



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE



WING COMMANDER JAG MOHAN NATH (Then SQUADRON LEADER)

SERVICE NUMBER	3946 GD (P)
RANK	Squadron Leader
NAME	Jag Mohan Nath
SON OF	Kamal Nain Rai
RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE	Mumbai, Maharashtra
UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS	No 106 Squadron
SERVICE	Indian Air Force
DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION	14 October 1950
AWARD/DATE OF ACTION	Maha Vir Chakra /1962 Maha Vir Chakra** /01 September 1965
WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION	1962 Sino-India War 1965 Indo-Pak War
OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE	Maha Vir Chakra (1962) Maha Vir Chakra** (01 September 1965)



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Squadron Leader Jag Mohan Nath, son of KN Rai, was born in Layyah, Punjab (now, in Pakistan) on 08 August 1930. He studied in a Government College of Lahore. He was commissioned as General Duties (Pilot) in the Royal Indian Air Force on 14 October 1950. Later, he married Usha and they had two children, Sanjiv Malhotra (Son) and Arti Vakil (Daughter) in 1952 and 1956 respectively. Subsequently, he rose to the rank of Wing Commander. During the Sino-India War of 1962, Squadron Leader Nath was Flight Commander with Strategical Reconnaissance Unit. He displayed conspicuous courage and was awarded Maha Vir Chakra.¹ Within the time span of three years, during 1965 Indo-Pak War, Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath again led a Photo Reconnaissance Squadron flying the Canberra aircraft. He led his unit several times over the hostile territory to obtain vital information about the enemy. His courageous endeavors were vital in India's success in the 1965 Indo-Pak War. For his conspicuous courage and exemplary leadership, he was again awarded Maha Vir Chakra. He served in the Indian Airforce till 1969, when he took voluntary retirement and joined Air India. Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath idolizes former Chief Air Staff, Air Marshal Arjan Singh and mentioned him to be a father figure who dearly cared for him and was a source of guidance for him. He dedicated his Bar to Maha Vir Chakra to Air Marshal Arjan Singh.



Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath with Marshal of the Indian Air Force Arjan Singh.

Source: <https://www.rediff.com/news/interview/what-if-nehru-had-used-the-iaf-in-1962/20190301.html>

¹ Stories of Heroism (PVC & MVC Winners) Dr B.C Chakravorty. Edited by Dr U.P Thapliyal (2005). Allied Publishers Limited and Ministry of Defence, Government of India.



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Since its independence, India followed a foreign policy of maintaining cordial relations with China. It wanted to revive its ancient contacts with the people of China. Therefore, soon after its establishment on 01 October 1949, India was one of the first few countries to grant diplomatic status to the People's Republic of China (PRC). India supported the demand for state recognition of the PRC on various international platforms. India took the initiative to enter into negotiations with China on the question of Tibet and entered into the Panchsheel Agreement in 1954. Within a few weeks of Chou Enlai's visit to India in 1954, the Chinese launched a protest against the presence of Indian troops in Barahoti, three kilometers South of a border pass, Tun Jun La in Uttar Pradesh. This was the first time, the Government of China laid claim to any part of Indian territory formally. The construction of the Tibet-Sinkiang Road in 1957, marked a turning point in Sino-India relations as the Chinese occupied a large part of the Aksai Chin. This opened an opportunity for China to come out with territorial claims against India openly. By 1959, Chinese soldiers moved in further into Ladakh and established themselves at Chushul- Rezang La, and at Mandal, just south of Dambu Guru. On 08 September 1962, about 600 Chinese troops encircled the Dhola Post in the Eastern sector and began firing. The Chinese launched simultaneous attacks in the Eastern sector of Namka Chu sector as well as in the Western sector in Ladakh. An overwhelming number of Chinese troops attacked the Indian soldiers but they fought the enemy with grit and determination. The Chinese announced the cease-fire at midnight on 21/22 November 1962. ²



Source: <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/and-if-india-had-won-1962-war/>

² History of the Conflict with China, 1962. P.B Sinha. Col A.A. Athale (1992). History Division, Ministry of Defence, Government of India.



