



रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE



MAJOR GENERAL (Then, LIEUTENANT COLONEL) KASHMIRI LAL RATTAN

SERVICE NUMBER	IC-7661
RANK (At the time of Award)	Major General (Then Lieutenant Colonel)
NAME	Kashmiri Lal Rattan
SON OF	Babu Ram Rattan
RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE	Una, Himachal Pradesh
UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS	6 SIKH
SERVICE	Indian Army
DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION	11 December 1955
AWARD/DATE OF ACTION	Maha Vir Chakra / 03 December 1971
WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION	1971 Indo Pak War
OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE	

Major General Kashmiri Lal Rattan was born on 07 September 1931, to Shri Babu Ram Rattan, in Una District of Himachal Pradesh. He was the eldest son among the four siblings, he had two younger brothers and one sister. Lieutenant Colonel Rattan pursued his schooling from Daulatpur Government School. Thereafter, he went to the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun and was commissioned into the 4th Battalion of the Sikh Regiment on 11 December 1955. After serving in the unit for six years, he was posted to 6 SIKH Regiment at Meerut Cantonment on the re-raising of the Unit in 1962.

Lieutenant Colonel Rattan married Mrs Brij Rattan on 14 October 1958, and they had two sons. He took over the command of the 6 SIKH Regiment on 10 April 1970,

The Sikh Regiment is one of the highest decorated Regiments of the Indian Army. It came into existence on 01 August 1846, with the raising of Regiment of Ferozepore Sikhs and Ludhiana Sikhs by Captain G Tebbs and Lieutenant Colonel P Gordon respectively. They participated effectively in the 1857 First War of Independence. This war proved to be beneficial for the Sikhs as it revealed their valour and fighting tenacity. They soon earned a rank of seniority over other Indian Sepoys. Under the British Indian Army, the Sikh Regiment fought gallantly in a number of war and battles including the Battle of Saragarhi in which they left an indelible mark in the Regiment's history. By 1914 the Sikh Regiment was deployed as part of British Indian Army for operations in World War I. The Regiment served in all theatres of operations and earned 28 battle honours. The modern Sikh Regiment traces its roots directly from the 11th Sikh Regiment of the British Indian Army. When transferred to the Indian Army post-Independence, the numeral 11 was removed and new battalions were added. 1 SIKH was later mechanised in 1970 and re-designated as 4 MECHANISED INFANTRY on 02 April 1979.

India gained Independence in 1947, and the partition resulted in the creation of Pakistan. The foundation of Pakistan was laid by the Muslim League based on the two-nation theory. Pakistan comprised two wings- East and West Pakistan which were geographically separated by 1600 kms Indian territory. The two wings of Pakistan were culturally and linguistically different and the diversities between the two wings could not be bridged by an emotional appeal to religion. Consequently, fissures started erupting in the political body of Pakistan soon after the Independence and with each passing year it widened. In the absence of appropriate defence arrangements, the people of East Pakistan felt isolated and abandoned. Finally, the malfeasance of Pakistani leadership during Cyclone Bhola and the overwhelming support for the Awami League in the 1970 elections, proved the proverbial last straw on the camel's back.² The Awami League led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (of East Pakistan) secured an absolute majority in the general elections held in December 1970. This entitled the League to form a Government in Pakistan. However, Pakistan's military rulers denied this democratic right to the Awami League, in connivance with the PPP, led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. This arbitrary act of government caused deep resentment among the population of East Pakistan resulting in widespread protests. When the slide became unmanageable, the Pakistani rulers resorted to a midnight crackdown on 25 March 1971. The government ordered a military crackdown and the Pakistan army under Lieutenant General Tikka Khan unleashed a reign of terror and massacred thousands of Bengalis in a genocide codenamed 'Operation Searchlight'. Pakistan launched its attack against India on 03 December 1971. The Indo-Pak War of 1971 was the first war when the Indian Government engaged all three services on a large scale.

On 03 December 1971, Pakistan opened Western Front with wide-spread pre-emptive strikes to gain impetus for the ground attacks that were to follow. At 0500 hours on the same day, two Pakistani aircraft flew over Poonch and fired a few rockets at the administrative base of 6 SIKH causing some damage. Pakistan's 12 Infantry Division had launched its offensive against 93 Infantry Brigade attacking the Durga, Banwat and Doda defences with the aim to capture Poonch. Throughout the night of 03 and 04 December, there was heavy shelling by enemy on all forward picquets.



