



club life

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Delhi Gymkhana Club, 2, Safdarjung Road, New Delhi 110011

A monthly in-house newsletter for private circulation only

FROM PRESIDENT'S DESK



Dear Members,

Spring is the season when nature bursts in an explosion of sight, sound and colour bringing with it the heady fragrance of blossoming buds, signifying nature's rebirth.... indeed a time for new beginnings. And that is what we are witnessing now.

You will be glad to know that your General Committee is planning to hold an EGM to carry out the much awaited updating of DGC's Articles. The New Companies Act 2013, imposes certain obligations on the Club; while the club's Administrative Reforms Panel has also recommended useful suggestions for smooth functioning of the club. In addition

ironing out of some ambiguities in membership issues and the oft repeated call for electoral reforms, are some of the important issues to be addressed in the proposed EGM.

As far as the court case is concerned the members may be aware that in the order dated 30th Nov 2016 the learned ADJ had touched on two important issues. While the order has refused relief sought by the plaintiffs but at the same time has asked the club not to grant any out of turn permanent membership to Green Cards/UCPs and to follow Articles of Association.

In the context of the above court order and keeping in mind the established traditions of the club, advice from the lawyers the appeal was filed in the Delhi High Court. In doing so we have stressed on the fact that we have not violated the Articles and that the judgement in question is a result of error apparent from the record. The appeal is presently under hearing.

The development of Organic Farm is going on in full swing and its

inauguration is slated for next month. The Jamun Tree project has also taken good shape and will be inaugurated later this month.

The month of February saw many social and cultural activities which attracted enthusiastic participation by members. On 2nd Feb the Beluga Noble Russian Vodka Promotion and on 12th Feb the Oakwood Creek Scotch promotion, were events of high spirits! The Annual Diplomats' Social Tennis Tournament on 12th Feb saw active participation from diplomats of many countries. The Valentine's Day was celebrated with Dance and Dinner on the 14th Feb. In the Book-club event on 17th Feb 2017, we had an excellent exposition by Mr. William Dalrymple, on his latest book 'Kohinoor: The Story of the World's Most Infamous Diamond'.

I sign off with my good wishes for more pleasant weather to continue in March and a joyful Holi!

Jai Hind!

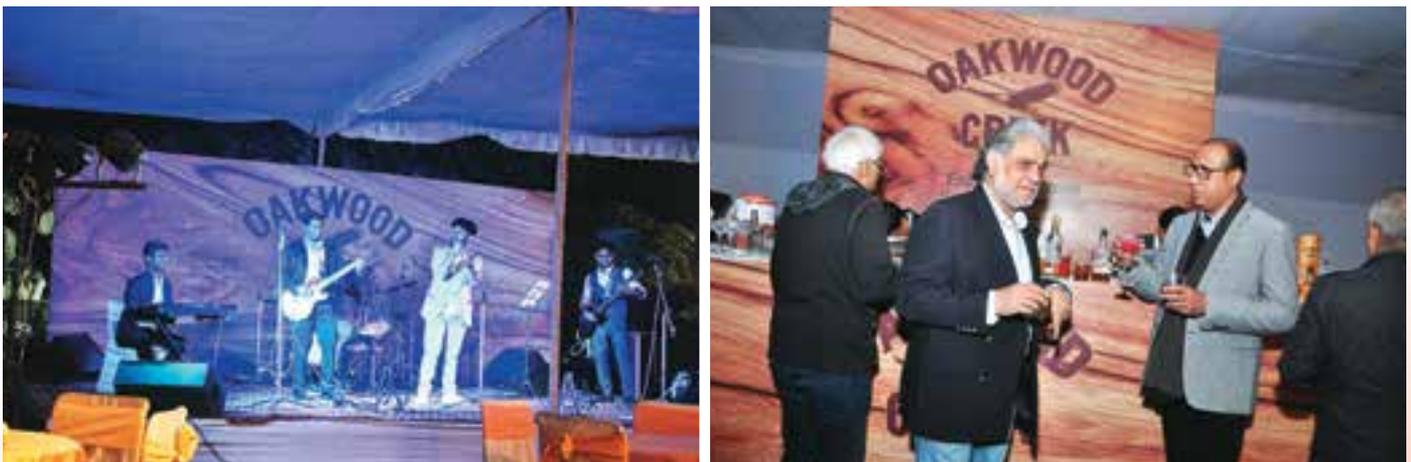
**Lt Gen IJ Singh,
AVSM, VSM (Retd)
President**

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Beluga Noble Russian Vodka - 2 February 2017



Oakwood Creek - 12 February 2017





BRUSH WITH ROYALTY

Sophiegate has once again highlighted the role of members of the royal family in Britain. Perhaps, the one person who could have halted the rift between the monarchy and the public would have been the late Earl Mountbatten. Although not strictly in the HRH category, he was considered to be a senior royal while at the same time a hero in the eyes of the public. I met him, for the first time, when he was Chief of Defence Staff(CDS) of the British Armed Forces.



In November 1964, an Indian delegation, led by Defence Minister YB Chavan visited the UK with the aim of getting maximum military assistance after the Chinese debacle. The other members were Defence Secretary PVR Rao, the three Vice Chiefs (all three later became chiefs of their respective services), Mantosh Sondhi who went on to become prominent in the corporate world, K Subrahmanyam, India's leading defence analyst, and yours truly.

