



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE



MAJOR SHAITAN SINGH

SERVICE NUMBER	IC-6400
RANK	Major
NAME	Shaitan Singh
SON OF	Lieutenant Colonel Hem Singh
RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE	Jodhpur, Rajasthan
UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS	13 KUMAON
SERVICE	Indian Army
DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION	01 August 1949
AWARD/DATE OF ACTION	Param Vir Chakra (Posthumous) / 18 November 1962
WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION	1962 Sino-India War
OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE	



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Major Shaitan Singh, son of Lieutenant Colonel Hem Singh, was born on 01 December 1924 in Jodhpur, Rajasthan. Being born in a military family, he aspired to join the army from a very young age. He was commissioned into the Indian Army on 01 August 1949 in 13 KUMAON. He took part in the 1961 liberation of Goa. During the Sino-India War of 1962, Major Shaitan Singh fought valiantly during the Battle of Rezang La against overwhelming number of Chinese.

The KUMAON Regiment traces its origins to the 18th century and has fought in every major campaign of the British Indian Army and the Indian Army including the two world wars. During World War I, a Kumaon battalion was raised at Ranikhet on 23 October 1917 as 34/39th Kumaon Rifles. In 1918, it was redesigned as 1st battalion, 50th Kumaon Rifles and a second battalion was raised. These were merged with Hyderabad contingent into the 19th Hyderabad Regiment in 1923. On 27 October 1945, the 19th Hyderabad was renamed as 19 Kumaon Regiment. Post-Independence, it has been known as the Kumaon Regiment. Staying true to the regimental motto of *Parakramo Vijayate (Valour Triumphs)* the regiment has proved its mettle in Indo-Pak War of 1947-48, Sino-India War of 1962, Indo-Pak War 1971, Kargil War of 1999 and also participated in the Indian Peace-keeping Force in Sri Lanka. During the Sino-India War of 1962, 13 KUMAON displayed conspicuous courage and undaunted determination while fighting the enemy during the Battle of Rezang La, where Major Shaitan Singh received the Param Vir Chakra. ¹

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 sector in Namka Chu sector as well as in the Western sector in Ladakh. The overwhelming number

¹ Ballabh, Anand, Insights into Infantry Regiments: A Basic Factbook. Forward Books publications. New Delhi (2013)



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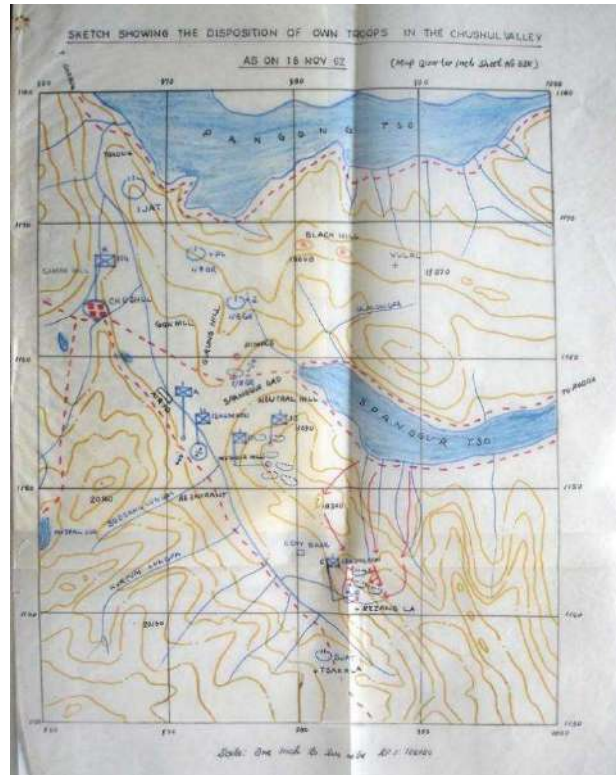
of the Chinese troops attacked the Indian soldiers but they fought the enemy with grit and determination. The Chinese announced the cease-fire at midnight of 21/22 November 1962.²

During the Sino-India War of 1962, 13 KUMAON was deployed in Chushul sector. 13 KUMAON arrived in Jammu and Kashmir from Ambala in June 1962. They were deployed to fight in high altitude for the first time. The Chinese troops in this sector was from the mountains and were better equipped and well trained to fight in inhospitable terrain. The attack in this sector started on 18 November, coinciding with the attack on Sela in NEFA. The Chinese launched a two-pronged attack on Chushul defences. The Northern prong attacked Gurung Hill and the second prong of the Chinese troops attacked Charlie Company of 13 KUMAON which was the Ahir company at Rezang La, an isolated feature, about 11 km South of Spangur Gap. Rezang La dominated the life line of the Chushul garrison- the road link with Leh that went via Dungti. On 18 November 1962, the Chinese approached the Indian position through the nallahs that came up to the hill top. At around 0500 hours, 13 KUMAON defending Rezang La opened up with every weapon they had. After nearly half an hour of intense firing in the first round, the Chinese took shelter behind boulders. At about 0540 Hr the Chinese opened artillery and mortar fire at the Indian troops. The telephone lines of the battalion HQ got cut and the radio set was destroyed. The fight at Rezang La was hard and bitter. Notwithstanding the disadvantages of climate, terrain and weapons, Major Shaitan Singh and the C Company of 13 KUMAON went all out to make sure their defensive position at Rezang La would make the enemy pay.

