

## Dickey takes on shady medicos

The Deputy Attorney general of the Republic of Singapore was dignified and humble. He had come to India for discussions with the officials of Indian Bar Council and Judiciary. He was here to put together an agenda for the forthcoming Judicial conclave planned by his government. The main objective of the conclave was to address new ethical issues and other complications arising out of unregulated application of medical technology in the hospitals in Singapore. His government was hoping that the discussions would throw up guidelines to frame new regulations that would be introduced in near future. He was happy with the interactions he had with Indian legal experts. He could now appreciate exactly how far Indian government had progressed in bringing about required regulations to prevent technological exploitation in medical profession. He also could see how corruption in the Indian system prevented proper application of new laws. He was very keen that Singapore should be more committed in the implementation of new guidelines and regulations

He was happy he had brought together right type of people for discussions on a rather tricky subject concerning medical profession. He was particularly impressed by the inputs provided by a fire brand female lawyer from Hyderabad. He looked at her business card again. It showed the name as Kadambari. She was also known as a highly committed human rights activist and she had brought heaps of documents covering the atrocities committed by the medical fraternity and enormous influence and power they had to protect the erring professionals. During the heated discussions she took on some very big guns with very assertive and at times very offensive remarks. He thought it would help his cause if he could hold a one to one discussion with her after main meeting with expert council was over. So during one of the many tea breaks, he took Kadambari aside and requested her to stay back after the meeting got over.

Kadambari was very surprised to receive such a request. After all that is said and done, in New Delhi she was a small fry as there were many more successful and prominent legal advisors, with more political clout to help the DAG. But the request was made very sincerely and she also noticed some amount of anxiety. Ever helpful and considerate to other people's trouble,

Kadambari agreed to stay back and added that she had to go out with her partner, who would be coming in shortly to take her away when the conference got over.

He asked her, "Is your partner also in legal profession?"

Kadambari laughed trying to think how Dickey would have answered that question if it was put to him. She answered, 'No, he is not in legal profession. He does lot of investigative and troubleshooting work. More of trouble shooting, I guess , because I have a propensity to get into serious trouble and he always comes out as my saviour.'" As she said, her eyes twinkled. " He has other skills ."

'Tell me more about your partner. From your eyes I can make out you have some special relations .Your face shines nicely when you talk about him.'

"yes, he is a very special man. He is a very good friend of longstanding and is like my body guard when my cases go awry and threatening."

'You mean dangerous'.

"Yes You can say that."

'And He is good in his job?'

"very good"

'Then please tell him that he is also invited. We can have our meeting over dinner .Will that be alright?'

"If it is a dinner meeting, I suggest we have it in the Army club. .It is an exclusive club meant only for very senior army officers and very select civilian gentlemen. My partner is a member and we use it when ever we plan some thing really naughty.' As she said it she laughed loudly .Her laughter was contagious and lightened the mood

Ok, it is Army club then. Was your partner high up in the Army?.

'I do not want answer that directly. But I will say that when my partner retired , from the army, the Army Chief personally drove him home'

You don't wish to reveal his rank.

She smiled.

The meeting came to an end .All the delegates pushed their chairs back and stretched their legs, preparing to go out.

Dickey entered the room to take Kadambari away. As usual he was dressed in the most informal manner comprising of a Gurkha regiment khaki shorts nicely ironed, white round neck T shirt that was one size too tight, revealing his bulging biceps and broad fore arm. Kaddu always described his arms as Popeye arm. His long thick fingers were twisting out of shape a beaten up but clean white polo cap which he sometimes sported to cover his crewcut head.

The DAG watched from his place, kadambari putting all her papers together and looking up as Dickey leaned over to help. There was a warm hug and she walked behind him like a lamb. She stopped suddenly as she remembered and heard an irritated ‘what now?’.Kadambari held Dickey by hand and led him towards the waiting DAG.As they neared the waiting DAG, she said,”Dickey, meet Mr Shanmukham, DAG of government of Singapore “ and she smiled at Shanmukham and said,”sir, please meet my partner Dickey’

Shanmukham stepped forward eagerly extending his hand. Dickey completely ignored him and told Kadambari ‘Kaddu, I am in a hurry. I can’t waste time talking to lawyers. Mouli is expecting my call and some thing has happened in Hyderabad and I need to catch the night flight to Hyderabad.so pl let us go’. He then turned towards DAG and said, ‘Hello’ with out caring to shake hands. Shanmukham went red in face. Kadambari said after literally forcing a handshake, ‘Dickey , this is more important. please shake hands like a gentleman. Mouli can wait.’