After the initial formalities, the CDS hosted a cocktail party at his London residence. He was the perfect host, moving amongst the guests and getting like-minded people to meet and get to know each other. "In India, it is Hindustan/Pakistan—all the men congregate near the bar and the ladies sit separately discussing the price of vegetables." When the guests were leaving, the CDS whispered to our Military Adviser that he would like both of us to stay back for supper.

It was then that I saw his human touch and the part he informally played in settling problems before they publicly surfaced. Younger members of the royal family dropped in for advice and representatives of the media came for



background information and guidance. It was like an open house.

Another meeting with a member of the royal family took place soon after World War II ended. This time the atmosphere was somewhat stuffy and formal. Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal (sister of the King) was at that time Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Corps of Signals. In appreciation of the "valuable contribution of the Signal Corps of all Commonwealth countries in the war effort", a memento was presented by her at the Hyde Park Hotel in London. I was selected to receive this on behalf of the Corps of Signals of the Indian Army.

Uniform was the dress. Two "dry runs" were held and some advice given on how to conduct myself; speak only when you are spoken to; and, bow your head slightly when shaking hands. At the ceremony, India was the last recipient even though our contribution was perhaps the greatest. When my turn came, HRH asked in a loud, aristocratic voice, "How is my Corps in India?" I was so taken aback that instead of bowing my head, I nearly fell over backwards!

Lt Gen M N Batra, (Retd) PVSM (P-0159)

The Annual Diplomats Social Tennis Event - 12 February 2017



Valentine's Day - 14 February 2017



Book Club Meeting - Kohinoor: The Story of the World's Most Infamous Diamond by William Dalrymple - 17 February 2017



WELCOME TO

GREAT

BRITAIN



Edinburgh Castle, England
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#OMGB

GREAT BRITAIN. HOME OF AMAZING MOMENTS.

Great Britain, where so many of our childhood flights of fantasy belong, is tailor-made for romance. Gaze at stately Edinburgh Castle, on a casual stroll across the cobble streets of **Edinburgh**, the capital of **Scotland**. Embark on an intoxicating Scotch Whisky Experience, unearth the secrets of the Royal Mile. Discover a world of kilted warriors, fabled battlefields and foreboding castles as you hunt for the elusive **Loch Ness** monster in the moors, beaches and glens of the legendary Scottish Highlands. Unwrap the secrets of milk chocolate at Cadbury World in Bournville, **Birmingham**, sink into an undersea world at the National SEA LIFE Centre. Relive the Beatles era over hearty real ale at the iconic Cavern Club in **Liverpool**, linger at its elegant boutiques and bohemian streets. Surprise her with a gift at hip Liverpool ONE, introduce her to the Liverpool FC story at legendary Anfield. Look out over the city from imposing Clifford's Tower, stumble upon Europe's largest gothic cathedral in the medieval streets of **York**. A romantic holiday designed for you by Mercury Travels. It will be etched in your heart, forever.

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THE DROUGHT OF BASKERVILLE

It was the rainy season in the town of Baskerville but there had been no rains for two months. The farmers were very worried. "We will be ruined! How can I possibly feed my family!" cried one. "We will get no food or money!" cried another. All the farmers went to visit Dame Knowlt. Dame Knowlt knew solutions for almost every problem anyone had. "Dame Knowlt, we farmers are suffering. There is a drought in Baskerville. Please tell us why this is happening," said a farmer named Ronald. After thinking for a while, Dame Knowlt said, "I believe the Gods of Season have not united. If the Gods of Season unite then it will rain and you will be saved. You, Ronald must go to Wecistishire to help unite the Gods of Season". Ronald and the other farmers thanked Dame Knowlt and left. Ronald left for Wecistishire immediately.

After travelling for what seemed like 2 days, Ronald reached Wecistishire. The guard stopped him. "May I know why you are here in Wecistishire?" Ronald replied, "We farmers of Baskerville have got no rains for two months, I have come to help the Gods of season reunite". The guard thought for a while and then allowed in Ronald. Ronald was in awe when he saw the majestic palace of Wecistishire. He saw a middle-aged man dressed in a shiny grey cloak and asked him for directions, "Umm..... Excuse me, sorry to bother you but could you tell me where I would find the Gods of Season?" The God looked at Ronald over and over and smirked. "Eh, the, Gods of Season are in that part of the castle". And pointed to a pitch black room. Ronald nodded and went towards the room. But he didn't go inside. He had seen that man's smirk and felt that he had been lying. He then saw a very old man in a royal blue cloak and asked him the exact same question. The old man replied, "My dear, you will find the Gods of Season in that room which has suns, clouds and rain droplets painted on it". Ronald thanked the man and went inside that room.

Shouts and angry threats were all that Ronald could hear when he went inside that room. Ronald couldn't believe his ears. Were those the Gods of Season who had often been nice to him by giving rains to Baskerville? Anyway he

continued. Seeing a farmer inside the room the Gods of Season become silent. Taking advantage of their silence, Ronald spoke. "Dear Gods of Season, I have come to help reunite you. Without your reuniting, people in my city, Baskerville, will suffer. You all must remember that "united we stand, divided we fall! You must unite."

The Gods took a while to take in what Ronald had said. The oldest God in the room said, "I am Zephus the God who is in-charge of every season. All the Gods of Season have their powers in a **blue umbrella**. When we have the **blue umbrella** we stay united. But the **blue umbrella** has been stolen by Aferson. Without the **blue umbrella** we can do nothing except stay divided and get, sadly, angry,". "What can I do to get back the blue umbrella?" questioned Ronald. "You must go to the pitch black room and get it back," answered Zephus, Ronald wasted no time.

