Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh DFC, President AFA & other Air Veterans at Amar Jawan Jyothi on the occasion of AFA Annual General Meeting

Retirement Onwards .... We Care!
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MESSAGE

1. It is heartening to know that DAV is publishing the second issue of *From The Tarmac* for the benefit of Air Veterans.

2. Indian Air Force has approximately 1,98,000 pensioners and the number is increasing with every passing month. Rules and policies about pension and other retirement benefits are constantly getting upgraded, hence the Veterans need to be updated to reap the maximum benefits.

3. I am sure that *From The Tarmac* will prove to be a comprehensive source of accurate information to all the retired and retiring personnel and their family members so that they could initiate correct actions on time to resolve their issues and get the maximum benefit of the government's liberalized pension policies. In addition, as the name suggests, it will provide news on the latest developments in the IAF which I am sure our Veterans are keen to follow.

I extend my best wishes to all the Air Veterans.
MESSAGE

1. It is indeed a matter of pride that I am a part of the team which is bringing out the second issue of *From the Tarmac*.

2. Life in the Armed Forces is distinct from civilian life. A person joins service when very young and retires before he is old. While in service we give our sweat and blood and Service always comes before self. We give our today for the secured tomorrow of our next generation. We rarely think of life post retirement since we are convinced that the nation takes care of the airwarrior’s relaxed retired life through liberal retirement & pensionary benefits for self, spouse and dependants. Therefore, we often miss out getting to know the nitty-gritty of pensionary benefits while in service. The aim of this magazine is to update our ESM on the various and latest pensionary benefits and the correct procedure to claim them, apart from sharing the latest happenings in the IAF.

3. I hope this Magazine will act as a bridge between the IAF and its Veterans. We, the men in blue, will endeavour to carry forward the mission of serving the pensioners with greatest transparency, efficiency and commitment.

With best wishes,
1. I am glad that the Directorate of Air Veterans which is in its infancy has been entrusted with the task of publishing the magazine for Air Veterans.

2. DAV is committed to helping all retiring Officers/Airmen/NCs (E) in getting their pensionary benefits within a reasonable time. However, timely release of these dues is a team effort, wherein all the participants i.e. individual, Unit, DAV, AFRO, JCDA (AF) and the payee Bank have to efficiently and correctly perform their role. Moreover, there is also a need for the individual/family members and the Units to understand numerous issues related to pension and retirement benefits.

3. From the Tarmac will be a useful resource for pensioners in updating themselves on the latest Govt policies on pension and welfare for deriving maximum benefit. This magazine will not only provide the latest and authentic information on improvements in pensionary benefits but will also explain the procedures involved to obtain those benefits. From the Tarmac is also a platform for our Veterans to share their thoughts and experiences. We also look forward to valuable suggestions from our Veterans to further improve the content and quality of the magazine.

4. On behalf of DAV I assure all the pensioners that it will be our endeavour to ensure prompt and timely payment of pension and other dues; it is also our resolve to address the grievances of the pensioners, if any, with promptitude and enthusiasm.
The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne PVSM AVSM VM, ADC inaugurated the Directorate of Air Veterans on 04th October 2012. The Directorate would be committed to looking after the pensionary and welfare aspects of all retired Air Force personnel. Inaugurating the Directorate, the Air Chief said "It gives me great pleasure to dedicate the new Directorate to the Air Warriors, who have contributed so much to the growth of the IAF. The Directorate would provide value added services to both our retiring as well as retired air warriors and coordinate all aspects, hitherto being handled by different directorates".

The creation of the Directorate of Air Veterans is an effort towards bringing under one roof, the various departments dealing with different aspects of Air Veterans so that the IAF veterans do not have to approach different agencies for their welfare and pensionary problems. This directorate is functioning under the Air Officer in-Charge Administration (AOA). The Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Accounts) has been given concurrent charge of this Dte and therefore the post has been redesignated as ACAS (Accounts and Air Veterans) henceforth.

To give focused attention to the needs of Air Veterans, this single window to approach IAF for assistance with respect to pensionary and welfare issues, will deal with various Civil Government departments on matters pertaining to Veterans of the IAF, so that issues affecting them are taken up in a consolidated manner and effectively.

The Directorate operates a website called http://iafpensioners.gov.in for grievances related to pensionary aspects.
### Contact Details

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### WAC Exchange Numbers, IP Number and Direct Numbers

011-25687194 followed by appropriate Extn No.s as mentioned below:

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<td>Air Cmde EPP Nambiar VSM</td>
<td>23116170</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Gp Capt SK Rattani</td>
<td>23116172</td>
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<td>Joint Director (Finance)</td>
<td>Wg Cdr Akhilesh K Singh</td>
<td>23116173</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joint Director (Contribution &amp; Systems)</td>
<td>Wg Cdr Sameer S Ali</td>
<td>23116177</td>
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Executives

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PRESIDENT'S STANDARD PRESENTATION
TO 25 SQUADRON & 33 SQUADRON

SULUR. The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee presented the prestigious Presidential Standards to two of the IAF's Squadrons – 25 Squadron and 33 Squadron, in an impressive ceremonial parade held at Air Force Station Sulur on 18 Dec 12.

The Governor of Tamil Nadu Mr.A Rosaiyah, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief South Western Air Command (SWAC), Air Marshal AK Gogoi, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Southern Air Command (SAC), Air Marshal RK Jolly, Commodore Commandant 25 Squadron, Air Commodore BS Yadav, and Commodore Commandant 33 Squadron, Air Commodore JV Paul, Mrs Rama Pilot, wife of Late Squadron Leader (retd) Rajesh Pilot were present on the occasion besides a host of other serving and retired personnel of the two Squadrons and civil dignitaries.

Located in the South Western Sector, 25 Squadron called 'The Himalayan Eagles' was formed on 01 Mar 1963 at Chandigarh, with the motto 'SATVADHINA HI SIDDHAYA' ie 'EXCELLENCE THROUGH DILIGENCE'. It has been the lifeline of troops stationed in the Northern region for over five decades, in peace, as well as in war. During the 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak conflicts and Kargil Operations, the squadron played a vital role.

33 Squadron was formed on 09 Jan 1963 with two Caribou aircraft, with the motto 'SHRAMO DADATI SIDDIM' meaning, 'THROUGH HARD WORK COMES GLORY'. The squadron participated in operations in both 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak conflicts. It also has the distinction of spearheading the largest ever formation in the history of the IAF during the Tangail operations in 1971. In 1986 the squadron was reequipped with AN-32 aircraft, which has over the years proven to be the work horse of the IAF. The squadron flew extensively during the IAF's tsunami rescue and relief operations. Based at Sulur, the squadron maintains an effective air bridge to the far flung island territories of Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep.

The Standards are awarded to Operational Units while Colours are awarded to non flying formations. IAF Operational Squadrons become eligible for award of Presidential Standards after completion of 18 years.
Fifteen years ago, in my mid-60s and a decade after I had retired from the Indian Air Force (IAF), my wife and I were in Harare visiting our daughter and family. At a lunch party, a Zimbabwean lady had many questions about India and, also being the daughter of a pilot, was keen to know about life in our air force. In answering her questions, I expressed my own pleasure, nostalgia and envy at the sight of a tiny little micro light aircraft (AC) that overflew our residence quite frequently at the same time and height and in the same direction. Early next morning, my daughter received a call from the secretary of the local aero club inviting the 'Indian air marshal pilot to come and fly in a micro light aircraft with Jacques at 3:30 pm'. I accepted the invitation immediately and was welcomed by an expatriate French Aeronautical Engineer, licensed pilot, aviation enthusiast and former owner of a self assembled micro light aircraft.

