CHAPTER - 2
INDO-PAK WARS : 1965 & 1971

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INDO-PAK WAR 1965

Infiltration: Beginning of the War:

When the Rann of Kutch affair had just held out a promise of amicable settlement, the Indian Government was confronted with a far more serious border conflict, which, with provocation from Pakistan and its natural effect on India, developed into a war. The effect, one might say, would have been different on Mr. Nehru, who usually defied 'natural effect' with his superior pacifist approach - superior to that of ordinary mortals. Let not this hypothesis prejudice the evaluation and analysis of the events which began to unfold themselves on 5th August, 1965 and closed with the so called Tashkent Agreement on 10 January 1966.

The background to the conflict is well known. Since independence, Kashmir has been a bone of contention between India and Pakistan. India takes its stand on legal position and the secular character of its polity. After the departure of British authority from India, the new Government (belonging to the Congress Party) opened negotiations with the rulers of the 600 and odd princely states with a view to bringing about political integration of the country. Agreements were entered into between the rulers and the Government of India: the states had autocratic rule for hundreds of years, and in the absence therein of democratic institutions, the rulers spoke on behalf of the people and signed the agreements. In the case of Kashmir also, the same procedure with some difference was followed and the state acceded to the Indian Union with its ruler signing the agreement and giving legal validity to the common belief in India that Kashmir was part of the Union.

Pakistan had a different viewpoint: it was the product of an attitude, which grew in the peculiar vicissitudes of Indian history and which eventually led to the formation of Pakistan. Muslims of learning and religious
fervour asserted their political identity in the early periods of British rule by repudiation of that rule and carried on a long-drawn-out movement with the intention of re-establishing Muslim hegemony over the country. By the time the movement was suppressed and the Revolt of 1857 fizzled out, a new political urge began to assert itself; it consisted of a constitutional demand for the establishment, not at once but in stages, of political institutions of British variety. Muslim leaders had already exhausted themselves and were a frustrated lot; men, who under Muslim rule, held lucrative government jobs, now witnessed the spectacle of English-educated Hindus being preferred for jobs by British rulers against Persian-knowing Muslims. As the year passed and British rule became an unalterable fact of life, the Muslim shifted the emphasis to offering unqualified support to Government and sought adequate patronage in return. They would not deviate from new policy and considered even the politics of constitutional variety a risky affair. There were, no doubt, men and occasions in the nature of exceptions, but the general attitude remained intact.

The British warmly welcomed the change in the Muslim outlook and wholeheartedly rewarded it as the demand for democratic institutions grew in volume and became irksome. The Indian National Congress, which mainly voiced the demand and conducted agitations to press it, was truly national in character: by word and deed, it proved that it belonged to the country and not to any particular community. But, with most Muslims holding aloof, an overwhelming number of the Congress membership came from the Hindu community, and anybody, ignorant of or unsympathetic to the peculiar situation, could plausibly suggest that the Congress was largely a Hindu organization. British rulers, for reasons of their own, did so; and when the country arrived at the mile-stone, from where full-fledged democracy could not be very far off and when Muslim consciousness of being a distinct community reached maturity, Muslim leaders demanded a separate homeland (in the event, they had two) and that the country should be divided.
into Hindu India and Muslim India. And ultimately, contiguous Muslim-majority areas were constituted as West Pakistan and East Pakistan.

This contiguity became a political principle with the rulers of Pakistan, and without waiting to find out whether the Muslim majority of Kashmir wanted the state to go over to Pakistan or not, they launched an invasion and in a rapid sweep annexed one-third of the territory. This happened soon after independence of the Indian sub-continent, and India, under the compulsion of a variety of circumstances, had to agree to a cease-fire, with the result that Pakistan remained in possession of one-third of Kashmir. Since 1947, there had been numerous violations of the cease-fire line, but a major clash was always avoided by Nehru.

Between 1947, the year of partition and 1965 (the year of war), millions of words had been exchanged between different parties at different levels and hundreds of speeches delivered. The salient points emerging from the reference of the case to the United Nations and subsequent discussions are: (1) Pakistani forces should withdraw from the occupied part of Kashmir. (2) A plebiscite, as suggested by Nehru, should decide whether the people of Kashmir wanted to opt for India or for Pakistan. There was no withdrawal and during the period that has elapsed since the invasion, one generation has passed into oblivion and another has come up: hundreds of thousands of people have grown as Pakistani citizens with all that citizenship implies, tending to make plebiscite a dubious proposition moreover the pre-requisite to plebiscite never presented itself despite UN efforts.

To Pakistan geographical contiguity of a Muslim majority area was an adequate criterion; to India it was not. At the UN, the battles always ended with assertions and counter-assertions of the respective viewpoints. The final, effective decision should have come from the UN, but it failed rather miserably as it did in most other conflicts. To quote New Statesman (10 September, 1965): 'The decision of India and Pakistan to fight over Kashmir is the consequence of a cumulative breakdown in the instruments of
The year 1965 was chosen for a final decision. After China and Pakistan, strange bed-fellows, came together as allies, the latter thought of making the utmost use of the alliance against India, and the former, no less inimical, gladly promised help. The first sign of the anti-Indian alliance was casually reported in a small news item which said that the Chinese were giving guerilla warfare training to the Pakistanis. Training centres were set up in Pakistan for saboteurs and guerillas. In July 1965, the representatives of the Union Home Ministry and the State Government examined and discussed the likely repercussions and the conclusion they reached was that a large-scale war did not appear to be Pakistan's intention, but they anticipated sabotage activity by armed guerillas.

Pakistan's war-mongers were desperate and were impatient to go to any extent, even a war. The feverish activity in the country betrayed these motives well enough. In May, Mahomed Mussa, the Commander-in-Chief, after a conference with president Ayub Khan, made an extensive tour of the occupied Kashmir; he conferred with field commanders and explained to them the 'steps initiated and completed by him with the concurrence of the president.'

The entire activity unmistakably showed preparation for a war; whether the intention was to avoid a war as far as possible is a matter of opinion. Two army divisions and some units of Khyber Rifles were deployed in occupied Kashmir, and the troops moved closer to the international border with Jammu and Kashmir. Military concentrations were reported along vital sectors of the cease-fire line. Students and youths of 16–25 year age groups were called for compulsory military training, and ten-man 'action committee' was set up to direct subversive activities across the cease-fire line.

Then there was a series of emergency ordinances. The first, promulgated in June 1965, made it obligatory for all employees to relieve reservists whenever a call was made. The second provided for the recall of Air Force reservists. The third provided for a Mujahid Force—those to the
engaged to launch *jehad* to be raised with 150,000 men. A semi-military volunteer force, (Razakars), of a like nature, of 8,500 men was already there. The Mujahids were given a fortnight's military training, which included a course in guerilla warfare. The Mujahids and Razakars were assigned the subsidiary role, the main task being entrusted to a highly-trained guerilla force of 30,000 styled as 'Gibraltor Forces.' Men for this force were selected from the regular Pakistan army, the 'Azad Kashmir' militia, Frontier Scouts Units, the Mujahids and the Razakars. Ten 'Forces', each of brigade-strength, constituted the 'Gibraltor Forces', and each was placed under a regular army commander. In the second week of July, they were called to a conference by Ayub Khan and given certain instructions. On 1 August, Major-General Akhtar Hussain Malik gave them the final orders.

This was the background to the events which began to unfold themselves on 5 August 1965. The next day, the news of armed Pakistani infiltrators crossing the cease-fire line appeared in the press. A Press Trust of India message said: 'A fully armed Pakistani sabotage party, 50 to 60 strong, infiltrated across the cease-fire line in the Mendhar sector of Jammu on the evening of 5 August and clashed with an Indian army patrol, a Defence Ministry spokesman said here today. Defence Ministry spokesman said here today. The infiltrators crossed the cease-fire line near a place called Dhabrot. An Indian patrol party was sent to investigate. The party was fired upon by the Pakistani troops with medium machine guns, two-inch mortars and rifles. A clash followed in which six Pakistanis were killed. The Indian patrol suffered three casualties. The infiltrators then fled across the cease-fire line, leaving behind three light machine-guns, a considerable quantity of ammunition and explosives, printed pamphlets exhorting the Kashmiris in the valley to rise in revolt, large quantities of cooked food and medical supplies. A clash had also been reported from the Uri sector. There, another fully armed Pakistani sabotage party, numbering over 50 crossed the cease-fire line on August 5 near a place called Buna Danwas. As soon as information was received, an Indian patrol was sent to apprehend the
intruders. Fire was exchanged and the intruders withdrew across the cease-
fire line under cover of darkness. The Indian patrol suffered no casualties.
Pakistani casualties are not known.

On 8 August, at 10 in the night, the emergency committee of the Indian
Cabinet, met to consider the situation, and after a 70 minute discussion, its
spokesman, Gulzari Lal Nanda (the Home Minister), told the press that from
5 August, there had been 'extensive infiltration' by armed men from Pakistan
at several points all along the cease-fire line in Jammu and Kashmir and also
at some points across the international frontier between Jammu and West
Pakistan. He added: 'Most of the infiltrators belong to Pakistan-occupied
Kashmir forces though in civilian clothes and have been obviously sent out
with arms and explosives to commit acts of sabotage and foment
disturbances.' The Government took, to quote Nanda again, 'a grave view of
the situation. They have taken steps to strengthen the security forces in
Jammu and Kashmir and will take all necessary measures to meet the
situation.' The spokesman claimed that from the information gathered from
the prisoners - some infiltrators were caught and taken prisoner - and the
nature of the arms recovered from them it appeared that the operation 'has
been planned, organized and equipped in Pakistan'.