Poonch Heights

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/photos/picture-gallery-others/6-sikh-battalion-celebrates-44th-anniversary-of-battle-honour-of-defence-of-poonch/>

The Punch Sector was defended by 93 Infantry Brigade, under the command of Brigadier Anant Natu. Kalai Bridge on the Punch River linked it with the 25 Infantry Division. The Brigade had divided the Sector into three Sub-Sectors before the commencement of war as follows: (i) Gulpur area to the West of Betal Nala ii) Banwat area to the East of Betal Nala (iii) Doda area to the East of Dorunli Nala.

In its overall plan, the Brigade had assigned the responsibility of depending on Gulpur to 1/4 GORKHA RIFLES, of Banwat to 6 SIKH and 8 JAT, and of Doda to 11 JAK Militia. Subsequently, 13 MAHAR (ex 33 Infantry Brigade) was also brought into Punch in mid-November 1971. Pakistan had started preparing for an offensive in the Punch Sector in November 1971 and her troops had been seen building-up in Kahuta area. Heavy vehicular movement, construction of new tracks, repair of old roads, digging of picquets and increased movement of troops and loaded mules, all indicated their offensive designs in the Sector. After

the outbreak of war on 03 December, they tried to seek a breakthrough in all Sub-Sectors. However, as the Indians were well prepared, Pakistanis failed in their objective.

The Banwat Sector included a hill complex that dominated the Poonch town. The defence of this Sector was necessary to protect the town from the East and North-East. Picquets 405, which covered Tund and Helipad. This Picquets and Picquets 406 and 406A were considered grounds of tactical importance and 6 SIKH was tasked to defend the area. To the south of 6 SIKH, 8 JAT was located. It was put under the command of the 93 Infantry Brigade to give depth to the defences of 6 SIKH. Lieutenant Colonel Kashmiri Lal Rattan was the Commanding Officer of the 6 SIKH.

Pakistan was well prepared to attack the Indian Brigade from the northeastern side. Chand Tekri and Munawri Tekri, nicknamed 'Raja' and 'Rani' respectively, were the two vital positions held by the Pakistanis in the area. On the afternoon of 03 December, 7 POK troops deployed at 'Raja' and 'Rani' picquets were relieved by regular troops (coy ex-51 Punjab). The same day, Pakistanis started intensive shelling of the Indian defended area including Helipad and Tund, leading to disruption of all line communications near the Brigade Signal Exchange.

6 SIKH had anticipated an attack because of the Pakistani build-up and the development of a road from Kahuta to 'Rani' Picquet. It had, therefore, prepared extra platoon positions outside the existing minefields to give depth to the defence positions. Overhead shelters had been put up on the trenches. The mine density on all approaches to platoon and company defended localities was three. The engineers had constructed a road from Punch to the base of the Brigade Maintenance Area to facilitate speedy replenishment of ammunition and evacuation of casualties.

As expected, the Pakistanis launched a determined attack on Helipad and Tund between 0300 and 0600 hours on the night of 03/04 December, with three Battalions (7 POK, 5 FF Rifles and 14 POK). There was fierce hand-to-hand fighting, lasting nearly two hours. Helipad fell to Pakistani troops at 1030 hours and the remnants of the two defending Platoons withdrew to the main defences. The Platoons facing Kalas and Kasba approaches, beat back the attack and took a heavy toll of the Pakistani troops. In view of the mounting threat to the area, two Platoons of 8 JAT were sent to reinforce them. The attackers then tried to isolate the area by establishing a roadblock between Piquets 405 and 406 at 1500 hours, but their attempt was foiled by heavy artillery and MMG fire.



Lieutenant Colonel Kashmiri Lal Rattan

Source: https://www.facebook.com/p/Late-Maj-Gen-K-L-Rattan-MVC-100066371418545/?paipv=0&eav=Afb2s1O6X5le1qrvDvFY4PfpFQN-SUIHMunGdx5LEI7dXvGGtczL4P8BeBdptcUTpuY&_rdr.

At 1530 hours on 04 December, the Pakistanis moved a Mountain Battery (3.7-inch Howitzers) loaded on 40 mules to the Bhai-Bhai area and resumed the offensive on the night of 04/05 December. They managed to disrupt the Indian lines of communication. The attack was, however, beaten back again by effective shelling and air strikes. Though Pakistanis remained in occupation of Helipad, they could not advance further in the face of intense MMG and LMG fire. The gunners did a magnificent job. The Indian artillery, in the battle of Punch comprised two Mountain Batteries, one Field Battery, two Light Batteries and one Medium Battery.



