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2015 a

Cover Design Veerangana 2015



Cdr. Rahul Jaitly



The cover design exemplifies the true essence of today's woman of substance....her femininity, her beauty, her poise and her steely determination. A naval wife, in particular, is the anchor in her husband's life and keeps him rooted at all times as depicted symbolically, very daintily, by the ear rings. Amidst the everyday rigours and hardships of frequent transfers, shifting as also single- handedly running the household during prolonged sea sorties of their husbands (depicted by the ship, which also gives the nautical flavour), a naval wife smilingly embraces all the challenges through her steely determination (depicted by her beautiful yet piercing gaze). The gaze also symbolises the correct vision of life which the naval wives provide to their husband. She adds cheer and humour to the naval community the riot of colours depicted in the background also brings out that ours is a happy and cheerful service, not merely by dint of the present dynamic and vibrant leadership of officers and sailors at various levels, but also largely due to the steadfast support of the naval wives, which invariably goes unnoticed. They are the actual '*Wind beneath the Wings of their Husband*'.

Acknowledgement

Team Sanchar (Central Region) thanks President NWWA and Vice President NWWA for their support and guidance. We thank all our contributors, Sanchar teams of all regions for their unstinting support as well as timely inputs for Veerangana 2015. We are indebted to Mrs. Lalita Ramdas, Cdr. Rahul Jaitly, Mrs. Nidhi Gupta, Cdr. Ajay Dhiman & staff.

Link To Nwwa Website

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

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Essence of A Woman

Quintessentially she walks the trodden path
Splashing colours of life on the canvas vast...
In shades of green, red and arden blue
She nurtures, kindles; instilling the values true.



Vidhi Bajpai

A mentor, confidant and romantique at heart
She holds your hand till the end....from the start.
Step by step; stride by stride...
Passion in her conviction, she's always by your side.

When the sea is rough and the vision blur...
She shepherds her ship without a stir!
Paragon of modesty; she watches with pride...
Eyes a little moist, as her own scale new heights.

Oh Woman! Oh Woman!
Your devotion is extreme....
Your valour boundless...
Your demeanour serene!!
Your smile reverberates a thousand chimes.
In your presence this world will shine!



एडमिरल आर के धवन
पी वी एस एम, ए वी एस एम, वाई एस एम, ए डी सी
नौसेनाध्यक्ष

Admiral RK Dhowan
PVSM, AVSM, YSM, ADC
Chief of the Naval Staff



रक्षा मंत्रालय
एकीकृत मुख्यालय (नौसेना)
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New Delhi - 110011

MESSAGE

Veeranganas, as the brave wives of the Indian Navy are called, are a great source of strength, support and stability to the community and the Service, working as they do, day after day, to keep our families happy, healthy and motivated. Their ability to silently, dedicatedly and continuously work towards the welfare of women and children in the community enables men in whites to attend to their assignments at the frontline, free from anxiety about the safety and well-being of their loved ones. Veeranganas have thus come to represent the care and affection that bind the community together and spur naval personnel to devote themselves to the service to the nation.

*The annual magazine of NWWA, aptly titled *Veerangana*, showcases the myriad pursuits, projects, talents, successes, and achievements of the indomitable naval wife, who stands steadfastly beside her man through the thick and thin of his career path. It also provides a glimpse of the activities she undertakes to make the community strong and vibrant, while highlighting the norms of change and challenge that NWWA functions under.*

*The theme of this edition of the magazine, *Humour in Naval Life*, highlights the importance of good natured humour in the hard lives that men and women of the Navy lead, negotiating long periods of separation from their families, prolonged operational deployments and frequently conflicting professional and personal requirements, all of which form part and parcel of their work environment. Reflecting the need for these professionals to appreciate the lighter side of life and find the right balance between their work and other interests, this edition perhaps also provides them opportunity to have a good laugh at themselves as they go about their daily lives. Importantly, it points to them the need to maintain the correct perspective in life and manage the stresses that accompany a challenging career, effectively. For these reasons, this theme holds high importance to us and deserves our collective attention.*

*I convey my warm felicitations to the editorial team of the *Veerangana* for bringing this interesting and informative magazine to the members of the community, and wish NWWA the very best in all its endeavours. Needless to state, the Navy will continue to provide the Association unstinted and whole-hearted support in all its activities.*

Jai Hind.

(RK Dhowan)
Admiral
Chief of the Naval Staff
02 Feb 15

Minu Showan
President NWWA



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MESSAGE

With utmost humility I pen my first message as President NWWA and am honoured to be a member of this vibrant organization. The role and responsibility of NWWA has been constantly changing with changing times. Our focus has, therefore, been to ensure that we keep pace with the changes and launch a wide range of projects, keeping in mind the growing needs of the community and changing concepts of welfare.

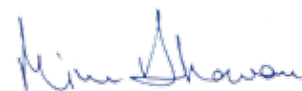
The Navy Wives Welfare Association works unstintingly towards women empowerment, welfare, community support, education, health care, social welfare and environmental conservation. We have ensured that our naval fraternity is sensitive to both social as well as environmental issues. It is my humble request that each and everyone works collectively and cohesively and contribute towards the common goal. Together, hand in hand we can achieve great heights and realize the vision of our predecessors.

Veerangana synonymous with the brave woman, 'strishkti' is an ode to the unsung heroine, the naval wife. A naval wife is strong, resilient and is the sheet anchor to her husband and the community. NWWA is a dynamic organization that unites all of us and as a team full of untapped potential, we can be catalysts for change inside our homes, in the community and Nation at large.

Why 'humour' as a theme? Humour, the ability to laugh at ourselves, brightens and lightens every situation and makes hard times easy in the life of a naval wife. A life full of transfers, changing houses, schools and long absences of husband can be made pleasant by laughing and sharing happy incidents and comical situations.

I congratulate team Veerangana and the editorial teams from Sanchar in all Commands for bringing out the essence so beautifully and for a collated effort towards the magazine. NWWA is making a difference in its own way and I salute each and every member for their selfless service to the community and spreading happiness.

Jai Hind!





Mrs. Reena Lanba
Vice President, NWWA

Navy Wives Welfare Association
A' Block Hutments
Integrated Head Quarters
Ministry of Defence (Navy)
New Delhi 110011



Message

It is with immense pleasure that I am sharing my thoughts with the readers of Veerangana, no better theme to dwell upon other than this year's focus issue; "Humour in Uniform". As stressed upon by Edward. D. Bono: Humour is by far the most significant activity of the human brain. These lines have become more relevant in modern times where people are reeling under competition, stress and fatigue and the only way to survive is to have a sense of humour and the ability to find humour and irony in situations that would otherwise overpower us.

For Naval wives, it is our sense of humour that enables us to tide over the storms and strife of everyday life while our spouses venture out to distant seas for indefinite periods. In Navy, humour definitely is an integral part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done with a hearty laugh. We do understand, as never before, that each of us is fully worthy of the respect and dignity essential to our common humanity. We recognize that we are the products of many cultures, traditions and memories; that mutual respect, camaraderie and humour only would help us to gain strength by combining the foreign with the familiar. I compliment the sanchar team (central region) for recognizing the need of the hour and conceptualizing, planning as well as publishing a completely in-house magazine with the theme "humour" to remind and re-establish the value of laughter in our lives. Our NWWA ladies had a bustling year with various group activities and interaction with foreign delegations yet we always found time to bond over Milans, Coffee mornings, and share a smile.

I wish all in the naval family a very Happy and Prosperous 2015. May each day of this year bring you little joys and simple surprises that will fill up each day with humour and happiness.

Mrs. Reena Lanba
Vice President
NWWA



Mrs. Ragini Chopra
President, NWWA
Western Region

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MESSAGE

I am indeed delighted at the immense and varied talent that I see in our community of naval wives. From young newly wedded wives who join their husbands far from their homes in different times and climes, to homemakers taking on the responsibility of their families, their official duties as naval wives, whilst managing and balancing their professional careers, they yet inherently retain their individual brand of talent and potential as artists, musicians, writers and designers.

Rarely does one come across such a vast diverse and talented pool of ladies, and we are indeed fortunate that the Navy and NWWA gives us an opportunity to meet interact, to make friends, to share experiences and to learn and imbibe from each other by showcasing our own brand of talent and expertise. I urge you all to grasp the opportunity and take the time to realize your own area of potential and expertise.

You have so much in you - *Carpe Diem* - Seize the day, stand tall and proud with your unique identity as a naval wife of today.

I wish all of you a wonderful 2015.

Warmest Regards,

(Ragini Chopra)
President
NWWA (WR)

Dated: 14 Jan 15



Mrs. Payal Soni

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MESSAGE

1. An idea of today is the vision of tomorrow. Veerangana is a unique tradition of creative endeavours and the magazine adequately shares the joy of community living, enthusiasm and talent, achievements and activities of past year.
2. The challenges that a naval wife faces are tremendous and the theme "Humour" comes as a major stress busting weapon. With the New Year round the corner one can feel the rush of reassured optimism, heaps of hope and tons of dreams. My congratulations to team Sanchar for selecting the theme, and volunteers for their contributions.
3. Last couple of months were very challenging for all the naval personnel of Vizag. We all saw the mayhem and the vandalism of super cyclone 'Hudhud' in our region. As the saying goes "The greatest oak was once a little nut that held its ground", so our men held the ground tight and turned the disappointment into an opportunity to start over again. NWWA ER has also contributed a dedicated section related to Hudhud which the readers would find a different experience.
4. My compliments and best wishes to the editorial board and all the volunteers for bringing out this fine magazine


(Payal Soni)

Date: 16 Dec 14



Mrs Gagandeep Cheema
President, NWWA
Southern Region

Navy Wives Welfare Association
Ashirvad Building, NWWA Kendra,
Naval Base, Kochi - 682004



Message

A well developed sense of humour is the pole that adds balance to your steps as you walk the tightrope of life.

William Arthur Ward

Humour in uniform – the theme for this issue of Veerangana, I am sure will leave everyone with smiles and memories of many a happy moments. After all who can appreciate humour better than those in the Armed Forces. Many an evening is spent in the company of friends regaling first hand accounts of humorous incidents that has everyone in splits. Though Whatsapp may be providing instant humour, the guffaws of a newly wed, faux pas of many of us not coming to grips with Naval ranks and jargons, continue to provide the daily dose of humour and light hearted bantering. With stress and fast pace making inroads in our lives it is important to look at the humorous side in everyday life and de-stress ourselves.

Meanwhile, in the Southern Naval Command, despite being busy with various activities of NWWA and other official commitments like Navy Week Celebrations, visits by foreign dignitaries and Mission: “We Remember” for the Naval Widows; we took out time from our busy schedules to conduct plenty of activities for bringing the community together, bonding and inculcating the ethos of camaraderie. Be it working together for the Swachh Bharat Campaign, enjoying family outings at Diwali Mela or walking enmass at the various health walks for sailors and officers of the Command, all have kept us occupied. Organising these activities have enriched us and have helped us discover and rediscover hidden and hitherto unknown talents in many of us. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the support from all ladies and organisations who have come forward voluntarily and helped with the conduct and co-ordination of these events. Success would not have been possible without them and we look forward to their continued support.

It is well known that handling serious topics or literary masterpieces is far easier than coming out with humour. Thus, compiling a magazine of this calibre is by no means an easy job. I compliment the Sanchar team at the centre for bringing out yet another brilliant issue of Veerangana. Humour is always a good medicine.

I would also like to take this opportunity to wish all of you, your families and loved ones a very Happy New Year. May new dreams blossom and take shape bringing about abundance of humour and happiness in each day of the year.

Mrs Gagandeep Cheema
President, NWWA, Southern Region



From the Editor's Desk



The magazine is near ready and it is time to articulate the “Letter from the Editor”. I was lost for words. How is one supposed to summarise the great experience that we went through, in getting this magazine out in a few words, without succumbing to the urge of using clichéd phrases- “an enriching experience”, “completely a team effort”, so on and so forth, etc. Quite obviously, an experience like this could not be anything, but enriching; and definitely would not have been possible without the amazing team that worked on it. So, then, what do I write about?

I sat down to this arduous task one morning, with my regular cup of tea. Not an easy task, by any standards, let me assure you; particularly when the house is buzzing with excitement from just having welcomed my granddaughter into this world. My son-in-law sat across. Seeing me struggle, he tried to help. His first question was “Why do you go through all this effort?” I launched into a familiar, long explanation of how it was a platform for showcasing local talent and encouraging the members of our naval fraternity to discover their hidden capabilities. Smart aleck that he is, he immediately quipped “Why don’t you just send it in to a regular magazine then?” That won him a baleful glare from me, but it also got me thinking. The articles and works that we received were very good; how come none of these were sent to commercial newspapers or magazines?


Then it struck me; who would understand us with our local lingo, but us. If I were to say “secure kar do” or refer to my 28 year old daughter as “baby” and 32 year old son as “baba”, I am sure people would question my innate intelligence. This magazine is virtually a mirror into our own lives. It is a reflection of what we take for granted, everyday. It helps us recall experiences and moments of our naval journey. It helps us laugh at our shortcomings and be proud of our myriad achievements. In short, this magazine is our platform to write, laugh, explore and celebrate “our” world.

And so this issue. This one is dedicated to ‘Humour in the Navy’. Let me tell you that there is plenty of it. In the house, in the Mess, in the social gatherings, everywhere, it is ‘Naval Humour’ which binds our community and makes us wake up with great anticipation every morning. Enjoy reading about it. Celebrate the fact that the Navy is a way of life; and that, we enjoy that privilege everyday.

This issue has a special significance for me. This is my last issue as the Editor. Having accompanied my husband through the ups and downs of Naval Life, I am now preparing to keep step with him, when he hangs up his uniform soon. What do I say? I will sorely miss this great Service, but, I will live with the poignant memories. I will look back at the fantastic timesthe Service has given our entire family.

This editorial is too short to thank all of you, but let me atleast thank my own very team, who have always made a system from chaos, a magazine from articles. I will not say ‘Farewell’, I will say ‘Adieu’ (till we meet again), ‘Dosvidaniya’ and ‘Phir Milenge’.

God Bless.


Padmini Nair

Team Sanchar Speaks



HUMOUR IS EVERYWHERE

The past few years have witnessed innumerable conflicts, untold suffering, and unimaginable crimes. We have seen repeated attempts by separatist groups inflict extreme violence on humanity, often driven by irrational hatred and suspicion, or unbounded arrogance and thirst for power and resources. The borders between nations have become porous but the real borders are not between nations, but between powerful and powerless, free and bound, privileged and deprived. Scientists have stressed upon the fact that the world of nature is so small and interdependent that a butterfly flapping its wings in the Amazon rainforest can generate a violent storm on the other side of the earth. This principle is known as the "Butterfly Effect." Today, more than ever we can see that the world of human activity is also having its own "Butterfly Effect"—more for the worse rather than better. Today we need to make concentrated efforts towards global peace and make efforts to bring back cheer and old world humour in lives of people so as to generate hope for a brighter and safe future. We need to find ways to lighten up and find more levity and have more fun. Humour will make every part of our life better as laughter is one of our great healers.

"Veerangana" this year has attempted to highlight the lighter side of naval life. We at Team Sanchar sincerely believe that a *good belly laugh can remove stress faster than medicine*. Modern life is full of stress. If the stress factor is addressed by humour, then productivity at home and work places will flow, and the general health of all of us will improve. With this view in mind we bring you humorous quips from our naval fraternity to be read, enjoyed, mulled over and imbibed. Live fully and laugh heartily! As President Kennedy, known for his sense of humour, once scribbled a note to his friend and cabinet member. It said: "*In effect, three things are real, God, human folly, laughter.*"



Paromita Ojha
Team Sanchar (NR)



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HUMOUR IN OUR LIVES





6.05 VT to Mulund

Radhika Arun Kumar

Having lived 27 years of my life in Mumbai before our first transfer, I valiantly call myself a Mumbai kar. So when we were posted back to Mumbai couple of years ago I decided to test my Mumbaikar status and got adventurous enough to take the famous local during the peak rush hour to meet my family in Mulund. The daily train travel can be quite an experience if you are not used to it and for me it had been a while.

Travelling by the local is quite colourful and is funny especially in the ladies compartments. Firstly it's quite a spectacle to see the ladies stand miles ahead and take the running train in full speed just so that they get their preferred seats. Once they are settled in, out comes the dabbas full of small eats along with juicy gossip entertaining others, complaining about their in-laws or bragging about their husbands and children.

I might not be able to do something like this on a daily basis any more as I have moved on, but I had to prove to myself that I could still do a lot of things I used to do all those years ago...gauge the speed of the train and get on to it carefully without a hair out of place, and then hunt for a seat to plonk myself on.

Smugly boarding the Thane double fast, I realised in a few minutes that I was trapped inside the train and that an impenetrable phalanx of bodies stood between the exit and me. In midst of all this chaos, two women start an argument over how ones long plait was irritating the other. As the stations zip, the quarrel ups in fervour and crescendo; when all of a sudden one of the ladies calmly takes out a scissor from her bag and cuts the long plait of the women standing in front much to the horror of everyone around. A mini riot starts with lot of heckling thrown in and my panic level notches up.



Deriding myself for being stupid, I startfreakingout,wondering aloud if I would reach the door to get down at my destination amidst all this mayhem. Then, I hear a laconic voice say: "टैशन नहीं लेने का। फस्ट टाईम है क्या, यह सब होता है। फस्ट में कौन आया अभी चल मेरे साथ" Don't know who gave the voice over, but at MulundI found myself on the platform standing with as much dignity I could muster.I felt I had fought a war and come out triumphant. My rapid heartbeat and sweaty palms however assured me... 'No more traveling in peak hours'.

But for a very tiny moment, I felt you can take a person from Mumbai, but can't take Mumbai or the Mumbai local train out of her be it good or bad...

FROM THE CHILDREN'S MOUTH

Mrs Kirti Rohit Garg



All mothers have experienced moments when their children stun them with quips.

I couldn't stop laughing when this happened way back in 2006, and even today the memory brings a broad

smile on my face.

My daughter Risha was about to complete her homework for Class 2. She, like all adorable daughters, loved playing with my 'dupattas'. I had just returned home after a trip to the market and was wearing my 'outgoing' salwar-kameez that I liked a lot and took immense care of.

Risha took my dupatta and ran away to the verandah. I ran after her and told her that it was my 'outgoing' piece of garment.

She instantly replied, "Then give me your rough copy-wala dupatta". For a moment I couldn't understand what she meant, and the little darling, with her limited vocabulary, told me that she wanted my old, worn-out dupatta.

Her tone and choice of words made me laugh uncontrollably.

This humorous incident took place in the NWWA-run Balpathshala in INS Chilka.

The teacher had just taught the children the concepts of singular and plural in Hindi, known as 'vachan'. During revision, she asked the class how many kinds of vachan there are.

One child raised her hand and said "Ekvachan and bahuvachan". Another said, "No, there are three kinds of vachan."

The perplexed teacher asked him to elaborate.

"There is ekvachan, and then there is bahuvachan, and finally there is Amitabh Bachchan."

Oriya language does not distinguish between the 'v' and 'b' sounds, prompting the child to understand the world in his own unique way.