Dickey bristled but like a child chastened by a domineering teacher, he reluctantly shook hands and DAG winced as the strong grip eased the blood out of his hand. Some how, DAG was not offended. He knew he was in presence of a personality who did not stand for any nonsense. He said “Dickey, I assure you that what I have to discuss is very important. I am sorry , your evening plans are dashed but you will agree after discussions that what I say is true. My position does not allow me the privilege of wasting any body’s time. Kadambari mentioned that we can have our dinner meeting at your Army club. Can you please arrange for reservation.”

'It is not my club,' Dickey said in irritation. 'Kaddu here is known to do daftest of things and we end up cleaning the mess she leaves all over the place. She has not mentioned about any evening dinner plans to me. I had other plans, which are also no less important.'

"How can you say that, Dickey. You don't even know what he wants to talk about"

'I know what he wants to talk about. His government has been making lot of money by allowing use of their hospitals by phony doctors and quacks and suddenly they are becoming ethical, because they have discovered that their treasury is being filled with blood money. They are worried about the fair name of their dear country being sullied by unscrupulous elements in medical field. They want your help to clean up their dirty closet'

DAG was shocked. The outburst was charged. It was honest. It was intimidating.

KADAMBARI SHOUTED "Dickey, that was not fair. That is hitting below the belt.'

'Is it? Look at his face. You can not see anything more revealing.

DAG was hard pressed to keep calm. He now understood what Kadambari meant when she said Dickey was a special man. Suddenly he was happy he had met him. He knew he would find all the solutions he wanted from this man. Dickey was only 5' 7" while Shanmukham was 6'2", yet he felt like a pygmy in front of a giant. Shanmukham had become a DAG from a very humble beginning. Softly he said, with grace and dignity, "Yes, Dickey what you said is very correct. I need help. I do not see anybody more suitable to tackle this work. It is necessary to put our house in order and we are determined to clean up. We have been successful in cleaning many things in our country and every time we have taken proper help. Are you so busy that you do not want to support an honest effort?"

'Stop fooling around, Dickey. This gent is serious and he is screaming for help. Are you deaf?' Kadambari had raised her voice by a decibel. DAG laughed. Dickey relented

“8 o clock, at the Army club. It is in Connaught place. I will send a car to pick you up. You don't come to the club in an embassy limousine. It will attract unwarranted attention.”

Then he turned and walked away dragging Kaddu with him by one hand. .Kaddu was literally running to keep pace with him, while the other hand was busy stuffing her papers in her bag .DAG was watching. It appeared to him that he was seeing an elder brother dragging a reluctant sister to school. That thought filled him with a warm feeling towards them. He wanted to know more about them.

## Chapter2

Back in his room, the DAG switched on his laptop and typed Heroes of Indian Army for a google search.. He had a hunch that he would find some details about Dickey. After a few attempts he got to Dickey. He read the details about the most decorated officer of the Indian Army, Anti insurgency specialist, Advisor to UN on military training, global consultant on industrial sabotage, advisor to police department of a dozen states, advisor to home ministry on matters relating to terrorist activity, civil unrest and intelligence. The brief note presented thumbnail sketches of extraordinary roles played by him on matters related to Srilankan tamils, Maoist elements, organised crime and Industrial sabotage by competitive corporations.

DAG thought about what he had just read. Then he typed Kadambari, lawyer Hyderabad. The computer was throwing lot of information about exploits of kadambari in the courts of poona, Hyderabad and Delhi. He had a feeling that he was in a totally different world and whatever he was reading was fiction and not be real. such people don't exist.