As the days passed, the infiltration increased in volume and force. On
9 August, an official spokesman of the Government of India made it known to
the press that about 1,000 Pakistani troops, under cover of heavy firing from
light machine-guns and 81 mm rockets launched an attack on an Indian post,
north-east of Poonch, in the early hours of 8 August. The attack, launched in
four waves, lasted six hours. The spokesman claimed that all the attacks had
been repulsed, and the enemy had withdrawn towards Kopra after suffering
heavy casualties. In two days, the Pakistani troops committed cease-fire
violations and the Indian army patrols intercepted at least twenty gangs of
armed Pakistani saboteurs who had infiltrated deep into Indian Territory.
The Pakistanis fired more than 81,000 rounds in thirty-five of the cease-fire violations.

A date-wise account of important events is necessary in order to understand the mounting gravity of the situation. On 11 August, it was officially stated that a concentration of ammunition was suspected to have been built up by the infiltrators in the outskirts of Srinagar, and that the area had been cordoned off and sealed, and intensive search was going on. Positive indications were now given that some of the infiltrators population on the Indian side. In Srinagar, about 10.30 p.m. on 10 August, desultory firing broke out (in three suburban areas); firing was also exchanged outside Srinagar on the Baramula road. Intermittent firing continued till 5.30 a.m., and stopped at 6.30. The official spokesman said that a few Pakistani infiltrators had been captured in a rural area. They had attacked a small isolated police picket under cover of darkness (on 10 August) as a result of which some Indian Kashmiri policemen lost their lives. Up to 11 August, 94 Pakistanis were claimed as killed. The loss on Indian side was: 29 killed and about 25 wounded. The cease-fire line being as long as 470 miles, it was not very difficult for determined men from the occupied territory to cross into the Indian side within the first few days when the Indian authorities felt called upon to add to their security forces. That Kashmir valley was infested with infiltrators and that they were hiding there was the subject of an address by the Kashmir Chief Minister, G.M. Sadiq, to a meeting of Congress workers at Srinagar on 11 August. His problem was how to round up the underground men and how to stop further clandestine infiltration. And he suggested: If Pakistan refused to respect the cease-fire line agreement, there was nothing that could hold India back from crossing the cease-fire line and freeing the territory of Jammu and Kashmir under Pakistani occupation. He regarded the infiltration on 'invasion', though not of the conventional type.

Nobody in India was in a position to give precise information about the number of infiltrators. On 12 August, a PTI message, quoting an official
spokesman, said that 1,000 to 1,500 armed Pakistanis had intruded into Kashmir, and of them ten to fifteen percent had reached the valley area. Two days later the Home Minister, Gulzarilal Nanda, told the Congress parliamentary party executive that nearly eight battalions of trained Pakistani army personnel (roughly 3,200 men) had crossed the cease-fire line; each battalion consisted of some 400 men, of whom 300 were active personnel and the rest helpers. On the same day, a Hindustan Times correspondent in New Delhi, summing up the Kashmir situation, said 'Today's reports show that Srinagar and its suburbs have been quiet as also all the other pockets in Jammu and Kashmir where Pakistanis were known to have infiltrated. This was interpreted by official sources here as a clear evidence that the infiltrators had lost their initiative in provoking trouble.' The intruders may have continued pouring in, and may have made the biggest dash in two days - between 12 August and 14 August. Only this suggestion can explain the increase in two days in the number of infiltrators from 1,000-1,500 to 3,200. Maybe it was only on 14 August that the Home Minister came into possession of more reliable reports from the front. The news reports of the days seem to confirm the latter suggestion.

On 12 August, the PTI reported: 'A large number of Pakistani armed infiltrators surrendered to the security forces in the Badgam area, nine miles from Srinagar, late this evening. Though the exact number could not be ascertained immediately, easily thirty to forty intruders surrendered and handed over arms and ammunition.' Further the report said: 'There has been desultory firing on the Kupwara-Srinagar and the Srinagar-Baramula road. Firing has also been reported from Gurez-Kanzalwan area. In the Kargil sector, there was a severe attack by the enemy in which one of their men was killed and one of our ranks was wounded. Reports indicate that fighting in the Chhamb area is continuing. We have taken 14 prisoners. As a result of mopping up operations, 100 infiltrators out of a total of 200 who were being pursued by our army near Thandi Choi Akhnoor sector have fled away to Pakistan via Chhamb border. The infiltrators in Mandi and Poonch area have
been completely surrounded by Indian troops. The report dated 14 August suggested the same trend: 'Pakistan is making renewed efforts to send more armed infiltrators into Jammu and Kashmir. The Pakistani move is interpreted as a desperate bid to relieve the hard-pressed infiltrators who are bottled up by Indian security forces in scattered pockets in the State. The Pakistanis made at least three major attempts during the last 24 hours to cross the cease-fire line but were unsuccessful.'

India was faced with a two-pronged problem - meeting the attacks on the cease-fire line and maintaining internal peace which the infiltrators, leavened unrecognizably into the civil population, wanted to disturb. In the Gulmarg sector, on 14 August, some villagers carried information to the Indian security forces that a party of infiltrators was shelling three villages. The security forces rushed to the area, and in the clash that followed, fifteen of the infiltrators were killed, and the remainder fled in different directions. On 15 August, the PTI reported on the authority of an official spokesman, 'eleven raiders were killed in an encounter when they attacked under the cover of darkness a border village, five miles from Jammu. Casualties on Indian side were four civilians killed. The villagers helped the security forces in tracing the intruders.' Next day, the same agency said: Reports are coming in of cases of infiltrators indulging in arson and looting in villages. Reports from more than one place said that the raiders had carried away wheat and rice.' Internal security was under a serious threat.

Continuous clashes on the border made it amply clear that Pakistan was acting according to a plan: to engage Indian forces in an exchange of firing on the border, and, on the other hand, to smuggle quietly armed men across the cease-fire line. As is evident from the above account, the plan succeeded to some extent; Indian authorities again and again used the adjectives 'serious', 'grave', 'alarming', in their description of the situation. Srinagar was placed under a dusk-to-dawn curfew, and entrances to the city
were heavily guarded. Rewards were announced by the Kashmir Government for those helping the authorities to capture the infiltrators.

How long would the border skirmishes continue, and what would be the next step? Most Indians asked this question. A feeling was growing that day after day India was being wronged by Pakistan whose 'war lords' were making desperate efforts to occupy Jammu and Kashmir on this side of the cease-fire line, and that a full-blooded war would start any day. The daily news no doubt gave heartening accounts of Indian forces repulsing the attackers, but many people, including politicians of the opposition parties, were losing their patience and suggesting that Pakistan should no longer get away with its usual belief that India would not retaliate, that is, she would not cross the cease-fire line.

The feeling was assuaged a little by the announcement on 17 August that Indian security forces had on 15 August reoccupied Pakistani posts in the Kargil sector. These posts were first occupied on 17 May as a measure of defence of the Srinagar-Leh road, but were vacated towards the end of June on the United Nations assuring future safety of the vital road link.

The Kashmir War of 1965:

The political structures of Hindu and Muslim nationalism diverged sharply after partition. India, under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi's successor, immediately embarked on the ambitious and unprecedented experiment of shaping an overwhelmingly illiterate country into an advanced democracy. The Indian national elections of 1951-1952 were indeed an impressive performance. The new Indian government spared no effort to make this election truly democratic, and, on the whole, succeeded admirably. The Congress party, now pursuing a policy of gradual socialism patterned after the example of the British Labour party, became the dominant political power, with Nehru its undisputed leader. Pakistan set out on a totally different road and fashioned its political system along authoritarian lines. After a succession of politicians had demonstrated their inability to
govern, the army seized power in 1951. Under the leadership of General Ayub Khan, Pakistan instituted its first effective government and embarked on an ambitious economic development program. Pakistan developed a formidable power base, but at the expense of the democratic process.

Far from resolving the Kashmir dispute, the 1949 cease-fire had provided merely a breathing spell. India and Pakistan now continued the struggle by diplomatic means. Their initial involvement in international affairs was determined by their overriding search for security vis-à-vis each other. In fact, their quest for friends and allies may be interpreted quite accurately as an outgrowth, first and foremost, of their fear of one another. All other considerations were secondary.

During the 1950s the military leadership of Pakistan committed the Moslem nation to the Western alliance system. Believing that meaningful negotiations with India over Kashmir could be undertaken only by making Pakistan a strong military state, General Ayub Khan led Pakistan into two American-sponsored regional alliances: the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). But in 1962, when war erupted between China and India over disputed border territory, Pakistan quickly gravitated toward India's enemy. Relations between China and Pakistan grew increasingly cordial. By the mid-1960s Pakistan was in the unique position of being a member of two Western military alliances and at the same time enjoying the friendship of the People's Republic of China.

In India Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru labored hard and long during the 1950s to develop a policy of nonalignment and economic advancement for his country. Nehru's policy was handed a severe setback in the decisive defeat India suffered in the 1962 border war with China. The Soviet Union, increasingly estranged from China, attempted to exploit the situation by consolidating its ties with India, while the American leadership, fearful of Communist expansion, extended large quantities of military aid to
both India and Pakistan, ostensibly for purposes of defense against Communism. In reality, however, both India and Pakistan used the American military equipment to bolster their strength *vis a-vis* each other. It was against this complex background of multi-dimensional maneuverings that the conflict between Hindus and Moslems erupted once again into open warfare.

The war began in an unlikely spot, the so-called Rann of Kutch, an uninhabited piece of territory of little value that was a virtual desert during the dry season but became a flooded marsh during the monsoon. In the spring of 1965 both India and Pakistan stepped up patrolling activity in that area, and soon serious clashes occurred. Pakistani forces quickly outmaneuvered Indian troops, winning an easy victory. Although a cease-fire was achieved through the mediation efforts of British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, and both parties agreed to a mutual withdrawal of forces, the Rann of Kutch encounters "left Pakistan dangerously overconfident and India dangerously frustrated."

