

# समाचार पत्रों से चयित अंश Newspapers Clippings

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## Ensure Izzat of the Armed Forces

*By Ramesh Davesar*

Given the huge gap in pay and perks, and the disparity in service conditions between the military and civil services, it's high time that we restore the pride and honour of our men and women in uniform

Our God and Soldiers we alike adore, even at the brink of danger; not before: After deliverance, both alike required; our Gods forgotten and our Soldiers slighted.”

The above quote symbolises two contrasting facts; one, the sacrifice a soldier makes in defending his nation; two, the most pathetic and callous public response in not fulfilling the national resolve to look after our men and women in arms. English poet Francis Quarles who penned these lines centuries ago would never have imagined that in the 21st century his prophesy was realised by India.

Our country has the dubious distinction of causing the perennial emasculation of the Armed Forces. One incident set the course of future civil-military relations immediately after independence when General Robert Lockhart, the then Commander-in-Chief, presented the “National Defence Policy” to Jawaharlal Nehru who summarily rejected it. India's first Prime Minister is reported to have said: “Rubbish, total rubbish. We don't need a Defence Policy, our policy is non-violence, we foresee no military threats. Scrap the Army! the Police are good enough to meet our security needs.”

Though the exact words that were used are contested, it was symbolic of the mindsight of the civilian administration at the time starting from the highest level and it sowed the seeds of anti-military policies that spiraled into a politico-bureaucratic onslaught over the decades against the Armed Forces inflicting upon the latter multiple vagaries ranging from tarnishing their prestige and status to erosion of the age-old military ethos, and diluting their protocol status to denying them their rightful perks and privileges, not to mention failing abysmally in the resettlement of veterans.

The Warrant of Precedence (WOP) that lays down the seniority and protocol at the national level is grossly subjective as it clubs various military ranks and those of the civil services without taking into account the cadre strength, disproportionate number of vacancies and the length of service put in by the incumbents of respective organisations.

To elaborate, the Armed Forces with officer strength of 60,000 with 9 ranks in the “Line of Promotion” is pitted against the Indian Police Service (IPS) and the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) with a cadre strength of 4,920/6,500 having 10/8 ranks respectively. It does not require a math wizard to conclude that the civil services with a luxurious “cadre-to-rank ratio” are better poised for faster promotions than their military counterparts.

For example, a service officer who takes 32 years to become a Major General is bracketed with the Inspector-General and the Joint Secretary who get promoted to those ranks with 18 to 20 years. There is clear differential of 10 to 14 years in favour of the civil services. Further, unlike the steep hierarchical pyramid in the Armed Forces, even sharper than the North Col of Mount Everest, just 10 per cent make to the top five ranks.

In contrast, in the civil services, thanks to liberal promotions, approximately 80 per cent qualify for the top ranks. It may sound like a wild exaggeration but it is a hard reality that in one instance an entire IAS Batch was promoted to Joint Secretary; can the Armed Forces ever dream of such a windfall? Lately, the IPS has gone in for massive cadre expansion as almost every city now has Police Commissioner (equivalent to Director General) which further tilts the balance in their favour. The agony does not end here. The National

Disaster Response Force (NDRF), with a strength of just 8,000 personnel with a proposal to increase the strength to 12,000) is headed by DG-rank officer.

Conversely, except for the Area and the Sub Area headquarters (HQs) there is no upgradation for the Armed Forces. Though it does ease out the protocol glitches to some extent, most crucially the operational and the internal/general security aspects which are handled by the Army's Field Formations ie Brigades/Divisions HQs are not upgraded.

This asymmetrical equation despite diverse core competencies, measurable professionalism and longer service puts military officers at grave disadvantage. In the light of these realities, the current 'inter se' seniority between the Armed Forces and the civil services is grossly unjustified and must be rectified.

Most importantly, based on the recommendations of the K Subramaniam Committee post-Kargil, the additional ranks of 'Colonel General' for Army Commanders and equivalents and the 'Chief of Defence Staff'

(CDS) for more effective coordination among the three services must be sanctioned. Now, the disparities created by the Seventh Pay Commission and its bias against the Armed Forces have further accelerated the disparities between civil and military personnel.

Further, in another first for India, the National Security Guard (NSG), the elite counter-terrorism force, in general has the extended task of infantry and that of Special Forces in particular; rightfully, two-third of the manpower is drawn from the Army, but most intriguingly the force is commanded by an IPS officer.

Besides lowering military prestige, this practice is professionally untenable. In order to maximise the NSG's operational competence as also to restore military pride, the command of NSG must be given to an Army officer from the Special Forces. Incidentally, post 26/11, the Army had taken up the case for change of command; as usual, it is enjoying the bureaucracy's "back burner hospitality"!