Carefully, Ronald entered the pitch black room. He saw the **blue umbrella**. He took it and ran away. But he was so busy trying to escape, that he didn't see a trap. He fell, head first, into the trap.

"You thought you could get away, human?" asked Aferson. He was the same man Ronald had seen. The middle-aged man wearing the shiny grey dock. Ronald kept quiet. Aferson changed form and became a sharp needle. He poked Ronald everywhere. Ronald concentrated on trying to remember the forgetting spell he had learnt from a Hoodoo Queen a few years ago.

It suddenly came to him!

"Flaa-raa-forget tial oopaa-Afe-god-rson," Ronald chanted. To his satisfaction, the spell worked! Ronald now had Aferson under his control. He ordered Aferson to open the trap and let him go. Now, being extremely careful Ronald tip-toed out of the black room.

Safely, Ronald returned the **blue umbrella** to the Gods of Season and left Wecistishire. Pleased with himself Ronald continued his journey back home.

As soon as he reached Baskerville, he felt the raindrops on his head. He smiled at the sky.

Ronald had just saved Baskerville!

Davki Misra D/o Purva Misra(U-2676)

First Prize winner of TOI Write India Junior Competition held in 'The Literature & Ideas Festival 2017' on 29th January 2017.

EXCELLENCE IN SPORTS – JAIVIR SINGH DHILLON – SQUASH



Jaivir Singh Dhillon is a top squash player in the country today at the age of 12. He has represented India at the Asian Junior Squash Championships held in Malaysia in 2016.

Jaivir is the grandson of our club members Jiti (S J) Chaudhri, VrC, and Mr. Preetinder Singh Dhillon, grand nephew of Mrs. Sushil Kanta Chaudhry, **a former 5 times Ladies National Squash Champion, and son of Sonaal and Yadavinder Dhillon.**

Jaivir recently won the All India Chattisgarh Squash Tournament in the under 13 Category. He was the Finalist in the Hamdard Junior Under- 13 boys category where he finished runners Up in February 2017. Earlier he had also bagged the Delhi Junior Open Squash Tournament (2016), which was held at our own Delhi Gymkhana Club. In 2016 he won the Bengal Open and was a Runner Up in the Junior Chandigarh event.

Jaivir won a Gold Medal at the National School Federation Games of India in the Boys U – 14 Category held at Chennai in January 2017 where he represented the Delhi State.

He has won numerous top level squash tournaments in India and has been named the **Most Promising and Upcoming Junior Squash Player.** He had earlier held the No: 1 ranking both in the U – 9 and the U -11 Category.

The young lad has been fortunate in receiving excellent guidance from experienced Squash players of our Club like Mr. Lalit Verma, Ms. Bhuvaneshwari Kumari, Mr. Arjun Khanna and Mr. Dhruv Dhawan.

On the academic front - he has won the **Delhi Public School R.K. Puram's prestigious Scholar's Badge award for academic excellence from 2014 till 2016 and the Red Blazer for Principals Award in Extra-curricular Excellence in 2015-2016, and a Gold Medal in Maths for four consecutive years.**

Jaivir is a conscientious child and has been pursuing the sport for the last five years and has given his heart and soul in achieving excellence in it. Not only has Jaivir been India's foremost ranked player in his age group during period 2013 - 2015, he has also been ranked 2nd in the country, in the U – 13 Category for the year 2016. He currently continues to compete regularly at the national level and has achieved exceptional results. We are proud of him at the Club.

Chairman, Sports Sub-Committee

Syndicate Rummy Tournament - 23 February 2017

RESULT: JOINT WINNERS: Col P S Bajaj, Ms Vishnu Bhagwan, Ms S Kewal Kishan and Ms Lalita Lal being felicitated by Wg Cdr Duj Nath.





CHARADE OF GIFTS

The other day we were dining at our friend Balwant's house. Roma and Nari, a couple we have known for some time, were also there. We've other common friends and do run into them once in a while, but we've never been to each other's house. Nice couple, friendly sort, good to talk to. Nari used to work for a multinational and is a consultant now.

I remembered Roma mentioning sometime ago about their house being built at Gurgaon. Among other things, the petite, five feet nothing was looking forward to more accessible tower bolts on doors and windows so she wouldn't need to carry her little stool around – which she had to in the company leased bungalow with high doors and short bolts. "You see, I'm a little short" she had confessed sportingly.

We enquired about the new house and Roma told us all about it; how they had got a great architect but lousy contractors, how many imported fittings Nari had brought, the beautiful terrace garden.... Suddenly she took off with a start, "Oh, thank you so much for the lovely gift. Sorry we are yet to have a house-warming party. We love the cute little antique lamp you have sent..."

I was flabbergasted. My wife looked askance and I just kept quiet. We had never sent them any gift; it was obviously a mistake. Someone else's card must have come unstuck, but we couldn't figure out how ours got in there.

The mystery was solved by Balwant's wife Nirmal. She confessed sending them the lamp, which we had given her

last year. Our card was still in the box.

Exchange of gifts has become so inane and mechanized that there's hardly any joy left. It's more an exercise in remembering – or recording – who had given you what and when. Come Diwali time and old registers are opened. Quid-pro-quo is important. Value of your gifts shouldn't be lower than what you received last year.

