

LIST OF MYRTYR OF THE KARGIL WAR

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List of Kargil War Heroes – Take a moment to remember Kargil Heroes

10 Years after the Kargil War we remember what happened and pay homage the brave soldiers and Kargil Heroes who gave their life to protect Indian borders.

The Kargil War was an armed conflict between India and Pakistan that took place between May and July in 1999 in and around the area of Kargil in Kashmir, India. The reason of the war was the infiltration of Pakistani soldiers into the Indian side of the Line of Control (LOC) into the area of Kargil. The Pakistani paramilitary forces were led by General Ashraf Rashid. The Indian Army, later on supported by the Indian Air Force, attacked the Pakistani positions and, with international diplomatic support, eventually forced withdrawal of the Pakistani forces across the LOC.

The Kargil war is one of the most recent examples of high altitude warfare in mountainous terrain. This was only the second direct ground war between any two countries after they had developed nuclear weapons, after the Sino-Soviet border conflict of 1969.

The town of Kargil is located 205 km from Srinagar, facing the Northern Areas across the LOC with Pakistan. The National highway (NH 1) connecting Srinagar to Leh cuts through Kargil. The area that witnessed the infiltration and fighting is a 160 km long stretch of ridges overlooking this highway. The military outposts on the ridges above the highway were generally around 5,000 metres (16,000 ft) high, with a few as high as 5,485 metres (18,000 ft). According to India's then army chief Ved Prakash Malik, and many other scholars, much of the background planning, including construction of logistical supply routes, had been undertaken much earlier. On several occasions during the 1980s and 1990s, the army had given Pakistani leaders (namely Zia ul Haq and Benazir Bhutto) similar proposals for infiltration into the Kargil region, but the plans had been shelved for fear of drawing the nations into all-out war. Some analysts believe that the blueprint of attack was reactivated soon after Pervez Musharraf was appointed chief of army staff in October 1998.

There were three major phases to the Kargil War.

- Pakistan infiltrated forces into the Indian-controlled section of Kashmir and occupied strategic locations enabling it to control NH1.
- The next stage consisted of India discovering the infiltration and mobilizing forces to respond to it.
- The final stage involved major battles by Indian and Pakistani forces resulting in India capturing positions held by Pakistani forces and the withdrawal of Pakistani forces back across the Line of Control.

The incursions into Kargil were not detected for a number of reasons: Indian patrols were not sent into some of the areas infiltrated by the Pakistani forces and heavy artillery fire by Pakistan in some areas provided cover for the infiltrators. Once the incursions were detected the Government of India responded with Operation Vijay, a mobilisation of 200,000 Indian troops. However, because of the nature of the terrain, division and corps operations could not be mounted; subsequent fighting was conducted mostly at the regimental or battalion level. In effect, two divisions of the Indian Army, numbering 20,000, plus several thousand from the Paramilitary forces of India and the air force were deployed in the conflict zone. The total number of Indian soldiers that were involved in the military operation on the Kargil-Drass sector was thus close to 30,000. The number of infiltrators, including those providing logistical backup, has been put at approximately 5,000 at the height of the conflict. This figure includes troops from Pakistan-administered Kashmir who provided additional artillery support. The Indian Air Force launched Operation Safed Sagar in support of the mobilization of Indian land forces, but its effectiveness during the war was limited by the high altitude and weather conditions, which in turn limited bomb loads and the number of airstrips that could be used. The terrain of Kashmir is mountainous and at high altitudes; even the best roads, such as National Highway No. 1 (NH 1) from Leh to Srinagar, are only two lanes. The rough terrain and narrow roads slowed traffic, and the high altitude, which affected the ability of aircraft to carry loads, made control of NH 1A (the actual stretch of the highway which was under Pakistani fire) a priority for India. From their observation posts, the Pakistani forces had a clear line-of-sight to lay down indirect artillery fire on NH 1A, inflicting heavy casualties on the Indians. This was a serious problem for the Indian Army as the highway was its main logistical and supply route. The Pakistani shelling of the arterial road posed the threat of Leh being cut off, though an alternative (and longer) road to Leh existed via Himachal Pradesh. The infiltrators, apart from being equipped with small arms and grenade launchers, were also armed with mortars, artillery and anti-aircraft guns. Many posts were also heavily mined, with India later stating to having recovered more than 8,000 anti-personnel mines according to an ICBL report. Pakistan's reconnaissance was done through unmanned aerial vehicles and AN/TPQ-36 Firefinder radars supplied by the US. The initial Indian attacks were aimed at controlling the hills overlooking NH 1A, with high priority being given to the stretches of the highway near the town of Kargil. The majority of posts along the Line of Control were adjacent to the highway, and therefore the recapture of nearly every infiltrated post increased both the territorial gains and the security of the highway. The protection of this route and the recapture of the forward posts were thus ongoing objectives throughout the war.

