



# Reef Knot

July 2023

Kochi

Volume 7



*An Annual Publication from  
Navy Foundation Kerala Charter*



## Dedication

*The inaugural edition published in 2013 was aptly titled as the “Reef Knot”. Cdr Jose Manjooran, the first Editor, introducing the Title brought out nuances that prompted the choice of the name. Essence of passages from his article that emphasis those thoughts are reiterated in the succeeding paragraphs.*

*The “Reef Knot” symbolises steadfast strength, support and stability in the nautical world of knots, splices and rigging, all of which contribute to ensuring that a ship is secure against storms and gales that sweep across her, in her passage through the tumultuous oceans.*

*The Reef Knot ensures a perfect bondage and has a particular character in that it becomes firmer as the ends are pulled from either ends.*

*Practiced in rhyming style “left over right, down turn, roll and right over left” is not just the sailors lesson but also the groom’s prayer at the wedding altar symbolising the importance of a perfect knot at sea and as in any married life!*

*Rear Admiral Malhotra (Retd) in his book on values and customs of the navy “Time, Tide and Traditions” has dedicated a chapter on the Reef Knot which according to him represents the perfect bonding a couple develop during their naval life and more importantly highlights the strenuous demands the multiplicity of roles that the unique phenomenon termed the naval wife has to play.*

*In the spirit in which the publication took shape, I am dedicating this volume to the ubiquitous presence in the life of all Naval Officers - the Naval Wife!!*





## *Editorial*

Dear Veterans and Ladies,

*It's been a decade since the Reef Knot has been amongst us. Ten years is not a long time in history nor does this time frame lend "Reef Knot" any additional aura of having traversed in the sands of time long enough for it to have gathered that historical perspective that tradition bound services like ours are bound to look for.*

*Having said that, let's not forget that every journey begins with the first step, and that first step can happen only when the urge to reach out to beyond the immediate or aspire to attain higher realms propel one to do so. That propulsive drive came from none other than one of the stalwarts of our times V Adm Prem Suthan whose singular drive brought about the first edition of the Reef Knot. Notably that 100-page volume, ably edited by Cdr Jose Manjooran, still holds the top spot for the vast range of topics discussed and the large number of contributors who helped to make those colourful pages interesting.*

*That tradition has been steadfastly maintained with successive volumes having given opportunities to many aspiring authors to express themselves, recounting tales of yore and reminiscing of times gone by with nostalgia and at times with incredulity and awe at the utter foolishness and misplaced bravado which by far contributed to the glitter of those golden ages!!*

*Guided by Naval Officers since its inception in 2013, the Reef Knot came under the deft hands of one of our shining stars Mrs Lakshmi (or is it Shobha) Ramachandran since 2018. She brought to bear a wealth of experience and expertise which reflected itself in the pleasant and poised style of this annual publication highlighting all the major events which the NFKC undertook year on year. The spanner thrown in the works by the furious floods and the sober silence of the chilling pandemic did not deter this lady with the ever beaming countenance to unfailingly bring out the Reef Knot every AGM with her characteristic aplomb!*

*Entrusted to shoulder that responsibility in the fall of the year gone by, I started off by dishing out missives to all, encouraging them to unfold their unbridled imagination and carefully hidden talent by penning a few lines of poignant prose (or poems if one may) to enrich this slim slender sliver in its literary voyage. The resoundingly deafening silence that I received, certainly indicative of the popularity of the new editor, made me realise that nothing works like persistent persuasion and pious patience.*







*Soon many bits and pieces landed up leaving me in a dilemma as to which I should include and which should find the sharp edge of the editorial knife to be sharpened and made precise!! Enjoyable pastime indeed amidst the many marriages, anniversaries and birthdays one has to attend nowadays as excuses of being far away from Kerala or being prevented by exposure to the deadly virus no longer exists!!*

*To enliven the proceedings, we now have a new look cover page depicting the proverbial pristine knot ridding as it were the vast deep dark turbulent ocean while caressing the hazy light bright calm sky reflecting our inborn ability to maintain our amazing bonding amidst our personal ups and downs, remembering to boisterously rejoice the pleasant and piously reflect on past relationships.*

*I am indeed indebted to VAdm Muralidharan President NFKC for his infectious encouragement, Mrs Lakshmi Ramachandran - our erstwhile editor, for her constant guidance, the team at NFKC for their consistent support despite my last minute yelps for information and last but not the least to all those who contributed directly and indirectly in making the Reef Knot appear again at this AGM!*

*One of the outstanding features in this, the seventh edition, is that we have three nonagenarians / octogenarians competing with three lady members vying for print space while three of the NFKC Management Committee members have also penned activities that they took part in.*

*My sincere thanks are also due to Cmde M R Ajay Kumar and Dr S Manikandan for their spontaneous response in sending in their advertisements to this publication.*

*In all this, the spirited support of Mrs Bindu Anand, who readily accepted to co-edit the Reef Knot and her active involvement in the entire process of preparing the contents and its presentation has been commendable. Our attachment with Global Public hence remains alive!!!*

*Hoping this edition of the Reef Knot unwinds you and encourages more of you to try your hands at playing distinguished writers!*

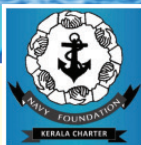
*Best wishes*

*Rear Admiral S Madhusudanan (Retd)*

*06 Aug 2023*







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### *Editorial Team*

Chief Editor : Rear Admiral Sailendran Madhusudan IN (Retd)

Co-Editor : Mrs Bindu Anand







## FROM THE BRIDGE - PRESIDENTIAL MUSINGS

Vice Admiral MP Muralidharan AVSM & Bar NM (Retd)



The classical adage “Time and tide waits for none,” strikes us only when we undertake similar events after prolonged gaps. Annual publication of the Reef Knot, is one such event which makes us realise as to how quickly a year has flown by.

The last few issues of the Reef Knot were witness to a series of catastrophic events such as floods and Covid; which had impacted the social lives of all and more so of senior citizens! Hopefully it is behind us, as we are slowly back to regular physical meetings and social gatherings.

NFKC which had gone into virtual meetings has happily returned to regular social activities. While the AGM and Onam Celebrations set the tone for other get togethers; it was the overseas visit early this year to Vietnam and Cambodia, followed later by the trip to Kodaikkanal that gave back to us the feeling of good old days!

An event in the year gone by that brought a big cheer not only to the Naval fraternity both serving and retired, but to the entire nation as such, was the commissioning of INS Vikrant, the first indigenously built Aircraft Carrier. I hardly need to reiterate that while just a handful of nations have constructed aircraft carriers; the fact that it was built by the shipyard in Kochi was something even more exhilarating to NFKC. A visit to the ship by NFKC enabled most of us to get a feel of the ship and I can never forget the

beaming faces of proud veterans on her flight deck, as they posed to capture their presence on board for eternity.

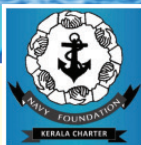
This is possibly an apt occasion to recall one of our Navy’s legendary figures, Late Admiral RL Pereira, who was the Chief of the Naval Staff of our Navy from 1979 to 1982, as it is his birth centenary year. He was an iconic leader and role model who exemplified the highest sense of duty, leadership, integrity, kindness of heart and a deep commitment to the welfare of those under his command. The impact he had on generations of officers and men is difficult to put down in words. The way he inspired and moulded Cadets of the National Defence Academy, during his tenure as Deputy Commandant in the early 1970s, ensured that the admiration and legendary stories about him is not restricted to the Navy! It continues to be part of the folklore in Army and Air Force as well. Recalling legacies of people like him by promoting his values of courage, leadership and dedication to duty, will no doubt inspire future generations.

The concept of Indo-Pacific and its emergence as a theatre for economic and strategic competition in the 21st century has enhanced India’s focus in the maritime arena and reinforced the need for her to expand strategic cooperation with nations across the world. Maritime Forces, Navies and Coast Guards have always played a significant role in enhancing connects between maritime nations. Nothing can be more exhilarating for veterans like us to see the relevance of the Indian Navy enhancing at the national level.

Sam No Varunah.







## मुझे पता ही नहीं चला।

कैसे कटा 21 से 60  
तक का यह सफ़र,  
पता ही नहीं चला।

क्या पाया, क्या खोया,  
क्यों खोया,  
पता ही नहीं चला।

बीता बचपन,  
गई जवानी  
कब आया बुढ़ापा,  
पता ही नहीं चला।

कल बेटे थे,  
कब ससुर हो गये,  
पता ही नहीं चला!

कब पापा से  
नानु बन गये,  
पता ही नहीं चला।

कोई कहता सठिया गये,  
कोई कहता छा गये,  
क्या सच है,  
पता ही नहीं चला!

पहले माँ बाप की चली,  
फिर बीवी की चली,  
फिर चली बच्चों की,  
अपनी कब चली,  
पता ही नहीं चला!

बीवी कहती  
अब तो समझ जाओ,  
क्या समझूँ  
क्या न समझूँ

न जाने क्यों,  
पता ही नहीं चला।

दिल कहता जवान हूँ मैं,  
उम्र कहती है नादान हूँ मैं,  
इस चक्कर में कब  
घूटने धिस गये,  
पता ही नहीं चला!

झड़ गये बाल,  
लटक गये गाल,  
लग गया चश्मा,  
कब बदली यह सूरत  
पता ही नहीं चला!

समय बदला,  
मैं बदला  
बदल गई मित्र-

मंडली भी  
कितने छूट गये,  
कितने रह गये मित्र,  
पता ही नहीं चला

कल तक अठखेलियाँ  
करते थे मित्रों के साथ,  
कब सीनियर सिटिजन  
की लाइन में आ गये,  
पता ही नहीं चला।

बहु, जमाई नाते, पोते,  
खुशियाँ आई,  
कब मुस्कुराई उदास

जिन्दगी,  
पता ही नहीं चला।  
जी भर के जी लो प्यारे  
फिर न कहना कि  
मुझे पता ही नहीं चला

*Author unknown*

(Contributed by Capt Sanjay Jaiswal as obtained from social media)







## MEMORIES OF HMIS BAHADUR

Lt K P Job (Retd)

I recollect the tense moments back in 1944 at the Naval boys training establishment HMIS Bahadur located on Manora Island in Karachi. The Commanding Officer was Captain Lermont R N and the Executive officer was Bingham RNR.

It was a Wednesday, a make-and-mend day, the trainees were relaxing after their locker inspection. Some of the senior boys were discussing a recent press report which dealt with the plight of the INA at that. They were agitated and expressed solidarity with the INA. They wanted to show their wrath towards the British. Finally, they came upon a decision to hoist a Tricolour on the main mast. A team of three senior boys were entrusted to get a Tricolour from Manora Island. The Tricolour was to be hoisted on that Saturday night. The operation was conducted in a hush-hush manner. After dusk, a team of junior boys were positioned at certain points to report movements of the night sentry roaming with torchlight. This team had to shift from place to place to avoid detection by the sentry. The OOD rounds were over, it was almost midnight then. After much waiting the team of three arrived with the Tricolour. The team without losing time went to the parade ground and hoisted

the flag on the main mast. We were excited and thrilled for having accomplished a task of this kind. Without making any noise we all went to sleep.

The next morning Cdr Bingham noticed the Tricolour flying on the main mast. He was furious and ordered the RPO to haul down the flag CLEAR LOWER DECKS was sounded and the entire trainees were lined up for questioning. Having failed to find the culprits the Cdr. ordered collective punishment, i.e., to make us run around the parade ground with rifles in high pot arms. After the second round, we were all tired. Two of the boys fainted and they were taken to the sick bay. As we were running, some of the boys removed bolts from the rifle to reduce weight and threw them into the adjacent swimming pool. The next Monday when the swimming pool was emptied for routine cleaning, nearly two hundred bolts were recovered from the pool. However, we were let off with a warning by the kind-hearted Commander.

The hoisting of the Tricolour by under-trainee boys should not be dismissed as mere mischief done by the disgruntled trainees. That was one of the natural and patriotic outbursts of the Indian Naval Trainees during British rule.

*Lt K.P. Job joined the Royal Indian Navy in Nov 42, in HMIS Dilawar, completed training as a wireless Telegraphist in HMIS Bahadur in Karachi, served on board INS Konkan, Rajputana and Rana. He was deputed to the UK as crew of INS Trisul in 1960. A War veteran of Indo China war 1961-62, Goa operation 1964, Indo - Pak war 1965 & 1971, Goa operation 1964. He served on board Vikrant, Mysore, B'Putra and NHQ and as the Assistant Provost Martial in the Beacon Project on deputation to the Border Roads organization in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Thereafter he was appointed as CO of a Wireless Experimental Unit in the Eastern Sector. Post retirement in 1977 was re-employed for six years in Customs. A chronic bachelor he is currently staying in Kumbalangi, maintaining a vegetable garden and fish ponds, looking after a local Charitable Society engaged in Social Service Activities, periodically conducting Quiz Programs in Schools and Institutions in his village, Kumbalangi.*







## NOSTALGIA

NAZHOORI NELLUM NADODI PATTUM

(A Small Measure of Paddy & A Folk Song)

Cdr CT Joseph, NM (Retd)

On the penultimate day of my SSB interview at MEERUT, UP; on 4 Nov 1969 - 54 years ago - when I faced the Interviewing Officer, my mind was calm and dispassionate as if I already knew the result! Along with some other contestants in the SSB, we had already planned to visit Old Delhi and the TAJ enroute our return journey. The return Rly warrant was in my hand. As the interview progressed, some rays of hope flashed through and the gloom gave way to confidence but a little nervous! Unwittingly, I started rolling the warrant in my hand and the interviewing COLONEL sternly rebuked me. That timely reproach helped me to be more conscious and earnest in the conversation. My answers to each question led him to next question. I had told him that my family included my father who was a teacher in the local school, mother a house wife, younger three brothers and three sisters who were



studying in colleges and schools and self, teaching in a junior college after my post graduation.