He was so much immersed in his reading that he lost track of time. So he was somewhat surprised when suddenly his intercom rang and he was told that a car has arrived to take him to the Army Club for dinner. He switched off the computer and looked at his watch.7.30 .He had a quick wash and changed clothes and was down at the reception. A driver in whites was waiting for him. DAG looked at the driver. A short , stocky Gurkha in white uniform complete with white peak cap. The driver introduced himself and led the DAG to a white BMW Car. The driver opened the door and invited the guest to take his seat inside. The door closed softly and the car glided smoothly out of the hotel towards Connaught circus. In fifteen minutes the car stopped in front of a two storied house with a big board showing 'The Friends nest' and under that in small letters The Army club. The driver got out of the car , walked around to open the door for DAG to get out. He pointed his hand towards a stair case, and said, "please go up that stairs to the first floor. Your table is all set and waiting for you. The madam will join you in a moment."

Coming from a Gurkha in a valet's outfit, the English was very refined and impressive. DAG shook his head and said 'Thank you'. He turned and walked

towards the staircase. He was fit enough to walk up the flight of stairs with out suffering any discomfort and pushed his way inside through a glass door. The place was very pleasant with just the right amount of air conditioning The place was alive with very muted soft instrumental music playing in the back ground. Ladies in colourful saris and gentlemen in formal clothes were occupying the tables that were spread over a large area, providing necessary privacy as well walk around space for people. Kadambari walked towards him dressed in a stunning blue silk sari draped with grace. The colour of sari, string of pearls around the neck and lighting in the hall showed up her clear fair complexion. DGA COMPLIMENTED HER SAYING, 'KADAMBARI, YOU LOOK VERY NICE.' His Indian ethnicity showed up in that very modest compliment as if he was very guarded .Kadambari floored him with a dazzling smile , shook hands and invited him into an inner chamber reserved for very special meetings. She wanted to put him at ease, so kept a running commentary. 'this place is called army club because it is used exclusively by army families for having a quiet dinner and meeting old friends. The kitchen is managed by retired army officers wives and all attendants are ex army men. There are two floors. .There is a doctor for any consultation. An ex army doctor operates his dental clinic here. There is a small pathological lab, which is complete with Xray and other scanning machines. This is not open to public but meant for poor army men and their families. There is no charge for any medical service. Food is homely and drinks are served in moderate measures on special occasion. The name "Friend's nest" indicates that this place is owned by five friends. You have met two of us. This one is Dickey's pet project. The five friends fund all expenses and there is no profit. There are five such places across the country. There is place for us to use whenever any of us visit Delhi. We all live in Hyderabad under one roof. This place is the smallest. At Poona we have much bigger set up which includes a big bakery. In Poona we have separate houses where our families live. But at Hyderabad, the house is meant for we five. All of us have taken sanyas from our families.'

DAG was very impressed. Dickey showed up and presented a card in which was typed the menu for the evening dinner. Kadambari read and approved after checking with her guest. Dickey went out to the kitchen holding the card and instructed the chef on how he wanted the food to be served. He returned cheerfully to the chamber to join his guest. DAG noticed that the change in his

dress and mannerism were remarkable. Now Dickey was making out as a caring host, out to delight his guest with out imposing himself in any way. They sat at the table nursing their drink and discussing world affairs, medical advancement, terrorism, social corruption and erosion of probity in public life. The topics were very sensitive , but they handled it with dignity and consideration. Frequently they broke into a loud laugh over some remark by Dickey and scolding by Kaddu. Dickey conducted the entire show with remarkable alacrity and poise. and changed the subject to avoid argument or controversy. Drink was put away and they soon tucked into a tasty meal served with old fashioned courtesy.

DAG thought it was the right time to present his problem. He coughed once and cleared his throat. The other two sat up to listen to what was coming.

‘You know that in Singapore we have a quiet and thriving set up. Our state has , like India, a multi ethnic population with long history of deprivation and suffering. By due diligence and proper application we have created a positive ambient for every section of our populace to thrive and prosper. We have applied technology and welfare measures without upsetting labour. we have satisfactory infrastructure supported by committed labour and aided by benign legislation. There are poor people but there are no ugly slums or slouching people. we are proud of what we have created and are anxious that what we created should last and promote improvement ,prosperity and peace. Our prosperity and life style is attracting people from across the globe. These people want to use our system for their profit. We try to draw a line there by enforcing proper immigration and visa policies to prevent exploitation.

