



रक्षा मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
DEFENCE



**COLONEL PRABHU NATH PRASAD (Then MAJOR)**

<b>SERVICE NUMBER</b>	IC-39610H
<b>RANK (At the time of Award)</b>	Major
<b>NAME</b>	Prabhu Nath Prasad
<b>SON OF</b>	Ganesh Prasad Sah
<b>RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE</b>	Nashik, Maharashtra
<b>UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS</b>	ARMY AVIATION 663 R&O SQUADRON
<b>SERVICE</b>	Indian Army
<b>DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION</b>	13 June 1981
<b>AWARD/DATE OF ACTION</b>	Vir Chakra / 13 May 1999
<b>WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION</b>	Kargil War / Op VIJAY
<b>OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE</b>	Sena Medal add year awarded Vashisht Sewa Medal add year awarded COAS Commendation Card and GOC-in-C Commendation Card



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Colonel (then Major) Prabhu Nath Prasad was born on 27 February 1961, in Sheoraj Pur, West Champaran, Bihar to Mr Ganesh Prasad Sah. He completed his schooling from Sainik School, Tilaiya Bihar. After completing his secondary education, he joined the National Defence Academy (NDA) and got commissioned into the Army Aviation Corps on 13 June 1981. He currently lives in Nashik, Maharashtra. During the Kargil War he was part of 663 R&O SQUADRON and was deployed in the Drass Sub-Sector.

In 1984, the Indian Army's Northern Command inducted the HAL Cheetah during the Siachen Glacier conflict. Three years later on 02 November 1987, erstwhile Air Observation Post Squadron of the Indian Artillery were detached to form Army Aviation Corps. The Corps supported ground units by carrying men and material to the 70-kilometre (43 mi) Siachen Glacier until the 2003 ceasefire. During the late-1980s Indian intervention in the Sri Lanka in Operation Pawan, the Corps was employed extensively. A unit of the Army Aviation Corps also operated in Somalia as part of United Nations Operation in Somalia II from October 1993 to November 1994. During the operation, the Corps flew over 2,000 hours accident-free with 100-percent serviceability in desert-like conditions. During OPERATION VIJAY, 663 Reconnaissance & Observation Squadron (R&O) under the Command of Colonel D S Yadav was affiliated with 8 Mountain Division and 663 R&O Squadron under the Command of Colonel S P Singh was affiliated to 3 Infantry Division. Together both the Squadrons flew for over 2,500 missions with over 2700 flying hours. Throughout the war they performed diverse tasks and were awarded Unit Citations by the Chief Of Army Staff (CAOS).

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 Kargil war of 1999 was fought 52 years after independence. 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 Indian territory<sup>2</sup>. After two months of violent confrontation, the war came to an end on 26 July 1999.

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

<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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Major Prabhu Nath Prasad, SM, of 32 R&O Flight (663 R&O Squadron) was flying an aerial reconnaissance mission to locate intrusions in the Drass Sub-Sector on 13 May 1999. On spotting a foot track coming in from across the LoC, the officer flew low and followed it up to a mountain feature called Black Rock (14,700 feet) adjacent to Tololing. Suddenly, Major Prasad and his co-pilot discovered that they were less than 300 metres away from a group of 15 to 20 Pakistani intruders who were rapidly closing in. Even as Major Prasad began to turn away, the intruders fired a rocket at the helicopter. Major Prasad instinctively dipped the nose of the helicopter, increasing the helicopter's speed almost instantaneously. This evasive maneuver due to reflex action caused the rocket to miss the helicopter by 10 to 15 metres. Displaying exceptional presence of mind and superb flying skills, he succeeded in flying the helicopter out of harm's way and immediately called for artillery fire on the intruders' location. Though the enemy continued to fire at him with machine guns and an armed Puma helicopter of Pakistan also joined the fray, Major Prasad skillfully controlled the fire of 155 mm Bofors guns and ensured that about 40 shells landed on the enemy position, killing seven to 10 intruders. This close-range reconnaissance proved extremely useful in fixing the forward positions of the intruders and inflicting casualties on them. For his masterly flying under fire, professional excellence and conspicuous courage beyond the call of duty, Major Prabhu Nath Prasad, SM, was awarded the Vir Chakra.



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## CITATION

IC-3960 Major Prabhu Nath Prasad, Sena Medal, Army Aviation 32 R&O Flight  
(Effective date of the award: 13<sup>th</sup> May, 1999)

While on an aerial reconnaissance mission to locate intrusion in Drass Sub-Sector on 13 May 1999, Major Prabhu Nath Prasad, as captain of the helicopter, taking clue from a foot -track on snow coming in from across the LOC, he, in a daredevil venture, followed it to the black rock feature at a height of about 14,700 feet adjacent to the TOLOLING height against heavy enemy machine gun fire. No sooner he had closed in while orbiting, and was in the eyeball contact with 15 to 20 intruders, then they fired a rocket at the helicopter when it was barely 300 metres away

Major Prabhu Nath Prasad with his unparalleled reflex action, undaunted courage and grit, instantly dipped the helicopter nose down and with that appreciable increase in speed out manoeuvred the rocket which went past the tail of the helicopter missing it just by 10-15 metres.

Displaying exceptional presence of mind and tactful flying skill, he immediately turned the helicopter with a steep back in the reciprocal direction to get out of the killing ground/airspace and flew back to immediately call for artillery fire.

The officer brought in accurate artillery fire of 40 rounds from Bofors guns despite continuously being engaged by machine gun fire from enemy position at Tololing and interference by an armed PUMA helicopter of the enemy which intruded overhead during the Air shoot, Major Prabhu Nath Prasad neutralised/destroyed the enemy position killing 7-10 intruders within just 20-25 minutes of the rocket attack. Having suffered this great loss, the intruders had abandoned the feature by the next day.

Major Prabhu Nath Prasad, thus, showed exemplary courage and dedication beyond the call of duty in the presence of the enemy.

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



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