Contributed by Mrs Kirti Rohit Garg, with inputs from Ms Samaptika, Balpathshala teacher, INS Chilka



DIL KE ARMAAN

By Navjot J Singh



I had never seen a ship before my marriage.. BUT had seen a serial called "SHAN-O-VARUN" on TV which impressed me to the extent that I wanted to join the Indian Navy or wanted to marry a NAVAL BOY. The officers and the ships and the sea everything wooed me. As luck would have it.....I got engaged to a naval guy. More than the boy I used to fantasize my life on the beaches, striking **the TITANIC** pose on the ship, and with the movie "कहो ना प्यार है" just having released, my honeymoon plans were on the lines of the songs "प्यार की कस्ती में ...लहरो की मस्ती में...." total dreamworld. My fiancé promised me a honeymoon cruise after seeing my excitement.

We got married and he was posted in Dockyard Vizag. The first time I had ever seen a beach... and it was crowded....infact overly crowded and I did not like it at all. We got a house at NCB (Naval Coastal Battery) and I would see ships sailing everyday...big and small but had not got the chance to visit one.

One day he came home with a big smile and surprised me by saying.

See..... I am taking you on a ship. Wow !!!honeymoon...!!!!.how many days???? one day...only, but why.....only one day??? this is trial baby.....if you like it then only I can take you for a longer sail...sailing is not everybody's cup of tea.

Ok.... trial hi sahi.....mauka to mila.. I was so--so excited, was not able to sleep that day... dreaming of my favourite pose...titanic. ..before the d-day arrived, my husband started preparing me from the previous night.

"Tomorrow when take you to the ship don't start behaving like a child.... control your emotions, don't hold my hand in public....., no public display of affection..., and wear some decent clothes ...as there will be many officers, families, sailors, and civilians too."

But why so many families??? Is it some mass honeymoon?????!!!!



no dear its family day at sea.

Once a year we are allowed to take our families on board to show them the functioning of ship, aircraft carriers, submarines, commandoes, exercises and experience the sailing...it is a picnic for the families.

My excitement faded but I still wanted to go. We reached the jetty. She was huge, tall and majestic. We boarded the ship along with 500 more "Baratis" including ladies, kids, parents,

all ages and sizes almost from all states of India watching carefully each part of the ship. Narrow staircases, dingy cabins, 3 tier berths for sleeping, even the CO's cabin was disappointing. The peculiar smell of oil, grease, paint had put me off. I was sceptical to touch the railings, and was afraid the corners would spoil my dress.

The ship sailed...with a convoy of 6-7 more ships, performing different exercises, an aircraft took off from the deck, a submarine appeared and disappeared, and many more things went on.. Snacks, nimbu pani, juices, biryani was served... But by that time my stomach had already started rolling and pitching. I was feeling nauseated and uneasy. I forgot all the poses... started chanting "waheguru-waheguru". The Buckets lying in all corners of the ship and the people puking was not helping..not to mention it further added to the ships ambience. I was drowsy and wanted to sleep but could not. "By God!!! इतनी उल्टि मैंने अपने दोनों बच्चों के समय पर भी नहीं की थी जितनी उस एक दिन में की" it was like a roller-coaster ride for me. Maybe the sea was rough or I was not used to it but it was not a good experience for me. The trailer was so bad that I never bothered to ask for a full movie ever...

दिल के अरमान उल्टियों में बह गये..... !!!!!



Towards the end of my husband's sea tenure as LO, we had invited some of the competency officers over for dinner to our house at '6B Anuradha'. Much to our amusement, we got a call from one of the invitees, at the eleventh hour enquiring whether the rig for the evening dinner was indeed 6Bs!!!!

Sonal Roy

FOOTNOTES FROM A NAVAL WIFE'S DIARY

Deepa Bhat Nair



My husband's ship was in harbour and he was invited for dinner at his senior shipmate's home. His good lady planned an elaborate menu. It was a gathering of about 15 people. The men were getting together after many months and there was a lot to catch up on. It was a while before the men in "high spirits" got to the dinner table and relished the lady's efforts.

Whatever your complaints about naval husbands, you cannot fault them for lack of social graciousness. Naturally, the dear lady received a host of compliments as dinner wound up. Soon it was my husband's turn, "Great food Ma'm," he said. "I loved it all but the egg curry was the best! I haven't eaten such an amazing egg curry in a long time," he added for good measure. The lady smiled and said "Praveen, the eggs were part of the presentation, on the prawns curry tonight." My mortified husband tied himself in knots

apologizing to her. "It is quite alright" she said. "In fact, yours is the best compliment my cooking has received tonight, at least there were eggs in the dish; the ten others before you have all thanked me for the mind blowing mutton curry!"

So, I learnt early in my naval life that when the men get together, food is less of a priority than the conversation and bon homie.





PHYSICIAN HEAL THYSELF

Lt Cdr M Sujatha (Retd)

26th of January is a day that is etched in the memory of every Indian. However, 26th of January 2001 is remembered for a very different reason, on account of the deadly earthquake that struck various parts of Gujarat and left in its wake widespread devastation.

INS Valsura located at Jamnagar was the coordinating unit for rehabilitation work on behalf of the Navy. The unit had adopted the once pristine village of 'Moda' under project 'Nai Roshni'.

Since I was serving at Valsura (my first appointment as a 'piddly' Sub Lieutenant), I was



always a part of the numerous relief teams that camped at Moda for rehabilitation work. The relief teams were as per the norm in 'no 10's'.

After many such visits in the same 'no 10's', I accompanied NWWA ladies on yet another visit, primarily for the distribution of study material and clothes at the village school, which was restarted, post the tragedy. It was good to see the children who had till now been scampering in the rubble seated neatly and facing a blackboard.

The distribution of relief material began with eager little hands being thrust forward to accept the gifts. I saw a little girl nudging her neighbour and saying shyly, "Aa ben na paasa eeku jjodi kapdachae topan tae aapnae aapeche" (this aunty has herself only one set of blue clothes, yet she is gifting us clothes). I was moved by the little girl's concern and yet couldn't help but laugh.



Beware of What You Wish For!

Aparna Gupta



Married to a Naval officer, I often feel I lead two lives. One when he is on land and the other when he goes sailing. When he is around, I feel like a regular woman juggling home, family and work, and when he is away, as a single working woman living on my own. I would love to say that it is a journey back in time to my hostel days, only that I never got a chance to stay in a PG or a hostel, since my dad was posted in Delhi while I was studying and eventually working there.

As a youngster, I was enamored by the idea of staying alone. In college I did float the idea of staying in a Paying Guest accommodation near my college, an idea which was so ridiculous that my parents didn't even bother reacting to it. I also contemplated the idea of going abroad for a course. A suggestion my bureaucrat dad was willing to consider once I submitted a proposal for the same, with details about the course, scholarship process and career prospects, remuneration standards post the course. He not-so-secretly hoped that I will ultimately realize my real calling in life – civil services. Too liberal to force his ideas on me, he waited for me to discover that for myself. My grandfather, a

retired bureaucrat, couldn't wait to have a third generation bureaucrat in the family.

At 22 when I was working in the Times of India, Delhi, out of the blue, a prospective alliance came from Mumbai. In a very typical Hindi sitcom-like situation, he was the son of my aunt's school batch mate's elder brother. My father was naturally apprehensive of the proposal, as a defence officer... was... well not an IAS officer. *'His job is too risky,'* he argued with my aunt, who had apparently committed on a date between the families. *'Meet the family once at least, you can always say 'no''*, she urged. I was excited about the official date as I got a chance to work on a story for the website – a modern-day take on arranged marriages. My father was a bit taken aback with my acceptance to meet the boy as he fully expected me to rebel. My only condition was the date had to be planned on my weekly off.

On the d-day, I was quick to point out to the boy's mother that all the savories were outsourced from Bengali Sweet House lest she decided to attribute it to my nonexistent culinary skills. Next stage of the 'date' involved the boy-girl



getting to know each other in privacy. Venue this time was the Taj coffee shop. I made sure that I had my fill of starters since my elder cousin who was a pro in this ‘arranged-marriage-date-scene’ had mentioned that many modern guys prefer to go ‘dutch’. If I am paying for the half, I better eat my share, was my motto. Having interviewed people from all walks of life, from actors to writers, singers to inmates as a trainee journalist, I had a ready question bank in my head. So chatting up with a somewhat shy naval officer was not a big deal. I remember asking him questions sizing up whether he will prove to be a good roommate – *Do you cook? Do you go out on weekends? Do you smoke? Do you drink? Do you have any problems if I work long hours?* I ended the chat with the customary tradition of exchanging email ID and phone numbers. We were taught in office, that everyone could be a potential contact for any prospective story.

Next day I woke up to commotion as the boy’s side had agreed and were awaiting our ‘feedback’. My father was hesitant, *‘I like the boy. His family background is also good. But he will be away most of the times? You will be living on your own. Are you okay with*

it? Or would you like to wait for a while and study for IAS exams?’

I did a quick calculation in my head. Here’s a roommate who stays away from home for a good part of the month, who knows how to cook and has no problems with my long working hours. It’s like staying in a PG accommodation, just on fancier terms. I could read books, watch whichever television show I liked, eat whatever I like, concentrate on my work, list was endless ... this didn’t sound so bad. And he was good to talk to. It will be ok to go out for dinners and movies with him. *‘I can live on my own. If you like the boy, I can go ahead with this.’*

This incident plays in my mind, every time I am even tempted to crib about my husband’s long absences from home. In fact whenever I pray now, I am guilty of getting into the tiniest details, as sometimes God takes you too literally!

P.S. My husband later confessed that he was taken in by my carefree attitude. That I gobbled down the chicken tikkas while on a date with a prospective groom led him to that assumption. Little did he know that I was just being true to my baniya genes!



Viewpoint of A Member of The Curly Haired Sisterhood

Tara Korti



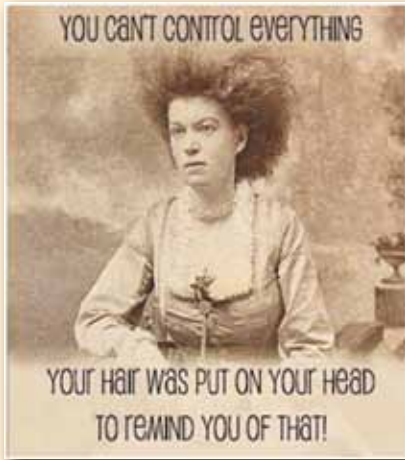
as I was born with curly hair I want to keep them as they are. Second, I keep my fingers crossed that the hairstylist in her enthusiasm to enlighten me about the various ways my hair can be tamed will remember not to cut my hair so short that one is

reminded of the esteemed Lord Meghnad Desai after the cut.

The world of hairstylists seems to find it difficult to accept that a woman with unruly hair does not want to change it. I have two options: 1) to leave my hair to be whatever it wants to be 2) spend time, money and effort going against the grain of my hair! I once exercised

I come from a line of curly-haired individuals. Every visit to a hairstylist is an ordeal for me. As soon as I enter a saloon, I get intimidated by pictures of models with perfectly glossy smooth hair with not a strand out of place. As I sink into the chair for a haircut and the hairstylist puts the apron around me, I just feel like sinking into mother earth for I know the inevitable questions will arise. 'Would you like to straighten your hair' or 'would you like so and so treatment or product for frizz control etc'? I politely decline and do two things-first, start humming Lady Gaga's 'born this way' to soothe my nerves and in the hope that the stylist will get a hint regarding my belief that





option 2 on a temporary basis to see the results and the result was that it just did not feel like me! So I always stuck to option 1. Moreover the risks inherent in option 2 made me wary. One of my curly haired friends burnt her skin using straightening iron.

Whenever a member of the curly haired sisterhood decides to leave us and join the straight hair sisterhood, my heart sinks. Other day we called a few of my husband's friends and their families for dinner. One couple is from Kerala and the wife had the trademark curly hair. That evening I could barely recognize the lady as she had straighter-than-straight hair. She smiled at me and said 'the curls are gone'. I had barely heard it when I heard her husband muttering under his breath '*and so has the cash*'! I thought alas she has given in to the pressure. What pressure you ask? Straight hair has been and continues to be the female ideal. The advertising

world and the beauty business are major players in upholding this ideal (I hope by way of my explanation you have guessed that I am a social sciences graduate!). India is obsessed with not only white skin but also straight hair for women. Most ads you see either for a shampoo or hair oil will feature a woman with long straight hair. How I wish our society could accept diversity in hair.

Living with curls is not easy. There are so many hairstyles which you can never ever try on (anything with flicks, bangs, very short hairstyles etc), humidity is your enemy, if I forget to apply conditioner then my mop of hair looks as if mild electric shocks have been given to me, combing is almost futile. My dad felt in my case even getting a haircut was futile. Every time I came back from a hairstylist and showed of my new cut to my dad. He remarked that my hair looked exactly how it looked before I went to the salon. And now my husband gives me the same feedback post my visit to the hairstylist (God, when I wished that my husband should have my dad's traits this is definitely not what I had in mind). But there are lots of pluses too: we do not have to worry about having hair out of place because it does not really have a place, if you do not carry a comb while travelling it is not

a crisis as a comb can never do anything much for you, for a 70s or 80s theme party you can dress like the lead singer of a rock band easily etc.

For my husband my hair is my mood barometer. He can gauge what's going on within me based on the state of my hair. If my hair is looking bouncy and in somewhat harmony, I need to be taken out to some place special. However If my hair looks weighted down and greasy, any one of the following or a combination of the following is/are the reason(s)-

- a) I am feeling weighed down with the hassles of everyday life
- b) I am unwell and hence do not have energy to engage with my hair
- c) There is a water problem in the house (the solution to this is order my favorite take away)
- d) if my hair is tied up in a ponytail then I am a lady on a mission and nothing especially him should come in my way

I have made complete peace with my unruly hair. Once I asked my better half whether he would like me to tame my hair and he replied (rather exasperatedly), '*I do not think either your hair or your spirit can be tamed!*'

Surviving Medicals

Sonali Bisht



Atkins, GM, Diet, Flab, Weight, Reduce and FAST.

Economic Impact

There is a sudden increase in sales at our Canteen shoes department, Adidas and Nike. In some cases you would see last year's well preserved shoes being reclaimed. The wardrobe is searched and refurbished with sweat shirts, track suits and running

shorts. Some dedicated people even INVEST in wrist bands and other accessories to get the feel.

The second market segment affected by this disease is the greengrocers. The sudden rise in demand for greens and fruits in general (apple and papaya in particular) gives them a new boost. We ladies might have noticed the sudden willingness of our spouses to join us and cherry pick the vegetables and fruits. No wonder the prices shoot up.

The other effect is at the local restaurants and bistros. The usual bustling crowd thins down considerably. And even if some victims are coerced to visit them, the order suddenly gets modified to salads, no cheese, no butter and low fat. And we thought we are the only ones who suffer.

Social Impact

The earliest symptoms are avoiding the

In my long life spanning over three decades I have seen lots of seasonal diseases. Viral, common cold, cough, conjunctivitis, flu even typhoid and jaundice. But there is a new seasonal disorder which we lucky ladies tend to see year after year. It is called MEDICALS. Mysteriously this condition affects only our officers (though families are severely addicted). The onset of this disease results in some serious ground work by them. A survey reveals, as this climate approaches, the most googled words in any Naval Base are





parties, potlucks, the stand easy time and even company of course mates. In short, all forms of temptations which remotely relate to food and booze are studiously avoided. It's very easy to find a victim in a party, a person with a glass of juice and a pained expression. The creases on the forehead go deeper at the sight of chicken tikka tray being passed on. If you catch someone nibbling carrots and cucumbers, steer clear. This can be contagious.

The usually empty roads would see some panting and puffing individuals with 'pain' clearly etched on their faces. Those contorted looks and doubled up human beings are in different forms of agony. The new adda now becomes the GYM instead of our dedicated samosa jalebiwalas. Only if our medical officers visited GYM during that period, they would have cleared the medicals on sheer humanitarian ground.



Psychological Impact

This is one of the most dreaded ones as this affects us the most. The usually cranky boys get crankier. They suffer the classic

Butter Chicken Withdrawal symptoms. Crying on the weighing scale, (tampering with that innocent truthful machine in extreme cases), wearing double tee-shirts and even sweaters during morning run, unnatural poses in front of the mirrors, youtubing exercises are just a few. Some even go in sheer denial and constantly use words like 'bone density' and 'family history'. Some go in sort of social coma and even deny the company of overweight people out of sheer phobia. The wives get affected severely. We are supposed to cook edibles which would appeal to that spoilt palate and that which scores a 100% on health food chart. Come-on guys! Lettuce will taste lettuce and boiled vegetables



are BOILED. And even if we are completely dedicated to your cause, we simply can't make chicken steak out of beetroots!

Cure and Recuperation

Like most of the seasonal diseases, this virus is best left to its own. They tend to die their natural death. The victim should be given a dose of pampering and regular visits to the favorite eatery helps boost the immune system. For the general upliftment of atmosphere, the ladies can consider calling their own parents for a vacation. Home remedies for this virus, handed down by our mothers work magic and you would see an immediate change in your spouse and his waistline.

I request the people suffering from MEDICALS to take adequate precautions and not to spread the virus around. Our genetically thin peers should extend their wholehearted support to the sufferers and I request them not to gloat on their superior DNA.

THE GRAND FAREWELL!!

Lata Srikant



chips couldn't satiate. As soon as dinner was announced, I jumped to my feet and sped in as dignified a manner as possible, to the lavish spread anticipating my favourite dishes. But nothing could have prepared me for the sight that followed!

The first dish had two hugelobsters sitting and staring at me. I had never seen such big lobsters in my life ...In the second dish two humongous crabs were romancing. With trepidation, I moved on to the next dish where pink prawns were waiting all in a row. To my horror, the whole spread was sea food... My husband and I were the only

vegetarians in the group.

I finally found some poories with bundi raita and felt blessed. Unfortunately by the time my

It was the month of September in year 1987 when my husband got transferred out of INS VAGLI. I was told, "*Ma'am we are giving you a grand farewell that you will remember for a long time to come.*" The words turned out to be prophetic!!

It was our last day of packing which kept us really busy, so we had a frugal lunch to save our appetite for the grand dinner. I was also very excited as our farewell had been organized in a swanky hotel - "The Sea Pearl" which was a regular with the elite of the city.

The mocktails arrived, and by this time I was famished and craving for food, which the peanuts and





husband ate, he had to do with just two poories and no raita.

In those days, the farewell speeches were made after the dinner. You can imagine my husband who was hungry and angry just took off on the young mess secretary, a lieutenant, who was the youngest in ship's crew. He had nonchalantly overlooked the fact that the- one in number-vegetarian, happened to be the GUEST OF HONOUR that evening.

On the way back we could not find any place to calm the hunger pangs as the whole of Vizag went to sleep by 10 pm in those days (I am talking of the pre- cable TV, pre- mobile phones and pre-internet days). We reached home and I dredged up Maggi for my ravenous, angry husband.

Twenty years later we happened to meet the erstwhile, young, inexperienced mess secretary who had bloomed into a charming, responsible

naval officer, and we all had a good laugh about the above incident. He also mentioned about the firing he had received from his CO the next day and the lesson learnt on balanced diet.... Balancing Vegetarian and Non vegetarian food!!

Language Blunder

Many years ago, my friend and neighbour Sara and I were both newly married into the Navy. Both of us were from the South of India and spoke only a smattering of Hindi. I was from Karnataka and she was from Kerala. We immediately struck a bond. We were both new to Navy, new to Bombay, and our Hindi was equally bad. Once I had to accompany Sara for an interview. I remember the day; it was pouring cats and dogs, a typical monsoon day in Mumbai. We were waiting at the bus-stop to catch a bus. When the bus finally arrived, it was so crowded, we were trying to clamber in with open umbrellas in one hand to save us from the torrential rain, but it was also very windy. Suddenly Sara's umbrella flew off and, helpless at the situation, she started screaming "मेरा छाती को पकड़ो, मेरा छाती को पकड़ो."