The Pakistani leadership began to feel that the Kutch strategy should be tried in Kashmir. A prominent Urdu newspaper openly recommended that "the Rann of Kutch prescription should be applied on the Kashmir front," and *The Pakistan Times*, in a burst of euphoria, predicted that, "In the event of war with India, Pakistani troops would march up to Delhi, would occupy the Red Fort, and hoist the Pakistani flag on it."

In India, on the other hand, resentment was rampant. To be defeated by China was one thing; to be outfought by Pakistan was something that most Indians were unwilling to accept. Lal Bahadur Shastri, Nehru's successor, came under increasing pressure to redress the Kutch defeat. *The Times of India* warned that "Pakistan has put the fish into the water to measure the temperature and one fine morning Pakistan will present the world with a fait accompli - the occupation of Kashmir."
Thus, Pakistan's overconfidence and India's humiliation brought the two nations to the brink of war:

It was barely credible in 1962 that two great countries should be at the brink of full-scale war, as China and India were, over an almost inaccessible stretch of barren and snow-bound track. It is no more credible today that India and Pakistan should fight over a piece of barren land that spends half its life under water; yet it has happened.

In August 1965 Ayub Khan, convinced that his policy of "leaning on India" was working, made the fateful decision of sending Pakistani-trained guerrillas into Kashmir. The infiltrators blew up bridges, disrupted lines of communication, and raided army convoys and military installations. Not surprisingly, Indian forces in Kashmir rounded up the guerrillas and then proceeded to occupy the three main mountain passes that had served as supply routes for the Pakistanis. Ayub Khan now faced a difficult dilemma. He could hardly sustain a guerrilla campaign in Kashmir with the key mountain passes in Indian hands. He either had to back down or raise the stakes. Calculating that Indian fear of China would deter her from a vigorous response against Pakistan and confident of his own military superiority, the Pakistani leader decided to escalate the conflict.

On September 1 Pakistani forces, supported by ninety Patton tanks, crossed the cease-fire line into southern Kashmir and advanced so rapidly that they threatened the vital road over the mountains linking Srinagar with the plains of India. If Pakistan captured this road, Indian forces in Kashmir would be encircled. Thus India was now left with the choice of yielding or expanding the war.

On September 5 India opened a new front and invaded West Pakistan in a massive attack. The two armies were now locked in large-scale combat over a wide area. Despite superior weapons and greater mobility, the
Pakistan forces were unable to break through Indian lines and advance on India's cities as their leaders had so confidently predicted. In several encounters the Indians even managed to outmaneuver and outfight their opponents, thus reversing the situation that had prevailed in the Rann of Kutch. The Pakistani leadership was badly shaken and resorted to desperate fighting to hold the line. After several weeks of war, the battle lines became relatively stationary, with both sides having fought each other to a virtual standstill.

The war finally ended through the efforts of Soviet premier Aleksei Kosygin, who invited both parties to the negotiating table at Tashkent to settle their differences. Reasoning that a continued conflict between India and Pakistan would probably benefit China, the Soviet leader decided to act the role of peace maker. Edward Crankshaw, who was in Tashkent during the Soviet-sponsored negotiations, commented as follows:

Mr. Kosygin, whose ideology demands the fostering of chaos and disruption in non-Communist lands, finds himself doing his level best to calm down a Hindu under direct threat from China and a Moslem supposed to be on friendly terms with Peking, embroiled in a quarrel over the possession of the mountain playground of the late British Raj. And, except for China, nobody minds.

And so the world was treated to the strange spectacle of a Communist state successfully fashioning a truce between two bourgeois nations. The Kashmir problem was not resolved, of course. Both sides merely agreed to set forth their "respective positions" on the issue. Nor were the deeper animosities removed, or even mitigated. Tashkent merely signified a pause in a protracted conflict that thus far had proved inconclusive. The decisive encounter was to come half a decade later, when the flames of war erupted once again with terrible ferocity.
### Table 1
Total Armed Strength of India and Pakistan Before India-Pakistan War (1965)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total armed forces</td>
<td>869,000</td>
<td>188,000 to 208,000 (including para-military forces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defence estimates-Rupees</td>
<td>9,952,000,000</td>
<td>1,382,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,100,000,000</td>
<td>289,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Army</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sanctioned strength</td>
<td>825,000</td>
<td>160,000 to 180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total strength of divisions (div)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Full fledged divs.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6 plus one air defence bde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Inf divs sanctioned on a reduced establishment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armoured forces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armoured (armd) divs</td>
<td>1 (Centurian)</td>
<td>The armoured forces in Pakistan included about ten regts equipped with M-47/48 Patton, M-4 Sherman Medium tanks and two or three regts with M-24 Chaffee light tanks. These probably formed one armd div of two bdes and a separate armd bde.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armd bdes</td>
<td>1 (Sherman)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light tank regiments (regts)</td>
<td>2 (AMX-13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light tank regts</td>
<td>2 (Stuarts)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Territorial Army</strong></td>
<td>47,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Para Military Forces</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frontier Corps (Tribesmen)</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>West Pakistan Rangers</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Pakistan Rifles</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK troops</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>70,000 Total strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Air Force</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total strength</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanctioned strength</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>(Number of sqns is not mentioned for Pakistan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>squadrons (sqn)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2
Development of Troops of Both Sides

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>India</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chhamb Sector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Inf Div</td>
<td>12 Inf Div</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI Corps</td>
<td>1 Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Mtn Div</td>
<td>11 Inf Div</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Inf Div</td>
<td>10 Inf Div</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Ind Div</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Indep Armd Bde</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu-Sialkot Sector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Corps</td>
<td>IV Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Armd Div</td>
<td>15 Inf Div</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Mtn Div</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Inf Div</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Inf Div</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striking force</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Armd Div - In Chharga Manga area near Lahore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 Armd Div - In Kharian near Sialkot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 Inf Div - In Sialkot area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

War in Outlined:

Armed infiltrators from Pakistan had crossed the CFL into J and K State of the Indian Union on 5 Aug 1965. The Indian Army also crossed the CFL on 15 Aug penetrating into POK in order to plug the routes through which the infiltrators were entering and being supplied. This action of the Indian Army culminated in the capture of Haji Pir Pass on 27 Aug. Next, Pak Regular Army troops crossed the CFL and International Border in Chhamb Sector on 1 Sep and launched a major offensive in that area. Thereafter, the Indian Army crossed the international border in Lahore Sector on 6 Sep and in Sialkot Sector on 8 September thus started the India-Pakistan War which ended at 3 a.m. on 23 September. All the Indian sources and almost all the foreign sources consider the War as having started on 1 Sep when the Pakistan launched their major offensive and so have called it a 22-day or three weeks war. Pak sources, on the other hand, have called it a 17-day war, considering 6 Sep, the day the Indian troops crossed the international border.
in Lahore Sector, as the beginning of the war. I have, however, assessed it a 22-day war and not a 17-day war as the former period covers the war fully.

**Ceasefire -**

The Ceasefire of 1965 war came about at 3 a.m. Indian standard time on 22 Sep 1965. On 6 Sep 1965, Shastri had said that India would not go from one ceasefire to another. Why did he then agree to a ceasefire when Indian Military authorities were claiming that they were having an upper hand? "Indian military circles strongly opposed acceptance of a premature ceasefire, because they wanted to cripple Pakistani armour sufficiently to reduce the possibility of another major attack in the immediate future. The usually well-informed American correspondent, Selig S. Harrison, reported that the Indian Cabinet was divided over timing of a truce during U Thant's visit. General Chaudhuri reputedly urged the Cabinet, on September 13, to avoid a cessation of hostilities at that point. The army, he said was on the verge of a decisive victory in the Punjab and should be allowed to inflict maximum damage on Pakistani power. He was supported strongly by the Defence Minister, Chavan. In this account, Shastri held out for acceptance of the UN resolution of September 6". The ceasefire was accepted by the Government against the advice of its military comdhrs. There is no doubt that, by 22 Sep, Pakistan was in a worse situation than India as far as military hardware, especially tanks, ammunition and fuel, were concerned. If the war had been permitted to carry on for another few days, the story might have been quite different. The Government of India committed the same mistake during 1947-48 operations by accepting ceasefire prematurely; the Pakistanis would have been driven out of whole of J and K if the ceasefire had been delayed by a month or so.

**List of PVC Awardees:**


- Lieutenant Colonel A.B. Tarapore, 17 Horse, 15 October 1965, Phillaura, Sialkot, Pakistan, (posthumous).
Company Quarter Master Havildar Abdul Hamid

CQMH Abdul Hamid, son of Shri Usman, was born on 1 July 1933, in village Dhamapur, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. He was enrolled in 4 Grenadiers on 27 December 1954.

During the Indo-Pak war 1965, 4 Infantry Division was entrusted with a two fold responsibility-capture Pak territory east of Ichhogil Canal and contain possible enemy attack on Kasur-Khem Karan axis. The Division succeeded in reaching Ichhogil Canal but the powerful Pak offensive forced it to fall back on Asal Uttar. It settled here to meet the enemy assault. In the new defence plan of the Division, 4 Grenadiers occupied a vital area ahead of village Chima on road Khem Karan-Bhikwind. A firm hold on this area was considered essential to sustain the divisional plan of defence.

Lieutenant Colonel AB Tarapore

Lt Col Ardeshir Burzorji Tarapore was born in Bombay on 18th August 1923. The second of three children, he showed from his very young age signs of courage and presence of mind.

