

SquarePetals

— Global Webzine —

COVER STORY

Gp. Capt. Hemlata Lohani

FEATURE STORY :

Dipikaben Makwana

EVENT COVERAGE:

Patriotic Dance
Competition,
Dynamic Diamonds Group

INDIAN WARFARE :

The Battle of
Haldighati

ASTROLOGY:

Failure and Success
in context of
Numerology

HUMAN PSYCHOLOGY:

The Observer's Edge

POEM :

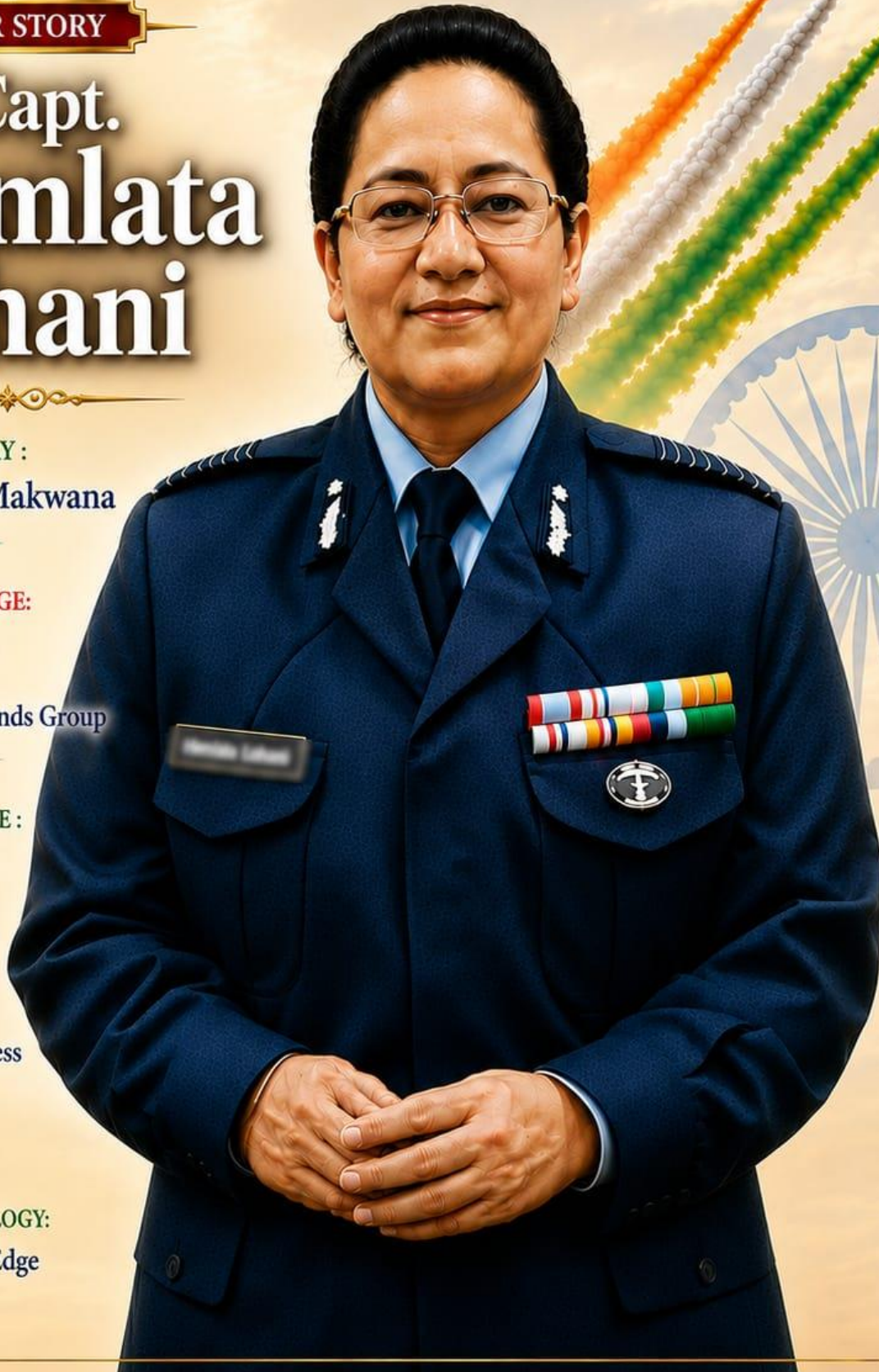
I crave &
Worth Becoming

TRAVEL :

Six Days on a
Himalayan 450

TOP TREND

Tri Color



From The Desk of Editor-in-Chief

Hello dear readers

This Independence Day, SquarePetals proudly presents an edition dedicated to the spirit of freedom, sacrifice, and resilience. As India celebrates 79 years of independence, our pages echo the voices of courage, reflection, and creativity that continue to shape our nation's journey.

We begin with our Cover Story on Gp. Cap. Hemlata Lohani, a shining example of leadership and service whose journey embodies the values of dedication and patriotism. Alongside, our Feature Story on Dipikaben Makwana highlights determination and achievement, reminding us that independence is also about empowering individuals to rise and inspire.

In Event Coverage, the Patriotic Dance Competition by the Dynamic Diamonds Group captures the vibrancy of national pride, where art becomes a powerful expression of unity. History comes alive in "The Battle of Haldighati", a tale of valor that continues to inspire generations with its message of courage and sacrifice.

From the lens of astrology, "Failure and Success in Context of Numerology" explores destiny and determination, while "The Observer's Edge" in human psychology examines how perception shapes our reality. Poetry enriches this edition with "I Crave" and "Worth Becoming", verses that capture longing, growth, and the beauty of transformation—echoing the spirit of independence as a personal and collective journey.

Adventure finds its place in "Six Days on a Himalayan 450", a thrilling ride through rugged landscapes that mirrors the freedom of exploration. Finally, our Top Trend: Tri Color zeal reflects the heartbeat of the nation, reminding us that the flag is not just a symbol but it identifies bonding with the nation.

This Independence Day 2026 edition is a tribute to the heroes of the past, the change makers of the present, and the dreamers of the future. May it inspire us all to honour freedom, not just as a gift, but as a responsibility we must keep earning.



Dr. Sansriti Johri
Editor-in-Chief – SquarePetals Global Webzine



Susan Elizabeth Girard

Author of Full Cold Moon
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*A compassionate heart
is the seed of all
meaningful services.*

August 2026

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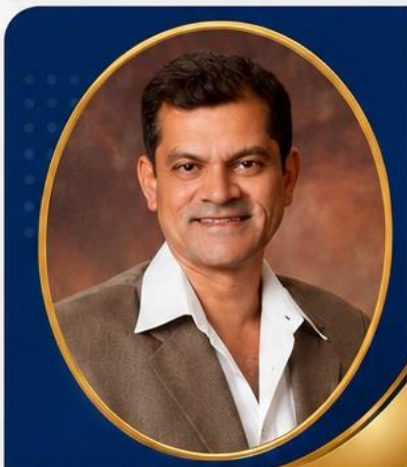
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Astrology

Failure and Success in
context of Numerology

Group Captain Hemlata Lohani



Cover Story



First woman officer To retire on completion of full tenure

Group Captain Hemlata Lohani was commissioned on 18 Dec 1993 in Administrative branch under the Short Service Scheme. She joined the 2nd batch of elite women officers in the IAF and underwent rigorous training of 52 weeks at the Air Force Academy along with her male counterparts. Her sports background stood steadfast in her achievements in the tough training period. Her illustrious career in the IAF was marked across 12 postings pan India, participation in four major Operations, the first being Op Safed Sagar in 1999, Commendation by the Chief of Air Staff for her exceptional services to the IAF and the Nation and a long legal battle for grant of permanent commission. A brilliant leader who led the troops with courage, integrity and accountability, Gp Capt Lohani was a strict disciplinarian laced with deep empathy.

A second generation Air warrior, Gp Capt Hemlata Lohani donned the blues two days after her father's retirement from the IAF bringing great pride to the family. She was always a trail blazer all rounder in her school and college. She represented her school in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan National games and also captained Jiwaji University women hockey team in the University National

Sortie on MiG 29



games. A gold medallist in graduation and post graduation, she completed her M.Phil in Kinesiology and Biomechanics of Sports before joining the IAF. Post Short service tenure, she also tenanted the appointment of ADG Administration in Manohar Parikkar Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, a premier think tank of India.



An ace anchor, she has been the commentator for Air Force Day Parade as well as Emcee for the Sri Lankan Air Force Cultural Wing presentation in Bengaluru India.

