

Meet Sam Manekshaw

India's First Field Marshal



**THE
AWAKENED
CITIZEN
PROGRAM**

Military Cross, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan



MILITARY CAREER

During World War II (1941), Captain Manekshaw received **9 bullets** in the lung, liver and kidney.

Fearing that Manekshaw would die and that a dead person can't be awarded a Military Cross, Major General DT Cowan, quickly took off his Military Cross ribbon and pinned it on Manekshaw.

However, Manekshaw had great will power and did not succumb to the severe bullet injuries. Even during this critical state, on being asked about his condition by the doctor, surprisingly, he humourously replied to the doctor -

“ Oh nothing much Doctor, a donkey happened to kick me.”

In 1963, while briefing the then PM, Jawaharlal Nehru, he prevented the entry of Indira Gandhi saying that she had not taken the oath of secrecy.



In 1965, as the General Officer Commanding in Chief (GOC in C), Eastern Command, he advised the Government against attacking (the then) East Pakistan as the innocent people would be the main sufferers.

His career came to a halt when he faced an enquiry for eighteen months on allegations which subsequently proved to be baseless. He did not lose faith in himself.

There was enormous political pressure on Manekshaw to start a war in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). He was well aware that would take a few months for the Army to be prepared due to various strategic reasons. Let's have a glimpse of the conversation between the then Hon'ble Prime Minister (PM), Mrs Indira Gandhi and General Manekshaw.

India should take military action against Pakistan to liberate East Pakistan

1. It will take me at least a month to get all the divisions back and put them in correct positions.
2. In June, it will be nearly impossible for the troops to move due to monsoon.
3. Further, there is a threat of Chinese intrusion. Even then, if you wish me to enter Pakistan, I guarantee you a **hundred percent defeat**.

If you allow me to plan, make my arrangements, and fix a date, I guarantee you a **hundred percent victory**



Q-1: What do you understand by moral courage?

Q-2: What kind of challenges Manekshaw would have faced in order to stand up to what he believes in ?

Q-3: What would have happened if Mankeshaw had not told the factual position to the PM?

Q-4: What qualities did Manekshaw demonstrate here ?

MILITARY CAREER

Manekshaw's meticulous planning led to the fastest and the greatest military victory for India.

When the Indian Army won under Manekshaw's leadership, Mrs Gandhi asked Manekshaw to visit Dhaka and accept the surrender of Pakistani forces. On this, he suggested that the honour and credit should go only to his Army commander in the East, Lt. General, Jagjit Singh Aurora.

After the war, Manekshaw came to be known for his humane approach towards the Prisoners of War (POW). He also ensured that they were treated well and allowed them to celebrate festivals and receive parcels from their families and a copy of the Quran.



Q. Is there any bug in the bed ?
Q. Do you have mosquito nets?
Q. Can I taste the food in the langar ?



He took extra care by asking such questions to the POWs

MILITARY CAREER

He believed that the “yes men” (flatterers) should be discarded because they can not be respected and he encouraged his juniors to express their own views so that he could consider their views at the time of taking decisions.

He always finished his own work in an hour so that he gets to spend the rest of his time visiting from one office to another, eagerly helping the juniors with their tasks.

He realized the importance of helicopters in the present day battlefield and had plans prepared for training officers on piloting helicopters.

When I talk of character, I don't mean just being honest, truthful and religious. I mean something more – knowing yourself, knowing your own faults, knowing your weaknesses.

- Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw

After helping a young Indian Army Officer with his luggage, who did not recognise Manekshaw –

Officer - “ What do you do here? ”

I help officers like you with their luggage everyday, but I do in my pass time command this Infantry Division



Q-5: What are the qualities Field Marshal Manekshaw demonstrated in each of these instances ?



He fought valiantly and received **9 bullets**.



After the 1971 victory, he suggested Mrs Gandhi that the honour and credit should go to his Army Commander in the East, Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora, thus **giving due credit to his subordinate**.

In 1963, while briefing the then PM, Jawaharlal Nehru, **Manekshaw prevented the entry of Indira Gandhi** saying that she had not taken the oath of secrecy.



Sam was known for his **compassionate policies towards Prisoners of War**.

In 1965, as the GOC in C, Eastern Command, he advised the Government **against attacking (the then) East Pakistan** stating that the people would be the main sufferers.



He always completed his work early to **help his juniors**.

His **meticulous planning , faith in himself and in his people** resulted in the fastest and the greatest military victory for India.



He encouraged his juniors to express their own views so that he could consider their views at the time of taking decisions.

He realized the importance of helicopters in the present day battlefield and had plans prepared for training officers on piloting helicopters.



Reflect on...



Q-6: How do these qualities help us in our life? Explain with concrete examples.

Q-7: How will such qualities benefit the people around you ?

Q-8: Share any incident from your life where you have demonstrated these qualities.

Q-9: What do you appreciate most in Manekshaw's life ?



AWARDS/ TITLES

- The King of Nepal, Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, conferred on him the title and sword of **Honorary General of the Royal Nepal Army**.
- He was awarded the Military Cross in 1942 and the **Padma Bhushan** in 1968.
- Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw was awarded the **Padma Vibhushan** in 1972 and became the **first Indian Army officer to be promoted to the rank of Field Marshal** in January 1973.

Q-10: Do you think FM Sam Manekshaw was an Awakened Citizen ? Think and write after reading more about him.



Thank you

“ The aim of education is to manifest in our lives the perfection, which is the very nature of our inner self. ”

Swami Vivekananda



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