Everyone stared at her shellshocked. Then, they all burst outlaughing. Both of us were clueless as to why they found such a serious situation hilarious. Anyway, a kind soul managed to catch her "chaati" for her and we got off at our destination still wondering what the joke was.

When my husband came home that evening, I narrated the day's adventure to him, and when I came to the "Chaati pakdo" part he looked shocked and wanted to know who said it. When I told him it was Sara he started laughing. Itoo joined him when I learnt the actual meaning of the word.

My First Impressions

Mrs. Tripti Joshi

My first impression was of the green lawns lined precisely by those white and blue painted bricks and the unending lines of the three toners. This was a world alien to me. This was the entirely different world to which my husband belonged. Coming from an entirely civil background, I had no clue as to what I had let myself in for. And my husband had done nothing to alleviate my ignorance.



When our flight landed at Vizag, my husband remarked that there might not be any one to receive us at the airport. I smiled wryly. Who did

he expect? With the smile of a self-conscious, newly married husband, he scurried out. I scanned the airport to breathe in the place where I was to start married life.

My gaze was riveted by the sight of some officers. A bewildered anticipation welled up in me. "These officers are from my ship. My CO has sent them to receive us. You must return their greetings appropriately," he informed and instructed me. My life as a naval wife was started.

husband' ship. One of them which I enjoyed the most was broom hoisting ceremony on board war Ship. Once I entered the ship, I was hosted by sailors and officers saluting. The feeling was so amazing that filled me with pride. It all started with a prank to broom the deck area by newly married couple which was told to us as pious naval tradition to enter family life. This was organised by young in-living officers. Finally, I was asked to hoist the broom on the other side of ship flag. **Broom hoisting is a ceremony in which newly married naval officer's wife has to hoist the broom in the main mast of the ship.**



I was welcomed as a new bride ceremonially at my

Of course, there were the initial teething problems. But on the whole I count myself

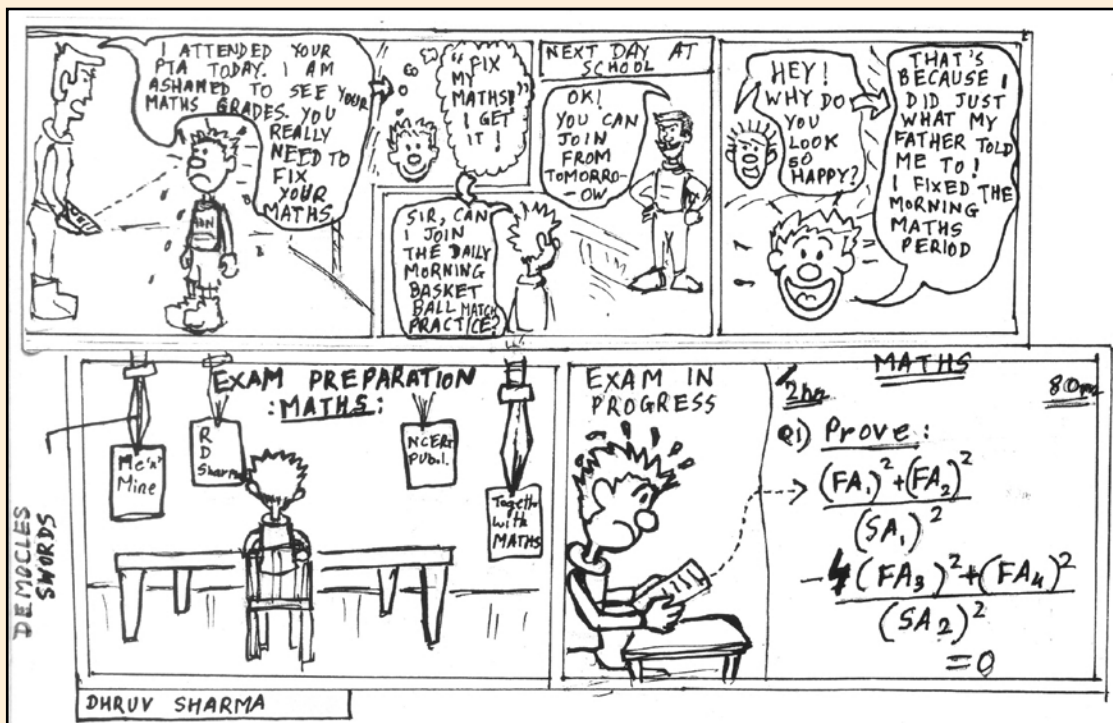


of any thing unbecoming of a lady and by sheer observation of other ladies. I learnt to mix with different kinds of people coming from different social backgrounds from different parts of India.

We ourselves become enriched personalities by learning to live in all kinds of situations, in the bush or by a warm hearth. Life is truly a 'bed in the bush with stars to see... This is the life for a woman like me. This is the life forever'. For me, the pride that I feel as a naval officer's wife is worth all the sacrifices I have had to make. It is a badge of honour I shamelessly flaunt.

lucky for having been exposed to this kind of life. At first, I used to feel like a bird that has come in from the wild and been imprisoned. There were so many rules and regulations. All that hierarchy from a Lt to a

Cdr had to be, oh', so careful. But slowly and gradually I learnt to transform my frivolous, college girl attitude into that of an naval officer's wife. This I achieved by my husband's acute disapproval



My First Happenstance As A Navy Wife



Anupama Joglekar

I still remember that day when after marriage my husband left me in Pune to join for a course at a place called Yelahanka near Bangalore. I had planned to join him after a few days, when he was allotted a room in the transit mess for us. I had visited Bangalore when I was a child with my parents on a holiday but this was to be my first travel by train on my own. I had no idea where Yelahanka was or how to go there from Bangalore railway station. My husband had promised me that he would be at the station to receive me and would reach there much before the train would arrive. Those were the days when there were no mobiles and even STD phone booths were not easily available.

The train journey from Pune to Bangalore was about twelve hours but seemed unending, as I could not even sleep for a wink. As I got down at the Bangalore Cantonment station, there were very few co-passengers who got down there and all of them dispersed

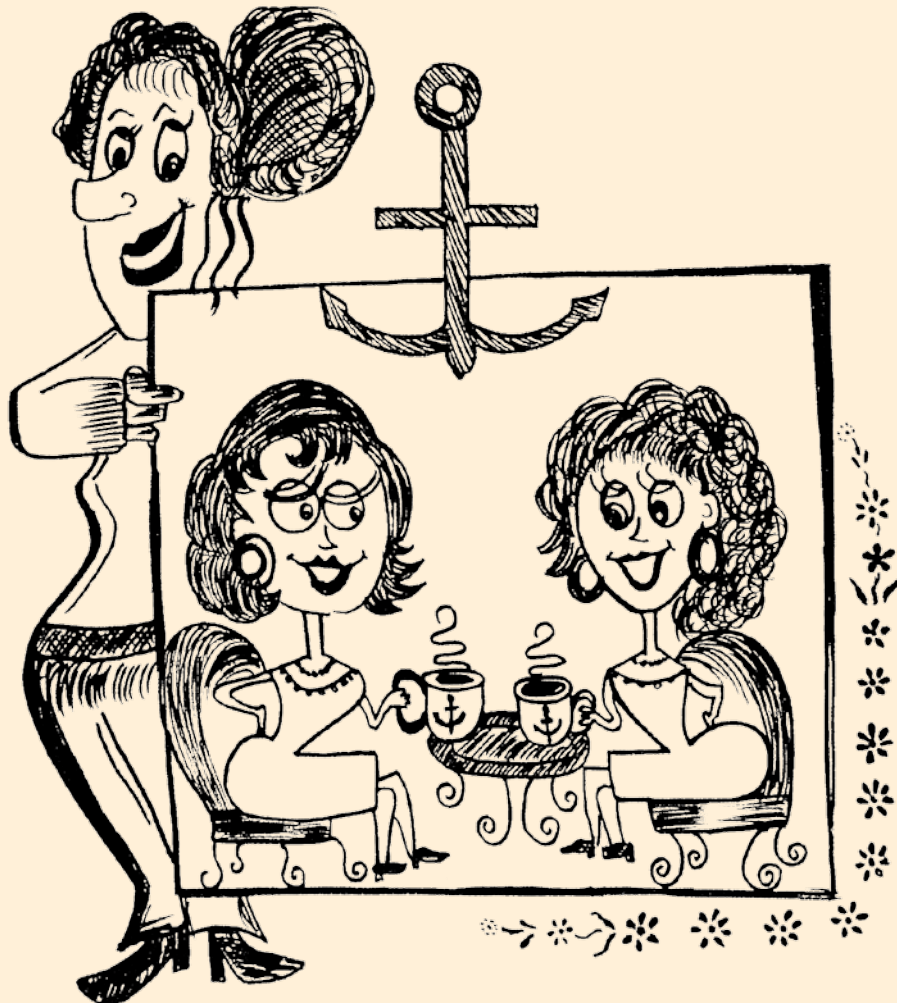
within minutes of getting down. With no sight of my husband anywhere, I noticed one scary looking fellow on the platform giving me weird looks. He then approached me and asked me if I would like to have a cup of coffee with him. While I was scared, I pretended to



ignore him and started moving towards the Railway Police Help Booth on the platform. To my horror this fellow started following me and as I was about to call the policeman for help, he took out a letter and gave it to me saying that it was from my husband. Although I could recognize the handwriting, having got many letters from my husband during our four long years of courtship, I was still apprehensive about this man and his intentions. I asked him for his identification and he showed me an I-card which

was a familiar sight, since I had seen my husband flashing it on many occasions. It turned out that he was also a Naval officer who was doing the same course as my husband and had come to receive me since my husband had gone for his flying test that time. I breathed a sigh of relief and headed towards the auto rickshaw he had hailed for me. But I still had a bit of apprehension and so I refused to go in that auto and hailed another one and asked the driver to follow him on the bike.

When we reached Air Force Station Yelahanka, I was finally relieved to see my husband waiting outside the Officer's Mess. Later, this officer became a very good friend and we would both recollect this incident and have a good laugh. While this was my first interesting encounter in the Naval life, there have been many more memorable events in the last eighteen years of my being a Naval wife. But this one being the first one as I entered Naval life remains the most cherished one.



Shivani Rohilla

A New TV Star for My Kids



Mrs. Vidya Karthik

Let me share my own experience of a Republic day Parade

It all began when my husband was selected as one of the probables to lead the Tri Services Guard of Honour at India gate. The practice session started on a cold winter morning around ten days prior to 26th January. My husband went for three- four days of practice and all was well when all of a sudden he lost his voice. My kids were very surprised as how come the father's lip is moving while talking without any sound!!! I thus learned that this was a common occurrence when the vocal chords are subjected to sustained abuse. Home remedies brought back his voice just in time for the final rehearsals.

I did not tell anyone that my husband is heading the Guard of Honour at Amar Jawan Jyoti as I myself was not sure about it. And finally a day before the D-day,

I told my kids that *'tomorrow your father will come on TV'*. My elder daughter who was around 5 plus then was surprised and asked me, *"He is here only and I am seeing him everyday then how come he will come on TV"* and my younger daughter who was not even one did not react to my statement.

The D-day arrived and we all were prepared and positioned ourselves in front of the TV at around 0900hrs. By that time I had given call to all dear and near ones and passed the message. Finally at around 09:20 a.m. my husband's face appeared on TV, and daughters were thrilled and started shouting. My younger one was jumping and calling out to her father but was disappointed as she did not get any response from her dad, who continued to sport a serious expression on TV. After the program I started getting lots of calls congratulating me.

Then my elder daughter started asking me *'how come every one could see my father at the same time'*. I started to explain about the satellite and technology which enables everyone with a TV and a cable connection to see the programme from any where. She was not convinced but accepted my explanation.

Her thrill was prolonged the next day when she went to school and started telling her friends and teachers, as how her hero dad appeared on TV. She was mighty thrilled when she realized that all of them had also seen her father on TV.

For my kids suddenly their father had become a super hero who had come on TV like their other favorite TV characters. My kid's excitement made this event memorable for me, which I will cherish through out my life. This is really an unforgettable moment in my life.



The First Month With ‘The Man in Whites’

Mrs Ramya K



Being raised in a traditional South Indian family in Chennai, I hardly knew anything about the Indian Navy. So, when my husband met me for the first time before my engagement and said about sailings, transfers, etc, it all looked like a cake walk. One of his greatest concerns was my ‘zero’ knowledge of Hindi which he tried to eradicate by sending ‘Learn Hindi in 30 Days’ books which went in vain in my busy office and shopping schedule

After a month and a half, I landed up at Mumbai railway station and stepped into a make shift accommodation. As I stepped in, before I got a chance to check the entire house my husband said- *“Come on freshen up, let us go for Holi celebrations”*. After the Holi celebrations, we came home and I was amazed to see kitchen groceries of 1 Kg each stacked up. When I asked what to make for lunch, my husband said in a calm and composed manner, *“1 Kg of everything is there what was there in Canteen. Do whatever you want and there started our family life”*. The next four days were uneventful. When my husband went for sailing then started the ordeal. The domestic help came and asked me about her work. Since Hindi was not known, I resorted to

sign language. So, when my husband came after his sailing, the domestic help asked my husband inquisitively, “Sir, Madam बोल और सुन नहीं सकती तो बहूंत परोबलम होता है। हमेशा इसारे करती हैं”. Then, I realized that she thought I was deaf and dumb! I had now to learn Hindi and after resolving the confusion, I learned most of the language by interacting with her later.

Then, the ‘TY duty’ to Goa. We stayed at one of his coursemates’ house who was away with his family on some other ‘TY Duty’. After the welcome we got from his friends there, we decided to call them for dinner. Murphy struck just when I placed all the items on the stove. Gas was over! So what, there is a microwave said my husband. We shifted everything into the microwave safe bowls and then, there goes the supply- Power cut! Finally, we somehow managed to cook with power coming well after half an hour after all the guests arrived. Thanks to NOI which provided the Rotis and Butternans.

Numerous interesting episodes continued as we moved from place to place and met more friends. If it wasn’t for Navy, I would have missed all of it in life. It would be a lie if I would say that there were no difficulties. But, I learnt to adapt myself right from the first month. Nothing deterred me after that. As my husband says, there is no problem if the attitude is right, *“Hard Times will Pass”*. And I agree; the only thing that was required to stay happy was the will that we always wanted to be together...





LAUGHTER

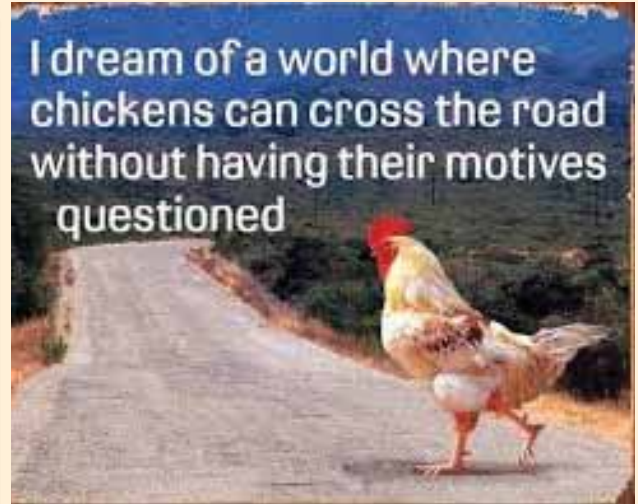
Lt Cdr Anurag Ganguly

The Indian Navy answers the question: “ *Why did the Chicken cross the road?*”

Education Branch: The purpose is to familiarize the chicken with road–crossing procedures. Road crossing should be performed only between the hours of sunset and sunrise. Solo-chickens must have at least three miles of visibility and a safety observer.

Directorate of Naval Personnel: Due to operational necessity the chicken has been involuntarily posted to the other side of the road. This will be a three year appointment in hard station and we promise to give the chicken a voluntary posting afterwards. Every chicken will be required to do one road crossing during its career and this will not affect its opportunities for future promotions.

CINC RED: The chicken while being deployed for surveillance mission during TROPEX crossed the road to gain tactical advantage over the



enemy forces. The crossing of road was well camouflaged and the chicken went undetected.

Naval Aviation: The chicken was instructed to hold short of the road. This road incursion incident was reported in a Hazardous Chicken Road Crossing Report (HCRCR). Please re-emphasize that all chickens are required to read back all hold short instructions. These incidents of hazardous road crossings should be covered in all road crossing safety meetings.

Naval Intelligence: Who chicken?

Directorate of Space and Net-centric Ops: The outdated chickens of today will be replaced with multi-functional, satellite based, interoperable and world class chickens. The advancements in the networking shall then be integrated with the road crossing systems thus improving the Road Crossing Domain Alliance enabling them to rule the roads of today and tomorrow. However, the project shall face an indefinite delay due to failure of the Satellite launch vehicle and non-cooperation between the PSUs and various OEMs.





LIFE IN A CANTONMENT

Alpana Agarwal

We shifted base from Mumbai to Mhow. Mhow is a quaint little place in the Malwa plateau near Indore. Soon after our arrival in this Army establishment we realised that my husband was almost “*persona non- grata*” amongst the troops as they did not recognise a Commodore Rank! The situation was so bad that even in the Golf Course; he would be offered either the worst caddie or none at all as they were reserved for the ‘*Col. Saab log*’. His assertiveness and even the occasional educative session with the jawans had no impact at all. One day, when he was playing with his course mate, a Col., from a nearby organisation who was his friend, saw the indifferent treatment being meted out to my husband. The Col. admonished the soldier by saying, “सब नैवी के ब्रिगेडियर हैं, उनका ध्यान रखो.” Since that day our quality of life improved phenomenally. In the next few months, we kept hearing the expression ‘*Navy ka Brigadier*’ everywhere including regimental shops, the cafeteria, offices and CSD canteens. But the best was yet to come- during the Navy Day tea party with Staff, an IAF Sergeant was heard explaining

to a newly joined Air Force Non- Combatant (NC)
“ये साहब नैवी के एयर कमांडर हैं!”

The Army had allotted to us a nice bungalow on the Mall Road with an expanse of wide open area. We were thrilled to see the house. But our happiness was cut short untimely when we started looking for a good *Mali* (gardener). All existing *Malis* in the station were already gainfully employed as regimental or casual workers with various Army institutions. There were none available to look after the large land area so graciously allotted to us! With great difficulty and compromise we settled for a *Mali’s* wife (referred to as *Malin*, due to lack of any other appropriate word). So the family had to chip-in with ‘*Shramdaan*’ whenever the occasion demanded. However, the occasion was almost every other day—courtesy heavy monsoon and strong winds coupled with the pride of staying on the main artery of the cantonment -frequent crossing by cavalcades of star studded cars!

On one of my husband’s “*Shramdaan*” days, in the early morning, he was working in the garden when a teenager shouted, “*Bhaiya...Bhaiya!*” from the main road. Naturally, being a teenager he was in a big hurry. Since there were other bungalows also across the road, my husband thought it was addressed to someone from there. Noticing nil reaction, the teenager was visibly annoyed and stopped at the main gate. He shoved a book in the railings of the gate and shouted “भैया मैं आपको बुला रहा हूँ... यह किताब प्रखर (*our younger son*) को दे देना।” Hearing our son’s name my hubby realised that the lad was addressing him. As he turned towards the visitor to say sorry for not responding earlier, the boy gave a very sheepish look, mumbled something inaudible and vanished faster than he had come!

