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MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE



**LIEUTENANT GENERAL ZORAWAR CHAND BAKSHI (Then,
BRIGADIER)**

SERVICE NUMBER	IC-1510
RANK	Major
NAME	Zorawar Chand Bakshi
SON OF	Sardar Bakshi Lal Chand
RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE	New Delhi, Delhi
UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS	2/5 GORKHA RIFLES
SERVICE	Indian Army
DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION	21 June 1943
AWARD/DATE OF ACTION	Vir Chakra/ 08 July 1948 Maha Vir Chakra/ 05 August 1965
WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION	1947-48 Indo-Pak War 1965 Indo-Pak War
OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE	Param Vashisht Sena Medal Vashisht Sewa Medal



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Lieutenant General Zorawar Chand Bakshi was born on 21 October 1921 to Sardar Bahadur Bakshi Lal Chand. He was born in Gulyana village, Rawalpindi District (Now, in Pakistan), Punjab. After completing his graduation from Gordon College, Rawalpindi, he joined Indian Military Academy (IMA) in 1942. He was commissioned on 27 June 1943 into the Infantry. He had a unique distinction of being the most highly decorated officer of the Indian Army, having won awards for gallantry at every level, from Company to Division. He was a rare combination of a fighting and thinking soldier, he is as well known for his achievements as for his reluctance to talk about them. A perfect blend of a soldier and a gentleman, 'Zoru' Bakshi -as he is affectionately known throughout the Army is an icon who was a source of inspiration for an entire generation of officers. Lieutenant General Zorawar Chand Bakshi took part in every war fought by the independent India, except for the Sino-India war of 1962, when he was deployed in Congo for the United Nations peacekeeping operation.

After a short attachment with a British battalion, Lieutenant General Zorawar Chand Bakshi was posted to 16/10 Baluch, which was then in the Arakan in Burma, and part of 51 Infantry Brigade under 25 Indian Division. The battalion was being commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John Fairlay, who was very fond of Indian officers since he had been an instructor at the IMA Dehradun. The Second -in-Command was Brigadier (then Major) Mohammad Usman. When Bakshi joined the battalion, the monsoon had just finished and operations had resumed after a long gap. Usman sent Bakshi with a patrol through the No Man's Land to probe the Japanese defences. Since Bakshi had just joined the battalion and was in-experienced, the patrol was led by a Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO), who had been told to keep an eye on the young officer. While climbing up the hill the Japanese opened fire. They could either withdraw or bypass the enemy. A withdrawal would have led them into enemy ambush. Displaying extraordinary leadership skills and presence of mind, then Second Lieutenant Bakshi decided to go downhill. They were able to bypass the enemy position safely after completing the task.

The JCO reported to Usman and told him about the firing, and how the young subaltern had handled the patrol. On the following day, Usman sent another patrol to check out a hill feature held by the Japanese, and asked Bakshi to lead it. Zoru took some men from his own Company, which comprised Pathans, and returned with some useful information about the feature. The CO, Lieutenant Colonel Fairlay, was leaving on transfer next day, but before he left, he gave orders for the hill to be captured, and assigned the Dogra Company to carry out the task. Fairlay had begun his career in the Dogras, and had a soft corner for them. However, he did not have much faith in the British officer who was commanding the Dogra Company, and ordered Bakshi to lead the attack. ¹

¹ SNIPPETS FROM- Leadership in Indian Army: Biographies of Twelve Soldiers. Maj Gen V K Singh. (2005). Sage Publications, New Delhi



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In January 1945, 51 Infantry Brigade took part in the Battle of Kangaw, which was one of the hardest fought battles of the Burma Campaign. The Brigade Commander, Brigadier RA Hutton, was awarded the DSO, as were all three Commanding Officers of the famous 'All Indian Brigade', i.e., Lieutenant Colonels SPP Thorat, KS Thimayya and LP Sen. Zoru Bakshi was Mentioned in Dispatches, and this was the first in a string of gallantry awards that he was to win in different wars over the next 30 years. After cessation of operations in Burma, the battalion was sent back to India for rest and refit, and was located at Pollachi near Madras. But it did not stay in India for long, and was soon moved to Malaysia with the rest of the Division. However, the Japanese surrendered soon after they landed, and the battalion was given the task of looking after prisoners of war. It remained in Malaysia for about a year before being repatriated to India.

