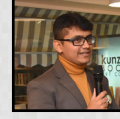


REMEMBER REJOICE RENEW



*Deepak Surana**

Next year the entire nation will be celebrating the 25th VIJAY DIVAS to commemorate the victory of the Indian army over our enemy during the KARGIL WAR in 1999. Twenty-five years is a long time; long enough for an entire generation to have grown up to adulthood and beyond. In the hustle and bustle of our super-fast lives, most of us have conveniently forgotten or neglected the sacrifices made by our men in uniform who did not even think once before lying down their lives for the safety of our great nation.



I urge all of you to always remember three basic expressions, listed down below, which will go a long way in keeping the spirit of our heroes alive.

REMEMBER: Soldiers die only if they are forgotten by their countrymen. It's high time we remember the sacrifices made by them and keep them alive in our thoughts. Always remember that any soldier who falls at the border leaves behind aging parents, wife, siblings, children and friends. He could have chosen to live a life in the civil just like you and me and make a bagful of money but he preferred to don the uniform for the greater good of our nation. Always remember that we can go to work, movies, restaurants and parties because there is someone out there ready to give his today for our tomorrow.

* *Entrepreneur and author of books on Indian Armed Forces, Bangalore*



REJOICE: We as a nation must collectively rejoice over the victory of our soldiers on the battlefield. We must take pride in our heroes and their valiant deeds on the battlefield. Days like the KARGIL VIJAY DIVAS must be celebrated like a festival, if not more. We must rejoice over the fact that we belong to a country which has been graced by innumerable heroes who have given their blood and sweat to protect our honour. In this era of Social Media, when reaching out to people is much easier, we will do well to reach out to martyr families and share their pride and sorrow. Respect and love is all what they crave for. Let them know that the sacrifice made by their beloved has not been forgotten by us.

RENEW: Every year we must renew the oath of being worthy citizens of this great country. Through our acts of patriotism,

generosity and harmony we must make ourselves worthy of the sacrifices made by our heroes in uniform. We must, in a collective effort, renew and revive the spirit of men like Bhagat Singh, Subash Chandra Bose, Azad, Maj. Shaitan Singh, 2nd Lt. Khetarpal, CQMh Abdul Hamid, Capt. Vikram Batra and many more of their kind. We must always respect and value INDIA, a nation for which these men gave their all. Every action and deed we do must be a step towards nation-building.

Personally, I feel that if given a chance, the able bodied youth of our nation must strive to join our armed forces to serve the nation. Being a part of the armed forces gives the highest chance for service and the least chance of corruption. It is sad to see that we are facing an acute shortage of officers at the junior levels of leadership. Highly paid jobs and lucrative careers are now the preferred options.

On a personal note, I, despite carrying a passion for the uniform, did not join the army largely due to a lack of devotion from my side. It shall forever be the biggest regret of my life. However, over the years, I realised that I could contribute to nation building by writing and telling the stories of our brave-hearts.

We all know about Lord Rama, Hanuman, Lord Krishna, Pandavas and other heroes from our epics because their stories have been orally transmitted through hundreds of generations. Eminent scholars have painstakingly compiled and sorted out ancient manuscripts to present to us the Ramayana and the Mahabharata in their current form. In the same vein, I realised that if we do not have enough written literature on our modern heroes they shall soon be forgotten.



My two books, **THE SHERSHAH OF KARGIL**- The definitive biography of Capt. Vikram Batra- and **THE KARGIL STORY**- a detailed account of five major battles fought during the Kargil war- are my miniscule and hopefully significant contributions to our canvas of military history. When I started my endeavour, almost seven years ago, my main objective was to inspire and motivate the youth. Even if a handful from those who have read my book, join the armed forces or become better citizens, my job will be done.

A nation without heroes is doomed. We as responsible citizens of this country must ensure that our heroes are respected, their families loved and cared for, their lives are worshipped and their stories are passed on to the next generation. Every soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him but because he loves what is behind him. We must make ourselves befitting of the love.

‘Always remember your soldiers, rejoice in their valour and renew their spirit through your good and noble deeds’

JAI HIND!

Image Credits by Deepak Surana

Reviewer Speaks

Mr Deepak Surana has given a timely reminder to the youth of the nation that as citizens of India, their highest obligation and privilege as a citizen is to protect the freedom of this nation, by bearing arms to safeguard it. That it is the most rewarding career as then a citizen can proudly and with deep sense of satisfaction state that his/ her life has been worthwhile as they serve/ served in the Indian Armed Forces, for India will only remain an independent nation as long as it is home to likes of Capt Vikram Batra. Without them India will be like "Gods without their angels."