Such amusing incidents are a part of our life in this Army Organisation. At the end of the day we just sit back and have a good laugh over it! Cheers!



Humour In Uniform



Cdr Dhananjay K Singh

The preparations for delivery of Kamorta (yard 3017) were on full swing at GRSE, Kolkata. Every member of 'Team Kamorta' was working hard to ensure that no stones were left unturned towards an effective delivery of the ship.

Some civilian contractors hired by GRSE had started painting of ship's side – one of the most important activities towards achieving immaculate ship's appearance. As one can

expect from civilian labourers, the painting party was solely interested in completing the job soon, and in the bargain, was not preparing the surface as is desired from Indian Navy's standards. Since the responsibility of overseeing the ship's side painting falls on the shoulders of ship's Master Chief Bosun Mate, who was a highly energetic senior sailor of the ship, he could no longer tolerate the poor quality of work being undertaken by the painting party.

To his credit, the sailor did not wait for the MCBM and took it upon himself to chide the wrong doers and suggest corrective measures to the 'painting supervisor' who was standing nearby but not paying much attention to the work of his labourers. In the animated discussion that followed, all the basics of paint work were enunciated by the senior sailor to the Supervisor. The



Supervisor momentarily acted on the complaint and started pointing out the mistakes to the painting party.

All augured well till one of the labourer from the painting party asked the dictating Supervisor, "Who are you?"

When it was realized that the person, so innocently assumed by the senior sailor to be the painting supervisor, was just a 'car driver' hired for Kamorta Officers, the senior sailor did not know where to look and all others did not know how to stop laughing.

One thing became very clear that day – even the drivers hired for Kamorta treated themselves as an integral part of 'Team Kamorta'!!

Humour IN UNIFORM- Anecdote

Lt Cdr Amit Punia

A navy psychiatrist was interviewing a potential sailor. To check on the young man's response to trouble, the psychiatrist asked: "What would you do if you looked out of that window right now and saw a battleship coming down the street"?

The young sailor replied: "I would grab a torpedo and sink it".

"Where would you get the torpedo"? - The psychiatrist asked.

The sailor replied: "the same place from where you got your battleship".

HOW I MET MY NEIGHBOURS!!!!

Vindya Ayyar



After a few months my in-laws came and stayed with us for some time. And when my mother-in-law somehow broke the ice with our neighbours, we learnt that the entire neighborhood thought that I was an illegal second arrangement, which is quite prevalent in the region. This was so because the man of the house was seen only occasionally, that too at odd hours and that is why our neighbors kept a distance from us!!! However, when they came to know that we were a wedded couple they became good friends and even encouraged their daughters to speak to me! My mother-in-law became my saviour and helped my neighbors to come out of this web of confusion. In this whole episode, my enthusiastic sailor hubby was the only one who was unaffected and merrily kept sailing to interesting destinations!

After a year long stay in Kochi for my husband's Long course, we moved to the 'City of Destiny'-Vizag, in July 1998. Our stay in Vizag was less than even a full year, as my husband had to again move to Mumbai in June 1999 in the run up before the Kargil war. We were at the bottom of the list for a naval quarter and hence had to put up in a rented house. After a lot of thought, we took a house on hire in Sriharipuram, which was close to the naval area and hospital. It was a MIG colony mostly consisting of god fearing people and all our neighbors were locals. My husband was a young officer

posted on a ship which sailed left, right and centre. Even by some rare chance if the ship was in harbor, he was in a one-in-two OOD roster and thus hardly stayed at home; keeping me totally puzzled in this new town! Surprisingly nobody in the colony was warm with us, or for that matter even spoke to us!! I was totally confused as to why I was being meted out this kind of cold behavior even by our immediate neighbours!!!! The only bright spark in my life was my four years old daughter. Together we used to explore the nearby markets and tried to make the most of life at home.





MURPHY IN MY LIFE!

Diya Purkayastha

prepare for all of the quirks that Murphy throws at you, not even a Naval wife!

Consider this, for instance. There's always a good dinner spread at home, except on the days when some colleagues suddenly decide to drop in for an impromptu meal. On those days, there's only lauki and kaddu in the fridge. I may have made lasagna the day before or chicken curry the next day, but on that one particular day I'm forced to serve daal and egg bhurji!

How many times have you left home without an umbrella on a bright and sunny day, and got stuck in the rain? How many times did the phone ring just as you entered the loo? How many times have you changed lanes while driving to find your old lane moving faster?

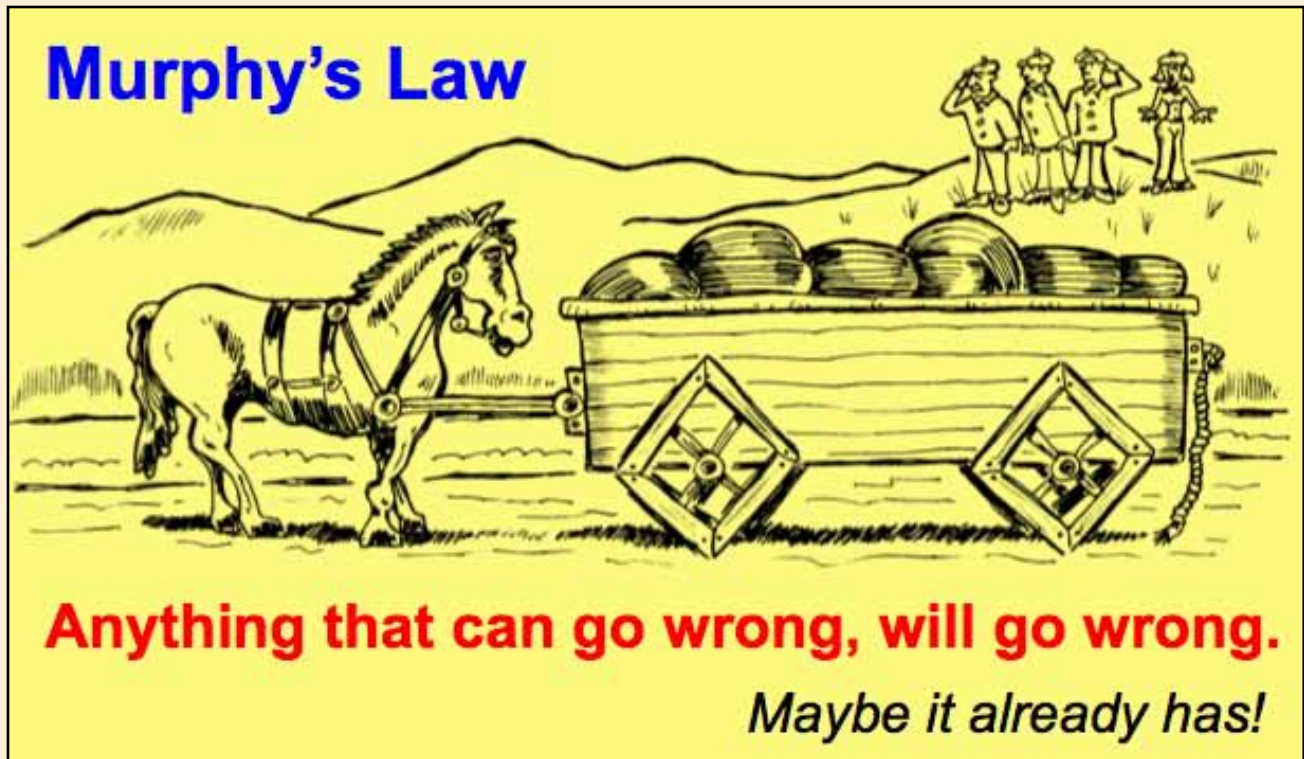
This happens to me all the time! So much so that I believe 'Murphy' resides in our house now. Who's Murphy and why did I mention him here?

Edward Aloysius Murphy, Jr. was an American aerospace engineer who worked on safety-critical systems. He is best known for Murphy's Law, which states, 'Anything that can go wrong will go wrong'. Without delving too much into his story, let me share some of my experiences of things going wrong when all else is well.

Once married to a Naval officer, one has to be prepared for a life full of rolling and pitching, and sometimes, a quiet sunny beach morning. Not that I'm complaining, My Man in White (MMW), had warned me of the consequences well before I wore the rose tinted glasses. So it was fine when he wasn't there for the 'first birthday after marriage' or several anniversaries. But no one can

Our house is always spic and span. Except of course on days when I bring a friend home unannounced. On that day, there will be shoes in the drawing room, toys on the floor and all the chairs out of place. All I can do is politely say, "My house is generally not in a mess!"

Most wives will empathise with this one. The children always fall ill when the husband is off sailing or on duty. Otherwise they are hale and hearty. Something like this happened to us while we were living abroad. MMW was posted out for two years and had to sail for a couple of months at a stretch as part of his job. Our daughter was barely two and a few days after he went sailing, she developed large, red blotches all over her body. The blotches looked like bed bug bites. So, first I cleaned the house for bugs. That didn't help. Then I turned to Google and after two sleepless nights and unending searches of the symptoms, I found out that she had 'hives'. In all likelihood an allergic reaction to some food she'd eaten. Then came the trip to the doctor, medication and thereafter the necessary precautions. As always, by the time 'Papa' returned she was back to her chirpy self.



Another one of Murphy's favorite forms of visit is via the domestic help. The maid will definitely be off or unwell before, after or on the day of the party. Nothing much can be said about this. I am sure all you married women out there feel my pain!

People with little children always carry around spare clothes for them. The kids usually don't need the spares. Except on the one day you forget to carry them. Like the night we had gone out for a movie and I forgot to carry spare clothes. My darling daughter spilt an entire glass of water on herself before the movie started! First I ran around looking for a shop to buy something but to no avail. Eventually I had to stand in the washroom and dry her clothes under the hand

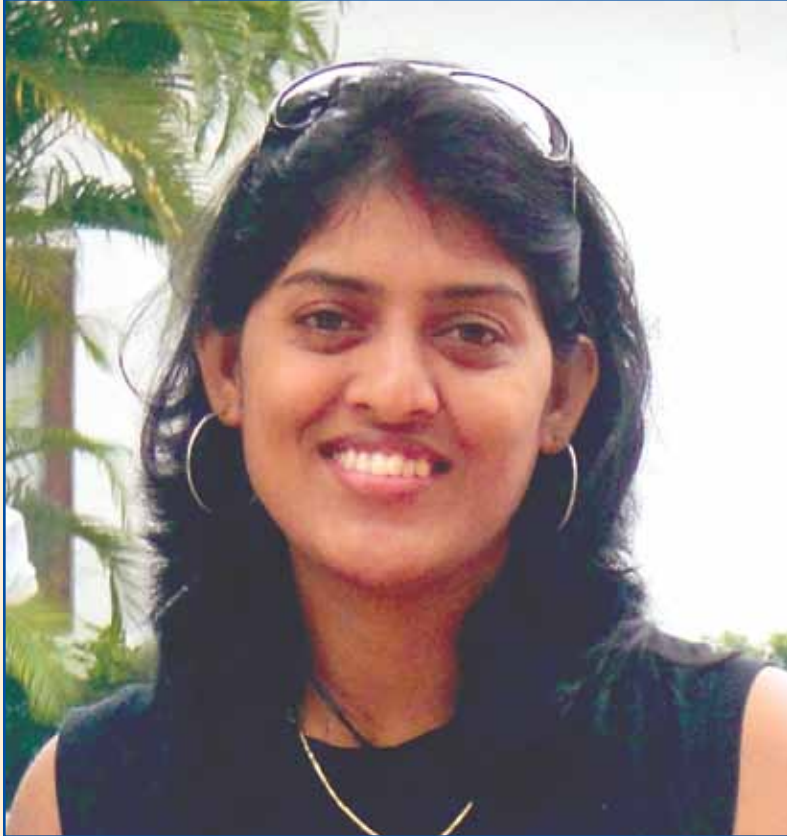
dryer for half an hour! Thankfully, the movie was worth it.

Then there are smaller Murphisms. The alarm doesn't ring on an important day, the traffic light always turns red when you reach it, the nearest ATM doesn't work when you need it the most, the electricity goes off just as you put the cake batter in the oven, there's always a water crisis when guests are visiting...

With time and some patience we learn to overlook these and the more messy ones teach us their own lessons. And yet, they add a little humour in our lives, especially a long time later when we can sit back and reminisce fondly.

TRANSFER'S TRAUMA TAKES A TOLL!!

Mrs Poonam Singh



Okay..so that little statement said it all, not quite much to my respite. The name of Vizag sure did fetch some “chicken soup for the soul” and when ladies around me recited all the nice stuff about Vizag, I had “tangdi-kabab” and “tandoori chicken” along (read- soul satisfying smile smeared all over). At times, my fascination for non-veg really amazes me, as I happen to be a hard-core vegetarian!! MasterChef Australia seems to be damaging me, I guess. Anyway, move on..

It's really bone-tickling to discover the kind of stuff that comes out of the cupboards during packing process and the thought then drills in your mind, oh man, when did I shop for all this stuff? What an obscene amount of bucks spent on shopping!! (Now it's all in front of

How about plunging into some city life? “My husband poured in one fine day from his office and cracked open the news, with the above written statement and the thought engulfed me, oh jeez, does it mean I am going to bid good bye to my gang, the lovely virgin beaches and a beautiful little world (read-base of Karwar, damn gorgeous in its own way)? I could very well feel a small stone doing rounds in my gut ‘cause, frankly speaking, I still had not had my share of feasting of this “cozy-in-the-womb-of-nature” feeling. Transfer is not supposed to carve out frown ‘cause of its obvious existence and to an Army kid (tough one) it hasn't been much of a problem to deal with (but that was as a daughter... as a wife I had yet to have some fun with it..).

you to wrap and stick the tag “handle –with – care”). Well then, me and my enthusiastic hubby dear decided to pack the entire house on our own (yes dear, you heard it right.. and yup, of course we have very much heard of the name of organization called “movers n packers”...), so what if I had to take care of two brats (one outside my womb and one inside my womb) and icing on the cake would be ongoing classic 3rd month nausea. But surprise surprise...we wrapped up the entire house within a few days and that consumed more than our sweat and blood (and pukes, to add on!!) and loaded our sweet little packaging on the truck, stayed in transit and were all set to hit Vizag.

In life you don't realize the importance of things until they play this hide-n-seek game with you in



their full glory. “Makaan” is one such thing which made its importance and absence felt. We sure landed up at friend’s course mate’s place, but that place was not something to cling to forever. Hubby had to do his share of running around and sure enough he did his share of “pillar to post” marathon. To my coolest surprise, we discovered that there was NO accommodation for us to put up in the entire base (forget about “A” type or “B” type ...even the transit accommodation evaporated from the sight..no rooms in Ol..no rooms in Nair cottage...yes, Circars was available but my expertise to nauseate and fall flat on my face averted us to grab one spot there..). And as if this was not enough, there emerged the picture of “ROSTER” which perched us somewhere in 200s... and trust me, it never budged as every week glided by. I must not have cared for the kicks of my li’l one in the womb as much as I cared for that Roster to show some movement, which, not to my surprise, successfully failed to happen. So obviously,we had to resort to get absorbed in civil somewhere. (Oh dear, Welcome to Vizag..!) . Being a “fauji brat” I am so accustomed to fauji

environment that it took ages to digest that I am actually putting up in a civil flat. Thankfully I met a few naval families in the same apartment and made friends with them (talk of the chirpy chick that I am..!) and sailed through my pregnancy comfortably (not really though), not taking that roster thing off my mind even for a second. Days, weeks, months crawled by (1 year and 3 months, to be precise) and 26th September 2013 happened, finally, when the Sec-E (North Pocket) was inaugurated and we got a HOUSE and that happened just before

I lost my sanity , because I was dead tired and embarrassed to leave my four months old son at my dear friend’s and neighbour’s place to drop my daughter to school, since no conveyance was provided for ‘Little Angels’ kids putting up in civil,and he happened to be a little too young to enjoy a two-wheeler ride along with my daughter!. A person has to be a saint,in truest sense of the word, to baby-sit somebody else’s kid for a good half an hour, twice a day..for almost three months! Phew! ...and dear neighbours, you were!!

Present day..

I have a beautiful sea-facing house with Vizag’s view in one frame at Dolphin hill, conveyance is being provided, KG school has come up, lovely park is on its way, food court, hobby classes, shopping complex... everything at walking distance!! And today I can say it, wearing my heart on sleeve..

Welcome to Vizag...!! (With smiles spilling around..)



My Tryst With Two-Wheelers

Paromita Ojha

I feel women and bikes are the best combination ever! Women can be fussy and when treated right can give you the world. Same with bikes! Bike-riding has contributed more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. As I read somewhere two-wheeler riding gives women a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. I personally stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel...the picture of free, untrammelled woman hood.

Well my love-hate relationship with two-wheelers started right

after marriage and all credit/discredit goes to my husband. The very first incident still makes me cringe with embarrassment. I had just joined my husband in Visakhapatnam, and one fine morning I decided to take a look around the city on my own. On my return as soon as I entered the Naval Park gate, I saw someone waving at me while zipping past, I declined to wave as I thought I was hallucinating my favourite TV series 'Street Hawk- The Man, the Machine' character who has been my dream man ever since I saw that TV series. My

17 days old brand new husband had geared up alike in biking finery – black biker jacket, gloves, helmet etc. and riding someone else's bike. He turned around and screeched to a halt right beside me which made me jump in fright a few inches off the ground. He grinned wickedly at my reaction and asked me to hop on. I was not much convinced seeing the bike as to my dismay, the bike had nothing to hold onto while being seated at the back. Being a newly married bride, I was little hesitant to hold him in public view, so I wore the extra helmet he had carried and primly sat at the back lady-like without holding onto anything. No sooner he started the bike and turned around I became a victim of the gravitational pull and felt myself flying off the rear seat.

Lo and behold!! A minute ago I was a coy pillion rider and seconds later I found myself plopped in the middle of the road with my purse and its belongings scattered all over for public view. I was horrified to see blotches of black and blue on my arm and could feel the bruises on my legs. Helplessly, I saw my husband coolly riding away not realizing that his pillion rider was now seated in all glory in middle of the road. After a few anxious moments he realized his wife had vanished into thin air and to resolve the mystery of my



disappearing act, he looked back and saw me sprawled on the road with a crowd of men all around trying to help me stand up. I was so embarrassed that I refused to take off my helmet thinking that at least with my helmet on, the sympathetic crowd that had gathered around me, would fail to recognize next time whenever they see me. Even in my pain, I was happy to indulge myself with all the empathies and sympathies that I was gathering from the crowd. My husband spoiled this moment by stepping inside the crowd, picking me up and with a twinkle in his eye, coolly told the crowd – *‘Don’t worry she is a submariner’s wife, it would just take a few drops of iodine in MI room of INHS Kalyani to put her back on her feet in a jiffy’*. It took all my efforts after hearing this to stay calm, not abandon

him and not flee to some safe destination where iodine was unheard of!! All my expectation of oodles of pampering from my husband was washed down the drain and I dejectedly headed back home cursing the world at large. Once we reached home however, I was fussed over to no end, so after this incident whenever I crossed the main gate of Naval Park recollecting this embarrassing incident still brings a naughty smile to my lips.

