



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE



LIEUTENANT COLONEL RAMAKRISHNAN VISHWANATHAN

SERVICE NUMBER	IC-39584M
RANK	Lieutenant Colonel
NAME	Ramakrishnan Vishwanathan
SON OF	Venkatesh Ramakrishna
RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE	Bombay
UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS	18 GRENADIERS
SERVICE	Indian Army
DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION	13 June 1981
AWARD/DATE OF ACTION	Vir Chakra (Posthumous) / 03 June 1999
WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION	Kargil War/Op VIJAY
OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE	



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Lieutenant Colonel Ramakrishnan Vishwanathan was born in Kerala on 12 January 1960 to Venkatesh Ramakrishna. He did his secondary schooling from Kochi. After finishing his schooling, he joined the National Defence Academy (NDA). On completion of his training at the NDA in Pune he went to Indian Military Academy, Dehradun for his advanced training. On 13 June 1981, he was commissioned into the Grenadiers Regiment, of Indian Army.

The Grenadiers regiment was formerly a part of the Bombay Army and later in pre-independence India, the regiment was known as 4th Bombay Grenadiers. They distinguished themselves in two world wars and have won battle honours Gurez, Assal Uttar, Jarpal and Chakra. During the Kargil War, 18 GRENADIERS captured the formidable Tiger Hill complex as well as participated in battles of Hump & Tololing.

Kargil conflict started in 1999 when the Pakistan army surreptitiously occupied the winter vacated posts on Indian side of Line of Control. On 3 May 1999, enemy intrusions were detected and Operation Vijay was launched by the Indian Army to evict the intruders from Indian territory. After two months of violent confrontation, the war came to an end on 26 July 1999. 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 and 18 GRENADIERS was tasked to capture Tololing on 23 May 1999. The Tololing Heights was the deepest penetration beyond the LOC by the Pakistani intruders. During the Kargil War, Lt Col Ramakrishnan Vishwanathan was the Second in Command of 18 GRENADIERS. He fought bravely in the series of attacks to recapture the Tololing heights. 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. 18 GRENADIERS is known as the 'Pole Star Battalion' for its steadfastness in the battlefield. Staying true to their name, within the time frame of five days the battalion acclimatized to the new surroundings of high altitude and launched their first attack on the fifth day. On 22 May 1999 18 GRENADIERS launched their first attack to capture Tololing feature, where enemy maintained a strong position.

On 03 June 1999, Lt Col Ramakrishnan Vishwanathan, demonstrated rare valour by closing in on enemy positions while facing prohibitive hostile automatic fire and severe artillery shelling. He caught the enemy off guard when he advanced along a very challenging route at the height of over 15,000 feet. During the assault the officer sustained several bullet wounds. Despite his injuries, he refused to be evacuated and exhorted his troops to continue fighting. In a close hand-to-hand confrontation, he charged at opposing defences, demolishing three enemy positions and



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eliminating four intruders. In a complete disregard of his personal safety, he preferred being where his men were fighting and led them from the front during assaults on well-fortified enemy positions in Tololing. He, however, succumbed to his injuries making the supreme sacrifice for the nation in the best traditions of the Indian Army.

Due to the efforts of the officer, the battalion could secure a foothold on the enemy location which later facilitated capture of Point 4590. After consistent efforts, the Tololing top was recaptured on 13 June 1999 by 2 Rajputana Rifles.

Lt Col Vishwanathan was affectionately called 'Vishu' by his friends and colleagues, who now remember him as a man who chose to save lives of other injured soldiers over his own. Lt Col Vishwanathan remains an example of extraordinary courage and devotion.

For his supreme sacrifice for the nation and display of conspicuous bravery, Lieutenant Colonel Ramakrishnan Vishwanathan, was awarded Vir Chakra posthumously.



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CITATION

Lieutenant Colonel Ramakrishnan Vishwanathan (IC-39584), 18 GRENADIERS (Posthumous)
(Effective date of the Award: 03rd June, 1999)

During 'OPERATION VIJAY', Lieutenant Colonel Ramakrishnan Vishwanathan was the Second-in-Command of his unit, 18 GRENADIERS, which was conducting operations in the Tololing area of Drass sector.

Lieutenant Colonel Ramakrishnan Vishwanathan displayed rare valour in closing in on enemy positions under prohibitive enemy automatic fire and intense artillery shelling, thus taking the enemy by complete surprise along a very difficult approach and terrain at an altitude of over 15,000 feet.

During the attack, the officer sustained multiple gunshot wounds. In spite of being severely injured he refused to be evacuated and exhorted his troops to press on further. He charged through enemy defences destroying three enemy positions and eliminated four intruders single-handedly in a close hand-to-hand combat.

Due to the efforts of the officer, the Battalion could secure a foothold on the enemy location which later facilitated capture of Point 4590.

Lieutenant Colonel Ramakrishnan Vishwanathan, Second-in-Command, 18 GRENADIERS, disregarded his seniority and preferred being where his men were fighting: and led from the front during assaults on well-fortified enemy positions in Tololing. He, however, succumbed to his injuries making the supreme sacrifice for the Nation in the best traditions of the Indian Army.

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



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2. Kargil 1999: The Impregnable Conquered Lt. Gen Y M Bammi. (2002) Gorkha Publisher
3. From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report (2000) Sage Publications, New Delhi (Pg no 104-105)
4. Singh, Amarinder . (2001). A Ridge Too Far: War in the Kargil heights 1999. Patiala: Motibagh Palace

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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. Honour point: Online memorial for every Indian soldier (Accessed on April 15, 2022)
<https://www.honourpoint.in/profile/lt-col-ramakrishnan-vishwanathan-vrc/>
3. The War Decorated India & Trust (Accessed on April 15, 2022)
<http://twdi.in/node/3444>



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VIDEOS

Recounting the Valour of Col R Vishwanathan (Source: Youtube DD News)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TEh9GYQ0ctU>

NCC honours Kargil War Hero Lt Col Ramakrishnan Vishwanathan, VrC (Source: Official Youtube Channel NCC)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y2gOtQ1ciFg>

**Disclaimer¹

MEMORIAL

A Bust statue of Lt Col R Vishwanathan is installed in Ernakulam, Kerala.



Source: Twitter National Cadet Corps @HQ_DG_NCC

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OTHER INTERESTING RESOURCES²

Special Programme #KargilBattle for the Peaks PART-2 (Source: Youtube Madhu MultiMedia Production)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RgmsO9rXkN8>

Battle of Tololing – 1999 – Kargil War (Source: Youtube History Media-HD)

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

Mount Tololing from Kargil War Memorial (Source: Youtube Wild Films India)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTYCT-IQt5Q>

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