After a distinguished service of 33 years including the training, Gp Capt Hemlata Lohani retired on 31 Dec 2025 from Hasimara, West Bengal which was also her birthplace. She is the first woman officer, other than the medical branch, to retire after having completed the full tenure of service.

She has now dedicated her retired life to mentoring future air warriors and contributing





towards social causes. **Jai Hind**

Independence Day 2026 Celebration by **Dynamic Diamonds Group Vadodara**, at Niti Bhavan.

Vibrant patriotic dance competition, celebrating India's Independence Day transforms historical struggle and cultural unity into a moving theatrical experience. Through powerful choreography, expressive rhythms, and brilliant visual storytelling, the stage came alive to honor freedom fighters, celebrate national heritage, and inspire future generations.

The symphony of Freedom and Unity,

As the lighting shifted to brilliant gold and white, the mood transitions to exuberant celebration. A dynamic medley of different dance styles took over the floor. The Esteemed Judges Dr. Sunehri Johri, Dr. Sansriti Johri, Cardiologist &



EnT Specialist Doctors of Zydus Hospitals & Kala Mandir Jewellers Team were the dignataries present in the event organised by the dynamic Dr. Shuchita Shah , Founder of Dynamic Diamonds Group.

Dancers entered in tricolour costumes, representing the national flag of India. This segment visually manifested India's core ethos of "Unity in Diversity". The performers weaved through intricate formations, their synchronized footwork and smiling expressions capturing the collective heartbeat of a free democracy.

Honoring the Brave and Inspiring the future, the final movement anchored the performance in deep gratitude and forward-looking hope. Set to soaring patriotic anthems, a modern contemporary sequence portrayed the silent sacrifices of border soldiers and national builders. The dancers applauded one another along with the cheering spectators. Depicting teamwork, strength, and national trust. All the participants on stage, together, unfurled the long trails of saffron, white, and green fabric that rippled across the auditorium. As the final notes rang out, the cast freeze beneath a warm spotlight, leaving the audience with an enduring symbol of pride, freedom, and a shared vision for tomorrow. **Jai Hind**



FEATURE STORY

When the streets grow quiet and the city turns in for the night, Makwana Dipikaben Kiritbhai begins her rounds behind the wheel of her auto-rickshaw.



Her journey into driving at night was born from deep personal loss. In 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, her father, Jasubhai Parmar, fell critically ill. In those desperate hours, a lack of immediate transport and emergency support meant he could not get the help he needed in time, and he passed away. That heartbreak became Dipikaben's quiet resolve: no one in her reach would be left stranded in an emergency.

Balancing multiple roles to support her family, including her 10-year-old daughter and 5½-year-old son, Dipikaben works through the day as an office and house maid before taking to the roads. With the steady

encouragement and backing of her husband, she manages the heavy daily demands, steadily working to pay down dues and provide for her children.

Navigating the night as a female auto driver comes with challenges, but Dipikaben has built a vital lifeline in her community. Much of her night shifts are dedicated to medical assistance, rushing patients to hospitals when other transport is hard to find. Her presence

on the road is also a reassurance for local women, particularly students and young working women living in nearby PGs, who make up the majority of her regular passengers.

While stepping out into the dark as a solo woman driver might seem daunting, Dipikaben feels secure on her routes. The consistent presence of PCR vans, active patrolling across sectors, and accessible police stations provide a strong sense of safety. Along the way, she has found unexpected camaraderie from supportive fellow auto drivers at the stands to helpful local officers and kind passengers. Through grief, perseverance, and service, Dipikaben has turned a painful past into a beacon of safety for anyone navigating the night alone.

Beyond the miles she covers and the lives she assists, Dipikaben stands as a powerful symbol of resilience for women striving toward financial independence and self-reliance. In a traditionally male-dominated occupation and during the vulnerable hours of the night, she fearlessly claims her space on the road, proving that courage and determination know no gender boundaries. By balancing multiple jobs, overcoming personal grief, and taking her family's future firmly into her own hands, she shows other women that self-sufficiency is a practical reality forged through grit. Her journey serves as an inspiration to every woman working against the odds, showing that with resolve, community support, and an unwavering spirit, you can steer your own destiny and light the path for others.



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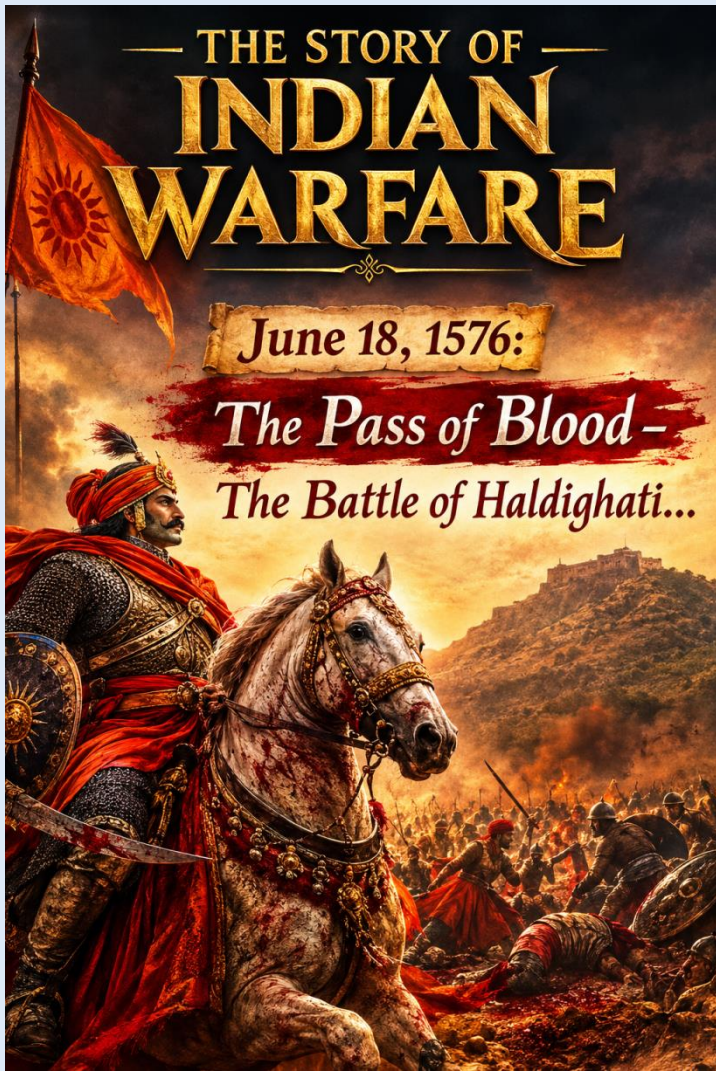


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Highlights:

❖ June 18, 2026, marks the 450th anniversary of the Battle of Haldighati, in which Maharana Pratap of Mewar fiercely resisted the Mughal expansion under Emperor Akbar.

❖ Despite being outnumbered, Rana Pratap's strategic use of the terrain and the bravery of his Rajput, Afghan, and Bhil warriors made it a legendary struggle.

❖ While tactically a Mughal victory, it failed to subdue Mewar, solidifying Rana Pratap's legacy as an unbowed symbol of Indian resistance.

Few battles have captured the collective imagination of Indians as much as Haldighati. Though nowhere near the scale of the titanic struggles at Panipat, Talikota, Plassey or Tarain, it still had a lasting impact and stands out as a tale of Indian valour in the face of overwhelming odds.

Akbar, the grandson of Babur, had expanded the Mughal Empire from Kandahar to Bengal and up to Gujarat in the south. Most rulers had either acceded to his sovereignty or had been

won over by marriages. Yet Mewar, the strongest Rajput kingdom, refused to submit to his authority and held on steadfastly.

Akbar launched a campaign to subjugate Mewar by force, and in 1567, he marched out at the head of a large army to capture Chittor, its capital. The Rana of Mewar, Raja Uday Singh, was urged to leave the besieged fort and take refuge in the hills of southern Rajasthan. After a five-month-long siege, Chittor finally fell on February 25, 1568, and its defenders were killed virtually to a man.

Akbar also ordered the slaughter of over 20,000 innocent civilians of the fort in an orgy of vengeance that went on for a week after its capture. This remains a lasting blot on his legacy.

The loss of their capital did not curb the zeal of the Mewar rulers. Rather, it inflamed it. Uday Singh founded the new city of Udaipur and established his capital in Gogunda, in the Aravalli Hills. With his death in 1572, his son, Rana Pratap, took over the mantle, and the struggle continued.

