

COMMANDER'S PRAYER

When we offer prayers to our deities, we always seek the blessings of the almighty to protect our family members and to shower us with happiness, health, prosperity, long life, etc. How many of us spared a thought for those unknown brave men standing vigil on our hostile borders so we could live happily and sleep in peace with our families, within the confines of our homes?

As a Commander, I led an infantry battalion in Guerez (West of Kargil) at a height of fifteen thousand feet, infested with terrorists, infiltration and with temperatures dipping to minus twenty degree centigrade. Later, as Brigade Commander, I commanded a Mountain Brigade at fourteen thousand five hundred feet in the Himalayan watershed in Sikkim facing the Chinese in an eyeball-to-eyeball deployment. Every day I made sure to offer my prayers for the well being of nearly five thousand brave men of my brigade guarding our territorial integrity. I am reminded of a very touching prayer written by Colonel C L Proudfoot, aptly termed, Commander's Prayer.

Commander's Prayer :

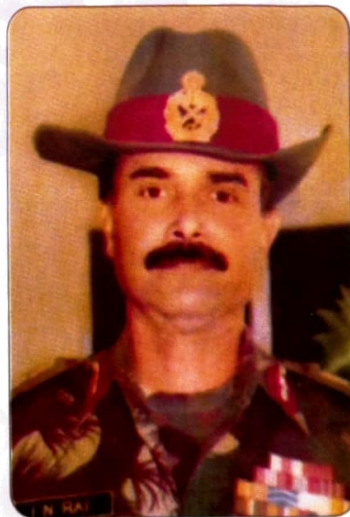
Lord make me worthy
Of the Men I serve
Worthy of their loyalty
And devotion to duty
Their Wondrous willingness
And their ready laughter
Their great humility
That asks so little
And gives so much
So readily without complaint
Grant their simple wishes lord,
And bless them please
For in this world
No better soldiers
Breath than these.

I had this prayer written in golden letters facing the Commander's Table to remind me of those selfless and brave soldiers.

Today, even in my twilight zone, every day, the first part of my prayers is dedicated to all those unseen brave men standing vigil on our borders. My fellow countrymen, please spare your thoughts, pray to God Almighty to bless our valiant soldiers and their beloved family members. Those brave ladies and children eagerly look forward to see them home; they wait for their calls and sleep with prayers on their lips. Let us remember them with gratitude. For if we forget that we're one nation under obligation to our brave armed forces, then we will be a nation doomed.

Long live our brave hearts and their families.

Jai Hind - Jai Jawan



Brig. I N Rai

Brig. I N Rai is an alumni of St. Aloysius College. He was commissioned as Second Lieutenant in Sikh Light Infantry in June 1970. He participated in the 1971 Indo-Pak War, operated in Nagaland during peak insurgency, in 1982 to 1984 faced the Chinese in Chushul (Ladakh), was seriously injured in Sri Lankan IPKF operation, commanded a battalion in Guerez (west of Kargil), and a Mountain Brigade in Sikkim facing Chinese army. He was also an Instructor in the prestigious Indian Military Academy, Dehradun and Officers Training Academy, Chennai.