Ardeshir was enrolled in the Sardar Dastur Boys School in Pune at the age of seven. Although not academically outstanding, he distinguished himself in athletics, boxing, swimming, tennis and cricket. He matriculated from the school in 1940.

After school, Ardeshir was selected for a commission in the Hyderabad Army. He had his training at the OTS first at Golconda and then at Bangalore. He was commissioned on 1st January 1942, in the 7th Hyderabad Infantry. However he was very keen on joining the armoured regiment of the Hyderabad State Forces and on request was transferred to the 1st Hyderabad Imperial Service Lancers. He saw active service during the Second World War in West Asia. He was commissioned in the Indian Army in 1951 and was posted to 17 Horse.
The Tashkent Declaration  
10 January 1966

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan having met at Tashkent and having discussed the existing relations between India and Pakistan, hereby declare their firm resolve to restore normal and peaceful relations between their countries and to promote understanding and friendly relations between their peoples. They consider the attainment of these objectives of vital importance for the welfare of the 600 million people of India and Pakistan.

I

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan agree that both sides will exert all efforts to create good neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan in accordance with the United Nations Charter. They reaffirm their obligation under the Charter not to have recourse to force and to settle their disputes through peaceful means. They considered that the interests of peace in their region and particularly in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent and, indeed, the interests of the peoples of India and Pakistan were not served by the continuance of tension between the two countries. It was against this background that Jammu and Kashmir was discussed, and each of the sides set forth its respective position.

II

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that all armed personnel of the two countries shall be withdrawn not later than 25 February, 1966 to the positions they held prior to 5 August, 1965 and both sides shall observe the cease-fire terms on the cease-fire line.
III

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that relations between India and Pakistan shall be based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of each other.

IV

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that both sides will discourage any propaganda directed against the other country, and will encourage propaganda which promotes the development of friendly relations between the two countries.

V

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that the High Commissioner of India to Pakistan and the High Commissioner of Pakistan to India will return to their posts and that the normal functioning of diplomatic missions of both countries will be restored. Both Governments shall observe the Vienna Convention of 1961 on Diplomatic Intercourse.

VI

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed to consider measures towards the restoration of economic and trade relations, communications, as well as cultural exchanges between India and Pakistan, and to take measures to implement the existing agreements between India and Pakistan.

VII

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that they give instructions to their respective authorities to carry out the repatriation of the prisoners of war.
The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that both the sides will continue the discussion of questions relating to the problems and evictions/illegal immigrations. They also agreed that both sides will create conditions which will prevent the exodus of people. They further agreed to discuss the return of the property and assets taken over by either side in connection with the conflict.

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that the sides will continue meetings both at the highest and at other levels on matters of direct concern to both countries. Both sides have recognised the need to set up joint Indian-Pakistani bodies which will report to their Governments in order to decide what further steps should be taken.

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan record their feelings of deep appreciation and gratitude to the leaders of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Government and personally to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for their constructive, friendly and noble part in bringing about the present meeting which has resulted in mutually satisfactory results. They also express to the Government and friendly people of Uzbekistan their sincere thankfulness for their overwhelming reception and generous hospitality.

They invite the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR to witness this Declaration.

Sd/-
Lal Bahadur
Prime Minister of India
Tashkent, 10 January 1966

Sd/-
M.A. Khan, F.M.
President of Pakistan
INDO-PAK WAR 1971

The Bloody Dawn of Bangladesh - 1971:

New nations are seldom born without great pain. The scale of human suffering that marked the birth of Bangladesh, however, was so vast that it stands out starkly even against the grim and melancholy canvas of the twentieth century. First, a natural disaster of titanic proportions, followed by a fratricidal war, then a flood of refugees, and finally another war - these were the four horsemen of the apocalypse that ushered into the world the state of Bangladesh in 1971.

To understand the outbreak of the war between Moslem and Moslem, one must appreciate that, first and foremost, the two Pakistanas had nothing whatsoever in common but Islam. For almost a quarter century, the two wings of Pakistan stood more than 1,000 miles apart - with Indian Territory in between. Aside from this physical, and consequently psychological, distance, the two peoples spoke different languages, had different racial characteristics, and prided themselves on different cultural achievements. As one observer put it rather bluntly: "The only bonds between the diverse and distant wings of their Moslem nation were the Islamic faith and Pakistan International Airlines."

As if this condition were not enough to weaken the union, a sequence of developments aggravated the situation and eventually plunged the two Pakistanas into all-out war. First, the founder of Pakistan, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, died one year after the creation of the state and his successor, Liaquat Ali Khan, was felled by an assassin's bullet two years later. The loss of these two charismatic leaders left a serious void and contributed to the declining popularity of the Moslem League, which had provided a semblance of unity throughout Pakistan. Second, and even more serious, was the flagrantly unequal distribution of economic resources between the two Pakistanas. From the very beginning, the West Pakistanis were far more generously endowed than their coreligionists in Bengal. As well, West Pakistan, six times the size
of East Pakistan, had to support only 40 percent of Pakistan's entire population. Third, and perhaps most important, was the tendency of the West Pakistani leadership to treat the Bengalis as poor relations. The nation's capital was established in the West, first in Karachi and later in Islamabad. As Pakistan became a major recipient of American military and economic aid, the West remained the main beneficiary. Westerners were always richer than easterners, and between 1950 and 1970 this income gap more than doubled. The Bengali jute and tea supplied between 50 and 70 percent of the nation's revenue, but the Bengalis received only 25 to 30 percent of Pakistan's total income. Thus, there was a parasitic quality to the West's relationship to the East. As a leading Bengali spokesman put it:

We are only a colony and a market. If the only reason for our ties with West Pakistan is that we are both Moslem, why shouldn't we join some other state, like Kuwait, from which we might get more money?

Finally, the West had a virtual monopoly on Pakistan's power elite: 85 percent of all government positions were held by westerners; two-thirds of the nation's industry and four-fifths of its banking and insurance assets were controlled by the West; and only 5 percent of Pakistan's 275,000 - man army were Bengalis.

East Pakistanis tried hard to compensate for this disparity with cultural arrogance. They were lovers of art and literature and regarded the westerners' respect for the martial virtues with contempt. But gradually, under the growing pressures of deprivation, pride gave way to a Bengal nationalism that demanded its case be heard. Still, violence might have been avoided had not nature visited upon Bengal one of the most terrible calamities of the century. In November 1970 a devastating cyclone struck the coast of Bengal and claimed the lives of almost half a million people, those who survived suffered starvation and disease. The catastrophe was so awesome that it was described as "a second Hiroshima."
At the time of the disaster the president of Pakistan was Yahya Khan, a general who had assumed power in 1969 by virtue of his military status. Yahya had promised free elections by the end of 1970. Two weeks elapsed, however, before the president even managed to visit the scene of the catastrophe, and most Bengalis perceived this delay as an example of West Pakistan’s callousness and indifference to the calamity that had befallen them. The Bengalis’ outrage now vented itself at the ballot box.

The election results turned out to be a bitter surprise for the military leadership as well as for the People’s Party, headed by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a westerner. To their dismay, Sheik Mujibur Rahman’s Awami League won a sweeping victory in East Pakistan. Whereas Sheik Mujibur had always favored Bengali civil liberties, Yahya Khan’s apathy in the wake of the cyclone provoked the Sheik’s followers into a genuine nationalist movement. The league’s platform of complete regional autonomy for East Pakistan would have given control of only foreign affairs and defense matters to the central government. On the basis of the election returns in December 1970, East Pakistan, with its large Bengali population, was allotted 169 seats in the National Assembly, while Bhutto’s People’s Party won only 90 seats. The results left no doubt that the next prime minister of Pakistan would not be Bhutto but the Bengali leader Sheik Mujibur Rahman.

The western leadership found this outcome simply unacceptable. It feared that the Awami League, with its absolute majority in the National Assembly, would vote itself a program for virtual self-government, thus removing East Pakistan from the control of the central government. The weeks following the election were marked by a feverish contest for power that finally erupted into bloody conflict.

President Yahya Khan triggered the crisis when he announced the postponement of the assembly session to a later, unspecified date. The Awami League, perceiving this as a deliberate attempt to disregard a popular mandate for Bengali autonomy, launched a campaign of civil disobedience.
The Bengalis, in turn, defied the central government by calling a massive strike and managed to bring government operations to a virtual standstill. In response to this pressure, Yahya Khan scheduled the date of the assembly session for March 26, but at the same time made arrangements for massive airlift of West Pakistani troops to East Pakistan.

In such a climate, negotiations were doomed from the start. On March 25 private talks between Yahya and Sheik Mujibur broke down, and on his return to Islamabad the president denounced the Sheik's activities as "acts of treason" He ordered the immediate arrest of Awami League leaders and directed the army to crush the secessionist movement and restore full authority to the central government. This decision directly precipitated the civil war and led to the end of a united Pakistan. In view of its crucial importance in the sequence of events, it is worth examining in some detail.

Yahya's plan was to destroy all Bengali resistance centers in one massive strike, thereby crushing the rebellion once and for all. West Pakistan leaders never doubted their own military superiority nor expected the Bengalis to put up more than token resistance. As one high-ranking army officer put it: "Those little brown buggers won't fight," and another predicted confidently: "A good beating and these chaps will come around."

This attitude was deeply rooted in the culture of West Pakistan. The light-skinned westerners had always extolled martial virtues and looked down on the dark-skinned Bengalis, who preferred the pen to the sword. Thus, Yahya crucially underestimated the appeal of Sheik Mujibur, whom he never regarded as a legitimate spokesman for Bengali aspirations; instead he imprisoned the sheik as a traitor. The sheik's statement in March that the Bengalis were "prepared to sacrifice one million people to gain independence" was dismissed as empty rhetoric. Yahya, in fact, was reported to have referred to the Bengalis as "mosquitoes" who could be killed with one determined slap of the hand. He ignored the possibility that the "mosquitoes" might soon become guerrillas. Moreover, he never recognized the charisma
of the Bengali leader, whom he dismissed as a saboteur and mischief maker. And finally, he never took into account the enormous logistical difficulties of supplying an occupation army from bases that were a thousand miles away. Instead, Yahya Khan preferred a military solution of the most brutal kind that not only alienated the Bengalis from West Pakistan forever but plunged the entire subcontinent into open conflict.

