



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE



BRIGADIER MOHAMMAD USMAN

SERVICE NUMBER	IA-219
RANK	Brigadier
NAME	Mohammad Usman
SON OF	Kazi Mohammad Farook
RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE	Bibipur (Now Mau), Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh
UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS	5/10 Baluch (Jacob Rifles), 50 Para Brigade
SERVICE	Indian Army
DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION	19 March 1935
AWARD/DATE OF ACTION	Maha Vir Chakra
WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION	1947-48 Indo-Pak War
OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE	



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

Brigadier Mohammad Usman was born on 15 July 1921 at Bibipur (Now, Mau) in Azamgarh District of then United Province (now, Uttar Pradesh). His father Kazi Mohammad Farook was a Kotwal of the main Police Station in Banaras (Varanasi). His father was given the title of Khan Bahadur by the British Government. He had three elder sisters and two brothers. One of his older brothers, Gufran was a Brigadier in the Indian Army. Brigadier Usman completed his schooling from Harish Chandra High School, Banaras. His father wanted him to join the civil services, but he was always inclined towards joining the Indian Army.



Source: Honourpoint

Courage and selflessness came naturally to Brigadier Usman, at a very young age of twelve, he jumped into a well to save a drowning child. On applying to the Indian Army he was selected along with ten other Indians in the last batch of Indian Officers to pass out from Sandhurst. Among 45 cadets, he secured thirtieth position in the order of merit. The seventh Chief of Army Staff, General Sam Manekshaw was three days junior to Brigadier Usman. He started his Army career with a mandatory one-year attachment to the Scottish Rifles before getting commissioned into 5/10 Baluch (Jacob's Rifles). After some regimental and staff duties, Brigadier Usman found himself with 16/10 Baluch in the Arakan (Burma) towards the end of the Second World War. Here, he served as the Battalion's 2IC along with later General Zorawar Chand Bakshi. Meanwhile, the situation in Jammu and Kashmir turned grim, due to tribal invasion supported by regular Pakistan Army troops.



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

The first Indo-Pak war fought between the independent countries of India and Pakistan began in 1947. The bone of contention between India and Pakistan were the attempts by Pakistan to annex the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir by any means. On the map of India, the state of Jammu and Kashmir appeared as a somewhat rectangular projection in the extreme North-West corner of the sub-continent. In size it was the largest of the Indian 'Princely States' during the pre-independence era. It was 222,870 sq km or roughly double the area of Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg combined. The state was important because of its strategic location. Even before the birth of Pakistan, Jammu and Kashmir was surrounded on almost three sides by foreign states. Today, its importance has been accentuated by recent international developments. To the East lay Tibet; to its North lies Chinese Turkestan or Sinkiang (Xinjiang); to West is Afghanistan; to South-West and South was Pakistan; and to the South and South-East lay the states of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh of India.¹ The narrow Wakhan corridor, a narrow strip of territory in Afghanistan, extending to China and separating Tajikistan from Gilgit-Baltistan, was to the North West. Some of the significant battles that took place in Jammu and Kashmir were, the Battle of Badgam, capture and recapture of Jhangar, battle of Naushera, the advance to Tithwal, the relief in Punch and the fight of Chhamb to Tithwal.



