



रक्षा मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
**DEFENCE**



**NAIB SUBEDAR RABI LAL THAPA (Then NAIK)**

<b>SERVICE NUMBER</b>	5733537
<b>RANK</b>	Naib Subedar (Then Naik)
<b>NAME</b>	Rabi Lal Thapa
<b>SON OF</b>	Tula Ram Thapa
<b>RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE</b>	Village Orlani, 4000 Parvat, Nepal
<b>UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS</b>	1/8 GORKHA RIFLES (now 3 MECHANISED INFANTRY)
<b>SERVICE</b>	Indian Army
<b>DATE OF ENROLMENT/COMMISSION</b>	30 December 1943
<b>AWARD/DATE OF ACTION</b>	Maha Vir Chakra / 21 October 1962
<b>WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION</b>	1962 Sino India War
<b>OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE</b>	



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Naik Rabi Lal Thapa son of Shri Tula Ram was born on 30 December 1925 in village Orlani, 4000 Parvat, Nepal. He joined the Indian Army on 30 December 1943 at the age of eighteen and was recruited into 1/8 GORKHA RIFLES, a regiment known for its fearless soldiers and numerous battle exploits. Lance Naik Thapa after completing his training served in various operational areas including Sino India War of 1962. He was awarded second highest gallantry award Maha Vir Chakra for the display of conspicuous courage and devotion to duty in the battle of Sirijap Post in Ladakh sector. Later, Naik Rabi Thapa was promoted to the rank of Naib Subedar.

The first battalion of Gurkha Regiment (now Gorkha Rifles) was raised in 1815 during the Anglo-Nepalese war. Impressed by the qualities displayed by Gurkhas during the war, the British started active recruitment of Gurkhas into the British Indian army. After the partition, in 1947 six Gurkha regiments viz, 1 GR, 3 GR, 4 GR, 5 GR, 8 GR and 9 GR remained with the Indian Army, while 2 GR, 6 GR, 7 GR and 10 GR were transferred to British Army as part of the Tripartite Agreement signed between India, Nepal and Britain. The 8 GR was raised in 1824 as a part of British East Indian Company and later was transferred to British Indian Army after the First War of Independence of 1857. The regiment participated in World War I and World War II. Since independence, the regiment has proved its mettle in Sino-India War of 1962 and Indo-Pak War of 1971. The regiment's motto is 'Kafar Hunu Bhandu Marnu Ramro' (Better to die than live like a coward). The regiment has given India one of the two Field Marshals, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, of the Indian Army. The battalion was subsequently mechanised and later re-designated as 3 MECHANISED INFANTRY.

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 of state recognition of 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 the 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



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sector in Namka Chu sector as well as in the Western sector in Ladakh. The overwhelming number of the Chinese troops attacked the Indian soldiers but they fought the enemy with grit and determination. The Chinese announced the cease-fire at midnight of 21/22 November 1962.<sup>1</sup>



*1<sup>st</sup> battalion of 8 Gorkha Rifles at Pangong Lake in Ladakh during 1962 Sino Indian War*