Undeterred by this incident, one fine morning I urged my reluctant husband to let me learn bike riding. I assured him that the bike being five years old obviously was the most suitable machine to sharpen my skills and as it is I perfectly drove my Kinetic Honda, so his bike was not at much risk. After much tears and cajoling

he took me to a deserted road near Dolphin Hill and started with explaining the basics – clutch, gear, brakes. With him seated at the back, I confidently started off and managed quite well for the first few minutes. Thereafter, I decided to accelerate and show him how adept a learner I was. As luck would have it, while I was busy putting my decision into action a big, brown and a very healthy snake decided to cross the road a few metres ahead, right in front of my bike. Though I consider myself very upfront and brave but where slimy and slithery creatures are concerned I fail to muster any courage to confront them even at a distance. I simply froze and forgot that there is a part called brake which can be utilized to the fullest, at times of such crisis. I refused to put my foot down, so my husband had to press the brake and also balance the bike along with the driver. In this melee of managing so many things we ended up having our ‘great fall’. Thankfully my instructor-cum-husband refrained from any sarcastic comment and we continued our lessons which boosted my confidence. While returning home, right near Scindia junction, I looked at the bike mirror and realized my instructor was nowhere to be seen which scared me out of my wits. A quick thought ran in my mind-*‘Was I deserted*



because of that fall? Without thinking I turned my head to trace my absconding husband when I found him bending down to pull out some weeds from the shoe. Relieved and realizing that as a driver I should look towards the road in front, I turned my attention back at the road albeit a second late as I heard a loud 'Aiyoo'!!! along with a string of expletives, which thank fully, I failed to understand due to my ignorance of Telugu. To my horror, I saw I had managed to hit a traffic cop and he was splayed flat on the road. My husband-cum-instructor

quickly jumped down and rushed to help the cop stand back on his feet. My husband somehow managed to pacify the cop and I escaped with just a reminder from the cop that drivers need to be careful and should always look in the front. I know the readers by now especially men must be smirking recollecting the innumerable jokes about women and their driving skills. But I firmly believe that one learns from one's mistakes. I never gave up and today I can proudly say that I can ride two-wheelers safely and without being a cause of nightmare

to my husband when I drive out. Jokes aside, I have had breakdowns, falls and a lot of funny incidents while brushing up my driving skills. Rather than being demoralizing, these incidents have just added to make my two-wheeler trips all the more charming and memorable. I also know that I have a staunch supporter back home – my husband, who has never clipped my wings and has been the wind beneath all my driving endeavours which has always propelled me to try harder. *'If I could, I would ride for the rest of my life, and perhaps even beyond'*.

HUMOUR IN UNIFORM

Lt. Cdr. Anurag Ganguly

Once during an adventure activity a mishap occurred and eleven officers fell from a cliff while rock climbing. All eleven officers were hanging onto a single rope. Out of the eleven officers one of them was an admiral. It was soon realized that the rope would not be able to take the weight of all the officers and one of them would have to sacrifice for others to live.

Seeing that none of the officers were volunteering to make the sacrifice, the admiral said that he would sacrifice his life since as an admiral he has been making sacrifices throughout his life by putting his work ahead of his family or personal comforts, never reclaiming his personal resources spent in betterment of the navy and that he had the moral responsibility of safe guarding his men.

By the end of the admiral's speech all ten officers started clapping.

Moral of the story: -'Never Underestimate Your Seniors'

FAMOUS SIGNALS



It was a cool Sunday morning that December day in 1960, when everything was in good order and peaceful all around. What was to follow a few hours later, was anything but peaceful, or in good order.

As a young Sub Lieutenant, and keen as mustard, I was the OOD on board INS Karwar, berthed in the Wet Basin. Immediately astern, also in the Wet Basin was INS Cauvery, on the North Wall, bows pointing West, i.e. towards the Office of the Commodore Superintendant Dockyard (CSD).

In those days it was quite something to be appointed to INS Cauvery, with her quaint anti submarine projectiles of World War II vintage, known as Hedge Hogs mounted on the foc'sle. Of course in harbour, Hedge Hogs were ceremonial in nature, (without warheads), but nevertheless painted a menacing Red. Compared to our small size and wooden hull, as I said before, it was quite something to be appointed to Cauvery.

At precisely 1000 hrs, a smart squad of lady Sea Cadets, in crisp white uniforms and marching in perfect unison, entered the Lion Gate and approached the Wet Basin, obviously to see some ship. I was beside myself with excitement, as I thought they were coming to MY ship. Alas it was not to be, and whilst I stood ramrod straight at the gangway ready to receive them, they marched rightpast and embarked on Cauvery.

I watched with envy as a young midshipman was assigned the duty of conducting the cadets around. After explaining the intricacies of firing the twin 4 inch gun mounted on the foc'sle, attention turned to the bright red Hedgehogs.

Rear Admiral VK Malhotra, AVSM, VSM (Retd)
Author of "Time, Tide and Tradition"

"What are these", asked a sweet young thing.

" Oh,these are anti-submarine weapons, which we fire after we detect a submarine", explained our young snotty with considerable pride.

"So how do you fire them", asked the bright eyed cadet.

"Well, its very simple.This is the firing button, and when the Captain gives the order, I press it like this", which he did, unaware that the power had inadvertently been left on after completing the PPM routines the previous day.

To his shock, and my amazement, a Hedge Hog swooshed skyward, and after a perfect parabolic flight crashed into the Drawing Office of the CSD, Commodore B S Baswan. Fortunately, being a Sunday, there were no casualties.



Thirty minutes later, Commodore Baswan made the following signal by Flashing Light to the Flagship, at anchor off Middle Ground, flying the Flag of The Flag Officer Commanding, Indian Fleet.

Emergency	Unclass
From CSD (B)	
To FOCIF	
Info FOB	

"I will repair your ships at any cost. Please stop firing."

Sixty minutes later, three officers were seen to be standing outside the door of Rear Admiral SG Karmarkar, FOB in Dress No 2.

- a. CO Cauvery, summoned from NOFRA.
- b. Duty Mid of the Day, INS Cauvery
- c. OOD Karwar, the sole impartial witness.

And so this incident has passed into the humourous chronicles of our superb service.



LIFE IN THE NAVY – BRANDY AND GINGER ALE

The year was 1970, the place Jodhpur Officer's Hostel, the season – chilly winter of Delhi's December. The day, a leisurely Sunday.

My father looked at his enviable collection of No. 8's. Twenty-four pairs! No less!!! Good old drill cotton. The shorts, airy and comfortable; whilst walking, the legs moved- the shorts did not. The shirt, stiff and bright like the scrubbed face of a school going lad. He chose the six pairs for the next week and then sat down to enjoy his coffee and Sunday newspaper.

The peace was not to last very long. Along came my mother, worry lines creasing on her forehead, holding me by my hand. *"Look at him"*. I stood sheepish, looked down, eyes red, nose running uncontrollably. *"He has a cold, do something"*.

My father was not amused. Vision of a laid back Sunday seemed to be vanishing pretty fast. However he suddenly smiled, as if with a great revelation. *"I know what is best for you"*.

Off, he yanked me, perched me on the trustworthy Lambretta; and of we rode to INS INDIA. What a lovely place. I sat on one of those high barstools. He called a steward and said *"give him a Brandy and Ginger Ale"*. He then spotted his longlost friends and went on to discuss *"important issues"*.

The first sip was not great. A burning sensation and some warmth. But it was nice after the third; or was it the fourth sip? The glass was soon emptied. The eager steward looked at me and as he was well -trained, refilled the glass. The second glass was even better. Unbelievably the third was still better; and the fourth was the best. Time to go home and my father came for me. By then, not only my cold, the entire Delhi's cold appeared to have vanished.

Hic! Hic! Hic!

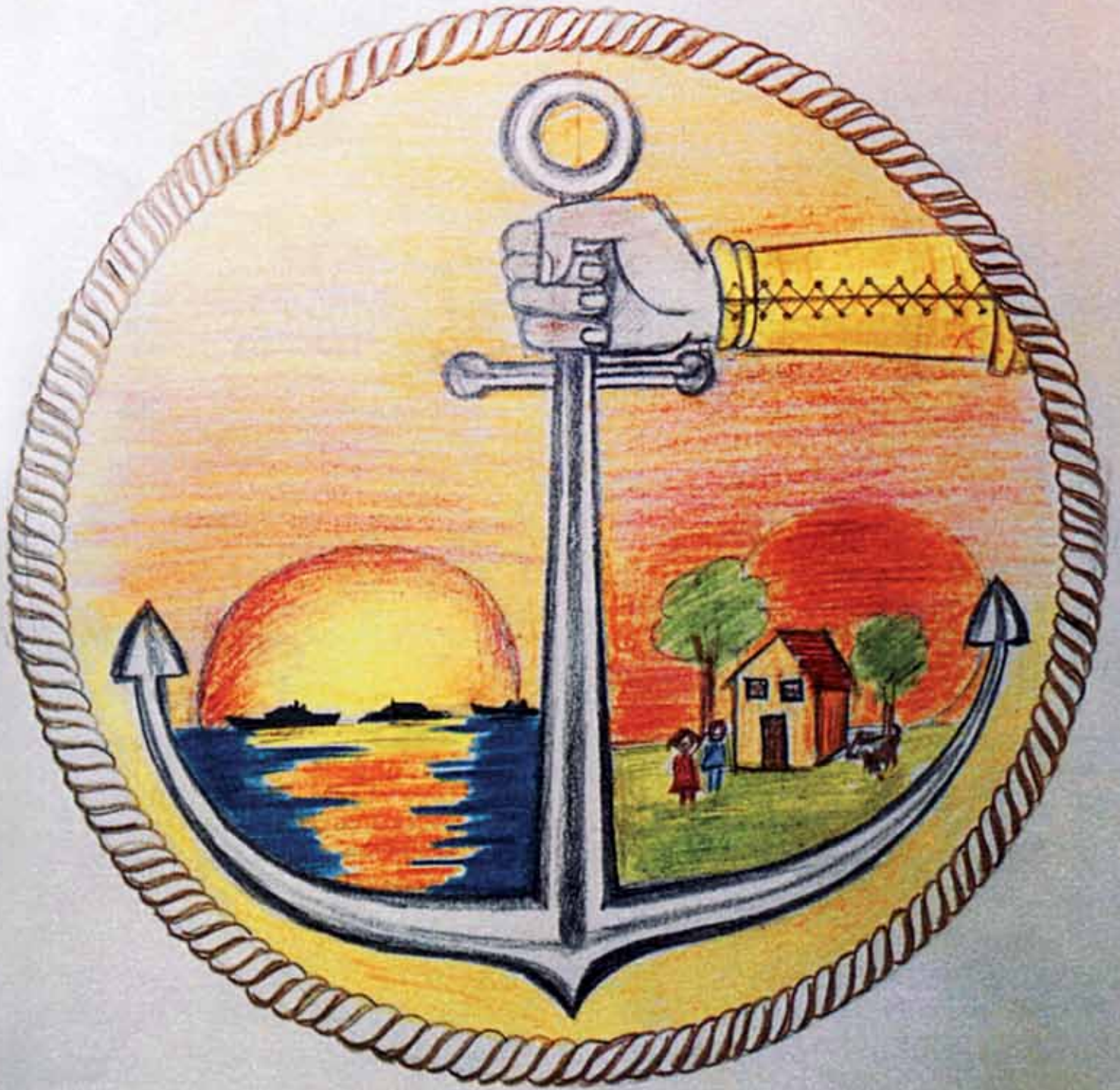
Reached home, my father told my mother about the strong medication given by the doctor to cure my cold and advised me to rest. Woke-up totally refreshed.

From that day to this one; *"Brandy and Ginger Ale"* remains my panacea for all weather related ailments. The Navy certainly has its own cure for everything.

CHEERS!

Vice Adm KR Nair

Young Minds

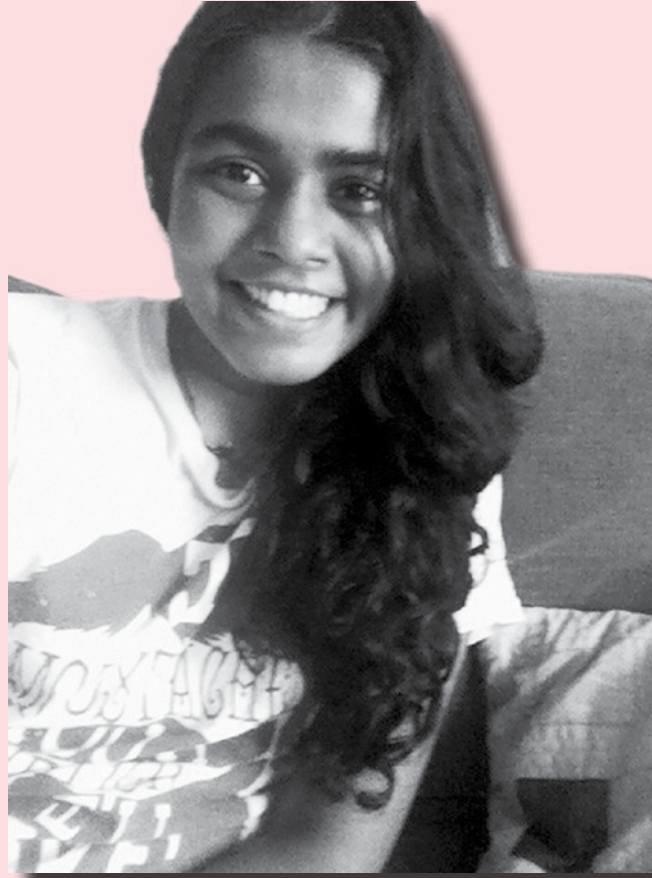


WEDDING SEASON

Karuna Menon

The year was 2010. It was freezing cold in Delhi at the time and when my parents and I got out of the car, all we could think about was getting someplace warm. We'd pulled up in front of a swanky hotel to attend my cousin's reception and as my father gratefully handed the car keys to the valet, I scanned the environs for the telltale signs of a wedding reception (laughing, loud music, and the smell of delicious food). Having spotted a venue that fit the bill, I directed my parents towards it, and we entered.

As soon as we entered, we knew something was amiss. I couldn't recognise a single 'aunty' or 'uncle' but I shrugged it off, considering our



family was huge. We smiled at everyone and exchanged pleasantries, telling them we were from the girl's side. I had made a beeline straight for the food, but as soon as I was ready to pile a generous helping of butter chicken on my plate, my mother stopped me in my tracks.

'Karuna, we're at the wrong wedding!' she whispered in my ear, mortified, while pointing to a sign we'd all failed to see: Manju weds Rakesh. With a laugh and not a little embarrassment, my

parents and I made a speedy exit (which earned us quite a few confused looks), consulted the receptionist and finally arrived at the right location, at the other end of the hotel. It ended up being a great night except... there was no butter chicken on the menu!!



THE MAN WHO TRIED TO EAT THE SUN

Pratyush Padmanabhan



There lived a man in times of yore
Following the geocentric theory,
The opinions that the Earth orbited the Sun,
Made him quite very teary!

Once he saw the Sun in the sky,
And his mouth started foaming,
In eagerness to taste the Sun
And stop the Earth from roaming.

So he climbed to the top of a skyscraper,
And started building a ladder,
The doctor had advised him against any exertion,
As it would make him much madder.

He soon emptied his entire treasury,
On increasing the ladder's height,
He was so much into it that he didn't realize,
Tall heights gave him a fright!!!

Soon, the entire town gathered around,
To see what the madman was doing,
And when he told, 'I'm trying to eat the sun,'
It was plain that he needed schooling!

At last, the man moved from riches to rags,
And yet everyone could plainly see,
Him building the ladder to reach the sun,
To eat it up for free.

Two and a half months later, the man had built,
The ladder made of bamboo and nails,
And announced the date for his public stunt,
The majority put bets on fails.

So the day arrived, and the man placed the ladder,
Against the balcony of the skyscraper,
He soon realized there was no one to hold it,
His only volunteer was a man collecting waste paper.





Soon, the media from across the world came,
Ready to photograph the action,
While bookies and betters from all continents,
Betted on him with full passion.

So at last, when he started climbing,
A great cheer rose from the crowd,
The man feared he would be distracted,
As the clapping was so loud.

At last, when the man was sweating from the heat,
The waste paper man felt a sneeze,
He tried to suppress it, but he failed,
He was stimulated by the breeze.

When the man felt the ladder vibrate,
He looked down to hear a sound,
He was suddenly gripped by a fear of heights,
He was so far above the ground!

The waste paper man could hold it no more,
And left the ladder to cover his nose,
The ladder teetered for a moment,
And after that what happened, who knows?

The man felt the ladder tilt,
And looked to see the ground so small,
Despite the greed for the sun, down he went,
He was in for a very great fall!

While falling, he looked up at the sun,
And realized what big blunder he had done,
For the Sun was not a fruit, but a ball of gas,
Now that took out all the fun!



SIGN LANGUAGE

Rohini Vishwanathan



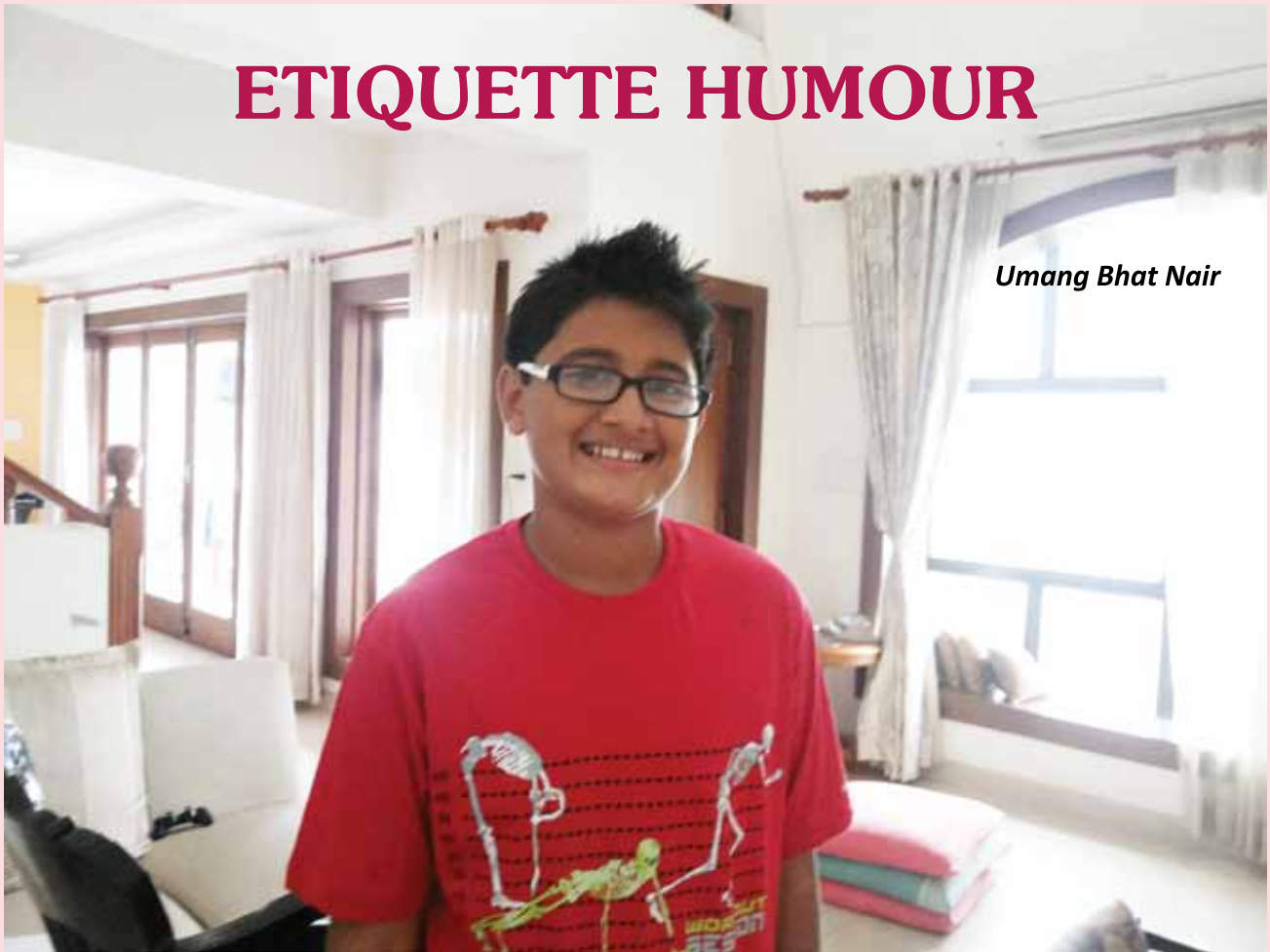
restaurant, which claimed to serve **Breakfast Lunch Dinner**, and listed the special items of the day as **Veg moms and Chicken moms**. It took me several minutes to realise they actually meant veg momos and chicken momos. To my great shock, the menu promised a **Cock with each Biryani**. Was I relieved when the waiter clarified that they meant a 'coke'! My father almost fell off his chair laughing when he asked for the drinks menu. **Child beer, Vadka, Jin and Wiskee** baffled his comprehension. Outside the kitchen was an equally funny notice: **Kitchen Room, Permission Not Aloud**. Meanwhile, my health-conscious mother was appalled to see that the menu offered her **Fresh Visitable Juice** instead of the vegetable extract she would have preferred. Perhaps we should limit ourselves to Hindi or maybe even "Hinglish" rather than butcher the English language.