When the 1947-48 Indo-Pak war broke-out in August 1947, Lieutenant General Zorawar Chand Bakshi was posted to the Punjab Boundary Force, which had been set up to maintain peace in Punjab, under Major General TW Rees, who was commanding 4 Indian Division. As a member of the Boundary Force, Bakshi witnessed the horrors of Partition at close quarters. The exodus of people from both sides was accompanied by violence that quickly escalated from individual acts of looting and revenge to full-scale attacks by armed gangs.

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 Luxemburg 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. 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.



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It was soon apparent that the Boundary Force would not be able to maintain peace with the meagre resources at its disposal. Civil administration had virtually ceased to exist, and the force had to look after not only law and order, but also the arrangements for transportation, shelter and food for the refugees, whose numbers had swelled to over 2 million. The supreme commander was informed about the critical situation on the borders and the responsibility for maintaining peace in their areas should be taken over by the respective governments. This was approved by the Joint Defence Council and, on 01 September 1947, the Punjab Boundary force ceased to exist. Ten battalions of the force, which belonged to regiments that had been allotted to Pakistan, left to join their new formation. The remainder comprising units which were to stay in India, were formed into the East Punjab. General Rees was appointed Military Assistant to Governor General Lord Mountbatten and moved to Delhi, taking Bakshi along with him. In his new assignment, Bakshi had to man operations room in the Governor General's House (now Rashtrapati Bhawan).

Post-partition, Lieutenant General Zorawar Chand Bakshi's parent unit 16/10 Baluch was allotted to Pakistan. Bakshi was transferred to 5 GORKHA RIFLES which was one of the six Gorkha regiments to stay in India while rest were transferred to British Army. In March 1948, Bakshi was posted as Brigade Major of 163 Infantry Brigade. 163 Infantry Brigade was given the task of advancing towards Tithwal, clearing enemy opposition en route and recapturing lost territory, including the strategic town of Tithwal. The brigade comprised four infantry battalions, i.e., 1 SIKH, 1 MADRAS, 6 RAJPUTANA RIFLES and 3 GARHWAL, during various stages of the battle. It also had a Squadron of 7 CAVALRY equipped with armoured cars, and two batteries of artillery guns. The brigade commenced operations from Handwara on 18 May 1948, and by 20 May had taken Chowkibal. The next day, the 10,000-foot high Nastachun Pass had been captured, and by 23 May Tithwal was in Indian hands. In five days, 163 Infantry Brigade had advanced 65 kilometres, killed 67 of the enemy and taken many prisoners.

The loss of Tithwal was also a severe blow to the Pakistanis, who reacted violently and launched several counter-attacks to recapture the feature. These attacks were supported by heavy shelling and resulted in many casualties. There were also several individual acts of bravery, including that of Company Havildar Major Piru Singh of 6 RAJPUTANA RIFLES, who was posthumously awarded the Param Vir Chakra, the country's highest award for gallantry. Bakshi played a prominent part in the battle, and displayed exceptional gallantry and leadership, for which he was awarded the Vir Chakra. This was remarkable, because Bakshi was the Principal Staff Officer in the Brigade HQ, and was not commanding troops. Unlike commanders, staff officers rarely get a



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chance to display gallantry on the battlefield. For his exemplary leadership and gallantry, he was awarded Vir Chakra.

Shortly afterwards, Bakshi notched up another feat. The task allotted to Lieutenant General Zorawar Chand Bakshi was to carry out an important strategic military reconnaissance of certain areas in Tibet. He covered a distance of 400 kilometres in 80 days, and traversed some of the highest passes in the Himalayas dressed as a Buddhist Monk. For this feat, he was awarded the MacGregor Memorial Medal in 1949. He became the first recipient of the medal after Independence. This medal was instituted in 1888 in memory of Major General Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, the founder of the United Service Institution of India. After completing his tenure in 163 Infantry Brigade, Bakshi was posted back to the Regimental Centre at Dehradun in July 1949.