At this juncture, he asked me how my father could manage to educate and feed all of us with his salary alone? There upon, I revealed him that I belonged to an agrarian joint family in KUTTANAD, the RICE BOWL of Kerala; and my grandfather had about 30 acres of paddy fields and a few plots of coconut trees. Our staple food was rice, fish and coconuts made in various forms and combinations mixed with seasonal vegetables and fruits like raw mango and jack fruit. The paddy fields were below sea/ river level and were surrounded by various water bodies. Ironically, here the farmers faced the problem of plenty- plenty of water- which had to be pumped out using heavy motors and pumps and the water had to be kept at bay by the long bund encompassing the large area which had to be periodically strengthened and kept under close watch! Any breach due to high tide could completely destroy the crop. Irrigation was through gravity/ water pressure by opening and closing the controlled small openings provided along the bund. The main crop was "puncha" from Nov/Dec harvesting in next Mar, sowing the seeds IR8, JAYA etc and using natural manures, cow dung, bone meal and fertilizers like urea and occasionally pesticides like FERADAN were also used. As I was associated with the various activities of paddy cultivation and harvesting, assisting my grandfather from my very childhood - I could answer and explain confidently all his questions







and queries in detail. Obviously, I think I could impress him, otherwise I would not have been writing this piece of nostalgia for our REEF KNOT!

Having brought out my agrarian background in the prelude, now let me take you to the same paddy fields where after the harvest the paddy grains were collected in heaps and covered ready for transportation. It was sometime in Mar/Apr 1956, when I was nine years old and my grandfather entrusted me and my uncle to guard and went home to take some rest. My, uncle, aka, Kochappen, is my father's youngest sibling, just five months older than me. In fact, we had two mothers as my mother and grandmother loved both and fostered us together. We grew up as twins, studying in same classes, wearing similar dresses, partners in all childhood adventures, misadventures and minor crimes and received punishments always together from my father who was the prosecutor, judge and executor all in one!!!

Now the story starts! After my grandfather went home, while both me and uncle were sitting in the coconut leaves- thatched small portable hut called 'maadom', guarding the crop; there entered our hero Thankkappen,



the son of the local black smith ! He was our classmate but a little older. He asked us for nazhoori (a small measure) of paddy. We refused as it was forbidden and we were afraid of the punishments.



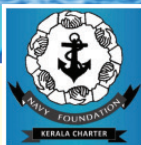
But his patience, perseverance and coaxing finally fruitified. He lured us by offering to teach us a few lines of the latest nadodi pattu (folk songs) in exchange. Satan entered us and we fell for the "satanic verses", blissfully unaware of its hidden meanings and its repercussions!! He taught us the verses and sang with us in different tunes and soon disappeared with the reward!!

Our village is surrounded by River Manimala and its riverlets. One riverlet divides the village into two halves and at its mouth there was an old bridge connecting both. The boat jetty, church, schools, post office, ration shop, stationery and vegetable shops, tea shop, black smithy etc were on either side near this bridge and it was the hub of activities especially the morning with a lot of people around waiting to board the private "JOY" boat- the only lifeline with the nearby towns - church goes and those who come for a cup of tea and gossips. My house was on the river bank about six hundred meters north of the bridge with all close relatives in between and one uncle owned the stationery shop very near to the bridge.

On that fateful day, both of us were returning from the church in the morning!







After climbing the bridge, we decided to conduct the 'arangettam' showcasing our musical talents using the bridge as the pulpit /stage. We sang the verses taught by Thankappan the previous day, as loud, sweet and musical as possible!! Soon all hell broke loose! People around were aghast and some shouted to stop, short of throwing stones, as we continued our musical treat. Probably, no one could believe their ears as those verses came out from two of us who were thought to be the most obedient and pious twins in the village? Suddenly, one of my uncles came running shouting at us and ordered us to go home immediately. Soon the news of our musical misadventure reached my father and he was ready with his long cane for the reception. Before starting the ceremony, he only asked "Who taught you that? " Sorry friend, we betrayed you under duress! I do not know what happened to him and no one dared to talk about that incident until recently when my uncle commented that my father should have told us the reason for beating us before or after. But as we grew up, we realized that those satanic verses had sexual overtones

and amorous propositions which were considered obscene, vulgar and offensive by the accepted standards of morality and decency.

I wonder what would happen to my father if this incident took place now? A 'MORAL POLICE/SAVE CHILDREN ACTION' committee would be formed, the PTA would call an EMERGENCY meeting, the State and Center CHILD WELFARE COMMISSIONs would seek reports from the SP, The Juvenile court might issue summons, Leaders of all possible Political combinations and permutations would rush to reach/visit first, TV News channels would have 'Breaking News', Health Minister would depute a team of specialist Doctors, the Chief Minister would call for Cabinet meeting and announce a solatium from his Relief Fund and the Opposition Leader would ask for a Judicial Enquiry and the Hon. High Court might issue a SUO MOTO notice to my father who is celebrating his 100th birthday on EARTH and 25th in HEAVEN this year !! WHAT DO YOU THINK??? MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE!!!



*Cdr CT Joseph, NM (Gallantry) was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 09 Mar 1970 and underwent the 40th Staff Course. A TAS(ASW) specialist he was awarded the NM in 1977 for his courageous salvage operations captaining the MN Poshak off the coast of Kiltan. He has also captained INS Bhatkal and INS Kadmat with distinction.*

*He retired from active service in 1993 and is settled in Kochi.*







## TREASURE HUNT

Cdr S Gopalakrishnan NM (Retd)

Modern James Bond tale unfolded right in front of me on a routine diving operations at Mumbai High Field on a calm morning. I was in command of a Multi-Purpose Diving Vessel assigned to carry out Inspection, Maintenance and Repair (IMR) of Mumbai High assets which is a requirement as per Offshore requirements. One morning I got a Radio call from ONGC Department in charge of IMR Section instructing me to terminate diving operations and bring the ship to Mumbai at the earliest.

On my arrival at Mumbai port a representative of IMR section arrived on board and asked me to accompany him. We proceeded to a restaurant nearby and he asked me to call the Officer-in-Charge of IMR Section. He explained to me that he had to resort to this “cloak and dagger” game to prevent eves dropping by vested interests and asked me to note down a position in Lat and Long and then asked me to go back to ship and depart Mumbai ASAP and I will be given further instructions when I arrived at the position he had given.

When I plotted the position given by my Boss, I was a little surprised to see it was about 15 miles off Chennai. In due course we arrived at the designated position and in the absence of further information waited there for some time. After a while a Naval ship arrived at the location and the ONGC Officer in charge of my ship talked to me and now gave me a new location and he also explained that he deliberately gave me a wrong position lest..... He then unfolded my task.

Some months back a fishing vessel of a Foreign Flag was highjacked at

sea. All members of the crew were killed and contraband goods like ammunitions etc for use of LTTE Cadres was embarked onboard. It was revealed that the fishing vessel was carrying AK 47 Rifles, Ammunitions, High Speed out board engines etc. The vessel was duly apprehended by an Indian Navy ship and in accordance with United Nations Convention of Laws of the Seas (UNCLOS) the fishing vessel was directed to proceed to a location near to Chennai, anchor at that position and await further instructions while the Naval ship was patrolling the area.

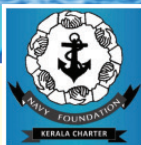
Then some dramatic events took place. The fishing vessel was scuttled and its crew jumped from the sinking vessel. The persons who abandoned the vessel were rescued by the IN vessel and handed over to local authorities at Chennai for further legal proceedings.

After a lapse of some months, the LTTE filed a case against Indian Government with International Court of Justice seeking a compensation of a sum USD 10 Billion for having commandeered a vessel of a Foreign Flag carrying expensive and essential equipment. To disprove their case our government sought the services of a suitable vessel to carry out under water search and retrieve the cargo from the fishing vessel and if required to recover the fishing vessel itself. The search was literally to be carried out by divers walking on the sea bed. It was like searching for a needle in a hay stack.

Since the IN expressed their inability, at that time, to provide a ship to undertake the task it finally fell on to my







ship. We had just come out of Dry Dock after repairs. There were some hiccups in the four-point mooring system and our logistics were stretched thin having sailed out on a routine op. Notwithstanding, the search commenced on the location provided by the ONGC. The position was reported by the IN vessel as a range and bearing, converted to Lat and Long, much before the present day DGPS system came into use.

As per regulations, under water search by Divers was not permitted if current strength was more than one Knot. Secondly, the location being close to the coast diver's visibility was restricted and danger of fowling with fishing nets was always present. Though as the Master I need not have committed my divers in this situation, but National interest took over all of us and we commenced the searches. Facing several impediments our Divers searched for three days, walking on the sea bed with sticks.

In the meanwhile, the ONGC had an individual embarked onboard the ship too supervise and advise us. He was no nonsense man with deep knowledge of diving operations and a decision maker. Government of India had appointed a Special Investigating Team to look into the LTTE fall out. DGP, Tamil Nadu Police was the Leader and he was also on board. The combined onslaught by heavy weights as to why the three days searches failed to produce any result kept my BP going up.

But one has to put one's foot down some time or the other. I categorically told them that the position given to me had inherent error due to many factors like inaccuracy in converting Range and Bearing to Lat and Long. Inaccuracy of GPS then in use. So, I insisted on a Side

Scan Sonar to be brought on board my ship and the searches done would be back tracked with Side Scan Sonar. Only the crying baby gets milk! The Side Scan Sonar was fitted, searches retraced and result zero. I stood vindicated. Now what? They said "Captain, we leave it to you".

My aviation experience came handy and a steel tube was lowered from the aft, weighed down by weights on either end where the steel tube was hanging just a meter from the sea bed and I carried out a rectangular search.

At one location there were considerable alarms from our ship Echo Sounder. My Diving Superintendent, a Britisher, advised me that alarms could be generated when shoals of fish swim near an underwater obstruction. He suggested that diving could be attempted there. Pronto no sooner did the diving commence, the diver reported an anchor. I asked him (Bridge Operator can converse with Dive Control) whether anchor was an isolated one or attached to something. He did some investigation, despite poor visibility and need to feel by hand and feet. He reported that an anchor was attached to a chain. I asked him to follow the chain and subsequently he reported a huge structure, covered by fishing nets, rising like an apparition.

It took another two to three days to cut the fishing nets to make way for an entry into the vessel. Unlike a regular merchant man, fishing vessels per force are small and hence entry into compartments highly hazardous for a diver as his umbilical could get caught in obstructions and would lead to fatality. Having taken the bull by its horns we all geared up and divers did a magnificent job of retrieving thousands of AK 47 Rifles





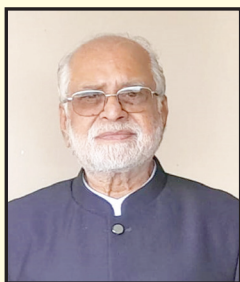


and thousands of cartridges, 200 HP Out Board Engines and a Marine Engine.

A whole lot of CBI team was on board interviewing all of us and taking photographs. The crew got jitters and they said unless Commando protection was provided, they are reluctant to sail back to Mumbai rounding Sri Lanka.

DGP was gracious enough to provide us with two Commandos who accompanied us till off Kochi whence I disembarked them via Naval Tug.

All is well that ends well, all back slapping and sabash and we returned to our routine duties. Another morning another day, Life goes on!



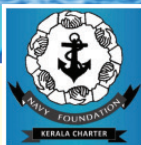
*Commissioned on 12 Oct 1959, Cdr Gopalakrishnan specialized in Naval Aviation, and has served in 310 Squadron, took part in 1965 Indo-Pak war. Commissioning crew of Sea King 330 and IL 38 315 squadrons. Awarded NM for 1971 war efforts. Post retirement in 1981 served as DP Master of multi support vessels for 21 years. National Maritime Bravery Award winner. Married to Nitya, retired Principal Bhavans School. Now running a special school for intellectually and physically challenged children and youth in Kochi.*



*Humour in Naval Uniform from Social Media - Cartoonist unknown*







## FROM BOARDING TO BROADSIDE

The greatest leap in maritime warfare ushered in by the naval gun

Cdr M P Joseph (Retd)

The switch over from Boarding to **Broadside** has been the greatest evolution in Maritime Warfare and this was ushered in by the Naval Gun. Before that all battles were fought at close quarters, by ramming or boarding. The use of the ram was only available for a vessel driven by oars. A sailing vessel could not ram unless she was running before a good breeze. In a light wind, her charge would be ineffective, and it could not be made at all from leeward. Therefore, while fleets depended on the methods of battle at close quarters, a warship had to be small and light, so that her crew could row with effect, and had to carry numerous crews to work her oars, to board as well as to repel enemy boarders.

Sails were used only when going from point to point - to relieve the rowers from the absolutely exhausting toil. They were lowered in action, and when the combatant had a secure port at hand, they were even left ashore before battle. The formation was inevitably line abreast for the object was to bring all the rams, or all the boarders into action at once. The extent to which ramming or boarding would be used would depend on the skill of the rowers. But an attack with the ram might be exceedingly dangerous to the assailant, if it were not solidly built. The ship's ram might be broken off in the shock. This was a very real peril, and fleets were compelled to construct their Galleys with stronger bows, to contend with the more heavily built opposing vessels - whereby they lost much of their mobility.