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Artillery shelling continued from the Pakistani side and the Pakistanis had orders to capture Punch by the evening of 10 December, as revealed by Lieutenant Golap Khan, a Bengali officer of 51 (Pak) Punjab, who crossed over to India on 07 December. But their efforts failed, and Indian troops cleared the area Northeast of Tund and also the Kasba Spur. In view of the losses, Pakistanis broke contact with Picquet 405 and also withdrew from Helipad at 0500 hours on 06 December. Helipad was reoccupied at 0900 hours by two Platoons of 6 SIKH. The area was found covered with splattered blood and scattered ammunition.

The Pakistanis then formed up with two Companies, each on Helipad, Kasba and Kalas approaches, and tried to occupy the Helipad again at 2235 hours on 07 December. They were dispersed by heavy artillery fire. Another attempt made by them at 0200 hours on 09 December was also foiled.



Commanding officer with troops after recapture of helipad.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/photos/picture-gallery-others/6-sikh-battalion-celebrates-44th-anniversary-of-battle-honour-of-defence-of-poonch/>

Lieutenant Colonel Rattan organised the defences with professional competence and skill. From 03 December to 06 December 1971, the enemy launched a series of fierce attacks in strength against his defended area. On each of these occasions, he positioned himself in the most threatened locality and unmindful of the heavy enemy shelling and small arms fire, moved from bunker to bunker encouraging and inspiring his men to beat back the enemy attacks inflicting heavy losses. Throughout this action, Lieutenant Colonel Kashmiri Lal Rattan displayed conspicuous bravery and exemplary leadership.



Commanding Officer with captured Pakistani weapons

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/photos/picture-gallery-others/6-sikh-battalion-celebrates-44th-anniversary-of-battle-honour-of-defence-of-poonch/>



Lieutenant Colonel Kashmiri Lal Rattan being awarded the Maha Vir Chakra

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/photos/picture-gallery-others/6-sikh-battalion-celebrates-44th-anniversary-of-battle-honour-of-defence-of-poonch/>

Lieutenant Colonel KL Rattan, the CO of 6 SIKH, was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra and his battalion won five Vir Chakras and two Mention-in-Despatches for gallantry in the battle of

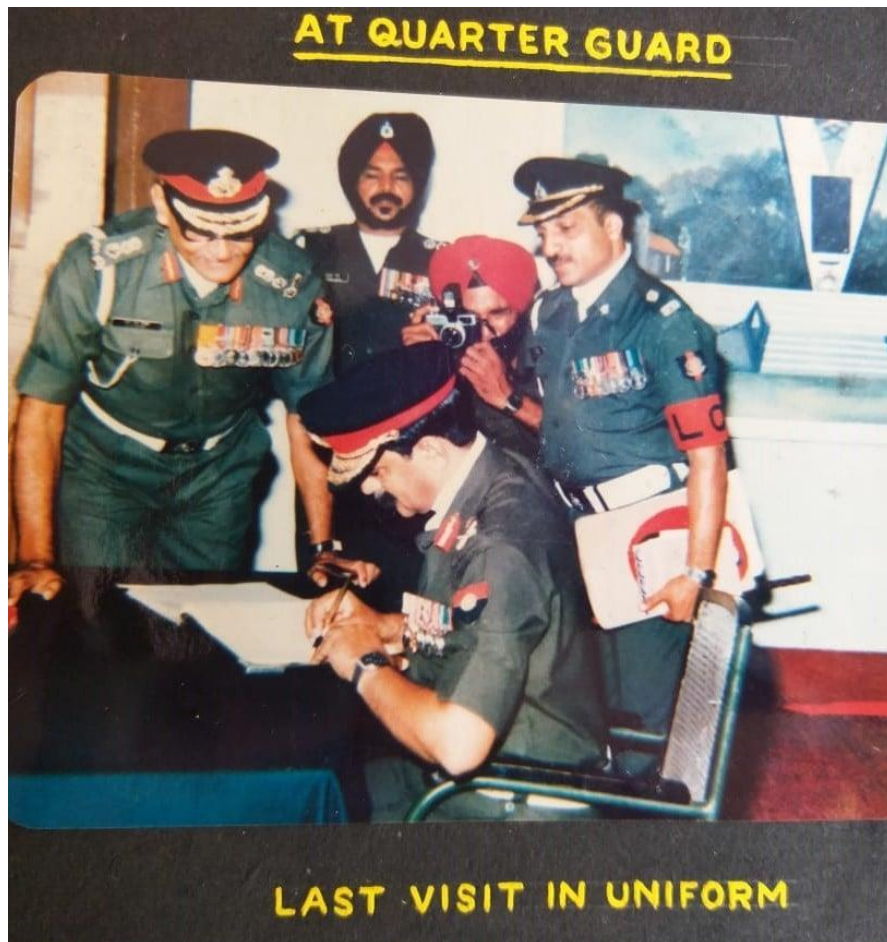
Punch. The Pakistan death toll was estimated at 309 men (7 POK Battalion-74, 5 FF Rifles-One officer, three JCOs and 70 ORs and 51 (Pak) Punjab-One JCO and 60 OR's). The casualties suffered by 14 POK are not known. Casualties of 6 SIKH included eight killed and 33 wounded.



