



रक्षा मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
**DEFENCE**



### MAJOR MAHANDAR SINGH CHAUDHARY

<b>SERVICE NUMBER</b>	IC-8164
<b>RANK</b>	Major
<b>NAME</b>	Mahandar Singh Chaudhary
<b>SON OF</b>	Chaudhary Pratap Singh
<b>RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE</b>	Jalandhar, Punjab (seems incorrect, he was from Rohtak)
<b>UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS</b>	9 PUNJAB
<b>SERVICE</b>	Indian Army
<b>DATE OF ENROLMENT/COMMISSION</b>	09 December 1956
<b>AWARD/DATE OF ACTION</b>	Maha Vir Chakra (Posthumous) / 10 October 1962
<b>WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION</b>	1962 Sino-India War
<b>OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE</b>	



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Major Mahander Singh Chaudhary hailed from Dubaldhan Majra village in Rohtak division of Jhajjar district in Haryana and was born on 07 May 1930. His father Chaudhary Partap Singh was a PCS officer in joint Punjab and his mother Smt Sahib Kaur, was a homemaker. He lost his father at the age of seven and was brought up by his maternal uncle Major Ameer Singh, a former Minister of Haryana. After completing his education at Punjab University, Major Chaudhary was commissioned into 9 PUNJAB of the Indian Army on 09 December 1956. After serving for some time, he got married in the year 1959, to Ms Shankutla, daughter of an Army officer Colonel LC Khajla from Rohtak.



*Mrs. Shakuntala, widow of Major Mahander Singh Chaudhary receiving Maha Vir Chakra on his behalf from then President Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan.*

Source: Honourpoint

Later in the year 1961, as years of negotiation did not yield any result, the Indian government decided to deploy the Armed Forces in an effort to evict the Portuguese out of Goa and other Enclaves. Consequently "Op Vijay" was launched in December 1961 and Major Chaudhary was part of that operation. By 1962, he had served for nearly six years with his unit in different field locations and had developed into a tough soldier and fine officer with commendable leadership skills.

The PUNJAB Regiment, is amongst the oldest Regiments in the Indian Army and traces its origins back to 1805 when the First Battalion was raised under the Maharaja of Patiala. Originally, the Regiment comprised four British-raised Battalions. The numbers and titles of the Battalions changed during the successive reorganisations of the Madras Presidency Army, the British Indian Army and the Indian Army during 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century. After the 1857, the British applied the martial races theory and North Indian troops replaced the South Indians.



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Post Independence, the PUNJAB Regiment of India was formed from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Punjab Regiment of the British Indian Army. In 1951, four battle experienced Battalions of the former Princely states of Punjab, joined the Regiment. These Battalions were from the Jind and Nabha State Forces and the first and second Battalions of Patiala Infantry. They were designated as the 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th battalions of the PUNJAB Regiment. Additional Battalions have been raised since 1963. Since 1947, the PUNJAB Regiment has taken part in various battle and wars, winning numerous honours and awards for the same. The Regimental Centre of the Regiment was first raised at Loralai and was shifted to Multan in 1922, Meerut in 1929 and at last to its present location in Ramgarh, Jharkhand in 1976.<sup>1</sup> During the Sino-India war of 1962, the Regiment was deployed in the North-East Frontier Agency Sector (NEFA) as part of 7 Infantry Brigade of 4 Infantry Division and fought valiantly in the crucial battles in Namka Chu Sector.