A Picture from The 1947-48 Indo-Pak War

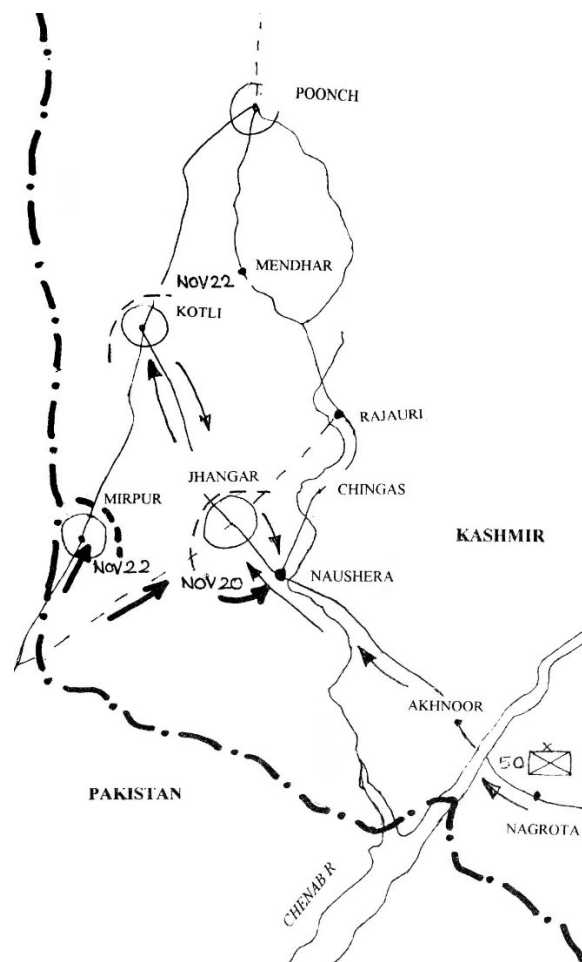
Source: <https://www.defencexp.com/brigadier-mohammad-usman/>

¹ Operations in Jammu and Kashmir S.N. Prasad. Dr. Dharam Pal (2005). Natraj Publishers and Ministry of Defence, Government of India



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

During 1947-48 Indo Pak War, in Jammu division, 50 Para Brigade relieved Kotli and Mirpur fell to. A count of four-hundred soldiers and thousands of refugees flocked to Jhangar. 50 Para Brigade was holding on to Jhangar and Naushera. At this time, the command of 50 Para Brigade passed on to Brigadier Mohammad Usman from Brigadier Paranjpe who had to be evacuated due to medical reasons. Jhangar which was being held by 1 Rajput less a Company was soon overrun by the invaders. 1 PARA (Punjab) suffered 55 dead and 46 wounded in defending Jhangar. By January 1948, the enemy was dominating all the four roads leading out of Naushera.²



Progress of Operations in Jammu Sector

Source: Indian Defence Review

² Brigadier Mohammed Usman, MVC: The Lion of Naushera. Rohit Singh.(2010). Scholar Warrior. CLAWS



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

Former Chief of Army Staff General K M Cariappa, who was then commanding the DEP (later Western Command) asked Brigadier Mohammad Usman to present him Kot. Kot was situated nine kms North-East of Naushera. It was the highest feature in the area and dominated the Naushera defences. Taking the wish of Gen Cariappa as his command, Brigadier Mohammad Usman launched an Op KIPPER (Kipper being the nickname of Gen Cariappa) on 31 January-01 February 1948. 3 PARA (MARTHA) captured Pathradi and Uparla from the right while 2/2 PUNJAB, 7 Cavalry and a Company less a Platoon of Mahar Medium Machine gunners were in supporting role. The enemy suffered 156 dead and 200 wounded. This was the first major reverse suffered by the enemy. Several enemy counter attacks on Kot were beaten back due to a clever positioning of troops by Brigadier Usman. ³



Brigadier Mohammad Usman with then Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru

Source: Honourpoint

On 14 March 1948, 50 Para Brigade and 19 Infantry Brigade launched Op VIJAY to capture Jhangar from two axis. 19 Brigade took the North axis while 50 Para Brigade consisting of 3 PARA (Maratha), 3 PARA (RAJPUT), 1 PATIALA and one Company of 3/1 PUNJAB attacked from another direction. ⁴ Prior to the attack, Brigadier Usman had issued a Special Order of the Day exhorting his men into battle. It was this famous Order of the Day, in which he quoted Lord Macaulay's famous poem, 'Horatius'.