Early in 1951, he was posted to 2/5 GORKHA RIFLES, which had moved to Dehradun recently, after short tenures in Meerut and Jhansi. The battalion was under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Niranjan Prasad. While he was with the Battalion, Bakshi appeared for the entrance examination for Staff College, and after qualifying, was nominated to the Fourth Course at the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, which commenced in October 1951. After completing the course in August 1952, he was posted as Brigade Major of 123 Infantry Brigade. He remained in this appointment till October 1955. After his tenure with 123 Infantry Brigade, Bakshi was posted to 2/5 GORKHA RIFLES, which was then located at Mahura in the Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir. In April 1958, he was posted as an Instructor to the Infantry School, Mhow, where he remained for almost two years. In January 1960, he was promoted Lieutenant Colonel and posted to the Staff College in Wellington as an Instructor.

In August 1961, he received orders posting him as Commanding Officer of 2/5 GORKHA RIFLES, which was then in Calcutta and they were sent to Congo for United Nations Peacekeeping mission. They started their journey in January 1962 and by 25 March, the Battalion had concentrated in Elizabethville as part of the Indian Brigade, which was in the Katanga province. The Indians formed part of the 27-nation United Nations Force called the Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo (ONUC), which had its Headquarters at Leopoldville. The task of the United Nations' peace-keeping force was to maintain law and order, and protect vital installations from sabotage. The Battalion frequently had to fight the Katangese Gendarmerie, and there were several skirmishes as well as some hard-fought battles resulting in heavy casualties to both sides. By the end of the year, 2/5 GORKHA RIFLES had cleared Elizabethville and the surrounding area within a radius of about 20 kilometres of all enemy positions and minefields. After a year the battalion returned to India in March 1963 on-board the



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same ship on which it had sailed to Congo. was awarded two Sena Medals and four 'Mentioned in Dispatches'. For his contribution in ONUC, he was awarded Vashisht Seva Medal.

In August 1963, Bakshi was posted to the Military Operations Directorate in Delhi. From December 1964 onwards, he officiated as the Director of Military Operations. Early in 1965, Pakistan had launched operations in the Rann of Kutch to regain control of territory which Pakistan claimed to be its own.

The genesis of 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 damages of 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 initiated on 24 April 1965, when Pakistan Army, attacked our 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 Indo-Pak Border Agreement 1960 and international law as per the United Nations Charter. The aerial phase of the war began on 01 September 1965 when the Indian Air Force responded to an urgent call for air strikes against the Pakistani Army.

In July 1965, Bakshi was promoted Brigadier and given command of the newly raised 68 Infantry Brigade, in Jammu and Kashmir. Though the brigade formed part of 3 Infantry Division in Ladakh, it was located in the Kashmir valley. Pakistani infiltration began a few days after he assumed command. Crossing the border at several places, the guerrillas began to blow up bridges, establish roadblocks, and destroy administrative installations. Though the Indian troops had no inkling of the planned infiltration, they were well prepared and their reaction was swift. The infiltrators were dealt with wherever they were encountered, and soon most were either liquidated or made to surrender. In some places, the Pakistanis used artillery to support the guerrillas, thus escalating the operations. To prevent further ingress by guerrillas and to block the routes that were being used by them, it was decided to capture some key tactical features. One of these was the Hajipir pass.



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The road connecting Uri and Punch passed through the Hajipir pass at a height of 8,650 feet. The pass was strategically very important, and provided one of the main routes of ingress into the Kashmir valley. In order to capture the pass, a pincer attack from two directions was planned, with one Brigade ex-19 Infantry Division launching an attack from the north along the road from Uri, and another Brigade ex-25 Infantry Division from the South, along the road coming from Punch. The task of capturing the feature from the north was assigned to 68 Infantry Brigade. As an indication of the confidence the higher command of the Army placed in then Brigadier Zorawar Chand Bakshi, the operation for the capture of Hajipir was code-named Operation Bakshi. Zorawar Bakshi more than justified the faith reposed in him by his superiors. In one of the most brilliant and successful operations of the 1965 War, they captured the Hajipir Pass when then Major (later Lieutenant General) Ranjit Singh Dayal of 1 PARA in a daring operation defying all odds surprised the enemy and seized this vital pass.