Since they had sent it first, you must do the honours this time. If their driver had brought it, you mustn't go yourself... endless calculations are necessary, including the care that you don't end up sending anybody else's card while recycling previous year's gifts and even more important, no one should get their own gift back!

As a matter of fact, we've had the pleasure of receiving such a gift – after three years – which we had given to a friend on his wedding. We've never really figured out the details but it must've been re-wrapped at least half a dozen times.

When the practice of Diwali gifts started, people used to prepare sweets at home. Every one had a specialty. The family would then carry a small plate, of what the lady of the house had made painstakingly, to their friends. They'd all spend some time together – perhaps even share a meal and when it was time to leave, the hostess would bring a return gift. There was grace, fun and charm in the process. Not a mechanized tally of inflow and outflow.

Now, the plate has been replaced by jumbo boxes, liquor bottles, huge hampers and ...much more. Big stores offer special gifts every year. Some take pride in advertising that their hampers start at Rs.5000! Of course there's no upper limit. What with imported cheese, wine caviar, suit lengths, crystal...you can pack in hell of a lot of moolah in a small basket. But, no one has the time. PAs and drivers do the job on their employer's bidding and the charade of being one-up goes on.

Krishan Kalra (P-4530)

The Resurrection of Retro Kings-Live Concert by Big Brother Vijay and DJ Aman - 25 February 2017





STILL TOGETHER AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

“Why don’t you be a good boy and just die?”

- Sean Bean as Alec Trevelyan 006, in *Goldeneye* (1995)

The disintegration of the modern Indian union of states has oft been predicted, but somehow hasn’t happened yet.

Perhaps among the first to start the ball rolling was Field Marshal Claude Auchinleck, the last British Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army. This worthy intoned that the 1947 partition of India was a harbinger of further future divisions of the sub-continent. Or words to that effect...

This was rightly seen at the time as a case of sour grapes (See you won’t be able to hold yourself together without the paternalistic guiding hand of the British Raj!) on the part of a retreating colonialist towards a country that didn’t want or need him. More importantly, this prophecy remains unfulfilled to date.

Unless, of course, you count the violent divorce between West Pakistan and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) after a small war in December 1971. Or the many (so far) unsuccessful attempts of sundry Kashmiri, Sikh, Bodo, Naga and Mizo secessionists to carve out independent states based on ethnicity, from the Indian union.

During the 1960s and 70s, some first world economists and political scientists played a then-popular parlour game of predicting the imminent demise and disintegration of the Indian union. The product of one of these, *Asian Drama* by the Norwegian economist Gunnar Myrdal even won the Nobel Prize for literature! Based on a biased and inaccurate reading of socio-economic data, this overrated tome (wrongly) predicted that a combination of famine, overpopulation and atavistic, regressive Hindu belief systems would soon doom the young republic of India.

Myrdal had reckoned without Professor M S Swaminathan and Dr Verghese Kurien; the Green and White revolutions they helped spearhead. He also hadn’t factored in the gradual erosion of caste practices and traditional beliefs

caused by increasing urbanization and exposure to western-style liberal education. Anyway, these beliefs and practices were never part of Indian government policy, the way *Apartheid* was for the former white minority regime in South Africa.

The problem with most prophets of doom is that they invariably anticipate extreme outcomes - not realizing that real-world scenarios mostly tend to fall somewhere in the median between normal and catastrophic. In the immortal words of Mark Twain, “rumours of my death are greatly exaggerated...”

The Norwegian Nobel Prize committee of that time must be wishing their embarrassingly ill-advised award has been conveniently forgotten by now. India is presently an exporter of food to neighbouring countries of the Middle East and South Asia. Population growth in certain regions of the country has stabilized - to the extent that some experts believe that Nigeria will overtake India as the world’s second most populous country by 2020!

Fantasies about conspiracies to destabilize India were a favourite of the chattering classes during the 1970s and 80s. Yet despite the best efforts of the “foreign hand”, India stubbornly refused to politically fragment in the Yugoslav manner. Secessionist movements in the North-East and Punjab have withered away. Even insurgency in Kashmir (despite enthusiastic Pakistani support) appears to be in a stagnant phase at present. If there really was a foreign hand at work, it doesn’t seem to have been very effective – or successful.

“You have a nasty habit of surviving, Mr. Bond”, hissed the frustrated villain of the 1983 movie *Octopussy*, coincidentally set in India. The country has an equally nasty habit of confounding complacent anticipations of its impending demise. Lt. General Hamid Gul, late of Pakistan’s infamous ISI, once smugly declared that “India is too big. It will have to be broken up first.”

Unfortunately for the late General Gul, our perversely contrary country persistently refuses to oblige him – besides others of his ilk, as well.

Ravi Vaish (G-1902)

SPRING - TIME BLOOM AT OUR CLUB!

ALLURING, AWESOME, AMAZING ALLITERATION

On a recent chat show on TV, a famous Bollywood producer/director remarked to a top heroine that her name carried a lot of weight in the film industry since it had "alliteration", ie, the same letter/sound occurred at the beginning of each of the three words in her name. Well, the name of the show also had the same literary device – Koffee with Karan as did the name of the heroine "K"areena "K"apoor "K"han! Of course she carried a lot of weight in the film world – she was in the final trimester of her pregnancy!!

