

## 20 YEARS AND 9 DIFFERENT LOCATIONS.

Being a fauji kid we were always moving across the country and changing places and houses. You don't have a stable address and in the earlier days no contacts either.

I was born in Darjeeling, studied in schools across cities like Ambala, Mumbai, Udhampur, Shillong and New Delhi and now pursuing my Architectural Degree in Delhi.

I didn't accompany my father to some of the places like Guwahati, Ahemdabad and right now in Agra (because I am in college in Delhi).

My father is in the Army and I can tell you that I had the best time of my life. It's just a different world altogether. It teaches you so many grand lessons along with heaps of great memories that remain with you for lifetime.

We have people from all parts of the country at one place. We get to learn a lot of new things from people from different parts of the country like cooking recipes, handicrafts, new languages, dressing sense, music, etc. am from Haryana and we have Idli Dosa every Sunday (which my mother learnt to make in Mumbai). You have events like tambola, sports meets and parties every other weekend. We actually used to play cricket along with some of our army uncles and young recruits. We had free horse-riding lessons, shooting lessons, Olympic-sized pools, and of course, access to the army clubs every day for dance nights, festival nights, movie nights, etc. I think the best part for me is travelling. You can cross over different borders, go to restricted areas and interact with people from neighbouring countries and places without any hassle.

We travel not only to the places where our fathers are posted, we also travel from the same place go to many other places.

*MUMBAI- Pune, Lonavala, Goa, and Ajanta-Ellora caves*

*UDHAMPUR- Patnitop and Jammu*

*SHILLONG- Meghalaya including Mawsynram, Cherapunjee (wettest place on Earth), Mawlynnong (cleanest village in the world), Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, China and Bangladesh borders,*

*DELHI- Dehradun, Kasauli, Darjeeling, Mussoorie, Nainital, Haridwar, Chandigarh and Amritsar*

*GUWAHATI- Nepal, Bhutan and most of the places in Assam, even the smallest beautiful corners of the state including wildlife sanctuaries like Kaziranga National Park and Pobitora National Park.*

*GANDHINAGAR- most of the places in Gujarat, also went on a long road trip to Somnath, Dwarka, Porbandar and Diu*

*AGRA- UP as well as the vibrant cities of Rajasthan including Udaipur, Jaipur, Jodhpur and Ajmer.*

The best part of growing up as army kids is that since our parents get transferred every 2 to 3 years, we also changed that many Army schools. We become the best of friends irrespective of any cultural or language barriers. The heart-breaking moment comes when you have to leave all your great friendships behind after 3 years and move to another location on the map carrying the memories for the lifetime.



All in all, we get a lot of opportunities to spend so much time together which is so memorable. I am sure if you meet any fauji kid, they will tell you how much fun it is to live in cantt areas unless your father is posted in field, somewhere where the family can't go with him.

Apart from all the good things for 'children' and families there are the obvious fears attached to the life of an army personnel. The transfers to J & K and some eastern regions used to be very problematic to the families and fathers alike. Moreover, our mothers would have to take care of all the things like market (shopping, vegetables and buying other household stuff), parent-teacher meeting in schools ,household cooking and rest of the stuff - I mean she had to be more brave and courteous to put up with anything we could face.

It's more difficult when you have to stay in civil areas outside. That's when you realise that army moulds you in a better and more responsible human being. Army teaches you the way of living.

I have had the privilege to be part of such excellent surroundings and beautiful memories. I can't mention each one of them here because the list is extremely long.

I can say one thing for sure that I had the privilege and I was lucky enough, thanks to my Father who moved to city from the village to serve in the army for the betterment of his and our future.



# RIA RANGI\_3 A\_MBS SPA