Akbar tried to make peace with the recalcitrant ruler of Mewar, even sending his emissaries to Rana Pratap in an effort to win him over. But Rana Pratap refused to acquiesce unless his capital, Chittor, was handed back to him. Finally, in the spring of 1576, Akbar dispatched a large army under the command of his own brother-in-law, Man

Singh—himself a Kachwaha Rajput—to bring the rebellious Rana to his knees.

Man Singh's army had around 5,000 of his own Kachwaha Rajputs and around 5,000 Mughal and Afghan troops, along with 100 elephants.

No cannon or heavy cavalry were carried because of the problems of transporting them across that difficult terrain.

Rana Pratap received news of Man Singh's move and moved out of his capital, Gogunda, to take up positions at Haldighati. The narrow, two-kilometre-long pass, permitting only one horseman to pass through at a time, and its forested hills made it a strong defensive feature.

The soil and crumbly rocks around it were pale yellow, perhaps due to high sulphur content, giving it its name – Haldighati. The yellow soil around the pass would soon be stained red with blood, earning it another name, Khooni Ghati, or the Pass of Blood.

Rana Pratap had a force of around 3,000 Sisodiya Rajput warriors and a contingent of 500 Afghan horsemen under Hakim Khan Suri. Around 1,000 Bhils, local tribesmen who knew the area intimately and were skilled archers, also joined him. Though outnumbered by around 1:2.5, the Rana was in a strong defensive position. The rugged terrain of Haldighati nullified the numerical superiority of the Mughal forces.

Man Singh's forces reached the vicinity in mid-June and camped on the flat ground short of the pass near Khamnor village and the Banas River.

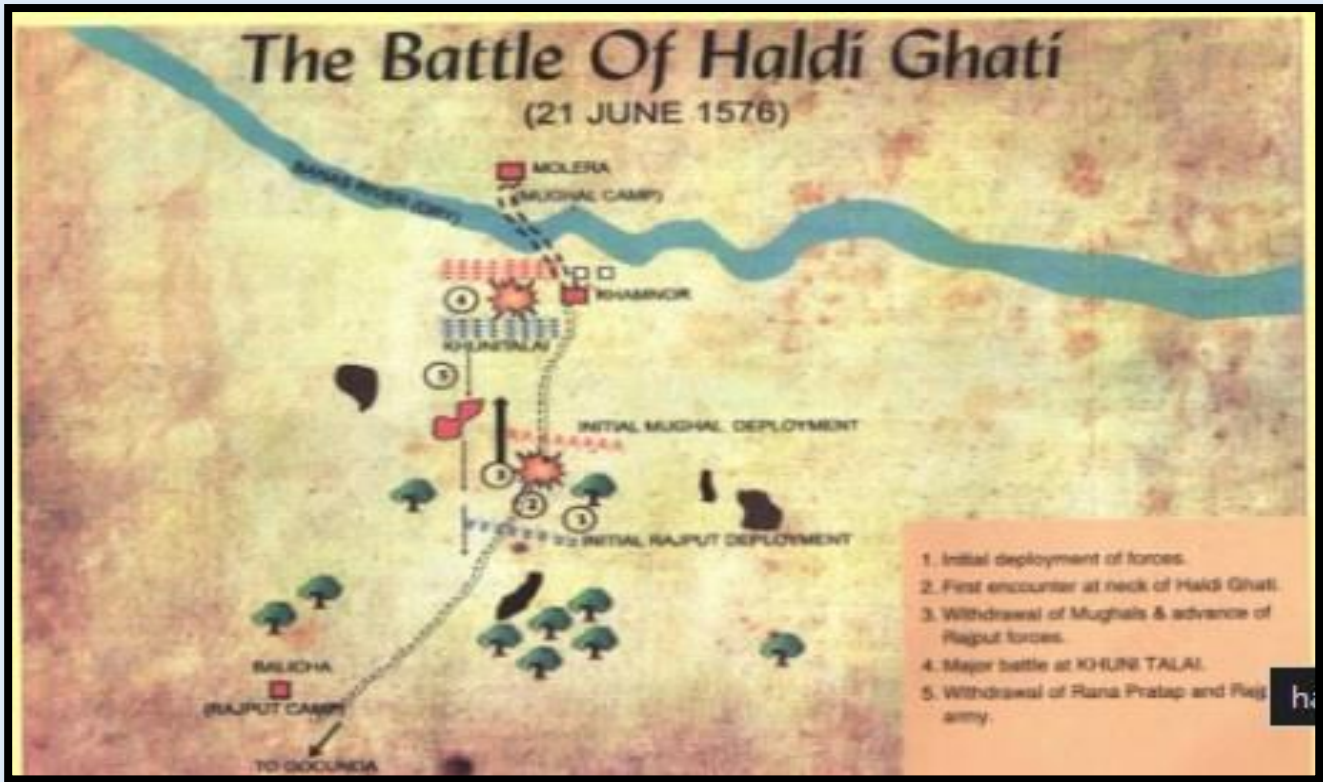
He did not attack, but waited for Rana Pratap to make the next move. For a week or so, the two armies remained static in their positions, raiding and skirmishing without decisive combat.

Finally, on June 18, 1576, Rana Pratap left his positions at Haldighati and advanced to engage the Mughal forces.

It is not clear why Rana Pratap chose to leave his strong defensive positions for an open ground where the Mughals would be at an advantage. Some say it was intended to be just a raid that went awry. Others say the Rajput concept of a "fair fight" led them out, prompted by calls of cowardice from their Rajput kinsmen on the other side....

Whatever the reason, the Rajput army moved out to the sound of drums, ranbankuras and war cries and arrayed themselves at the mouth of the pass in the traditional order of Haraval (Vanguard), Chandawal (Rear Guard), Vam Parswa and Dakshin Parshwa (Left and Right Wings). The Rana himself was in the centre, in his distinctive white tunic atop his war horse Chetak, who would himself acquire a kind of immortality in the lore of Indian warfare.

The Mughals arrayed themselves similarly. But Man Singh's numerical advantage enabled him to maintain a reserve (Iltimish) of around 1,000 cavalry.



The Rajputs attacked first at around 8 a.m. from the left flank as around 1,000 Rajput and Afghan horsemen slammed through the Mughal vanguard and hit its right flank. On the right, a similar attack was launched with equal ferocity. The combined weight of the attacks on both flanks forced the Mughals to give way, and the troops began breaking ranks. It was only the Sayyids of Barhi on the right flank who held on and prevented a complete breakthrough.

With his formation about to break, Man Singh launched his Iltimish of 1,000 cavalry to stabilise the situation.

As the cavalry moved forward, amidst the troops running in panic, Mihtar Khan, the Commander of the reserves, shouted out, “The Emperor is coming. Akbar Badshah himself is coming.” The pronouncement did the trick. The ranks stopped their withdrawal and beefed up with the timely arrival of their cavalry, held their positions, preventing any further breakthrough by the Rajputs.

It was now around 11 a.m., and the Rajputs had been fighting for over three hours. Exhaustion and heat were taking their toll, and slowly the Mughals—or more appropriately, Man Singh’s Kachwaha Rajputs—were gaining the upper hand.

Rana Pratap had only one reserve, the small pool of elephants, which he launched to charge the Mughal lines. The Mughals countered by bringing up their own elephants. Elephants of both sides clashed on the battlefield, cheered on by their respective soldiers.

In an epic clash, Lona, the Rajput war elephant, clashed with Gujmukut, the Mughal champion, goring each other with their tusks until Lona succumbed to his wounds and was captured. One by one, Rana Pratap’s elephants were killed or captured and he lost his final card.

With the situation becoming critical, Rana Pratap launched a final attack directed at Man Singh himself. He charged full tilt atop Chetak (Chetak had a leather snout affixed to his head. It was a standard practice, since the short-sighted elephants would mistake the smaller horses for their young and often hesitate to attack them), slashing his way through the Mughal ranks till he reached Man Singh's elephant.