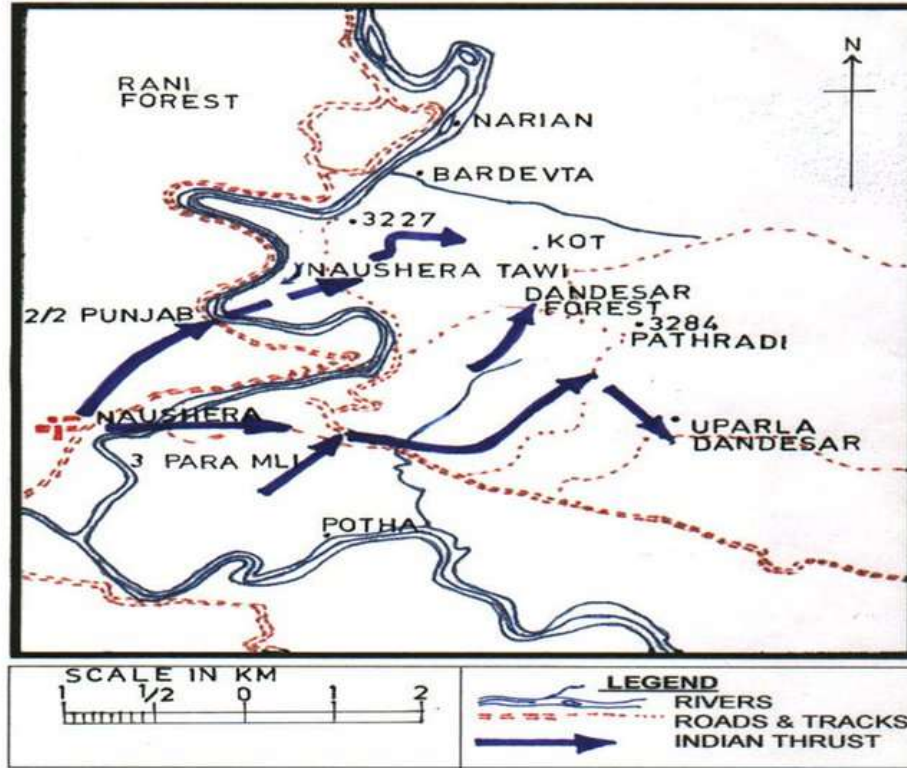
³ Ibid (Pg no. 158)

⁴ Ibid (Pg no. 158)



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

OPERATION KIPPER



Source: Twitter @ADGPI-Indian Army

The order reads-

Comrades of 50 Para Brigade Group,

Time has come when our planning and preparation for the recapture of Jhangar has to be put to test. It is not an easy task but I am confident of success- because our plan is sound and our preparations have been good. More so, because I have complete confidence in you all to do your best to recapture the ground we lost on 24 December and to retrieve the honour of our arms.

They eyes of the world are on us. The hopes and aspirations of our countrymen are based upon our efforts. We must not falter- we must not fail them.

*To every man upon this earth,
Death cometh soon or late,
And how can man die better,
Than facing fearful odds.
For the ashes of his fathers,*



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

And the temples of his gods.

*So forward friends, fearless we go to Jhangar. India expects everyone to do his duty.*⁵

Brigadier Mohammad Usman had worked out a very detailed Artillery Fire Plan for the battle of Jhangar. He had brigaded all the twenty-four field guns and the Mortars of the three Battalions. He had concentrated them on a limited front targeting the highest point of the feature, which was attacked first. Once the barrage lifted, the troops were already at the enemy trenches taking them by surprise. 3 PARA (MARATHA) secured Pir Thal Naka on 17 March 1948 and Uparli Karhali on 18 March and then pressed on to Susloti Dhar along with a Company of 3 PARA (RAJPUT). Brigadier Usman soon followed up with his Headquarters (HQ). 3 PARA (MARATHA) and 1 PATIALA advancing on a two battalion front secured Pt 3399. 19 Infantry Brigade had already entered Jhangar and 'Op VIJAY' was complete.⁶ Brigadier Usman had taken a vow to not sleep on a cot till he had avenged the loss of Jhangar. Staying true to his vow, he had spent nearly three months on the floor despite temperatures dropping to zero almost every night. With the success of Op VIJAY, he redeemed his pledge and asked for a cot to be brought.

Following the success of Jhangar, 19 Infantry Brigade withdrew to Naushera, while 50 Para Brigade, was assigned the task to hold Jhangar. Several enemy counter attacks were beaten back in the next three months, the two major ones were on 16 April and 10 May, 1948. However, an attack by 3 PARA (MARATHA) and 2 RAJPUTANA RIFLES (from 19 Infantry Brigade) on MG Hill suffered reverses due to faulty intelligence on enemy strength on that feature.

