



A Journey of Discipline, Adventure and Leadership – IMA Attachment Camp 2025

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My name is UO Pulkit Jain. I had the distinct privilege of attending the IMA Attachment Camp, which took place from 17th December to 28th December 2025. There is only one Indian Military Academy in the world, so where and which is not required. The camp brought together cadets from all NCC Directorates across the country, and we were divided into four companies: Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, and Delta. The schedule was unyielding. In fact, on paper, there were a few rest days scattered throughout the duration, but under the intensity of the IMA environment, they never truly felt like leaves. The only genuine breathing room we got was on the very first day when our barracks were allotted, and on the final day before departure.

Our days were structured with clockwork precision. Every single morning began with a 0600-hour fall-in, from which we would disperse to our morning activities. Physical Training (PT) and Drill sessions ran on alternate schedules; for instance, if Alpha and Bravo companies were heading to PT, Charlie and Delta would be on the drill square, and vice versa. Following the morning session, those who had PT would quickly change into their uniforms before breakfast, while the drill squad could proceed directly to the mess. Post-breakfast, it was time for another strict fall-in before we boarded our assigned buses for the rest of the day. The first half of our afternoon was dedicated to institutional visits, during which we toured the academy's core training infrastructure, including the Weapon Training (WT) area, the Equitation Training Team (ETT) stables, the Olympic-size swimming pool, and the barracks where the Gentlemen Cadets (GCs) reside. We also spent time inside the majestic Chetwode Museum, walking through the living history of our armed forces. After tea, lunch, and a brief one-hour afternoon break, the second half of the day demanded active participation from everyone in various competitive disciplines, including sports like basketball, volleyball, and tug-of-war, as well as cultural events, drill, and the Guard of Honour. I participated in basketball; we lost miserably, but it taught me a profound lesson about discipline and leadership—that with just one hour of practice a day over three days, a group of individuals can learn to coordinate, adapt, and pull together under pressure. As the sun set, we had our final evening fall-in, where we were often made to stand at attention for up to an hour. This was seemingly for no explicit reason, but in reality it was a deliberate exercise designed to test and drastically increase our physical and psychological endurance. By 2200 hours, it was dinner, lights out, and immediate sleep.

If you ask me what the most difficult part of the camp was, it was adapting to the unforgiving terrain. Being in a high-altitude, hilly area, breathing was already restricted during heavy exertion. To add to that, the IMA enforces a strict rule: you are never allowed to simply walk. If you are in casuals, you must run everywhere; if you are in uniform, you must march with precision. Our drill ground sat at a gruelling 60-degree incline, and the key training locations were often a kilometre apart, so sprinting uphill for a kilometre to get to consecutive activities throughout the day was absolutely exhausting. However, looking at the GCs put everything into perspective. The very terrain we struggled to run on was the terrain the Officer Cadets had to cycle up and down daily while carrying full combat loads. Witnessing that level of endurance makes you realise exactly what it costs to become a disciplined, hard-earned officer, and it changes your mindset completely. In terms of practical skills, the training was exceptional, but on a personal note, the funniest and most useful skill I mastered was the ability to fall asleep anywhere, in any position, within sixty seconds. Another critical operational skill I gained from my experience was the habit of carrying a writing pad and a pen everywhere to pen down notes then and there; the schedule is so packed that if you don't record information immediately, you won't get a second chance later. My absolute most memorable moment was our intensive visit to the tactical training sectors. Getting a firsthand look at the Weapon Training area, the Close Quarter Battle (CQB) environment, the grenade throwing fields, and attending detailed, specialised classes on Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and modern weapon displays was an unforgettable experience that brought us closer to the reality of soldiering. I hope this gives you a vivid picture of what the IMA stands for, Astha. Cherish your time in the NCC, push past your comfort zone, and always keep your Josh high. Jai Hind!

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