Weapons of that era were many. The **Dagger** was a general classification for a small knife. Every sailor carried a dagger of some sort for more than just combat. The dagger was useful in eating, cutting cloth, line, and such other items while out at sea. Today's Seaman Knife is nothing but a variation of the Dagger. A **Dirk** was a particular type of dagger. The Cutlass was a weapon the seamen usually used for slashing, while the Officers, who were trained swordsmen, used the point instead. It was an excellent weapon for close quarter fighting such as repealing boarders or boarding an enemy vessel. The Pike akin to a spike was an effective weapon that allowed a sailor to keep the enemy out of sword reach. The **Tomahawk/Axe** was used by a boarder to cut through riggings and nets to disable a ship. Of course, such an axe could also be used on people as a weapon.

### Arrival of the Gun Powder

From ancient times men had used incendiary mixtures for warlike purposes. They were well-acquainted with **salt peter** (potassium nitrate), and its effect when burned. That someone would eventually chance upon a mixture which would explode when ignited, was inevitable. However, while mixtures involving the crude salt peter can be made to burn quite fiercely, they cannot be made to explode. To make an explosive mixture the salt peter must first be refined.

The earliest known reference to the refining of salt peter appears in an Arabian text dated 1240. Therefore, it is







extremely unlikely that gunpowder was invented prior to that year. For over 500 years western military historians attributed both the invention of gunpowder and the gun to Black Berthold, a German monk so-called because he dabbled in the 'black art' of alchemy. Extensive research produced not one scrap of evidence that Berthold ever existed. He is now seen as a legendary figure, someone like Robin Hood.

The invention is more authentically credited to **Roger Bacon (1214-94)** who was an intellectual giant, ages ahead of his time. At Oxford he wrote several learned treatises. In one of these, written around 1249, appears a chapter with a cipher for the preparation of gunpowder. Bacon not only named the ingredients and the proportions then used (saltpeter: charcoal: sulphur 7:5:5) but also described the explosive properties of the mixture. But Bacon did not claim that he himself invented gunpowder; he merely recorded its composition and described its explosive properties. There is a belief - but no proof - that he obtained the recipe from Arabian sources, possibly the same which described the refining of saltpeter mentioned above. Until further evidence comes to light, whoever actually invented gunpowder will remain a mystery.

#### Evolution of Gun Powder

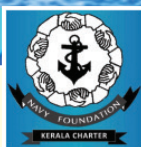
Early makers simply pounded quantities of the three ingredients into powder and mixed them according to their own particular recipes. Quality was judged by the loudness of the bang it made! Known as '**serpentine**', early gunpowder possessed several faults; firstly, jolting during transport caused the ingredients to separate, the heaviest ending up at the bottom of the barrel, the lightest at the top. The ingredients were therefore often carried separately and mixed near the gun,

creating in the process a highly explosive dust easily ignited by spark or friction. Serpentine also absorbed moisture from the air to a degree which greatly reduced its efficiency, or in bad cases rendered it useless.

Loading presented more problems. To load, the Gunner simply filled a ladle with powder - hoping to put the same amount into it each time - inserted it into the gun, turned it over, then withdrew it, probably spilling some of its contents along the way. His assistant then rammed and shot. If these were rammed too hard, the powder was compressed, thus slowing the rate of burning. On the other hand, if they were rammed lightly the powder burned faster. Obviously, any consistency in the shooting was purely a matter of luck. Fouling, i.e., the residue consisting of un-burnt or partially burnt powder, was excessive and made loading difficult. Old-time Gunners were well aware of serpentine's faults. As time went by, they tried to improve its quality by varying the proportions of saltpeter, charcoal and sulphur, and by adding other substances, like camphor, ammonia, gum, etc., without much success. Then came the most important breakthrough in 1429 in France, by a process consisting of moistening the mixture, pressing the paste so formed into 'cakes', drying them, then breaking them up into smaller particles called 'grains'. Various moistening agents were tried, including wine, vinegar and urine. Monks' urine was said to be the best, the bishops' even better. (This was a typical example of mediaeval thinking. Because the clergy enjoyed a higher standard of living than ordinary folk, their urine was thought to be of higher quality). Eventually pure water was found to be the best moistener.







This **Powder** thus no longer separated out during transport and was less susceptible to the effects of moisture. The gaps between the grains enabled flame to pass more freely, variations in loading conditions did not affect the rate of burning to the same extent, making the rate of burning more consistent. Most of all, this Powder was found to be at least 30% more powerful than serpentine.

Polishing the powder grains by tumbling them in a wooden barrel improved their moisture-resisting properties, while the addition of a small amount of graphite made the process even more effective, thus the **Gun Powder was born around 1520.**

#### Evolution of the Naval Gun

With the Gun Powder came new weapons of War. In the very beginning came the **Musket**, a single shot weapon, the first small arm with some accuracy and an effective range of 100 Yards. The Musket eventually became the model for the rifle. The Musket could also take a bayonet. The musket was most commonly used by sailors manning the rigging for shooting the officers of opponent vessels or other sailors similarly employed by the opponent.

The **Musketoön** was the next step; it had a brass barrel and the standard flintlock firing mechanism. This was a single shot weapon, loaded and packed from the mouth of the barrel. It was less accurate than a musket, but was far more effective at close range. It was more of a small cannon in terms of how it was employed.

The Blunderbuss was also a close range, devastation inducing tool. Unlike the musket, the Pistol seemed to be a

seaman's best friend, those days. Single person could carry at least half dozen pistols loaded and ready. The sea pistol had an effective range of only 3 or 4 yards. It would be fired and then thrown away to hopefully be retrieved after the fight. Crude explosive devices akin to modern grenades were also used in close combat during boarding operations.

The early naval guns were either cast in bronze - a technique long known and used for making church bells - or were made of wrought iron. The latter were built up from bars of iron welded into crude tubes and strengthened by hoops shrunk on to the outside. A bronze cylinder might be inserted at the breech end to serve as a powder chamber. Cast iron replaced wrought iron for all but the largest pieces during the 16th century, bronze being too expensive.

Many sizes and types of guns were made in a process of continuous development during the 15th and 16th centuries, ranging from the 'whole' cannon firing a ball of more than 70 lb. weight down to the 'robinet', firing a shot of between 1/2 to 1lb. The Culverin was of smaller caliber relative to its length and therefore of greater range. The Perier, (includes cannon-perier), was a short-barreled gun firing a medium-sized stone shot for a comparatively short distance. The culverin type of gun was preferred for arming ships during the 16th century rather than the heavy and comparatively unwieldy cannon. The steady improvement in the quality and power of gunpowder and quicker combustion, together with the increasing accuracy in the manufacture of the guns themselves, permitted smaller charges to be used and the length of the culverin to be reduced. At the same time, guns were mounted on board ships on low wooden







carriages running on small, solid, wooden wheels or trucks. The Naval Gun had arrived.

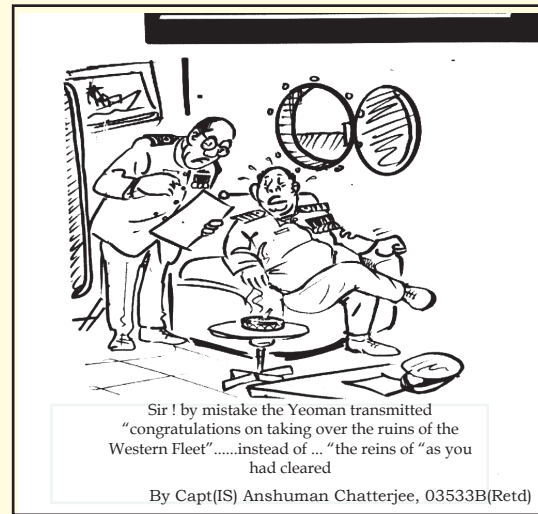
In the 16th century, the English and the Dutch fitted out their Galleys, with sides pierced for Gun Ports, bringing about a new form of maritime warfare, relying upon comparatively long-range

broadside fire instead of boarding. It's undisputed effectiveness was most notably demonstrated in one of the greatest maritime battles ever, when the English Fleet defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588. If it were otherwise, the history of India would have been very different. ■



*Commander M P Joseph (Retd), from the Long G Class of 87, is an alumnus of NDA & DSSC. He has been deputed to both UK & USSR for training & acquisition related to Gunnery. He has been a SAMCO, ASMO & SSMO in addition to being a GO.*

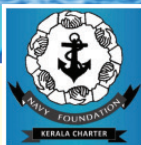
*The author sincerely acknowledges the many sources in public domain from which these information has been gleaned / collated. The author can be reached at [m\\_pjoseph@hotmail.com](mailto:m_pjoseph@hotmail.com)*



*Humour in Naval Uniform from Social Media*







## JAYAM SAM YUDHISPRADHA VIKRANT - THE LEGEND LIVES ON

Cmde Mani Krishna Murthy (Retd)

It was just another day in the picturesque city of Asmara where I was serving on deputation as Head of the Indian Training Team at the Ethiopian Naval College. Walking into my office that day in March 1983, I was greeted by a phone call from our Defence Attache in Addis Ababa informing me that my appointment letter had come from NHQ. I was to report at Bombay (April DTBR) as the Engineer Officer (CDR 'E') of INS Vikrant. I was both excited at being selected for this challenging appointment and pleasantly surprised as I had never served on board the carrier before.

The next fortnight passed in a blur as we packed and moved back to Bombay. I headed to Naval Dockyard to take over, the enormity of the responsibility still only sinking in, when there she was. Nothing prepares you for that first sight of Vikrant - a colossus, her might was truly majestic.

What followed was twenty months at sea (which interestingly is the longest tenure by any Chief Engineer onboard) - high octane excitement over 3000 underway hours across 35,000 nautical miles, the equivalent of circumnavigating the globe and more. During this period, there never was a dull moment, courtesy the idiosyncrasies of my steam turbines as CDR 'E' and the enthusiasm of an eclectic wardroom as PMC.

It was during this period that the grand ole lady underwent a major facelift, as we welcomed the Supreme Commander

with Three Jais at the Presidential Fleet Review. The Sea Harriers were inducted as we bid a respectful adieu to the Alizes, with the venerable steam catapult giving way to the less demanding ski jump. I learnt many a valuable lesson during this tenure, made my fair share of mistakes, and understood firsthand the finer nuances of carrier operations. With its admixture of challenges by the way of catapult launch and arrested recovery, main propulsion, power generation, air conditioning, to name a few, and its blend of intra-and inter-departmental issues, there were plenty of opportunities to test one's knowledge, versatility, presence of mind and imagination. During operations & ERDD, I observed the degree of difficulty and appreciated 'PERMOBILITY' with respect to machinery arrangement solutions within cramped spaces. Little did I know then that all this would stand me in good stead many years later whilst undertaking 'Detailed Engineering' of her reincarnate, at the Helm of Affairs in Cochin Shipyard.

On completion of my tenure onboard, I was promoted to Captain and moved on. Years passed and Vikrant, after having served the Indian Navy for 36 glorious years, was decommissioned in 1997. Her fate, however remained a source of lively debate as various constituencies discussed her disposal. Those of us who had served on her were anguished when the decision to make her a national museum was finally vetoed in 2014.







Meanwhile, I retired from the Navy and joined Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) in February 1996, initially as Director (Operations) and a few years later was appointed as CMD. From the early 90s, based on various audits, it was evident that the aircraft carrier would be designed and built in CSL. Commencing 2000, we started gearing up in right earnest, to make the IAC - India's Indigenous Aircraft Carrier a reality. CSL accordingly undertook streamlining of material procurement, upgradation of the design department & facilities to enhance speed and precision of welding, cutting, marine coating, cranes, heavy lift and a host of other activities to make us ready for 11 April 2015, that Red Letter Day in the history of the yard when the construction of the aircraft carrier began.

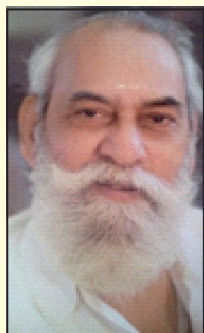
Vikrant's resilient spirit had triumphed again and true to her credo, she had indeed 'defeated all odds'. Only months after she was subjected to the ignominy of the ship breakers, Vikrant would now be reborn in her new avatar, right here in God's Own Country.

During my 30 years in the Indian Navy, and a 9-year tenure in CSL, both my cameos with Vikrant were "baptism by fire". As the longest serving CDR E onboard, and then by a strange quirk of fate, I found myself again in the midst of the action during the 'Renaissance of R11', as the CMD of CSL. I am indeed fortunate that I was able to contribute my bit towards CSL's success in "Building an Indian Dream", by bagging the contract for detailed engineering and construction of the IAC. I also feel privileged that, on behalf of all my shipmates who served on the old Vikrant, I could honour her memory by breathing life into her reincarnate.

With the commissioning of INS Vikrant at Cochin Shipyard Limited, India joins an elite club of a select few nations that have indigenously designed and built an Aircraft Carrier.

Vikrant fittingly symbolises a resurgent Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

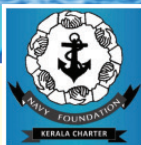
Long Live the Legend! Jayam Sam Yudhispradha!



*Cmde M K Murthy is an alumnus of the NDA (1961), The Naval College of Engineering (1965-68), The DSSC, Wellington, (1977) and the NDC (1992). His naval career spanning three decades, was filled with many challenges covering Project Management, Logistics and Technical Services both ashore and onboard. Sea tenures covered INS Mysore during 71 operations, INS Brahmaputra and INS Vikrant. From Feb 1996 to Feb 2005, he was on the Board of Cochin Shipyard Ltd (CSL), initially as Director (Operations) and subsequently as CMD. On superannuating served as External Independent Director on the Boards of MDL, HSL and Hindustan Copper. After 48 years of active service, he has settled down in Coimbatore. He spends his time reading, writing and listening to music.*







## IT HAPPENED ONE NOVEMBER....

Cmde KS Subramanian, NM (Retd)

We have all heard stories of the big helping the small, the rich helping the poor, the strong helping the weak, high tech coming to the aid of low tech and so on, but it is not often that such stories are heard in the reverse order, and that too in the field of technology. Yes, it happened one November, the year was 1997 and the place was Cochin.