Mr Deepak Surana's write up is indeed a clarion call to the youth to "Remember, Rejoice, Renew" their association with martyrs of this nation in variety of ways , individually and collectively. Not for once has he asked the youth to mourn the death of those whole fell on the battlefield, thereby conveying that it will be foolish to mourn these braves, but that we should be thankful to the Almighty that such men and women lived in India.

To understand the import of his message, one must get a glimpse into the "ethos" of our Armed Forces.

Indian Armed Force, without 'conscriptation,' has been a saga of loyalty to the commanders, fidelity to an "oath" and of courage under extreme stress. It is a story of many ups and downs, sometimes victory, sometimes dogged endurance and reverses and there is so much to be proud of.

Over the years the weapons, equipment, training have evolved and will keep evolving as emerging technologies are weaponised, all with the aim to achieve fatch (victory). The means to achieve victory may change but these ingredients to victory have not and will not change one 'constant' and that is the spirit of Indian Armed Forces, which is the confidence between officers and men which in turn has depended on three virtues "loyalty, fidelity and courage" which has been its ethos, on which the saga of bravery of Indian Armed Forces has built.

Though the youth today mainly joins the Armed Forces as a "Career" but with training , regimentation and on the strength of the camaraderie , such which can only exist in soldiering to protect the nation, this "career" soon transform itself into a " Matter of Honour".

The youth joining the Armed Forces today are mainly first generation of their families to so opt for this career. They come from a society which is fast evolving, changing under the duress of plethora of information which mostly is misinformation, available freely over the electronic and social media. This society's time tested values and ethics of centuries are fast being challenged by the increasing western modernity it is embracing.

The youth coming from this background, on joining the Armed Forces must be initially finding the strict discipline, orderliness, relentless training to imbibe the 'never say die attitude,' very frightful. But within all this they also discover that they have joined a new family where they will spend the prime of their youth rubbing shoulders with their comrades in arms, who come from all over India, from different regions and culture , much of which they are ignorant about and their interaction with new comrades makes them realise the richness and the strengths of India they have chosen to serve. He also discovers that despite all the toughness and strictness, his leaders are compassionate too and this youth then goes on to forge lifelong friendships, such which can be forged 'only under fire'.

This youth than emulates their leaders and thereafter are content to die rather than give an inch, to risk surgery without anaesthesia, of life as a cripple, yet are unwavering in the line of duty, under relentless fire, repelling repeated assaults for hours and days, with dead comrade in arms lying around in their bunker/trench and yet clinch victory with that "last charge", clashing cold steel, with tenacity and resoluteness which epitomises the Indian soldier.

What makes such a youth achieve such great heights? It is true that their 'pay,' though far from being princely, is much improved than those of soldiers of yesteryears and yes why otherwise but for attractive pay, should they volunteer to join the Indian Armed Forces? But they are expected on that pay, to do more, to give the 'supreme sacrifice' and this they readily DO, without batting an eyelid.

