ARBiT
it happens here...

World Snake Day

Snakes have gotten something of a bad rap over the past few thousand years. What with that one snake tricking that nice lady into eating an apple way back when, thus condemning the entire human race to mortality, snakes have been mistrusted if not flat-out feared. And while it is understandable that people may fear an animal that can easily kill them, we think these fascinating, diverse creatures that range from several inches to 30 feet long, and from friendly and docile to aggressive and deadly, deserve for people to find out more about them.

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SUNDAY
16 July 2023
A-B

#LIFESTYLE

Kids' Room Wall Decor Ideas

Encourage flights of fancy with these kids room wall decor ideas

Creativity is king when designing for kids' room, and the right wall decor ideas can truly help curate a space that is fun, playful, and inspiring. Finding a style that will suit your child's room for as long as possible is tricky, but wall decor is an easy-to-change way to embrace whimsical design while they're still young.

Experiment with fun wall art, paints, wallpapers, to even wall storage to enhance the kid's room. Take a look at these amazingly designed spaces, and get cracking.

A Fun, Patterned Wallpaper

In the kid's bedroom, wallpaper can do a lot of heavy lifting when it comes to introducing fun. Choose a wallpaper that appeals to them, and don't be afraid of large motifs and bright hues. While designing a kid's room, choose one wall to decorate with a bold design, or go all-in with a wallpapered room.

A Wall Mural

Sure, the walls can play dress-up with kids' artworks and drawings but to give the room a more dramatic look, try a wall mural. To keep it stylish, avoid passing fads like designs based on your child's favourite characters or toys, and look to modern wall decor with a playful edge.

Add Two Tone Paints

Create an eye-catching bedroom accent wall with two colours for instant contrast and architectural interest - a modern way to add dimension to a room. If you're planning on painting the room yourself, first determine the height of your paint line, measuring from the ceiling down. Once you've decided how you want to divide the colours on the wall, tape it off using painter's tape and a level, and start painting. If you're struggling to line up the paint, use an existing feature in the room, like the door frame, chair rail, or fireplace mantel as a guide.

A Decorative Headboard

If you're not looking to install wall decor pieces or add nails to the walls of your rental, then a great way to add design drama to a kid or teenager's bedroom is with a large headboard. The bed is the most important piece of furniture in a bedroom, so deserves the most attention. One way to make a statement, and in the process create a fun accent wall, is to choose a tall or interestingly-shaped headboard.

To make sitting up in bed comfortable for the young ones, you could choose from tufted panels, leather designs, or suede, to silk headboards.

Add Artworks

An obvious place to display kids' artwork is in their rooms. You could try different techniques for display, perhaps a pegboard, clothespins that attach pictures to twine for an inexpensive solution, or a photo rail.

If the child's bedroom opens up to a hallway, you could create a casual gallery wall to showcase their latest work.

Not giving an inch

Many claimants to the 'liberator' of Bangladesh abound, but it was Sagat who led the forces on the ground, whilst heliborne over his leading troops, and even had his helicopter shot at. Sagat was India's Patton, unstoppable. His warrior instinct and cavalier attitude often posited him at odds with his seniors but Sagat was too formidable to be tinkered with as he pressed ahead regardless, with his eyes fixated on Dacca, even though Dacca was not the objective for his corps. Of the three corps involved in the attack, Sagat's relentless, bold and audacious leadership saw him take his division across the mighty Meghna River, as the Pakistanis watched, thunderstruck in its temerity. Not one to pontificate, procrastinate or suffer fools - Sagat went for the kill as warriors do.

Lt Gen Bhopinder Singh
Former Lt Governor of A&N Islands and Puducherry

Violent-standoffs like Galwan are not about 'balance sheet' comparisons of numerical strength, technological advancements or even nuclear arsenals between the two powers. It is usually a contest of man-to-man equals as bilateral understanding necessitates non-usage of weapons, except if a power cheats the other by carrying crude contraptions that reneges on the bilateral understanding, as done by the Chinese. Even with the patented Chinese chicanery and the resultant advantage, the Indian soldiers held their own and the indefatigable spirit of the Indian Army is personified by the martyrdom of the 'Commanding Officer' who led from the front, a uniquely Indian phenomenon. Persevering in the face of unimaginable adversity has been the hallmark of the Indian soldier, as borne by the reconquering of the Kargil heights from a position of absolute disadvantage, which international military historians acknowledge as unparalleled in modern-day infantry action. The

> Deep in the unforgiving Thar deserts seeps the saga of fabled 'Ran Banka Rathore' warriors who have held their own, since antiquity. One such fierce clansmen was Sagat (perhaps an English distortion of 'Sakat' or unflinching) Singh, for whom joining the profession of arms was a natural choice.