On 03 Nov 1997 a German Naval Task Force consisting of two modern frigates Bayern (F-217) and Bremen (F-207) accompanied by two fleet auxiliaries Gluksburg (A-1414) and Rhon (A-1443) called at Cochin almost towards the fag end of its four-month long deployment. In the words of the Task Force Commander, Captain Richard Himstedt, besides training and cooperation, the deployment was undertaken to “present the capabilities and technology of the German Navy”.

As is the norm during such visits, numerous events were organized to bring about substantial interaction between Indian and German Naval personnel. One such event was a visit to the German ships on 05 Nov 97 which was co-hosted by Diesel Engine giants MTU, Friedrichshafen.

Welcoming us onboard, the Task Force Commander highlighted the capabilities of the ships and drew particular attention to the two modern state of the art frigates, which he called the “Porsches of Warships”. The highly informative visit was followed by a sumptuous Bavarian lunch during the course of which we got the first inkling that perhaps all was not well with the Bremen.

Discreet enquiries revealed that both superchargers of one of the Main Diesel Engines had developed cracks which had rendered the engine non-operational. We also learnt that it had happened after the ship had departed from Djakarta, their last port of call. When they couldn't locate the cracks even after removing and pressure testing the superchargers; they did the next best thing – cabled for two new superchargers to be delivered onboard at Cochin.

The German logistics system got to work immediately and within two days, two brand new superchargers were at New Delhi airport. But then the German logistics system had not contended with the Indian Customs system! So, on the day prior to departure of the Task Force from Cochin there were no signs of the superchargers leaving New Delhi airport despite frenzied diplomatic effort.

Our offer to “have a look and see what we could do” to the defective superchargers was received with polite disinterest – after all what could a developing country do to help a technological giant. On return to Naval Ship Repair Yard (NSRY) after lunch, the Commodore Superintendent told me that the “defective superchargers issue” had also come up during discussions he had with the Captain of the Bremen. Hence, we decided to send a team to the ship immediately to see what we could do to help.

So promptly, Lieut Mathew Varghese, Asst Manager (Engineering) and Foreman (ICE) VA Rajan were sent to the Bremen. After preliminary onboard investigations revealed nothing,







they requested the ship's crew to allow them to take the superchargers to NSRY for further checks. The Germans agreed, though very reluctantly as they were unsure of what to expect.

The superchargers arrived at the Yard at about 1530 hrs and Rajan and his team from the ICE shop prepared the necessary blanks/jigs etc and set about hydraulically pressure testing the superchargers to locate the cracks. When no crack could be detected despite holding pressure for about 10 minutes, Rajan hit upon an idea. With improvised heating arrangement rigged up to simulate working conditions of the superchargers, he undertook further pressure testing. After about another 10 minutes of testing, the first droplets of water glistened through the aluminium volute casing of the superchargers revealing minute hairline cracks. Detection of the elusive cracks was greeted with cheers all around!

The scene next shifted to the welding shop where Sr Chargeman (Welder) PI Wilson and HS I (Welder) PA Krishnan were busy preparing jigs to hold the superchargers in place during the welding process. They also improvised extended holders to reach the cracks deep inside the volute casing. On receiving the drained, dried and marked superchargers from the ICE shop at about 1700 hrs, Krishnan, using all his

extensive skills (which would one day fetch him the coveted Lloyds certification in welding) expertly welded the cracks in a jiffy!

The two superchargers, duly welded and pressure tested under the overall supervision of Lieut Mathew Verghese, were ready by about 1830 hrs - just three hours after being received at the Yard. All that was now left was to deliver them onboard - which was done by Lieut Mathew Verghese and Foreman VA Rajan. The Germans were so thrilled at receiving the repaired superchargers so quickly that they not only thanked Mathew and Rajan profusely but also treated them to a small impromptu party during which they were presented with the ship's sea cap and made "honorary crew". NSRY, Cochin was presented the ship's crest as a token of appreciation and gratitude.

Needless to say, that the Bremen sailed out the next day (06 Nov 97) as scheduled along with the rest of the German Task Force with both her Main Diesel Engines on line. That the repairs effected by the "low tech" (relatively) Indians of NSRY,

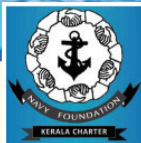
Cochin, on the "high tech" German superchargers were successful is amply evident from the letter written from sea by the Captain of the Bremen to the Commodore Superintendent of Naval Ship Repair Yard, Cochin, which is reproduced here. ■



*Commodore KS Subramanian, NM, IN (Retd) is a former Marine Engineer Officer of the Indian Navy. During his Naval career spanning over 33 years he held a number of important appointments both afloat and ashore. At the time of the "Bremen incident" he was the Deputy Superintendent and Senior Manager (Production) at NSRY, Cochin. He can be reached at [kssubra1954@gmail.com](mailto:kssubra1954@gmail.com)*







Fregatte BREMEN  
Kommandant.

At sea, 8<sup>th</sup> November 1997

Commodore  
Dilip Deshpande, VSM  
Commodore Superintendent  
Naval Ship Repair Yard  
Naval Base

Cochin - 682 004  
India

Dear Sir,

It is with much joy that we received our two repaired superchargers. We are most grateful for the help you provided us.

In particular, I was touched by the willingness, rapidity and skillfulness of your assistance. It is a fine example of mutual understanding and friendship, for the which I have the honour and privilege to thank you, Sir.

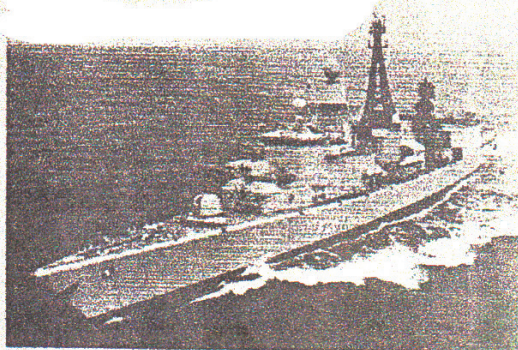
With warm regards

Yours aye

André Hetke

André Hetke  
Fregattenkapitän

F 122 Class Frigate FGS »Bremen« - F 207



C15)







## In our Eden.....

Letha Sushil

In the pristine 3-acre plot, where our house is located, I realised how Eve must have felt. Quiet flows that river..... gentle ripples on the lake, arched by lush coconut palms in front underline the beauty and serenity of our Eden. Of course, I have to get my apples from the local supermarket, though the occasional snake drops by.

Except for very few people who come for their morning constitutionals and youngsters hoping to be a Messi or Mbappe our constant companions are God's other creatures..... lizards..... monitor lizards ...mongooses ...giant and tiny frogs, snakes and a variety of colourful avians...Brahmin Kites... Kingfishers et al

We, my dear hubby and I, break off from the serene isolation thanks to revival of our interest in Golf and occasional forays to town or some social visits.

Since Golf became an almost obsession, I spend long hours watching Tiger Woods trying to imitate his swing ...imagining those elegant drives and lovely putts. But on the course, it's a bit different ...I realise I am no Tiger Woods..... but every flopped shot makes me growl like a tiger(ess) in the woods.

Our golfing mornings came to a very painful temporary halt. I was well out of the way almost hidden behind a tree and only my left hand was exposed. As my friend's three wood made perfect contact with the golf ball it took off with great velocity and curved smoothly like a guided missile and found my poor left

hand. My left hand looked as if the golf ball was lodged inside it. That particular spot in the Golf course was an unlucky spot. The previous day I had tripped over a tree tump.....and fell without breaking any bones. Obviously, I hadn't taken the omen too seriously.

At INHS Sanjeevani the XRay for the battle damage assessment revealed that no bones were broken. So, my sentence was solitary confinement at home.

Alas...my golf expedition stopped.....I could not use my left hand for two weeks. Sitting in my lonely house I listen to the ever-green favourite song" Vasantha panchami naalil ...varum ennoru kinavu kandu ..." ... (during spring season...I had a dream that someone would come...)

Back into isolation, I lapsed back into nature gazing and hoping for some visitor to come or pass by. My prayers were soon answered

Sipping our morning tea my hubby and I were competing as to who will solve "quordle and wordle" first. Through the corner of my eye, I spotted through the window the head of the visitor in the verandha. No.... No...it couldn't be. I went back to solving quordle. But again, I sensed a head and ...it was looking at me.

I recognised the visitor. ...and yelled" paambu". It was curled nicely on its namesake Snake plant. My hubby jumped up and tapped at the window pane. The visitor just showed his forked tongue as if in defiant mockery. My hubby was not amused with this at all. He quickly got his weapon...golf club...7







iron and was out in the varandha. As my hubby was no expert snake catcher this behaviour of his terrified me. Moreover, his behaviour may terrify the snake and make it aggressive “Please don’t ...Please don’t” I yelled. My heart was pounding... cos if the snake bit him I wouldn’t be able to rush him to the hospital as I did not know driving. I didn’t want him to hurt the snake either ...

It was then that I spotted two young men enjoying the morning breeze ... sitting in the neighbouring plot. I called out to them...amidst my husband’s fervent angry objections...’ not required... not required’...

“There is a snake in the varandha... “(...Those boys looked at my husband...) ...but soon understood the situation” The gate is locked...I will throw the gate keys through the window...please can you open it.” I yelled out. They obliged willingly.

The snake was picked up with a fork ended stick by one of the men and thrown into the water.

Now started our hunt for more snakes around our house. I don’t mind a transient visitor ..... but permanent residents are a strict no no... To my horror. We found four baby snakes at the back yard. We got them removed. Am sure there are many more somewhere I am not happy about it ...me not of Canadian mind set...

I kept trying to tell my hubby how dangerous the area had become. As if to assuage my fears he agreed to enclose the verandha. ...

Somewhere there was still that fear lurking in me. When I raised these with my hubby he mumbled something from his favourite poem The Rime of the Ancient Mariner..... the gist of which was appreciate the creepies and crawlies as the work of God and bless them and the Albatross will fall off your neck.

O God....it suddenly dawned on me I was living among the creepies and crawlies with an ancient (sub)mariner... Must read the ‘Rime’ soon.



*Letha Sushil, known to friends as Sona, joined the Navy family in 1984 when she married then Lieut Commander K N Sushil. As a young navy wife she zeroed in on education as a good alternative to just being a homemaker only, as many other young Naval wives. With the advent of social media she took to writing humorous anecdotes that occurred from time to time in their daily lives. A compilation of such anecdotes titled Sona’s Tales is available in Amazon. This anecdote is a continuation of her characteristic persistence with humour.*







## ME, THE BIRDER AND A SNAKE RESCUER TOO

Mrs Vidya Raju

My passion is my love for nature and all living creatures. It inspires me to see them thrive in their natural habitat more than seeing them in a zoo. In my childhood, my father used to take me for trekking, along with my brother and sisters. He used to bring wounded birds and kitten home, apply medicine and treat them, at times taking them to a veterinarian if he saw the need. My mother, kind as she is, used to feed these birds just as she used to feed us and she always insisted that we switch off the fan to avoid any injury to the bird. That is how my penchant for nature developed. My liking for the sound of birds chirping and the serenity of green forests afflicted me with a proclivity for birding.



Birding helps you connect with nature. If you start birdwatching, you'll start to pay closer attention to nature. Birds don't live in isolation - each species interacts with numerous other animals and plants, as well as elements of the non-living world such as geologic formations and weather systems.

Along the way, you'll see and experience countless other natural wonders and become more connected with our beautiful planet. If you're like me and many other bird enthusiasts, you'll find yourself becoming a naturalist, a person who appreciates and

studies many facets of nature.

Spending time and energy to find and observe birds is great for your physical, mental, and emotional health. Sure,

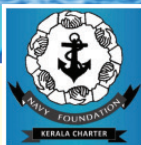


you'll be in great shape if you are literally running around chasing birds, but you don't have to be that intense to get the health benefits of birding. Looking for birds gets you outside in the fresh air and gets you moving. Even just pottering around at an easy pace is far better for your health than watching Netflix on your couch or sitting at a desk for hours. You might even end up hiking to somewhat remote areas or at least walking for miles, to find interesting birds, which will do a lot of good to your health. Some of the most rewarding birding experiences are those that you work the hardest for.

Kerala, blessed with God's gift of nature and the greenest of greenery, was the best thing that happened to me when my husband first got posted to Kochi in 2004 after he completed his LDMC. We have stayed in Kerala ever since. When he retired from HQ, SNC in 2014, we stayed back in Kochi. Thereafter, I become a member of the Cochin Natural History Society (CNHS). I also participated as a volunteer in their bird watching hikes (I participated in the four Southern districts of Kerala) organised under the aegis of the Kerala Forest Department, in their attempt to publish the Kerala Bird Atlas. When they could finally publish the Kerala Bird Atlas,







my name figured in their acknowledgement in that book. I am grateful for the opportunity they gave me and the wonderful experiences I had in even the remotest parts of the Silent Valley, normally not open for public, during these birdwatching sessions.



To understand how I started to rescue snakes, one must go back several years - to be precise, the year 2000, to the time when my husband, Cmde NVS Raju, then a Commander, was stationed in INS Mandovi, Goa. I used to go for bird watching trips, as member of WWF and in one such trip, I saw a man in the team rescuing a snake, was fascinated and wanted to do so myself. I got my chance to hone my skills in Goa itself, when I could first rescue a Saw-scaled Viper (and then quite a few other snakes as time passed by). In 2020, I became a licensed (volunteer) snake rescuer of the Kerala Forest Department. When I rescue a

snake, I am at peace knowing that both the people and the snake are safe.

I also participate in spreading awareness on snakes, birds and environmental issues



giving awareness talks in schools, colleges, clubs etc.,

I am grateful to the Navy for the commendations I have received from CNS in 2014 and CinC (South) in 2020. ■

*Mrs Vidya Raju, wife of Commodore NVS Raju (Retd), is an MA, BEd. She started her naval life as a teacher in the Naval Children Schools and Kendriya Vidyalayas. Over the years, she took to bird-watching and became an active member of the India chapter of World-Wide Fund for Nature (Asia), the Nature Conservation Organisation and participated/organised several bird-watching treks. Presently, she is an active volunteer for birding with Cochin Natural History Society (CNHS).*



*A few years ago, Vidya made deft use of her association with the Blue Cross Society to deepen her understanding of reptiles as well. The sight of Blue Cross volunteers cleaning the injured fangs of a cobra to ease its pain taught her the value of compassion.*

*She has saved and nurtured a number of snakes, injured birds and other animals in all societies she had exposure to because of her husband's transfers. Kochi turned out to be her calling and the Raju's have settled here post Cmde's retirement. She is a recipient of Commendations by the Chief of the Naval Staff in 2014 and the CinC in 2020.*







## IN CONVERSATION

Lakshmi Ramachandran

When Lakshmi Ramachandran, the dean of the Global Public School, gets up in the morning the first thing she says is, 'Thank you, God, for giving me this day.' She adds, "I genuinely believe every day is a present."

Thereafter, after a bath, she stands in front of an alcove which contains the photos of Guruvayurappan, Lord Krishna, Shiva, Devi and Saraswati and recites a few shlokas, including the Sarasawti vandana.

Here is a translation of the Sanskrit verse: "May Goddess Saraswati, who is fair like the jasmine-coloured moon, and whose pure white garland is like frosty dew drops; who is adorned in radiant white attire, on whose beautiful arm rests the veena, and whose throne is a white lotus; who is surrounded and respected by the Gods, protect me. May you fully remove my lethargy, sluggishness, and ignorance."

Sometimes, Lakshmi speaks to God. "The minute I connect with Him, I feel an energy come into me," she says. "It is this energy that lubricates all my relationships. I also believe that my happiness gene comes from God."

Thereafter, the ever-smiling Lakshmi reads a book of daily thoughts and prayers brought out by the Ramakrishna Math. And one of the phrases she read recently was about how all human beings are connected with one another. "If we look

inward, we will be able to see the divine spark within oneself, and the divinity in others," she says.

To get in touch with this divine power, Lakshmi goes to the Ernakulathappan Shiva temple often, usually in the evenings. "I am enchanted by the numerous lights," she says. "There is a special aura of stillness and tranquility."

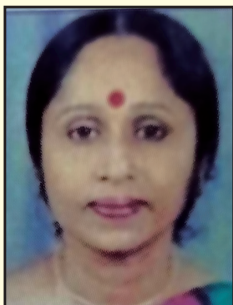
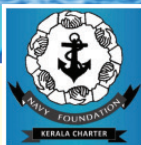
These visits remind Lakshmi of her childhood and the numerous occasions when her mother would take her to the temple. "She would hold my hand, and teach me how to pray and acknowledge the presence of God," says Lakshmi. Unfortunately, her mother, Saraswati, died of ovarian cancer in 1978, when she was only 52. "I asked God why He took her away at such a young age?" she says. "I was consumed by pain."

Years later, she read a book, "Autobiography of a Yogi" by Paramahansa Yogananda. "He spoke about the different realms that exist, where the souls reside," says Lakshmi. "After reading it I was convinced that there is a life after death and my mother is alive."

But death continued to haunt Lakshmi. Her two brothers died prematurely in separate car accidents. "I was traumatised," she says. "But it did not make me bitter. And that is God's gift to me. There are many things in life which we will never understand. The ways of God are incomprehensible."







*Ms. Lekshmi Ramachandran, is currently an Advisor to the Chairman & Board of Trustees of the Global Education Trust. As the visionary founder and Principal of 'The Choice School' in Kochi, and as the Head of prestigious institutions such as 'Tata High Range School' in Munnar and 'The Millennium School' in Dubai, she has indelibly shaped the educational landscape, nurturing the intellect of countless students. An ardent advocate of knowledge sharing, she has played a pivotal role in conducting workshops and seminars, both on the national and international stage. Her relentless pursuit of excellence and her pet project - "Idea a Minute", has set a remarkable benchmark for innovation and progress, inspiring both students and educators alike.*

*Her invaluable contributions to education, its impact and significance at the field level, have been recognised as the numerous awards bestowed upon her indicate of which the prestigious Tata Award for Excellence in 2001, is the feather in the cap. Adding a well-rounded dimension to her personality and diverse interests is her passion for theatre and music.*

### **SNC Honours Veteran Gallantry Award Receipient**



*16 newly constructed Officers' married accommodation, Ashok 8, at Katari Bagh, Kochi inaugurated on 19 Jun 23 by Cdr CT Joseph (Retd), NM . The houses were handed over by Cmde Deepak Kumar, Station Commander, Brig Niloy Saha, Chief Engineer (NW) and other senior officers.*







## TO HELL WITH THE OZONE LAYER

Capt Ramesh Babu (Retd)

This is from an era when our supply chain was not computerized, when one rummaged storehouse at Ghatkopar, carrying paper demands to locate and pick up elusive NA/NSB (Not Available/Not Stocked Before) items. In such times, Engineer Officers (EOs) turned generous particularly when their ships got into long refits, readily lending items to their counterparts who were struggling to run their own.

Generosity of a particular EO of a ship in refit was well known. He was so generous that he allowed everyone to go on a rampage and carry away items mostly without dependable records or replacements. As an assistant manager at the dockyard, I too had benefitted from his generosity.

Little did I know then that I would soon take over as EO of that very ship, while it was still in refit.

It was a missile corvette under long refit to replace its main propulsion COGAG plant, was the most complex propulsion plant in the navy. Being the very first time that the entire plant was being replaced, it was a challenging task. Many months of hard work by the dockyard and ship's staff, with guidance from two Soviet specialists, went into making it possible.

Finally, after almost two years, it was time to put everything into place, connect up the systems and get the engine rooms back into action.

Soon the ex-EO's generosity started showing up. Air bottles, gas cylinders, transmitters, pressure / temperature gauges, and many other critical items

were found missing. The generous EO and his engine room crew (mostly transferred out by now) could not remember the beneficiaries who could be approached to return them.

Fortunately, I had many friends in the dockyard, survey yard and Material Organisation. They came to my rescue, issuing BER (Beyond Economical Repairs) certificates, gifting me items from their unaccounted stock, surveying such items or make do replicas and issuing new items to fit in place of those that had abandoned ship.

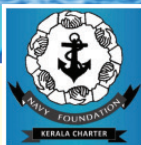
Finally, the refit was coming to an end with everything, including the missing items made good, repaired/overhauled/renewed machinery and systems fitted in place, and the new propulsion plant buttoned up and ready to start.

It was then discovered that one crucial item, the HP air reducer on the gas turbine air system, was still missing. Without it the GTs could not be started. Being located behind the HP air compressor, its absence had gone unnoticed.

Nobody had a clue as to where the pressure reducer had gone. I was in a spot, after unsuccessfully pursuing my generous predecessor and his beneficiaries to locate the missing reducer. The Command Headquarters, dockyard, trial teams and my captain were mounting pressure on me to start the turbines. I was buying time under some pretext or the other, keeping the real story of the missing reducer away from all of them, except for a couple of my trusted crew and the friendly Soviet specialists. Time was really running out for me, as the already extended term of engagement of







these specialists was about to end.

With no solution in sight, I was all at sea for weeks, when one of the Soviet specialists came to my rescue. He had located a replacement for the missing HP air reducer onboard our ship itself!

Tucked away in another corner of the engine room, behind a panel, there was another HP air reducer of the same rating as the missing one. We could remove it and fit it on the gas turbine air system and thus get over our agony.

But there was a problem.

It was not in my part of ship!

As a part of the missile system, it was under the Electrical Officer (LO). Luckily, the LO did not require the reducer immediately, as his missiles would be fired only later, after we had started the gas turbines and taken the ship out to sea.

So, one night when everything was quiet on the western seaboard, I, and my most trusted crew member, removed (actually stole) the HP air reducer and fitted it on the gas turbine system. Only the two of us and the Soviet specialists knew of the clandestine act.

Soon, we let air into the gas turbine system through the stolen reducer and started all the four gas turbines. Thereafter, we went through all the trials of the propulsion plants in a couple of weeks, celebrated the 'first ever replacement of an entire COGAG propulsion plant in India', let go of the Soviet Specialists and joined the flotilla as an operational missile corvette.

Now it was the LO's turn to get busy with his team, as his weapon systems, including the missiles had to be fired to get the ship battle ready.

They soon discovered that their HP air reducer behind the panel in the engine room was missing. There was some confusion in their ranks for a while, as I watched silently from the sidelines.

Then, one evening, the Electrical Officer confronted me. After many tactical denials, I finally bluffed to him that it could have been the Soviet specialists who did the evil deed! It was a wise move, I thought, as the specialists had gone away. The LO appeared to believe me. But he took a stand.

"Sir, then you can return it and manage one for yourself, or even better, arrange a new one for my missile system, rather than disturbing a reducer that is working fine for your turbines. And let's keep this entire episode to ourselves."

I could only nod my head, fully knowing that it was going to be a difficult endeavour to meet his demand.

The first task was to arrange for a BER certificate for a non-existent reducer. That was fairly easy, but getting the non-existent reducer surveyed with only a sheet of paper (the BER certificate) was a tougher task. The kindness of a Malayali surveyor, who was willing to accept a dummy created with scrap material, came to my rescue. Handing over the survey report, the Malayali surveyor reassured me that my language skills and large heart (with canteen items) could help in getting a reducer from the Malayali storekeeper!

Armed with the reassurance, survey report and a neatly written demand form, I boarded the local train to Ghatkopar, to fetch a new reducer from the storehouse at Materials Organization, and absolve myself of theft. It turned out to be a disappointing trip. The item was NA (Not







Available) with the Malayali storekeeper, who refused to acknowledge my language skills and accept my gifts from the ship's canteen. I came back and told the expectant Electrical Officer that the reducer would soon be issued. But my bluff held only for a week, as he started getting after me again.

This time I went to the CMP with my demand and explained the entire case, including my resultant plight. As a friendly senior of the Engineering branch who was aware of my predecessor's generosity, the CMP empathized with me. He summoned the Malayali storekeeper with his records. After a while, I was called in. "I have checked the details. We have one HP air reducer with us, though the item is shown as NA."

The CMP's words were music to my ears. My relief and excitement would have shown, as I jumped out of the chair, exclaiming "Thanks a ton, Sir".

"I wish I could help by issuing it to you. But we have a problem. That one reducer available with us is classified as 'War Stock'. So, it cannot be issued to anyone, unless we are at war, without approval of the Naval Headquarters," he said, as the look on his face turned from empathy to sympathy, and mine from relief to despair.

"We have a severe shortage of such items from Soviet Union, Sir. We have written several letters to NHQ for importing new reducers. But no one there seems to be concerned. This is an agenda item in today's meeting, Sir," the storekeeper added his bit, as they got up to attend a meeting on shortage of Soviet origin spares.

Over the next few agonizing days, I was toying with ideas of getting myself

transferred out, taking emergency leave or reporting sick, as the Electrical Officer kept postponing missile firing, annoying the captain.

Finally, one day, I decided to confess of my crime to the captain. I was sitting alone in my cabin and making up my mind, when someone knocked and hurriedly entered.

It was the Malayali storekeeper.

"Namaskaram Sir, I have brought you the HP air reducer," he said in Malayalam. I gleefully signed the receipt for the item, called for the Electrical Officer, handed it over to him, and offered a cup of tea to the storekeeper.

"Thanks a lot, but how come you managed to get the reducer? Has Naval Headquarters finally arranged to get you new ones?", I asked him, as we waited for tea.

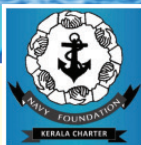
"No Sir. This is the one from the war stock. I managed to convince CMP Sir that we are not going to war any time soon, and he agreed to issue it to you, considering your condition." He continued in Malayalam, picking up his cup of tea. "It was a difficult task, convincing the CMP to take the reducer out of the war stock and issue it to you, Sir. I did it only for you, because you are a Malayali."

"That is indeed very nice of you. I would have been in a soup, without this reducer. Let me get you something from the ship's canteen."

"I don't need anything in return for that, Sir, not even canteen items. I just need your signature on some more papers", he said, pulling out a demand form and receipt for 100 litres of "Khladon 114 B2".







I had enough stock of Khladon onboard and told the storekeeper that I didn't need any more. "I am not giving you any Khladon, Sir. I just want your signature on these forms, as I have to account for 100 litres of Khladon that has gone missing." He took a long sip of the hot tea and narrated the story of the missing Khladon,

Though not much concerned about ships, NHQ was concerned of the ozone layer that was closer home at 20 to 30 kilometres in distance as compared to the far away fleet at 1500 kilometres. So, they issued a policy directive to protect the ozone layer.

It said that all chlorofluoro carbons including Khladon, which were stored hitherto in 200-litre drums at the storehouses should be transferred to 20-litre cans, and only such cans should be issued to ships. This was to prevent wastage leading to depletion of the ozone layer.

The directive was passed down for immediate execution to the Malayali storekeeper, who was the temporary custodian of the Khladon store. Being dutiful, he went to the store with 20-litre cans and instructed his assistants to do the needful. The assistants soon got to

work, placed ten cans in a row, and poured the liquid Khladon from the 200-litre drum into them, using a portable crane. Once the entire drum was emptied, they proceeded to close and seal the cans.

