Vivek was born on 12 July 1996 in a small village called Dharampur in Uttarakhand's Pauri Garhwal district. His father, Raghav Mehta, worked as a primary school teacher earning around ₹22,000 a month, and his mother, Savitri Mehta, stitched clothes for villagers to support the family. Their home was a modest two-room house with a tin roof that rattled during heavy rains. Yet, the home was full of warmth, books, discipline, and dreams.

Vivek studied at Government Inter College, Dharampur, where he was known not for brilliance but for sincerity. His roll number was always in the middle of the attendance register, but his teachers trusted him with responsibilities—class monitor, debate speaker, and volunteer at school events. His childhood dream was not to become an IAS officer; in fact, he didn't even know what the UPSC exam was until he turned 17.

The turning point came during his Class 12 farewell ceremony. The chief guest was an IAS officer, Neha Joshi, an alumna of the same school. She spoke about administration, rural development, and the power of a government officer to uplift thousands. Vivek felt something ignite within him. "If she can come from the same halls and reach such heights," he thought, "why can't I?"

After completing Class 12 with 87.4%, Vivek moved to Dehradun to pursue a B.A. in Political Science at Doon Government College. He lived in a rented room costing ₹3,000 per month, sharing the kitchen with two other students. He would often skip outings and save money to buy second-hand books from Paltan Bazaar. His daily routine was simple: classes in the morning, self-study in the afternoon, and part-time tutoring in the evening to earn ₹4,000-5,000 per month.

During his second year of college, he fully decided: he would attempt the UPSC Civil Services Examination. But deciding was easy—preparing was not.

After graduation in 2017, Vivek moved to Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi, the heart of UPSC preparation. He took a small 80 sq. ft. room on rent for ₹6,500 per month and joined a coaching centre for General Studies using his father's savings and a small education loan. He had chosen Sociology as his optional subject.

Year 1: Failure and Awakening (2018)

Vivek's first attempt was a disaster. He couldn't clear prelims.
He remembered sitting alone in his room, staring at the rejection result. All the motivational videos, coaching advice, and peer talks failed to comfort him. When he called his father, Vivek expected scolding. Instead, his father said calmly:

"Beta, a river keeps flowing even when rocks block it. You only failed the exam, not the goal."

That night, Vivek rewrote his entire strategy.

Year 2: Improvement but Not Enough (2019)

Vivek studied for 10–12 hours daily. He stopped joining random test series and focused on understanding the syllabus deeply. He made his own notes, solved PYQs, and improved his essay writing.

This time, he cleared prelims but missed mains cutoff by 11 marks.

It hurt even more because he had come so close. But this attempt proved one thing—he was capable.

Year 3: The Year of Discipline (2020)

He realized something important:
"UPSC is not about how much you know, but how consistently you perform."

He made a fixed daily schedule:

Wake up: 5:30 AM

Newspaper (The Hindu): 1 hour

Polity/History/Economy: 3 hours

Optional (Sociology): 3 hours

Answer writing: 1 hour

Revision/Test solving: 2 hours

Evening walk: 30 minutes

Sleep: By 11 PM

He stopped attending social gatherings, reduced phone usage to 30 minutes a day, and resisted the distractions around him. His closest friend during this period was his notebook.

Year 4: Success at Last (2021)

Life changed on 24 September 2021, the day UPSC declared results. Vivek's hands trembled as the PDF downloaded. He scrolled with fear and hope.

There it was:

"Rank 87 — Vivek Raghav Mehta"

For a moment, he froze. He blinked twice, rubbed his eyes, and checked again. It was real. He had done it. His dream had become reality.

He ran to the terrace of his rented building and cried—not out of sadness, but overwhelming relief. His room, which had witnessed tears, failures, loneliness, and hunger, now witnessed victory.

He called home.

His mother didn't understand the ranking concept, but when Vivek said, "Maa, main IAS ban gaya," she broke down. His father, usually a calm man, shouted joyfully, "Mera beta Collector banega!"

Training and Posting

Vivek joined Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) in December 2021. It was his first time seeing so many toppers in one place, yet he blended in effortlessly. He loved horse riding, trekking, and the camaraderie with his batchmates.

During his district training, he was posted to Haridwar district, where he worked closely with the District Magistrate. He learned ground realities of governance—public grievances, land issues, disaster management, and developmental schemes.

On 1 July 2023, Vivek received his first posting as Assistant Collector (IAS Officer Trainee) in Almora, Uttarakhand. His employee ID, badge number, and office cabin were symbols of a dream fulfilled.

His Personal Side

Vivek was not just a civil servant. He was a simple, humble person with personal quirks:

He loved homemade aloo paratha.

He always kept a blue pen in his pocket.

He maintained a habit of writing one motivational line daily in a diary.

He donated 10% of his monthly salary to improve libraries in rural schools.

He started a free weekend mentorship group for UPSC aspirants from Uttarakhand.

He never forgot the struggles of Mukherjee Nagar. He often told students:

"Failure is not your enemy. Inconsistency is."

A Full Circle

In 2024, Vivek was invited as the chief guest at the same Government Inter College in Dharampur where he once sat as a shy schoolboy. Standing on the stage, in front of students who looked at him with admiration, he felt life had come full circle.

He said:

"I am not extraordinary. I only refused to give up. If you have a dream, protect it. Nurture it. Fight for it. And one day, it will come looking for you."

The applause echoed across the school grounds.