

```
[
{
  "title": "I fly a helicopter to work",
  "author": "Lieutenant Colonel Anupam Gaur",
  "affiliation": "Army Aviation Corps",
  "summary": "Lieutenant Colonel Anupam Gaur shares his experience as a helicopter pilot in the Army, focusing on a rescue mission at Siachen Glacier.",
  "date": "6 October 2007",
  "location": "Siachen Glacier",
  "story": [
    {
      "altitude": "19,000 feet",
      "conditions": "Snow has started falling",
      "helicopter": "Cheetah",
      "mission": "Search and rescue of missing mountaineers",
      "challenges": [
        "Cannot land in soft snow",
        "Limited time due to fuel constraints",
        "Hovering above sloping glacier"
      ],
      "rescue_situation": [
        {
          "sightings": "Blurry shapes moving towards them in the haze",
          "mountaineers_condition": [
            {"injury": "broken shoulder"},
            {"injury": "ankle fracture"},
            {"injury": "frostbite"}
          ],
          "attempts": "Previous day had no place to land",
          "plan": "Hover and pull in mountaineers one at a time",
          "fuel": "Minimum to lessen weight",
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    "first_mountaineer": {
      "description": "Lean and haggard, face streaked with tears",
      "reaction": "Pulled up by co-pilot amidst sighs of relief"
    },
    "result": [
      "Three trips made by Major Anupam Gaur",
      "Three mountaineers taken to safety",
      "All eleven members rescued by three helicopters"
    ]
  }
]
},
{
  "meeting": {
    "age": 44,
    "description": "tall, dark, and good-looking",
    "name": "Anupam Gaur",
    "rank": "Lieutenant Colonel",
    "time_since_rescue": "10 years",
    "appearance": {
      "aviators": "shading his eyes",
      "comparison": "looks more like a movie star"
    },
    "reaction_to_compliment": {
      "emotion": "embarrassed",
      "quote": "I'm not a hero—I'm just a regular guy in the Army. That rescue is one of the most precious memories of my life but it is nothing extraordinary if you look at a career in uniform. Army officers do these things all the time. I can bet you that no other profession can match what we do for a living."
    }
  },

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"career_highlights": [  
  "flying a helicopter for a living",  
  "dropping skydivers off at 10,000 feet",  
  "chasing lions in an African national park during a UN mission",  
  "flying fellow officers including Lieutenant Colonel Mahendra Singh Dhoni"  
],  
"quote_about_Dhoni": "You might have heard of him—he also plays cricket."  
},  
"career_summary": {  
  "impact": "everything",  
  "beginnings": {  
    "exam": "National Defence Academy (NDA) entrance exam",  
    "age": 18,  
    "location": "Pune",  
    "academy": "National Defence Academy",  
    "first_experience": {  
      "description": "thin, scruffy young boys nervous about what lay ahead",  
      "initial_activities": [  
        "lined up for haircuts",  
        "given an NDA blazer",  
        "became local heroes overnight"  
      ],  
      "reaction": "When we went out, girls would look at us and it was a nice feeling."  
    }  
  },  
  "training": {  
    "duration": "three years",  
    "skills": [  
      "swimming",  
      "boxing",  
      "horse riding",
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    "football",
    "handball",
    "martial arts",
    "ten-kilometre cross-country runs"
  ],
  "language": "German",
  "table_manners": {
    "method": "taught by a senior who sat next to him at meal times for a year",
    "skills": [
      "keeping elbows off the table while eating",
      "using the right fork and knife for each course"
    ]
  },
  "teaching_others": "After a year, Gaur had learnt enough to sit next to his own understudy (a fresher) and teach him the same things.",
  "social_skills": [
    "attending parties with ladies, mostly wives of instructors",
    "pulling out chairs and opening doors for ladies",
    "being attentive to them",
    "other nuances of chivalrous behaviour"
  ],
  "ballroom_dancing": {
    "club": "Ballroom Dancing Club",
    "activities": "dances organized with girls from local colleges invited as partners for the cadets"
  }
},
"personal_growth": {
  "quote": "The Academy reinvented us completely. It taught us to walk smartly, talk confidently, address gatherings and learn self-defence. Boys who were non-swimmers became swimmers, some like me who had never been near a horse became riders, some developed a passion for sailing and yet others went on to become boxers and shooters. Knowing how to do so many things made us really confident.",
  "feeling": "supermen",

