



68th Issue

March 2025

AFA NEWS

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION



EAGLE'S EYE

**Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari PVSM, AVSM, VM
taking over as president Air Force Association from
Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria PVSM, AVSM, VM (Retd)**





EAGLE'S EYE-68

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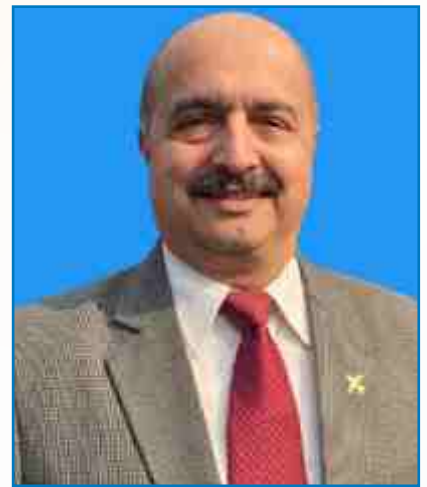
AFA NEWS

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President's Page



Dear Veterans,

It is a matter of great honour and privilege for me to take over as President of Air Force Association, the sole Air Veterans' Organisation, which has the recognition of Govt of India. I assure the Air Veterans community that I stand committed to serving the AFA with dedication and integrity.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize the excellent work done by my predecessor Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria, as he was in regular touch with me during his tenure as the President of AFA and discussed the welfare activities on various occasions. All my predecessors have worked relentlessly for laying a strong foundation at AFA and I look forward to building upon their legacy.

Air Mshl Jagjeet Singh and the team at AFA Head Office along with the Branch Presidents and volunteer veterans have worked hard to bring about positive changes and many improvements in various facets of welfare. It is indeed my privilege to work with this team.

I am happy that Marshal of the Air Force and Mrs Arjan Singh Trust is able to provide help to the members and their families. I invite more philanthropists to come forward to help those in true need.

Senior Citizens' Home is another welfare responsibility of AFA. My colleagues and I shall continue the ongoing efforts to improve the quality of life of its residents and to explore the feasibilities of setting up of at least one more such facility, in one of the metros.

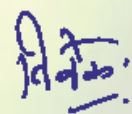
It has been a great experience to meet the Branch Presidents and the members of Executive council during the recently concluded biennial council meeting held at AFA Head Office on 07-08 Dec 24. I highly appreciate the endeavour of all the Branches for regularly organising events / get togethers for resolving the problems of AFA members and to increase social interaction amongst Air Veterans.

I had the opportunity to attend the Late Fg Offr Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon Memorial lecture, which was very well organised by the Gujarat Branch. There are a few more memorial lectures planned to be started soon. This is going to be a very good tribute to the founding fathers of the IAF.

As we move forward, we will continue to strengthen this organization to help resolve issues of Air Veterans and provide a strong support to the needy veterans amongst us.

I convey my best wishes to all air veterans and families for healthy and happy future.

Jai Hind



Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari
PVSM AVSM VM (Retd)



Sr Vice President's Page

Dear fellow veterans

We are happy to continue and present in our News magazine an assortment of **significant** news, events of general awareness and updates on prominent developments in IAF apart from engaging stories of valour and excellence by Air

Warriors and other thought provoking content just for you.

Significant events of IAF in 2024 include "Exercise Vayu Shakti" at the Pokhran range near Jaisalmer (Rajasthan), 'Exercise Tarang Shakti' India's largest multinational air exercise to date at Sullur and Jodhpur. India's First Private Military Aircraft Plant was also inaugurated at Varodra. IAF also achieved significant milestones like participation of an all women contingent at Republic Day Parade 2025. Award of President's Standards and President's Colours to four units of IAF in 2024 (a historic first for the IAF) and inauguration of Weapon Systems School are the other important events.

IAF also commemorated its 92nd anniversary with a grand air show over Chennai's Marina Beach. The show attracted an unprecedented crowd of approximately 1.5 million spectators, setting a record for the largest gathering at an air show in India.

Indian Air Force extended full support to the civil administration for the successful execution of Maha Kumbh 2025, one of the world's largest religious gatherings at Prayagraj. IAF provided the logistical and operational support, facilitating civil aviation and providing humanitarian aid and disaster relief (HADR) coverage. Arrangements were in place to help veterans to visit Kumbh. During the 9th Armed Forces Veterans' Day celebration at the Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal AP Singh stressed that modernization and strengthening operational capabilities remain essential to addressing the challenges posed by evolving warfare. The CAS paid tribute to the contributions and sacrifices of all veterans. In his message he underscored the importance of preserving the legacy of those who had built the foundation of the IAF.

Editorial team at AFA has also captured in this edition spirit and synopsis of significant events, namely Defence service pension bank accounts for veterans, National Pension Scheme for children, Digital transactions replacing paper money, decoding PAN code, New PAN Card, New Banking laws allowing four nominations, New Sainik schools, Veterans medical support groups, Amendments in national education policy, Amendments to ECHS policies etc so as to bring to you content that informs, inspires and entertains.

I also want to take a moment to recognize and appreciate outstanding teamwork and collaboration by volunteers team of retired IAF personal at all AFA branches to work together, share ideas and support one another so as to be always able to provide a holding hand to those amongst us in times of need. Let's continue to achieve great things together!

Happy reading!

Warm regards,

Jai Hind

Air Marshal Jagjeet Singh

PVSM VSM (Retd)

Editor's Page



Welcome to this edition of Eagle's Eye, where we bring you stories that inspire, inform and ignite curiosity and a little bit of everything in between. As we navigate an ever-changing world, this issue is a celebration of resilience, creativity and the human spirit. From thought-provoking features to stunning visuals, every page is crafted to spark conversations and leave long lasting impression. Thank you for joining us on this journey. Let's explore, learn and grow together.

Due to emergence of new technologies, communication of data and content in magazines and news papers on Email / WhatsApp has become the most expeditious, efficient and cost effective means. Also, apart from rising costs of printing; postal charges towards registered post / speed post are also progressively increasing and have become unaffordable within meager members subscription fund. Accordingly, AFA has also gone Digital. The digital copy of magazine is being dispatched by AFA HO to all AFA branches and branches in turn are mailing the same to all the subscribers by email / WhatsApp. Digital magazine is also posted on AFA face book page (**Airforce Association India**), AFA twitter page (**@AirForceAssoci1**) and AFA Web site (**afa-india.org**). Veterans desirous of reading printed copy can download and PRINT their copy from digital copy mailed to them. Printed copy of the magazine shall continue to be dispatched to Magazine Subscribers aged 75 years and above as of 01 October 2024. AFA magazine subscribers are also requested to send their mail ID and mobile phone number by email / WhatsApp to their branch offices and make arrangements to receive the Digital copy.

The highlights of activities of various AFA branches are included in this news letter. The pictures sent by branches speak eloquently about their activities.

AFA is happy to get feedback that the members are enjoying the reading of Eagle's Eye. Your satisfaction and welfare is our main motto and with your co-operation we shall continue to make efforts in this direction.

Feedback is always important for any publication because it helps in improving the shortcomings. Readers are requested to continue sending their valuable feedback. Readers are also requested to send articles / poems/pictures/photos etc. by e-mail to afaheadoffice@gmail.com.

Happy Reading

Jai Hind

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Vijay Kumar Kapur'.

Gp Capt Vijay Kumar Kapur
VSM (Retd.)

OCTOGENARIAN / NONAGENARIAN FELICITATION

The felicitation ceremony is being organized in the month of February every year at AFND lawns. Accordingly this year, OCTOGENARIAN / NONAGENARIAN FELICITATION ceremony was held on 02 February 2025. Thirty nine veterans attended the function. Most of the Octogenarians / Nonagenarians were accompanied by their spouse / children / grandchildren and appreciated the efforts put in by AFA.

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL AP SINGH, PVSM, AVSM TAKES OVER AS CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF



Air Chief Marshal AP Singh took over as Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) at a ceremony at Air Headquarters (Vayu Bhawan) on 30 Sep 2024.

The CAS was commissioned on 21 December 1984 in fighter stream of the IAF. He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Defence Services Staff College and National Defence College. He is a Qualified Flying Instructor and an Experimental Test Pilot with more than 5000 hours of service flying on a variety of fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft.

His operational tenures include being the Commanding Officer of a MiG-27 Sqn and Air Officer Commanding of an air base. As a test pilot, he led the Mig 29 Upgrade Project Management Team at

Moscow, Russia. He was also the Project Director (Flight Test) at National Flight Test Centre looking after flight testing of Tejas. During his career spanning four decades, the CAS has tenanted staff appointments as Air Defence Commander at HQ South Western Air Command and Senior Air Staff Officer at Eastern Air Command. Prior to taking over as Chief of the Air Staff, he was the Vice Chief of the Air Staff.

The CAS is a recipient of Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM) and Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM). In his address to the IAF, Air Chief Marshal AP Singh said that he is honoured and privileged to have been entrusted with the responsibility of leading the Indian Air Force. Extending greetings to all Air Warriors, Non Combatants (Enrolled), DSC personnel, civilians and their families, CAS expressed absolute faith and confidence in their unstinted support and dedication towards maintaining IAF's operational capability at an all-time high.

He conveyed sincere gratitude to the vision of air veterans and attributed the success of the IAF to their superior efforts and dynamic leadership. Highlighting certain focus areas towards building a 'Sashakt, Saksham and an Atmanirbhar' IAF, he urged the Commanders to adopt a nurturing leadership and enhance cohesion and jointness. He called for attention on the current uncertain geo-political situation and said, "It is important that the IAF remains operationally capable, ever vigilant and a credible deterrent." The CAS exhorted all air warriors to follow traditions of the great service and ensure that together we all "Touch the Sky with Glory".

AFA GETS NEW PRESIDENT



Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, PVSM, AVSM, VM (Retd) takes over as president AFA and Chairman of Marshal of the Air Force and Mrs Arjan Singh Trust on 30 Sep 2024 from Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhaduria PVSM AVSM VM (Retd).

He was 27th Chief of Air Staff succeeding Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhaduria. He is born to Shri Rambhau Ganapat Chaudhari, his mother was a school headmistress. His grandfather was a teacher at the Zila Parishad school at Koli, a village in Hadgaon taluka. He studied in primary school at Nanded. He subsequently moved to Pune and enrolled in a military school. He is married to Smt Neeta Chaudhari. They have two sons. His elder son is a Fighter Pilot in the Indian Air Force. His younger son is settled at USA. Post retirement President AFA is settled at Hyderabad.

GP CAPT SHUBHANSHU SHUKLA



Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla will be the second Indian to travel to space since Wing Commander Rakesh Sharma's journey in 1984. His participation in Ax-4 is expected to provide valuable experience that will benefit India's Gaganyaan mission. Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4) is the fourth mission to the International Space Station (ISS) by Axiom Space (a private spaceflight company). This mission which has been planned in collaboration with NASA is scheduled for launch no earlier than April 2025. The mission will utilize a Space X Crew Dragon spacecraft. During his maiden mission, Subhanshu Shukla plans to perform yoga aboard the ISS aiming to

explore its potential benefits in microgravity. He also intends to showcase India's cultural diversity by carrying items representing various regions and sharing Indian cuisine with the crew.

UNIQUE ACT OF PHILANTHROPY



Veteran Gp Capt SM Puri VM and Mrs Sonia Puri have donated Rs Two Crores to Air Force Association for "**Gp Capt SM Puri VM and Mrs Sonia Puri Benevolent Fund**".

Gp Capt SM Puri was commissioned on 29 Oct 1966 in Transport stream of the Flying Branch. He is an alumnus of Higher Command Course at MHOW with Army and has held important appointments of CO 12 Sqn, Stn Cdr AF Stn Sulur, Jt Director Ops (T & H) and has 10000 hours of accident free flying. Mrs Sonia Puri's role, the joint donor, is especially commendable wherein she has joined hands with her husband for this magnanimous and humongous donation and agreed to part with this large sum for noble cause.

The amount has been invested with IAFBA and the interest thereon is being used for the following welfare activities:-

- (a) Grant for **IVF treatment** to childless couple
- (b) Scholarships for **UG professional courses**

Since inception Rs 12.70 Lacs have been distributed for IVF treatment and Rs 10.75 Lacs for scholarships. As a special case, civilian employee of Senior Citizens' Home was given a grant of Rs. 1.5 Lakh for IVF treatment.

The Donors can be contacted at Mob No. **9810264835** and email ID **smpuri483@hotmail.com**

NEW APPOINTMENTS: IAF

AIR MARSHAL SP DHARKAR, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM: VICE CHIEF OF AIR STAFF



Air Marshal Sujeet Pushpakar Dharkar, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, took over as Vice Chief of the Air Staff on 03 October 2024 after relinquishing appointment as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of EAC. Prior to this, he was the Senior Air Staff Officer at HQ SWAC. He has earlier been the Director General of the Defence Space Agency at Bengaluru, Air Defence Commander at HQ EAC and Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Training) at Air Headquarters. Air Mshl Dharkar is a fighter pilot with more than 3600 hrs of flying experience.

AIR MARSHAL SURAT SINGH, AVSM, VM, VSM: AOC-IN-C EAC



Air Marshal Surat Singh assumed command of EAC on 01 October 2024. He is an alumnus of NDA and was commissioned on 06 December 1986. The Air Officer has flown various fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force which include variants of the MiG-21, MiG-29 and Su-30 MKI. He is a graduate of the Command and Staff College, Australia and National Defence College, Bangladesh and has flown over 2900 hours on fighter aircraft. Prior to taking over his present appointment, he was Director General Air Operations at Air HQs.

AIR MSHL JEETENDRA MISHRA, AVSM, VSM: AOC-IN-C WAC



Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra, AVSM, VSM took over as AOC-in-C WAC on 01 January 2025. He graduated from NDA on 06 December 1986. Air Marshal Mishra is a highly experienced fighter Pilot with over 3000 hours of flying experience and has flown more than eighteen types of fighter, transport aircraft and helicopters. He is an alumnus of Air Force Test Pilots School, Bangalore, Air Command and Staff College USA and Royal College of Defence Studies UK. The Air Officer is a Fighter Combat Leader and an Experimental Test Pilot and has held many prestigious appointments in IAF.