Major General Rattan with Admiral Nanda and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi

Source: https://www.facebook.com/p/Late-Maj-Gen-K-L-Rattan-MVC-100066371418545/?paipv=0&eav=Afb2s1O6X5le1qrvDvFY4PfpFQN-SUIHMunGdx5LEI7dXvGGtczL4P8BeBdptcUTpuY&_rdr.

He relinquished command of the unit on 12 July, 1972, and subsequently served as a Battalion Commander at the Indian Military Academy (IMA) from 1972 to 1975, an institution he had previously attended as a Gentleman Cadet. He then had the honor of leading the 6 SIKH Regiment in Dhana as part of the 36 Infantry Division from 02 June, 1975 to 16 December, 1975.



At Quarter Guard

Source: https://www.facebook.com/p/Late-Maj-Gen-K-L-Rattan-MVC-100066371418545/?paipv=0&eav=Afb2s1O6X5le1qrvDvFY4PfpFQN-SUIHMunGdx5LEI7dXvGGtczL4P8BeBdptcUTpuY&_rdr.



Major General (then Lieutenant Colonel) Kashmiri Lal Rattan, MVC seated on the extreme left with General K Sundarji and Shri Arun Singh at Infantry School, Mhow

Source: https://www.facebook.com/p/Late-Maj-Gen-K-L-Rattan-MVC-100066371418545/?paipv=0&eav=Afb2s1O6X5le1qrvDvFY4PfpFQN-SUIHMunGdx5LEI7dXvGGtczL4P8BeBdptcUTpuY&_rdr.

He later commanded the 24 Infantry Brigade in Tamalpur, Assam, where his Brigade earned high praise for their excellent performance. Following this, he was then posted as Deputy GOC of the MG & G Area in Mumbai and later served as Deputy Commandant of the Infantry School in MHOW, Madhya Pradesh. He retired from the Army Headquarters on 30 September, 1987, as Provost Marshal.



Lieutenant Colonel Rattan playing golf

Source: https://www.facebook.com/p/Late-Maj-Gen-K-L-Rattan-MVC-100066371418545/?paipv=0&eav=Afb2s1O6X5le1qrvDvFY4PfpFQN-SUIHMunGdx5LEI7dXvGGtczL4P8BeBdptcUTpuY&_rd.



Inter Battalion Cross Country Championship

Source: https://www.facebook.com/p/Late-Maj-Gen-K-L-Rattan-MVC-100066371418545/?paipv=0&eav=Afb2s1O6X5le1qrvDvFY4PfpFQN-SUIHMunGdx5LEI7dXvGGtczL4P8BeBdptcUTpuY&_rd.

Post his retirement he served as the Chairman of Himachal Pradesh Public Services Commission.



Major General (then Lieutenant Colonel) Kashmiri Lal Rattan retiring.

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Major General (then Lieutenant Colonel) Kashmiri Lal Rattan retiring.

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Major General Kashmiri Lal Rattan passed away on 16 May 2020 in Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

CITATION

**Lieutenant Colonel Kashmiri Lal Rattan
(IC-7661), Sikh Regiment
(Effective date of award—3rd December 1971)**

Lieutenant Colonel Kashmiri Lal Rattan was commanding a battalion of the Sikh Regiment in 'Punch' in the Jammu and Kashmir Sector. His battalion was assigned the task of holding a feature, which was the key to our defences in this sector. He organised the defences with professional competence and skill. From 3rd December to 6th December 1971, the enemy launched a series of fierce attacks in strength against his defended area. On each of these occasions, Lieutenant Colonel Kashmiri Lal Rattan positioned himself in the most threatened locality and unmindful of the heavy enemy shelling and small arms fire, moved from bunker to bunker encouraging and inspiring his men to beat back the enemy attacks inflicting heavy losses.

Throughout this action, Lieutenant Colonel Kashmiri Lal Rattan displayed conspicuous bravery and exemplary leadership.

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