

Stories of Heroism

Param Vir Chakra and Mahavir Chakra Winners

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DR. B.C. CHAKRAVORTY

Edited by
Dr. U.P. Thapliyal
History Division, Ministry of Defence
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5th Main Road, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009

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*To the Brave
who laid down their lives
to defend the Motherland*

Preface

The Armed Forces of independent India have fought four major wars. Many soldiers have shed their blood to defend the honour of the Motherland. Some even laid down their lives in foreign lands in UN peace-keeping operations. The History Division undertook the writing of this book to immortalise their deeds of bravery. It is hoped that these stories would serve as an inspiring force for future generations.

I am grateful to the three Services Headquarters, Regimental Centres, awardees and their relatives for providing us the necessary information about the brave soldiers covered in this book. Regretfully, in some cases it has not been possible to use all the information supplied to us for lack of space. It is requested that inaccuracies, if any, found in the stories by the readers may kindly be brought to the notice of the Director, History Division, for correction.

The compilation of this book was first undertaken by Dr. B.C. Chakravorty, Narrator. Subsequently, in the light of additional information collected from various sources it was revised and updated by Dr. D.C. Verma, Dy. Director and myself. Shri Y.C. Bhargava, RA, rendered valuable assistance by way of collecting necessary information. Two more sections viz. 'The Glorious Saga of the Indian Army' and 'Medals and Decorations of India' have been added to the volume to make it more useful.

Shri G.B. Singh, Dy. Director, Shri Jasvinder Singh, SRO, Shri T.R. Gulati, SRO, Shri Om Shankar, Asstt Director (Heraldry) and Shri T.R. Tandon, RA also helped me in various measures. Shri Sudhir Sharma, Shri N.K. Sagar, and Smt. Chitra Santhanam, typed the manuscript. I am indebted to these colleagues for their valuable cooperation.

I am indeed grateful to the Ministry of Defence for the help and encouragement extended to me in completing this task. However, for statement of facts and expression of views the Editor alone is responsible.

In the end I would like to record my grateful thanks to M/s. Allied Publishers who undertook the challenging task of publishing this book. They have done a marvellous job indeed.

Dr. U.P. Thapliyal
Director

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	vii
1. The Glorious Saga of the Indian Armed Forces	1
2. Medals and Decorations of India	30
Param Vir Chakra : Award Winners	45
Mahavir Chakra : Award Winners	81
<i>Index</i>	
Award Winners: Service, Corps and Regiment	379

List of Abbreviations

ALEA	Auxiliary Landing Field Area
AOC-in-C	Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief
Armd Bde	Armoured Brigade
AVSM	Ati Vahlar Seva Medal
Bde	Brigade
BSF	Border Security Force
Capt	Captain
CD	Coast Defence
CFA	Cease Fire Agreement
CHM	Company Havildar Major
CFI	Custodian Force India
CIE	Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire
Col	Colonel
Coy	Company
QMH	Company Quarter Master Havildar
CZ Force	Communication Zone Force
DFC	Distinguished Flying Cross
DSO	Distinguished Service Order
EEM	Emergency Efficiency Medal
FF	Frontier Force
Flg. Offr.	Flying Officer
GD (P)	General Duties (Pilot)
GOC	General Officer Commanding
GOC-in-C	General Officer Commanding-in-Chief
Hrs.	Hours
IAF	Indian Air Force
IASM	Indian Administrative Service Medal

IC	Indian Commission
IDSM	Indian Distinguished Service Medal
IMSM	Indian Meritorious Service Medal
IMSP	Indian Marine Special Force
Inf	Infantry
Inf Bde	Infantry Brigade
Inf Div	Infantry Division
INS	Indian Naval Ship
IONM	Indian Order of Merit
IPKF	Indian Peace Keeping Force
JC	Junior Commission
JCO	Junior Commissioned Officer
J&K	Jammu and Kashmir
JVP	Jamata Vimukh Parapane
Kms	Kilometres
LI	Light Infantry
Lt	Lieutenant
Lt-Col	Lieutenant Colonel
Lt-Gen	Lieutenant General
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MBE	Member of the Order of the British Empire
MC	Military Cross
Maj-Gen	Major General
MMG	Medium Machine Gun
MR	Marine Reserve
MS	Medical Service
Mtn Div	Mountain Division
MV	Merchant Vessel
MVC	Mahavir Chakra
MM	Military Medal
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer

NEFA	North East Frontier Agency
NNRC	Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission
OBE	Order of the British Empire
OBI	Order of the British India
OR	Other Rank
Op Hill	Operation Hill
OP	Observation Post
PAF	Pakistan Air Force
Para	Parachute
Posth	Posthumous
POW	Prisoner-of-War
PL	Point
PVC	Param Vir Chakra
Raj Rif	Rajputana Rifles
RCL	Recoilless
RGR	Royal Gorkha Rifles
RIAF	Royal Indian Air Force
RS	Reserve Service
SB	Special Branch
Sqn Ldr	Squadron Leader
UN	United Nations
UNAVEM	United Nations Angola Verification Mission
UNIMOG	United Nations International Military Observation Group
UNEP	United Nations Emergency Force
VCO	Viceroy's Commissioned Officer
VSM	Vishisht Seva Medal
VS Medal	Vayu Sena Medal
Wg. Cdr.	Wing Commander

The Glorious Saga of the Indian Army

शुक्लस्य लोकेश्वरं तन्वते पुत्रवत् सदा।

तस्मात् संपत्तिवन्ध्यासु शूरः सम्मानमर्हति।

न हि शौर्यात् परं किञ्चित् त्रिपुरलोकेषु विद्यते।

शूरः सर्वं पालयति सर्वं शूरे प्रतिष्ठितम्॥

The world rests on the arms of heroes like a son on those of his sire. He, therefore, that is a hero, deserves respect under every circumstance. There is nothing higher in this world than heroism. The hero protects and cherishes all, and all things depend upon the hero.

(Mahabharata, Santi Parva, 99. 17-18)

Ancient Indian seers considered the act of gallantry as the easiest way to heaven, the abode of gods. According to the Mahabharata the comforts of the palace of Indra, the Lord of Heaven, are reserved for those who seek death in battle. In the great war Sri Krishna exhorted Arjuna to fight, since in the event of success he will enjoy the earth and in the event of death he will ascend to heaven. For an Indian warrior there was no third option. The maxim continued to inspire the Indian warriors through the ages.

When India became independent on 15 August 1947, she chose the motto 'Satyameva Jayate'. The Indian soldiers have since fought many wars in the defence of truth and justice. This introductory chapter is intended to serve as a backdrop to many a great deed of gallantry performed by them on the battle-field.

OPERATIONS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Right from the day of her creation Pakistan had set her heart on Kashmir. She applied various measures including economic pressure to force the Dogra ruler to join Pakistan. When these measures failed a tribal invasion was engineered to 'liberate' Kashmir. The 7 Infantry Division of the Pakistan Army was concentrated at Murree and Abbottabad to back up the tribals. A Pakistani Infantry Brigade was stationed at Sialkot to move on to Jammu at short notice. The Pak Operation was code-named 'Gulmarg'.

Blunting of Attack

On the morning of 22 October, the raiders crossed the Kashmir frontier. They captured Muzaffarabad, Dodel and Uri in quick succession. The

State troops at Uri kept the raiders at bay for four days. Their tough resistance eventually saved the valley from plunder. The raiders entered Baramula at sunset on 26 October. The city was subjected to indiscriminate killing, loot and rape. But the burden of the booty acquired at Baramula slowed down their pace of march.

This was also the time when Indian troops were preparing to move to Kashmir as the Maharaja had signed the Instrument of Accession. 1 Sikh deployed in Gurgaon was flown to Srinagar on 27 October. Colonel D.R. Rai, the Battalion Commander made quick arrangements for the protection of the airfield and raced towards Baramula. Unfortunately, the enemy was already there in good strength. While retreating, he was caught in the fire and perished.

The most important battle for the defence of Srinagar was fought at Badgam, 2 km short of the Srinagar airfield, on 3 November 1947. The 'A' company of 4 Kumaon beat back repeated enemy attacks on the airfield and kept him at bay for six hours. In this action Major Somnath Sharma displayed outstanding bravery and leadership.

Indian Army on the Offensive

On 5 November Maj Gen Kalwant Singh assumed the command of Indian forces in Jammu and Kashmir. It was now time to take on the enemy. An offensive was launched by 161 Bde which had been inducted into the valley on 7 November. A grim battle followed and the enemy was defeated at Shalateg, about 6 km from Srinagar. Chasing the enemy the Indian troops advanced on Baramula on 8th morning and reached Uri on 10th morning. In the later half of the month the Bde successfully sent a battalion for the relief of the Punch garrison. RIAF detachments at Srinagar and Amritsar extended useful support to the Bde in its operations in Uri-Punch sector. It held on to Uri during the winters.

Meanwhile, things were warming up in Jammu-Punch sector also. The Jammu column of the 50 Para Bde set out on 16 November to relieve the State Force garrisons at Mirpur, Kotli, Punch, Jhangar, Naushahra, Bhimber and Rajouri from Pak encirclement. The column succeeded in its mission in spite of difficult communication problem. But the raiders also did not remain quiet. On the night of 23-24 December 6000 raiders attacked Jhangar garrison compelling Indians to fall back on Naushahra. Their attack on Naushahra was, however, beaten back. In this battle the RIAF fighters effectively supported the army effort.

The security of Naushahra was in peril as long as Kot, a vital hill feature to its north, lay in enemy hands. Therefore, 50 Para Bde launched an attack on Kot on 1 February with artillery and air support. The raiders fought bravely but the feature fell to Indians by 1000 hrs. The enemy retaliated by launching a massive attack on Indian pickets at Tain Dhar and Kot hills on 6 February. Naik Jadunath Singh of 1 Rajput, who was holding a picket at Tain Dhar, displayed extraordinary gallantry during this battle. Indians beat back the attack and moved forward to capture Jhangar on 18 March, 1948.

During April, two important actions were fought by the Indian Army. In Jammu sector, Dogras captured the Barwall ridge and advanced on to the Chingas. In their advance Second Lieutenant R.R. Rane of the Corps of Engineers and his field company contributed substantially by clearing the formidable road blocks. Jats and Kumaonis relieved Rajouri on 12 evening and saved many lives. In the north 3 Garhwal advancing from Baramula evicted the enemy from the area between Limber Nala and Kopra by 16 March.

The Summer Offensive

In early May the Indian forces in J & K were reorganised. The northern sector stretching from Uri to Leh was placed under the command of Uri Division (later 19 Division) led by Maj Gen Thimayya. The western sector stretching from Rajouri to Jhangar was entrusted to 2 Airborne Division (later 26 Division) led by Maj Gen Atma Singh. Lt Gen K.M. Cariappa, GOC-in-C Western Command became over-all incharge of these 'operations'. 77 Para Bde was inducted to relieve 161 Bde.

The Success in the West

The summer offensive started on 20 May with 161 Brigade advancing on Uri-Domel road. As a diversionary move 163 Brigade advanced from Handwara to Tithwal. The offensive was a great success. It so unnerved the Pakistanis that they now overtly brought in their regular army units in support of the raiders. The direct involvement of Pakistanis denied some gains to 161 Brigade. 163 Brigade, however, achieved remarkable success in Tithwal sector.

In the western sector a link-up was affected with Punch on 22 June. But it did not add to the security of the garrison as the troops affecting link-up had to fall back on Rajouri for lack of sufficient strength. In the enemy

attack on Jhangar, which had fallen to Indians in March, Brigadier Usman was killed on the night of 3 July 1948.

Containing the Northern Thrust

While the Indians were progressing well in the west, the raiders were approaching the valley from the Gilgit side on the north. They passed through Gurais and reached Wular Lake by the end of April 1948. It required great air and engineering effort to evict the raiders from this area. Gurais fell to Indians on 28 June 1948.

The situation was more critical further east in Leh area. On 11 July, about one thousand raiders attacked the Leh out-posts. The attack was beaten back by the great efforts of Lt Col Thakur Prithi Chand and Major Hari Chand. Subsequently, the Skardu garrison which had held on for many months under the able leadership of Lt Col Sher Jung Thapa fell to the raiders on 14 August. This added to the pressure on Leh. The raiders occupied Zoji La and infiltrated into Sonmarg. 77 Para Bde opened the road to Leh with the help of tanks. The capture of Dras further consolidated Indian position. The threat to Leh was finally removed.

The Last Round

Pakistan had never reconciled to the set-back suffered in Tithwal sector and they launched repeated counter-attacks to dislodge the Indians. They occupied some vital features in the area and kept on harassing the Indians. Company Havildar Major Piru Singh of Rajputana Rifles sacrificed himself to protect his position. The next serious threat came on 13 October when a 2000 strong force supported by artillery, attacked Indians from the west and south. After intense fighting for two days, the enemy was forced to abandon the effort. During this attack Lance Naik Karam Singh of 1 Sikh fought gallantly to beat back the enemy attack eight times.

The last great achievement of the Indian Army on the Western sector was the link up with Punch. Punch had been encircled by the Pakistani raiders and efforts to relieve it had failed earlier. It involved clearing of some 1440 sq km of the enemy occupied territory between Rajouri and Punch. The Jammu Division was launched on the mission of 19-20 September. It finally succeeded in relieving Punch on 25 November. Many fierce battles were fought in the process in and around Mendhar. The battle ended with the declaration of cease-fire at 2359 hrs on 1 January 1949, midnight. Tithwal remained with the Indians after the cease-fire.

The Role of RIAF

RIAF played an important role in J&K operations 1947-48. Its detachments at Srinagar, Amritsar, and Jammu conducted offensive reconnaissance of enemy held areas and carried ammunition and supplies for the beleaguered state garrisons. The area covered by the air strikes stretched from Domel to Mirpur.

During the attack on Kot, the RIAF detachment achieved several direct hits on enemy strongholds. In the battles of Naushahra, Tithwal and Jhangar close air support was provided by RIAF. It was the RIAF which saved Punch from falling into enemy hands in early 1948. Continuous supply of food and ammunition and evacuation of casualties helped to keep the morale of the entrapped people high. A daring act was the transport of two 25-pounder guns at the improvised airstrip of Punch on 21 March 1948. Some offensive sorties were carried out in Punch area to soften the enemy positions.

RIAF blunted the enemy advance at Zoji La by accurate strafing in early July 1948. It also maintained supplies to Skardu and thus delayed its fall by many months. In Gurais sector Air Force Tempests rocketted and strafed the enemy positions to pave the way for Indian advance. When the situation became critical in Ladakh it was Air Commodore Mehar Singh who piloted a Dakota to Leh. Air transport of men and material to Leh became a regular feature hereafter. It is rightly said that the Dakotas of RIAF did not win the battle of Ladakh but they certainly saved it from being lost.

Jammu and Kashmir operations lasted for about 14 months. The Indians suffered six thousand casualties-1500 killed, 3500 wounded and 1000 missing. 5 Men received Param Vir Chakra, 53 Maha Vir Chakra and 323 Vir Chakra awards for gallantry in these operations.

OPERATION POLO, 1948

The State of Hyderabad was established in 18th century by Nizam-ul-mulk Asaf Jah. It came under British protection in 1798 under the Subsidiary Alliance of Wellesley. In view of the impending lapse of paramountcy on 15 August 1947, Mir Usman Ali, the Nizam of Hyderabad, issued a *firman* declaring his independence from that date. Encouraged by the turn of events fanatic Razakars started attacking Indian territory outside the State boundary.

This incensed the Indian public opinion. On 12 September 1948, Indian Army Headquarters sent a go-ahead signal to Southern Command. 'Operation Polo' was under way. Within five days it was to be all over for the Nizam and his State.

The Western Thrust

The main thrust of Operation Polo was carried out by 1 Armoured Division (1 Armd Bde, 7 Inf Bde and 9 Inf Bde) along the Sholapur-Hyderabad axis. The 7 Inf Bde called the 'Kill Force' was the first to move out to attack Naldurg from the southern direction while the Smash Force of 1 Armd Bde marched past the main road to Naldurg. By 0900 hrs on 13 September Naldurg and Jalkot were reduced, overcoming the resistance offered by the Hyderabad army and the Razakars.

While the two Brigades were concentrating on the main axis the Vir Force (9 Inf Bde) pushed north to Tuljapur, Osmanabad, and further north and north-east to Latur to destroy the enemy strong points. The Vir Force divided itself in many columns to mop up the enemy. Enemy had dug out positions at Tuljapur and it took some time to clear them. But at Osmanabad serious opposition was encountered. The town could be cleared only on 15th morning. In this encounter 75 Razakars were killed and 184 captured.

In its march eastward the Smash Force met stiff resistance on 16th at Zahirabad, about 150 km short of Hyderabad. It was held by two companies of Hyderabad Infantry and large bodies of Razakars and Irregulars. It took Indian tank guns some time to finish them. Bidar Garrison to the north of Zahirabad was another irritant for advancing Indians. The Strike Force which was so far leading the advance was, therefore, diverted to Bidar. It was occupied on 17th without meeting any opposition. At 1700 hrs on the same day, when the Smash Force was still away, the Hyderabad Radio announced the surrender of the State army. It took the Indian Army another 24 hours to reach Hyderabad. The official surrender ceremony took place at 1600 hrs on 18 September. Maj Gen JN Chaudhuri accepted the surrender from Maj Gen S.A. El Edroos, the Commander of the State Forces.

The Eastern Thrust

Another thrust was made on Vijayawada-Hyderabad axis by the Eastern Striking Force (2/5 RGR, one Tank Squadron and ancillary troops). The

Force made quick advance till it met resistance near Suriapet at 0830 hrs on 14th. This position was held by 5 Hyderabad Infantry and 1 Hyderabad Lancers. The Indian Force could reduce it only by 1600 hours. Enemy suffered 35 killed and 50 captured in this action. Suriapet was attacked next morning after an air strike. In a fierce attack on Narkatpalli on the 16th about 45 Razakars were killed. Chitval, the major objective of this Force was captured by 0900 hours on the 17th. It was now only 63 km short of Hyderabad. While the Force moved on the main road the 3 Sikh Light Infantry with a tank squadron in support branched off in the direction of Khammamett to the north. No major resistance was encountered in this area.

The Southern Thrust

The Mycol Force (5/5 RGR, Mysore Lancers and 1 Mysore Infantry) advanced into Hyderabad from the south. The task of this Force was to protect the railway bridges at Kurnool, Tungabhadra and Hospet. Kurnool was easily captured whereas Tungabhadra was occupied after minor opposition on the 13th morning. But the enemy resistance was stiff at Hospet and the battle went on here upto the 17th evening. Meanwhile, Gadag Column (4 Raj Rif) threatened the enemy in the rear and forced him to surrender. In this operation the Mycol Force suffered 16 killed and 54 wounded. The hostiles suffered many hundreds killed.

Jai force (3/5 RGR, two coys of 17 Sikh, a tank squadron etc) launched a two-pronged attack on Aurangabad on 13 September. The column moved on Nandgaon—Aurangabad axis while a small force advanced on Chalisgaon—Aurangabad axis. For the main column it was smooth sailing till it reached Yerul hill occupied by the hostiles in company strength. At least 60 hostiles were killed in this encounter. The diversionary column did not encounter opposition and it met the main column at Daulatabad on the 14th. On the 15th the Force entered Aurangabad and then fanned out to eliminate the Razakars.

The Northern Thrust

In the northern sector, Jabalpur Independent Sub-Area, opened operations in Jalra area in support of the Jai force. It also conducted two minor thrusts at Hingoli and Chanda to eliminate the hostiles. Some minor operations were also conducted in different parts of Hyderabad to end the Razakar menace. The Indian Air Force extended useful help to the Army in 'Operation Polo'. Enemy positions were attacked and close support was given in the ground battles on many occasions.

OPERATION VIJAY, 1961

Portuguese refusal to transfer her Indian settlements of Goa, Daman, Diu and Anjdiv Islands to the Indian Republic led to 'Operation Vijay' in 1961. They had ruthlessly suppressed a peaceful Satyagraha launched to liberate these territories in 1955. In 1961, they even fired on some Indian coastal steamers and fishing boats near Anjdiv Island. India, therefore, decided to use force to liberate the Portuguese pockets on her soil.

Goa Operation

On 11 December 1961, 17 Inf Div and attached troops were ordered to advance into Goa to capture Panjim and Marmagao. The main thrust on Panjim was to be made by 50 Indep Para Bde Group from the north. Another thrust was to be carried by 63 Inf Bde from the east. A deceptive thrust, in company strength, was to be made from the south along the axis Majali-Canacona-Margao.

The Northern Thrust

On the 18th morning, 50 Para Bde Group moved into Goa in three columns. The western column (2 Sikh LI Group) marched on Dodamarg-Tivim-Betim-Panjim axis, the central column (1 Para Punjab) on Banastarim-Panjim axis and the eastern column (2 Para Maratha) on Dodamarg-Usgao-Ponda axis. The first two competed in the race for Panjim.

The western column led by armour moved out at 0630 hrs. The armour reached Betim shortly after 1700 hrs without encountering any opposition. 2 Sikh Light Infantry joined it by 2100 hrs, crossing over mines and demolished bridges enroute. Panjim now lay only 549 metres away. But in the absence of orders from above the unit stayed at Betim for the night. The same night Major Sidhu of 7 Cavalry was killed when Portuguese guards opened fire on an unsuspecting Indian rescue party at Aguada Fort. On the 19th morning 2 Sikh LI received permission to cross over to Panjim and two rifle companies landed there at 0735 hrs. The race to Panjim was won.

The central column of 1 Para Punjab crossed the border at 0600 hrs. Upto Bicholim it moved as the eastern column but from there it turned on Banastarim-Panjim axis. It reached Banastarim at 1730 hrs but was held up there on account of the broken bridge. On the 18th morning the water obstacle was negotiated and the column reached Panjim by 0830 hrs, 55 minutes after the Sikhs.

The eastern most column (2 Para Maratha) moved on the northern route on the axis Sanquelim-Usgao-Ponda. It reached Ponda at 1345 hrs and brought order to the town. The column conducted patrolling in Ponda-Banastarim sector and established contact with the rear elements of 1 Para on the 19th morning.

The Eastern Thrust

63 Indian Infantry Bde moved into Goa from Anmond in two columns. The right column (2 Bihar) moved through a track whereas the left column (3 Sikh) moved down the existing road. Both columns linked up at Mollem and then moved on to Ponda taking separate routes. 3 Sikh could not go beyond Darbandora on 18th. 2 Bihar went further to settle at Candearpar for the night. Meanwhile 4 Sikh, the rear battalion, reached Candearpar river crossing at midnight.

At 0600 hrs on 19th, the 4 Sikh crossed Candearpar by wading through chest high water and by mid-day rolled into Margao. It then marched on to Dabolim through Verna where a number of Portuguese surrendered at 1530 hrs. Finally it moved to Vasco da Gama where the Portuguese formally surrendered at 2030 hrs.

With 4 Sikh in the lead 2 Bihar also pressed on in the direction of Margao. But finding the Sikhs well set on the outskirts of the town it advanced on Verna. The enemy stronghold was attacked on both flanks and his resistance collapsed. The swift action of 2 Bihar at Verna enabled 4 Sikh to press on to Dabolim and Marmagao unhindered.

The 3 Sikh was put on reserve on 19th. From here it marched on to Margao and beyond in two columns. Some 400 Portuguese soldiers surrendered before it on 20th morning.

A diversionary move was made from the south along the axis Majali-Canacona-Margao in company (4 Rajput) strength. It was meant to mislead the Portuguese about the direction of the main Indian thrust. The southern column marched upto Margao overcoming road blocks, mines and broken bridges and helped in restoring order there. 17 Division ended more than four centuries of Portuguese rule over Goa in just 40 hours.

IAF also played a useful role and its Canberra aircraft twice bombed Dabolim airfield whereas Hunters bombed Bombolim Wireless Station.

Daman Operation

Operations in Daman were conducted by 1 Maratha LI. It launched an attack on Nani Daman from the north after neutralising the Flying Control Tower and Post-175 in a pre-dawn sweep. By 1700 hrs, the two companies had reached the Garden area south of the airfield. The battalion settled in this area for the night. At 1100 hrs on 19th the Portuguese made a surrender in Daman without giving any fight. In this push forward artillery and air support played an effective role.

Indian Army captured 600 soldiers and some guns and mortars in Daman. Indians suffered 1 JCO and 3 ORs killed and 1 JCO and 13 ORs wounded in Daman operation. Portuguese suffered 10 killed and 2 wounded.

Diu Operation

Diu was the smallest Portuguese possession in India. A two-pronged attack was made on Diu-one from the north-west and the other from the north-east. The north-western thrust on Kob-Forte-Do Passo-De Covo axis was made by two companies of 20 Rajput, to establish a bridge-head and to capture the airfield. But the Rajput effort was frustrated by the well sited MMG and LMG fire across the creek.

The Rajputs (B Coy) were, however, successful in their thrust on Ahmedpur-Gogla axis. They replaced the 4 Madras Company and successfully attacked Gogla at 1600 hrs. The enemy resistance was overcome with heavy pounding of guns. Portuguese garrison showed a white flag and surrendered.

In Diu operations the IAF gave very useful support to the Rajputs. Toofani aircraft gave much needed support by bombarding the citadel and the control tower at the airfield on 18th. On 19th 4 Madras (C Coy) occupied the Island of Panikota and captured 13 Portuguese soldiers.

Anjidiv Island

Anjidiv lies to the south of Goa. The task of capturing this Island was entrusted to *INS Mysore* and *INS Trishul*. While *Mysore* was to provide covering fire, *Trishul* was to land a party on the Island. The assault party called 'Kustum' landed there successfully at 0715 hrs on 18th. Another party followed at 0746 hrs. At this stage the Portuguese hoisted a white flag near beach Lima. But this was a deceptive move and the Portuguese

soon started firing on the second Indian party nearing the beach. Indians suffered some casualties in this treacherous attack. *Trishul* and *Mysore* thoroughly shelled the enemy strong points to break the resistance. As a result of this pressure many Portuguese surrendered on 18th. More prisoners were taken over on 19th. At 1425 hrs on 19th the Indian flag was hoisted at Anjidiv.

SINO-INDIAN CONFLICT, 1962

India had to face a Chinese attack some months after the operations in Goa. After consolidating her position in Tibet, China laid claim over large chunks of Indian territory in NEFA (Arunachal Pradesh) and Ladakh. To enforce these claims China established military posts all along the Sino-Indian border. When India took measures to stop these intrusions a clash followed in October 1962.

China had been preparing for this confrontation for some years. It had built roads, constructed airfields, conducted military exercises and had organised Tibet into a military district. India on the other hand was little prepared to face the Chinese attack. The Chinese invasion came along three directions—Thag La and Walong in NEFA and Chushul in Ladakh.

Attack on Kameng

A major offensive in Division strength came in Kameng Sector, south of Thag La ridge in Namkha Chu valley, on 21 October 1962. Incidents had taken place in the area in September and early October. The 7 Brigade, especially 2 Rajputs and 1/9 Gorkhas, fought a grim battle here. But the overwhelming superiority of the Chinese in men and fire power won the day for them. The other two battalions of 7 Brigade i.e. 9 Punjab and 4 Grenadiers were pulled back from the forward positions as their rear now became exposed, owing to enemy infiltrations.

Next, the Chinese advanced on Tawang from the north and the west. It was defended by two Indian battalions—1 Sikh and 4 Garhwal guarding the northern and western approaches respectively. The Chinese attacked Tawang with a brigade group on 23 October from the north and forced 1 Sikh to fall back. During this attack Subedar Joginder Singh who was commanding a platoon south of Bum La displayed extraordinary gallantry. Indians evacuated Tawang on 23 October to settle in Nuranang valley.

There was an interlude of some three weeks before the Chinese mounted a fresh attack on Sela-Bomdila Sector. The area was now held in better

strength by three brigades of the 4 Division—62 Bde at Sela, 65 Bde at Dirang Dzong and 48 Bde at Bomdila. 62 Bde (4 Garhwal, 2 Sikh LI, 4 Sikh LI, 1 Sikh and 13 Dogra) commanded by Brig Hoshiar Singh was well placed at Sela to fight the Chinese attack. Chinese made a three-pronged attack, aiming at Sela, Dirang Dzong and Bomdila, on 18-19 November, 1962. This led to total outflanking of Indian positions, spread between Sela and Bomdila and further south. The outflanking move of the Chinese led the Indian Commander to order a retreat, which proved disastrous. Chasing the Indians, the Chinese came down to Rupa, Foothills and Bomdila at a very fast pace. The threat to Tezpur was looming large. On 21st it was deserted by the people. The same day the Chinese declared unilateral cease-fire effective from mid-night on 21-22 November.

But in this drama of defeat many scenes of gallantry were enacted by Indian soldiers. 2 Rajputs and 1/9 Gorkhas fought bravely in the battle of Namkha Chu. 4 Garhwal did very well in the battle of Nuranang. Many brave soldiers including Brigadier Hoshiar Singh gave their lives in negotiating the Chinese road-blocks. Many others were lost in the dense jungles of Himalayas.

The Attack on Walong

In the east, the Chinese attacked Walong area of Lohit Division on 22 October. This area was held by 6 Kumaon, 4 Sikh and Assam Rifles personnel. 6 Kumaon fought bravely and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. But the mounting enemy pressure forced them to retreat to Walong where 4 Sikh were holding defensive positions. The Chinese attack on Walong on 27 October was beaten back with heavy losses to them. A lull followed and some organisational changes took place. 11 Brigade led by Brig Rawley took over the responsibility of the Sector on 31 October. In early November 3/3 Gorkha Rifles was flown to the area by air.

Meanwhile Chinese had occupied two important positions called Green Pimple and Yellow Pimple, near Tri-junction in the north-west of Walong. On 14 November the Indian Bde launched an attack on these positions to prevent Chinese outflanking move from the Tri-junction side. 6 Kumaon could not evict the entrenched enemy and fell back to the Tri-junction. On 16th the Chinese launched a massive attack in Division strength, with heavy artillery in support. The Indian Bde could not stand this attack and fell back. As the Chinese threatened to cut the Indian withdrawal, mounted Indian units withdrew to Hayuliang, suffering heavy casualties in the

process. 11 Bde suffered about one thousand casualties in killed, wounded and captured. It earned one Maha Vir Chakra, nine Vir Chakras and one Mention-in-Despatches for the battle of Walong.

The Attack on Ladakh

Another major battle was fought in Ladakh. The Chinese had occupied the Aksai Chin and penetrated into Galwan and Chip Chap valleys of Ladakh by 1959. When India took measures to stop further incursions into her territory, the Chinese launched an invasion.

On 20 October 1962, the Chinese attacked the Indian posts on Chip Chap river and threatened Daulat Beg Oldi. They forced J&K Militia, which was holding the area, to fall back. They made another thrust in Sirijap area, north of Pangong lake. This area, considered vital for the defence of Chushul, was held by 1/8 Gorkha Rifles in company strength. The company beat back the Chinese attack repeatedly but had to cave in before the mounting pressure. Major Uhan Singh Thapa, the Company Commander, distinguished himself in this action. In the October offensive in Ladakh, the Chinese overwhelmed almost all Indian posts stretching from Daulat Beg Oldi in the north to Demchok in the south.

Meanwhile, Indians continued their build-up in Ladakh. In November 1962, when fresh Chinese attack came, two Indian brigades (114 and 70) were well positioned ahead of Chushul to take on the attackers. As the enemy was likely to approach Chushul through the Spangur gap, 114 Bde was deployed to cover it as best as possible. One battalion (1/8 Gorkha) held the Gurung Hill to the north of the gap and another battalion (13 Kumaon) the Mager Hill to the south of the gap. 1 Jat was positioned north of the Chushul airfield in Thakung area. Some tank and gun support was also provided for.

When it came to actual battle the Chinese chose Gurung Hill and Mager Hill for attack on 18th morning. The attack was preceded by heavy firing on Indian positions. The Gurung Hill was attacked in waves in battalion strength. But in the face of stiff resistance from 1/8 Gorkhas they could capture only part of it. The Chinese had to mount another attack on 19th to capture the remaining part of Hill. Razang La was held by Kumaonis in company strength. The enemy made a three-pronged attack on the position and in spite of the bravery displayed by the Kumaonis it was lost to the enemy. Major Shaitan Singh distinguished himself in this battle. This was the end of Indian resistance in Ladakh.

The IAF did airlifting of men and material to the Sino-Indian border. During the period 20 October to 20 November, troops and supplies were flown to the support of the border posts virtually round the clock in all weathers and at extreme altitudes.

The war ended at midnight on 21 November 1962, with the unilateral cease-fire by the Chinese. The Government of India set up an Enquiry Committee under Lt Gen T. B. Henderson-Brooks to investigate into the reasons for the defeat of the Indian Army. He submitted his report on 12 May 1963, and this led to far reaching changes in the Indian Army.

INDO-PAK WAR, 1965

The result of Sino-India Conflict of 1962 encouraged Pakistan to seek a military solution of the Kashmir problem. A modernised Army, to which U.S.A. had contributed substantially, added to her confidence. By 1965, she had been able to acquire an edge over India in armour, artillery and air-power. This sense of superiority prompted her to plan aggression on Kashmir in 1965. It was a three-phased programme. In the first phase the Indian capacity to react was tested in the Rann of Kutch. In the second phase trouble was fomented in Kashmir to weaken the Indian hold. In the third phase an attempt was made to bottle up the Indian Army in Kashmir by sealing the supply line in Chhamb-Jaurian sector of Jammu.

The First Phase

The Rann of Kutch is an 80 km wide and 515 km long stretch of land bordering on Sind in Pakistan and Gujarat in India. The area was better defended from the Pakistan side. On the Indian side police posts guarded the border. Despite Pakistani mischief in Kanjarkot in January 1965, India expected no major intrusion in this area.

On 7 April 1965, Pakistan attacked the Indian border at Sardar post, Kanjarkot, Vigokot, Biar Bet, Chhad Bet, etc., in Brigade strength and over-ran the first two posts. India moved a Bde (50 Para) to check the Pakistani intrusion. Pakistan strengthened her Brigade with a tank regiment. On 23 April, Pakistan again struck on four border posts and captured Vigokot and Biar Bet. The hostilities ended on 1 July 1965, at the intervention of the British Prime Minister. Though no major gains accrued to either side, Pakistan felt elated by this adventure.

The Second Phase

After this supposed success in the Rann of Kutch, Pakistan put into action her plan to grab the valley of Kashmir by infiltration and sabotage. The conspiracy was code-named 'Operation Gibraltar'. 30,000 Raiders (Mujahids) divided into 'Task Forces' infiltrated into Kashmir between 1 and 5 August with this intent. The Indian XV Corps took some quick measures and was able to contain the infiltrators within fifteen days.

But to remove the threat completely it was necessary to seal the entry points of the infiltrators. Indian Army attacked Kargil (in Leh sector), Tangdhar (Tithwal sector) and Haji Pir (in Uri sector) with this intent. To further seal the entry points of the infiltrators a link with Punch was effected by 93 Brigade. In the process two strong features of Raja and Chand Tekri, held in strength by the enemy, were reduced on 5-6 September 1965. Mirpur area on river Kishanganga was taken care of by 104 Bde. The operation opened in this sector on 24 August and lasted till 21 September. The brigade fought many fierce battles to acquire complete domination in this area. In short, the timely action of the Indian Army (19 Division) turned 'Gibraltar' into a total disaster.

The Third Phase

Pakistan finally launched the operation 'Grand Slam' to retrieve the situation. The aim was to defeat Indian forces in Chhamb area to facilitate the capture of Akhnur bridge and Jammu. This in turn would have cut the Indian line of communication to Kashmir.

The Pak offensive in Division strength came at 0345 hrs on 1 September 1965. Comparative superiority in artillery, armour and infantry almost ensured its success. The Indian 10 Division was still in the making. The 191 Bde responsible for the defence of the area could not stop the Pak three-pronged advance and retreated to Akhnur on 4 September. With Pakistan resuming advance on Akhnur on the 5th, the situation became very critical. India took recourse to diversionary attacks on Pakistan in Lahore, Sialkot and Rajasthan sectors. This shattered the Pak dream to bottle up Indian forces in Kashmir.

Lahore Sector

In Lahore sector the three Divisions (15, 7, 4) of Indian XI Corps mounted attack on an area extending from Pathankot in the north to Suratgarh in the south. The area was divided into three sectors. The northern sector

along the GI Road axis was assigned to 15 Division, the central sector along the Khaira-Barki axis to 7 Division and the southern sector along the Khem Karan-Kasur axis to 4 Mountain Division. Necessary armour and artillery support was provided to each division. The corps aimed to capture all Pakistani territory east of Ichhogil Canal. The Indian attack commenced at 0400 hrs on 6 September 1965. In the beginning the operations of 15 Division in the northern sector went well. Its advance brigade captured Dograi in the first sweep and established a bridgehead across the Ichhogil and reached Batapore on the outskirts of Lahore. But it could not capitalise on these initial gains and fell back when the Pak troops retaliated with good armour support. The second attempt of the division to capture the Pak territory, initiated on 10 September, brought only a limited success. The highlight of this thrust was the capture of Dograi by the 3 Jat at midnight on 21 September. In this action Pak suffered 150 men dead and 100 others made prisoners.

The operations went on well in the central sector. Here the 7 Infantry Division advanced on Khaira-Barki axis with great dash and completed its assignment by 11 September 1965. The most difficult action during the advance was fought by the Division at Barki, which was protected by strong bunkers. 4 Sikh broke all enemy resistance and captured Barki by 2130 hrs on 10 September. Both sides suffered heavy casualties in this battle.

The 4 Division, however, found the going difficult in the southern sector. It shouldered a two-fold responsibility—capture Pak territory east of Ichhogil and contain possible enemy attack on Kasur-Khem Karan axis. The Division gained some initial success but the Pak counter offensive blunted the Indian advance. In fact, Pak had planned a powerful offensive in this sector as an enveloping move to destroy XI Corps.

The Indian 4 Division, unable to check the powerful attack, fell back on Asal Uttar. It now comprised only three and a half battalions as the 7 Bde had been rendered ineffective in the first Pak attack. But the Div was now occupying a well defended position with well sited artillery and armour in support. The Pak effort to run through the Indian position was, therefore, foiled. On the 8th night Pakistanis tried to outflank the position on the right with an armoured bde, but here again 4 Grenadiers stood like a rock to beat the Patton attack. Havildar Abdul Hamid alone destroyed two tanks and damaged one in this battle. Another outflanking move by a Pak armoured bde from the left side on Mahmoodpura-Dibbipura axis

also failed as the well sited Indian armour regiments trapped them on three sides. Pakistan lost 97 tanks including 72 Pattons in the battle of Asal Uttar. Indians made some attempts to recapture the lost territory, but Pakistanis held on to the area till the last. The cease-fire denied the Indians another opportunity to beat back the Pakistanis.

The right flank of XI Corps was protected by 29 Infantry Bde Group. It launched an attack on Dera Baba Nanak and captured it on 7 September. Indian XI Corps generally succeeded in its mission to capture areas east of Ichhogil Canal except in the Khem Karan sector.

Sialkot Sector

To ease pressure on Chhamb another front was opened by the Indian Army in Sialkot sector by launching 1 Corps on 8 September 1965. 26 Infantry Division carried diversionary move in the north towards Sialkot. 6 Mountain Division attacked Charwa-Maharajake area and captured it after some fighting. 14 Infantry Division established a bridge-head in Ikhnal area further to the east. This set the stage for the advance of 1 Armoured Division. It moved out on 8 September but bad weather hindered its progress. The commander then chose another axis to mount attack on Phillora on 11 September. While the Armoured Brigade was engaging the Pak armour, 43 Lorried Bde captured Phillora in a spirited action. Pak army lost nearly 61 tanks in this battle.

1 Armoured Division then proceeded to capture Chawinda on the 14th. The Pak armour had already concentrated in the area and, therefore, the Division could make little progress. However, it succeeded in capturing Jassoran and Batur Dograndi on the 16th. It was in one of the Pak counter attacks on Batur Dograndi that Lt Col Tarapore of Poona Horse was killed fighting. Another effort by 1 Corps to capture Chawinda on the 18th night met with limited success. The corps, however, succeeded in capturing about 466 sq kilometres of Pak territory. It destroyed and captured about 180 Pak tanks.

Rajasthan Sector

India opened a third front in Rajasthan sector to tie down the enemy forces in Sind. 11 Infantry Division carried operations on Barmer-Hyderabad axis of this sector. Gadra was occupied in the first sweep on 8 September and Pak Rangers were driven out from many more areas of the desert. Ding dong battle continued in the desert till the end of the war and Indian made some more gains. In all, India captured 388 sq km of Pak territory in this sector.

Air Support

The IAF gave substantial support to the Army in fighting the enemy on many fronts. On the first day of war Indian Vampires and Mysteres struck heavy blows on Pak armour, advancing on the Chhamb-Jaurian axis. Subsequently, IAF Canberras raided major Pakistan Air Force bases at Sargodha and Chaklala at night. Pakistani bases at Akwal, Peshawar, Kohat, Chak Jhumra and Risalwala were also raided. The Mysteres were employed primarily in the ground attack role whereas the Hunters were utilised for counter air interdiction and close support missions, as well as flying combat air patrols. The Gnat squadrons were the air defence mainstay. The astounding success of the Gnat against the Pak F-86 earned it the appellation "Sabre Slayer". During this conflict India lost 35 aircraft as against 70 by Pakistan.

The Indian Navy ensured the safety of our ports and coast-line. Pakistani Navy managed a sneak raid on Dwarka port but it caused no damage of military consequence.

In the 1965 War, Pakistan suffered heavily in men and material in spite of her superiority in arms and equipment. It is estimated that Pak Army lost 5988 killed and many more wounded. India suffered 2735 men in killed and 8225 in wounded. Indian tank losses were 80 as against 475 of Pakistan.

Finally, a cease-fire was agreed upon with effect from 23 September 1965 with UN efforts. The Tashkent Declaration and the subsequent agreement between the two countries led to the disengagement of forces and their withdrawal to positions occupied by them before 5 August 1965. This restored peace in the sub-continent for some time.

INDO-PAK WAR, 1971

After securing an absolute majority in the elections in 1971, the Awami League insisted upon autonomy for East Pakistan. The military rulers of West Pakistan responded with a military crack-down and repression. Consequently, about ten million East Pakistanis fled to India. This adversely affected the Indian economy. India asked Pakistan to create conditions for the return of the refugees to their homes in East Bengal. Pakistan sought to internationalise the issue by attacking India on 3 December 1971. The war was fought both on the eastern and the western fronts. India adopted aggressive strategy on the eastern front and a defensive strategy on the western front.

The Eastern Front

On the Eastern front the Indian Army defeated four divisions and 30,000 para-military forces of the Pak Army in the thirteen days' war. Three corps and 101 Communication Zone Area of the Indian Army participated in this war.

The Indian XXXIII Corps (20 Mtn Div, 71 Mtn Bde) conducted operations between the Jamuna and Padma rivers in the north-western sector of East Pakistan. The sector was defended by 16 Pak Div and 3000 para-military forces. While the Brigade advanced on Pachagarh-Thakurgaon axis, the Div attacked the waist line of the sector i.e. Hill area. It was finally reduced on 11 December 1971. The corps also captured enemy strongholds of Rangpur and Bogra on the 16th. During the war it inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and captured some seventeen thousand of its troops. It suffered 471 killed and 1450 wounded in the war.

The II Corps (9 Inf Div, 4 Mtn Div) carried out operations in the south-western sector of East Pakistan. The sector was bounded by Padma river in the north, Jamuna river in the east and the Bay of Bengal in the south. One Pak infantry division with eight battalions was defending this sector.

The 4 Mtn Div carried out operations in the northern part of this sector. It fought its way through Jibannagar, Kotchandpur, Suadih, Jhenida and Magura. It also overcame tough enemy resistance at Kushtia. The Division fought a crucial battle on 15 December on the western banks of the Madhumati.

9 Infantry Division carried out operations in the southern part of the Corps sector on Garibpur-Jessore-Khulna axis. It captured Burinda and Jessore and then moved on to Khulna. The Pak Brigade commander surrendered here on the 17th with 3700 troops.

An important thrust into East Pakistan was made by 101 Communication Zone Area (95 Bde and FJ Sector with one battalion) from the north. It covered the area bounded by the Meghna in the east, Jamuna in the west and Padma in the south-west. The Zone launched its attack on two axes. 95 Bde advanced on Kamalpur-Jamalpur-Madhupur axis. The Brigade encountered tough opposition at Kamalpur and Jamalpur. Heavy use of air and artillery power finally broke the enemy resistance at these strongholds. The enemy broke out from Jamalpur on 10th night and suffered heavy casualties during the retreat.

Meanwhile, FJ Force made rapid progress on Haluaghat-Mymensingh axes. The Pak position at Haluaghat was outflanked and the defending battalion totally destroyed. The Force captured Mymensingh on the 11th and Madhupur on the 12th. This was the time when Indian 4 Corps was knocking at the eastern gate of Dacca. The Pak Commander panicked and withdrew the small force, which was defending this sector, to meet the threat from the east. This enabled the 101 CZA to advance unchallenged. The 2 Para landing at Tangail and its securing the Poongli bridge also facilitated the advance of CZA Force. It was FJ Sector (strengthened by two battalions) which finally made it to Dacca on the 16th.

But the most important thrust into East Pakistan was carried by IV Corps (8, 57, 23 Divs, Kilo Force, East Bengal Battalion). It covered the area stretching from Sylhet in the north to Chittagong in the south. The sector was defended by two Pak divisions.

The 8 Mountain Division operated in Sylhet area. It encountered the major part of the Pak 14 Division in this sector. Its 81 Bde advanced on Kalaura-Sylhet axis and 59 Bde on Kalaura-Frenchganj-Sylhet axis. It fought its way to Sylhet destroying all opposition enroute. On 7 December a battalion was airlifted to Sylhet to unnerve the enemy and break his will to fight. The Div captured Sylhet on 14 December. On 17 December, 107 officers and 6500 soldiers of the Pak army surrendered to 8 Division.

The 57 Division (71, 311 Bdes) operated on Agartala-Akhaura-Ashuganj-Dacca axis. In one of the initial attacks on Gangasagar near Akhaura on 3 December, Lance Naik Albert Ekka of 14 Guards displayed extraordinary gallantry. On 5 December, the Division attacked Akhaura with two Brigades and inflicted a crushing defeat on the defending 27 Pak Bde. It then advanced on to Ashuganj and beat a sharp counter-attack from the Pak Bde. Meanwhile, 61 Bde of the Division advancing on Comilla-Mynamati-Daudkandi axis in a wide outflanking move captured Daudkandi on 10 December. This move by 61 Bde forced the 117 Pak Bde to vacate well prepared defences at Lalmai and Comilla and fall back on Mynamati. This in turn facilitated the advance of Indian 23 Division.

The southern thrust in the IV Corps sector was carried by 23 Division (83, 181, 301 Bdes) on Himatnagar-Laksham-Chandpur axis. It completely encircled and emasculated 53 Pak Bde at Laksham. By 9 December the division had captured Chandpur. It crossed the Meghna on 14 December and then pressed on to Dacca, where it reached on the 16th, just after the

301, CZA area. Further south a two-pronged attack was made on Chittagong. The northern hook was led by 83 Bde and the southern hook by the Kilo Force. The enemy surrendered on the 16th after feeble resistance. It is said that precision rocket attack by IAF fighters on the Governor's Secretariat in Dacca hastened the Pak decision to surrender.

On 16 December at 1630 hrs Lt Gen Niazi surrendered to Lt Gen Aurora with 93,000 regular and para-military men. War on the Eastern front ended in a complete victory for India.

The Western Front

On the Western front the main battles were fought in Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab and Rajasthan. On J&K front Pakistan had deployed two divisions, each four to five brigade strong, and about 20,000 para-military men. In Rajasthan, it had one division plus one brigade, one regiment of armour and a few thousand para-military men.

Jammu-Kashmir Sector

In Jammu & Kashmir Pakistan launched offensive on 3 December, with an attack by 12 Division on Punch held by Indian 93 Brigade. Pak forces succeeded in occupying Thanpir and Mandi heights on 4 December. But their attack on Shahpur, Gulerian and Denna was repulsed with heavy losses. Renewed Pak attempt to capture these positions on the 4th night was also defeated. India then went on the offensive and recaptured Thanpir and Mandi positions. Within three days the Pak offensive in Punch fizzled out.

In Kargil sector the Pak out-posts located at high altitudes posed a threat to Srinagar-Leh road. 121 Indian Infantry Brigade captured these posts after a fierce battle.

The most fierce Pak attack came in Chhamb Sector. 10 Indian Division, with four brigades and ancillary troops under command, was holding this area. 23 Pak Division launched the offensive in Chhamb on 3 December with four brigades. It succeeded in capturing Mandiala Heights which was weakly held by the Indians. The Pak attack on Kachrial Height on the 4th night was, repulsed, but the Indian counter-attack on Mandiala Heights failed. Pakistan after a major attack on the 5th night forced 191 Brigade to withdraw from Chhamb.

Emboldened by its success in Chhamb, Pak decided to carry war across the Munawar Tawi river. On 10 December, using tanks in assault role, 111 Pak Inf Brigade overran the Indian company positions at Darh and Raipur crossing. Pak Brigade made some more gains but owing to heavy losses suffered in the process, it decided to pull back. 10 Indian Division, therefore, regained the lost positions by 1700 hrs. That was the end of the Pak misadventure in Chhamb sector.

Punjab Sector

An important battle of this sector was fought in the Shakargarh area. Pakistan was holding the area with more than three divisions. I Indian Corps (54, 36, 39 Divs) launched an offensive between Basantar and Ravi rivers to break the enemy concentration in this area. The corps moved into Shakargarh bulge during the night on 5 December.

The Indian corps made a double thrust into the bulge—one from the north and the other from the east. The northern thrust was carried by 54 and 39 Divisions between Basantar and Bein rivers. This thrust had to negotiate deep mine-fields well covered by tanks, anti-tank guns and machine guns. In view of these hurdles, 39 Division could not make much progress in its area of responsibility. But the 54 Division succeeded in establishing a bridge-head across river Basantar on 16th morning, after defeating the enemy in many battles. Repeated counter-attacks by Pak forces failed to dislodge the bridge-head. In the day-long battle Pakistan lost about 46 tanks. Second-Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal distinguished himself in the battle of Basantar. By the time the cease-fire came into effect the Division had penetrated 21 km inside Pakistan.

The eastern thrust was carried by 36 Division. Its main task was to advance across Ravi river in Gurdaspur area and capture Nainakot and Narkot. The Division inched forward in the face of tough resistance and reached Bein river on 12 December. It could not, however, make much progress due to heavy mining of Bein river.

The IX Corps, operating between Dera Baba Nanak and Ganga Nagar, also made some gains. The capture of Dera Baba Nanak by 15 Division was indeed a notable achievement.

Rajasthan Sector

In Rajasthan sector 11 and 12 Indian Infantry Divisions were deployed. Pak forces in this sector included 18 Infantry Division plus one Brigade

and some para-military forces. Indian forces had planned a double thrust in the Rajasthan sector—12 Division on Longewala-Rahim Yar Khan axis and 11 Division on Barmer-Naya Chor axis. The thrust of 12 Division could not materialise because of the Pak attack on Longewala on 3 December. This Pak attack was blunted with the tactical air support. The Pak army lost about 24 tanks, and 150 vehicles in this air attack.

In the south, 11 Indian Infantry Division overran Pak border posts on the 4th. Advancing 45 km into Pak territory it contacted Naya Chor defences on 11 December. A commando battalion also assisted the division in its advance. But the attack on Naya Chor could not materialise because of the cease-fire.

Further south in the Kutch sector Indian para-military forces made some effective thrusts. Consequently, Vingoora and Chhad Bet complex were captured by evicting the Indus Rangers. Indians suffered 90 killed, 252 wounded and 17 missing in these operations. Pak suffered many more casualties.

Role of Indian Navy

The Indian Naval offensive started on the morning of 4 December, when *Vikrant* based aircraft and ships of the Eastern Fleet struck military targets in East Pakistan. Cox's Bazar airfield was damaged and six Pak ships were destroyed at Chittagong harbour. The Pak submarine *Ghazi* was sunk off the coast of Vishakhapatnam. Round the clock attack by the naval aircraft, caused extensive damage to Pak military installations and harbours. By sealing all the escape routes to Pakistan *Vikrant* forced many Pakistanis to surrender.

A Naval Task Force of the Western Fleet attacked Karachi harbour on 4-5 December and destroyed 3 ships. It caused extensive damage to oil installations at the harbour. Another attack on Karachi harbour was made on 8 December. Simultaneously, another Task Force carried a diversionary raid on Makran Coast and captured a Pak merchant ship. By these daring acts the Indian Navy bottled up the Pak warships in harbours. Indian Navy lost anti-submarine frigate *Khukri* during the Naval operations in the Arabian Sea.

The Effort of IAF

IAF also gave a good account of itself. It fought a major aerial battle with four Pakistani Sabres on a strafing mission on 22 November, and shot down three Sabres. Some more encounters took place on the following days.

On 3 December, the PAF launched pre-emptive strikes against major IAF bases in western India. It also attacked Indian railway stations, armour concentrations and other targets. In response, the IAF carried out 4,000 sorties in the west and 1,978 sorties in the east against Pak targets. In the west the IAF's primary task was disruption of the Pak communication system, the destruction of her fuel and ammunition reserves and the prevention of her ground force concentration. Flg Offr Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon distinguished himself in an air battle against Pak Sabres on 14 December. On the eastern front the IAF finished the PAF in a quick action. In 1971 War the IAF gave crucial support to the ground forces on both fronts and maintained its superiority over PAF.

The war lasted for fourteen days. Pak forces in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) were convincingly defeated and about 93,000 of them were made prisoners. In the west, a large area of Pakistani territory was occupied by Indian troops. About 600 officers and men of the Indian Army were decorated with gallantry awards. Of these 4 earned Param Vir Chakra, 76 Maha Vir Chakra and 513 Vir Chakra. In this war India suffered more than 12,000 casualties. Of these 2,908 laid down their lives for the country.

The war on the eastern front ended with unconditional surrender of Pak forces at 1631 hrs on 16 December. Thereafter, the Indian Prime Minister announced a unilateral ceasefire effective from 2000 hrs on 17th. The Simla Agreement signed by the Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan at midnight of 2 July sorted out the residual problems of war.

INDIAN ARMY—THE GUARDIAN OF PEACE

The concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (the entire world, a family) propounded by the ancient sages of India found expression in the foreign policy proclaimed and practised by independent India. It was no mere coincidence, therefore, that when the need arose for the United Nations to find a force to keep peace between warring groups of humanity, it looked to India.

Korea, 1953

Korea was the first country where the Indian soldier was asked to fight the battle of peace. The end of World War II saw Korea divided into two parts along the 38th parallel. On 25 June 1950, a war started in Korea, which ended on 27 July 1953, with the signing of the Armistice Agreement. The

Agreement provided for the creation of Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) and the Custodian Force India (CFI) for the supervision of the Armistice and the disposal of the prisoners of war.

The CFI was made up of 5 Raj Rif, 6 Jat, 3 Dogra and 3 Garhwal and ancillary services grouped under the 190 Inf Bde. Maj Gen S.P.P. Thorat, DSO, was nominated GOC of the Force. Subsequently, one more battalion was added to the Brigade. Altogether 5,230 Indians of all ranks went to Korea. The Force left India in five batches in August-September 1953.

On arrival in Korea the CFI took over some 25,000 prisoners under protection. Its main task was to enable the parent nations to "offer explanation" to their men. It was a ticklish task indeed. Prisoners often refused to cooperate and on occasions the CFI had to make a show of force. In the circumstances within the stipulated period of 90 days, ending on 23 December 1953, only 3,222 prisoners could be given explanations. In the absence of any alternative, the CFI handed over 21,805 prisoners back to UN Command and 347 prisoners to Chinese and Korean Red Cross representatives. The other prisoners were repatriated according to their choice. 88 Prisoners were brought to India and finally 11 of them chose to settle in India.

Indochina, 1954

Soon after her disengagement in Korea, the Indian Army was asked to serve the cause of peace in Indochina. India had played a vital role in the Geneva Conference which brought about an end to the war in Indochina. Therefore, she was requested to assist in supervising the implementation of the Agreement. For the purpose of supervision, three separate Commissions were set up, one each for Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Each Commission had India as Chairman and Canada and Poland as Members.

1 Grenadiers Regiment was sent to Indochina to provide security to various headquarters and teams created under the Agreement. As the work of the Commission lasted for many years, a turnover policy, under which officers and personnel were replaced every year with fresh staff from India, was followed. Gradually, there was a decrease in the number of teams and proportionate decrease in the number of troops. Indian troops were pulled out in 1968, 1969 and 1970, leaving only four officers and three Other Ranks with the Commissions in Vietnam and Laos. Subsequently, the Commission in Vietnam was also wound up.

Egypt, 1956

The United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was created in 1956 to secure the cessation of hostilities between Egypt on the one hand and Israel, UK and France on the other. India contributed one infantry battalion and some ancillary units to this Force. India's participation in the peace-keeping mission was code-named "Operation Shanti."

The first batch of Indian troops left by air on 16 November 1956. But their actual participation in the peace-keeping started in early December when 3 Para (Kumaon) entered the buffer zone which separated the Anglo-French and Egyptian forces. Subsequently, it followed the Israeli withdrawal along Suez Road.

Later the battalion concentrated at El Arish, to take over its area of responsibility in the Gaza Strip. On 6 March despite rain storms, 236 Indian soldiers entered the Strip at 2000 hrs. At 0400 hrs, the next day the Israelis pulled out and the Indians took over the area.