After the fall of Kotli and Jhangar, Brigadier Usman had restored the low morale of 50 Para Brigade and encouraged his men to put up a fierce fight in the battles of Naushera and Thal Naka. These battles bear testimony to his dynamic leadership and charismatic personality. Although he was a hard taskmaster, he was quick to reward a person for his good deeds and bravery, making him popular and loved among both officers and men. He could not stand men who failed to perform to their optimum levels. Still, he gave a fair hearing before reprimanding a person. He believed loyalty was a two-way street and always stood up for his subordinates. In one such instance, his Brigade Intelligence Officer had sent a signal to the HQ JAK Force giving the six-figure map reference of one of our own positions which was later shelled by the enemy. A signal from HQ JAK Force demanded the Captain's head on a plate for his carelessness. A weary Captain SC Sinha (who was on attachment with the Brigade from 3 PARA (Maratha) walked into Brig Usman's office with the signal. Brig Usman without speaking a word and

⁵ Leadership in Indian Army: Biographies of Twelve Soldiers. Maj Gen V K Singh. (2005). Sage Publications, New Delhi

⁶ Brigadier Mohammed Usman, MVC: The Lion of Naushera. Rohit Singh.(2010). Scholar Warrior. CLAWS



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

looking at the BIO (Brigade Intelligence Officer), scribbled a note and handed it over to the officer. The reply to Division HQ read: “A six-figure map reference of our own position in question may have been news to the JAK Force HQ, but I assure you it was no news to the enemy”. This was the last that was heard of the matter.



Troops of 50 Para Brigade in action in Poonch

Source: Honourpoint

In June 1948, own aerial reconnaissance observed manned gun positions to the South of Jhangar. HQ JAK Force issued instructions to 50 Para Brigade to provide overhead protections to the bunkers and trenches. But this warning was not taken seriously as the enemy had never shelled Jhangar after it was recaptured. The Brigade HQ was nothing more than a series of tents.

On 03 July 1948, Brigadier Mohammad Usman in accordance to his daily routine, held an evening meeting half and hour early at 1700 Hours. At 1745 Hours enemy started shelling at the Brigade HQ. This act by the enemy led to a massive blood shed in Indian camp. The first set of shells landed 500 meters north of crossroads. These were ranging shots, since the next salvo landed nearer, everyone scrambled for cover. Brigadier Usman along with few other staff officers was taking a walk near the HQ after the evening meeting. After the shelling started, they found cover under large overhanging rock in the terraced field, just above the signallers' bunker. Brigadier Usman was being accompanied by his Battery Commander, Major Bhagwan Singh and



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

Brigade Intelligence Officer Captain SC Sinha. In an effort to silence enemy fire, our own field battery began to return fire. But realising the futility of effort to fire at well entrenched enemy, Brigadier Mohammad Usman displaying great awareness of his surroundings, was quick to realise that Point 3150 was obvious place for enemy to site its artillery Observation Post (OP), ordered Major Bhagwan Singh to turn his guns to West and engage Point 3150. Major Singh was puzzled and later appreciated Brigadier's presence of mind and followed his order. He also ordered his eight other gunners engage the target indicated by Brigadier Mohammad Usman. This achieved the desired result and the enemy guns ceased firing.

The shelling had damaged the wireless aerials on top of the command post, which was located a few metres away. Once the shelling stopped, a few signallers, led by Lieutenant Ram Singh of the Brigade Signal Company, came out and started repairing the aerials. Usman, too, decided to move to the Brigade Command Post.

He started off ahead, leaving Major Bhagwan Singh and Captain SC Sinha to follow. They had barely taken a few steps when Bhagwan Singh heard a sound, which he immediately recognised as artillery gunfire. Instinctively, he caught Sinha by the arm and pulled him back. By now, Usman had reached the entrance to the Command Post, where he had stopped to have a few encouraging words with the signallers. Just then, a 25-pounder shell landed on the rock nearby. The flying splinters killed Usman on the spot, wounding Lieutenant Ram Singh and two of the signallers working outside. The shelling continued throughout the night, and about 800 shells were dropped on Jhangar. Fortunately, except for two abortive attempts at infiltration by a Company, it was not followed by an infantry attack. Besides Brigadier Usman, four men lost their lives during the shelling, while eight were wounded, including three officers.⁷

⁷Leadership in Indian Army: Biographies of Twelve Soldiers. Maj Gen V K Singh. (2005). Sage Publications, New Delhi