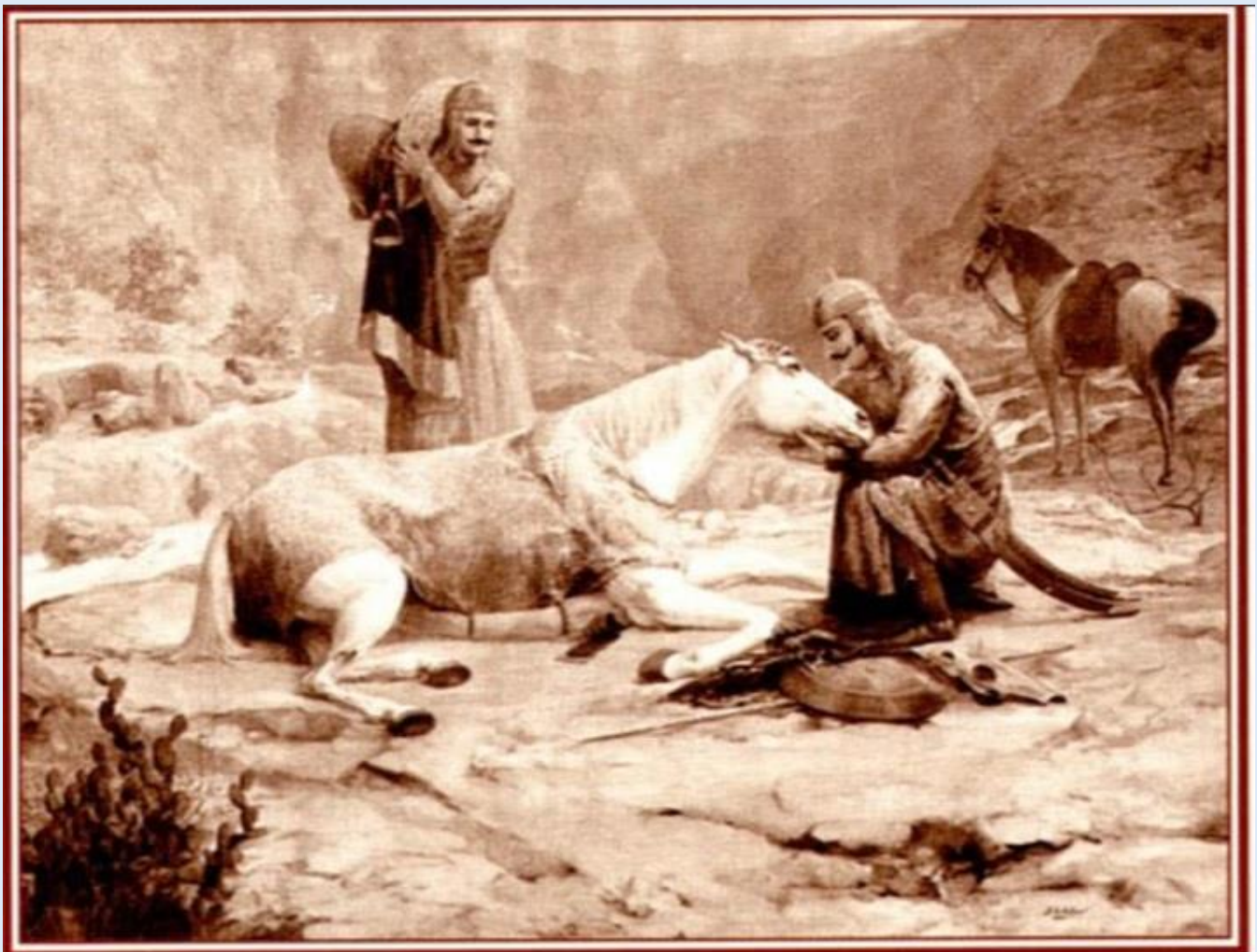
As he closed in, Chetak rose on his hind legs, giving his master a clear shot. Rana Pratap hurled his spear, which went through the mahout and slammed against the armoured howdah, barely missing Man Singh. Before Rana Pratap could strike again, Man Singh's guards converged on him.

At this point, Bida Mana, a Jhala chieftain, placed Rana Pratap's chhatri (royal umbrella) over his own head, proclaiming that he was Rana Pratap.

The ruse worked. The bodyguards rushed towards him, while the wounded Rana was carried away by Chetak, pursued by Mughal officers.

Chetak, who had been badly wounded during the attack, raced away and made a final leap across a wide chasm that his pursuers could not cross.

He took his master to safety, but died at that spot of sheer exhaustion and loss of blood. A cenotaph still marks the spot where he fell.



The Rana and the rest of the Rajput army withdrew to the safety of Haldighati, their withdrawal covered by the arrows of Bhil archers. Man Singh did not follow up the pursuit – an act which earned him the wrath of Akbar when he returned.

Around 500 Rajput warriors fell in the “Thermopylae of Mewar,” along with around 250–350 of Man Singh’s Kachwaha Rajputs and Mughal soldiers.

But who really won at Haldighati?

Tactically, it was a victory for Man Singh, but it achieved none Akbar’s long-term strategic goals. Rana Pratap remained unbowed and recovered to continue his struggle, pushing back three other expeditions that Akbar launched to subjugate him.

His guerrilla war continued for two decades until his death in January 1597, and with his passing, India lost one of its noblest sons—one who remained unbowed and undefeated until the end.

This is a serialisation of the book 'India's Battlefields from Kurukshetra to Balakot' by international award-winning author Ajay Singh. The book (and the series) covers the major battles fought on India's battlefields. In this episode, we cover the Battle of Haldighati...



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ISSN: 2456-4427

Impact Factor: RJIF: 5.64 Jyotish 2026; 11(1): 01-03

© 2026 Jyotish www.jyotishajournal.com Received: 02-10-2025

Accepted: 06-11-2025

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Failure and success in context of numerology

Abstract

Numerology, a branch of Jyotish Shastra, interprets the symbolic relationship between numbers and human destiny. This study investigates how single numbers (1-9), master numbers (11, 22, 33), compound numbers, and personal year cycles influence success and failure. Using a mixed qualitative and quantitative approach, data from 51 individuals were analysed against career outcomes, financial stability, recognition, and personal satisfaction. Case studies of two contemporary leaders-Narendra Modi and Rahul Gandhi-illustrate contrasting trajectories shaped by numerical vibrations. Findings confirm that although numerology does not predetermine outcomes, it offers a reflective framework for understanding personality patterns, karmic challenges, and pathways to success.

Keywords: Numerology, Jyotish shastra, success, failure, pinnacle cycles & personal year

1. Introduction

Numerology, one of the oldest branches of Jyotish Shastra, explores the hidden relationship between numbers and destiny. Each number carries vibrations that influence traits, decision-making, and life outcomes. Success and failure are often interpreted through numerical patterns derived from names, dates of birth, and personal year cycles.

This article, based on doctoral research, examines the role of single numbers, master numbers, compound numbers, and personal year cycles in shaping human experiences. By bridging traditional numerological wisdom with structured research methods, the study offers a systematic framework for practitioners and scholars to understand how numbers influence success and failure in modern contexts.

2. Methodology and Discussions

- **Sample Selection:** Data from 51 individuals across diverse professional backgrounds were analysed.
- **Tools Used:** Chaldean numerology system and comparative charting methods.
- **Criteria for Success/Failure:** Career growth, financial stability, recognition, and satisfaction were indicators of success; repeated obstacles, instability, and delays were categorized as failures.
- **Analysis:** Statistical correlations tested whether particular numbers consistently produced favourable or unfavourable outcomes. Case studies were incorporated to illustrate nuances.

The findings highlight both alignment (where numbers supported achievement) and discord (where numbers created obstacles), validating the hypothesis that numbers exert symbolic influences on life events.

