



रक्षा मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
DEFENCE



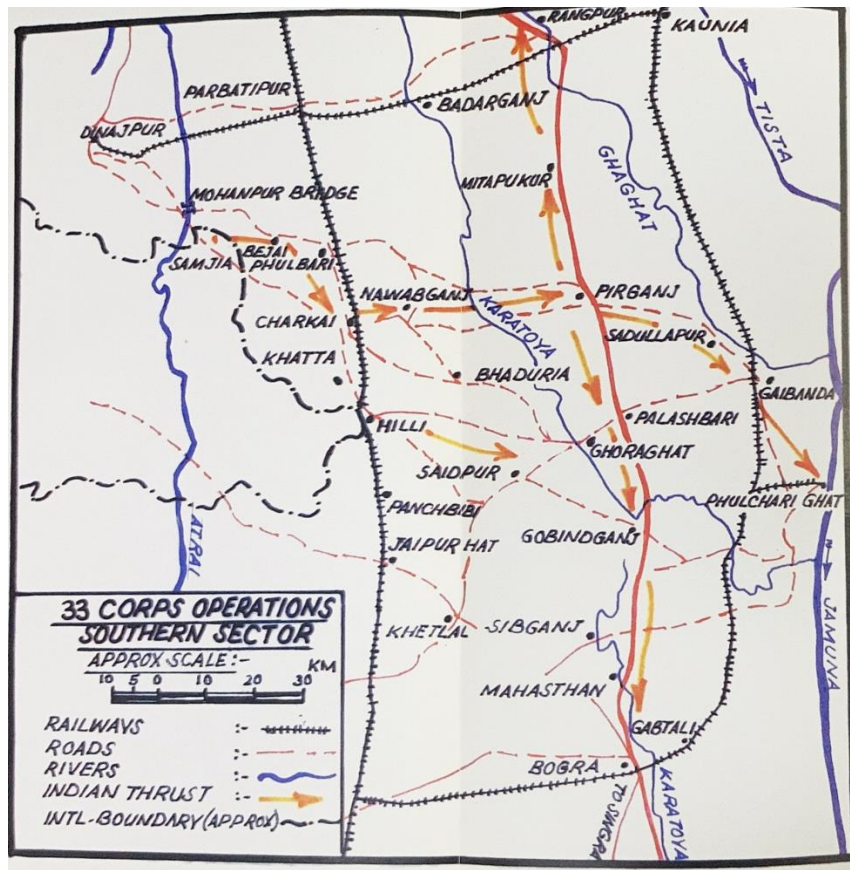
**LANCE NAIK RAM UGRAH PANDEY**

<b>SERVICE NUMBER</b>	13457079
<b>RANK</b>	Lance Naik
<b>NAME</b>	Ram Ugrah Pandey
<b>SON OF</b>	Harakh Nandan Pandey
<b>RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE</b>	Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh
<b>UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS</b>	8 GUARDS
<b>SERVICE</b>	Indian Army
<b>DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION</b>	31 December 1962
<b>AWARD/DATE OF ACTION</b>	Maha Vir Chakra (Posthumous)/ 24 November 1971
<b>WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION</b>	Indo-Pak War 1971
<b>OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE</b>	

Lance Naik Ram Ugrah Pandey was born on 01 July 1942 to Shri Harakh Nandan Pandey and Smt Samarth Devi, in the Village of Hema-Bansi in Ghazipur District of Uttar Pradesh and. He joined the Indian Army on 31 December 1962 at the age of 20 years. He was enrolled into 8 GUARDS of the Brigade of the Guards, an Infantry Regiment known for its gallant soldiers with a long history of numerous battle exploits. By 1971, he had put in around 09 years of service and had been promoted to the rank of Lance Naik. By then he had served in various field areas and gained the field-craft skills required to be a battle-ready soldier.

The Brigade of The Guards is a Regiment of the Indian Army. The troops from all parts of the country serve in various Battalions of this Regiment. The Regiment was formed in 1949 as the first mixed class Indian regiment by Field Marshal KM Cariappa OBE. The GUARDS Brigade was raised to implement the government's policy of encouraging army recruitment from regions under-represented in the forces. Four of Army's oldest BATTALIONS - 2 PUNJAB, 1 GRENADIERS, 1 RAJ RIF and 1 RAJPUT were converted as the GUARDS Battalions in 1949. Though the Brigade of Guards is only 50 years old, its constituent battalions go back as far as 225 years. They also share 93 Battle Honours earned around the world. At the moment, the Regiment consists of 19 Battalions. The majority of these operate as Mechanised Infantry. During the first war of Kashmir 1 RAJPUT (4 GUARDS) showed their mettle in the battle of Taindhar, where Naik Jadunath Singh fought valiantly and won the first Param Vir Chakra for his Regiment. During the 1971 Indo-Pak War, the Regiment earned its second Param Vir Chakra through Lance Naik Albert Ekka of 14 GUARDS for heroism in Gangasagar in the Eastern Theatre in 1971.