It is then that they realized that the 20-litre cans were only half full, though they had emptied 200 litres from the drum to ten of them. Logically they should have been full, but they weren't. The store assistants were not aware of the chemistry of Khladon, its low boiling point and the possibility of it evaporating in the hot ambience of their storehouse as they 'poured' it down. The NHQ directive did not include instructions to prevent such evaporation.

"Either way, we lost 100 litres of Khladon that would have ruined the ozone layer. It was like using a fairness cream and landing up with leukoderma, as they say in Malayalam, Sir", he concluded, finishing his tea (which by now had turned cold) with a sigh of helplessness. I got what he was looking for, and promptly signed the papers.

As a Malayali, I owed the helpless storekeeper at least that much. After all, he had manipulated the war stock to save my face.

To hell with the Ozone layer.



*After having served the Navy for almost 25 years followed by the Mazagon Dock at Mumbai for nearly 15, Capt Ramesh Babu now lives in Kerala, enjoying his pension and pleasures of farming, writing, reading, eating, sleeping and attending to needs of needy folks in his native village. He has no tall tales of glory from his past to make a rich CV, as almost all of them are like the one he narrates here.*

*A prolific writer, historian and heritage enthusiast, he has published three books, "After you, Sir!", "Calicut -Heritage Trails" and "My Own Mazagon" all of which have been very well received in Naval and literary circles.*







## MESSAGE FROM EMPEROR MAHABALI

Lt Cdr PKN Pillai (Retd)

My Beloved children of NFKC,

I am emperor Mahabali the grandson of Prahalad and son of Virochanan. Ages ago, I ruled this country. Now I remain in the good memories of you all.

I am a mighty emperor with a stout & strong body with a majestic look. Not with a flabby, blotted belly with the look of a clown and buffoon as exhibited in many places. During my rule agricultural production was very good. There was no poverty, no famine, no pollution to air, water and earth, no molestation of women, no food adulteration, no bribery, no cheating, no robbery and no health problem. In fact, people lived in great harmony and peace with pride and dignity.



I was a great devotee and worshiper of Lord Vishnu. My durbar astrologer cautioned me about the future of this country ie. the anticipated democratic and political changes. After considerable thought, I decided to leave my kingdom. I prayed to Lord Vishnu to free me from this world. Lord Vishnu during his incarnation as VAMANA accepted my country and created a special heaven

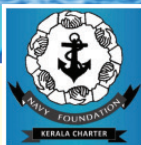
for me 'SUTHALAM' which is between PRITHVI AND PATHALAM. I was sent to that heaven with my "Parivar and Fauz". Before leaving to Suthalam, I requested Lord Vamana to allow me to visit this beautiful country once a year. To my pleasure my request was granted. I was given the choice to select the day of my visit. I chose the month Chingam, being the most beautiful season in Kerala. Every year I am given visit VISA for 30 days.

Keralites at home and around the world start their Onam preparations well in advance to welcome me. The real Onam function starts from 'ATHAM' day. The main celebration for me, however, is on the THIRUVONAM day. On that day all houses are cleaned and decorated with 'POOKALAMS'. Men and children wear new clothes. Ladies wear pretty dresses and ornaments. Many games/sports are played. Besides, all enjoy the delicious matchless 'Sadhya' served on banana leaves. Snake boat races, that have no match in this world, are conducted in most of the rivers, lakes and backwaters.

Even after Thiruvonam I am not freed by my loving people. Organizations, departments and offices arrange their 'Onam' celebration on dates convenient to them. I ensure my presence at all these functions. This year, the NFKC onam celebration is the last function in my diary. I always enjoy and appreciate the functions of NFKC because of various reasons. The gathering here is of a well-







disciplined community who have come from various parts of Bharath. The unity amongst them is commendable. The service style of NFKC is an example to other organizations. This is the only unit which give practical help and assistance

to the Retired Naval Community, helping the poor with food, clothes, medical aid and encouraging education by giving scholarships.

My Queen, Prince and Princess are also very eager to attend the function of NFKC. As such in 2023 VISA may be arranged for them too. My Queen is fond of Kerala Sarees and Set Mundu, please arrange at least a dozen of them for her. My Prince and Princess are very fond of Banana chips and Sharakara Varatti. Kindly arrange those things for them.



In conclusion I am extremely satisfied with my onam visit. Perhaps onam is the only function celebrated all over the world by keralites with out distinction of caste, creed and religion which shows their unity.

Yours affectionately

EMPEROR MAHABALI

“LOKA SAMSATHA SUKHINO BHAVANTH

18 Sept 2022



*Lt Cdr PK Narayana Pillai was born on 13 June 1937. He has a total naval service of 46 years. Post commission as a logistics officer in 1968, he has served on INS Vikrant, Betwa, Mysore, Rajput. Talwar, Godavari and Cauvery. His shore appointments included logistics functions at the Western Naval Command / INS Angre, Southern Naval Command at INS Venduruthy/Shivaji, and Eastern Naval Command/ INS Circars.*

*On retirement, he settled down at Irumpanam, Tripunithura, Kochi. He took a very active role in the activities of NFKC as Convener Public Relations for about 8 years. In addition, he has been a practicing homeopath for well over 40 years, which he still does along with being member of a few service minded organisations at Kochi and outside.*







## THE YEAR GONE BY

Cdr Benny Mathew – Secretary NFKC

The Kerala Charter of the Navy Foundation has always prided itself on being one of the most active Charters pan India. The Charter has engaged itself in many spheres of activities with our spouses taking a very positive role in its programmes.

The year of course started with the Annual General Body Meeting 2022,

which was held on Sunday, 7th Aug 2022, from 1030 to 1215 hrs, at the Southern Naval Command Officers' Mess, Naval Base, Kochi. A total of eighty-eight (88) members attended the Meeting. The President of the Charter, VAdm M P Muralidharan, AVSM & BAR, NM (Retd), presided. A new Management Committee for the year 2022-23 was elected.



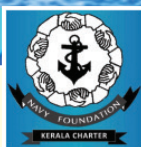
### Management Committee 2022-23

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| (a) President              | - VAdm MP Muralidharan, AVSM & BAR, NM |
| (b) Vice President         | - Cmde P Suresh, VSM                   |
| (c) Secretary              | - Cdr Benny Mathews                    |
| (d) Treasurer              | - Capt Sanjay Soni                     |
| (e) Chairman Out-Reach     | - Cdr M Ravindran                      |
| (f) Chairman Entertainment | - Capt Paul Abraham                    |
| (g) Chairman Log & Pension | - Capt Muralidhar Nair, NM (Gallantry) |
| (h) Chief Editor Reef Knot | - RAdm S Madhusudanan                  |

'Reef Knot' the annual publication of the Navy Foundation Kerala Charter, was jointly released, as traditionally done, during the AGM by VAdm MP Muralidharan, the President of our Charter and Mrs Lakshmi Ramachandran, the Chief Editor.







Members of NFKC along with their spouses assembled at the NFKC Office on the morning of 15th Aug '22 for hoisting the National Flag. This was followed by a morning walk upto the Birdies followed by a nice breakfast.



The new Management Committee members got together at the Grand Hotel on Friday, 29th Aug '22, to bid farewell to the outgoing members from the Committee. It was a nice and lively evening which also included a sing song session .



The once a year signature event of the NFKC, which is the Onam Celebration was held with usual gaiety at the NOI Kochi, on Sunday, 18th Sep 2022. Vice Admiral MA Hampiholi, AVSM, NM, C-in-C SNC



was the Chief Guest. A

host of Flag Officers , Commanding Officers and invitees

attended the celebration. The entertainment programme put up by the veterans included an exposition of the traditional 'Thiruvathira' dance, a 'Vallamkali' song by veteran officers



and a slew of songs, duets and group songs by ladies and officers of the charter The beautiful 'Pookalam' and the traditional decorations at the venue , thayambika and 'Mahabali' added colour to the celebrations. The entertainment program was followed by the traditional 'Ona Sadya'.



A special lunch was organised at the Birdies on Monday, 26 Sep '22,

by the Management Committee of NFKC, for members, spouses and children who participated in the entertainment program at the Onam Celebrations 2022, to thank them for their efforts.

A visit to INS Vikrant, the pride of the nation built at Kochi was a must







see for NFKC members and families which fructified on Sunday, 30th Sep'22, Charter members and families were guided to the ship by the ship's staff from the South Gate of Cochin Shipyard. The visit commenced with a briefing and presentation about the ship after which the 175 members group was divided into two sub-groups and conducted around the hangar and flight deck. A nice South Indian breakfast was also arranged by the



ship on the quarter deck, for us. On completion of the visit, Capt Gurdeep Bala, the Executive Officer of

the ship, presented a crest of the ship to NFKC, while a crest of NFKC was presented to the ship. Speaking on the occasion, the President NFKC thanked the ship for facilitating the visit for our members and their families, despite the very hectic and tight schedule of the ship.



As has been the practice, the SNC Veterans lunch was hosted by Headquarters Southern Naval Command at the SNC Officers' Mess on 27th Nov 22, On the occasion, the Chief of Staff, Southern Naval Command, RAdm J Singh, NM, briefed the Veterans on the status, activities and modernisation plans of the Navy.



Veterans look forward to take part in the activities of the Navy Week, which commenced with the Symphonic Band



Concert by the South Naval Command Brass Band, the scintillating Ops Demo at Shanmugam

Park involving all units and arms of the Navy followed by the "At Home" at the Navy House on the occasion of the Navy Day!

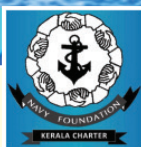
The New Year 2023 kicked off with the Veterans Day Wreath Laying ceremony at the War Memorial, Naval Base, Kochi, on 14th Jan 2023. It was attended by nominated members from



the NFKC. The President, laid a wreath on behalf of the Naval Veterans. This was followed by breakfast at sailor's home for all attendees.







On 21st Jan 23, President NWWA Southern Region, hosted Anubhavi, a get together for spouses of Naval Veterans at the SNC Officers' Mess. In addition to the entertainment programme organised by the ladies of the Command, an overall brief of activities of the NWWA-now the



Navy Welfare & Wellness Association followed by a sumptuous lunch kept all of the ladies busy and indeed happy.

The annual NFKC Scholarship awards were presented to two students each from the SRV Government Higher Secondary School and the Government Higher Secondary School for Girls, Ernakulam, a detailed report of which appears elsewhere in this publication.



The Coast Guard Mess, situated right on the edge of the Kochi Channel offered a beautiful view of the channel and the Kochi harbour. A fun filled afternoon get together was organised at the CG Officers' Mess located at this picturesque locale on 26th Feb 23, The proximity of the Mess to the Kochi Channel offered our members a close up view of ships entering and leaving harbour; adding



reminiscences of a whole lot of nautical events in the conversations.

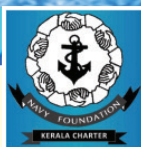
As part of our Outreach Initiative, which again is detailed later in another section, NFKC members visited and donated utility items to the inmates of the Government Old Age Home at Thevara and the Cottolengo Brothers' Home for the Mentally Challenged.



To enliven and enrich their experiences, the NFKC organised an eight-day trip to Vietnam and Cambodia and an overnight visit to the exotic Kodaikanal hills. Both the events evoked enthusiastic response from the veterans and their families. Colourful reports on these outings have been included as separate reports in the following sections. The "Eagles and Birdies" at the Naval Golf Club, on Sunday, 16th Jul, bore witness to 34 members, spouses and 4 Honorary Members to the Jul monthly get together. Mr Lancymon, provided many of us, in house singers., the opportunity to entertain the gathering with melodious numbers with him playing his guitar and adding some very popular old English numbers for us. ■







## ARMED FORCES' VETERANS DAY

The Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed each year on 14 January since 2017, as a mark of respect and recognition of the services rendered by Field Marshal Kodandera Madappa Cariappa OBE (28 January 1899 – 15 May 1993), the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces who retired on 14 January 1953.



The day aims to acknowledge and honour the selfless devotion and sacrifice of our veterans in the service of the nation. Observance of the Armed Forces Veterans Day is also to reiterate



the resolve of the services to ensure the wellbeing of veterans.

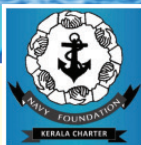


In keeping with the tradition established the Armed Forces Veterans Day celebration of 2023 was held at the SNC Command War Memorial. This was marked by the enthusiastic attendance of veterans from the Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard. The wreath laying ceremony and parade was conducted by the Station Commander and Commanding Officer INS Venduruthy, Commodore Deepak Kumar.

Wreaths were laid by President NFKC VAdm MP Muralidharan AVSM & Bar, NM and Veterans from all the services in an impressive ceremony, which was followed by breakfast.







## NFKC OUTREACH PROGRAM - 2022-23

Cdr M Ravindran (Retd)

The Naval community is looked upon as being one with a high sense of responsible social consciousness and humane interaction with its civilian counterparts wherever it is stationed. The naval veteran community in Kochi has strived to live up this image and has been over the years through its rather limited "Outreach" programme lend its hand to the underprivileged to bring in a bit of warmth and succour to those lives it can touch.

### Naval Donors

Our efforts have been sustained essentially by the generous voluntary contributions of our members and through the interest that is accrued from the Fixed Deposit Donation provided by families of late Cdr S. Arogya Swamy, late Cmde ANP Pillai and late Lt(SDC) A P Nair, to which we, the NFKC members have been supplementing handsomely to provide for four substantial scholarships every year. The details of the activities undertaken during the last year are as explained in the succeeding paragraphs.

### Scholarship to Children

SRV HSS, Ernakulam.