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The Indian Army's first priority was to recapture peaks that were in the immediate vicinity of NH1a. This resulted in Indian troops first targeting the Tiger Hill and Tololing complex in Dras, which dominated the Srinagar-Leh route. This was soon followed by the Batalik-Turtok sub-sector which provided access to Siachen Glacier. Some of the peaks that was of vital strategic importance to the Pakistani defensive troops were Point 4590 and Point 5353. While 4590 was the nearest point that had a view of NH1a, point 5353 was the highest feature in the Dras sector, allowing the Pakistani troops to observe NH1A. The recapture of Point 4590 by Indian troops on June 14 was significant, notwithstanding the fact that Point 4590 resulting in the Indian Army suffering the most casualties in a single battle during the conflict. Though most of the posts in the vicinity of the highway were cleared by mid-June, some parts of the highway

near Drass witnessed sporadic shelling until the end of the war. The tail of an Indian air force MiG-21 fighter shot down by a Pakistani missile. The pilot Squadron Leader Ajay Ahuja was killed. The IAF lost a MiG-27 strike aircraft which it attributed to an engine failure as well as a MiG-21 fighter which was shot down by Pakistan; Initially Pakistan said it shot down both jets after they crossed into its territory and one Mi-8 helicopter to Stinger SAMs. On May 27 1999, Flt. Lt. Nachiketa developed engine trouble in the Batalik sector and bailed out of his craft. Sqn Ldr Ajay Ahuja went out of his way to locate his comrade but was shot down using a shoulder-fired Stinger missile. According to reports, he had bailed out of his stricken plane safely but was apparently killed by his captors as his body was returned riddled with bullet wounds.

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A number of Indian soldiers earned awards for gallantry during the campaign. Grenadier Yogendra Singh Yadav, 18 Grenadiers, Param Vir Chakra, Posthumously, but it was his namesake that had been slain in the mission while he was recuperating in a hospital.

Lieutenant Manoj Kumar Pandey, 1/11 Gorkha Rifles, Param Vir Chakra, Posthumous

Captain Vikram Batra, 13 JAK Rifles, Param Vir Chakra, Posthumous

Rifleman Sanjay Kumar, 13 JAK Rifles, Param Vir Chakra

Casualties for both sides were heavy for India and Pakistan. Pakistani claimed to have lost 357 soldiers but was challenged as some claimed that 4,000 Pakistani soldiers were killed in the conflict. According to India, Indian losses stand at 527 soldiers killed, 1,363 wounded, and 1 captured. Finally India lost 500 young brave soldiers with a median age 19 to 35 years. The grim-faced army officers receiving the coffins, draped in the tricolour, the carriage to the army parade ground.Â

Some of the brave Indian Soldiers and heroes who died protecting the Indian nation in the Kargil War:

OFFICERS (INDIAN ARMY)