Finally, a recent development made me hang my head in shame. I learnt that while the Army was running from pillar to post to get sanction to replace SAF Carbines with new Close Quarter Battle (CQB) weapons, the Border Security Force (BSF) had already acquired this weapon. This is not to deny the fact that the BSF needed the weapon but it must be remembered that such decisions would further demean the honour and pride and lower the already sagging morale of the Armed Forces.

The time has come for the nation to address these sensitive issues and initiate immediate redressal to ensure that not only the prestige of the defence forces is restored but they also get their share of honour and glory, which has been denied to them since long.

While the principle of the Armed Forces' functioning under the civilian set-up in our democratic system is inviolate, it must not be overstretched to disparage their honour, glory and pride. At the same time, the top military hierarchy cannot escape from its duty to safeguard and restore military pride. The moment is apt to remind them about the Chetwod Motto.

*(The writer is a retired Infantry Officer with vast operational experience)*



Wed, 18 Oct, 2017

## **J&K: Soldier accused of braid chopping, assaulted**

***Scores of people took to the streets in Kralpora to protest against braid-chopping incidents. The youths threw stones at security personnel who retaliated by firing teargas canisters.***

***By Wajahat Shabir***

Clashes erupted in Reddi Chowkibal of Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district on Tuesday after a soldier was beaten up by local residents on the suspicion that he was a braid chopper.

Local residents alleged that the Territorial Army personnel barged into the house of one Ghulam Nabi and sprayed some substance on his daughter Saima that left her unconscious. Later he, chopped off her hair, they alleged.

A local resident said, “Soon after the braid chopper came out of the house, locals raised alarm. We chased the man and caught hold of him. He later revealed that he is a Territorial Army personnel and belongs to Tangdhar.”

To control the situation, police rushed to the spot and took the soldier into custody.

DIG, Baramulla, Vidhi Kumar Birdi denied involvement of the soldier in the braid chopping incident. He said, “A general convoy was passing by when some people blocked the road and started accusing him of braid chopping.”

Later, scores of people took to the streets in Kralpora to protest against braid-chopping incidents. The youths threw stones at security personnel who retaliated by firing teargas canisters.



Wed, 18 Oct, 2017

## Indian peacekeepers in Sudan awarded UN medal

*The Indian peacekeepers are part of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).*

Fifty Indian peacekeepers stationed in South Sudan have been awarded the UN Medal for their professionalism and service in protecting civilians and building durable peace in the conflict-ridden country.

The Indian peacekeepers are part of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

They are deployed with the Indian battalion stationed at Bor in the Jonglei region of South Sudan. They were presented with the award recently by UNMISS Force Commander General Frank Mushyo Kamanzi.

Presenting the award, General Kamanzi acknowledged their contribution in carrying out patrols across the region as well as providing a safe and secure environment for the 2,500 civilians who have sought sanctuary at the UN Protection of Civilians site at Bor, a media release said.

“I would like to thank the Indian battalion for their courage and professionalism in executing their mandate in Jonglei,” said General Kamanzi.

The local government in Jonglei also paid tribute to the Indian troops.

The Indian battalion had played an important role in keeping the community safe as well as encouraging local peace efforts, said Agot Alier, Jonglei Acting Governor.

They had also provided much-needed services to the community outside of their core mandate, such as medical care for local residents and support for local farmers with veterinary treatment for their animals, he said in a media release issued by the UN.

The battalion has been intimately associated with peacekeeping efforts and the battalion has supported the mandate of the United Nations and the overall peace process, said Alier.

Indian Ambassador to South Sudan, Srikumar Menon, attended the medal ceremony and thanked the peacekeepers for their commitment and service.

“India is committed to the objectives of the UN Charter and therefore is ready to support the United Nations’ peacekeeping efforts globally,” he said.

Wed, 18 Oct, 2017

## US-backed forces oust IS from its de facto capital Raqqa

By Anne Barnard

*Terror Group's Last Syrian Stronghold Falls after Four-Month Siege*

American-backed forces said on Tuesday that they had seized the northern Syrian city of Raqqa from the Islamic State, a major blow to the militant group, which had long used the city as the de facto capital of its self-declared caliphate.

The apparent rout of the last IS fighters touched off celebrations in Raqqa, where residents had lived under the repressive rule of militants who beheaded people for offenses as minor as smoking. Fighters could be seen cheering and firing celebratory gunfire in the streets, according to residents reached by phone and text message.

The United States Central Command stopped short of declaring victory, saying "more than 90% of Raqqa is in SDF control," a reference to the Syrian Democratic Forces, an American-backed militia group made up of Syrian Kurds and Arabs. A White House spokesman, Michael Anton, said, "We are still trying to confirm the truth here."