Lieutenant General Bakshi had only one battalion, 6 DOGRA, which had been raised just six months earlier. For the operation, almost all the troops allotted to him were new to him. He concentrated his brigade at Uri in the third week of August 1965, where most of his units joined him. He had three infantry battalions: 1 PARA, 19 PUNJAB and 4 RAJPUT. Another battalion ex-161 Infantry Brigade was placed under his command for the operation. He also had an artillery regiment, 164 FIELD REGIMENT, equipped with 25-pounder field guns, 144 MOUNTAIN BATTERY, and a troop of medium guns ex-39 Medium Regiment. In addition, he had the usual complement of Engineers and Signals. The artillery ammunition was restricted—the field guns had five first line scales, and the medium guns four first lines. Information about the exact dispositions of the enemy was scanty. Bakshi was not permitted to carry out any ground reconnaissance or visit the area held by troops of 161 Infantry Brigade, through which he had to pass to launch the attack. The Hajipir pass and the subsidiary features covering its approaches, were known to be held by 20 PUNJAB of the Pak Army. To distract the enemy's attention and prevent them from reinforcing their position, troops deployed all along the Cease Fire Line in the 19 Infantry Division sector were ordered to put in small-scale attacks to coincide with the main attack of 68 Infantry Brigade. Strange as it may seem, Bakshi was not told about the pincer movement, or the attack by 93 Infantry Brigade from the South. Bakshi's plan for the operation envisaged a two-pronged attack from the north, to be conducted in three phases. After multiple failed attempts, on 27 August 1965, Major Ranjit Singh Dayal left with his column at last light to hit the enemy with an attack went on the night of 28/29 August. He was accompanied by Captain Vaswani as his Second-in-Command, and Second-Lieutenant JS Talwar of 164 Field Regiment as the FOO.

At about 0430 Hours on 28 August, when the Company hit the old Uri-Punch road, Dayal decided to give the men a much-needed break. After a few hours of rest, the advance was



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resumed at 0700 hrs When they had advanced for about an hour, the leading Platoon negotiated a turn and came under intense machine-gun fire from the western shoulder of the pass. The area was open, and the objective was almost 1,200 yards away. Leaving the leading platoon and the forward observation officer to keep the enemy engaged from the front, Dayal took the balance of the Company to the right and began climbing up the western shoulder of the pass. On reaching the top, they rolled down, completely surprising the Pakistani soldiers, who took to their heels without offering any resistance. By 1100 hours on 28 August, Hajipir pass had been captured. Twelve Pakistanis, including one officer, were taken prisoner. There was not a single Indian casualty.



General Zoru Bakshi explaining Chicken's Neck operation plan.

This operation was among one of the most complex operations to be executed during 1965 Indo-Pak war. The road connecting Uri and Poonch via Haji Pir had deteriorated due to disuse and some places it had disintegrated. There was no direct route for an approach to Haji Pir except over the mountain ranges. Haji Pir at an altitude of 9,000 feet had strong enemy defensive positions forward of it and flanking it.

Throughout, Brigadier Bakshi remained foremost. As soon as an objective was captured, he was there personally to guide and help in the reorganisation. Many a time, though enemy shelling was intense and continuous, he remained in the forefront without regard for his personal safety. After the capture of Haji Pir, 01 September he moved his tactical headquarters to Haji Pir Pass immediately. The battle of Hajipir pass is a saga of courage, determined leadership and valour. Its capture was an important victory for India, and a big blow for Pakistan. The credit for the success went to Dayal, who had led his men resolutely, and to Bakshi, who had not only conceived the bold plan, fraught with risk, but had executed it brilliantly. For his grit and determination, he was awarded Maha Vir Chakra (MVC), the country's second highest gallantry had having already won the Vir Chakra earlier, he became the only Indian to have won both the



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awards. Major Ranjit Singh Dayal was also awarded the MVC for his courage and gallantry in capturing the Hajipir pass.

