

# *Gratitude*

**On the Occasion of the First Anniversary of  
Lt. Gen. (Retd.) A.K. Singh as the  
Lt. Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands**

## **Tribal Council of Nancowrie**



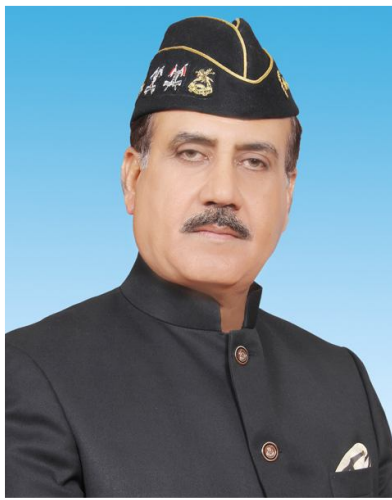
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**ANDAMAN  
Chronicle**

*The daily diary of the islands...*





Lt. Gen. (Retd.) A.K. Singh  
Lt. Governor of  
Andaman & Nicobar Islands

## FAMILY MEMORABILIA

**Lt General A K Singh, The Lieutenant Governor of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands** is the only son of the late Chowdhry Jai Narain Singh and the late Shrimati Tripti Devi. Born into an old and illustrious family with two generations of Rai Bahadur his Great Grandfather was Rai Bahadur Chowdhry Nihal Singh. In memory, and as a sign of respect, there also is a street named after him in Old Delhi which used to be their old family home. His Grandfather was Rai Bahadur Chowdhry Raghunath Singh.

He has three sisters Meera Shankar, Late Dr Geeta Chowdhry and Sudha Sarin with whom he shares a very close filial bond. He is married to Mrs Suneeti Singh who is a housewife and a universally recognized animal lover.

**Mrs Suneeti Singh** an army officer's daughter, has been a constant source of support to her husband and the invisible force which goaded him forward in aiming high and also achieving all aimed. An inveterate animal lover she enjoys taking care of her dogs and horses personally and her most cherished moments are spent in their company. She has also been a teacher and was instrumental in developing some interesting Montessori formats for creative teaching. Extremely concerned about the Jawan wives Mrs Singh has taken time to understand their problems and difficulties and always worked towards easing them. Clearly, service before self is a motto she lives by.

They are blessed with two sons, **Vishal Singh**, a mariner who has excelled and made a name for himself in this field and **Udai Singh**, a Nationally acclaimed Equestrian, who has been encouraged to pursue his passion for horse riding since his childhood. Udai has excelled and won several championships over the years and is now focused to make a mark for himself at the forthcoming Asian Games and the Olympics.

**His elder sister Meera Shankar** served as India's Ambassador to the United States of America from 2009 to 2011. She was India's second female ambassador to the United States of America, Vijaya Lakshmi Nehru Pandit being the first. Prior to 2009, she served as India's Ambassador in Berlin, Germany.

Meera is married to Ajay Shankar, an IAS officer, who retired as Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion. They are blessed with a daughter - **Priya**.

**His second sister Dr Geeta Chowdhry**, a professor of the Department of Politics and International Affairs at Northern Arizona University, died while in India with her family early this year. She was preceded in death by her parents. She had been at Northern Arizona University since 1989.

Previously she taught at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts. She earned her Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Florida and her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from St. John's College in Agra, India, where she grew up.

Geeta is survived by her husband, **Dr Mark Beeman**, a professor of Sociology and Social Work at NAU and son Jai.

**The LG's youngest sister - Sudha Sarin** joined corporate India and is a Communications Professional with over 2 decades of experience. Sudha has worked with CEO's and Industry leaders, of several Multi National & Indian Companies as a very successful entrepreneurs. She recently left her role as Managing Director – IPAN Hill & Knowlton India to work independently with companies and entrepreneurs to lend them her expertise, gained over the last two decades.

Sudha is married to Ajay Sarin, a businessman and resides in New Delhi with her husband and sons Raghav and Pranav.

**The Lieutenant Governor of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands** is an ex student of Sainik School Rewa and former Commander in Chief of Southern Command, of the Indian Army. Lt Gen (Retd) A K Singh, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM, the Lt Governor of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ex-General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command, alumnus of National Defence Academy was commissioned into one of the oldest Regiments, the 7th Light Cavalry on 17 June 1973 and has had an illustrious career with the Indian Army.

Born into a liberal family, his earliest influences were his father's deep intellect, and large heartedness along with his mother's grounded view of life and selfless service to friends and family. He imbibed his father's intellect and many close to the family have been witness to his large heartedness.