AIR MARSHAL PK GHOSH, AVSM: AOA



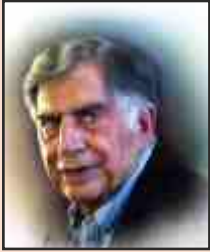
Air Marshal Prabal Kanti Ghosh, AVSM was commissioned in the Administration Branch on 07 Jun 1986. He is an alumnus of Sainik School Purulia, NDA and NDC. He led the Runway Project Monitoring Team in Sri Lanka during 2008-09. He has held senior appointments of ACAS (AF Wks), ACAS (P&D) and SOA HQ TC. He held the appointment of DG (Adm) before assuming the present appointment.

AIR MARSHAL VENKATARAMANAN RAJASEKHAR, AVSM: AOM



Air Marshal Venkataramanan Rajasekhara, AVSM has taken over as AOM on 01 Feb 25. He was commissioned in IAF on 07 September 1987. He is an alumnus of IIT, Bombay. His senior level appointments include CTTO TC, Commandant MILIT and Director General (Systems). He is also appointed as Commodore Commandant, AFTC.

INDIA LOSES A RATAN: “THE RATAN”



Sh. Ratan Tata was a prominent business tycoon, philanthropist, and luminary figure whose success story shall continue as an inspiration for generations. He was born into an affluent industrial family with a rich legacy. He was the great-grandson of Jamsetji Tata, the founder of the Tata Group. He controlled over 30 companies operating in over 100 countries across six continents and had an estimated personal net worth of ₹10000 Crore. Yet he lived an unpretentious life.

He, like his great-grandfather and founder Sh Jamshed Tata was a firm believer that businesses need to go beyond the interest of their companies and support the communities they serve.

Tatas have been regularly supporting and funding various projects. Some of their major donations include 50 million dollars to Cornell University, 50 million dollars to Harvard Business School, 25 million dollars grant to IISC for advancing research in nanotechnology, aerospace engineering, and data science; Large donations for Cancer Research and Treatment particularly through the Tata Memorial Hospital; Funds for Development and augmentation of 10 cancer care facilities across various states in India; Rs 1,500 crore for COVID relief efforts etc.

Late Sh. Ratan Tata also made regular donations into various sectors like Empowerment of Women, vocational training and entrepreneurship support for Dalits and tribes; Environmental Sustainability initiatives like Clean Energy Projects, Water Conservation; Tsunami Relief (2004), Flood Relief Efforts; Kerala floods in 2018, Promoting Mental Health Awareness; Affordable Housing Initiatives, helping young 21st-century start ups, entrepreneurs by investing in many new-age tech-driven startups including Ola Electric, Paytm, Snapdeal, Lenskart and Zivame.

He touched the lives of many, often avoiding the limelight and focusing instead on meaningful, personal connections. He gave away new trucks to genocide survivors of 1984 riots without charging a penny and helped them restart their businesses from scratch. During the 26/11 Mumbai Attack, Sh. Ratan Tata visited each employee's family affected by the attack and formed the Taj Public Service Welfare Trust to provide relief to those affected by the terrorist attack.

He decided to make affordable TATA NANO, world's cheapest car, when he witnessed a family of four riding precariously on a scooter in early 2000. While the Nano didn't become a commercial success as hoped, it showcased Tata's deep concern for ordinary people and his desire to innovate for the greater good rather than solely for profit.

In the late 1990s, when Tata Motors' passenger car division was struggling, Ratan Tata considered selling it to Ford. During a meeting in Detroit, Ford executives reportedly belittled Tata's efforts, suggesting that Ford would be “doing Tata a favor” by buying the division. Insulted, Ratan Tata walked away from the deal and decided to turn Tata Motors around. Years later, in 2008, Tata Motors acquired Jaguar and Land Rover from a financially troubled Ford. The acquisition was a success and is seen as a powerful example of resilience and business turnaround.

He was also well known for his kind and empathetic nature, for animals. Tata Group's Headquarters in Mumbai, which is aptly named Bombay House, is open to all stray dogs in that area and they are given free food and shelter on any given day. In his will, he has not only left his wealth for his brother Jimmy, and half-sisters Shireen and Deanna Jejeebhoy, but also to his beloved pet dog Tito (a German Shepherd) and his house staff, among others. Now that shows the golden heart that Ratan Tata had!

The Visionary Who Took India Inc Global, Ratan Tata Passed away at 86 on 09 Oct 2024.

“May his soul rest in peace”

In the obituary messages of Sri Ratan Tata, We saw a new touching expansion of RIP.



“SIR, RETURN IF POSSIBLE”



COMBAT AIRCRAFT ENGINES – THE NEED FOR ATMANIRBHARTA



Aero engines form the heart of an airborne platform, be it aircraft, helicopter, drone or missile. Technology, in particular for combat aircraft engines, be it manufacture or MRO, is unique and demands a high level of expertise”



This article serves to provide a knowhow on the very basics of a combat aero engine, the current issues being faced in design, development and manufacture within Bharat and a possible way forward.

As we are all aware, it is in the public domain that significant articles and newspaper clippings have been published on India's critical need for developing a combat aircraft aero engine to meet the urgent requirements of powering our indigenous combat aircraft, the LCA. I had already published two basic articles on the LCA and now thought it prudent to give an overview on aero engines for the benefit of the larger populace of our air veterans and air warriors community.

A basic combat aero engine comprises of a Low Pressure Compressor, High Pressure Compressor, Combustion Chamber, Turbine and an Afterburner. Each one is called a **module** of the engine, interconnected by shafts from front to end. Likewise, there would be approximately 50-60 **Accessories** that control the engine. Examples are Fuel Control Unit, Actuator Controls, Afterburner Controls, Digital Computer and the like.

Organisations like Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE; a subset of DRDO) have been entrusted with the responsibility to design and develop such engines with HAL being given the responsibility to manufacture. Today, many private partners are in the play to support this critical venture. Academia like IITs have also pitched in to resolve many key issues of aero engine design particularly with framing computer laws, material issues involving Hot-end Components like the turbine.

In spite of all these efforts, the very infamous Kaveri Gas turbine engine could not find its place into the LCA. However, the dry Kaveri engine has been successfully integrated and flown into one of our key missile programmes. OEMs like SAFRAN, GE, Euro Jet and Rolls Royce have offered succour to India to participate in combat engine development programmes, but the success rate has been very poor. Probably issues related to contract, Budget, technical knowhow arrangements and similar areas have had a telling effect on this programme.

As a result of this, OEMs like GE have taken advantage and sold their available engines to meet our immediate requirements of the LCA. But then at what cost? The GE F-404 powers the LCA Mk1 and the upcoming LCAMk1A. Squadrons are flying with these engines currently. We need to set up our own full-fledged MRO either with HAL or with IAF to realise long term cost optimisation. Similarly, the choice of the GE F-414 engine with its 98kN thrust with likely increase to the 100kN class is yet to fully fructify. The Naval LCA is another lost case for want of a suitable aircraft and a high power engine for deck take-off and landing.

Hence, the programme to go in for a Rafale (Marine) class of aircraft for the Indian Navy.

There is the AMCA of course, 5th generation class of aircraft with Super Cruise Capabilities staring at us a decade down the hill and looking for a suitable engine.

All this demands that we as a Nation get ourselves together, put the best brains into a thought process, lay out a road map, take assistance from a chosen OEM and realise our intended goal. War Gaming exercises on this subject (involving retired IAF officers, private industry, Certifying agencies, DRDO) have been conducted and results forwarded to the Government for suitable consideration. Time alone will tell, the next steps in the process which our top leaders at the Government, Military and R&D will have to decide.

Air Cmde KI Ravi, AVSM VSM who is an M. Tech from IIT Madras has specialisation in aircraft propulsion and hypersonic aircraft design. He was part of the team that was trained at SAFRAN in France for the MRO of the M 53-P2 engine of Mirage 2000 and set up the facility at 4 BRD (Kanpur). He was also involved with ADA during the negotiations with GE for the F-414 engine which resulted in the purchase of initial EIGHT engines for the DRDO trial of LCAMk-II and also AMCA.

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL SK KAUL PVSM MVC, EX PRESIDENT AFA



It is with profound sadness that we announce the demise of former Chief and Ex President Air Force Association, Air Chief Marshal Swaroop Krishna Kaul, PVSM, MVC **who passed** away at the age of 89 on 19 February 2025. He was the Chief of Air Staff from 31 Jul 1993 to 31 Dec 1995.

He was President AFA from 31 Dec 95 to 31 Dec 98 and known for his ability to inspire, unite and lead the veteran community with both grace and determination earning the respect and admiration of the veteran community.

He was born on 20 December, 1935 in Lucknow to a Kashmiri Pandit family. He joined the National Defence Academy in 1951 (5th JSW course) and was commissioned into the IAF in December 1954 (63 Pilot's Course).

Kaul's combat experience began during the 1965 War where he flew multiple ground-attack missions against Pakistani forces in Chhamb, Pasrur and Chawinda. During the 1971 war he led decisive strikes on the Dacca Governor's House and University accelerating Pakistan's collapse. For his fearless leadership he was awarded Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) one of only 19 IAF officers to receive this honour.



**OUR CONDOLENCES GO OUT TO HIS FAMILY AND LOVED ONES.
MAY GOD GRANT SADGATI TO THE DEPARTED SOUL!**



BRANCH PRESIDENTS' MEETING - 2024

The Biennial Governing Council Meeting with AFA Branch Presidents from all over India was held on 07 & 08 Dec 24, under the Chairmanship of Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, PVSM, AVSM, VM (Retd), President, Air Force Association.

President, AFA highly appreciated the endeavour of all the Branches who regularly organise Octo / Nano Felicitation ceremonies, hold events / Melas for resolving the problems of AFA members and increase social interaction amongst Air Veterans. President AFA added that primary aim of the Biennial Meeting of the Presidents of the AFA Branches is to take stock of the good work undertaken by the Branches and initiate measures to further promote the activities towards achieving the objectives of AFA which primarily remain general well-being and welfare of the Air Veterans and their families. Thereafter, the Sr VP presented a detailed resume on various activities of AFA and its future plans. He informed the house that AFA has approximately one lac members and asked all branches for purification of membership data along with mobile no and Mail ID of veterans. This was followed by very fruitful discussions on agenda points as brought over by various branches and overview of major activities. House decided that since AFA News magazine in PDF format on mail / WhatsApp and social media is available to all Air Veterans and Air Warriors, printing of magazines and its postal despatch should be stopped except for subscribers of 75 years and above as of 01 October 24.

In his closing address President exhorted the Branch Presidents to continue with the good work that they and their teams are already doing and make the Branches even more dynamic and vibrant by introducing innovative measures to bring about a qualitative improvement in the general well-being of Veterans and their families with a view to instill a spirited and cheerful disposition in them.

The President also added that the Association is an apolitical body and gave a word of caution, stating that actions initiated by the Association should always remain within the mandate provided for in the Memorandum of Association. There are many other ESM Associations operating within the country, some of whom may have political aspirations and are not recognized by Govt of India. We, as an integral part of IAF, our parent service, should in no way be associating ourselves with such Associations. Minutes of BPM 25 have been mailed to all branches.

WG CDR A K GOSWAMI (RETD): WHO STOLE CO'S PEAK CAP



About fifty years back (1984), as a young Flight Lieutenant I was posted in a newly raised forward base support unit. We were just eight officers in the unit and had worked shoulder to shoulder with our men day and night, to bring up our unit to the inspection standard for the forthcoming inspection by AOC-in-C.

The D – Day arrived. At 0715 hrs all airmen in the ceremonial uniforms formed a perfect hollow square. Four officers donning white web-belts and peak caps had taken their respective positions. Two tall young officers were positioned to escort the VIP to the saluting dais. **Pilot Officer Asthana**, the adjutant, with six month service, was running around to do a final check of the parade contingent.

The **CO, Wing Commander Narayana Swamy** was visibly tense and was awaiting a telephone call from the guard room informing the arrival of the AOC- in-C at the unit gate.

Precisely at 0728 hrs the telephone rang at CO's office to inform the CO that the VIP had entered the unit gate and was being driven to the Parade Ground. As Wg Cdr Swamy replaced the receiver of the phone, he extended his hand to the hat-stand to grab his **Peak Cap** and rush to stand at the head of the parade formation. His hand hit the empty wooden hat hanger. The peak cap was not there! With heart pounding against his chest CO went to position himself at the head of the formation in full ceremonial uniform **sans the peak cap**.

The VIP's car glided to a stop just behind the saluting dais. The escorts marched to lead the VIP to get up on the saluting dais. But instead of climbing the carpeted steps of the saluting dais, AOC – in – C came around and stood face to face with the CO. He took one full minute to slowly look at the **CO from head to foot and then from foot to CO's bare head**. However, no words were exchanged. The AOC – in - C turned back and stood ramrod at the centre of the saluting dais. After presenting a General Salute, the CO marched to the dais and reported to AOC – in - C, **“Parade Aapke Nirikshan Ke liye Hazir Hai Shreeman”**. AOC – in – C stepped down from the dais and proceeded to inspect the parade formation with the CO following him on a slow march. The **UNIT BAND** from civilian labourers who used to play in marriage processions in their spare time belted out the unit's slow marching tune, **“Pyar Kia toh Darna Kya”**.