In recent days medical field has become a problem area for us. We have ensured that our medical facilities are of high standard by use of trained people, excellent infra structure and applying technology. We have kept at bay quacks and unscrupulous people from spoiling our country by keeping proper supervision, records and documentation. In recent days the entry of doctors from India has created new problems for us. These problems are related to unethical practices and down right exploitation. It is a matter of regret that Indian doctors with powerful political backing in India are perverting the medical profession in Singapore

You must have heard about new social problems created by indiscriminate trafficking and harvesting of human organs. Singapore has become a hot place for organ transplant with many European and Chinese doctors establishing excellent facilities. They have so far complied with our regulations and have contributed to improvement of medical care for our people. Singapore is very strict in this regard and hospitals and doctors have to generate lot of records and reports to keep track of work done. Doctors are required to furnish details of donor, compensation made, post donation health care of donors,, expenses incurred by recipients, towards hospital and surgeons etc. Such records are designed to prevent mal practices, exploitation of poor and ignorant people. This is where Indian doctors have been found to be at fault. They have found a way to work around all rules and regulations so carefully put in place by our government .They bypass controls, ignore generation of reports and avoid responsibilities. They have made huge profits by not recording their earnings .They come to Singapore as tourists, engage medical facilities, perform surgeries and vanish. All monitory transactions are done in INDIA. The donor is an Indian, recipient is local or expatriate and doctor is an Indian and no records are maintained by doctors. So when there is a post surgical complication of any sort, the doctor concerned escapes accountability and local facility gets into trouble. God knows what happens to the donor. In recent days, there have been more complaints and many deaths have occurred. There are reports of faulty surgical procedures, use of infected parts, hasty rehabilitation routines and failure of reporting transplant failures. We want to stop this nonsense before it becomes a big disease. We want to bring in stricter laws and more supervision. We have set up a study group to study regulations in different countries , identify shortcomings in our system and correct them.

During the forth coming Judicial conclave we wish to conduct brain storming sessions to discuss all aspects of organ transplant to decide additional regulations required

Now I come to specific problems faced by us; a group of doctors from Indian city of Hyderabad. They are bringing in organs with out following procedures. Doctors come and go as they please. They have totally ignored local laws, have made huge unreported profits .They have also tied up with local elements with

great influence and clout. Our medical facilities are being misused denying our government due revenue. We do not want to put a ban on Indian doctors. But we want to bring erring doctors to book. This is where I need your help. We had written formally to your government. But due to enormous clout possessed by Indian medical practitioners, your government has not responded properly to our government's requests. During our study in India, we have found out how weak are your systems, inspite of very good laws. Your medical council has no power. Doctors enjoy un limited immunity from prosecution and huge facilities are being put up by corporate groups and profit making is the only criteria .There is a very ugly spectre of exploitation of innocent and poor. There is poor compensation to the donor, no medical post donation care for them and very unscrupulous organ harvesting practices. There are no records about success rate , records about donors, compensation made and his plight after donation. The Indian doctors are protected by political bosses and criminal elements. One of my agents who asked un pleasant questions to a doctor, got himself killed in the process.

I want your help in cleaning up this mess. You will be on your own , but we will compensate you for your troubles.

If you say no to my requests, then I will have to engage services from international agencies specialising in wrecking and demolitions to bring down some of your very well known names in medical field.

For the judicial conference we are planning in Singapore, we have written to your government, Minister of health and public welfare, requesting them to depute a team of legal experts and medical administrators to make presentation about Indian experiences, for the conference. I would like to see your name also in the list of Indian delegates, so pull some strings and get your name in.

The discussions ended with desert served, which was a huge scoop of delicious ice cream mixed with fruits.DAG thanked Kadambari profusely for an excellent dinner and patient hearing. He hoped that Dickey and Kaddu would remember what he had mentioned about Hyderabad based doctors .He expressed the hopethat with their active support, some concrete action to bring the erring doctors and their criminal activities to book .This would help,

medical practice regain its lost glory. Dickey and Kaddu did not give any word from their side. When DGA left, Dickey drove him back in his car. As DGA got out, Dickey shook hands and said that what the DGA said was something the friends have been working on for quite some time. He assured that the Hyderabad end of all investigations would be handled by him with full cooperation from AP Police.

DGA BOWED AND SAID THANKS. Back in his room, When he put his head to the pillow and closed his eyes he felt that the burden he had been carrying all these days, had suddenly become less.