The main task of the UNEF was to guard the Armistice Demarcation Line (ADL) and to protect UN establishments. With this end in view, the Indian battalion established 27 observation posts in its sector, extending over an area of 13 km. UNEF Commander Maj Gen E.L.M. Burns, spoke highly of the Indian Battalion's performance.

Indians served in Gaza until 1967. On 18 May 1967, Egypt served quit orders on UNEF. On 5 June, war erupted between Israel and Egypt. This disrupted the evacuation plan of Indian troops. Caught in the war, they suffered 14 killed and 25 wounded. Indians finally returned via Cyprus.

Lebanon, 1958

Lebanon was caught in internal strife in the fifties and this led to US military intervention. This was resented by the Arabs and they demanded an early withdrawal of US troops. The UN General Assembly passed a resolution to this effect unanimously.

The Security Council decided to station an Observer Group in Lebanon to prevent the entry of foreigners and smuggled arms, and to ensure free and fair elections. The Observer Group comprised 71 officers drawn from India, Norway and Ecuador. Col Ranbir Singh of the Indian Army led the Group. It arrived in Lebanon on 19 June 1958. The elections were held

in a peaceful manner and the President took office on 28 September. The last batch of the UN troops was withdrawn from Lebanon on 25 October 1958.

Congo, 1961

In 1960, Belgium terminated her 78 years' rule in the Congo and Patrice Lumumba formed the first national government. Soon tribal violence erupted in the Congo and the provinces of Katanga and Kasai seceded. To save the Congo from a disastrous civil war, the Security Council by its resolution of 21 February 1961, decided upon military intervention in that country. India consented to contribute a Brigade to the UN force.

To end the secession of Katanga the UN forces launched two important operations code-named 'Rumpunch' and 'Marthor' in August-September 1961. The Indian Independent Brigade made substantial contribution in these operations. It was during 'Marthor' that the UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld died on 18 September, in a plane crash while on a mission to Congo. In a subsequent operation Captain Salaria of 3/1 Gorkha Rifles was killed on 5 December while clearing an enemy road-block. The last and most important act of Indian Independent Bde Group in Katanga was the launching of 'Operation Grand Slam' on 28 December 1962. It aimed at freeing Elisabethville and Jadotville from gendarmerie (Katanga groups) menace. During 'Operation Grand Slam' the Indian Bde Group suffered 7 dead and 49 wounded. IAF also contributed substantially towards the success of UN troops in the Congo. The repatriation of Indian Brigade Group which started on 1 March 1963, was completed on 30 June 1964. In all, 39 units of the Indian Army participated in the Congo operations during 1960-64. During the two year service with the UN, 142 Indian Army officers and men won awards for gallantry or distinguished service.

West Asia, 1988

A war between Iran and Iraq started in September 1980, over the control of Shatt-al-Arab water channel. Subsequently, it assumed territorial and religious overtones. As a result of UN efforts a cease-fire became effective there on 20 August 1988.

The Security Council Resolution provided for a UN International Military Observation Group (UNIMOG) to supervise the Cease-Fire Agreement (CFA). 350 Military officers from 26 countries including India formed the Group. India contributed 15 officers (one Brigadier, one Colonel, and

thirteen Majors) to the Group. The Indian contingent contributed substantially in peace-keeping on the cease-fire line.

Angola

Angola, a Portuguese colony, became independent in 1975. Tribal feuds engulfed the new born country soon. This brought in the involvement of some foreign countries including Cuba in Angolan affairs.

To bring peace in strife-torn Angola, the Security Council provided for the creation of United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) in December 1988. Its main task was to supervise the redeployment of troops and withdrawal of Cuban forces. The Mission comprised 71 Military Observers and some 20 civilians. Ten countries including India were represented on the Mission. India had contributed 7 officers to the Mission.

Maldives

On 3 November 1988, at 0415 hrs, Maldives, a small country in the Indian Ocean, witnessed a coup attempt. The President of Maldives requested India, UK and USA for help. India responded promptly and the first batch of Indian troops landed at Hulule airport near Male at 2200 hrs the same day. More troops followed in subsequent flights.

The Indian troops accomplished their task with utmost speed and efficiency and foiled the coup attempt. Many mercenaries were captured. Indian Navy and Air Force contributed to the success of the operation substantially.

IPKF in Sri Lanka

India's efforts at helping to find a solution to the ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka culminated in the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement signed in Colombo on 29 July 1987. The Agreement was a balancing act between legitimate aspirations of the Sri Lanka Tamils on the one hand and the integrity and unity of Sri Lanka on the other. The Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) landed in strife-torn Sri Lanka to restore peace and normalcy.

Unfortunately, one of the Tamil groups, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) refused to shed militancy, necessary to restore the democratic process in the Island and started attacking the IPKF. The IPKF was, therefore, forced to start operations to disarm them in early October 1987. In these search and raid operations it suffered heavy casualties.

The IPKF achieved remarkable success in containing LTTE terrorism in the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka. It also ensured successful completion of the provincial, presidential and parliamentary elections, despite serious threats from the JVP and LTTE.

The IPKF was the result of a peace accord. When the Sri Lankan government expressed a desire for its pull out, India agreed to do so in phases. The last batch of the IPKF left Sri Lanka on 24 March 1990. More than 1000 Indian soldiers shed their blood to bring peace to the Island.

U.P. Thapliyal
Director

Medals and Decorations of India

The hero protects and cherishes all, and all things
depend upon the hero.

THE ANCIENT PERIOD

The custom of rewarding the brave is as old as man. In early tribal societies the mantle of leadership fell on the most valiant. Among the Indo-Aryans the brave Indra became the commander and the king. The soldiers were entitled to a share in the spoils of war commensurate with their contribution. The charioteers were entitled to one-fourth of the booty captured in war. Subsequently, it was ordained that spoils such as chariots, elephants, parasols, women and vessels would go to the brave who win them. The lure of earthly rewards continued to inspire the brave for centuries to come.

In the epic age the reward of heavenly bliss motivated the soldier to fight resolutely. In the *Gita*, Krishna exhorts Arjuna to join the battle because in the event of victory the pleasures of earth will accrue to him and in the event of death he will ascend to heaven.

In the Mahabharata there is a reference that Janaka, the ruler of Videha, through his yogic powers, enabled his soldiers to see the glory of the martyrs in heaven and the ignominy of the cowards in hell. He addressed them "Behold there are regions endowed with great splendour for those that fight fearlessly; full of Gandharva girls, these regions are eternal and capable of granting every wish. There on the other side are the regions of hell intended for those that fly away from the battle. They would have to rot there for eternity in everlasting ingloriousness.... The laying down of life (in battle) constitutes in respect of heroes, their happy door to heaven". The fallen heroes went to heaven in the escort of celestial nymphs.

The concept of gallantry found expression in the institution of *Virukala* (memorials of the gallant) in southern India. Such memorials are referred to in Sangam literature. When a soldier fell fighting his compatriots marked the spot by raising there a stone bearing the name and fame of

the fallen hero. Soon a literary convention standardised the procedure for erecting such memorials. Often these became the object of worship with people.

The custom of honouring gallantry by giving cash awards also prevailed in ancient India. The *Arthashastra* of Kautilya even specifies the awards for various acts of gallantry. "A hundred thousand (*Panas*) for slaying the king (the enemy); fifty thousand for slaying the Commander-in-Chief or the heir apparent; ten thousand for destroying an elephant or a chariot, a thousand for killing a horse; a hundred for slaying the chief of the infantry; twenty for bringing a head; and twice the pay in addition to whatever is seized". Similar views on cash awards are met in the Puranas and Niti works.

Enhanced pay and promotions were granted for distinguished performance in the battlefield. A warrior who broke the enemy array or saved his own front received royal treatment and doubled emoluments. He was also granted promotion and gifts such as jewellery and sandal-wood. The king was expected to promote soldiers for extraordinary bravery. Hoysala rulers promoted brave soldiers as *Garuda* i.e. life guard of the king.

The brave were honoured with land grants and relief in taxation. The family of the soldier who died fighting was given rent free land. Chivalric titles were conferred on distinguished soldiers. Selected few were honoured with a *Prasalapatta* i.e. a band or fillet of gold. In this connection *Todar* and *Gand Pindara*, two Hoysala awards, are of unusual interest. *Todar* was a golden badge with carvings conferred on soldiers promoted to serve as life guards to the kings. It was worn on the left foot. *Gand Pindara* was bestowed on reputed soldiers and was worn like an anklet on the right leg.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD

In the medieval period India was ruled by Turks, Afghans and Mughals. Sultanate kings honoured their soldiers with titles, degrees and roles of honour, cash and privileges. The Mughals conferred high sounding titles such as Amir Khan (Lord of Riches), Zafar Khan (Lord of Victory), Sarbuland Khan (Lord of Exalted Position), Sajjat Khan (Lord of Bravery), Amir-ul-Umara, Khan-e-Khanan, Khan Jahan, etc.

The *Khalat* or robe of honour was bestowed in accordance with the status of the recipient. The seven piece *Khiyat*, the highest category, comprised a cap, a long gown, a close fitting coat, two pairs of trousers, two shirts,

two girdles and a scarf. People in profession other than the army were also entitled to this honour.

Other honours included the right to display the battle-drum and *Mahi-e-marathi* (fish symbol). The latter could be granted only to nobles who commanded at least 6000 *sowars*. Vassal kings were bestowed with *Tugh*, *Alam* and *Aflabgir*. Cash awards were also given. Ornaments, palanquin, horse, chariot, pearls and jewels were also granted to men of distinction. Among the medieval awards there is nothing which could compare with the modern medal.

MODERN PERIOD

The institution of medals was introduced in India by the East India Company in the eighteenth century. Earlier, in England medals for military service had been instituted by Queen Elizabeth in late 16th century. A campaign medal had been instituted for the Battle of Dunbar in 1650. A war service medal was instituted by Charles I in 1643 "to be delivered to wear on the breast by every man who shall be certified under the hands of their commander-in-chief to have done us faithful service in the forlorn hope". Thus began the history of the British war medals and decorations.

When the East India Company assumed a political status in India in the later half of the eighteenth century, the British institution of war medals was in its formative stages. The company institutions in India, therefore, contributed to their growth in a substantial measure.

War Medals

The earliest medal issued by the Company on the Indian soil was to honour the native officers who had suppressed a mutiny at Monghyr in 1766. Next came the Deccan Medal (1778-84). It was the earliest Anglo-Indian medal to be awarded to all ranks. It was worn suspended from the neck by a yellow cord. This was followed by the Mysore Medal (1791-92) which was again awarded to all participant native troops. Srirangapattanam Medal was, however, awarded to all officers and men, European and native, who had taken part in the battle. It was struck in gold for high nobility, in silver gold for officers and copper bronze for men. The ribbon was orange-watered and symbolised the emblem of Tipu Sultan.

In the first half of the 19th century the Company's growing ambitions brought her into conflict with the native states and bordering countries. This led to many wars and issue of many medals.

Instituting a medal for the Nepal War, the General Order by the Governor General in Council dated 20 March 1816 said "the nature of the country and the climatic conditions were so novel to the native troops that a greater degree of merit must be attached to intrepidity under such circumstances, at the same time that a testimonial of exemplary behaviour in such a service must have more than ordinary value to those on whom it may be bestowed. Government has, therefore, determined that silver medals shall be presented to every native officer who actually served within the hills and to as many of the non-commissioned officers and privates as shall be recommended by the commanders of their respective Battalions for distinguished zeal or gallantry in the course of their duty."

Institution of many campaign medals resulted in manifold increase in the number of medals. To avoid such multiplications in the forties of the 18th century, the Army General Service Medal was introduced in the British Army. In other words, now the same medal could be given for all small wars or expeditions in a certain country or continent, with bars attached to the ribbon denoting the particular service for which the medal was awarded. The Company, following the Home Government, instituted Army of India Medal in 1851. Four General Service Medals were subsequently instituted to cover operations undertaken from 1849 to 1895, 1895 to 1898 and 1906 to 1925. To commemorate the 'Robert's march' from Kabul to Kandhar in 1880, a bronze medal called 'Robert's Star' was instituted. It is notable that a star was granted only when a major campaign was to be commemorated. A General Service Medal was granted for minor campaigns.

Gallantry Medals

The campaign or commemorative medals referred to above were granted to all participants in a war. But in this system there was no recognition for the gallantry of an individual. The Company, therefore, followed the British model in this regard. In the beginning the gallant deeds of individual soldiers were recorded in the despatches sent by the commander to the Governor General and by the Governor General to the Board of Control. These despatches bear eloquent testimony to the bravery of many a soldier.

During wars with the native states, the Company also followed the custom of rewarding its soldiers with prize money. After the English defeated the Rohillas, the money that fell to the victors was distributed among soldiers in an equitable manner. At the end of the Mysore Wars the spoils collected at Srirangapattanam were distributed among the generals and the soldiers. After the victory against the Marathas on 11 September 1803, the prize money amounting to 540 thousand rupees was distributed among the soldiers. The General Order by the Governor General in Council dated the 8 October 1803 runs: "the Governor General in Council... deems it to be the duty of this Government to anticipate the sanction of His Majesty, and of the Honourable the Court of Directors for the distribution of this sum, as a testimony of the applause and fortitude with which the British Government views the exemplary valour, discipline, zeal and firmness displayed by the army under the personal command of His Excellency General Lake during the present glorious campaign, and the memorable battle of Delhi".

At the end of the Mysore Wars, the Prize Committee directed that the state sword of Tipu Sultan be presented to General Baird in the name of the army as a testimonial of their high admiration of his courage and conduct in the assault. "For speedy and glorious termination of war". Governor General Lord Wellesley was presented a star and badge of the Order of St. Patrick, composed of Tipu's jewels, by the Court of Directors.

Honorary colours and standards were conferred on Regiments for gallant performance. After the victory at Aligarh and Delhi in 1803 the participating units were granted colours.

The British sovereign granted the title 'Royal' to a service corps or regiment in recognition of distinguished service. In 1892 Indian Marine was awarded this title. Indian Air Force became the Royal Indian Air Force on 12 March 1945. Many services, corps and regiments of the Indian Army were awarded this title in recognition of their distinguished service. After India became a Republic the use of this title was discontinued.

The British custom of granting Battle Honours to units for gallant performance in war was also introduced in India. Public monuments were erected to honour the dead heroes. Lord Wellesley ordered that 'a public monument be erected at Fort William to the brave officers and men, European and native who have fallen in the public service during the Aligarh and Delhi campaign'. A similar order was issued by him to honour the gallants who laid down their lives in the battle of Assaye: "The names

of the brave officers and men who fell at the battle of Assaye will be commemorated, together with the circumstances of action, upon the public monument to be erected at Fort William to the memory of those who have fallen in public service during the present campaign".

Occasionally the award of a medal was accompanied by land grants and hike in pay. In November 1817, the Governor in Council recommended promotion and enhanced pay to Jarnadar Shaik Hussain and Hunybhye for their fidelity and attachment to the Company. "It is the intention of the Governor in Council also to bestow on each a medal with a suitable inscription and to recommend to the Honourable the Court of Directors the grant to each on retirement from service and to their heirs in perpetuity land in Inam in such part of the British territories as they prefer yielding an income equal to double the emoluments of the ordinary pension of the rank they may hold on their retiring from service".

In the early phase of the Company rule in India the following honours and awards were in use with the Indian Army:-

1. Mention-in-Despatches
2. Campaign Medals and Stars
3. Prize Money
4. Distinguished Service Medals
5. Pay Hike and Promotion
6. Land Grants

About the middle of the nineteenth century a system of military decoration was introduced in India. Indian Order of Merit (in three classes) was the earliest honour, instituted to recognise the gallantry of Indian officers and men. In 1856 the Victoria Cross was instituted and it was subsequently made applicable to Indians as well. In 1857 the Victoria Cross and the Distinguished Conduct Medal were the only decorations which could be won on the battlefield.

Indian Order of Merit, Military Cross and Indian Distinguished Service Medal were added in due course. There were also some medals which could be awarded to Indians and these included CIE, CEE, OBE, MBE, OBI(1), OBI(2), IMSM and EEM. This was the position of Indian medals and decorations at the end of World War I.

After World War I, 420,000 acres of land was distributed among 5,902 VCOs and JORs in recognition of their distinguished service. Jangi Inam was granted to 14,100 recipients for two lives. VCOs, JORs and followers

received Rs.10, Rs.5, and Rs.2 ½ respectively. 200 Jagirs were awarded to specially selected VCOs for distinguished service. Two hundred honorary commissions as King's Commissioned Officers were granted to VCOs.

During World War II some changes were introduced in the system of honours and awards. A gratuity of Rs.200/- was sanctioned for the IDSM and Rs.75/- for each bar thereto. From 15 February 1944, Indian ranks were made eligible for the award of Military Medals. The IOM was placed above the Military Cross in the order of precedence. The MC hereafter became the lowest gallantry decoration open to VCOs. The award of IOM was generally confined to VCOs and its grant to IORs was limited to outstanding acts of leadership. The IDSM was placed above the MM and its award restricted to IORs.

These changes necessitated some changes in the allowances attached to the awards. Earlier to World War II, winners of gallantry decorations were paid entirely by the Central Government. But during the war some provincial governments decided to make grants of land or money to soldiers. The Punjab Government took the initiative in this matter in 1943.

In the course of time, decorations such as Distinguished Service Order, Military Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Force Cross, Indian Order of Merit, Conspicuous Gallantry Medal, Distinguished Flying Medal, Air Force Medal, Military Medal and Distinguished Service Medal were instituted. The Indian soldiers were entitled to all decorations of the British Army.

POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

After Independence, a new system had to be devised to replace the British system. The Jammu and Kashmir operations had started in October 1947, and there was urgency to institute some decorations to honour the brave. A Committee was, therefore, appointed to examine the need of instituting gallantry awards for the Indian Armed Forces. The Committee suggested the Chakra series i.e. Param Vir Chakra, Maha Vir Chakra and Vir Chakra in June 1948.

The awards were sought to be instituted by a royal warrant. But subsequently these were instituted by the Government of India on Republic Day i.e. 26 January 1950. Thus a new era of decorations and medals started in India. These institutions viz., Param Vir Chakra, Maha Vir Chakra and Vir Chakra were to rank above all the decorations awarded to the Indian

personnel earlier. The General Service Medal 1947 was instituted to recognise the general operational service. The number of Indian decorations and medals has since increased manifold.

Then came the Ashoka Chakra series (in three classes) for gallantry displayed other than in the face of the enemy. This series now comprises Ashoka Chakra, Kirti Chakra and Shaurya Chakra. Vishisht Seva Medal (in three classes) was instituted in 1960. This was later redesignated as Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal. Yudha Seva series comprising Sarvottam Yudha Seva Medal, Uttam Yudha Seva Medal and Yudha Seva Medal is a recent addition in decorations.

In between, campaign medals such as Samar Seva Star, Raksha Medal, Poorvi Star, Paschimi Star, Sangram Medal, Videsha Seva Medal and General Service Medal were instituted. Long service and good conduct medals were instituted from time to time and these comprise Meritorious Service Medal, Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, 30 Years' Long Service Medal, 20 Years' Long Service Medal and 9 Years' Long Service Medal. The commemoration medals include Indian Independence and Anniversary Medals. The number of Indian national awards was seven in January 1950. It grew to 10 in March 1952, to 27 in November 1964, to 40 in January 1973, to 51 in June 1976 and to 55 in January 1981.

The Ribbon

The ribbon forms an integral part of the medal. How this came about is best explained by Steward in his *ABC of War Medals and Decorations*: "The rout of the Spanish Armada in 1588 probably gave the incentive to Good Queen Bess to commemorate the auspicious occasion by the issue of medals in gold and silver and we may reasonably assume that they were given for personal decoration to the leading officers engaged in the defeat of the Armada or that the recipients thought that by wearing this they would show respect to the Queen and thus established the custom of wearing medals presented by the sovereign for war service. A specimen of these medals with rings and chain for suspension probably from the neck can be seen in the British Museum".

The medal was thus associated with some sort of medium which helped its display. To start with it was perhaps a chain. Subsequently, the chain was replaced by a ribbon. The Deccan Medal, first of its kind for military service in India, instituted in 1784, was worn suspended from the neck

by a yellow cord run through a metal loop. The ribbon in its present form came into vogue much later.

The 'Naval Riband of England' and the 'Military Riband of England' are the two earliest of the class. The latter was used for the Army Gold Medal and Cross 1808-14 and the Waterloo and General Service Medal 1847.

The recipients of Srirangapattanam and First Burmese War medals also used this ribbon. The use of Military Riband of England with the medals instituted by the East India Company in India was indeed strange. Lord Ellenborough, the Governor General of India (1842-44), favoured a Military Riband of India depicting an oriental sun-rise on the lines of the Military Riband of England. It was used for Kelat-i-Ghilzee, Jallalabad, Afghanistan and Sind Medals and the Maharajpore and Punniar Stars. With the growing number of medals some new ribbons were introduced. The Ghaznee Medal was issued with a separate ribbon. Thereafter, each new institution was accompanied by a new ribbon. It is notable that all ribbons conveyed some meaning or message by means of its colour or colour combinations.

The ribbons for the medals of Indian Republic have been chosen after considerable thought. The purple ribbon of the Param Vir Chakra symbolises conspicuous bravery. Purple is the colour of the heart. Its old association with Victoria Cross confers it with a special dignity.

A pattern is perceptible in the choice of Indian ribbons. These are generally made in saffron, white and green, the colours of the Indian National Flag. Army Red, Navy Blue and Air Force Blue are used in the medals exclusive to these services. Generally speaking in ribbons, the red symbolises courage and bravery, the saffron, self sacrifice and dedication to service, the green, growth and auspiciousness, the white, purity and glory, and blue, devotion and sacrifice. Occasionally, the red symbolises Indian Army, the dark blue Indian Navy and the light blue Indian Air Force.

Symbols

But for the symbol it bears, a medal is a piece of metal. The symbol bears some relationship with the action it intends to commemorate. To illustrate the point, the Srirangapattanam Medal which was instituted to commemorate the British victory over Tipu Sultan in 1799, represented the British lion trampling over a tiger symbolic of the British victory over Tipu Sultan.

The reverse of the medal represented the storming of the fort with the meridian sun above. It symbolised the successful assault on the fort at a time when the sun was in its full glory.

Considerable attention has been paid to the symbolic aspect of the decorations and medals of the Indian Republic. The choice of *Vajra* (thunderbolt) to serve as the symbol for Param Vir Chakra amply proves this. *Vajra* was the *amogha-astra* (unfailing weapon) of Indra, the Vedic god of war. He wielded it to kill Vritra, the demon of drought and death, to release the life giving waters for the benefit of mankind. According to a Puranic story *Vajra* was made of the bones of Sage Dadhici, who sacrificed his life for the protection of good.

The choice of the star symbol for Maha Vir Chakra and Vir Chakra and the Vishisht Seva Medal series is also no less meaningful. The star, a heavenly body known for its firm, steady and fixed position, symbolises everlasting glory. According to Indian mythology, Dhruva, a boy of firm determination was assigned a position in the northern hemisphere by Lord Vishnu.

Another widely used symbol in Indian medals is the *Chakra*. It occurs on the Indian National Flag and Ashoka Chakra series of medals. The *Chakra* is symbolic of activity and forward movement. The Buddhist adopted this symbol in the service of religion calling it the *Dharma-chakra*. The preaching of the gospel by Lord Buddha was denoted with the *Chakra* symbol. This symbol is also called the Ashoka Chakra.

Ashoka lions form the obverse or reverse symbol on many Indian medals. This motif when represented with the motto *Satyameva Jayate* represents the National Emblem. The four lions symbolise the universal application of *Dharma*.

This is briefly the story of the growth of Indian medals and ribbons instituted from time to time. The Gazette notification are given in Appendix 2 and 3. The Gazette notification on the Order of Precedence of wearing various medals and decorations is given at Appendix 1.

L.P. Thapliyal
Director

PRESIDENT'S SECRETARIAT NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 16th June, 1976.

No.41-Press/76 - The President has been pleased to determine the following Order of Precedence of wearing of various medals and decorations. The President's Secretariat Notification No.9-Press./73, dated 27th January, 1973, is hereby cancelled.

1. Bharat Ratna
2. Param Vir Chakra
3. Ashoka Chakra
4. Padma Vibhushan
5. Padma Bhushan
6. Param Vishisht Seva Medal
7. Mahā Vir Chakra
8. Kirti Chakra
9. Padma Shri
10. Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak
11. Ati Vishisht Seva Medal
12. Vir Chakra
13. Shaurya Chakra
14. President's Police and Fire Services Medal for gallantry
15. President's Police Medal for gallantry
16. President's Fire Services Medal for gallantry
17. President's Home Guards and Civil Defence Medal for gallantry

18. Sena/Nao Sena/Vayu Sena Medal
19. Vishisht Seva Medal
20. Police Medal for gallantry
21. Fire Services Medal for gallantry
22. Home Guards and Civil Defence Medal for gallantry
23. Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak
24. Wound Medal
25. General Service Medal - 1947
26. Samanya Seva Medal - 1965
27. Samar Seva Star - 1965
28. Poorvi Star
29. Paschimi Star
30. Raksha Medal - 1965
31. Sangram Medal
32. Sainya Seva Medal
33. Police (Special Duty) Medal - 1962
34. Videsh Seva Medal
35. President's Police and Fire Services Medal for distinguished service
36. President's Police Medal for distinguished service
37. President's Fire Services Medal for distinguished service
38. President's Home Guards and Civil Defence Medal for distinguished service
39. Meritorious Service Medal
40. Long Service and Good Conduct Medal
41. Police Medal for meritorious service
42. Fire Service Medal for meritorious service
43. Home Guards and Civil Defence Medal for meritorious service
44. Jeevan Raksha Padak

45. Territorial Army Decoration
46. Territorial Army Medal
47. Indian Independence Medal - 1947
48. Independence Medal - 1950
49. 25th Independence Anniversary Medal
50. 20 Years' Long Service Medal
51. 9 Years' Long Service Medal
52. Commonwealth awards
53. Other awards.

New Awards as on 1 January, 1981

54. Sarvottam Yudh Seva Medal
55. Uttam Yudh Seva Medal
56. Yudh Seva Medal.

Appendix 2

No. 3(21)/85/D (Ceremonials)
Government of India
Ministry of Defence
New Delhi, the 12th April, 1988

To

The Chief of the Army Staff
The Chief of the Naval Staff
The Chief of the Air Staff

Subject: Enhancement of monetary allowance attached to the
Post-Independence gallantry awards

Sir,

I am directed to refer to this Ministry's letter No. 3(8)/83/D(Ceremonials), dated the 9th May, 1985 on the above subject and to convey the sanction of the President to the grant of enhanced monetary allowance at the following rates to all recipients, irrespective of rank and income, of gallantry decorations with effect from 1st January, 1987:

Param Vir Chakra	Rs. 200/-p.m.
Ashoka Chakra	Rs. 180/-p.m.
Maha Vir Chakra	Rs. 160/-p.m.
Kirti Chakra	Rs. 140/-p.m.
Vir Chakra	Rs. 120/-p.m.
Shaurya Chakra	Rs. 100/-p.m.

Each Bar to the decoration will carry the same amount of monetary allowance as admissible to the original award.

2. The payment of above enhanced monetary allowance will be subject to all other terms and conditions contained in this Ministry's letter referred to above.

3. This issues with the concurrence of Ministry of Defence (Finance) vide their u.o. No.1115/GS/88, dated 11.4.88.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

(G.C. Sharma)

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

Tele : 3016547

PARAM VIR CHAKRA WINNERS

The Param Vir Chakra

Firstly: The Decoration shall be in the form of a medal and styled and designated the *Param Vir Chakra* (hereinafter referred to as the Chakra).

Secondly: The medal shall be circular in shape, made of bronze, one and three eighth inches in diameter, and shall have embossed on the obverse four replicas of "Indra's Vajra" with the State Emblem embossed in the centre. On the reverse, it shall have embossed "Param Vir Chakra" both in Hindi and in English with two lotus flowers between the Hindi and the English inscriptions. A sealed pattern of the decoration shall be deposited and kept.

Thirdly: The medal shall be suspended from the left breast by a plain purple coloured riband of one and a quarter inches in width; on those occasions when only the riband is worn, a replica of "Indra's Vajra" in miniature shall be fixed to the centre of the riband.

Fourthly: The Chakra shall be awarded for most conspicuous bravery, or some daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice, in the presence of the enemy, whether on land, at sea, or in the air.

Fifthly: The Chakra may also be awarded posthumously.

Sixthly: The distinction shall be conferred by the President.

Seventhly: The names of those persons upon or on account of whom the Decoration may be conferred shall be published in the Gazette of India, and a Register thereof kept under the directions of the President.

Eighthly: The persons eligible for the Decoration of the Chakra shall be:

- (a) Officers and men and women of all ranks of Naval, Military and Air Forces, of any of the Reserve Forces, of the Territorial Army, Militia and of any other lawfully constituted Armed Forces.
- (b) Matrons, Sisters, Nurses and the Staff of the Nursing Services and other Services pertaining to Hospitals and Nursing, and Civilians of either sex serving regularly or temporarily under the orders, directions or supervision of any of the above-mentioned Forces.

Ninthly: If any recipient of the Chakra shall again perform such an act of bravery as would have made him or her eligible to receive the Chakra,

such further act of bravery shall be recorded by a Bar to be attached to the riband by which the Chakra is suspended, and for every such additional act of bravery, an additional Bar shall be added, and any such Bar or Bars may also be awarded posthumously. For every Bar awarded a replica of the "Indra's Vajra" in miniature shall be added to the riband when worn alone.

Tenthly: The miniature decoration which may be worn on certain occasions by those to whom the Decoration is awarded, shall be half the size of the Chakra and a sealed pattern of the said miniature decoration shall be deposited and kept.

Eleventhly: Every recipient of the Chakra being or ranking junior in rank to that of Second-Lieutenant in the case of Army, Sub-Lieutenant in the case of Navy, and Pilot Officer in the case of Air Force, shall be entitled for life, from the date of the act by which the Decoration has been gained, to a monetary allowance. Each Bar conferred shall carry with it an additional monetary allowance. These allowances will be paid at such rates as the President may prescribe. On the death of a recipient of the Chakra to whom this clause applies, the monetary allowance shall be paid to his widow, until her death or re-marriage, under such rules as may be prescribed by the President. Where the award is made posthumously to a bachelor, the monetary allowance shall be paid to his father or mother, and in case the posthumous awardee is a widower, the allowance shall be paid to his son or unmarried daughter, as the case may be under such rules as may be prescribed by the President.

Twelfthly: The President may cancel and annul the award of Chakra to any person together with any pension appertaining thereto not already paid, and thereupon his or her name in the Register shall be erased and he or she shall be required to surrender his or her insignia; but it shall be competent for the President to restore the Decoration when such cancellation and annulment has subsequently been withdrawn, and with it such pension as may have been forfeited.

Lastly: Notice of cancellation or restoration in every case shall be published in the *Gazette of India*.



2639885

**Company Quarter
Master Havildar
Abdul Hamid,
PVC (Posth.)**

Company Quarter Master Havildar Abdul Hamid, son of Shri Usman, was born on 1 July 1933, in village Dhamupur, Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh. He was enrolled in 4 Grenadiers on 27 December 1954. During his Army service he was decorated with Sainya Seva Medal with Clasp J&K, Samar Seva Medal and Raksha Medal.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, 4 Indian Division was entrusted with a two-fold responsibility—capture Pak territory east of Ichhogil Canal and contain possible enemy attack on Kasur-Khem Karan axis. The Division succeeded in reaching Ichhogil but the powerful Pak offensive forced it to fall back on Asal Uttar. It settled here to meet the enemy assault.

In the new defence plan of the Division, 4 Grenadiers occupied a vital area ahead of village Chima on road Khem Karan-Bhikhiwind. A firm hold on this area was considered essential to sustain the divisional plan of defence. On the night of 8 September, the enemy made repeated probing attacks on Grenadiers positions but was frustrated in all his attempts.

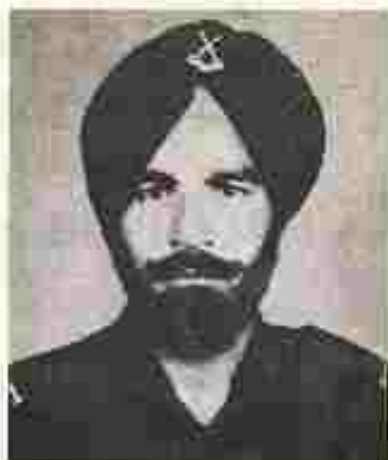
The most serious threat, however, developed when the enemy attacked with a regiment of Patton tanks at 0800 hours on 10 September. The attack was preceded by intense artillery shelling so much so that every yard of ground occupied by the battalion was littered by a shell. By 0900 hours the enemy tanks had penetrated the forward company positions. At this critical juncture Hamid was commanding a recoilless gun detachment.

Seeing the gravity of the situation, he moved out to a flank with his gun mounted on a jeep. Intense enemy shelling and tank fire could not

deter him. From his new position, he knocked out the leading enemy tank with accurate fire. Then he changed his position and knocked out another enemy tank. By this time the enemy who had spotted his position brought down concentrated machine gun and high explosive fire on him. But he kept on firing. As he fired to hit yet another enemy tank, he was mortally wounded by a high explosive shell.

Throughout this action Abdul Hamid inspired his comrades to put up a gallant fight to beat off the enemy tank assault. His sustained act of bravery and disregard for personal safety, in the face of constant enemy fire, was in tune with the highest traditions of the Indian Army.

CQMH Abdul Hamid was awarded Param Vir Chakra, posthumously.



JC-155825 A
Naib Subedar
Bana Singh,
PVC

Naib Subedar Bana Singh, son of Shri Amar Singh, was born in village Kadyal, Jammu, on 6 January 1949. He was enrolled in the Indian Army on 6 January 1969.

During June 1987, 8 Jammu & Kashmir Light Infantry was deployed in Siachen area. It was then found that a large number of Pakistani infiltrators had intruded in the Siachen Glacier. The ejection of these infiltrators was considered difficult but necessary and a special task force was, therefore, constituted for the purpose. Naib Subedar Bana Singh volunteered to join this force.

The Pak intrusion had taken place at a height of 6500 metres. The enemy post was virtually an impregnable glacier fortress with ice walls, 457 metres high, on either side. Naib Subedar Bana Singh led his men through an extremely difficult and hazardous route. He inspired them by his courage and leadership. He and his men crawled and closed in on the adversary. Lobbing hand-grenades, charging with a bayonet and moving from trench to trench, he cleared the post of all intruders.

Naib Subedar Bana Singh was awarded Param Vir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and leadership under most adverse conditions.



4239746
Lance Naik
Ekka, Albert,
PVC (Posth.)

Lance Naik Albert Ekka, son of Shri Zulnis Ekka was born on 27 December 1942, in village Zari, Ranchi, Bihar. He was enrolled in 14 Guards on 27 December 1962.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 14 Guards was asked to capture a Pakistani position at Gangasagar, 6 ½ km west of Agartala in the Eastern sector. It was a well-fortified position held in good strength by the enemy. The reduction of this position was considered necessary as it was the key to the capture of Akhaura.

14 Guards launched an attack on enemy positions at 0400 hours on 3 December 1971. Albert Ekka accompanied the left forward company of the battalion in the attack. The assaulting Indian troops were subjected to intense shelling and heavy small arms fire by the enemy. Lance Naik Ekka observed that an enemy light machine gun was belching deadly fire from a bunker, causing heavy casualties to his company. Unmindful about his personal safety, he charged the enemy bunker, bayoneted two enemy soldiers and silenced the light machine gun. Though seriously injured in this encounter, he continued to fight alongside his comrades with courage, securing bunker after bunker.

After battling through a distance of one and-a-half kilometres, when Ekka and his comrades reached the northern end of the objective, an enemy medium machine gun opened up from the second storey of a well-fortified building. It inflicted heavy casualties on Indians and held up their progress. Once again Ekka rose to the occasion. Unmindful of his personal safety,

he crawled to the building and hurled a grenade into the bunker. One enemy soldier was killed and the other injured. But the medium machine gun could not be silenced. Lance Naik Ekka then scaled the sidewall to enter the bunker. He bayoneted the enemy holding the bunker and silenced the deadly weapon. This saved his company from further casualties and ensured success. Ekka died of the injuries suffered during this battle. As a result of the fall of Gangasagar, the southern and south-western flanks of Akhaura were exposed and the enemy rear was threatened. Consequently, the enemy was forced to vacate Akhaura.

Lance Naik Albert Ekka was awarded Param Vir Chakra for displaying the most conspicuous valour and determination, posthumously.



IC-14608
Major
Hoshiar Singh,
PVC

Major Hoshiar Singh, son of Shri Hira Singh, was born on 5 May 1936, in village Sisana, Rohtak, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Grenadiers Regiment on 30 June 1963. He was also Mentioned-in-Despatches.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 3 Grenadiers spearheaded the advance of 54 Infantry Division in Shakargarh sector on the Western front on the night of 5 December. The battalion made quick gains in the first ten days of war. On 15 December, it was assigned the task of establishing a bridge-head across the Basantar river. The river was covered with deep minefields on both sides and protected by well fortified defences by the enemy.

Major Hoshiar Singh, the Commander of the 'C' Company launched an attack across the enemy minefield on Jarpal from the left. It was a well fortified position held in good strength by the enemy. The company came under intense shelling and crossfire from enemy medium machine guns and suffered heavy casualties. The Grenadiers, however, continued the assault doggedly and captured their objective. In this battle, most of the enemy bunkers could be cleared only after grim hand-to-hand fighting.

The enemy's reaction to the loss of Jarpal was violent. He put in sharp counter-attacks, two of them supported by armour, to dislodge the Grenadiers on 16 December. Major Hoshiar Singh, unmindful of the enemy shelling and tank fire, went from trench to trench, encouraging his men to remain steadfast and fight. Inspired by his courage and leadership his company repulsed all attacks, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy.

On 17 December, the enemy mounted yet another attack in battalion strength with heavy artillery in support. Though wounded seriously in enemy shelling, Major Hoshiar Singh again went alone from trench to trench, moving in the open. On one occasion an enemy shell landed near his medium machine gun post, injuring the crew and rendering the gun inoperative. Major Hoshiar Singh, realising the importance of fire support at this juncture rushed to the machine gun pit and operated the gun inflicting heavy casualties on enemy. The enemy attack was repulsed, and he beat a hasty retreat leaving behind 85 dead including the Commanding Officer.

Major Hoshiar Singh was seriously wounded in the battle but he refused evacuation till the cease-fire. During this grim struggle he inspired his command to perform outstanding acts of gallantry to defeat repeated enemy attacks. He was decorated with Param Vir Chakra.



27373
Naik
Jadunath Singh,
PVC (Posth.)

Naik Jadunath Singh, son of Shri Bir Bal Singh, was born on 21 November 1916, in village Khajuri, Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh. He was enrolled in 1 Rajput on 21 November 1941.

The capture of Jhangar on 24 December 1947 placed the Pak raiders in an advantageous position in Naushahra sector. Being in full command of the communication lines from Mirpur to Punch they could now build up their forces for attack on Naushahra. Indians were alive to this threat. In January 1948, they conducted some operations to prevent the enemy build up in the area and in the process occupied Kot village to the north-west of Naushahra.

In any case an attack on Naushahra was imminent. Brigadier Usman of the 50 Para Brigade had made adequate preparation to thwart this attack by establishing strong pickets on possible enemy approaches. One of these approaches lay to the north of Naushahra through Tain Dhar.

The expected enemy attack came on the foggy morning of 6 February, at 0640 hours. The enemy started the attack by opening fire from their pickets on the Tain Dhar ridge on an Indian patrol. Simultaneously, the whole of Tain Dhar feature and the surrounding hills became live with bursts of machine gun and crunches of mortar fire. Meanwhile under the cover of darkness the enemy crept up to the Indian pickets. In the first light of dawn the men in the post saw thousands of hostiles creeping up to them.

On the crucial day of 6 February, Naik Jadunath Singh was in command of a forward post of picket No. 2 at Tain Dhar. The post was garrisoned by nine men. The enemy launched his attack in successive waves to take this post. The first wave swept the area upto the post. At this juncture Naik Jadunath Singh displayed great valour and superb leadership and used his small force in such a manner that the enemy retreated in utter confusion. When four of his men were wounded he re-organised the battered force for meeting another onslaught. The post did not give in despite its being outnumbered.

When all men including himself were wounded, he personally took over the bren gun from the wounded bren-gunner. The enemy was now right on the walls of the post. The Naik unmindful of personal safety encouraged his men to fight. His fire was so devastating that what looked like a certain defeat was turned into a victory. The enemy retreated in chaos leaving dead and wounded littered on the ground. Thus the post was saved a second time.

By now all men of the post had turned into casualties. The enemy put in his third and final attack determined to capture the post. Naik Jadunath Singh, wounded and alone, rose to give a battle for the third time. He came out of the Sangar and firing his sten gun charged on the advancing enemy. The surprised enemy fled in disorder. He met a gallant death, in this third and last charge when two enemy bullets pierced him in the head and the chest. At a most critical stage in the battle for the defence of Naushahra, he saved his picket from being overrun by the enemy.

Naik Jadunath Singh was awarded Param Vir Chakra, posthumously.



JC-4547
Subedar
Joginder Singh,
PVC (Posth.)

Subedar Joginder Singh, son of Shri Sher Singh, was born on 26 September 1921, in village Mahla Kalan, Moga, Faridkot, Punjab. He was enrolled in 1 Sikh on 28 September 1936.

During the Sino-Indian Conflict 1962, Subedar Joginder Singh commanded a platoon in Tawang sector of NEFA. While holding a defensive position on a ridge in Tongpeng La area on Bum La axis, the platoon noticed heavy enemy concentration opposite Bum La across the McMahon Line on 20 October. This was indeed preparatory to the Chinese advance on Bum La axis on 23 October.

At 0530 hours on 23 October the Chinese launched a heavy attack on the Bum La axis. The intention was to achieve a breakthrough to Tawang. The enemy attacked the Ridge in three waves, each about 200 strong. The attack was supported by artillery and mortar fire, besides other weapons. The fierce resistance of the Sikh platoon, however, compelled the enemy to fall back with heavy losses. But he regrouped quickly and launched a fresh attack under the cover of an artillery barrage. However, Subedar Joginder Singh and his platoon stood firm like a rock before the advancing enemy. In this fierce action the platoon lost half of its men but not the will to fight. Subedar Joginder Singh, despite a wound in the thigh, refused evacuation. His platoon also refused to yield any ground to the enemy.

The last wave of the Chinese attack, which was more determined and more forceful followed next. Now the platoon had very few men left to fight. Subedar Joginder Singh, therefore, manned a light machine gun and

killed a large number of enemies. But he could not stem the tide of the enemy advance single-handed. The Chinese continued advancing with little concern for the casualties. By now all ammunition with the platoon had been exhausted. When the situation became desperate, Subedar Joginder Singh and his men emerged from their position with fixed bayonets, shouting the Sikh battle cry "*Wahe Guruji ka Khalsa, Wahe Guruji ki Fateh*". They fell upon the advancing enemy and bayoneted many to death. Finally, better weapons and numerical superiority of the enemy prevailed.

Subedar Joginder Singh was awarded Param Vir Chakra for his inspiring leadership, courage and devotion to duty, posthumously.



22356
**Lance Naik
Karam Singh,
PVC**

Lance Naik Karam Singh, son of Shri Uttam Singh was born on 15 September 1915, in village Sehna, Barnala, Punjab. He was enrolled in 1 Sikh on 15 September 1941. He had earned a Military Medal in World War II.

During the Jammu & Kashmir operations in the summer of 1948 the Indian Army made substantial gains in Tithwal sector. This led to the capture of Tithwal on 23 May 1948. The enemy fled in utter confusion across the Kishanganga after dumping his arms and equipment in the river. But the enemy quickly recovered from this shock. He reorganised his forces and mounted a strong counter-attack to recover the lost ground. As a result, the Indians could not withstand the enemy pressure and withdrew from their positions across river Kishanganga. Finally, they settled on the Tithwal ridge to take on the enemy.

The battle of Tithwal went on for months. The enemy could not, however, make a dent on Indian defences. On 13 October, he launched a desperate attack in brigade strength to evict the Indians from their strongly held positions. His objective was to recapture Richhmar Gali to the south of Tithwal and to outflank the Indians by marching on to Nastachur Pass to the east of Tithwal. Both his attempts were foiled. During this attack some bitter fighting took place in Richhmar Gali area on the night of 13 October. The attack commenced with heavy shelling of guns and mortar. The fire was so devastating that nearly all bunkers in the platoon area were damaged. In this action 1 Sikh played a very important role in beating back the enemy onslaught.

Lance Naik Karam Singh was commanding a forward outpost when the enemy launched the attack. His post was attacked by the enemy in vastly superior strength, said to be ten times more than the Indians. The position was attacked eight times and the Sikhs repulsed the enemy every time. When ammunition ran short, Karam Singh joined the main company position, knowing fully well that due to heavy enemy shelling no help would be forthcoming. Although himself wounded, he brought back two injured comrades with the help of a third mate. Ringed by enemy fire, it was almost impossible for them to break out. Ignoring all dangers, Karam Singh crawled from place to place encouraging his men to keep up the fight. Often he beat back the enemy with grenades. Twice wounded, he refused evacuation and continued to hold on to the first-line trenches.

The fifth enemy attack was very intense. Two enemy soldiers came so close to his position that he could not engage them without hitting his men. Karam Singh jumped out of his trench, and before anyone could realise what had happened, bayoneted the two intruders to death. This bold action so demoralised the enemy that he broke off the attack. Three more enemy attacks which followed were also repulsed by Karam Singh and his men.

Lance Naik Karam Singh was awarded Param Vir Chakra for his outstanding role in the battle of Tithwal. He was an inspiration to his comrades and a terror to the enemy.



IC-25067
Second Lieutenant
Khetarpal, Arun,
PVC (Posth.)

Second Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal, son of Brigadier M L Khetarpal, was born on 14 October 1950, in Pune, Maharashtra. He was commissioned in the Poona Horse (17th Queen Victoria's Own Cavalry) on 13 June 1971.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, the 47 Indian Infantry Brigade, with Poona Horse under command, was ordered to establish a bridge-head across the Basantar river in Shakargarh sector. The infantry completed the task by 2100 hours on 15 December. It was now for the engineers to breach the enemy mine-fields and make a safe lane for the induction of Poona Horse in support of the bridge-head. While the engineers were half way through their task the Indian troops at the bridge-head reported alarming activity of the enemy armour. They requested immediate tank support. But the mine-field had been cleared only partially by that time. At this critical juncture the Poona Horse decided to push through the mine-field come what may. By first light on 16 December, the regiment established a link-up between the armour and the infantry at the bridge-head.

At 0800 hours, the enemy made a counter-attack with an armour regiment, under the cover of smoke-screen. The target was the regimental pivot at Jarpal. As the Indians were heavily outnumbered, the Commander of the B Squadron requested reinforcement. At that time Second Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal was positioned close to the squadron with his troops in two tanks. He answered the call and moved out to face the enemy attack. On the way his troops came under fire from enemy strong-points and recoilless gun nests, in the bridge-head zone. Khetarpal fiercely attacked these strong-points, over-ran defences and captured many enemy soldiers and

recoilless guns at pistol point. During one of these attacks, the commander of his second tank was killed on the spot leaving him alone. But he continued attack on the enemy strongholds singlehanded, until all enemy positions were overwhelmed. He then raced to the 'B' Squadron position. By the time he reached there, the enemy tanks were on the retreat. He pursued and destroyed one of these tanks. The commander could persuade him to fall back in line after great difficulty.

The enemy soon reformed for a second attack. This time he chose the sector held by Arun Khetarpal and two other officers, for the main attack. He employed a complete armoured squadron against these three tanks in order to achieve a breakthrough. A fierce tank battle followed. As many as ten enemy tanks were destroyed and of these Arun Khetarpal alone destroyed four. In the thick of the battle two of the three Indian tanks became casualties—one was hit and another suffered mechanical failure. The third tank i.e. Khetarpal's tank, also received a shot and burst into flames. The Commander of the tank troops ordered Khetarpal to abandon the burning tank. But realising the useful role of his tank in preventing a breakthrough he communicated the following message to his commander:

"No sir, I will not abandon my tank; my gun is still working and I will get these bastards."

Then he set about destroying the remaining enemy tanks. The last enemy tank which he shot was barely 100 metres from his position. At this stage his tank received a second hit. The brave soldier met his death denying the enemy the intended breakthrough.

For most conspicuous gallantry in the face of the enemy, Second Lieutenant Khetarpal was awarded Param Vir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-32907 F
Major
Parameswaran,
Ramaswamy,
PVC (Posth.)

Major Ramaswamy Parameswaran, son of Shri K.S. Ramaswamy, was born on 13 September 1946, in Bombay, Maharashtra. He was granted Short Service Commission in the Mahar Regiment on 16 January 1972. He took part in a number of operations undertaken by the Indian Army.

Under the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement many Indian Army units were despatched to Sri Lanka to maintain law and order there. The Mahar, the unit of Major Parameswaran, was also sent to Sri Lanka to participate in 'Op Pawan'.

On 25 November 1987, Major Parameswaran was returning with his column from a search operation late in the night. Suddenly, his column was ambushed by a group of militants. With great presence of mind he encircled the militants from the rear and boldly charged on them. This completely surprised the enemy. During hand to hand combat that followed, one militant shot him in the chest. Undaunted by his grave injury, he snatched the rifle from a militant and shot him dead. Though critically wounded he continued to give orders and inspire his command till he breathed his last. The ambush was finally cleared. In this action five militants were killed and three rifles and two rocket launchers were captured.

Major Parameswaran was awarded Param Vir Chakra for the most conspicuous bravery and supreme sacrifice, posthumously.



2831592
Company Havildar
Major
Piru Singh,
PVC (Posth.)

Company Havildar Major Piru Singh, son of Shri Lal Singh, was born in village Beri, Jhurjhuu, Rajasthan, on 20 May 1918. He was enrolled in 6 Rajputana Rifles on 20 May 1936.

During Jammu & Kashmir operations, the Pakistani raiders mounted a strong counter offensive in Tithwal sector in July 1948. The enemy raided and captured a ring contour on 8 July 1948. He also forced the Indians to vacate their forward positions across river Kishanganga. After the setback the Indian troops took position on the Tithwal ridge. At this juncture 6 Rajputana Rifles was moved from Uri to Tithwal to strengthen the 163 Brigade in its impending offensive in the sector.

The Indian offensive commenced on 11 July. The operation went on well till 15 July. The reconnaissance reports, however, revealed that enemy was holding a high feature in the area and that its capture was essential for making any further progress. Further ahead lay another feature also held in strength by the enemy. 6 Rajputana Rifles was assigned the task of securing these two features. The 'D' Company was to secure the first feature. The 'C' Company was to capture the second feature after the 'D' Company had carried out its task. The 'D' Company launched its attack on the objective at 0130 hours on 18 July. The path to the objective was about one metre wide with deep ravines on either side. Overlooking this narrow path were the hidden enemy bunkers. The company was subjected to heavy fire and within half an hour it suffered 51 casualties.

During this battle Company Havildar Major Piru Singh was with the leading section of the company, more than half of which was mowed down

by the devastating fire of the enemy. He rushed forward to deal with the enemy medium machine gun post which was playing havoc with his troops. Enemy grenade splinters ripped open his clothes and wounded several parts of his body. But this did not deter him. He continued the advance, shouting the battle cry, "Raja Ramchandra Ki Jai". Rushing forward he bayoneted the crew of the enemy medium machine gun, with his own sten gun, silenced the menacing gun and occupied the post.

By this time all his companions lay behind either dead or wounded. The responsibility of clearing the enemy from the hill feature lay with him alone. Bleeding profusely he inched forward to attack the second enemy medium machine gun post. At this juncture a grenade wounded him in the face. The blood dripping from his forehead almost blinded him. By now all sten gun ammunition with him had been spent. He courageously crawled out of the occupied enemy trench and hurled grenades at the next enemy post. Piru Singh then jumped into another trench and bayoneted two enemy soldiers to death. When he was rushing out of this trench to capture another trench, a bullet hit him on the head. But before he fell down dead, he had hurled a grenade into the enemy trench.

CHM Piru Singh paid with his life for this singularly brave act and left for his comrades a unique example of single-handed bravery and determined courage. He was awarded Param Vir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-7244
Second Lieutenant
Rane, Rama Raghoba,
PVC

Second Lieutenant Rama Raghoba Rane, son of Shri R P Rane, was born on 26 June 1918, in village Chendia, North Kanara, Maharashtra. He was commissioned in the Corps of Engineers on 15 December 1947. He retired as a Major in 1968. During his 21 years' service with the Indian Army he earned 5 Mentioned-in-Despatches.

On 18 March 1948, the Indian Army recaptured Jhangar, which was lost to the enemy in December 1947. The Indian troops then planned an advance from Naushahra to Rajauri to protect the natives from the atrocities of the raiders. Half-way lay the Chingas, on the old Mughal route to Kashmir.

4 Dogra commenced the advance to Rajauri on 8 April 1948. It attacked the Barwali ridge, eleven kilometres north of Naushahra and captured it after driving out the enemy from well-prepared positions. But beyond Barwali, the increasing number of road-blocks and minefields obstructed the progress of the battalion. Even armour could not cross over these obstacles.

During this critical phase Second Lieutenant Rane and his section of 37 Assault Field Company, attached to 4 Dogra, performed yeoman service. As the section started clearing a mine-field on 8 April, two sappers were killed and five others including Rane were injured in enemy mortar fire. However, Rane and his men completed the work by the evening and enabled the tanks to push forward. But the enemy had not been cleared from the area and the road ahead was still unsafe for the advance. Second

Lieutenant Rane worked during the night to prepare a safe lane for the tanks. On 9 April his men continuously worked for twelve hours to clear mines and remove road-blocks. Where the road was found unnegotiable he made a diversion for the column to pass through. Second Lieutenant Rane continued this work in the face of enemy artillery and mortar fire.

On 10 April, he woke up early to resume work on the road-block, which could not be cleared the previous night. He cleared this huge road-block of 5 big pine trees, surrounded by mines and covered by intensive machine-gun fire, within two hours. Indians advanced another 13 km on this day before they encountered another major road-block. The enemy pickets perched on the adjoining hills were guarding all approaches to this road-block. Second Lieutenant Rane drove to the road-block in a tank and crouching under it blasted the block with mines. He thus opened the road before the end of the night.

On 11 April, he worked for seventeen hours to open the road to Chingas and beyond. Second Lieutenant Rane made a substantial contribution in facilitating the Indian advance on Rajauri. It cost the enemy about 500 dead and many more wounded. It also helped in saving many innocent lives in Chingas and Rajauri. The citation read: "But for the grim determination and tireless diligence of Lieutenant Rane, who worked ceaselessly, our column could not have reached Chingas—an important feature which secured for us a vantage position to advance further".

The gallant effort made by Second Lieutenant Rane during this crucial advance to Rajauri earned him Param Vir Chakra.



IC-8497
Capt Salaria,
Gurbachan Singh,
PVC (Posth.)

Captain Gurbachan Singh Salaria, son of Shri Munshi Ram, was born on 29 November 1935, in village Jangal, Gurdaspur, Punjab. He was commissioned in 1 Gorkha Rifles on 9 June 1957.

After the Belgians quit Congo, a civil war situation developed in that country. When the UN decided upon military intervention to retrieve the situation, India contributed a brigade of 3000 men to the UN Force. In November 1961, the Security Council decided to put a stop to the hostile activities of the Katangese troops in Congo. This greatly angered Tshombe, the secessionist leader of Katanga, and he intensified his 'hate the UN' campaign. The result was increased violence against UN personnel.

On 5 December 1961, a 3/1 GR Company supported by 3-inch mortar attacked a road-block, established by Katangese troops, between HQ Katanga command and the Elisabethville airfield at a strategic round about. The enemy road-block was destroyed and the Gorkhas established a UN road-block there. When Captain Salaria in a platoon strength tried to link up with the Gorkha company to reinforce the road-block, he met strong opposition in the old airfield area. Heavy automatic and small arms fire was brought down on his force by the enemy from a dug-in position on the right flank. The enemy held the area strongly with two armoured cars and 90 men. Captain Salaria was not deterred by the superior enemy strength and fire power. He decided to take on him head-long to achieve the objective.

The Gorkhas charged the enemy with bayonets, khukris and hand-grenades. A rocket-launcher supported them in the attack. In this sharp

encounter, Captain Salaria and his men killed 40 of the enemy and knocked out two armoured cars. This bold action completely demoralised the enemy who fled helter-skelter despite numerical superiority and well fortified positions. In this engagement, Captain Salaria was wounded in the neck by a burst of enemy automatic fire, but he ignored the injury and continued to fight till he collapsed due to excessive bleeding. Subsequently, he died of his grave wounds. Twelve other ranks were also wounded in this action. Captain Salaria gallantly prevented the enemy from going to the round-about thereby saving the UN Headquarters in Elisabethville from encirclement.

Captain Salaria was awarded Param Vir Chakra for extraordinary leadership, courage and devotion to duty, posthumously.



10877 F (P)
Flying Officer
Sekhon,
Nirmal Jit Singh,
PVC (Posth.)

Flying Officer Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon, son of Warrant Officer (Hon Etc Lt) Trilok Singh Sekhon, was born on 17 July 1943, in village Rurka Isawal, Ludhiana, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 4 June 1967. He won the first Param Vir Chakra for the Indian Air Force during Indo-Pak War 1971.

