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A determination to succeed

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Sam Manekshaw  
(1914 - 2008)



Who  
Was  
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Sam  
Manekshaw





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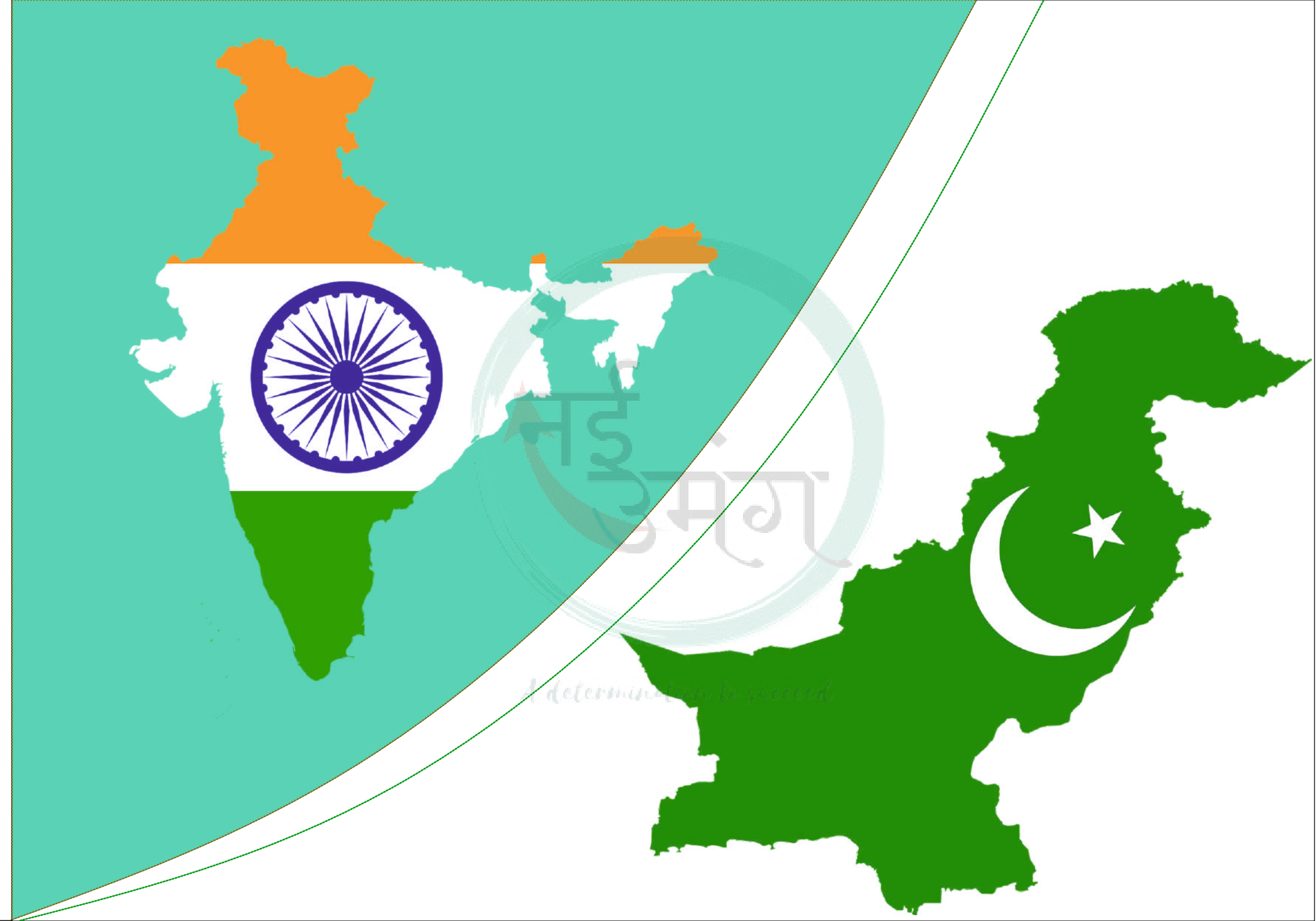
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# INTRODUCTION



**S**am Hormusji Framji Jamshedji Manekshaw or as widely known as **Sam Bahadur** was a man of exceeding gallant and perseverance. He was the first of the Indian armies who got promoted to the rank of **Field Marshal**, back in the year 1973. Manekshaw was already about to retire but because of his excellent services towards the nation and the army, ended up getting an extra **six months** to further serve his country.

