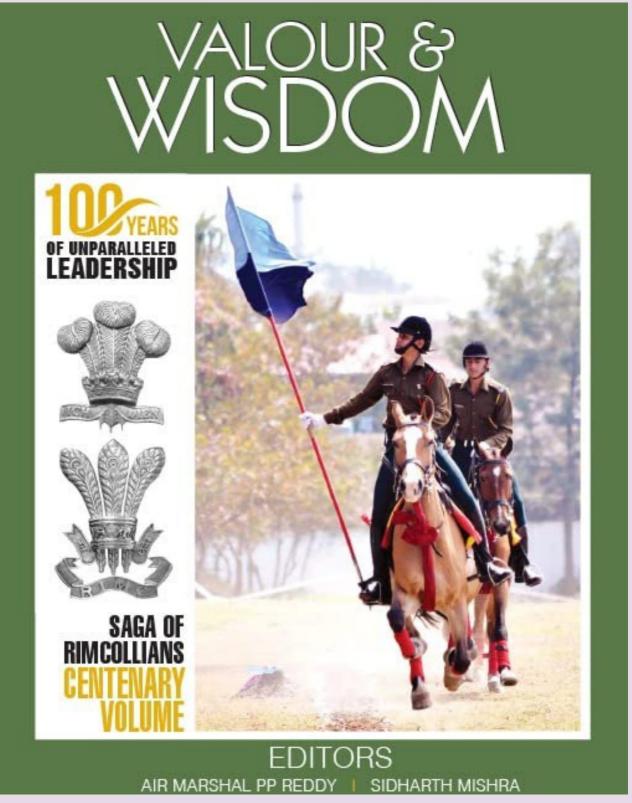


## Book Review



Review By Cdr Naveen Pandita The Rashtriya Indian Military College celebrates its 100th anniversary with the book "Valour & Wisdom" (RIMC). The book describes how the British made less deliberate attempts to send chosen students to Sandhurst to become future officers following the World War I. As a result, on March 22, 1922, the Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College was founded in Dehradun (PWRIMC). To prepare Indian youth for admission to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, UK, before granting them a Royal Commission into the officer cadre, it was established in the style of British public schools. This nursery of military leadership completed 100 years of existence on March 13, 2022. RIMC's alumni have served in various wars and examples of their heroism and their significant contribution in military operations have been firmly established. The leadership role of Rimcollians has been admirably chronicled in the book.

In order to firmly avoid politics from intruding, the book recounts how obstacles posed by a less-than-understanding external environment were overcome. This was substantially facilitated by the internal cohesion of the staff, cadets, and Old Boys. In order to explain how the PWRIMC evolved into the RIMC, the Sainik School, and finally back to the RIMC, the book takes a reflective turn. The incidents are accurately recounted, it tells tales of bravery, devotion, and unity that transcend caste, religion, and linguistic barriers, and the numbers of those who rose to high ranks and received honours for their bravery and devotion to duty are staggering. The book has beautifully covered the concerted efforts and commitment displayed by Commandants, principals and teachers who were earlier British and later Indians, who understood the significance of creating and institutionalising the requirements of any professional Armed Forces. The atmosphere at RIMC was channelized through discreet internal feedback and aided by a well-rounded relationship shared between the gurus and their 'chelas'. Even after the change of nationalities in the RIMC, the strong ethos established continues to exist till date.

The book makes tries to cover the exploits of the alumni of RIMC, Dehradun which have remained confined to their respective regimental history or part of the military folklore. One such chapter covers the role of Rimcollians in integrating J&K, one tale is that of Colonel Kashmir Singh Katoch who was appointed Military Advisor to the Maharaja of J&K. Following the accession on 26-27 October 1947, the state forces came under the Indian Army with Colonel Katoch as its Commanding Officer. He was decorated with Padma Bhushan for his service in Kashmir. Another tale is of "Battle of Budgam", Major Somnath Sharma who was awarded India's first Param Vir Chakra, the highest gallantary award of Independent India. RIMC's achievements goes far beyond Indian Borders and will continue in the foreseeable future as its alumni contribute with valour and wisdom to India's military might and development.

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However, this too includes how the Pakistani Rimcollians have fared so far. The book makes an effort to convey that RIMC is honouring more than simply a century of life in brick, mortar, and greenery, it is also recognising the leadership of its graduates who have contributed at various pivotal points in our country's development.

The foundation upon which the military leadership of the nation has been established is laid out in "Valour & Wisdom." This was accomplished using a format of thoroughly researched chapters, historical records, photographs and other images from some of the more renowned archives in overseas, well as as as-needed photographed frames. A crucial component of its ecosystem, ROBA excels in ensuring that RIMC maintains high standards. Their lives, value systems, and worldview are changed by the yearly get-togethers interactions between the Old Boys and the cadets. The Rimcollian Old Boys Association or ROBA, has also narrated the tale of how 12-year old's are mentored and turned into leaders both in military and civilian domain.

The 26 authors of the book are all Old Boys who have varied experience in military and civil, they have attended school in a different time frame varying between 1961-1999. The oldest author being Lt Gen NS Brar (Retd) attended school from 1961-65 and the youngest, Col Bhaskar Shukla who attended school from 1995-99. This brings fore 100 years of glorious legacy of institution.

'Valour & Wisdom' deserves a place in every CAT A military establishment, Military/ Sainik school and every public school library which would certainly aid those who seek to learn from the past, to set right the perspective and analyse qualities which made the school alumni leaders extraordinaire and visionaries in their own right.

## ABOUT EDITORS

AIR MARSHAL PP REDDY was at RIMC between 1967-72. He was commissioned into the Indian Air Force in 1976 as a fighter pilot. After serving in uniform for almost 40 years, he retired in 2016 as CISC (Chief Of Integrated Defence Staff To The Chairman Chiefs Of Staff Committee), the most-important triservice assignment before the emergence of the Chief of Defence Staff. Post-retirement he was picked by then Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar as Consultant for defence reforms. A former President of the Rimcollian Old Boys Association, he is presently the Chairman of its editorial committee.

SIDHARTH MISHRA, a veteran media person and academician of repute, was at the RIMC between 1979-83. On leaving school he joined Delhi University and followed it up with a very fruitful career in mass communication rising to become a newspaper editor. An author of standing, he has nearly 20 books and over a thousand articles and reserach papers to his credit including publications from the prestigious Oxford University Press and the National Book Trust of India. On changing course to academics, he has led and taught at some very prestigious institutions of the country.



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