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE



Grave Of Brigadier Mohammad Usman in Delhi

Source: <https://www.indiatimes.com/news/india/army-restores-grave-of-india-pakistan-war-hero-brigadier-mohammad-usman-vandalised-by-miscreants-530928.html>

For his last journey, they used the brand-new caravan, which had just his bed and which Usman had not yet had the chance to use. When the troops lined up on the road to bid him farewell, there was not a single one among them whose eyes were not wet. Veteran soldiers cried unashamedly for the man who had endeared himself to all of them in so short a time. From Jammu, his body was flown to Delhi, where a large crowd had gathered to pay homage to a brave son who had laid down his life for his motherland. The government decided to honour him with a state funeral, which was held at Mehrauli, and was attended by Governor General Lord Mountbatten and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Shortly thereafter, the government announced that Usman had been posthumously awarded the MVC, the second highest award for gallantry in India.⁸

Mohammad Usman was the seniormost Indian officer to have lost his life during the Jammu and Kashmir operations of 1947-48. Even today, he is venerated by the people of Jammu and the surrounding region. Memorials have been built at Naushera and Jhangar, where veterans gather on the anniversary of his death to honour his memory. The memorial at Jhangar is built on the same rock where the shell which took his life had landed, Usman was a true soldier and a patriot, unflinching in the face of adversity. Though a bit of a showman, he was not immodest and gave credit where it was due. As a war hero, his place in the Roll of Honour of the Indian Army is

⁸ Ibid (Pg no. 179)



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

secure. As he had exhorted his men to do before going into battle at Jhangar, he died 'for the ashes of his fathers, and the temples of his Gods'.⁹

⁹ Ibid (Pg no. 179)



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

CITATION

Brigadier Mohammad Usman (IA-219) 50 Para Brigade

On 06 February 1948, a thousand strong enemy force attacked his defensive position from all three sides nine times. When the grim battle was going on, the situation in Tangdhar area became extremely critical. Despite the fact that area around his headquarter was under enemy fire. Brigadier Usman dispatched his small reserve to save the situation there. Encouraged by his leadership, the men drove home a counter-attack and Naushera was saved. The enemy lost around two thousand 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, Jhanghar 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 03 July 1948, when he was entering a bunker after neutralising an enemy observation post, one 25-pounder shell killed him on the spot.¹⁰

Reference: Gazette of India, Notification No. _____ dated _____

¹⁰ Stories of Heroism (PVC & MVC) Winners Dr. B.C.Chakravorty.(1995). Ministry of Defence, Government of India



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

REFERENCES

1. Operations in Jammu And Kashmir S.N. Prasad. Dr. Dharam Pal (2005). Natraj Publishers And Ministry Of Defence, Government Of India
2. Brigadier Mohammad Usman, MVC: The Lion of Naushera. Rohit Singh.(2010). Scholar Warrior. CLAWS
3. Leadership in Indian Army: Biographies of Twelve Soldiers. Maj Gen V K Singh. (2005). Sage Publications, New Delhi
4. Stories of Heroism (PVC & MVC) Winners Dr. B.C.Chakravorty.(1995). Ministry of Defence, Government of India

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Defending Kashmir (Written by Official History of the Jammu & Kashmir Operations) (Accessed on 08 October 2022)
<https://www.bharat-rakshak.com/ARMY/today/254-defending-kashmir.html>
2. India's Wars since Independence: A Concise History by Lieutenant General Vijay Oberoi, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd) (Accessed on 08 October 2022)
<https://usiofindia.org/publication/usi-journal/indias-wars-since-independence-a-concise-history/>
3. Indo-Pakistani Wars (Accessed on 08 September 2022)
https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Indo-Pakistani_Wars
4. Indo-Pak War, 1947-48: The History and its Current Ramifications by Col Jaibans Singh (Accessed on 08 October 2022)
<http://www.indiandefencereview.com/news/indo-pak-war-1947-48-the-history-and-its-currentramifications/>
5. Remembering Nowshera ka Sher Brig. Mohammad Usman, MVC(P) : Hero of India-Pakistan War 1947 (Accessed on 20 April 2023)
<https://www.aviation-defence-universe.com/remembering-nowshera-ka-sher-brig-mohammad-usman-mvcp-hero-of-1ndia-pakistan-war-1947/>