# EARLY LIFE

Born on 3<sup>rd</sup> April; 1914, he was the fifth born and the third of the sons to Hormizd Manekshaw a doctor and Hilla née Mehta who were both Parsis. He was born in Amritsar, Punjab. Later he moved to the city of Valsad in Gujarat along with his parents. Manekshaw's parents left Mumbai for Lahore, however when the train halted in the Amritsar station, Hilla found it unbearable to journey any further as she was pregnant. Thus, the couple settled in the city of Amritsar soon establishing a clinic and pharmacy in the center of the town.



In his boyhood Manekshaw was termed mischievous and full of life. He completed his primary level of his schooling from Punjab, later passed out from Sherwood College, Nainital at the age of 15 with a junior Cambridge certification. In the year of 1931, Manekshaw passed senior Cambridge with distinction. Desiring to pursue medicine like his father he requested his father to send him to London for further studies to pursue medicine and become a doctor. Though Manekshaw's father had two of his sons pursuing engineering in London, and as Manekshaw was not of full age; got refused to his proposal and the dream of studying Medicine.





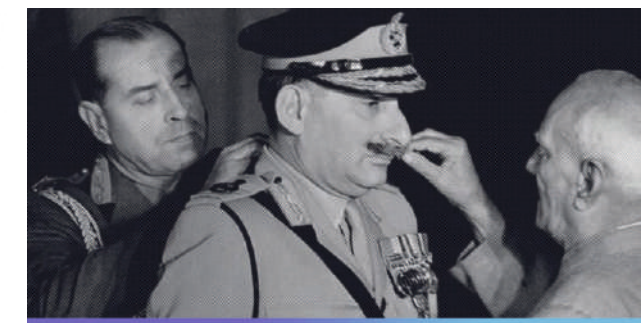
In the meantime, the Indian Military College committee chaired by field marshal Sir Phillip Chedwode, put forward a proposal to train Indians for the officer commissions in the army. It was a three-year course with an entry age of 18-20 years. An examination called the Public Service Commission was conducted to select candidates as per the merit. In an act of sheer rebellion against his father, Manekshaw appeared for the entrance exam in Delhi. In the year of 1932, he was selected and was amongst the fifteen cadets to be selected. Manekshaw was placed at the rank of sixth on the order and basis of his merit.

# CAREER IN ARMED FORCES

Manekshaw's career was golden and bright as his wit and valour. During his commissioning reign, it was a common convention amongst newly commissioned Indian officers to be a part of the British regiment first, before becoming a part of the Indian regiment.

## A)WORLD WAR II

Already fluent in Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, English and Gujarati, he was qualified and equipped to be the higher standard army interpreter. Manekshaw was appointed as a temporary Captain and Major due to a shortage of qualified officers in World War II. He encountered the war in Burma in the 1942 campaign at the Sittang River and was identified as a brave soldier in the battle. During the encounter he was shot nine times in the stomach, lungs, kidney, liver and intestines by machine gun fire. Severely wounded Major General David Cowan sited Manekshaw grasping in between life and death.



Manekshaw had a sense of humor even at that point of time as he was rushed to the doctor who refused to perform any operation on him. On being asked about his condition, Sam Bahadur replied humorously that he was “kicked by a mule.” Thus, initially declining him a surgery, the doctor agreed to perform an operation to which Manekshaw survived and came out in Flying colours. Thus, Sir David Cowan heard of Manekshaw's bravery and in sheer respect pinned his own Military Cross ribbon to the wounded Manekshaw's chest. Saying convincingly that, a dead person cannot be awarded a Military Cross.

## B) POST INDEPENDENCE ERA

During the time of partition in India, Manekshaw was reassigned to the 8<sup>th</sup> Gorkha Rifles as his Battalion became a part of the Pakistani army. Later that year Pakistani armies invaded Kashmir and captured Muzaffarabad and Domel. The Maharaja of Kashmir Hari Singh appealed for help from the Indian Government. Manekshaw looked into the matter with his extreme wit thus ordered for the immediate disposal or deployment of troops to prevent the capturing of Kashmir by Pakistani armies. Following that day, the Indian soldiers were in Kashmir thus the capital Srinagar was captured before the arrival of the Pakistani troops. Manekshaw was posted as the MO Directorate and as a result the annexation of Hyderabad was also planned by him along with the Kashmir dispute. Later during his term, he was also promoted to the Colonel and Brigadier. Also appointed to, the first Indian Director of Military Operations, Major General and Lieutenant General to finally Director General Military Operations.