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- Rezag 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 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.<sup>2</sup>

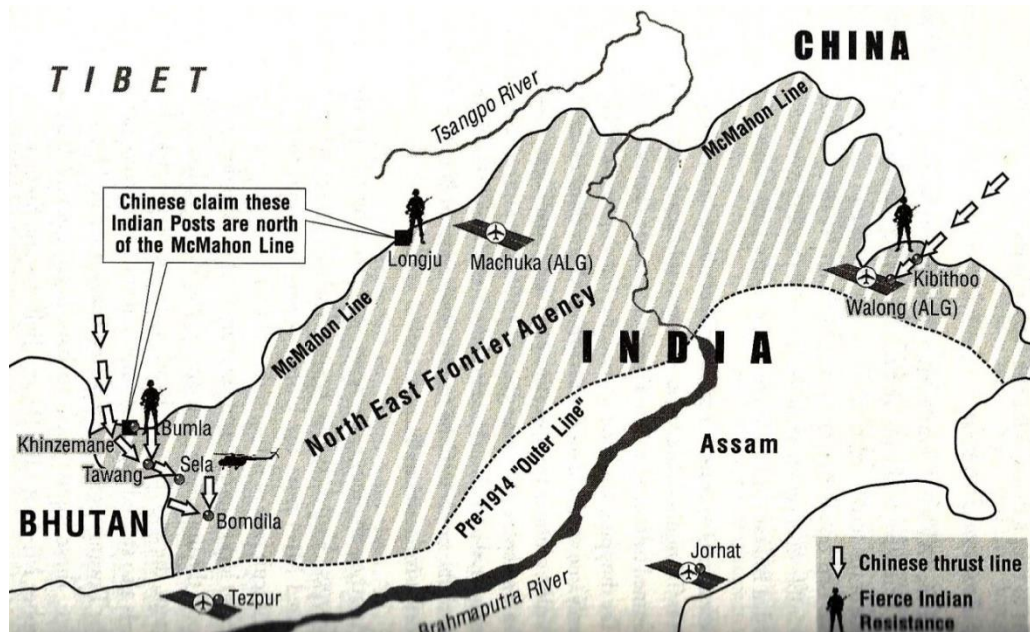
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<sup>1</sup> Ballabh, Anand, Insights into Infantry Regiments: A Basic Factbook. Forward Books publications. New Delhi (2013)

<sup>2</sup> 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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*North East Frontier Agency during Sino India War 1962*

Source: India's Wars: A Military History 1947 -1971. Arjun Subramaniam (2016) Harper Collins Publishers. Uttar Pradesh, India.

During the 1962 Sino-India War, the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) was a hub of enemy invasions. In early September, the Government of India ordered immediate evacuation of enemy troops from the NEFA. On 24 September Lieutenant General Umrao Singh, who was the Corps Commander conveyed the orders to Major General Niranjan Prasad, GOC 4 Infantry Division who then made sure that the energies of Indian Army in the area was directed to execute "OPERATION LEGHORN". Brigadier JP Dalvi, who was the Commander of the 7 Infantry Brigade, along with Major General Niranjan Prasad prepared a plan with a modest aim of capturing a small feature on Thag La slopes, and Tseng-Jong, then roll down West to East to the Chinese positions on the Namka Chu. However soon the responsibility of NEFA was handed over to IV CORPS commanded by Lieutenant General B M Kaul, the CGS. Acting upon the Brigadier Dalvi's plan for Op LEGHORN, on 08 October Lieutenant General Kaul began his opening moves by ordering 2 RAJPUT and 1/9 GORKHA RIFLES down from Tsangdhar to join other troops along the river line. Both the Battalions reached the river line on 09 October 1962.

The plan was to evict the Chinese from Thag La" by 7 Infantry Brigade. Thag La Peak, was where they would take positions behind and dominating the Chinese, as the Chinese had not yet occupied it. Lieutenant General Kaul chose the approach through Tseng- Jong which would be occupied by 9 PUNJAB. One Platoon of 'D' Company 9 PUNJAB, under Major



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M S. Chaudhary left for Tseng-Jong and established Bridgehead on the North Bank of Namkha Chu. The Platoon occupied a location at 1500 hours on 08 October. One Section of this Platoon then occupied Karpole II height next morning. One Platoon Section of 'A' Coy 9 PUNJAB then left to for Tseng-Jong to reinforce Major Chaudhary's Platoon on 09 October 1962.



*Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru with troops at a forward position during the 1962 India-China war.*

Source: <https://www.indiasentinel.com/opinion/1962-india-china-war-how-scholars-misled-indians-a-case-study-5846>

Although Chinese response to these moves didn't come instantly, but a strong Chinese response came on 10 October 1962. When groups of men from 2 RAJPUT were moving up the Southern Bank of the Namkha Chu, making for Bridge III on their way to Log Bridge - the planned crossing point on the way to Yutso La - a full Battalion of Chinese emerged from their positions and moved quickly down the Ridge, to form up for an attack on, Tseng-Jong. At the same time the Indian position at Tseng-Jong came under fire from heavy mortars. At around 0800 hours approximately 800 Chinese attacked the 9 PUNJAB position at Tseng-Jong from the East and North-East. After a heavy exchange of fire for about 45 minutes, the attack was repulsed. However, the enemy soon re-formed for a second time and started assaulting the position at around 0930 Hours. A Section of 9 PUNJAB under Havildar Malkiat Singh on Karpola II had moved close to the flank of the Chinese. The Section opened fire on the Chinese and completely surprised them. While the Chinese were caught in the cross-fire of Light Machine Guns and suffered heavy casualties, they reacted and opened Heavy Mortar fire on the Section. The Section was subsequently asked to withdraw.

Major Mahandar Singh Chaudhary contacted his Battalion Commander Lieutenant Colonel R N Misra, on wireless and informed him that, as the enemy was forming up again, it would be difficult for his men to hold the ground unless supported by Medium Machine Guns and Mortars from Bridge 4. Colonel Misra agreed to give fire support, but it was turned down by



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Brigadier Dalvi after consultations with Divisional and Corps Commanders. Brigadier Dalvi informed the Battalion Commander that reinforcements from 2 RAJPUT were already on the way.

The enemy assaulted the position a third time at 1200 hours from three sides- North, East and West, with 82 mm Mortars mm mortars, automatic weapons. Hand to hand fighting developed. Major M S Chaudhary insufficient time to dig in and coordinate the defences, he stood his ground with the small arms ammunition at his disposal and kept the enemy at bay for more than nine hours. Realising that the platoon at Tseng-Jong was no more position to hold the ground, at around 1250 hours the Brigade Commander issued the withdrawal order. After which Major M S Chaudhary was ordered to withdraw South of the Log Bridge which he did successfully. Although he was wounded, he refused to be evacuated and continued to be a source of great inspiration to his men. throughout this and in the subsequent operations of 20 October 1962. In the latter battle, he inflicted some 100 casualties on the enemy. However, during the war, he went missing in action. For his determination and grit, he was awarded Maha Vir Chakra posthumously.



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## CITATION

IC-8164 MAHANDER SINGH CHAUDHARY, 9 PUNJAB. (*Missing*)  
(Effective date of award-10 October 1962)

Major M. S. Chaudhary was ordered to establish with two platoons a post at Tseng-Jong, north of the log bridge in NEFA. On 10 October 1962, this post was assaulted by large number of Chinese forces of about a battalion strength. Although Major Chaudhary post: had not had sufficient time to dig in and coordinate the defences, he stood his ground with the small: arms ammunition at his Disposal and kept the enemy at bay for more than nine hours, after which time he was ordered to withdraw South of the log bridge which he did successfully. Although he was wounded." he refused to be evacuated and continued to be a. source of great inspiration to his men. throughout this and. the subsequent operation of 20ch October 1962. In the latter battle, he inflicted some 100 casualties on the enemy.

Major Chaudhary displayed courage and leadership of high order.

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



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## VIDEOS

INDO-CHINA 1962 WAR|ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE (SOURCE: PRASAR BHARTI YOUTUBE)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pl8exz7ifuw&t=123s>

DNA: Analysing the unforgettable India-China war of 1962 (Source: YouTube Zee News)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79-wYad\\_j9A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79-wYad_j9A)

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