I do not claim to be a master of the English language. Nonetheless, I often find it amusing when I see a signboard whose English content would horrify the people who gave the world this complicated language.

Particularly hilarious were the signboards I saw at a roadside restaurant on the outskirts of Goa recently. A simple board displayed outside the restaurant read, **Outside Food Not Allowed Inside**. Even funnier was the name board of the



ETIQUETTE HUMOUR



Umang Bhat Nair

Military kids are taught to be well behaved very early in life. We are taught to always wish every adult we meet. This happened when I was eight years old. I used to cycle around NOFRA a lot. As I cycled past older people, I would shout, “Good Evening Uncle and Aunty” even if I did not recognize them. Soon it became an automatic reflex for me if I ever passed by anyone taller than me.

One evening, I passed by a woman who was waving to me and calling out my name. I shouted, “*Good evening Aunty*” and continued on my way. I completed my first round of NOFRA and reached the same spot. I saw somebody waving at me from the corner of my eye and followed my routine. This happened one more time. By then I was tired and went back home. The lift wasn’t working; luckily we were on the first floor.

I dragged my cycle up and rang the bell. Nobody opened the door. I waited for fifteen minutes when my mother came up the stairs. She looked tired. She said she had been waving to me and running behind me but I hadn’t recognized her. We were supposed to go out for dinner at a friend’s house and she was calling me. I still fondly remember that incident till date and always look properly at somebody before wishing them.



'Circle of Life' Life of a 'Fauji Beti'

Shreya Joglekar



*In my house in Delhi one fine day
Dad calls up and says
We are getting transferred, we move out in May
Oh well!that's great sarcastically I say*

*With a frown on my face to my friends I wishgood-bye
In another month to Hyderabad we fly
But little did I know what lies await
What can I say to my amazing fate?*

*And before I knew, it was my first day in the school
I still found friends some old and many new
Pinch of fights, smiles and laughter - stir well
Umm, school life drama tastes good just like hot'stew'*

*As time flies taking strides
I start settling in this new life
Annual Day, Investiture ceremony, Sports Day – Fun!
Oh no, start studying SA II has begun.*



*Had always been a part of every Annual Day
I've faced the stage before, but never a street play
Fun, dialogues, laughter and pranks – all the way
While listening to the cheer as the applause didn't stop
Was proof enough that it totally rocked*

*A few months later, while gazing at a flock
Mom said we are taking a vacation to Bangkok
And not just us but your friends Bhavana and Malavika too
I pinched myself to check if this was true*

*Then I found myself at Chatuchak Market
Buying clothes, shoes and a very pretty locket
Later a tour in the traditional old village of 'Siam'
Watching 'Siam Niramit' – the history of Thailand
Then at Pattaya, the beachside land
Para sailing, underwater walk and the banana boat ride – grand*

*But now as I look back at the year that passed by
Sadly now, it's time again to say goodbye.
In my house in Secunderabad on a very fine day
Dad says we are getting transferred; we'll move to Arakkonam any day
Here we go again sarcastically I say*

*These transfers add up to twelve and my age fourteen
Boy, am I looking forward to the number thirteen*



Mistress of Spices



Hummus



Puneet Kaur



Ingredients

- 3/4 cup boiled kabulichana (white chick peas)
- 3 tbspolive oil
- salt to taste
- 4 clove garlic (lehsun)
- 1 tbsplemon juice
- 3 tbsp fresh curds (dahi)
- For The Garnish
- 1 tbspolive oil
- a little chilli powder
- 1 tsp finely chopped parsley

For Serving
lavash

Method

1. Combine the kabulichana, olive oil, salt, garlic, lemon juice and curds in a mixer and blend to a smooth mixture. Add a little water only if required.
2. Spoon the mixture into a serving plate and pour olive oil and sprinkle chili powder and parsley over it.
3. Refrigerate till use and serve with lavash.

Chicken & Spaghetti Soup



Swati Harsha

Ingredients

1. Chicken – 150 gm boneless
 2. Mushroom – 80 gm
 3. Olive oil – 1 tbsp
 4. Onion – 1 finely diced
 5. Whole wheat spaghetti – 80 gms, broken into short lengths
 6. Chicken stock – 600ml
 7. Fresh basil leaves – 20 large (torn)
2. Add the chicken and mushroom cook for a minute. Add the spaghetti pieces and chicken stock. Bring to the boil.
 3. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 min. stir in the fresh basil leaves. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground pepper
 4. Serve hot.

Method

1. Dice the chicken to bite size pieces and roughly chop the mushrooms. Heat the olive oil in a pan and cook the onion until soft and golden.



Note: Chicken stock was prepared by dissolving 2 “maggi chicken cubes” in 600 ml of boiled water. If you buy the imported stock cubes then follow the instructions given on the pack.

The starch from the pasta thickens the soup a little, so it’s not the watery thin kind.



Oriental Red Cabbage and Lettuce Salad



Manasa Vasisth

An out of the box salad, it combines the goodness of lettuce and red cabbage with the zing of rice wine vinegar and nuttiness of sesame oil. The salad is loaded with Vitamins A, K and Iron.

Ingredients

Red Cabbage – 1 1/2 cup (Finely Shredded)

Red, Yellow and Green Capsicum – ½ cup (diced into ½ inch cubes)

Lettuce – 1 cup (torn roughly)

Top Ramen Noodles – 2 tbsp (broken into tiny bits)

For the Dressing

Rice wine vinegar – 4 tbsp

Sesame oil – 1 tbsp

Honey – 1 tsp

Light Soy Sauce – ½ tsp

Method

Add the red cabbage, capsicums and lettuce in a salad bowl. On a low flame add a teaspoon of butter and sauté the top ramen noodles that have been broken into tiny bits till they are light golden brown.

Heat the rice wine vinegar and sesame oil slightly and add the honey and soy sauce. Whisk nicely and when the dressing has cooled down, pour it over the salad and top it off with the top ramen bits.





Shalaka Kulkarni

Tropical Exótica

Ingredients

1 1/2 cup (apple, tinned pineapple, banana each) chopped

1/2 cup pomegranate

1/2 cup mango pulp (optional)

2 tbsp honey mix with little water

Sauce- 1/2 litre milk hung curd

1/2 cup coconut milk

1/2 cup roasted dessicated coconut powder

sugar according to taste.

Mix everything and beat it till smooth.



Method

Take a nonstick pan, add tsp butter and stir fry the fruits on high flame, toss it lightly. Now add honey mixture, toss it so that fruits should get honey glaze. Chill the fruits and sauce. Mix it and serve with mango pulp.



Beer Battered Prawns



Minu Dhowan

Ingredients

Jumbo prawns 10-15

Ginger -garlic paste 1 teaspoon

Beer 100-150 ml

Pepper powder 1/4 teaspoon

Salt to taste

Refined flour (maida) 100gms

Cornflour/ corn starch 100gms

Baking powder 1 teaspoon

Oil to deep fry

Method Step 1 Wash, remove shell and de-vein prawns retaining the tip of the tail. Pat dry prawns thoroughly with an absorbent paper. Mix ginger-garlic paste, half of the pepper powder, and salt.

Step 2 Apply this mixture liberally on the prawns and leave aside to marinate for one hour. Mix refined flour/maida, cornflour, baking powder, salt, remaining pepper powder, beer and prepare a batter.

Step 3 Whisk thoroughly to make a batter of pouring consistency and set aside for twenty minutes. Heat sufficient oil in a wok, dip marinated prawns in the batter by holding the tail and deep-fry on medium heat, turning frequently, for two to three minutes or until crisp and golden brown in colour.

Step 4 Drain on absorbent paper and serve hot with Tartar sauce.

An aerial photograph of a river with rapids. The water is turbulent and white with foam, contrasting with the vibrant green banks. The text 'Hudhud Section' is overlaid in the center.

Hudhud Section



In The Eye of The Storm

12th October, 2014 will be etched in the memory of Vizagites forever. It was on this day at 2 p.m. The city bore the fury of cyclone for the first time in 125 years! At Dolphin Hill Park we were witness to the havoc wrought by 'Hudhud' as the Category 4 Hurricane was named, head on. Wind speed measuring 220 kph lashed with such ferocity that it destroyed everything that came in its

way. The tandav that began then went on unabated for the next ten hours. Windows rattled, glass panes smashed, awnings went flying through air like missiles, roof tiles were flung about and onto cars parked outside; the wind itself, howled and whistled, moaned and groaned.

We sat huddled in our bedroom, waiting for the cyclone to end, hoping and praying that the



Padmaja Parulkar Kesnuris

roof over our heads stayed put. By the time we woke up the next morning the wind had died down. The scene outside was overwhelming. Everything around us lay in shambles. Electric poles and mobile towers had keeled over, so had lamp-posts. All around us we could see buildings—naked and exposed—which until now had been shrouded in green cover. Trees were razed to the ground, some bent and broken—the winds had shorn them of their foliage. Even the low-lying shrubs and hills looked bald. It was exactly what a newspaper described it: a war zone.

We were lucky: we had few broken windows, a damaged washing machine, dish antenna beyond repair, and some soaked-to-bones wooden furniture, books, clothes and mattresses. We were spared the ordeal of holding onto entrance doors for dear life. People had their





BEFORE: *Ficus outside my bedroom window*



AFTER: *Not a single leaf left*

cars smashed; air conditioners sucked out, garage gates gouged out, front doors coming off their hinges, grilled windows detached from their frames, glass panes shattering sending shards into the house, rooftop water cisterns and solar panels blown off.

Immediately, in the aftermath, there was no electricity, no water, no fuel, and essential items such as milk and bread and Maggi (some success story this) dried up instantly. We would have to rely on our larder with its provisions and dry foodstuff for the next few days. The first lesson I learnt in this natural disaster was the importance of water and its indispensability. We could live without electricity, sweltering in the heat, but it was unimaginable to go on without water. On the first day, post-cyclone, my son scooped mugs full of rainwater—collected on

the terrace—into the overhead tank. We did not have the luxury of waiting for clean water. With no fresh water flowing through taps we were back to basics—to buckets and cans.

Somewhere, a source of water was discovered (we were told that gravity aided its flow at that water point) which was tapped by all. Navy has a hierarchical structure, but

for once you found everyone standing in line for water with no privilege for rank or position. The second lesson: Crisis such as this can be a great leveller.

True to the military motto of ‘Service before Self’, the Indian Navy jumped headlong into relief and rescue work in town, in setting up community kitchens for Vizagites, and getting electricity and airport services operational. In the absence of menfolk, in Dolphin Hill, women soldiered on regardless. Mothers with children in tow were seen ferrying water bucket by bucket on Scooty from a central water point. They assumed the role of ‘handymen’, even as they tackled ‘clean ship’ of home and neighbourhood, and provided food for the family—some with babies, small children, and ageing parents.



BEFORE: *Spotted owlet on ficus*



AFTER: *Shifted base to a nearby thicket*



Shikra



Rufous Treepie

What saved us from Hudhud's wrath was the banyan right outside the bedroom window. It had spread indiscriminately like a giant darkening the room but providing privacy. That day it bore the onslaught throughout — twisting, turning, contorting, and protesting; not a leaf was left on its dense crown. It stood its ground and kept our windows on. A similar feat was enacted by the coconut trees outside the living room windows. The twin palms had blocked my bay view, earlier. If it were not for them, I would have a brilliant view of the bay from the low-

lying windows from the luxury of my couch. That day they took the lashing, swayed this way and that, but did not yield.



Before



After

The ficus and the coconut—both of Indian nativity and antiquity—had saved the day for us. The biggest casualty of this cyclone was the trees.

Vizag has lost 80% of its green cover according to an estimate. But now the city lies defenceless. It will be years before the green lungs emerge robust enough to protect us from the industrial pollution that is Vizag's bane.

The hill took pride in being a 'silence zone', but now noise pollution is making itself heard. Without trees as shock absorbers, I am suddenly more aware of clattering vehicles and braking buses. I feel a tremendous sense of bereavement at this loss. But, it is heartening to see that most of the standing trees

have started sprouting leaves. The same spirit of resilience is evident among men and women who have risen up to the task of rebuilding their lives.



Before



After

The banyan outside the bedroom window had been home to two pairs of spotted owlets. After Hudhud, I have been seeing only one pair, which has shifted camp to a thicket by the compound wall. In the harsh daylight, in the



Before



After

absence of natural shade, the pixies take refuge in a hollow pipe embedded in the wall. Like insects and rodents, birds, have been flushed out of their habitats. It is ironical, but I have photographed more birds in the last ten days than what I have seen in the past one and a half year of my birdwatching here! Bluejays, shrikes, shikras, treepies and even the usually skulking coucals can be seen perched atop tree skeletons. I saw a paradise flycatcher wander about openly which is a rare sight indeed. Nearly 30,000 birds perished in that

gale according to newspaper reports. Look at the irony: Hudhud, the ogre that preyed on the birds, was named after a gentle, hoopoe-like bird!

We now stare into smoggy winters and sultry summers. What horrors of climate

calamities wait ahead, no one knows. Some suspect that cyclonic disturbances will only rise with the rise in temperature and absence of carbon sinks. The industrial pollutants now have no buffer and we are all the more at the mercy of greenhouse gases and coal dust.

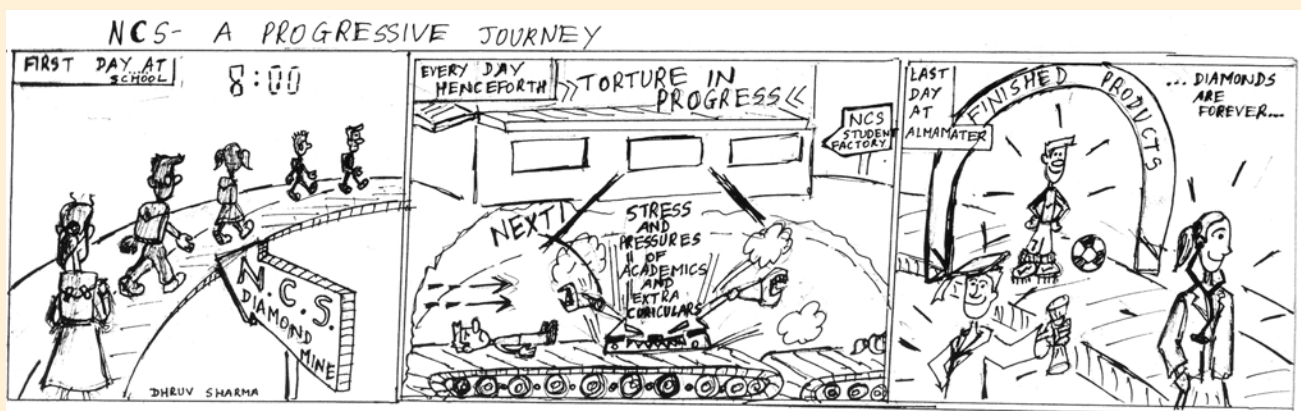
And yet, in a strange sense, I feel privileged to have been in the eye of the storm. I felt that Nature had honoured me by showing its 'other' side. Till now, I had been basking in its beauty and glory, this once it let me into its fury.



Before



After



Paso Doble of Hudhud

Anupama Dahiya

Vedi VeniVici! It came, it saw, it conquered. Denizens of Vizag got free practical live lessons of Hairy Ball theorem with a smattering of Bernoulli's principle also. It was the closest some of us are ever going to come to breaking the sound barrier. The winds swished and sliced, the rains splashed and soaked. Glass exteriors of malls proudly protruding out of the concrete jungle of corner shops lay humbled shattered and scattered. Tin roofs executed a fiery tango with the tearing winds, faulted in their footwork, zoomed off for circumnavigation. Air-conditioners precariously balancing on window ledges were ripped from their precious anchorage leaving their umbilical cords forlornly dangling in mid-air. Nano's proved their airworthiness if not road, by flying downhill



and landing somewhat imperfectly onto convenient balconies. Skoda, loyal to a fault, dived out of broken window of showroom onto road, suffering more than its fair share of laceration and lesion. Two wheelers lined up like the Indian cricket team, before a big game, went down faster than a set of dominoes. Roof top water tanks performed fantastic flips and flicks to settle temporarily in neighbour's garden. All weather new age aluminium door and window frames displaying more affiliation for outdoors rather than indoors bolted out of their hinges encouraging Hudhud to cavort to Cha-Cha-Cha in salons.

The coconuts swayed with the winds, their long slender leaves doing a robust Jazz instead of the usual graceful waltz. The veteran Peepal and Banyans



dug their heels in tenaciously and held fort in the face of the brutal onslaught. Mangoes, eternal exotic, played the damsel in distress and leaned onto the sturdy peepal. Fragile, tender greens curled into the nearest stalwarts. Climbers and creepers, forever opportunist, jostled with





the flaying branches of their stout neighbours. Adorable terracotta plants decorating bay windows and balconies twisting, turning jiving with the tempestuous winds, were viciously plucked out of their fancy settings without so much as a leave from the proud owners. Leaves shimmied down to the ground in abundance.

Birds of all feathers sought shelter into nooks and crevices. Some braved the ferocious whistling winds perched on window ledges, drenched to their bones looking like something the cat dragged in. Street dogs resurfaced from their hiding places only after the turbulent weather was way over the Eastern Ghats, adhering to the adage 'Street Smart'. Vermin and ants of all shape size and colours hunted asylum from roaring and



riotous winds hip-hopped in homes of the lesser mortals. Water snaked into homes essaying a silent samba, exposing the crooked sense of levelling of local masons. With homes resembling miniature Bay of Bengal replete with its own tiny lagoons, residents sat huddled onto multiple mattresses piled onto beds.