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

VIDEOS

1. Brigadier Mohammad Usman: 'Nowshera ka Sher' जिन पर पाकिस्तान ने रखा था 50,000 का इनाम (Source: YouTube BBC Hindi)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89wJEwhS_kU
2. DNA: जानें Brigadier Mohammad Usman के पराक्रम को | DNA Analysis | Sudhir Chaudhary (Source: YouTube Zee News)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FPPQVD5BJT8>
3. Desh Ki Bahas : Brig Usman was offered Pak Army Chief offer, but he refused (Source: YouTube News Nation)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BMbxierNgZA>
4. Rare footage of Brigadier Mohommad Usman in action (Source: YouTube Shorts Heritage Times)
<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Pjo5UhpozDQ>
5. Vande Matram: ब्रिगेडियर उस्मान के सामने घुटने टेके पाकिस्तान | Indian Army (Source: YouTube AAJ Tak)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0Bh2ZiHbkU>
6. Brigidier Usman जिन्होंने Pakistan को युद्ध हराने के बाद ही चारपाई पर नींद की कसम पूरी की (Source: YouTube The Lallantop)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=as-9OkRbL_k

Disclaimer**¹¹

¹¹ Disclaimer: Photos, links to publications and videos presented here are not intended to serve as a substitute for consultation and should only be used at the user's own risk. These are primarily shared because of the extensive coverage available on the subject. No copyright infringement is intended and it is not intended to hurt anyone or make sales of any sort. All copyright belongs solely to the relevant owners/creators. Usage here is purely for Fair Usage in accordance with the Indian Copyright Act 1957.



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

MEMORIALS

1. Grave of Brigadier Mohammad Usman at the Jamia Milia Islamia in New Delhi.



Source: Twitter @LestWeForgetIndia (Accessed on 20 April 2023)

2. Brigadier Mohammad Usman's Memorial at Jhangar in Naushera Sector of Jammu and Kashmir.



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE



Source: Twitter @LestWeForgetIndia (Accessed on 20 April 2023)

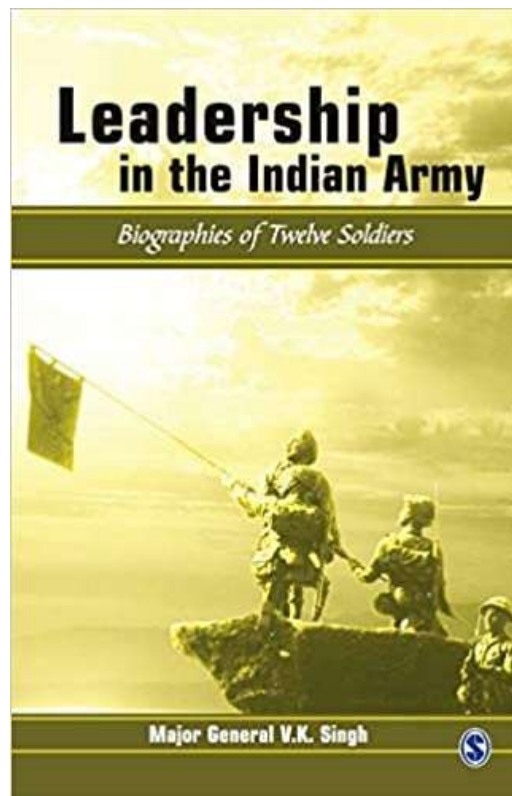


रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

OTHER INTERESTING RESOURCES¹²

An animated short film dedicated to Brigadier Mohammad Usman by Shivi TV Hindi Stories
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQ1qtvHnRgc> (Source: YouTube Shivi TV Hindi Stories)

A book written by Major General V.K. Singh 'Leadership in Indian Army: Biographies of Twelve Soldiers' has a chapter dedicated to the Brigadier Mohammad Usman and his contribution during 1947-48 Indo-Pak War.



(Source: Amazon India)

¹² Disclaimer: The content mentioned under the Listicles constitutes fair-use of any copyright material and is used for information and research purpose only. The content is in no way promoting or branding an individual, organisation, book or film.



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE

DETAILS FOR USE FOR AN EXTENDED RESEARCH