The western crackdown on Bengal was marked by extreme brutality. Pillage, murder, and rape were so pervasive that by April a powerful guerrilla movement had sprung up that fought the West Pakistanis with a courage born of desperation. On April 17 the Bengali resistance fighters, or Mukti Bahini, as they quickly came to be known, established a provisional government of their own in a mango grove just inside the East Pakistan border. They gave their embryonic state the name of Bangladesh.

In terror millions of Bengalis fled for their lives from the pitilessness of the West Pakistanis. They chose as their haven the neighboring province of West Bengal, which was a part of India. Thus it came about that Moslems, in order to save themselves from other Moslems, sought refuge in India, the country of their former archenemy. The growing influx of these panic-stricken people began to create a terrible burden on the overpopulated and impoverished neighboring Hindu nation. India had to draw upon its meager resources in order to provide food, medical assistance, and shelter for the refugees, and as a result, and as a result, had to suspend its own economic development plans. To make matters worse, West Bengal also happened to be one of India's politically most volatile and unstable states, and the flood of refugees naturally exacerbated this instability.

In view of these developments, India could not remain a passive observer of the civil war in Pakistan for very long. On April 16 the government of Indira Gandhi accused the West Pakistan army of "planned carnage and systematic genocide. By May Pakistani troops were chasing
Bengali guerrillas across the Indian border, and armed clashes between Indian and Pakistani border patrols were becoming commonplace.

As the flood of Bengali refugees gathered momentum the Indian government became increasingly alarmed. Its treasury was being drained of 2.5 million a day. In the spring Mrs. Gandhi warned the parliament that the refugee problem was "going to be hell for us, we are not going to allow them to stay here." By November the Indian estimate of Bengali refugees had reached the 10 million mark. If this figure is correct, them "the mass movement of humanity over eight months of 1971 was the most intensive, regionally concentrated large-scale migration in the history of man."

By mid-July Mrs. Gandhi had evidence that a war with Pakistan would be cheaper than the economic burden of coping with the refugee problem for a single year. This evidence was supplied by the Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis in New Delhi. The Indians concluded that the refugees would cost their country 900 million within a year, or more than thirteen times the cost of the entire Kashmir war with Pakistan in 1965. This report was widely circulated and resulted in a wave of popular emotion in favor of war. The Indian leadership had to respond forcefully to alleviate the pressure.

On August 9 Mrs. Gandhi, with an eye toward Pakistan's friendship with China, abandoned India's traditional policy of nonalignment and signed a treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union. This twenty-five-year treaty had all the earmarks of a military alliance. Reflecting the popular mood, the Indian Parliament hailed the new "realism" in India's foreign policy and praised Mrs. Gandhi for having "put some meat in our vegetarian diet of non-alignment." The pact was intended as a clear warning to Pakistan and as a deterrent against the possibility of Chinese intervention. Several weeks later, Mrs. Gandhi embarked on a tour of the United States, Britain, and Western Europe to underline the gravity of the situation and the need for a political solution. Specifically, she demanded the release of Sheik Mujibur, which she
hoped would result in Bengali autonomy and the return of the refugees to their former homes.

On the home front Mrs. Gandhi quietly took measures to prepare the Indian army for action in case her diplomatic efforts failed. During the months of October and November 1971 Indian forces began to help the Mukti Bahini more actively. Mrs. Gandhi was still hopeful that a major war could be averted and that the Indians, as discreetly as possible, could secure enough territory within East Pakistan to establish a Bangladesh regime. However, this clandestine support for the Bengali guerrillas turned out to be insufficient. Moreover, another natural calamity forced the Indian government to become even more actively involved.

In early November another cyclone struck, this time spending its fury on Indian soil. The death of 20,000 Indians sharply increased public pressures on Mrs. Gandhi. The Parliament now demanded that priority be given to the Indian victims and that forceful measures be taken to effect the repatriation of the Bengalis. In response to these pressures, Mrs. Gandhi made a crucial military commitment. She authorized Indian forces to engage Pakistani troops on the East Pakistan border. He strategy was hit the West Pakistanis with quick, limited strikes that would tie down the occupation troops and give the Bengali guerrillas more freedom to maneuver. This "hit and run" strategy was greeted with a chorus of approval in the parliament. The commander of the Indian forces in the area, General Jagjit Singh Aurora, was happy that his troops could now challenge the Pakistanis in open combat. As he put it: I had finished building up my force in September, and I really began to retaliate in mid-October, but it wasn't until the third week of November that I got permission to go in and silence their guns by pushing them back and giving them a bloody nose.

Mrs. Gandhi had confidence in her strategy for another reason. She was convinced that China would be deterred from intervening not only because of India's new alliance with the Soviet Union, but also because the
Himalayan passes were already blocked by snow. Her assumption proved to be correct.

On November 30 Mrs. Gandhi ordered a blackout of Calcutta, and on the following day Indian troops penetrated 5 Miles into Pakistan as a "defensive measure." On that day the United States began its "tilt" toward Pakistan by canceling an arms shipment to India, and Mrs. Gandhi exploded:

If any country thinks that by calling us aggressors it can pressure us to forget our national interests, then that country is living in its own paradise and is welcome to it. The times have passed when any nation sitting three or four thousand miles away could give orders to Indians on the basis of their color superiority. India has changed, and she is no more a country of natives.

Tension also ran high in Pakistan. By late November it had become public knowledge that President Yahya Khan had taken to heavy drinking. On November 25, while entertaining a delegation of visiting Chinese, he exclaimed to a reporter:

If that woman thinks she can cow me down, I refuse to take it. If she wants a war, I'll fight her! In ten days, I might not be here. There might be a war. I'll be off fighting a war.

Indira Gandhi's demand that Yahya Khan release Sheikh Mujibur enraged the Pakistani leader so much that he sentenced the Bengali nationalist to death. Not only did he resist all appeals and efforts to change his mind, but on November 26 he outlawed the entire Awami League on grounds of conspiracy against the government. The death sentence against Sheikh Mujibur, however, was never carried out.

Yahya Khan also displayed an increasing tendency to reduce the conflict between India and Pakistan to a personal test of strength between himself and Mrs. Gandhi. In an interview with a Time correspondent, his vanity broke through. Proud of his thick black hair, he exclaimed to the
reporter: "My strength lies in it - like Samson's." And to a *Newsweek* correspondent, who questioned him about the possibility of war with India, he confided: "The worst losers will be the Indians themselves. I hope to God that woman understands." A week later, the same reporter interviewed Mrs. Gandhi, who promptly returned the compliment:

"That woman" I am not concerned with the remark, but it shows the mentality of the person. He is one man who could not get elected in his own country if there were a fair election. I would say he would not even get elected in his province if there were a fair election. What weight has his judgment on India? It is a world which is quite outside his ken.

On 01 December Mrs. Gandhi issued an ultimatum in which she demanded that Yahya Khan withdraw all his forces from East Pakistan. This was a hard blow under any circumstances, but for a man with Yahya Khan's fragile masculine ego, such an ultimatum from a woman was psychologically unacceptable. Thus, even though he knew that the Indian forces outnumbered his own by a ratio of five to one, the president of Pakistan authorized a massive air strike against India on December 3. The decision was greeted with a chorus of approval. Bhutto, who had just assumed the post of Deputy Prime Minister, exclaimed that "Pakistan is faced with a predatory aggressor who never reconciled itself to the establishment of this country." And Lieutenant-General Niazi, commander of Pakistan's forces in the east, got right to the heart of the matter: "We are Moslems and we don't like Hindus. One Moslem soldier is worth five Hindus."

Yahya Khan's military strategy was based on the example of the Israeli surprise attack of June 1967. He hoped to cripple the Indian Air Force with a single devastating blow and then move with impunity into Kashmir, which he could use as a trump card in postwar bargaining.

The execution of the 03 December air attack, however, turned out to be a military disaster. Indian jet planes, unlike Egyptian planes in 1967, were
well protected in concrete revetments and thus were virtually immune to the Pakistani assault. As well, since only thirty-two Pakistani planes participated in the attack the offensive stokes was very feeble indeed. India’s air marshal claimed that India was hardly bruised, let alone hurt, by the attack, and another military expert commented that “In military terms, no one in his right mind would have attacked with three or four planes at each airfield. It was sheer madness.

The failure of the air attack, far from forcing the Pakistanis to face reality, had precisely the opposite effect. Fervent appeals for a holy war against India increased in frequency. The Pakistan times editorialized:

Plainly Islam is the issue between India and Pakistan......Only those qualify to fight the battle of Pakistan who are prepared to fight the battle of Islam.......For us there is no choice but to fight, if need be to the last man.

As the conflict intensified in early December, the elements of a fierce religious war made their appearance. Gradually all restraint was lost, and the religious basis of the struggle was revealed in all its fanaticism and ferocity. As a Pakistani pilot put it: “Our one god makes our victory certain. The Indians are worshippers of idols, of many gods. Ours is the true strength. And an army colonel took strength from the concept of jihad, or holy war, when he asserted confidently that there would be no Pakistani casualties on the field of battle since, “in the pursuit of jihad, nobody dies, he lives forever.