3. Key Findings

3.1 Single Numbers (1-9)

Table 1: Single Numbers and Their Influence

Number	Planet	Traits	Success Factors	Failure Risks
1	Sun	Leadership	Initiative, originality	Arrogance, isolation
2	Moon	Diplomacy	Cooperation, intuition	Indecision, dependency
3	Jupiter	Communication	Expression, optimism	Over-confidence, scattered efforts
4	Uranus/Rahu	Discipline	Stability, persistence	Rigidity, rebellion
5	Mercury	Adaptability	Versatility networking	Instability, impulsiveness
6	Venus	Harmony	Service, responsibility	Over-idealism, emotional burden
7	Neptune/Ketu	Introspection	Wisdom, spirituality	Isolation, skepticism
8	Saturn	Authority	Structured growth, endurance	Misuse of power, restrictions
9	Mars	Humanitarianism	Activism, sacrifice	Aggression, impatience

Influence of Single Number on "Success and Failure"

3. Master Number (11, 22, 33)

Number	Title	Traits	Success	Failure
11	Visionary	Intuition, inspiration	Spiritual insight, creative vision	Anxiety, escapism
22	Master Builder	Vision + practicality	Large-scale achievements	Overwhelmed by responsibility
33	Master Teacher	Compassion, healing	Humanitarian influence	Martyrdom, neglect of self

Table 2: Master Numbers and Their Influence

Influence of Master Numbers on "Success and Failure"

3.3 Compound Numbers (Selected)

Table 3: Compound Numbers and Their Influence

Number	Traits	Success	Failure
13 (4)	Transformation	Renewal through discipline	Sudden obstacles
14 (5)	Change, movement	Adaptability, persuasion	Instability, impulsiveness
16 (7)	Loss, testing	Spiritual strength	Breakups, setbacks
19 (1)	Recognition	Honor after trials	Arrogance
23 (5)	Creativity, protection	Success in ventures	-
26 (8)	Partnership strain	Success after struggle	Financial reversals
31 (4)	Innovation, solitude	Originality	Isolation
36 (9)	Karmic retribution	Reform through sacrifice	Downfall, scandal

Influence of Compound Numbers on "Success and Failure"

3.4 Personal Year Cycle (1-9)

Table 4: Personal Year Cycles and Their Influence

Year No.	Theme	Success	Failure
1	New beginnings	Initiative, leadership	Impatience, ego
2	Relations	Cooperation, diplomacy	Indecision, dependency
3	Creativity	Expression, networking	Distraction, superficiality
4	Discipline	Stability, persistence	Rigidity, fatigue
5	Freedom	Adaptability, agility	Instability, recklessness
6	Responsibility	Service, harmony	Over-commitment, stress
7	Introspection	Wisdom, research	Isolation, stagnation
8	Authority	Power, recognition	Over-ambition, karmic pressure
9	Completion	Fulfilment, humanitarian spirit	Endings, emotional turmoil

4. Case Study

4.1 Narendra Damodardas Modi - A Successful Leader Born on 17 September 1950, Modi's numerological profile reveals alignment between discipline, adaptability, and karmic drive. His Birth Number 8 (Saturn) anchors perseverance, while his Destiny Number 5 (Mercury) enhances communication and strategic flexibility. The Name Number 9 (Mars) fuels assertive leadership, often polarizing but effective. Pinnacle cycles show progression from Saturnian rigor to Venusian service, with challenges testing ego, diplomacy, and communication. His success lies in harmonizing Saturn's discipline with Mercury's intellect and Venus's mass appeal, enabling structured governance with national influence.

4.2 Rahul Gandhi - An Unsuccessful Leader

Born on 19 June 1970, Rahul Gandhi's chart reflects humanitarian ideals but recurring struggles with adaptability and relational sensitivity. His Birth Number 1 (Sun) suggests leadership potential, yet the dominance of Name and Soul Numbers 9 (Mars) introduces emotional intensity and vulnerability. The Destiny Number 6 (Venus) emphasizes service and harmony, but repeated Pinnacle 7 cycles highlight karmic lessons in detachment. Challenge Numbers (5, 7, 2) reveal restlessness, emotional diplomacy, and relational tension. These vibrations manifest in cycles of promise followed by setbacks, where visionary intent is undermined by communication burdens and structural rigidity.

4.3 Comparative Insight

The contrast between Modi and Gandhi illustrates how numerological archetypes shape divergent trajectories. Modi's disciplined Saturn-Mercury-Venus triad supports resilience and structured success, while Gandhi's Sun-Venus-Mars interplay highlights inner conflict and vulnerability. These case studies demonstrate that success in leadership emerges when numerical vibrations are harmonized into disciplined action, whereas failure arises when restlessness and emotional discord weaken external consolidation.

5. Conclusion

The research confirms that numerology offers symbolic frameworks that meaningfully correspond with human experiences of success and failure. Single numbers highlight core traits, master numbers reveal amplified responsibility, compound numbers introduce karmic influences, and personal year cycles illustrate time-bound opportunities. While numerology does not guarantee outcomes, it provides a reflective blueprint for understanding why success manifests in some lives and failure in others. By harmonizing with one's numerical vibrations, individuals can align with opportunities, overcome obstacles, and cultivate growth in professional, financial, relational, and personal spheres. Thus, numerology emerges not merely as a mystical tradition but as a practical diagnostic tool-bridging ancient wisdom with modern application, and offering pathways for conscious living, leadership development, and holistic success.

6. Author's Bio Note

Narsingh Narayan Singh is a doctoral researcher in Numerology. His research focuses on the relationship between numbers and human behaviour, professional success, financial growth, and life outcomes, with emphasis on patterns of "Failure and Success in Context of Numerology." He is affiliated with Shree Maharshi College of Vedic Astrology, Udaipur (Rajasthan), under the guidance of Dr. Shefali Bansal.

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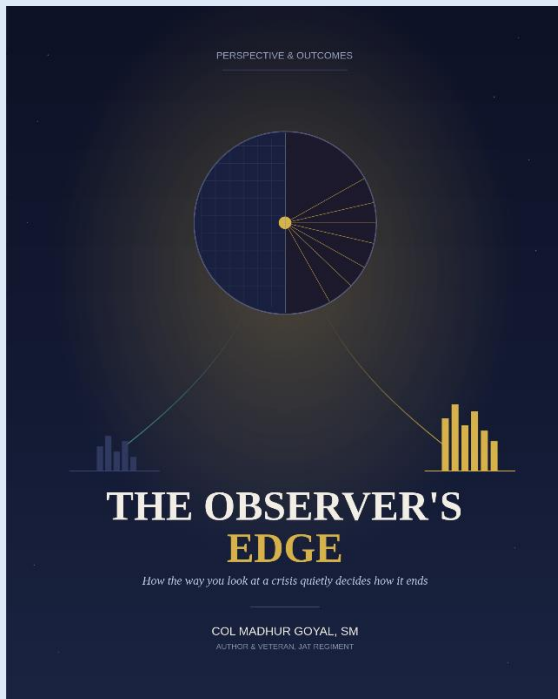
The Observer's Edge (Col Madhur Goyal, SM)



How the way you look at a crisis quietly decides how it ends

There is a particular kind of silence that falls over a room when bad news arrives - the silence of people deciding, without quite realising it, what the news *means*. Give the same headline to ten people and you will get ten different futures, because the story that follows isn't written by the fact. It's written by the frame we put around it.

Nowhere is this more visible than in the strange, improbable story of a rocky, resource-starved island that had every reason to fail and instead became one of the wealthiest patches of land on Earth.



A Backwater on Borrowed Time

On 26th June 1843, the British formally took possession of Hong Kong, then little more than twenty scattered fishing villages clinging to a hillside. Queen Victoria herself seemed unimpressed by the acquisition; writing to her uncle, King Leopold of Belgium, in 1841, she remarked that Prince Albert found it faintly amusing that she had "got the island of Hong Kong." It was, by every contemporary account, a barren afterthought of empire. Today that same afterthought runs one of the freest economies on the planet, with services alone contributing roughly nine-tenths of its GDP, and its stock exchange counted for years among the largest in the world by market capitalisation. Somewhere between the joke in Queen Victoria's letter and the skyline of Central district, something extraordinary happened. The question worth asking isn't just *what* changed, it's *who decided* to see the change as possible in the first place.

Built on Ruins, Twice Over

The path there was brutal. In 1937, Japan invaded China, and by December 1941 in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor; Hong Kong fell under Japanese occupation. For three and a half years, the territory endured occupation, atrocity, and the complete severing of its trade links with the outside world. When Japan's surrender finally came after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Hong Kong began, once again, to breathe. It didn't get long to recover. In 1949, the Communist takeover of mainland China sent a wave of refugees pouring across the border by some estimates, one new arrival for every two existing residents within just two years. A territory with no oil, no minerals, no meaningful agriculture, and barely enough fresh water for its own people now had to absorb a population shock that would have

broken most economies outright. Then, in 1950, the Korean War erupted, and with China backing the North, Hong Kong's trade lifelines to Europe and the West collapsed almost overnight.

At that moment, the administration faced a genuine fork in the road: tighten the borders, ration the scarcity, and manage decline or treat the crisis as raw material. Hong Kong chose the latter. Entrepreneurs began dismantling decommissioned warships from the Korean War and selling the steel, birthing what would become a serious ship-breaking industry. Machinery was imported from Western markets, and the flood of cheap, willing labour from the mainland was turned into a textile boom. A colony that should have drowned in its own refugee crisis instead built an economy on top of it.