### Chapter3.

The consul general Lue Wan Chu at Chennai office of government of Singapore, stared at the photograph attached to the visa application form and the passport. His office was used to receiving thousands of such applications and there was a well organised set up to handle these applications. So he was a little surprised when this particular application was routed to him for his decision on grant of visiting visa. He looked at the name given in the form and the passport. The name did not strike any alarm bell, so why did this paper come to him, he asked himself, trying to see if any thing was written by the Visa officer. He called his Aide and asked, 'Do you know any thing about this form and why this paper was marked for my attention.'

For Lue wan Chu the appointment to the position of consul general ,India was high point in his diplomatic career. India was the emerging giant in international diplomatic field pitting her might and influence against China. So it was important for him to maintain best of relationship with Indian government and Indian people. So he did not want to create any diplomatic situation by denying Visa to any important Indian officiando, if he could help it. He looked at the photo and read the name again. He told himself that he should not deny visa to an applicant just because the photo that stared him was intimidating to say the least. The name also looked strange ' Dickey Shankar Gurung', profession retired Indian Army. Purpose was stated as sight seeing. So what was wrong with the application, he wanted to know.. He waited for his Aide to respond. The aide said, 'Sir, there are many questions. The application form is not our standard form. This is Xerox copy of limited number of forms we had selectively sent to Law ministry of Government of India, who are sending twenty legal experts for the forthcoming Judicial conclave being organised by our Attorney general at Singapore. So first question was how did this man get this application form in the first place. Secondly , we get forms only through our authorised agents, but this application came directly. Thirdly there was a recommendation letter attached to the visa application form. The letter was signed by IGP .HYDERABAD. Why did this man need such a strong recommendation? It is not so difficult to get Singapore Visa as we are quite liberal. I know it is almost second nature for some Indians to attach recommendations for special favours. That is the way

many Indians get their work done and permits released. In view of these questions, our staff officer was not keen on deciding to issue the visa on his own.

Consul general heard all that patiently and then asked , “what do you suggest that I do?”

I suggest you simply say NO.

Consul stared at him and then said, ‘okay. Return the papers with reject stamp’

The consul forgot about it as soon as his aide moved out of his sight.

The envelope from Singapore consul’s office landed at Mouli’s desk at the police commissioner’s office , Hyderabad. Mouli eagerly tore open the envelope and extracted the passport and attached letter. The letter from the consul General office of Government Singapore, Chennai, clearly stated that the applicant’s application for Visa was rejected. There was a large stamp in red colour “Denied” in large bold letters.

Mouli whistled cheerfully.

He called Dickey on cell phone.

Dickey who was ironing his shirt on the ironing board kept the hot iron away and softly said Hello .He had noticed that it was Mouli calling. The loud cheerful voice of Police commissioner Mouli filled the air. ‘Eh Dickey, it looks as though you are not very popular at the consul general’s office at Chennai or at Singapore. Your application has been rejected with extra large reject stamp. Did you do anything dirty in Singapore during your last visit.?’

Dickey was annoyed ‘Nobody knows about my last visit to Singapore. It does not appear in my passport also. what happened?’

Nothing .They simply don’t want to see you any where around Singapore.

Any reasons?

Nothing. Just a plain old rejection letter. Diplomats do not believe in giving long winded explanation .At least not to any lazy retired army bums.

Mouli liked nothing more than irritating Dickey. He gets such opportunities very rarely because Dickey was always on top of any game he played and Mouli was always playing second fiddle.

Mouli , stop playing the fool. You know I have to go to Singapore. Kadambari has been nominated as a delegate for the judicial conclave and I am supposed to escort her to Singapore and back. She has already got her diplomatic Visa. She could have processed mine also. But I thought I could get it done faster through your office. That is why I sent a Xerox copy of blank application form obtained by her. I thought you were more capable than law ministry. Now I know why AP police is held in such low esteem. You can't manage a simple Visa. You are inefficient.' It was dickey's turn to rag Mouli.

Mouli Bristled. For him AP Police was always top.

I have to get that Visa, Mouli. I have to go. Do some thing.

You have to escort kaddu ?.

Yes.

You want me to believe that.