After the parade, CO invited the AOC – in – C into his office for a small briefing session. As the CO was entering his office, his eyes almost popped out. **His Peak Cap, as usual, was hanging from the hat stand!**

The rest of the inspection went off like clock-work. After seeing the VIP off, the CO returned to the ante-room of the Officers' Mess where all the officers were waiting for him. The CO took his seat. He remained silent for a couple of minutes to mentally figure out the words to say to the assembled officers. Finally, he gravely said, **“Gentlemen, who stole my Peak Cap this morning?”** A complete silence followed. After complete silence for a while CO spoke again, “Gentlemen! You are the officers of the elite armed forces of India. If you have done something wrong, you should have enough moral courage to own up.” More silence followed. When the silence became deafening, **Pilot Officer Asthana, the Adjutant,**

slowly got up and said, “Sir, I had taken your Peak Cap”. CO demanded, “Why”. Asthana admitted that in the morning he rode his bike to his office with the helmet on his head and in a hurry, he forgot to carry his Peak Cap. He said, “Sir, you had been out on the corridor and your peak cap was hanging at the hat stand. I was sure that, as a Pilot Officer if I stood at the parade without a peak cap, I would have been thrown out of service unceremoniously. On the other hand, I knew that you were the CO and if you had forgotten your peak cap no one would tell you anything. So I took your Peak Cap from your hat-stand, put it on and joined the parade.” For the CO, the logic was unnerving.

He remained silent for a long moment and then asked the rest of the officers. “Tell me, what should I do with this chap?”

There was another long silence until the CTO, senior most officer and a pious fellow from ranks, spoke up. He said, “Sir, in my life I have not come across such an incident and I am sure it will not happen again anywhere. He has committed a great blunder. But we request you to **forgive him and let it pass.**” CO pondered for a minute and finally said, “Well, as you say. We all will have a **glass of beer and Asthana will stand.**

- Author can be contacted - 9810559543

OUTSTANDING SPORTSMEN – FELICITATION BY THE CAS

Air Chief Marshal AP Singh on 21 March 2025, felicitated the meritorious sportsmen of IAF who have excelled at Services, National and International arena, at a ceremony that was held at Air Force Station New Delhi. A total of 40 sportsmen including 11 Agniveervayu who had brought laurels to the country by winning medals at Services / National / International forums and Seven teams of Indian Air Force as winners of Inter Services / National Championships / Games, were felicitated during the ceremony.

He congratulated the achievers and advised them to maintain the level of perseverance and consistency while maintaining IAF ethos and ensure promotion of sports.



WOUNDED SOLDIER EVACUATION FROM ISRAEL



Havildar Suresh R, 33, sustained severe head injuries while stationed in the Golan Heights war zone under the UN Peace Keeping Mission (Israel - Hamas conflict). He was successfully evacuated and brought to R&R hospital in Delhi. The evacuation operation was carried out by **IAF using a C-130 Air Ambulance**. The Critical Care Air Evacuation Medical Team, comprising of **Lt Col Singh and two trained paramedics from Base**

Hospital, Delhi Cantonment, ensured that Havildar Suresh received state-of-the art medical care. **IAF Air Ambulance took off from Tel Aviv (Israel) at 1.20 AM (IST) on 26 September 2024 and landed at Jamnagar at 10 AM**. The soldier was then airlifted to Palam, and by 3 pm, Havildar Suresh was safely transferred to Army Hospital R&R, New Delhi.

The successful operation highlights the efficiency, **dedication and the close co-ordination by IAF and Indian Army** who together, navigated a highly uncertain situation in war zone, to bring one of their own back to safety.

DIGITAL TRANSACTIONS

The shift toward digital cash transactions has been transformative for India's economy, promoting financial inclusion, efficiency and transparency. However, addressing the digital divide and ensuring cyber security will be critical for sustaining and expanding these benefits.

Various easy and convenient modes of digital payments, including Bharat Interface for Money-Unified Payments Interface (BHIM-UPI), Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) and National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC) have registered substantial growth and have transformed digital payment ecosystem by increasing person-to-person (P2P) as well as person-to-merchant (P2M) payments.

Total Digital Transactions Number has increased substantially from 2071 crores in FY 2017-2018 to 18,737 crores in FY 2023-2024.

INDIA, US INK DEAL FOR 31 PREDATOR DRONES



India and the United States have signed a ₹34,500 Crore deal for **31 Predator drones (MQ -9B, 15 for Navy, 8 each for IAF and Army)** developed by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems to enhance the surveillance capabilities of the Defence Forces. The agreement includes establishing Maintenance, Repair and Overhauls (MRO) facilities in India and also involves **collaboration with Bharat Forge** for UAV components and consultancy for combat drone development.

The MQ-9B Sky Guardian **variant can fly for over 40 hours** with a maximum range exceeding **6,000 nautical miles**. It is equipped with multiple sensors for high-resolution imagery, radar, and signals intelligence, providing real-time situational awareness.

The MQ-9B can carry **variety of weapons**, including precision-guided munitions like the Hellfire missile, Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM), and laser-guided bombs, making it highly effective for strike missions.

GALLANT AIR WARRIORS : CPL VICKY PAHADE AND CPL SANJAY DHABI



CPL VICKY PAHADE



CPL SANJAY DHABI

On 04 May 24, two Air Warriors, **Corporal Dabhi Sanjay Hiffabai ESSA (Environmental Support Services Assistant)** and **Corporal Vicky Pahade (Communication Technician)** traveling in a Ashok Leyland Stallion Vehicle deployed on ration collection duty were ambushed by three terrorists.

Due to heavy and concentrated small arms fire and grenade attack from two sides, **Cpl Dabhi Sanjay Hiffabai ESSA** was hit by bullets in his right hand and got inflicted with multiple splinter injuries on face and upper body.

Unmindful of his gunshot wound and profuse bleeding, he maintained his composure, tactically adjusted himself and opened retaliatory fire from left side window from his weapon (AK-103) on the terrorists forcing the terrorists to retreat into the nearby jungle. Despite extreme adversities, he established communication with the unit from his personal mobile and informed about the situation at ambush site resulting in launch of immediate evacuation team with required medical aid.

Similarly his co passenger, **Cpl Vicky Pahade** also received heavy and concentrated small arms fire onto him and suffered grievous gunshot wounds in head, neck as well as chest. However, unmindful of his physical condition, he also maintained his composure, situational awareness and opened retaliatory fire from his weapon (AK-103) onto one of the terrorists who was firing at their vehicle from higher ridges. Because of his retaliatory fire, the terrorist had to hide which allowed the armed air warriors seated behind to open fire on terrorists in a coordinated manner, thereby saving the precious lives and collateral damage to the service property.

However, Corporal Vicky Pahade succumbed to his injuries later at Command Hospital Udhampur. As a mark of respect to the bravery displayed by both the warriors in the face of enemy they were awarded with Presidential awards: **Cpl Sanjay Dabhi Hiffabai Shaurya Chakra** and **Late Cpl Vicky Pahade VM (Gallantry) [Posthumous]**.

UNVEILING OF STATUE OF AVM HARJINDER SINGH PVSM MBE (RETD)



Late AVM Harjinder Singh, PVSM, MBE joined IAF in 1932 as a Hawaii Sepoy and was subsequently commissioned in 1942 in Tech GDP Branch. He was appointed as Commanding Officer of 1 BRD in 1949 and excelled to become AOC-in-C, Maintenance Command in 1955. Also, he along with his dedicated and skilled team produced first AVRO 748 A/C. He also contributed in manufacturing of the first ever IAF aircraft named K-1 and K-2. He was awarded PVSM on 26 January 1962 for the distinguished service of exceptional order. **His statue was installed and unveiled on the Republic Day 26 Jan 25 by the Chief Guest, AVM Kapil Razdan VSM (Retd) in the presence of AOC, CO's, PSOs of AF Stn Kanpur along with large number of Air Veterans and their families in the complex of AF Association Kanpur Branch.**

MILITARY AIRCRAFT: FIRST PRIVATE SECTOR PRODUCTION



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and his Spanish counterpart Mr Pedro Sanchez jointly inaugurated the TATA Aircraft Complex for manufacturing of C-295 aircraft at **TATA advanced systems limited (TASL) Campus in Vadodara, Gujarat** on 28 October 2024.

In 2021, Ministry of Defence signed a ₹21,935-crore agreement with Airbus Defence and Space SA, Spain, to supply 56 C-295 (a 5-10 ton transport aircraft designed for tactical

operations) to replace the Indian Air Force's aging Avro-748 aircraft. Under this contract, **16 aircraft are to be delivered fully assembled from Spain, while the remaining 40 are to be assembled in India at the new TASL facility in Vadodara. According to officials, the first aircraft produced locally in Vadodara will be completed by September 2026, the remaining 39 aircraft by August 2031.**

The Vadodara facility is not only tasked with assembling the aircraft but is expected to handle the complete production lifecycle, from component manufacturing to assembly, testing, and final delivery, with a future potential to support maintenance and upgrade services. Other than the aero-engine and avionics, which are sourced by Airbus from other OEMs, the other structural parts will mostly be made in India. **Of 14,000 detailed parts used in one aircraft, 13,000 parts** would be made in India from raw material.

AYUSHMAN BHARAT PRADHAN MANTRI JAN AROGYA YOJANA (AB PM JAY)

AB PM JAY is a national public health insurance scheme of the [Government of India](#) that aims to provide free access to health insurance coverage for low income earners in the country.

Features of PM-JAY include - Providing a cover of [Rs. Five 5 lakh](#) per family per year for medical treatment in empanelled hospitals, both public and private.

Offering [cashless payment](#) and [paperless recordkeeping](#) through the hospital or doctor's office; using criteria from the [Socio Economic and Caste Census 2011](#) to determine eligibility for beneficiaries .

No restriction on family size, age or gender. All pre-existing medical conditions are covered under the scheme; it covers 3 days of pre-hospitalisation and 15 days of post-hospitalisation, including diagnostic care and expenses on medicines; the scheme is portable and a beneficiary can avail medical treatment at any PM-JAY empanelled hospital outside their state and anywhere in the country.

Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY (AB PM-JAY) has now been expanded to cover all senior citizens aged 70 and above, regardless of their **income**. All eligible senior citizens will get free health insurance coverage of Rs **5 lakh annually**.

For registration under the scheme please visit National Health Authority website (<https://beneficiary.nha.gov.in/v>)

Those currently covered by schemes like CGHS, ECHS or Ayushman CAPF can choose to continue with their existing scheme or switch to Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY

AEROSPACE MEDICINE

The 63rd annual conference of Indian Society of Aerospace Medicine Institute (ISAM) was held at Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM), Old Airport Road, Bengaluru from 05 to 07 December 2024. The event was inaugurated by VCAS, Air Marshal SP Dharkar on 05 December 2024, in the presence of military and civilian dignitaries from Bengaluru and other parts of the country. Air Marshal Rajesh Vaidya, DGMS (Air) delivered the presidential address highlighting various collaborative achievements of the medical services of the Indian Air Force.

The prestigious Air Marshal Subroto Mukherjee Memorial Oration was delivered by Dr VR Lalithambika.

The Air Vice Marshal MM Srinagesh Memorial Oration was delivered by Wg Cdr Karthik Kalyanram (Retd) from Rishi Valley Rural Health Centre. Other highpoints included 'The Jemi Harmusji Framji Manekshaw Panel' featuring guest lectures by notable experts including Dr SL Vaya, Dr Hanumantray Baluragi.

The conference celebrated the multi-faceted discipline of Aerospace Medicine and showcased the innovative efforts of IAM in furthering aerospace medicine initiatives in India.

WHY PAN 2.0



PAN 2.0 project has been recently launched by the Income Tax Department which aims to streamline and modernize the process of issuing and managing PAN and TAN making it more user-friendly and efficient. The project addresses the requirements of taxpayers, focusing on consolidation of multiple platforms/portals and efficient services to PAN/TAN holders.

There will be NO (R) NO change in the existing Permanent Account Number (PAN). The 10 digit alphanumeric number issued by the Income Tax Department is set to have the following upgrades:-

- (a) Enhancement of the QR code feature for new and old cards.
- (b) Your application process will be online.
- (c) Merger of all existing identification numbers to make PAN as the common identifier for businesses.
- (d) PAN data vault system - will be created for all entities using PAN data, for data protection and cyber security purposes.

Existing PAN cards will continue to be valid under PAN 2.0. Existing PAN holders **NEED NOT** mandatorily apply for the new card but could upgrade their PAN. The allotment or update or correction of PAN will be done free of cost and e-PAN will be sent to the registered email ID of the individual. For a physical PAN card, the applicant has to apply along with a fee of Rs 50 (domestic).

PAN ONLINE APPLICATION - Online application can be made either through the website portal (<https://tin.tin.nsdl.com/pan/index.html>) or UTIITSL (<https://www.pan.utiitsl.com/PAN>) or Instant E-PAN through Income-tax E-filing Portal (<https://www.incometax.gov.in/iec/foport>)

FIRST WOMAN DIRECTOR GENERAL, ARMED FORCES MEDICAL SERVICES



Surgeon Vice Admiral Arti Sarin, AVSM, VSM becomes the first woman DG, Armed Forces Medical Services. Prior to assuming the appointment on 01 October 2024, she has held the coveted appointments of DGMS (Navy), DGMS (Air) and Director & Commandant AFMC Pune.

She is an alumni of AFMC. She attended the Timpany School, Visakhapatnam. Her father and brother were naval officers.

She is married to Surgeon Rear Admiral C S Naidu, AVSM, VSM, a hepatobiliary surgeon who served in the Indian Navy for 38 years.

SAINIK SCHOOL AT JAIPUR

Honourable Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh formally inaugurated Sainik School, Jaipur in Rajasthan on 23 September 2024. It is part of the Government's vision to set-up 100 new Sainik Schools across the country in partnership with NGOs, state governments and private schools. These new schools will be in addition to the existing 33 Sainik Schools already functioning under the erstwhile pattern.

Ministry of Defence has accorded approval to 45 new Sainik Schools under the partnership mode. These new schools, besides their affiliation to respective education boards, will function under the aegis of Sainik Schools Society and follow the Rules & Regulations. In addition to their regular affiliated board curriculum, they will impart education of Academic PLUS curriculum to the students of Sainik School pattern.

In September 2023, Sainik Schools Society had signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Shri Bhawani Niketan Shiksha Samiti for the establishment of a new Sainik School at Jaipur. The school has already started functioning in the present academic year.

