



BRIGADIER RAGHUBIR SINGH (Then LIEUTENANT COLONEL)

SERVICE NUMBER	IC-6596
RANK	Brigadier (Then Lieutenant Colonel)
NAME	Raghbir Singh
SON OF	Shri Pratap Singh
RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE	Jaipur, Rajasthan
UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS	18 RAJPUTANA RIFLES
SERVICE	Indian Army
DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION	18 Apr 1943
AWARD/DATE OF ACTION	Maha Vir Chakra /07 September 1965
WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION	1965 Indo-Pak war
OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE	

Lieutenant Colonel Raghbir Singh was born to Shri Pratap Singh on 02 November 1923, in Jaipur, Rajasthan. He was commissioned into the Sawai Man Guards as a Second Lieutenant on 18 April 1943. He is survived by his two sons— Maj Sangram Singh & Narendra Singh Rajawat. He participated in the Burma War in 1944 and went to Japan to fight. Thereafter, he fought in the Indo-Pak War of 1947-48 in the Uri Sector immediately after independence. During the Korean war in 1954, he was posted as Chairman of the Neutral Nations Representative Commission (NNRC) as part of the Peacekeeping Force. During the 1958-59 Israel-Egypt War, he was part of the United Nations Emergency Force. In the Indo-Pak War of 1965, Lieutenant Colonel Raghbir Singh was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra on 07 September 1965 while commanding his Battalion 18 RAJPUTANA RIFLES which is now 11 MECHANISED INFANTRY.

The RAJPUTANA RIFLES is the senior most Rifle Regiment of the Indian Army. Its first Battalion was raised in January 1775. The RAJPUTANA RIFLES has a long and glorious history. The Regiment took part in some of the bloodiest battles in many theatres of the world. During World War II, the Battalions of this Regiment fought in every theatre in which the Indian Army was involved. Three of them, the 1st, 4th and Medium Machine Gun Battalions fought in Eritrea in North Africa and Italy as part of the famous 4th Indian Division, whose fighting record was one of the finest in World War II. Post-Independence the Regiment took part in many battles and operations including the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Congo. The Rajputana Rifles fought gallantly in the 1965 and 1971 India Pakistan wars. During the 1965 Indo-Pak war, the RAJPUTANA RIFLES displayed exemplary valour and determination especially in the Khem Karan Sector. During the 1999 Kargil War 2 RAJPUTANA RIFLES was instrumental in capturing Tololing.

The genesis of the Indo-Pak conflict can be traced back to the year 1947. The bone of contention between India and Pakistan are the attempts by Pakistan to annex the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir by any means. The ceasefire line in Jammu and Kashmir and our frontiers with Pakistan have remained a sensitive zone for years. Pakistan has on and off resorted to firing, incursions and intrusions at several points of these frontiers, compelling India to adopt defensive measures. These attempts of Pakistan have been met by the Indian Armed Forces with commendable bravery and steely resilience, but always with great restraint to not escalate the conflict. The Indo-Pak War of 1965 was the second war fought between these two bordering countries. While India was still recovering from the Sino-India War of 1962, Pakistan saw it as an opportunity to acquire Jammu and Kashmir with might, presuming India to be weak in terms of defence preparation. The war began on 24 April 1965, when the Pakistan Army attacked Indian territory in the Rann of Kutch and penetrated six to eight miles inside the Indian territory. This act of illegal occupation of Indian territory constituted violation of the Indo-Pak Border Agreement, 1960 and the international law as per the United Nations Charter. The Pakistani forces subsequently intruded in Kashmir with the launch of Operation Gibraltar. The 1965 War was fought in various Sectors including in Khem Karan which was the area of responsibility of 4 Infantry Division and 2 (Independent) Armoured Brigade.

Historians consider this to be the greatest tank battle since the Battle of Kursk, fought during World War II– The Battle of Asal Uttar, a pivotal engagement in the 1965 India-Pakistan War, unfolded from 08 September to 10 September 1965. Positioned near Khem Karan, the Indian resistance played a crucial role in shifting the balance of power in India's favour during the conflict. The Pakistani Army's Battle Group, composed of the 1st Armoured Division and 11 Infantry Division, had crossed the International Border, and captured the Indian town of Khem Karan.

Recognizing the seriousness of the situation, the Major General Gurbaksh Singh, General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 4 Mountain Division ordered the Division to withdraw and establish "Horse Shoe" shaped defensive position centred on Asal Uttar. Three Indian Army units, namely the 18 RAJPUTANA RIFLES, 1/9 GORKHA RIFLES, and 4 GRENADIERS, were strategically positioned to cover three axes leading to Khem Karan, providing depth to the location. 9 JAK RIFLES were deployed in the rear, while the DECCAN HORSE commanded by Lieutenant Colonel (later General) AS Vaidya, was positioned ahead, to the South East of the Division's defences. In a well-executed tactical manoeuvre, Indian troops breached the Rohi canal at night, flooding the sugarcane fields. When morning came, the M-7 and M-48 Patton tanks of the 1st Armoured Division of Pakistan were lured into the horse-shoe shaped defensive position with the intention of overwhelming Indian defences. However, the swampy terrain slowed down the advance of the Pakistani tanks, which ultimately became immobilized in the muddy slush.