Flying Officer Sekhon was a pilot in a Gnat detachment based at Srinagar for the air defence of the valley. India was bound by an international agreement not to base its air defence aircraft at Srinagar. Therefore, the pilots who were hurriedly brought to Srinagar at the outbreak of hostilities with Pakistan, were neither familiar with the terrain nor acclimatised to the winter rigours of Kashmir. Nevertheless, during the war, Flg Offr Sekhon and his colleagues fought Pakistani air raids with valour and determination. The reputation of the Gnat was safe in their hands.

On 14 December 1971, Srinagar airfield was attacked by a wave of six Pakistani Sabre jets. Sekhon was on readiness duty at that time. Soon the enemy aircraft started hovering over the airfield. The strafing of various targets on the ground followed. Attempting to take off with enemy aircraft overhead was inviting mortal danger. But Flg Offr Sekhon, unmindful of his safety, flew his Gnat to engage the two attacking Sabres. In the air battle that ensued he secured a direct hit on one Sabre and set another ablaze. The latter was seen heading away towards Rajauri, trailing smoke and flame. At this juncture four more Pakistani Sabres came on the scene and surrounded his aircraft. He chose to give a fight again. In the dog fight that ensued at tree-top level, he held on against the numerically superior

enemy for some time. Eventually, his aircraft was hit and he was killed. But Flg Offr Sekhon had achieved his objective. The enemy aircraft fled from the scene of the battle without pressing home the intended attack on Srinagar town and airfield.

The supreme gallantry, flying skill and determination displayed by Flying Officer Sekhon earned him the Param Vir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-6400
Major
Shaitan Singh,
PVC (Posth.)

Major Shaitan Singh, son of Lt Col Hem Singhji, was born on 1 December 1924, in village Banasar, Jodhpur, Rajasthan. He was commissioned in the Kumaon Regiment on 1 August 1949.

During the Sino-Indian Conflict 1962, 13 Kumaon was deployed in Chushul sector. The C Company of the battalion led by Major Shaitan Singh held a crucial position at Rezang La, at a height of 5000 metres. The company area was defended by five platoon positions and the terrain isolated it from the rest of the battalion.

The expected Chinese attack on Rezang La came on 18 November in the morning. It was the end of a very cold winter night. The icy winds howling through Rezang La were biting and benumbing. In the dim light of the morning the Chinese were seen advancing through nullahs to attack No.7 and 8 Platoon positions. The Indians fell on their prepared positions to face the enemy offensive. At 0500 hours when the visibility improved both platoons opened up on the advancing enemy with rifles, light machine guns, grenades and mortars. The nullahs were littered with dead bodies. The survivors took position behind boulders and the dead bodies.

The enemy was not, however, discouraged. He subjected the Indian positions to intense artillery and mortar fire at about 0540 hours. Soon about three hundred and fifty Chinese commenced advance through the nullahs. This time No. 9 Platoon which held fire till the enemy was within 90 metres opened up with all weapons in their possession. Within minutes, the nullahs were again full of dead bodies.

Unsuccessful in frontal attack, the enemy, approximately 400 strong, then attacked from the rear of the company position. They simultaneously opened intense medium machine gun fire on No.8 Platoon. This attack was contained at the barbed wire fencing of the post. The enemy then resorted to heavy artillery and mortar shelling. An assault group of 120 Chinese also charged No.7 Platoon position from the rear. Indian 3" mortar bombs killed many of them. When 20 survivors charged the post, about a dozen Kumaonis rushed out of their trenches to engage them in a hand-to-hand combat. Meanwhile, the enemy brought up fresh reinforcements. The encirclement of 7 Platoon was now complete. The platoon, however, fought valiantly till there was no survivor. No. 8 Platoon also fought bravely to the last round.

Major Singh, the Company Commander, displayed exemplary leadership and courage in the battle of Rezang La. He led his troops most admirably. Unmindful of his personal safety he moved from one platoon post to another and encouraged his men to fight. While moving among the posts he was seriously wounded. But he continued to fight along with his men. While he was being evacuated by two other ranks, the Chinese brought heavy machine gun fire on them. Major Singh sensed danger to their lives and ordered them to leave him. The other ranks placed him behind a boulder on the slopes of a hill where he breathed his last. In this action 109 Kumaonis out of a total of 123 were killed. The Chinese suffered many more in killed. After the war was over, the body of Major Singh was found at the same place. It was flown to Jodhpur and cremated with full military honours.

Major Shaitan Singh was awarded Param Vir Chakra for his supreme courage, leadership and devotion to duty, posthumously.



IC-521
Major
Sharma, Somnath,
PVC (Posth.)

Major Somnath Sharma, son of Major General A N Sharma, was born on 31 January 1923, at Dadh, Kangra, Himachal Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Kumaon Regiment on 22 February 1942. During the Second World War he had fought in the Arakan Operations. He was the first Indian to be honoured with Param Vir Chakra. His brother General V N Sharma served as Chief of the Army Staff, Indian Army, during 1988-1990.

Pakistan launched the tribal invasion of Jammu and Kashmir on 22 October 1947. The intention was to grab the Kashmir valley by force. As the State became a part of the Indian Union on 26 October, her protection became the responsibility of India. To save the State from this tribal invasion, which was approaching the valley at a very fast pace, India despatched troops to Srinagar. The first batch of Indian troops reached just in time on 27 morning to stop the enemy on the outskirts of Srinagar.

The D Company of 4 Kumaon, led by Major Somnath Sharma, was air-lifted to Srinagar on 31 October. When his company was asked to move to Srinagar, Major Sharma's arm was in plaster. He had suffered a fracture on the hockey ground and was advised rest till the plaster was removed. But he insisted on being with his company at this crucial hour and was allowed to go.

Meanwhile, the main thrust of the tribal invasion of Srinagar had been blunted by 1 Sikh at Patan. The enemy now resorted to guerilla tactics to sneak into the valley. But the induction of more troops into Srinagar enabled the Indians to take care of the surrounding areas better. On

3 November a strong fighting patrol comprising 3 companies was despatched to reconnoitre the Badgam area to look for raiders approaching Srinagar from the northern direction. By 0930 hours the troops had established a firm base at Badgam. As no enemy was seen during patrolling, two companies moved back to Srinagar by 1400 hours. D Coy led by Major Sharma which had taken up position south of Badgam was, however, asked to stay on in the area till 1500 hours.

At 1435 hours D Coy was subjected to firing from some houses of Badgam village. The coy did not return the fire for fear of killing innocent people of the village. While Major Sharma was discussing this threat with the Brigade Commander, suddenly a large force of the enemy, about 700 strong, appeared from a depression to the west of his position. It attacked the coy with small arms, mortars and heavy automatics. The accurate and devastating fire of the enemy inflicted heavy casualties on the Indians. Major Sharma understood the gravity of the situation and the imminent threat to both Srinagar town and the airfield was looming large before his eyes. The danger of losing both was real. He urged his coy to fight the enemy doggedly. He rushed across the open ground to his sections, exposing himself to enemy fire. He also laid out panels to guide own aircraft to their targets in the face of enemy fire.

The company held on for six hours against heavy odds. When heavy casualties adversely affected the firing power of the company, Major Sharma, with his right hand in plaster, took upon himself the task of filling the magazines and issuing them to men, operating light machine guns. While he was busy fighting the enemy a mortar shell exploded on the ammunition near him. That ended the promising career of young Major Sharma who had not yet completed twenty-five years of his life. In his last message to the Brigade Headquarters he said "I shall not withdraw an inch but will fight to the last man and the last round". In the battle of Badgam Major Sharma, one JCO and 20 other ranks of the D Coy were killed. But their sacrifices did not go in vain. Major Sharma and his men stemmed the tide of enemy advance on Srinagar and the airfield for some very crucial hours.

Major Sharma set an example of fine leadership and great courage. He was awarded Param Vir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-5565
Lt Col Tarapore,
Ardeshir Burzorji,
PVC (Posth.)

Lt-Col A.B. Tarapore, son of Shri B.F. Tarapore, was born on 18 August 1923, in Bombay, Maharashtra. He joined the Hyderabad State Force in 1942 and saw active service in West Asia during the Second World War. He was commissioned in the Poona Horse on 1 April 1951.

The biggest tank battle of the Indo-Pak War 1965 took place at Phillora, in Sialkot sector. During the southern thrust of the Indian Army on Kaloi-Phillora axis the 17 Horse commanded by Lt Col Tarapore advanced on the right flank. On 11 September 1965, the regiment was assigned the task of delivering the main armoured thrust for capturing Phillora. It decided upon launching a surprise attack on Phillora from the rear. To achieve the surprise, when the regiment was thrusting forward between Phillora and Chawinda, it was suddenly counter-attacked by the enemy's heavy armour from Wazirwali. Lt Col Tarapore defied the enemy's charge, held his ground and gallantly attacked Phillora with one of his squadrons supported by an infantry battalion. Though under continuous enemy tank and artillery fire, Lt Col Tarapore remained unperturbed throughout this action. When wounded, he refused to be evacuated.

On 14 September 1965, he led his regiment to capture Wazirwali. Unmindful of his injury, he again led his regiment and captured Jassoran and Butur-Dograndi on 16 September 1965. In this battle his own tank was hit several times. But despite the odds, he maintained his pivots at both these places and thereby helped the supporting infantry to attack Chawinda from the rear. Inspired by his leadership, the regiment fiercely attacked the enemy armour and destroyed approximately sixty enemy

tanks, suffering only nine tanks casualties. Lt Col Tarapore was mortally wounded.

The valour displayed by Lt Col Tarapore in this action, lasting six days, was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Indian Army. He was awarded Param Vir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-7990
Major
Thapa, Dhan Singh,
PVC

Major Dhan Singh Thapa, son of Shri P.S. Thapa, was born on 10 April 1928, at Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. He was commissioned in 8 Gorkha Rifles on 28 August 1949.

The Sirijap valley, north of Pangong lake in Ladakh, was considered vital for the defence of Chushul airfield. 1/8 Gorkha Rifles held outposts there to thwart any enemy encroachment in the area. One of these outposts named Sirijap-1 was held by a platoon of C Company under Major Dhan Singh Thapa when the Chinese attack came on 21 October 1962.

At 0600 hours on 21 October 1962, the Chinese opened a barrage of artillery and mortar fire over Sirijap-1 post. The shelling continued till 0830 hours and the whole area was set ablaze. Some shells fell on the command post and damaged the wireless set. This put the post out of commission.

The Chinese then attacked the outpost in overwhelming numbers. Major Thapa and his men repulsed the attack, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. But the Chinese were not dismayed by the defeat. They mounted another attack in greater number after shelling the area with artillery and mortar fire. Major Thapa again rose to the occasion and repulsed the attack, inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. In this attack, he also suffered losses but these could not weaken his determination. He encouraged his men to be prepared for a third assault, which came after a shortwhile indeed.

The third Chinese attack was, however, more powerful and intense. The enemy now came with tanks in support of the infantry. The platoon post was now in a much depleted strength owing to casualties suffered in earlier attacks. But the post held out till the ammunition lasted. When it was finally overrun by the Chinese. Major Thapa jumped out of his trench and killed many intruders in hand-to-hand fighting. He was eventually overpowered and captured.

For this act of bravery Major Thapa was awarded Param Vir Chakra.



Major Thapa was awarded the Param Vir Chakra for his gallant leadership and bravery during the Sino-Indian War of 1962.

Major Thapa was a brave and gallant officer who served in the Indian Army. He was awarded the Param Vir Chakra for his gallant leadership and bravery during the Sino-Indian War of 1962. He was a member of the 1st Battalion, 1st Grenadier Regiment, 1st Mountain Division, Indian Army. He was killed in action on 20 November 1962 at the Battle of the Loos.

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MAHAVIR CHAKRA WINNERS

The Mahavir Chakra

Firstly: The Decoration shall be in the form of a medal and styled and designated the *Mahavir Chakra* (hereinafter referred to as the Chakra).

Secondly: The medal shall be circular in shape and of standard silver, one and three-eighth inch in diameter, and shall have embossed on the obverse a five-pointed heraldic star with the points of the star just touching the rim. The star shall have in the centre a domed gilded State Emblem. On the reverse, it shall have embossed *Mahavir Chakra* both in Hindi and in English with two lotus flowers between the Hindi and the English inscriptions. A sealed pattern of the Decoration shall be deposited and kept.

Thirdly: The medal shall be suspended from the left breast by a half white and half orange riband of one and a quarter inches in width; orange nearest to the left shoulder.

Fourthly: The Chakra shall be awarded for acts of gallantry in the presence of the enemy whether on land, at sea, or in the air.

Fifthly: The Chakra may also be awarded posthumously.

Sixthly: The Decoration shall be conferred by the President.

Seventhly: The names of those persons upon or on account of whom, the Decoration may be conferred shall be published in the *Gazette of India* and a Register thereof kept under the directions of the President.

Eighthly: The persons eligible for the Decoration shall be:-

- (a) Officers and men and women of all ranks of the Naval, Military and Air Forces, of any of the Reserve Forces, of the Territorial Army, Militia and of any other lawfully constituted Armed Forces.
- (b) Matrons, Sisters, Nurses and the Staff of the Nursing Services and other Services pertaining to Hospitals and Nursing, and Civilians of either sex serving regularly or temporarily under the orders, directions or supervision of any of the above-mentioned Forces.

Ninthly: If any recipient of the Chakra shall again perform such an act of bravery as would have made him or her eligible to receive the Chakra,

such further act of bravery shall be recorded by a Bar to be attached to the riband by which the Chakra is suspended, and for every such additional act of bravery, an additional Bar shall be added, and any such Bar or Bars may also be awarded posthumously. For every Bar awarded a replica of the Chakra in miniature shall be added to the riband when worn alone.

Tenthly: The miniature Decoration which may be worn on certain occasions by those to whom the Decoration is awarded, shall be half the size of the Chakra and a sealed pattern of the said miniature Decoration shall be deposited and kept.

Eleventhly: Every recipient of the Chakra being or ranking junior in rank to that of Second-Lieutenant in the case of Army, Sub-Lieutenant in the case of Navy, and Pilot Officer in the case of Air Force, shall be entitled for life, from the date of the act by which the Decoration has been gained, to a monetary allowance. Each Bar conferred shall carry with it an additional monetary allowance. These allowances will be paid at such rates as the President may prescribe. On the death of a recipient of the Chakra to whom this clause applies, the monetary allowance shall be paid to his widow, until her death or re-marriage, under such rules as may be prescribed by the President. Where the award is made posthumously to a bachelor, the monetary allowance shall be paid to his father or mother, and in case the posthumous awardee is a widower, the allowance shall be paid to his son or unmarried daughter, as the case may be under such rules as may be prescribed by the President.

Twelfthly: The President may cancel and annul the award of the Chakra to any person, together with any pensions appertaining thereto not already paid, and thereupon his or her name in the Register shall be erased and he or she shall be required to surrender his or her Insignia; but it shall be competent for the President to restore the Decoration when such cancellation and annulment has subsequently been withdrawn, and with it such pensions as may have been forfeited.

Lastly: Notice of cancellation or restoration in every case shall be published in the *Gazette of India*.



IC-19161
Captain
Ahlawat,
Devinder Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Captain Devinder Singh Ahlawat, son of Lt Col S.C. Ahlawat, was born on 4 July 1947, in Gochhi, district Rohtak, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Dogra Regiment on 16 December 1967. He belonged to a family with four generations in military service. His father and uncles retired as Colonels of the Indian Army.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 10 Dogra was deployed in Punjab sector on the Western front. The battalion was asked to launch an attack on Dera Baba Nanak bridge on the night of 5 December with the objective to capture the eastern end of the bridge. The bridge was well protected by a series of concrete embankments fitted with anti-tank guns and heavy and light automatics.

In this attack, Captain Ahlawat led the 'C' Company, which was assigned the task of occupying Link Bund and Rail Bund. The advance of the company was held up by heavy medium machine gun fire from a concrete pill-box. All attempts to destroy this pill-box failed and in the process the company suffered heavy casualties. Captain Ahlawat could not bear this hurdle on his way to the objective. With total disregard for his life he charged upon the pill-box with a dash. He grabbed the hot machine gun barrel with his right hand and silenced the gun by throwing a grenade into the pill-box with his left hand. This enabled the company to make a charge and overrun the objective. In this bold attempt Captain Ahlawat lost his life, suffering six bullet wounds. He hung on to the machine gun barrel till the end.

For conspicuous gallantry and supreme sacrifice Captain Ahlawat was honoured with Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-7750
Lt Col Airy,
Ved Parkash,
MVC

Lt Col Ved Parkash Airy, son of Shri Ganga Bishan Airy, was born on 10 March 1935, at Karnal, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Grenadiers on 3 June 1956.

During the Indo-Pak War of 1971, Lt Col Airy commanded 3 Grenadiers in Basantar river area in Shakargarh sector. The enemy had covered both sides of the river with mine-fields, about 1100 metres in depth, and in addition had prepared fortified defences to check the Indian advance. The Grenadiers spearheaded the advance of 54 Infantry Division in Basantar area. They captured Bhairo Nath and Bhagor Khurd on 5th night after a tough engagement. The booty that fell to them included two Sherman tank destroyers.

The Grenadiers played a much more important role in the battle of Basantar river. They were asked to capture Lohal and Jarpal for the establishment of an initial bridge-head. On 15th night, penetrating through the deep mine-fields on the river sides and braving the incessant firing from Pak positions, they attacked the objectives. The enemy put up stiff resistance. In the ensuing fierce hand to hand fighting, the Grenadiers beat the enemy and captured the objectives. But the cost of the success was paid in heavy casualties. During this battle, Lt Col Airy led his troops with cool courage. He always remained in the forefront to encourage and inspire his men.

But the enemy did not give up. On 17 December, after getting reinforcements, he launched a massive counter-attack on the Grenadiers.

to dislodge them from the bridge-head. But the attack was again beaten back. Lt Col Airy moved from one trench to another motivating his men to fight, unmindful of his personal safety. Finally, the enemy had to retreat with heavy losses. The bodies of at least eighty-seven Pakistanis including Lt Col Akram, their commanding officer, were found lying along Indian forward defences.

Lt Col Airy was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry in the face of the enemy.



IC-3276
Major
Ajit Singh,
MVC

Major Ajit Singh, son of Shri Joginder Singh, was born on 7 November 1924, in Punjab. He was commissioned in the Jat Regiment on 23 September 1945. Subsequently he rose to the rank of Colonel.

During the Sino-Indian Conflict 1962, 5 Jat was deployed in Hot Spring area in Ladakh. B Company led by Major Ajit Singh was deployed at patrol base and Nulla Junction as protective-cum-early warning troops. On 22 October 1962, the Chinese launched a heavy attack on these positions. They overran the patrol base and tried to outflank Nulla Junction with a view to cut off Hot Spring from the rear. The Nulla Junction fell to the enemy after a bitter fight. Major Ajit Singh was asked to fall back to Tsogatsalu in order to organise a more co-ordinated defence there.

Major Ajit Singh could not reconcile to the loss of these posts. He requested permission to retake the post at Nulla Junction. This was agreed to and the feature was reoccupied by his men. This enabled the Indians to hold on to the Hot Spring post as well. He was, subsequently ordered to withdraw from these posts in view of the continued enemy build-up opposite Hot Spring and reports of enemy infiltration into Marsimikla. In the circumstances he had to vacate the posts to take up a defensive position in the rear.

Major Ajit Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for the great courage and leadership displayed during these operations.



JC-18340
Subedar
Ajit Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Subedar Ajit Singh, son of Shri Ujagar Singh, was born on 8 April 1933, in village Sobhana, Jalandhar, Punjab. He was enrolled in the Sikh Regiment on 23 May 1952.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, 4 Sikh was deployed in the Punjab sector. The battalion was assigned the task of capturing the Barki village in Lahore sector of Pakistan. The troops commenced advance at 2000 hours on 6 September. After reducing the enemy outposts on the way, it closed on to about 380 metres of village Barki.

The assault on the village Barki was then launched. The Indian advance was, however, held up by a well-sited enemy gun position. Subedar Ajit Singh was assigned the task of destroying this gun emplacement which was holding up the Indian attack. In complete disregard of his safety, the Subedar charged the emplacement single-handed. Though wounded in the chest by a burst of medium machine gun fire, he pressed home the attack and destroyed the post by lobbing a grenade through a loophole in the emplacement. By this gallant act he not only removed the menace of the machine gun but also inspired his comrades to destroy the enemy position. Subedar Ajit Singh succumbed to his injuries, subsequently.

Subedar Ajit Singh was decorated with Mahavir Chakra posthumously for displaying supreme courage and devotion to duty.



5341315
Lance Havildar
Ale, Nar Bahadur,
MVC (Posth.)

Lance Havildar Nar Bahadur Ale, son of Shri Bal Bahadur Ale, was born on 15 July 1954, in village Khaitar, district Dailekh, Nepal. He was enrolled in 3/4 Gorkha Rifles on 15 July 1972.

In 1987, 3/4 Gorkha Rifles was deployed in Siachen area. One of its companies held a vital post at Bila Fondla Complex. Lance Havildar Ale commanded a medium machine gun detachment at this post.

On the night of 23 September, the enemy launched an attack on the Indian post with heavy artillery support. The attack was beaten back largely due to accurate and effective fire of the medium machine gun. On the night of 24 September, the enemy again launched an attack on the post in overwhelming strength. Heavy artillery shelling and missile fire supported the attack. The medium machine gun detachment, however, succeeded in blunting the attack. Meanwhile, a direct hit from an artillery shell incapacitated the crew members and injured Lance Havildar Ale in the left leg severely. Despite profuse bleeding he picked up the medium machine gun and firing incessantly succeeded in breaking the assault, 50 metres short of the post. At least 15 assaulting troops were killed by him during this attack. In view of the grave situation, unmindful of his bleeding wounds, Lance Havildar Ale refused evacuation. He was instrumental in beating back two more enemy attacks. Later he succumbed to his injuries.

Lance Havildar Ale was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous bravery, posthumously.



4212
Sepoy
Amar Singh,
MVC

Sepoy Amar Singh, son of Shri Narain Singh, was born on 30 August 1921, in village Daughrat, Patiala, Punjab. He was enrolled in 1 Patiala (RS) Infantry on 9 July 1942.

During Jammu & Kashmir operations in the first half of 1948, the Pakistani raiders mounted heavy pressure on the Indian units thinly spread out on the northern front. The Dras sector was weakly held by some units of 5 Kashmir Infantry. In May 1948, 1 Patiala was ordered to relieve the detachments on the State Infantry between Sonmarg and Dras. Unfortunately, Dras was lost to the enemy in early June even before the State force units could be relieved. 1 Patiala, therefore, established positions in Zoji La area only.

Meanwhile, the raiders were gaining strength. They mounted sharp attacks on Indian pickets throughout June 1948. During one such attack on 18 June Sepoy Amar Singh was manning light machine gun No. 1 at a platoon picket at Zoji La Pass. At 0610 hours under the cover of morning haze and snow-fall, the enemy managed to bring three medium machine guns, two browning guns and five light machine guns in the area. He opened up all his weapons on the picket position and then advanced down the ridge. In this attack one third of the Indian picket became casualty. Sepoy Amar Singh was wounded severely in the head and became semi-conscious, while his number two had his arm shattered.

Between 0700 hours and 0900 hours the enemy made two determined attempts to rush through the picket. But Sepoy Amar Singh kept on firing

accurately from 250 metres. He held up the enemy single-handed. He kept his cool before the continuous fire of the enemy guns and shouting and yelling of the enemy personnel. In 15 hours of the battle he fired 11 magazines.

The picket was reinforced in the afternoon, but the heavy enemy fire directed from vantage points did not allow the Indians to use their weapons effectively. Profusely bleeding and weakened by a skull injury, Sepoy Amar Singh continued lying on a snow-covered ground, watching for the enemy. He was removed to the picket at 2200 hours.

Sepoy Amar Singh displayed great courage, initiative and gallantry in most adverse circumstances. By his single-handed effort he saved many comrades from certain death. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional gallantry.



IC-4501
Brigadier
Anand Sarup,
MVC

Brigadier Anand Sarup, son of Captain Khem Chand, was born on 18 March 1929, at Dera Ismail Khan, Punjab, now in Pakistan. He was enrolled in the Indian Army on 7 October 1947 and was commissioned on 11 December 1949, into 8 Gorkha Rifles.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brigadier Anand Sarup was allotted the task of organising a force for engaging the enemy at Pathanagar and in the area north of Feni town. He grouped the force and quickly launched an attack on the enemy. In this attack he moved forward with his troops directing them on the targets. Under his command the force fought the battle at Nazirhat, Kumirhat and Bhatiani very successfully.

Brigadier Anand Sarup was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and outstanding leadership.



9212865
Sepoy
Ansuya Prasad,
MVC (Posth.)

Sepoy Ansuya Prasad, son of Shri Dayanand, was born on 19 May 1953, in village Nanna, District Chamoli, Uttar Pradesh. He was enrolled in 10 Mahar on 19 May 1971.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 10 Mahar was deployed on the Eastern front. It acted as an advance guard to 81 Mountain Brigade in its move along axis Shamsher nagar-Maulvibazar. Maulvibazar township was strategically important and the enemy had stationed a strong force there. Anti-personnel mines etc. protected its approaches and the built-up area was also well fortified.

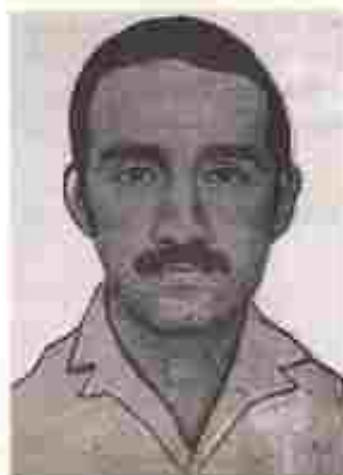
The brigade launched an attack on the night of 8 December. The 10 Mahar was asked to capture the enemy position at Chatlapur Tea Factory. The battalion was, however, held up by heavy automatic fire from enemy machine guns located at the house of the factory manager. Further advance appeared almost impossible.

At this juncture it was decided to send a squad to get into the enemy defences and to set the building on fire to neutralise the guns. Sepoy Ansuya Prasad volunteered to perform the task. He took a few grenades with him and in utter disregard for his personal safety, crawled towards the enemy position. While moving towards the target he was shot at and both his legs received severe injuries. But he did not abandon the mission. Moving to the building he noticed a stock of ammunition in one of the rear rooms. While crawling towards it, he received a machine gun burst on his shoulders. Wounded badly and bleeding profusely he made it to

the room with great difficulty. He soon succumbed to his injuries but not before he had hurled the grenades at the dump and had set whole building ablaze. The enemy was forced to abandon the building and the Mahars captured the objective. Ten enemy soldiers were burnt to death inside the building.

Sepoy Ansuya Prasad was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry, posthumously.





02283-N
**Lieutenant
Arvind Singh,
MVC**

Lieutenant Arvind Singh, son of Dr. Virendra Singh Chaudhary, was born on 26 January 1958, in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in Indian Navy on 1 July 1981. As a student he earned many laurels in studies and sports. He was awarded the President's Gold Medal for being the best all round cadet at Naval Academy.

In 1987, Lt Arvind Singh was posted at *INS Abhimanyu* as the Officer-in-Charge of an Indian Marine Special Force (IMSF) Team. This Force alongwith 10 Para Commandos was assigned certain tasks as part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka. It moved out from Jaffna Fort at 1430 hours on 19 October 1987, on the mission. On the way it successfully negotiated heavily mined road and boobytraps laid by the militants. It also encountered heavy militant fire from the roof-tops. Lieutenant Singh motivated his men to secure the area. This made a link up between 41 Brigade and 1 Maratha Light Infantry possible on 20 October 1987.

On the night of 21 October, the Force was asked to destroy Guru Nagar Jetty and also the speed boats of the militants in the Jaffna lagoon. It extensively damaged the jetty and destroyed six speed boats. The Force swam over 1 1/2 km under water and planted demolition charges on 11 speed boats. It, however, came under heavy fire from the militants before these charges could be exploded. Lieutenant Arvind Singh, therefore, exposed himself to militant fire without regard to his personal safety, with a view to divert the enemy attention.

Lieutenant Arvind Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for professional skill, courage and devotion to duty.



IC-16
Brigadier
Atal, Kanhya Lal,
MVC

Brigadier Kanhya Lal Atal, son of Shri P. Atal, was born on 7 December 1913. He was commissioned in the Gorkha Rifles on 3 September 1939. He later settled in Delhi.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations in 1948, the blasting of enemy defences at Zoji La on 1 November removed the main hurdle for Indians on their way to Dras and Kargil. But there were some hurdles beyond the Pass.

The task of clearing these hurdles was entrusted to 77 Brigade. Brigadier Atal planned the attack in great detail, made adequate preparations and executed the task under intense wintry conditions with determination. Soon the advance of the Brigade was held up at Pindras. At this place the enemy was entrenched in strong positions completely dominating the defile through which the Indian troops had to pass in any event. Here the C Company of 1/5 RGR had suffered about 18 casualties in an enemy ambush on 22 November 1948. Brigadier Atal moved forward his tactical HQ with the leading battalion and came under heavy enemy machine gun and mortar fire. Undaunted, he pressed a strong Brigade attack and overran the enemy positions. This enabled the advance on Kargil to continue.

Later, when the leading battalion was held up about 6 km short of Kargil, he personally led two companies over a difficult mountainous track, at great personal risk. This took him to the rear of the enemy and to Kargil.

For displaying great courage and leadership throughout these operations, Brigadier Atal was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



**IC-4870
Brigadier
Bakshi,
Joginder Singh,
MVC, VSM**

Brigadier Joginder Singh Bakshi, son of Shri Man Singh Bakshi, was born on 10 March 1928, at Kauntila, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in the Jat Regiment on 4 June 1950. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Major General. He was awarded Vishisht Seva Medal for rendering distinguished service in 'Mizo Hills'. Many members of his family have served the Indian Army with distinction.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brigadier Bakshi commanded 340 Mountain Brigade Group on the Eastern front. On 6 December 1971, the Brigade Group was asked to advance along axis Nawabganj-Chandipur-Pirganj with a view to capture Pirganj and establish a road-block there.

Brigadier Bakshi planned his operations assiduously. He launched a series of attacks on enemy strongholds between 7 and 16 December and captured a number of well prepared positions. In the process the district town of Bogra was also captured. During these operations, Brigadier Bakshi displayed professional competence of a high order. By his daring acts, he outwitted the opposing forces and broke their resistance. He captured a large number of enemy troops including a Brigade Commander and a large quantity of equipment.

Brigadier Bakshi was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and professional skill.



IC-1697
Lt Col
Bakshi,
Madan Mohan Singh,
MVC

Lt Col M.M.S. Bakshi, son of Shri D.R. Bakshi, was born on 14 November 1925, at Campbelpur, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in the Hodson's Horse (4th Duke of Cambridge's Own Lancers) on 17 March 1945. He served in World War II. During the Indo-Pak War 1971, he rendered meritorious service and was awarded Ati Vishisht Seva Medal. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier.

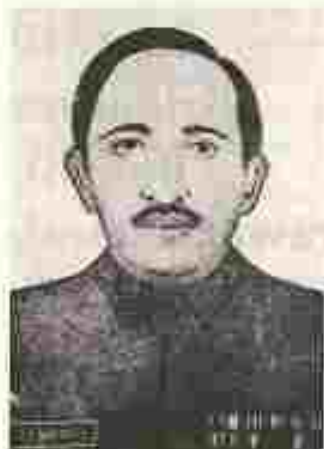
During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lt Col Bakshi commanded the 4 Horse in Stalkot sector. The regiment was assigned the twin task of protecting the left flank of 1 Armoured Brigade during the attack on Phillora and cutting the Phillora road in Saboke area to intercept the enemy withdrawal.

On 11 September 1965, when the 4 Horse squadrons were under deployment for the impending battle of Phillora, Lt Col Bakshi observed a squadron of enemy Patton tanks in hull down position astride Libbe-Phillora road, facing west and north-west. Without any loss of time, he engaged and knocked out two tanks. These tanks blew up and their crew bailed out. The other tanks of the enemy squadron now directed their guns on him. Undeterred, he advanced and charged through the enemy tanks, though by then his tank had received two direct hits. He gallantly charged with his tank, and knocked out yet another enemy tank. His tank was then hit for the third time. Still, undeterred he charged through the enemy line of tanks, some of which were on fire, and crossed the Libbe-Phillora road. At this juncture his tank was hit for the fourth time and caught fire. Thereupon, he ordered the crew to bail out. As they bailed out intense enemy machine gun fire greeted them and the crew of enemy

tanks who had come out earlier from their burning tanks surrounded them. Bakshi and his men escaped capture by taking cover in a sugarcane field. Soon Bakshi and his men found themselves entrapped in the crossfire between Indian and Pak tanks. They were rescued by 17 Horse after three hours of harrowing experience. Meanwhile B Squadron of 4 Horse had knocked out 6 enemy tanks.

Lt Col Bakshi resumed the command of the regiment on return. His inspiring leadership made a material contribution in the battle of Phillora. He inflicted heavy loss on enemy armour and compelled it to flee in panic. His unit fought valiantly, destroyed 69 Patton's and won 43 gallantry awards.

Lt Col Bakshi was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exemplary courage, determination and leadership.



IC-16709
Colonel
Bakshi, Vijay Kumar,
MVC (Posth.)

Colonel Vijay Kumar Bakshi, son of Shri Bal Mokand Bakshi, was born on 3 April 1943, at Jalandhar, Punjab. He was commissioned in 8 Gorkha Rifles on 25 December 1965.

Under the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement many units of the Indian Army were despatched to Sri Lanka to assist the home government in containing the militant activity in the Island. 6/8 Gorkha Rifles commanded by Col Vijay Kumar Bakshi also joined the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka.

On 2 March 1989, the Gorkhas encountered a militant camp in general area Nayaroo lagoon in Wannu sector. An exchange of fire began. Soon the militants started firing from all directions. Unexpectedly the skirmish turned into a prolonged engagement lasting over twenty-four hours. In this action, Col Bakshi led his troops in a bold manner despite the fact that he had been injured earlier. He maintained contact with the militants and continued to press forward notwithstanding the fact that his force had been cut off. By his brave actions Col Bakshi maintained pressure on the militants and inflicted heavy casualties on them. In the end, a bullet killed this valiant soldier.

Colonel Bakshi was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous courage, determination and leadership, posthumously.



**IC-1510
Brigadier
Bakshi,
Zorawar Chand,
PVSM, MVC,
Vr. C, VSM**

Brigadier Zorawar Chand Bakshi, son of S.B. Bakshi Lal Chand, was born on 2 January 1921, at Bulyana, now in Pakistan. His family later settled in New Delhi. He was commissioned into 5 Gorkha Rifles on 27 June 1943. His list of awards included Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Maha Vir Chakra, Vir Chakra and Vishisht Seva Medal. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Lt Gen.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Brigadier Bakshi was commanding 16 Infantry Brigade, deployed in Jammu and Kashmir. In early August the information was received that a large number of Razakars from Pak occupied Kashmir had infiltrated into Gulmarg sector. Brigadier Bakshi was ordered to capture Basali, Haji Pir Pass and Kahuta to effect a link up between Uri and Punch and to deny ingress to the infiltrators. The brigade first operated from Tangmarg and Pattan area and then entered the Uri-Punch bulge. The operation lasted from 5 August to 21 September, the day ceasefire came into effect.

The capture of Haji Pir, an enemy stronghold at a height of 2600 metres was considered vital for the Uri-Punch link up. The road connecting Uri and Punch via Haji Pir had deteriorated due to disuse and at some places it had disintegrated. There was no direct approach to Haji Pir except over the mountain ranges, both on the west and east. From brigade headquarters it was 22 km along the road. These were strongly defended enemy positions on the way to Haji Pir.

Brigadier Bakshi always remained with the forward troops during the advance. As soon as an objective was captured, he reached there to guide

and help in the reorganisation. Many a time, he remained in the forefront unmindful of his convenience or safety in the face of intense and continuous enemy shelling. After the capture of Haji Pir, he moved forward his tactical Headquarters immediately, notwithstanding the lurking danger of enemy counter-attack.

Throughout this operation, Brigadier Bakshi displayed a high standard of planning, tactical skill and leadership. He was decorated with Mahavir Chakra.



IC-13377
Major
Bal, Amarjit Singh,
MVC

Major Amarjit Singh Bal, son of Major General Tara Singh Bal, was born on 6 June 1940, at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. His family lived in Amritsar, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Armoured Corps on 10 June 1962. He belonged to a family with four generations in military service. During the Indo-Pak War 1965, he was wounded and his brother Major M.S. Bal was killed in action. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Lt-Colonel.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Major Bal was attached to the Poona Horse, deployed in Shakargarh sector on the Western front. The regiment was placed under the command of 47 Infantry Brigade which was given the task of establishing a bridge-head across the Basantar river. It was to ensure the security of the bridge-head against enemy counter-attacks and also to extend support to 3 Grenadiers and 16 Madras in their operations.

In the battle of Basantar river Major Bal was commanding 'B' Squadron of the regiment at Jarpal. The enemy counter-attacked this position in great strength from the direction of Bara Pind. The gunners of 'B' Squadron foiled his attempt to overrun the position and inflicted heavy casualties on him. But the enemy was not disheartened. He launched repeated counter-attacks against Jarpal, with armour in support, between 15 and 16 December 1971. Major Bal foiled all enemy attempts. Though heavily outnumbered, he motivated his troops to remain steadfast and beat back the enemy attacks. As many as twenty-seven M-48 tanks belonging to Pak 13 Lancers were destroyed by his squadron in this battle.

Major Bal was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry, outstanding leadership and exceptional devotion to duty.



MR 281
Major
Banerjee,
Nirod Baran,
MVC

Major Nirod Baran Banerjee, son of Shri B.B. Banerjee, was born on 2 April 1915, in Chandi Mahal, Khulna, now in Bangladesh. He was educated in Calcutta Medical College. He was commissioned in the Army Medical Corps on 5 March 1942. After Partition his family settled in 24 Parganas, West Bengal.

The end of World War II saw Korea divided into two along the 38th Parallel. The northern part became the Democratic Republic of Korea and the southern the Republic of Korea. On 25 June 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea. This led to UN intervention in support of South Korea. India contributed a Medical Unit, viz. 60 Para Field Ambulance, to this UN peace effort. By the end of 1950 the Unit was operating in sub-zero temperature of Korea.

On 29 March 1951, during the airborne operation 'Tomahawk' in Korea, Major Banerjee parachuted down with the surgical team of 60 Indian Field Ambulance behind the opposing force. He organised the medical and surgical treatment of the seriously wounded for five days and nights continuously, with tireless energy. During this period he came under hostile mortar fire several times. But with utter disregard for personal safety and with an amazing power of endurance, he continued rendering medical aid to casualties and thus saved many lives.

His exceptional courage, determination and devotion to duty was an inspiration to the rest of the surgical team. Major Banerjee was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



4898 F(P)
Sqn Ldr
Banerji, Madhavendra,
MVC

Sqn Ldr Madhavendra Banerji, son of Shri T.R. Banerji, was born on 4 April 1934, in Calcutta, West Bengal. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 16 April 1955 and joined an operational squadron. He was in the first batch of the IAF pilots trained on a new type of supersonic aircraft. He displayed considerable initiative and professional competence in imparting this training to other pilots. He was awarded Vayu Sena Medal in recognition of his services. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Air Vice Marshal.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Indians could not deploy heavy armour in the Chhamb area due to difficult terrain and absence of approach roads. On the other hand better terrain and developed roads enabled Pakistanis to bring heavy armour right inside the battle zone. The Indian ground forces asked for air support to neutralise this Pakistani armour threat. At this juncture Sqn Ldr Banerji was a senior pilot with a fighter-bomber squadron, on the Western sector. During the first seven days of war, he led as many as 14 bombing missions against the enemy targets. Most of these missions were directed to Chhamb area where the enemy had mounted great pressure on Indian infantry troops. In spite of heavy ground fire he repeatedly attacked the enemy forces and inflicted heavy losses on them. Consequently, the pressure on our ground forces was considerably reduced. In these attacks he personally destroyed two enemy tanks and two guns.

Sqn Ldr Banerji was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for displaying outstanding valour, initiative and courage.



MS-22409
Major
Barat, Anil Krishna,
MVC

Major Anil Krishna Barat, son of Dr. S.N. Barat, was born on 1 February 1915, in Krish Nagar, Nadia, West Bengal. He received his education in the Royal College of Surgeons, London, and was commissioned in the Indian Army Medical Corps on 15 November 1940. Later, he rose to the rank of Lt General.

During the Jammu and Kashmir operations in 1948, the Indian Army had to fight a long battle with the raiders to save Naushahra from falling into their hands. The enemy had completely surrounded the area and was putting in as much lead as possible. In this battle for Naushahra the Indian Army suffered heavy casualties.

Attending to the mounting battle casualties demanded a herculean effort indeed. Major Barat of the Army Medical Corps rose to the occasion. With calm and cool courage he went about the task of giving surgical attention to the casualties rapidly pouring into the centre from the battlefield. His dedication to duty was a source of inspiration to all his comrades.

During the capture of Dharwal, Major Barat attended on the casualties from 21 to 25 September 1948. Once the enemy put in an attack when he was carrying out an operation with the aid of jeep light. He continued the operation while the bullets were whizzing and the shells were bursting around him. After completing the operation he joined the other troops in fighting the enemy.

His gallantry and devotion to duty inspired all who served with him. Major Barat was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional gallantry in the face of the enemy.



IC-17621
Lt Col
Bawa,
Inder Bal Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Lt Col Inder Bal Singh Bawa, son of Dr. H.S. Bawa, was born on 25 May 1947, at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the 5 Gorkha Rifles (Frontier Force) on 11 June 1967. He belonged to a family with military traditions. His father had served the Indian Army during World War II as a Captain.

Lt Col Bawa assumed the command of 4/5 Gorkha Rifles on 7 August 1987, at Gwalior. His battalion left for Bangalore on 26 August for eventual deployment in Sri Lanka as a contingent of Indian Peace Keeping Force. It landed at Palali in Sri Lanka on 11 October 1987 and was immediately launched into battle. The battalion was allotted the task of clearing axis Vasavilan-Urgmpurai-Jalfna fort. The militants desperately opposed the battalion's advance from their strong fortified positions. But Lt Col Bawa moved on, boldly reducing enemy strongholds on the way and inflicting heavy casualties on them. There was a personal touch in his command and he was always an inspiring force for his men.

The battalion was then detailed to extricate 13 Sikh Light Infantry and 10 Para Commando team from area Kondavil North. Lt Col Bawa led his men through heavily fortified enemy territory, effected a link up with the above force and successfully extricated it on 13 October 1987. While he was conducting operations a suicide squad of militants sprayed a hail of bullets on him killing him on the spot.

Lt Col Bawa displayed conspicuous bravery and commendable leadership in the face of the militants. He was decorated with Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



4220 F(P)
Wing Commander
Benegal,
Ramesh Sakhrum,
MVC, AVSM

Wing Commander Ramesh Sakhrum Benegal, son of Shri B.S. Rao, was born on 9 October 1926, at Rangoon, Burma, where his ancestors had settled. For his connections with the Indian National Army, he was taken prisoner of war and repatriated to India in January 1946. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 25 January 1952. For distinguish service in 1965 operations his name was Mentioned-in-Despatches and he received AOC-in-C's commendation. He was decorated with Ati Vishisht Seva Medal in January 1971. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Air Commodore.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Wg Cdr Benegal commanded 106 Squadron of the Indian Air Force. It was an operational reconnaissance squadron. The squadron was asked to carry out a number of missions into enemy territory with a view to obtain vital information of its Air Force and Army installations. Wg Cdr Benegal flew, unarmed and unescorted, deep into enemy territory over heavily defended targets. He always returned after achieving his objective in full measure. The information brought by him from 19 such missions immensely helped the Indian Army and the IAF in planning their operations. This of course went far to cripple the enemy war machinery.

Wg.Cdr Benegal was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional courage, skill and devotion to duty.



IC-11567
Major
Berry, Vijay Kumar,
MVC

Major Vijay Kumar Berry, son of Shri Om Prakash Berry, was born on 26 June 1938, in Amritsar, Punjab. Later on he settled in Delhi. He was commissioned in the Parachute Regiment of the Indian Army on 7 June 1959. Afterwards he rose to the rank of Lt Col.

The Indo-Pak War came to an end on 17 December 1971. After the cease-fire, the 4 Para deployed in Ganganagar sector of Rajasthan was given the task of preventing enemy encroachments on Indian territory. On 26 December 1971, it was discovered that the enemy had encroached 550 metres inside Indian territory in area Sand Dunes. The area had been developed into a defended locality by laying mines on all approaches and by stocking it with artillery pieces. 'C' company led by Major Berry was given the task of clearing the encroachment on 28 December.

The company commenced advance at 0300 hours. The enemy reaction was quick and the company was pinned down by MMG fire. At this critical juncture Major Berry led the company towards the objective with great determination. In the process the company suffered casualties and one platoon got separated due to the blinding dust created by artillery fire. The mine-fields encountered near the enemy position also claimed some casualties. The movement of enemy tanks in an adjacent area further complicated the situation for the Indians. Despite these hazards, 'C' company captured half of the objective by 0530 hours. One enemy MMG which held up further progress was silenced by Lance Havildar Tek Bahadur, who paid for it with his life. Major Berry finally captured the

objective. The enemy subjected the position to heavy artillery and mortar fire for twelve hours to dislodge the Indians. The company, however, managed to hold on to the objective.

During this battle Major Berry, disregarding his personal safety, moved from section to section inspiring his men to continue the assault. For his conspicuous gallantry and outstanding leadership he was decorated with Mahavir Chakra. His unit won the Battle Honour Sadiqia Sand Dune 1971.





**5001 F(P)
Sqn Ldr
Bhardwaj,
Ravinder Nath,
MVC**

Sqn Ldr Ravinder Nath Bhardwaj, son of Shri P.N. Bhardwaj, was born on 26 July 1935 at Lahore, now in Pakistan. After Partition his family shifted to Delhi. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 8 October 1955. While serving at an Operational Training Unit he worked hard to improve the flying skill and ground knowledge of the trainee pilots. For this distinguished service he was awarded Vayu Sena Medal in 1970. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Air Marshal.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Sqn Ldr Bhardwaj served with a fighter-bomber squadron stationed at Bareilly. The squadron was launched into action on 4 December 1971, at 1405 hours to provide close air support, counter air tactical recon and interdiction, etc.

Sqn Ldr Bhardwaj took active part in these missions. On 5 December 1971, he led a successful raid on an enemy airfield, which was heavily defended by anti-aircraft guns and small arms, and succeeded in setting on fire an enemy heavy transport aircraft. On 7 December, he led another successful mission and caused heavy damage to a well protected power station of the enemy. On 10th, he led a close air support mission to Chhamb area. During the first attack, his aircraft as well as that of his number two were hit by ground fire. While pulling out of the attack they were engaged by enemy Sabres. But he skilfully guided his number two out of the danger and then returned back to join the battle. In the process he shot down an enemy Sabre which crashed inside the Indian territory near the Chhamb bridge. Left alone, he then returned back to attack

Pakistani tanks and troops and caused extensive damage to them. Finally he brought back his damaged aircraft safely to the base.

Sqn Ldr Bhardwaj was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exceptional leadership, courage and devotion to duty.

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IC-8119
Major
Roy, Bhaskar,
MVC

Major Bhaskar Roy, son of Shri S.C. Roy, was born on 4 April 1936, in New Delhi. He was commissioned in the 20 Lancers on 9 December 1956. This brave soldier died in an accident on 30 October 1969.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Major Roy commanded 'C' Squadron of 20 Lancers. It had been placed under the command of 191 Infantry Brigade Group in Chhamb sector, in August 1965. It participated in anti-infiltration operations and by the middle of August had moved to the west of the river Munawar Tawi. On 1 September 1965, Pakistan subjected the 'C' Squadron's harbour area near Chhamb to intense shelling. This was followed by a massive tank thrust across the international boundary.

Major Roy employed his armour boldly and skilfully to stem the tide of enemy advance. In the first encounter at about 0805 hours he destroyed 6 Patton tanks and 3 RCL's and captured one jeep. The enemy made a second attack at about 1100 hours and the battle continued till 1600 hours. During these five hours a fierce tank battle was fought. But finally the Indian AMX 13 tanks beat back the Pak Patton tanks. A total of 13 enemy tanks were destroyed and several others disabled. This brought the Pak offensive to a bleeding halt. Thus the Pak attempt to encircle 191 Infantry Brigade Group was foiled.

Major Roy was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous courage, skill and leadership.



IC-1338
Lt-Col
Bhattacharjea,
Bejoy Mohan,
MVC, PVSM

Lt Col B.M. Bhattacharjea, son of Shri S.P. Bhattacharjea, was born on 3 December 1922, at Midnapore, West Bengal. He was commissioned in the Royal Garhwal Rifles of the Indian Army on 11 July 1943. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Major General. He was awarded PVSM.

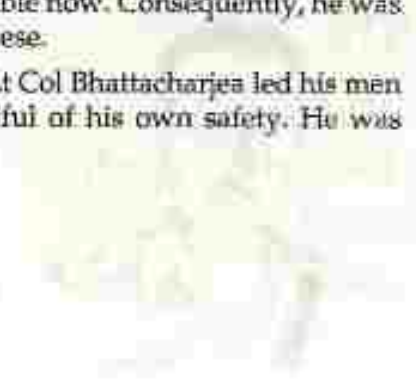
During the conflict with China in 1962, Lt Col Bhattacharjea was commanding 4 Garhwal in Tawang area of NEFA. On 23 October 1962, due to heavy enemy pressure, the Garhwalis abandoned Tawang and took up a defensive position at Jang bridge to give cover to the retreating Indian forces. A fierce battle was fought here on the 25th. The Garhwalis destroyed the bridge and halted the enemy advance. The troops regained their confidence and began dominating the area with aggressive patrolling. Lt Col Bhattacharjea himself accompanied the first few patrols. His men recovered some arms and equipment, raided an enemy position and took a prisoner.

On 17 November the Chinese launched a major offensive on the position held by the Garhwalis ahead of Sela. Five successive attacks were mounted. But the Garhwalis led by Lt Col Bhattacharjea met the challenge with fortitude and beat back all the attacks. When the enemy subjected his flank and rear to medium machine gun fire, he sent out a party of volunteers to destroy the enemy position and capture the gun.

When the withdrawal became inevitable the battalion retreated to Senge in good order after the last light. Men marched another 22 km during the night. When his forward troops came under attack from a ridge, Lt Col Bhattacharjea led a gallant charge to clear the area. But owing to heavy

enemy fire no further movement was possible now. Consequently, he was captured and made prisoner by the Chinese.

During these weeks of intense fighting Lt Col Bhattacharjee led his men with courage and determination, unmindful of his own safety. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra.





IC-9015
Lt Col
Bhawani Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Bhawani Singh, son of His Highness Sir Sawai Man Singh (Late Maharaja of Jaipur), was born on 22 October 1931, at Jaipur, Rajasthan. He was commissioned in the Parachute Regiment on 15 February 1952.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Bhawani Singh commanded the 10 Para Battalion in Rajasthan sector. The unit was trained for special operations behind the enemy lines in the event of war. It was ordered to raid Chachro and Virawah areas with a view to destroy enemy forces and stores and to cause confusion in his rear.

On the night of 5 December 1971, Lt Col Singh led his men deep into the enemy territory. He conducted relentless raids on the enemy posts at Chachro and Virawah for four days and nights. He led his commandoes with cool courage and confidence on difficult terrain despite heavy enemy small arms fire. Personal comfort and safety were his last concern. Large chunks of enemy territory, 100 to 120 km deep across the border, fell to Indians as a result of these operations. His operations created panic and confusion in the enemy ranks and forced them to retreat, leaving behind a large number of prisoners and equipment.

In this operation, Lt Col Bhawani Singh set a fine example of courage, leadership and devotion to duty. For his outstanding performance he was decorated with Mahavir Chakra.



IC-4466
Major
Bhupinder Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Major Bhupinder Singh, son of Shri Sajjan Singh, was born on 19 September 1928, at Kopar, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Hodson's Horse (4th Duke of Cambridge's Own Lancers) on 11 December 1949.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Major Bhupinder Singh commanded the 'B' Squadron of 4 Horse. The squadron was deployed to cut the enemy line of retreat along road Gadgor-Phillora and to provide a fire-base for the Indian attack on Phillora.

On 11 September Major Bhupinder Singh advanced with his squadron to carry out the assigned tasks. He ably led his squadron in the battle of Phillora and Sadoke in Pakistan. The enemy line of retreat was cut and a heavy toll of his armour was taken when he pulled back in panic. Although his tank was hit on several occasions, he remained in effective command and by several acts of personal gallantry inspired his men to fight courageously. When the Commander of 4 Horse was forced to abandon his tank and take refuge in a canefield Major Bhupinder Singh ably led the regiment. On 19 September, in the battle of Sodreke his tank was hit and caught fire. While abandoning his tank he was severely burnt and died a hero's death. It is remarkable that Major Bhupinder Singh continued fighting even when all but two of his tanks were disabled.

For displaying exemplary gallantry, leadership and devotion to duty Major Bhupinder Singh was decorated with Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-17687
Subedar
Bishan Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Subedar Bishan Singh, son of Shri Santa Singh, was born on 14 January 1917, in village Purain, Ludhiana, Punjab. He was enrolled in the Sikh Regiment on 14 January 1933. He had distinguished himself as a soldier in the Second World War and had won honours and titles like Sardar Bahadur, OBI and MC.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations some 4000 to 6000 raiders had spread in Uri sector by early December 1947. They had also settled on the high hills overlooking Uri from the south-east in good strength. From these positions the raiders sniped at the Uri garrison and also posed a threat to the roads leading from Uri to Srinagar and Punch. Indians, therefore, decided to dislodge the enemy from these hills.

At 0700 hours on 12 December 1 Sikh moved out from Uri to remove this threat. They quickly overcame the opposition on the way and reached the main enemy position in the afternoon. At about 1430 hours they bumped upon a strong enemy force and a fierce hand-to-hand fight ensued. The 'B' and 'A' Companies suffered heavily in this encounter and were ordered to withdraw. During the withdrawal 'D' Company held the last lay back position. The enemy followed the withdrawal. When minor actions failed to deter the enemy, Subedar Bishan Singh organised a counter-attack with the remnants of his company. Though wounded in the right arm, he led his company with such dash and determination that the enemy position was overrun. He bayoneted two enemy soldiers with his own hands.

Soon another wave of the enemy came upon him. A bloody battle ensued and Subedar Bishan Singh was wounded for a second time, now in the chest. Still, he continued to lead his men on, cheering and encouraging them. Even when enfeebled by the loss of blood, he killed two more enemy troops with his bayonet. This so demoralised the enemy that he fled in all directions. Subedar Bishan Singh chased them shouting "Sat Sri Akal". He was killed by an enemy bullet while in hot pursuit.

Subedar Bishan Singh set a fine example of courage, leadership and determination. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-1257
Major
Brar,
Malkiat Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Major Malkiat Singh Brar, son of Shri Inder Singh, was born on 15 August 1918, in village Alamwala, Faridkot, Punjab. He was commissioned in 1 (Para) Kumaon Regiment on 1 January 1941.

During the Jammu and Kashmir operations the problem of relief of Punch caused a lot of anxiety to the Indians. Troops were despatched to augment the Punch garrison so that it could hold on against the enemy pressure. 1 (Para) Kumaon less one company and two companies of 3/9 Gorkhas joined the Punch garrison before January 1948. But in this enemy-infested territory survival was difficult. The supply position was never satisfactory and the troops and the refugees had to go without necessities for days and weeks. The Punch Brigade often carried harvesting operations in the neighbouring enemy held territory to augment its food-stocks. In one such operation carried out at 2000 hrs on 7 February 1948, at village Khanetar two companies of 1 (Para) Kumaon were deeply involved.

Major Brar was then commanding 'B' Company of the battalion at Punch. Under his leadership the unit captured an important hill feature despite heavy opposition of the hostiles. At day-break, the enemy directed very heavy automatic fire from ridges to the east, north and south of his position. At 1030 hours he launched a determined counter-attack with 1200 men. By this time the forward post of the company had suffered heavy casualties and only two men were left to hold the position. At this juncture Major Brar, unmindful of his personal safety, ran with a bren gun to the forward post and fired at the advancing enemy at point blank

range. With incessant firing he not only stopped the advancing hostiles but also forced them to seek cover behind the rocks. Major Brar thus saved the forward platoons from being overrun.

Despite the wound suffered during the action, Major Brar personally supervised the evacuation of casualties from the forward post. Heavy enemy automatic fire could not deter him from going about his task. When ordered to withdraw he went around the forward posts and collected two Bren guns and five rifles from dead comrades. While supervising the evacuation of casualties, a 3-inch mortar bomb landed close to him and wounded him mortally. Major Brar died on the spot exhorting his men to continue the fight.

Major Brar was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional gallantry, posthumously.



IC-159
Lt Col Butalia,
Inderjit Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Lt Col Inderjit Singh Butalia, son of Shri Iqbal Singh, was born on 12 February 1911. He was commissioned in the 4 Dogra Regiment on 31 January 1937.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations the Indian troops captured Naushahra on 6 February 1948. The stage was now set for the recapture of Jhangar, which they had lost to the enemy on 24 December 1947. The ring of enemy positions around Naushahra was still tight making any break-through to Jhangar difficult if not impossible. The garrison at Naushahra was, therefore, reinforced to carry out an offensive sweep to clear the area of the enemy.

