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A Wonderful Ham Story(?)

[\(VU2ITI\)](#) on June 10, 2003

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Hi all

My name is Mani and I am the person mentioned in the article by captain Fatty (<http://www.eham.net/articles/4883>). I didn't know about this Internet story until one of my students informed me so.

It all started with an email from my friend and HAM working in Kuwait (Mr. Balsun, VU2UYC) informing me that there is a request from a sailboat anchored at Cochin back waters for help in restoring their SSB radio. Later I realized that these sailing people had raised their request through OM Sandeep Baruha (VU2 MUE) who has a nice web page. Sandeep Baruha passed on the info to VU hams email discussion group. (Please visit http://www.qsl.net/vu2msy/Fatty_Bournvita_Quiz.way for hearing the voice of Fatty Good Lander.)

Immediately after reading the email I tried to locate the sailing yacht and the sailors in it. Only thing I knew was they anchored near to Bolghaty Palace hotel. Bolghaty Palace hotel is situated in a tiny island (there are a dozen islands like this in Cochin) and I made a telephone call to the hotel but no luck. Later I went to the Boat jetty near to Bolghaty palace. I saw several boats of different sizes and colors (later Fatty corrected me - those are sailing yachts!). One of them looks like a pirate boat in black colour of course with a strange looking flag. I was sure, there will be the skull and crossed bones drawn on the flag!!

After an unsuccessful chase, I informed Mr. Sandeep that I could not locate the vessel and I am afraid that they might have given the rig for repairs to some local- so called marine electronics- experts! (Why afraid? - you will understand as you read on). After a day, I got another email from VU2MUE indicating email id of Carolyn Good Lander. I soon wrote an email to Mrs. Carolyn intimating my willingness to repair their SSB transceiver and asked her to contact me on my mobile number.

OK, since the day on which I met Mrs. Carolyn and Mr. Fatty Good Lander in the sailboat Wildcard (the pirate itself), a new world was unraveled in front of me. I never knew that such a wonderful people and wonderful life style existed on earth. He is very humorous and intelligent (later I realized that he is a genius too!). I asked him to explain what is wrong with the rig. He switched on and tuned to some frequency. The signal level shown on the meter and clarity of the sound ensured that the receiver part is OK. Then he tuned the automatic ATU by pressing antenna tune button on the rig and immediately I recognized that the rig is giving out power and the ATU is working OK. I made some calculations in my mind and arrived at a conclusion that the modulator or something related to microphone circuit might be defective. What I want to say is there is a little bit of exaggeration in saying that I had given my assurance to repair the rig even without looking into it. HII HII! What worried me at that time was whether I would be able to get the exact spare parts for the rig?

I took home the rig and, switched on, inspected and realized that the dynamic microphone coil is open circuited. My friend and myself (the engagement function that Fatty attended was of this guy) searched the local electronic shops and purchased different types of microphone capsules available with them so that at least one will be suitable for the rig. But none was suitable. Few were electrically matching but physical size prevents them to fit inside the microphone. So I thought of reshaping the

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capsule by cutting away unwanted parts from it! Finally I succeeded in fitting one inside the mic. (To be honest, I damaged three microphone capsules during the process).

Next week, I was able to handover his ICOM M710. Fatty, (a good mechanic indeed) attached the rig to the ATU and switched on. He was very happy, as his rig is now working fine. I was not satisfied with the SWR shown on the attached SWR meter. Later we noticed that his antenna connections are wrong. He had connected the coax cable from his antenna tuner to his wire antenna after short-circuiting the braid and inner conductor together!!

In the rest of his story also he had taken his liberty as a gifted writer to add some flavor to it. The commendable among them is that I had collected old television sets for parts. I did not do that because, there was no old TV set available in India. In fact the TV transmission started in our area years after I had built my first super heterodyne receiver. (My favorite is the super generative receiver). One more interesting fact is that I had homebrewed a TV receiver, which was happened to be the first TV receiver in our place (Vypin Island, a small island in the shape of forefinger pointing towards Cochin port). I recollect the day (no, it was a night!) when I switched on the TV set. It was raining outside and a small crowd (all were wet in the rain) outside the room was eagerly looking at the very faint image on the screen. One of my friend stood outside held a tall bamboo pole in the upright position in the downpour. At the top end of the pole, there was a 13-element Yagi antenna looking towards the 100 watts TV transmitter located 25 K ms away from us!

Now I am very happy. Many thanks for Captain Fatty for his request to the ham community for sending us the old ham radio magazines. I had received several emails from HAM friends all over the world with their offer to send me the magazines. In expectation of the huge bundles of parcels arriving, I made a list of eligible HAMS and HAM clubs in our area to share the magazines and articles. So far I had received only 4 QST magazines (I don't know who sent it- No address of sender). I am yet to receive the magazines from those who promised me (may be the snail mail is sleeping).

Finally one word about my daughter: - her name is Greeshma (not Krishna). She is 13 years young, not only mentally challenged, she is physically disabled and also blind. She brings out joyful and lighter moments to our life better than for the parents of normal children. We are adapted our life style to bring happiness in her little world. Her world is full of music.