With the Pakistani M-47 and M-48 Patton tanks approaching within 900 meters of the main defences, the Deccan Horse, equipped with Shermans, engaged them effectively and destroyed eleven Pakistani tanks.

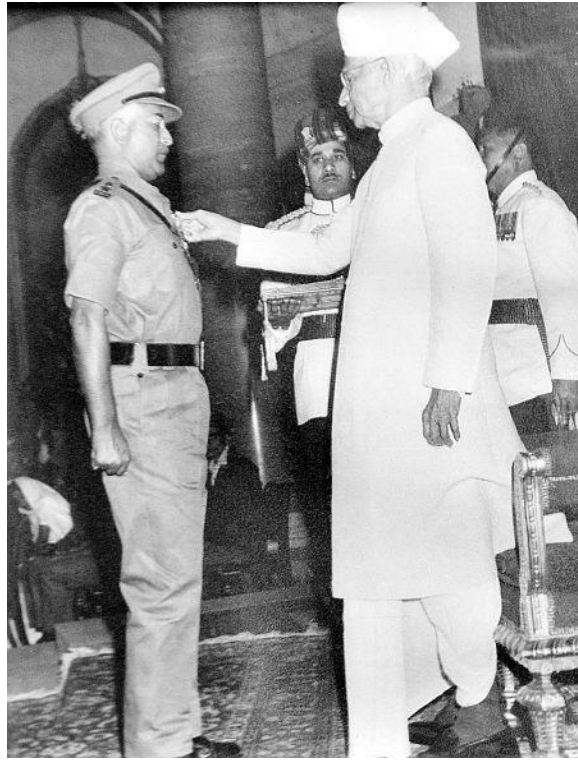


Brigadier Raghbir Singh shaking hands with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi

Source :- <https://www.indiaofthepast.org/divij-sharma/armed-forces-heroes/brigadier-raghubir-singh-maha-vir-chakra>

On the night of 09 September 1965 at 0200 hours, the Pakistani Pattons being equipped with infra-red devices had an edge over our Indian tanks which were comparatively blind at night. The 4 Armoured Brigade of Pakistan, utilizing moonlight and infra-red equipment, launched an attack on the 18 RAJPUTANA RIFLES position, with two Patton Regiments. Despite achieving a breakthrough, the Pattons couldn't breach the Indian defences and withdrew after sustaining casualties. At 0430 hours on the same day, the 2 (Independent) Armoured Brigade came under the command of the 4 Mountain Division. The deployment of troops in the 4 Mountain Division Sector included battalions in the Asal Uttar area, a Squadron of DECCAN HORSE between the Brigade-defended Sector and the gun area, 3 Cavalry sub units in various locations, and 8 Cavalry deployed in the Warnala area. Despite an unsuccessful attempt to overrun the 4 GRENADIERS position, the Pakistanis made another effort to attack the 18 RAJPUTANA RIFLES position during the night. However, the Battalion held its ground, and Indian medium artillery and tanks, strategically positioned, inflicted significant damage on the attackers. Soon after, the assault fizzled out and the enemy who had expected an easy breakthrough, withdrew in frustration.

Lieutenant Colonel Raghuvir Singh, the Commanding Officer of the Battalion, displayed exceptional bravery and leadership in this encounter, earning him the Mahavir Chakra for his outstanding actions.



Brigadier Raghur Singh receiving the Maha Vir Chakra medal from President Radhakrishnan.

Source :- <https://www.indiaofthepast.org/divij-sharma/armed-forces-heroes/brigadier-raghubir-singh-maha-vir-chakra>

During the 1971 Indo-Pak War, he was posted as the Provost Marshal in the Military Police, where his responsibilities included handling over 93,000 Pakistani prisoners of war in various camps. One of the bravest soldiers of Mother India who saw action in World War II as well as the 1965 and 1971 wars against Pakistan, he passed away at the age of 99 after a prolonged illness due to age-related problems on 13 June 2021 in Jaipur.

CITATION

Lieutenant Colonel Raghbir Singh (IC-6596) 18 The Rajputana Rifles

(Effective date of award–7th September 1965)

Lieutenant Colonel Raghbir Singh was commanding a battalion of the Rajputana Rifles Regiment during the battle of Asal Uttar. The unit was occupying the left forward position of a Brigade defended sector. During the period from the 7th to the 10th September 1965, the unit was attacked twice by day and twice at night by Pakistani forces in overwhelming strength, supported by armour and intense artillery fire.

On 9th September at 2100 hours, in moonlight, the enemy forces launched a ferocious attack with tanks and managed to overrun the forward Company positions. The situation became grave and communications with these Companies were disrupted. Lieutenant Colonel Raghbir Singh, anticipating the enemy's tank assault left his Command post and regardless of personal safety moved up to those Companies past three enemy tanks. He entered the positions under intense enemy artillery fire and established contact with the Company Commanders. This example of courage, determination and leadership on the part of the Commanding Officer inspired the men to defy the enemy tanks and under his command they destroyed twenty enemy tanks.

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