NEW BANKING LAWS – FOUR NOMINEES ALLOWED

New Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill 2024 allows bank account holders to nominate up to **four** people for their bank accounts and fixed deposits including PPF. This bill also introduces a concept of "**successive and simultaneous**" nominations to reduce hardship to customers amid rising unclaimed deposits (app Rs 78,000 Crore at the end of March, 2024). Currently, banks allow only one nominee for savings bank and fixed deposits, which is proposed to be raised up to four.

Depositors can choose between the **same nominations**, where shares are divided among nominees, or **successive nominations**, where the nominees are listed in order, and the claim proceeds are paid to each nominee in turn if the previous nominee is unable to receive the benefit. However for the **lockers**, only successful nominations will be allowed.

At age 20, we worry about what others think of us... At age 40, we don't care what they think of us... At age 60, we discover they haven't been thinking of us at all."

DEMISE OF AIR VETERAN - TAMIL ACTOR 'DELHI' GANESH



Veteran Ganesh served in the Indian Air Force from 1964 to 1974 as Corporal before quitting in favour of films. Delhi Ganesan (01 August 1944 - 09 November 2024), known professionally as **Delhi Ganesh**, was an acclaimed actor in Tamil cinema and serials. He acted in more than 400 films in 48 years in cinema. Ganesan was born in Keezhapavur, a town in present-day Tenkasi district of Tamil Nadu. His early education was in Vallanadu, present-day Thoothukudi district.

Honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, in a message on X, stated he was "deeply saddened by the passing of the illustrious film personality, Thiru Delhi Ganesh Ji."

WORLD'S LONGEST TRAFFIC JAM

Life came to a standstill on 14 August 2010 in China's capital Beijing on Beijing-Tibet Expressway (China National Highway 110). For 12 days, people were stuck in such a jam that the vehicles did not move even an inch. The vehicles lined up to 100 km. This jam is the longest jam in the history of the whole world so far. Trucks carrying construction materials from Mongolia to Beijing for the Beijing-Tibet Expressway that was under construction blocked Beijing's exit for 12 days. Finally, the world's longest jam ended on 26 August 2010.

AIR MARSHAL SUBROTO MUKERJEE'S LEGACY: SUBROTO CUP



Subroto Mukerjee was born on 05 March 1911, in Kolkata. He was one of the first Indians to receive training as a pilot at the Royal Air Force College in Cranwell, England, in 1930 and was one of the first batch of six Indian pilots commissioned into the Royal Indian Air Force in 1932.

In 1954, he became the **first Indian Chief of the Air Staff**. Air Marshal Subroto Mukerjee's (1911- 1960) legacy is remembered in the IAF through the **Subroto Cup**, a premier inter-school football tournament at international level.

The **Subroto Cup International Football Tournament** is one of the oldest and most prestigious inter-school football tournament in India. The tournament is organized by the Indian Air Force (IAF), with the support from Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and the School Games Federation of India (SGFI). Matches are played on prominent grounds in Delhi, including the Dr. Ambedkar Stadium.

The tournament has three categories; Sub Junior Boys (U-15), Junior Girls (U-17) and Junior Boys (U-17). It attracts school teams from all across India, along with international teams from countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, and even far-off nations like Brazil and Ukraine.

63rd edition of the Subroto Cup International Football Tournament was conducted from 05 Aug 24 to 11 Sep 24 at New Delhi and Bengaluru. The Junior Girls (U-17) and Junior Boys (U-17) categories were held at Delhi and Sub Junior Boys (U-15) category was conducted at Bengaluru from 19 to 28 Aug 24.

A total of 107 teams including teams from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal participated in this year's edition. **School children from far flung areas, diverse backgrounds and nationalities lived and played together bringing about an overall integration in line with the fundamental objectives of the tournament.**

A NOBLE INITIATIVE BY VETERAN



I Wg Cdr Thomas Verghese (Retd) staying in Jal Vayu Vihar (Bangalore) shall like to share a true incident. We had an elderly lady living alone in Jal Vayu Vihar. Her son was staying outside. One day her son rang up at 11 AM. Son gets no response. He drives into Jal Vayu Vihar, rings the doorbell. No response. Breaks open the door. Mother was lying on the floor (Probably for 12 to 18 hours).

Wg Cdr Verghese mentioned that to deal with such issues, we have created the free **SKY Blue Alerts service app**. Every member of a group must indicate their 'OK' status by pressing an icon on the app by 10 AM each day. If the member forgets or fails, an automated alarm system will remind the elder (this is work in progress). If there is still no action, it is an alert for other group members or volunteers to contact the member who failed to respond. This is a modified concept of the Indian Air Force of the 1980s where each unit reports its OK status by sending **SKY BLUE MESSAGE** to its higher formation daily. We are working to expand the capabilities of the app so that it can be used to reach out also to paid service providers.

The objective of this initiative is to enable elders to retain their self-respect and dignity, encourage elders to be contributing members, and encourage the younger generation to enjoy the joy of volunteering.

App is still under development. For further details veterans may contact Wg Cdr Thomas Verghese (Retd) on 9945926448. Alternatively veterans may also form similar **SKY BLUE WhatsApp groups**.

VETERANS MEDICAL SUPPORT GROUP (VMSG)



VMSG is holding hands of sick / needy veterans and their dependents to guide them LIVE on issues of medical care, ECHS coverage and pension related issues. Conceptualized and led by **Wg Cdr RS Pandey (Retd)**, with its team of volunteers has been quite active to help all veterans in organising medical care for sick and needy. He has roped in staff and doctors from 25 ECHS empanelled hospitals of NCR and 15 non empanelled hospitals and functionaries at various ECHS offices to secure online LIVE guidance on medical care on this WhatsApp group to veterans. The Group also ties up arrangements for air, train and road ambulance service, blood donor volunteers on

Pan-India basis and assistance from cancer NGOs etc.

Veterans in distress or desirous of serving "Veterans Medical Support Group may connect with **Wg Cdr RS Pandey on WhatsApp number...9711-540-340**.

GRATITUDE TO THE STAKE HOLDERS FROM MRS ASHA WIFE OF 717827-A SGT RAKESH KUMAR RTO R/O GURUGRAM (HARYANA)

My husband passed away on 09 November 2024. Being the wife of Late Sgt Rakesh Kumar I wish to convey my gratitude to all the stake holders for tremendous help in the release of my family pension and allied issues.

Gratitude to SPARSH: I would like to extend my sincere thanks to SPARSH for their efficient online system which enabled me to get Family Pension sanction within 10 days of submitting death intimation. It's an incredible job which could not have been possible without implementation of online system.

I submitted my husband's death certificate on 27 Dec 2024 and the Family Pension was sanctioned on 07 Jan 2025. I received my first pension on 31 Jan 2025.

Gratitude to DAV/IAFBA/AFGIS/AFA HARYANA BRANCH and 54 ASPAF: I want to place on record my special thanks to DAV for HDN action, IAFBA for FAS, AFGIS for AVIC and AFA HARYANA for ADLR Support & 54 ASPAF for Ex-Gratia.

Gratitude to AFA HO: I am very much thankful for the speedy action. My new AFA membership Card No. F: 7633 was received within a month on my residential address.

AIR WARRIOR: SPORTSMEN



Congratulation to JWO Dinesh Kumar and JWO Sahil Kumar, members of AF Cycling team for winning Gold and Silver Medal in 120 Km Road Race at 38th National Games 2025 Uttarakhand. Congratulations to JWO MD Afsal and Sgt Thomas Mathew members of air force athletic team for winning Gold and Bronze medal in the 800 Mtr and 4 X 400 Mtr relay events during the 38th National Games–2025.

ELITE PERFORMANCE



Miss Aditi Yadav is D/o Wg Cdr RD Yadav (Retd) of Lgs Branch. She comes from a rural background and was born at village Jakhrana, Dist-Behror, Rajasthan. She is elder of the two sisters. She did her schooling from KVs. She passed her XII exam with CGPA 10 and was in top 10% of overall CBSE result. She did her graduation from DU in Economics Honours (Hansraj College) and Masters in Economics from Delhi School of Economics. Subsequently, she worked with Price Water Cooper House as an associate for one year. Later she decided to prepare for Civil Services. It was her third attempt that she got through with an AIR of 194 and was allotted the IAS Cadre as per her first choice. She was the second highest scorer in her UPSC interview.

Presently she is undergoing training at LBSNAA Mussoorie and has been allocated Rajasthan cadre as her first choice being home state. Apart from studies, she enjoys playing badminton, lawn tennis and horse riding. She loves reading and being with friends.



MY POSTINGS, PENNED IN POETRY VETERAN WG CDR GH JONES CONTACT: 9567594948

Three decades in the Indian Air Force
Brought home the point that time flies.

In the bustling street of **DELHI**, I found purpose, a guiding light, the heart of the nation, where dreams unite.

BANGALORE, a tech oasis, where innovation thrives, In the realm of knowledge, we reached for the skies.

CHENNAI's shores embraced me with gentle waves, Where tradition's melodies danced amidst the caves.

COIMBATORE's green haven, where nature find solace, In the Manchester of South India, we see peace's embrace.

BHATINDA, the City of Lakes, ignited my soul, The land of warriors, where prowess stands tall.

In **JAISALMER**'s golden sands, history's secrets lie Amidst yellow sandstone havelis and tales that never die.

NALIYA, a trading town of the past, reminds us of its beaches,

At Pingleshwar and Mandvi used to be our weekend bashes.

Oh, the unforgettable memories of life in the Air Force, A tapestry woven with grit and a noble cause.

Though retired, the flame of service burns inside, In the depths of my soul, cherished memories abide,

For I am an Air Veteran, proud to have served the nation, Bound to the flag, where esprit de corps is the foundation.

GUKESH D - YOUNGEST WORLD CHESS CHAMPION



India's chess prodigy Gukesh Dommaraju, also known as Gukesh D who had earlier become grandmaster at the young age of twelve years, has made the country proud now by winning the World Chess Championship at 18 years of age and he has become the **YOUNGEST WORLD CHESS CHAMPION**.

He has defeated **China's Ding Liren** with a score of 7.5–6.5, in the 14-game World Chess Championship final held at Singapore. He has become the second Indian, after five-time champion Viswanathan Anand (dethroned in 2013) to win the World Chess Championship.

Gukesh learned to play chess in 2013, at the age of seven and eventually began structured one hour sessions three times a week. He dropped out of school after Class IV, that is, in elementary school, to focus on his chess hour sessions three times a week. In 2017, his father quit his job to travel with Gukesh to various tournaments. Gukesh was sponsored by his parents' friends at this time. His extraordinary talent was recognized institutionally early on, and he became one of the many beneficiaries of the robust Indian chess ecosystem.

Gukesh was born on 29 May 2006 in Chennai into a Telugu family from Andhra Pradesh. His mother, Smt Padmakumari, is a microbiologist, and father, Dr Rajinikanth, is an ENT surgeon who moved to Chennai to pursue his medical career. Gukesh studied at the Velammal Vidyalaya School in Mel Ayanambakkam, Chennai. Gukesh's family hails from the village of Chenchuraju Kandriga, near Satyavedu in the Tirupati district of Andhra Pradesh.

ECHS POLICIES AMENDMENTS

SINo.	OLD POLICY	NEW POLICY
1	Required OIC approval for updating the registered mobile number.	Can now be updated without OIC approval.
2	Required approval from both existing and new parent OICs.	Auto-approved upon submission of the request.
3	Required approval from the parent PC OIC for referral.	Non-Parent PC OIC can directly approve referrals.
4	Referrals were valid for 30 days.	Referrals are valid for three months (90 days)
5	Limited to three consultation per referral.	Up to six consultations are allowed within the three-month validity period.
6	Required further referral for each investigation or procedure	No further referral is needed within the three-month period.
7	Applied to beneficiaries aged 75 years and above.	Now applied to beneficiaries aged 70 years and above.
8	Limited to certain government hospitals.	Includes all AIIMS, INIs, North East institutions, Tata Memorial and others.
9	Referral required for consultations and procedures.	No referral is required for consultations, investigations or procedures.

Auth: CO ECHS Letter No B/49769/AG/ECHS dt 02 Sep 2024

Website: www.echs.gov.in Contact: 7703818578/7701976194/1800114115

SYNOPSIS OF BRANCH ACTIVITIES

AP AND TELENGANA BRANCH: 92nd Air force day Celebrations were organized for all the veterans available in Hyderabad area, in the premises of CAW on 05 Oct 24. Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne PVSM, AVSM, VM (Retd) was the Chief Guest of the event. On 06 Oct 2024 AF Day celebration was held at Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh) with sixty Air veterans and their family members. AGM along with Felicitation of Octogenarian Air Veterans function was held on 01 Dec 2024. Besides these events, GCM was held on 09 Jan 25 where in Sparsh and ECHS issues were deliberated.

BIHAR: Independence Day was celebrated at branch on 15 Aug 2024. Air Force Day celebrations and AGM 2024 were conducted on 08 Oct 2024. Republic Day was celebrated on 26 Jan 2025.

GUJARAT: Branch organised a pivotal workshop on “**Good Touch-Bad Touch**” and “**Self Defence**” for the students of Army Public School, Ahmedabad Cantt. Veterans and their family members participated in the “**Adani Run for Our Soldiers**” organised by the Adani Group.

Eighth Fg Offr Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon PVC Memorial Lecture was held on 16th Feb 2025 at Neelamber Auditorium of HQ SWAC, Gandhinagar. Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari PVSM, AVSM, VM (Retd), Lieutenant General Pradeep Chandran Nair PVSM, AVSM, YSM (Retd) and Rear Admiral Sudarshan Y Shrikhande AVSM (Retd) shared insights on the multiple strategic aspects of National Security. Honourable Minister of State for Home, Government of Gujarat was the Chief Guest and Air Marshal N Tiwari , PVSM, AVSM, VM AOC-in-C SWAC was the Guest of Honour. About six hundred people attended the lecture.

HARYANA: Scholarship Award function was organized by the Branch at AF Stn Gurgaon on 01 Sep 24. Eight students from class V to XII were awarded the scholarship. A function for Felicitation of two Nonagenarians and eighteen Octogenarians was held on 24 Nov 24. Twenty seven veterans and their spouses participated in an organised trip to National War Memorial on 11 February 2025.