The Physics of Looking

Why does the same set of facts produce ruin in one telling and a foundation for growth in another? Quantum physics offers a strangely apt metaphor here; the observer effect, which holds that the very act of measuring or observing a system changes that system's behaviour. Even the simple act of seeing something requires light to strike it and bounce back - the object is never entirely unaffected by being looked at.

Human affairs work on a softer but no less real version of this principle. The lens through which we view a setback doesn't just interpret the situation; it starts to shape what we do next, which in turn shapes what the situation becomes. A refugee crisis viewed purely as a burden produces policies of containment. The same crisis viewed as a labour surplus produces an industrial boom. The facts didn't change. The frame did and the frame became the future.

When the Market Tests the Theory

Investors run into this constantly, often without naming it. A stock nudging its 52-week high triggers an instinct to book profits and run, while a stock languishing near its 52-week low tempts people to hold on, reasoning that "how much lower can it really go?" Value investors have even dignified this instinct with a name - margin of safety.

But flip the lens, and the same numbers tell a different story. A stock at its high, backed by accelerating earnings, might simply be at the *start* of a much longer climb. A stock at its low, dragged down by deteriorating fundamentals, might still have plenty of room to fall further. The price alone is not the story; the trajectory behind it is. This is exactly why momentum investing and contrarian value investing can both work, not because one is right and the other wrong, but because each is a different, internally consistent lens on the same raw data, and each produces a different outcome depending on which one an investor commits to.

A more contemporary echo of this; in 2013, Kodak - inventor of the digital camera it later refused to take seriously; filed for bankruptcy, undone by seeing digital photography as a threat to film rather than an opportunity in its own right. In roughly the same window, Netflix, once a mail-order DVD company staring at the same technological shift, chose to see streaming as the future it should build rather than the disruption it should fear. Same wave. Opposite reading of it. Opposite outcome.

The Nagging, the Noise, and the Nudge

This isn't confined to markets and macroeconomics. Every workplace has that one team member who questions every decision, probes every rationale, and seems constitutionally incapable of simply nodding along. Every household with children knows a parallel version - the relentless "but why?" that can wear down even a patient parent by dinnertime.

It is entirely possible to experience both as friction; an irritant to be managed or, worse, silenced. But there's a second reading available. Constant questioning is also constant pressure-testing. A process that survives being interrogated repeatedly is usually a stronger process for it; a plan forced to justify itself to a persistent sceptic often becomes a better plan. The irritation and the improvement arrive in the same package; it's the observer's choice which one gets acted on.

There is a more recent, national-scale version of this worth noting. India's own space programme offers a case in point; the country's first attempt at a lunar south-pole landing, Chandrayaan-2, ended in a crash in 2019, in full public view. It would have been entirely reasonable to treat that failure as a verdict. Instead, the setback was read as a data set - every telemetry gap and design flaw was mined for what it could teach. Four years later, Chandrayaan-3 touched down safely near the lunar south pole, making India the first country to do so. The failure and the triumph were built from the same engineering team, the same institution, and largely the same constraints. What changed in between was the decision to treat the crash as instruction rather than indictment.

Pain, Reframed Into a Fortune

Perhaps the most unlikely illustration of this principle comes from a battlefield. In 1865, a wounded Confederate soldier and pharmacist named John Stith Pemberton returned from the American Civil War with a chest wound and, within a year, a dependence on the morphine he'd used to manage the pain. He was hardly alone, thousands of wounded veterans shared the same quiet addiction, an era's hidden epidemic hiding behind medals and homecomings.

Pemberton could have simply treated his own addiction as private misfortune. Instead, he read it as a problem worth solving on behalf of everyone who shared it, and spent years experimenting with morphine-free alternatives for pain relief. After repeated failures, he

landed on a formulation built around coca leaf extract and kola nut, rich in caffeine. That formulation, refined over the following decades, became Coca-Cola; arguably the most recognised brand on the planet, born not from ambition but from one man's decision to see his own suffering as a problem to be engineered around rather than endured.

The Choice Hiding Inside Every Crisis

None of these stories argue that perspective alone rewrites reality; Hong Kong still needed capital, labour, and no small amount of luck; Chandrayaan-3 still needed better heat shielding and redundant sensors, not just better morale. But in every case, the reframing came *first*. It was the precondition, not the guarantee, for what followed. The instinctive reaction - the memorised, first-draft response to bad news is rarely wrong exactly. It's just narrow. It closes off the very possibilities that a second look might reveal. Whether it's a falling stock, a relentless question from a junior colleague, a failed mission, or a wound that won't fully heal, the raw material of the situation stays the same. What changes the odds is whether you're willing to look at it twice, from a different angle, before deciding what it means.

As the saying goes; change the way you look at things, and the things you look at begin to change.



Col Madhur Goyal, SM is a decorated military veteran, author, essayist, and public affairs commentator. A recipient of Sena Medal (gallantry). He has authored five books and written extensively on geopolitics, governance, economics, leadership, and social transformation. Drawing upon decades of military service and a lifelong interest in history, public policy, and human behaviour, his writings explore the often-overlooked forces that shape nations, institutions, and societies. Through a blend of strategic insight, historical perspective, and philosophical reflection, he seeks to examine the intersection of power, prosperity, conflict, and the human experience. His work aims not merely to inform, but to encourage readers to question assumptions, challenge conventional narratives, and engage more deeply with the world around them.

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I Crave!



I crave affection but I run from it,
I feel being hugged but I hide a bit.
I am always with you he says,
but I've been in stress for days.



I crave attention but I run from it,
I feel being kissed but I hide a bit.
I will do anything for you he says,
but where is he in my lowest phase.



I crave for you to be with me,
but I am for you like a drop in sea.
I crave for you in the morning cold,
and I wish the way in which you hold.



I crave love but I run from it,
I feel your presence but I hide a bit.....



Shruti Verma student of Philosophy,
from Jammu. A avid reader, passionate writer and
academic coach, pursues her passions of writing and
joining the armed forces.

Worth Becoming



I found you when my heart still carried
the weight of old fractures
You never asked me to become someone else
You simply walked into my life with a kindness
that made healing feels possible



So I gathered myself piece by patient piece
not because I had to earn your love but
because I wanted to meet it without asking it
to carry the weight of my past



You did not mend me
You gave me something worth mending for



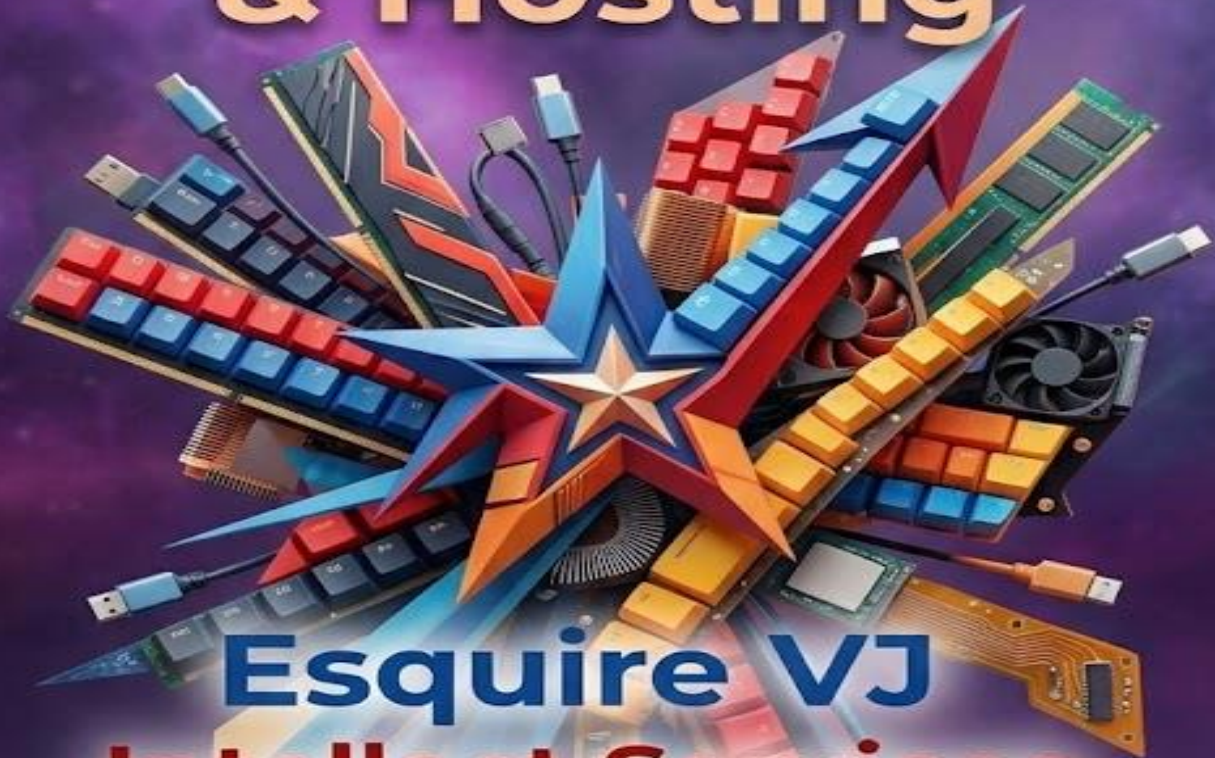
And when I reached for your hand,
I wanted you to meet the woman
I had always been beneath the brokenness



Shruti Patel

an aspiring writer with a passion for poetry
and writing a novel, A law student from Vadodara.