Manekshaw attended the Imperial Defense College, London for higher studies. In his era of commanding General K.S Thimayya was the Chief of the army staff and Krishna Menon was the defense minister. During the year 1959, Sam Manekshaw was promoted to Substantive Major General. Later on, that year he was appointed as the Commandant of the Defense Services Staff College, in Wellington. Later on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1963, he was promoted to Substantive Lieutenant General. He also came across the insurgency in Nagaland when he was moved to Calcutta from Shimla for the courageous act for which he received Padma Bhushan in 1968.

## C) INDO-PAK WAR



The war between the West Pakistanis and East Pakistanis was a heated one where the East Pakistanis asked for liberation from the West Pakistanis. Soon the East Pakistanis demanded for a separation resulting to which the West Pakistanis launched their armed forces in East Pakistan. A fierce war began to setup to which many East Pakistanis were killed, whereas many others fled to the neighboring Indian state of West Bengal. Thus, India decided to help the East Pakistanis in the formation of the new nationnamely, Bangladesh. Back then the Prime Minister of India; Indira Gandhi granted the matter to be single handedly solved by Manekshaw. Thus, the preparation for the war began as the Mukti Bahini, a local military group of Bengali nationalists embarked on the training sessions under the order of Manekshaw. Almost three units of regular Bangladeshis were trained along with thousands of guerillas to harass the Pakistani armies. The war was officially begun on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1971 when Pakistan dropped bomb on the Indian Air Force bases in the western part of India. Manekshaw readily formed units under different Lieutenant Generals from different zones and directions. Thus, the Indian Air Force began taking actions from the Eastern and the Western fronts.



# CRITICISM

The war kept on progressing as the Pakistani troops started collapsing. Soon the Pakistani forces kept on withdrawing and were left isolated. The United Nations called for a meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1971, to discuss about the ongoing dispute. After a long and tedious discussion, the UN came to the conclusion to immediately withdraw the firing and call off the troops. The USSR vetoed the discussion twice and the United Kingdom and France decided to not vote and abstain themselves from the matter. The Pakistani troops were addressed by Manekshaw on radio broadcast confirming them to receive respectful treatment if they agreed to surrender. Pakistani troops led themselves to defeat by putting on further resistance.

Later on, 11<sup>th</sup> December Ali called up the United Nations to call off the firing though it was not authorized by the president Yahya Khan, on the grounds of which the firing continued. After several discussions on the ongoing attacks and conflicts; Khan came to a conclusion to stop the war as many Pakistani soldiers were getting killed. Niazi played an important role in officially conveying the message to Manekshaw through the United Nations Consul General in Dhaka via Washington. Manekshaw responded by saying he would only stop the war if Pakistani troops surrendered by a certain time decided by Manekshaw. The Prime Minister wanted Manekshaw to accept the surrender in Dhaka by the Pakistani armies to which he declined and instead bestowed the entire honour on Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aroura. Concerned about the aftereffects of the war to make sure there was no rape or looting. Manekshaw strictly ordered the soldiers to keep their hands in pockets whenever they see a Begum, a Muslim woman. The war lasted for 12 days and ended with an exaggerated and unquestionable surrender.



When Manekshaw was appointed as the Commandant of the of the Defense Services Staff College in Wellington, he got caught up in a raged controversy where he commented on the fact that cultivating personal relationships with Nehru and the Defense Minister Menon would result in more power for Major General Brij Mohan Kaul who had been promoted to the Lieutenant General and appointed to Quarter Master General by Menon himself without the prior permission from the CAOS Thimayya. Thus, according to Manekshaw convictions as such will lead towards more power than the CAOS himself. Thus, this type of disagreement caused Manekshaw to be termed as an anti-national. Spies and informers were sent after Manekshaw by Kaul as a consequence he was charged with sedition and court inquiry. That caused Manekshaw to be close enough to losing his career.



Manekshaw 's reply to Menon when he was asked to remark on the Chief of the Army staff was that; he (Thimayya) was superior to him in workspace, thus commenting about his Chief is not very respectful according to Manekshaw as later Menon himself could ask the same question to staffs and brigadiers under Manekshaw's discipline, which could ruin the decorum and discipline of the army. Thus, Manekshaw always had his way to prove his knowledge and respect towards the regulation of his career.