Miss Afreena KS - Plus one Commerce and Mr Ananth B-Plus one Computer Science students of SRV HSS, Ernakulam were awarded merit cum means scholarships of Rs 10,000/- each on 16 Feb 23 based on selection undertaken by the school authorities. The Principal Shri Biju KS while welcoming the NFKC team explained the parameters adopted for a fair selection of the candidates. The President NFKC addressed the class, congratulated the award winners and

impressed on the students to put in their best while at school as this is the very basis of all their future endeavours.



Government HSS for Girls, Ernakulam.

The President NFKC, along with the management committee members visited the Government HSS for Girls, Ernakulam on 16 Feb 23 to give away the scholarship amounts to Miss Irfana KR - Plus one Commerce and Miss Aneena Josy - Plus one Science students of the institution. The Principal Smt Mini Ram in her welcome address not only highlighted the hard work and dedication of the selected students but also made it a point to introduce their parents who despite their financial difficulties unflinchingly supported their children to become worthy of this merit cum means scholarship. It was also underlined that the Rs 10,000/ each awards that the children received are by far the highest financial awards so far provided by any organisation to their institution. The President NFKC repeatedly emphasised to the students that equal opportunity is available to all during their school days irrespective of their financial background or the type of school in which they are studying and hence all efforts must be made to benefit from such environments. The scholarship awardees, he pointed







are examples worth being looked up to as role models for all to emulate.

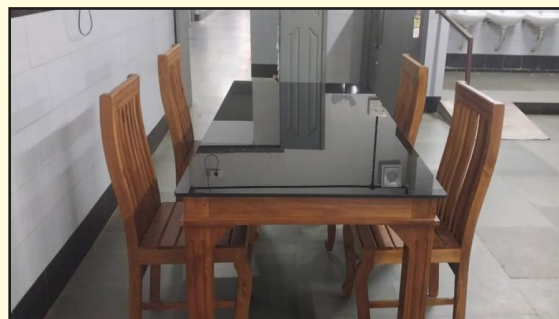
### Old Age Home & Destitute Home

Old Age Home Thevara. A glass top teak wood dining table and four chairs along with a gift packet of toiletries and eatables was handed over to the Old Age Home Thevara on 03 Mar 23. This institute is home to 30 individuals and is under the superintendence of Shri Sajeew Abdusalam and his staff. NFKC members interacted with the inmates during a visit arranged to hand over the donations,



procured at a cost of Rs 25,000/- The President NFKC and management committee members were present.

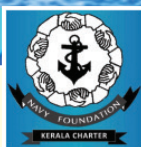
Cottelengo Brothers Homes, Veli, Palluruthy. Cottelengo Brothers Homes, Veli, Palluruthy managed by Brother Binoy Peter and few staff members houses about 34 mentally and physically handicapped inmates. They are fruitfully engaged in gardening, compost manufacturing, aqua culture, and making of door mats. To improve their living conditions NFKC procured 12 ceiling fans at a cost of about RS 18,000/- and gifted it to them.



*Cdr Madhavan Ravindran, joined the Indian Navy in 1968 and earned his commission in 1981 as an Air Engineer Officer. In his long illustrious service, which was mostly in Kochi and Goa, he served with distinction at MO (K), MO(Goa), NASDO(Goa), three tenures at NAQAS and finally as the Station Air Engineer Officer, INS Garuda. His experiences include two expeditions to Antarctica 1989 & 1993 and the IPKF operations at Batticolao, Srilanka in 1988. He retired from service while with the INDA(K) on 24 Mar 2010.*







## AN NFKC DIARY ENTRY @ 2023

### Visit to Cambodia and Vietnam

Capt Muralidhar Nair, NM, IN (Retd)

The yearly foreign jaunt for members of the NFKC and their spouses, disrupted for two years because of the pandemic, was resumed in 2023. After a lot of deliberations, it was decided that this year we would visit Vietnam and Cambodia.



18 March 23

A group of 14 members accompanied by their spouses set off, early this morning, to the Far East. We took off from Kochi and headed to Siam Reap in Cambodia, with a refreshing 8 hours stop over at Singapore. On arrival at Siam Reap we checked in to our hotel and directly set out for dinner with local cuisine followed by a native classical dance show and visit to the night market. We returned to the



hotel for a well-earned sleep after the day's activities.

19 March 23

Early on day two, accompanied by a local guide, we set out to the world-famous temple of ANGOKAR THOM (commonly known as Angkor Wat). The journey through acres of land with the spread-out structures of

the temple was a delightful experience. It was heart-warming to see that the exquisite carvings and rock structures, neglected for years, are being restored



by the local government. Having spent the whole morning here, we returned for lunch. The day culminated with a visit to the local temples and shops.

20 March 23

Exploring Vietnam was on the cards for day 3 and Ho-Chi Minh city (Saigon) was our destination. On landing, we checked in to the hotel. Later the group set out for sightseeing and shopping in the city.

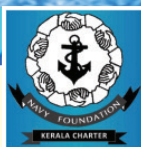


21 March 23

Day four saw us set out in the morning by road to visit the famous underground tunnels and military base of the erstwhile Vietcong, locally known as Cu-Chi tunnels. The exploits of the







Vietcong with their traps, innovative camouflage and the life of the local population of Vietnam in their long war with the Americans were narrated with pride by the local guide. A few daring members of the group experienced a



short stretch of underground tunnels, where, one had to literally crawl for about 30 meters in total darkness. The next stop was the war museum where the horrors of the war and its after effects on the local population were vividly displayed in photographs. The visit to the Reunification Palace was followed by a visit to the local market.

22 March 23

We started the visit to Hanoi with a city tour on day 5, and enjoyed the local cycle rickshaw ride. The visit to Ho-Chi



Minh mausoleum and Parliament house, brought an end to the hectic day and the group retired for the night.

23 March 23 – Day 6

Early morning of the sixth day saw us set out by road for a 3-hour drive to Halong Bay. Here we took a boat ride to explore the famous caves. The enthusiasm and josh of the group was evident as they spent four hours climbing and exploring every nook and corner of the caves. Even after the day of hectic exploration, that



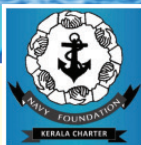
evening, we headed back to Hanoi with our spirits high and went on a shopping spree. That was the last night of our tour and we were determined to spend it well.

24 March 23

All great adventures also come to an end ...







Heading back to Kochi with vivid memories of the trip and establishing stronger bonds with each other the seven-day foreign jaunt of NFKC for 2023 came to an end.

Certainly a well spent seven days and eagerly looking forward to our next trip.



*Captain Muralidhar Nair, NM was commissioned in 1975. As CO of the Coast Guard Ship CGS Avvaiyyaar, he took part in the IPKF operation, for which he was awarded the Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry). His appointments include Manager Finance Arkonam Project (INS Rajali), INS Rana, Staff Officer to FOCWF, Command Works Officer IN ENC and SNC, Command Logistics Officer SNC. The officer is an alumnus of the College of Defence Management, Secunderabad, and holds a Master of Management Science Degree from the Osmania University. Post retirement in 2007 he has settled down in Kochi.*

### How to write Military Rank Name & Decorations

Rashtrapati Bhavan  
New Delhi – 110004

No.V-11020/1/2023-CER 15 May 2023

1. It has been observed that the names of the Officers of Armed Forces are written incorrectly in the official correspondence. The same needs to be corrected as indicated below:-

**For Serving Officers**

Rank Name Decorations

Eg. Major General XYZ, PVSM, AVSM

The prefix 'Shri' is not be used for Service Officers.

**For Retired Officers**


Rank Name Decorations (Retd)

Eg. Major General XYZ, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)

(Retd) is to be used only at the end.

The prefix 'Shri' is not be used.

2. This may be widely circulated for the future reference.

  
(Sanjay Sundhyan)  
Under Secretary (Cer)

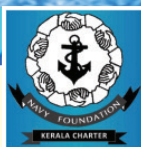
**All the Ministries/Departments of Government of India**

**Copy for information.**

i) Secretary, DMA, R/No.12, MoD, South Block, New Delhi.  
ii) Col, CW-1, Army HQ  
iii) Gp Capt Org (Cer-1) Air HQ  
iv) Cdr PS (Cer), Naval HQ







## KODAIKANAL TRIP: AN OVERVIEW!

Capt Paul Abraham IN (Retd)

A three days & two nights trip to Kodaikanal, from AM 24 May to PM 26 May 2023, was organised under the aegis of NFKC. Concord Exotic Voyages was the designated Tour Operator. A total of 21 couples & 2 single ladies joined. A 45 seater air cushion luxury coach was hired by Concord. The bus departed from JVV at Panampilly Nagar at 6:15 sharp, with two pick up points at Varsha & Lulu Mall, finally setting course for Kodaikanal, at 7 am. After a delicious South Indian Breakfast at Saravana Bhavan, Vadakkanchery, the bus proceeded to Palani, via Pollachi, for its next stop at 1 pm, for a sumptuous Vegetarian lunch, before leaving for the awaited destination.



Kodaikanal was “raised” at 5 pm. The salubrious climate at the Resort, “Germanus Springs” was a welcome change from the scorching heat of Kochi.

After a refreshing cup of Tea & Biscuits, everyone dispersed to their rooms and reassembled in a designated hall, for an Ice breaking session with songs & a warm fellowship. This was topped with a grand dinner, before everyone retired for the night, to a well-deserved rest!

Next morning, after a wholesome breakfast, we split into 2 groups, to board the hired Mini buses, for sightseeing. The first stop was Moir Point, which is the highest point in Kodaikanal. Green Valley view & Suicide Point are also in the vicinity.



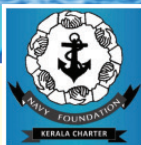
Our next destination was the Pine Forest. Such a dense forest has to be seen to be believed. Though the climb up & back down was tiring, all enjoyed the hike and the photography session.



We now moved on to the Guna cave. A long winding, up & down trek is required to reach the cave. History has it that an American Mr B. S. Ward discovered the place in 1821. According to Hindu mythology, the Pandavas stayed in the caves and cooked their meals. The caves however shot to fame after the movie “Guna” was shot here.







The last item on the pre-lunch program was a visit to the Pillar Rocks, which are amongst the most sought after tourist spots of Kodaikanal, comprising of three vertical granite boulders that stand shoulder to shoulder amidst untouched packets of condensed rainforests. After giving the ladies a chance for shopping, we returned to the Resort, to an excellent spread for lunch, followed by a forced yet well-deserved sleep, as the clouds threatened heavy rains. By evening, the skies cleared and we all were eagerly looking forward to our Bonfire.



Yet another sumptuous dinner followed, after which everyone was instructed to assemble in the main hall, the next morning at 0830h, after breakfast, for check out. After clearing dues and giving handsome tips all around, everyone said goodbye to the friendly staff, who had made our stay so memorable.

It was decided to visit the famous Kodaikanal lake and take the picturesque

route via Kambam, Theni, Kumily, Parunthumpara, back to Ernakulam. At Kambam, we stopped at the famous Vineyards. Lots of grapes & goodies were bought from there.



After Lunch at Theni & having hot refreshing Tea & snacks at Kumily, we went to Parunthumpara for awesome sightseeing. Due to heavy rains, we could not leave the relative safety of the bus. Neither could we take photographs.

We did not delay at Kumily, as there were rumours of the infamous “Ari Komban” at the scene. We missed him by a hair’s breadth. All of us were reasonably tired, after so much fun & exhaustion, that everyone relaxed in the bus, till we reached Pala for a very tasty dinner. The last few hours, to return to Kochi, was spent silently in the bus. We reached JVV by 10 pm on 26th.







## BACK PAIN, NO GAIN

Maj Gen Krishan Chauhan (Retd)

Back pain or backache is a condition which is responsible for highest sick absenteeism in the world. No country is spared. No office, business or industry is unaffected.

Almost \$200 billion are spent in its management. Lost productivity in Japan alone was \$11 billion, that too, 5 years ago. Earlier, the disease was prevalent in adults but now, with changing life style, youths are increasingly falling prey to backache. At least 20% of the working population is affected by backache at any given time.



Another unique aspect of this pain is that it can occur due to numerous causes. A patient with backache usually goes to the family doctor. If the condition doesn't improve in a few weeks, depending on the condition, the patient may be referred to anyone of the following. A medical specialist, a surgeon, an orthopaedic surgeon, a neurologist, a neurosurgeon or even a psychiatrist. A lady patient may be referred to a gynaecologist. An elderly to a urologist. Some may even require to be examined by an oncologist as some cancers may start with a backache. 80 to 90% of the back pain is in the lower portion of the back.

But, a few medical terminologies about our back need to be learnt first.

**VERTEBRA** - Our back's basic structure is built by wedge like flat bones called vertebra (plural- vertebrae). Much like

children's game called Jenga or Stacking tower. Please refer to the sketch for better understanding. These are placed in the following order, from neck downwards:

- **Cervical vertebrae.** 7 in number, the topmost is attached to the skull and is aptly known as the Atlas.

- **Thoracic vertebrae.** There are 12 in number and each of the 12 ribs are attached to a vertebra.

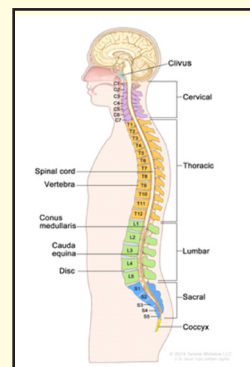
- **Lumbar vertebrae.** 5 in number, they are behind our tummy and has quite a bit of movement. They have to bear the brunt of additional weight if the person is overweight or obese.

- **Sacrum.** 5 in number, they are fused together to form a large triangular structure to which the femur (bone of upper leg) is attached on either side.

- **Inter vertebral discs.** These are semisolid cushions between each two vertebrae, except the sacrum and coccyx.