In March 1967, Bakshi was posted as Brigadier General Staff, HQ Eastern Command, in Calcutta. Lieutenant General Sam Manekshaw was the Army Commander, and he found Bakshi to be a pragmatic, efficient and competent Staff Officer. At that time, Eastern Command was engaged in building up defences in the North-East, which had become the Indian Army's top priority after the debacle of 1962.

In December 1967, he was selected to do the course at the Imperial Defence College, London. This was a prestigious course, on which only highly rated officers of the rank of Brigadier were sent. He stayed in London for a year and qualified on the course with distinction. On his return from England in February 1969, Bakshi was posted to the Military Training Directorate at Army Headquarters. In June 1969, he was promoted to Major General and appointed GOC 8 Mountain Division in Nagaland, where insurgency had become a serious problem.

In September 1970, Bakshi was posted as GOC 26 Infantry Division, which was responsible for the defence of Jammu in 1971. The operations commenced on 03 December 1971 after air-strikes by Pakistan, and orders were issued for the planned advances by Indian troops to commence. However, due to the Pakistani offensive in Chhamb, 10 Infantry Division had to fall back and could not undertake any offensive action. A Brigade of 26 Infantry Division was sent to 39 Infantry Division to make up the loss of 33 Infantry Brigade, which had been dispatched to Punch to counter the Pakistani offensive in that Sector. This resulted in the cancellation of the all-important offensive of 26 Infantry Division towards Sialkot.

However, Bakshi was not deterred by this setback and proceeded to capture Chicken's Neck, an important gain of the 1971 operations, which compensated to some extent the loss of Chhamb by 10 Infantry Division. The name 'Chicken's Neck' was coined by Lieutenant General Bakshi. To the South of Akhnur, there is a narrow strip of territory that belongs to Pakistan and measures about 170 square kilometres in area. It is actually an islet between the river Chenal and Chander Bagha, one of its subsidiary channels. It has a small neck in the south, and a jagged head, with a beak shaped like a dagger extending towards the north. The beak points towards the Akhnur bridge, and because of its shape and the threat it posed to Akhnur, the area had long been known as 'the dagger'. Bakshi felt that the name indicated defensive mentality and promptly informed every one that henceforth it would be called the 'Chicken's Neck', which could be wrung at will by India. It is known by this name even today.



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In order to remove the Pakistani threat to the Akhnur bridge, he decided to capture Chicken's Neck. Bakshi decided to infiltrate the South, from where the enemy least expected an attack. On 05 December 1971, the operation achieved complete surprise, and the leading Battalion found well-prepared defences, which were not occupied as they had been vacated by the Pakistanis. In spite of this, the leading troops made slow progress, since they insisted on following set piece battle drills, losing precious time. The situation called for bold and audacious action, but the commanders were overcautious and refused to exploit the factors of surprise and de-moralised enemy.

Bakshi arranged to set up roadblocks, using his tanks and the para commandos. However, most of the enemy was able to withdraw before the roadblocks were in place. In one case, some armour that had been inducted into the salient to hasten its clearance, clashed with the roadblock armour, which mistook them for withdrawing Pakistani tanks. Timely intervention by the Brigade HQ staff averted what could have been a disaster. The para commando roadblock at one of the ferries was attacked by a large body of withdrawing Pakistani troops, and had to be rescued by tank-mounted infantry which was rushed to their aid. By the evening of 07 December, the Chicken's Neck was captured. After the capture of Chicken's Neck, 26 Infantry Division had little to do and had to content itself with small raids on border outposts opposite its area. It was unfortunate that higher commanders found no use for the gallant commander or the troops of 26 Infantry Division, which had been relieved after the operation, for the rest of the war. Since Bakshi had already won both the MVC and the VrC earlier, he was awarded the Param Vashisht Seva Medal (PVSM) for this operation.

