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HIGHER RANKS FOR INDIAN OFFICERS OF THE R.I.N.

COMMANDER CHOUDRI AND COMMANDER SOMAN PROMOTED.

NEW DELHI, JULY 21 — Commander H.M.S. Choudri, MBE, RIN, and Commander B.S.Soman, RIN, whose promotion to the rank of acting Captain has just been announced, are the first Indian officers ever to be raised to this high rank in the Royal Indian Navy.

Captain Haji Mohammed Siddiq Choudri, who was till recently a member of the Armed Forces Nationalization Committee, joined the Royal Indian Navy in 1931. During World War II, he saw action against the Italians in the Red Sea and off the Somaliland Coast. In 1942 he qualified in the United Kingdom as a specialist officer in the Torpedo Branch. The following year he toured the United States of America, lecturing on the role of the Royal Indian Navy in the late war. In 1945, he was appointed to command one of the newer sloops of the Royal Indian Navy, being the second Indian officer to be raised to the command of a sloop, was promoted to the rank of Commander soon after, and served with the British Pacific Fleet in the Far East.

Thirty-four year old Captain Bhaskar Gadasiv Soman entered the Royal Indian Navy in 1933 as a Midshipman, was promoted a Lieutenant in 1937 and became a Lieutenant-Commander in 1945. During these years he gained wide experience of the Service while serving in various H.M.I. ships, shore establishments and the Landing Craft Wing of the Royal Indian Navy. In 1946, he was promoted to the rank of Commander and was appointed Drafting Commander of the Royal Indian Navy, being the first Indian officer to hold this key post. He was till recently a member of the Armed Forces Post-War Pay Committee.

Both Captain Choudhri and Captain Soman are at present serving on the Naval Sub-Committee of the Armed Forces Reconstitution Committee at the Armed Forces Headquarters (India).

Pix accompany.