Readying for battle

#WARRIOR

ethos of steel has been burnished in the ranks akin to the stirring warrior's impulse, 'The Spartans do not ask how many the enemy, but where they are are'.

Deep in the unforgiving Thar deserts seeps the saga of fabled 'Ran Banka Rathore' warriors who have held their own, since antiquity. One such fierce clansmen was Sagat (perhaps an English distortion of 'Sakat' or unflinching) Singh, for whom joining the profession of arms was a natural choice. From the State Forces of 'Bikaner Ganga Risala' to joining the 'Third Gurkha Rifles' on the amalgamation of State Forces was a seamless transition, as the combatant had seen already seen action in Sindh and Iran-Iraq. The legend of Sagat Singh could be summed up by saying that Sagat never lost a battle, he ever partook - and he remains, arguably, the most combat intense Commander of the Indian Army. Sagat was the Brigade Commander of the only Para-Brigade that literally jumped into Panjim in the liberation of Goa in 1962. He played an invaluable role in quelling the Mizo insurgency. As the corps commander, his exploits of dare and dash that resulted in Bangladesh, are simply unmatched.

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While Bangladesh established Sagat as the most formidable 'Combat Commander' ever, it was in 1967 that the Military realised that Sagat was cut from a different cloth. For five years the festering wounds of 1962 Indo-Sino war had irked Sagat's conscience, and the man of destiny like his forefathers sought to avenge the slightest dishonour - opportunity came knocking, and the man who had a talent for war, latched on to with it both hands, and how! In 1965 as a Major General and GOC of 17 mountain divisions, the Chinese made provocative bids in two areas, Nathu La and Jelep La. Fatally for the Chinese, Nathu La was under Sagat's command. Given the overall situation, the HQs had given the permission to vacate and fallback - while Jelep La was vacated by the other division, Sagat famously disagreed and reasoned furiously by fortifying even further and refused to be cowed down. This brazen defiance was proved to be useful in 1967 when Nathu La erupted in a violent clash, where serendipitously similar to Galwan, the CO of a battalion was killed by the Chinese and the Indian side 'opened up' with heavy retaliation. The dispute was on the development of military infrastructure on the Indian side - but Sagat refused to buckle and commenced relentless artillery fire along with infantry attacks. The Chinese were struck like never before, and the final tally was over 300 Chinese fatalities to 65 on the Indian side. The Chinese had picked a fight with the wrong man, Sagat was raring to have a go for over two years and when the border did erupt, Sagat redeemed his memories of 1962 and bloodied the Chinese nose that ensured no such attempt was made, till 2020.

The blood that runs through the veins of the Indian Army is of the DNA given by the likes of Sagat, who fight fair and straight. The fearless devil-may-care persona of a Sagat was perhaps unpalatable to many careerists, who ensured Sagat retired without becoming at least an Army Commander - but the warrior had kept his word to his conscience and his forefathers in all battles and had always triumphed. Sagat was unconventional in his approach, but never unprofessional - his instincts for war always saw openings which none saw, and before anyone realised, Sagat hit hard, very hard. He is the sort of leader the enemy feared and the soldiers under him revered for they knew that when the chips were down, Sagat would never back down. At 6 feet 2 inches, the giant of a man sent shivers down the Chinese by looking them in the eye and going at them, all guns blazing - such legends sometimes get overlooked by their own, as irony died a thousand deaths when Sagat was probably the only General in 71' operations who didn't get a gallantry award, but then again, the likes of Sagat neither seek nor retreat.

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(The writer is the former Lt Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands & Puducherry. Views expressed are personal)

The Black Cat Division (17 Mountain Div) conducts the birth centenary celebrations of Lt Gen Sagat Singh at Nathu La last year with full military grandeur.

Lt Gen Sagat Singh standing behind Gen Niazi signing the Instrument of Surrender in Dacca.

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Sagat Singh addresses his troops.

Bofors in the Siachen

Considerable effect and damage to Pakistani fortifications was achieved, as picked up from their intercepts later. In the evening, our battery received a case of whiskey and four cases rum as a gift from the Brigade Commander to celebrate this inaugural operational firing of Bofors not only in India, but anywhere in the world.