Alliteration is a stylistic device where a number of words having the same first consonant occur close together. Many companies are named with a repetitive sound – Dunkin Donuts, Best Buy, Coca Cola, PayPal are a few which come to mind. Many prominent people – both real and fictional are also named with an alliterative effect – William Wordsworth, Marilyn Monroe, Ronald Reagan, Fred Flintstone, Donald Duck etc. Alliteration certainly lends a catchiness to the

names and enhances the recall value!

Alliteration seemed interesting and exciting – definitely a break from the mundane; so I incorporated it in my everyday life. Birthday greetings which I sent to friends now read – "hope your day is fabulous, fantastic and fulfilled." Rendezvous with friends would be fixed with statements like, "Lets meet in the morning for mocha." When Mom asked if I wanted to have rice for lunch I would answer "Peas pulao please." I started enjoying using alliterative phrases. When I rearranged my closet I gleefully proclaimed "see how consistent I am in cleaning my cupboard". "Fresh fried fish" was my choice from the restaurant menu on a dinner outing with family.

This alliterative euphonic state however did not last long. One evening Dad reached home weary and pooped. Paying no heed to his enervated, wornout state I took off with childlike glee "Lets go for a flick and follow it up with a fabulous feast at this fantastic new...."

I stopped short. With a fierce, fiendish, furious look and with firmness and finality in his voice he said, "Enough. End this exhaustingly exasperating exercise right now."

Ayushmaan Datta (G-7344)

THE ROAD TO WIMBLEDON



In the old days, our serene grass courts have hosted some of the World's premier Tennis events, from India's first Grand Prix in 1973, to Davis cup ties and National Championships. We have had an endless number of Tennis Royalty tread on our manicured grass. To mention just a few, Roy Emerson (winner of 12 Grand Slams), Frank Sedgman (Wimbledon Champ), Raul Ramirez, Lew Hoad (former World number 1), Fred Stolle, Pancho Segura, Goran Ivanisevic (Wimbledon Champ), Tom Gorman, Ramanathan Krishnan and Vijay Amritraj.

It was about time we did something once again to serve Indian Sports and put ourselves back on the Tennis map.

The 'Road to Wimbledon' is a Junior Tennis initiative of the ALL England Club, the patron of Wimbledon. They will be conducting the 14 and Under Masters event at our Club commencing the week of April 10th, 2017.

The RTW began in the UK in 2002 and has over 7000 juniors participating each year. The Indian players have qualified from the four Road to Wimbledon qualifying events played in Pune, Bangalore, Chandigarh and Kolkata this January and February. The top 16 boys and girls from all over the country will be slugging it out next month, and the two boys and girls finalists will be invited to the UK for the National Finals of the UK HSBC Road to Wimbledon.

Also invited to the UK are the boys and girls from Hong Kong and China who are staging their own 'Road to Wimbledon' events.

During the event, the RTW team will also be holding clinics for our Juniors at the Club. Incidentally, the RTW is involved with an excellent charitable based project with Magic Bus, who use tennis and sport as a holistic way of improving junior lives in the marginal communities. As the Gymkhana

Club is currently looking at helping out kids for our own Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project, the timing of this event could not have been more appropriate.

I would encourage our members to come and watch some of India's best young talent during the week starting 10th of April, as it is not often one can watch the top Juniors in action in our own backyard, or rather, back lawn!

Finally, a special word of thanks to Paul Hutchins, MBE. Paul is a former professional player and Captain of the UK Davis Cup team and is spearheading this landmark event at our club. In fact, it was Paul, who created the Wimbledon buzz last year by magnanimously arranging for Goran Ivanisevic (Wimbledon Champion in 2001) and Tim Henman (former World number 4) to play here and conduct a coaching clinic for our kids. It was a memorable afternoon of exchanged forehands and backhands with these legends. Paul had also thrown in the symbolic Wimbledon strawberries and cream during the High tea that followed. So, subsequently, when Paul requested the Gymkhana Club to host the Road to Wimbledon even this April, the Committee embraced the opportunity with much zeal and anticipation.

For more information please go to the website www.roadtowimbledon.com

Sanjeev Kassal (P-7090)

BRIDGE RESULTS FEBRUARY 2017

TEAM OF FOUR

- 1st Brig V K Sawhney, Mr D Coehlo, Mr Arun Jain, Mr Mukesh Shivdasani, Mr S Sundereshan, Mr Arjun Sawhney
- 2nd Mr Siddharth Behuria, Mr Ashok Singh, Mr Sarthak Behuria, Dr Sutanu Behuria
- 3rd Dr Rajeev Anand, Gen Suri, Col R Vasudeva, Mrs Madhu Berry, Mrs Veena Vishwanathan

PAIRS

NORTH-SOUTH

- 1st Mr D B Ahuja – Mr Narendra Singh
- 2nd Mr H D Bhalla – Mr Sanjiv Bery
- 3rd Ms Sheena Khurana – Mr Jasjit Singh

EAST-WEST

- 1st Mr A K Gupta – Mr Yogeshkar Varma
- 2nd Mr Sneh Thadani – Mr Mahendra Chopra
- 3rd Mrs Urmil Agarwal – Mrs Veena Vishwanath



THREE FIELD MARSHALS

How interesting to read RK Puri's contribution to the November Club Life, and I hope he would allow me to share my knowledge of the same three Field Marshals -- Cariappa, Bramall and Manekshaw.

In descending order of the depth of acquaintance with each Field Marshal, I start with Manekshaw. I didn't really know him except for one or two social occasions with Biki Oberoi; during a visit to Delhi in the mid 1980s I found myself sitting in an adjoining position at the hairdressing salon at the Oberoi Hotel. "When are they sending you to the House of Lords?" the Field Marshal enquired. "No idea Field Marshal, but you obviously keep yourself abreast about affairs at Westminster," I replied. "Yes, I am interested in former modest Cavalry Officers now knocking on the doors of the Houses of Parliament," said he. "Well, no Cavalry Officer should ever be described as modest," I replied.

Again, in the mid 1980s, my wife and I were members of a Tory Parliamentary group visiting Nepal and it coincided with an entirely different and separate visit by then General Dwin Bramall. Our paths crossed a number of times, although we were already nodding acquaintances in London. A few days later we found ourselves in Jaipur. My former Regiment, 2nd Royal Lancers were then stationed there, and when I spent the day with them they talked about the "bandobast" for the visit by Bramall. We were guests one evening of Ayesha Jaipur at the Polo Bar at the Rambagh Hotel. The General looked at me and said "Who is following whom around?" "Well General," I replied "you are visiting my former Regiment tomorrow, and it is partly because Lady Bramall has insisted you do so, should you be in India. Her grandfather was a General and after retirement held an appointment at Buckingham Palace and he was a former Officer in my erstwhile Regiment."

"You are well informed," said the General "but tell me why you and the other Cavalry Officers I know call us General and not Sir." I replied that all this was part of the cavalry elan, part of our complexes, and inferiority or superiority one. I am happy to run into the Field Marshal from time to time in one of our London clubs, and one of the many thousands, or millions, who were appalled at the police investigating nonsensical charges against him, charges of which he was fully cleared, but sadly after Lady Bramall had died, a granddaughter of the 2nd Royal Lancers family.

Again some time in the mid 1980s, I was delighted to learn that Cariappa had deservedly been made a Field Marshal, but after Manekshaw, and the order of batting has always

puzzled me. It was somewhere in the same decade that he was invited to London as a state guest of Her Majesty's Government, an honour thoroughly deserved.

Brig Mayadas, the Defence Attaché at the Indian High Commission, asked me to assist in some of the arrangements. The Field Marshal was being accommodated at the Cavalry and Guards Club of which I have been a member since 1954. With the Secretary's help, I was able to choose the most comfortable room for our distinguished visitor, who was going to be feted by the Ministry of Defence, including joining the Queen in the Royal Box at Ascot races, and other distinguished gatherings. Mayadas had also arranged a dinner party to which my wife and I were invited. When we had been introduced, he said "Look here Saroop, Mayadas informs me that we have met before. Tell me." Now here is the story of that meeting in GHQ in Delhi, where I became one of his many hero worshippers.

When I was commissioned from the IMA, our C-in-C, Cariappa, had formed the idea of having a Guards Brigade, similar to the Household Division in Britain. A number of specially chosen Officers were due to be transferred to it, but my batch from the IMA were going to be the first directly commissioned officers into the Guards, a great honour. I wanted to go into my family Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Royal Lancers (Gardner's Horse) but against my inclination was told I was one of four or five to be the first directly commissioned officers, the others being Sodhi, KB Mehta and others who eventually all reached General rank, forever to be remembered as such in Indian military archives.

The four or five of us were ordered to report to GHQ for a two days' briefing starting with a charming Major in MS Branch, followed by a meeting with General Henry Shiv Dutt Singh, Military Secretary, an elegant Cavalryman and to observe him putting his cigarette into a holder before lighting it was a virtuoso performance not easily forgotten!

The first day was rounded off with a meeting with the Adjt Gen, Maj General Hira Lal Atal. My agitation had been mounting, and I sought a meeting with General Wilkinson (Silky Wilky because of his ubiquitous scarf). He was then Director Armoured Corps and Colonel of his old Regiment, 2nd Royal Lancers. To summarise our conversation while I was shaking in my boots, he said that I was a bloody fool, should never have allowed myself to be ordered/ persuaded into joining the Guards. The Regiment I wanted would still have me, but Silky Wilky said that I had to tell the Chief the next day that I did not wish to join the Guards, he would throw me out to some remote station, but Silky Wilky would rescue me from my fate and ensure that I joined 2nd Royal Lancers. With only ten days commissioned service, he expected me to bite the bullet and tell the Chief that I did not wish to join his specially selected Regiment! "And what is more, it will show me how much courage you have. Dismissed" said General Wilkinson.

I had a sleepless night, formed up the next day to be presented to the Chief, and with sweat running down my trousers, told him that I did not wish to join the Guards. "What, what," he barked, "Henry what is wrong with this boy?" shouted the Chief. "I don't know, Sir, he was alright this morning," said Henry beautifully performing his smoking routine. An eternity seemed to pass: the Chief glared at me, and then uttered the kindest words I have ever heard in my life. "Henry, post the boy where he wants to go."

The day after Mayadas' dinner, I ran into Cariappa in the appropriately called Field Marshal's room at the Cavalry Club. He said that having listened to the story "If you had stayed with the Guards you would now have been in the House of Commons." I could not have admired any individual more.

Maj Narinder Saroop (P-0144)

SHADOWS

They follow you everywhere you go,
You see them and you should know
They will never leave until the end

They walk as fast as you
Stop to tie their shoe
But you will never lose them
For they do what you do

They walk behind you
Or sometimes on the side
They aren't so creepy
So don't get very weepy
They will always stick with you

Even if you are lonely
Your shadow is your best friend
And will remain so
Till the end

Sammarth Kumar

(age 13; son of Bharat and Juhi Kumar (F-1069))

Mexican Food Festival - 26 February 2017



ACHIEVEMENTS



Mr Sunil Sachdev (P-6983) was unanimously elected President of the Federation of Publishers and Booksellers Association of India on 28th January 2017.



Dr. Reena Sethi

Dr. Reena Sethi, a senior consultant is at present the Ophthalmic Director of Arunodaya Deseret Eye Hospital (ADEH), a community based, tertiary eye institute, in Gunagram, Haryana. She is also a visiting consultant to leading hospitals, including Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, New Delhi, and Fortis Memorial Hospital, Gurugram.

Dr. Reena Sethi, is the co-founder of the Arunodaya Charitable Trust (ACT), not for profit, NGO, which is doing yeomen service, in the field of primary community eye care, in over 65 villages, and urban areas. Till date, over 1.3 million needy patients, have been treated.

She is an accomplished Phaco Surgeon, with special interest in Paediatric Cataracts. Presented at numerous National & International Meetings.

She was presented an Hony. Diploma by the prestigious S. Fyodorov Eye Microsurgery State Institution, Moscow, Russia, in October, 2016.



ANECDOTE

I was talking to a consultant from abroad who was on his first visit to India.

I asked him "Have you visited one of the 7 wonders of the world in India Tajmahal".

He said "That is not the real wonder of India"

I asked "Then what is the wonder of India"

He said "The real wonder of Indian is the belief in the pedestrian crossing the road that the driver will not kill him".

Chandrika Prasad (P 3538)

MEMBERS' VOICE - INTERFACE

(extracts of letters to editor)

Dear Editor,

I didn't expect my e-mail to be printed, but hope the correct method of addressing is taken up by members of the Club, and then passed onto their families and friends.

Enjoyed the articles of pre-Independence India, and appreciated the February articles by A. K. Srivastava on B. N. Lahiri's book, Major Saroop's article about the Club and Desert Rendezvous by Lt Gen Batra.

Just wonder how many British Indian Army officers still survive, and how many of the Club members could also provide some articles pre or even post independence.

With best regards,

Shiv Anand (P-1183)**GENDER BENDER**

our ladies speak!

Dear Sir,

I was initially thrilled to see the club's concern for kids and opening up the space in the library.

However this morning I was appalled to see that the kid space has been reallocated to a judge office desk and the only comfortable seating - the sofa too has been moved out!

I am sure the management will be more sympathetic to the kids and at the very least move the sofa back in.

Regards,

Priyanka Bhandari (U-2339)**Editor - work in progress please!**

DEMONETISATION - ITS IMPACT ON GROWTH IN NATIONAL INCOME

GDP Data by CSO (Central Statistics Office) has projected that Indian "Real" or Inflation adjusted GDP will grow at 7.1 percent in 2016-17, 0.8 percentage points slower than the previous years 7.9 percent growth. This is due to the amazing 7 percent growth in Oct – Dec 2016. The growth during the previous quarter (July-Sept 2016) was 7.4 percent. These projections have surprised many experts. To elucidate, the CSO has retained its projection, that the economy will grow at 7.1% in 2016-17, slowing down from the pre-revised growth of 7.6% in the previous year. More importantly the 7.1% GDP growth was retained over the higher revised growth in 2015-16. It is clarified here that on February 1, 2017 the CSO had revised the 2015-16 GDP growth numbers to 7.9% from 7.6% estimated earlier. It may be mentioned here that estimates of GDP growth were released a month before they were due to help the Govt. prepare the Budget, whose presentation was advanced by a month to February 1, 2017.

Although the GDP growth is below the growth of 2015-16, it defends the decision to demonetize, which according to critics had been disastrous for the economy. It was then said that demonetization had led to massive job losses as companies cut down production, and overall economy was disrupted post November 8, 2016, even as the government maintained the impact was temporary.

It needs to be clarified here that the CSO has forecast a greater slide, in GVA (Gross Value added). The CSO figures reveal that GVA (which is GDP minus net taxes) will slow down to 6.7 percent in 2016-17, which is 1.1 percentage points lower than 7.8 percent GVA growth in 2015-16. GVA is a more realistic proxy to measure changes in the aggregate value of goods and

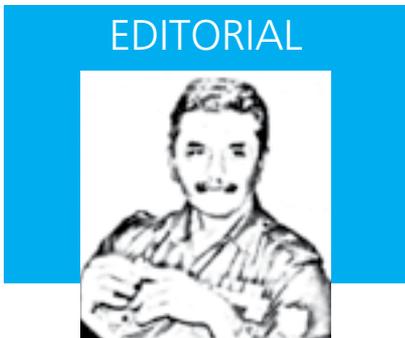
services produced in the economy. The effect of demonetization and resultant slow down in household spending and corporate investment will be better reflected by the steeper fall in GVA growth.

The first estimates released in January 2017 had estimated that Indian GDP will grow by 7.1 percent in 2016-17. However these estimates were based on incomplete corporate income and factory output data, and did not factor in the effects of demonetization. Most Economists had projected below 7 percent growth, based on consumer goods sales and third quarter corporate balance sheet. The IMF had projected that India will post demonetization grow by only 6.6 percent in 2016-17. The economic survey had put down growth to 6.5 percent in 2016-17. The economic survey said that GDP growth in 2017-18 will be in range of 6.75 to 7.5 percent, showing fears of no early revival in the economy.