During February 1948, the Naushahra garrison confined its activities to probings into enemy positions. In one such action on 22 February, 4 Dogra was asked to provide right flank protection to 1 Kumaon, advancing on village Kalal. Dogras left their camp for reconnaissance at 0115 hours in Kaman Gosha Gala area. While withdrawing on completion of the mission, they were pursued by the enemy in good strength upto village Gujarat. A sharp engagement followed. Lt Col Butalia the Officer Commanding of the battalion fought bravely. The enemy directed concerted fire on him. He was seriously wounded, with his left hand completely blown off. This grave injury did not, however, dampen his spirits. He refused evacuation, saying that a few like him could be sacrificed for fulfilling the task.

Lt Col Butalia set a fine example of leadership and selfless devotion to duty. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-881
Lt Col Caleb,
Salim,
MVC

Lt Col Salim Caleb, son of Shri J. Caleb, was born on 3 November 1924, at Lahore, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in the 3 Cavalry on 2 September 1944. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Major General.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lt Col Caleb commanded the 3 Cavalry in Khem Karan sector. It was deployed in the Bhikhiwind-Patti area to watch for and prevent the enemy tank thrust.

On 8 September the Pak forces pushed forward after breaking through Indian defences in Khem Karan sector. Lt Col Caleb intercepted the enemy tanks on the main Bhikhiwind-Khem Karan road and in the ensuing battle destroyed 5 Pattons and one Chaffee tank. The enemy armour then moved to the west of the road but the 3 Cavalry again checked its advance. In the process the enemy suffered badly. The bold and timely action of 3 Cavalry brought the enemy armour thrust to a halt.

On 10 September the enemy moved to the west of the main road to effect a breakthrough. The 3 Cavalry was deployed in two semi-circles, opening on the west to meet the enemy threat. The assault came at 1530 hours from the west and a fierce tank battle ensued. In this battle the accurate fire of Indian tanks destroyed 15 Pattons. Nine other tanks which were in working condition, were captured.

Lt Col Caleb was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for his exceptional courage and leadership.



2437390
Naik
Chain Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Naik Chain Singh, son of Shri Sadhu Ram, was born on 19 October 1931, in village Bhaini Bangar, Gurdaspur, Punjab. He was enrolled in the Punjab Regiment on 19 October 1951.

During the conflict with China in 1962, Naik Chain Singh was commanding a section of the 9 Punjab in Tsangle area of NEFA. On 9 October 1962, his platoon moved from Tsangle to reinforce a vital position at Tsengjong, north of the Namkha Chu river. Later at night, one more platoon joined them. This increased the strength of the position to 56 men. The men had only pouch ammunition to fight with and hardly any time to prepare their defences.

On 10th morning 500 Chinese, concentrated in the north and east of this post, started shelling it with guns and mortars. The Punjabis returned the fire. Naik Chain Singh and his men fought well, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy and repulsed the attack. The Chinese then launched a more determined assault on the post from all sides. Again Naik Chain Singh and his men inflicted heavy casualties on them. Then came the real crisis. The Naik and his men ran out of ammunition. They were ordered to withdraw. Naik Chain Singh took over a light machine gun to give covering fire to the withdrawing troops. At this juncture a burst of the enemy machine gun injured him gravely. But he kept on manning the gun to enable his men to withdraw safely. Then an enemy gun burst hit him in the head. It killed him instantaneously. Naik Chain Singh enabled his section to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy and withdraw safely.

Naik Chain Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional leadership and bravery, posthumously.



**87600 (CD-2)
Leading Seaman
Chanan Singh,
MVC**

Leading Seaman Chanan Singh, son of Shri Nandu Ram, was born on 1 June 1945, in village Gokalgarh, Gurgaon, Haryana. He was enrolled in the Indian Navy on 12 June 1961.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Leading Seaman Chanan Singh of INS Hoogli, was with a naval team. It was asked to prepare explosives and organise infiltration of commandos into Bangladesh. Chanan Singh performed his task admirably, without any assistance, in Sector Delta.

On 6 December, he was directed to join MV *Padma*. It formed a part of ALFA Force which had been ordered to attack enemy targets in Mongla and Khulna area from 8 to 11 December. The ALFA Force launched a special commando operation on Chalna and Khulna harbours.

The force came under heavy air attack while operating off Khulna. The Pak aircraft succeeded in scoring a direct hit on the gun boat of Leading Seaman Chanan Singh. The boat sank and the Seaman was seriously wounded by shrapnels. Chanan Singh could make to the shore with great difficulty. From the shore he saw two survivors of the ill-fated gun-boat struggling for their life in the waters. He turned back to rescue them, and despite heavy enemy fire, escorted them to the shore. The danger of enemy fire, however, remained.

However, Chanan Singh unmindful of his wounds, rushed at the enemy. This diverted the enemy attention which enabled the two injured men to

make good their escape. In this rescue operation Leading Seaman Chanan Singh received gun shots. Finally, he was overpowered and made a prisoner of war.

Leading Seaman Chanan Singh was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for bravery and selfless concern for his comrades.



3460 F(P)
Group Captain
Chandan Singh,
MVC, AVSM, Vr. C

Group Captain Chandan Singh, son of Colonel Bahadur Singh, was born on 8 July 1924, at Jodhpur, Rajasthan. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 27 July 1945. He was awarded Ati Vishisht Seva Medal on 26 January 1962 for his professional competence. During the conflict with China in 1962, he was put on supply dropping missions in Ladakh area. Although his aircraft was hit 19 times by the enemy ground fire, he always returned to the base safely. For this feat he was awarded Vir Chakra. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Air Vice-Marshal.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Group Captain Chandan Singh was commanding an Air Force Station in the Eastern front. The Wing stationed there was responsible for airlifting commando troops to various forward areas by Dakotas, flying 8 sorties a day. Twenty Caribou aircraft flew from his base on bombing missions and expended 180 bombs on enemy targets. Eighteen sorties were carried out for aerial recce and army transport. All these missions were planned and directed by him successfully.

Group Captain Chandan Singh always remained in the forefront during all air operations. He successfully planned a helicopter operation to airlift two companies to Sylhet area. He transported nearly 3000 troops and 40 tons of equipment and heavy guns overflying the obstacles put by the enemy. The troops and equipment were dropped safely in a heavily defended area during the night. Prior to each dropping mission, he personally carried out reconnaissance in the face of enemy fire. On the night of 7th December he carried out eight such missions, deep into enemy territory, to supervise the progress of the helicopter operation as

also to guide and inspire his pilots who were facing menacing ground fire. Later he undertook 18 more missions. On many an occasion his helicopter was hit by ground fire, but this did not deter him from undertaking new missions. This major airborne operation substantially contributed to the fall of Dacca and the capitulation of the Pakistani army.

Group Captain Chandan Singh was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for exceptional drive, determination, courage and leadership.



IC-18067
Major
Chandpuri,
Kuldeep Singh,
MVC

Major Kuldeep Singh Chandpuri, son of Shri Wattan Singh, was born on 22 November 1940, at Montgomery, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in the Punjab Regiment on 30 June 1963. As a student he had been a keen sportsman, athlete and NCC Cadet.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 23 Punjab was attached to 45 Infantry Brigade to cover the move of 12 Infantry Division into Ramgarh bulge. It was also to support the subsequent offensive operations in the area. 'A' Company of the battalion, led by Major Kuldeep Singh, was asked to hold a defended locality in Longewala with a view to check enemy ingress into Indian territory.

On 5 December 1971, 10 to 14 enemy tanks probed the company defended locality at Longewala. Thereafter the enemy, in about two company strength, launched an attack on the locality with armour support. He was allowed to come within 50 metres of the company's mortar position and then subjected to heavy fire. IAF Hunter aircraft also rocketed enemy armour and set three tanks ablaze. Another enemy tank was destroyed by a recoilless gun. The infantry attack of the enemy was also repulsed with heavy losses to him.

The enemy was, however, determined to capture Longewala position. Therefore, he once again attacked the company position with tanks in support. Then enemy tanks were neutralised by the Indian Air Force and his infantry was mowed down by small arms fire by the company. Enemy suffered a loss of 30 to 40 men in killed or wounded and 36 tanks in this battle. Major Chandpuri exhibited dynamic leadership in holding his

command intact during these operations. He inspired and encouraged his men to beat back the attack moving from bunker to bunker in utter disregard for his safety.

Major Chandpuri was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying conspicuous gallantry and leadership.





16180
Naik
Chand Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Naik Chand Singh, son of Shri Phuman Singh, was born in 1922 in village Jaid, Rampuraphul, Punjab. He was commissioned in 1 Sikh Regiment on 21 March 1939.

During the Jammu and Kashmir operations the recapture of Uri by the Indian forces on 13 November 1947, removed the enemy threat to Srinagar. The situation in Jammu sector, however, remained grave as the enemy maintained constant pressure on Uri-Punch area. On 22 November 1947, a 600 strong enemy force attacked an Indian picket on a hill across the Jhelum at 2215 hours. This picket held by 1 Sikh platoon was vital for the defence of the Uri camp. Naik Chand Singh was commanding a section of this platoon.

The enemy attacked the picket in three waves, supported by heavy automatic fire from a feature overlooking the picket, about 750 metres away. The main attack came on the side of the perimeter, held by the section of Naik Chand Singh. The section held up the fire until the first wave of the enemy was within 22 metres of its position and then opened up with light machine guns, rifles and hand grenades. The enemy, caught unawares, withdrew about 20 metres and after taking up position behind boulders and bushes opened up with automatics.

In between the firing abuses were traded. The enemy even challenged the Sikhs to come out in the open. Naik Chand Singh thrice came out of his trench to hurl grenades on the enemy. On the last occasion he was wounded in the left fore-arm. The enemy also retired shouting "Jemadar Sahib dushman bahut mazbut hai, ham mare gaye".

At about 2230 hours the enemy put in another attack. This time he intensified the covering fire and brought a 3" mortar into action. Again he was allowed to come within 30 metres of the position and effectively stopped there.

But the induction of 3" mortar by the enemy caused anxiety to the Indian commander as it could be used for shelling Uri camp also. It was, therefore, decided to destroy the mortar. Naik Chand Singh, in spite of his wounded arm, volunteered to lead the raid on the mortar. Making good use of cover, his party (3 men) crawled upto a few yards from the mortar position. Naik Chand Singh threw a couple of grenades at the mortar crew, and then alongwith his two comrades charged the mortar position with bayonets shouting "Sat Sri Akal". He killed one of the crew with his bayonet while the others fled. The mortar was put out of action. Naik Chand Singh withdrew to his position safely along with his two comrades.

On return Naik Chand Singh found the enemy entrenched on his left flank. He came out of his trench and hurled grenades to force them out. There a burst of the enemy light machine gun killed him instantaneously. However, the destruction of mortar completely demoralised the enemy. He collected his wounded and dead under the cover of heavy automatic fire and fled. The vital picket was thus saved.

Naik Chand Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry in the face of the enemy, posthumously.



IEC-787
Major
Chand, Thakur Prithi,
MVC

Major Thakur Prithi Chand, son of Rai Bahadur Thakur Amar Chand, was born on 1 January 1911, in village Rangri, Manali, Himachal Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Dogra Regiment. He later served with 7 Jammu and Kashmir Militia with great distinction and rose to the rank of Lt Col.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations, after Lt Col Sher Jung Thapa had left for Skardu in November 1947, only 33 men of the Jammu and Kashmir State Force were left in Leh. In February 1948, it was decided to send a contingent of 40 men to Leh, to raise and train a militia for the defence of the area. Major Thakur Prithi Chand of 2 Dogra volunteered to lead this force to Leh. On 17 February the party left for Leh. On 8 March 1948, despite all kinds of natural and physical hardships the party reached Leh. Major Prithi Chand hurriedly raised and trained a 200 strong local militia there.

By May 1948, the enemy there had overrun most of Baltistan and Kargil. He was advancing on Leh along the Indus and Nubra valleys. Major Prithi Chand contained the enemy advance by adopting guerilla tactics. Covering a front extending over many hundred kilometres, he organised raids and ambushes on the enemy. He underwent extreme physical strain to make his presence felt everywhere. One day he was seen in the Indus valley and the next day in the Nubra valley. He and his men lived mostly on 'sattu' (grain powder). With very little ammunition he kept the enemy at bay, until reinforcement arrived by air.

On one occasion the enemy supported by 3.7" howitzers attacked one of the Indian forward pickets in Leh in battalion strength. He was beaten

back. Later, Major Prithi Chand led a long-range patrol deep into the enemy held territory and captured one howitzer. It was destroyed before returning to base. This brave officer and his men greatly contributed to the defence of Ladakh.

Throughout these operations Major Prithi Chand displayed exceptional leadership, courage and bravery. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra.

DVM





IC-36449-W
Major
Chatterjee,
Krishna Gopal,
MVC

Major Krishna Gopal Chatterjee, son of Shri A.K. Chatterjee, was born on 15 August 1951, at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in 4 Gorkha Rifles on 23 March 1975. Major Chatterjee served in Nagaland, Rajasthan and Jammu & Kashmir.

The 3/4 Gorkha Rifles, the battalion of Major Chatterjee was inducted into Siachen in September 1987. He was commanding a company which was asked to take over the defences of Bila Fondla Complex, which included the three forward posts called Saddle, 'U' Cut and Ashok. While taking over the charge of the complex, his company was subjected to heavy shelling by the enemy on the morning of 21 September 1987.

From the pattern of the enemy shelling, Chatterjee deduced that the main target of the enemy was Ashok Post. He, therefore, decided to stay on at Ashok Post to supervise and direct the defences personally. The expected attack on the post came on the night of 23 September with heavy shelling. Major Chatterjee directed artillery fire on the enemy concentration opposite the Ashok Post and broke the enemy assault. But the enemy appeared again and again and repeatedly attacked the post on the night of 23 September. The defenders, however, fought with determination and foiled each attempt. While directing these defensive battles, Major Chatterjee was injured in the left arm by a splinter of an artillery shell. But he refused to be evacuated and continued to command and motivate his men to hold on to the post.

But the enemy was not in a mood to accept defeat. He re-appeared on the night of 24 September to launch a major attack on Ashok Post in

battalion strength. Major Chatterjee again motivated his men to repulse the attack. Two more determined attacks launched by the enemy the same night were also repulsed. Throughout this operation, Major Chatterjee motivated and guided his men against heavy odds. He beat back a determined enemy in hazardous glaciated terrain and adverse climatic conditions, successfully.

Major Chatterjee was awarded Mahavir Chakra for his outstanding leadership, professional competence, meticulous planning and bravery.





IC-8164
Major
Chaudhary,
Mohinder Singh,
MVC

Major Mohinder Singh Chaudhary, son of Shri P.S. Chaudhary, was born on 7 May 1930, in village Majara, Rohtak, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Punjab Regiment on 9 December 1956. His family had a long military tradition. His great grandfather, grandfather and elder brother also served in the Indian Army.

During the conflict with China in 1962, Major Chaudhary was with 9 Punjab, deployed in NEFA area. On 9 October he was ordered to establish a post at Singjang, north of the log bridge, with two platoons. The order was carried out immediately. But this did not allow him sufficient time to dig in and coordinate his defences. The enemy mounted attack on his post in a battalion strength at 0800 hours on 10 October from the east and north-east. Although heavily outnumbered and short of arms and ammunition, he faced the enemy attack with determination. He kept the vastly superior enemy force at bay for more than nine hours. But his men had nearly finished their ammunition by now. He was, therefore, ordered to withdraw to the south of the log bridge. Major Chaudhary displayed remarkable leadership and courage in extricating his platoon from the endangered position. He was wounded during this withdrawal. But he refused evacuation and continued to inspire his men. Later in a battle on 20 October he inflicted some 100 casualties on the enemy.

For displaying courage and leadership of a high order Major Chaudhary was decorated with Mahavir Chakra.



IC-16224
Major
Chewang Rinchen,
MVC and Bar

Major Chewang Rinchen, son of Shri Kunzang Dorjee, was born on 11 November 1930 in village Sumoor, Nubra valley, Ladakh. He was enrolled as Jemadar in the Ladakh Home Guards, a para-military organisation, on 25 July 1948. He came from a martial family of Ladakh. Jemadar Rinchen bagged the MVC award twice in his service career. He was also awarded Sera Medal in 1962. Within three months of his joining the service he was promoted as Subedar. He subsequently rose to the rank of Major in the Indian Army.

During Jammu and Kashmir Operations the defence of Leh was a matter of grave concern to India. In March 1948, Major Prithi Chand was sent to Leh to enroll volunteers for J & K Militia. Rinchen, then a student, left the school and joined the Nubra Guards. He organised the Ladakhis into a useful force. Meanwhile, the situation in Ladakh sector grew more serious. The 7 J & K Militia was then holding Shyok valley axis of the enemy advance on Ladakh. It beat back the enemy attack on Kharu on 28 and 29 August 1948 and again humbled him on 16 September at Kharu Nala. The JCO played a decisive role in these defensive actions.

In September 1948, he was detailed to capture 'Lama House', an enemy position to the west of Shyok river. It was an extremely difficult task involving 4 days' march through a treacherous terrain and a 5200 metres high mountain feature. He occupied the objective, inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and captured 3 rifles. On 15 December 1948, crossing over high snow drifts, he led a fierce attack on a higher hill feature near Biagdangdo village. In this assault the JCO and his band of 50 Ladakhi

guerillas walked through snow for 3 days and forced the enemy to withdraw. Again, on 22 December he was asked to mount an attack on Tulkar Hill, the last enemy position in the Leh tehsil. This involved crossing of a 7040 metres high mountain feature. It took the JCO six days to reach the objective. In this venture his platoon suffered fifty per cent casualties from frost-bite. But he kept his men going by displaying exemplary leadership. The two enemy observation posts were captured after inflicting heavy casualties on him. Jemadar Rinchen was awarded Maha Vir Chakra for exemplary courage, leadership and initiative in the most adverse conditions.

Rinchen, now a Major, again leapt to glory during the Indo-Pak War 1971. He led a force of Ladakhi Scouts against Pakistanis in Pratapur sector. His Scouts fought at altitudes where no troops had fought before. They captured many enemy pickets, including one at a height of 5600 metres.

Major Rinchen was assigned the task of clearing Pakistani fortifications from the Chalunka complex in Pratapura sector. His force attacked Chalunka, on 10 December and after heavy fighting captured it the next day at 0700 hrs. In this attack the enemy suffered 14 killed and 7 (including two JCOs) prisoners, besides a heavy loss of arms and ammunition. On 11 December he led an advance on Turtok along the banks of Shyok river. Passing through the mountain ridges, the Scouts infiltrated into enemy positions quietly and achieved complete surprise. Turtok fell on 14 December and this broke the back of Pakistani resistance in this sector. Other enemy posts in the area were captured without much resistance. By the cease-fire day, the Scouts had advanced 22 km along the Shyok, with the commanding heights on either side of the valley in their hands. They captured nine enemy positions at very high altitudes and in difficult terrain.

Major Rinchen was awarded Bar to Mahavir Chakra for outstanding gallantry and leadership.



5439887
Rifleman
Chhetri, Dil Bahadur,
MVC

Rifleman Dil Bahadur Chhetri, son of Shri Lok Bahadur Chhetri, was born on 21 August 1950, in village Gharti Gaon, district Matta Dang, Nepal. He was enrolled in 4/5 Gorkha Rifles on 21 August, 1968.

During the Indo-Pak War of 1971, 4/5 Gorkha Rifles was deployed on the Eastern front. It was ordered to capture Atgram with the three-fold objective to facilitate the advance on Sylhet, to pose a threat to the town of Zakiganj and to secure the line of communication from Karimganj to Silchar. Atgram was a well-defended position protected by concrete bunkers with adequate overhead protection. Well-sited machine guns and medium machine guns covered all approaches to it. Panjis and mines provided it with additional protection. Two companies of Pak army and para-military forces defended it in strength. It also had the support of 3" mortars, 2 MMG sections, a field battery and one 6-pounder gun.

The assault on this well defended position was made on 21 November 1971. The battle that followed was bitter. Hand-grenades and khukris were extensively used to assault the dug-in enemy positions. During this battle, Rifleman Chhetri displayed most conspicuous gallantry. Unmindful of his personal safety he charged the enemy from one bunker to another and killed eight of them with his khukri. He physically captured a medium machine gun which was holding up his company's assault. All ranks of his company were greatly inspired by his cool courage.

Rifleman Chhetri was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for exceptional valour.



13664546
**Lance Naik
Chhetri, Nar Bahadur,
MVC**

Lance Naik Nar Bahadur Chhetri, son of Shri Tek Bahadur Chhetri, was born on 27 March 1950, in village Dourali, district Gulmi, Nepal. He was enrolled in the Brigade of Guards on 27 March 1968.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, the guided missile companies of 12 Guards were allotted to different formations to operate independently. 'A' Company was allotted to 1 Corps operating in Punjab Theatre. One platoon of this company was deployed at the Chhamb crossing over the river Munrawar Tawi. Lance Naik Chhetri of this platoon was keeping vigil on 4 December 1971, when the enemy launched a massive attack on Indian positions with a combined force of four infantry brigades and two armoured regiments. The attack was supported by eleven artillery units.

The attack was sudden and came from the most unexpected direction. The deployment of tanks in this most unsuitable terrain for armour movement, was a surprise. Indian Army had not deployed guided missile sub-units to cover these approaches due to the lack of deployment area. The enemy took maximum advantage of this lapse. His two tanks took position across the river and started firing high explosive shells on the bank. Intense artillery, mortar and automatic fire added to the intensity of onslaught.

Lance Naik Chhetri's position thus lay completely exposed. At this critical moment he took a bold decision. Unmindful of his personal safety, he dashed 200 metres ahead of his position to bring the enemy tanks within guided missile range. He engaged the enemy tanks accurately and knocked them out.

Lance Naik Chhetri was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for displaying conspicuous gallantry.



IC-1933
Major
Chopra, Satyapal,
MVC (Posth.)

Major Satyapal Chopra, son of Shri Gauri Nath Chopra, was born on 12 November 1922. He was commissioned in the Maratha Light Infantry on 1 July 1942.

Pakistani raiders captured Jhangar on 24 December 1947. This gave them strategic advantage to build up their forces for assault on Naushahra and Punch. On the other hand it was a major set-back for the Indians. The recapture of Jhangar was, therefore, considered vitally important by them.

To recapture Jhangar Indians planned a two brigade advance on Naushahra-Jhangar road. During this advance the Marathas marched ahead as a vanguard of 50 Para Brigade to the left of the road. On 15 March, at 0830 hours the two Maratha companies moved out on offensive reconnaissance to spot enemy positions in the Pir Thul area. During this move Major Chopra led one company.

In the meanwhile the hostiles had strongly entrenched themselves at Pir Thul Nakka, a formidable hill feature. They held fire until the Maratha companies reached the open ground, within 185 metres of their position. The Marathas were caught completely unawares on this open ground. The enemy swept the area with four machine guns and six light automatics. Major Chopra rushed forward with a platoon to an intermediate position to provide covering fire to his troops, unmindful of his personal safety. He was wounded in the face, but despite the injury, he kept on firing to extricate his entrapped men. Major Chopra then turned to the evacuation of his men who were lying wounded on the open ground, swept by

enemy machine guns. He successfully removed three of them to safety. While trying to evacuate the fourth man, he was shot through the head and fell mortally wounded.

Major Chopra sacrificed his life to save his comrades. For his leadership, devotion to duty and gallantry he was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



Major Chopra was born on 15th March 1924 at Jalandhar, Punjab. He joined the Indian Army in 1942 and served with distinction during the Second World War.

Major Chopra was awarded the Mahavir Chakra for his gallantry during the Battle of Imphal in 1944. He was also awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) for his leadership during the Battle of Kohima in 1944. Major Chopra was killed in action on 15th March 1945 at Imphal. He was posthumously awarded the Mahavir Chakra in 1946.

Major Chopra was a brave and dedicated soldier. He was a natural leader and was respected by his men. He was also a very kind and generous person. He was a very good friend and a very good comrade. He was a very good officer and a very good man. He was a very good soldier and a very good citizen. He was a very good person and a very good man. He was a very good soldier and a very good citizen. He was a very good person and a very good man.



IC-11004
Major
Chowdhry,
Vijay Rattan,
MVC (Posth.)

Major Vijay Rattan Chowdhry, son of Dr. M.D. Chowdhry, was born on 9 July 1939, at Ambala, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Corps of Engineers on 14 December 1958. He obtained his Engineering degree from the College of Military Engineering, Pune, in 1962. He belonged to a family with a long military tradition.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, the Indian Army planned a breakthrough in Samba sector on the Western front. It was a pitch dark night on 11 December when the Indian armour made a move to achieve the goal. The extensive enemy mine-fields at Chakra held up the Indian progress and adversely affected the momentum of their attack. On the other hand the enemy threat to Chakra, which had been captured by the Indians earlier, was also developing. To save the situation the Indian armour had to cross over the mine-fields.

Major Chowdhry of the 9 Engineer Regiment accepted the challenging task of clearing the mine-fields and opening a safe lane for the armour. The enemy used all his fire power to hamper the work. But Major Chowdhry was not discouraged. He supervised the mine clearing operation unmindful of his personal safety and ignoring all enemy fire. He moved among his men giving an instruction here, and lending a hand there, till the detour was effected. As a result of his initiative the traffic was restored in the mine-infested area at Chakra and Indian armour and anti-tank elements could move on to their destination.

During the advance in Samba sector, Major Chowdhry also led his men in clearing the mine-fields at Thakurdwara, Lohara and the Basantar river,

each between 950 to 1400 metres in depth. While supervising the improvement of a lane across the mine-field at Basantar, he was killed in enemy shelling on 17 December 1971. The place where he laid down his life was a few km from his home town Kanjroor.

Major Chowdhry was decorated with Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.

Major Chowdhry was decorated with Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.





20714
**Havildar
Chuna Ram,
MVC (Posth.)**

Havildar Chuna Ram, son of Shri Bina Ram, was born on 29 December 1923, in village Dalmaski Dhani, Sikar, Rajasthan. He was enrolled in 2 Raj Rifles on 29 December 1940. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Subedar.

During the Jammu and Kashmir operations, the problem of the relief of Punch kept on agitating the minds of Indian commanders throughout 1948. By May 1948, the Punch Brigade had consolidated its position but a link-up was necessary to prevent its encirclement and much feared capitulation.

A link-up with the Punch Brigade was, therefore, planned by 19 Brigade. On 15 June at 0530 hours, the brigade column left Rajouri for Thana Mandi for eventual link-up at Surankot. 2 Rajputana Rifles provided the right flank protection to the column. The enemy was occupying the hills on both sides of the road Rajouri-Thana Mandi with a battalion. On the right flank of the road the enemy was holding point 5460 in company strength. This posed a direct threat to the right flank of the brigade column.

The 'C' Company of 2 Rajputana Rifles was asked to launch an attack on point 5460. When the company was about 140 metres short of the objective the enemy opened up with heavy SAA from the front side. Bren gun and rifle fire also came from two *sangars*, situated on a spur, overlooking the company position. At this juncture, Havildar Chuna Ram, commander of the reserve platoon of the company, was ordered to silence the enemy *sangar* on the right spur, which was belching fire on the company position. The Havildar moved up with two sections of his platoon. When he had

climbed up to a position within 25 metres of the objective the enemy attacked the sections with hand-grenades. The situation was indeed grave. At this stage Havildar Chuna Ram, in complete disregard for his personal safety, charged the enemy post with a sten gun. Singlehanded he killed two and wounded three enemy troops and silenced the guns. This enabled the company to capture its first objective.

The gallant NCO was hit and wounded by grenade splinters all over the body. One splinter burst on the left side of his back. The right leg was pierced by three splinters. One splinter each wounded him on the left leg and the right fore-arm. The Havildar fell fighting at the enemy post mortally wounded.

Havildar Chuna Ram was awarded Mahavir Chakra for gallantry and leadership of a very high order, posthumously.



4580 F(P)
Wing Commander
D'Costa, Allan Albert,
MVC

Wing Commander Allan Albert D'Costa, son of Shri A.V. D'Costa, was born on 1 February 1933, in Bombay, Maharashtra. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 14 October 1953. He was also awarded Vayu Sena Medal. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Group Captain.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Wg Cdr D'Costa commanded No. 222 Squadron on the Western front. The Squadron was assigned the task of striking at the enemy and conducting photo reconnaissance. During the war, Wg Cdr D'Costa led as many as 15 missions against heavily defended targets into the enemy territory.

On 4 December, Wg Cdr D'Costa carried out a reconnaissance sortie over Walton airfield and located a radar unit there. He led a strike on Risalwala airfield the same day in spite of very poor visibility over the target area. In the afternoon he struck Chander airfield. Next day, he led a mission to Chistian Mandi and personally accounted for three enemy tanks. On 6 December, he led an attack on a concentration of tanks at Dera Baba Nanak, in the face of intense anti-aircraft fire. In this effort his number two was shot down but he pressed home the attack, in utter disregard of his own safety, and destroyed a number of enemy tanks. On 7 December he carried out a low-level photographic reconnaissance mission in the Sulemanki area and followed it up by leading an attack on railway wagons and vital installations. Between 8 and 12 December, he flew a number of unescorted reconnaissance missions and gathered valuable intelligence. This greatly helped the Air Force and the Indian Army in planning air and ground operations. He led missions against railway

targets, such as marshalling yards and railway tracks. In the process he destroyed a large number of railway wagons. All these missions were flown in the face of intense anti-aircraft fire and in some cases against Pakistani air threat. His bravery, determination and skill were an inspiration to the pilots of his squadron.

Wg Cdr D'Costa was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous bravery and outstanding leadership.



9025630

Naik

**Darshan Singh,
MVC (Posth.)**

Naik Darshan Singh, son of Shri Hari Singh, was born on 28 July 1929, at Ludhiana, Punjab. He was enrolled in the Sikh Light Infantry on 28 July 1948.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, 5 Sikh Light Infantry was deployed in Mendhar sector in Jammu and Kashmir. Chuni Nar, a feature to the south west of Mendhar-Baloni road, overlooked the Indian defences in this area. Pakistan had occupied this feature in August 1965 and she used it for infiltration purposes. It was held in battalion strength with field guns, mountain guns, medium guns and mortars in support. India first tried to get this encroachment on its territory removed through the U.N. But the UN inability to help India forced her to wrest the territory by force. The Sikhs were put on the job.

During the attack on the feature on the night of 2 November, Naik Darshan Singh led the leading section of the company, which went to clear a bunker of enemy Browning machine gun. The approach to the bunker lay over a difficult and steep terrain which was mined, wired and dominated by enemy small arms fire. Naik Darshan Singh encouraged his men to charge. In this charge his left leg was blown up by a mine. Still, he continued crawling forward and exhorting the men to carry on with the charge. He even overcame a wire obstacle on the way. In the process of crawling to the obstacle another mine blast wounded him severely. Still he managed to crawl forward to the enemy bunker and hurled a grenade into it. Encouraged by him, the remaining men of his section charged and silenced the enemy Browning machine gun. By this time his entire section

had fallen casualty. They had, however, paved the way for the success of their company. Naik Darshan Singh died shouting to the follow-up echelon to take the route which had been cleared of mines by his section.

Naik Darshan Singh was honoured with Mahavir Chakra for displaying exemplary courage, determination and leadership, posthumously.





IC-4004
Major
Dayal, Ranjit Singh,
MVC

Major Ranjit Singh Dayal, son of Risaldar Ram Singh, S.B., O.B.I., was born on 15 November 1928, in Burma. His family later settled in village Tukar, Badhni, Kurukshetra, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Parachute Regiment on 12 September 1948. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Lt General. During the Pak infiltrations in August 1965, Major Dayal was commanding a company of 1 Para Battalion in Jammu and Kashmir. The plan was to capture Haji Pir Pass with a view to seal an important entry route of the infiltrators into the valley. 1 Para was detailed to capture the vital features Sank, Sar and Ledwali Gali with the intent to explore further to Haji Pir.

On the night of 25 August 1965, Major Dayal led a company assault on the Sank hill feature in pouring rain. The assault was stalled by heavy enemy fire and Major Dayal could extricate his company out of a hopeless situation, with great difficulty. But on the following night he again attacked Sank and captured it. After more daring efforts he captured Sar and Ledwali Gali, to the northwest of Haji Pir Pass, by 1100 hours on 27 August 1965.

Having secured the three strategic hill features, Major Dayal and his men commenced advance for Haji Pir. It was heavily raining and this made any further advance difficult. Meanwhile, the enemy had regrouped and started mortar and machine gun fire on the advancing Indian troops. Major Dayal then chose a different approach to capture the Pass. Marching by night through very difficult terrain he climbed up to the Pass from the most unexpected direction and took the enemy by surprise. After a two-

hour long battle he captured the Pass by 1100 hours on 28 August 1965. In this action one Pakistani Officer and 11 Other Ranks were captured.

Interestingly, when Major Dayal and his men were digging in at the Pass, one Pakistani officer and three other men walked straight at them. They were not aware of the fall of the Haji Pir Pass. Indeed these men were found in possession of a large number of documents. Major Dayal and his men shared their rations with the captured Pakistanis. It is remarkable that the Haji Pir Pass was captured without any casualty to the Indians.

On the morning of 29 August 1965, Major Dayal sent a platoon patrol to capture another feature. Seeing that the patrol had come under heavy fire, he immediately went to help it with another platoon. The enemy held the feature in company strength and was supported by mortars and medium machine guns. Major Dayal led his platoons in a lightning attack and took the enemy completely by surprise. This daring act unnerved the enemy forces and they took to their heels.

Major Dayal was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying outstanding courage and qualities of leadership.



2930979
**Lance Havildar
Daya Ram,
MVC**

Lance Havildar Daya Ram, son of Shri Bhola, was born on 25 March 1922, in village Islamabad, Bulandshahar, Uttar Pradesh. He was enrolled in 1 Rajput Regiment on 1 June 1940.

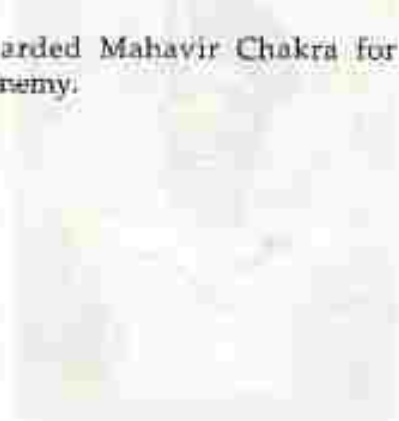
6 February 1948, is a significant date in the history of Jammu and Kashmir operations. On this day 6000 tribals launched an attack on Tain Dhar and Kot pickets in Naushahra sector. It was the Tain Dhar pickets, particularly picket No.2, which bore the brunt of this attack. The enemy attack commenced at 0643 hours in the morning.

Lance Havildar Daya Ram of 1 Rajput was then commanding a forward section of the platoon at picket No.2 in Tain Dhar. The picket was subjected to heavy enemy fire. The section post was attacked as many as five times, but every time, the enemy was beaten back and suffered heavy losses. In the process the Lance Havildar and most of his men were also wounded. But he kept on hurling hand-grenades and encouraging his men to fight on. When his No. 1 bren gunner was killed, he took over the gun and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy.

During the final charge on the picket three enemy soldiers came within 10 metres of his post. He killed two of them. But the third one managed to reach him. He injured the bleeding Lance Havildar with his sword and caught the barrel of his gun. But Lance Havildar Daya Ram held on to his bren gun, took out a hand-grenade with his left hand, removed its key with his teeth and threw it on the enemy who was blown to bits. By this act of bravery, he not only saved the bren gun from falling into enemy

hands, but also the lives of his four comrades who were lying wounded in the post.

Lance Havildar Daya Ram was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry in the face of the enemy.





**4810 GD(P)
Sqn Ldr
Devayya,
Ajjamada Bopayya,
MVC (Posth.)**

Sqn Ldr Ajjamada Bopayya Devayya, son of Dr. Ajjamada Bopayya, was born on 24 December 1932, at Coorg, Mysore. He was commissioned as General Duties (Pilot) in the Indian Air Force on 6 December 1954.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Sqn Ldr Devayya was attached to No. 1 Jet Training Wing, Air Force Station Hakimpet. On 7 September 1965, he was assigned the task of attacking the heavily-defended Sargodha airfield of Pakistan. Piloting a Mystere aircraft he undertook the mission with determination and attacked the airfield successfully at the appointed time.

The Mystere aircraft piloted by Sqn Ldr Devayya was intercepted by a supersonic F-104 Starfighter of the Pakistan Air Force. Flight Lieutenant Hussain, the Pak pilot, first fired an air-to-air Sidewinder missile at the Mystere which Sqn Ldr Devayya successfully evaded. However, by virtue of its faster acceleration, the Pak Starfighter rapidly closed in on the Mystere and fired a burst of 20 mm multibarrel cannon at it. It left the Indian Mystere damaged. The F-104 soon went ahead of the Mystere due to its higher speed. The Indian pilot saw an opportunity here. With utter disregard for his personal safety, he flew his damaged Mystere in pursuit of the Pak Starfighter. The decision was critical because the Mystere was operating at the extremity of its range. Combat with an F-104 meant little chance of return to base. But the Pakistani pilot's skill and the superior performance of his aircraft were no match for the Indian pilot's determination and single-minded devotion to duty. Manoeuvring his damaged Mystere he finally shot down the Pak Starfighter. Flight

Lieutenant Hussain, the Pak pilot saved his life by ejecting successfully. Sqn Ldr Devayya could not maintain the control of his damaged aircraft any longer and was killed either in attempting a low-level ejection or in a crash.

In combating an F-104 with a damaged Mystere, Sqn Ldr Devayya displayed valour of a very high order. He displayed exceptional flying skill in shooting down an aircraft with a much higher performance. For this exceptional act of gallantry in the face of the enemy Sqn Ldr Devayya was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.





26301
Sepoy
Dewan Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Sepoy Dewan Singh, son of Shri Udai Singh was born on 4 March 1923, in village Purdam, Tejam, Pithoragarh, Uttar Pradesh. He was enrolled in 4 Kumaon Regiment on 4 March 1943.

During the invasion of Kashmir in 1947 the capture of Srinagar was the main objective of the raiders. For the Indians, on the other hand, it was equally important to deny them the ingress to Srinagar. Measures were taken to protect Srinagar airfield and troops were sent to reconnoitre the Badgam area to check the enemy advance.

On 3 November, while reconnoitring Badgam area, a company of 4 Kumaon was suddenly attacked by 700 raiders at 1400 hours. The attack was preceded by light machine gun and medium machine gun fire. During this attack Sepoy Dewan Singh was serving as a gunner with a section of the company. Much of the enemy fire was directed against his platoon position. Knowing that the position was no more tenable, the platoon commander was asked to withdraw. But by now the enemy had come very near, making the withdrawal impossible. Sepoy Dewan Singh knowing the situation as desperate, picked up his Bren gun and commenced firing with great accuracy and speed. Enemy suffered at least 15 casualties and fell back. He thus repulsed the enemy attack and enabled his platoon to withdraw safely.

While firing at the enemy, he was severely wounded on the shoulder. Still he stuck on to his position. The enemy finding that the platoon had withdrawn and that there was a lone Bren firing on him, concentrated all

fire on his post. But Sepoy Dewan Singh did not leave his weapon till a burst from an enemy gun hit him on his chest and made him immobile. In this action, 1 Officer, 1 JCO and 20 ORs were killed on the Indian side.

By his heroic action Sepoy Dewan Singh saved his platoon from complete annihilation. For his exceptional courage, gallantry and devotion to duty he was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-2447
Lt Col
Dharam Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Dharam Singh, son of Subedar Major Ujala Singh was born on 8 February 1912, in village Badasara, Bhiwani, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Kumaon Regiment on 15 May 1941.

In November 1948, the operations in Jammu and Kashmir were in full swing. A link-up with Punch, vital for the safety of the Indian garrison there, had eluded the Indians so far. The 19 Infantry Brigade was asked to effect a link-up with Punch. 1 (Para) Kumaon spearheaded the Brigade advance on this mission. The Kumaonis were to capture the southern ridges of Mendhar to neutralise the enemy opposition enroute. The road was hazardous, because the enemy was occupying the Kotli area on the left flank. To overcome this obstacle the troops had to cross over a valley to get on to the western ridges of Bhimbar Ki Gali, before advancing on Mendhar ridges.

On 7 November 1948, during a night attack on the feature, Lt Col Dharam Singh led his battalion extremely well over a difficult country and against a determined enemy. He fought five actions in pitch dark without any artillery support. At Dheri Dhara, his forward company captured the enemy position after a bold frontal charge. The battalion had to fight for every pimple on the way to Mendhar. At daybreak he was on top of the feature with his men. During these encounters Lt Col Dharam Singh always moved with the leading company unmindful of his personal safety.

Lt Col Dharam Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and inspiring leadership in the face of the enemy.



IC-14123
Major
Dharam Vir Singh,
MVC

Major Dharam Vir Singh, son of Honorary Captain Tuhi Ram Singh, was born on 1 January 1939, at Bhamela, district Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Grenadiers on 11 December 1962. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Lt Colonel.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 8 Grenadiers was given the task of capturing the enemy stronghold Chakia in Shakargarh sector. It was well protected by wire obstacles and mine-fields and was held in strength by a Patton squadron, an infantry company and a mobile detachments of recoilless guns and machine guns. The task was considered difficult but necessary to threaten the enemy positions at Dehra and further north.

The Grenadiers launched the assault across the mine-fields at 2100 hours on 10 December. The enemy brought down intense artillery and tank fire on the advancing troops inflicting heavy casualties on them. But the Indians were not discouraged. The assaulting companies pressed home the attack with determination and forced the enemy tanks to withdraw. During this Indian assault Major Dharam Vir Singh was commanding the left forward company of 8 Grenadiers. He boldly led his company through the mine-field. By displaying exemplary courage he inspired his men to rush to the objective and capture it. After a fierce hand to hand fight, lasting for more than three hours, the objective was captured.

The enemy counter-attack came at 0700 hours on 11th. Major Dharam Vir Singh unmindful of his safety, moved from trench to trench encouraging

his men to stand fast and repulse the attack. The counter-attack was beaten back decisively. The company destroyed 2 enemy tanks and captured 4 tanks, 2 jeeps and a lot of arms and ammunition. Earlier on 5 December, Major Singh had led the company in a successful attack on a strong enemy post at Chaman Khurd.

Major Dharam Vir Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exemplary courage, leadership and devotion to duty, in the face of the enemy.



2831725
Rifleman
Dhonkal Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Rifleman Dhonkal Singh, son of Shri Simrath Singh, was born on 1 December 1923, in village Sekala, Jodhpur, Rajasthan. He was enrolled in 6 Rajputana Rifles on 1 December 1944.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations the enemy activity increased in Uri sector in mid-April 1948. At that time this sector was strongly held by two Indian battalions. On 18 April the enemy attacked two pickets held by 6 Raj Rifles but was beaten back and suffered heavy casualties. He then directed fire at Nalwa picket, which was the key to the defence of Uri and was called, 'Uri ka Morcha' for its strategic importance. But the enemy did not dare to come close to the picket.

On 29 April 1948, 6 Raj Rif was ordered to capture a feature overlooking the Nalwa picket with a view to strengthen the defence of Uri. At 2000 hours on 30 April, the battalion headquarters and the four assaulting companies concentrated for the attack. The D Company had to make its way along a narrow ridge through a pine forest to reach its objective south of Uri.

While advancing it came within 28 metres of a hidden bunker and the enemy opened up with a light machine gun. Rifleman Dhonkal Singh, who was guiding his platoon as the leading scout, received serious injuries in the left shoulder during this firing. The brave soldier, however, crawled forward to the flank of the enemy and when within a few metres of the post, destroyed it with a grenade. Three enemy personnel were killed and the rest abandoned the post and withdrew. While chasing the fleeing enemy, he was again hit by a grenade on his chest and face. Still, he

managed to hurl a grenade at the fleeing enemy and killed two of them. The enemy Commander also died in this action. The Indians finally achieved the objective. The severely wounded Rifleman fully drenched in blood, fell unconscious and died. His outstanding bravery and determination enabled the company to capture the objective without further loss of life.

For his supreme sacrifice Rifleman Dhonkal Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-13176
Second Lieutenant
Dogra, Bhagwan Dutt,
MVC

Second Lieutenant Bhagwan Dutt Dogra, son of Shri Dewan Chand, was born on 25 September 1941, at Lahore, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in 9 Gorkha Rifles on 10 June 1962.

During the conflict with China in 1962, 1/9 Gorkha Rifles was occupying a forward position in Tsangdhar area, NEFA. Second Lieutenant Dogra was posted on the left flank of the battalion to guard the track which led to his company's position.

On 20 October 1962, at 0445 hours, the Chinese subjected his position to heavy shelling. The shelling was followed by a determined attack by about 200 Chinese at 0530 hours. Though heavily outnumbered, Second Lieutenant Dogra and his men held their ground and broke the initial assault. He moved from bunker to bunker infusing confidence in his men. He continued to run about even after he suffered a grave wound in the face and was bleeding profusely. When Dogra realised that the light machine gun of the section had stopped firing, in complete disregard of his personal safety, he ran to it through the hail of enemy fire, put the gun into action and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. Afterwards he directed the gun to give covering fire for the withdrawal of his men. He continued to do so till the machine gun was destroyed and he was captured.

Second Lieutenant Dogra displayed courage and leadership of a high order and was decorated with Mahavir Chakra.



2960050

**Lance Naik
Drig Pal Singh,
MVC (Posth.)**

Lance Naik Drig Pal Singh, son of Shri Sunder Singh Rathore, was born on 23 December 1945, in village Naugma, district Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh. He was enrolled in the Rajput Regiment on 23 December 1965.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 15 Rajput was deployed on the Western front. It participated in the battle of Fazilka. During this battle, Lance Naik Drig Pal Singh commanded a section of the battalion. Under his able leadership the section accomplished the task assigned to it. But two enemy medium machine guns located in bunkers continued firing. These inflicted casualties on Rajputs and at the same time hindered the reorganisation of troops in the Mauzzam Bund area. The Lance Naik decided to silence these guns.

On the night of 13 December, he took two men with him, crawled 180 metres to the first bunker and lobbed a grenade at it. This destroyed one medium machine gun. He then crawled towards the second gun but was hit on the way by an MMG burst on the left shoulder. He continued advancing towards the target when another MMG burst hit him on the chest and killed him on the spot. But the sacrifice did not go in vain. His bold and aggressive action frightened the enemy and he ran away from the bunker leaving behind the medium machine gun and a large quantity of ammunition. The brave soldier enabled his unit to achieve the objective.

Lance Naik Drig Pal Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exemplary courage and devotion to duty, posthumously.



**1614 GD(P)
Wing Commander
Engineer,
Minoo Merwan,
Padma Bhushan,
PVSM, MVC, DFC**

Wing Commander Minoo Merwan Engineer, son of Shri M.H. Irani, was born on 1 January 1921, in Hyderabad, Sind, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned as General Duties (Pilot) in the Royal Indian Air Force on 1 August 1940. In his long service career he was awarded Padma Bhushan, Param Vishisht Seva Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross. He rose to the rank of Air Marshal of the Indian Air Force. During the conflict with China in 1962 and Indo-Pak War 1971, he played a leading role in organising the air support to the fighting troops.

During Jammu & Kashmir Operations 1947-48, Wing Commander Engineer actively participated in air activity in Kashmir for nearly a year. Under his able guidance the enemy was hit hard on a number of occasions at Kishanganga Bridge, Skardu and Gilgit. During the capture of Guraia the Air Force extended very effective support to the land forces. This was largely due to the drive and initiative shown by Wing Commander Engineer in planning and directing the air operations.

Wing Commander Engineer was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional gallantry and leadership.



12742
**Havildar
Fateh Singh,
MVC**

Havildar Fateh Singh, son of Shri Bharat Singh, was born on 3 June 1919, in village Kirsola, Jind, Haryana. He was enrolled in 3 Jat Regiment on 3 June 1939. He later rose to the rank of Subedar and retired as Honorary Captain in June 1967.

During Jammu & Kashmir operations the Indian army had to withdraw from some vital positions in the northern sector of Kashmir in the first half of 1948. The loss of Kargil and Dras created a grave situation indeed. An attempt to relieve the situation in early September through a left hook attack on Dras and an advance through Zoji La also failed. On 11 September, 77 Para Bde planned a break through at Zoji La by a frontal attack. 5 Mahratta were to capture the Mukand Hill and 3 Jat the Chabutra hill, to the right and left of the main track beyond Zoji La. Both the features were strongly held by the enemy.

The 3 Jat advanced to launch attack on Chabutra with A & D Companies at 2130 hours on 13 September. Havildar Fateh Singh was number two with a platoon of the leading company. When the platoon approached the objective at 0500 hours on the 14th, the enemy who had been holding fire for tactical reasons so far, opened up from 20 metres of the platoon position. The platoon suffered heavy casualties and Havildar Fateh Singh and his few men moved up to a safer position near Tactical HQ. About three-fourth of the attacking force was wiped out during this attack. The survivors withdrew by 1400 hours.

At that time, some 20 bodies of the Indians could be seen lying on the spurs. The Commanding Officer ordered Havildar Fateh Singh to move

down to the spurs to collect the wounded and also the weapons of the dead. The brave Havildar moved ahead without any hesitation. He had scarcely moved a metre, when an enemy Browning opened up and a bullet hit him straight on the hand. In fact he was given up as dead by all those who were observing his movements.

Half an hour later he again tried to move forward but this attracted another bullet, which injured him in the arm. In this situation the only alternative left to him was to lie still. He made a bold attempt after an hour and in spite of heavy automatic fire from all directions succeeded in reaching the lower slopes of the spur. He succeeded in collecting 4 wounded comrades and brought them back to safety. He also collected weapons from the dead.

Havildar Fateh Singh faced yet another danger. At 1915 hours while with his wounded comrades he saw 15 enemy troops moving up the hill with the intent of collecting the arms of the dead and killing the wounded. He hurled hand-grenades and killed 3 of them. The others took to their heels. Thereafter the Havildar along with the wounded withdrew to a safer place. In this action Subedar Fateh Singh set a unique example of gallantry and was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



IC-13792
Major
Gahlaut, Anup Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Major Anup Singh Gahlaut, son of Lt Col Darel Singh, was born on 19 September 1940, in Nangloi village, Delhi. He was commissioned in the Dogra Regiment on 11 December 1962.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 3 Dogra was deployed in the Laksham sector in the then East Pakistan. It was ordered to move into the enemy territory on 3 December in the night to establish road-blocks on Chaudagram-Laksham road. The task had to be carried out by first light on 4 December with utmost secrecy and speed. 'A' Coy under Major Gahlaut successfully established road blocks by 0310 hours on 4 December.

On 5 December, A & D Companies of the Dogras succeeded in trapping two enemy companies between them. They were asked to surrender. But the enemy chose to fight it out to the bitter end. The Dogras also vowed to beat the enemy convincingly. Major Gahlaut in a daring move charged an enemy position in platoon strength. A bitter encounter ensued. While the battle was raging the enemy attacked Major Gahlaut's platoon in company strength from an unexpected quarter. Though caught unawares the Major did not lose his balance. He rallied his platoon to fight the enemy. In the ensuing battle Major Gahlaut and some of his brave men fell on the battle-field. Major Gahlaut sustained serious wounds in the hand-to-hand fighting. However, he continued to fight on and finally succeeded in breaking the enemy attack. He died shortly after this heroic battle.

For displaying exemplary leadership Major Gahlaut was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-28792
Major
Ganapathi,
Puttichanda Somaiah,
MVC

Major Puttichanda Somaiah Ganapathi, son of Shri Puttichanda M. Somaiah, was born on 7 November 1944, in village Chamial Mythadi Kodagu, Karnataka. He was commissioned in the Mahar Regiment on 22 June 1968. He took part in the counter-insurgency operations in Nagaland.

After the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, 91 Infantry Brigade was despatched to Sri Lanka as a part of Indian Peace Keeping Force. The first contingent of the Force which landed at Palali, Jaffna, included 8 Mahar. Major Ganapathi commanded a company of this battalion. He remained deeply involved in counter-insurgency operations in an unfamiliar land throughout his stay in Sri Lanka.

On 16 October 1987, Major Ganapathi's company located at Anaikkodal, was surrounded and repeatedly attacked by the militants. The company had occupied this position with a view to provide a firm base to 41 Infantry Brigade to launch an offensive on enemy bases. As a result of the intense firing of the enemy, the company suffered heavy casualties. It also ran short of ammunition. Due to heavy militant fire even airdrop of ammunition was not possible. The situation was indeed grim. Major Ganapathi, however, fought gallantly and kept the militants at bay throughout the day. He continued fighting, from trench to trench till 0600 hours on 17 October 1987, when a patrol finally brought the ammunition.

Major Ganapathi was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional devotion to duty.



4482 F(P)
**Wing Commander
Gautam, Padmanabha,
MVC and Bar**

Squadron Leader Padmanabha Gautam, son of Shri Neelkanta Padmanabha, was born on 23 July 1933, in Madras, Tamil Nadu. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 1 April 1953. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Wing Commander. This promising officer was killed in a flying accident on 25 November 1972.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Squadron Leader Gautam commanded a bomber squadron in the Western sector. On the outbreak of the hostilities he was assigned many difficult and dangerous missions into enemy territory at short notice. He undertook six offensive, tactical and close support missions deep into enemy territory between 6 and 21 September 1965, notwithstanding the heavy ground fire and Pak Sabre jet attacks. These missions included reconnaissance into enemy territory, bombing of Akwal and Gujarat airfields and straffing of enemy concentrations in Gujarat and Chawinda areas.

For displaying exceptional courage, determination and devotion to duty he was decorated with Maha Vir Chakra.

Wing Commander Gautam got another opportunity to distinguish himself during the Indo-Pak War 1971. He then commanded 16 Squadron of the Indian Air Force on the Western front. This bomber squadron was allotted the task of penetrating deep into enemy territory to attack vital targets.

Wing Commander Gautam led a number of attacks. On 5 December 1971, he led an attack on Mianwali airfield. This airfield was well protected

with anti-aircraft guns and small arms. The moment Indian aircraft appeared over the airfield, they were subjected to intensive anti-aircraft and small arms fire. Leading his squadron with skill and determination, Wing Commander Gautam flew at low level, avoided the ground fire and attacked the target with great precision. The raid severely damaged the airfield. The raid was repeated on 7 December with equal success. He also led a successful rocket and gun attack on railway marshalling yards in Montgomery-Raiwind area despite heavy anti-aircraft fire.

Wing Commander Gautam was awarded Bar to Mahavir Chakra for professional skill, courage and leadership of a high order:



IC-7119
Lt Col
Ghai, Ved Prakash,
MVC (Posth.)

Lt Col Ved Prakash Ghai, son of Shri Desh Raj Ghai, was born on 22 February 1935, at Dehradun, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Madras Regiment on 4 December 1954. In 1961, he served with the Indian contingent in Congo. He also served with distinction in Indo-Pak War 1965.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Ghai commanded 16 Madras in Shakargarh sector on the Western front. During the battle of Basantar river, his battalion was asked to capture Lahal and Sarajchak positions of the enemy. These positions across the river Basantar were well protected by mine-fields and bunkers and were connected by a network of communication trenches and alternate positions.

The battalion plan of attack envisaged crossing of a 550 metres deep mine-field and tackling of four separate objectives on the pitch dark night of 15 December 1971. The attack started at 1930 hours on 15 December. Undeterred by the heavy enemy fire, 16 Madras crossed the Basantar river and the mine-fields and in a swift action captured the objectives.

The enemy reacted sharply to this Indian affront. A fierce counter-attack followed. Lt Col Ghai rallied his men to beat back the enemy attack during the night itself. But the enemy reappeared at dawn with tanks to mount yet another attack. Lt Col Ghai again rose to the occasion. With utter disregard for his personal safety he moved fearlessly from one position to another encouraging his men to fight. They not only beat back the enemy attack but also inflicted heavy casualties on him. While

re-adjusting the disposition of his troops a shell injured him seriously. Still he continued to direct the action and laid down his life on the battle-field itself.

For conspicuous gallantry and supreme sacrifice Lt Col Ghai was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.





**IC-1984
Brigadier
Gharaya,
Joginder Singh,
KC, VSM, MVC**

Brigadier Joginder Singh Gharaya, son of Shri Deva Singh, was born on 31 July 1926, at Montgomery, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in the Bihar Regiment on 20 January 1946. He was awarded Kirti Chakra for displaying conspicuous gallantry during the Police Action against Hyderabad. He was also decorated with Vishisht Seva Medal.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brigadier Gharaya commanded 42 Infantry Brigade in Jessore sector. He displayed commendable skill in planning operations and deploying troops. His brigade was attacked on four successive occasions, but his men stood their ground despite heavy casualties. Due to his excellent leadership the enemy attempt was repeatedly frustrated. He conducted the operations in such a manner that the enemy had to suffer heavy losses and to beat a disorganised withdrawal eventually.

In a subsequent offensive, while moving with the leading troops, he was severely wounded by the enemy fire. He refused evacuation till he had seen the attack through.

Brigadier Gharaya was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry.



**3571 GD(P)
Wing Commander
Goodman,
William MacDonald,
MVC**

Wing Commander William MacDonald Goodman, son of Shri W. Goodman, was born on 12 July 1924, at Guntakal, Andhra Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force as General Duties (Pilot) on 1 April 1949.

