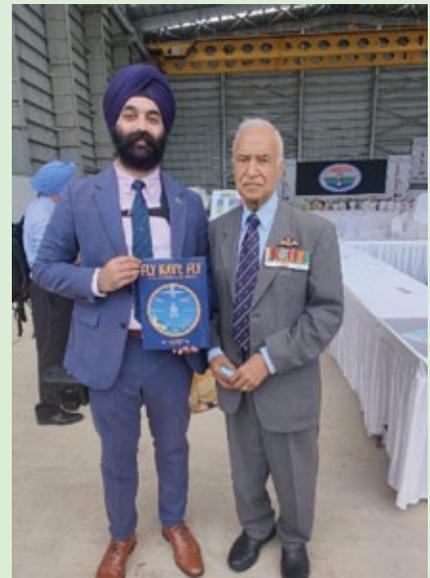


Fly Navy Fly!



Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh presented the book to the Supreme Commander, President Ram Nath Kovind



*Co-author Angad Singh with 1971 War legend, Rear Admiral SK Gupta, MVC
(Photo: Angad Maolankar)*

India's Naval Air Arm turned 68 earlier this year, and none can contest that it has been vital since inception. From the liberation of Goa through to present-day natural disasters, naval aircraft — whether fighters, submarine-hunters, or helicopters — have been committed to operations across India and the region. In 2021, Indian Naval Aviation is celebrating its 'finest hour,' the strike operations conducted by the aircraft carrier INS Vikrant and her

embarked Sea Hawk fighters and Alizé anti-submarine aircraft in the 1971 war. For this, and all their sterling contributions to the nation in times of war and peace over 68 years, Indian Naval Aviation was awarded the President's Colours on 6 September 2021 at INS Hansa, Goa.

The event also saw a comprehensive history of Naval Aviation released by Navy Chief Adm Karambir Singh, and presented to the Supreme Commander,

President Ram Nath Kovind. The book 'Fly Navy, Fly' is an expanded update of Vayu founder-editor Pushpindar Singh's seminal 'Fly Navy,' first published in 2006. Co-authored with Angad Singh, the project was essentially a labour of love, involving over three years of meticulous research and photography across the length and breadth of India, to produce a work that would surpass the original in every aspect, and serve — in the words of the book's introduction — as a "tribute to the intrepid spirit of the men and women who ensure the Naval Ensign flies proud, from the wavetops to the skies." Containing vital inputs from Naval Air stalwarts such as Admiral Arun Prakash, a lavish cover designed by Angad Maolankar (also responsible for Vayu cover art) and a great deal of support from the Indian Navy, the release of Fly Navy, Fly was nevertheless a bittersweet event, marred by the absence of Pushpindar Singh, who was lost to the pandemic in May 2021.

Still, he was remembered fondly by serving and retired, civilian and uniformed alike at the Colours ceremony — a mark of the tremendous goodwill he enjoyed in the Indian aviation community. And he would doubtless be pleased that the final book to bear his name is devoted to an air arm he was incredibly passionate about, and his last published words are an exhortation to FLY NAVY! 🦋

Text: Angad Singh. All photos by Angad Singh except where mentioned




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