His father the **late Chowdhry Jai Narain Singh** had completed his Masters in History from St Stephens College, New Delhi and was deeply interested in the social political fabric of the country. His deep interest towards the social fabric of our country reflected itself in his efforts to helping highly intelligent yet under privileged boys and girls to achieve a sound educational grounding which would stand them and the society in good stead.

The Lt Governor was also deeply influenced by his mother, **Shrimati Tripti Devi** who despite not having a formal education was an astute, compassionate and wise woman whose focus was to ensure a sound education for her children that would provide them a place in the world. Her focus and dedication paid off and her children have all done her and their father proud. She played a pivotal role in steering the life of her children and was a source of constant support and encouragement for them with her guiding force and deep wisdom.

Overall, the family reflects a very nationalistic fervour and is guided by the family ethos as imbibed from their parents – **'to give more than you receive', and 'share and care'**.

The Lt Governor has led a life which is deeply rooted in the early learning's of his life **'Good Thought, Good Words and Good Deed'** seems to be truly committed to making a difference in the lives of the people of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.



# The First Lady – Mrs Suneeti Singh

**- Definitely a woman who seems to have the Most and needs the Least.**

Mrs Suneeti Singh, The First Lady of ANI, born in the army and married within the army, is a pure thoroughbred of the Army. And as such, reflects a very high moral integrity which also reflects her rigid sense of 'right' or 'wrong'. A person - truly apolitical, completely dedicated to all close to her heart, THE woman behind the success of all the three Men in her life, and still standing proudly as an individual - with no highlighted achievements to her credit. All who know her, are still unable to comprehend her ability to squeeze in the work of four days into one. Her persona exudes a certain kind of energy rarely found!



As a universally acclaimed animal lover, she devotes herself to numerous Dogs at home and the Horses in the stables. Yet, she

manages to do justice to the multifarious roles she plays in her life. Being herself empowered, Suneeti Singh has always stood for Women Empowerment, and has rightly regarded it as the true essence of a woman's being. It has been her main focus through the years. She has relentlessly advocated Education, Health Care and done all she could for them who could manage to reach out to her.

The Islands and the Islanders do have a special place in her heart. During her visits to Andamans, she has been visiting various social welfare institutions like the Working Women's Hostels, Orphanages/Homes and has inspired many initiatives.

It was at her behest that a lot of activities were introduced at the Balika Niketan, a home for orphan and destitute girls. With the desire to make available a window to the world, she has got them introduced to yoga, classical music and dance, development of communication skills, art and craft. Talking to her, clearly reflects the pain she feels for all that needs to be done.

Various new facilities were added in the Old Age Home and the Working Women's Hostel following her visits.

A unique initiative, exemplifying the largesse of her heart, was the introduction of regular visits by school children to the Raj Niwas providing them a unique opportunity for this kind of interface.

## Message



*It gives me immense pleasure to wish our Hon'ble Lt. Governor, Lt. Gen. (Retd) A.K. Singh, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM on the occasion of his first anniversary as the Lt. Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. You have been a great source of inspiration to the people of these islands, especially the Nicobarese tribal community, who are touched by your humble nature and spirit to move ahead. I wish you all the very best and sincerely hope that our Islands would prosper under your able guidance.*

**Rani Fathima**

**Queen of Nancowrie**

## Message



*On the occasion of the first anniversary of Lt. Gen. (Retd) A.K. Singh, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM as the Lt. Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude. Within a year of your posting as the Lt. Governor, you have understood the challenges faced by the islanders. Sir, you have touched our lives in many ways and inspired us to move ahead, no matter how big a hurdle that lies ahead. The Tsunami of 2004 had shattered our lives. It has been ten years after the heart breaking incident and yet we were not able to come over it. Your visit to our remote islands and your positive approach towards life and commitment to your job has greatly touched us. We are confident that you will lead the islands in the right direction. On behalf of the Tribal Council, I would like to extend all our support in your mission for a holistic development of the islands.*

**Ayesha Majid**

**Chairperson, Tribal Council,**

**Nancowrie**



# A Ray of Hope Behind the Clouds...



**By Denis Giles, Editor**

*The Islanders were on the verge of losing all hopes. A time, when the dark shadows loomed large and frustration seemed to be quite evident. Unemployment, lack of opportunity, poor medical facilities, not up-to date educational options, long term pending projects, not very wise decisions, corruption, favouritism etc. were all combinedly corroding the islands, and the Islanders. And when everything seemed to be lost - with no one to guide and stand up for - the heavens finally ended up showing some mercy.*

*In this scenario, where Confusion prevailed and Self Interest dictated, a new Lt. Governor was appointed to take on the helm of the affairs. But by this time the ignored Islands were destitute and the Islanders were steeped in scepticism. It was not easy for the islanders racked with pain to overlook the past and easily forget what they had gone through. Doubts and negativity had filled them and they had lost the ability to Believe, be Positive and Foresee Happy times ahead.*