On 1 September 1965, Pakistan launched a strong armour attack in the Chhamb sector with a view to cut the Indian communication lines to Kashmir. This posed a great threat to Indian security. Wing Commander Goodman, commanding a fighter squadron at Pathankot, was entrusted with the task of destroying enemy tanks and troop concentrations in the Chhamb sector.

The squadron immediately went into action and blunted the enemy offensive by destroying his tanks and armoured vehicles. Between 2 and 8 September, the squadron undertook many reconnaissance and ground attack missions in the area. These included rocketing of tank concentrations at Troli and Chhamb and strafing of enemy positions at Jaurian.

It was, however, on 9 September that the Squadron did the most commendable work. A photo recce and strike mission was undertaken between Kasur and Raiwind by two aircraft. They attacked a train carrying tanks and destroyed twenty of them. This was followed by an attack on a tank and heavy gun concentration at Chawinda. Many of these reconnaissance and ground attack missions were led by Wing Commander Goodman himself in the face of heavy air and ground opposition. He was a source of inspiration to all ranks under his command. Under his guidance

the squadron maintained a very high standard of serviceability, which contributed to a number of successful air strikes on enemy positions.

Wing Commander Goodman was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry, leadership and professional skill.





00079 B
**Commander
Gopal Rao,
Kasargod Patnashetti,
MVC, VSM**

Commander Kasargod Patnashetti Gopal Rao, son of Rai Bahadur K.P. Janardan Rao, was born on 13 November 1926. His family settled in Mangalore, Karnataka. He was commissioned in the Indian Navy on 21 April, 1950. His elder brother Major K.P.S. Rao had served the Indian Army in Burma during the Second World War. Commander Rao subsequently rose to the rank of Commodore. He was awarded Vishisht Seva Medal in January 1971.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Commander Rao was asked to launch an offensive sweep, off the coast of Karachi. He assembled a small Task Force and led it towards the target on the night of 4 December. It was a risky venture as the Task Force was vulnerable to air, surface and submarine attacks. Commander Rao led his force deep into enemy waters evading air attacks and discovered two groups of large enemy warships off Karachi coast. Attack on these warships involved great risk. Commander Rao, however, took a firm decision to attack. He encouraged his men to press home the attack despite heavy fire from the enemy destroyers. A grim battle ensued and finally he succeeded in sinking two Pakistani destroyers and one minesweeper. Commander Rao then pushed towards Karachi and entered the port waters. He bombarded the port area and set fire to oil dumps and other installations there.

Commander Rao was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for his outstanding performance.



IC-12665
Second Lieutenant
Goswami,
Shyamal Dev,
MVC

Second Lieutenant Shyamal Dev Goswami, son of Shri Priya Kumar Goswami, was born on 6 November 1938, at Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Regiment of Artillery on 11 June 1961.

During the conflict with China in 1962, Second Lieutenant Goswami was posted as Observation Post Officer on Gurung Hill, Ladakh. It was an important defensive position guarding the airfield at Chushul.

On 18 November 1962, after a heavy barrage of artillery and mortar fire the Chinese attacked this post in overwhelming strength. Despite heavy enemy pressure Goswami and his four companions held on to the post directing the artillery fire on the enemy in the most effective manner. The constant and accurate enemy firing, however, killed the four other ranks and injured him seriously. But he continued to direct his fire on the enemy with determination till he fell unconscious. He was taken for dead and remained buried under the snow for 36 hours. He was later found alive.

Second Lieutenant Goswami was honoured with the Mahavir Chakra for displaying great courage and devotion to duty.



IC-16177
Captain
Gour, Pradip Kumar,
MVC (Posth.)

Captain Pradip Kumar Gour, son of Shri Mata Prashad Gour, was born on 15 April 1945, at Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Regiment of Artillery on 2 August 1964. During the 1965 War he fought in Kargil area, Jammu and Kashmir. He joined 660 Air OP Squadron in December 1969. Many members of his family have held senior appointments in the Indian Army.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Captain Gour was assigned to 36 Artillery Brigade operating in Shakargarh sector. As an Air OP Pilot his task was to locate enemy positions and direct artillery fire on them. From 4 to 14 December he led many missions deep inside enemy territory, braving enemy small arms and artillery fire.

On 11 December 1971, he noticed about twelve enemy tanks advancing on Malidpur with the aim of encircling the Indian posts there. He immediately cautioned the troops about the direction, strength and likely aim of the enemy tank force. He manoeuvred his small unarmed plane in such a manner that all enemy attempts to shoot him down failed. On the other hand, he directed artillery fire so effectively that eight enemy tanks were knocked out and two were badly damaged.

On 14 December, a major operation was planned to cross the Bein river which guards the eastern approach to Shakargarh. On that day in the morning Captain Gour remained sky borne for three hours, locating the targets deep inside the enemy territory. He was spotted and at 1655 hours the enemy put Sabre jets on his trail. Despite the warning signal, he continued to carry on his task. Soon, three enemy Sabre jets closed in on

him. He tried to evade them as best as possible, without let in his work. Finally he was encircled and shot down.

Captain Gour was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty, posthumously.



IC-3999
Brigadier
Gowri Shankar,
Krishnaswamy,
MVC

Brigadier Krishnaswamy Gowri Shankar, son of Shri Pinayur Krishnaswamy Sastri, was born on 16 October 1927, at Chingleput, Tamil Nadu. He was commissioned in the Corps of Signals on 12 September 1948. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Lt General.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brig Gowri Shankar commanded the 86 Infantry Brigade on the Western front. His brigade was responsible for the defence of Dera Baba Nanak area. The area was strategically important because roads leading to major towns of Punjab passed through it. In short, it was the gateway to Punjab. The occupation of this area by the enemy would have given him a wide choice of objectives. The area across the border was well prepared, heavily fortified and held in good strength by the enemy for launching an attack. The 86 Infantry Brigade was ordered to remove this threat by eliminating the enemy bridge-head across river Ravi at Dera Baba Nanak.

Brig Gowri Shankar showed boldness in planning the attack on the enemy bridge-head. During the assault he always remained in the forefront with his troops, directing their operations and exercising personal control over them. Heavy tank and artillery fire by the enemy could not unnerve him. By his presence in the front line, he inspired confidence in his men. It also gave him the added advantage of on the spot decision to ensure speed and momentum of attack. His skill and inspiring leadership brought success to Indians with heavy losses to the enemy.

Brig Gowri Shankar was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and outstanding leadership.



00311 F
**Lieutenant Commander
Gupta, Santosh Kumar,
MVC**

Lieutenant Commander Santosh Kumar Gupta, son of Shri Hari Kishore Gupta, was born on 21 December 1936, at Dehradun, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Indian Navy on 1 January 1958. He served with the air arm of the Indian Navy. On 11 October 1966, while operating from *INS Vikrant*, he recovered his Sea Hawk aircraft from a perilous situation and was awarded Nao Sena Medal. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Vice Admiral.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Cdr Gupta commanded an Air squadron of the Indian Navy, from the aircraft carrier *INS Vikrant*, in the Eastern waters. The squadron was asked to strike enemy harbour and shore installations at Khulna, Chalna and Chittagong areas. On 9 December 1971, Lt Cdr Gupta led a strike mission of Sea Hawk aircraft against enemy targets in Khulna in the face of a fierce barrage of anti-aircraft guns and other arms. In this attack his aircraft was hit by enemy ground fire and severely damaged. But regardless of his personal safety he continued to lead the attack with determination and skill. Finally, he led his squadron back to board safely, after causing severe damage to the enemy. Bringing back the damaged aircraft safely was an act of great courage and professional skill indeed.

He led ten more strike missions against enemy harbours, shore installations and ships. These were heavily defended targets. Lt Cdr Gupta conducted his missions successfully and contributed immensely in eliminating enemy resistance in Chalna, Khulna and Chittagong areas of Bangladesh.

Lt Cdr Gupta was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional courage, initiative and leadership.



IC-324
Major General
Gurbaksh Singh,
MVC

Maj Gen Gurbaksh Singh, son of Sardar Tek Singh, was born on 20 May 1913, at Badrikalan village, Faridkot, Punjab. He joined the Indian Army on 7 September 1935 and was later commissioned into 8 Gorkha Rifles, on 3 April 1940.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Maj Gen Singh commanded 4 Mountain Division in the Khem Karan sector. The tasks allotted to this division were to secure Pak territory upto the east bank of Ichhogil Canal, destroy the bridge over the Canal on road Khem Karan-Kasur and occupy a compact defended sector to contain possible enemy offensive. The division launched the offensive at 0500 hours on 6 September 1965. Maj Gen Gurbaksh Singh directed the operation skilfully and succeeded in capturing the initial objective on the very first day. The division held on to these positions until they were forced to fall back by an overwhelmingly superior enemy armoured force. The withdrawal to a tactically sound position was carried out with a view to take full toll of any enemy attack, subsequently.

The expected enemy attack came soon. Three enemy armoured groups followed by an infantry division launched the attack in the early morning of 10 September. Although the enemy force was numerically superior, the men under the command of Maj Gen Singh held on to their positions. By the end of the day they practically decimated one and a half of the enemy tank regiment. Early next morning the remnants of the attacking enemy tank force were forced to surrender.

During these operations, Maj Gen Singh kept moving amongst his men sharing their dangers and directing the battle on ground. By his personal example he inspired his troops to inflict heavy losses on a well-equipped enemy force.

Maj Gen Gurbaksh Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exemplary leadership, tenacity and courage.





IC-1880
Major
Gurdial Singh,
MVC

Major Gurdial Singh, son of Shri Kishan Singh, was born on 25 September 1917, at Ferozpur, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Rajput Regiment of the Indian Army on 12 September 1943. He retired as a Lt Col.

During the conflict with China in 1962, Major Singh was with 2 Rajput in Namkhachu river area, NEFA. The battalion was allotted the task to defend the area from a possible Chinese attack.

The expected attack came on 20 October. The Chinese broke hell with heavy artillery, mortar and medium machine gun fire on the battalion defended area. Then overrunning the company position at bridge 4, they closed on Battalion Headquarters from all sides. At this critical juncture, Major Singh, who was second-in-command, rushed out of his bunker, rallied the survivors and personally led a charge on the advancing enemy. By this timely action he slowed the enemy advance and gained time for some of the Indian survivors to be extricated from an untenable position. The enemy suffered heavy casualties in this sharp action.

Major Gurdial Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry.



SF 205
Subedar
Gurdial Singh,
MVC

Subedar Gurdial Singh, son of Shri Nandan Singh, was born on 26 January 1916, in village Nathana, Bhatinda, Punjab. He was enrolled in 1 Patiala (RS) Infantry on 26 January 1935.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations in March 1948, the main concern of the Indian Army was to capture Jhangar. To this end, a two brigade advance on road Naushahra-Jhangar was planned in early March. While conducting preliminary operations in the area, 1 Patiala (RS) Infantry encountered enemy resistance on 2 March. It was a V-shaped feature with apex and arms strongly held by the enemy with automatics and mortars.

Subedar Gurdial Singh was the leading platoon commander during the advance on this feature. The platoon had hardly gone 30 metres down the hill, when the enemy mortars completely knocked out his leading section. Without losing heart he rushed down with the remaining two sections. After covering about 200 metres, he suddenly came under intense and accurate fire from a well-hidden enemy position. Unperturbed, he hurled a grenade at it from a distance of 20 metres. He then led a section in a bayonet charge and killed two survivors. The enemy position was overrun after inflicting heavy casualties on him.

Advance beyond this point could have been done only in full view of the enemy bunkers. The commander was not prepared to take the risk of heavy casualties in this venture. Further, Subedar Gurdial Singh's platoon had already suffered forty per cent casualties. The Company Commander, therefore, ordered him to halt and come into reserve. But the JCO represented that his platoon should be allowed to carry on. The

Commander reluctantly agreed and the Subedar pressed on the attack. When an enemy bunker stopped the advance of the right section he walked on to it in the open and led yet another bayonet charge. He killed two enemy troops in the bunker.

On 18 March 1948, during the advance on Jhangar while attacking a feature his leading platoon on the right came under fire. He led his men so skilfully that the enemy, though in a very commanding position, had to flee leaving behind 46 men dead and a lot of arms and equipment. He thus cleared a strong enemy position without any loss to his platoon. In both these actions, Subedar Gurdial Singh displayed great leadership and bravery.

Subedar Gurdial Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry.



5037008
Rifleman
Gurung,
Pati Ram,
MVC (Posth.)

Rifleman Pati Ram Gurung, son of Shri Padam Bahadur Gurung, was born on 8 September 1948, in village Barden, district Lamjung, Nepal. He was enrolled as a boy in 5/1 Gorkha Rifles on 8 March 1963.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 5/1 GR was attached to 41 Mountain Brigade on the Eastern front. The battalion was asked to capture the enemy stronghold of Uthali, in Kushtia district. The reduction of this stronghold was not easy because it was well protected by bunkers and machine guns. The progress of the Gorkhas was, therefore, held up by intense and accurate machine gun fire of the enemy.

During this assault on Uthali Rifleman Gurung was with a medium machine gun detachment of the assaulting company. His company came under heavy machine gun fire from a bunker and this held up the progress of the whole operation. The destruction of this gun was, therefore, considered essential. Rifleman Gurung understood the need of the hour and decided to silence this gun at any cost. Throwing to the winds all consideration of personal security he rushed forward and attacked the machine gun post. While rushing forward, he was hit by a burst of fire from the enemy machine gun. This wounded him mortally but could not stop him from charging the machine gun. He succeeded in destroying the machine gun before he fell down dead.

Rifleman Pati Ram Gurung was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for outstanding bravery, posthumously.



534271
Naik
Gurung,
Prem Bahadur,
MVC (Posth.)

Naik Prem Bahadur Gurung, son of Shri Karna Bahadur Gurung, was born on 22 November 1956, at village Sidani, district Kaski, Nepal. He was enrolled in 3/4 Gorkha Rifles on 22 November 1976.

In September 1987, 3/4 Gorkha Rifles was deployed in Siachen area. The section of Naik Gurung held a defensive post in the Bilafondla complex. On the night of 23 September, the enemy launched a determined attack on the post with heavy artillery support. The Section Commander became a casualty in the shelling and Naik Gurung took over the command. When his section ran short of ammunition Naik Gurung twice ran to platoon headquarters under intense firing to bring the ammunition. The section successfully beat back the enemy attacks and suffered six casualties.

On 24 September at 0325 hours, the Pakistanis launched yet another attack. They came within 50 metres of the post. Naik Gurung sensing the grave danger jumped out of the trench and charged them, with grenades and rifle shots. The enemy troops could not stand the gallant charge and took to their heels. By now the Naik had exhausted all his ammunition. He cast away his rifle and unbuckled his Khukri. With the raised Khukri he chased the fleeing enemy. He hacked three of the four fleeing enemy troops. In the last hand-to-hand fight he received a shot in the chest and was mortally wounded.

Naik Gurung was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous bravery, posthumously.



4131
**Lance Havildar
Gurung,
Ram Parshad,
MVC**

Lance Havildar Ram Parshad Gurung, son of Shri Tula Gurung, was born on 1 December 1921, in village Bhemdi, Kansai, Nepal. He was enrolled in 1/5 Royal Gorkha Rifles (PF) on 1 December 1938. He retired as Havildar.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations in 1948, the enemy stronghold at Zoji La defied all Indian attempts to break through to Dras for many months. Finally a tank assault broke the enemy resistance and the Indian Infantry rushed on to capture the formidable hills astride the road. 1/5 Royal Gorkha Rifles contributed substantially in breaking the enemy resistance in this area. While the battalion was engaged in mopping up operations astride the road, soon after the capture of Zoji La a platoon was sent up to Badgumbar Nar to round up the hostiles. While proceeding to the objective the platoon suddenly came under heavy fire from a well prepared enemy bunker. To avoid casualties to the platoon it was necessary to destroy this bunker. But who would creep up to knock out the bunker? Lance Havildar Ram Parshad was the first man to volunteer. He left on the mission equipped with grenades and a sten gun. He planned the attack in such a way that the bunker was knocked out and the enemy position was captured. It was due to the daring spirit of this NCO that the platoon succeeded in its mission.

Again during the assault on the 'Anant' feature on the night of 14 November 1948, he was the leading man of his section. The enemy shot at him from point blank range but he escaped death by sheer providence. He charged the enemy position and captured it without any loss to his section. The capture of Anant facilitated the capture of Dras on 15 November 1948. On both these occasions Lance Havildar Gurung showed an admirable sense of duty and leadership. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



5333223
**Lance Naik
Gurung, Ran Bahadur,
MVC (Posth.)**

Lance Naik Ran Bahadur Gurung, son of Shri Krishna Bahadur Gurung, was born in village Pakhrikat, Lamjung, Nepal, on 6 October 1935. He was enrolled in 3/1 Gorkha Rifles on 6 October 1952.

On UN request India contributed a brigade to keep peace in the strife-torn Congo in 1961. In early December 1961, the hostile Katanga forces (gendarmes) had established many road-blocks in Elizabethville and had occupied many vital points. By 5 December they had been strengthened by two additional battalions. This growing strength encouraged them to become more aggressive. The UN troops finally decided to put a stop to this menace.

On 6 December 1961, when the Gorkhas were attacking enemy positions in Katanga, they came under intense machine gun and rifle fire. Lance Naik Ran Bahadur Gurung was then second-in-command with one of the sections of a platoon. He crawled about 300 metres with his Bren gun and closed in on the enemy post, killing all the nine occupants. Meanwhile, his party came under fire from an enemy medium machine gun located on a nearby ridge. A burst of machine gun fire from the ridge area killed him on the spot.

Lance Naik Gurung was awarded Mahavir Chakra for outstanding courage, devotion to duty and gallantry, posthumously.



IC-6126
Lt Col
Hanut Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Hanut Singh, son of Lt Col Arjun Singh, was born on 6 July 1933, in Jasol, district Jodhpur, Rajasthan. He was commissioned in the Poona Horse (17 Horse) on 28 December 1952. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier. He belonged to a royal family of Rajasthan.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, the 47 Infantry Brigade was given the task of establishing a bridge-head across the Basantar river in Shakargarh sector. This river had been heavily mined by the enemy to make it a formidable obstacle for the Indians. The brigade plan was to make a safe line through the Basantar mine-field to put across the 17 Horse to ensure the security of the bridge-head against enemy counter-attacks. The 17 Horse was also to extend support to Infantry battalions in their offensive. On 16 December Lt Col Hanut Singh led 17 Horse to the bridge-head and took up position ahead of the infantry.

On 16-17 December the enemy armour, in regiment strength, launched repeated attacks on the Indian position. He directed medium artillery and tank fire on the Indians to break their resistance. In this grave situation Lt Col Hanut Singh moved from one threatened sector to another in utter disregard of his safety. By his presence and courage he inspired his troops to remain steadfast. As a result many men performed commendable acts of gallantry. The repeated armour attacks were beaten back with heavy loss to the enemy in both men and material. On 16 December alone, the Pakistanis lost some 48 tanks in a fierce tank battle. On 17 December,

a tank troop helped 3 Grenadiers to repulse the enemy attack. In spite of day long shelling and air attacks the regiment held on to its position.

Lt Col Hanut Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and leadership during the battle of Basantar. His regiment also earned the Battle Honour 'Basantar'.



IC-14655
Major
Harbhajan Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Major Harbhajan Singh, son of Sri Assa Singh, was born on 3 August 1941, in village Bathe Bhaini, Patti, Amritsar, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Rajput Regiment on 30 June 1963.

In 1967 the Indians decided to lay a wire fence along the Sikkim - Tibet border at Nathu La to avoid a clash between the Indian and Chinese troops. The task of laying the wire fence was entrusted to 70 Field Coy Engineers. 18 Rajput was to provide protection to the engineers coy. Major Harbhajan Singh then commanded the 'A' Coy of the battalion at Nathu La.

The engineers commenced the construction of the wire obstacle on the north shoulder of Nathu La at 0540 hours on 11 September 1967. This was opposed by the Chinese and a scuffle took place between the Indians and the Chinese. The Chinese simultaneously opened fire from the front as well as from the flanks. The Rajput company and the engineers were caught in the open. At this juncture Major Harbhajan Singh shouted to his men to charge the attacking force. He himself bayoneted three Chinese soldiers and then moved forward to silence their light machine gun, which was firing on the Indians, by throwing by throwing a hand-grenade. He was killed in this action.

For displaying conspicuous gallantry and determination, Major Harbhajan Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



5219
Jemadar
Hardev Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Jemadar Hardev Singh, son of Shri Ranjit Singh, was born on 14 July 1921, in village Dhan Singh Khana, Bhatinda, Punjab. He was enrolled in 1 Patiala (RS) Infantry on 14 July 1941.

During Jammu & Kashmir operations in 1947-48 the Indian Army could not stop the march of the raiders in the northern sector for some time. By June 1948, Kargil was lost and Dras was in danger. As the State Force detachments string out upto Dras were considered totally insufficient to meet the challenge, 1 Patiala was inducted in the area to relieve them. One company of 1 Patiala reached Zoji La on 21 May and took up positions beyond the defile. On 22 May, it got the better of the enemy in a serious encounter at Gumri but suffered heavy casualties. Hereafter, 1 Patiala remained content with vigorous patrolling between Zoji La and Machhoi.

On 23 May 1948, Jemadar Hardev Singh of 1 Patiala was in command of a platoon patrol at Machhoi. The platoon was heavily engaged with intense, accurate and close fire by the enemy from well-prepared and concealed positions. One third of the platoon suffered casualties and the Commander was himself wounded in the arm. But he calmly went about organising his platoon unmindful of the enemy fire. His fearlessness and quiet demeanour encouraged his men. They assembled to give the enemy a bloody nose.

His platoon was fighting in a heavy snow covered area. No side movement, except through a Nullah bed, was possible there. Realising the seriousness of the situation Jemadar Hardev Singh, braving the enemy automatic and mortar fire, went to his men in a bid to collect them on the

hill-side from where he hoped to keep the enemy engaged till the reinforcements arrived. In this effort he was twice hit in the shoulder.

Jemadar Hardev Singh did not seek any cover till he was satisfied that his men were well covered. While crawling back to cover as the last man of the unit he was mortally wounded by a medium machine gun burst. He refused to be attended to and insisted that the other wounded be dressed up first. Before succumbing to his injuries he had organised a strong resistance to the enemy.

Jemadar Hardev Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for grit and leadership of the highest order, posthumously.



IC-2520
Major
Hari Chand,
MVC

Major Hari Chand, son of Shri Babu Ram, was born on 16 February 1919, in Pondori Atwalan, Punjab. His family later settled in Nangal Ishwar, Hoshiarpur. He was commissioned in 8 Gorkha Rifles on 8 November 1942. He subsequently rose to the rank of Lt Col. His father had also seen action in the Middle East during the First World War. His son has also joined the Indian Army as an officer.

In January 1948, the growing enemy threat to Ladakh was a matter of great concern to the Indian Army. Only 33 men of the State Force were left in Leh at that time. Attempts were, therefore, made to reinforce Leh. A small column, led by Major Thakur Prithi Chand of 2 Dogra left for Leh on 16 February, when the winter was at its peak. Another column left Marali for Leh under the command of Major Hari Chand. General Cariappa had himself selected Major Hari Chand for this task.

Major Hari Chand's column entered Leh on 7 July 1948, after a long and hazardous journey. He soon deployed his men in defensive positions to meet the enemy onslaught. He also led numerous attacks on the enemy positions and his line of communication. By 18 July, the enemy had reached Tharu, about 13 km from Leh and mounted repeated attacks on Indian positions. On one occasion troops holding the defences became panicky and withdrew from their posts. But Major Hari Chand hung on to his post for 3 days with a platoon. This prevented the enemy from consolidating his gains and gave Indian troops time to reorganise their defences. If he had not held on to this position firmly Leh would have certainly been lost to the enemy.

In September 1948, Major Hari Chand led a guerilla party of 35 men over a height of 5200 metres and trekked 96 km to raid a village and destroy the enemy gun located there. The march was completed in 4 days under very rigorous conditions but the guerilla party achieved complete surprise. The gun-crew of six, found asleep inside a house, was killed and a howitzer destroyed. The return journey proved to be much more hazardous but the party returned safe to the base.

In October 1948, Major Hari Chand led another guerilla party to harass the enemy lines of communication. In this raid, he killed the escort of an enemy convoy and captured arms, ammunition and other supplies.

Throughout these operations Major Hari Chand displayed leadership, courage and gallantry of a very high order and was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



4476
Sepoy
Hari Singh,
MVC

Sepoy Hari Singh, son of Shri Kura Singh, was born on 26 September 1921, in village Badanpur, Jind, Haryana. He was enrolled in 1 Patiala (KS) Infantry on 26 September 1940. He retired as a Lance Naik.

During the Jammu & Kashmir Operations the tribal threat to Naushahra had been removed completely by February 1948. It was now time to recapture Jhangar which had been earlier lost to the enemy. In early March Brigadier Usman, Commander, 50 Para Brigade, issued orders for the advance on Jhangar. But Pir Thil Nakka, a hill feature, held by enemy in two battalion strength stood like a rock on the way. No advance was possible without evicting the enemy from this feature. The brigade planned a two-pronged attack on the feature with 1 Maratha on the right and 1 Patiala on the left. After heavy artillery barrage on the enemy positions the infantry attack commenced.

1 Patiala launched the attack at 0700 hours on 17 March and broke through the first line of enemy defence. During this attack Sepoy Hari Singh was with the leading platoon of the leading company on the left. While approaching the crest, his section came under very heavy fire and was pinned down to the ground for a while. Sepoy Hari Singh spotted an enemy bunker belching fire barely 23 metres away. He hurled a grenade on the bunker and rushed at it firing his sten gun. He killed the two defenders in the bunker. Meanwhile the other enemy bunkers in the rear also opened accurate fire on him. Though wounded on the knee, he threw a grenade at the nearest enemy bunker. One occupant was killed while the others fled. Subsequently, when the rest of his company advanced

towards the enemy medium machine gun position, an enemy section quickly slipped away. Hari Singh spotted the fleeing enemy and blitzed him. Moving 18 metres ahead of every one in his section, he mortally wounded a Pak captain, while his comrades killed two others. In these actions enemy suffered 100 casualties with 50 killed and 50 wounded.

By his individual action Sepoy Hari Singh killed four enemy soldiers and broke through two enemy resistance points. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry.



IC-7916
Lt Col
Harollikar,
Arun Bhimrao,
MVC

Lt Col Arun Bhimrao Harollikar, son of Shri B D Harollikar, was born on 6 December 1934, at Koliapur, Maharashtra. He was commissioned in 5 Gorkha Rifles on 3 June 1956. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier. His elder brother had also served with the Indian Army in World War II.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Harollikar commanded 4/5 Gorkha Rifles in the Eastern sector. His battalion was asked to lead the advance of 59 Mountain Brigade along Ghazipur-Sylhet axis. The built-up area of Ghazipur was protected by the enemy with concrete bunkers, well coordinated MMG, mortar and artillery fire and mines. Two companies of Pak troops blocked all approaches to the position.

The Gorkhas launched attack on Ghazipur on 4 December. The two assaulting Gorkha companies were soon held up due to intense enemy fire. At this juncture Lt Col Harollikar led the remaining companies behind the enemy along a difficult approach. After fierce hand to hand fighting, in which he himself took part, the objective was captured. The battalion suffered heavy casualties in this action.

On account of its excellent performance at Ghazipur the battalion was selected to carry out a heliborne operation for the reduction of Sylhet. On 7 December, it was air-dropped at Sylhet. The enemy quickly threw a ring around the Indian battalion and subjected it to constant small arms, mortar and artillery fire. The enemy, about 7000 strong, also launched repeated attacks on Indian positions. Meanwhile, the supply position had become critical for the Gorkhas. During eight days of encirclement the beleaguered

men fought many fierce battles to keep the enemy at bay, all on their own. The ordeal ended on the 14th when the brigade effected a link-up with the battalion.

The gallantry of the Gorkhas under the inspiring leadership of Lt Col Harolihar broke the enemy's will to resist and the entire garrison of Sylhet surrendered. The Garrison Commander of Sylhet is reported to have said that if this battalion had not been there, he would have fought for at least another 12 days.

Lt Col Harolihar was awarded Mahavir Chakra for gallantry, leadership and devotion to duty.



IC-4036
Lt Col
Hayde, Desmond,
MVC

Lt Col Desmond Hayde, son of Shri Walter Driscoll Hayde, an Irishman, was born on 28 November 1926, at Devonshire, England. Lt Col Hayde was commissioned in the Jat Regiment on 12 September 1948. He married a Hindu lady from Garhwal and settled down in Bangalore. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier. His father had served in the British artillery for 21 years.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lt Col Hayde commanded the 3 Jat in Lahore sector. The battalion was ordered to attack enemy outposts on the Ichhogil Canal at 0400 hours on 6 September. It was a pitch dark night and no reconnaissance of the route to the objective had been carried out.

Lt Col Hayde launched a lightning attack on well-prepared and strongly held enemy positions at 0550 hours. In the ensuing battle the enemy company commander and 38 other ranks were killed and 26 soldiers captured. 3 Jat was then ordered to push on to the east bank of the Ichhogil Canal. Despite intense air attacks and heavy opposition it reached the Canal and captured Dograi by 1120 hours. To the west of the Canal lay the Batapore factory. The enemy directed accurate and effective artillery and medium machine gun fire on the battalion from there. The Jats crossed the Canal and after heavy fighting cleared the factory. It was primarily due to the leadership of Lt Col Hayde that the battalion held on to the occupied area even under great pressure. In fact it moved on to capture more enemy territory unmindful of heavy shelling and frequent air and ground attacks. On 9 September, when the enemy launched a powerful attack with Pattons and Shermans, the Jats gave a good account of themselves. They claimed five enemy tanks in the renewed fighting.

Lt Col Hayde was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exceptional courage and leadership in this action.



IC-2531
Brigadier
Hira, Ram Dharmdas,
PVSM, MVC

Brigadier Ram Dharmdas Hira, son of Shri D H Hiranandani, was born on 27 August 1923, at Hyderabad, Sind, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in 9 Gorkha Rifles on 2 May 1942. He served the Indian Army in World War II. In Indo-Pak War 1971, he distinguished himself as a Division Commander and was awarded Param Vishisht Seva Medal. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Lt General.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Brigadier Hira commanded 52 Mountain Brigade. In August 1965, his brigade was allotted the task of conducting operations against the Pak infiltrators in the valley. He kept the enemy constantly on the run and inflicted heavy losses on him.

When the war started, Brigadier Hira was asked to move to Punjab border on 10 September and concentrate at Jammu. His brigade was assigned the task of cutting off Sialkot from the north. It involved movement by night through unreconnitred enemy territory. It also necessitated defensive position so that during the day it could hold against enemy counter-attacks.

The brigade began aggressive patrolling inside enemy territory on 14 September. On 17 September Brigadier Hira ordered an attack on Tilakpur-Muhadipur area. The area was occupied by 19 September despite heavy enemy opposition. An enemy counter-attack led by armour and supported by automatics, mortars, artillery and air was repulsed on the same day.

Next day the enemy made a determined attack on brigade position at Tilakpur with 16 tanks grouped with infantry. The attack was again

repulsed. The enemy reappeared again with 3 infantry companies supported by 15 tanks, mortars and medium and heavy artillery. The attack was backed by Sabre jets as well. This attack was also repulsed with effective artillery support by the Indian troops. Two more attacks on Tilakpur area on 21 and 22 September were also repulsed with heavy losses to the enemy.

While major counter-attacks were being fought back in Tilakpur area, the enemy launched a powerful attack on battalion headquarters, at Muhadipur. This was repulsed after a hand to hand fighting in which heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy. The enemy ran helter-skelter offering an easy target for our artillery and mortars. About 150 enemy troops including Major SNH Rizvi of 14 Baluch were killed, in this encounter. During these battles the Brigadier exposed himself to all the risks to which every soldier under his command was subjected to.

Brigadier Hira displayed exemplary leadership, courage and resourcefulness and was awarded Mahavir Chakra.

Civilian Coolie Ismail, Mohammad, MVC

Shri M Ismail, was enrolled in the Indian Army as a Coolie and was attached to 3 Jat Battalion.

During the Jammu and Kashmir Operations, on 23 June 1948, an Indian reconnaissance patrol was ambushed in the Zoji La area and one person was severely wounded. The wounded rolled down the hill into a ditch and could not get back. All attempts by the section to recover him failed as the enemy fired incessantly.

At this juncture Ismail, a civilian labourer at the base of the picket, volunteered to bring back the wounded man. The Company Commander very hesitatingly allowed him to attempt the hazardous task. Ismail displayed outstanding skill in negotiating the almost impassable slopes swept by the enemy medium machine gun fire. By superb physical effort he reached the wounded man, bundled him up in his blanket and brought him back to safety. By this singular act of bravery Ismail became a hero in the eyes of the men of his unit.

Again on 14 September 1948, Ismail volunteered to accompany 3 Jat during their attack on Zoji La as a guide. He moved fearlessly with the leading scouts in spite of close and continuous enemy fire. When a hidden enemy medium machine gun wiped out the leading troops he was caught and made prisoner.

Civilian Coolie Muhammad Ismail was awarded Mahavir Chakra for outstanding gallantry.



IC-14509
Major
Jaivir Singh,
MVC

Major Jaivir Singh, son of Thakur Jai Chand Singh, was born on 25 December 1940, in village Kalai, district Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Sikh Regiment on 30 June 1963.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 5 Sikh was deployed in Chhamb sector on the Western front. The 'D' Company of Major Singh was holding Phagla Ridge position. On the night of 3 December this position was attacked by the enemy in battalion strength, with well coordinated artillery support, three times. It was indeed a very critical night. During these attacks Major Singh, disregarding his personal safety, moved among his troops exposing himself to enemy artillery and small arms fire. Under his inspiring leadership all attacks were repulsed with heavy losses to the enemy.

The enemy, with armour in support, again subjected the company to well coordinated attacks on 4 December. These attacks were again beaten back by the company under the brave leadership of Major Singh. On the night of 4 December the enemy again attacked the Ridge and succeeded in penetrating through the Indian defences. Hand-to-hand fight ensued. Major Singh and his company finally succeeded in throwing back the enemy. In this assault about twelve Pakistani soldiers were killed. The Company Commander's determination and leadership won the day for India.

The company position was again attacked by the enemy on 5 December. This time he inflicted heavy casualties on the company but the Sikhs

finally repulsed the attack. The company also recaptured a post, to the south of the ridge, which had been overrun by the enemy earlier. Major Singh kept his command intact during these difficult operations.

Major Jaivir Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exemplary courage, determination and leadership.



IC-1523
Captain
Jatar, Arvind Nilkanth,
MVC, AVSM

Captain Arvind Nilkanth Jatar, son of Lt Col N S Jatar, CIE, DSO, was born on 20 December 1923, in Nagpur, Maharashtra. He was commissioned in the Armoured Corps on 20 December 1942. He later rose to the rank of Brigadier and was awarded AVSM.

During Jammu & Kashmir operations, in February-March 1948, the Indian forces made substantial gains in Naushahra sector. By March end they had secured their position on the Naushahra-Rajouri road. A safe passage through this road, however, depended on clearing the strong enemy positions astride the road. The Barwali ridge to the west of the road was held by the enemy in great strength. 4 Dogra was asked to capture it with Central India Horse less two squadrons in support. Captain Jatar, a tank officer, volunteered to go with the leading company in this attack with a view to give effective support to the Dogras. He also carried a 46 set on his back, because the operator had sprained his ankle while crossing the river.

When the right forward company of the Dogras was half-way to the objective it was held up by heavy enemy medium machine gun fire from the right ridge. At this juncture Captain Jatar, unmindful of his personal safety, moved across the bullet and mortar-swept river to the left forward company of the Dogras. While crossing the river his wireless set was hit by a burst of MMG fire and rendered unserviceable. But he continued to indicate targets by means of a handkerchief, tied to the wireless mast, in full view of the enemy. Due to his signalling, close tank support could be given to the Dogras for five continuous hours. This finally enabled them to capture the objective.

On 10 April 1948, Captain Jatar was in the leading tank. At Merian the tanks had to leave the road and advance along the river bed of Munnawar Tawi, unmindful of enemy automatic fire. By walking in front of the tanks, he saved them from getting bogged down. On 12 April during the advance on Rajauri, he crossed and re-crossed the river Munnawar Tawi eleven times, ahead of all tanks. He also recovered two tanks which had bogged in the river. It was mainly due to his effort that all tanks reached their objective successfully. This move of the Indian armour through river Munnawar Tawi so unnerved the enemy that he abandoned the area leaving behind a large quantity of arms and ammunition.

Captain Jatar was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional gallantry and outstanding leadership.



IC-219
Major General
Kallan, Swarup Singh,
MVC, MC

Maj Gen Swarup Singh Kallan, son of Chowdhary Sultan Singh, was born on 16 November 1912, in village Salhawas, Rohtak, Haryana. He joined the Indian Army on 16 November 1931 and was granted commission in the Rajputana Rifles on 1 February 1939. He had fought in World War II and had earned the Military Cross for gallantry.

In August 1965, Maj Gen Kallan commanded 19 Infantry Division in the Uri-Baramulla-Gulmarg sector. This was the time when Pakistan attempted large-scale subversive activities in Kashmir with the aim to capture the valley. The Pakistani guerillas infiltrated into Kashmir surreptitiously through jungles, peaks and valley moving on foot during night. By the time the Indians knew of infiltration the enemy had entered deep into Kashmir, some of them even making their way to Srinagar.

The Indian forces planned to contain this threat by rounding up the infiltrators and by sealing the entry points. Maj Gen Kallan planned and executed operations for hunting out infiltrators and capturing their bases and routes of infiltration in the entire territory east of the Kishanganga. For the capture of Haji Pir Pass and the subsequent link-up with Punch, he personally led his troops against well protected Pakistani posts. Inspired by his leadership and courage, the Indians unmindful of enemy fire, evicted the enemy forces from their well defended positions.

Throughout this operation, Maj Gen Kallan displayed conspicuous courage and exemplary leadership. He was decorated with Mahavir Chakra.



IC-397
Lt Col
Kaman Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Kaman Singh, son of Dafadar Vijay Singh Pathania, was born on 23 April 1917, at Ladori, Nurpur, Kangra, Himachal Pradesh. His father served with 23 Cavalry during the Mesopotamia campaign in the First World War. He was commissioned in the Garhwal Rifles on 22 December 1940. He had fought in Burma during World War II and was Mentioned-in-Despatches. Two of his sons also fought during the Indo-Pak War 1971.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations, 163 Indian Infantry Brigade planned an advance on Tithwal in the first week of May 1948. It was the main supply base for about 6150 enemy troops located in Handwara-Trahagam sector. But the approach to Tithwal was guarded by the enemy in good strength. The Trahagam and Chakibal positions stood like a rock on the road to Tithwal. India employed two battalions to break the enemy resistance in the area.

On 18 May, 3 Garhwal (less one company) led by Lt Col Singh was asked to secure Trahagam ridge where the enemy was firmly entrenched. Two companies of the battalion moved out at night to secure the ring contour behind the ridge by advancing from the rear while the third company launched a frontal attack, supported by armour and artillery. Lt Col Singh personally led the frontal attack. He encountered heavy resistance near the lower features and Pethahir position. The armoured cars could not move in his support as the enemy had destroyed the bridges. The frontal attack was thus held up.

The attack on ring contour had also been held up and the two Garhwali companies were completely surrounded by the enemy. The situation was

indeed critical. Lt Col Singh was, therefore, asked to press on with his frontal attack at all cost. Joining his forward-most platoon he pressed home the attack with such boldness that the enemy caved in. Before the end of the day the ridge was captured and contact with the other two coys established. Enemy suffered heavy casualties in this attack. The leadership, courage and determination of Lt Col Singh saved the day for the Garhwalis.

Again on 17 June 1948, the battalion (less two coys) was asked to raid a strong position on Buni ridge, beyond Tithwal. The enemy was caught asleep. 20 Raiders were killed and 2 were made prisoners. The others fled in confusion. The enemy then opened up with brens, medium machine guns and mortars, but Lt Col Singh pressed on with the leading coy and captured a prominent feature. The enemy's company and battalion tactical headquarters were located there. The intensity of the attack forced the enemy to flee in utter confusion, leaving behind many dead and wounded.

Lt Col Singh took up a defensive position on the feature awaiting the arrival of his second company. In the meantime the enemy put in three successive counter-attacks on his position which were repulsed. Lt Col Singh held on to the position until all casualties were evacuated. Later, on orders from the brigade, he withdrew to the base.

Lt Col Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry.



2442148

**Sepoy
Kanshi Ram,
MVC**

Sepoy Kanshi Ram, son of Shri Narotam Ram, was born on 1 July 1938, in village Duhari, Mandi, Himachal Pradesh. He was enrolled in the Punjab Regiment on 10 January 1958. Kanshi Ram fought the Pakistanis in 1965 and 1971 Wars and rose to the rank of Naib Subedar.

During the conflict with China in 1962, 9 Punjab was deployed in Tsengjong area of NEFA. Sepoy Kanshi Ram was manning a post in the battalion defended area. He was covering the right approach to the post with his light machine gun. On 10 October 1962, about 300 Chinese launched an attack on this post. Sepoy Kanshi Ram fought with determination, disregarding devastating enemy fire and inflicted heavy casualties on the Chinese. Though seriously wounded in the battle, he refused to be evacuated.

The post was again attacked by the Chinese, this time with greater mortar support. Sepoy Kanshi Ram, unmindful of his injury, again brought his gun into action. But the enemy kept on advancing and closing in, and shouted to the men in the trench to surrender. Sepoy Kanshi Ram shouted back at them to surrender. He hurled a grenade at the enemy and killed one officer and three other ranks. In the meantime more Chinese closed in on him. He was fired at and wounded again. Despite the injuries, he held on to his gun and tackled the Chinese skilfully. Finally he grabbed a loaded automatic rifle from the enemy and walked back to his platoon with the booty and his own gun. This was the first Chinese weapon captured by 7 Infantry Brigade.

Sepoy Kanshi Ram was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying courage and initiative of a high order.



IC-7684
Lt Col
Kapur, Surinder,
MVC

Lt Col Surinder Kapur, son of Shri B.D. Kapur, was born on 4 September 1935, at Amritsar, Punjab. His family later settled in Bombay. He was commissioned in 4 Gorkha Rifles on 11 December 1955.

Earlier to the outbreak of Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Kapur was commanding 1 J&K Rifles in Jessore sector, on the Eastern front. Even in November 1971, Pak forces were on the offensive in this sector. They were posing a threat to Indian security. The J & K Rifles were asked to employ such pressure tactics as would force the enemy to abandon his defences in this area. While maintaining a defensive posture the unit was to blunt any enemy offensive and inflict maximum casualties on him.

The enemy reaction to Indian move was quick and sharp. He reinforced his positions and attacked hastily prepared Indian defences. The Pak troops, with heavy artillery support, launched as many as five attacks on Indian positions between 12 and 17 November. During these attacks Lt Col Kapur displayed rare professional competence in deploying his battalion. No amount of small arms and artillery fire could deter him from going about his job. His competent handling of troops enabled the Indians to capture Maslia outpost.

Lt Col Kapur was awarded Mahavir Chakra for his indomitable courage and inspiring leadership.



**4721 F(P)
Wing Commander
Kaul,
Swaroop Krishna,
MVC**

Wg Cdr Swaroop Krishna Kaul, son of Shri K.K. Kaul, was born on 20 December 1935, at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 17 July 1954. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Air Marshal.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Wg Cdr Kaul commanded a fighter bomber squadron on the Eastern front. In the beginning of the conflict an urgent need was felt for the photographs of some strategically vital areas of the then East Pakistan. The task was difficult and risky, because the areas intended to be photographed were well defended by the enemy. Wg Cdr Kaul volunteered to undertake the task. He carried out four missions deep into the enemy territory penetrating heavily defended areas of Comilla, Sylhet and Saidpur. Sometimes he had to fly as low as 60 metres.

On 4 December 1971, when a need for the photographs of Tezgaon and Kurmitola airfields was felt, Wg Cdr Kaul volunteered to undertake the mission. While flying over these airfields he had to face sustained and heavy anti-aircraft fire from the ground. He evaded these shots with amazing skill and took photographs of the airfields.

His professional competence earned him the honour of leading the first strike mission of eight aircraft to Dacca, the capital city. In this attack, he encountered anti-aircraft guns as well as the Pak Air Force. He fought both and came out unscathed.

Wg Cdr Kaul was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional courage, devotion to duty and professional competence.



3349770
Sepoy
Kewal Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Sepoy Kewal Singh, son of Shri Sohan Singh, was born 20 October 1943, in village Kotli Than Singh, Jalandhar, Punjab. He was enrolled in 4 Sikh on 20 October 1961.

During the conflict with China in 1962, 4 Sikh was deployed in Walong sector of NEFA. It occupied defensive positions on both banks of the Lohit river. On 24 October, the enemy launched a massive attack on the Sikh positions. The Sikhs stood firm and repulsed the attack inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. But the enemy was not discouraged. He attacked the positions with renewed vigour on the night of 27 October and came very close to the Sikh defences.

Sepoy Kewal Singh had been watching the increasing threat to Sikh positions all this time. Thus far and no further said the brave Sikh. Like a possessed man, he rushed out of his section-post and charged the enemy with bayonet, killing a few in hand-to-hand fighting. In this encounter he was seriously wounded. But despite grievous injuries he bayoneted yet another enemy. By this act of valour and self-sacrifice Sepoy Kewal Singh inspired his comrades to repulse the enemy.

Sepoy Kewal Singh was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for displaying bravery and heroism of a high order, posthumously.



IC-88
Lt Col
Khanna, Manmohan,
MVC

Lt Col Manmohan Khanna, son of Shri B.N. Khanna, was born on 1 May 1915, in Multan, now in Pakistan. His family subsequently settled in Dehradun, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Kumaon Regiment on 16 July 1936. He later rose to the rank of Lt Gen and served as commandant of the National Defence College, New Delhi.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations in November-December 1947, 4 Kumaon led by Lt Col Khanna, played a leading role in arresting the tide of tribal invasion in Srinagar Valley. In January 1948, a 3000-4000 strong enemy force attempted to cut off the Indian line of communication at Mahura and Rampur. 4 Kumaon was ordered to foil this attempt. Moving out of Uri in a pitch dark night in a blinding snow-storm, 4 Kumaon reached Mahura the following morning. It crossed the river Jhelum by means of a single strand of wire, strung across the river, and attached to a pulley from which was slung a wooden box. The hazardous crossing was made during a severe snow-storm. After crossing the river, the battalion captured the dominating height opposite Mahura. The enemy was completely surprised by this seemingly impossible crossing and was completely routed in the ensuing battle.

During February-March 1948, the enemy inducted a brigade of Azad Kashmir Force and a few thousand tribesmen in this area. They launched repeated attacks on the Indian pickets, north of Mahura. All these attacks were repulsed with heavy casualties to the enemy.

On 14/15 April 1948, Lt Col Khanna launched a major attack on Kopra, a formidable enemy position held by two companies, with two more

companies in reserve. After covering a distance of 13 km during the night, the Kumaonis completely surprised the enemy in a dawn attack and thoroughly routed him. They inflicted more than 600 casualties on the enemy and cut off his line of communication between Mahura and Baramula.

On 20 April 1948, Lt Col Khanna led an attack on Goashar, held by the enemy in battalion strength. After a night march in heavy rains his battalion fought a sharp action at dawn during a severe thunderstorm. The enemy suffered heavy casualties and withdrew in disorder.

Lt Col Khanna saved the area north of Mahura from falling into enemy hands. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra for his outstanding leadership.



IC-4018
Lt Col
Khanna,
Narindra Nath,
MVC (Posth.)

Lt Col Narindra Nath Khanna, son of Shri M.L. Khanna, was born on 20 May 1928, at Larkana, Sind, now in Pakistan. His family later settled in New Delhi. He was commissioned in the Sikh Regiment on 12 September 1948.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lt Col Khanna commanded 2 Sikh Battalion in Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir. The battalion was ordered to attack the Raja picket, across the cease-fire line, on the night of 5 September with a view to the linking up of the Uri-Poonch bulge. The picket was strongly held by the enemy. The approach to it lay from the east and the gradient for the last 200 metres was very steep. The picket was heavily mined and wired.

Lt Col Khanna launched the attack on the picket with three companies at 0400 hours on 6 September 1965. No sooner than the companies had crossed the start line they came under devastating fire. The day light made it easy for the enemy to choose his targets. Somehow the companies managed to reach the wire obstacle. But any further move became difficult. The two assaulting companies were even pushed back by the enemy. Meanwhile, Lt Col Khanna was wounded by a grenade splinter in the right shoulder. He encouraged the two companies to move up and with a few men led an assault with grenades in his hand. The assault brought Indians within the area of enemy bunkers. Here the Commanding Officer was mortally wounded by a Browning burst in the stomach. The companies, however, edged forward gallantly and captured the objective.

Lt Col Khanna was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for his courage, determination and leadership, posthumously.



IC-7380
Lt Col
Khanna, Prem Kumar,
MVC

Lt Col Prem Kumar Khanna, son of Shri Sohan Lal Khanna, was born on 10 December 1933, in Lahore, now in Pakistan. He graduated from the Punjab University in 1953. He was commissioned in the Sikh Regiment on 2 June 1955. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Khanna commanded 5 Sikh in Chhamb sector west of Munnawar Tawi river. The battalion was deployed to defend the northern flank of the sector from Pak attack. It had laid a protective minefield in front of its defended area to prevent the enemy ingress.

On 3 December 1971, at 2050 hours Pakistani forces launched a massive attack on Chhamb with tanks and artillery. They subjected the Sikhs to intense shelling and small arms and MMG fire to achieve a breakthrough. But the Sikhs under the inspiring leadership of Lt Col Khanna remained firm. They not only foiled the enemy attempt at breakthrough but also inflicted heavy casualties on him. In desperation, Pakistan pressed its Air Force in support of the Army. On 4 December the 5 Sikh positions were repeatedly strafed. The enemy then attacked them with rockets, tanks, artillery and infantry. The enemy, however, found a match in the Sikh commander. He not only repulsed the repeated enemy assaults but also launched several counter-attacks to regain the lost positions.

Lt Col Khanna led his men with imagination and courage in moments of great despair. His conspicuous bravery and leadership earned him the Maha Vir Chakra.



8295
**Havildar
Khattri, Lal Bahadur,
MVC**

Havildar Lal Bahadur Khattri son of Shri Nain Singh was born on 1 July 1917, in village Ramtala, 4000 Parbat, Nepal. He was enrolled in 3/9 Gorkha Rifles on 23 November 1934. He retired as Jemadar (Naib Subedar) from the Indian Army.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations in 1948, Punch remained under the enemy siege for a long time. However, Punch Brigade did not succumb to enemy pressure. It resorted to aggressive patrolling and established pickets for the defence of Punch. West of Punch in Tetrinot area, the enemy held a vital position with two companies. When the brigade planned to clear this area, 3/9 Gorkha Rifles was asked to capture a hill feature to the right of Tetrinot.

In this attack A Company was allotted a pimple to the right of the feature. When the commander of the leading platoon of the company got wounded during the advance, Havildar Khattri took over the command. The advance continued despite heavy enemy automatic fire, and the platoon secured the whole of the ring contour under his able leadership. Shortly afterwards, the enemy put in a strong counter-attack to regain the position. At this stage the ammunition position of the platoon became critical and some men, losing heart, started to crawl back. But Havildar Khattri remained firm in his position and with cool courage he kept the advancing enemy at bay.

Meanwhile one of his riflemen was gravely wounded. Havildar Khattri went forward, virtually in the face of death, to pull his man out. When he ran out of grenades, he hurled stones at the advancing enemy. While

throwing stones with his right hand he evacuated the rifleman to safety with his left hand. Inspired by the courage of their leader, the men took heart and rallied to beat back the advancing enemy. The enemy withdrew leaving behind 14 dead.

Havildar Khattri was awarded Mahavir Chakra for his outstanding gallantry and leadership.



IC-4969
Major
Khushhal Chand,
MVC

Major Khushhal Chand, was born on 26 September 1909. His family later settled in village Geysnur, Keylong, Himachal Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Dogra Regiment on 15 September 1941. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Lt Col. This brave soldier died in an air crash in 1957.

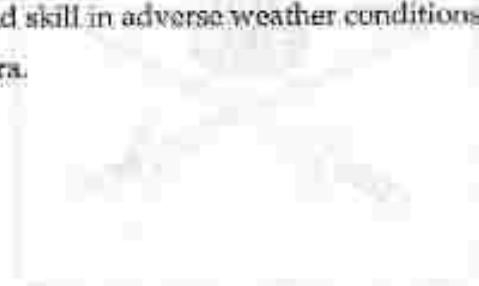
In January 1948, Ladakh lay unprotected. The Pakistani raiders were gradually closing upon it. Leh detachment, comprising 33 persons, was the only Indian force in Ladakh valley at that time. The situation was desperate and Indian commanders were worried about the fate of Ladakh. The need to strengthen the Leh detachment was most immediate. But the problem was who would venture out for Leh in the prevailing inclement weather.

The Indian Army did not lack in men of guts. Major Khushhal Chand and his cousin Major Thakur Prithi Chand volunteered to lead a contingent each through the snowy path to Leh. Major Khushhal Chand, with one platoon of J&K State Force and about twenty local militia, delayed the enemy advance on Leh along the Indus valley for four months. He skillfully applied guerilla tactics to fight a numerically superior enemy. By his mobile tactics he gave an exaggerated impression of his strength to the enemy. On one occasion he held the Kharatsi bridge for 24 hours with just one sepoy. In the night, the sepoy kept on firing on the opposite bank, while Major Khushhal Chand crawled down to the bridge and set it on fire. This delayed the enemy advance by another one week. The absence of communication facility added to his problems. He had to

make frequent visits to Leh to keep the commander informed about his activities.

Throughout these operations Major Khushhal Chand fought without adequate rations, weapons and ammunition. He led his small band of men to success with great vigour and skill in adverse weather conditions.

He was awarded Mahavir Chakra.





IC-993
Brigadier
Kler, Hardev Singh,
MVC

Brigadier Hardev Singh Kler, son of Shri Chhajja Singh, was born on 3 July 1926, in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Corps of Signals on 10 October 1943.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brig Kler commanded a mountain brigade on the Eastern front. His brigade was asked to lead the Indian advance in Kamalpur-Turag river axis. It involved clearing of strong enemy opposition at Kamalpur, Bakshiganj, Jamalpur, Tangail, Mirzapur and river Turag and many minor obstacles in between.

During the advance Brig Kler always moved with the leading troops, directing the operations in complete disregard of his safety. His handling of the troops during the battle of Jamalpur showed great professional skill. He provided great inspiration to his troops, who had laid siege behind the enemy positions south of Jamalpur, by his presence in the thick of the battle. He directed the operations so skilfully and courageously that all attempts by the enemy at breakthrough were foiled. Enemy suffered heavy casualties and lost 379 men as prisoners of war. He also lost a large quantity of weapons and ammunition to the Indians.

Brig Kler was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying outstanding courage and leadership.



JC-3091
Jemadar
Lal Singh,
MVC

Jemadar Lal Singh, son of Shri Nikka Singh, was born on 5 January 1916, in village Bharwani, Bhatinda, Punjab. He was enrolled in 1 Patiala (RS) Infantry on 5 January 1934.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations Indians had not reconciled to the loss of Dras and Kargil in the northern sector of Kashmir by May-June 1948. In fact the recapture of these vital positions was necessary to save Leh from falling into enemy hands during the winter. All plans to reach Dras by outflanking the enemy from the right and left came to nothing. Even a frontal attack through Zoji La also came to naught. But once the tanks cleared the way at Zoji La there was nothing to prevent Indians from marching on to Dras.

During this advance on Dras by 77 Para Brigade, 1/5 RGR and 4 Rajput were to take on the enemy pickets astride the road near Pindras. 1 Patiala was to push through along the valley and capture Dras. The plan was to advance with one company on either side of the stream running down the narrow valley towards Dras. The troops started off at 1730 hours on 14 November from the Matayan area. At about midnight the company moving on the right came up against a strong position on Brown Hill.

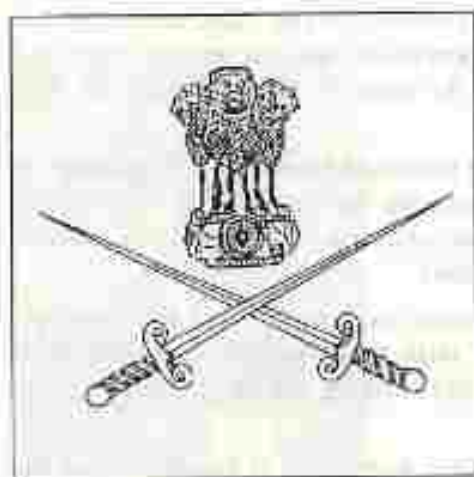
Jemadar Lal Singh of 1 Battalion of the Patiala (RS) Infantry, was commanding the leading platoon of the company which attacked the Brown Hill feature, a formidable enemy stronghold on the way to Dras. When the platoon reached within 20 metres of the enemy, it faced very heavy fire. At this juncture the JCO showed great presence of mind. Under incessant fire he crawled forward with his W/T set to the leading section.

and ordered them to dig in. He then crawled to the other sections, and gave them necessary directions. In the process he was hit several times and his W/T set was damaged. Most of the men of his platoon were also wounded.

The injuries suffered by him caused profused bleeding. The damage to W/T set put him out of communication with the Coy HQ. But he did not lose heart. With cool courage, guts and stamina he enabled the platoon to stick on to the position for four hours.