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"sense_of_responsibility": "moral responsibility and more importantly, the strength and training, to stand up for our country and our principles in times of need",

"comparison": "even the best university in the world cannot give you so much in one package"

}

}

},

{

"first_posting": {

"location": "Siachen Glacier",

"age": 22,

"details": {

"post": "Amar",

"altitude": "20,000 feet",

"conditions": "Breathing was difficult due to the thin air",

"experience": {

"quote": "I was completely awestruck",

"observations": [

"Army Aviation Corps pilots with Cheetah helicopters dropping down from the sky",

"Landing despite heavy shelling from the Pakistani side",

"Flying off cheerfully, ignoring Pakistani fire"

],

"routine_visits": [

"bringing medicines, rations, and letters",

"evacuating sick men",

"bringing reinforcements"

],

"impact": "Instant heroes"

},

"aspiration": "Flying a helicopter at the highest altitude in the world, supporting men in uniform was glamorous work"

}

},

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"volunteering_and_training": {
  "years_of_service": 3,
  "volunteering": "Army Aviation Corps",
  "selection": "Selected and landed in the Air Force Academy in Dundigal near Hyderabad",
  "initial_training": {
    "duration": "six months",
    "training_on": "fixed-wing training aircraft",
    "companions": "Air Force cadets",
    "experience": {
      "description": "amazing new experiences",
      "details": [
        "Wearing blue overalls",
        "Flying solo",
        "Learning about the system of the aircraft",
        "Interacting with fighter pilots"
      ]
    }
  },
  "transition_to_helicopters": {
    "duration": "one year",
    "training_on": [
      {
        "type": "Cheetahs",
        "description": "five-seater light combat helicopters, holding the record for high-altitude flying"
      },
      {
        "type": "Chetaks",
        "description": "seven-seater helicopters used for cargo transport, casualty evacuation, and search and rescue operations"
      }
    ],
  },
}
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"new_equipment": {
  "type": "Dhruv helicopters",
  "description": "state-of-the-art, multi-engine glass cockpit aircrafts"
},
"post_training": {
  "location": "Udhampur in Jammu and Kashmir",
  "experience": {
    "quote": "It was a great feeling to be alone in the cockpit",
    "tasks": [
      "Memorizing the Line of Control",
      "Doing fuel calculations",
      "Taking loads to posts on the border in bad weather conditions and low visibility"
    ],
    "summary": "New experience"
  }
},
{
  "african_experience": {
    "mission": {
      "type": "United Nations Peacekeeping Forces",
      "year": "2005-2006",
      "location": "Democratic Republic of Congo",
      "unit": {
        "description": "Part of a UN Peacekeeping Force",
        "uniform": "UN uniform and light blue UN beret",
        "salary": "Increased due to UN payment"
      },
      "operation": {
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"description": "Supporting a division with three brigades from India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan",
"leader": "General from Senegal",
"type": "Surgical strike across the Sudan border",
"details": "Commandos inserted before first light and extracted as soon as the operation was
completed",
"participation": "Part of the stealth operation"
}
},
"additional_experiences": {
"countries_flown": ["Rwanda", "Uganda", "Tanzania", "Republic of Congo"],
"description": "Interacting with people, flying over terrain"
},
"lion_chase": {
"flight_details": {
"route": "Goma to Beni",
"purpose": "Reconnaissance of militant camps"
},
"location": "Virunga National Park",
"terrain": "Glaciated Rwenzori Mountains (Mountains of the Moon)",
"wildlife_sightings": [
"herds of wild elephants",
"buffaloes"
],
"lion_sighting": {
"description": "Officer spotted a lion below",
"actions": "Turned chopper, flew lower, hovered 25 feet above ground",
"lion_reaction": "Startled, ran, hid behind a bush",
"crew_actions": "Hovered lower, clicked pictures, waved goodbye"
}
},
"elephant_encounter": {
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"description": "Flying over a herd of elephants",
"actions": "Lowered chopper, hovered before them",
"alpha_male_reaction": {
  "description": "Lifted trunk, flapped big ears, took an attack stance",
  "reaction_to_helicopter": "Helicopter took off and left"
},
"reflection": "These are experiences I shall treasure all my life"
},
{
  "siachen_rescue": {
    "background": {
      "year": 2007,
      "post_congo_tenure": "Soon after Congo tenure",
      "location": "Siachen",
      "base_camp": {
        "details": "Three Army Aviation and four Air Force helicopters parked on standby",