*Herein, stepped the Eleventh Lieutenant Governor of ANI. On 8 July 2013, Lt. Gen. (Retd) A.K. Singh, the newly appointed Lt. Governor took an oath to justify his appointment. Having had successfully led an Army, with an unending list of remarkable achievements, this must have seemed to be a child's play for him. But he could not have perceived what all lurked behind the apparently beautiful and peaceful scenes visible to the naked eye.*

*His achievements could not serve as a qualification to console the dejected islanders infused with negativity over the years. Moreover, dealing with the civil society, without ruffling the feathers of all concerned, and getting the desired result proved to be totally a different field for the General to get accustomed to.*

***"I don't have a magic wand to solve issues overnight but  
I can assure my commitment for my job....."***

*The above sentiments were expressed by the new Lt. Governor in his opening remarks through the media. He explicitly stated that his*

***"posting as the Lt. Governor is not a stepping stone but a milestone and a second  
chance to serve the people."***

*The words were encouraging and no doubt had raised some expectations of the islanders. But this time, the dejected wanted to see words materializing. They had been hearing many such idioms, phrases and anecdotes and had forcibly clapped over it. For them it was seeing for believing.*

*The passing year has proved, repeatedly that he stood by all his commitments and claims.*

*The General within no time of his new posting had travelled across the length & breadth of the islands. He lent his ears to the unheard, stood amidst them, understood them and ensured that their genuine grievances were taken care of. Many spot decisions were taken, which in fact never required tedious official procedures that used to be followed. These small little decisions and actions on the ground by the Lt. Governor, managed to rekindle the lost faith of the islanders, to a large extent.*

*It was not only this; Lt. Governor AK Singh within a short time was able to judge the real challenges being faced by the islanders. He knew that the task was not easy but with his 'never give up' attitude, the General was determined to hit the nail. He had a clear vision of a sustainable development and inclusive growth, while being sensitive to the fragile ecosystem and the particularly vulnerable tribes.*

*As announced in his opening remarks when he took over as the Lt. Governor, AK Singh persistently took up the issues with the concerned Ministries at New Delhi. Many projects that remained shelved due to lack of initiative has started gaining momentum. As a follow up, the General adopted a policy to conduct regular review of the functioning of various departments, which is the very basis of chasing any target.*

*Believing in inclusive growth, the Lt. Governor AK Singh remained connected to the islanders through public hearings and also opened up a new platform using social media to invite suggestions from the Islanders in particular. It is for the first time that the Lt. Governor of A&N Islands could be connected through social media and by doing this, unexpectedly he ended up at the receiving end of the frustration of the people and needless to mention, criticism by media. To add to it, the unfortunate tourist boat tragedy and expose on exploitation of the tribes seemed to shatter it all.*

*Though demoralizing for any newcomer who meant business in true sense; the spirit of moving ahead and facing challenges ultimately elevated his position in the eyes of the islanders. The unfortunate incidents ultimately helped put things back in track. Safety Audit of all boats was ordered, causing inconvenience to many but then, it proved worth in many ways. Organising an international seminar to deliberate on the situation of the aboriginal tribes too is a welcoming step.*

*Lt. Gen. (Retd) A.K. Singh has identified the key areas to focus on which includes employment opportunities, connectivity, tourism, fisheries, IT services, health, education, sports, telecommunication, security and not the least a fool proof Disaster Management for the islands prone to natural disasters. His personal initiative to reorganise the existing Disaster Management and conduct of the first ever State Level Mock Disaster Exercise proved its worth during the devastating Cyclone 'Lehar'. It was due to this initiative that the islands could prevail over the cyclone with minimum damages.*

*It's been just a year after Lt. Gen. (Retd) A.K. Singh took over as the Lt. Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. While many developmental projects are in the pipeline; it would be worth mentioning that the once seemed distant dream of having Islands' own Medical College would soon be a reality.*

*The entire happening of the last one year can be summed up beautifully in the words of **W.B. Yeats***

***"Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,"***

*And the outcome as -*

***"Surely some revelation is at hand;  
Surely the Second Coming is at hand."***



# A New Chapter of Development Begins...

*"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way".*



By Rasheed Yusoof

*"With great power comes, great responsibility"; but there are only a few*

*who manage to live upto it. The new buzz in the islands is about our Hon'ble Lt. Governor Lt. Gen. (Retd) A K Singh, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM. You must have seen him cycling, taking a walk or might be around you and you wouldn't have even realized. Yes, he is just one of us, who thinks and understands the problems of the common man.*

*From what we have seen and heard until now, our new Hon'ble Lt. Governor is a responsible leader for the masses, which becomes possible through effective Administration.*