Source: <https://wikibio.in/dhan-singh-thapa/>

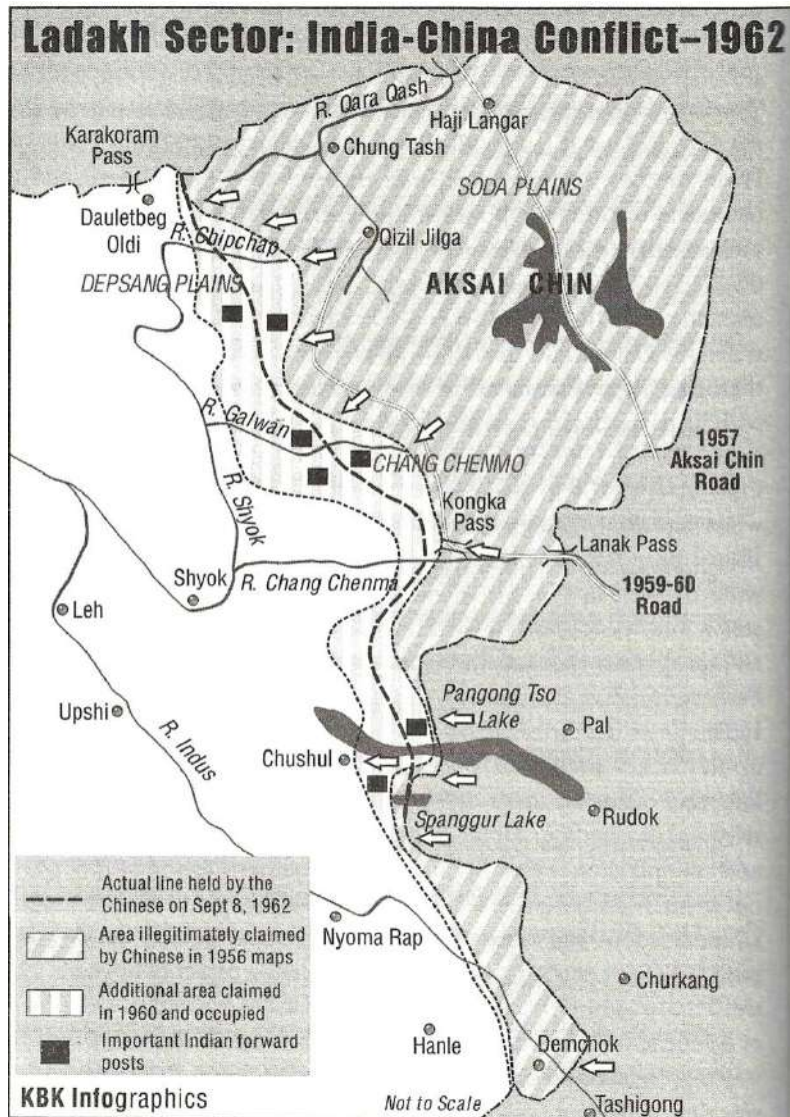
Ladakh, a part of frontier province of Jammu and Kashmir, is also part of the Greater Himalayan Range. The mountains of Ladakh, perhaps the most rugged and inhospitable in the world are formidable. On the night of 19/20 October 1962, the Chinese forces attacked Chip-Chap, Galwan and Pangong area of Ladakh. Despite the fact that these posts were isolated and lacked fire support, the Indian Army fought bravely but was overrun by the enemy who was superior in numbers.

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<sup>1</sup> 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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*Ladakh sector during Sino India War 1962*

Source: India's Wars: A Military History 1947 -1971. Arjun Subrmaniam (2016) Harper Collins Publishers. Uttar Pradesh, India.

During the war, Chinese aimed to capture Chushul airfield, which was the lifeline to the Indian Air Force in the area. To prevent this, 1/8 GORKHA RIFLES was deployed in the area. One of the posts in this area, the Sirijap Post was unexpectedly subjected to severe mortar and artillery fire from the Chinese on 21 October, 1962. The post lost contact with the base due to the broken wireless equipment. Naik Rabi Lal Thapa, who was commander of another post, offered to take a storm boat to the Sirijap Post to conduct reconnaissance and bring back the most recent situation report. When he was about 1,000 yards from the post, the enemy noticed him and opened fire on the boat from three different directions.



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*Naik Rabi Lal Thapa commander of a post in the Pangong Lake area of Ladakh shakes hands with General Kaul during 1962 Sino-Indian war.*

Source: Express archive photo (Accessed on 17 November 2022)

<https://indianexpress.com/photos/picture-gallery-others/sino-india-1962-war-rare-pictures-from-express-archives-4749969/>

Naik Rabi Lal Thapa, totally oblivious to his own safety, continued moving. Despite significant damage to the boat, he was able to bring back the most recent information. A different post was in grave danger that evening, and Naik Thapa once more offered to take charge of evacuation at great personal risk. While returning from the post, both his boats came under enemy fire and one of them sank. Naik Thapa, disregarding his own safety, swam to their aid and saved them from drowning.

Throughout the action, when confronted by the enemy, Naik Rabi Lal Thapa showed a great level of bravery and devotion to duty. He was awarded with nation's second highest gallantry award Maha Vir Chakra for his bravery.



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## CITATION

Naik Rabi Lal Thapa, Gorkha Rifles  
(Effective date of award – 21 October 1962)

On 21 October 1962, the Chinese suddenly opened a heavy barrage of artillery and mortar fire on the Srijap Post in Ladakh. The wireless set was damaged and the post lost contact with the base.

Naik Rabi Lal Thapa, who was commander of another post, volunteered to go to the Srijap Post in a storm boat to reconnoitre and bring back the latest situation report. When he was about 1,000 yards short of the post, the enemy spotted and fired at the boat from three directions. In complete disregard of his own safety, he carried on. Though the boat was badly damaged Naik Thapa managed to bring back the latest information. The same evening another post was in imminent danger and Naik Thapa again volunteered to undertake the evacuation of this post at grave risk to his life. While returning from the post, both his boats came under enemy fire and one of them sank. Naik Thapa went to the rescue of the drowning persons and saved their lives.

Naik Rabi Lal Thapa displayed courage and devotion to duty of a high order in the face of the enemy.

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



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