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Six Days on a Himalayan 450: **Returning to the Ladakh That Never Left Me**

By Col. Vineet Dev, SM



There are journeys that take us to places. And then there are journeys that quietly return us to ourselves.

Forty years ago, I travelled to Ladakh as a young Second Lieutenant on my way to the Siachen Glacier. The mountains were not a destination then; they were my workplace. Endurance was not a choice. It was expected from a young officer. We rarely paused to ask whether our body could cope, whether the lungs protested, or whether fatigue had silently crept into our bones. The mission always came first.

Four decades later, I found myself riding once again towards those very mountains in Ladakh, not as a soldier under orders, but as a veteran seeking an intimate conversation with time.

This was not an expedition undertaken to prove that age is merely a number, nor was it an exercise in nostalgia. It was an inward journey. A pilgrimage of reflection astride a Royal Enfield Himalayan 450 through some of the highest and most unforgiving terrain on earth—Leh, Khardung La, Nubra Valley, Pangong Tso, Rezang La, Hanle, Umling La (19,024 feet), Tso Moriri, and finally back to Leh.

People often romanticise such rides as adventures. They are mistaken.

They are, above all else, lessons in discipline.

Where the Mountains Strip Away Pretence

High-altitude riding is brutally honest.

The mountains possess an extraordinary ability to dismantle every illusion we carry about ourselves. At sea level, one can often bluff one's way through discomfort, ignore exhaustion, or mask physical limitations with sheer determination. Above fifteen thousand feet, however, nature permits no such deception.

Every breath becomes deliberate. Every heartbeat is audible. Every few steps remind you that oxygen is a privilege rather than a certainty.

Forty years ago, youth encouraged me to dismiss these signals. At sixty-two, experience has taught me to respect them.

The body whispers before it screams. Wisdom lies in listening to the whisper.

One becomes acutely conscious of breathing patterns, pulse rate, oxygen saturation, hydration, nutrition, balance, judgement, and even emotional stability. Fatigue is no longer merely physical; it influences decision-making. At such heights, discipline is no longer an organisational virtue. It becomes a survival skill.

When Rider and Machine Become One

The motorcycle, too, assumes a personality of its own.

At high altitude, riding ceases to be a mechanical act of opening the throttle. Every gear change, every clutch release, every throttle input and every chosen line through a mountain bend demands complete concentration.

There is a consequence to pay for every distraction.

But gradually, something remarkable happens.

The rider, the machine and the mountain cease to exist as separate entities. They begin responding instinctively to one another, almost like musicians improvising together without words.

Motorcycling, I realised once again, has never been about speed. The throttle merely gives you velocity. But the skill gives you confidence and discipline gives you safety.

The road quietly reveals who you truly are.

The Silence Between the Peaks

Perhaps that is why the Himalayas have always fascinated me. It is not merely their grandeur. It is their silence.

An overwhelming, almost sacred silence.

In that silence one hears one's own heartbeat. One listens to thoughts that remain buried beneath meetings, responsibilities, deadlines, and social obligations. Our titles dissolve here. Our rank becomes irrelevant, and the achievements lose their urgency.





What remains is simply the individual.

The mountains demand no introduction. They ask only one question:

"Who are you when everything else has been taken away?"

Nubra: Where Time Stands Still

Crossing Khardung La and descending into Nubra Valley felt strangely familiar.

The landscape appeared unchanged, almost indifferent to the passing of four decades. The mountains had neither aged nor hurried. They had simply continued existing.

I realised it was I who had changed.

The exuberance of youth had gradually transformed

into the quiet confidence of experience. Earlier I admired mountains for their size. Today I admire them for their permanence.

Nubra gently reminded me that while human beings spend their lives measuring change, the Himalayas patiently teach continuity.

Pangong: Where Colours Defy Language

No photograph can adequately prepare one for Pangong Tso at sunrise.

The lake does not merely reflect colours; it creates them.

Beginning with pale silver before dawn, the waters slowly transition through white, turquoise, aquamarine, emerald, brilliant blue and finally deep sapphire as sunlight advances across the sky.

One simply stands speechless.

Some experiences defy the vocabulary.

Rezang La: Where History Breathes

Few places evoke emotion as powerfully as Rezang La.

Standing on that sacred battlefield, where the men of 13 Kumaon fought almost to the last soldier during the 1962 war, history ceased to be an academic narrative.

It became profoundly personal. One does not merely remember those soldiers.

One salutes them.

The wind seems to carry their courage across the barren landscape, reminding every visitor that patriotism is often written not in speeches but in sacrifice.

The Day Everything Went Wrong

Every mountain journey has a day that tests resolve. Ours arrived between Hanle and Umling La. We could not get the fuel at Hanle.

Dark clouds gathered unexpectedly. Rain soon transformed into biting hail.

Within minutes we were soaked, riding through one of India's most remote regions with almost no habitation in sight. It was one of those moments when planning begins yielding to uncertainty.

And then, almost unbelievably, an Artillery Regiment appeared.

When I introduced myself simply as a retired Gunner, the Subedar Major smiled warmly and said,

"Sahab, aap apni unit mein hain. Jo madad chahiye, milegi."

"Sir, you are among your own. Whatever help you need, you shall have."

That single sentence captured everything the Indian Army has always stood for.

All our problems were solved.

Truly, the brotherhood in the Army requires no introduction.

Service never truly retires.

Umling La and the Familiar Zombie Walk

Standing atop Umling La, the world's highest motorable pass at 19,024 feet, unexpectedly transported me back to Siachen.

Oxygen saturation had fallen below fifty percent. Walking resembled what every Siachen veteran instantly recognises as the infamous "zombie walk"...slow, deliberate, mechanical steps separated by pauses to breathe.

Yet, paradoxically, it was there that I experienced one of the most fulfilling moments of the journey.





It was never about standing on the world's highest road. It was about discovering perfect harmony between mind, body, motorcycle and mountain.

That harmony lasts only a few fleeting moments.

But once experienced, it remains with you forever.

Tso Moriri and the Humility of Nature

The ride towards Tso Moriri introduced the final lesson.

The mountains never move. We do.

They remain exactly where they have stood for millennia, majestic, patient and utterly indifferent to human accomplishment.

They neither acknowledge our professional titles nor celebrate our social media posts.

They are unmoved by our medals, our ranks, our achievements or our egos.

Respect them, and they reveal stonishing beauty. Approach them with arrogance, and they quietly remind you how insignificant human pride truly is.

During the journey, we encountered travellers struggling for oxygen by the roadside. We watched some attempting needless displays of machismo, performing push-ups at Umling La merely to prove physical superiority.

Nature does not negotiate with ego. It simply waits.

Tso Moriri



The *Bhagavad Gita* speaks repeatedly about relinquishing ego. The mountains teach precisely the same lesson without uttering a single word.

We are merely travellers.

They are eternal.

The Journey Inward

When I first arrived in Ladakh forty years ago, I believed mountains were meant to be conquered.

Today I know better.

The Himalayas are not summits waiting for human victory.

They are mirrors. They reveal the person we have become.

Perhaps that explains why I returned after four decades.

Not to conquer Ladakh. Not to prove that I could still ride at high altitude. Not even to relive memories of a younger soldier.

I returned to leave behind another layer of ego. And to discover, somewhere amidst the silence of those timeless mountains, a quieter, humbler version of myself.

Julley, Ladakh.