Dickey you are holding out on me. There is some thing going on. you met the DGA in Delhi. You have undertaken to do some dirty job for him. Now out with it Dickey.

How did you know about my meeting DGA?

We are AP Police. We make it a point to know what is going on around some important people. For AP Police Dickey is important. We always protect your back.

Big deal. You are spying on me. OK you know some thing. you know it is important for me to go Singapore. So get my visa.

When is the conference?.

A month from now.

Okay ,I will get your visa. But you move your butt and reach my office to tell me all about the troubles you are going to create to god knows who. I want to be prepared for all the shit that starts flying around when you make your play.

No . I am not coming any where near your office for some time. If you are very keen to know all about DAG's problems come home for lunch. Kaddu has promised one of her best biriyani for lunch. Taj is sending their top chef to help her.

That is a deal , said Mouli cheerfully.

Mouli was twenty years younger than Dickey, but there was a close friendship borne out of great trust and respect between them .For Mouli, Dickey was an elder brother or a father he never had.

Dickey, you will get that Visa even if it means I have to fry that precious CG over low fire.

Okay.be on time for lunch. Biryani should not be eaten cold and kaddu hates people who don't keep their time.

Mouli laughed and said , I love your kaddu. I wish she were thirty years younger.

## Chapter4

Madame Wan Chu , wife of the consul general ,Government of Singapore,Chennai, India,was very pleasantly surprised to receive the invitation from the famous Chennai Music Academy to chair a session during the inauguration of the music season. The Madam had majored in Performing arts with specialisation in vocal music. She had interacted with the south Indian community in Singapore during her studies, so she had more than passing acquaintance with Carnatic music. She had treasured the season's pass for the concerts, that had come with the invitation. .She wasted no time to ring up the chairman of the academy to convey her appreciation of the gesture by the organising committee to invite her to be present for the inaugural function.

The evening programme at the Music academy was a stand out success. Her speech with choice quotation in chaste tamil earned her a standing applause. So when she stepped out of the auditorium at the end of the programme, she was actually on cloud nine. So, it was with a great sense of shock that she realised she was a very ordinary human being when her staff driver told her that her car had a flat tyre and she would be better off ringing up consular office to send another car for her or take a taxi home.

Aruna Reddy IPS was watching with amusement the discomfiture experienced by the distinguished foreigner. From a distance , she watched Madam Wan chu looking at the flat tyre in total disbelief. It was not a normal flat. The tyre

has been slashed open. Such things don't happen in Singapore. Aruna timed her arrival at the scene to a nicety. She spoke loudly, "Hello there, that was the best speech I have ever heard at this venue. So technical, so right. Let me congratulate on your excellent proficiency in Tamil, madam.....Is any thing wrong? Can I help you? " Aruna was compassionate to say the least.

Madam turned to look at the imposing presence of Aruna reddy in her resplendent khaki uniform.

Aruna looked at the Chinese Driver from the embassy, the flat tyre and drew right conclusions. She hastened to assure the devastated lady, " My, that flat was deliberate. But ,do not worry madam. I will take care of the car and send it over to your house. I can drive you to the embassy if you don't mind travelling with a police woman'

Madam looked at her nervously and thanked her for her offer. Luckily for her, Aruna had brought her personal car , a brand new BMW. Madam Wan Chu walked like a lamb behind the pondering policewoman. She climbed in and watched the car glide softly out of the parking lot and on to the main road with roaring traffic.

The police mechanic came around to help the Chinese driver to change the tyre in the embassy car. The police politely asked the Chinese driver to sit in the car and the car was driven to the police dump adjacent to the academy

Next day, the morning papers carried colour pictures of Madame Wan Chu being held by the police commissioner Aruna Reddy, the shining embassy car in the police dump and the Chinese staff driver in the police interrogation centre. The reporter had filed an extraordinary story of embassy car being involved in local drug trafficking.

The consul general was woken up rudely by a call from his Ambassador in new Delhi. "Mr Chu, have you seen today's papers?" A loud voice asked him. He was still sleepy and did not hear a word. He simply mumbled, ' I beg your pardon, what was that ? please, can you say it again?'

.The ambassador roared, 'wake up man. You have rubbed somebody in a very wrong way. Do you know of any person called Dickey?'"

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