In the aftermath of Hudhud, no power and water supply for more than a week, no Wi-Fi technology connections, Apple and Gates lost their virtual meaning. Humans adjusted to



an unwarranted break, from their daily dance, for bread and butter. Family time developed a whole new meaning. The passé board games which were limited to the circle of unopened birthday gifts were dusted and played with gusto. Many an interesting anecdotes were shared between parents and children over flickering and spluttering candle lights. Youngsters were spotted lugging water buckets early morning instead of ogling at Facebook or twitter status. Even a five year old was seen



struggling with a miniature bucket befitting his size sportily up the steps to his home. SUV's and sedans doubled up as water carriers for the entire neighbourhood what with their cavernous capacity to hold multiple buckets. Rooftop camaraderie resurfaced.

Rudra in tandav or maybe Yam raj orchestrating a yakshagana!! Weather in its destruction gave a performance of great élat, man and other living beings triumphed in their resilience. It was not per se winning or losing, but spirit and strength of achievement and accomplishment. Within a week trees sprouted new tender leaves, birds' hip hopped in their daily routine of collecting food. Vizagities reached out collectively to resurrect the fallen and build new bridges.



'The test of success is not what you do when you are on top. Success is how high you bounce when you hit bottom'

– George S. Patton

The Blossoming-NWWA Initiatives



Rashmi Jha

On 12th October 2014, Vizag witnessed an extraordinary situation, the experience of a lifetime when it was hammered by Hudhud (reclassified as a “very severe cyclonic storm” by the India Meteorological Department). The cyclone persisted for nearly six hours post-landfall in the morning and peaked by noon with wind speed of 155kmph to 195kmph, unleashing a huge destructive force. Wreckage was strewn across the ‘City of Destiny’ as it was in direct path of the cyclone.

It drizzled intermittently, disrupting electricity and telecommunication services as well as road and rail traffic along the coast. As the strong wind kept whistling and raging, it started uprooting the trees. The green cover which we were all proud of came crashing and it was heart wrenching to see the majestic vertical trees horizontal on the ground.

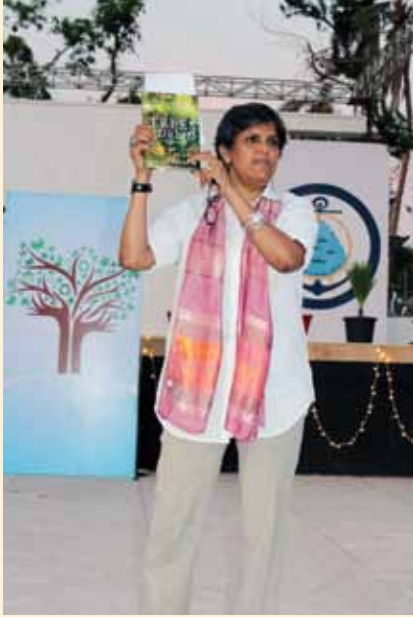
However, all this fury and destruction did one good thing for this city. It set all of us thinking as to what went wrong that so many trees were uprooted. Was it just the wrath and ire of the wind or a mechanism which had gone terribly wrong? It was a major cause of concern and became a topic of discussion in all the informal gatherings.

Experts were of the opinion that no tree can always stand up to cyclonic strong winds as there are many factors which influence their ability to withstand the strong winds. However, some trees are always more wind resistant than others. How well a tree can withstand the strong wind depends on many factors such as how wet the soil is at that time; the intensity and duration of wind gusts and most important the type of root system. So a bad planning

could have been the major underpinning for this kind of devastation.

Ultimately Mrs. Seema Verma Vice president NWWA(ER) took up this issue very seriously. The next coffee evening held by HQ ENC was dedicated to Hudhud. Mrs. Liria Mendonca and Mrs Padmaja Kesnur educated the ladies present there with informative talks on effective planning while planting saplings. Handouts on what to plant; where to plant; how to plant with the characteristics of different avenue plants were distributed. Some of the points passed on were as follows:

- Good flexibility such as found in some palms with thin flexible stems.
- Good well-developed root system – preferably ones with a good tap root and where the roots haven’t been cut on one side by road works or something similar.
- Ease of defoliation, i.e. the ability to lose leaves quickly and so offer little resistance to the wind.
- Plants with fine leaves offer little resistance.
- Lack of a dense top heavy canopy or crown. Some



Seema Verma Showing the Book
"A Guide on Plantation"



Tree Plantation by Children

examples are Indian tulip, Bottlebrushes and Poinciana, Silk floss tree.

- Healthy trees, vigorous growth, no termites. Slow growing trees are often the best.

With the initiatives taken by Mrs. Seema Verma; NWWA

could procure 600 saplings from Department of forest and few nurseries. Plan was to plant them in form of avenue trees and distribution was done by auctioning of these trees to the ladies staying in different neighborhoods. All ladies had to do was to adopt these plants. It was a huge success. Ladies came

out with great enthusiasm and fervor to adopt these plants. The process is already on and many localities have already started the plantation of these saplings. Even small children are taking part in open ended process because this is just the beginning to reinstate the lost green canopy we were proud of once.

With the kind zeal and interest everybody is showing, it is only a matter of time when our efforts will bear fruit, the plants will grow and we will reestablish the green cover taken away mercilessly by the super cyclone.





The Bird That Uprooted The Trees

Arunima Nair Jairath

In all natural disasters through time, man needs to attach meaning to tragedy, no matter how random and inexplicable the event is.

-Nathaniel Philbrick

Hudhud was preceded by days of speculation... the naysayers were confident that the cyclone would change path and move away from the city of Visakhapatnam, while the doomsayers were adamant that she was coming and we all should be prepared. Most people looked to the naysayers for guidance. After all when had a cyclone, let alone a super cyclone ever hit the verdant port city of Visakhapatnam... “never” said the old timers... “never before”! These were to prove famous last words as on the morning of 12th October 2014; the city woke up to gusting, howling winds and lashing rain. Pots, furniture and assorted objects left outside were already being tossed about like confetti. Trees were already wildly swaying. The road to Dolphin Hill was already

treacherous. The cyclone was yet to make landfall!

The first part of the cyclone tore to shreds all our best hopes that Hudhud would gently pass us by. Belying its namesake, the gentle and lovely Hoopoe that is occasionally spotted on Dolphin Hill, Cyclone Hudhud descended like a rampaging Banshee bringing with it deafening winds that smashed everything in its path. Our secure homes were no longer our sanctuary as doors and windows gave way and families watched in despair as their belongings and their city was pummelled by forces so intense that our puny human selves seemed insignificant in its wake. A few hours into the cyclone a deathly stillness descended heralding the proverbial eye of the storm. As dazed residents stepped out to take in the destruction

wrought by Hudhud, a sense of camaraderie bloomed at the shared horrors. Some residents began to clean up, while others went to check on wives and children of friends and neighbours who were alone at home. Some even left their homes and stayed together in groups to cope with the storm. Soon the calm gave way to the second wave with gusting winds that crossed 250kmph coming in from the opposite direction of the first wave. Parts of the home that residents thought were secure gave way under the wrath of the winds. More windows and doors collapsed, Tata Sky dishes flew like saucers and Sintex tanks, solar heaters, tin roofing sheets etc flew around like they were Frisbees. Cars were smashed and trees and gardens uprooted. Shattered glass flew into home along with



stones and leaves. The storm showed no signs of giving way until residents just gave up and waited for it to end.

The morning brought with it no power and in many houses no water. The whole city was transported to a more primitive time when commodities like water, electricity, milk and bread were hard to come by. It was amazing to watch how fast residents adapted. Paper plates and glasses sold like hot cakes. Water from any source was collected and stored. Cooking was simplified and happened only in the mornings. Candles were a prized commodity. Residents got together and started cleaning up their areas as debris piled up on roadside. Slowly, news trickled in bringing to light the extent of the disaster. Tentative drives around the area revealed a city whose legendary greenery seemed scorched by the searing velocity of the winds. Visakhapatnam looked like a post apocalyptic wasteland. But the amazing thing about disasters is the lessons it teaches you about the human spirit. Our Naval retailers opened shop the next day

and sold whatever they could amidst the shambles of their shops. Residents scampered to help each other and the establishment helped by sending periodic water tankers, ration on payment and teams working all hours to restore the power and water supply.

Every situation no matter how dark has its own positives. Like in the sepia tinted days of lore; before technology diminished human interaction; we began living a far simpler life. People got to know their neighbours and spent time with friends. Evenings became a time for families to sit outside and discuss the day's happenings. Neighbourhood Marathons of Antakshari and Dumb Charades were played out and children ran about playing and exploring. Food and anxieties were shared as everyone waited for life to get back to 'normal'. In the absence of power, the night skies became a stunning panorama of myriad stars never seen before. We gazed on in wonder as shooting stars were spotted and constellations revealed.

Today as I write this article on my computer with the



fan droning behind me, and the security of water in my tap, Hudhud seems a distant nightmare and I find myself mulling on the lessons Hudhud taught me. I found that we can lead a far simpler life, where the fridge, TV and so much more is redundant. We can live happily on a quarter of the water we consume everyday. We are surrounded by amazing, interesting, kind and helpful people, if we only take the time to meet them. Disasters are a great leveller. The class distinction of Memsaab and maid disintegrates when calamities strike. Fear and deprivation are shared human experiences that can afflict all of us. And above all I learnt that no matter how much we progress as human beings, nothing is greater than Nature. If we continue to disrespect and destroy our environment, cyclones like Hudhud will keep coming to remind us of just how small and helpless we really are.

As Visakhapatnam and the Navy continue to work at rebuilding and restoration, let us move ahead with the wisdom of lessons learnt and the hope and promise we see in the tender leaves that are sprouting all around us.

Tomorrow hopes we have learned something from yesterday.

-John Wayne

Lessons in Urban Forestry

Liria Mendonca

Last year we were transferred to Visakhapatnam. I fell in love with the place on my way to Dolphin Hill where we had booked our transit accommodation. In the month of October we were the 1st occupants of a new home in E-block. The greenery, the misty mornings, the serenity, the view of the bay, the city and the hills beyond...one could not ask for anything more.

A visit to a friend's house in Naval Park made me share a concern with her. The greenery and the way trees were planted there was a recipe for disaster. Sadly, a few weeks later I was proved right. Cyclone Hudhud created Havoc and left a trail of destruction, but the greatest damage to property was because of the trees; the very trees that all of us grow and protect.

This raises questions like; do we plant big trees again?

The answer is yes, but...we plant them differently.

In spite of knowing that we live in a region that is known for high intensity winds and frequent storms, we did not do our homework while undertaking plantation drives. Plants that have low resistance to winds were planted dangerously close to houses and as avenue plants.

Earlier storm warnings never made us think that big trees needed trimming. Every storm always bypassed Vizag until Hudhud decided otherwise.

A few months before many tree saplings were distributed to E-block residents of Dolphin Hill. Peepal, Neem, Mast tree (often wrongly called Asoka) etc. All these were promptly planted by dutiful residents in a way that will lead to a repeat of what happened at Naval Park and Amzari Park. Trees were planted in narrow spaces between the building and retaining walls. Unfortunately nobody checked about the presence of drainage pipes



running under the planted trees or thought as to what will happen when these trees become big. Is it not our duty to inform residents on how to plant, maintain etc? Sometimes good intentions end up causing problems when we do not foresee...

I am not a professional with degrees in horticulture or botany but my knowledge comes from the experience of having lived in close proximity to nature and taking care of cashew, mango and coconut plantations.

Now with the loss of the green cover due to the storm the government as well as private agencies and individuals want to plant trees on a war footing. We must ask ourselves; on our part what can we do to counter the loss of trees in the naval areas? While we undertaken this tasks let us not repeat the mistakes of the past.

While growing trees these are the points to be kept in mind:

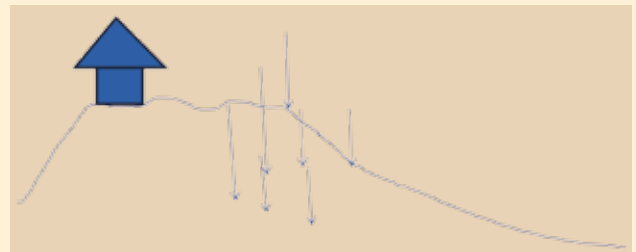
1. It is important to know the layout of drainage and water pipes, electricity and communication wires.
2. Select plants that are as far as possible indigenous species that have higher wind resistance and a good root system.
3. Plant in formations or groups that can best resist winds.
4. Make a note of wind directions etc. when planting certain trees.

5. Ground floor residents must be given directions as to where to plant trees keeping in mind all the above mentioned points.
6. For residents growing low height grafted varieties of fruiting trees in their yards is a better option than planting trees that grow tall with huge trunks and branches. Small flowering trees such as crepe myrtle and Asoka are ideal as these have high wind resistance and a good root system. They also do not grow very tall or have heavy branches. Tuja, cypress etc. are other trees that can be grown in yards for beauty and greenery. The growing of Mast trees (wrongly called the Asoka trees) can be done in yards as long as their height is kept in check.
7. Designing and planning beautiful safe avenues in our residential areas can be now undertaken wisely. Instead of growing trees that can cause damage, trees such as the Asoka, crepe myrtle, weeping fig, Indian beech, etc are a better option. The Asoka tree when in full bloom is a sight to behold, the height of this tree can be safely managed. These trees have high wind resistance and strong root system. Bamboo (different types) can be grown in clumps in parks and open areas. Bushes such as Ixoracan provide colour and greenery and are resistant to high winds. These can be safely planted close to buildings, boundary walls etc.
8. Grafted mango, Amla, Bimbli, Star fruit, Rose apple, Custard apple, Bullsheart sapota, Citrus fruits, Ber, grafted jamun are trees that have low height, yield fruits and provide a green cover without causing damages.
9. Dolphin Hills needs are a little different. Parts of the hill which have been exposed due to road constructions must be protected by growing plants that will hold the loose soil and avoid landslides. Growing of Ivy in certain areas is an option that must be looked into.
10. Growing Ficus trees and allowing the roots to take hold of exposed areas is also a viable



option. However, these trees need a regular prune so as not to cause damage.

11. Cashew plants have high wind resistance; do well on sloping land and at elevations. They are also a source of high returns when planted as a cash crop. Many of the cashew plants lost leaves and a few branches but survived Hudhud. Their low spreading habit also helps them to resist high winds. The slopes of E block, D block and C block are ideal for planting wind barriers of Casuarinas trees. These have to be planted in 3 rows.



Again trees have to be pruned so as not to fall on building loads etc. Regular checks have to be maintained before the onset of rains, storms etc.

12. Wild almond also has withstood the storm and must be planted all along the hills. But not too close to the road or buildings. The slopes of the cliffs are ideal for planting a mix of Amla, Cashew, Custard Apple, Wild Date, Tamarind, Peepal, Pacific rose wood, Banyan and other Ficus trees etc. Active support from residents to care for the plants initially is one of the ways to ensure their safety and good growth. Residents from certain areas can be allotted areas to care for.

Whimsical and senseless planting of trees has lead to a lot of damage, do we learn from this and create another urban forest that is beautiful, green but at the same time safer? Success is a planned event it is up to us to plan for it.

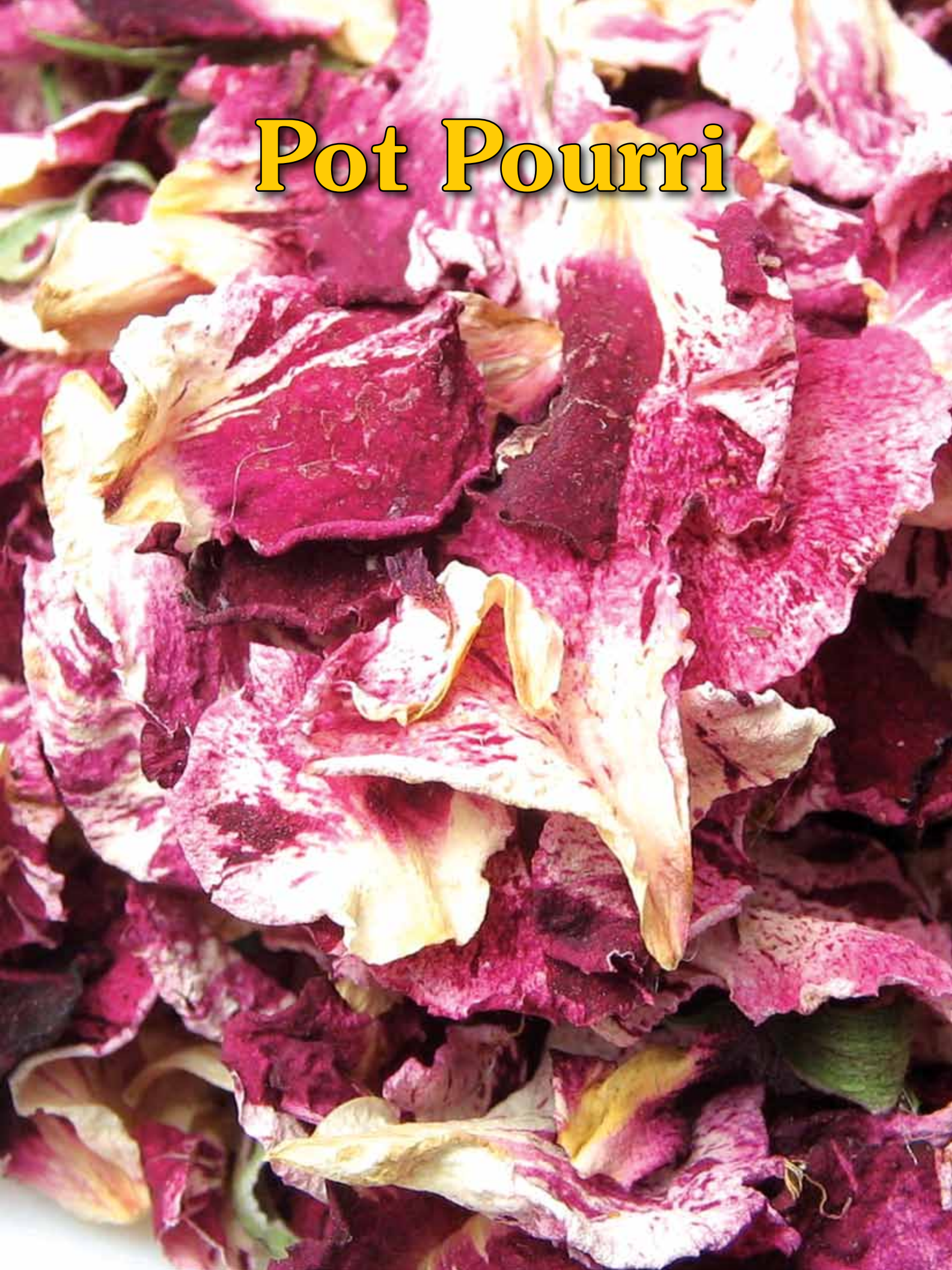


aftermath of hudhud



Photos compiled by Team Sanchar NR

Pot Pourri



Good, Bad & Bare Facts About Fat

Annu Anand



For decades, doctors, nutritionist and health authorities have told us that a ‘low fat’ diet is the key to weight loss, managing cholesterol and preventing cardio – vascular diseases. So, came an array of guiltfree products such as, baked potato chips, fat free ice creams, low fat cakes and candies. In the process, what we clearly (or conveniently) forgot was that a “fat free” label doesn’t mean you can eat all you want without any consequences. Most of the fat free foods are high in sugar, carbohydrates and calories. The low fat craze has thus produced an epidemic of obesity, diabetes, hypoglycemia and even some of the ADHD and perhaps cancers that are so common today. These diseases were not as prevalent world over before people began

believing the lie that “fats are bad for you”. The key here lies in not cutting out the fat from the diet but in understanding about this essential food group and adopting right choices by replacing bad from good to maintain health and well-being.