JAMMU: Branch felicitated visit of 19 Air Veterans and their families from Karnataka, Tamilnadu & Puducherry region to Air Force Station Jammu. Veterans recapitulated memories of their past postings at Jammu. Veterans also joined Armed Forces Veterans day celebrations at Akhnoor and Jammu.

JHARKHAND: Branch celebrated AFA Day on 15 Sep 24. Felicitation of Octogenarian members and a cultural programme were held as part of the event. Branch also celebrated its 13th Foundation Day on 05 Jan 25 at Remix Falls, Ranchi. A picnic was organized as part of the event.

KARNATKA: Air Chief Mshl LM Katre Memorial Lecture was conducted on 21 Sep 24. Dr. Samir V Kamat Secretary Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO was the Chief Guest at the function. AFA Annual Day and Wreath Laying Ceremony were conducted on 19 Oct 24 at Arjan Hall and War Memorial of HQ TC. Fourty two Octogenarians and Six Nonagenarians were honoured. Air Veterans' Life Certificate Mela was conducted duly attended by 440 Air veterans and their families from 05 Nov 24 to 14 Nov 24. Air Veterans' SPARSH Sahayata Shibir was conducted at Hubbli/ Dharwar on 01 & 02 Feb 25. Reps from PCDA (Sparsh), DAV and Banks participate to resolve the issues.

KERALA: The first Governing Council Meeting of AFA Kerala Branch, after taking over by the present Executive Committee members, was conducted at Rajadhani Hotel, TVM on 23 Feb 25. The meeting was chaired by Wg Cdr PNS Nair, President AFA Kerala Branch and attended by Executive Committee members of Branch, Chapter Vice Presidents/Representatives and Nominated Members from districts across Kerala. Family meet cum 8th anniversary celebration of Pathanapuram under kollam chapter was conducted on 07 Dec 24. General body meeting and family get-together was organised by Neyyattinkara under TVM district on 11 Jan 25. Vijay divas was celebrated at TVM on 16 Dec 24. Christmas cum New Year was celebrated by AFA Kasaragod Chapter.

SYNOPSIS OF BRANCH ACTIVITIES

MADHYA PRADESH: Virtual meeting with members was conducted. Senior veterans were informed, educated and updated about issues of pensions through DAV and Sparsh. Independence Day was celebrated with veterans and their family members. Problem related to ECHS and few empanelled hospitals were discussed. A virtual meeting with members of Indore, Jabalpur and Rajgarh was conducted. A meeting was conducted at Rewa where Honorary Fg Offr Ajay Raj Singh was felicitated since he completed 80 years.

MAHARASHTRA Branch: Air Chief Marshal PV Naik PVSM, VSM (Retd), CAS and Mrs Madhubala Naik were the Chief Guest at the Octo-Nano Felicitations Programme.

Dr Sarita Kapoor, wife of Late Veteran Sqn Ldr B R Kapoor (first ADC to Dr Rajendra Prasad) and Mrs. Anjalee Goel and other members of the branch jointly with Rotary Club arranged to gift four hundred fifty blankets to veterans at MH Khadki, Queen Mary's Technical Institute For Differently Abled Soldiers QMTI and Artificial Limb Centre at Pune.

NOIDA: Octogenarians felicitations ceremony function was held on 05 February 2025. Vice President AFA HO presided at the function. Lecture on awareness about Cyber crimes was conducted. Noida branch volunteers visited residence of old and sick veterans and helped them in securing their Annual Life certification.

RAJASTHAN: Branch provided assistance to veterans and their spouses towards resolution of their pension and health related issues. On 16 Jan 25 branch President Wg Cdr Mehta briefed the incoming AOC, Air Cmde J Sreeram, VM about the ongoing activities of AFA Jodhpur.

TAMIL NADU: Branch felicitated sixteen Octogenarians and one Nonagenarians members on 23 Jan 25 at Air Force Tambaram. The function was presided over by Vice President AFA Tamilnadu Branch. A talk on Defense service pensions and updates on ECHS was given by Vice President AFA Tambaram Chapter. Other Chapters also conducted the Nonagenarians and Octogenarians felicitations functions.

UTTAR PRADESH (KANPUR): AGM and Octo / Nano Samman Samaroh were conducted on 01 Dec 2024. The Bust of Late AVM Harjinder Singh MBE, PVSM was unveiled on the Republic Day 26 Jan 25 by the Chief Guest, AVM Kapil Razdan VSM (Retd).

UTTAR PRADESH (LUCKNOW): On 28 December 2024, about fifty air veterans visited Cheshire Old Age Home. Veterans carried ration, woolen clothes and other essential items for old age inmates. A Sparsh camp was organised with help of PCDA (Army), Mr S K Chaudhary from Central Command (Army) on 10 Jan 2025.

UTTARAKHAND: On 08 Jan 2025 HFO (Retd) Ghanshyam Pant (97 years) was enrolled as AFA member at 97 years by the Uttarakhand branch. His Life membership card, a calendar of the Air Force Association and a cap of the Branch were presented to him by the branch President Air Cmde Amul Kapoor VM in the presence of Committee Members and the Adjutant of the No 1 Air Force Selection Board.

WEST BENGAL: Branch celebrated the 44th raising day of AFA at the War Memorial, Fort William. The day started with laying wreath at the Cenotaph (at Maidan). Air veterans along with their families marched along the Red road from Cenotaph to War Memorial, Fort. AOC Adv HQ EAC, IAF also joined the celebrations. Branch organised Bijaya Sammilani cum Book Launch of Air Warriors on 27 Oct 24 at Air Force Camp Ballygunge (AFCB). The august gathering included the Chief Patron Veteran ACM Arup Raha PVSM, AVSM, VM and Mrs Lily Raha, Veteran members and families presented songs, dance and recited poems. Veteran groups made visits to the Space Museum of Indian Centre for Space Physics (inaugurated last year by the first Indian astronaut Wg Cdr Rakesh Sharma).

OBITUARY LIST

SI No	Ser No.	Rank	Name	Contact No.	SI No	Ser No.	Rank	Name	Contact No.
1	4721	ACM	SK Kaul	—	49	263178	Cpl	B Jeevaneson	9841567837
2	618344	JWO	Prem Prakash	9919244764	50	8754	Gp Capt	BP Patnaik	6742431481
3	619823	Sgt	Habul Dey	7874142172	51	9241	Wg Cdr	TC Sood	—
4	636944	Sgt	H Singh	—	52	5236	Gp Capt	JN Sachdeva	—
5	612045	Cpl	GS Dey	—	53	294935	MWO	JK Mathai	—
6	4686	Wg Cdr	Swatantra Kr Goel	9999136648	54	250185	Cpl	T Subramani	9840441678
7	14209	Flt Lt	Arun Kumar Bose	9898842455	55	228737	Sgt	Shori Lal Suri	923553364
8	736034	Sgt	Jitendra Singh	—	56	677316	Sgt	MS Kannan	9962606147
9	791717	Sgt	Ajay Vishwakarma	9677031998	57	635297	WO	SK Rathore	—
10	263867	Sgt	P Narayan	9600006041	58	8693	Wg Cdr	PS Sanadi	—
11	227382	MWO	JC Sarkar	9335756307	59	263601	JWO	Laljit Gupta	—
12	781447	Sgt	Vibin Chand VC	9910372774	60	813946	NC (E)	Kailash Chandra	9311311150
13	11496	Air Cmde	RK Sharma	9811716640	61	13676	Gp Capt	MK Roy	9315242610
14	658438	Sgt	B Rajan	9629462901	62	258404	SGT	JD Shogokar	—
15	632005	WO	GS Kumar	9450606792	63	656629	Sgt	AK Bhattacharjee	9932589084
16	274121	JWO	PD Shukla	—	64	747249	Sgt	MS Singh	9259088345
17	6691	Gp Capt	KL Sapru	9811109188	65	9164	Wg Cdr	HS Aujla	—
18	14770	Wg Cdr	C K Desai	9845213179	66	5123	Sqn Ldr	MK Chengappa	9448145450
19	621449	Sgt	BK Chinaray	—	67	650390	Sgt	KN Ahmed	—
20	18891	Gp Capt	Sundeeep Puri	9871412063	68	702564	Sgt	Rameshwar Dass	—
21	16511	Sqn Ldr	IJ Sharma	9257024289	69	14883	Flt Lt	AK Chaterjee	9903383555
22	646231	Sgt	CDP Selvan	—	70	290979	HFO	TCP Pillai	9400161498
23	17945	Flt Lt	M Vishwanathan	9486739936	71	271652	Sgt	Sewa Singh	9889048456
24	772438	Sgt	Nagaraj K	8527187761	72	9149	Wg Cdr	SV Vaidhyanathan	9380886948
25	219599	JWO	M Chandrasekhan	9400429749	73	269998	HFL	Chandel H Singh	9818750269
26	706976	JWO	SK Ambashta	8825077904	74	625539	WO	MB Vijayan Nair	944903830
27	9455	Gp Capt	AC Mathur	—	75	603959	SGT	H Baliar Singh	9776956467
28	205526	HFO	J Murthy	8023419541	76	220111	HFL	GL Sahni	—
29	21817	Wg Cdr	Ajit Sapre	25540089	77	217403	HFL	V Balachandran	—
30	227862	HFO	R Manglam	—	78	223823	Sgt	MC Ganguly	—
31	636169	Sgt	G Loganathan	—	79	268590	MWO	SD Pillay	—
32	9337	Wg Cdr	NM Sharma	9811109418	80	277886	Sgt	K Jaswant Singh	9451375837
33	18467	Wg Cdr	Poral Janardhana	9449028223	81	646989	Sgt	GK Chand	—
34	766976	Sgt	AS Premanand	8109939633	82	262110	JWO	S Gnanapragasm	9942648059
35	658249	Sgt	S Dhar	—	83	696008	JWO	P Gopalkrishnan	8754532785
36	254039	Sgt	P Ramalingam	9942140127	84	603051	JWO	AA Rahim	—
37	236120	MWO	SS Sahdev	—	85	256524	SGT	P Paulsam	9791254898
38	662831	JWO	Rajvir Vashishth	9428201544	86	257332	Cpl	Sudevan Madhavan	9747322748
39	602272	Sgt	V Selvaraju	9944816619	87	11103	Wg Cdr	PV cherian	—
40	735159	Sgt	KP Gauniyal	9351501151	88	4897	Wg Cdr	KC Soni	—
41	661417	MWO	Gulab Singh	9455931877	89	9115	Wg Cdr	ML Biswas	9872212024
42	816702	NC(E)	Jagdish Kumar	9017848589	90	20070	Gp Capt	Jaspal Singh Gill	9899368731
43	267113	JWO	MT Chacko	—	91	246924	WO	Tarsem Chand Garg	—
44	654125	MWO	SK Yadav	9621173120	92	6582	Air Cmde	SK Gupta	26481178
45	12619	Wg Cdr	RK Saxena	—	93	8395	AVM	AN Sen	9899846191
46	285157	WO	PN Katiyar	—	94	8499	Wg Cdr	K Ramchand	—
47	10015	Gp Capt	Satish Dhawan	9810929259	95	16467	Gp Capt	SM Sachdev	8750978090
48	218085	Sgt	SP Palanivelu	4423610029	96	254592	MWO	R Ram	—

A SPECIES CALLED COURSEMATE BY AIR MSHL PV ATHAWALE, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)



Air Mshl PV Athawale



4 AEC Reunion Jan 25



38 NDA-(107 PC) Reunion Feb 25

Air Force veterans of the 38 NDA/107 PC had a reunion at Hyderabad recently in Feb '25. Hyderabad was important for them because the Air Force Academy at Dundigal had begun in January 1971 with the 38 NDA along with the direct entry cadets of the 107 Pilots Course as the first entrants to the Academy. They visited their Alma mater, AFA proudly attired in formals. Having known many of the 38 NDA/107 PC officers since our younger days, it was indeed delightful to meet them on the sidelines of their reunion. Just a month ago, we had a reunion of our Aeronautical Engineers Course, 4 AEC, also in Hyderabad. The venue was incidental without any historical connect with Hyderabad. Unfortunately, we haven't had the privilege of going through the portals of AFA—the engineers have started coming to AFA only recently.

Reunions have great similarities, high levels of nostalgia being the most common factor. Happy energies during reunions are believed to add a few healthy years to each one's life. The term 'Coursemate' is specific to the military, the others being 'classmate' and 'batchmate'. The IAS officers have adopted a lot of their culture from the armed forces. However, all those who share classrooms for two years in their academy, call themselves 'batchmates'. 'Classmates' from schools, colleges, universities and Business Schools are common in all walks of life. Coursemates, however, are unique! We had our 'Golden Jubilee Reunion' at IIT Roorkee three years ago, instantly travelling back to our classrooms and playgrounds to relive those lovely years. Back at Roorkee, we were happily on the same old benches. However, barring a few who were in contact through the fifty years after graduation, there was little common ground with the others and their spouses.

Therefore, these two recent Air Force course reunions particularly brought home to the uniqueness of the species called 'Coursemate'.

The IAS and other services batchmates also meet regularly. Since they have attended classes together, they share fond memories of their younger days. However, rarely would you find officers from the same batch posted together. The same goes for Business School graduates. In comparison, our young officers from a course are posted many to a squadron or a station together. Senior and junior course officers also come out as thick friends just like the coursemates.

We grow in service together, get married and share bonds with families within a big family called the squadron or unit. We do have operational emergencies unknown to the civilian world, which intensely bind the families together. Those happy times as well as tough times are remembered throughout. Coursemates revel in one another's success and milestones and they are there in one another's hardships. Coursemate is, therefore, a classmate, a colleague and more. We must truly envy our Ex-NDA friends. They are classmates at two impressionable levels in life, one just out of school at NDA and the other at Air Force Academy. Their bonds are further strengthened during fighter, transport, helicopter conversion levels. And they also have coursemates across different branches from pilots, navigators to the other ground duties as well. That's a big, big plus! Although not all from AFMC join the military, yet those who do, enjoy similar relationship with their mates. As engineers, we had missed the fun of having the other branch officers as our coursemates. Good things do take time to happen. The recent policy of getting AE courses first to AFA for one term has been a blessing for engineers. Now they have coursemates at places of their first posting, facilitating a rollicking start to their innings in the Air Force.