On a small landing ground bereft of any manpower, I helped the friendly Jacques open a mini hangar and wheel out what appeared to me like a powered glider with swept wings. Out on the tarmac however, it resembled a tiny bird with a large wing span poised to lift off into the sky. A closer examination revealed the same basic controls and instrumentation of a conventional aircraft. The airframe and attachments were of light weight material and designed to offer minimum resistance in the air. The rear-fitted engine drove on a propeller which pushed the aircraft forward. Flight within the local airfield zone (on the periphery of which our bungalow lay) and upto 100 feet in good weather, was free and uncontrolled from the ground. Jacques briefed me on the simple procedure before we strapped on our seat belts and he started up the engine.

The aircraft required a very short run to get airborne and climb steeply away. The joy of being airborne again in an open cockpit took me back to the fabric covered Tiger Moth on which I had done my basic flying training back in 1951. One very soon sheds the 'fighter pilot' persona and returns to the basics of pure manual flying to enjoy the sheer pleasure of being in the air described so beautifully, by the well known writer Richard Bach, in his delightful novella, Jonathan Livingston Seagull.
Like cycling and swimming, flying skills are never forgotten and soon Jacques left the aircraft in my hands just guiding and advising me. We flew low over our bungalow and waved to my two little grandchildren on the tennis court who were thrilled to see Grandpa actually flying an aircraft. Approach and landing presented no major difficulty, though ground control was a bit shaky as the aircraft had no brakes. After we had stabled the aircraft in the hangar, I asked Jacques how I could repay his kindness. He replied that I already had as he longed for aviator company sometimes and was pleased to have met and taken up his very first Indian Fighter Pilot!

Over drinks at the club subsequently, we talked 'flying' and he was keen to know of the Indian experience with French aircraft. I shared with him our long and happy experience with the French Ouragan (Our Toofani), Alouette Helicopter (Our Chetak), Mystere and Mirage aircraft. I shared with him my singular experience at a French air base in 1969. Ferrying a Hunter aircraft from UK to India, I had landed at their airfield in Istres where their refueling operator spoke only French and I was uncertain as to the grade of fuel he had, as the markings were all in French. The problem was finally solved by a French speaking RAF pilot in transit who ensured our two aircraft received the correct grade of aviation fuel. Regrettfully, Jacques and I did not keep our communication over the years, but when he comes to know that our air force has opted for the induction of the French Rafale aircraft, I am certain he will remember this (now octogenarian) Indian air veteran whom he complimented as being a 'pilote naturel' (natural pilot) – a tribute to the training standards of the IAF.

(Note: The author is a retired Air Vice Marshal and a freelance writer who can be contacted at 09810099874).
THE PCDA (P) ALLAHABAD CIRCULAR NO. 500 DATED 17 JAN 13.

Implementation of the govt. decision on the recommendations of the committee on the issue related to defence service personnel and ex-servicemen – minimum guaranteed pension to pre-2006 commissioned officers / family pensioners.

As per this GOI, MOD letter dated 17.01.2013, the minimum guaranteed pension and ordinary family pension in respect of Pre-2006 Commissioned officers, pensioners/ family pensioners has been determined at 50% (fifty) and 30% (thirty) percent respectively, of the pay in the pay band corresponding to minimum of pre-revised pay scale as indicated under fitment tables annexed with SAI 2/S/2008, as amended, and SAI 4/S/2008.(Equivalent instructions for Navy & Air Force), plus Grade pay corresponding to the pre-revised scale from which the pensioner had retired/discharged/invalided out/died plus Military Service Pay, wherever applicable.


1. The PCDA (P) Allahabad has issued Circular No. 501 dated 17 Jan 13 in accordance with GOI MOD letter No. 1(13)/2012/D(Pen/Policy) dated 17 Jan 13 in order to implement Govt. decision on the recommendation of the Committee of Secretaries 2012 for improvement in pension of JCOs/ORs retired/discharged or invalided out of service prior to 01 Jan 2006. The applicability of ibid Govt. orders has been made effective from 24 Sep 2012.

2. In terms of the above referred Govt. orders, the pension in respect of Pre-01.1.2006 retirees has been revised on the basis of notional maximum of the Pre-1 Jan 06 pay scale. The weightage for ranks of AC/LAC, Cpl and Sgt has been increased by two years and is to be taken as 12, 10 and 08 years respectively, subject to a maximum of 32 years for computation of pension. Hence, the pension in respect of the three lower ranks viz., AC/LAC, Cpl and Sgt has been enhanced. The revised pension has been tabulated vide Table No. 16 and 17 as Appendix to GOI MOD letter No. 1(13)/2012/D(Pen/Policy) dated 17 Jan 13. The pension in respect of JWO, WO and MWO has not been revised in accordance with the ibid Govt. orders.

3. The pension of an Honorary Flying Officer and Honorary Flight Lieutenant has been revised to Rs. 15465 (Old Rate: Rs. 13590 pm) and Rs. 16145 (Old rate: Rs. 13850) respectively wef 24 Sep 12 (Table No.20).
CIRCULAR NO. 502

Enhancement of Ordinary Family Pension in respect of Pre-2006 JCOs/Ors Family Pension.

1. The improvement in ordinary family pension as per the PCDA (P) Allahabad Circular No. 502 is effective from 24 Sep 12.

**Applicability:** These orders are applicable to the family pensioners of JCOs / ORs and Honorary Commissioned Officers of regular Armed Forces including DSC personnel who were discharged / retired prior to 01 Jan 2006.

**Non Applicability:** These orders do not apply to families of UK / HKSRA / KClOs pensioners, Pakistan and Burma army pensioners. These orders also do not apply to the families of reservist pensioners.

2. The powers of revision of family pension have been delegated to all Pension Disbursing Agencies (Bank / DPDO) in terms of PCDA (P) Allahabad Circular No. 502. **All affected family pensioners are to approach the bank / DPDO from where they are drawing their Family Pension.**

CIRCULAR NO. 503

Enhancement of Special Family Pension (SFP)/Dependent Pension (Special), Liberalised Family pension, Dependent Pension (Liberalised) in respect of Pre-2006 JCOs/Ors including Honorary Commissioned Officers and Non Combatants (Enrolled).

1. The enhancement of Special Family Pension / Dependent Pension (Special), Liberalised Family pension, Dependent Pension (Liberalised) has been authorized vide PCDA (P) Allahabad Circular No. 503 dated 17 Jan 2013 and is effective from 24 Sep 2012.

**Applicability:**

These orders are applicable to the family pensioners of Pre-2006 JCOs/Ors and Honorary Commissioned Officers and equivalent.

**Non-Applicability**

(a) Family pensioners of Armed Forces Pensioners (Commissioned officers and JCOs/Ors and equivalent) who are in receipt of Ordinary family pension.