Fats and oils are an important component of a good diet. They have a high energy value and provide twice the number of calories as compared to proteins and carbohydrates. Besides, they also contribute to food taste, texture, and flavor and impart a feeling of fullness and satisfaction.

Types of Fat:

We derive this important group from plant and animal products. Oils, butter and ghee that we use directly for cooking are called visible fats.

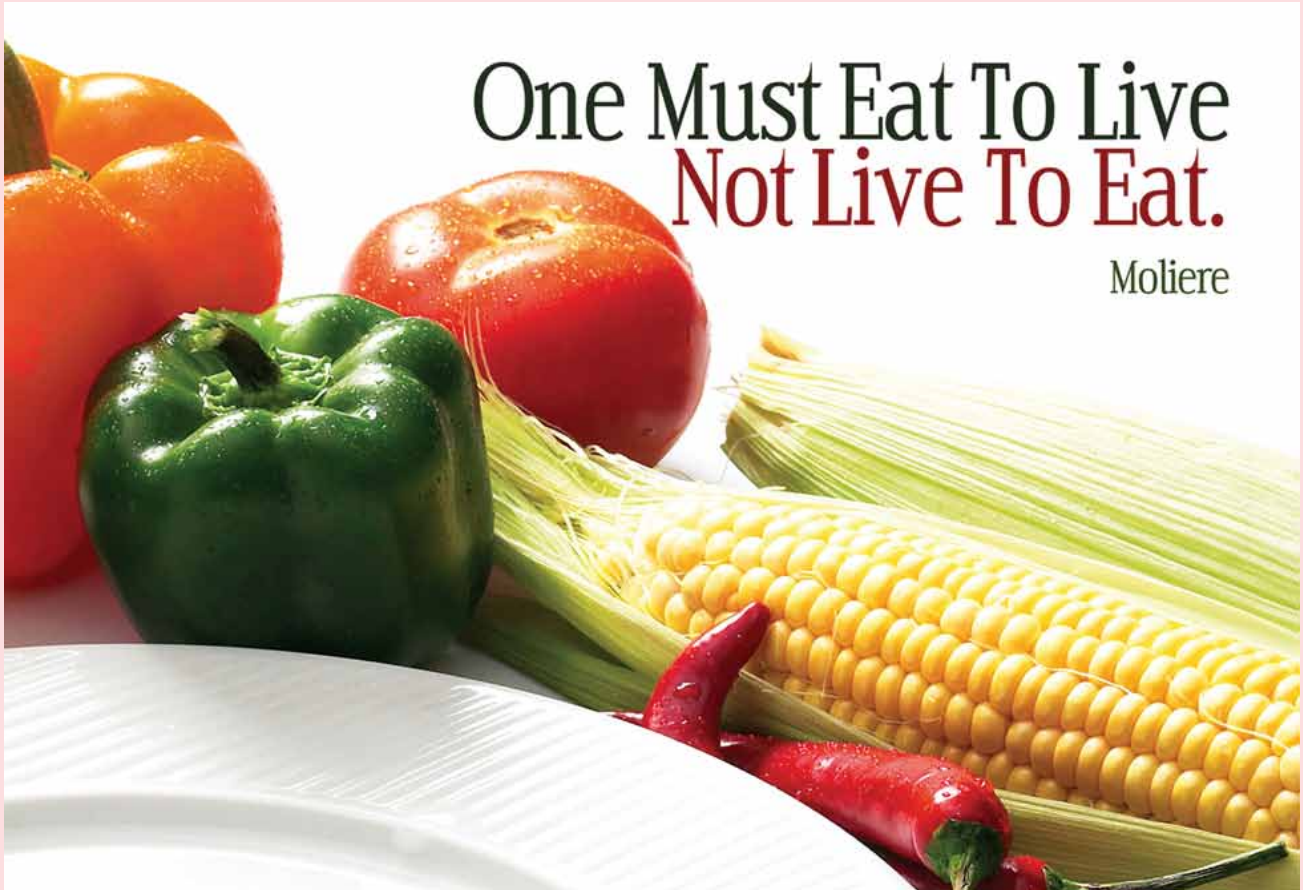
Some amount of fat is also present in foods like cereals, pulses, meat, nuts and eggs that we cannot see and is called hidden or invisible fat. To understand good and bad fats, it’s important to know the types of dietary fat. It can be divided into four groups.

- Mono unsaturated fatty acids, MUFA.
- Poly unsaturated fatty acids, PUFA.
- Saturated fatty acids, SFA.
- Trans fats.

Good Fat Vs. Bad Fat:

MUFA and PUFA are called good fats as they are good for your health, cholesterol and your overall health.

MUFA & PUFA are obtained from vegetable oils which can be derived from:-



One Must Eat To Live Not Live To Eat.

Moliere

- Grain-Corn, wheat, rice bran, oil etc.
- Legumes - Peanut, soya oil, etc.
- Seeds-Sesame, sunflowers, mustard, canola etc.
- Fruits & Nuts-Coconut, almond, olive oil etc.

Get more of these good fats from nuts, seeds, fish and healthy cold pressed oils.

Saturated and Trans fats are known as 'Bad Fats', they increase your risk for cardiovascular diseases and elevate cholesterol. These tend to be solid at room temperature and include butter, margarine etc. while MUFA & PUFA are liquids.

Saturated fats are mainly found in animal products – red meat, whole dairy products, etc. Simple way to reduce it would mean swapping beef, pork or lamb with fish and chicken, replacing frying with baking boiling or grilling or using olive oil rather than butter, cream or cheese.

A trans-fat is a normal fat molecule that has been twisted & deformed during hydrogenation, where in, a liquid vegetable oil is heated and combined with hydrogen gas. This makes them more stable and less likely to spoil which is good for food manufacturers but bad for

us. Primary source of trans fat is margarine, vanaspati, commercially prepared baked goods (cookies, crackers, pizza dough, buns); fried foods (doughnuts, french-fries, fried chicken, chicken nuggets, tacoshells); snack foods (potato, corn & Tortilla chips, microwave popcorn) premix product (cake mixes, drink mixes) So, when shopping, read the labels well and watch out for partially hydrogenated oil and trans fats.

Essential Fattyacids: Super Fats for Brain & Health:

These are necessary fats that we cannot synthesize and must get through diet. EFA's are long chains of PUFA



that fall under 2 classes - omega-3 and omega-6. EPA's support the cardiovascular, reproductive, immune, and nervous system and in the production of prostaglandins. Getting more of omega-3 fatty acids in your diet can help you battle fatigue, sharpen your memory, and balance your mood. The best sources are fatty fish such as salmon, herring, mackerel, anchovies, sardines, tuna and trout. For vegetarians, flax seeds, hemp seeds, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, Brazil nuts, sesame seeds, avocados, some dark green leafy vegetable are good sources. All vegetable oils are good sources of omega-6 fatty acid along with olives, olive oil, pine nuts, sunflower seeds, pistachios, etc.

Cholesterol myths:

Cholesterol is an essential fat compound manufactured in

our liver that is needed to make cell membranes, steroid and sex hormones, etc. But you also get cholesterol directly from any animal product you eat such as eggs, meat and dairy. As with fats, there is good and bad cholesterol.

HDL Cholesterol is the good kind of cholesterol found in your blood as it helps protect against heart disease and stroke, while LDL is the bad cholesterol that can clog arteries and increase the risk for disease. Research shows there is a weak link between the amount of cholesterol you eat and your blood cholesterol levels. Instead the type of fat you eat has a greater bearing on your blood cholesterol levels.

Choice of Cooking Oil:

Heating an oil changes its characteristics. When choosing a cooking oil it is important to match the oil's heat tolerance with the cooking method. A good quality fat is one which maintains a balance between PUFA/SFA and omega-6 to omega-3 ratio. It is necessary

to increase omega-3 fatty acid intake & reduce omega-6 fatty acid obtained from cooking oils. Choice of cooking oil should be ground nut or sesame or rice bran oil, with mustard or soya bean or canola. Use of more than one source of fat/oil has an added advantage. Heat, light and oxygen damages a good fat, so it should be stored in a cool, dark place. Most vegetable oils can form toxic chemicals when reused over and over as done in some chain restaurants and road side vendors. Avoid such fried foods.

Recommendations For Indians:

National Institute of Nutrition recommends:-

- Keep total fat intake to 20-30% of total calories.
- Limit saturated fat to less than 8-10% of calories.
- EPA requirement to be 3%.
- Visible fat intake for adults to be 20 g/d.

As a final note, remember fats are one of the most important food groups. Good fats such as MUFA, PUFA, & omega-3s play an important role in managing your moods, keeping you mentally alert, fight fatigue and even control your weight. Try and stay away from foods that say "low-fat" or "no-fat" and avoid all types of trans fat and saturated fat.

THE TRANSITION

Mrs Poonam Negi Shankar

Got married to a Naval officer in Goa,
I became a member of NWWA.
NWWA stands for Navy Wives Welfare Association,
After marriage my life went through a transition.
Initially I felt I'm not married to the Navy.
Over the years I became a part of it like crazy.
I groomed my personality and attitude,
Now am smart, independent and show gratitude.



My dressing became elegant as I walked a mile,
Understood the difference, between formal and informal dressing in a while.
In the Academy, formal function or mess night,
Draping a saree and looking graceful was right.

Navy provides housing and a safe environment to stay,
A time came when I realized it's time for me to repay.
I joined NWWA and extended my hand,
Believe me my heart rests on a peaceful land.

The clouds of doubt that obscured my mind,
I participated in activities that make people bind.

From a girl to a lady a transition took,
Thank you Navy for my new look.
The values and morals those are ingrained in me,
You can't take the Navy out of me.





The Sound of Silence

Avantika Tiwari

Our sense of hearing normally takes a back seat to our sense of sight. With our vision in the driver's seat we map and navigate our worlds while hearing rides along, a sleepy passenger. It was during my stay in DSSC Wellington last year, where life rolls at the pace of a safari elephant, that I plumbed the wonders of that passenger ride and experienced the other, nether world of sound.

Moving to Wellington was like dropping into an ocean of pin-drop silence. I was all ears for anything and everything. The sounds of my neighbours' phone ringing (always seeming louder than my own), their midnight arguments, kids' running feet drumming on the floor above, party gossip from the top floor balcony (usually praising their amazing neighbours below), blaring party music from the lane above ours, chatter of kids playing by the roadside, the cooker whistling its third warning in some faraway kitchen, my maid's dog whining about her giving us all the attention, the diligent ticking of my wall clock, the weeping, leaking bathroom tap and the list went on...

"If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite." If William Blake hadn't come up with the idea, I

believe it would have been necessary for me to invent it. I remember listening to the gentle tap of raindrops on my window panes, hearing a frog chorus in the dark, and crickets singing far away almost in rhythm. The whistling wind through the trees along with the distant hourly church bells formed a symphony of their own. Water being in scarce supply was manna from heaven, bestowed upon us once every four days, a cocktail of amrit



and ambrosia pouring through the stiff upper-lip royal Victorian plumbing for one whole hour. I have to confess that the sound of water gushing in the pipes and filling our overhead tanks was simply magical. I've never listened to water quite this way before, and surely never will.

Sounds of vehicles always had a tale to tell. If you could hear the screeching of the school bus brakes sitting at home that would mean your child has missed the bus, literally – a sound which may be a downer for you but mood elevator for the child. When one heard cars zipping in the wee hours of the morning, it meant that one was late for 8 Market – a flea market on the Ooty road, held on the 8th of every month. It is a single day event starting 4 am and lasting until 9 pm, and feels like a country festival.

Higher altitude seems to mess with another sense too: the sense of humour of its dwellers. In the hills, voices carry far, sometimes as easily from one hill to another as between two rooms in a house. The crisp air also seems to resist the invasion of technology such as cell phone signals into its domain. A story my friend swears happened to her was of an afternoon when their family had to go for a pot-luck Sunday lunch to a family's house that lived on the next hill. With a weak network signal, repeated attempts to contact their hosts by phone failed so as a last ditch attempt they resorted to the traditional method of "cooee-ing" across to the other hill. They caught the ear of their listeners surprisingly quickly, and efficiently communicated how many naans vs. rotis vs. parathas had to be brought. When the families gathered, her husband, a submariner, was congratulated on hitting upon this solution, with the Hindi proverb "sau sonar ki, ek lohar ki" (Translation: A goldsmith's hundred strikes are but one blow of the blacksmith"). To which the submariner replied to his surface navy colleague that, since radio signals failed them and sound won, it was a case of "sau RADAR ki, ek SONAR ki" (Translation: A hundred signals by



the Radar are equal to one by the Sonar). Now with my return to the concrete jungle, I find this skill helps me look at things anew. More than seeing the forest for the trees I think this helps me see the spaces between the trees. I perceive a kind of parity in:

The rooster's crowing at dawn and the calling of the alarm clock,

The varieties of songbird tunes and the novelties of ringtones,

The chirping of crickets and the beeping of home appliances,

Birds twittering on the branches and kids tweeting on their smartphones,

The rumbling of a jungle brook and the trundling of a bus down a city road,

Akoel cooing and the sound of a compliment,

The papiha pining "pee-kahan?" and my kid asking "cheeni kahan".

Every new place is a new cup of tea, another glass of water, or - to try a new analogy - a different doughnut. From a small hill town to a sprawling metropolis, no matter how jarring or complex the new experience, how big the doughnut, I now know I can get my jaws around it soon enough. And once you've gotten your teeth into the doughnut's centre, its nothingness reveals an indescribable sweetness. That just may be the sound of silence.



Cdr Prashant Mital

1. Navies all over the world have played a pivotal role in the shaping of history. The great British Empire was a classic example of sea power. Due to the important roles that navies have played over the years, they have left an indelible mark on the imaginations of generations. Great battles make heroes, heroes lead to fables and fables to fiction. There is a very thin line between fact and fiction, when it comes to life at sea. This is most evident in a number of writings both fact or fiction; ballads or plays, which have been inspired by the Naval way of life and continue to entertain us till date
2. Now, over 100 years old, motion pictures have time and again come up with various movies which have showcased the excitement, adventures, chivalry, courage and hardship of the naval way of life. However the sole purpose of movies is not only to inspire and educate us but to entertain, and what entertains better than "humour". Life at sea is not always about hardships, sacrifices and suffering. Humour has always played an important role in military/naval way of life and to certain extent has become a key trait of successful leaders over the ages. Here's

Reel Life- Real Fun

taking a look at some Hollywood classics that portray sea sorties as fun-filled adventure!

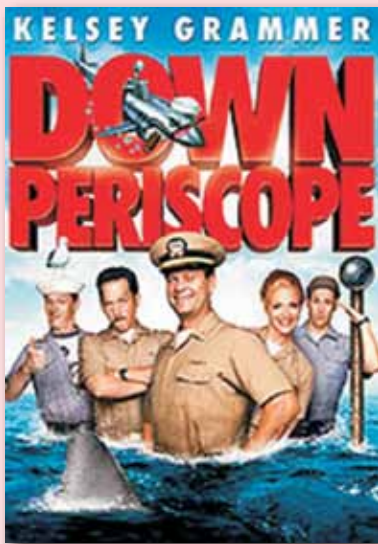
3. Starting with my favorite, and it has nothing to do with me being a submariner but the sheer circumstances involving women on a submarine, that too a pink submarine. The movie could not be more aptly titled "**Operation Petticoat**". This 1959 classic is the tale of a submarine called Sea tiger whose crew during WWII rescues few lady nurses to escape the Japanese stranglehold only to be prosecuted by its own forces. The twists and turns of how the crew and officers deal with the presence of ladies in the confined spaces of a submarine cannot let you keep a straight face. The movie is a must-see to know how the boat escapes prosecution from enemy and own friendly forces and turns pink in colour!



4. The next in line, again a submarine movie, **Down Periscope**, and again has nothing to do with me being a submariner but all to do with a very 'Beautiful and Hot' Lauren Hollywho gets appointed on USS Stingray

a re-commissioned vintage WWII diesel submarine as the diving officer. The Captain of the submarine needs to take part in a war game against the might of the US Navy on this rag-a-tag submarine to preserve his career at the same time dealing with the antics done by its Executive officer (second in command) and his crew. Presence of a lady officer adds flavor to the movie. The movie educates us about which part of the body you don't get tattooed in a drunken stupor! Only serious suggestion from the movie to Submariners is not to pass under and between the running propellers of a ship as shown in the movie!!!

- Another classic which deals with a very serious matter in a profoundly humorous manner is the **Caine Mutiny**. This movie is based on a Pulitzer Prize winning novel and depicts the experiences of a young Princeton graduate, who joins the USS Caine during WWII. The Ship has an eccentric captain whose behavior at times borders lunacy. In the movie, he seemed to be more bothered about a can of strawberries than the morale and well-being of his crew. The crew at one point of time is so fed up with him that he is relieved from command by his junior, which he declares as a mutiny. The court room (Court Martial) proceeding, which follows, is a satire on human emotions and insecurities.



- Mc Hale's Navy** is another funny movie in which a retired veteran is given the command of a small naval ship with a bunch of misfits as a crew to tackle the menace of a renowned terrorist. The manner in which the crew along with happy-go-lucky captain and the ever siding luck are able to save the world from this lunatic terrorist is extremely funny.



- Some of the other movies in this genre, which tickle our funny bone, include **Going Under, All hands on Deck, Son of the Navy** and many more. However for the uninitiated these movies could be the starting point for a wonderful humorous insight towards life at sea. These movies whilst portraying the Navy and life onboard ships touch upon us some very valuable lessons in life whilst keeping us in splits.

THE 20-YEAR MARK

Captain Susheel Menon

A few weeks ago, I was in my office cubicle when I had the honour of a ‘personal’ mail delivery: a small brown envelope. I was curious for sure. Moments later, the envelope revealed a shiny medal...my name etched on the edge...the 20-year long service medal. Had it really been that long since the summer of 1992 when I had proudly worn a golden stripe on my shoulders for the very first time? Actually, it’s been more than 22 years. It was true that the medal wound up in my possession two years late, but then the Navy has kept me moving and I was just glad the little envelope finally caught up with me.

Twenty years is a significant bit of time. It meant I had spent more time in uniform than out of it. I took a few moments to reminisce about the good times, the tough times, challenges faced, failures taken

in stride, lessons learnt and, above all, the continuing sense of exhilaration that the best was yet to come.



For us in the services, it comes naturally to think of ourselves as an enmeshed element of a larger team. This regimentation, in my opinion, is one of the most prized sentiments of the days we spend in training. Rarely can an individual in uniform think of himself without automatically thinking of his course-mates or batch-mates—brothers-

in-arms, if you will. Such is our conditioning. The 20-year mark held significance for my batch in more ways than one.

This was the time in our careers that the Navy chose to promote a few to take on challenges in the next rank and at the same time exhorted others, who could not be promoted, to continue to give their best, the profession of arms being about service and not the manifestations of rank and privilege. It was a time of mixed emotions for sure. A sense of reward for those who received the opportunity

to wear a new rank but for those who were not given this opportunity a possible sense of loss, even betrayal—for all the hard work done, exertions undertaken and hardships borne.

Any officer will tell you that every batch goes through these same defining moments.