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.<sup>2</sup> 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.



Map

Source: The India - Pakistan war of 1971 A History

20 Mountain Division, under the leadership of Major General Lachhman Singh Lehl, VrC, a distinguished veteran from the 1947 Indo-Pak conflict, was designated for operations in the Bogra Sector. The Division comprised several infantry formations including 66 Mountain Brigade, 165 Mountain Brigade, 202 Mountain Brigade, and 340 Mountain Brigade. Besides these they also had three Armoured Regiments under Brigadier Armour 33 Corps, 471 Engineer Brigade, and two artillery Brigades with additional support from 33 Corps Artillery. 202 Mountain Brigade was tasked with the strategic objective of capturing Hilli, a crucial border town in the western sector of East Pakistan.

The 202 Mountain Brigade was commanded by Brigadier Farhat Bhatti, VSM. Among its three Infantry Battalions, 8 GUARDS was tasked with capturing the Northern defenses of Hilli, specifically in Morapara village, with 5 GARHWAL RIFLES in reserve. The third Battalion, 22 MARATHA LI, later secured Biagram to the North of Hilli. Support for the attack on Morapara by 8 GUARDS included a Medium Artillery Regiment (less one Battery), two Field Artillery Regiments, a Light Battery, and a Squadron of 63 Cavalry equipped with T-55 tanks. Lieutenant Colonel Shamsheer Singh, who earned the Mahavir Chakra (MVC) for his actions during the Hilli operations, was the Commanding Officer of 8 GUARDS.

Hilli town was divided by the International Border, with the Indian side housing the town itself and the Pakistani side consisting of sparse villages and open paddy fields. Surrounding Hilli were villages like Basudeopur, Chandipur, Moaoana, and Morapara. The defenses of Hilli were held by the 205 Infantry Brigade of the Pakistan Army. Specifically, 4 Frontier Force (FF) troops were stationed there along with a Reconnaissance and Support Platoon from 34 PUNJAB. They were supported by six field guns of 80 Field Regiment, three M-24 tanks

from 29 Cavalry, two jeep-mounted anti-tank recoilless rifles, one Platoon of the East Pakistan Civil Armed Forces, and around 50 Mujahids. The Pakistani forces had extensively prepared and fortified their defenses over a long period, anticipating an assault from the Indian side. Their positions were well entrenched and stocked, ready to withstand an Indian attack.

The main objective of the Indian Army was to capture Bogra, which would isolate Pakistani forces in northern East Pakistan. The most viable route to Bogra was through Hilli. The offensive began on the night of November 22/23 led by 202 Mountain Brigade, initiated ten days prior to the formal declaration of war between India and Pakistan. Before the midnight assault on November 22, Indian artillery heavily targeted Pakistani defenses, although it was later found that the fortifications were so robust that only a few bunkers were affected by the shelling. Around 0100 hours, amidst ongoing artillery fire, the attack commenced with two companies from 8 GUARDS leading the charge. As Indian troops advanced towards their objective, they encountered intense machine gun fire from well-prepared Pakistani defenses.

The Company Commanders of 8 GUARDS displayed remarkable bravery and leadership, leading their men through challenging terrain and perilous obstacles. They fearlessly took charge at the forefront, urging their soldiers to follow suit. Throughout the night of November 23/24, they encountered mines, barbed wire, booby traps, and waded through waist-deep water. The combat evolved into intense hand-to-hand fighting, with the situation remaining fluid into the early hours. Despite fierce resistance, the Pakistanis maintained control over most of Morapara, while the Guards managed to secure only a small enclave. D Company, commanded by Major KK Rao, received orders to capture Morapara. Lance Naik Ram Ugrah Pandey, leading a Section of his Company, played a crucial role in these operations.

Major Rao was fatally injured by a burst from a Pakistani bunker's MMG during the battle for Morapara, but he continued leading his men, eventually destroying the bunker himself before succumbing to his wounds. Captain Vishnu Sharma assumed command and carried on the fight. Lance Naik Ram Ugrah Pandey from D Company himself took the responsibility to take down three bunkers. He closed in on the first under heavy fire, carrying grenades and at first lobbed a grenade inside the first, blowing it up. Fired up with his first triumph, he closed in on the second bunker and lobbed in grenades, blowing up this bunker as well. Soon, he found an enemy Recoilless Rifle laying in the mud and picking it up, with a rocket in breach—he fired the rocket right into the third bunker. These RCL guns are meant to crack steel armor of tanks! The bunker was turned into a mess. But he was shot by the enemy for being so close, which mortally wounded him. He died on the spot.