Until the
for us to
meet
again.



mountains decide it is time

Col. Vineet Dev. Sena Medal

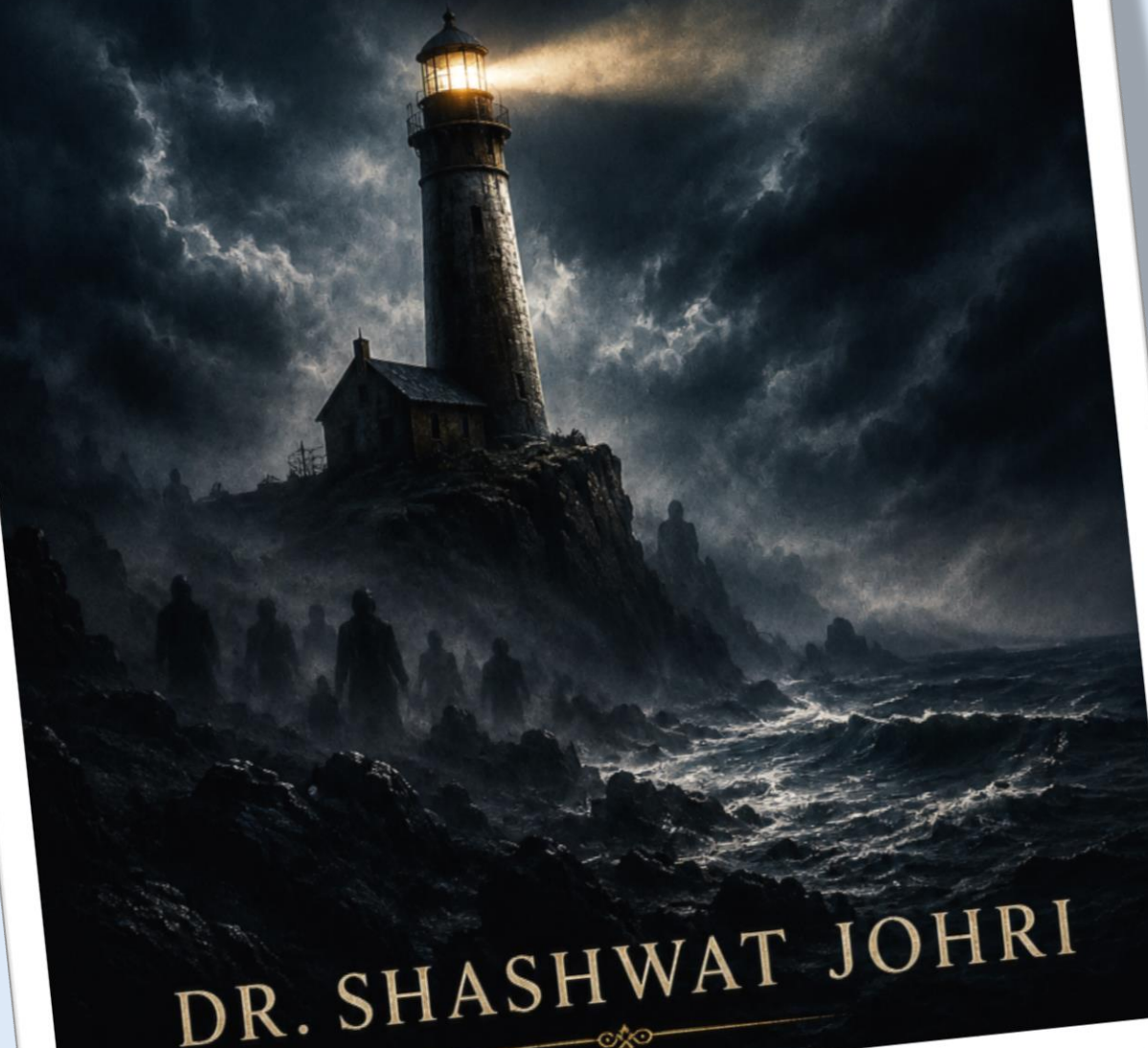
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THE SILENT CONFESSION



Why The Silent Confession is worth your time

By Dr. Shashwat Johri

Every so often, a mystery comes along that isn't just about who did it — it's about how easy it is for an entire town to convince itself not to ask. That's the question at the center of *The Silent Confession*, and it's why I believe this is a story worth your time.

The premise is simple enough to draw you in: a young journalist is found dead at the foot of a cliff, beneath an old lighthouse, in a town that would much rather call it an accident and move on. Detective Samuel Pierce isn't willing to do that. As he starts pulling at the threads the town has spent years keeping neatly tucked away, he discovers that this isn't the work of one guilty person — it's the work of an entire community, quietly complicit, generation after generation.

What sets this book apart is pacing and patience. This isn't a mystery built on shock for its own sake. It's built the way real investigations actually unfold — through paperwork, reluctant witnesses, small moments of courage, and the slow, mounting dread of getting closer to an ugly truth someone is willing to kill to protect. If you're a reader who enjoys mysteries that reward attention rather than rushing to the next twist, this book is built for exactly that kind of reading.

It is also, unapologetically, atmospheric. The lighthouse isn't just scenery — it becomes something closer to a silent witness, standing over everything the town has tried to bury. Readers who love a strong sense of place, where the setting feels as alive as the characters, will find a lot to sink into here.

And for readers who like a story that doesn't tie everything into a neat bow — *The Silent Confession* ends exactly where it should: with the case closed, but the larger truth only beginning to surface. It's the first installment in a series, and the ending is designed to leave you needing to know what comes next.

If you're looking for a slow-burn, character-driven mystery with real atmosphere, real consequence, and a genuine cliffhanger — this one delivers.

The Silent Confession is available now on Amazon.

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The Self Medication Trap

"This Book Was Born From Pain, Fear, and the Urgent Need to Save Lives"

I never thought I would write a book on self-medication until I watched the same dangerous patterns unfold in my clinic day after day - my patients repeatedly misinformed about medication.

I never imagined I would dedicate months, even years of my professional life to a subject most people ignore or laugh off. But life has a powerful way of turning your attention exactly where it needs to go, often through pain.

This book is not meant to scare, but to protect. I just want to let you know you are the most important person to yourself, but you mean the world to others as well. Take care of yourself. We get one life, and experiments with our health are not a good idea as it may cost a life! Why even attempt such drastic risks when we have professionals to look after our health?

This book was not born in a clinic, hospital, conference, or medical seminar; it was born in a home, in a moment of helplessness, when I watched someone I love suffer because of one simple decision - choosing the internet over a doctor. It was that day when I realized how dangerous that decision could be!! The idea took birth the night I spent sitting on the floor, holding the hand of a patient who whispered, "I thought I was doing the right thing. I didn't want to bother anyone. Doctors are expensive, so I did it myself". It progressed when I saw countless faces walking into OPDs with complications that could have been avoided, if only they had not trusted a reel, a viral video, or a random diagnosis from the internet. It became important in the loud, alarming realization that we are living in the most dangerous health era ever. It's not because diseases are increasing, but because wrong information is spreading faster than any disease ever could. Yes, faster than Corona.....

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KUTUMB

When Guests became Masters -
How India's Values redrew its Map



Narayan Rout



Kutumb

When Guests Became Masters: How India's value redrew its Map

India has never been merely a stretch of land or a name on a map. She has always been a household, a living home, a grand family where life itself was sacred. To be born here was to awaken each day not only under the roof of one's dwelling, but under the endless sky that fathered the stars, by rivers that nourished like mothers, among mountains that stood as elders in still silence, and trees that spoke the wisdom of ages through rustling leaves.

This land did not separate the human from the divine, the seen from the unseen. Every grain of soil held memory, every breeze carried song, and every dawn was prayer. To live here was to live in intimacy with the cosmos itself - a member of the great family of existence. Her people grew up not with the thought that they owned this land, but that they belonged to it, as children belong to a mother's embrace. To wake in India was to wake to intimacy with life itself — to bow at dawn not only to the sun in the sky, but to the flame in the clay lamp, to the elder in the house, to the cow that gave milk, to the teacher who gave wisdom, and even to the stranger whose footsteps had just touched the threshold.

When India said *kutumb*, it meant something far greater than a household. It meant that the farmer, the bird on his plough, the stranger at the gate, and the moon reflected in his water pot — all belonged. All had their rightful place. This was kutumb. Not a small circle of kin, but a grand family where nothing was excluded. The bird nesting in the eaves, the wanderer at the gate, the river whose waters kissed the soil, the stars reflected in the village pond — all were woven into the same thread of belonging.

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