After completing his tenure in 26 Infantry Division, in October 1973, Zoru was appointed the Director of Military Operations (DMO), at Army Headquarters. He remained for a year in this important appointment, which carries a lot of respect and authority: in September 1974, he was promoted Lieutenant General and was appointed as the Military Secretary, at Army Headquarters.

In May 1975, Bakshi was given command of the 2 Corps, the Strike Corps, which is perhaps one of the most coveted assignments for a Lieutenant General. He replaced Lieutenant General TN Raina, who moved on promotion as Western Army Commander, and later became the Army Chief. Bakshi remained in command of 2 Corps for more than three-and-a-half years, till he retired on 31 January 1979. He thus had the longest tenure as a Corps Commander in the Indian Army.

After retirement, Bakshi settled down in Defence Colony in New Delhi and did not take up a job in either the private or public sector. With his drive and determination, he was ideally suited for a challenging assignment, such as breathing new life into a sick public sector undertaking. But



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because of his modest and unassuming nature, he was not very well known outside the Army, and perhaps this is why his services were not in demand. However, he continued to take keen interest in the profession of arms, and was a regular visitor to the United Service Institution of India in Delhi.

Lieutenant General Zorawar Chand Bakshi is one of highly decorated officers of the Indian Army breathed his last breath on 24 May 2018. He would always be remembered as true son of the soil, who defended the honour of his motherland and of his command, always and every time. Highly respected for his professionalism and personal qualities he left behind a rich legacy and set standards for others to emulate.

Remembering the legend Zoru Bakshi-

Former Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh said he last met Gen Bakshi after the capture of Haji Pir Pass. “He was the Commander of 68 Brigade and I was ADC to Army Commander General Harbaksh. A great soldier. His death is a great loss to the country. RIP Sir!” tweeted the CM.

“Despite all his achievements, he remained a humble, down-to-earth man. Never bragging or gloating over the wars he had fought or his decorations,” says Lieutenant General Narayan Pathania, who served with him from 1970 till Gen Bakshi retired in 1979.

“He belonged to the 5th Gorkhas, who wear the chin strap of the Gorkha hat not under the chin but under the lower lip. He believed that it signalled doing your job and not talking about it, and followed that in principle,” adds General Pathania. “Apart from being a brave soldier and a remarkable leader of men, he was an ideal and an inspiration,” says General Pathania.

His son Rajeev says his father was a “great human being who equipped us with the ability to discern but gave us the freedom to make our choices in life, to be audacious to take a road less travelled and to treat life as a great adventure.” “No idea or belief was too sacrosanct to be left unquestioned except honesty and integrity. These values were passed on to his grandchildren as was his love for the outdoors, the hills and nature,” Rajeev adds.



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CITATION

Major Zorawar Chand Bakshi (SS-1510), 2/5 GORKHA RIFLES
(Effective date of award – 05 August 1965)

Brigadier Zorawar Chand Bakshi was commander of a brigade in Aug-Sept 1965 employed on the difficult task of capturing Basali, Haji Pir Pass and Kahuta, which was vital for the Uri-Poonch link-up. The road connecting Uri and Poonch via Haji Pir had deteriorated due to disuse and some places it had disintegrated. There was no direct route for an approach to Haji Pir except over the mountain ranges. Haji Pir at an altitude of 9,000 feet had strong enemy defensive positions forward of it and flanking it.

Throughout, Brigadier Bakshi remained foremost. As soon as an objective was captured, he was there personally to guide and help in the reorganisation. Many a time, though enemy shelling was intense and continuous, he remained in the forefront without regard for his personal safety. After the capture of Haji Pir, he moved forward his tactical headquarters immediately, though he knew that the enemy would most certainly counter-attack it viciously.

Throughout this operation, Brigadier Bakshi displayed a high standard of planning and tactical skill, combined with outstanding leadership, determination and camaraderie in sharing the hardships of his troops, which were in the highest traditions of our Army.

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



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VIDEOS

1. भारत का हर युद्ध लड़ने वाले Lt Gen Zorawar Chand Bakshi के मरने पर PM Modi ने ट्वीट क्यों नहीं किया (Source: Lallantop YouTube)
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