Despite the Army and the Navy having many institutions awarding engineering degrees in-house, the Air Force hasn't been fortunate to get one. An in-house degree course would provide longer duration for military character-building process, besides giving us the buoyant coursemate effect.

Happily, now the NDA graduates come to AFTC for acquiring an engineering degree before joining the AE branch. Hope this policy is sustained. This will surely enhance the coursemate effect and sore up the operational effectiveness.

The term 'Coursemate' changes to 'Entry mate' for the other ranks, the spirit and emotions being the same.

Long live the Coursemates and Entry mates !

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VETERAN AJIT SINGH

The transition from active service to retirement brings new opportunities and challenges, particularly in financial management. Having served the Indian Air Force in the Accounts Branch, I deeply understand the unique financial landscape of Air Force personnel. At Air Warrior Money, we take pride in offering financial solutions that align with the disciplined approach and integrity that define an Air Warrior.

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KEY THRUST AREAS - IAF CAPABILITY ENHANCEMENT GOALS



Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh presented the Empowered Committee's report on IAF Capability Enhancement to Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh Jee. Chaired by the Defence Secretary, the Committee identified key thrust areas and recommended short, medium & long-term actions for optimal capability growth. The

report emphasizes boosting Aatmanirbharata in aerospace with private sector participation complimenting DPSUs & DRDO India.

PROJECT MARUT

Air HQ has instituted PROJECT MARUT vide which historical material (photographs, personal reminiscences, log books, publications etc) pertaining to IAF are being collated, archived and digitised to enable historians to build a detailed narrative of IAF history. The project is named after the HF-24 Marut, India's first indigenous jet fighter.

OBJECTIVES

- To preserve the IAF's history and heritage
- To uncover rare artifacts of historical value
- To make the IAF's records accessible for research and study
- To capture the IAF's glorious past for future generations

IMPLEMENTATION

- The IAF has already archived records from its History Cell, including declassified files, photographs, mission reports, and operational studies
- The IAF has identified many closed files, some dating back to before independence, for preservation

CO-OPERATION

Veterans, in possession of such material of historical importance and who desire to contribute to Project Marut may forward details of their proposed contributions to AFA at afaheadoffice@gmail.com or Air HQs on email projectmarut@gmail.com.

SUNITA WILLIAMS: ASTRONAUT OF INDIAN ORIGIN



Sunita William's Journey to the Stars and Back encourages young minds to dream big and reach for the stars, proving that with passion and dedication, anything is possible. She is an American astronaut and United States Navy officer. Sunita Lyn Williams was born on September 19, 1965, in Euclid, Ohio, USA. She comes from a diverse background, with her father of Indian origin and her mother of Slovenian descent.

She was selected as a NASA astronaut in 1998. She first went to space aboard the Space Shuttle Discovery in December 2006. During this mission, she set a record for the longest spaceflight by a woman at the time, spending 195 days in orbit. Her second mission was aboard a Russian Soyuz spacecraft in July 2012 wherein she became the first person to complete a triathlon in space and set another record for the most spacewalks by a female astronaut.

Recently Sunita Williams, alongside Butch Wilmore, embarked on a mission aboard the Boeing Starliner's first crewed flight, called the Crew Flight Test. However due to unexpected technical challenges the crew's rerun to earth was delayed. Her recent return from the International Space Station (ISS), after an extended 286-day mission, marks another significant chapter in her remarkable journey.

IAF SUPPORT AT KUMBH



Indian Air Force (IAF) extended valuable support to the civil administration for the successful execution of Maha Kumbh 2025, one of the world's largest religious gatherings at Prayagraj, India. IAF provided the logistical and operational support, facilitating civil aviation and rendered Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR) coverage.

Air Force Station Bamrauli served as the 24X7 hub for civil and chartered flight operations. Its Instrument Landing System (ILS) was maintained at CAT-II standards to enable seamless operations during the low-visibility conditions.

The IAF also supported infrastructure projects in Prayagraj, including the construction of a four-lane highway connecting Kaushambi to the airport and a railway overbridge at Begum Bazar. It also collaborated with the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for the expansion of the civil airport terminal.

An IAF Coordination Team for rescue was stationed at the Mela site equipped with advanced equipment/facilities to provide first aid and casualty evacuation in emergencies.

IAF : CASUALTY EVACUATION AT ZULUK NEAR GANGTOK



On 20 Dec 24, in a well coordinated casevac operation, IAF & Indian Army Helicopters evacuated a total of 10 passengers of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) from Zuluk near Gangtok to Military Hospitals (MH), Gangtok and Bengdubi. Having received the information at 1115 hrs, that a bus carrying personnel of SSB had met with an accident, the IAF launched two Cheetah and one MI 17 V5 helicopters from Bagdogra airbase in less than an hour. The casevac operation was conducted in marginal weather from the Zuluk helipad which is at an elevation of approximately 9000 feet.

IAF : EVACUATION EFFORTS AT JOSHIMATH



In a coordinated swift effort, IAF enabled timely deployment of rescue agencies, NDRF, SDRF & NDMA teams at Mana Uttarakhand towards Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). The airlift of Drone-Based Intelligent Buried Object Detection System (DIBODS) equipment played a crucial role in expediting recovery efforts. The IAF deployed Mi-17 1V and Cheetah helicopters which inducted rescue personnel and evacuated critical casualties from Mana to Joshimath.

AERO INDIA – 2025



Aero India 2025, the 15th edition of Asia's premier Aerospace and Defence Exhibition (10- 14 February 2025) was held at Air Force Station Yelahanka, Bengaluru.

Aero India was inaugurated by Honourable Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh Jee with participation from over 900 exhibitors including 150 foreign companies and delegates from more than 90 countries. **Defence Ministers' Conclave** was conducted which facilitated strategic discussions aimed at strengthening defence ties and exploring new avenues for collaboration.

The main highlight was **Historic Aircraft displays** with rare simultaneous presence of the Russian Su-57 Felon and the American Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II fighter jets, showcasing the two most advanced Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft (FGFA) from rival countries together in India.

NATIONAL PENSION SCHEME -VATSALYA EXTENDED TO MINORS

While traditionally aimed at **working / employed adults**, the National Pension Scheme (NPS) has now been **extended to minors**, encouraging early financial planning for long-term benefits of family savings. Similar to savings schemes like PPF or Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana, the NPS also has the potential to deliver growth over the long term. The National Pension Scheme (NPS) for minors is a **retirement savings initiative** that allows parents or guardians to open NPS accounts for **children under the age of 18**. NPS is a scheme that allows parents or guardians to save for a **minor child's RETIREMENT**. NPS accounts can be opened at all Major Banks, Post offices, eNPS website.

A FUTURISTIC MOVE: CHANGE IN NCERT CURRICULUM (CLASS VI)



Havildar Hameed PVC

The objective of this initiative, jointly undertaken by the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Education, is to inculcate the values of patriotism, devotion to duty and courage & sacrifice among the school children and participation of youth in Nation building.

The **National War Memorial** was set up to inculcate a sense of high moral values, sacrifice, national spirit and belongingness in each and every citizen and to pay befitting tribute to the soldiers, who laid down their lives defending the Nation. The inclusion of poem on "National War Memorial" is a part of an action plan initiated towards branding National

War Memorial (NWM) as an iconic National monument.

The chapter titled '**Veer Abdul Hameed**' honours the Brave heart Company Quarter Master Havildar (CQMH) Abdul Hameed who made supreme sacrifice fighting for the Country during the India-Pakistan war of 1965 and was awarded the Country's highest gallantry award Param Veer Chakra (posthumously).

IAF'S HERITAGE FLIGHT PALAM: MOVES TO JET ERA

IAF plans to restore two retired **MiG-23s** for air display and add these to its Heritage Flight. This move will propel its Heritage Flight into jet era. The Vintage **Flight**, based at Palam Air Force Station in New Delhi, was established in 1981-82 and was renamed in 2020 as **Heritage Flight**. The Flight serves as a bridge between the IAF's past and present, showcasing the evolution of Indian aviation.

Currently, the Heritage Flight operates three World War II-era aircraft: the de Havilland DH-82 Tiger Moth, T-6G Harvard and Douglas C-47 Dakota. While the Tiger Moth is of British origin, the Harvard and Dakota are American-made. The IAF also plans to induct a restored super marine Spitfire, a legendary British WW-II fighter that served with the IAF, along with an HT-2 trainer, the first basic trainer designed in India. These vintage aircraft are used for ceremonial fly pasts at major events such as Republic Day and Air Force Day, as well as Air shows and significant Military events.

LARGEST AIRPORT IN WORLD: KING FAHD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT located in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, sprawls over an impressive 776 square kilometers, making it the largest airport in the world by land area. It is larger than the city of Mumbai or even the entire country of Bahrain.

LONGEST AIRFIELD IN INDIA: INDIRA GANDHI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT has the longest runway in India which measures about 4,430 meters and holds the capacity to handle up to 100 flights per hour.

CR RAO WINNER OF INTERNATIONAL PRIZE IN STATISTICS 2023 EQUIVALENT OF THE “NOBEL PRIZE”



Callyampudi Radhakrishna Rao (1920 – 2023) a distinguished Indian-American statistician was honored with the 2023 International Prize in Statistics, considered the field's equivalent of a **Nobel Prize** in July 2023.

At age of 102 years, he received this honor at the International Statistical Institute's World Congress in Ottawa, accompanied with \$80,000 prize money.

Born in 1920 in Karnataka, India, Rao began his academic journey at the Indian Statistical Institute and later earned a Ph.D. from Cambridge University. He

founded **The Indian Econometric Society (ITES)**.

His extensive career includes over 400 research papers, numerous books, and contributions to fields such as genetics, anthropology, and economics. Rao received 38 *honorary doctoral* degrees from universities in 19 countries. He was a member of *eight National Academies in India*, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Italy and many more. Rao was earlier awarded the *United States National Medal of Science*, that nation's highest award for lifetime achievement in fields of scientific research, in June 2002. He is Padma Shri, Padma Vibhushan and Bharat Ratna.

Dr Rao passed away in Buffalo, New York on 22 August 2023, aged 102.

DR S SOMNATH BESTOWED 'WORLD SPACE AWARD 2024'



Dr S Somnath, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has been honoured with the prestigious International Astronautical Federation World Space Award for 2024 in a ceremony held at Milan (Italy) recognizing ISRO's successful Chandrayaan-3 mission (a historic milestone in lunar exploration of the South Pole).

The International Astronautical Federation (IAF) praised the Chandrayaan-3 mission for its innovation and cost-effective engineering, symbolizing India's dedication to space advancements.

The award recognizes individuals who make significant contributions to space science and technology. In 2023, this prestigious award was bestowed upon Elon Musk, founder and CEO of Space X, for his groundbreaking contributions to space exploration.

DEFENSE SECURITY PERSONNEL - PENSION ACCOUNT

1. Most of the Banks in India offer several advantages for **DSP (Defense Security Personnel)** pension accounts.
2. **Different banks offer different facilities. A few of the salient facilities are covered below:**
 - **Personal accidental insurance** cover of Rs.50 lakh and additional Rs.10 lakh in case of death in terrorist action.
 - **Air accidental insurance** cover of Rs.1 Crore; permanent total and permanent partial disability insurance cover of Rs.50 lakh;
 - **Life time free credit card; Zero balance account; Free ATM transactions; Free issuance of multi-city cheques & demand drafts; Free SMS alerts; 100 % Car loan processing fee waiver; 25% off on annual Locker rent.**
3. The Veterans are advised to visit their respective pension account bank and examine the facilities being offered by their bank for DSP Pension account and **convert their existing pension accounts into Defense Services Pension account if not already done.**

PRESIDENT'S COLOURS – COLLEGE OF DEFENCE MANAGEMENT

The Honourable President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu awarded the **President's Colours** to the College of Defence Management (CDM), Secunderabad on 20 December 2024, marking a historic milestone in the journey of the institute since its establishment in 1970. The President complimented the college's enduring legacy and its dedication to providing officers with the skills to effectively manage complex military operations, logistics, and resources while embracing new-age technologies and strategies. The President emphasized upon the need to be adaptive towards absorption of emerging and disruptive technologies and lauded the role played by CDM in preparing the future strategic leadership towards imbibing the same.

INDIA'S WONDER RAIL BRIDGE



India's inaugural Cable-Stayed railway bridge, named **Anji Khad**, is situated in the picturesque state of Jammu and Kashmir and extends across the mighty Chenab River. This bridge forms a crucial part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, which is expected to significantly enhance connectivity and faster development in the region. The **Anji Khad Bridge** (length 725 meters, width 15 meters with Height **331** meters above **riverbed**) can accommodate trains

travelling at speeds of up to 110 km/h. The bridge is supported by a single pylon which is 1,086 feet tall, (similar to the height of a 77-story building).

ARMY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY : AIR FORCE AND NAVY WARDS

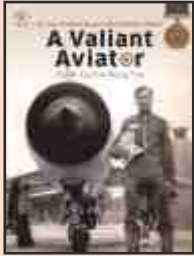
Army Institute of Technology (AIT) was established in the year 1994. It is located on the Dighi campus, about 25 km from Pune and is affiliated with Savitribai Phule Pune University. Until the last year, children of Army personnel only were eligible for admission to the institute. However, (AIT) has now started admitting children of Air Force and Navy personnel into Engineering programmes. This has been approved by Army Welfare Education Society (AWES). As per the approved quota, AIT enrolled 11 wards of Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel and five of Indian Navy (IN) personnel in its Bachelor of Engineering (BE) programmes for 2024-25 academic year, besides 2 wards of IAF and one of Navy in its Master of Engineering (ME) programme. The decision was made at the highest level of Armed forces and is another step towards jointness and tri-services integration.

