

11 GR Best Marching Contingent – RD 1995



4 GR was to participate in the RD 1995 and 11 GR was detailed as reserve. By mid NOV 1994 11GR was detailed to participate in place of 4 GR at short notice. 11 GRRC did not have enough time to get the PBOR from the battalions due to paucity of time. Col M.S. Samuel, Centre Comdt discussed the matter with Capt Ravee whether we could participate in this or not. Capt Ravee, being a recipient of Sri Nagesh Kumaon Regiment Medal for Best Drill & Turn Out from OTA, perceived this as a golden opportunity to take his skills in this area to a desired height. But soon he had realized that he had only 43 PBORs and rest the recruits who were yet to be attested were available. Thus 105 recruits, who couldn't even walk straight were taken along with 43 PBORs by Capt Ravee to participate in the RD Parade Competition under the banner of 11GR Contingent with ashoe string budget.

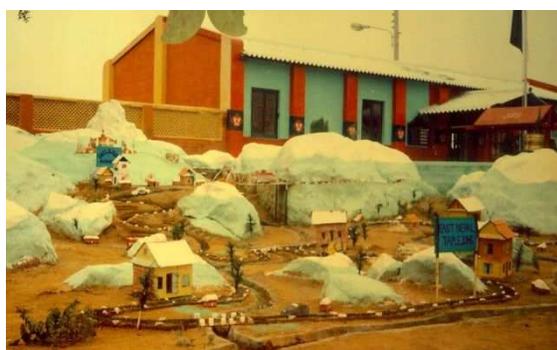
When the contingent reached the camp, Capt Ravee observed that the contingents of other regiments were practicing since past 2-3 months minimum and there were few contingents like Engineers and Assam Regt who had practiced for past 10 months in their respective regtl centres. This was not very good to see and had a demoralizing effect on all the participants.

In the first rehearsal Maj Gen PM Bhatt ADG (Cer) was most annoyed with the 11 GR contingent and conveyed his displeasure to our new COR Brig JBS Yadava VrC, DDG (DV) with the Army HQ. Capt Ravee got a message the very next day that the COR wants to see him. Highly embarrassed to meet the COR, he reached the COR's office, who gave his piece of mind for 20 minutes. What Capt Ravee took home was a key which mentioned that "there is no second position anywhere, its only 1st and only 1st position. This first extremely poor performance set the things rolling with the COR giving me the task of attending the practice everyday and get the contingent to a reasonable standard. **COR was also aware of the problems but said he did not want others to point a finger at 11 GR contingent.** 3/11 GR came into action, all the sub-standard participants were replaced by the men from 3/11 GR. Young soldiers were used

on various other duties in the battalion. **The contingent infact was finally composed of 75 percent from 3/11 GR.** The fact has been eclipsed down the memory lane.

Our efforts to get the attachments back from various duties from HQ Delhi Area had failed inspite of the fact that we had completed our, share of detailment by end November '94. I issued a letter and a log to the Stn HQ regarding the urgency with a cut off time after which the Adjt will go around get the boys back without any movement order. Finally we had to resort to physically getting the attachments back with Adjt (Capt Sumit Pant) and the NSA. Immediately a letter was received by special courier reporting the matter to the stn cdr Brig Pandya, Dy GOC Delhi Area regarding the action taken by 3/11 GR and stating that CO, 3/11 GR be held responsible. Accordingly Dy GOC after my security briefing to the GOC Delhi Area at Vijay Chowk complained about my irrational action. I explained my compulsions and steps taken prior to this action. The GOC Maj Gen ARK Reddy just said that **"here is a CO who has behaved like a Tiger"** and the matter was closed.

Capt Ravee started putting heart and soul into the difficult task ahead. I had given orders to the Adjt & the NSA that what ever was required by Capt Ravee will be provided without asking me. My complete Qr Gd was shifted to the Parade Ground, a Nepali village scene was made after land scaping a hill slope. Slowly the contingent started improving. At one stage our cdr Brig Manoranjan Singh, VrC asked me if a visit takes place to my Qr Gd by some visiting VIP how will I justify. I told him that now that he is aware the program will be planned in a manner the Qr Gd visit is left out!



Capt Ravee came to me with an idea of wearing white gloves since all the Police Contingents were wearing it and it gave a very good shine while the hands moved to & fro. I accepted this recommendation and took the risk at my cost. It surely made the difference and 11GR contingent in the final 32 steps in front the dias was far ahead of all other contingents. Finally when the result was declared 11 GR contingent was declared as the 'Best Marching Contingent' but there was representation against our wearing white gloves during marching, COR rang up that who had given the orders to wear the gloves. I said I had given the orders to wear gloves only during marching! Finally it was to the credit of energetic Capt

Ravee who led this contingent to the ultimate first time historic victory. We had made history since this was the first time since the raising of 11 GR that it had won the trophy for Best marching contingent.

The fact not known to many is that 11 GR contingent was outstanding in all spheres including the Qr Gd and line competition. I cribbed to the GOC Maj Gen ARK Reddy who said "Pat, others have also participated so let some of them also go back happy". I was convinced with his answer and we did not raise the issue again. So this in fact is the story of our first time tasting success starting with a real baulking from the COR Brig JBS Yadava, VrC to CO 3/11 GR Col RC Patial, SM and sincere hard work and dedication of Capt. Ravee and the participants. (Capt. Ravee presently in his second carrier is the Firebrand CEO of his Fireball Group of Companies and OSSIM. www.captainravee.com)



By
Col RC Patial
(Ex- CO 3/11 GR)