

All India Best Cadet in Senior Division Army

Mr. S.Arunkumar has participated in N.C.C. Republic Day Parade Camp, New Delhi from 1st to 31st January, 2009. He represented Tamil Nadu state as the Best Cadet in Senior Division Army. He is studying B.Sc. II year in the Department of Mathematics. He was awarded the All India Best Cadet in Senior Division Army. Below is given his report on this occasion.

Treasure at the end of the Rainbow

When we were waved off from Chennai Central on 28th of December little did we realize how time had flown by. 12 camps of hardship of various types and of varied degree culminated in that train journey to Delhi – to the famed Republic Day Camp. And I was pinching myself as I was so proud to represent the State as a Best Cadet in Senior Division Army. It had been 6 years back when Tamil Nadu had a gold medal to their name in this category and I was nominated to break that duck. Reminiscing on how this journey took place, I found myself thanking my parents on helping me decide on NCC and supporting me constantly throughout in all circumstances; my college seniors, ANO Lt.S.Krishnan and the college management who provided me with the training and wherewithal to ensure that I succeed in the task I was going to undertake. And of course I was going with a single minded objective of winning this medal for that person who was instrumental in shaping me up – Col.E.N.Prince of 13 BN NCC, Kilpauk – without who I would not have been in the frame of things at all.

The Best Cadet competition is conducted over a period of 15-20 days at Delhi, in which the cadet is tested on :

1. His/her General knowledge and aptitude in the service subject.
2. Firing skills
3. Bearing, Turnout and Swiftness in movement – Drill
4. Group Discussions
5. Extempore
6. Interview with the DG NCC.

We knew the task in front of us and we were prepared for it by the BC trainers for a period of 1 month divided over a period of 10 days in Puducherry and 20 days in CRPF Avadi. So when we went there, everyone was quietly confident of getting the medal. But there is only a thin line separating confidence and arrogance and we had to be careful not to cross that line but at the same time keep an eye out for our competitors. We had a simple philosophy of preparing for the worst and hoping for the best and I must say that we handled ourselves very well there.

While this was going on, I was also nominated for being the Flag Area Briefer of our directorate to all the VVIP's arriving in the camp. To see people of the stature of the First Citizen of India, Vice President, Defence Minister, Minister of State for Defence, Chiefs of Army, Navy and Air Force at a distance of 1 foot from oneself is a chance that can almost be not replicated anywhere else. When it was announced on the eve of the Republic Day that I was the All India Best Cadet in SD Army, I was overcome with joy. And since then the Tamil Nadu Directorate and the State Government has felicitated me with cash prize and mementos.

People say that a RD Camp will be a life changing experience. I don't know how far they meant it, but for me it rings true every passing day.

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MoS(Defence) Shri Pallam Raju being briefed about the Flag Area