ARMED FORCES VETERANS DAY : CELEBRATIONS



On 14th January 2025, the Indian Armed Forces celebrated the 9th Armed Forces Veterans' Day, honoring the invaluable contributions of veterans to the nation's security and sovereignty. This annual observance since 2017 marks the retirement date of Field Marshal KM Cariappa, the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, who retired on this day in 1953. The celebrations spanned multiple locations across the country, including Jammu,

Mumbai, New Delhi, Pune, Nagpur, Visakhapatnam, Bengaluru, Bareilly, Jaipur, and Siliguri. In New Delhi, a commemorative event was held at the Manekshaw Centre, Delhi Cantt, attended by the Chief of Air Force along with other senior officers of the Armed Forces. Addressing the 9th Armed Forces Veterans' Day Celebration, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal, Amar Preet Singh said that all of us are aware about the issues with SPARSH (portal) and we are trying to get everything automated and reduce corrupt data through it. There are issues digitising the data. We are slowly but surely learning. Things are progressing and in the right direction. There is one SPARSH cell at every station of Indian Air Force, as well as other bases, to correct whatever issues one may have.



THE VALIANT AVIATOR is more than just a biography; it is a heartfelt tribute to courage, resilience, and the unwavering spirit of a young fighter pilot from the 49th NDA course who etched his name in history. Awarded the “Shaurya Chakra at just 24”, his story is one of extraordinary bravery and selfless dedication to duty.

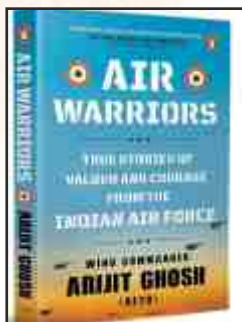
Through each chapter, the book takes readers on an inspiring journey—from his early dreams of flying to the rigorous training that shaped him into an exceptional pilot. It delves into the high-stakes world of aerial combat, where split-second decisions mean the difference between life and death. His story is not just about skill and precision but also about the unshakable resolve that defines a true warrior.

With vivid storytelling, *The Valiant Aviator* brings to life moments of intense action, personal struggles, and unwavering commitment to the Nation. It captures the spirit of a man who soared beyond limits, proving that true heroism is not just about victory but about the willingness to risk everything for a greater cause. Every page leaves an impact, ensuring that the legacy of this young aviator continues to inspire generations to come.

The Book is available in English and Hindi versions at AMAZON and FLIPKART and Publishers: HIGHBROW SUBSCRIBES, Rohini, New Delhi, Mobile 9315426795

Author - Mrs Archana Jain; Wife of Late Group Capt PK Jain, Shaurya Chakra, Mobile 9342445834 Mail ID archanajain00@gmail.com

AIR WARRIORS



AIR WARRIORS is a compilation of ten true stories on different operational incidents and events in IAF like acquisition of first heavy bomber from an Aircraft Graveyard by a new independent country. A heartwarming story of two pilots fighting as enemies in 1965 war meeting each other later in an IAF training institute and other similar well narrated incidents.

These and other human interest stories told against the backdrop of life and day to day operations in the IAF, form the backbone of this book. It is an interesting reading for the air warriors as well as air veterans. Further it will be of immense interest to such readers who are not familiar with IAF.

Author - Wg Cdr Arijit Ghosh (Retd), (Mobile no - 99809 96906) is Ex Secretary Air Force Sports Control Board. He also headed the Indian Armed Forces Sports Contingents to Military World Championships overseas as Chief of Mission.

A CHEST FULL OF HONOUR



Each medal on my chest is more than just metal and ribbon—it is a story, a memory; a chapter of my life lived in service. They carry the weight of distant lands, the heat of deserts, the chill of mountains, and the relentless march through geography. They are echoes of the camaraderie shared, the battles fought, and the sacrifices made.

These simple pieces of cloth and steel hold the dust of countless journeys—marches through unknown terrains, nights under unknown skies and moments when duty outweighed fear. They are not just decorations; they are my legacy, whispering of the unwavering spirit that shaped me.

When I wear them, I do not just wear honours, I wear the pride of every brother in arms who stood beside me. They grant me a title that no rank can surpass.

VETERAN: A title earned, not given. A title that means I served, I endured and I will always stand tall.

SCHOLARSHIP: 2024-25 AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

List of Scholarship : 2024-25		
Name of Child	Name of Air Veteran	Amount
Shiv & Chandravati Pandey Scholarship(I-V)		
ANAGH C ANJANAN	LATE CPL ANJANAN S	12,000
SV CHAUDHARI	LATE CPL CV SITARAM	12,000
Smt Usha Mohan Scholarship (II-V)		
MANJIT	SGT S DAHIYA	5,000
NAVYA CHOUDHARY	SGT J CHOUDHARY	5,000
ANANYA	SGT PK SINGH	5,000
SHIVANSH OJHA	SGT ANUJ PRAKASH	5,000
Smt Urmil Handa Scholarship(II-V)		
AARVI	SGT P KUMAR	6,000
RAJVI SINGH	SGT R KUMAR	6,000
Asha Saraf & Wg Cdr AK Saraf Scholarship(V-VIII)		
SHAHZA KP	SGT SHAFEER KP	10,000
SIVAMAYI REMESH	LATE SGT RV PANICKER	10,000
AVNI RAWAT	CPL A RAWAT	10,000
SREEHARI S NAIR	SGT SREEJITH A	10,000
Sri Venketeswara Scholarship(V-VIII)		
URVI TOMAR	JS TOMAR	8,000
Mrs Satya Mehra Memorial Scholarship(V-VIII)		
ARCHITA SHARMA	SGT V SINGH	8,000
ASHUTOSH SINGH	JWO PANKAJ SINGH	8,000
CH JAISWANTH SAI	CHR SHANKAR	8,000
Shiv & Chandravati Pandey Scholarship(VI-VIII)		
RITESH SINGH BORA	SGT GS BORA	12,000
SP SINGH	SGT DP SINGH	12,000
SWASTIK DAHIYA	LATE LAC P KUMAR	12,000
GRATIA KAMBOJ	JWO S KUMAR	12,000
SHIVANSHI SAH	VISHWANATH	12,000
AADYA PANDEY	LATE SGT NC PANDEY	12,000

Mrs Satya Mehra Memorial Scholarship(IX-X)		
OM MAURYA	JWO VK MAURYA	12,500
FAZILA SULTAN	SGT S AHMED	12,500
NIKITHA DEEPAK	SGT DEEPAK KUMAR	12,500
Mrs Satya Mehra Memorial Scholarship(XI-XII)		
JASWANT SINGH JAMWAL	SGT S JAMWAL	25,000
A AFSHEEN FATHIMA	SGT BA BASHA	25,000
AADYA	SGT B KUMAR	25,000
SRISHTI DHAMA	SGT A KUMAR	25,000
MIDHILA NAIR SK	SGT SB NAIR	25,000
SATYAM SINGH	SGT S SINGH	25,000
SIMRAN	LATE JWO S KUMAR	25,000
AAKRITI	SGT MK PANDEY	25,000
AK ESHWAR SAI	SGT AS KIRAN KUMAR	25,000
N SRIHARSHITHA	JWO VENKATAPPAYA NALLA	25,000
ARAFLO Scholarship(IX-XII)		
B ANIRUDH	SGT S BABURAJ	12,000
ARPAN PAL	HFO SK PAL	12,000
Miss Ekta Jindal Memorial Scholarship(IX-XII)		
SAMPADA RANI SHAH	SGT RP KUMAR	12,000
VARSHINI M	LATE SGT MOHAN K	12,000
KESHAV P	SGT PALINISWAMY R	12,000
TOYAM TATHAGAT	JWO KK SAHU	12,000
96P-34/35 N Course(IX-XII)		
ATUL KOYAL	SGT SK KOYAL	12,000
SHREYAS	JWO ADARSH J	12,000
NISHITA PRIYADARSHINI	LATE WO NC SAHOO	12,000
Daulat Ram Bhatia Scholarship(IX-XII)		
SURYANSH P SINGH	SGT KP SINGH	12,000
Mrs & Sqn Ldr Pritam Singh Scholarship(IX-XII)		
SM SHARIQUE ANWAR	LATE JWO T ANWAR	12,000

SCHOLARSHIP: 2024-25 AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

PNSP VYSHNAVI	JWO KL SEKHAR P	12,000
GULAM MOHIUDDIN	SGT MD ASHARAF	12,000
Shri Kundan Lal Scholarship(IX-XII)		
P DHURVATEJA	LATE SGT PV RAJENDRA	12,000
Devditi Foundation Scholarship(IX-XII)		
PIYUSHI SIHAG	LATE JWO VS SIHAG	12,000
Mrs Suwarna Chaudhary Scholarship(IX-XII)		
CH BAVYA SANVY	SGT CH RAMA KRISHNA	12,000
KRITI SHUKLA	SGT KK SHUKLA	12,000
FI Lt Sunit Mohanty Scholarship(IX-XII)		
AKHILA S	LATE SGT S SUKUMAR	12,000
A SHARVESH RAJU	JWO ANAND S	12,000
Fg Ofrr NJS Sekhon PVC Scholarship(UG - PROF)		
VIGNESH BS	JWO BINOY DS	25,000
MADA KANAKA HARINI	SGT MV GOPAL	25,000
ADITI CHAUDHARY	CPL M SINGH	25,000
Smt Veena Jain & Wg Cdr SC Jain Scholarship(UG - PROF)		
TEJAS TRIPATHI	JWO SK TRIPATHI	25,000
ADRITH KRISHAN M	SGT RAMPRASAD P	25,000
NITI PRIYA	JWO RAKESH KUMAR	25,000
V GANGANAVAR	SGT S GANGANAVAR	25,000
Gp Capt SM Puri & Mrs Sonia Puri Benevolent Fund(UG - PROF)		
MALLELA JAHNAVI	SGT SR MALLELA	25,000
DEVATHA SRESTA	SGT D SUDHAKAR	25,000
SAMYA AGARWAL	JWO P KUMAR	25,000
GAURAV KUMAR	JWO R KUMAR	25,000
PRIYANSHU RANJAN	JWO R RANJAN	25,000
AMAN SINGH	SGT SK SINGH	25,000
ARJUN G NAIR	SGT GOPAKUMAR KG	25,000

PRATHIBH KUMAR	SGT RANJEET KUMAR	25,000
N NIHIL SAI	SGT NUM RAO	25,000
AMBER MISHRA	SGT AK MISHRA	25,000
REVATHI S HARI	SGT TV HARIHARAN	25,000
SAMBIT SUBHADEEP	SGT SIMACHAL DASH	25,000
SHIVAM KUMAR	WO VINOD KUMAR	25,000
MALLA RAJESWARI	JWO MALLA VENKATARAMANA	25,000
RENU NIHARIKA	JWO K SRINIVAS RAO	25,000
PRATYUSH SAHOO	SGT PRATAP KUMAR SAHOO	25,000
KRITIKA YADAV	WO C PRAKASH YADAV	25,000
ADARSH RANJAN	SGT N RANJAN KUMAR	25,000
ABHAY P	JWO SETHUMADHAVAN E	25,000
SWATHY V	SGT VENU R	25,000
Smt Nirmala Vedwa Scholarship(UG - PROF)		
RIYA KHAN SN	LAC KHAN NSM	25,000
ANKITA KUMARI SINGH	SGT AK SINGH	25,000
AVM Dalip Singh Dhaiya Memorial Scholarship(UG - PROF)		
SUBHRANSU PATRA	SGT P PATRA	25,000
SRIKRISHNA UN	JWO SHRINIVASA UK	25,000
J JAYESH	SGT N JAYACHANDRA BABU	25,000
VIVEK KUMAR BEHRA	SGT KK BEHRA	25,000
Smt Promila Yadav Memorial Scholarship(UG - NON PROF)		
SHRIA SANTOSH	WO TK SANTOSH	16,000
H SISHIR	SGT H NAGARAJA	16,000
FI Lt Sunit Mohanty Scholarship(UG - NON PROF)		
ANKUR SARDAR	JWO S SARDAR	16,000
AVM Dalip Singh Dhaiya Memorial Scholarship(UG - NON PROF)		
EVANJELIN NAYAK	SGT DK NAYAK	16,000
SHAFNA AA	SGT ASHARAF AA	16,000
SREELAKSHMI HARIDAS	SGT HARIDAS TP	16,000

MAJOR DONORS 2024 - 2025: AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

SL No	Name	Amount
1	MRS ASHA DHAHIYA	5,00,000
2	VEENA DEVI JAIN	4,00,000
3	AVM RP MISHRA	2,00,000
4	LATE CPL K CHANDRASEKHAR	1,25,000
5	MR ANOOP GUPTA	1,00,000
6	MRS RENU PUGGAL	50,000
7	AIR CMDE SN BAL	25,000
8	MRS MANJU SHARMA	15,000
9	SQN LDR BANGA	12,000
10	PARAMJIT KAUR MAHEK	11,010
11	GP CAPT JAI KISHEN KAUSHIK	11,000
12	MRS MADHU SENDHIR	11,000
13	SGT CHINMAY DAS	10,001
14	GP CAPT SARAB JIT SINGH	10,000
15	WG CDR SUNITH SOARES	10,000

Major Donors (2024-25) for Marshal of the Air Force and Mrs Arjan Singh Trust

Sl No	Name	Amount (₹)
1	EX SGT SP MITTAL	25,000
2	WG CDR ANIL PRADHAN (RETD)	10,000

Scholarships and Grants - Marshal of the Air Force and Mrs Arjan Singh Trust (2024-25)

- MAFT Grants given to 25 beneficiaries = Rs 12,63,205
- MAFT Undergraduate professional courses scholarship given to 30 beneficiaries = Rs 7, 50,000
- MAFT Undergraduate Non professional courses scholarship given to 10 beneficiaries = Rs 1,50,000
- MAFT Scholarship Class 9th to 11 th given to 5 beneficiaries = Rs 60,000
- MAFT -ONGC Scholarship given to 11 beneficiaries = Rs 1,32,000
- MAFT - PRG scholarship Class 11th to 12th given to 16 beneficiaries = Rs 1,92,000
- MAFT - Sports Awards given to 3 beneficiaries = Rs 40,000

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FIRST WOMAN PILOT OF TEJAS (LCA)



Squadron Leader Mohana Singh created history after becoming the first woman fighter pilot to join the elite eighteen - 'Flying Bullets' Squadron of the IAF operating the indigenously made LCA (Tejas) Fighter aircraft.