*We have seen him interacting and discussing problems right from the young to the elderly. What we see here is democratic or in other words participative leadership, which was practiced by some of the great leaders of their time like Mahatma Gandhi. Our Hon'ble Lt. Governor takes **suggestions & advices from all sections of the society and then acts upon it.***

*The logical and practical approach towards problem solving, and the apparent endeavour to make the islands a better place to live, has created a positive wave in the islands, and hence a sense of security and comfort among the Islanders. The Islanders have started envisioning the long awaited development of the Islands, and trust that Their new Leader is the gift of Their long awaited prayers. The Lt. Governor has a very strong Positive and 'Never Give Up' Attitude and His warmth, approachable attitude, personal visits and time bound problem solving acumen reflects his interest for the Rise of the Islands. Moreover, he has been able to identify the key areas where he wants to focus on, namely Education, Health, Fisheries and Tourism, which are truly also the need of the hour.*

*Andaman having been bestowed with all natural beauty needs to be showcased on the global map, and only with a visionary like our current Hon'ble Lt. Governor, this dream is possible. **Our Hopes are high and fingers crossed and the goal is common to make the islands a part of the global economy and have world-class infrastructure. In this day and age, it's a boon for the society to be led by a true leader motivated both socially and morally for unparalleled public service.***

*It feels great to have a Lt. Governor who is kind, encouraging and strives for development of the islands in all fields. His valuable guidance, inspiring words and above all, his encompassing physical presence amidst us itself shows his greatness. We will always remain grateful to you, Honorable Sir!*

*We look forward for bright and prosperous future under your Strong & Positive leadership as the Administrator of A & N Islands.*







Rani Fathima, Queen of Nancowrie Group of Islands handing over a miniature Hodi to the Hon'ble Lt. Governor, Lt. Gen. (Retd) A.K. Singh during the LG's visit to Kamorta. Hodi is a traditional boat of the Nicobarese Tribes, which is specially crafted and designed to suit the islands' sea conditions. It used to be the only means of transportation to connect different islands in the Nicobar Group. Though the traditional Hodis still exist but is generally restricted to competitions during festivals after the introduction of mechanized boats.



Harpoon Fishing is a traditional way of fishing by the Nicobarese tribes. In this the Nicobarese dive inside the water, select and hunt the desired fish. Unfortunately the traditional practice had died after the Boxing Day Tsunami on 26<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2004 as fear of sea had engulfed the tribes. It was Lt. General (Retd) A.K. Singh who encouraged the members of the tribe and took out the decade old fear by travelling with them in the sea. Picture shows a fisherman handing over the catch to Hon'ble Lt. Governor.





Picture shows the Hodi Race at Kamorta. The race was conducted to mark the visit of Hon'ble Lt. Governor, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) A.K. Singh to the Nancowrie group of islands. The interesting part of this race is that it is a competition exclusively between the tribal ladies. Unfortunately this tradition had faded away after the Tsunami of 2004. This is the first ever race conducted in a decade during the visit of Hon'ble Lt. Governor, A.K. Singh.



Mrs. Ayesha Majid, Chairperson Tribal Council of Nancowrie, also the eldest daughter of Queen Fathima explaining about the traditional handicrafts made by the Central Nicobarese to the First Lady of the Islands, Mrs. Suneeti Singh. The handicraft shown in the picture is made out of coconut shell. There are many such traditional crafts that used to be a part of their day-to-day lives. Today these handicrafts are basically restricted to present as souvenir to the visitors. Efforts are on by the Tribal Development Cooperative Society to market these products so as to generate some income for the poor tribal families in Nancowrie.





Picture shows display of traditional food of the Central Nicobarese. The food was served to the Hon'ble Lt. Governor, Lt. Gen. (Retd) A.K. Singh during his visit to Nancowrie group of Islands. Alike the Harpoon Fishing and Ladies Hodi Race, the Nicobarese rarely used to prepare the traditional cuisines after the Boxing Day Tsunami of 2004. They had become solely dependent on the free ration supplied by the Govt. of India as relief measures for years together. This is a rare occasion when the Nicobarese had decided to conduct a food competition with a motivation to revive their culture with the visit of Hon'ble Lt. Governor, Lt. Gen. (Retd) A.K. Singh.



Lamson, a 23 year old boy in the Ramjaw Village in Kamorta Island has been suffering from excessive obesity (Gigantism) since his childhood. He is the only son of a poor widowed mother. Lamson had lost his father during his early childhood and is totally dependent on his mother since then. Seen in the picture are Lamson (left) and his Mother (right). The Hon'ble Lt. Governor during his visit to Kamorta, after knowing about the case handed over a cheque of Rs. 50,000/- as a small relief.



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