When Pakistan was confronted with dismemberment and defeat in mid-December, the truth was so appalling that it was unacceptable. Even the conquering Indian generals were moved to compassion when they saw their former colleagues from the British colonial army under siege in Dacca. Major-General Gandharv Nagra’s to General Niazi, the defender of Dacca makes poignant reading: “My dear Abdullah, I am here. The game is up. I suggest you give yourself up to me and I’ll look after you.
Mrs. Gandhi thus emerged as the undisputed victory. India agreed to a cease-fire at her own convenience, acquired 2,500 square miles of territory in West Pakistan, and detained some 93,000 prisoners of war for almost two years. Pakistan was dismembered and Bengal East emerged as Bangladesh. A bitter political divorce and a bloody war had led to the emergence of a new state in the family of nations.

War Declared:

The war broke out at 5.45 p.m. on 3 December 1971 when Pakistan resorted to a swift aerial action and bombarded a number of Indian bases, namely Amritsar, Awantipur, Ambala, Agra, Jodhpur, Pathankot, Srinagar and Uttarlai. A total of six Star fighter and ten Sabre squadrons were used in these attacks. Pakistan, apparently, used the fading twilight for ease of its own navigation and simultaneously to put the runways of Indian airfields and aircraft out of commission. This air attack was to be followed by bomber raids deeper into Indian Territory later that night. Between the dusk of December 3 and the dawn of December 4 there were 24 aerial attacks, including three on the Indian bomber base at Agra, where its runway was damaged but quickly re-commissioned within a couple of hours. Pakistan, however, failed to appreciate India's capability to retaliate, that night itself Indian Canberras struck at Murid, Mianwali, Sargodha, Changa Mouga, Chanderi, Risalwala, Shorkot and Masrur airfields. On land, Pakistani forces mounted ferocious attacks on Indian forward positions all along the western border in the Punjab area, particularly at Sulemanke and Khem Karan, and along the cease-fire line in Jammu and Kashmir to include Chhamb and Poonch. A state of emergency was proclaimed by the President and Prime Minister of India. In a broadcast to the nation at 20 minutes past midnight on 4 December the latter called upon the people of India to unite and repel the aggression decisively. By first light on 4 December, the IAF fighter bombers also struck at Chanderi, Risalwala, Kohat, Peshawar, Mianwali, Murid, Walton and Shorkot. These attacks appear to have blunted Pakistan's
capability to follow up its previous day's strikes. The oil storage depot at Keamari near Karachi port was also bombed and set on fire. This attack is known to have seriously affected Pakistan's fuel position.

On 4 December Pakistan proclaimed a state of war with India. Indian troops crossed into Bangladesh. The eastern and western fleets of the Indian Navy went into action.

In the first day's fighting, Pakistan lost 33 planes, either shot down or destroyed on the ground. These included three Mirages, two F-104 Star fighters, and 19 Sabres, five B-57 bombers, three light air observation aircraft and one transport plane. Twelve Pakistani tanks were destroyed, six in the Ferozepore sector and an equal number near Chamb. Two Pakistani gunboats were sunk and a merchant vessel captured in the Arabian Sea. IAF planes destroyed six powerboats and damaged another 20. India lost a total of 13 planes, 11 in the west and two over Bangladesh.

The U.N. Security Council met that day in an emergency session to consider the 'deteriorating situation which led to armed clashes between India and Pakistan.'

The Indo-Pakistani conflict was sparked by the Bangladesh Liberation war, a conflict between the traditionally dominant West Pakistanis and the majority East Pakistanis. This gave India a strong advantage over Pakistan. The war ignited after the 1970 Pakistani election, in which the East Pakistani Awami League won 167 of 169 seats in East Pakistan, thus securing a simple majority in the 313-seat lower house of the Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament of Pakistan). Awami League leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman presented Six Points and claimed the right to form the government. After the leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, refused to give premiership of Pakistan to Mujibur, President Yahya Khan called in the military, which was made up largely of West Pakistanis.

Mass arrests of dissidents began, and attempts were made to disarm East Pakistani soldiers and police. After several days of strikes and non-
cooperation movements, Pakistani military cracked down on Dhaka on the night of March 25, 1971. The Awami League was banished, and many members fled into exile in India. Mujib was arrested and taken to West Pakistan.

On 27 March 1971, Ziaur Rahman, a rebellious Magor in the Pakistani Army, declared the independence of Bangladesh on behalf of Mujibur Rehman. In April, exiled Awami League leaders formed a government-in-exile in Boelidonathgolla of Mecherpur. The East Pakistan Rifles, an elite paramilitary force, defected to the rebellion. A guerrilla troop of civilians, the Mukti Bahini, was formed to help the Bangladesh Army.

A Post Attacked

On 4 December, as part of 23 Punjab's patrolling programme, Lieutenant Dharam Vir took out a patrol comprising 21 other ranks to Boundary Pillar (BP) 635, which was located 16 km towards the west of Laungewala. It had left Laungewala post towards evening with a small supply of water and food, and after trudging for hours in the soft sand, deployed astride BP 635. As the cold December night progressed, the bright moon which had just risen over the eastern horizon tended to cast strange shadows over the landscape. Soon Dharam Vir went around the general area of BP 635 at about 10:30 p.m., making sure that the look-out group was at its designated location while the other group rested. This done, he returned to the patrol base which was located in a small defile some 200 meters away to the east. At about 11 p.m. Havildar Mohinder Singh of the look-out group reported hearing faint tank noises at a distance. The entire patrol was now fully alert. In the absence of any credible information related to enemy concentration opposite Laungewala, the general belief was that the look-out group was imagining things. However, the noise of approaching tanks could soon be clearly heard by every member of the patrol, and all doubts were put to rest in anyone's mind. The matter was immediately reported to company headquarters, from where it was reported to higher headquarters up the chain
to include the battalion, brigade and the divisional headquarters. However, no one beyond the battalion headquarters was prepared to give any credibility to this information.

Ironically, since no intelligence report had been received intimating the large build up of enemy forces opposite this Indian sector, the commanders and staff officers of higher formation headquarters felt that imagination had got the better of Dharam Vir. They insisted that 'A' company of 23 Punjab should reconfirm the patrol report forwarded by Dharam Vir, and accordingly Major Kuldip Singh Chandpuri at Laungewala came on the radio-set personally and asked Dharam Vir to reconfirm tank noises, which was once again fully confirmed by the latter.

It so happened that the latest information passed up the channel by Major Chandpuri was also discounted. By about 2 a.m., Dharam Vir could see tank columns silhouetted against the moonlit horizon. Some of the tank columns were accompanied by vehicles, all painfully ploughing their way from the direction of Pakistan, and were heading towards a defile near village Kharotar, located approximately 3 km south-west of Laungewala, from where they could easily-approach the post. Dharam Vir's patrol kept its cool and continued to monitor with stealth the strength and type of tanks and vehicles which were now not more than two hundred meters away from them. The young officer gave up the count after 30 tanks and twice the number of assorted vehicles, which included some tractors towing some other types of vehicles. According to Major General Shaukat Riza in his book 'The History of Pakistan Army (1966-71)' - "The infantry was mounted on agricultural tractors, to keep us with the armour. The tractors were wheeled, and the heavy wheels just sank in the soft sand". This is what happened subsequently, and the infantry following the tanks got bogged down. "The perversity of the terrain came as a shock to the troops", states the Pakistani author. Chandpuri kept on informing his higher-ups of these latest developments.
With no more doubts in anyone's mind up the hierarchy, the brigade headquarters contemplated reverting to Laungewala the two RCL guns, which were earlier, dispatched to battalion headquarters at Sadhewala for conduct of training. Meanwhile, Major Chandpuri found himself explaining the situation over the radio-set time and again to his CO at Sadhewala a the commander of 45 Infantry Brigade based at Tanot, and even to the General Officer Commanding (GOC) and other staff officers of 12 Infantry Division, the tactical headquarters of which was located 8 km behind Tanot. It took tremendous patience to get organized for the imminent battle while keeping over-curious enquirers at bay over the radio-set.

By 2.30 a.m. enemy artillery guns commenced shelling Laungewala with the dual purpose of causing attrition to Indian troops deployed at the post and to provide direction to its own advancing columns. The firing commenced while the Pakistani tank columns were still negotiating the Kharotar defile. Dharam Vir soon reported that vehicles carrying troops could also be seen following the tank columns. Chandpuri was left in no doubt as to what to expect during the next few hours. He requested his CO for revert his two RCL guns earliest.

Major General R.F. Khambatta, who had been planning for a limited offensive into Pakistani territory, soon found he unsettled by the unexpected enemy thrust. There were rumours of a Pakistani boast of stopping for breakfast at Ramgarh and pausing for lunch at Jaisalmer before moving towards Jodhpur and subsequently Delhi. These rumours had been disregarded. As luck would have it, the divisional offensive had been delayed by 24 hours. Had this not been so, the division would have found it hard to cope with this unexpected threat, with no reserves to block the Pakistani planned advance. The GOC now got in touch with the air base at Jaisalmer and requested the IAF to provide close air support to Laungewala post at day-break.
Battle of Launagewala (Rajasthan)
5 December 1971

Map not to scale
By 3 a.m. the two RCI guns under Havildars Baldev Singh and Sandhur Singh reached Laungewala at breakneck speed. The post could now clearly hear the noise of tanks and vehicles from the direction of Kharotar. The frightening prospect of being overrun by the enemy's overwhelming strength caused trepidation among some Jawans, for whom it was to be their first baptism of fire. Sensing this, Chandpuri told his men in chaste Punjabi: "Anyone who is afraid to face the enemy, is free to run away now, although it will be a shame to the battalion and its ancestors, who thought nothing of sacrificing their lives in the past for the honour and name of this paltan" and added "but remember, I intend to stand and fight to the last". This touched them, and soon they all reassured that they would never desert him or their colleagues in the post, and would fight and die till the last man. Chandpuri, although apprehensive, had complete faith in his men and took a silent pledge thereafter - that of not to vacate Laungewala under any circumstances and, if need be, to fight to the last man/last round. In order to uphold the morale of his men he made it a point to keep in regular contact with his various platoons, sections and detachments deployed all along the post, and constantly motivated them to put in their best at all times, thereby upholding the traditions of the battalion and the Punjab Regiment. This act of Chandpuri had made a tremendous impact on his men and they were determined to live up to the expectations of their company commander, battalion commander and the regiment. This was proved beyond doubt subsequently, after the battle was over.