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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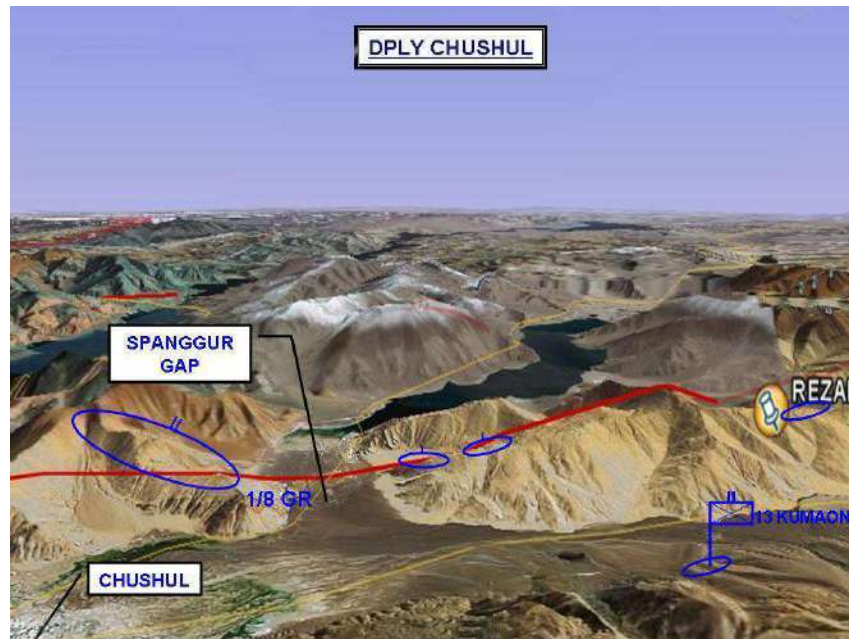
Sketch showing the disposition of Indian troops in the Chushul Valley

Source: Bharat Rakshak, <https://www.bharat-rakshak.com/ARMY/Galleries/Wars/1962/RezangLa/Chushul-Map-18-Nov-62.jpg.html>

On 18 November 1962, Chinese forces bombarded the company position with heavy artillery, mortars, and small arms fire before launching an all-out assault in many waves. Despite the odds, our forces repelled several waves of hostile onslaught. Throughout the action, Major Shaitan Singh moved at great personal risk from one platoon post to another while raising the morale in his platoon posts. He was gravely wounded while doing so, but he continued to encourage and lead his soldiers, who, inspired by his bold example, battled gallantly and inflicted numerous casualties on the enemy. The enemy lost four or five men for every man we lost. When Major Shaitan Singh became incapacitated due to wounds in his arms and abdomen, his troops attempted to rescue him but were met with heavy machine-gun fire. Major Shaitan Singh then instructed his soldiers to abandon him to his fate in order to preserve their own lives.



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Pictorial representation of Chushul valley where 13 KUMAON fought at Rezang La

Source: Bharat Rakshak, <https://www.bharat-rakshak.com/ARMY/Galleries/Wars/1962/RezangLa/Chushul-Looking-East.jpg.html>

The Battle at Rezang La was one of rare battles in military history where Indian soldiers fought till the last and sacrificed their lives. Major Shaitan Singh's exemplary leadership, undaunted determination and conspicuous courage is etched in the pages of Indian history. For his valour in the face of the enemy he was awarded Param Vir Chakra posthumously.



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CITATION

Major Shaitan Singh (IC-6400), 13 KUMAON (Posthumous).
(Effective date of Award: 18 November 1962).

Major Shaitan Singh was commanding a company of an infantry battalion deployed at Rezang La in the Chushul sector at a height of about 17,000 feet. The locality was isolated from the main defended sector and consisted of five platoon-defended position. On 18 November 1962, the Chinese forces subjected the company position to heavy artillery, mortar and small arms fire and attacked it in overwhelming strength in several successive waves. Against heavy odds, our troops beat back successive waves of enemy attack. During the action, Major Shaitan Singh dominated the scene of operations and moved at great personal risk from one platoon post to another sustaining the morale of his hard-pressed platoon posts. While doing so he was seriously wounded but continued to encourage and lead his men, who, following his brave example fought gallantly and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. For every man lost to us, the enemy lost four or five. When Major Shaitan Singh fell disabled by wounds in his arms and abdomen, his men tried to evacuate him but they came under heavy machine-gun fire. Major Shaitan Singh then ordered his men to leave him to his fate in order to save their lives.