Oh! I forgot one thing to tell you all. Few weeks ago, I received a mail from Mr. Spencer from sailboat Axe Calibre anchored at Cochin seeking advice from me regarding their SSB radio. The set was faulty and they got it repaired by a marine electronics engineer in Cochin. They repaired and repaired and repaired the rig and finally reinstalled. Still Mr. Spencer was in doubt whether the repair had been carried out properly. I offered my willingness to inspect the rig and visited the sailboat to see the trx. I asked about the history of the rig and he informed me that no one was responding to his CQ call and thought some thing was wrong with the rig even after repair. It is an ICOM IC707, receives fine but not transmitting. I understood that the repair work that had been entrusted with the local service person was not done properly. The Service bill shows an amount of 14000 INRS (divide it by 48.75, you will get the amount in dollars).

"Did you pay the money in full?" I asked.

"No. I paid only 10000." Mr Spencer seems to be very happy as he got 4000 Rs discount.

After bringing home the rig and inspecting it, I was also happy to note that the rig was repairable - no missing parts, no tampering. It was as if no repair work has been carried out!

While handing over the rig back to Axe Calibre, after rectifying the defects (the fault was very simple, the condenser mic was defective and I replaced it with a new one), I told him "you are lucky since nothing wrong happened due the repair work carried out by the marine engineer, and a positive thing is that the worth of your rig has been enhanced by 10000 Rs!"

Indeed, Mr Spencer is very lucky. There is tight competition among the so-called marine engineers in and around Cochin port. One who fails to repair any equipment would make it sure that no one else could do the repair! Once I came across a marine trx in a junk shop and thought of

buying that good-looking rig and to convert it to HAM radio use. A marine engineer accompanied me (who seeks advices from me time to time) insisted me not to buy it.

"Why? It is an HF rig and I can convert it for ham radio use."

He said, "I know about the rig. Once I tried to repair it. It has got a microprocessor in it."

"So what? I can reprogram it for my use." I was proud that I am a postgraduate in digital electronics and a confident home brewer.

"I am afraid, you can't sir! No one can repair it now! I made it sure that those chips inside the rig could not with stand 230 V AC if fed to it directly!" He whispered.

"You too Brutus!" I uttered.

73 & thanks,

Mani (VU2ITI)

Member Comments:

This article has expired. No more comments may be added.

A Wonderful Ham Story(?)

by [VU2RDN](#) on May 21, 2003

[Mail this to a friend!](#)

It is said that one has to go miles and miles to see a real ham. A real ham radio operator should have lot of qualities, out of which, in my opinion, common sense comes first! I know om Mani, VU2ITI since early 80s is more than a ham in all respects. He is taken to several tests in real life, but going strong as of now. I should say that those sailors who contacted him are lucky. Else their rigs and pocket might have electrocuted! (I feel very sorry for that microprocessor!)

The big difference - is one person becomes some one in his carrier (say, an engineer, ham or doctor) by chance or by choice? Those who come by chance may not excel. (The probes they put into an electronic circuit is not connected to a multimeter, but direct 230V!; they talk rubbish or cause QRM to others; they kill rather than save a soul). The real ones always know what to do and one can find the confidence in their eyes. Creativity is not an accident. Unfortunately, our nation is not recognizing such real persons. I am happy to see that e-Hams has done some thing good in this line, by exposing people like om Mani.

73

de VU2RDN
Ravi

RE: A Wonderful Ham Story(?)

by [N1JAO](#) on June 10, 2003

[Mail this to a friend!](#)

yawn, stretch, turn the light out when you leave.

robert
n1jao

RE: A Wonderful Ham Story(?)

by [N6AJR](#) on June 10, 2003

[Mail this to a friend!](#)

I find this a intersting story and am entertained by the effort made to present a bit of Hamdom in a different part of the world. I too try to help folks when I can and find pleasure in making new friends. Keep up the good work and please feel free to post an up date any time, it is appreciated!

(and to N1JAO, didnt your mom tell you that if you can't say something nice then don't say any thing at all.)

733 and good dx tom N6AJR

RE: A Wonderful Ham Story(?)

by [N1JAO](#) on June 10, 2003

[Mail this to a friend!](#)

no, did yours?"

robert
n1jao

A Wonderful Ham Story(?)

by [KA2LIM](#) on June 11, 2003

[Mail this to a friend!](#)

Good story, Thanks for your kindness and hope to work you someday on the air. As for the negative comment, consider the source.

Ken
KA2LIM

RE: A Wonderful Ham Story(?)

by [N1JAO](#) on June 14, 2003

[Mail this to a friend!](#)

boy this story went over big i see

A Wonderful Ham Story(?)

by [VU2ITI](#) on June 17, 2003

[Mail this to a friend!](#)

Thanks for the positive comments and the negative comment on the article. I had received several direct emails from other readers as well, congratulating me. I am happy and I still had a feeling that I never deserve such an appreciation since I did only my duty as a HAM. I hope to work with all those who had responded and wished to contact me over radio (only after setting my station with a good antenna).

73
Mani (vu2iti)

RE: A Wonderful Ham Story

by [KB1ILA](#) on March 5, 2004

[Mail this to a friend!](#)

Dear T. K. Mani

Are you still in need of old issues of Ham publications?

If so, let me know and I will send along my old QST's and ask my friends at the Genesis Radio Club for additional publications.

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