At 4 a.m. enemy armour, later identified as 22 Cavalry consisting of Chinese-built T-59 tanks plus a squadron of Shermans ex 38 Cavalry, along with infantry mounted on tanks later identified as troops of 38 Baluch Regiment, were seen emerging from nearby dunes, ostensibly to overrun the Laungewala defences. Following close behind the armour was a long column of assorted vehicles carrying what was later identified as re-orbited combat and support troops of 51 Infantry Brigade of 18 Pakistan Infantry Division. 20 FF, which was a part of 206 Brigade earlier, now formed part of 51 Infantry
Brigade. It was subsequently discovered that Pakistan had not only intended to overrun Laungewala, but had also planned a two-pronged brigade attack on Jaisalmer.

The enemy armour was closing in fast. There was no time for laying all the mines, and only a few could be laid. Major Chandpuri ordered all the remaining mines to be immediately scattered around the defended locality. This strategy had the desired effect, as it imposed caution on the on-rushing tanks. At about 4.20 a.m. the leading tanks crept forward to within effective RCL gun range, when the latter were ordered to fire. One RCL gun scored a direct hit against a T-59 tank which immediately burst into flames, while the other knocked out a jeep carrying a senior officer. The Pakistani troops spent more effort in removing his body than to pursue their objective. It was then also noticed that each tank had strapped on its back a couple of 40-gallon / 200 liters spare barrels of diesel. This was unusual, since no armoured units or formations anywhere in the world resorted to Strapping fuel barrels on their tank hull, particularly during war. The reserve stock of fuel, ammunition and rations during operations always followed the advancing armoured columns in sand channeled wheeled or tracked vehicles having cross-country capability in the desert. These vehicles known as logistic echelons, always remained one bound behind, only to move up on orders or whenever required. Fuel containers strapped onto tanks always posed the risk of igniting when under enemy fire, tending the respective tank along with its first line integral ammunition to explode like a giant match box.

Around 4.30 a.m. the enemy infantry attacked the post with vigour, shouting their battle cry 'Ya-Ali', while their tanks, artillery and medium machine guns provided close support for the attack. Inspire of innumerable odds, the attack was courageously held. The tanks then attempted to assault and started closing in. It was at this juncture that Sepoy Bishan Dass, with his detachment of pioneers, started placing anti-tank mines along the route of the assaulting tanks. He unfortunately made the supreme sacrifice in the process,
but not without blowing off the tracks of three tanks. The RCL guns again opened up and knocked out two more tanks, but in the bargain Sepoy (later Naib Subedar) Mathra Dass sustained a machine gun burst from another tank and was severely wounded. One of enemy's infantry assaults, too, had been held at bay due to the sheer courage of Sepoy Jagjit Singh who continued firing his light machine gun from the open till he was killed by a tank round. The platoon under Subedar Rattan Singh took the brunt of this very assault with great fortitude. Every single soldier did his duty including the cook Sepoy Bhagi Ram who ferried ammunition to the gun positions without a break.

The loss of a few tanks seemed to have unnerved the Pakistani armoured troop commanders who preferred to stall their assault, fearing high density minefields. Furthermore, apparently due to lack of effective leadership, their infantry-tank cohesion was also not in evidence. The tanks, instead of maneuvering behind Laungewala and blocking the routes to Sadhewala and Ramgarh, just held back non-tactically and fully exposed, as if waiting for further orders. The brave men of Laungewala under Chandpuri's constant spurring knocked down seven more tanks with RCL guns, rocket launchers and anti-tank mines. The remaining tanks soon turned around and took cover behind sand-dunes, while some other tanks started making a detour towards the southwest in order to attack the company from the left flank and rear. During this critical maneuver Chandpuri ordered his MMGs and mortars to open up in a coordinated manner simultaneously, and in this process took a heavy toll of the enemy infantry. During this exchange of fire, Sepoy Charan Das of the Mortar platoon was hit by an enemy tank’s MMG and made the supreme sacrifice. Surprisingly, some Pakistani troops were still seen sitting on the tanks while some others were seen running about, seeking cover. It was also observed that several tanks, while negotiating a sharp turn to get behind cover, got bogged down in loose sand. The crew bailed out and, while running for cover, was caught under LMG fire, thus suffering casualties.
Chandpuri felt that unless he was reinforced quickly his company position would be overrun by the sheer weight of enemy tanks, artillery and infantry. He sent yet another desperate request for reinforcements, this time it included immediate closer air support.

Wing Commander (later Air Marshal) M.S. Bawa was the enterprising commander of the IAF base at Jaisalmer. He responded magnificently to Khambatta’s request. With just two out of four Hunter aircraft functioning, he organized an extraordinary ground crew backing with a view to send numerous sorties to Laungewala by day-break. The IAF pilots at Jaisalmer airfield were being briefed on an interdiction sortie to Nawab Shah, deep inside Pakistan, territory, but the mission was cancelled by Bawa and the pilots were ordered to go to Laungewala instead. The first two sorties of Hunters appeared over Laungewala at 7.20 a.m. and spotted tanks all over, some on sand-dunes, some heading towards Ramgarh and some just stuck in the sand. Flying low, a sortie pilot rocket a T-59 creeping towards the defended locality and scored a direct hit, and then he knocked out five other tanks.

Daylight air attacks brought an incredible spectacle for the troops at Laungewala. The entire area was dotted with Pakistani tanks with its infantry and vehicles aimlessly moving around in the open. It was a classic score before the unbelieving eyes of the brave defenders of Laungewala. Bawa’s determined pilots made repeated rocket attacks, first against the tanks and then against other vehicles and towed guns. Panicky evasive action by enemy tanks further gave away whatever advantage of concealment the winter desert haze afforded them. Surprisingly, the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) failed to put in even a token appearance. Pertinent to say that Major (later Brigadier) Atma Singh of the Indian Air Observation Post (AOP) Squadron incurred heavy risks in assisting the IAF fighter pilots to accurately direct their shooting.
Having run out of rockets, the Hunters started firing their 30 cannons and saw a few tanks go up in flames when their rounds hit the diesel barrels strapped on the tanks. Thereafter, sortie after sortie of Hunters began arriving in pairs, knocking out several tanks. Eight enemy tanks were seen heading towards Ramgarh in single file and were easily rocketed. The IAF had the air to it and, having immobilized all enemy armour near Laungewala, spotted a train carrying tanks, APCs, guns and other assorted vehicles approaching Khairpur in Pakistan, and blasted off the entire train with rockets and cannons.

The enemy mustered up yet another attempt to attack the post at 10.30 a.m. which was effectively thwarted by the combined effort of the IAF, the MMGs at Laungewala post and gun support provided by the field battery. The Hunters continued to take a heavy toll of enemy columns and kept up the attacks against the withdrawing enemy columns which were strung out on a linear fashion up to the border.

Meanwhile, by about 11.30 a.m., Chandpuri's post had been reinforced by Dharam Vir's patrol, and by afternoon that day reinforcements began to trickle in by way of a company of 17 Rajputana Rifles which formed part of a neighbouring formation, a troop of four AMX-13 tanks, which had been hastily collected from the Armoured Delivery Regiment located nearby, and artillery support provided by 17 Para Field Battery. The Pakistanis made another desperate bid to capture Chandpuri's position, but were repulsed with heavy casualties. The few Indian tanks put up a gallant resistance but were no match for the T-59s which managed to outmaneuver the Indian tanks due to their better fire power and maneuverability.

By the evening of 6 December the Indian ground and air forces proudly claimed 37 enemy tanks neutralized, a feat backed up by aerial photo evidence. Air reconnaissance later that day confirmed that the Pakistani thrust to Jaisalmer was in shambles. 12 Infantry Division was soon in a
position to readjust its defensive posture suitably and prepare for a limited offensive.

Coming back to Laungewala, one might then ask as to who actually won the battle there? In simple terms a collective endeavour led to the victory. The Indian commanders did initially underestimate the threat but thereafter got their acts together in a smooth manner. It was hammer of the Air Force which broke up the Pakistani thrust on the anvil provided by the 'Alpha' company of 23 Punjab Regiment, a battalion which had been raised just five years before the battle, and most of its soldiers were new to combat. However, Major Chandpuri's singular contribution was in ensuring that his men stood their ground against a far superior force; in retaining command and control through the confusion; in bringing the Pakistani force to a stop by forcing tank losses on them, and in giving reliable and timely information to the higher commanders to organise a timely response. The Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel M.K. Hussain, moved the anti-tank guns to Laungewala as soon as he sensed the armour threat and continually encouraged Chandpuri over the radio. If the small air component of Hunters had not contributed as they did, Major Chandpuri and his brave men could have been wiped out. So no single individual, sub unit, unit or formation can take the entire credit. It is a known fact that when a battle is won there are many claimants, as goes the saying - "Victory has many fathers but defeat is often an orphan". Nevertheless, Chandpuri stood out as a towering pillar of strength throughout the battle, an act which has been universally acclaimed and acknowledged.