But officers with the SDF were emphatic in phone interviews and public statements that they had finally wrested control of the city after a four month-long campaign. "The military operation is over," said Talal Salo, a commander reached by phone at SDF's headquarters in Hasaka.

He added that all remaining IS fighters had either been killed or had surrendered to a tribal council. The bodies of dozens of foreign fighters were found in the national hospital in Raqqa after a last-ditch battle there, he said, an account confirmed by a member of the SDF who said he had seen at least 22 corpses there.

Whether final or not, the seemingly inevitable defeat in Raqqa of the IS carries heavy symbolic weight. At its height in 2014, the group controlled Iraq's second-largest city, Mosul, as well as Raqqa and large stretches of land on both sides of the border, and it had grand aspirations to double the size of its territory.

The victory in Raqqa, however, came at a heavy cost. The four-month-long battle for Raqqa has left at least 3,250 people dead, more than a third of them civilians, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. At least 1,130 civilians were among those killed since the start of the operation in early June, it said. About 270,000 residents have been displaced by the fighting, and thousands of homes have been destroyed.

Wed, 18 Oct, 2017

## Nuclear war may break out any moment, warns N Korea

North Korea's deputy UN ambassador warned on Monday that the situation on the Korean peninsula "has reached the touch-and-go point and a nuclear war may break out any moment."

Kim In Ryong told the UN General Assembly's disarmament committee that North Korea is the only country in the world that has been subjected to "such an extreme and direct nuclear threat" from the US since the 1970s -and said the country has the right to possess nuclear weapons in self-defence. He pointed to military exercises every year using "nuclear assets" and said what is more dangerous is what he called a US plan to stage a "secret operation aimed at the removal of our supreme leadership."

This year, Kim said, North Korea completed its “state nuclear force and thus became the full-fledged nuclear power.” “The entire US mainland is within our firing range and if the US dares to invade our sacred territory even an inch it will not escape our severe punishment in any part of the globe,” he warned.



Wed, 18 Oct, 2017

## Unravelling the cosmic code

By S Ananthanarayanan

*Coming to grips with gravity may be the way to understanding the forces and matter in the universe*

Detection of gravity waves and the Nobel Prize for the pioneers has put the focus on Albert Einstein’s formulation of gravity as a geometric effect that masses have on the structure of space itself. The force of gravity, however, is manifested at the level of planets, stars and the universe and can hardly be made out between objects of normal experience. On the surface of the Earth, of course, our planet exerts a force on each of us, which we believe we feel. Theoretical physicist and author, Nicholas Mee, however, in his book, *Gravity — Cracking the cosmic code*, argues that none of us has ever felt the force of gravity for one is weightless during free fall under gravity.

What we feel, as our weight, is the reaction of our bones and muscles, to the resistance that the ground we stand upon exerts to hold us where we are. With this encouraging start, that we do not feel gravity, Mee takes his readers through a rapid, 360 page, guided tour of centuries of contemplation in physics, mathematics, astronomy, art and symmetry, the cosmos and its origin from the Greeks to Galileo, Copernicus, Tycho Brahe and Kepler, to Newton, and then to Einstein and the moderns, on to Stephen Hawking and those that followed. The narration brings characters into the story in sequence, as they introduce, or morph into succeeding roles, along the progress from primitive wonder in the presence of the night sky to the present-day comprehension of how the universe has evolved. The book starts with an account of the Greek geometers and philosophers who described the first cosmologies.

The circle was the perfect shape and the motion of the heavens was naturally described in circles. In keeping with religious beliefs, which assumed divine sanction to these early notions, the first astronomers devised complex mechanisms, based on circles, and faithful to God’s Earth being the centre of the universe, to predict tides and the seasons and to explain the movements of the planets. Astronomers finally discarded the notion of a fixed Earth and recognised the sun as the centre of the Solar System. And then, the advent of the telescope brought into view things in the night sky that had never been seen before. Other planets were seen to have satellites and new planets were discovered. By sighting stars from different locations, when the Earth had changed position from one side of the sun to the other, the stars were seen as not fixed in a shell around the planets, but at great distances. The universe, in a sense, began to expand!

The orbits of planets were found to be not real circles, but ellipses, planets were found to go faster when nearer their host, and the idea grew of an attractive force that grew weaker by the square of the distance. Mee, in his book, systematically builds the run-up to Isaac Newton and his monumental contribution, to mathematics, the laws of dynamics and the law of gravitation, which drove the clockwork precision of the solar system, asteroids and comets. Newton’s formulation of gravity explained the motion of the planets with great accuracy. It was known that, the axes of spinning objects would go around in circles, like the motion of a spinning top. As planets had spin, these movements were observed in the planets too. In the case of Mercury, the innermost of the planets in the Solar System, however, the speed with which the axis of the planet’s spin went around did not agree with what was worked out. This was a longstanding mystery, and one explanation attempted was there was another planet, Vulcan, yet to be discovered, whose presence led to this effect on Mercury. Albert Einstein enters when electricity and magnetism have been understood and elegantly described

by James Clerk Maxwell. There was, however, a question of what it was that filled space, even where there was a vacuum, which electromagnetic waves, of which visible light was a form, could traverse. If there was “ether”, the medium of light, then, the speed of light should vary in different directions on Earth, for it moved through the ether at 30 kms a second.