(b) UK/HKSRA pensioners/Family pensioners.

(c) Persons in receipt of Compassionate Allowance/ Guzara Bhatta/ Reservists Allowances etc.

(d) Ex-gratia Family Pension @ Rs. 605/- pm to the families of the deceased reservist covered by Govt. of India, MOD Order No. B/40029/AG/PS-4(d)/1B/D (Pension/Service) dated 07.01.1999.

(e) Families of Artificers and Non-Combatants (Enrolled) in the Corps of EME who are in receipt of Rs. 150/- pm as Ex-gratia payment wef 01.01.1992.

(f) Gallantry Awards, such as Param Vir Chakra/Ashok Chakra etc.

(g) Over payments/Recovery etc.

2. The power of revision of the above pensions have been delegated to all Pension Disbursing Agencies (PDA/ DPDO) in terms of PCDA (P) Allahabad Circular No.503. All pensioners who are in receipt of the above should approach their PDA/DPDO from where they draw their family pension.
CIRCULAR NO 504

Grant of Dual (two) Family Pension from Military as well as Civil employment.

Armed Forces Pensioners who were re-employed in Central Civil departments or State Govt./PSUs/Autonomous bodies/Local Funds of Central/State Governments after retiring/on being discharged from military service and whose families receive ordinary family pension, such families would be entitled to draw two family pensions i.e the family pension (ordinary) from Military side in addition to the family pension, if any, authorized by the re-employer for the re-employed civil service, subject to fulfillment of other prescribed conditions. The provision of these rules shall be effective from 24 Sep 2012. Those who have taken NOC from IAF for opting for pension from civil may write to DAV (Dir-III, for airmen and NCs(E)) for fresh joint notification.


CIRCULAR NO. 505

Implementation of the Government decision on the recommendations of Committee on the issue related to Defence Services Personnel and Ex-Servicemen, 2012 - Grant of family pension for life to handicapped children of Armed Forces Personnel.

1. As per existing rules a disabled son or daughter becomes ineligible for Family pension on his/her getting married or when he/she starts earning his/her livelihood and the same is endorsed in PPO. In such cases disabled family pensioner/guardian (in case of minor) should produce a certificate regarding "non earning livelihood" and "non-marital status" in respect of disabled family pensioner.

2. As per provisions contained in Govt. of India, Ministry of Defence letter No. 02(03)/2010-D (Pen/policy) dated 17.01.2013, son or daughter of an Armed Forces pensioner who is suffering from any disorder or disability of mind or is physically crippled or disabled so as to render him or her incapable of earning his/her livelihood, shall be granted family pension for life w.e.f. 24th September 2012 even after his/her marriage subject to fulfillment of other prescribed conditions as hitherto.

CIRCULAR NO. 506

Provisions contained in Ministry's letter dated 18 Aug 2010 shall also be applicable to post 1.1.2006 JCOs/Ors granted Honorary Commission as Lieutenant and Captain (equivalent for Air Force) i.e. pension to be calculated on the notional pay in the revised pay structure corresponding to maximum of the pre-revised pay scales. Pension Sanctioning Authorities will issue corrigendum PPOs if the recalculated pension in terms of these orders is found beneficial.

FOR MORE DETAILS AND CLARIFICATIONS ON ABOVE CIRCULARS, PLEASE LOGON TO http://www.pcdapension.nic.in/, THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF PCDA (PENSIONS), ALLAHABAD.
OFFICE OF THE CGDA
Ulan Batar Road, Palam, Delhi Cantt -10
For special attention of Legal Heirs of
Deceased Armed Forces Officers
(In the matter of Hon'ble Supreme
Court order of 04.09.2012 on Rank Pay)

1. According to MoD letter No. 34(6)2012-D (Pay/Services) dated 27 December, 2012 (also available at www.cgda.nic.in) in regard to implementation of Hon'ble Supreme Court Order dated 04th September 2012, the pay of the officers of the Armed Forces holding the rank of Capt/Maj/Lt Col(TS)/Lt Col(Sel)/Col/Brig and equivalent ranks in Air Force and Navy serving as on 01.01.1986 is to be revised for payment of arrears of Pay. Pension may also need to be revised.

2. Therefore, the NOK/Legal heirs (who are receiving pension) of the deceased retired Army Officers may immediately forward information in the format available at www.cgda.nic.in to the P.C.D.A. (O), Golibar Maidan, Pune-411001 along with the requisite documents.

3. The NOK/legal heirs (who are not receiving pension) of the deceased retired Army Officers may immediately forward information in the format available at www.cgda.nic.in and the requisite documents mentioned therein along with valid Legal Succession Certificate to the Director, MP-5 (b ), AG's Branch, IHQ of MoD (Army), West Block-III, R.K. Puram, New Delhi-66. A copy of the above documents/information may also be sent to the P.C.D.A. (O), Golibar Maidan, Pune-411001.

4. The NOK/Legal heirs of the deceased retired Navy and Air Force Officers may immediately write to the following respective offices in the format available at www.cgda.nic.in for their consideration and necessary action.

   (a) For Air Force Officers: Officer-in-Charge, Officers Pay Wing, Air Force Central Accounts Office, Subroto Park, Delhi Cantt-110010.

   (b) For Naval Officers: The Logistics Officer-in-Charge, Naval Pay Office, Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Mumbai-400023.

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CLARIFICATION REGARDING WHETHER MILITARY SERVICE PENSION IS INCLUDED IN GRANT OF MODIFIED PARITY IN ENHANCED RATE OF ORDINARY FAMILY PENSION

The matter has been clarified by MOD Dept of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (Pension Division) vide 10 (17)/2012-D (Pen/Pol ) dated 18 Apr 13 that MSP is one of the components in calculation of enhanced OFP as per Tables enclosed with Circular 494 dated 19 Mar 13 issued by PCDA(P), Allahabad.

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CLARIFICATION REGARDING WHETHER DSC PENSIONERS ARE ALSO COVERED UNDER THE AMBIT OF THE ORDERS FOR ADMISSIBILITY OF DUAL FAMILY PENSION TO NOK

The matter has been clarified by MOD Dept of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (Pension Division) vide 10 (17)/2012-D (Pen/Pol ) dated 21 Mar 13 that the dual family pension is allowable irrespective of whether re-employment was in civil or military department. Hence, family pensioners of DSC personnel are also covered in the ambit.
FROM TARMAC – OLD TIMER – WORLD WAR – II

Air Mshl MS Sekhon PVSM VrC SC VM (Retd)

During the 68th Air Force Anniversary celebration at Trivandrum a very large number of Air Veterans had come and one of them was Flt Sgt Philip, who was one of the founding members of EIGHT PURSOOTS – 8 Sqn for which I have been Commodore Commandant. No.6, 7 & 8 Sqs were raised on the same day at Trichinapally. Philip had completed his 10th Class and wanted to join RIAF at Trichinapally. He went to his School Principal who gave his bicycle to enable him to go to RIAF also at Trichinapally for selection. He was enrolled into 8 Sqn by the Offg OC, Plt Offr Rehman. The Sqn was equipped with Vulture Vengeance bomber aircraft. After 3 months, 8 sqn moved to NWFP (North West Frontier Province) at Kohat. They did exceptionally well and after 3 months were moved to Burma Front at Tulihal-Imphal and Sqn converted to Spitfire- Air Defence Fighter aircraft. Here they did exceptionally well and were nick named EIGHT PURSOOTS. Philip had become a Flight Sergeant- a Chiefy- throughout the WW-II. After the War he married his School Principal’s daughter. He had two daughters-one trained to be a doctor (she subsequently married a doctor from the AMC) and the 2nd daughter an engineer (who later married an engineer in service with the Tamil Nadu Govt.) Philip had retired as a very happy and satisfied Flt Sgt, a big rank in those days.

