

PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (DEFENCE WING)  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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FIRST WOMAN PARATROOPER OF THE  
ARMY -- CAPTAIN (MISS) FARIDA REHANA

Bhadra 29, 1888  
Agra, ~~-----~~  
September 20, 1966

Capt (Miss) Farida Rehana of the Army Medical Corps became the first woman paratrooper of the Indian Army when she successfully completed the Basic Course in paratrooping by taking her fifth and final para jump on Monday at the Paratroopers' Training School here. Precisely at 7 in the morning she took the jump from an I.A.F. Fairchild Packet C 119 and glided down safely to the Dropping Zone. Later in the day, Capt (Miss) Rehana was presented her wings at the Passing Out Parade of the Paratroopers' Training School by Air Commodore S.A. Hussain, Air Officer Commanding, I.A.F. Station, Agra.

"I have achieved something" said Capt (Miss) Farida Rehana exultantly immediately after completing her final jump. But she admitted, "My most thrilling moment during the training was on Saturday (September 17) when I took the night jump. The weather was calm and congenial. Everything was silent. I could see the city lights." She had taken her first para jump on September 15.

.... / 2

The 26-year old Captain (Miss) Farida Rehana who comes from a well-to-do Muslim family of Mysore has a number of achievements to her credit. She was the first Services lady officer to join an operational air-~~borne~~ berne unit in July this year; she is the first Army lady officer to qualify as a paratrooper and the first Services lady officer to complete the Basic Course in paratrooping from Packet transport aircraft. She is, however, the second lady paratrooper in the Armed Forces, the first being Sqn Ldr(Mrs) Geeta Ghosh (nee Chanda) of the I.A.F., who qualified as a paratrooper in 1959 using the Dakota aircraft.

Capt(Miss) Farida Rehana was commissioned into the Army Medical Corps in February 1965. The call of adventure, she said, had lured her into the Armed Forces. She had taken her MBBS degree, winning the Gold Medal in surgery, from the Government Medical College, Mysore in 1963. Earlier, she had taken her B.Sc. degree from the St. Philomena's College, Mysore. She was also an outstanding athlete.

Capt(Miss) Farida Rehana developed interest in paratrooping while still undergoing the basic training at a Military Hospital in Secunderabad. In July 1966, soon after she had obtained a permanent commission in the

Army Medical Corps, she volunteered to join a Para Medical Unit. She did well in the initial physical efficiency test and the training as a probationary Para Officer. After the pre-basic training and having passed the tests with high grading, she was attached to the Paratroopers' Training School. The training, she recalled, was tough, adventurous and enjoyable. She said that she had been inspired by the work of the Para Medical Unit in Korea.

Asked how she felt on completing the Basic Course in paratrooping, Capt Farida flashed a smile and said, "I want to jump again and again".

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549/3