LT. COL. VISHWANATHAN

LT. COL. VIJAYARAGHAVAN

LT. COL. SACHIN KUMAR

MAJOR AJAY SINGH JASROTIA

MAJOR KAMLESH PATHAK

MAJOR PADHMAPHANI ACHARYA

MAJOR MARRIAPAN SARVANAN

MAJOR RAJESH SINGH ADHIKARI

MAJOR HARMIDER PAL SINGH

MAJOR MANOJ TALWAR

MAJOR VIVEK GUPTA

MAJOR SONAM WANGCHUK

MAJOR AJAY KUMAR

CAPTAIN AMOL KALIA

CAPTAIN KIESHING CLIFFORD NONGRUM

CAPTAIN SUMEET ROY

CAPTAIN AMIT VERMA

CAPTAIN PANNIKOT VISVANATH VIKRAM

CAPTAIN ANUJ NAYYAR

CAPTAIN VIKRAM BATRA

DY. COMMANDENT JOY LAL(BSF)

CAPTAIN JINTU GOGOI

LT. VIJAYANT THAPER

LT. N. KENGURUSE

LT. HANIF-U-DIN

LT. SUARAV KALIA

LT. AMIT BHARDWAJ

LT. BALWAN SINGH

LT. MANOJ KUMAR PANDEY

OFFICERS (INDIAN AIR FORCE)

SQUADREN LEADER AJAY AHUJA

SQUADREN LEADER RAJIV PUNDIR

FLT. LT. S MUHILAN

FLT. LT. NACHIKETA RAO

SEARGENT PVNR PRASAD

SERGEANT RAJ KISHORE SAHU

JUNIOR COMMISSIONED OFFICERS (INDIAN ARMY)

Naik Chaman Singh

Naik R Kamraj

Naik Kudeep Singh

Naik Birendra Singh Lamba

Naik Jasvir Singh

Naik Surendra Pal

Naik Rajkumar Punia

Naik S N Malik

Naik Surjeet Singh

Naik Jugal Kishore

Naik Suchha Singh

Naik Sumer Singh Rathod

Naik Surendra Singh

Naik Kishen Lal

Naik Rampal Singh

Naik Ganesh Yadav

Havaldar Major Yashvir Singh

Lance Naik Ahmed Ali

Lance Naik Gulam Mohammed Khan

Lance Naik M R Sahu

Lance Naik Satpal Singh

Lance Naik Shatrugan Singh

Lance Naik Shyam Singh

Lance Naik Vijay Singh

Naik Degender Kumar

Havaldar Baldev Raj

Havaldar Jai Prakash Singh

Havaldar Mahavir Singh

Havaldar Mani Ram

Havaldar Rajbir Singh

Havaldar Satbir Singh

Havaldar Abdul Karim

Havaldar Daler Singh Bahu

Subedar Bhanwar Singh Rathod

Rifleman Linkon Pradhan

Rifleman Bachhan Singh

Rifleman Satbir Singh

Rifleman Jagmal Singh

Rifleman Rattan Chand

Rifleman Mohamad Farid

Rifleman Mohamad Aslam

Rifleman Yogendra Singh

Rifleman Sanjay Kumar

SEPOYS (INDIAN ARMY)

Grenadier Manohar Singh

Gunner Uddabh Das

Sepoy Amardeep Singh

Sepoy Vijay Pal Singh

Sepoy Virendra Kumar

Sepoy Yashwant Singh

Sepoy Santokh Singh

Sepoy Dinesh Bhai

Sepoy Harendragiri Goswami

Sepoy Amrish Pal Bangi

Constable Suraj Bhan (BSF)

Sepoy Lakhbir Singh

Sepoy Bajindra Singh

Sepoy Deep Chand

Sepoy Dondibha Desai

Sepoy Keolanand Dwivedi

Sepoy Harjindra Singh

Sepoy Jaswant Singh

Sepoy Jaswinder Singh

Sepoy Lal Singh

Sepoy Rakesh Kumar(RAJ)

Sepoy Rakesh Kumar (Dogra)

Sepoy Raswinder Singh

Sepoy Bir Singh

Sepoy Ashok Kumar

Tomar

Sepoy R. Selvakumar

So after 10 years of Kargil, we take a moment to remember the brave soldiers and Heroes who fought the Kargil War and died for the nation.