        "living_conditions": {
          "huts": "Fibreglass huts",
          "electricity": "Twenty-four-hour electricity"
        },
        "daily_routine": {
          "time": "5.30 a.m.",
          "tasks": [
            "Sort out what supplies needed to be carried to which post",
            "Evacuate ill soldiers",
            "Drop off medicines"
          ],
          "job_satisfaction": "Very satisfying job supporting our own men"
        }
      }
    }
  }
}
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}  
,  
"incident": {  
  "date": "Around 22 September 2007",  
  "visitors": "Seasoned mountaineers on an expedition to Rimo",  
  "peak_details": {  
    "name": "Rimo",  
    "height": "24,229 feet",  
    "location": "North-east of Siachen Glacier, borders of India, China, and Pakistan"  
  },  
  "advice": "Advised not to go due to bad weather, but mountaineers were adamant"  
},  
"rescue_mission": {  
  "initial_contact": {  
    "date": "Nearly ten days after the team left",  
    "method": "Satellite call through Leh exchange",  
    "expedition_leader_message": {  
      "situation": "Ropes securing mountaineers broke, entire team fell",  
      "injuries": [  
        "Three members badly injured",  
        "Others in bad shape"  
      ],  
      "request": "Needed immediate evacuation as they had run out of food",  
      "urgent_message": "If you don't come and rescue us, we will all die here"  
    }  
  },  
  "rescue_preparations": {  
    "permissions": "Sought and obtained at once",  
    "supplies": "Food packets loaded into helicopters",  
    "takeoff": "Pilots took off"  
  },  
}
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"first_attempt": {
  "location": "Stranded at 19,000 feet",
  "time_to_locate": "Nearly an hour",
  "actions": "Dropped food packets, most lost in the snow",
  "communication": "Team managed to communicate their injuries",
  "injuries": [
    "One climber's shoulder broken",
    "Another had ankle fracture",
    "Two had frostbite"
  ],
  "return": "Helicopters had to return as there was no place to land, one day lapsed"
},
"final_rescue": {
  "morning": "Next morning",
  "spirit": "Do or die",
  "strategy": "Flying on minimum fuel to lessen aircraft weight",
  "hovering_technique": "Barely a foot above the ground, couldn't land on soft snow",
  "plan": "Pilot keeps chopper steady while co-pilot pulls injured people in",
  "weather_conditions": "Bad, helicopter rotors kicking up freshly fallen snow",
  "first_rescue": "First mountaineer climbed into hovering helicopter, moment of elation",
  "success": "All eleven members rescued and evacuated to Leh"
},
"post_rescue": {
  "evacuation_details": {
    "destination": "Leh",
    "aircraft": "IL-76 aircraft waiting to take them to New Delhi",
    "hospital": "Admitted to the Army Research and Referral Hospital"
  },
  "outcome": "All survived, some lost fingertips to frostbite"
},
"reflection": {
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"quote": "When you face situations like these, you surpass your own limitations. Our only concern at that time was to save their lives, and we managed to do it.",

"emotion": "Nostalgia"

}

}

}

},

{

"life_in_army": {

"statement": "There is no better life than being in the Indian Army.",

"personal_journey": {

"cadet_age": 18,

"officer_age": 22,

"transformation": [

"soldier",

"flier",

"instructor",

"adventurer",

"officer",

"gentleman"

],

"skills_acquired": [

"see the world",

"confidence to walk into any situation"

]

},

"advice_to_youth": {

"starting_pay_package": "Rs 1.5 lakhs a month cost to company",

"comparison": "Comparable to the best starting job opportunity in the world",

"job_rut_avoidance": "Ensures you will never be bored in the rut of a nine-to-five job"

},

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"job_flexibility": {
  "roles": [
    "ground soldier",
    "doctor",
    "engineer",
    "pilot",
    "skydiver",
    "rallyist",
    "sailor"
  ],
  "activities": [
    "participate in adventure sports",
    "play golf",
    "climb mountains"
  ],
  "impressions": "Ladies tend to get impressed with your work clothes"
},
"commendations": {
  "awards": [
    {
      "type": "commendation card",
      "from": "Army Chief"
    },
    {
      "type": "commendation card",
      "from": "Army Chief"
    },
    {
      "type": "commendation card",
      "from": "General Officer Commanding, Northern Command"
    }
  ]
}
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]
},
"closing_scene": {
  "description": "Lieutenant Colonel Anupam Gaur puts on his aviator shades, flashes a Tom Cruise smile, and drives off into the mad din of Delhi. His faithful helicopter probably waits for him somewhere."
}
}
}
```