PEOPLE PROFILE

Jemadar Nand Singh VC,MVC

India's most highly decorated soldier

FACT FILE:

D.O.B. 24 September 1914
P.O.B Bhatinda, Punjab India
D.O.D 12 December 1947 Uri, Kashmir
Years of service 1933 - 1947
Rank Jemadar (Viceroy's Commissioned Officer (VCO)
Unit 1/11th Sikh Regiment
Engagements
Burma Campaign
Indo-Pakistan War
Awards
Victoria Cross (VC)
Maha Vir Chakra (MVC)

Nand Singh was a member of the the Sikh Regiment which received the most medals of any regiment in the British Empire.

He was awarded the VC for his incredible actions against the Japanese on 11-12 March 1944 in Arakan in Burma.

The Japanese held a position called India Hill, which had a very steep knife-edged ridge. Singh and his platoon were ordered to capture this position. As Singh and his men approached, they were met with heavy machine gun and rifle fire which killed or injured most of them.

Singh moved forward alone, even though he was injured. He then captured the first trench and killed the two Japanese occupants with his bayonet.

Following this he moved onto the second and third trenches, again sustaining injuries from the continuous heavy fire and grenades of the Japanese. Again he silenced them with his bayonet – single-handedly.

What he achieved took a matter of minutes. When his platoon reached him, they captured the position using bayonets and grenades to kill 37 of the 40 Japanese who had held the position.

Singh was wounded six times, but showed incredible bravery, determination, and even total disregard for his own life or safety. He was honoured with Britain's highest honour – the Victoria Cross.

Following India's independence Singh remained in the Indian Army and fought in the Indo-Pakistani War.

Sikh regiment clear a Japanese foxhole with machine gun fire after throwing in a phosphorus grenade

On 12 December 1947 he led his platoon of D Company to rescue his battalion from an ambush in Uri, Kashmir. During the battle Singh was killed by machine gun fire at close range.

CITATION Indian MVC awarded as per The Gazette of India

On 12 December 1947, Nand Singh was employed as a jemadar with the 1st Sikh Regiment, defending Kashmir from a Pakistani attack. Performing his duty with "valour leadership and selfless devotion to duty," Jemedar Nand Singh led in the capture of a key objective, near Uri. He was killed shortly after the objective was taken. To recognise this bravery, he was awarded posthumously the Maha Vir Chakra by independent India. This VC and MVC pair is unique.

There is a statue of Nand Singh at Fauji Chowk in Bathinda

Sikh troops in action

Singh was posthumously awarded the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC), for valour and steadfastness of the highest order in the Jammu & Kashmir Operation in 1947. To this day no other Indian has received both the VC and MVC.

SIKH REGIMENT

Branch
British Indian Army, Indian Army
Active
1846 – Present
Engagements
Abyssinia
Iraq
Malaya
North Africa
Italy
Greece
BurmaBurma
Regimental Motto
'Nische kar apni jeet karon' : With determination, I'll bring triumphNische kar apni aron"
Regimental war cry
Jo Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal said : "He who cries God is truth, is ever Happy."J

Project: For your eyes only

Sikhism is a religion in India. Find out what other religions there are in India?

Did any of these religions have their own regiments in the Armed Forces like the Sikh Regiment during WWII? The British and Commonwealth forces would have a chaplain, pastor or spiritual leader within their troops, what would their role be?