On, 15 November 1948, when the other two platoons of his company moved for the attack, he put himself with the first section. He charged the enemy position with great ferocity, killing six of the enemy and captured the feature.

By daring, dash and skilful leadership, Jemadar Lal Singh opened the way to Dras for his unit. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra for this conspicuous gallantry.



IC-8423
Captain
Mahabir Prasad,
MVC (Posth.)

Captain Mahabir Prasad, son of Shri Inder Prasad, was born on 16 January 1936, in Calcutta, West Bengal. He was commissioned in Sikh Regiment on 1 June 1957.

During the Conflict with China, 1962, Captain Mahabir Prasad was serving with an unit of Gorkha Rifles in Namkhachu area of North-East Frontier Agency. The unit was deployed to defend this area from the Chinese attack.

On 20 October the enemy launched a massive attack on Indian positions in this area with heavy artillery, mortar and medium machine gun fire. Captain Prasad faced the enemy attack with grim determination and courage. He led a handful of his men against the waves of advancing Chinese and inflicted heavy casualties on them.

For displaying remarkable gallantry, determination and courage, Captain Prasad was decorated with Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-10690
Lt Col
Mahatam Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Mahatam Singh, son of Subedar Dhaja Singh, was born on 16 July 1921, in village Raipur, Dumna, Jammu, J & K. He was commissioned in JAK Rifles on 13 August 1942.

In 1967, Lt Col Mahatam Singh commanded 10 JAK Rifles on India-China border. The battalion remained in the Cho La area from 23 June to 14 October 1967. D Company held the Cho La BOP, which was very close to the border. To avoid a clash with the Chinese, barbed wire concentration coils were laid along the boundary. This was done despite difficult terrain and adverse weather conditions under the leadership of Lt Col Singh.

At 0925 hours on 1 October the enemy suddenly started firing on all Indian posts simultaneously. The firing was intense and effective. Heavy machine guns and recoilless guns caused considerable damage to Indian positions. At 1430 hours Lt Col Mahatam Singh was ordered to march to Cho La. He started immediately and after an arduous march reached Cho La to take over the command of the operation. He acted with determination, courage and skill, restored the situation and established physical contact with the position which had borne the brunt of the fighting.

He was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exceptional bravery, leadership and devotion to duty.



JC-39248
Subedar
Malkiat Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Subedar Malkiat Singh, son of Shri Gurcharan Singh, was born on 5 May 1927, at Lohat Baddi, district Sangrur, Punjab. He was enrolled in 14 Punjab Regiment (Nabha Akal Regiment) on 5 May 1947.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 14 Punjab was deployed in Garibpur area on the Eastern front. In view of the increasing Pakistani activity on Indian borders the battalion was given the task of securing Garibpur by the first light on 21 November and blunting of enemy counter-attacks, if any. The battle lasted from 20 to 22 November.

During this battle Subedar Malkiat Singh was holding an important defensive position which was repeatedly subjected to infantry and armoured attacks by the enemy. He moved from one trench to another encouraging his men to fight with determination to repulse the attack. The enemy however, advanced upto 50 metres of battalion position and subjected it to effective light machine gun fire and grenade attack. At this critical moment Subedar Malkiat Singh, unmindful of his personal safety, crawled forward and engaged the enemy. Although he himself was badly wounded, he killed two enemy machine gunners. There he was mortally wounded by an enemy tank shell.

For most conspicuous bravery, Subedar Malkiat Singh was honoured with Maha Vir Chakra, posthumously.



4128692
**Sepoy
Man Singh,
MVC (Posth.)**

Sepoy Man Singh, son of Shri Sampat Singh, was born on 12 April 1926, in village Khera Machhroli, Rohtak, Haryana. He was enrolled in 1 (Para) Kumaon Regiment on 12 April 1945.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations in early 1948, the defence of Punch was one of the most complex problems of the Indian Army. Punch was completely surrounded by the enemy. The enemy mounted pressure on Punch garrison by attacking its pickets in January 1948. At 1200 hours on 25 January, the raiders launched simultaneous attacks on four Indian pickets and 200 of them managed to infiltrate into the perimeter through two of the camp pickets.

At this juncture, Sepoy Man Singh was with a picket under enemy attack. His platoon was holding the front on a key defensive position. The enemy troops, supported by six light machine guns and grenade dischargers from a distance of about 100 metres, came close to the picket perimeter. The platoon suffered 50 per cent casualties and the enemy was poised for a rush in.

The situation was indeed critical. Sepoy Man Singh knew it. He rushed out of his slit trench and dashed forward, engaging the enemy with grenades. The strong enemy pressure could not deter him from advancing on enemy posts. By incessant firing he eventually succeeded in silencing two enemy LMGs. In the din of the battle an LMG burst hit him on the head, injuring him severely. But before death could take him away, he smashed another enemy LMG hurling a grenade saying "I am finished

but I will finish you too." In his last message to the Section Commander he pleaded that no enemy should be allowed to leave the sector alive.

Sepoy Man Singh set an example of bravery and devotion to duty. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



**4666 F(P)
Wing Commander
Mangat,
Harcharan Singh,
MVC**

Wg Cdr Harcharan Singh Mangat, son of Shri Ram Singh Mangat, was born on 6 June 1932, at Ludhiana, Punjab. He was commissioned as General Duties (Pilot) in the Indian Air Force on 16 January 1954. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Air Commodore.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Wg Cdr Mangat commanded a fighter bomber squadron of the Indian Air Force from a forward airfield on the Western front. The enemy opened his attack on India with his aircraft simultaneously bombarding Amritsar, Srinagar, Avantipur and Pathankot airfields. In retaliation Wg Cdr Mangat led many strikes on targets inside enemy territory. He also alerted the anti-aircraft guns around the airfields against possible air attacks. This word of caution proved very useful when enemy aircraft came over the airfield at 2100 hours and 0235 hours on 3 and 4 December 1971 respectively. Indian ack ack guns gave them a hot reception and they had to retreat empty handed.

At dawn on 4 December, Indian aircraft took off in pairs to raid the targets in Pakistan. One of these attacks, deep into enemy territory, was led by Wg Cdr Mangat on 4 December. While on the way his formation comprising four aircraft was fired upon by enemy ack ack guns. His own aircraft was hit thrice. But he continued to move forward on to the target unperturbed until he found that one more aircraft of the formation had been damaged. The formation was now some 200 km deep inside enemy territory. Wg Cdr Mangat immediately ordered a hard turn and gave a retreat call. By then his aircraft had suffered serious damage by intense anti-aircraft fire. However, he manoeuvred to extricate his formation from

the hazardous situation and led it safely to the base. On landing it was found that his aircraft was extensively damaged and major portions of the tail control surface were completely shot away.

The failure of the mission did not dishearten him. He led many more strikes on targets into the enemy territory. These included marshalling yards, goods trains and gun and tank concentrations. He flew a number of photo reconnaissance sorties deep inside enemy territory. The information collected by him was used by Indian Army and Air Force in planning their operations.

Wg Cdr Mangat was awarded Mahavir Chakra for superb flying skill and presence of mind.



IC-12933
Brigadier
Manjit Singh,
MVC

Brigadier Manjit Singh, son of Sardar Bikram Singh, was born on 1 January 1942, at Amritsar, Punjab. He was commissioned in Mahar Regiment on 17 December 1961. He belonged to a family with a long military traditions. His grandfather had seen action in West Asia during the First World War. His four brothers have also served in the Indian Army.

41 Infantry Brigade was inducted into Sri Lanka as part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force on 16 October 1987. Brigadier Manjit Singh had taken over the command of this brigade on the previous day. The brigade was asked to clear Jaffna town, the biggest stronghold of LTTE militants, and to link up with 1 Maratha Light Infantry in Jaffna port. The militants had mined all the roads leading to Jaffna and had covered all approaches to it with small arms and heavy machine gun fire.

Brigadier Manjit Singh landed at Palali airfield at 0830 hours on 16 October. He found that the Indian troops advancing towards Anna Collai were facing stiff resistance. He also found that the troops operating west of Marupal were trapped in heavy firing and were unable to extricate themselves. Brigadier Manjit Singh decided upon a quick breakthrough. He assumed the charge of the leading elements to speed up the operations. The cordon of desperate militants was broken with just two companies of Rajputana Rifles and a link up with Para Commandoes operating from Jaffna Fort affected. His leadership and valour in the face of grave danger motivated his men to overcome the militants' resistance.

Brigadier Manjit Singh was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous courage and leadership.



IC-14221
Major
Mankotia,
Basdev Singh,
MVC

Major Basdev Singh Mankotia, son of Shri S. B. Rai Singh Mankotia, was born on 16 April 1941, at Sidhpur Garh village, district Kangra, Himachal Pradesh. He belonged to a family with long military traditions. His father, grandfather and great grandfather had served the Indian Army with distinction. He was commissioned in Punjab Regiment on 11 December 1962.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Major B.S. Mankotia was commanding a combined force of regular infantry and Border Security Force men. The force was holding Rarian Screen on the Lahore-Amritsar axis. Rarian was key to the defence of Amritsar and it lay within 100 metres of the strong enemy position at New Wagha Drain. Between 3 and 5 December the enemy attacked Rarian Screen seven times. In the first attack, launched at 1830 hours on 3 December Pakistanis subjected the Rarian Screen to heavy and accurate artillery fire. Two Pakistani companies pushed on and managed to reach within 250 metres of Indian defences. Major Mankotia allowed the enemy to come within 50 metres of his position and then directed heavy artillery and mortar fire on him. This broke the attack. Thus despite determined attack, the enemy failed to overcome the Screen position. Heavy and accurate small arms fire forced him to retreat with heavy casualties.

The enemy soon overcame the shock of defeat. Repeated assaults were made again on Indian positions the same night. The first assault was repulsed but in the second assault the enemy succeeded in penetrating part of Indian defences. At this juncture Major Mankotia personally led

a counter-attack to evict the enemy. He succeeded in regaining the lost ground. While moving out of his bunker he was badly wounded in the shelling. But he refused to be evacuated and beat back two more enemy assaults on this day.

On 4 December the enemy again subjected the Indian post to artillery and air attack. In the night he launched an attack in brigade strength. Major Mankotia stuck to his post and foiled these attempts in spite of the fact that he was wounded and running temperature. In all, seven enemy attacks were repulsed by him.

Major Mankotia was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for displaying conspicuous gallantry.



IC-6622
Major
Mathur, Sushil Kumar,
MVC

Major Sushil Kumar Mathur, son of Shri S.B.P. Mathur, was born on 1 July 1934, at Dehradun, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in Artillery Regiment on 13 December 1953. He took part in Operation 'Vijay' in Goa, Operation 'Kahaddi' in the Rann of Kutch and Operation 'Riddle' in Rajasthan. He also fought the Indo-Pak War 1971, in Punch Sector. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier.

In April 1965 Pakistan launched a limited offensive in the Rann of Kutch to grab some Indian areas. The terrain was unfavourable for the Indians and they experienced difficulties in containing the enemy onslaught. The visibility in the area was very poor and the movement of vehicles on the sand was very difficult. In these circumstances it was decided to direct artillery fire on the enemy targets from the air. At this juncture Major Mathur was commanding an Air Operation Flight in the Kutch area. The task was, therefore, entrusted to his team. He was also directed to carry out artillery observation and aerial reconnaissance.

Major Mathur flew 45 operational sorties to accomplish the tasks assigned to him. Of these sorties two were extremely successful. On 15 April 1965, he effectively engaged a convoy of intruders in the Kanjarkot area, destroying three vehicles and damaging many others. Again on 30 April 1965, he directed artillery fire towards the intruders in the Biar Bet area and compelled them to withdraw in haste. In this action, a field ammunition dump and three vehicles belonging to the intruders were damaged.

Major Mathur was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exceptional courage, technical skill and leadership.



1559 GD (P)
Air Commodore
Mehar Singh,
MVC, DSO

Air Commodore Mehar Singh, son of Shri Trilok Singh, was born on 20 March 1915, at Lyallpur, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned as General Duties (Pilot) in the Royal Indian Air Force on 1 August 1936. He was awarded DSO in 1944 for distinguished performance in World War II. He resigned from the Royal Indian Air Force in 1948 and was later killed in a flying accident.

During the Jammu and Kashmir Operations 1947-48, Air Commodore Mehar Singh was the Air Officer Commanding No.1 (Ops) Group, RIAF. While the RIAF Dakotas were flying supplies to and evacuating refugees from Punch, one of the Indian Dakotas was hit by machine gun fire. The pilot, however, managed an emergency landing at Punch. This incident brought home the need for arming the Dakotas. During the link-up with Punch in early 1948, Air Commodore Mehar Singh introduced the novelty of arming Dakota aircraft on supply missions. He carried out a bombing-cum-supply mission personally. This enabled the RIAF to send supplies to Punch in armed Dakotas. In May 1948, when Leh was in desperate need of reinforcements he flew a Dakota to Leh on 24 May, heretofore considered an impossible task. Thereafter, the supplies and reinforcements arrived into Leh regularly. Leh was thus saved from capitulation.

Air Commodore Mehar Singh displayed great leadership and devotion to duty and set an example for those serving under him. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



IC-4282
Lt Col
Mehta, Harbans Lall,
MVC (Posth.)

Lt Col Harbans Lall Mehta, son of Shri D.C. Mehta, was born on 15 September 1922, at Jhelum (Pakistan). Subsequently, his family settled in Delhi. He was commissioned in the Madras Regiment on 15 December 1946.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lt Col Mehta commanded 4 Madras in Stalkot sector. His battalion was asked to capture Maharajke, held in good strength by the enemy. The battalion crossed the ceasefire line at 0200 hours on 8 September and the assault troops penetrated upto about 100 metres of the enemy forward defence line.

4 Madras encountered heavy opposition at this stage, which held up the advance of the leading company. To overcome this obstacle, Lt Col Mehta pressed the reserve company into attack. But it too failed to make progress owing to heavy opposition from the flank. He then ordered the officers to clear the objective trench by trench. In the fierce hand to hand fight that ensued many trenches were cleared, some guns were destroyed and heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy.

The enemy, however, refused to surrender. Time was running short and the sun was about to rise. Lt Col Mehta then pushed ahead to clear the remnants of the enemy with one of his reserve companies. It was a tactically sound outflanking move. Inspired by his presence in the foremost line of attack, the men pressed home the attack successfully. The enemy stronghold collapsed. But the Madras lost their commander in this action.

Lt Col Mehta was awarded Mahavir Chakra for setting an example of personal courage, leadership and sacrifice, posthumously.



IC-4190
Brigadier
Michigan, Anthony
Harold Edward,
MVC

Brigadier Anthony Harold Edward Michigan, was born on 13 October 1925, at Muddebihal, Bijapur, Karnataka. He was commissioned in the Grenadiers on 10 December 1948.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brigadier Michigan commanded 41 Mountain Brigade on the Eastern front. The brigade was asked to capture Uthali and Darsana in Jessore sector, by 30 November. These positions were fortified and held in good strength by the enemy.

When the Indian attack on Uthali was in progress enemy automatic and tank fire covered them on three sides and pinned them down. At this critical juncture Brigadier Michigan, braving a hail of enemy fire, took personal control of the situation, stabilised the battle line and reorganised his troops for further offensive. He conducted the battle with cool courage and scant regard for his life. This greatly inspired his troops and they took the objective by storm.

Subsequently, he regrouped his forces for mounting an attack on the strongly fortified enemy position at Darsana. He personally reconnoitred the area braving the small arms and artillery fire of the enemy and conducted a preliminary operation, breaking through the outer crust of the enemy defences. Subsequently, he negotiated an extensive minefield to launch the main offensive against the well prepared enemy positions. Again he was in the thick of the battle. He inspired his troops to brave a devastating hail of artillery and mortar fire and gained a decisive victory. From Darsana, he advanced towards Jhenida and captured it after covering

50 km in 48 hours. The enemy was taken by complete surprise. Throughout these operations, Brigadier Michigan commanded his troops with great professional skill.

Brigadier Michigan was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and exemplary leadership.



IC-1857
Captain
Mistri, Dara Dinshaw,
MVC (Posth.)

Captain Dara Dinshaw Mistri, was born on 14 October 1921. He was commissioned in the Regiment of Artillery on 5 July 1942. His family later settled in Dharampur, Himachal Pradesh.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations in 1948, after a convincing defeat in the summer, the enemy kept a low profile in Naushahra area for some time. But in mid December 1948, he again became active. Hell broke loose when on 14 December all available guns of his two regiments rained on Naushahra area. In this shelling, Chhawa ridge suffered the most. At this juncture Captain Mistri of 1 Medium Battery, 40 Medium Regiment Artillery, was an Observation Officer at the forward-most picket. He stuck to his post in spite of this murderous fire, feeding the much needed information to his men.

His fearless conduct invited more hostile guns at him. But this never deterred him from going about his job. He confirmed the presence of enemy Sherman tanks in the Sandoa village area. These tanks engaged his picket for more than two hours, but could not break his will to hold on to the post. The Platoon Commander also could not persuade him to seek safety and he continued to feed information to his guns. He remained at the post till a 75-mm shell killed him instantaneously.

By day and by night, Captain Mistri served as the watch-dog of the picket. All ranks on the picket were greatly inspired by his courage, gallantry and devotion to duty. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



JC-33029

Subedar

Mohinder Singh,

MVC

Subedar Mohinder Singh, son of Shri Bodh Singh, was born on 3 January 1933, in village Sham Nagar, district Amritsar, Punjab. He joined the Army as a Boy. He was enrolled in 18 Punjab Regiment on 3 January 1950.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 18 Punjab was with 121 Independent Infantry Brigade Group in the Kargil Sector, to the west of river Shingo. The vital Srinagar-Leh road passed through this area and there was an urgent need to secure this link against possible enemy interference and infiltration. The enemy position at Hathi Matha posed a grave threat to this link. It was necessary for the Indians to capture Brachil Pass to remove this threat. But the Pass was held in good strength by the enemy and provided with shell-proof bunkers, 3-inch mortars, 81-mm mortars and two BMG sections. It was well stocked with arms and ammunition.

The task of capturing Brachil Pass was allotted to 18 Punjab. The attack was launched at 0530 hours on 7 December and a foot-hold gained on the left shoulder by 0700 hours. But further advance of the unit was held up by heavy enemy fire. Subedar Mohinder Singh was commanding a platoon there. The eyes of the Battalion Commander fell on him at this critical hour. He was ordered to creep forward with his platoon and rush on to the Pass to secure the left shoulder at the earliest. Subedar Mohinder Singh rose to the occasion and led his men through intense fire and determined opposition. He charged forward, destroyed one medium machine gun bunker and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy in close combat. His inspiring conduct in war ensured the success of the attack.

Subedar Mohinder Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and leadership.



IC-524
Major General
Mohinder Singh,
MVC

Major General Mohinder Singh, son of Shri Chhaja Singh, was born on 20 December 1914, at Nabha, Punjab. He joined the Indian Army on 10 June 1932, and was commissioned on 6 October 1940 in the Regiment of Artillery. He had earned Military Cross for gallantry during the Second World War and was also Mentioned-in-Despatches. His father had also served in the Indian Army.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, 115 Infantry Division was deployed in Lahore sector. On 9 September 1965, Maj Gen Mohinder Singh took over command of this division. By that time the conflict with Pakistan had developed into a full-fledged war. The division was assigned the task of capturing Ichhogil Canal.

Maj Gen Mohinder Singh with his zeal, determination and leadership, infused a new spirit in the division. Disregarding his personal safety, he moved from formation to formation and thus set a fine example before his subordinate commanders. His sound operational planning and indomitable courage enabled his brigade to capture Ichhogil bridge and Dograi.

Major General Mohinder Singh was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for gallantry and leadership.



1644 F(P)
Wing Commander
Moolgavkar,
Hrushikesh,
PVSM, MVC

Wing Commander Hrushikesh Moolgavkar, son of Dr. S.R. Moolgavkar, was born on 14 August 1920, in Bombay, Maharashtra. He was commissioned in the Royal Indian Air Force on 30 November 1940. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Air Chief Marshal and became the Chief of the Air Staff. He was awarded PVSM for distinguished service of most exceptional order in 1976. In 1976, he was honoured with Legion of Merit, one of the highest Congressional medals of USA.

During the Second World War, Wing Commander Moolgavkar served with No. 1 Squadron and did 280 hours of operational flying in bombing, rocketing and gunnery. He was gravely wounded when the engine of his Spitfire aircraft failed during a take-off in 1945 and remained hospitalised for eight months.

During Jammu and Kashmir Operations 1947-48, Wing Commander Moolgavkar commanded No.1 Operational Wing of the RIAF. He himself took to air when difficult and dangerous commitments had to be carried out. The air attacks on the well-defended Domel bridge and the Uri and Saadabad sectors were led and directed by him personally. When the enemy defences around Uri presented serious obstacles in the way of operational flights, he carried out attacks on them. The venture exposed him to grave dangers. His determination, initiative and drive enabled the RIAF to render effective support to the Army.

Wing Commander Moolgavkar was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional bravery and leadership.



IC-15689
Captain
Mubayi, Gautam,
MVC (Posth.)

Captain Gautam Mubayi, son of Shri S.N. Mubayi, was born on 2 June 1943, at Lahore, now in Pakistan. His family later settled in New Delhi. He was commissioned in the Dogra Regiment, on 27 September 1963.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, 2 Dogra was deployed in the Mendhar sector in Jammu and Kashmir. The battalion was asked to launch 'Op Hill' to remove the enemy encroachments in the area committed after the cease-fire. The encroachments had been turned into strongly fortified positions by the enemy with minefields, bunkers and wire obstacles and adequate fire coverage. Captain Mubayi led a platoon of the company which undertook this operation.

On the night of 2 November 1965, Captain Mubayi led the company attack on the enemy held feature with courage and determination. When the assault was held up by intense fire and mounting casualties, he volunteered to make a breakthrough with his platoon by establishing a bridge-head. He crawled forward, cut the wire obstacle and pushed his platoon through the minefield. At this juncture, a mine wounded him severely in the leg but unmindful of the injury, he kept on moving. He thus established a bridge-head, capturing a portion of the objective. Meanwhile an enemy light machine gun was firing devastatingly. Captain Mubayi rushed forward to silence this gun with a grenade attack. He held on to the bridge-head in spite of heavy enemy pressure and refused evacuation. While urging his men to move forward he was mortally wounded by a burst of Browning machine gun.

Captain Mubayi was awarded Mahavir Chakra for his indomitable courage and inspiring leadership, posthumously.



**Captain
Mulla,
Mahendra Nath,
MVC (Posth.)**

Captain Mahendra Nath Mulla, son of Justice T.N. Mulla, was born on 15 May 1926, at Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Indian Navy on 1 May 1948.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Captain Mulla was commanding a task force of two ships which formed part of the Western Fleet. The force was assigned the task of hunting and destroying enemy submarines in the north Arabian Sea. On 9 December 1971, INS *Kukri* of the task force was hit by torpedoes fired by a Pak submarine, about 64 km off Diu. The time was 2050 hours. The ship could not be saved. Captain decided to abandon the ship. Unmindful of his personal safety he supervised the arrangements for the rescue of his ship's company in a very cool, calm and methodical manner. With great presence of mind he continued to direct rescue operations even at a later stage when the ship was about to sink. He even gave his own life-saving gear to a sailor. Having directed as many of his men as possible to leave the sinking ship, Captain Mulla went back to the bridge to see what further rescue operations could be performed. He had indeed chosen a water grave for himself. Captain Mulla was last seen going down with his ship.

Captain Mulla's action and behaviour and the example he set, has been in keeping with the highest traditions of the Service. For displaying conspicuous gallantry and dedication to duty he was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-5499
Lt Col
Nandagopal, Pagadala
Kuppuswamy,
MVC

Lt Col Pagadala Kuppuswamy Nandagopal, son of Shri P.V.K. Naidu, was born on 15 January 1924, at North Arcot, Tamil Nadu. He was commissioned in the Sikh Light Infantry on 16 December 1945. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lt Col Nandagopal commanded 6 Sikh Light Infantry, which formed a part of 191 Infantry Brigade, in Jammu and Kashmir sector. Even after the declaration of cease-fire on 22 September night, the enemy continued encroachment on Indian territory. In the process, it got hold of Kalidhar feature. On 28 September, Lt Col Nandagopal was ordered to attack and occupy two important hill features as a prelude to clearing the Kalidhar area. The attack on hill features was personally led by Lt Col Nandagopal and after a bitter struggle these were captured. But the enemy could not reconcile to this defeat. He launched two counter-attacks supported by heavy artillery, to evict the Indians. The counter-attacks were beaten back and the enemy suffered heavy casualties. Indians also suffered heavy casualties in the process. This enabled the enemy to reoccupy one of the hill features in the third counter-attack.

The enemy could make no further advance. But the task of clearing the lost hill feature still remained unaccomplished. On the night of 3 October, Lt Col Nandagopal was ordered to clear the feature with the help of a Mahar battalion. He succeeded in capturing the hill feature by 0630 hours on 4 October despite treacherous terrain, heavy opposition and intense shelling. The battalion continued its advance and despite strong enemy opposition, occupied three other important features by 1800 hours. The

three counter-attacks launched by the enemy in good strength and supported by artillery fire were repulsed. During one of these counter-attacks Lt Col Nandagopal personally led the forward-most company and fought a desperate hand to hand battle with the enemy. In the process he received two heavy blows with a hatchet on his head and face.

It was now the time for final assault on Kalidhar Trig Point. Although the battalion had suffered heavy casualties and was extremely tired Lt Col Nandagopal mounted the attack immediately. The Trig Point was captured and cleared of intruders by 1230 hours on 5 October.

For remarkable courage, leadership and determination Lt Col Nandagopal was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



IO-61833
Jemadar
Nand Singh,
VC, MVC
(Posth.)

Jemadar Nand Singh, son of Shri Bhag Singh, was born in 1915, in village Bahadurpur, Bhatinda, Punjab. He was enrolled in 1 Sikh Regiment on 24 March 1933. In World War II he had won the Victoria Cross for conspicuous gallantry on the Burma front.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations some 4000 to 6000 raiders had spread in Uri Sector by early December 1947. They had also settled on the high hills overlooking Uri from the south-east in good strength. From these positions the raiders sniped at the Uri garrison and also posed a threat to the roads leading from Uri to Srinagar and Punch. Indians, therefore, decided to dislodge them from these hills. At 0700 hours on 12 December, 1 Sikh marched out from Uri to remove this threat. They quickly overcame the opposition on the way and reached the main enemy position in the afternoon. At about 1430 hours, they bumped upon a strong enemy force and a fierce hand-to-hand fight ensued. In this encounter the 'B' and 'D' Companies suffered heavily and were ordered to withdraw.

But the enemy did not allow the Sikhs a smooth withdrawal. From well dug in positions, he directed fire on them. B Company was badly trapped in the shelling and lost ten men in killed in no time. Fifteen men lay wounded within ten metres of enemy position. The company launched counter-attack on enemy bunkers but these resulted in more casualties.

'D' Company was then ordered to attack the enemy from the left flank. At this juncture Jemadar Nand Singh, VC, was commanding a forward platoon of 'D' Company. He led his platoon into attack like a band of

Trojans. The intense enemy fire, however, brought down many Sikhs. But he pressed on despite an injured leg. His men shouting cries of SAT SRI AKAL closed in on the enemy. Then ensued fierce hand-to-hand fighting. Jemadar Nand Singh, was the first to draw blood with his bayonet. He killed five enemy soldiers. His men were now inspired to a frenzy and acting like fiends, they bayoneted the enemy right and left. The enemy broke and fled, but not many could make it to their homes.

The brave JCO captured the objective and kept the promise made to his Commanding Officer. But as he stood on top of the bunker, a burst of light machine gun hit him in the chest killing him on the spot. In the words of Battalion Commander "The valour, leadership and self-less devotion to duty displayed by this son of India in this little action was something that cannot be described, much less matched".

This extraordinary performance won him Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-8140
Major
Narag, Daljit Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Major Daljit Singh Narag, son of Shri B.S. Narag, was born on 20 May 1935, at Peshawar, now in Pakistan. His father later settled in Delhi. He was commissioned in the Deccan Horse (9 Horse) on 9 December 1956.

Things had started worsening up on the Eastern front much before the beginning of Indo-Pak War 1971. In November 1970, Major Narag was commanding 'C' Squadron of the 45 Cavalry in Jessore sector. He was asked to establish a road block with an infantry battalion east of Chaugachha. The squadron fired in general area Garibpur on 20 November to this end.

On 21st morning, 14 enemy tanks supported by two infantry battalions attacked the squadron position. A fierce tank battle was fought at very close quarters, for nearly 30 minutes. The 'C' Squadron effectively engaged and destroyed 10 enemy tanks. Subsequently, 4 more enemy tanks were knocked out. Squadron lost 3 tanks in this encounter. Major Narag standing on the turret of his tank, skilfully and boldly manoeuvred his squadron during this battle, despite heavy enemy fire. The troops inspired by his courage inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. While leading his men in the thick of the battle he was hit by enemy MMG and killed. It is said that "there are a few parallels in the history of armoured warfare where one armoured squadron was engaged and annihilated by an armoured force of equal strength at such a little cost in terms of tank and personnel casualties".

Major Narag was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty, posthumously.



30831
Naik
Nar Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Naik Nar Singh, son of Shri Uttam Singh, was born on 14 March 1926, in village Gangolakatuli, Almora, Uttar Pradesh. He was enrolled in 4 Kumaon Regiment on 14 March 1944.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations the build-up of enemy forces in Chakothi area of Handwara sector in May 1948, was a matter of great concern for the Indian commanders. The enemy was holding the area in brigade strength. To meet this threat, the Indian 77 Para Brigade was moved to Pandu area, to operate north of Jhelum, so as to cut the enemy line of communication and harass him on the rear.

In these operations, 4 Kumaon was ordered to capture the hill feature Master, north of Jhelum. It was a narrow and steep feature, much like a pyramid, covered with dense pine forest on one side. The other side was barren. The approach to it lay along a very narrow bridle path. The enemy was holding it with one company, one medium machine gun section and one mortar section. The approach to the position was covered by the enemy with two medium machine guns and six light machine guns. The advantage lay with the enemy because he was occupying a higher ground.

During this operation Naik Nar Singh commanded a section. The attack commenced at 0530 hours. But owing to the lack of space for manoeuvring and intense enemy fire, the B Company could make no progress. During the second assault an enemy bullet hit Naik Nar Singh on the right shoulder blade. A stream of blood started flowing out of his body. The matter was reported to the Platoon Commander who advised him to

evacuate. The Company Commander also ordered him not to take part in the third assault. But the NCO maintained a stoic silence.

During the third attempt on Master feature, Naik Nar Singh's section led the assault. As the troops started moving out of the concentration area he quietly slipped out and took over the command of his section. While on the lead he spotted an enemy light machine gun. He encouraged his comrades in his faint voice to push on "*Kumaoni Ke Dacho Jan Chale Jee, Lekin Dushman Ke Aj Tukre-Tukre Kar Dalo: Piche Nahin Hatna*" (Oh, the children of Kumaon worry not, even if your life goes, cut the enemy into pieces today, do not retreat). Then firing his sten gun he jumped into the enemy bunker, bayoneted two of the gunners and captured the gun. In this attack the enemy was totally routed. Master feature was in Kumaoni hands by 1130 hours. Many guns, rifles and a large quantity of ammunition and stores were captured. The enemy suffered 20 killed and 20 injured. Indians suffered 2 killed and 7 wounded. Meanwhile, the Naik had suffered heavy loss of blood. He was found dead in the enemy bunker lying on top of his two victims, holding fast to a Bren gun he had captured from the enemy.

Naik Nar Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for outstanding gallantry, posthumously.



**3946 GD(P)
Sqn Ldr
Jag Mohan Nath,
MVC & Bar**

Sqn Ldr Jag Mohan Nath, son of Shri K.N. Rai, was born on 8 August 1930, at Jaipur, Rajasthan. He was commissioned as General Duties (Pilot) in the Indian Air Force on 14 October 1950. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Wing Commander.

In December 1962, Sqn Ldr Nath was Flight Commander with a Strategic Reconnaissance Unit. He performed a number of hazardous operational tasks involving flying over difficult mountain terrain, both by day and by night in adverse weather conditions. He displayed conspicuous gallantry and a high degree of professional skill in these operations and was awarded Mahavir Chakra in January 1963.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Sqn Ldr Nath commanded a Canberra unit. He led his unit several times over the hostile territory to obtain vital information about the enemy. The unescorted missions, which were in the nature of reconnaissance, entailed flying long distances over the enemy territory and well-defended airfields and installations during day light. Sqn Ldr Nath was fully aware of the risk he was running on each of these missions. Still, he chose to undertake the risky missions himself. It was after great persuasion that he allowed his colleagues to do some risky assignments.

The information gathered by him during his missions proved vitally important to Indian air effort. The missions enabled our Air Force to attack vital enemy targets and this adversely affected enemy's war effort.

Sqn Ldr Nath was awarded Bar to Mahavir Chakra for displaying courage, determination and devotion to duty.



IC-4703
Brigadier
Natu,
Anant Vishwanath,
MVC

Brigadier Anant Vishwanath Natu, son of Shri V.V. Natu, was born on 1 September 1925, at Akola, Maharashtra. He was commissioned in 9 Gorkha Rifles on 13 October 1946. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Major General. He earned many medals for distinguished service with the Indian Army.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brigadier Natu commanded 93 Infantry Brigade in the Punch sector on the Western front. His brigade was responsible for the defence of Punch. He planned and organised his defences in the area in a skilful manner so as to prevent enemy ingress into Punch. To this effect he secured the heights above Punch. Thus he disallowed a tactical advantage to the enemy.

The enemy launched offensive on Punch defences in a overwhelming strength. Attacks were mounted one after another with artillery support. Surprisingly, Indians did not lose a single post over a period of four days. Brigadier Natu showed great courage and leadership in this battle. He ensured that the troops held their ground at all costs. The vital sector of Punch was thus saved from falling into enemy hands.

Brigadier Natu was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying gallantry and leadership of a high order.



3940154
**Lance Havildar
Naubat Ram,
MVC**

Lance Havildar Naubat Ram, son of Shri Sain Ditta, was born on 8 November 1931, at village Kotgora, district Poonch, Jammu and Kashmir. He was enrolled in the Dogra Regiment on 8 November 1949. He retired as Naib Subedar.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lance Havildar Naubat Ram commanded a 6 Dogra platoon in Haji Pir Pass area in Jammu and Kashmir. On the night of 8 September 1965, two companies of his battalion were ordered to attack a hill feature, few kilometres south-east of Haji Pir Pass, held by the enemy in two platoon strength.

While leading his platoon to the objective, Lance Havildar Naubat Ram came under heavy mortar fire and a splinter hit him in the arm. But he continued to lead his platoon on the right flank of the enemy. At this stage the enemy subjected his platoon to light machine gun fire and pinned it down. Determined to silence this gun fire he crawled towards the rear of the enemy and coming within a few metres of the gun, hurled a grenade on it. The grenade attack was followed with bayonet attack. In this action he captured the enemy light machine gun and killed two gunners single handed.

During the main attack on Gilian feature on 20 September, Lance Havildar Naubat Ram led the front platoon of the leading company. When his platoon was about hundred metres short of the objective, the enemy brought down heavy automatic fire on it. He was wounded, but undaunted he continued to lead the assault. Two enemy machine guns, which were holding up the attack, were silenced with grenades. At this

juncture the Lance Havildar was again hit by a machine gun burst. Still he refused evacuation and reorganised his men to meet the enemy counter-attacks. In the counter attack, some enemies even reached his forward section post. Lance Havildar, however, foiled their attempt to gain any foothold by hurling grenades at them. He inspired his platoon to such a crescendo that every counter-attack was beaten back with heavy losses to the enemy. During this operation, the Lance Havildar was wounded three times. He fell down unconscious only after the enemy had been driven away.

Lance Havildar Naubat Ram was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for exceptional courage, leadership and devotion to duty.



1735 GD(P)
Wing Commander
Norohna, Sidney Basil,
MVC

Wing Commander Sidney Basil Norohna, son of Shri A.J. Norohna, was born on 6 January 1919, at Tangasseri, Madras, Tamil Nadu. He was commissioned as General Duties (Pilot) in the Royal Indian Air Force on 10 November 1941. He breathed his last on 22 August 1957, while in service.

During Jammu and Kashmir Operations 1947-48, the Royal Indian Air Force gave effective logistic and tactical support to the ground forces against the Pakistani raiders. Wg Cdr S.B. Norohna distinguished himself in this supporting role. He carried out more than 37 operational sorties over enemy strongholds in close support of the Army. His squadron achieved maximum success in its offensive role in the face of very adverse conditions. He proved himself an outstanding leader both in air and on the ground.

Wg Cdr S.B. Norohna was awarded Mahavir Chakra for his inspiring leadership, determination and devotion to duty.



00422-H
Lieutenant
Commander
Noronha,
Joseph Pius Alfred,
MVC

Lieutenant Commander Joseph Pius Alfred Noronha, son of Shri J.C. Noronha, was born on 1 March 1937, at Mysore, Karnataka. He was commissioned in the Indian Navy on 13 October 1959. He belonged to a family with military tradition. His elder brother and brother-in-law also served the Indian Army. He took part in 'Operation Vijay' in 1961.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Cdr Noronha commanded the Indian naval ship *Panvel*. It was attached to the naval force, code named 'Force ALFA', deployed in the Eastern waters. The Force was asked to mount attacks on the enemy targets at Mongla and Khulna. At 0600 hrs on 10 December 1971, the Force led by INS *Panvel* captured the Mongla harbour without much resistance. The same day, it sailed north and entered Khulna harbour. The Force forged ahead despite close encounters with the enemy.

The Force was subjected to incessant air attacks while operating off Khulna. The enemy shore defences also opened up to engage *Panvel*. In these attacks two Mukti Bahini boats, forming part of the Force, were damaged and lost. During this difficult situation, Lt Cdr Noronha handled the ship very efficiently in the very restricted waters and effectively engaged the enemy on the water front. The enemy's shore defences were extensively damaged and vital shore installations destroyed beyond repair. While engaged in the grim battle the ship also picked up 14 survivors from the river. It came out unscathed from the great fire ordeal.

Lt Cdr Noronha was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional skill, courage and leadership.



IC-4128
Brigadier
Pande, Kailas Prasad,
MVC

Brigadier Kailas Prasad Pande, son of Shri Raja Ram Pande, was born on 4 July 1925, in Dewas, district Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. He started his military career with the Gwalior State Force and was commissioned in the Regiment of Artillery on 25 August 1946. He participated in most of the operations of the Indian Army since 1947. The Royal Geological Society, London bestowed its membership on him.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brigadier Pande took over the command of 61 Mountain Brigade after its commander was wounded and evacuated, in the midst of the battle of Dhalai Tea Estate on the Eastern front. He directed the attack on the fortified enemy position at Dhalai (in Tripura) and captured it. On the night of 3 December 1971, the brigade was given the task of capturing the well fortified enemy position at Saugam, which formed part of the Comilla airfield defences. The objective was captured by dint of the courage and initiative of Brig. Pande.

On the night of 6 December, he embarked upon the task of encircling and containing the enemy in Mynamati fortress and advancing up to Meghna river. By making dual infiltration he captured 42 km of the enemy territory in less than 72 hours. He maintained relentless pressure on the enemy till the fort of Mynamati capitulated. Repeated enemy counter-attacks supported by tanks were repulsed. As a result of this battle, 1600 prisoners were captured and a large quantity of arms and ammunition fell into Indian hands. The brigade finally made it to the Meghna river and captured the steamer station at Daudhkhandi.

Brig. Kailas Prasad Pande was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying courageous, determined and inspiring leadership.



13657079
**Lance Naik
Pandey, Ram Ugrah,
MVC (Posth.)**

Lance Naik Ram Ugrah Pandey, son of Shri H.N. Pandey, was born on 1 July 1942, in village Bansi, district Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh. He was enrolled in 8 Guards on 31 December 1962.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, the 8 Guards fought as a vanguard of 202 Mountain Brigade on the Eastern front. The brigade had planned an offensive to destroy the enemy positions in the Hilly area completely. The Guards had to fight many bloody battles to implement the brigade plan. One such battle was fought at Morapara where the enemy had built an almost impregnable position with 72 bunkers and two company plus troops. All approaches to the position were mined with anti-tank and anti-personnel mines. Wires and booby-traps made out of grenades gave additional cover to the position. A good number of HMGs, RCLs and RBs added to the strength of enemy troops.

To dislodge the enemy from such a fortified position demanded supreme effort and determination. The Guards launched the assault on the night of 23 November with 'A' and 'B' Companies. But when these companies came under a withering crossfire and encountered wire obstacles and booby-traps, 'D' Company which was kept as a reserve was pressed in support. Lance Naik Pandey led the assault section of this company. He first lobbed a grenade into the first bunker on the advancing line and silenced it. He then dashed towards the third bunker, grabbed an enemy RCL and blasted it. The remnants of the company formed a perimeter to counter any enemy attempt to regain the lost ground. Lance Naik Pandey moved along the most threatened flank to keep the enemy at bay. He

personally shot three adversaries. In the on-going battle a cannon shot killed him on the spot.

For displaying exceptional gallantry, dash and initiative Lance Naik Pandey was decorated with Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.





IC-6213

Lt Col

**Pannu, Kulwant Singh,
MVC**

Lt Col Kulwant Singh Pannu, son of Major Thakur Singh, was born on 6 March 1932, in village Lauhka, Amritsar, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Parachute Regiment on 28 December 1952. During 'Operation Vijay' in 1961, he had commanded a rifle company. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier. His family had a long military tradition.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Pannu commanded 2 Para Battalion on the Eastern front. His battalion was air dropped near Tangail on 11 December 1971, with a view to prevent enemy build up in the area and to cut the routes of enemy withdrawal. To accomplish this task it was necessary to capture the enemy position on a vital bridge at Poongli.

The air drop was carried out as per schedule. But as a result of the airdrop the troops were widely dispersed. Lt Col Pannu had to run about from one place to another under enemy small arms fire to collect his men. His cool courage and skilful direction enabled the para battalion to capture the vital Poongli bridge. The enemy launched a number of counter-attacks to recapture it but was repulsed with heavy casualties.

On 15 December, 2 Para was assigned the task of securing Mirpur bridge with a view to threaten Dacca from the west. Lt Col Pannu launched an attack on the western bank, the same night. The enemy fought resolutely to protect the position but the mounting pressure of 2 Para forced him to withdraw to the eastern bank. 2 Para Battalion was the first Indian unit to enter Dacca.

Lt Col Pannu was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying conspicuous bravery and exceptional leadership in this action.



4346 F(P)
Wing Commander
Parker, Cecil Vivian,
VSM, MVC

Wing Commander Cecil Vivian Parker, son of Shri Paul Richard Parker, was born on 22 November 1932, at Anand, Gujarat. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 30 August 1952. In September 1966, he was selected to raise and command IAF's first Operational Training Unit of Hunter aircraft at Jamnagar. For his qualities of initiative and leadership, he was awarded Vayu Sena Medal in April 1970. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Air Vice Marshal.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Wg Cdr Parker commanded 20 Squadron of the Indian Air Force. It was a fighter bomber squadron based at Ambala. In the event of hostilities it was to navigate at low level to targets upto 320 km inside enemy territory to deliver weapon loads on the enemy airfields. On 4 December 1971, Wg Cdr Parker led an attack on the Pak Air Force base at Peshawar. He directed missions that raided PAF bases at Kohat, Mianwali, Murid, Chaklala, Walton, Lahore and Chak Jhumra. The PAF radar at Sakesar, an oil refinery at Attock and a hydro-electric power station at Mangla Dam were also raided.

The squadron also undertook interdiction missions along the Wazirabad-Jhelum, Montgomery-Raiwing and Montgomery-Lahore axis and in the process destroyed many vehicles and rolling stocks of the enemy. While returning from one such mission, his formation came under the attack of enemy Sabre aircraft. In the air battle that ensued Wg Cdr Parker skilfully manoeuvred his aircraft, shot down one Sabre and heavily damaged another. In leading and directing these missions, Wg Cdr Parker displayed great skill and courage.

He was decorated with Mahavir Chakra.



**IC-7114
Lt Col
Pathak,
Harish Chandra,
MVC**

Lt Col Harish Chandra Pathak, son of Shri B.P. Pathak, was born on 30 June 1934, at Mhow, Madhya Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Sikh Light Infantry on 4 December 1954. He took part in "Operation Vijay" in 1961. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Pathak commanded 8 Sikh Light Infantry on the Western front. His battalion was asked to capture the Pakistani post at Fatehpur and its surrounding embankments. The post was protected by Dassi Bund and the enemy had deployed automatic and anti-tank weapons to defend it.

Lt Col Pathak led the attack on the objective on 11 December 1971. The enemy brought down very intense and accurate artillery and small arms fire on the assaulting troops resulting in heavy casualties to Indians. At this stage, Lt Col Pathak, unmindful of his safety, rushed forward to lead a charge on the objective. After a fierce hand-to-hand fight he captured the post at 0230 hours on 12 December. But the enemy did not sit quite. He immediately launched fierce counter-attacks from two directions to regain the lost position. At this juncture Lt Col Pathak, unmindful of heavy shelling and small arms fire around him, kept on moving encouraging his men to hold their ground and beat back the attack. In this grim action the battalion suffered 34 killed and 102 wounded. The enemy suffered 32 killed and 3 prisoners.

Lt Col Pathak was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and leadership.



IC-56
Lt Col
Pathania, Anant Singh,
MVC, MC

Lt Col Anant Singh Pathania, son of Lt Col Raghubir Singh, was born on 25 May 1913, in village Re in Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh. He was commissioned in the 5 Gorkha Rifles on 3 February 1935. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Major General.

On 1 November 1948, after the Zoji La defile had been burst open, the Indian forces quickly secured the surrounding hill features. But in their march forward to Dras and Kargil, the Pindras gorge held by the enemy in strength, proved a great obstacle. An effort to overcome this obstacle in early November ended in a failure. A two battalion attack was, therefore, planned to achieve a breakthrough at Pindras. Under this plan 1/5 Gorkhas were to capture the ridge, ahead of Pindras, on the north of the Gumri Nala. This long ridge was divided into two objectives, viz. Kumar and Anant. The Gorkhas were asked to destroy these vitally important enemy positions.

1/5 Gorkha Rifles fought one of the hardest battles of the Jammu and Kashmir operations in this area. Lt Col Pathania took the lead in reconnoitring the enemy positions courageously and then pressed his troops into the attack personally. One company launched a fierce assault on Kumar and another on Anant feature on 14 November. The enemy replied with heavy machine gun, mortar and automatic fire. But Gorkhas captured both the features, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. The success of this operation was entirely due to Lt Col Pathania's personal reconnaissance of the enemy defences.

Lt Col Pathania was awarded Mahavir Chakra for his exceptional gallantry and leadership.



2550166
Havildar
Philipose, Thomas,
MVC

Havildar Thomas Philipose, son of Shri Philipose was born on 8 July 1941, at Edayaranmula, Kerala. He was enrolled in 16 Madras (Travancore) on 8 July 1961.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 16 Madras was deployed on the Western front. To pave the way for Indian advance, it was asked to establish a bridge-head across river Basantar. To this end, it was to capture Sarajchak and Lalial by 15 December 1971. The river was protected by the enemy with deep minefields on either side. Well coordinated defences covered these minefields effectively with medium machine gun fire. In addition medium machine guns and infantry 'nests' were deployed in between the minefields. Bunkers were connected by a network of communication trenches and alternate positions. Fire was well coordinated by artillery observation posts positioned in the village.

To dislodge the firmly entrenched enemy was indeed a herculean task. 16 Madras undertook the job with determination and confidence. Havildar Philipose was with the 'C' Company which attacked Lalial on the night of 15 December 1971. The company was subjected to intense artillery shelling and accurate medium machine gun fire. The commander of the platoon was seriously wounded and Havildar Philipose replaced him. By this time the platoon had suffered heavy casualties and its strength had been reduced to 15 men. At this stage, Havildar Philipose led a fierce attack on the enemy and made it to the objective. But soon the enemy counter-attacked. With his depleted strength he made a counter-charge on the enemy with fixed bayonets. The ferocity of the attack demoralised the

enemy and he fled away. In this battle Havildar Philipose received a severe bullet injury but he continued to fight. He was wounded a second time before he could be evacuated from the field.

Havildar Philipose was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying resolute leadership and courage.



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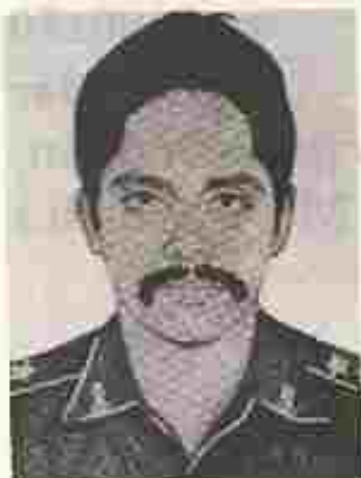
9100170
Havildar
Phunchok, Stanzin,
MVC (Posth.)

Havildar Stanzin Phunchok, son of Shri Vangial, was born on 17 June 1929, in village Sishu, Kelong, Lahul Spiti, Himachal Pradesh. He was enrolled in the Jammu and Kashmir Militia on 17 June 1948.

During the conflict with China 1962, 7 Militia was deployed in Ladakh sector. Havildar Stanzin Phunchok was posted as second-in-command at Changla post.

On the morning of 27 October 1962, the Changla post was heavily shelled and attacked by the Chinese in overwhelming numbers. Havildar Phunchok fought bravely with unflinching courage and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. He did not yield an inch until he was overpowered in his trench and killed.

For his great courage and devotion to duty, Havildar Phunchok was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



SS-31468
Captain
Pratap Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Captain Pratap Singh, son of Captain Khazan Singh (Retd) was born on 17 January 1960, in Basai Darapur, New Delhi. He was commissioned in the Regiment of Artillery on 27 August 1983. His father had fought in the Second World War and subsequent operations of the Indian Army and had won many medals.

In April 1988, Captain Pratap Singh was posted at Sonam outpost in Siachen area as an Observation Post Officer. Soon after he was called upon to defend the Bana post which was considered strategically very important for our defences in the area. The enemy had made several attempts on this post. These attempts had, however, been foiled by vigilant Indian troops. On 9 May 1988, a commando group of the enemy made a more determined attack on the post with the help of ropes and ladders. The attack was successfully beaten back but the ropes and ladder system fixed by the enemy could not be removed. To prevent further attacks on the post it was imperative to cut the ropes and unfix the ladder.

On 18 May 1988, two of the ropes had been cut, but the remaining two ropes and the ladder still threatened the security of the post. Captain Pratap Singh undertook a mission to remove this threat on 26 May 1988. He descended down the ice wall with a jawan. On reaching the spot, Captain Singh found a large quantity of ammunition and grenades at the head of the ropes. While he was examining it, a grenade booby-trap exploded and wounded him severely in right arm and chest. But the brave officer was not deterred. He crawled forward to the fixed ropes and cut them with his knife. He then unfix the ladder system and let it fall,

down the ice wall. The gallant officer then returned back to his rope to climb up the ice wall to his post but collapsed due to his severe wounds. He made the supreme sacrifice for the nation.

Captain Pratap Singh was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and courage, posthumously.

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**3442
Naik
Pritam Singh,
MVC**

Naik Pritam Singh, son of Shri Sawan Singh was born on 15 August 1918, at Lelchewal, in Sangrur district of Punjab. He was enrolled in 1 Patiala (RS) Infantry.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations the Indian Army suffered some reverses in the Northern front in the first half of 1948. In the process the crucial position of Dras was lost in early June 1948. The Indian troops then occupied defensive positions at Zoji La and Gumri plain. 1 Patiala (RS) held a position at Gumri, a few kilometres ahead of Zoji La.

On 3 July 1948, the enemy mounted a major attack on Gumri. Between 0600 and 0700 hours the enemy dropped 93 shells on the main Gumri position, cutting all lines of communication and making all movements impossible. Naik Pritam Singh of 1 Patiala (RS) was in charge of a signal detachment. He could not bear the sight of broken lines and immediately volunteered to go out in the open to repair the lines. The Company Commander hesitatingly accepted his request because the line, some 750 metres long, lay over heavily fire-swept area. The Naik was, however, determined. He moved out with courage, completely unperturbed by the bursting shells and heavy medium machine gun fire directed at him. Right under the nose of the enemy, he mended the wires and got back safely. Death did not dare touch him.

The same day in the afternoon, when the communication line to another picket was damaged, he again braved heavy enemy fire and repaired the line. Next, when a wireless set at another picket went out of order in the

thick of a heavy battle, he replaced it with a new set, unmindful of the danger of close medium machine gun fire. A man of normal nerves would have certainly collapsed in such a critical situation.

Naik Pritam Singh displayed exemplary fortitude, courage and devotion to duty. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra.

CHINA



Naik Pritam Singh was born on 15th March 1921 at Jalandhar, Punjab. He joined the Indian Army in 1941 and served in the 1st Punjab Regiment. He was promoted to Naik in 1945.

During the Sino-Indian War, Naik Pritam Singh was posted to the 1st Punjab Regiment. He was awarded the Mahavir Chakra for his gallantry during the Battle of the Loos.

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5032571
**Havildar
Pun, Bir Bahadur,
MVC**

Havildar Bir Bahadur Pun, son of Shri Dete Pun, was born on 1 July 1939, at village Burichaur, district Pithan, Nepal. He was enrolled in 1/1 Gorkha Rifles on 12 November 1956. In 1965, he was transferred to 5/1 Gorkha Rifles.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 5/1 Gorkha Rifles was deployed with 41 Mountain Brigade on the Eastern front. The brigade was assigned the task of capturing Darsana village, 4 km north-east of Uthali. The enemy had organised the defence in Darsana complex with bunkers, minefields and anti-tank ditches. Tanks, guns and mortars supported the 18 Punjab, (Pakistan) which was holding the position.

Havildar Pun was in the company which was given the task of capturing village Chandpur near Darsana. The enemy had a gun position there and a company of infantry protected the area. The attack on Chandpur was launched by the Gorkhas on 4 December 1971, at 0745 hours. The assaulting troops encountered very heavy artillery and small arms fire from the entire frontage. They suffered heavy casualties and the advance was stalled. Havildar Pun then moved ahead of his troops inspiring and motivating them to advance on the objective. At this juncture, he saw a machine gun post which was claiming most of the casualties among his men. He took the decision to silence this heavy machine gun himself. He dashed towards it through a nullah and crawled about 100 metres under heavy enemy fire. He lobbed two grenades into the bunker and silenced the gun. This brave enabled his men to capture their objective.

Havildar Bir Bahadur Pun was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous bravery.



IC-6596
Lt Col
Raghubir Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Raghubir Singh, son of Shri Partap Singh, was born on 2 November 1923, at Sheora, Jaipur, Rajasthan. He was commissioned in the Rajputana Rifles on 18 April 1943. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lt Col Raghubir Singh commanded 18 Raj Rifles in Khem Karan area of Punjab. On 7 September 1965, his battalion was ordered to move to Asal Uttar to occupy the left forward position in the 62 Brigade Sector. The battalion dug up and assisted engineers in laying protective minefield in the night. By first light of 8 September it was well entrenched to meet any challenge. The enemy on his part carried out probing moves and shelled the battalion defended area with a view to build pressure on it.

The enemy attack came at 2100 hours on 9 September. The noise of the advancing enemy tanks could be heard all along the battalion front. They fired their guns from the front and the right flank. Over a squadron of Patton tanks came as near as 450 metres on the left flank of the battalion. It charged the left flank and overran the forward company positions. Meanwhile enemy artillery let loose a rain of shells.

The situation became grim as the communication with forward companies lay disrupted. Lt Col Raghubir Singh, anticipating the enemy tank assault, left his command post and regardless of personal safety moved up to these companies through three enemy tanks. He reached there under intense artillery fire of the enemy and established contact with company commanders. The situation improved considerably after Lt Col

Raghubir Singh reached the affected company positions. He inspired his men to defy enemy tanks and they actually destroyed about twenty enemy tanks.

LT Col Raghbir Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exemplary courage and leadership.



IC-112
Lt Col
Rai, Dewan Ranjit,
MVC (Posth.)

Lt Col Dewan Ranjit Rai was born on 6 February 1913. He was commissioned in the Sikh Regiment on 4 February 1934. His family later settled in Delhi.

In October 1947, Pakistan sponsored a tribal invasion of Kashmir with a view to grab the valley. By the time India decided to meet this challenge on 26 October, the raiders had occupied Baramula. Srinagar, the capital of the state, was not far.

India was ill-prepared to meet this threat. But the circumstances demanded a swift action. 1 Sikh, then stationed near Gurgaon, was flown to Srinagar on 27 morning. By mid-day the Sikhs had taken position in the airfield area. Lt Col Rai, 1 Sikh Commander, had a grave responsibility. He made a quick appreciation of the situation and decided to oppose the raiders away from the city of Srinagar and its airfield.

The C Company was quickly despatched towards Baramula to check the advancing tribal column. It took up position at Milepost 32 on Srinagar-Baramula road. The D Company carried out a flag march in Srinagar to restore the morale of the citizens.

On 28 October, Lt Col Rai with A and D Companies under command proceeded to join the C Company with the intent of recapturing Baramula from the raiders. His troops were caught under heavy small arms and mortar fire of the enemy on all sides. The commander and his men fought bravely but under overwhelming enemy pressure, they had to withdraw to a hill feature near Srinagar. While conducting the withdrawal, Lt Col

Rai was struck in the face by a burst of automatic fire and was instantaneously killed. His platoon commander also fell by his side. In this encounter, Lt Col Rai, one JCO and 6 other Ranks were killed and 18 Other Ranks were wounded. The sacrifice was amply rewarded. The raiders were stopped at a safe distance to allow the build-up of the Indian troops around Srinagar.