Flt Sgt Philip was into his nineties and was very fragile and was escorted by his wife and colonel-Doctor son-in-law when he came to attend the 68th Air Force Anniversary in the SNCOs Mess, SAC Trivandrum. He was the Oldest Air Veteran, he took permission and wanted to say a few words to his colleagues. He said "AOC-in-C Sir, SOA- Air Cmde Kumar, Officers and my colleagues. SOA has informed me that now a days you SNCOs are getting Rs. 15,000-20,000 salary per month, you got 100% SMQs, two KV Schools, a college, MH and still you are cribbing & unhappy in life. You GOONs listen to me. In Burma Front, I used to get salary of Rs. 5 p.m., out of which Rs.4, I used to send home, with one Rupee, I used to spend 4 Annas for canteen toiletries, 1 Anna per week for Sunday haircut for CO’s Monday Parade, 1 Anna for Sunday Pictures and Church and save 4 Annas p.m for a rainy day. Out of 27 years in service, I had spent 22 years in Field Areas in tents/bunkers/bashas and had no cribs. You GOONs, you know, we never asked for leave, it was always given/we were sent on leave as officers knew our problems/knew us well. Once Plt Offr Herry Dewan made a very bad landing of his Vulture Vengeance aircraft in Burma front on a katcha ALG and I told him that Sir you have F-up the aircraft. We both went to the CO and on my request he was let off with a crate of Rum for DSS as fine! We worked throughout the night and at 1st light, Plt Offr Herry Dewan (Later on Air Marshal) took off in the same aircraft for a bombing mission. You GOONs, we had no tractors or ladders or proper tools and used elephants to tow aircraft and we used barrels as ladders and hammers as tools. Those were the days when I was Chiefy and I had a standing. I am happily settled-courtesy Air Force Training and help from Officers”.

Then Chiefy Philip pulled out a cheque of Rs. 1 lac and wanted to give it for the welfare of airmen. At this stage I moved forward, took the cheque and put it back in to Philip’s coat pocket saying “Chiefy Philip, we greatly appreciate your gesture and kind thoughts for the men, but we ask you to take this cheque back for your own health and age. To respect your feeling, I shall issue a cheque of Rs.2 lac, tomorrow, for the welfare of airmen”. It was an emotional and affectionate Air Force Anniversary.
THREE GENERATIONS IN THE IAF
FATHER & SON FLY TOGETHER

1. On 28 Jan, Air Force Station, Vadodara made a niche in the aviation history when a father-son duo flew a sortie.

2. Air Commodore RS Sodhi VSM, who is the Air Officer Commanding, Air Force Station, Vadodara made this record with his son Flight Lieutenant Angad Singh Sodhi who is presently posted to 12 Squadron, Air Force based at Agra.

3. It is a great coincidence that three generations of this family served the nation through the glorious service of the IAF. It began when Wg Cdr Bhupinder Singh Sodhi (now retired) joined the Adm/Legal branch of IAF in Nov 1949. Both his sons subsequently also chose this illustrious service. The elder son Air Cmde PS Sodhi joined as a medical officer and is presently the DPMO, HQ WAC. The younger son Air Cmde RS Sodhi, achieved the feat when he flew with his son Flt Lt Angad Singh Sodhi. Flt Lt Angad joined the Air Force as a pilot in Jun 2010.

A PEEK INTO THE PAST

DISCHARGE CERTIFICATE OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCES
FOR THE USE OFFICERS AIR GUNNERS AND AIRMEN

DISCHARGE CERTIFICATE ISSUED
BY ROYAL AIR FORCE
TO SGT PILOT TJ
GODWIN
IAF MISSION ‘ENGLISH CHANNEL’

Wg Cdr Paramvir Singh

An exciting new chapter in the annals of IAF Adventure was opened – swimming in the open seas and oceans - a dangerous, highly specialized arena, requiring tremendous physical and mental fortitude. Endurance swimming differs from normal pool swimming in that the distance covered is considered, rather than outright speed. Some well-known open water endurance swims of the world are the crossings of Cook Strait, Catalina Channel and, the king of all channels – the English Channel.

The Indian Air Force forayed into this extreme adventure in 2011, when a team was put together with the aim of swimming the dreaded English Channel, the arm of the Atlantic Ocean stretching between the coasts of southern England and northern France.

The English Channel is 560 kms long and its width varies from 240 kms to 34 kms at its shortest, in the Straits of Dover. The Straits of Dover, due to its location, has seen a lot of action throughout history, especially during the World Wars. Today, it is the world’s busiest seaway, with over 500 ships, tankers and ferries ploughing through the waters.

Considered the toughest Channel swim in the World, the challenge lies as much in the tough rules and guidelines governing the swim, as the channel itself. The Channel Swimming Association regulates, registers and monitors every swim that takes place. Each swimmer is “permitted to grease the body before a swim, use goggles, and wear one cap, nose clip, ear plugs and one costume”. The use of any artificial aids, like wetsuits, fins etc., is not allowed. Swimmers are not permitted to come in physical contact with any other person or any vessel during the swim. An observer from the Association accompanies and records every registered swim, and ensures compliance of rules.

The IAF Team (nick named ‘Delphinus’ in appreciation of the Dolphin) comprised of nine members led by Wg Cdr Paramvir Singh, swam two of the most difficult channels in the Indian waters as part of its training process – the Rewas to Mumbai channel (33 kms) and the most prestigious Indian channel swim from Dharomat to Gateway of India (47 kms). Both the swims have since been recorded and recognized by the Swimming Federation of India and also by the Maharashtra State Amateur Aquatic Association, as the first by any Armed Forces team ever. This was just the beginning for the team.

The summer of 2012 brought them to the near-freezing waters of the English Channel. Practice sessions meant swimming in bone-chilling waters, bouts of shivering, countless cups of hot coffee, and a never-ending parade of curious onlookers.
On 26 June 2012, Team Delphinus, comprising four members, Wg Cdr Paramvir Singh (Team Leader), Flt Lt Y. A. Narayanpethkar, Cpl A. K. Patel and Cpl Saripilli Srihari, set out before dawn for their first swim. Braving water temperatures as low as 7 to 8 degrees Celsius, wind speeds of 30-40 mph and extremely choppy waters, the team ploughed on regardless, through lethal blue-box jellyfish, fields of seaweed, and inhaling the nauseating fumes from the world's busiest sea-faring traffic.

‘Team Delphinus’ swam into history by becoming the first Indian Armed Forces team to swim the English Channel successfully, clocking an incredible time of 12 hrs 14 minutes, improving the existing Asian record in the process. The Indian Tricolour flew proudly above the Union Jack in Dover!

