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MINISTRY OF  
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**MAJOR VIVEK GUPTA**

<b>SERVICE NUMBER</b>	IC-51152K
<b>RANK</b>	Major
<b>NAME</b>	Vivek Gupta
<b>SON OF</b>	Colonel B R S Gupta (Retired)
<b>RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE</b>	Dehradun, Uttaranchal (Now Uttarakhand)
<b>UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS</b>	2 Rajputana Rifles
<b>SERVICE</b>	Indian Army
<b>DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION</b>	13 June 1992
<b>AWARD/DATE OF ACTION</b>	Maha Vir Chakra (Posthumous) / 13 June 1999
<b>WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION</b>	Kargil War/ Op VIJAY
<b>OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE</b>	



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Major Vivek Gupta was born on 02 January 1970, to a serving army officer, Col BRS Gupta, an Army Ordnance Corps officer. He was born in Dehradun, Uttarakhand. From a very early age, Major Gupta aspired to become an army officer. When he declared his intentions to join the Indian Army, his family was very happy and proud of their brave son. His father, recalls asking him the regiment that he'd like to join, to which iron-willed Major Gupta replied that he'd be honored if he got commissioned into an infantry regiment. His dream of becoming an army officer came true on 13 June 1992 when he got commissioned into The Rajputana Rifles. After 5 years of service in the Indian Army, Major Gupta married Captain Raj Shree Bisht in the year 1997. Captain Raj Shree Bisht is a doctor in Army Medical Corps (AMC).

Major Vivek Gupta, who had a reputation of not resting until the task assigned to him is complete, was a part of 2 Rajputana Rifles which was deployed in Dras sector of Jammu and Kashmir for the capture of Tololing heights. 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and Medium Machine Gun Battalions fought in Eritrea in North Africa and Italy as part of the famous 4<sup>th</sup> 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 Kargil War, the Rajputana Rifles displayed exemplary valour and determination especially in the Tololing Operation. The 2 RAJ RIF was conferred India's first 'Instant Unit Citation' by General VP Malik, the then Chief of the Army Staff. In the year 1999, during the Kargil War the men of this regiment displayed exceptional bravery and fortitude in the capture of Tololing Heights.

The Kargil war of 1999 was fought 52 years after independence. 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 war commenced shortly after the signing of the Lahore declaration in 1999, when the Pakistan army surreptitiously occupied the winter vacated posts of the Indian Army. This act is thought to be the brain-child of General Pervez Musharraf, then chief of the Pakistan Army. On 03 May 1999, intrusions were detected. On 26 May <sup>1</sup>, the first air to ground strike was launched by the Indian Airforce (IAF), followed by Operation Vijay, by the Indian Army to evict the intruders from the

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<sup>1</sup> Kargil 1999: The Impregnable Conquered Lt. Gen Y M Bammi. (2002) Gorkha Publisher



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Indian territory<sup>2</sup>. As the Kargil War progressed, the capture of Tololing became essential to flush out the Pakistani intruders. 56 Mountain Brigade was given the task to capture Tololing.

The Tololing Heights was the deepest penetration beyond the LC by the Pakistani intruders. Tololing and another feature named Point 4590 were among the vital peaks for India. Both the peaks were crucial as they overlooked the Dras sector and a large section of National Highway, giving enemy a visual access to every movement on the National Highway. The intruders at the Tololing top stayed put and didn't open fire until they were discovered on 12 May 1999. This time was utilized by the intruders to build coordinated defences that would enable the enemy to bring effective fire on attacking troops.

On 22 May 1999, 18 Grenadiers launched their first attack on the Tololing top. The battalion made several attempts yet, were only able to encircle them in the span of two weeks. During the attempts to recapture the Tololing Top, 18 Grenadiers also lost a valiant officer Major Rajesh Singh Adhikari on 30 May 1999. The responsibility to capture the top was then assigned to 2 Rajputana Rifles (2 RAJ RIF), a regiment which operated in the valley and had undergone extensive training at the Corps Battle School in Khrew. The unit of 2 RAJ RIF reached Dras Sector on 01 June 1999.

To recapture the Tololing top and the surrounding features, a multi-directional attack plan was approved by Major General Mohinder Puri, General Officer Commanding 8 Mountain Division. To ensure plan was a success, it was absolutely necessary to have adequate artillery fire units for each assaulting battalion, since the multi-directional attack should begin at the same time otherwise enemy would guess the direction of attack and take appropriate action. However, later it was decided to stagger the attack and ensure adequate artillery support for all assaulting troops.