The officer was part of the major exercise 'Tarang Shakti' involving Air Forces representation from 30 countries conducted by IAF at Salur and Jodhpur. She was also a part of the historic flight by three Vice Chiefs of the three forces. In 2020, Mohana Singh was awarded the Nari Shakti Award by Honourable President Shri Ram Nath Kovind.

FIRST FEMALE APACHE PILOT



Squadron Leader Rahi Ramachandran is the first woman in the Indian Air Force to qualify as an Apache helicopter pilot. Her achievement reflects exceptional skill and growing inclusivity in the armed forces. This milestone inspires women aspiring to break barriers and serve in defence roles, showcasing the evolving role of women in strengthening India Military

FIRST BATCH OF WEAPON SYSTEMS BRANCH OFFICERS



The first batch of officers for the newly created Weapon Systems Branch of the Indian Air Force passed out from the Air Force Academy (AFA) in Dundigal near Hyderabad on 14 Dec 24.

Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), was the Reviewing Officer (RO) at the Combined Graduation Parade. A total of 204 cadets which included 178 men and 26 women were commissioned. Flying Officer Parag Dhankar of Flying branch was awarded the coveted 'President's Plaque' and the 'Chief of the Air Staff Sword of Honour' for standing first in the overall order

of merit in the pilots' course. Flying Officer Ram Prasad Gurjar was awarded the 'President's Plaque' for standing first in the overall order of merit in the Ground Duties branch.

INDIAN ARMY & INDIAN AIR FORCE INK MOU WITH GATI SHAKTI VISHWAVIDYALAYA

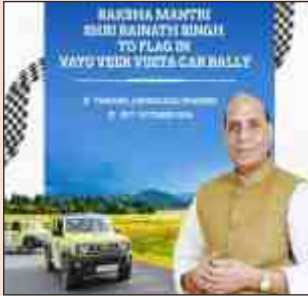


To enhance the skills and capability building of their personnel, Indian Army and Indian Air Force signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, Vadodara (Gujarat) in the presence of Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh and Minister of Railways Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw. The event was attended by CDS, Chiefs of Army and IAF, Def Secy and Chairman Railway Board and Vice Chancellor, Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya in New Delhi on 09 September 2024. Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV), formerly National Rail and Transportation Institute, is a central university located in Vadodara, Gujarat. GSV

is India's first transport University. It is presently at the campus of the National Academy of Indian Railways (NAIR), a central university in India, established by the Government of India with a focus on transport and logistics education. The university is intended to provide specialized programs in areas such as railway engineering, highways, aviation, ports, and other sectors related to multimodal transportation systems.

Speaking on the occasion, the Raksha Mantri described the collaboration as a monumental partnership towards further strengthening the logistics backbone of the Armed Forces in sync with the vision of 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence.

RM FLAGS OFF – VAYU VIJETA CAR RALLY



To mark the 92nd anniversary of the Indian Air Force (IAF) and 25 years of India's victory in 1999 Kargil war, 'Vayu Veer Vijeta' car rally (4300 kms Delhi - Thoise-Tawang) was given a warm ceremonial send-off by Honourable Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh from the National War Memorial, New Delhi to Thoise on October 01, 2024. The rally was then formally flagged-off by Union Minister of State for Highways Shri Harsh Malhotra from Thoise to Tawang on October 08, 2024.

For the very first time Air Veterans participated in any adventure activity organized by IAF (Adventure cell) along with the serving armed forces personnel.

INDIAN AIR FORCE CELEBRATES SWACHHATA DIWAS

The Indian Air Force observed Swachhata Diwas in alignment with the nation-wide "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan," marking another significant step towards maintaining cleanliness and environmental sustainability on 02 October 2024. The event, held on the birth anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and Sh Lal Bahadur Shastri, reiterates IAF's dedication to fostering cleanliness, hygiene, and environmental awareness across its units and bases.

Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, Chief of the Air Staff, led the initiative by participating in a cleanliness drive at Air HQ Vayu Bhawan alongside senior officers, airmen, and civilian staff. He emphasized the importance of cleanliness not just as a routine activity but as a national responsibility, quoting Mahatma Gandhi's vision of a clean and self-reliant India.

WHY LOCKHEED C-130 HERCULES USE PROPELLARS INSTEAD OF JET ENGINES

IAF operated C-130 Hercules transport aircraft uses propellers instead of jet engines because they are better suited for the aircraft's primary role of versatile, tactical airlift operations that require **short takeoffs and landings (STOL)**. Unlike Jet engines which are optimized for high-speed, high-altitude flight, the C-130 often operates at lower speeds and altitudes where turboprops are more effective which in turn is crucial for missions like **paradrop, search & rescue operations and aerial refueling**.

AIR FORCE BOYS SPORTS SQUADRONS (AFBSS)

The Air Force Boys Sports Squadron (AFBSS) is located at Jalahalli, Bengaluru. The IAF and the Sports Authority of India jointly run this program which offers free education, lodging and sports training for boys up to class 12. The program aims to identify and develop potential sports talent to improve India's chances of winning medals in the future international competitions.

To foster sporting talent in **Wrestling** and **Boxing** at the grassroots level IAF conducts enrolment Rallies for prestigious AFBSS. These induction rallies promise to create future champions who will not only represent India in global sporting arenas but also uphold the values of discipline and perseverance that the IAF is known for.



SURYA KIRAN AT BANGKOK

On the occasion of the 88th Anniversary of the Royal Thai Air Force, the Suryakiran Aerobatic Team of the Indian Air Force mesmerized Bangkok after 17 years with a breathtaking nine aircraft display.

EXERCISE EASTERN BRIDGE VII AT OMAN

An IAF contingent comprising MiG-29s, Jaguars and C-17 Globe Master participated in Exercise Eastern Bridge at Air Force Base Masirah, Oman in seventh edition of Exercise EASTERN BRIDGE from 11 to 22 September 2024 with the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO).

SQUADRON LEADER AJJAMADA BOPPAYYA DEVAYYA MVC IN ACTOR AKSHAY KUMAR FILM — SKY FORCE



Ajjamada Boppayya Devayya was born to Dr. Bopayya on December 24, 1932, in Karnataka's Coorg. He was commissioned in IAF in 1954. When the outbreak of the 1965 war happened, Ajjamada was working as an instructor at the Air Force Flying College.

During the **1965 India-Pakistan War**, Devayya (called 'Wings of Fire') was part of a strike mission targeting the Pakistani airbase Sargodha when his aircraft was intercepted by Pakistani pilot Flt Lt Amjad Hussain PAF F-104 Star fighter. Despite his plane being damaged, Sqn Ldr Ajjamada Devayya managed to bring down Pakistan's Star fighter piloted by Flt Lt Amjad. While Flt Lt Amjad of PAF ejected from the plane and parachuted in Pakistan territory, Ajjamada reportedly lost communication with the Indian Air Force, and went missing. Presumably he died in Pakistani territory. However many years after the war, Pakistan reportedly confirmed that Ajjamada Devayya's body was found near Sargodha, and the nearby villagers had buried him.

Twenty-three years later, in 1988, he was posthumously awarded the MVC award. Squadron Leader **Ajjamada Boppayya Devayya MVC** is the only **Indian Air Force** officer to be posthumously awarded the **Maha Vir Chakra (MVC)**.

Sky Force is a 2025 Indian Hindi-language action drama film centred around India's first airstrike, the Sargodha airbase attack of Pakistan in the **Indo-Pakistani air war of 1965** and **Squadron Leader Ajjamada Boppayya Devayya's** remarkable story of courage and bravery. The film stars Akshay Kumar and newcomer Veer Pahariya in lead roles, alongside Sara Ali Khan and Nimrat Kaur.

Honourable Defence Minister Sh Rajnath Singh Jee joined CDS and three service chiefs at the special screening of the film at Air Force Auditorium on 21 January 2025.

IAF FOSTERING CIVILIAN MILITARY CO-OPERATION WITH PROJECT UDAN



In a landmark move to strengthen regional connectivity the Civilian Aviation Ministry, launched its aircraft BOEING-737 flight Kolkata, Hindon, Goa on 01 March 2025 from IAF base Hindon. The project was inaugurated by Hon'ble Civil Aviation Minister Mr Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu at Air Force Station Hindon, showcasing exemplary civilian military coordination. This flight under the UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik) project is a testament to the IAF commitment to supporting both military and civilian air operations, facilitating improved access to varied locations.



MOTHER SON DUO

HISTORIC FEAT: Lt Gen Sadhna S Nair, awarded AVSM, and Sqn Ldr Tarun Nair, awarded Vayu Sena Medal (Gallantry), scripted history as the first mother-son duo to be honoured with Presidential Awards in the same year.

PHOTO GALLERY



**CHANGE OF COMMAND AT
AFA HO – 30 SEP 24**



**AFA STAFF WITH CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF ON
HANDING / TAKING OVER**



**FAREWELL OF OUTGOING
AFA PRESIDENT**



**FAREWELL OF OUTGOING
AFA PRESIDENT**



**BRANCH PRESIDENTS'
MEETING - 2024**



**AFA PRESIDENT RELEASING VII EDITION OF MOA ON
OCCASION OF BPM-24**



**SR VICE PRESIDENT WITH AFA KERALA
BRANCH MEMBERS**



**VICE PRESIDENT AFA WITH MAHARASHTRA
BRANCH MEMEBRS**

PHOTO GALLERY



OCTO-NONA FELICITATION FUNCTION AT AFA HO



PRESIDENT AFA FELICITATING VETERANS (FEB 2025)



OCTOGENARIANS / NONAGENARIANS WITH PRESIDENT AFA



SR VICE PRESIDENT PAYING TRIBUTE ON NATIONAL VETERAN DAY AT NWM



PRESIDENT AFA – INTERACTING WITH STAFF



AFFWA PRESIDENT VISITS SENIOR CITIZENS' HOME AT TUGHLAKABAD



HARYANA BRANCH: OCTO NONA FELICITATION CEREMONY



HARYANA BRANCH: VISIT TO NWM ON 11 FEB 25

PHOTO GALLERY



MP BRANCH: OCTO - NONA FELICITATION CEREMONY



MP BRANCH: OCTO - NONA FELICITATION AT REWA CHAPTER



JHARKHAND BRANCH: PRESIDENT PRESENTING MEMENTO TO THE CHIEF GUEST (COMMANDANT MH, NAMKUM)



JHARKHAND BRANCH: AFA ANNUL DAY CELEBRATION



LUCKNOW BRANCH: VETERANS VISIT CHESHIRE OLD AGE HOME



LUCKNOW BRANCH: PRESIDENT WITH OLD AGE HOME RESIDENTS



AP & TS BRANCH: PRESIDENT INTERACTING WITH CHIEF MINISTER OF TELANGANA



AP & TS BRANCH: ACM NAK BROWNE PVSM, AVSM, VM (RETD) WITH OCTOGENARIANS AND NONAGENARIANS

PHOTO GALLERY



NOIDA BRANCH: LECTURE ON AWARENESS ON CYBER CRIMES



NOIDA BRANCH: FELICITATION OF OCTO NONA MEMBERS



KARNATAKA BRANCH: AOC-IN-C TC WITH PRESIDENT AFA KARNATAKA AT BOOK LAUNCH AT LM KATRE MEMORIAL LECTURE



KARNATAKA BRANCH: ANNUAL LIFE CERTIFICATE MELA



WB BRANCH: PRESIDENT PRESENTING MEMENTO TO THE HONORABLE GOVERNOR OF WEST BENGAL AT RAJ BHAVAN.



WB BRANCH: ACM ARUP RAHA PVSM AVSM VM (RETD) AT BOOK RELEASE FUNCTION.



NORTHERN ZONE: INAUGURATION OF AFA OFFICE BY AOC 12 WG, AF.



NORTH ZONE BRANCH: WREATH LYING CEREMONY AT WAR MEMORIAL (AIR FORCE STATION CHANDIGARH)

PHOTO GALLERY



**GUJARAT BRANCH: PRESIDENT AFA ATTENDING LATE FG OFFR
NIRMAL JIT SINGH SEKHON PVC MEMORIAL LECTURE**



J&K BRANCH: VETERANS DAY CELEBRATIONS



**KERALA BRANCH: ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
AT PATHANSPURAM CHAPTER**



KERALA BRANCH: GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING



**BAREILLY CHAPTER: FELICITATION
OF OCTA – NONA VETERANS**



**ODISHA BRANCH: GET TOGETHER OF LADIES WING ON THE
OCCASION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**



ODISHA BRANCH: BRANCH MEMBERS GET TOGETHER



**TAMIL NADU BRANCH:
OCTOGENERIAN - NONAGENERIAN FUNCTION**

PHOTO GALLERY



MAHARASHTRA BRANCH: ACM PV NAIK, PVSM, VSM (RETD) (CHIEF GUEST) BEING FELICITATED



MAHARASHTRA BRANCH: OCTO-NONA FELICITATION CEREMONY



RAJASTHAN BRANCH: DISCUSSION REGARDING FUNCTIONING AND WORK FLOW OF BRANCH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS



RAJASTHAN BRANCH: VISIT OF SECRETARY AFA HO TO JODHPUR



BIHAR BRANCH: AGM-24 CONDUCTED ON 08 OCT 2024



BIHAR BRANCH: INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION



BPM - 24: AFA BRANCH PRESIDENTS AND ECM MEMEBRS WITH ACM VR CHAUDHARI, AVSM, PVSM, VM (RETD), PRESIDENT AFA

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