But this was not enough for this audacious team. Just 8 days later, on 5 July 2012, ‘Team Delphinus’ set out again and nonchalantly bettered its previous record! This time it set the fastest Asian and World Armed Forces record of 11 hrs 25 minutes. They were also the first team in the world to have successfully crossed twice, within the same season. The Tricolour flew even higher!!

The Channel Swimming Association, the governing body for the English Channel swims, conferred the Montserrat Tresserras Shield on ‘Team Delphinus’ for being the fastest Channel swimming team in the world for the year 2012.

Several records were set by ‘Team Delphinus’ that day, in their category:

- First in the World to swim twice within the same swim season.
- First, and till date, the only team from the Armed Forces of the World to swim the Channel.
- Fastest team in the World for the year 2012.
- Fastest team ever in Asia.
- First and only team in Asia, as well as in the World Armed Forces, to be conferred with the Montserrat Tresserras Shield.

“Despite the march of time and progress, the basic essentials of swimming the Channel remain precisely the same. Whatever the era, a Channel swim is, and always will be, a battle of one small swimmer against the sometimes savage vastness of the open sea”.
- Commander Gerald Forsberg

(Editor: Kudos to the Team. You have done us all so proud!)
THE UNTOLD STORY OF 1971 WAR

Wg Cdr (Dr) M.L. Bala (7101) AE(L) (Retd)

It is now more than 40 years since India fought a decisive war with Pakistan in 1971 and a new nation, Bangladesh, was born. Many articles and books have been written about this war by historians, political leaders and soldiers. I have gone through most of these books and articles. Very vivid and interesting accounts have been written in these publications. However, I have not come across any account of what I shall be narrating in this article.

I was posted to a Signals Intelligence Unit in 1970, after completing a Refreshers’ Course at the Air Force Technical College, Bangalore. I was a Flight Lieutenant and was commissioned in the then Technical Signals Branch. I had joined the Indian Air Force in 1963 after completing my doctorate in Physics from Allahabad University, and declining a post-doctoral fellowship from the University of Pennsylvania, USA. I declined the fellowship since I wanted to serve my country, after China attacked India in 1962. To the best of my knowledge, I was the first D. Phil (or a Ph. D) to have joined the technical branch of the Indian Air Force. I believe, I still hold this record although many Air Force officers have completed their Doctorates while serving.

My Unit was called a Wireless Experimental Unit (WEU). It was commanded by Squadron Leader ON Kapoor of the same branch. There were four other officers of Technical Signals branch and one officer of the Administrative Branch in the Unit. Being the second senior most officer in the Unit, I was also called the 2 I/C of the unit.

Our task was complicated since some of the conversations were in languages other than English or Hindi. Often, Bengali, Urdu, Pusho, Sindhi, Chinese, Burmese and Jhangi (a local dialect of South-West Pakistan) were also used. We found that strategic conversations were encrypted at the transmission end and they kept the length of important conversations to the barest minimum. We had made out a schedule of tasks that the R/T Operator manning the radio receiver had to perform. He was expected to carry out searching the various frequencies on the Receivers, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; to log all the monitored conversations and assess its importance. His job also involved decoding the encrypted conversation as soon as he had recorded it, by inserting the correct decode card in the Receiver, if the conversation was encrypted. Very often, he would record important conversations on the audio tape recorder. The duty R/T Operator would inform the Section Commander, who was normally a Flight Sergeant (now called Junior Warrant Officer) what he had “heard”.

Since it was a very strenuous & painstaking job which required complete dedication, the tenure of duty of each R/T Operator on the Receiver was kept at 4 hours only, along with a standby-duty of another 4 hours during which he was asked to relieve the R/T Operator on the Receiver after 2 consecutive hours each.

THE SCENE HOT UPS

The main role of my WEU was to monitor & intercept R/T conversations between East & West Pakistan. The political scene in Pakistan was heating up by the end of 1970 and so was the task of my unit. There were a lot of imbalances between East & West Pakistan. Though both the parts followed the same religion, there was a vast difference in their culture, life-style and language. The East deeply resented the attempt to dominate by the West. It reached epic
proportions, so much so, that the Bengali officers of Pakistan Air Force (PAF) mutinied at Tejgaon air base in East Pakistan.

As the scenario was heating up in the two parts of Pakistan, the traffic density and content of telecommunication conversation between them started to change. Almost all the commercial and trade conversations on the normal and the administrative R/T channels were replaced with political and military conversation. The channels which used to be opened by them for testing only, were now being switched-on and used more frequently and for longer duration (we had made a list of these frequencies under the heading STRATEGIC FREQUENCIES, and were sure that these were going to be used for important conversations). Our Ops room started buzzing with activity. My responsibilities also became very rigorous. We had to ensure that, while no intelligence of relevance should go unreported to the higher command, they should not be burdened with inconsequential reporting. All the officers and men at the WEU rose to the occasion. We had also to be vigilant against the fifth columnist, especially after one of our own uniformed NCO was detained by military policemen.

We kept passing on details of various intercepted intelligence information to our Directorate and were told that some of the intelligence intercepted by us had been very important and useful. The density of telephone traffic remained very high. After the Bengali PAF officers mutinied, our interceptions became very useful and the density of our reporting also increased. Since our monitoring was on 24X7 basis, many a time I and many others had to spend almost 24 hours in the Unit. We reported that Iran was rushing its Boeing and C-130s for sending Pakistani army to East Pakistan much earlier than other Intelligence organisations of the country. Similarly, we reported that though China was ready to help the Pakistan military, they did not agree to put pressure on India by moving their army to occupy Indian territory. The incidence of firing on the Alouette Helicopter, in which the Pakistani army officer Maj Gen Khadim Raja was travelling, was also reported by us, immediately after the incident.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE**

The Pakistani military spokesmen were also trying to play psychological warfare on our men operating the channels through these very communication channels. They were sure that their R/T channels were being intercepted by Indians. Therefore, many times they used to pass on irrelevant or wrong information on their channels to mislead us. We had to guard our R/T operators through regular pep talks to keep their morale high and to differentiate between right & wrong information.

**CRUCIAL INTERCEPT**

When Gen Yahya Khan imposed Martial Law in East Pakistan and appointed Lt Gen Tikka Khan as the administrator, the Pakistani channels started encrypting most of their military conversations. The decoding cards available as well as newly developed locally, were used extensively after the declaration of martial law. A large exodus of Bengali Muslims as well as other Hindus, were reported by our Unit.

It was about 1045 hrs on 14 December, 1971 when one of our Telst RT Operators, Corporal BP Singh brought a log to me which mentioned a conversation between a Dhaka Governor House official and a West Pakistan government official. I thought it to be one of the routine official conversations. However, when Cpl Singh told me that the conversation was encrypted and he had
to use one of the decoding cards to listen and record the conversation, which was in English, it
evoked my interest. On checking the log book, I found that the conversation was intercepted on
one of the strategic frequencies. I asked for the audio recording of the conversation. It spoke about
a meeting in the Government House to be held the same evening, which was to be chaired by the
Dhaka Governor himself. As I listened further, I found it revealed the names of the officials who
were attending this meeting. The names included General Tikka Khan, the Martial Law Administrator, and AOC, PAF Dhaka among others. I heard and reheard the recording many times
and asked the operator to type out the same.