Lt Col Rai gave his life to save Srinagar. For making supreme sacrifice in the service of the country he was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-5086
Lt Col
Rai Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Rai Singh, son of Shri Ganpat Singh, was born on 17 March 1925, at Rohtak, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Grenadiers Regiment on 10 December 1950. He belonged to a family with a military tradition. He won Vishisht Seva Medal for his services in Indo-Pak War 1971. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier.

In 1967, Lt Col Rai Singh was commanding a Grenadiers battalion deployed in Nathu La area. On 20 August he was ordered to construct a wire-fence along the watershed at Nathu La, after the first Chinese intrusion at north shoulder. He successfully completed the task assigned to him in spite of determined resistance and use of physical force by the Chinese.

On 7 September 1967, he was ordered to extend the wire-fence along the watershed from north shoulder to south shoulder. The Chinese again offered determined resistance. They even fired a few shots. In the battle of bayonets and rifle butts Lt Col Rai Singh was injured. But he carried on with his task successfully.

The Chinese, however, persisted in violating the Indian border notwithstanding the wire-fencing. At 0530 hours on 11 September when his men were strengthening the wire to prevent enemy intrusion, the Chinese opened up with artillery, mortar and recoilless guns. Lt Col Rai Singh opposed the intrusion with all available weapons. He himself directed LMG fire on the Chinese bunkers, and gave covering fire to his men on the wire to fall back. When his own bunker was damaged he came out

in the open, picked up the weapon of a wounded soldier and engaged the Chinese.

Meanwhile, the Chinese engaged an Indian Browning Machine Gun and killed its crew commander. Lt Col Rai Singh rushed to take the charge of the gun. In the process he was hit in the stomach and collapsed on the spot. He was hit again in the back of his head by a splinter at the time of evacuation yet he continued to give directions and exhorted his men to keep on fighting.

Lt Col Rai Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying gallantry and devotion to duty of a very high order.





IC-1850
Brigadier
Raina,
Tapeshwar Narain,
Padma Bhushan, MVC

Brigadier T.N. Raina, son of Rai Sahib A.N. Raina was born on 21 January 1921, at Jammu. He was commissioned in the Kumaon Regiment of the Indian Army on 12 April 1942. In World War II he saw active service in Middle-East and Far-East. During Indo-Pak War 1971, he led a corps and cleared the enemy from a large area, west of Padma river. He was awarded Padma Bhushan for successful conduct of operations. Subsequently, he became Chief of the Army Staff.

During the conflict with China 1962, Brigadier Raina commanded an infantry brigade in Ladakh sector. He took over the command of this brigade just before the commencement of hostilities in October 1962. During intensive operations between 20-25 October 1962, Brigadier Raina displayed exemplary leadership. On 26 October 1962, he was ordered to move to Chushul at a very short notice to strengthen the defences there. With limited transport available to him, he very ably organised the movement of his troops. The task of coordinating defences was indeed stupendous. But Brigadier Raina organised the brigade well and raised it to a state of remarkable preparedness within a short period.

During the Battle of Chushul, he visited the forward posts in complete disregard of his personal safety, directed the operations and adjusted the defences effectively. Again on 19 November, when Guring Hill was lost to the Chinese, he organised a systematic withdrawal and saved men and material from falling into enemy hands. By the next morning he had readjusted his defences and was once again ready to fight back the enemy.

Brigadier Raina displayed commendable courage leadership and devotion to duty in handling his brigade and was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



IC-4525
Brigadier
Rajendra Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Brigadier Rajendra Singh, son of Shri Harnam Singh, was born on 25 October 1928, in Rawalpindi, now in Pakistan. His army career started with the J&K State Force Army No.2. He was granted commission in the Indian Army on 11 December 1949.

In October 1947, the tribal raiders, supported by Pakistan army invaded the State of Jammu & Kashmir. At 0800 hours on 22 October the Officer Commanding 4 Jammu and Kashmir Infantry, informed HQ Jammu & Kashmir State Force that the Domel Camp was under attack and that the reinforcements were needed urgently. There were very few troops available in Srinagar at that time. Brigadier Rajendra Singh, the Chief of Staff of the State Forces, collected a contingent of two platoons and a mortar detachment and left for Domel at 1800 hours in a heavy downpour. He reached Uri by mid-night. On 23rd morning the contingent, supplemented by two sections of 7 Jammu and Kashmir Infantry, advanced towards Domel. It was heavily engaged by the enemy near Garhi and lost about a platoon in killed or wounded. The tiny force could not hold out and it withdrew towards Baramula. Here it was reinforced by one section MMG and one detachment 3-inch mortar by midnight. Thus strengthened, Brigadier Rajendra Singh reorganised his contingent and pushed towards Uri. On 24th morning, he destroyed the Uri bridge and took a defensive position.

The same afternoon the enemy appeared. Exchange of fire continued for four hours. The column was finally forced to withdraw to Mahura. It held on there until 1500 hours on 25 October but was again forced to fall back on Rampur. The Brigadier and his men prepared defensive positions

under cover of darkness and kept the enemy in check till 0200 hours on 26 October 1947. Again under pressure, the Brigadier withdrew to an already reconnoitred position in the rear. He had hardly covered a distance of about 200 metres when he received an LMG burst on his right arm and leg. But he continued to inspire his men to fight on and delay the enemy advance as best as possible. Realising that his evacuation would jeopardize the safety of his men, he ordered them to leave him behind and withdraw. His men put him under a culvert, hoping that he might escape detection. The Brigadier, thus wounded and rendered helpless, fell into the enemy hands, never to be heard of again.

The outstanding leadership, courage and sense of duty displayed by Brig Singh inspired his men to fight to the last. They delayed the advance of the enemy into the valley by three days. This delay was crucial as it saved Srinagar from falling to the raiders. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-144
Major General
Rajindar Singh,
MVC and Bar

Major General Rajindar Singh, son of Shri Prag Singh, was born on 3 October 1911, in village Man, Gurdaspur, Punjab. He was commissioned in 7 Light Cavalry on 1 February 1938. He later rose to the rank of Major General. A keen sportsman and player, he earned Mahavir Chakra twice — first as a Lt Col in Jammu and Kashmir Operations 1947-48 and second as a Maj Gen in Indo-Pak War 1965. It is remarkable that Lt Col Rajinder Singh fought many other crucial battles during the Jammu and Kashmir operations. These included the battles of Shalatang, Assar Kadala and Zoji La. After a distinguished career in the Army he joined the Punjab Government as a Cabinet Minister. Subsequently, he became a Member of Parliament.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations the Indians lost Jhangar to the raiders in December 1947. This encouraged the hostiles to mount an attack on Naushahra on 25 December. The Indians rallied to frustrate the enemy plans to capture Naushahra. By February end they were prepared to attack Jhangar. However, the march to Jhangar was not easy. The main road from Naushahra to Jhangar was in a very bad shape and was completely dominated by precipitous hills on the flanks. Twelve days of incessant rain had literally turned the Naushahra-Jhangar valley into a bog. Further the enemy had carried out extensive mining of the road leading to Jhangar. Moreover, all the mines had become invisible owing to the rains.

During the battle for Jhangar in March 1948, Lt Col Rajindar Singh commanded two light tank squadrons. He led his tanks with great dash

and élan, unmindful to personal safety. While advancing, one of his tanks encountered three mines and was rendered useless. It completely blocked the road.

Lt Col Rajindar Singh cleared the passage under heavy fire. His devotion to duty and untiring zeal enabled the 7 Cavalry to enter Jhangar ahead of all other troops. This brought the battle to a successful finish. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional gallantry and leadership.

Major General Rajindar Singh earned a Bar to Mahavir Chakra during the Indo-Pak War 1965. He led his formation into battle against a numerically superior and better equipped enemy in Sialkot sector. His troops inflicted heavy tank casualties on the enemy force. He remained in the thick of the battle, with utter disregard to his personal safety, and inspired his men to engage the enemy force at close quarters. He commanded the armoured formation in an outstanding manner and establishing such moral ascendancy over the enemy that in the later stages of the campaign the enemy tanks avoided battle. In fact they had to be sought out to be destroyed.

Throughout these operations, Major General Rajindar Singh displayed conspicuous bravery and leadership. He was awarded Bar to Mahavir Chakra.



**7770
Naik
Raju,
MVC**

Naik Raju, son of Shri Viyagappa Nadar, was born on 18 June 1921, in Virudunagar, Ramnad, Tamil Nadu. He was enrolled in 1 Madras Regiment on 18 June 1942 and was discharged from service on 21 December 1948, on medical grounds.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations after the capture of Tithwal in May 1948, 163 Infantry Brigade strengthened its defence in the area with a view to possible enemy counter-attack. A large number of pickets were established along the tracks on either side of Tithwal. 1 Sikh firmied in on the left track and 1 Madras on the right. Pickets were also established at Pt 7229 and ring contour across the Kishanganga with the same intent.

In this scheme of the defence of Tithwal, the picket at ring contour was held by 1 Madras. It was overlooked by Pt 9444, a crucial position in the area. This point had not been manned by the Indians for lack of sufficient troops. The enemy taking the advantage of this weak point in Indian defence, positioned some mountain guns behind it. He started shelling and mortaring the picket at ring contour on 10 June and 1 Madras suffered a few casualties in the process.

But the fiercest attack was yet to come. At 0545 hours on 11 June 1948, an enemy force of 300 attacked the ring contour picket. The attack was preceded by heavy concentration of gun and mortar fire. On this day the visibility was very poor with low clouds hanging overhead. The enemy advance was covered by machine gun and bren gun fire from two directions. The enemy was, however, beaten back twice with the help of light and medium machine guns.

A third attempt was made by the enemy with the support of heavy artillery and mortars. This time he breached a part of the defensive position and reached within 27 metres of the picket. At this stage Naik Raju, though severely wounded, directed incessant firing of his section on the enemy. When the Bren gunner of his section was wounded seriously he took over the gun and kept on engaging the enemy. The enemy then decided to sweep the picket with a bayonet charge. Seeing them crawling up to his post with fixed bayonet Naik Raju collected as many hand grenades as possible for use against the advancing enemy. Once the enemy was within his reach he started hurling grenades at him. At this juncture the Naik was again injured, this time in the right eye. Still, he refused to vacate his post. A Havildar, however, forcibly removed him from the battle-field. This enemy attack was finally beaten back after a pitched battle of 6 hours. In this attempt to capture the Madras picket the enemy lost 50 killed and many more wounded. 1 Madras suffered 11 wounded. The enemy also left behind some arms and equipment.

Naik Raju was awarded Mahavir Chakra for great courage, leadership and devotion to duty.



SS-14035
Major
Ramaswamy,
Annavi Krishnaswamy,
MVC (Posth.)

Major A.K. Ramaswamy, was born on 31 October 1924, in village Ayilam, Palaghat, Kerala. His father later settled in south Malabar, Kerala. He was commissioned in 3(Para) Maratha Light Infantry on 15 December 1946.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations the Pakistani raiders captured Jhangar, a strategic town about 19 km south of Punch, on 24 December 1947. This ensured their dominance over the lines of communication in the area and provided them a good launching pad for attack on Naushahra and Punch. The protection of lines of communication and Naushahra was the main concern of the Indian Army on this front during the early months of 1948. 3 (Para) Maratha Light Infantry of the 'Z' Brigade was deployed to keep the lines of communication open.

On 16 January 1948, Major Ramaswamy was in command of a para company at Naushahra. He was ordered to reinforce a forward company, which was under enemy fire. He moved forward to relieve the pressure of the enemy on the sister company. He rendered necessary help to that company and withdrew his men only after all others had withdrawn safely. The route of his withdrawal was covered by heavy enemy fire. While negotiating an exposed part of the ground, a sepoy was wounded by the enemy fire and was left behind. When Major Ramaswamy came to know of it he rushed back to evacuate the injured sepoy, unmindful of his personal safety. The brave sepoy sensing danger warned his officer not to expose himself to enemy fire in a bid to save him. But the officer ignoring the warning went ahead to rescue his man. He carried the wounded soldier for some 15 metres, braving a hail of enemy fire. But

before he could complete his mission the enemy fire caught him. He was gravely injured. He succumbed to his injuries during evacuation to the Regimental Aid Post.

Major A.K. Ramaswamy was awarded Mahavir Chakra for outstanding gallantry, posthumously.



Civilian Dhobi Ram Chander, MVC

Civilian dhobi Shri Ram Chander, son of Shri Faqir Chand, was born in 1921 at Kot Kishan Chand, Jalandhar, Punjab. He was enrolled in the Madras Engineering Group in May 1947.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations 1947-48, an Indian convoy proceeding to Jammu was ambushed by the enemy on 18 December 1947, at Bhambla. He had created a roadblock by removing the decking on a bridge. Civilian dhobi Ram Chander helped Lieutenant Fallon, the leader of the convoy, to replace the decking while the bridge was under continuous fire. When Lieutenant Fallon fell wounded, he picked up his rifle and held the enemy with courage. This enabled Fallon's vehicle to cross the bridge. In the process dhobi Ram Chander inflicted 5 or 6 casualties on the enemy. Subsequently the wounded Fallon had to abandon his vehicle and was left alone with dhobi Ram Chander. He was in a state of collapse due to loss of blood. Ram Chander helped him to the nearest post, which was 13 km away.

Dhobi Ram Chander was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry.



IC-11212
Major
Randhawa,
Baljit Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Major Baljit Singh Randhawa, son of Shri R.S. Randhawa, was born on 11 November 1934, in village Isapur, Amritsar, Punjab. He was a distinguished NCC cadet during his college days. He was commissioned in the Rajput Regiment on 14 December 1958. He took part in Operation Shanti in Egypt in 1960 and in Operation Vijay in Goa in 1961.

During May 1965, 4 Rajput was deployed in Kargil sector in Jammu and Kashmir. One fine morning Pakistani intruders assisted by their army suddenly attacked and occupied one Indian post. India could not brook this mischief. The Rajputs were ordered not only to recover the lost post but also to capture all Pakistani posts in the area to prevent recurrence of such mischief. Situated on the top of the hills these Pakistani posts dominated Kargil valley and overlooked Indian defensive positions. They were held in a company plus strength with medium machine guns and 3 inch mortars in support. The approach to them lay over extremely rugged terrain of steep and precipitous slopes.

The temperature was well below zero and strong winds were blowing when 4 Rajput launched the attack on the objective on 17 May 1965, at 0200 hours. It was a two-pronged attack, one of which was carried by Major Randhawa in company strength. The company was subjected to heavy mortar, light machine gun and small arms fire by the enemy from its entrenched positions on the peaks. Security consideration did not deter him and he led his company towards the objective. Finally, he took a few selected men with him and stormed the enemy position. An important peak of the feature was thus captured. Further advance of the company

was, however, held up by a light machine gun post. Major Randhawa again led an attack on this post but in the process he was hit and fell wounded. However, he kept on encouraging his men to move forward till the last. He did not permit them to attend on him lest the advance was delayed. He thus laid down his life to complete his mission.

For displaying exemplary courage, determination and leadership, Major Randhawa was decorated with Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



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**IC-2651
Major
Randhawa,
Sardul Singh,
MVC**

Major Sardul Singh Randhawa, son of Lt Col Jiwan Singh, was born on 10 October 1926, at Ambala, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Jammu and Kashmir Militia on 28 April 1946. He was Mentioned-in-Despatches on 26 January 1952.

During the Conflict with China 1962, Major Randhawa was posted with Jammu and Kashmir Militia, deployed in Daulat Beg Oldi sector in Ladakh. On 20 October 1962, the Chinese attacked forward positions east of Daulat Beg Oldi in overwhelming strength. The attack was met with courage and determination. Major Randhawa moved from one post to another in the face of enemy fire, inspiring confidence in his men. He conducted the operations creditably against a large enemy force.

He displayed courage and leadership of a high order and was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



MR-252
Lt Col
Rangaraj,
Arcot Govindraj,
MVC

Lt Col AG Rangaraj, son of Shri A.G.R. Mudaliar, was born on 5 June 1916, in Vellore, Arcot, Tamil Nadu. He obtained his MBBS Degree from Osmania University and was commissioned in the Medical Corps of the Indian Army on 5 July 1941.

The end of World War II saw Korea divided into two along the 38 Parallel. The northern part became the Democratic Republic of Korea and the southern, the Republic of Korea. The ideological conflicts between the two led to open hostilities and on 25 June 1950, the North Korean army invaded South Korea. The Security Council appealed to member nations to help South Korea and a UN command came into being. India contributed a medical unit viz. 60 Para Field Ambulance, to the UN command. It was led by Lt Col Rangaraj, as a part of 27 British Commonwealth Brigade in Korea.

The Commonwealth Brigade was deployed as a rear guard during the withdrawal from Seoul. When everybody was in a hurry to withdraw Lt Col Rangaraj held on to his Advance Dressing Station across the river because he was attending on some casualties. His unit withdrew just before the last battalion.

During the fighting north of Yagu, a very difficult mountainous country, casualties had to be carried on stretchers for four hours to get them to the nearest Regimental Aid Post. Lt Col Rangaraj himself stood at various RAPs, to organise the evacuation. He also advised and helped the battalion medical officers in their work. His devotion to duty was an inspiring example to all.

On 23 March 1951, Lt Col Rangaraj accompanied a UN airborne regiment, with a detachment, in a parachute drop. Deep into territory held by the enemy forces, he directed and controlled the activities of his unit throughout that day. The parachute force was relieved from this enemy infested territory on 24 March 1951. The unit efficiently attended on the casualties of the operation.

Lt Col Rangaraj was awarded Mahavir Chakra for excellent service in the very inclement weather conditions in Korea.



IC-13413
Second Lieutenant
Rao,
Gopalakrishna
Venkatesa Prasanna,
MVC

Second Lieutenant G.V.P. Rao, son of Dr. Jag Rao, was born on 15 October 1945, at Thondamuthur, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. He was commissioned in the Grenadiers Regiment of the Indian Army on 10 June 1962.

During the Conflict with China 1962, Second Lieutenant Rao was commanding a rifle company of 4 Grenadiers in Khinzemane Bemave area. On 12 October 1962, he was holding the defended locality of Drokin Samha with a view to re-inforce the Indian position in the sector.

On 20 October, 1962, this defended locality was shelled by the enemy. Subsequently an enemy infantry battalion, supported by mortars, mounted an attack on it. The company was greatly outnumbered, but it withstood repeated enemy attacks. Meanwhile, the enemy mortars had destroyed the bridge over the unfordable Nyamjungchu making any withdrawal by the Indians impossible. In spite of being cut off, Second Lieutenant Rao continued to fight gallantly. He personally manned a light machine gun and inspired his men to hold the position at all cost.

For setting an example of leadership and courage Second Lieutenant Rao was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



IC-4735
Lieutenant
Rathor, Kishan Singh,
MVC

Lieutenant Kishan Singh Rathor was born on 1 October 1929, in Bikaner, Rajasthan. He was commissioned in the Rajput Regiment on 13 October 1946. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Colonel in the Indian Army.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations the Indians lost Jhangar to enemy on 24 December 1947. This opened the Indian position at Naushahra to enemy attack and the tribals trained all their guns on it. Indians could not afford the fall of this vital position to the enemy. In January 1948, they launched many operations to prevent the enemy build-up in the area. In one of these operations the enemy stronghold at Kot, which was a serious threat to Naushahra, was destroyed. The enemy was stung by the loss of Kot. On 6 February 1948, at 0640 hours, he launched an all-out attack on Kot and Tain Dhar positions of the Indian Army, located to the north-east and north of Naushahra. During this enemy attack on Tain Dhar, Lieutenant Rathor was commanding a picket. The enemy was 1,500 strong, while Lieutenant Rathor had only 70 men with him. He saved the day for the Indians by virtue of his leadership, courage and presence of mind. Unmindful of his own safety, he moved from post to post, inspiring his men to fight to the bitter end. When no one was left to carry the ammunition to the picket, he did it himself under heavy enemy fire.

On 5 March 1948, Lt Rathor was posted with battalion tactical hq at Kaman Gosha Dhar, near Naushahra as an Intelligence Officer. When the forward companies of the battalion were pinned down by enemy fire, he volunteered to lead a platoon attack on the hostiles from the other flank to ease the pressure on them. Unfortunately, his platoon too was pinned

down and was ordered to withdraw. During the withdrawal, he brought back the dead body of a comrade, lying on open ground, braving heavy enemy fire.

On 9 April 1948, Lieutenant Rathor was ordered to lead a platoon near Jiungar, to make a deception. About 350 metres short of objective, he was caught under very heavy enemy fire. There were two alternatives before him—to withdraw or to advance. He chose the latter course and made a determined bayonet charge, forcing the enemy to retire.

Lieutenant Rathor was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous bravery in the face of the enemy.



IC-7661
Lt Col
Rattan, Kashmiri Lal,
MVC

Lt Col Kashmiri Lal Rattan, son of Shri B.R. Rattan, was born on 7 September 1931, at Hoshiarpur, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Sikh Regiment on 11 December 1955. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier. He belonged to a family with old military traditions. In 1965 operations he fought in the Uri Sector of Jammu and Kashmir.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Rattan was commanding 6 Sikh Battalion in Punch area of Jammu and Kashmir. The battalion was asked to hold a feature, which was a key to our defences in the sector. A helipad was also located within the defended locality of the battalion. Lt Col Rattan organised the defences in the area with rare professional skill and competence.

During the night of 3 December the enemy engaged the forward platoons of the battalion with small arms fire. He also pounded the battalion position with mortars and artillery heavily. At 0830 hours on 4 December the enemy launched a massive attack on the defended locality and the helipad with three battalions. The momentum of attack pushed the enemy through two Indian forward platoons. The inspiring leadership of Lt Col Rattan, however, saved the day for the Indians. They fought gallantly and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. Another enemy attack on 4th night was also beaten back. Subsequently, attacks on 6 December were also foiled. These reverses forced the enemy to abandon his grand plan to make a headway in Punch sector. During these fierce engagements, Lt Col Rattan always occupied the most threatened position. He moved from company to company in total disregard of his personal safety and

inspired his men to hold their ground at all cost. His determination, courage and leadership greatly contributed to this success.

Lt Col Rattan was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for exceptional bravery in this action.



4039009

Rifleman

Rawat, Jaswant Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Rifleman Jaswant Singh Rawat, son of Shri Guman Singh Rawat, was born on 19 August 1941, in village Baryun, Pauri Garhwal, Uttar Pradesh. He was enrolled in 4 Garhwal Rifles of the Indian Army on 19 August 1960.

During the Conflict with China 1962, 4 Garhwal was holding a defensive position at Bridge No 3 near Nutanang in NEFA. On 17 November 1962, at 0500 hours the enemy launched a massive attack on the Garhwali position. The attack was repulsed after heavy fighting. The second attack, which came at 0745 hours, was preceded by heavy mortar and artillery fire, but this too was repulsed with heavy losses to the enemy. The third attack, by far the heaviest, came at 1055 hours. It was a three-pronged attack supported by heavy mortar and artillery fire. But Rifleman Rawat's company stood like a rock.

To break the Indian resistance the enemy brought forward a medium machine gun close to a Garhwal platoon, threatening its defences. To remove this threat Rifleman Rawat and two other men, a Lance Naik and a Rifleman, volunteered to destroy the enemy gun position. The Lance Naik provided covering fire while Rifleman Rawat and his companion hurled grenades on the gun point. Two Chinese were killed and one wounded. Rifleman Rawat then rushed to the gun, snatched it from the wounded Chinese and returned to his position. While nearing his trench the enemy automatic fire caught him from a close range. Rifleman Rawat was hit on the head and died on the spot. He kept on holding the gun in his hand, the prized booty he had staked his life for.

The exceptional courage and initiative shown by Rifleman Rawat in the face of intense enemy fire, earned him the Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



2760401
Sepoy
Salunkhe, Pandurang,
MVC (Posth.)

Sepoy Pandurang Salunkhe, son of Shri Balkrishna, was born on 1 May 1950, in village Manerajuri, district Sangli, Maharashtra. He was enrolled in 15 Maratha Light Infantry on 13 February 1969.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 15 Maratha Light Infantry was attached to 96 Infantry Brigade on the Western front. On the night of 3 December 1971, Pakistanis attacked the Indian border posts at Fatehpur and Burj in great strength. The BSF contingents deployed there could not withstand this assault and the posts fell to the enemy. The 15 Maratha Light Infantry was ordered to launch a counter attack for recapturing the lost territory from the enemy hands. About a company of troops including 35 BSF men, were organised into two groups to launch the attack with the support of an armoured troop.

The attack was launched on 6 December. The enemy taking shelter in bunkers brought down heavy fire on the assaulting troops. Close fighting ensued. The Marathas had to clear bunker after bunker physically. In many cases the enemy was dispossessed of his weapons forcibly. When fierce battle was going on, an enemy rocket launcher was found posing a threat to Indian tanks and infantry. Sepoy Pandurang Salunkhe decided to eliminate this threat. He charged the enemy, killed the operator and physically snatched away the rocket launcher. But in this bold charge he himself received a burst of sten gun fire at point blank range and fell dead. But the great sacrifice did not go in vain. It enabled the Marathas to recapture Burj and paved the way for the success of 96 Infantry Brigade.

Sepoy Salunkhe was decorated with Mahavir Chakra in recognition of this conspicuous gallantry, posthumously.



00124-F
Commander
Samant,
Mohan Narayan Rao,
MVC

Commander Mohan Narayan Rao Samant, son of Subedar Major N.R. Samant, was born on 19 October 1930, at Bassein, Maharashtra. He was commissioned in the Indian Navy on 1 January 1952. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Captain.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Commander Samant served as a senior officer with a naval force comprising 4 craft. The force was to undertake offensive operations against the enemy in the Bay of Bengal. It actually carried out some daring and successful attacks on the enemy in Mongla and Khulna ports.

Commander Samant manoeuvring his force through a hazardous and unfamiliar route achieved surprise. The enemy was completely routed in Mongla and heavy losses were inflicted on him. Then he proceeded to attack Khulna port, where the enemy was entrenched in good strength. In the bitter fight that ensued in Khulna, the force was subjected to incessant air attacks. In these attacks, two boats of the *Mukti Bahini* operating with the force, were lost. Commander Samant unmindful of his own safety, managed to pick up a large number of survivors. He also persisted with fierce attacks on Khulna. The enemy indeed suffered immensely. He had many narrow escapes during this battle but he refused to withdraw to safer waters. This inspired his men to rise to the occasion and fight gallantly.

For displaying courage, determination and devotion to duty Commander Samant was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



SF-227
Jemadar
Sampooran Singh,
MVC

Jemadar Sampooran Singh, son of Subedar Sant Singh, was born on 15 October 1915, in village Gharnan, Ambala, in Haryana. His family later settled in village Bibipur, Patiala. He was enrolled in 1 Patiala (RS) Infantry on 15 October 1935 and retired as a Subedar from the Indian Army in 1953.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations, in the first half of 1948, the enemy mounted a very heavy pressure on the Indian forces, thinly spread out on the northern front of Kashmir. The Dras sector on this front was weakly held by the units of 5 Kashmir Infantry. In May 1948, 1 Patiala (RS) was ordered to relieve these units. Dras succumbed to enemy pressure in early June and 1 Patiala, therefore, settled in Zoji La and Gumri plain area, for short of Dras.

The raiders were further emboldened by the capture of Dras and they launched repeated attacks on Indian positions in the area. On 3 July 1948, they mounted an attack on Gumri, held by 1 Patiala. Jemadar Sampooran Singh was then commanding a platoon, less one section at a picket. About 80 metres ahead of the picket there was a section outpost serving as a screen to the main picket. The enemy launched the attack on this picket with two companies, supported by heavy fire under cover of the morning haze and snowfall. He managed to reach within 200 metres of the section outpost.

The outpost held out against heavy medium machine gun fire. But its defences had been blown up and position lay exposed to the enemy. At this juncture Jemadar Sampooran Singh, unmindful of his safety, rushed

forward with a couple of his men to the out-post, crossing some 75 metres of heavily blitzed area. His presence electrified the men at the outpost. They fought back bravely, inflicted heavy losses on the enemy and stopped the momentum of the attack. The JCO all the while moved from one trench to another encouraging his men, unmindful of fire around him. After establishing the outpost he moved back to the main picket position braving a shower of flying steel.

After about an hour the enemy again put in a big attack on the picket. But Sampooran Singh was now fully prepared. He inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and forced him to retreat before reaching anywhere near the objective. Four hours later, the enemy launched yet another big attack. He was again pushed back and suffered more serious losses.

During this day-long battle, at least 60 casualties were inflicted on the enemy. The platoon suffered only two casualties. During the succeeding three days, he warded off three major enemy attacks and inflicted 76 more casualties on him.

Jemadar Sampooran Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry.



IC-8041
Lt Col
Sampuran Singh,
MVC, Vr C

Lt Col Sampuran Singh, son of Shri Rattan Singh, was born on 22 February 1923, in village Nethowal, Ludhiana, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Punjab Regiment on 24 March 1946. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier.

In August 1965, Pakistan sent a large number of infiltrators into Kashmir to cause unrest in the state. Haji Pir Pass was an important infiltration route for these intruders. India, therefore, planned to capture Haji Pir to seal this vitally important route of the intruders. In the plan to capture Haji Pir Pass, 19 Punjab was to reduce Bedori feature by the first light of 29 August 1965. It was held by the enemy with two companies and covered by four medium machine guns on all the possible approaches.

The 19 Punjab, led by Lt Col Sampuran Singh, attacked the objective at 0330 hours on 29 August and forced the enemy to withdraw leaving behind ten dead. The battalion soon established a link with 1 Para at Haji Pir Pass. For this brave action Lt Col Sampuran Singh was awarded Vir Chakra.

After the capture of Haji Pir Pass by the Indian troops, it became necessary to secure the road to Kahuta. 93 Indian Infantry Brigade had already established a forward position at Kahuta bridge but the road to it still remained infested with Pak troops. On 9 September 1965, Lt Col Singh was ordered to secure this strategic ridge with a view to effect a link up between the base and the forward position of the brigade. The enemy was well entrenched in the area and his eviction demanded a serious effort.

Lt Col Singh, with consummate skill, rushed forward with his men, charged the enemy and captured the ridge by last light on 9 September. The desired link-up was thus established on 10 September. Disregarding his own safety, he rushed forward and in three successive attacks pushed back the enemy. The enemy fled leaving behind six dead on the battlefield.

In recognition of his exemplary courage and leadership Lt Col Sampuran Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



IC-22826
Second Lieutenant
Samra,
Shamsher Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Second Lieutenant Shamsher Singh Samra, son of Shri G.S. Samra, was born on 10 June 1945, in village Pakhoke, Amritsar, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Brigade of Guards on 15 March 1970.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 8 Guards was deployed in Hilly complex on the Eastern front. The enemy had well prepared positions in this area. In fact every house had been fortified and every mound had been burrowed through to make a shell-proof pill box.

8 Guards fought many bloody battles to capture this fortified Hilly complex. In one battle, it was held up by heavy and accurate fire from enemy automatics. At this juncture Second Lieutenant Samra, commanding the left assault platoon of his company, exhorted his men to press home the attack. Unmindful of the cross-fire of two light machine guns, he led his platoon to 25 metres of the enemy position. Here he was hit by a light machine gun burst on the right side of the chest. Unmindful of the wound, he charged the nearest MMG bunker with a grenade and destroyed it. He then rushed upon a second bunker. He was about to hurl a grenade on it when another burst hit him on the chest and wounded him mortally. He fell to the ground clutching the bunker with one hand and holding the grenade with the other. His profile after death was a picture of grit and determination.

Second Lieutenant Samra was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying most conspicuous bravery and determination, posthumously.



IC-6638
Lt Col
Sandhu,
Narinder Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Narinder Singh Sandhu, son of Shri Hari Singh, was born on 1 September 1932, at Narli, Amritsar, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Armoured Corps on 13 December 1953. He changed to Infantry in 1970. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier. During the 1965 operations he had fought in Khem Karan sector and his name was Mentioned-in-Despatches. Lt Col Sandhu belonged to a family with long military traditions. His grand-father Major Thakur Singh, MC, OBE, earned the Military Cross during World War I. His uncle and younger brother have also served the Indian Army with distinction.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Sandhu commanded 10 Dogra Battalion in the Punjab sector on the Western front. His battalion was ordered to capture the eastern end of the enemy-held bridge over river Ravi at Dera Baba Nanak. This bridge was considered strategically important as Pakistan could launch a major offensive in this area and threaten Indian communications to Pathankot, Beas and Amritsar. The enemy defences in the area were extensively fortified with an elaborate system of pill-boxes with machine gun and anti-tank weapon emplacements. These were connected to each other by a tunnelling system. The position was held in strength by the enemy.

On 5 December 1971, at 1730 hours about 420 officers and men of the Dogra battalion mounted on 21 tanks, moved to attack the bridge. But the attack could not progress as per plan because tanks got bogged down in the marshes bordering the Ravi. The battalion was, therefore, forced to dismount and cover five km to the objective on foot. It surprised the

enemy with a sudden attack from a distance of 15 metres, shouting the battle cry 'Durga Mata Ki Jai'. Fierce engagement took place and 10 Dogra captured the objective. During the attack, Lt Col Sandhu remained in the forefront. He fought from bunker to bunker to reach the objective. In the bitter fighting he received a bullet wound in his leg, but that did not deter him from leading his men with grim determination. In this action the battalion suffered 5 dead and 10 wounded. Enemy suffered 22 killed and 14 prisoners. A large quantity of arms and ammunition was also captured.

Lt Col Sandhu was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying gallantry and leadership of a high order.



SS-33343
Second Lieutenant
Sandhu, Rajeev,
MVC (Posth.)

Second Lieutenant Rajeev Sandhu, son of Shri Devinder Sandhu, was born on 12 November 1966, at Bhagwara, Kapurthala district, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Assam Regiment on 5 March 1988. His father had served in the Indian Air Force. His grandfather joined the Indian National Army during the World War II. He was the only child of his parents.

Under Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement many units of the Indian Army were despatched to Sri Lanka to quell the disturbances in the island. 7 Assam joined the Indian forces there on 19 July 1988. Second Lieutenant Sandhu was leading a convoy of two vehicles from Madurang Keni Kulam to Mangani for collection of dry rations. When his jeep approached a track junction it was suddenly fired upon by the militants with rockets, AK-47 and 7.62 rifles. A direct hit of a rocket mutilated his legs and he suffered injuries all over his body. Crippled by the grave injuries and bleeding he tumbled out of the jeep and crawled to a fire position with his 9mm carbine in hand. Presuming that every one in the vehicle had been killed, one militant came out of hiding and approached the jeep to collect the weapons and ammunition. Sandhu made the last effort to prevent the enemy from pouncing on his booty. He lifted his carbine and sprayed the militant with bullets and killed him. The militant was Kumaran of the group led by Batticaloa sector militant leader Karuna.

Second Lieutenant Rajeev Sandhu blunted every effort of the militants to come anywhere near his fallen comrades or their weapons till the last breath. For conspicuous courage and supreme sacrifice he was decorated with Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-2990
Lt Col
Sangha,
Gurbans Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Gurbans Singh Sangha, son of Shri Udham Singh, was born on 2 September 1922, in village Jandu Singha, Jalandhar, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Sikh Regiment on 22 October 1944. He belonged to a family with a long military tradition. His father and grandfather had also served in the Indian Army.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lt Col Sangha commanded the 3 Mahar Battalion. The unit was deployed in Jammu and Kashmir during August 1965, when a large number of Pakistani infiltrators speared into the State. On 7 August Lt Col Sangha was asked to search for and capture the infiltrators in the Dewa and Chhamb-Jaurian sectors. The battalion established road blocks to prevent the infiltrators from entering India or escaping back to Pakistan. On 15 August 1965, his brigade suddenly came under heavy and concentrated Pak artillery fire. Lt Col Sangha extricated his battalion and continued to defend his front in spite of heavy enemy shelling. By holding the Mandiala crossing, the situation on this front was stabilised. In the process the battalion occupied some enemy border posts and recaptured three Indian posts.

On 1 September 1965, Pakistan launched a massive attack on Jammu and Kashmir with armour and artillery support. One squadron of Pak armour advanced on Dewa to encircle and destroy the defending battalion. The battalion had neither recoilless guns nor armour nor close air support to face the onslaught. At this critical juncture, Lt Col Sangha directed the defensive operations very efficiently and skilfully and foiled all enemy attempts to encircle the battalion.

Lt Col Sangha was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for commendable courage and leadership.



JC-127266
Subedar
Sansar Chand,
MVC

Subedar Sansar Chand, son of Shri Kirpa Ram, was born on 31 December 1949, at Kamila, Jammu and Kashmir. He was enrolled in the S J&K Militia on 12 April 1967.

In June 1987, Subedar Sansar Chand was commanding a section of 8 JAK Light Infantry, deployed in Siachen. He was assigned the task of capturing a feature called 'Left Shoulder' under enemy occupation, at a height of 640 metres. This feature was located between two Indian posts. The attack on the feature involved negotiating a stretch of 3 km in the open on the glacier face and climbing of a vertical 370 metre high ice wall.

On 25/26 June, Subedar Sansar Chand climbed to the objective and led his section into attack with exemplary courage and determination. Two outer trenches of the enemy were occupied. In this action two men of the section were killed and one was wounded. He reorganised his section and held on to the captured territory with unflinching courage. Subsequently, this action made it possible for the Indians to capture the whole feature.

Subedar Sansar Chand was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying outstanding courage and determination in this action.



IC-5479
Brigadier
Sant Singh,
MVC and Bar

Brigadier Sant Singh, son of Shri A.S. Gill, was born on 12 July 1921, at village Panjgrain Kalan, Faridkot, Punjab. He was enrolled in the Indian Army on 12 July 1941 and fought in World War II in Assam and Burma. He was commissioned in 14 Punjab Regiment on 16 February 1947. In Jammu and Kashmir Operations 1947-48, he fought some daring actions in Naushahra sector. He earned his Maha Vir Chakra during the Indo-Pak War 1965 and a Bar to Maha Vir Chakra during the Indo-Pak War 1971.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lt Col Sant Singh commanded the 5 Sikh Light Infantry in Naushahra sector of Jammu and Kashmir. The enemy had captured a complex of hills called 'Op Hill' in Mendhar area after the cease-fire. The Indian army could not bear this encroachment on her territory. Repeated attempts to evict the enemy did not, however, yield any result. 5 Sikh Light Infantry was then moved to Mendhar area to join in the brigade attack on 'Op Hill'.

On the night of 2 November the Sikhs moved forward to capture the feature White Rocks. It was a strongly defended enemy position. The approach to it was mined and well covered by artillery fire. Lt Col Singh crossed the mined area with his men, attacked the enemy and after a bitter hand-to-hand fight captured the objective. Taking advantage of his position, he cleared one more vital feature in a subsequent duel. He moved from bunker to bunker in the face of heavy artillery and automatic fire to encourage his men. With the reduction of these features the enemy's defences in the area crumbled.

He was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and leadership.

Again during the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brigadier Sant Singh was commanding a sector on the Eastern front. He was entrusted with the task of capturing Mymensingh, strongly held by the enemy with two battalions. Enemy had anticipated the Indian move and had made preparations to foil it. The brigade's route had been demolished and force had been deployed to oppose the advance. Brigadier Sant Singh, however, beat the enemy with his tactics, resourcefulness and leadership. Mymensingh thus fell into Indian hands. He then moved another 60 km almost on foot, to capture Madhopur beating all enemy opposition en route. The capture of Madhopur opened the way for a rapid advance on Dacca. Brigadier Sant Singh always remained in the forefront with the leading elements to direct the advance. It was his gallantry and leadership that enabled the Indians to advance so rapidly against a much stronger and better placed enemy.

For displaying conspicuous gallantry and inspiring leadership Brig Sant Singh was awarded Bar to Mahavir Chakra.



9105087
**Havildar
Sarup Singh,
MVC (Posth.)**

Havildar Sarup Singh, son of Shri Kishan Singh was born on 15 April 1924, in village Koteri, Punch, Jammu and Kashmir. He was enrolled in the Jammu and Kashmir Militia on 15 April 1948.

During the Conflict with China 1962, 14 Jammu and Kashmir Militia was deployed in the Ladakh sector. Havildar Sarup Singh was manning a post at Shujang as second-in-command. On the night of 19 October 1962, the Chinese attacked this post in overwhelming numbers with automatic weapons and mortars. The few Indians manning post were not well-equipped to fight back the attackers. Still the soldiers put up a gallant defence. In this unequal battle Havildar Sarup Singh distinguished himself. While fighting gallantly he was overpowered and killed by the Chinese.

Havildar Sarup Singh was honoured with the award of Mahavir Chakra for displaying courage and devotion to duty of a high order, posthumously.



IC-7018
Lt Col
Shamsheer Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Shamsheer Singh, son of Sardar Sahib Sardar Harbans Singh was born on 21 July 1934, in Lahore, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in the Brigade of Guards on 4 December 1954. He belonged to a family with long military traditions. His brother Lt Col Harkirat Singh also led a Guards battalion in Indo-Pak War 1971.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Singh commanded 8 Guards in the Eastern sector. His battalion was ordered to spearhead the offensive of 20 Mountain Division in the Hilly complex. It was a grave responsibility as well as a great honour. The area around this complex was low, marshy and full of high paddy crops and therefore, difficult for tank operations. In the proper complex the enemy was holding defensive positions, prepared sufficiently in advance. Every inch of the ground was defended, every house was fortified and every mound was burrowed to make it a shell-proof pill-box.

8 Guards fought seven bloodiest battles of the 1971 War in Hilly area. In spite of strong enemy opposition, the battalion secured a foot-hold on the objective and held on to it, notwithstanding heavy casualties suffered in bunker-to-bunker fighting. The enemy launched a series of counter-attacks to evict the Guards. At one stage, while fighting back the enemy, the battalion ran short of ammunition. Lt Col Shamsheer Singh, therefore, engaged the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting. He encouraged his men to hold on to their position while seeking artillery and medium machine gun support to ease enemy pressure. Finally, he regrouped his men, launched a fresh attack and despite heavy opposition succeeded in capturing the

objective. The enemy suffered heavy casualties in this action. It is remarkable that the Guards won 3 Mahavir Chakras, 2 Vir Chakras, 1 Sena Medal and 5 Mentioned-in-Despatches for gallantry in this action.

Lt Col Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and outstanding leadership.



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3355332
Lance Naik
Shangara Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

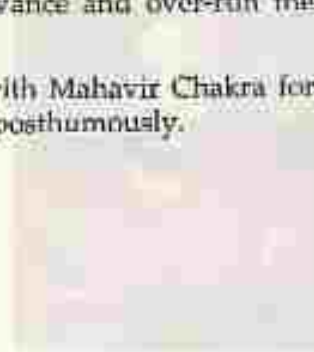
Lance Naik Shangara Singh, son of Shri Narang Singh, was born on 14 January 1945, in village Chola Sahib, district Amritsar, Punjab. He was enrolled in the 2 Sikh Regiment on 14 January 1963.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 2 Sikh was deployed in Amritsar sector on the Western front. Before the beginning of hostilities, the Pakistanis attacked and captured the Indian village Pulkanjri situated on a high ground close to the international border. The feature had been lightly held by the Border Security Force. 2 Sikh was asked to recapture this feature. An attack on this village could not, however, be launched before 17 December 1971. Meanwhile the enemy had laid defensive anti-tank and anti-personnel mines around the village and had further strengthened the defence with machine gun.

During the 2 Sikh attack on this enemy position, Lance Naik Shangara Singh was the second-in-command of the left flanking section. While inching towards the objective this section came under heavy fire from two well placed machine guns and was pinned down. Lance Naik Shangara Singh could not bear this and he decided to silence these guns at any cost. He dashed through the mine-fields towards the enemy machine gun post and hurled a grenade inside the bunker. The gun was destroyed. He then dashed towards the second machine gun post, leaped over the loop-hole and snatched the gun from the enemy. In the process he also received a burst of fire on his abdomen. This injured him severely but he held on to the machine gun. The daring act completely unnerved the enemy and he fled from the bunker in panic. Lance Naik Shangara Singh killed eight

enemy soldiers in this attack. He also laid down his life. But his sacrifice did not go in vain. It enabled the Sikhs to advance and over-run the enemy post.

Lance Naik Shangara Singh was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and dedication to duty, posthumously.





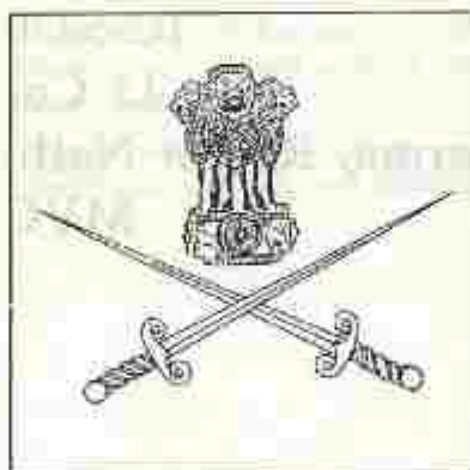
IC-5270
Lt Col
Sharma, Rattan Nath,
MVC

Lt Col Rattan Nath Sharma, son of Shri Hari Charan Dixit, was born on 23 November 1926, at Kangra, Himachal Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Punjab Regiment on 28 August, 1949. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier. His name was Mentioned-in-Despatches for his remarkable performance in the Indo-Pak War 1965.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Sharma was commanding 21 Punjab in Punch sector on the Western front. The enemy was holding Nangi Tekri and its adjoining area in Punch sector in good strength. His positions spread out in the area were mutually supporting and therefore, difficult to overcome. The capture of these positions was considered necessary because they dominated Punch river and adjacent roads, all vitally important for Indian defence. On 9 December, the Punjabis were assigned the task of capturing the enemy positions in and around Nangi Tekri.

The Punjabis launched the attack on 10 December. But intense artillery and small arms fire from the entrenched enemy made the going difficult for them and resulted in heavy casualties. However, Lt Col Sharma did not lose heart. He encouraged his men to fight till the objective was achieved. Throughout the operation he remained with his troops in the forefront. The enemy positions were finally reduced after a fierce hand-to-hand fight on 12 December. The enemy suffered 13 killed and 3 wounded in this action. One wounded Pakistani was made prisoner.

Lt Col Sharma was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exemplary courage and outstanding leadership.



3131692

Naik

**Shishpal Singh,
MVC (Posth.)**

Naik Shishpal Singh, son of Shri Sheo Lal, was born on 20 June 1920, in village Bamla, Bhiwani, Haryana. He was enrolled in 2 Jat Regiment on 26 June 1940.

During the Jammu and Kashmir operations, after securing Naushahra, the Indian Army planned an advance on Rajauri in early April 1948. An advance on Rajauri was not, however, possible without destroying the strong enemy positions in Barwali ridge area, north of Naushahra. 2 Jat was, therefore, asked to capture Rohitak picket located in a very difficult terrain. 'B' Company led the attack and a very stiff battle lasting seven hours was fought at the picket on 9 April. In this engagement the company suffered 27 casualties but the enemy suffered many more.

During this encounter, when 'B' Company was leading the attack, Naik Shishpal Singh of the 4 Platoon was hit by a bullet. He refused evacuation, wrapped his own first aid field dressing and continued to encourage his platoon to advance with greater determination unmindful of the enemy machine gun fire. Suddenly, one of his men fell down wounded. While attending on him, Naik Shishpal Singh was again wounded, this time seriously. He again refused evacuation and kept on encouraging his men till he collapsed. He died of grave wounds the next day.

For exceptional gallantry and devotion to duty Naik Shishpal Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-5192
Major
Shrikent,
Sher Partap Singh,
MVC

Major Sher Partap Singh Shrikent, son of Dr. S.S. Shrikent, was born on 12 June 1929, at Dinapur, Bihar. He was commissioned in the 9 Gorkha Rifles on 10 December 1950. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier.

During the Conflict with China 1962, 1/9 Gorkha Rifles was deployed in Dhola Post area of NEFA. Major Shrikent was Adjutant of the battalion. On 20 October at 0445 hours the Chinese started shelling the battalion defended area. This was followed by an infantry attack on Gorkha positions at 0530 hours. The Gorkhas bravely repulsed the attack. A second attack was also beaten back by them with heavy casualties to the enemy. However, in the third attack the Chinese overran the defences and surrounded the battalion headquarters.

At this critical juncture Major Shrikent was ordered to render help to the 'C' Company which was under attack by the Chinese. He rushed to the company position with five other ranks but found it overrun by the enemy. Soon, his own party was surrounded by the Chinese. By now his men had almost exhausted their ammunition as they carried only pouch ammunition, i.e. 50 rounds per rifle. Major Shrikent, finding the situation desperate, rallied the few survivors of the battalion headquarters. He snatched a sten gun from an orderly, gallantly charged the enemy and inflicted heavy casualties on the advancing Chinese. Thus, he managed to get his men out of the enemy encirclement.

Major Shrikent displayed courage and leadership of a high order for which he was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



IC-254
Major General
Sibal, Har Krishen,
MVC

Maj Gen Har Krishen Sibal, son of Shri Diwan Chand, was born on 19 November 1917, at Dinga, Gujrat, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in 1 February 1940 in 5 Gorkha Rifles. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Lt General.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Maj Gen Sibal commanded 7 Infantry Division in Pirozpur sector. The division was ordered to advance into Pakistan at 0500 hours on 6 September 1965, along the Khaira axis, and occupy Pak territory upto Ichhogil Canal. It was also directed to cause maximum attrition to the enemy. The main Headquarters 7 Inf Div moved to Narla on 5 September in view of the impending offensive.

The division commenced operations on 6 September and these continued till 22 September. During these operations the division undertook a major offensive at the crossing of the Hadiara drain. Another major offensive was launched to clear the fortified village of Burki before closing on the east bank of the Ichhogil Canal. The troops inched forward fighting from house to house and assaulting concrete emplacements sited along the east bank of the Canal. Repeated counter-attacks by the enemy were repulsed and the division attack pressed on untill the east bank of the canal was cleared of the enemy.

These operations were conducted by Maj Gen Sibal, who stayed close to the front line, in utter disregard of his personal safety. By his presence he inspired the troops to a better effort and contributed materially towards the success of his division.

Maj Gen Sibal was awarded Mahavir Chakra for courage, leadership and devotion to duty.



IC-12701
Captain
Singh, Chander Narain,
MVC (Posth.)

Captain Chander Narain Singh, son of Captain Balwant Singh, was born on 2 July 1939, at Srinagar, Garhwal, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Garhwal Rifles on 11 June 1961. He belonged to a family with a military tradition. His father and uncle had served the Indian Army as Captain and Major General respectively.

In August 1965, Captain Chander Narain Singh was a GSO III with 120 Infantry Brigade Headquarters, in Punch sector. On 5 August, it was reported that five Pakistani soldiers had infiltrated in the Punch area and were seen in the vicinity of the brigade headquarters. Immediately, a patrol was despatched under the command of Captain Singh to search and liquidate the infiltrators.

The patrol left at 1830 hours and started searching the area, midway of the hill range. At about 1930 hours, the patrol encountered heavy Pakistani light machine gun, mortar and grenade fire from a higher position and as a result of this one Indian soldier was killed. Undeterred by the heavy fire Captain Singh manoeuvred the patrol to the enemy's flank, where a better cover was available. Two light machine guns, which were belching fire on the patrol, were quickly neutralised.

As the enemy was much superior in number and advantageously placed, Captain Singh took the decision to attack him in the night. Unmindful of his personal security in the face of grenade bursts and mortar fire he led the charge with a handful of men to about 50 metres of the enemy position. Encouraging his men, he pressed home a second charge without

any loss of time and reached within 10 metres of the enemy post. He was killed by a light machine gun burst at the objective. In this action six Pakistanis were killed and many more were wounded. They also left behind a large quantity of arms and ammunition.

Captain Chander Narain Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying conspicuous bravery and inspiring leadership, posthumously.



**IC-2014
Brigadier
Singh, Khem Karan,
MVC**

Brig. Khem Karan Singh, son of Major Bharat Singh, was born on 3 March 1919, in village Bhadani, district Rohtak, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Armoured Corps on 14 September 1941. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Major General.

During the Indo-Pak War, 1965, Brig. Khem Karan Singh commanded 1 Armoured Brigade in Sialkot sector. He was provided with some additional armoured units in order to cope with enemy tank force which was superior in numbers and better in technical performance. "Whatever the case I shall always be with you", said Brigadier Singh before joining the battle.

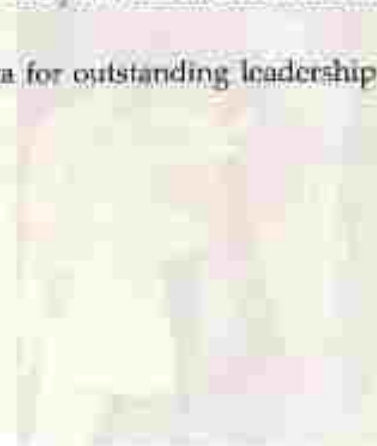
The brigade was allotted the task to destroy as much enemy armour as possible. Brig. Singh therefore, moved across the country by night and attacked the enemy in the rear by day. This surprised the enemy, unhinged his command and control at various levels and unbalanced his disposition. The enemy was forced to move up all his reserves to hold the line.

During the first three days of the battle, the tank force of Brig. Singh destroyed over 75 enemy tanks losing a small number in return. Brig. Singh's personal example greatly contributed in this success as he always remained present with his troops, at the point of maximum enemy threat.

Brig. Singh fought the battle of Phillora for three days. His superior leadership, better tactical and technical performance finally won the day for Indians. The enemy force was defeated and thrown out of this important communication centre. The enemy tank commanders were so demoralised

by his bold action that hereafter, they deliberately avoided a close combat with the Indian tank force.

Brig Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for outstanding leadership, tactical ability and devotion to duty.





3871 F (P)
Wing Commander
Prem Pal Singh,
PVSM, MVC, AVSM,

Wing Commander Prem Pal Singh, son of Shri Sucha Singh, was born on 10 February 1929, at Hansi, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 15 April 1950. In the beginning he served as a transport pilot but later he switched over to jet bomber aircraft. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Air Marshal. He was awarded AVSM and PVSM for distinguished service.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Wing Commander Prem Pal Singh commanded No. 5 Squadron, stationed at Agra. The unit was assigned the triple task of tactical bombing, close support and armed patrolling. Under his able guidance the squadron carried out tactical bombing of various targets to destroy the Pakistan Air Force on the ground. Led by Wing Commander Prem Pal Singh himself, Pak army camp east of Gujarat and airfields at Chakiala, Dab, Murid, Akwal, Risalwala, Wagowal, Sargodha and Peshawar were successfully attacked by his bombers.

The squadron gave close support to the army in Kasur, Khem Karan, Pasrur, Chawinda and Sialkot sectors. Bombs were dropped on the enemy concentrations at all these places. During the period of war the squadron undertook 39 sorties of armed patrolling over Agra, Palam, Ambala, Halwara and Adampur.

Most of the operational missions over the enemy territory were carried out during the hours of darkness. The targets were identified in the moonlight. These dangerous operational sorties were undertaken in the face of heavy enemy anti-aircraft fire with exceptional courage and determination.

Wing Commander Prem Pal Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying a high sense of duty and gallantry.



IC-7113
Lt Col
Raj Kumar Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Raj Kumar Singh, son of Shri B.S. Thakur, was born on 25 December 1934, in village Bharaut, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Punjab Regiment on 4 December 1954. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier. In 1962 he served with the Indian contingent in Congo. He also saw action in the Indo-Pak War 1965.

In November 1971, border clashes had started between Indian and Pakistani troops on the Eastern front. Chaugacha, an enemy stronghold dominating an important axis to Jessore, was a threat to Indian security in the area. Indians, therefore, decided to compel the enemy to vacate this strategic position by threatening the line of communication Chaugacha-Jessore. To implement this plan it was considered necessary to occupy Garibpur, a village situated behind the enemy position of Chaugacha.

14 Punjab led by Lt Col Singh was asked to remove this threat to Indian security. On 20 November 1971, the battalion crossed over river Kabadak and reached south of Garibpur by 1645 hours. The enemy reaction to this Indian move was sharp. He swiftly advanced with a squadron of tanks and two infantry battalions to beat back the Indians. He mounted a determined attack under the cover of fog and penetrated within 20 metres of battalion positions by 0600 hours on 21 November. In this grave crisis Lt Col Singh organised the defence with professional skill and led his troops with courage and confidence. The attack was repulsed with heavy losses to the enemy.

The enemy was not, however, deterred. He mounted a fresh attack from the south and reached within 65 metres of the defences of Garibpur

undetected. The Indians again beat back the attack successfully. But a more determined attack came from the west at 0915 hours. The Punjabis once again put up a spirited defence and threw him back by 1015 hours. In this battle the Commander displayed outstanding leadership. In the midst of the battle he went around from company to company exhorting his men to hold their ground and annihilate the enemy. His battalion repulsed three attacks, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. At Garibpur the Indians suffered about 90 casualties as against 350 suffered by the Pakistanis.

Lt Col Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for outstanding leadership.



718
Naik
Sonawane, Krishna,
MVC

Naik Krishna Sonawane, son of Shri Sayaj Maluji Sonawane, was born on 17 November 1921 in village Kudpan, Poladpur, Kolaba, Maharashtra. He was enrolled in 1 Mahar Regiment on 17 November 1941. He retired from the Army as Honorary Subedar Major.