The 2 RAJ RIF was tasked to capture the Tololing top by 0600 Hr on 13 June 1999. When the battalion launched the attack, Major Vivek Gupta was in command of the leading Charlie Company. Despite heavy artillery and automatic fire, the unit under Major Vivek Gupta's inspiring leadership was able to close in with the enemy. The Company came under heavy fire from all sides as soon as they emerged into the open. After three soldiers of the Company's leading section were hit, the attack was temporarily stalled.

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<sup>2</sup> From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report (2000) Sage Publications, New Delhi (Pg no 104-105)



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Knowing that staying in the open, amidst intense enemy fire would result in further casualties, Major Vivek Gupta reacted quickly and fired a rocket launcher at the hostile position. Before the enemy could regain command and control, he charged on to the hostile position. During the charge he was hit by two bullets, yet he pressed on with the attack. Despite being wounded, he fought the enemy in severe hand-to-hand fight. Upon reaching the area he managed to kill three enemy soldiers. Inspired by their officer's valiant deed the rest of the company surged onto the enemy position and captured it. Major Vivek Gupta, was yet again hit by enemy gunfire and got grievously injured and succumbed to his injuries on the battlefield.



*Maj Vivek Gupta's wife, Captain Raj Shree Bisht saluting her husband during his last rites.*

Source: Twitter Account Vikas Manhas (<https://twitter.com/37VManhas/status/1536039462710673408>)

Major Vivek Gupta wrote his last letter to his father stating, 'Don't worry dad, I'll be back soon'. The letter was able to reach Col BRS Gupta's residency by 17 June 1999, which was two days post the last rites of Major Gupta. Col BRS Gupta mourns his son as a proud father who believes that his son found himself where he always wanted to be, right where the action was.



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The battalion of Major Vivek Gupta remembers him as a great singer and a keen bodybuilder.

In the face of the enemy, Major Vivek Gupta demonstrated noteworthy courage and inspired leadership, which contributed to the conquest of Tololing Top. For his supreme sacrifice, he was awarded Maha Vir Chakra posthumously.



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## CITATION

Major Vivek Gupta (IC-51152), 2 Rajputana Rifles (Posthumous)

(Effective date of the Award: 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1999)

Major Vivek Gupta was in command of the leading Charlie Company, when 2 Rajputana Rifles launched a battalion attack on Tololing Top, in Drass sector on 13 June 1999.

In spite of heavy artillery and automatic fire, the company under the inspiring leadership of Major Vivek Gupta was able to close in with the enemy. As soon as the Company emerged in the open, they came under multidirectional intense fire. Three personnel of the leading section of the Company were hit and the attack was temporarily stalled.

Knowing fully well that staying any longer in the open under the murderous enemy fire would lead to more losses, Major Vivek Gupta reacted immediately and fired a rocket launcher at the enemy position. Before the shocked enemy could recover, Major Vivek Gupta charged on to the enemy position. While so charging, he was hit by two bullets, despite which, he kept moving towards the position. On reaching the position, he engaged the enemy in fierce hand to hand combat and managed to kill three enemy soldiers despite his own injuries.

Taking inspiration from the gallant deed of their officer, the rest of the company charged onto the enemy position and captured it. However, in the ensuing combat, Major Vivek Gupta received another direct hit of enemy bullets and finally succumbed to his injuries.

Major Vivek Gupta displayed conspicuous gallantry and inspiring leadership in the face of the enemy, which ultimately led to the capture of Tololing Top.

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Reference: Gazette of India, Notification No. \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_



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## REFERENCES

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2. From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report (2000) Sage Publications, New Delhi
3. A Ridge Too Far: War in the Kargil heights 1999. Amarinder Singh. (2001). Patiala: Motibagh Palace.
4. Taygi, Satish Chandra. (2019). The Kargil Victory Battles from Peak to Peak. The Speaking Tigers in association with The United Service Institute of India

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1. Gandhi, S.S. Portraits of Valour: India's Highest Gallantry Awards and Their Recipients. The Defence Review. (Ed 2006).
2. Honourpoint- The Online memorial of every Indian Soldier (Accessed on 9 April 2022)  
<https://www.honourpoint.in/profile/major-vivek-gupta-mvc/>
3. Kargil War: From the ashes of the dead rise the tales of India's heroes (Accessed on 9 April 2022)  
<https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/cover-story/story/19990628-kargil-war-from-the-ashes-of-the-dead-rise-the-theses-of-indias-heroes-781204-1999-06-28>
4. The War Decorated India & Trust (Accessed on 1 April 2022)  
<http://twdi.in/node/1153>