Unfortunately, our OC, Squadron Leader Kapoor was not available for advice, since he had
left on compassionate leave to attend to his mother who was seriously ill at Lucknow. After making
sure that what I heard was of importance, especially because the war of 1971 was in a critical phase,
I rang up the ADSI (Air) on the dedicated phone and informed him about the particular intercept at
about 1250 hrs. After about one hour, Wing Commander Banerjee returned my call and asked me
if the conversation had been audio taped. On my confirmation, he asked me to personally carry it to
the Directorate. The rest is history. The intercept intelligence that General Jacob mentions in his
article, is this very intercept on the basis of which the Governor's House at Dhaka was bombed and
the Pakistan military surrendered to the Indian Forces on December 16, 1971.

I later learnt that our intercept was instrumental in finalizing the decision to bomb the Dhaka
Governor's House, an act which eventually proved to be a catalyst in making Pakistan surrender to
the Indian Armed forces much sooner than otherwise. I am happy and feel grateful to the almighty
for guiding me to stay back in India and serve my country even though I had to forgo the American
post-doctoral fellowship.

Subsequently, I wrote a citation for Cpl BP Singh and recommended him for an award. I was
happy when he was awarded Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM) for devotion to duty.

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**Things to Remember During a War!!**

_The only thing more accurate than enemy fire is friendly fire._

_No inspection-ready unit ever passed combat. No combat-ready unit ever passed inspection._

_Never share a cockpit with someone braver than you._

_SAMs have the right-of-way._

_If you aren't sure, the SAMs are pointed at you._

_Smart bombs have bad days too._

_Friendly fire - isn't. Recoilless rifles - aren't. Suppressive fires - won't. Mines are equal opportunity weapons._
WEARING OF MEDALS BY EX-SERVICEMEN

Letter No. Air HQ/99730/2/Org (Cer) dated 24 Feb 12 stipulates the QRs and occasions when medals/minature medals may be worn on civil clothes by ex-servicemen. Full medals/minature medals may be worn by ex-servicemen on all functions in the manner as authorised for serving officers/personnel. However, medals will not be worn at meetings of a political nature. Personnel cashiered/dismissed from service or discharged on disciplinary grounds will also not wear medals on any occasion. The occasions on which the medals/minature medals will be worn, are:-

WEARING OF FULL MEDALS

- Republic Day Parade
- Independence Day Parade
- Service Day
- Vijay Diwas
- Wreath Laying on Memorial Day
- Reception at Rashtrapati / Raj Bhawan
- Standards/Colour presentation Parade
- Passing out parade
- Anniversary/Re-union Parade
- When attending State/Military Funerals
- When invited to any official function by an Embassy, Legation or High Commission
- At Armed Forces functions including ESM rallies
- When called upon in aid to civil power
- When visiting any Military HQs on duty

WEARING OF MINIATURE MEDALS

While attending official and service functions such as dinner, cock-tails, lunches, tea parties, reception etc. during day and night connected with the following occasions:

- Functions held in the messes, institutions in connection with Service Day, Unit Anniversary, Re – Unions etc.
- When invited to any official function by any Embassy, Legation or High Commissions.
- At Armed Forces functions including re-unions.

TRUE FRIEND

A true friend is like a (medical) injection; the needle pricks and pains but surely cures the illness in us.
PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH NON-RECEIPT OF PPO / CORRIGENDUM PPO AT THE BANK & ISSUE OF A LOSS CERTIFICATE

1. This situation arises when a pensioner has got his original or corrigendum (revised) PPO and the link branch of the concerned branch of the bank reports non-receipt of the PPO. This is a typical situation of loss of PPO in transit.

2. PPOs are despatched by registered post, therefore their loss is rare. However, if the link branch does not receive the PPO within one month of despatch then it should be presumed as lost in transit and action should be initiated to get a duplicate PPO issued by the office of the DCDA (AF). The lost PPO has the potential of perpetuating a bank fraud, therefore a ‘Loss Certificate’ from the link branch is a must for issue of a duplicate PPO from the office of DCDA (AF). The Loss Certificate is in a particular format which banks are aware of. If in doubt, DAV can be asked for this format on e-mail. The Loss Certificate issued by bank manager basically states that the loss of PPO has been annotated in the Bank records and if the PPO is found again and produced to the bank, no payment will be released by the Bank. This Loss Certificate in original should be sent to the office of DCDA (AF). A copy of the Loss Certificate should also be sent to Dte of AV for necessary liaison with DCDA (AF) and early issuance of duplicate PPO. DCDA (AF) will issue a duplicate PPO only to the bank. It will not issue any duplicate PPO for loss of individual’s copy of PPO.

IMPORTANT LANDMARKS FOR AIR FORCE VETERANS

New Pay Commission: One of the first important landmarks after retirement is a new pay commission. The present trend is that for those who have retired under the provisions of a previous pay commission, their revised pension after a new pay commission will be fixed by the banks. Past experience indicates that the bank staff generally have a limited understanding of defence pensions and tend to fix lower pensions than entitled. Thus, a pensioner should be alert and must find out his correct pension entitlement after every new Pay Commission. If in any kind of doubt, the individual should contact the Directorate of AV for advice and help. Don’t take anything for granted!

Restoration of Commuted Value of Pension: This is the second important landmark after retirement. This provision means that whatever amount was reduced from Pension due to commutation, the same amount will now get added to your pension. Since Dearness Relief (DR) is always on full pension, the restoration of commuted value of pension doesn’t result in any increase in DR. This restoration is not after 15 years of retirement but 15 years of receiving commutation amount. Those pensioners whose pension is of a new pay commission and who have received commutation amount in two/three installments (as per old/new pay commission rates) will have commuted value restored after 15 years of receiving each individual installment. The PPO authorizes restoration of commuted value of pension after 15 years, no external sanction is required. It is desirable to put an application to the bank, 1-2 months before restoration of commuted pension falls due. Normally restoration of commuted value of pension is carried out in the normal course of duty by the bank. However, in case of any problem, the Dte of AV should be contacted for advice and help.

Procedure for Change of Jt Notification after Death of wife /Divorce/Re-marriage: Joint notification basically means that when an airwarrior retires, his pension as well as his legally
wedded wife’s pension is jointly notified in the PPO. After joint notification, the widow can collect her family pension from the same bank where her husband was drawing his pension. The Bank after bare minimum formalities commences the payment of family pension to the widow. However, after death/divorce of first wife, if the airwarrior remarries, he can apply for change of Joint notification in PPO. Similarly, an airwarrior who was unmarried at the time of retirement and marries after retirement, can ask for a joint notification with his wife. On similar lines, there is a need for recording the birth of a child after retirement. Some essential formalities have to be completed before these changes can be made by Dte of Air Veterans. Airwarriors who require these changes to be incorporated, should contact Dte of Air Veterans.

**INCOME TAX PROVISION ON PENSION**

The present status on exemption / taxation on pensionary emoluments is given below:-

**EXEMPTIONS:** Commutation amount, Gratuity, Leave Encashment & Provident Fund – are exempt from Tax. Complete monthly pension amount is exempt from income tax ONLY for those pensioners who are in receipt of Disability element of pension, Gallantry awards and Liberalised Family pension for death in notified operations.