He would train the troops aggressively in order to reach perfection. On a visit by Nehru and Indira Gandhi he was restrained from taking such rigorous training as Nehru would not prefer anymore men to lose life. To which Manekshaw declined the order, instead asked to be sent to staff appointment. Manekshaw was a strict man, when it came to rules and discipline of regulations to army. When Indira Gandhi, the then PM of India wanted to operate a launch of war against West Paskistan, to which Manekshaw steadily disagreed, displaying reasons of monsoon and the overflowing Brahmaputra River along with the swampy roads, which would make the journey tougher for the Indian soldiers and the fight back as well. Manekshaw stayed back after the cabinet meeting ended and offered to resign to which Indira Gandhi declined, instead took his advice on the war.



Thus, Manekshaw was a rebellion and a tough man who would always prefer to rather have his way no matter how rigid or unbelievable it was. This behavior of Manekshaw was often seen as something unnecessary and tough, beyond control by the officials and his superiors.

*A determination to succeed*



# ADVANCEMENT TO FIELD MARSHAL

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had proposed to promote Manekshaw as the Field Marshal, and also appoint him as the Chief of Defense Staff. Although the decision was determined, it suffered from various oppositions namely from the air force and navy as Manekshaw was from a stronger majority of army, the questionable smaller group of navy and air force could be left to neglect alongside the officials felt that would be a challenge to control the defense affairs.

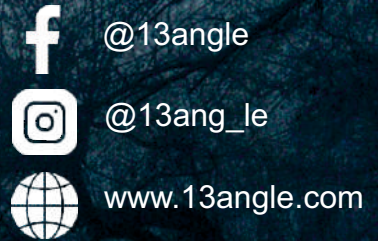


Though Manekshaw was about to retire he got an extend of six months and in the honour of his great service to the nation he was honourably promoted to the rank of Field Marshal on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1973 in a ceremony later held at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1973.

## Top 13 Interesting Facts

- 1) Manekshaw met his future wife in Lahore.
- 2) The name of Manekshaw's wife was Siloo Bode with whom he had two daughters namely Sherry and Maya.
- 3) The famous quote “one thing always remains the same, your task and your duty. You are required to ensure the security of this country against any offence. What is that means for you? That means that you should have to fight, a fight to win. There is no roof for losers, if you lose don't come back.” Was framed by Sam Manekshaw.
- 4) Both Manekshaw and Yahya Khan had served together in the military operations before the partition.
- 5) Major Yahya Khan has once purchased a motorbike from Manekshaw to which he never paid back. Although according to Manekshaw he paid with half of his country in the war of 1971.
- 6) There is a flyover bridge in Ahmedabad named after him in 2008 by the then Chief Minister of Gujarat Narendra Modi.
- 7) Vijay Diwas is celebrated in the memory of Manekshaw's victory in the war of 1971.
- 8) After his retirement Manekshaw was on board of directors of various multinational companies such as Goetze India, Nagarjuna Fertilizers, Britannia Industries etc.
- 9) Manekshaw's grave was adjacent to his wife's grave.
- 10) Manekshaw dies of several complications from Pneumonia.
- 11) He dies at Military Hospital in Wellington, Tamil Nadu.
- 12) He was cremated in a Parsi crematory in Ooty.
- 13) Manekshaw's Funeral ceremony lacked VIP visits owing to many controversies during the time of his post retirement.





## ***ABOUT US***

“ਨੌਂ ਉਮੰਗ” is a unit of 13angle magazine. ਨੌਂ ਉਮੰਗ focuses on imparting biographical information about such personalities whose determination to succeed makes a big difference and with their firm belief, they make their dreams come true and also contribute to making the world a beautiful place to live. They show the world that opportunities are not limited, opportunities are endless. one can start from anywhere and one can also reach anywhere, achieve anything. For them, failure only means some new experience.

So, ਨੌਂ ਉਮੰਗ brings a biography of such personalities who dares to see the world from their perspective and also dares to change it.

The main motive behind creating ਨੌਂ ਉਮੰਗ magazine is to fill youths with hope and enthusiasm so that they can conquer themselves and reach new heights.

***“Goals on the road to achievement cannot be achieved consistency.”  
—Denzel Washington***

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