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## OTHER INTERESTING SOURCES

A Series on the capture of Tololing (Source: Youtube Captain Yashika Hatwal Tyagi)

1. Shaurya Tales Ep.2 | Battle of Tololing - The Ascent | Part 1 | Kargil War  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJO0Ydyj6Qo>
2. Shaurya Tales Ep.3 | Battle of Tololing - The Final Assault | Part 2 | Kargil War  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWCQEBuCRME>

20 Years Of Kargil: War Heroes And Stories Of Extra Ordinary Courage (Source: Youtube HTN)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ihHGt7vt0U>

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## REMEMBERING MAJOR VIVEK GUPTA, MVC

### An anecdote by Col Virendra Tavathia (Retd) <sup>4</sup> :

In 1994 Summer, I was officiating Commanding Officer of the Battalion in Kupwara Sector in the High-Altitude Area. Then Lt Vivek Gupta was the adjutant of the battalion. He was very unhappy as adjutant since he was not getting a chance to be in active operations. One day, I was returning after visiting a forward post. Vivek called me and told me that a BSF party was engaged in some operations with terrorists, and we were asked to provide some help to them. I told him to send the QRT asap, fully equipping them for at least 48 hours. In between, we had the areas where Radio Communication was not at its best. When I reached the Tac HQ, I found Adjutant missing from there. I asked the Sub Adjt as to where the Adjt was? He told me that he himself had taken the QRT and had reached the site of the operations. That was Vivek. He was a born soldier, a brave one and a dedicated one. He was an excellent Adjutant, did well as an Instructor at Inf School. I was very fortunate to have officers like Maj Vivek Gupta, MVC and Maj Padmapani Acharya, MVC in the battalion. Both of them served as my adjutant. My most prestigious possession is a picture taken in the summer of 1995 in the High-Altitude Area, where I am flanked by both of these brave hearts. In their company, I feel special until today.

### Tribute by the CO, Col Virendra Tavathia (Retd):

As the Commanding Officer of Late Maj Vivek Gupta, MVC, (Posthumous) I have a lot of stories to share. Vivek joined the Bn in June/July 1992 at Udaipur. Our youngsters had started a so-called tradition (which I really did not know, since I had returned after almost 4 years after my Staff Course and BM's tenure) in which the newly commissioned officer was to climb about a 12-14 feet pole over which they put his Cap and get his Cap. This was to be done during the dinning in after the officer was given excess liquor. What happened in Vivek's case that these officers put grease on the pole. No one prior to Vivek had been able to get the Cap in that state. When I saw that I told these young officers that it is unfair to put grease on the pole. But guess what, Vivek climbed the pole got his Cap and was the first one to do so. That showed the resolve of this brave heart. We were celebrating the 175th Anniversary of the Bn's raising in November 1992. I was the secretary of the event. We made a beautiful Silver Trophy to be presented to the officers' mess by Officers. We as a team were discussing as to who must present this trophy to the Officer's Mess. Everyone was talking about Col of the Regiment, or the Senior most officer from serving or retired

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<sup>4</sup> Honourpoint- The Online memorial of every Indian Solider (Accessed on 14 June 2022)  
<https://www.honourpoint.in/profile/major-vivek-gupta-mvc/>



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officers to do so. There were apprehensions about the protocol and so on. An idea came to my mind, and I told the Commanding Officer that let the youngest officer of the battalion present it for he is going to be with that Trophy for the maximum time, and my suggestion was accepted by the Commanding Officer. The 175th Anniversary Trophy in 2 Raj Rif officers mess was presented/unveiled by then 2/Lt Vivek Gupta. I declined to go on my grade 1 tenure, as the unit for the first time in my service was scheduled to go active operations. So, from Jan 1992 I remained with the battalion till I took premature retirement in June 1998. During this period, I had seen Vivek, Acharya, Mohit, Umed and Uttam and many more doing a great job with the Bn. Least I knew that I had a chance to command the battalion in actual War, and if I knew it, I would have completed the Command, and a dream would have come true. Leading the likes of these officers and men is a great experience and if it comes in War that is the best. 21 Years after my retirement I still salute each one of these brave men of 2 Raj Rif and the great commanding officers who have led the battalion before me and after me. We are very proud of the heritage of our battalion, which has come at a great cost of soldiers like Maj Vivek Gupta, MVC. If one analyzes the Kargil War, the battle of Tololing, and the act of bravery of these men and officers, I personally feel that Maj Vivek Gupta should have received PVC.