By the morning of 23 November, the situation was uncertain, with the Guards running out of ammunition and the enemy carrying out intense shelling. The heavy T-55 tanks got bogged down in the paddy fields and were, thus, not able to provide valuable fire support, which, if available, would have turned the operations in the favour of the attacker. However, it was clear that some element of the Guards had a tenuous hold in Morapara; but had to withdraw under intense fire and shelling and, along with the rest of the battalion, organised itself at Naopara and kept engaging the enemy.

Towards dawn, Brigadier Bhatta ordered 5 GARHWAL RIFLES to capture a locality from

which the Pakistanis had been supporting Morapara. In a daring assault, the Battalion captured the enemy locality. Throughout the day on 23 November, a stalemate continued. On the night of 23/24 November, all the three infantry battalions of 202 Mountain Brigade carried out probing actions by vigorous patrolling and commando raids. All attempts to achieve a breakthrough from the north and west met with stiff enemy resistance. However, by first light of 24 November, 8 GUARDS managed to secure a foothold on the Eastern side of Morapara and exploiting the opportunity, the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Shamsheer Singh quickly reinforced this foothold.

The enemy launched a counter-attack to evict this foothold; however, the Guards stood firm and repulsed the enemy attempts with the support of artillery and tank fire of the light PT-76 tanks of 69 Armoured Regiment, which had fetched up by now, and were much more maneuverable in comparison to the T-55 tanks. Thus, Morapara finally fell at 1000 hours on 24 November; though the casualties strewn on and around the objective told their own story and reflected the savagery of the action.



*A Historic Surrender: Major Niyazi, 38 Punjab Regiment (Pakistan Army) surrendering after the famous battle of Hilli.*

Source: <https://www.bharat-rakshak.com/galleries/picture.php/910/categories>

Lieutenant Colonel Shamsheer Singh, the Commanding Officer of 8 GUARDS, led his men boldly in this attack and was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra for conspicuous gallantry. Lance Naik Ram Ugrah Pandey showed exemplary valour and leadership and made the supreme sacrifice. Lance Naik Ram Ugrah Pandey was a fearless and committed soldier who laid down his life at the age of 29 years in the line of his duty. He was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra for exceptional gallantry, posthumously.

In the second battle of Hilli, Second Lieutenant Shamsheer Singh Samra, although grievously wounded, charged an enemy MMG bunker and destroyed it. In recognition of his

extraordinary bravery, he was posthumously awarded the Maha Vir Chakra.



*Battle of Hilli*

Source: <https://x.com/adgpi/status/1205410807653314560/photo/1>

The first Battle of Hilli, which raged before the commencement of Indo-Pak War was one of the fiercest battles of the 1971 War. The then Army Commander, Eastern Command, Lt Gen JS Arora, PVSM, had called Hilli the bloodiest battle in the then East Pakistan. 8 GUARDS kept on pushing with their advance, but the Battalion lost 68 men in the Battle of Hilli—all killed in action.



*A statue of Lance Naik Ram Ugrah Pandey*

Source: <https://x.com/Tanishksengar/status/1595597259819057152>

## CITATION.

13657079 Lance Naik Ram Ugrah Pandey  
Guards. (Posthumous)

13657079 Lance Naik Ram Ugrah Pandey was commanding a section of a company of a battalion of the Brigade of the Guards which was engaged in an attack on an enemy post as part of our defensive action on the Eastern Front. The assaulting troops were held up by heavy and accurate fire from well fortified enemy positions. Lance Naik Pandey crawled up and destroyed in succession two enemy bunkers with hand grenades. He then took up a rocket launcher and destroyed a third bunker where he was mortally wounded and died on the spot.

Lance Naik Ram Ugrah Pandey showed exemplary valour and leadership and made the supreme sacrifice.

---

Reference: Gazette of India, Notification No. 18-Pres./72. — dated FEBRUARY 12, 1972

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

1. Ian Cardozo. 1971 Stories of Grit and Glory from the Indo-Pak War. Published by Penguin Random House, 2021.
2. SN Prasad and UP Thapliyal. The India - Pakistan war of 1971 A History. Published by Natraj Publishers, Dehra Dun on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, 2014.
3. Armour 71, Cavalry officers Association. (2022). Defstrat Books.
4. "Lance Naik Ram Ugram Pandey MVC." n.d. Honourpoint. Accessed July 8, 2024.  
<https://honourpoint.in/profile/lance-naik-ram-ugram-pandey-mvc/>.
5. SNS. 2023. "Army Commemorates Victory in Battle of Hilli." The Statesman. December 20, 2023.  
<https://www.thestatesman.com/bengal/army-commemorates-victory-in-battle-of-hilli-1503251513.html>.
6. [https://archive.claws.in/images/journals\\_doc/2131815590\\_AnuraagChhibber.pdf](https://archive.claws.in/images/journals_doc/2131815590_AnuraagChhibber.pdf)

## **Videos**

- 1) Battle of Hilli (Source: Twitter– News Nation)  
<https://x.com/NewsNationTV/status/1470092916336967681>