Major Shaitan Singh's supreme courage, leadership and exemplary devotion to duty inspired his company to fight almost to the last man.

Reference: Gazette of India, Notification No. 14-Pres./26 January 1963



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2. 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.
3. Ballabh, Anand, Insights into Infantry Regiments: A Basic Factbook. Forward Books publications. New Delhi (2013)

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<https://www.honourpoint.in/profile/major-shaitan-singh-pvc/>
3. Major Shaitan Singh, PVC (indiancc.mygov.in) (Accessed on 02 November 2022)
<https://indiancc.mygov.in/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/mygov-9999999991968419619.pdf>
4. 1962 War: How Major Shaitan Singh and his men fought to defend Rezang La (Accessed on 02 November 2022)
<https://swarajyamag.com/defence/1962-war-how-major-shaitan-singh-and-his-men-fought-to-defend-rezang-la>
5. Major Shaitan Singh remembered on 59th martyrdom in Jodhpur (timesofindia.indiatimes.com) (Accessed on 02 November 2022)
<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/jodhpur/maj-shaitan-singh-remembered-on-59th-martyrdom/articleshow/87788389.cms>
6. Major Shaitan Singh, "The Hero of Rezang La" in 1962 War (Accessed on 02 November 2022)
<https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-shauryastories-major-shaitan-singh-the-hero-of-rezang-la-in-1962-war-2868577>
7. The War Decorated India & Trust (Accessed on 02 November 2022)
<http://twdi.in/node/1074>



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VIDEOS

1. Story of Major Shaitan Singh (Source: Youtube- Aaj Tak)
<https://youtu.be/vmywNzXu34M>
2. A narration of the tale of conspicuous courage displayed by Major Shaitan Singh at Rezang La (Source: Youtube- Navbharat Times)
<https://youtu.be/MWI6k-StSXc>
3. Major Shaitan Singh and Battle of Rezang La (Source: Youtube- StudyIQ)
<https://youtu.be/EppMJel0DJQ>
4. Biography of Major Shaitan Singh's story of Kumaon Regiment's bravery in 1962 Sino India War (Source: Youtube- StudyIQ)
<https://youtu.be/AGtxbbrPtc0>

**Disclaimer³

³ DISCLAIMER:

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MEMORIALS

- 1) A bust of Major Shaitan Singh has been installed in the National War Memorial, New Delhi within the Param Yodha Sthal.



- 2) Statue of Shaitan Singh, in a central square of Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shaitan_Singh





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OTHER INTERESTING RESOURCES⁴ BOOKS

Fig 1: Param Vir by Major General Ian Cardozo

Fig 2: The Brave: Param Vir Chakra by Rachna Bisht Rawat



Fig 1

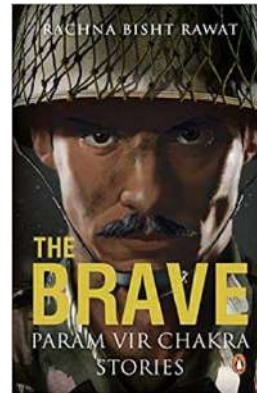


Fig 2

COMICS

Fig 1: Param Vir Chakra- Shaitan Singh, Major General Ian Cardozo

Fig 2: Major Shaitan Singh, Gaurav Sawant

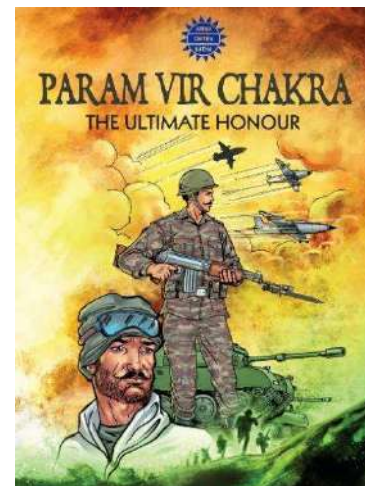
Fig 3: Param Vir Chakra, Amar Chitra Katha



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig

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FILMS

A film based on the story of Major Shaitan Singh was released in 2017 starring Behzaad Khan, Vikas Srivastav and directed by Pankaj Sehgal

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4920122/>

STAMPS/FIRST DAY COVER

First Day cover of Major Shaitan Singh, issued by Army Postal Service on 18 November 1984.



LEGACY

- In honour of Major Shaitan Singh's selfless sacrifice and bravery, in 1980s, the [Shipping Corporation of India](#) (SCI), a [Government of India](#) enterprise under the aegis of the [Ministry of Shipping](#), named fifteen of its [crude oil tankers](#) after him. The tanker MT *Major Shaitan Singh, PVC* was delivered to SCI in 1985, and served for 25 years before being phased out.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shaitan_Singh

- The Officers Colony in Jodhpur is named after Major Shaitan Singh as Shaitan Singh Enclave