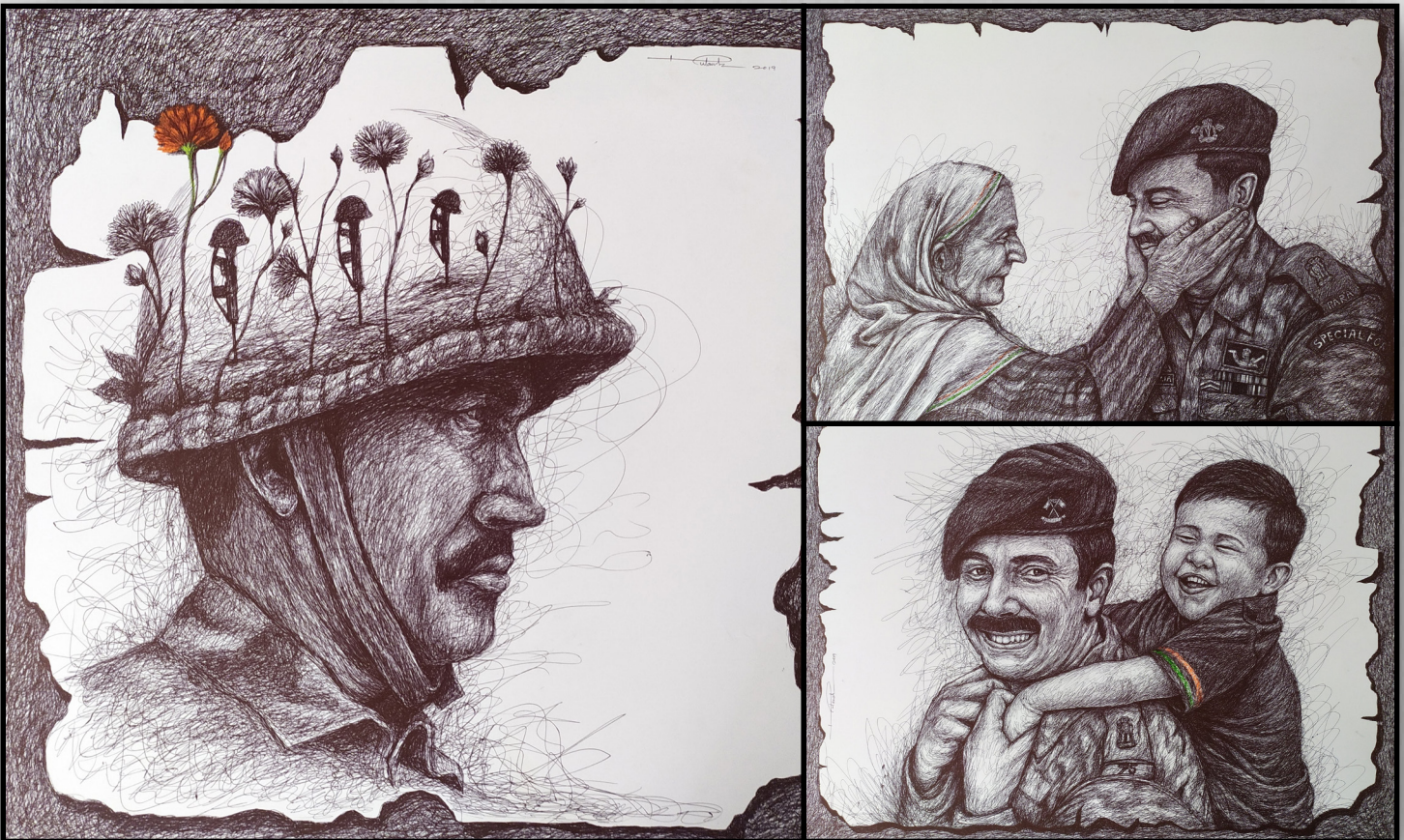
They epitomise the noblest devotion, romanticism in bravery, under conditions beyond human endurance. Why do they render such service? Is it for the 'Oath' to which they swore upon when they joined or is it the personal honour of the man who fears shame of cowardice or is it the respect, sometimes even affection for the personal qualities of the his leaders or is it the fear of discipline or simply the habit of enduring hardship so ingrained in each Indian or is it the Regimental spirit and his dedication and devotion to the Tricolour and the Nishaan of his Regiment and above all , the for this wonderful Nation?

It is a combination of all of the above which translates into 'Namak, Naam, Nishaan,' the ethos of the Indian Armed Forces.

And to understand this ethos should one read Mr Deepak Surana. Those who after reading still forego their birth right to join the Indian Armed Forces but decide to serve the nation in many other ways each citizen can, such must give heed to and imbibe the clarion call given by Mr Deepak Surana "Remember, Rejoice, Renew." □□□

"JAI HIND"

*RNG Dastidar
Freelance Journalist*



Illustrations by Hutansh Verma

KARGIL HEROES



**TANISHK
SENGAR**

VIKRAM BATRA

SANJAY KUMAR

MANOJ PANDEY

YS YADAV

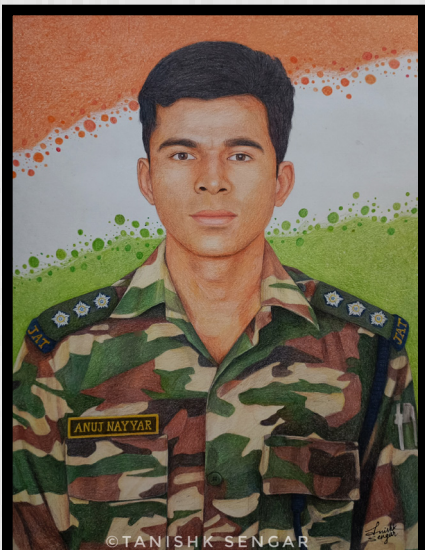
Tanishk Sengar

Vikraa M Batra Unit
13 JAK RIF
Param Vir Chakra Posthumously

Subedar Sanjay Kumar
13 JAK RIF
Param Vir Chakra

Y. S. Yadav
18th Grenadiers
Param Vir Chakra

Manoj Kumar Pandey
1st Battalion, 11 Gorkha Rifles
Param Vir Chakra Posthumously



Anuj Nayyar, 17 Jat
Mahavir Chakra Posthulously



Art by Tanishk Sengar