Like Khem Karan during 1965, Laungewala proved to be the largest tank disaster for Pakistan during the 1971 War. It was a bold plan but executed with ineptitude and without the basic ingredient for such operations, namely, logistics and close air support. Had it not been for the meager yet determined air effort from Jaisalmer and for the grit and steadfastness of all ranks of 'A' Company of 23 Punjab at Laungewala, the
enemy’s plan could have succeeded. In the event, it was the deadly aerial hammer of Wing Commander Bawa’s pilots smashing away Pakistani dreams on the anvil of Major Chandpuri’s men at Laungewala. The brilliant tactical victory against great odds only confirmed the troops’ faith in the Mata temple of Laungewala. Men of ‘A’ Company still firmly recall how tank shells ricocheted off the walls of the tiny temple structure and also saved the lives of many of its men. It is also a fact that a lone, freak shell fired from an enemy tank managed to pierce the walls of the temple but left the idol unscathed. This shell, along with various other tell-tale signs of the battle, can be seen within the temple complex even today.

The battle at Laungewala became famous overnight and received nation-wide publicity. Major Chandpuri was conferred with the coveted Maha Vir Chakra while Subedar Rattan Singh and the gallant Sepoy Jagjit Singh were awarded Vir Chakras, the latter posthumously. Sepoy Mathra Das, the RCL gunner and the dare devil Sepoy Bishan Dass were awarded Sena Medals, the latter posthumously. Lieutenant Dharam Vir was Mentioned-in-Dispatches for his splendid patrol action while Sepoy Cook Bagi Singh, who often left his cooking chores to lend a hand in combat, received a Commendation from the Chief of the Army Staff. The heroic performance of the BSF also did not go unrewarded, for Bhairon Singh of the BSF was conferred with the Sena Medal. 23 Punjab has also the proud distinction of being awarded the battle honour 'Laungewala' and theatre honour 'Sind'. All this was achieved at the cost of just three fatalities while three soldiers sustained injuries. What seemed impossible just prior to the battle turned the tables on the enemy in a most unexpected manner. Indeed, it will go down as a unique battle in the history of the Indian Army.

**Effects:**

The war led to the immediate surrender of Pakistani forces to the altered forces of India and Bangladesh, jointly known as the Mitro Bahini. Bangladesh became an independent nation, and the third most populous
Muslim country. Loss of East Pakistan demoralized the Pakistani military and Yahya Khan resigned, to the replaced by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Mujibar Rahman was released from west Pakistani prison and retained to Dhaka on January 10, 1972.

The cost of the war for Pakistan in monetary and human resources was high. In the book "Can Pakistan Survive" Pakistan based author Tariq Ali writes, "Pakistan lost half its Navy, a quarter of its Air force and a third of its Army".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Number of Captured PoWs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>54,154</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>1,381</td>
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<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paramilitary Including Police</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Personnel</td>
<td>12,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>90,368</strong></td>
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It was one of the largest surrenders since world war - II

The new nation of Bangladesh, most recently East Pakistan, and East Bengal before that, is surrounded by five states of the Indian Union: West Bengal, Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura, and Mizoram - and, of course, the Bay of Bengal. The country itself is divided into four major administrative sectors - Khulna, Rajshahi, Dacca and Chittagong - each of which is, for administrative purposes, further sub-divided into various districts.

**List of PVC Awardees:**

- Lance Naik Albert Ekka, 14 Guards, 3 December 1971, Gangasagar, Bangladesh, (posthumous).
- Second Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal, 17 Horse, 16 December 1971, Jarpal, Shakargarh, Pakistan, (posthumous).
Chapter - 2

Lance Naik Albert Ekka

L/Nk Albert Ekka was born on 27th December 1942 in Zari village of Ranchi District in Bihar. His father's name was Juluis Ekka and his mother's name was Mariam Ekka. Hailing from an Adivasi family, he was keen even in childhood to join the Army. Exactly at the age of 20 on 27th December 1962, he was enrolled in the Indian Army in the Bihar Regiment. In 1968 he was posted in 14 Guards.

During the Indo-Pak war in 1971, 14 Guards was asked to capture the Pakistani position at Gangasagar, 6.5 kilometers west of Agartala in the Eastern sector. It was a well fortified position held in good strength by the enemy. The reduction of this position was considered necessary as it was the key to the capture of Akhaura.

2nd Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal

2/Lt Arun Khetarpal came from a family with a long tradition of service in the Army. His great grand father had served in the Sikh Army and had fought against the British at the battle of Chalianwala in 1848. His grandfather served in the British Army during the First World War. Arun's father, Brig Ml. Khetarpal, AVSM, served in the Corps of Engineers till he retired from service.

The Khetarpal family belonged to Sargodha in Pakistan and migrated to India after partition as refugees.

Arun was born at Pune on 14 October 1950. His father, then Lt Col ML Khetarpal was an Instructor at the College of Military Engineering. Arun had his early education at the local schools where his father was posted. In February 1962, he joined Lawrence School, Sanawar as a boarder for the next five years and completed his Senior Cambridge from here itself.
In June 1967, he joined the National Defence Academy where he excelled in swimming and golf. In June 1970, he moved to the Indian Military Academy and was commissioned on 13 June 1971 in the 17 Horse.

**Major Hoshiar Singh**

*Maj Hoshiar Singh*, son of Shri Hira Singh, was born on 5 May 1936 in village Sisan, District Rohtak of Haryana. From his childhood, Maj Hoshiar Singh was keen to join the Army. Physically fit and a good sportsman, he represented the combined Punjab team in Volleyball at the National level. He was enrolled in 2 Jat in 1957. During his tenure with the unit he moved with them as part of the UN Mission to Congo in 1960.

He was commissioned in 3 Grenadiers in June 1963, and served with the battalion in Ladakh and also the Rashtrapati Bhavan. He was awarded Mention-in-Despatches in his early service career.

**Flying Officer Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon**

*Flying Officer Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon* was a pilot of a Gnat detachment based at Srinagar for the air defence of the Valley against Pakistani air attacks. From the very outset of the hostilities he and his colleagues fought successive waves of intruding Pakistani aircraft with valour and determination, maintaining the high reputation of Gnat aircraft. On 14 December 1971, Srinagar airfield was attacked by a wave of enemy six Sabre aircraft. Flying Officer Sekhon was on readiness duty at the time. Immediately, however, no fewer than six enemy aircraft were overhead, and they began bombing and strafing the airfield. In spite of the mortal danger of attempting to take off during the attack, Flying Officer Sekhon took off and immediately engaged a pair of the attacking Sabres. In the fight that ensued, he secured hits on one aircraft and set another on fire. By this time the other Sabre aircraft came to the aid of their hard-pressed companions and Flying Officer Sekhon's Gnat was again outnumbered, this time by four to one. Even though alone, Flying Officer Sekhon engaged the enemy in an unequal combat. In the fight that followed, at treetop height, he almost held his own, but was eventually overcome by the sheer weight of numbers. His aircraft crashed and he was killed.
Chapter - 2 (101)

The Simla Agreement
2 July 1972

1. The Government of India and the Government of Pakistan are resolved that the two countries put an end to the conflict and confrontation that have hitherto marred their relations and work for the promotion of a friendly and harmonious relationship and the establishment of durable peace in the sub-continent, so that both countries may henceforth devote their resources and energies to the pressing task of advancing the welfare of their peoples.

In order to achieve this objective, the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan agreed as follows:

(i) That the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations shall govern the relations between the two countries;

(ii) That the two countries are resolved to settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them. Pending the final settlement of any of the problems between the two countries, neither side shall unilaterally alter the situation and both shall prevent the organisation, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relations;

(iii) That the pre-requisite for reconciliation, good neighbourliness and durable peace between them is commitment by both the countries to peaceful co-existence, respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, on the basis of equality and mutual benefits.
(iv) That the basic issues and causes of conflict which have bedeviled the relations between the two countries for the last 25 years shall be resolved by peaceful means.

(v) That they shall always respect each other's national unity, territorial integrity, political independence and sovereign equality;

(vi) That in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations they will refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of each other.

2. Both Governments will take all steps within their power to prevent hostile propaganda directed against each other. Both countries will encourage the dissemination of such information as would promote the development of friendly relations between them.

3. In order progressively to restore and normalise relations between the two countries step by step, it was agreed that:

(i) Steps shall be taken to resume communications, postal, telegraphic, sea, land including border posts, and air links including over flights;

(ii) Appropriate steps shall be taken to promote travel facilities for the nationals of the other country;

(iii) Trade and co-operation in economic and other agreed fields will be resumed as far as possible;

(iv) Exchange in the fields of science and culture will be promoted.

In this connection delegation from the two countries will meet from time to time to work out the necessary details.

4. In order to initiate the process of the establishment of durable peace, both the Governments agree that:
(i) Indian and Pakistani forces shall be withdrawn to their side of the international border;

(ii) In Jammu and Kashmir, the line of control resulting from the cease-fire of 17 December 1971 shall be respected by either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it immediately, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further undertake to refrain from the threat or the use of force in violation of this line this.

(iii) The withdrawals shall commence upon entry into force of this Agreement and shall be completed within a period of 30 days thereof.

5. This Agreement will be subject to ratification by both countries in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures, and will come into force with effect from the date on which the Instruments of Ratification are exchanged.

6. Both Governments agree that the respective Heads will meet again at a mutually convenient time in the future and that, in the meanwhile, the representatives of the two sides will meet to discuss further the modalities and arrangements for the establishment of durable peace and normalisation of relations, including the questions of repatriation of prisoners of war and civilian internees, a final settlement of Jammu and Kashmir and the resumption of diplomatic relations.

Sd/-
Indira Gandhi
Prime Minister
Republic of India
Simla, the 2nd July, 1972

Sd/-
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto
President
Islamic Republic of Pakistan