- **Coccyx** or the tail bone is also fused to the sacrum. It is, however, a cause of much pain in some.

**SPINAL CORD** - The vertebrae have a hollow portion through which the spinal cord emerges as an extension of the brain and goes down till the Lumbar vertebrae and ends there. Spinal cord is a very delicate organ, encased in sheaths with a fluid for lubrication. It gives off branches called nerve roots. The nerve roots take







signals from the brain to the muscles and bring back sensations of touch, pain, heat/ cold, vibration and others from the body to the spinal cord and onwards to the brain.

#### MUSCLES AND LIGAMENTS.

Ligaments are thread like organs which hold the vertebrae in place. Muscles are also attached to the vertebrae and helps in their mobility. The upper vertebrae are also attached to skull by muscles and the lower vertebrae to the leg bone, femur.

There can be a myriad of reasons of backpain - but we improve our lifestyle to help ourselves.

- **Physical Fitness:** The lack of it would be more appropriate. Inactivity leads to weakening of muscles which cannot endure excessive movements or unusual weight lifting.
- **Weight gain:** The more we weigh, the more stress it puts on our back. Together with physical inactivity, an overweight or obese person is more prone to backache.
- **Job:** Work profile requiring lifting, pushing or pulling of heavy equipment.
- **Posture:** Reading or working in a faulty posture for long hours causes pain in the back. Keeping our back in a twisted posture is equally bad. Working on the cell phone, tablet or laptop in bed or recliner is the cause of impending epidemic of backache in adolescents and adults.
- **Stress:** Excessive, unresolved stress, lesser sleep, depression and anxiety may cause backache.
- **Age:** Muscles begin to weaken and bone density begins in the fourth decade. Menopause is another milestone.

Chances of having a backache is more as we age and begins in this decade.

- **Heredity:** Certain heredity diseases also have backache as an important symptom.
- **Smoking:** Long term smokers also have frequent coughing episodes which lead to backache. Nicotine in tobacco, by itself causes less oxygenation of tissues. In the muscles and other tissues, it causes backache.
- **Others:** Many other conditions may cause pain in the back. These are pregnancy and Endometriosis in women. Diseases of prostate in men. Certain cancers, infections and inflammation in both sexes also give rise to pain in the back.

#### STAGES OF BACKACHE

1. **Acute:** The backache occurs suddenly and it may last for a few days to almost month.
2. **Subacute:** The backache of more than a month to less than three months. The pain may be continuous or may come and go in episodes.
3. **Chronic:** A person is thought to have Chronic backache if the pain lasts for over three months. The pain may be severe on certain days and quite less on others.

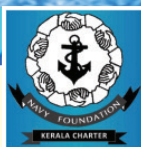
#### WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR

Sharp back pain can come up suddenly - after an accident or a jerk. Or, it may start slowly over a few days, starting in the morning and disappearing after the body warms up. Or, it appears whenever a heavy item is lifted. Bending forward may worsen the pain.

It may be restricted to a small patch of our back (frequently lower back),







or may be over a larger area. In some people, it is in one side of the buttock or over the tailbone. Or may radiate to one side of the buttock and go all the way



down to our toes. Some people also have numbness or tingling in legs or toes.

Coming to the point, one must go to a doctor when:

- The pain is severe, not relieved by rest or by pain relievers.
- Pain lasts for over two weeks.
- Spreads to the lower leg or toes.

- There is weakness, numbness or tingling in feet.
- Backache is accompanied by unexplained weight loss.
- Fever, passage of urine or motions are affected.
- Pain starts after an accident or injury to back.

Humans are the only species of the earth which stands erect and routinely walks erect. Our spines have special curves for this purpose and muscles adapt accordingly. A baby's spine has no curves.

As we grow and go about our chores on erect posture, backache is bound to occur.

Lying for longer period on bed also gives rise to backache!

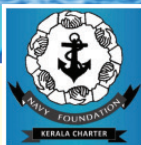
Don't put the backache into the back burner. We must be proactive about our health, especially the back. Backache is one pain which doesn't go away very easily. ■



*Maj Gen Krishan Chauhan, Retired Army Medical Corps. Studied in Sainik School Kapurthala, IG Medical College Shimla and AFMC Pune. Professor of Community Medicine. Enjoy participating in Half Marathons. Has written two books, 'Teens and Tweens' and 'Nature's Nomads'. Both are available on Amazon.*







## OF AILMENTS AND OINTMENTS

Capt V K Radhakrishnan VSM (Retd)

1. In my last article I had explained certain basic principles of the ECHS system and also listed certain urgent actions to be taken by all veterans. In this article I shall try to address issues related to ailments and Ointments.

2. **Ailments.** The Veterans community being one where ailments like Lifestyle diseases are large in number, frequent visits to empanelled hospitals is often unavoidable. Once the veteran reaches the empanelled hospital, then there is more confusion awaiting him. If a medical situation occurs during off working hours, then the troubles are even more. To handle such issues, here is what you can possibly do. If you reside within reasonable distance from an MH, then don't hesitate to visit the casualty /MI room of the MH. They will not deny emergency treatment. If on the other hand you live far away from the MH, then do visit the causality dept of the empanelled hospital, but at the next available opportunity, please visit the ECHS desk of the hospital and submit your credentials to obtain ECHS coverage. You may then save all expenditure on treatment other than consultancy charges. Thereafter, for any further treatment do obtain a letter titled "Authorisation for additional services" from the ECHS desk of the hospital and visit the nearest Polyclinic for obtaining a referral.

3. **Authorisation for Additional Services.** This is a letter issued by the ECHS desk of the empanelled hospital and lists out details of clinical history, what specific investigations are required, are any procedures involved, is admission necessary, for which all departments is consultation required and is there a need

to obtain a special sanction. These details help the Polyclinic Doc to make a correct referral thus preventing confusion for the veteran at the hospital.

4. **Special Sanctions.** Certain procedures, especially those related to cardiology, oncology etc are costly and therefore, an additional sanction from the competent authority is necessitated for the expenditure. In some cases, the procedure may not be listed in the CGHS list of medical procedures. Such procedures are known as 'unlisted procedure'. Special sanctions are obtained on a proforma known as 'Appendix A to Central Org policy letter'. This is commonly referred to as 'Appx A'. It is the responsibility of the ECHS desk at the empanelled hospital to provide the Appendix A form to the patient. The form is to be submitted to the parent PC, who then will get the same signed by the Service specialist at the MH followed by the CO of the MH, also known as the SEMO (Senior Executive Medical Officer). In case of cardio procedures and certain Onco procedures, it is mandatory to obtain approval of Sr Advisor Command Hosp Bangalore (CHAFB) before approval is accorded by the SEMO.

5. **Where Do I Get My Ointments.** ECHS policy mandates that all medicines must be issued by the Polyclinic only/ issued by the Polyclinic only. Thus, one must not buy any medicine from local market unless otherwise permitted by the Polyclinic. During COVID times there was a blanket sanction for veterans to buy medicines from local market and claim the costs. This has since been done away with. Now you need prior approval of the OiC Polyclinic to buy medicines on your







own. Medicines must be bought as per generic names only. Visit Jan Aushadhi to be on the safe side of the law.

6. What If I Have a Medical Emergency? To start with, if you have an emergency, just go to the nearest hospital and get first aid/ medical help, but remember to inform the NEAREST POLYCLINIC WITHIN 48 HOURS OF ADMISSION. This implies that you need not always worry about informing your parent Polyclinic in case of emergency admission in a NON-EMPANELLED HOSP. Next thing to be done is to obtain an emergency admission certificate from the hospital and submit same along with ECHS card to the Polyclinic where you gave information about your admission. All other requirements are only after discharge from the Hosp. But

what if there was no admission? A case of broken bones for example. In such a case the concerned hospital can raise an “OP” bill. An OP bill is one in which all expenditure except bed charges is listed, because there was no admission.

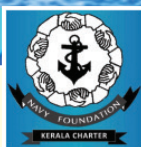
7. What Then Is an Emergency as Per ECHS? As per ECHS, only medical situations related to heart, lungs, liver, Kidney, brain are considered emergency situations, so do bear in mind that though a damage to any body part is an emergency for us, it does not necessarily constitute an ECHS Emergency. In an emergency, no referral is required to visit any hospital. Further, if the admission is in an empanelled hospital, then the onus to intimate the nearest Polyclinic rests with the hospital. ■



*Capt K V Radhakrishnan, VSM was commissioned in the IN on 04 Jul 84 and joined the submarine arm in 1985. His appointments included INS Betwa, Dunagiri, Vagi, Sishumar, Shalki and Mahish & tenures in Headquarters SNC, ENC and ANC. Was awarded VSM in 2001. He is currently OIC ECSH Polyclinic Naval Base, Kochi.*







## In Remembrance.....

Naval life throws us together with a large spectrum of persona and personalities, some outstandingly brilliant yet introvert and silent, yet some boisterous and loud but gentle and graceful where it counts, yet so many again quiet and self-effacing but determined and strong... the range and rationale of these individuals make the colourful mosaic of naval life so enterprising and exciting!!

Into this varied mix we find ourselves, firstly as an ungainly bachelor or a shy young woman, thereafter as a young husband or wife, soon as young parents and then elders until we exit from the firmament of active service.

The Foundation, such as ours, help

to maintain these contacts beyond the uniform and assist to nature relationships growing closer as we advance in age, multiplying our joys and dividing our sorrows, rejoicing at the multiplication of generations and sadly reminisce at the irreversible minuses.

The sense of loss gets compounded when the departed was close to you, had reached out to you in your troubled times and has helped you to rejoice in the small yet significant moments of personal pride! The memory of such individuals will remain cherished in our memories personal and public...to those who have bid adieu to us the last year, we offer our collective respective obeisance and our silent prayers ... rest in eternal peace.



Cdr UK Pisharody, VSM  
14-Aug-22



Mrs Omana Nanu Nair,  
W/o Late L KN Nair  
04-Oct-22



Mrs Prasanna Nair,  
W/o Surg Cdr KM Raamesh Nair  
05-Oct-22



Cdr RK Mathews  
06-Dec-22



Mrs Kunjamma Mammen,  
W/o Late Cdr AC Mammen  
10-Dec-22



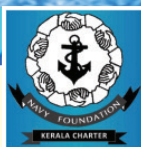
Cdr Vallath Divakaran  
26-Mar-23



Cdr KK Das  
17-Jul-23







## Welcome to the Fold

Dear Veterans,

A new beginning is a new hope and we at NFKC heartily welcome our new members, whose particulars will soon find a place in the NFKC Directory.

<b>S No</b>	<b>P No</b>	<b>Name of Member &amp; Spouse</b>	<b>Place &amp; District</b>
1	02271 K	Cdr Benny Mathews & Mrs Anita Beny Mathews	Kakanad, Kochi
2	03182 F	RAdm Antony George & Mrs Kavita Antony	Vyttila, Kochi
3	89130 T	Cdr Suresh Kumar B & Mrs Nisha PB Pillai	Thripunithura, Kochi
4	01079 A	Cdr Kappadakunnel Stephen Mathews & Mrs Lalitha Mathews	Vyttila , Kochi
5	89117 N	Cdr T Udaybhanu Nambiar & Mrs Kalpana Udaybhanu	Vatakara, Kozhikode
6	75984 R	Surg Cdr Manoj George Varghese & Dr Mrs Divia Paul A	Mary Hill, Mangalore
7	89786 H	Cdr George K Mathew & Mrs Jisha Joseph	Kolakkad, Kannur
8	52600 W	LCdr Anoop Krishnan & Mrs Swetha Dinesh	Thripunithura, Kochi
9	04938 Y	Cdr Raj Davis & Mrs Divya Raj	Kalady, Ernakulam
10	52601 Y	LCdr George Manjooran & Mrs Neethu Ittieera	Edappally, Kochi
11	06895 W	LCdr Visakh AM & Mrs Ankita Nagar	Thiruvananthapuram
12	40747 F	Cdr K Ravindran, NM & Mrs K Lakshmy Ravindran	Poothole, Thrissur
13	02267 A	Cdr MP Joseph & Surg Capt Mrs Marys Joseph	Thevara, Kochi
14	02701 N	RAdm MD Suresh & Mrs K Kairali Suresh	Aya Nagar, New Delhi
15	05233 T	Cdr BK Prashant & Mrs Deepthi P	Karaparambu, Kozhikode
16	86977 Z	Lt Harikrishnan S & Mrs Preetha J	Devarupara, Idukki
17	03414 H	Capt P Emmanel Prasad & Mrs Nisha Prasad	Kuravilangad, Kottayam
18	52708 R	LCdr Allan Sebastian & Mrs Iris Himal	Palarivattom, Kochi
19	50456 Y	VAdm Raman Prabhath & Mrs Rekha Prabhath	Kakkanad, Kochi
20	88585 B	LCdr Rajan Methal Thodi & Mrs Thankam Rajan	Azhinhilam, Kozhikode
21	43332 F	Amith Dayanand & Mrs Ammu Chitra Nambiar	Azhiyidathuchira, Tiruvalla
22	52663 N	LCdr George Joseph & Mrs Naiza Elsa Geojan	Charumoodu, Alapuzha
23	41224 R	Cdr Suresh Babu P & Mrs Usha Suresh Babu	Thripunithura, Kochi
24	03735 N	Capt Abraham Suresh Thomas & Mrs Mary Thomas	Pattom, Thiruvananthapuram
25	41520 N	Capt Madhavan Radhakrishnan Nair & Dr Mrs Sreevidya J Bhaskar	Kuravankonam, Thiruvananthapuram
26	41383 A	Capt P Ananda Padmanabhan & Mrs RP Kala	Thycaud, Thiruvananthapuram





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