The demonetization was widely believed to have hurt household spending, which was the back bone of India growth story. Demonetization was believed to have upset the wedding season sales in Oct – March on cars and electronics. But CSO figures now reveal that India remains the World's fastest growing economy, ahead of 6.7 growths in China, that is suffering from Industrial declaration.

Further good rains this year have helped in raising Farm Income. Agriculture is set to grow at 4.4 percent this year, compared to 0.8 percent in 2015-16. However, part of this growth in Agriculture may be due to a low base effect. It needs to be mentioned here that India was hit by two successive droughts in the last two years.

Tejinder Singh Lashar (P-1764)



With spring time again in Delhi, the flowers in full bloom and Rashtrapati Bhawan opening its Mughal Garden gates; **we at the Club have had our own riot of stupendously pleasing flowers attracting record attendance!** Some pleasing snaps have been carried in this issue. To complement the weather and flowers, a host of events by our Entertainment Sub Committee ensured that February continued to rock! Our Bar Committee organised some spirited evenings too! Despite the jerky on-off weather, the winter lunches did indeed continue unabated with myriad menus on order. The Mexican Food Festival was a hit, not the least because of our Mexican-hatted staff!

Our date with a much awaited Book Club invitee, **William Dalrymple,**

ensured the largest attendance to date for a Book Club event; while he held forth in his inimitable extempore style. The interactive session was equally lively, with the author responding with his crackling humour. We thank all the members for making the event a success with their spirited participation

This month we have two Book Club events lined up, **with one specially for our ladies.** It will provide a further respite to them from the children/grand children who are into the exam month. The **'Holi month'** scheduling has obviously been framed around children's commitments. We assure our children of some great Workshops at the upgraded Children Reading Room at the library on their return from their exams.

Tennis saw some great action with a host of events, carried pictorially in this issue. We have highlighted achievements of one of our children in Squash, as brought to our notice by Major Yogesh Prasad and cleared by the Chairman, Outdoor Sports. The Rummy Room resounded with great 'card fever'; while the Bridge players are sharpening their skills

for the March tournament. The Swimming Pool saw an upsurge in attendance, as did the occupancy of our Cottages with outstation and overseas members flocking to Delhi during February. Fortunately, stringent control on functions ensured a relatively more balanced scheduling of large parties at our party venues.

Amidst the fun and frolic, a parallel play of unsavoury and avoidable bad press caused much consternation amongst the senior members; who recounted genteel, gentlemanly/ladylike conduct of our members of yore. **Resolute, decisive and accommodative measures are obviously being ensured by the GC to safeguard Club interests AND to curb the nasty canards being spread around. We request the membership at large to support our endeavours through the GC.**

We do hope this too passes over!

Happy Holi!

Jai Hind!

**Lt Gen Anil Bhalla (Retd)
PVSM, AVSM, VSM**

THEN... AND NOW



Mrs Nayantara & Chandrika Prasad (P-3538). December 1966 (sporting the same tie!)



On passing on of those cherished DGC Members who departed from the shores of life, the Club Fraternity solemnly pays its respects and condolences



B S Manchanda (P-0458)



Mr Sanjeev Rai Puri (P-5496)



Mr Bikram Kochhar (P-4978)



Dr Ravi Kashyap (P-3606)



Mr R N Narang (P-1656)



Mr Arvind Charanjiva (P-0962)



Col K B Kapoor (P-0546)



Col Satya Pal Wahi (P-0511)



Mr R K Atal (P-0343)



Capt J S Sandhu (P-0125)



Mrs Bimla Rani (L-0718)

Mr V N Sahgal (P-0971)
Mr Hari Inder Singh Bhagat (P-0386)
Mrs Devaki Shahney (L-0163)
(Regret inability to obtain photograph)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 10th March 2017

BOOK CLUB EVENT

Lt Gen Rajender Singh, PVSM, SM, VSM in conversation with Tilak Devasher on his latest book 'Pakistan: Courting the Abyss' at 6 pm in Rose Garden (Tea at 5.30 pm)



Friday 24th March 2017

BOOK CLUB EVENT

'Aroma Therapy: A Way of Life' by Blossom Kochhar

**Demo at 4:30 pm in cottage number 10
Talk at 6 pm in Rose Garden
(Tea at 5.30 pm)**

BACK TO LIFE...

Gymkhana Club in association with Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (ISIC) is organising a **Free Ortho & Spine Health Checkup Camp and Health talk** on Friday, 17th March 2017 from 2:30pm to 6pm.

Mr Narinder Kumar, Store Keeper (Second Generation Employee) retired on 28 February 2017 after 39 years and 6 months service from the Club.



CORRIGENDUM

- There was an inadvertent mistake in the notice published in the CLUBLIFE, February 2017 page number 4 wherein, Book Club Meeting-Kalayug by Anurag "Mathur" has been wrongly attributed and is by **Anurag Tripathi**.
- There was also an inadvertent mistake in the article published in the CLUBLIFE, February 2017 page number 3 'DE-MONETISATION-THE ROAD AHEAD' wherein in the first para first line, 'In 1978 an ordinance was imposed to end liability of Rs 5000 and Rs 10000 notes with around 15 lakh crores having been demonetised' in place of 'In 1978 an ordinance was imposed to end liability of Rs 5000 and Rs 10000 notes, and now around 15 lakh crores have been demonetised'.

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