



### **RIFLEMAN MATHAN SINGH**

<b>SERVICE NUMBER</b>	2851209
<b>RANK</b>	Rifleman
<b>NAME</b>	Mathan Singh
<b>SON OF</b>	Shri Siri Chand Singh
<b>RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE</b>	Bhiwani, Haryana
<b>UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS</b>	2 RAJPUTANA RIFLES
<b>SERVICE</b>	Indian Army
<b>DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION</b>	16 June 1962
<b>AWARD/DATE OF ACTION</b>	Vir Chakra/ 06 September 1965
<b>WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION</b>	Indo-Pak War 1965
<b>OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE</b>	

Rifleman Mathan Singh was born to Shri Siri Chand Singh on 16 June 1943 in Bhiwani, Haryana. He was enrolled into the 2 RAJPUTANA RIFLES on 16 June 1962. During the 1965 Indo-Pak War, Rifleman Mathan Singh was awarded the Vir Chakra for a gallantry of high order in the best traditions of the Indian Army.

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 1st, 4th and Medium Machine Gun Battalions fought in Eritrea in North Africa and Italy as part of the famous 4th 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.

The genesis of the 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 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 began on 24 April 1965, when the Pakistan Army attacked Indian 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 the Indo-Pak Border Agreement, 1960 and the international law as per the United Nations Charter. The Pakistani forces subsequently intruded in Kashmir with the launch of Operation Gibraltar.

Dera Baba Nanak is situated along the banks of the Ravi River, approximately 28 km to the North West of Batala in India. On the opposite bank of the river lies the town of Jassar, located about 14 km east of Narowal in Pakistan. There is a 150 m long road-cum-rail bridge over the Ravi River at Dera Baba Nanak. This bridge and a portion of land on the Indian side of the river have been under Pakistani control since the Indo-Pakistani Agreement of 1959, constituting what is known as the "Pak Enclave." Conversely, there is also a small piece of Indian territory situated on the Pakistani side of the river, forming an "Indian Enclave." One significant consequence of this arrangement is that Pakistan has the capability to transport

troops to its Enclave on the Indian side of the river using the Dera Baba Nanak Bridge as needed.

Pakistan held Dera Baba Nanak with 115 Infantry Brigade, 30 Cavalry. One Battalion, 3 Punjab (Pak), was in the Pakistani Enclave. However, the Indian assessment at that time differed from the actual Pakistani deployments. According to the Indian assessment, Pakistan had positioned one infantry Battalion, along with one Field Artillery Battery and a Squadron of tanks, in the Narowal-Jassar area. Additionally, they believed that only two Pakistani Companies would be present in the Pakistani Enclave on the Indian side of the Ravi River.

29 Infantry Brigade from 7 Infantry Division, consisting 2 RAJPUTANA RIFLES, 1/5 GORKHA RIFLES, and 2 MADRAS was operationally responsible for this area . Starting from 21 August 1965, it was put on a four-hour notice status at Ambala for potential operations in the Dera Baba Nanak area.

In the spring of 1965, during the conflict between India and Pakistan, the 2nd RAJPUTANA RIFLES were deployed to defend a significant area near Dera Baba Nanak, which included the Northern part of the Jassar rail-road Bridge on the Ravi River spanning about 4000 yards. On a critical night in September 1965, the Southern end of the Bridge, held by the 1/5 GORKHA RIFLES, was taken over by enemy forces, prompting orders from the Corps Commander Lieutenant General JS Dhillon for the 2nd RAJPUTANA RIFLES to reclaim that section urgently to prevent further enemy advancement towards Dera Baba Nanak.

Rifleman Mathan Singh, serving as the light machine gunner in 'D' Company, played a pivotal role in the Battalion's mission to recapture the Southern end of the Jassar Bridge. Despite strong enemy opposition, by the morning of 07 September, the Bridge was retaken. The enemy, however, having blown up a section of the Bridge, began regrouping for a counter-attack. In a display of extraordinary courage, Mathan Singh and his fellow soldiers from 'D' Company, disregarding personal safety, crawled to the far end of the bridge. There, in broad daylight, they effectively engaged the enemy with Machine Gun fire for nearly thirty minutes, thwarting the impending counter-attack. Thanks to their determination, the enemy's efforts were foiled even before they could launch the assault. After the enemy withdrew and 'D' Company personnel reached the far end of the Bridge, they found Mathan Singh, who had succumbed to seven gunshot wounds, still holding his Light Machine Gun.

Rifleman Mathan Singh's exceptional bravery and unwavering determination went above and beyond the expected duties, leading to the posthumous award of the Vir Chakra in recognition of his extraordinary valour.

## CITATION

2851209 Rifleman Mathan Singh, The Rajputana Rifles (Posthumous)  
(Effective date of award– 6th September 1965)

On the night of the 6th/7th September 1965, during a counterattack on the enemy on the bridge over the river Ravi near Dera Baba Nanak on the India-Pakistan border, Rifleman Mathan Singh was the leader of an LMG unit in one of the sections of Rajputana Rifles. After the battalion had captured its objective, the portion which Rifleman Mathan Singh's section was holding was severely counter-attacked by the enemy. Rifleman Mathan Singh bore the brunt of this attack and kept the enemy at bay. He was severely wounded, but did not leave his gun. When the enemy force attacked again, Rifleman Mathan Singh prevented it from advancing. Meanwhile, the position of our troops on the objective ha been consolidated. When the enemy force gave up further attempts to recapture it, Rifleman Mathan Singh was found dead with his gun still to his shoulder.

By his supreme sacrifice, Rifleman Mathan Singh enabled his company to hold on to its objective. In this action, he displayed gallantry of very high order in the best traditions of the Indian Army.

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

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