**NOT EXEMPT FROM TAX:** The Monthly pension and family pension (except as stated above) are not exempt from income tax.

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In a first of its kind in the IAF, a free bus service for ex-servicemen was inaugurated by Air Vice Marshal JS Kler, Senior Air & Administration Staff Officer, Maintenance Command at Poly clinic, Vayu Sena Nagar. The facility is seen as a milestone welfare measure extended to the ex-servicemen and their dependents. More than 11,000 ex-servicemen are living in Nagpur. The service is aimed to spare the Veterans the agony of commuting to hospitals on their own by public or personal conveyance.

Adapted from Sainik Samachar November 12 edition.

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In an impressive ceremony at Gandhinagar, No 3 Air Force Selection Board (AFSB) was inaugurated by Air Marshal AK Gogoi, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, South Western Air Command (SWAC). The 3 AFSB will carry out testing for selection of candidates, both men and women, who are aspiring to join the Indian Air Force in the Officer Cadre. The Indian Air Force has three Selection Boards at present which are located at Dehradun (1 AFSB), Mysore (2 AFSB) and Varanasi (4 AFSB) respectively.

Adapted from Sainik Samachar November 12 edition.
80th ANNIVERSARY OF INDIAN AIR FORCE

The Indian Air Force celebrated its 80th anniversary on October 8 last year. An air display by various aircraft formed part of the Air Force Day Parade-cum-Investiture Ceremony at Air Force Station Hindon. The CAS reviewed the parade.

IAF RECEIVES TROPHY FOR BEST MARCHING CONTINGENT IN REPUBLIC DAY PARADE 2013 - A HAT TRICK

The 63rd Republic Day was celebrated at New Delhi with great pomp and show.

The Indian Air Force Marching Contingent had been adjudged the Best Marching Contingent jointly with the Indian Navy, for Republic Day Parade 2013, amongst the Armed Forces Contingents. For the IAF, this has been a singular achievement for the third consecutive year. Commanded by Flight Lieutenant Heena Pore, the IAF Marching Contingent comprised 4 officers and 144 airmen of the Ceremonial Contingent based at Air Force Station New Delhi and Supernumerary officers - Flight Lieutenant Anupam Chaudhary, Flying Officer Gaurav Ahlawat and Flying Officer Rahul T.
IAF'S EXERCISE 'IRON FIST' AT POKHRAN

Indian Air Force’s first day-night exercise demonstrating its combat and fire prowess was conducted at Rajasthan’s Pokhran firing range in the presence of President Pranab Mukherjee, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne ,CAS and a host of other dignitaries.

The mammoth fire power exercise ‘Iron Fist’ in the skies over the Thar desert commenced with ‘flag trooping’ by Mi-8 helicopters and fly past by IAF planes followed by net-enabled operations.

The event was conducted in three phases in which over 100 fighter and transport aircraft and helicopters participated. The event also showcased more than 30 types of platforms and Weapons Systems.

Frontline fighter aircraft including Sukhoi 30, Mirage 2000, Jaguar, MiG 27, MiG 21, MiG 29, attack helicopters, UAV and high-tech AWACS displayed their potential in the show. The prestigious indigenous project-Light Combat Aircraft ‘Tejas’ also took part.

Transport aircraft like AN-32, Embraer, IL-76, IL-78 and C-130J and helicopters like Mi-17V5, Mi-25, Mi-35 also participated in good number. Pilatus-7, the state-of-the-art trainer aircraft, also formed a part of the fly past. Low level aerobatics by SU-30 aircraft added to make the event attractive. The helicopter aerobatic team ‘Saarang’ also gave a riveting performance at the event.
MY JOURNEY FROM BLUE TO KHAKI

J N Pankaj IPS
Superintendent of Police, Kandhamal Distt, Odisha

I would like to share with the readers my experience and the role of the Indian Air Force in shaping my career in the Indian Air Force and providing an excellent platform to advance further in life.

I feel enormously fortunate to have been a member of the IAF family as I always considered it more than just a means of earning a livelihood. I joined the IAF in 1994 as an airman in the technical stream (Eng Fit) and served for more than 11 years before my selection into the All India services.

I come from a humble farming family from a remote eastern part of Bihar. At the time of my entry into the IAF, I had very little exposure and understanding of the outside world except for bookish knowledge. Once I joined the IAF, it not only trained me in my basic trade work, military skill/drill/discipline but also enhanced other aspects of my personality by imparting formal and informal teaching in general education, etiquette/sports/management skills/health-hygiene etc. One of course should not forget the exposure one gets by working with diverse people of great synergy, which is unique. Further, the feeling that one is working in one of the largest Air Forces of the world is enough to boost one’s confidence level.

With grit, determination, and some luck, I cleared my UPSC examination. I would study under candle-light since I had to observe the "lights-out" orders in the billet. During off-shift hours I would study and prepare for the exam. Not that I led an unexciting life. I would still go out occasionally for dinner with my friends and the odd movie too! My colleagues, friends and superior officers always had words of encouragement, which came to my rescue when I thought, the going was too tough.

The amount of exposure and learning in the IAF both in terms of quality and quantity is simply without parallel. It would not be an exaggeration to say that when an Airwarrior appears before an interview he is already far ahead of many of his competitors because of the tremendous self-confidence gained from the time spent in the IAF. Apart from the above stated benefits, one should also acknowledge the pay/perks/healthcare/pre-retirement care etc which are matchless.

I have nearly spent an equal amount of time in the Indian Police Service now since I left the IAF. It is tempting to attempt a comparison but I would be unfair to both the services. Needless to say my years in the IAF have come in handy in my new uniform.

I take great pride in having been associated with the IAF for such a long time and owe many things to it. And I would like to state that it is not just a sentimental expression but a reiteration of facts. I salute the IAF, may it always touch the sky with glory.

Jai Hind!
AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 32nd Annual General Meeting of the Air Force Association was held on 15 Sep 2012 at Air Force Auditorium Subroto Park New Delhi under the chairmanship of Air Chief Marshal PV Naik PVSM VSM (Retd), President, Air Force Association. The meeting was preceded by a solemn wreath laying ceremony at Amar Jawan Jyoti, India Gate which was attended by Marshal of the Air Force. The President, AFA, former Air Force Chiefs, Senior Vice President, AFA and a large number of Air Force Veterans including ladies were present. During the AGM, 35 Octogenarians including one nonagenarian AFA member were honoured and mementos were presented by President, AFA. During the meeting the Air Veterans and families were apprised of the various welfare measures announced by Air HQs, Air Force Association and Ministry of Defence as also the orders of Govt for the grant of pension for pensioners and family pensioners during the year.

As per the tradition, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne PVSM AVSM VM ADC addressed the Air Veterans on the day, highlighting the achievements of the Air Force to meet the challenges and responsibilities in various fields including providing support to paramilitary forces for anti naxallite operations in naxal affected areas. He also gave an overview of the modernization programme of the IAF for the next decade. During the AFA Annual Day programme, Chief of the Air Staff released the First Issue of the magazine, From The Tarmac containing relevant information for retiring/retired Air Force Personnel which was applauded by the august gathering. Copies of the Journal were presented by the CAS to President, AFA and Senior Vice President, AFA.