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The role of the Indian Air Force in the conflict is significant in more ways than one. On the one hand, the paucity of road communications on the Indian side of the border was such that the deployment, maintenance and even the survival of ground forces were dependent on the air supply. In the initial years, from 1959 to 1962, the Sino-India dispute was primarily focused on the Ladakh sector. The Eastern sector in the McMahon was manned by Assam Rifles till 1961. The supply to these isolated posts was carried out by Kalinga Airlines. As the 'Forward Policy' came into operation in 1960, the Indian Army and Indian Air Force were directed to find suitable posts to carry out an assessment of aerial supply in order to establish new posts. The Indian Air Force was directed not to fly recce or fighter sorties within a 24 km belt from the border. This was not applicable to transport aircraft which could fly right up to the border but were asked to not cross the border on any account. In December 1961, as the Army was establishing additional posts, there was an urgent request to waive this condition. 106 SQUADRON equipped with Canberra aircraft and fitted with cameras carried out these tasks. Initially, the mission was for mapping purposes. As the active operations started, these became recce missions, to find out the deployment and strength of the Chinese. Most of these missions were in Aksai Chin, Tawang, Sela and Walong areas. During the period 13 October to 11 November 1962, the Canberras flew 22 photo recce missions, flying nearly 50 hours. Apart from these missions, there were no strategic missions carried out that were controlled at the highest level.³

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No 106 Squadron (Lynx) of IAF was a newly raised squadron in 1957 in Bareilly but was moved to Agra, and its role was to provide military aerial photography and aid in other operations. Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath affectionately known as Jaggi flew his twin-engine English Electric Canberra PR.57 high-altitude long-range reconnaissance aircraft for this tough mission. The aircraft was fitted with one camera for surveillance and four cameras for pictures. While flying over Tibet, Xinjiang, he saw many Chinese soldiers positioned and the pictures clicked by his

³ Ibid



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camera were sent directly to the HQ in Delhi. In fact, Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath was first to photograph the Aksai-Chin Highway in 1959.

During 1962 Sino-India War Wing Commander (Then Squadron Leader) Jag Mohan Nath performed a number of risky operational missions while serving as the Flight Commander of an operational squadron, including flying over challenging mountain terrain both during the day and at night, inclement weather, and with utter disregard for his own safety. He showed notable bravery, a strong sense of duty, and a high level of professional ability.⁴ For his gallantry he was awarded Maha Vir Chakra.

However, within three years India found itself in another border conflict with Pakistan. Learning from the mistakes of 1962 Sino-India war, Indian airpower grew exponentially giving India its first kill in air-to-air combat since independence on 04 September 1965. 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 1965, Indian Air Force comprised of twenty-six Fighter Squadrons, four Bomber Squadrons, thirteen Transport Squadron and five Helicopter Units. During the 1965 Indo-Pak War, after the failure of Operation Gibraltar, a desperate Pakistan Army mounted a major armour-cum-infantry thrust in Chhamb, on 01 September 1965. The objective was to capture Akhnur Bridge and cut off Jammu-Punch Road. The same day at 1600 Hr General Jayanto Nath Chaudhuri the Chief of Army Staff and Air Marshal Arjan Singh, the Chief of Air Staff, met the Defence Minister Yashwantrao

⁴ Stories of Glory: Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath, MVC (Bar). Divyam Shrama. The Defence Archive. (Accessed on 01 March 2023)

<https://www.thedefencearchive.com/post/wing-commander-jag-mohan-nath>



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Balwantrao Chavan and Defence Secretary Shri PVR Rao and sought permission to use the Indian Air force (IAF) against the invaders. A 'go ahead' was obtained and within an hour the IAF went into action to stem the onslaught. 26 fighter-bombers of IAF (12 Vampires and 14 Mysteres) took off from Pathankot for Chhamb Sector just before sunset. In a swift action, the IAF destroyed ten tanks, two automatic guns and 30-40 vehicles of the invading column. The PAF Sabres, which were patrolling just across the border retaliated and shot down four Indian Vampires killing three of our pilots.⁵



Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath receiving Maha Vir Chakra from President Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/the-pilot-who-shot-pakistan/article7620308.ece>

During 1965 Indo-Pak War, Wing Commander (Then Squadron Leader) Jag Mohan Nath was Flight Commander with the Strategic Photo Reconnaissance Squadron flying the Canberra aircraft. 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. On each of these missions, Wing Commander Nath was completely aware of the risk he was taking. Yet, he opted to carry on the perilous missions by himself. He only gave his colleagues permission to complete some dangerous tasks after much convincing. The data he obtained throughout his

⁵ The Indian-Pakistan War of 1965: A History. S.N. Prasad. U.P. Thaplial (2011). Natraj Publishers and Ministry of Defence, Government of India



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trips turned out to be crucial for the Indian air effort. The sorties gave Indian Air Force the ability to attack crucial enemy objectives, which caused the adverse damage to enemy war effort. Wing Commander Nath received the Bar from Mahavir Chakra for exhibiting bravery, tenacity, and devotion to duty.



Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath getting vaccinated for COVID-19.

Source: <https://www.indiatoday.in/cities/mumbai/story/my-third-successful-battle-experience-against-covid-19-says-92-yr-old-air-force-veteran-1777096-2021-03-09>

Wing Commander Jag Mohan died at the age of 96 in Mumbai. This war veteran was one of the six bar to Maha Vir Chakra winners of India. While the world believed that he fought two wars, he believed that he fought and won three wars, 1962 Sino-India War, 1965 Indo-Pak War and his last war being the war with COVID-19.



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CITATION

Squadron Leader Jag Mohan Nath (3946 GD (P), No. 106 SQUADRON
(Effective date of award—1962).

As Flight Commander of an Operational Squadron, Squadron Leader Jag Mohan Nath has fulfilled a number of hazardous operational tasks involving flying over difficult mountain terrain, both by day and by night, in adverse weather conditions and in complete disregard of his personal safety. He has displayed conspicuous gallantry, a very high sense of duty and a high degree of professional skill.

Reference: Gazette of India, Notification No._____ dated_____



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CITATION

Squadron Leader Jag Mohan Nath (3946 GD (P), No. 106 SQUADRON
(Effective date of award— 01 September 1965).

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, Sqn Ldr Nath was again the Flight Commander with the Strategic Photo Reconnaissance Squadron flying the Canberra aircraft. 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

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



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3. The Indian-Pakistan War of 1965: A History. S.N. Prasad. U.P. Thapliyal (2011). Natraj Publishers and Ministry of Defence, Government of India

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2. The pilot who 'shot' Pakistan. Pankaja Srinivasan (Accessed on 23 March 2023)
<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/the-pilot-who-shot-pakistan/article7620308.ece>
3. Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath (Accessed on 23 March 2023)
<https://www.bharat-rakshak.com/IAF/Database/3946>
4. Squadron Leader Jag Mohan Nath (Accessed on 23 march 2023)
<https://indianairforce.nic.in/decorations-of-legends/>
5. Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath — IAF veteran of 1962 & 1965 wars who received Maha Vir Chakra twice (Accessed on 23 March 2023)
<https://theprint.in/defence/wing-commander-jag-mohan-nath-iaf-veteran-of-1962-1965-wars-who-received-maha-vir-chakra-twice/1463728/>



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VIDEOS

Wings commander Jag Mohan Nath speech on 26 Jan 2016 (Source: YouTube)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UeI9SIYSX04&t=5s>

Jagmohan Nath: दो महा विर चक्रा से सम्मानित Air Force जांबाज की अनसुनी कहानी | वनइंडिया हिंदी (Source: YouTube)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z720M2ZU_0s

Sqn Ldr Nath was awarded Bar to Mahavir Chakra. (Source: La Ares YouTube)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMDygXpW2-A>

1965 INDO-PAK Air War Source: PIB India)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6mPJm_I-X8&t=139s

Indo-China 1962 War | Archival footage (Source: Prasar Bharti YouTube)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pL8exZ7iFUw&t=123s>

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OTHER INTERESTING RESOURCES⁷

1. An article written by Major Gen Jagatbir Singh 1965: A WESTERN SUNRISE–RAISING THE BAR ONCE AGAIN
<https://www.punekarnews.in/1965-a-western-sunrise-raising-the-bar-once-again/>
2. Video by Indian Air force made by Wing Commander Jag Mohan Nath on 1965 Indo-Pak War
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=77StaB0KTds> (Source: YouTube)
3. 1962 Indo-China War: जब 120 भारतीय सैनिकों ने छीने 1300 चीनियों के प्राण! | Rezang La Battle
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yi2lcKmGSCg> (Source: AAJ TAK YouTube)

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