The problem arose when experiment showed that the speed of light was the same in all directions. As Maxwell’s equations gave the speed of light with no reference to the speed of a source, Einstein reasoned that discrepancies in the way speeds added up must arise from the way we regard distance and time. In the Special Theory of Relativity, so called because it ignores gravitational effects, it is length and time that depend on the relative motion of an object and its observer, and the physical laws work equally for both, so long as one is in uniform motion with respect to the other. Hence, moving clocks run slower and measuring rods shrink when they move. And then, the mass of a moving body increases with the speed, and mass and energy are equivalent. And as energy used to propel a body gets used up with the increase in mass, no object can move at the speed of light. Now, mass is the bedrock of the older mechanics, where a heavier body needs a stronger force to set it moving. If heavy and light bodies fall to the ground with the same speed, it is because the heavier body is attracted to the earth with the greater force required to set it moving.

Einstein saw something not quite clear in this. Could it be just coincidence that the force of gravity on a body was the same as the force needed to set it in motion? Or was there some principle of the universe that was involved?

With perseverance and abstract mathematics, Einstein arrived at a formulation of gravity as an effect that the presence of a mass has on the shape of space, which is the reason for the attraction of masses, rather than a mysterious “action at a distance”, imagined by Newton. And with this formulation, Einstein showed that in the strong gravity felt by Mercury, there was a deviation from Newtonian mechanics and the difference in the speed of rotation of the axis of spin. The Special Theory of Relativity has also profoundly affected understanding of the working of the subatomic world. At this scale, particles behave like waves, and energy and mass are routinely transformed from one to the other. As the particles are small, however, gravitational effects are irrelevant. Mee leads readers through the maze of ideas used to understand the sub-atomic world. If the first cosmologies were geometric and Einstein saw gravity as a geometric effect that mass had on space, the theories of the elements of matter are built around symmetries and topologies.

Mee guides the reader through the different concepts that result in the Standard Model, an extremely successful description of the sub-atomic world, but one that ignores gravity. One important idea is that while the elementary particles of nature, like photons or electrons, are either components of matter or carriers of forces, theories, like Stephen Hawking’s String Theory, that attempt to blend electromagnetism — the forces found in atoms and the force of gravity — propose “supersymmetry” where force carrying particles have corresponding matter particles, and vice versa. Experiments such as the Large Hadron Collider, at CERN, aim to create the high energies needed for these heavy, supersymmetric partners to appear. Mee explains that the energies required are even higher than the capacity of the LHC. Gravity becomes a relevant effect only at the exceedingly small scale, smaller even than the particles in the nuclei of atoms.

A theory of matter that can account for gravity would need to be tested at this scale, which implies very high energies. The confirmation that gravity waves exist holds out the hope of conducting “gravity wave astronomy”, which would investigate the very ancient and high energy universe. This, possibly, would help resolve what is outside the capacity of manmade particle accelerators.

## **Cellular skeleton**

Scientists at Singapore's Agency for Science, Technology and Research have discovered how mammalian cells build their internal skeletons during the earliest stages of life. Every cell in the body has an internal skeleton, made of hundreds of fibres called microtubules. Microtubules grow from a region of the cell known as the centrosome. But in the early stages of embryonic development, cells lack centrosomes; so it has long been a mystery how cells begin to build their skeletons during the earliest stages of life.

Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology researchers have discovered a structure inside cells from which microtubules emanate. This newly-discovered structure called the "microtubule organising centre", seen here as a bridge-like structure connecting a pair of cells, acts as the centrosome of the cell before its formation. This image of a live mouse embryo at the eight-cell stage of development was imaged in real time using laserscanning microscopes. Microtubule filaments that form the skeleton of the cells are marked in blue, and the nucleus of each cell in orange. The image also shows two newlydiscovered "microtubule organising centres", prominent bridge-like structures responsible for the formation of cell skeletons during early embryonic development.

The research team, led by Nicolas Plachta at IMCB, believes this discovery will form the basis for new methods to monitor the development of human embryos used in assisted reproduction, and pre-implantation genetic diagnosis — a procedure used to help identify genetic defects within embryos before they are implanted. The IMCB findings were published in the leading scientific journal *Science* last month.