Age is only a number, a cipher for the records. A man can't retire his experience. He must use it. Experience achieves more with less energy and time.

Bernard M Baruch

Retirement is wonderful. It's doing nothing without worrying about getting caught at.

Gene Perret
NEW APPOINTMENTS

01 Jan 13 - Air Mshl PP Reddy VM took over as Director General (Inspection & Safety). Prior to this he was SASO, HQ TC.

01 Jan 13 - Air Mshl PR Sharma AVSM took over as Air Officer -in-Charge of Personnel. Prior to this he was the first 3 star Commandant of Air Force Academy.

01 Dec 12 - Air Mshl RK Sharma AVSM VM took over as AOC-IN-C EAC. Prior to this he was the Deputy Chief of Air Staff.

01 Dec 12 - Air Mshl S Sukumar AVSM VM took over as the Deputy Chief of Air Staff. Prior to this he was the ACAS (Personnel (Officers)).

01 Feb 13 – Air Mshl HB Rajaram AVSM VSM took over as the Air Officer in charge of Administration. Prior to this he was the DG Wks &Cer.
LETTERS FROM THE READERS

Dhiraj Kukreja <kukrejad@hotmail.com>
Dear Editor,
Probably surprised to see this mail from my side.....Thanks for the inaugural issue of the Journal From The Tarmac..... informative and inspiring.... the interview with MIAF is wonderful... so are the narratives by the veterans.... I hope the young from the Service get to read and learn from them.
A suggestion.... there is so much in the “air” on OROP....the Supreme Court judgement on Rank Pay... one really does not know what to believe. Could Air HQ depute someone to give authentic figures and information through this Journal and the Air Force Association webpage?
Looking forward to the next issue and learning from it..... keep up the good work.
Best wishes and Regards,
Dhiraj aka Kuki (DHIRAJ KUKREJA)
Air Mshl (Retd)

Naushad Khan <nshkanriya@gmail.com>
Sir,
Went through the issue 1 vol.1 of From The Tarmac. Fabulous work in all the fields. While appreciating the team behind the scripts I wish one and all the best. Please let me know the procedure to subscribe to the coming issues.
Thanks.
Khan NSM EX LAC

Respected Sir,
Good morning. I am an ex-air warrior hailing from Kerala State. During our Air Force Association Annual General body Meeting held at SAC on 30 Dec 2012 I got a magazine named From The Tarmac. The said magazine is quite informative and a useful item for the ex-air warriors.
Thanking you Sir.
298832 A Ex-Sgt James P Wpn/Fit

s shanmugam <s.shanmugam50@gmail.com>
Editor sir, From The Tarmac is nice introduction. it is suggested to change the colour of cover page as it has the same look of AFA NEWS magazine.
244790 EX.SGT.SHANMUGAM.S, PERALAM P.O. TAMIL NADU. PIN. 609 405.
Sureshbabu sikha <sikhasureshbabu@gmail.com>
Respected Sir, I am JWO S SURESH BABU (254281) from TIRUPATHI (AP). From the Vol.1 issue no.1 page no.16 it is observed that many of the medals which were awarded did not find a place in the list. I am holding 6 medals which do not find a place. There may be much more. 1. RAKSHA MEDAL 1965 (2)SAMARSEVAMEDAL 1965 (3)SANGRAM MEDAL (4) PASHCHIMI STAR (5) GSNAGAHILLS (6) 25th INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY MEDAL (1947-1972). Kindly add up to the list. So far I was not awarded with 20 years LSM, SSM NAGALAND and LS&GCM (if applicable). I have served in IAF from 21.1.1963 to 31.1.1984 with 21 years and 10 days. Kindly advise me in above matter. As regards to M/S RAO TRAVELS in page no.34 his agency address contact no. are not given. This may benefit Air Veterans to avail the bookings through him. If he announces certain benefits (discount) for veterans and family he may improve his targets and benefit individuals who have served in IAF. I thank every individual and their effort in bringing out the booklet.

Sincerely Yours

Reply :

The medals listed in the first issue of magazine From The Tarmac included only the medals presently manufactured by the MOD (medals). The medals mentioned in your mail are presently not manufactured by MOD (medals) vide their memo No. 7 (17)/85/D Medals dated 16 Dec 85. With respect to your query regarding non receipt of 20 yrs, SSM Nagaland - please contact Dte of Air Veteran (Welfare section) (email id- dav@iaf.nic.in) with relevant details for promulgation of POR. Long service and Good Conduct medal is awarded on merit basis by AFRO. Any further query on honours and awards please write to AFRO (afro@iaf.nic.in).

afa_koz@rediffmail.com
Respected Sir,
“FROM THE TARMAC”
The above publication in hand. Kindly accept my sincere thanks for sending me the 1st issue of our dear magazine which also contains one of my poems from the book “Unlike the Seabridge”. My applause goes to the brain which coined the caption “TARMAC”. It’s amazing! The elegance- it’s quite befitting the honour of Indian Air Force. The contents are very attractive and informative. The word “TARMAC” carries me back to the plains of Air Fields where I had walked. It gives me memories of bygone days. It gives me pains of nostalgia. Thanking you, very much, Sir,
Sincerely yours, (P.M. Mani) Ex-261603 ADSO
Date: 27-09-2012
Reply: - The title for the magazine was given by the CAS himself!

COMMENTS FROM THE EDITOR:
THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS - WE LOOK FORWARD TO MORE OF THESE! THE MAGAZINE IS FREE OF COST AND DESPATCHED TO ALL AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION CENTRES. SINCE LIMITED COPIES ARE PRINTED IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO SEND EXCLUSIVE COPIES TO ALL OUR DEAR READERS. PLEASE BEAR WITH US.
THANK YOU, IAF!

Dear Air Chief Marshal,

1. I'd like to acknowledge with gratitude my experience in dealing with various Air Force agencies from Unit level to Air HQs after the death of my husband.

2. My husband Gp Capt TP Vyas (18135) Adm had met with a road accident in Jodhpur and passed away on 19 Dec 12. He was posted at that time to ECHS Danapur, Patna, which is co-located with the Army.

3. I am grateful to the AOC and officers of Air Force Station Jodhpur who organized a befitting cremation for him with full military honours.

4. The Dte of Air Veterans and AF Station Bihta helped me to complete the required formalities. As a result, the AFGIS cheque was released on 17 Jan 13. This relieved me from my immediate financial worries. IAFBA benefits also started immediately. The Leave Encashment amount was also credited in my account in Mar 13. The PPO was issued on 13 Mar 13 i.e. within about two months of applying and three months of the accident. I had also applied for Govt accommodation at Jaipur for next two years which has been approved by Air HQ. Presently I have moved to Jaipur and I am staying with my relatives.

5. I once again thank the wonderful organisation of Air Force and all its officers, airmen and NCS(E) who helped me in time of need.

Sd/-

(Geetanjali Vyas)
40/128, Swarn Path
Mansarover, Jaipur
Rajasthan - 302020

Date: 05 Apr 13
A Veteran is one who, at one point in his life, wrote a blank cheque payable to his country for an amount “upto and including his life.”