



SUBEDAR MAJOR & HONY CAPTAIN PREM SINGH (THEN NAIK)

SERVICE NUMBER	3946403
RANK	Subedar Major & Hony Captain (Then Naik)
NAME	Prem Singh
SON OF	Shri Labh Singh
RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE	Kehnwal, Mandi, Himachal Pradesh
UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS	3 Dogra
SERVICE	Indian Army
DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION	23 November 1955
AWARD/DATE OF ACTION	06 September 1965
WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION	Indo-Pakistan war of 1965
OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE	

Naik Prem Singh was born to Labh Singh on 01 July 1936 in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh. He was commissioned into the DOGRA Regiment on 23 November 1955. Naik Prem Singh was awarded the #VirChakra on 06 September 1965.

The DOGRA Regiment, raised in 1877 is one of the older infantry regiments of the Indian Army. The regiment traces its roots directly from the 17th Dogra Regiment of the British Indian Army. After World War I, the British Indian government restructured the army, moving from Regiments with a single Battalion to multi -Battalion Regiments. In 1945, it shed the numeral '17' and became Dogra Regiment. The DOGRA Regiment has troops from Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and the Northern Districts of Punjab. Their Regimental war cry is "Jwala Mata Ki Jai" (Victory to Goddess Jwala). The Dogras have participated in all the wars and conflicts fought by the Indian Army since independence and winning laurels. General NC Vij, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM who was the 21st Chief of the Army also belonged to the DOGRA Regiment.

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.

In 1965, 93 Infantry Brigade under Brigadier Zora Singh launched Operation Faulad to capture the picquets, located on the hill features that lay between Punch and Kahuta. The enemy picquets were swamped with MMGs and shellproof bunkers, and the approaches to these picquets were shielded with MMGs, guns and mortars.

The Poonch - Haji Pir Road was under the control of two enemy posts, known as Raja and Rani. Raja Post was situated 1.5 kilometers to the North of our own Post, which was designated as 405. The gap between the front lines was merely one kilometer. Rani Post was an additional kilometer to the North West of Raja. Capturing these two Posts was essential for securing the Poonch - Uri connection. After the capture of Haji Pir the entire focus was on capturing these two Posts. The plan was for Brigadier Zora Singh to advance along a series of dominating features that included Raja and Rani and link up with Brigadier ZC Bakshi's 68 Mountain Brigade on the Poonch _ Kahuta-Haji Pir – Uri axis.

The picquets were defended by a Battalion (less a Company), with two 3.7-inch Howitzer and two 81 mm Mortars in support. The soldiers, armed with automatic weapons, were positioned in well-fortified shelters that could withstand artillery shelling. Furthermore, the outposts were fortified with barbed wire and mines. In short, both picquets were turned into miniature fortresses.

During the night of 05/06 September 1965, a simultaneous attack was launched on Raja and Rani picquets by 2 SIKH and 3 DOGRA respectively. 3 RAJ RIF was in reserve and the attack was supported by 42 Field Regiment and 3.7 mm Pack Howitzers of 75(Patiala) Mountain Battery. 3 DOGRA was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel RB Nair. Naik Prem Singh was leading Section Commander of B Company – entrusted with the task of capturing a strongly held Pakistani Post. As the approach to the objective lay along a steep and slippery slope, the assaulting Dogras had to go crawling. Along their way, they encountered a minefield, but undeterred, they continued their slow and cautious approach. After a night of relentless marching, despite facing heavy enemy machine gun fire, the Company managed to reach the barbed wire barricade in front of the enemy's position.

Recognizing that any delay at this point would result in significant casualties for their side, Naik Prem Singh displayed exceptional bravery. He courageously moved forward to cut a gap in the wire, allowing his company to advance. In the process, he was struck by a bullet, and his left hand suffered a grievous injury from a mine detonation. Despite his injuries, he crawled up to the enemy Machine Gun bunker, removed a grenade, pulled out the pin, and threw it into the bunker. This action resulted in the immediate elimination of all the enemy personnel inside the bunker.

Naik Prem Singh lost consciousness due to significant blood loss. Despite his incapacitation, his section continued to engage the enemy fiercely and within half an hour of hand-to-hand combat, the enemy fell back and retreated. Naik Prem Singh was evacuated to the Advance Dressing section in Poonch for medical treatment.

Following the successful capture of Rani picquet, it was renamed as Chand Tekri. The capture of both Raja and Chand Tekri effectively shattered the defensive strength of the Pakistani Forces in this Sector. With this pivotal success, the Indian Forces encountered minimal obstacles in clearing and eliminating the remaining pockets of resistance in the area.

For his exceptional leadership, unwavering courage, and extraordinary determination displayed during this operation, Naik Prem Singh was honored with the #VirChakra.

CITATION

3946403 Naik Prem Singh, 3rd Battalion, The Dogra Regiment.

(Effective date of award –06 September 1965)

Naik Prem Singh was a leading section commander of a company entrusted with the task of capturing a strongly held Pakistani post in the Poonch sector in Jammu and Kashmir. After marching for a night, the company, in spite of heavy enemy machine gun fire, reached the wire barricade in front of the enemy position. Realising that delay at the assault line would entail heavy casualties on our side, Naik Prem Singh rushed forward to cut a gap in the wire to enable his company to move forward. While doing so, he was hit by an enemy bullet, but in spite of the injury, completed his task and led his company to the objective, where he collapsed due to loss of blood. By his gallant action the lives of many others of his company were saved and the objective was captured.

In this operation, Naik Prem Singh displayed leadership, courage and determination of a high order in the best traditions of the Indian Army.

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

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