

Vijay Diwas Celebrations hosted by Shradha Foundation at Indian Consulate

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New York, NY

July 26th, 2023, marked the 24th anniversary of Vijay Diwas. Vijay Diwas is celebrated to recognize India's victory against Pakistan in the Kargil War. Vijay Diwas is celebrated with freedom in minds, faith in words, pride in hearts, and memories in souls.

At the event held at the Indian Consulate in New York, many heroic soldiers were remembered and praised. The soil from the battlefield during the war was also displayed for the audience to see. Consul General Randhir Jaiswal, Col Virendra Tavathia, Maj Krishna Chari, Maj Gen Manjit Khara, and Col KB Singh (a veteran of 1971 War), were all present during this lively event.

Shradhaa Foundation's mission is to provide financial support, educational resources, and career counseling for the spouses and children of soldiers of Indian Descent. It has helped many widows and children over 12 years so far. With their determination and courage, they have helped many families and children of our soldiers back home struggling financially as well as those needing professional guidance.

As Seema Jagtiani proudly announced, "Our promise to the world is that all the donations meant to be delivered to India will not go through any secondary sources. Your money will safely be sent to where you expect it to go."

Seema is a passionate woman who from a very young age has wanted to be that "vision" that people are usually not able to see in the army. She mentioned, "...when people talk about the army, they don't really think that our soldiers are on duty 24/7 even when there is no war going on."

Seema explained how when there are floods in India, or the landslides, cloud bursts, or any other natural disaster, soldiers are the ones who step up to help us through our life. They take the initiative and risk their life to give us a hand when we need it the most, without expecting anything in return. Visiting the soldiers on a high-altitude post, Seema asked over 200 soldiers, "who all are here for the



money?" Only one raised his hand. Everyone else was there to protect their nation, even if that meant risking their life for it.

During the event, I was taken aback when I learned about the Kargil War, our courageous soldiers, their devotion to duty, and their love for the Nation. I remember telling my friends how the vibe had taken me to experience the war as if I was really there. I told my parents that

the atmosphere had made me think as if we were at a place in India, and not in New York. It is amazing to see the Indian legacy stretch out across 7 oceans to the other side of the world, with the level of enthusiasm not a drop less. At a moment in the event, the audience rose in unison and saluted the soldiers who had sacrificed their lives for their mother country.

During a moment in a speech that was being shared in the event,

I learned something that sank into my heart: "Soldiers have to work in climates below 40 degrees Celsius in the mountains and over 55 degrees Celsius in deserts. It can be deadly for human beings to tolerate anything under 11 degrees Celsius and over 30 degrees Celsius."

I don't think I can ever forget this.

Sanya Gupta is an intern who is going to enter 9th grade in September



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