6 February 1948 is a date of special significance for Indian Army. On this day 6000 tribals attacked the Tain Dhar and Kot pickets in Nausahra sector. The attack commenced at 0643 hours in the morning. The whole of Tain Dhar feature and its adjoining hills were activated by burst of machine guns and crunch of mortars. The medium machine gun post at No. 7 picket came under intense small arms fire. Then came the attack and some 1200 tribals closed on the picket from all sides.

Naik Sonawane of 1 Mahar, who was in command of this post, opened up with his gun at point blank range. His gun team inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. When No. 1 gunner was wounded in the neck he took over the gun himself and operated it with great skill. Unfortunately, his right hand was perforated by a light machine gun burst, fired by the enemy from a close range. Still he continued to operate the gun with his left hand. He thus maintained the momentum of fire at a very critical moment. When the gun was damaged beyond repair, he kept on engaging the enemy by throwing hand grenades with his left hand. He also directed his gun team to use grenades. Consequently, the attack was beaten back with heavy losses to the enemy. His team inflicted over seven hundred casualties and saved a very vital position from falling into enemy hands.

Naik Sonawane displayed great courage, determination and leadership. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



9100419
Subedar
Stobdhan, Sonam,
MVC (Posth.)

Subedar Sonam Stobdhan, son of Shri Tashi Wangyal, was born on 30 March 1928, in village Thikshe, Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir. He was enrolled in Jammu & Kashmir Militia of the Indian Army on 11 October, 1948.

During the Conflict with China 1962, 14 Jammu & Kashmir Militia was deployed in the Ladakh sector. Subedar Stobdhan was commanding the Indian post at Chandani.

On the night of 19 October, the Chinese launched an attack on this post in overwhelming numbers with automatic weapons and mortars. Although heavily outnumbered and armed with inferior weapons, the Subedar put up a bold fight. Inspired by his leadership, his men, fighting to the last, inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy.

Subedar Stobdhan made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the country and was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



2850287

**Naik
Sukan Singh,
MVC (Posth.)**

Naik Sukan Singh, son of Shri Abey Singh, was born on 6 March 1942, in Nagaur, Rajasthan. He was enrolled in 7 Rajputana Rifles on 6 March 1962.

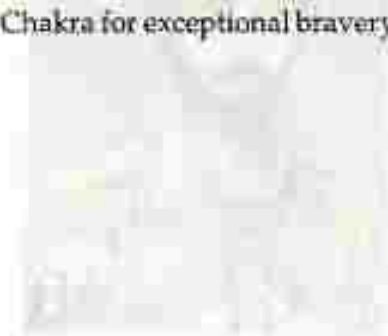
During the Indo-Pak War 1971, 7 Rajputana Rifles was deployed on the Eastern front. On 9 December 1971, the battalion was asked to attack Mynamati ridge with a view to secure lodgement to facilitate the capture of Mynamati Cantonment. This ridge was a vital link in the enemy's defence system. It was held by one brigade group and was well defended by ditches, bunkers and mines. It could also be re-inforced by withdrawing troops from Chandpur. To prevent reinforcements from Chandpur it was decided to launch an attack on Mynamati ridge immediately.

The march to the objective started on 9 October. After covering a distance of 12 km, the assaulting troops reached the forming up place at midnight. The attack commenced at 0230 hours from the west. During this attack Naik Sukan Singh was commanding one of the assaulting sections of the battalion.

When the assaulting troops closed on the objective, the enemy reacted spiritedly and subjected them to medium machine gun and small arms fire from the well prepared positions. The advance of this section was thus held up. Naik Sukan Singh could not tolerate this affront. He boldly charged the enemy medium machine gun post to destroy it. While attacking the enemy, a burst of fire badly hit him on his shoulders. This left him profusely bleeding. But he did not give up the attempt and crawled upto the enemy bunker. He lobbed a hand grenade into it and killed the two

defenders. Then he crawled towards the second medium machine gun. Meanwhile the loss of blood had weakened him and he fell down. Still he dragged himself upto the bunker and threw a hand grenade into it killing three occupants. An explosion killed him at this place.

Naik Sujan Singh was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional bravery and courage, posthumously.



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IC-6704
Lt Col
Sukhjit Singh,
MVC

Lt Col Sukhjit Singh, son of H H P. Singh, was born on 15 October 1934, at Bangalore, Karnataka. He was commissioned in the Scinde Horse (14 Horse) on 6 June 1954.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Singh commanded the Scinde Horse in the Shakargarh sector. His regiment crossed the international border on the night of 8 December and was deployed west of Nainakot.

On 10 December at 1630 hours, the enemy launched a powerful armour attack on the regiment under the cover of intense medium artillery and heavy mortar fire. The Indians faced the assault with great courage and Lt Col Singh distinguished himself in the ensuing battle. Unmindful of his safety, he took position in the most threatened sector and directed his tanks with great courage and skill. Unmindful of heavy shelling and tank fire, he opened the cupola of his tank to direct the fire of his tanks effectively. Due to his inspiring leadership, the enemy attack was beaten back without any loss to the regiment. The enemy lost one tank in this action. On 11 December 1971, Lt Col Sukhjit Singh led an outflanking move to trap the enemy tanks at Malakpur. While he moved from the south of the road Nainakot-Nurkot, one of his squadrons kept the enemy engaged frontally. During this move his force came under heavy medium artillery and mortar fire. The enemy tanks also opened up from well-prepared positions. However, Lt Col Singh remained completely unruffled. He maintained pressure on the enemy and succeeded in destroying 8 tanks and capturing 1 officer, 2 junior commissioned officers and 2 other ranks.

Throughout this action, Lt Col Sukhjot Singh displayed exemplary leadership, outstanding courage and firm determination. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra. It is remarkable that his regiment earned the Battle Honour Malakpur for exceptional performance in this action.



00022-Z
Captain
Swaraj Parkash,
PVSM, MVC, AVSM,

Captain Swaraj Parkash, son of Pandit Milkhi Ram, was born on 3 September 1923, at Jalandhar Cantt., Punjab. He was commissioned in the Indian Navy on 3 September 1943. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Vice Admiral. His distinguished service earned him Ati Vishisht Seva Medal and Param Vishisht Seva Medal in 1973 and 1978 respectively.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Captain Swaraj Parkash commanded the Indian aircraft carrier *Vikrant*, the nucleus of the naval interdiction and strike force, in the Bay of Bengal. During the hostilities this ship completely dominated the Bay in the most hazardous waters. The enemy submarines and aircraft repeatedly tried to sink or damage it but the professional skill and strategic manoeuvres of the commander foiled all their attempts. He also mounted a ceaseless offensive against the enemy. The successful air strikes launched from *Vikrant* had a devastating effect on ports all along the enemy coast while its supremacy on waters paralysed the enemy's movement on the sea and inland waterways. This near total blockade of the sea route shattered the morale of the enemy naval force and expedited its surrender.

Captain Swaraj Parkash was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous bravery, leadership and professional skill.



4573 F(P)
Wing Commander
Talwar,
Man Mohan Bir Singh,
MVC

Wing Commander Man Mohan Bir Singh Talwar, son of Shri Kartar Singh, was born on 1 April 1931, at Abbottabad, NWFP, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned as a C.D. (Pilot) in the Indian Air Force on 14 October 1953. He started his career as a fighter pilot and subsequently, changed to a bomber pilot. He rose to the rank of Group Captain.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Wing Commander Talwar commanded a bomber squadron, based at Agra. The squadron was to attack pre-determined targets inside enemy territory in the event Pakistan attacked India. Wing Commander Talwar divided his squadron into groups of four to five aircraft and allotted each of them a target. On 3 December 1971, the enemy aircraft attacked Agra airfield twice at 2035 hours and 2125 hours but due to the measures taken by Wing Commander Talwar these made negligible impact on the runway.

The squadron went into action against the pre-determined targets at 2150 hours on 3 December, barely an hour after the 'Go' signal. Wing Commander Talwar led five bombing missions against heavily defended targets such as radars, search lights and tank concentrations during the first ten days of the war. He inflicted severe damage on the Pak Air Force installations at Sargodha. In a daylight mission in the Chhamb area, in support of the army, he attacked four enemy gun positions near the Muniawar Tawi river and effectively silenced three of them. This facilitated the advance of Indian troops in a very difficult terrain. Wing Commander Talwar always pressed home his attacks with determination and success.

Wing Commander Talwar was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying bold leadership, flying skill and conspicuous gallantry.



IC-14682
Captain
Thapa, Kapil Singh,
MVC (Posth.)

Captain Kapil Singh Thapa, son of Subedar Major D.S. Thapa, was born on 2 November 1937, in village Panditwari, Dehradun, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Jat Regiment on 30 June 1963.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, the 3 Jat Battalion operated in the Lahore sector. According to the brigade plan the Jats were to capture Dograi on 21st September night after 13 Punjab had overrun the enemy defences east of Dograi. The battalion assigned different targets to its attacking companies in Dograi. The 'D' Company was asked to secure a foothold on the north-eastern projection of Dograi township.

The company crossed the start line at 0139 hours. An enemy platoon, entrenched on the east bank of the canal, opposed its advance with intense medium machine gun fire. The enemy shelling also retarded the Indian progress. At this stage, the depth platoon of 'D' Company under Captain Thapa charged the enemy position across a minefield, which was belching fire. A fierce hand-to-hand fight ensued on the bunkers. Captain Thapa himself engaged the enemy with grenades and bayonets. In spite of heavy casualties, the platoon successfully made to the objective. However, Captain Thapa laid down his life in this grim battle.

Captain Kapil Singh Thapa was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying conspicuous gallantry, determination and leadership, posthumously.



5030815
Naik
Thapa, Mahabir,
MVC (Posth.)

Naik Mahabir Thapa, son of Shri Birkhe, was born on 3 December 1923, in village Baralekh, Dailekh, Nepal. He was enrolled in 3/1 Gorkha Rifles on 3 December 1942.

On UN request, India contributed a brigade to keep peace in strife-torn Congo in 1961. During the operation Marthor the Irish company at Jadotville came under heavy attack from the hostile Katanga force. On 16 April, two company groups, one Irish and one Gorkha were sent to Jadotville to assist the beleaguered company. But the relieving column met tough resistance at Lufira bridge, 24 km short of Jadotville. Meanwhile, Jadotville had fallen to the enemy and the relieving column decided to retreat. It was ambushed a few kilometres short of Elizabethville.

On 16 September 1961, Naik Thapa was section commander of the rearguard platoon of the relief force withdrawing from Lufira bridge. His platoon was to prevent the enemy from closing on the withdrawing force. Naik Thapa had been wounded even before he had reached the road block. But he deployed his section boldly and engaged the enemy with fire while manoeuvring towards the flank of the enemy ambush. In the process he was seriously wounded by enemy machine gun bullets. Still he continued to lead his section and engaged the enemy. Naik Thapa's section withdrew only after every one of the retreating force had safely crossed the ambushed area. Naik Thapa was the last man to leave the area. Shortly afterwards he succumbed to his injuries.

Naik Mahabir Thapa was awarded Mahavir Chakra for showing leadership and courage of the highest order, posthumously.



2661
Lance Naik
Thapa, Rabi Lal,
MVC (Posth.)

Lance Naik Rabi Lal Thapa, son of Shri Budh Singh Thapa, was born on 6 November 1923, in village Sagdi, Gulmi, Nepal. He was enrolled in 2/1 Gorkha Rifles on 6 November 1940.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations fierce fighting took place between the Pakistani raiders and the Indian Army in Chhamb-Tithwal sector in the later half of 1948. Ever since the loss of Jhangar on 18 March 1948, the enemy maintained a heavy pressure on Indian positions of Jhangar and Naushahra. But the strong Indian defence made any penetration impossible in the area. The skirmishes, however, went on for months. By September the enemy had become more aggressive in Jhangar area. The Indians on their part resorted to aggressive patrolling. This led to many short but sharp exchanges between the contending forces.

On 27 September a fighting patrol of the Gorkhas was sent to Bhed, 6 km west of Jhangar, to intercept enemy movement towards Indian pickets. At Bhed the patrol came under heavy enemy automatic fire from three directions. The enemy was occupying all the high ridges in the area as also the high ground ahead of the patrol. At this juncture a section of the patrol, under the command of Lance Naik Rabi Lal Thapa, was holding the right flank of the feature. He saw that the enemy was trying to encircle the patrol at a very close range. Thapa knew the grave danger of encirclement. He exchanged his sten gun with the section Bren gunner and rushed forward to attack the enemy. He killed three of them. His swift action so unnerved the enemy that he fled in disorder. After defeating the enemy Lance Naik Thapa rejoined his section.

At this stage all sections of the platoon were ordered to pull back and occupy a feature, about 200 metres in the rear. Thapa's section was to withdraw last. Meanwhile, the enemy fire grew intense. Fresh reinforcements had made them more aggressive. Sensing the danger of being cut off by the enemy Thapa ordered his section to withdraw. But he chose a different course for himself. He stood like a rock before the advancing enemy to enable his comrades to withdraw safely. He kept on firing till he was killed by the enemy.

His utter disregard for personal safety set a unique example before his comrades. Lance Naik Rabi Lal Thapa was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



5733537

Naik

Thapa, Rabi Lal,
MVC

Naik Rabi Lal Thapa, son of Shri Tula Ram Thapa, was born on 30 December 1925, in village Orlari, 4000 Parvat, Nepal. He was enrolled in 8 Gorkha Rifles on 30 December 1943. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Naib Subedar.

During the Conflict with China 1962, Chinese aimed at the capture of Chushul airfield, which was the lifeline to the Indian forces in the area. 1/8 Gorkha Rifles was deployed in Chushul area to prevent this. One of its outposts at Sirijap was manned by the 'C' Company. On 21 October 1962, the Chinese subjected this outpost to heavy artillery and mortar fire. This damaged the only wireless set of the platoon and consequently all contact with the base was lost.

Naik Thapa who was commanding an adjacent post, volunteered to go to Sirijap post in a storm boat to reconnoitre and bring back the latest situation report. When he was about 1000 metres short of the Sirijap post, the enemy spotted him and fired at his boat from three directions. In complete disregard of his own safety, he carried on. Though the boat was badly damaged in the firing he managed to come back with the latest information. The same evening, when another post was threatened by the enemy, Naik Thapa volunteered to undertake the evacuation of this post, at grave risk to his life. While returning from the mission both his boats came under enemy fire and one of them sank. Naik Thapa went to the rescue of the drowning persons and saved their lives.

Lance Naik Rabi Lal Thapa displayed courage and devotion to duty of a high order and was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



IC-10631
Lt Col
Thapa, Sher Jung,
MVC

Lt Col Sher Jung Thapa, son of Honorary Captain Arjan Thapa, was born on 18 June 1908, at Abbottabad, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in 6 J & K Infantry, J & K State Force, on 23 August 1930. He got permanent regular commission in the Indian Army on 1 January 1957. He later rose to the rank of Brigadier. Earlier his grandfather Subedar Balkishan Thapa, Sardar Bahadur, OBI, IDSM, and his father, Honorary Captain Arjan Thapa, had also served the Indian Army with distinction.

In 1947, Skardu, a town on the southern bank of the Indus, was a tehsil headquarters in Ladakh district of Jammu and Kashmir State. It was an important link in the communication system of the northern region of the State.

The coup at Gilgit engineered at the behest of Pakistani agents, greatly compromised the security of Skardu. On 21 November 1947, Lt Col Thapa was ordered to move to Skardu with as many troops as could be spared from Leh and Kargil. Thapa reached Skardu post on 24 November with two officers, two JCOs and 75 men. He immediately established two platoon posts, about 30 km down the river from Skardu, to prevent any hostile advance on the town. On 10 February 1948, reinforcements raised the strength of his contingent to 161.

The raiders, 600 strong, struck on 9 February in the night. One outpost held by the Sikhs was easily captured and troops there were completely annihilated. The other outpost went over to the enemy without resistance. Thus two vital outposts were wiped out at the dead of night while Skardu

lay asleep. On the morning of 11 February the Skardu garrison was surprised by the enemy. Soldiers rushed to their posts on the walls of the fort. After a six-hour battle the enemy retreated, leaving behind ten dead, one wounded and some arms and ammunition. The garrison suffered seven other ranks killed, and one officer and 15 other ranks wounded. 30 soldiers broke away and joined the enemy. On 13 and 15 February reinforcements arrived and the strength of the garrison increased to 285 men.

The raiders came again on 14th night. They occupied a high hill feature behind the fort and from there directed harassing fire into the fort. To put a stop to enemy forays, Lt Col Thapa organised fighting patrols to search and kill the enemy in the countryside. On 14 March, an enemy patrol was successfully ambushed by a fighting patrol.

An effort to reinforce Skardu failed when one company of the State Force was ambushed by the raiders on 17 March 1948. Meanwhile, the raiders, now strengthened with the looted arms and ammunition, stepped up their pressure on the Skardu garrison. On 23 March, they mounted an attack supported by heavy fire. Fighting continued for the whole day and the garrison suffered 6 casualties, including two killed. Battle continued for many more days. The hostiles launched another assault against the fort on 7 April 1948, but fell back on 10th, weakened by mounting casualties.

In April 1948, in response to Lt Col Thapa's call for reinforcements, relief columns were despatched for Skardu. None could make it to the destination. The raiders out-flanked these columns and captured Kargil and Dras on 10 May. The Indian columns suffered heavily in the ambushes. All these goings greatly encouraged the besiegers of Skardu.

On 16 May, General Thimayya asked Lt Col Thapa to break out from Skardu. This was, however, considered impracticable as the garrison was too weak to effect a breakthrough. Further, there were many refugees including women, old, sick and wounded, who could not be left behind at the mercy of the enemy. The General, therefore, allowed the Colonel to continue his lone battle. The meagre IAF support arranged in June and July also proved of little help to the garrison.

The strength of the garrison gradually weakened. 90 per cent of the men had become sick due to malnutrition and over-work. By the middle of July, the ration in the fort was reduced to 2 'chapaties' per man per day. On 9 August the enemy mounted an attack using howitzers. The

attack was repeated on the 10th. On 12 August, 200 raiders made an assault on a picket. The battle raged for full four hours. After a hand-to-hand fight the attack was repulsed, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. This was Thapa's last success. As battle could not be continued further, on 13 August the heroes of Skardu slipped out of the fort in small batches. On 14 August Skardu capitulated. This brought an end to the six months old heroic defence of Skardu.

Throughout this siege, Lt Col Thapa displayed outstanding leadership. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and leadership in the face of the enemy.



JC-7526
Subedar
Thapa, Tika Bahadur,
MVC (Posth.)

Subedar Tika Bahadur Thapa, son of Shri Maniratna Thapa, was born on 29 November 1925, in village Thapak, Gulmi, Nepal. He was enrolled in 4/8 Gorkha Rifles on 29 November 1942.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Subedar Thapa was second in command with a company of 4/8 Gorkha Rifles in Jammu and Kashmir sector. After the cease-fire some Pakistani troops surreptitiously infiltrated into Indian territory and established pickets there. The task to evict these intruders was entrusted to 4/8 Gorkha Rifles. The Commanding Officer directed Subedar Thapa's company to attack the enemy pickets and evict the intruders.

On 30 September, the company quickly captured the first objective and advanced towards the second. At this stage the company commander was wounded and Subedar Thapa took over command. He made a fierce attack on the second objective and captured it after a bitter struggle. The enemy was dislodged.

The Pakistanis launched fierce counter-attacks to regain lost positions. These attacks were supported by heavy artillery fire. During these encounters, Thapa displayed commendable leadership. During an encounter, when the communication with the artillery got snapped, he brought a mortar from another position and fired it single-handed. In the process he was seriously wounded. But despite grave injuries he kept on directing the fire on the enemy till the last.

Subedar Tika Bahadur Thapa was honoured with the Mahavir Chakra for exceptional courage and leadership, posthumously.



IC-4321
Brigadier
Theogaraj,
Thomas Krishnan,
MVC

Brigadier Thomas Krishnan Theogaraj, son of Shri James Theogaraj, was born on 12 November 1919, at Palam Cottah, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu. He was commissioned in the Armoured Corps on 1 June 1942. His brother and two cousins also served in the Indian Army. He fought in Burma during World War II and was Mentioned-in-Despatches.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brigadier Theogaraj commanded 2 Independent Armoured Brigade. It was stationed at Patiala in a state of immediate readiness for the impending war. It was moved to Bundala on 5 September to take on the enemy forces in Khem Karan and Bedian area.

On 8 September, Pakistani troops launched a major offensive in the Khem Karan area. The intention of the enemy was to pierce through the Indian defences with the help of the Patton tanks. The Patton tanks overran the forward defended localities and attempted to encircle Indian forces. At this critical juncture Brigadier Theogaraj was ordered to stop the enemy's advance and prevent the encirclement of Indian troops. He immediately moved his brigade and deployed his tanks so effectively that all determined attacks of the enemy were beaten back.

After halting the initial enemy thrust, Brigadier Theogaraj deployed his brigade in such a manner that enemy armour could be drawn into the ground of his choosing. He made the axis Khem Karan-Bhikiwind the backbone of his defence by deploying the Centurions along it. The AMXs protected the flanks to draw enemy armour into the selected killing ground. In this manner he drew the enemy armour into a virtual death trap.

In this battle over 40 enemy Patton and Chaffee tanks were destroyed or captured. Thus two Patton Regiments of the enemy were nearly wiped out. The enemy was forced to withdraw and he never attempted a major thrust against our defences in this sector again.

Brigadier Theogaraj was decorated with Mahavir Chakra for remarkable courage, leadership and determination.

महाराज महोदय
२/४



महाराज महोदय
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महाराज महोदय
२/४



IC-11137
Lieutenant
Trehan, Ved Prakash,
MVC (Posth.)

Lieutenant Ved Prakash Trehan, son of Sri Rup Lal Trehan, was born on 14 December 1937, at Gurdaspur, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Rajputana Rifles on 14 December 1958.

4 Rajputana Rifles was despatched to the Congo in March 1962, as part of the Indian contingent to serve under the UN force. On 29 December 1962, the battalion was asked to attack an important road junction in Elisabethville which endangered security of the airfield nearby. It was held in good strength by the hostiles. Lieutenant Trehan was directed to lead a patrol to locate the enemy positions and to mislead the enemy about the direction of the attack.

On 29 December 1962, Lieutenant Trehan pushed forward with his patrol through dense jungle and reached about 100 metres from the enemy trenches. Here he came under intense machine gun and rifle fire. Trying to manoeuvre to the right flank, the patrol encountered heavy fire in that direction also. The encirclement of the patrol was near complete. Seeking a breakthrough, he charged the enemy positions with determination and finished them. He extricated the patrol and fulfilled the task assigned to him. He was mortally wounded in this bold action.

Lieutenant Ved Prakash Trehan earned Mahavir Chakra for great devotion to duty, posthumously.



9100075
Jemadar
Tundup, Ishe,
MVC (Posth.)

Jemadar Ishe Tundup, son of Shri C Paljore, was born on 31 March 1910, at Lel, Jammu and Kashmir. He was enrolled in the Jammu and Kashmir Militia on 18 June 1948.

During the Conflict with China 1962, 7 Jammu and Kashmir Militia was deployed in the Ladakh sector. Jemadar Ishe Tundup was holding a defensive post at Changla. On the morning of 27 October 1962, the Chinese heavily shelled and attacked this post in large numbers. Led by Jemadar Tundup the men at the post fought to the last man. The post was finally overrun by the Chinese attackers. But the enemy could take the post only after Jemadar Tundup had been killed in action.

For displaying leadership, courage and devotion to duty of a high order, Jemadar Ishe Tundup was awarded Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.



IC-13056
Major
Tyagi, Asa Ram,
MVC (Posth.)

Major Asa Ram Tyagi, son of Shri Saguwa Singh Tyagi, was born on 2 January 1939, in village Fatehpur, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Jat Regiment on 17 December 1961.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, 3 Jat was allotted the task of capturing Dograi in the second phase of the attack. The battalion entrusted different objectives of Dograi to its attacking companies. The 'A' Company led by Major Tyagi was asked to capture the eastern edge of the Dograi township. This area was well defended by the enemy with pill-boxes, recoilless guns and a troop of tanks. The enemy held the area firmly with one company.

On the night of 21 September 1965, Major Tyagi advanced on the objective leading the forward-most platoon of his company. No sooner had he left the forming up place that two bullets hit him on the right shoulder. Ignoring the injury he pressed on. In the process he was again hit by a bullet. Despite grave injuries he pressed on against the enemy tanks, hurled grenades on their crew and captured two tanks intact. In the severe hand-to-hand fight that followed Major Tyagi himself shot and bayoneted a Pakistani Major. This gallant officer continued to lead his troops till he received two more bullet wounds and fell unconscious. Inspired by the commander his men fought gallantly and captured the objective.

Major Tyagi was awarded Mahavir Chakra, for exceptional courage, leadership and devotion to duty, posthumously.



IC-4868
Colonel
Udai Singh,
MVC

Colonel Udai Singh, son of Shri Khet Singh, was born on 13 January 1929, in village Garha, Jodhpur, Rajasthan. He was commissioned in 8 Gorkha Rifles, on 4 June 1950. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier. His father had also served in the Jodhpur State Force.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Col Udai Singh commanded a force comprising three companies of the Ladakh Scouts and a section each of mortars and medium machine guns. He was asked to capture the area between Chalunka and Turtok in Kargil sector. It involved long night marches, with man-pack and animal transport, in subzero temperature at altitudes upto 5,500 metres through an unreconnaited area.

Col Udai Singh planned the operation in meticulous detail and executed it with professional competence. He completely out-manoeuvered a strong enemy force and inflicted heavy casualties on it. He also captured a large number of prisoners and a large quantity of arms and equipment, at a very little loss to him. Despite deficient communication and artillery support, he pressed home his attack against well-entrenched enemy positions. After bitter fighting and often at the point of the bayonet, a number of posts were captured. Consequently, Turtok and considerable area beyond it, were brought under control. Throughout this operation Col Udai Singh remained in the forefront, sharing all the discomforts and dangers with his troops.

Throughout this operation, which lasted for eleven days, Col Singh displayed conspicuous gallantry and outstanding leadership for which he was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



IA-219
Brigadier
Usman, Mohamad,
MVC (Posth.)

Brigadier M. Usman, son of Shri Mohd Farooq, was born on 15 July 1912, in village Man, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Baluch Regiment on 1 February 1934.

During the Jammu and Kashmir operations the tribal invaders, encouraged by their success at Jhangar, laid a siege of Naushahra in December 1947. It was then being held by 50 Para Brigade under the command of Brigadier Usman. The Brigadier organised the defence of this strategic area and kept up the morale of his troops and the civil population in a very desperate situation.

On 6 February 1948, a 10000 strong enemy force attacked his defensive position from all sides nine times. When the grim battle was going on, the situation in Tangdhar area became extremely critical. Despite the fact that the area around his headquarters was under enemy fire, Brigadier Usman despatched his small reserve to save the situation there. Encouraged by his leadership, the men drove home a counter-attack and Naushahra was saved. The enemy lost about 2,000 dead in this battle.

In March 1948, Brigadier Usman again led his brigade with great skill and determination. In spite of tough enemy opposition, inclement weather, and difficult terrain, Jhangar was recaptured by Indians. The enemy, however, maintained pressure on our positions by continuous firing. Brigadier Usman took effective counter measures to contain the enemy shelling. On 3 July 1948, when he was entering a bunker after neutralising an enemy observation post, one 25-pounder shell killed him on the spot.

The defence of Naushahra is considered as one of the memorable victories of the Indian Army. On not many occasions so much has been achieved by so small a force. Brigadier Usman was awarded Mahavir Chakra, for this supreme sacrifice, posthumously .

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**IC-1701
Brigadier
Vaidya,
Arun Shridhar,
MVC & Bar, AVSM**

Brigadier Arun Shridhar Vaidya, son of Shri S.B. Vaidya, was born on 27 January 1926, in Bombay, Maharashtra. He was commissioned in the Royal Deccan Horse on 20 January 1945. He earned a Mahavir Chakra in the Indo-Pak War 1965. His commendable role in operations in NEFA and Nagaland earned him the AVSM in 1969. In the Indo-Pak War 1971 he was awarded Bar to Mahavir Chakra. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of General and became Chief of Staff, Indian Army in 1983. While leading a retired life at Pune, he was killed by terrorists in 1986.

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Lt Col Vaidya commanded the Deccan Horse in Khem Karan sector. He fought a series of tank battles in Asal Uttar-Cheema area from 6 September to 11 September 1965, to blunt the enemy offensive. In these encounters he organised his unit with exceptional ability and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy Patton tanks. Unmindful of his personal safety he moved among the troops in the thick of the battle, encouraging them to fight. He was thus instrumental in stemming the enemy armour thrust in this sector. The dash and initiative shown by him in this battle earned him the Mahavir Chakra.

Brigadier Vaidya was awarded Bar to MVC during the Indo-Pak War 1971. During this war he commanded 16 Independent Armoured Brigade in Zafarwal sector on the Western front. He dashed forward with his Brigade to break the enemy tank resistance. He boldly and aggressively employed his tanks to enable the Indian division to maintain its momentum of advance. In the battle of Chakra and Dahira the going was difficult as the enemy had laid deep mine. The terrain was also unfavourable for the

advance of tank and heavy armour. Brigadier Vaidya led his brigade in a cool and confident manner and crossed the mine infested area safely. He then deployed his tanks to meet the enemy counter-attacks effectively. Consequently, the enemy was defeated in the battles of Chakra and Duhira. He penetrated about 20 kilometres into enemy territory.

In the battle of Basantar he again displayed superb professional skill and leadership in pushing his tanks through one of the deepest mine-fields. He deployed them efficiently to expand the bridge-head on the Basantar river. The enemy counter-attacked these positions in strength and with determination. But he was no match to the excellent leadership of Brigadier Vaidya. His brigade destroyed 62 enemy tanks. Few enemy tanks could manage to escape from the battlefield.

Brigadier Vaidya was awarded Bar to Mahavir Chakra for displaying outstanding courage, professional competence and leadership.



4584 F(P)
Wing Commander
Vashisht,
Vidya Bhushan,
MVC

Wg Cdr Vidya Bhushan Vashisht, son of Shri H.N. Vashisht, was born on 24 September 1931, at Wazirabad, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in the Indian Air Force on 14 October 1953. In 1973 he was awarded Vayu Sena Medal for his outstanding work in the field of maintenance and performance. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Air Vice Marshal.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Wg Cdr Vashisht commanded 44 Squadron of the Indian Air Force on the Western front. The squadron comprising 12 aircraft, was put on an offensive role. On 3 December when the Pak launched air attacks on India, Wg Cdr Vashisht led a group of heavy bombers to set ablaze the enemy's fuel and ammunition dump at Changa Manga forest. This dump was well protected by anti-aircraft guns. The commander skilfully manoeuvred the bombers, evaded the fire, attacked the target, and caused considerable damage to it. The action was repeated on 4 December night.

On 5 December 1971, Wg Cdr Vashisht was called upon to lead a formation of bombers on Haji Pir Pass. Haji Pir, in the Pak Occupied Kashmir, is a high hill feature surrounded by mountains on all sides. Flying and leading the formation at a very low level, in this mountainous terrain, against well defended targets, demanded high skill and courage. Wg Cdr Vashisht lacked neither. Despite heavy ground fire he pressed home the attack successfully. Wg Cdr Vashisht led many more raids on well defended strategic positions, inside enemy territory. Neither heavy ground fire nor the enemy fighters could deter him from his mission. He

led these raids in such an efficient manner that not a single Indian bomber was lost.

Wg Cdr Vaahisht was honoured with Mahavir Chakra for displaying exceptional skill, courage and leadership.



IC-5096
Lt Col
Venugopal, Chitoor,
MVC

Lt Col Chitoor Venugopal, son of Shri C. Chiruna Swami, was born on 14 November 1927, at Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. He was commissioned in Gorkha Rifles on 10 December 1950. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Major General.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Venugopal commanded 5/1 Gorkha Rifles in Jessore sector on the Eastern front. His battalion was assigned the task of capturing Darsana and Uthali area. The area was well protected by the enemy with a series of concrete pill boxes, interconnected by elaborate communication trenches.

Lt Col Venugopal directed attack on the enemy position with great speed and skill. The attack commenced at 0500 hours on 4 December. Indian tanks and artillery systematically fired at the front line bunkers of the enemy from north to south. Standing out in the open unmindful of his safety, Lt Col Venugopal calmly directed this fire. Finally, he led the attack on the objective. His men, an inspired lot, were crowned with victory. In this battle the battalion suffered 7 killed and 19 wounded. The enemy suffered 32 killed. After the capture of Darsana and Uthali, the battalion chased the withdrawing enemy, giving him no respite to regroup, till Jhenida was captured three days later.

For his bravery and devotion to duty Lt Col Venugopal was awarded Mahavir Chakra.



IC-656
Lt Col
Virk, Harbans Singh,
MVC, DSO

Lt Col Harbans Singh Virk, was born on 15 August 1912, in Sheikhupura, now in Pakistan. He was commissioned in the Maratha Light Infantry on 4 August 1941. He had been awarded DSO during the Second World War.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations in January 1948, Naushahra sector was the scene of bitter fighting between the Indian forces and the Pakistani raiders. It was also the time when the raiders were very active and the garrison at Naushahra was under a real threat. The well dug-in positions of the enemy along the villages of Manpur and Bajnao greatly added to this threat.

Lt Col Virk commanded 3 (Para) Maratha Light Infantry during this battle of Naushahra. He led strong fighting patrols against the enemy strongholds. Heavy casualties did not deter him from his mission and he returned only after thrashing the enemy severely. He inspired confidence and courage not only in his men but also in his senior officers.

Lt Col Virk was very exact in his tactical appreciation and, therefore, his attacks on enemy positions always proved successful. The famous battles of "Kama Gosh Galla", turned the tide in favour of Indians and saved the Naushahra garrison.

During the battle of Hendan Ridge, when the Marathas suffered more than fifty casualties in less than two minutes, he displayed great courage. When an enemy victory became imminent he conducted a successful withdrawal.

His most notable achievement was the recapture of Jhangar. During the advance on Jhangar the battalion was held up for one day at a formidable feature called Pir Thil Naka. In the fierce fight that ensued, the Maratha battalion suffered heavy casualties including two officers. Undeterred Lt Col Virk planned a fresh attack next day. At dawn the assault went on. No obstacle could stand before him, not even the heavy barrage of enemy 3-inch mortar and small arms fire. The objective was captured. Early next morning the follow up action began. The enemy got no chance to recover and Jhangar was captured the same day at 1335 hours. From Jhangar he led his men forward and captured the hill feature covering the valley.

Lt Col Virk was awarded Mahavir Chakra for his leadership, valour and devotion to duty.



IC-6121
Lt Col
Vohra, Raj Mohan,
MVC

Lt Col Raj Mohan Vohra, son of Shri Bakhshi Sant Ram, was born on 7 May 1932, at Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. He was commissioned in the Scinde Horse (14 Horse) on 28 December 1952. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Brigadier. His four brothers have also served the Indian armoured corps with distinction. During the Indo-Pak War 1965, he fought in Punjab sector.

During Indo-Pak War 1971, Lt Col Vohra commanded the 4 Horse in Shakargarh sector. The regiment, spearheading the advance of 54 Infantry Division, commencing on 5 December, captured many vital positions including Chakra and Dahira. These positions were well protected by the enemy with tanks, missiles and minefields. In the battle of Basantar river the enemy put up stiff resistance and brought down heavy fire on Indian troops from RCLs, cobra missiles and medium machine guns. But under the leadership of Lt Col Vohra, 4 Horse overcame all opposition. In the process it also destroyed 27 enemy tanks. During this engagement, Lt Col Vohra moved from one forward position to another, completely unmindful of his personal safety. He thus inspired his men to fight with courage and determination.

Lt Col Vohra was awarded Mahavir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry and leadership.



IC - 544864
Assistant Commandant
Wadhwa,
Ram Krishna,
MVC (Posth.)

Assistant Commandant Ram Krishna Wadhwa, son of Shri D.C. Wadhwa, was born on 10 November 1940, at Jalandhar, Punjab. He was commissioned in the Regiment of Artillery on 2 February 1964. After his release from the Army in 1968, he joined the Border Security Force.

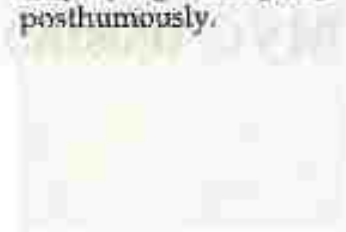
During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Assistant Commandant Wadhwa's unit was deployed in Raja Mohtam area on the Western front. On 5 December 1971, the BSF picket at Raja Mohtam was attacked and occupied by the enemy despite the stiff resistance of the defenders. The recovery of this picket was considered essential and the task was entrusted to Assistant Commandant Wadhwa.

Assistant Commandant Wadhwa, with two platoons under his command, quickly moved to the forming up place, braving the enemy shelling and machine gun fire. The enemy was well entrenched and holding the position in good strength. Despite the disparity in numbers he attacked the enemy with determination. The enemy directed fire on his platoons from all sides and it appeared that the BSF attack would fail. But Wadhwa was not prepared for any kind of failure. With utter disregard for his personal safety, he led his troops gallantly through heavily mined areas, under intense and accurate fire. His courage inspired the men to close in on the enemy and capture the objective.

The enemy did not reconcile to this defeat. He launched a counter-attack on 10 December with a much large force, under cover of intense artillery and mortar fire. Wadhwa faced the attack boldly. With utter

disregard to his personal safety he moved from trench to trench encouraging his men to give a spirited reply to the enemy. Thus inspired, his men fought gallantly and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. While moving among his men under intense shelling he was mortally wounded.

Assistant Commandant Wadhwa was awarded Mahavir Chakra for displaying exemplary courage, leadership and devotion to duty, posthumously.





IC-23473
Captain
Walkar,
Shankar Shankhapan,
MVC (Posth.)

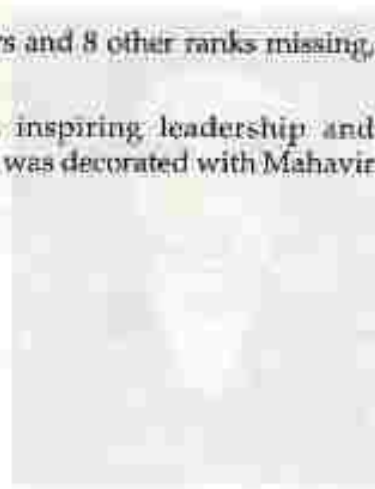
Captain Shankar Shankhapan Walkar, son of Shri Sankharam Kheru Walkar, was born on 8 March 1943, at Kadgaon, Maharashtra. He was commissioned in the Madras Regiment on 15 June 1969.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Captain Walkar served with 18 Madras in Rajasthan sector. The battalion advanced on Gadra-Chhachro axis. It captured Gadra city on 4th December and reached Hingore Tar on 16 December, overcoming all the enemy resistance on the way. The enemy was well entrenched in this area and the battalion encountered very heavy shelling. Captain Walkar geared up to meet this challenge. Disregarding his personal safety, he went to each company position to coordinate the defensive fire tasks. In the process he was twice hit by splinters and sustained injuries. But he refused to be evacuated.

Heavy enemy shelling continued during the night and early morning. This was followed by an assault on the company position. The ferocity of attack forced 'A' and 'D' Companies to fall back leaving the battalion headquarters and the mortar platoon exposed to the enemy. The situation was indeed precarious as no artillery support was forthcoming. The mortar platoon met the enemy challenge under the inspiring leadership of Captain Walkar. The injured Captain stuck to his job, directed the mortar fire accurately and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. In this defending action he shot at least four enemy soldiers. But he was also wounded fatally during this attack. In this action besides the brave Captain, the battalion suffered 2 junior commissioned officers and 18 other ranks killed.

and 3 officers, 2 junior commissioned officers and 8 other ranks missing, believed killed.

For displaying conspicuous gallantry, inspiring leadership and exemplary devotion to duty, Captain Walkar was decorated with Mahavir Chakra, posthumously.





IC-3940
Brigadier
Whig, Mohindar Lal,
MVC

Brigadier Mohindar Lal Whig, son of Rai Sahib Sardari Lal Whig, was born on 10 December 1925, at Amritsar, Punjab. He was commissioned in 5 Gorkha Rifles on 12 September 1948. He fought in the Indo-Pak War of 1965 and his name was Mentioned-in-Despatches. He trekked extensively and scaled great heights. The United Services Institution, New Delhi awarded him the MacGregor Memorial (Silver) Medal for his exploration report on Nepal. His three brothers have also served in the Indian Army. His son is also serving with the Indian Army.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Brig Whig commanded 121 Indep Infantry Brigade Group in Kargil sector, Jammu and Kashmir. His brigade was to capture the enemy posts overlooking Kargil and advance on to 'Olthing Ihang'. The posts above Kargil were located at a dominating height of about 3650 metres with temperature twenty degrees below zero. These were further protected by wire obstacles and mines.

Brig Whig planned and executed the operation with professional competence. He led his troops with determination in very inclement weather. Setting a fine example of leadership he inspired them to brave the enemy shelling and small arms fire. Consequently, within a short period of ten days they captured thirty six posts, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. A large quantity of arms and ammunition was also captured by them.

In recognition of his conspicuous gallantry and outstanding leadership, Brigadier Whig was decorated with Mahavir Chakra.



00101-B
Commander
Yadav, Babru Bahan,
MVC

Commander Babru Bahan Yadav, son of Major Bhagwan Singh, was born on 14 September 1928, in village Bharawas, Gurgaon, Haryana. He was commissioned in the Indian Navy on 1 January 1951. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Commodore.

During the Indo-Pak War 1971, Commander Yadav was commanding a Missile Boat Squadron. This squadron formed a part of the task group of the Western Fleet, deployed in the Western waters. After the Pakistani pre-emptive air strike on Indian airfields, this Task Group was directed to carry out an offensive sweep, on the enemy coast off Karachi, on the night of 4 December 1971.

This area was well protected by the Pak air force, army and navy. Any venture into this well defended area required extraordinary skill, determination and courage. Notwithstanding the threat of the enemy air, surface and submarine attack, he led his squadron deep into the enemy waters and encountered two groups of large enemy warships. Despite heavy gunfire from the enemy destroyers and at great risk to his ships and personnel, he led his squadron towards the enemy in a swift and determined attack. As a result of his manoeuvre two enemy destroyers and one mine sweeper were sunk. Probably the enemy lost some more ships in this attack.

For displaying exceptional courage, leadership and bravery Commander Yadav was honoured with Mahavir Chakra.



IA-946
Brigadier
Yadunath Singh,
MVC

Brigadier Yadunath Singh, son of Colonel Girdhari Singh, was born on 11 February 1907, in Rajasthan. He was commissioned in the 4 Kumaon Regiment on 30 August 1928. He rose to the rank of Major General.

During Jammu and Kashmir operations, after the Indians clinched a victory at Naushahra on 6 February 1948, the stage was set for the recapture of Jhangar. By 5 March 1948, Jammu and Kashmir force had secured vital features in the area and was well set to advance on Jhangar. In this operation, code named 'Vijay', 19 Infantry Brigade was asked to operate in the hills north of the road towards Jhangar in a very inclement weather. Owing to heavy rains the rivers and nullahs were in full spate. The breached roads had made movement extremely difficult, if not impossible. The enemy resistance made it all the more inconvenient.

At this extremely awkward turn in the battle scene, Brigadier Yadunath Singh crossed over the Jambir Nullah, which was then a raging torrent, at the head of the leading battalion. The feat was accomplished in the face of enemy fire. An important bridge-head was thus established. But for the dash of Brigadier Singh, the Indian advance to Jhangar would have suffered considerably. The delay would have given the enemy time to organise better resistance resulting in more casualties to the Indians.

In April 1948, 19 Brigade was engaged in operations for the recapture of Rajauri. Brigadier Singh, in spite of a sprained ankle, constantly moved to encourage his men who were in the thick of the battle. He displayed extraordinary leadership during the battle of Barwall Ridge, one of the toughest actions fought during Jammu and Kashmir operations. On

17 June 1948, Brigadier Singh effected a link up with a battalion column from Punch. During the link-up operation the enemy suffered heavy casualties. On 22 September 1948, his men captured Thanamandi after a tactical battle.

Brigadier Yadunath Singh's outstanding leadership was instrumental in making the operations of his brigade a success. He was awarded Mahavir Chakra for exceptional leadership.

Award Winners

Service, Corps and Regiment

AIR FORCE

	Year	Page
PVC		
Sekhon, FO Nirmal Jit Singh	1971	71
MVC		
Banerji, Sqn Ldr Madhavendra	1971	106
Benegal, Wg Cdr Ramesh Sakhran	1971	109
Bhardwaj, Sqn Ldr Ravinder Nath	1971	112
Chandan Singh, Gp Capt	1971	128
D'Costa, Wg Cdr Allan Albert	1971	149
Devayya, Sqn Ldr Ajjamada Bopayya	1965	157
Engineer, Wg Cdr Minoo Merwan	1947-48	168
Gautam, Wg Cdr Padmanabha	1965, 1971	173
Goodman, Wg Cdr William MacDonald	1965	178
Kaul, Wg Cdr Swaroop Krishna	1971	219
Mangat, Wg Cdr Hancharan Singh	1971	237
Mehar Singh, Air Cde	1947-48	243
Moolgavkar, Wg Cdr Hrushikesh	1947-48	250
Nath, Sqn Ldr Jag Mohan	1962, 1965	260
Noronha Wg Cdr Sidney Basil	1947-48	264
Parker, Wg Cdr Cecil Vivian	1971	270
Prem Pal Singh, Wg Cdr	1965	335
Talwar, Wg Cdr Man Mohan Bir Singh	1971	345
Vashisht, Wg Cdr Vidya Bhushan	1971	365

NAVY

MVC		
Arvind Singh, Lt	1987	96
Chanan Singh, Ldg S'man	1971	126
Gopal Rao, Cdr Kasargod Patnashetti	1971	180
Gupta, Lt Cdr Santosh Kumar	1971	185
Mulla, Capt Mahendra Nath	1971	252

	Year	Page
Noronha, Lt Cdr Joseph Pius Alfred	1971	265
Samant, Cdr Mohan Narayan Rao	1971	309
Swaraj, Capt Parkash	1971	344
Yadav, Cdr Babru Bahan	1971	376

ARMY

Armoured Corps

PVC

Khetarpal, 2/Lt Arun	1971	62
Tarapore, Lt Col Ardeshr Burzorji	1965	77

MVC

Bakshi, Lt Col Madan Mohan Singh	1965	99
Bal, Maj Amarjit Singh	1971	104
Bhupinder Singh, Maj	1965	118
Caleb, Salim Lt Col	1965	124
Hanut Singh, Lt. Col.	1971	195
Jatar, Capt Arvind Nilkanth	1947-48	212
Narag, Maj Daljit Singh	1971	257
Rajindar Singh, Maj Gen	1947-48	290
Roy, Bhaskar, Maj	1965	114
Sandhu, Lt Col Narinder Singh	1971	315
Singh, Brig Khem Karan	1965	333
Sukhjot Singh, Lt Col	1971	342
Theogara, Brig Thomas Krishnan	1971	355
Vaidya, Brig Arun Shridhar	1965, 1971	363
Vohra, Lt Col Raj Mohan	1971	370

Army Medical Corps

MVC

Banerjee, Maj Nirod Baran	1951	105
Barat, Maj Anil Krishna	1948	107
Rangaraj, Lt Col Arcot Govindra	1950-51	300

The Regiment of Artillery

MVC

Goswami, 2/Lt Shyamal Dev	1962	181
---------------------------	------	-----

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Page</i>
Gour, Capt Pradip Kumar	1971	182
Mathur, Maj Sushil Kumar	1965	242
Mistri, Capt Dara Dinshaw	1947-48	247
Mohinder Singh, Maj Gen	1965	249
Pande, Brig Kailas Prasad	1971	266
Pratap Singh, Capt	1987	276
Wadhwa, Asstt. Commandant Ram Krishan	1971	371
Assam Regiment		
MVC		
Sandhu, 2/Lt Rajeev	1987	317
The Baluch Regiment		
MVC		
Usman, Brig Mohammad	1947-48	361
The Bihar Regiment		
MVC		
Gharaya, Brig Joginder Singh	1971	177
The Dogra Regiment		
MVC		
Ahlawat, Capt Devinder Singh	1971	85
Butalia, Lt Col Inderjit Singh	1947-48	123
Chand, Maj Thakur Prithi	1947-48	134
Gahlaut, Maj Anup Singh	1971	171
Khushal Chaud, Maj	1947-48	227
Mubayi, Capt Gautam	1965	251
Naubat Ram, L Hav	1965	262
Corps of Engineers		
PVC		
Rane, 2/Lt Rama Raghoba	1947-48	67
MVC		
Chowdhry, Maj Vijay Rattan	1971	145

	Year	Page
Corps of Signals		
MVC		
Gowri Shankar, Brig Krishnaswamy	1971	184
Kler, Brig Hardev Singh	1971	229
The Garhwal Rifles		
MVC		
Bhattacharjee, Lt Col Bejoy Mohan	1962	115
Kaman Singh, Lt Col	1947-48	215
Rawat, Rifleman Jaswant Singh	1962	307
Singh, Capt Chander Narain	1965	331
Gorkha Rifles		
PVC		
Salaria, Capt Gurbachan Singh	1961	69
Thapa, Maj Dhan Singh	1962	79
MVC		
Ale, Lance Hav Nar Bahadur	1987	90
Anand Sarup, Brig	1971	93
Atal, Brig Kanhya Lal	1947-48	97
Bakshi, Col Vijay Kumar	1987	101
Bakshi, Brig Zorawar Chand	1965	102
Bawa, Lt Col Inder Bal Singh	1987	108
Chatterjee, Maj Krishna Gopal	1987	136
Chhetri, Rifleman, Dil Bahadur	1971	141
Dogra, 2/Lt Bhagwan Dutt	1962	166
Gurbaksh Singh, Maj Gen	1965	186
Gurung, Rifleman Pati Ram	1971	191
Gurung, Nk Prem Bahadur	1987	192
Gurung, L Hav Ram Parshad	1947-48	193
Gurung, I. Nk Ran Bahadur	1961	194
Hari Chand, Maj	1947-48	200
Harolika, Lt Col Arun Bhimrao	1971	204
Hira, Brig Ram Dharamdas	1965	207
Kapur, Lt Col Surinder	1971	218
Khatttri, Hav Lal Bahadur	1947-48	225
Natu, Brig Anant Vishwanath	1971	261

	Year	Page
Patharia, Lt Col Anant Singh	1947-48	272
Puri, Hav Bir Bahadur	1971	280
Shrikent, Maj Sher Partap Singh	1962	329
Sibal, Maj Gen Harkrishen	1965	330
Thapa, Nk Mahabir	1961	347
Thapa, L Nk Rabi Lal	1947-48	348
Thapa, Nk Rabi Lal	1962	350
Thapa, Sub Tika Bahadur	1965	354
Udai Singh, Col	1971	360
Venugopal, Lt Col Chittoor	1971	367
Whig, Brig Mohindar Lal	1971	375

Grenadiers

PVC

Abdul Hamid, C Q M Hav	1965	49
Hoshiar Singh, Maj	1971	54

MVC

Airy, Lt Col Ved Parkash	1971	86
Dharam Vir Singh, Maj	1971	162
Michigan, Brig Anthony Harold Edward	1971	245
Rai Singh, Lt Col	1967	285
Prasanna Rao, 2/Lt Gopalkrishna Venkatesa	1962	302

Guards

PVC

Ekka, L Nk Albert	1971	52
-------------------	------	----

MVC

Chhetri, L Nk Nar Bahadur	1971	142
Pandey, L Nk Ram Ugrah	1971	267
Samra, 2/Lt Shamsher Singh	1971	314
Shamsher Singh, Lt Col	1971	323

Jammu and Kashmir Rifles

MVC

Mahatam Singh, Lt Col	1967	233
-----------------------	------	-----

	Year	Page
Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry		
PVC		
Batra Singh, Nb Sub	1987	51
Jammu and Kashmir Militia		
MVC		
Phunchok, Hav Stanzin	1962	275
Randhawa, Maj Sardul Singh	1962	299
Sarisar Chand, Sub	1987	319
Sarup Singh, Hav	1962	322
Stobdhan, Sub Sonam	1962	339
Tundup, Jem Ishe	1962	358
Jammu and Kashmir State Force		
MVC		
Rajendra Singh, Brig	1947-48	288
Thapa, Lt Col Sher Jung	1947-48	351
Jat Regiment		
MVC		
Ajit Singh, Maj	1962	88
Bakshi, Brig Joginder Singh	1971	98
Fateh Singh, Hav	1947-48	169
Hayde, Lt Col Desmond	1965	206
Ismail, Civilian Coolie Mohammad	1947-48	209
Shishpal Singh, Nk	1947-48	328
Thapa, Capt Kapil Singh	1965	346
Tyagi, Maj Asa Ram	1965	359
Kumaon Regiment		
PVC		
Shaitan Singh, Maj	1962	73
Sharma, Maj Somnath	1947-48	75
MVC		
Hrar, Maj Malkiat Singh	1947-48	121
Dewan Singh, Sep	1947-48	159
Dharam Singh, Lt Col	1947-48	161

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Page</i>
Khanna, Lt Col Manmohan	1947-48	221
Man Singh, Sep	1947-48	235
Nar Singh, Nk	1947-48	258
Raina, Brig Tapeswar Narain	1962	287
Yadunath Singh, Brig	1947-48	377
Madras Regiment		
MVC		
Ghai, Lt Col Ved Prakesh	1971	175
Mehta, Lt Col Harbans Lal	1965	244
Philipose, Hav Thomas	1971	273
Raju, Nk	1947-48	292
Walkar, Cap Shankar Shankapan	1971	373
Madras Engr. Group		
MVC		
Ram Chander, Civilian Dhobi	1947-48	296
Mahar Regiment		
PVC		
Parameswaran, Maj Ramaswamy	1987	64
MVC		
Ansuya Prasad, Sep	1971	94
Ganapathi, Maj Puttichanda Somaiah	1987	172
Manjit Singh, Brig	1987	239
Sonawane, Nk Krishna	1947-48	338
Maratha Light Infantry		
MVC		
Chopra, Maj Satyapal	1947-48	143
Ramaswamy, Maj Annavi Krishnaswamy	1947-48	294
Salunkhe, Sep Pandurang	1971	308
Virk, Lt Col Harbans Singh	1947-48	368
Parachute Regiment		
MVC		
Berry, Maj Vijay Kumar	1971	110
Bhawani Singh, Lt Col	1971	117

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Page</i>
Chewang, Maj Rinchen	1947-48, Bar 1971	139
Dayal, Maj Ranjit Singh	1965	153
Pannu, Lt Col Kulwant Singh	1971	269

Patiala (RS) Infantry

MVC

Amar Singh, Sep	1947-48	91
Gurdial Singh, Sub	1947-48	189
Hardev Singh, Jem	1947-48	198
Hari Singh, Sep	1947-48	202
Lal Singh, Jem	1947-48	230
Pritam Singh, Nk	1947-48	278
Sampooran Singh, Jem	1947-48	310

The Punjab Regiment

MVC

Chain Singh, Nk	1962	125
Chandpuri, Maj Kuldip Singh	1971	130
Chaudhary, Maj Mohinder Singh	1962	138
Kanshi Ram, Sep	1962	217
Malkiat Singh, Sub	1971	234
Mankotia, Maj Basdev Singh	1971	240
Mohinder Singh, Sub	1971	248
Sampuran Singh, Lt Col	1965	312
Sant Singh, Brig	1965, 1971	320
Sharma, Lt Col Rattan Nath	1971	327
Singh, Lt Col Raj Kumar	1971	336

Rajput Regiment

PVC

Jadunath Singh, Nk	1947-48	56
--------------------	---------	----

MVC

Daya Ram, L Hav	1947-48	155
Drig Pal Singh, L Nk	1971	167
Gurdial Singh, Maj	1962	188
Harbhajan Singh, Maj	1967	197
Randhawa, Maj Baljit Singh	1965	297
Rathor, Lt Krishan Singh	1947-48	303

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Page</i>
Rajputana Rifles:		
PVC		
Pirra Singh, C H M	1947-48	65
MVC		
Chuna Ram, Hav	1947-48	147
Dhonkal Singh, Rifman	1947-48	164
Kallan, Maj Gen Swarup Singh	1965	214
Raghubir Singh, Lt Col	1965	281
Sugan Singh, Nk	1971	340
Trehari, Lt Ved Prakash	1962	357
Sikh Light Infantry		
MVC		
Darshan Singh, Nk	1965	151
Nandagopal, Lt Col Pagadala Kuppaswamy	1965	253
Pathak, Lt Col Harish Chandra	1971	271
Sikh Regiment		
PVC		
Joginder Singh, Sub	1962	58
Karam Singh, L Nk	1947-48	60
MVC		
Ajit Singh, Sub	1965	69
Bishan Singh, Sub	1947-48	119
Chand Singh, Nk	1947-48	132
Jaivir Singh, Maj	1971	210
Kewal Singh, Sep	1962	220
Kharua, Lt Col Narindra Nath	1965	223
Khanna, Lt Col Prem Kumar	1971	224
Mahabir Prasad, Capt	1962	232
Nand Singh, Jem	1947-48	255
Rai, Lt Col Dewan Ranjit	1947-48	283
Rattan, Lt Col Kashmiri Lal	1971	305
Sangha, Lt Col Gurbans Singh	1965	318
Shangara Singh, L Nk	1971	325