Lt Gen MS Buttar, AVSM, VSM

The induction of the 155 mm FH77B Guns (Bofors) into the Indian Army commenced in May/June 1987. My unit, 285 Medium Regiment was located at Tezpur and we were the first to be equipped with these guns. At that time I was commanding 'Q' Battery.

By early 1988, tension was building up in the Siachen Glacier with Pakistan making repeated attempts to capture Bana Post. This post had been captured by India in 1987 in what was thought to be an impossible mission. At that time, the Pakistanis had named it Qaid post after Jinnah, but after its capture it got its name from Subedar Bana Singh, who was awarded a PVC for his role in the capture of this position.

Induction of Bofors

To counter Pakistan's artillery, we received orders on 06 May 1988 for immediate move of one battery of our regiment to Siachen by air. The Commanding Officer, Col NS Ghotra nominated my battery for this task. Air transportation of six guns, two gun towers, one x 1 ton and a jeep along with first line ammunition was planned for. The move commenced on 08 May 1988 with two IL76 aircraft of 44 Squadron under the command of

#MILITARY ANECDOTES

Group Captain AG Bewoor. Both aircraft carried out two sorties each to ferry all personnel, guns and equipment from Tezpur to Chandigarh in Phase1. Thereafter, ferrying to Thoise was completed in Phase 2 with one gun at a time between 09 and 16 May 1988. Further move to base camp by road was completed and the battery operationally deployed by 28 May 1988.

Operational Firing

Lt Gen BC Nanda, the then Army Commander authorised inaugural firing of our guns in the first week of August 1988. The requirement came up soon after on 14 August, which also happened to be Pakistan's Independence Day. A Pakistani Post in Bilafond La sub sector was identified for punishment. Brigadier CS Nugyal (later Major General), Commander 102 Infantry Brigade and myself moved by helicopter upto Kumar Post and then by snow scooter to the selected OP Position. Captain DP Singh was performing the duties of Battery 2IC and GPO at the gun position. Technical support systems comprising Observer and Battery Computer Modules, Met sounding equipment and automated survey system had not yet been received. All calculations were therefore carried out manually. Fire orders were relayed through the Field Regiment Battery Commander at Kumar and his headquarters at base camp.

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The Guns are Fired

Fire orders completed, first ranging round was fired at about 8:30 AM. Three OP Officers in the area were asked to observe and provide compass bearings to the point of burst to fix the fall of shot and facilitate corrections. After one more correction, third round landed in the centre of the Pakistani Post at a recorded range of 37.5 km (additional range achieved due to high altitude effect). We fired a total of 45 rounds from three guns, achieving an excellent spread of 125 metres along the line of fire. Considerable effect and damage to Pakistani fortifications was achieved, as picked up from their intercepts later. In the evening, our battery received a case of whiskey and four cases rum as a gift from the Brigade Commander to celebrate this inaugural operational firing of Bofors not only in India, but anywhere in the world.

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#SELF-DEVELOPMENT

Try 'Habit Stacking'

Forming bad habits is easy, but building good habits is surprisingly hard-even though most of us crave routine to one degree or another.

Luckily, here's a way to use your natural inclination toward routine to build and maintain a new habit. It's called habit stacking, and you can think of it like glueing a new habit to an existing one.

What is habit stacking?

Habit stacking happens when you tack a desired behavioural change onto an existing routine.

Theoretically, that way the thing you're having trouble sticking with just becomes part of your broader, ongoing string of habits. Consider the things you already do every day: Brushing your teeth in the morning and at night, making your coffee in the morning, walking your dog at lunchtime, etc.

During any one of those, you can add in a second necessary task that will benefit reciprocally from happening alongside your existing routine.

How to get started?

There are plenty of ways to build a habit stack, but first you need to identify the tasks you're struggling with. For example, if you know you need to sort through your emails every morning but you tend to put it off as soon as you log in to work, keep it in mind as a possible candidate for adding to a stack.

Once you've identified the things you want to do but don't, identify the things you do do, whether it's taking a break every day at 3 p.m. to scroll social media or doing the dishes after every meal. Examine each and look for ways you could stack the less-sticky tasks on top of them.

The trick is to figure out which things can stack cohesively. You can't return phone calls while you're running at the gym, but maybe you can do so while you're commuting. You can't study while you brush your teeth, but you can practice your deep breathing.

Once you've determined which habits can stack, write down your plans somewhere like a Google doc-"I will respond to my emails every morning by 10, while I eat breakfast"-and for the first few days, actively check in on it to make sure you're staying on top of them. Eventually, they'll become habitual, just like the activities you've paired them with.

THE WALL

BABY BLUES

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman