

THE

# CHARGE

of the **BULLS**

A brief history of an infantry  
battalion counter attack

BY COL(R)IMTIAZ UL HAQUE



FOREWORD BY GENERAL ATTIQ UR RAHMAN



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of ALLAH  
The most Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

**A BRIEF HISTORY  
OF AN INFANTRY  
BATTALION  
COUNTER ATTACK  
1971**

**BY**

**COL. (Retd) IMTIAZ UL HAQUE**

**FOREWORD  
BY  
LT. GEN ATTIQUR RAHMAN**

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## DEDICATED

To All those Soldiers who laid down  
their Lives  
for the Honour of their Regiment and  
Motherland

AND

To my late son ASIM HAQUE (who died very young)



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Lieutenant General M. Attiqur Rahman, HQA, HPK, MC  
who wrote foreword for this booklet.









Lieutenant-Colonel Raja Mohammad Akram was born in District Haripur (NWFP). After receiving his early education, he joined Gordon College Rawalpindi from where he joined Pakistan Military Academy Kakul (P.M.A). He was commissioned in 9 Frontier Force Regiment which he commanded later on as well. He did staff, command and instructional appointments at various levels. During 1965



War, he served as GSO-II Ops 14 Division at Dhakka. In early 1971 he was serving as GSO-I in the Military Training Directorate when he was picked up to raise and command 35 Frontier Force Regiment.

He would always lead from the front and set personal example which he amply demonstrated during war and peace. He excelled extremely hard for training of all ranks of the Battalion. The Battalion became one of the highly motivated Battalions of the Pakistan Army.

He was a true professional, hardworking and a very brave soldier. Man of faith and conviction enlightened Muslim who would lead the Friday Sermons (Juma Khutbas) at Chaman. He would pray to Almighty for 'Shahadat' which he got on 17 December 1971, in a daring counter - attack against a very heavily defended Indian defensive position in village Jarpal (Sialkot Sector). In this gallant action, he was in the front line of assault, a rare phenomena envied by the enemy as well. Lt Col Muhammad Akram Raja displayed extreme courage, determination and personal bravery of the highest level and was awarded Hilal-e-Jurat (H.J).





The Author (then Major Imtiaz ul Haque) at Chak 174 Dharanwala (Bahawalnagar Sector) on 10 December 1971 during the 1971 War, with a noteable of the area.



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HISTORIC LETTER OF LT COL MUHAMMAD AKRAM RAJA  
TO CAPT. IMTIAZ UL HAQUE-GSO-3 20 BRIGADE AT THE  
TIME OF RAISING 35 FF REGT.

General Headquarters GS Branch (MT Dte)

Rawalpindi

Tel 65911/6205

D.O.No.05/109/70/MT-2

15 Apr 71

Dear Captain Imtiaz ul Haq

On posting as Commanding Officer of the 35 FF I welcome you to the family of 35 with all sincerity and earnestness. I have been told by MS Branch that all the officers posted to me are potential leaders and would expect unflinching loyalty, selfless devotion to our 35 FF Regt. You should be mentally prepared to make valuable contribution in raising our new structure promptly. I would appreciate if you bring anything such as Army Forms, Registers, standing orders, file cover or other training material with you from your parent units so that we can make a genuine start.

It would be great honour for all the members of the family of 35 FF to raise it as soon as possible. My mission as your CO would be, "To make 35 FF Combat worthy ASP". In the accomplishment of this mission you should plan to assist me with utmost and whole hearted endeavour.

At the very outset I must emphasize that I believe in hard work, honesty, loyalty, devotion to duty in the



performance of military duties. I will expect these traits from you.

Be prepared to discuss the following when we meet:-

- a. Our motto.
- b. Roles of an inf bn in war especially in Offensive and defensive operations.
- c. Preparation of the standing orders for peace and war.
- d. Conduct of trg of young and old soldiers, NCOs and JCOs separately.

You are bound to face some unavoidable administrative difficulties. Well, do write me if I could be of any help or service to you.

Hope to join you on 28 Apr 71.

Sd/-

Lt Col

(Muhammad Akram Raja)

"Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world,  
Today I am wise, so I am changing myself."

RUMI

## AUTHOR'S NOTE FOR DELAY IN PUBLICATION

The action was conceived in 1984 and written in detail in 1987, when I was Commanding 35 Frontier Force Regiment at Bhimber (AJK). It was cleared for publication by G.H.Q, the same year with some observations which were corrected. There was no problem/or issue in its publication at Unit level but I did not want to utilize the Regimental Funds for this purpose. I myself had some financial constraints at that time. I therefore, requested the GHQ for its publication at their end but I was conveyed that GHQ does not publish unit level actions, and considerable time passed.

Various formation were holding study periods on this action and I wanted the writ-up to mature thus held back its publication. Additionally, I thought it better to get it published after retirement.

However , now I have decided to get it published for the benefit of young leaders at various level including formation staff officers, before I get a call from the Almighty Allah ( which could be any time) so that this is recorded as a piece of military history.

Hopefully, we shall learn from our mistakes in planning staff work, coordination and execution of counter-attacks and offensive actions at that level.



## THE CHARGE OF THE BULLS-COUNTER ATTACK BY AN INFANTRY BATTALION

### CHARGING BULLS BACKGROUND

- Major General Fazal Muqem in his book "Pakistan – Crises in Leadership" has described 35 Frontier Force Regiment counter attack at Barapind – Jarpal in 1971 War, like "Charge of Bulls," due to its nature of "boldness and violence." It implies a relentless charge by a "Bull" that never wavers in its pursuit. It is symbolic to strength, power and courage to hurt or coerce others. (35 FF Charging Bulls Review 2009).
- After the ceasefire, opposing enemy Commander, in one of the flag meetings mentioned informally that you chaps (35 Force Regiment) came on us like "Bulls". Later it transpired that during the battle, enemy had suffered heavy casualties, they pulled back their infantry and brought tanks forward.
- Due to this determined effort and recognized "boldness and violence" by Commanders on both sides, 35 Frontier Force Regiment is informally called "Charging Bulls". This has now been adopted as unit "MOTTO" and has been approved by the G.H.Q. Well Done.

**"A PROUD CHARGING BULL"**

**GOLD MEDAL**  
**WORLD "CAMBRIAN PATROL"**  
**COMPETITION 2010**

When I write the final pages of this booklet, this brave and courageous battalion, 35 Frontier Force Regiment has won a "Gold Medal" in the prestigious Exercise "Cambrian Patrol", held in Wales, United Kingdom, another proof of being the toughest and brave soldiers. They were up against soldiers from U.S.A., U.K., Canada, Australia, India and others in the toughest conditions.

This professional competition was held in October 2010 in which 101 teams of World armies participated. They made history for Pakistan Army. They displayed professional excellence of the highest orders.

Team comprised 7 sons of "Charging Bulls" led by Major Asfand Bin Naseer. I could not be more proud.





## PREAMBLE

- Pakistan Army is one of the best professional armies of the world even today. We have done very well in various wars and conflicts. However, as soldiers, we must take stock of our strong points and weaknesses. Strong points should be further developed and weaknesses removed. Improvement is a continuous process and there is always room for improvement.
- Our neighbour did not do well in 1962 War against China. They took stock of their short comings and improved upon with an open mind. Infact, we should not hesitate and discuss our actions critically in order to improve further. We should evaluate our successes and reverses suffered realistically in detail. Only then we can come closer to achieving excellence in profession of arms which is changing rapidly with change of environment and warfare methods and techniques.
- 1948-49 Kashmir War was a small action as compared to 1965 and 1971 Wars which have been studied and analysed in our training and research institutions and formations. Similarly, we should study and evaluate other conflicts like counter insurgency in Baluchistan, Afghan War, Kargil Operation. War on Terror and operations in Swat, North and South Waziristan with a professional approach and objective mind.

- When I was in Turkey in early 1980's I was told that 1965 Indo-Pak War was studied and discussed by the Turkish Staff College, Istanbul for some years since we have rich experience of combat which most of the World Armies did not have or did not get a chance to fight. It is very important to study the combat actions at unit level also so that when ever confronted, similar mistakes may not be repeated.
- Though the technique of Warfare is changing, as it was demonstrated in Arab Israel conflicts, Gulf Wars, Iraq War etc, however, the importance of conventional warfare is still very much there and shall remain, since ultimately even for neutralized or softened or captured objectives, ground has to be held by the conventional forces. When the troops are on the ground, they should be prepared against counter attacks by the opposition, hence their importance cannot be over looked, and should be equipped and trained accordingly.
- However, at the same time we should also designate 'Mission Oriented' 'Rapid Action Force(s)' for specialized operations/actions for which troops must be very well trained and equipped with most modern and sophisticated weaponry, if possible 'Dedicated' in various formations or likely threatened areas/zones, so that maximum results can be achieved, in minimum time.



- To fight terrorism, 'Anti-Terror Force' may be raised, equipped and trained properly, which should also be able to conduct counter insurgency operations.

**State Of Readiness**

"Against them make ready, Your strength of the utmost, of your power, including, steeds of War, to strike terror, into (the hearts of) enemies, and others besides, whom ye may not know, but whom, ALLAH doth know. Whatever, ye shall spend in the cause ALLAH, shall be repaid, unto you, and ye shall not, be treated-unjustly.

( Al-Quran- Surah Al-Anfal- Verse 6

**Foreword**

**By**

**Lieutenant General M. Attiqur Rahman,  
HQA, HPK, MC**





## FOREWORD

Lieutenant Colonel Imtiaz ul Haque 35 Battalion the Frontier Force Regiment has asked me to write a foreword to his document "35 Frontier Force Regiment Counter Attack Barapind- Jarpal 17 December 1971". I accepted with alacrity, for to be associated even in this very modest way with the imperishable deeds of 35 Frontier Force Regiment, is a great honour. However, it is not an easy Foreword to write as one is filled with emotion the whole time.

One cannot, for a moment, get away from the picture of the gallant Commanding Officer of 35 Frontier Force Regiment lying dead ahead of the front line of the shaheeds of his command with "both his arms frozen after his death, in the position in which he was holding his sten gun, which indicates his determination to get ahead".( extract from Lieutenant Colonel V.P. Airy's tribute. Colonel Airy was commanding the Indian troops at JARPAL).

Some years ago I was compiling the Regimental History of the Piffers in the "Wardens of the Marches" when I came across 35 Frontier Force Regiment's account of their counter attack at JARPAL. I could not believe it. Could our planning, preparation, coordination, direction of battle, and battle procedure really be so bad? Unbelievable! I, therefore rather underplayed the action with considerable restraint. However, over the years I really did not completely forget this action and I turned it over in my mind.



What went wrong? There is a very strong undercurrent of haste leading to "hurry" by everyone all along the line. Is this the result of all the training that my generation gave to our successors? We cannot easily avoid this stigma.

Naturally I left all this to the Army to sort out as I was sure that they would go over this action in great detail and hold those concerned accountable. However, soon after this battle, there were major changes at the highest level of political and military affairs and such unit actions were rather left "in limbo".

Colonel Intiaz however, did not forget, nor could he forget. He was a company commander in that battle and what he saw and felt must have been seered into his very soul. He has done signal service to the Army, let alone to 35 Frontier Force Regiment, in composing this document. He has stressed that his attempt has not been to go "witch hunting" some 16 years after the event but to portray what went wrong in one battalion, 35 Frontier Force Regiment, in battle. After reading this document one cannot simply carry on as if nothing has happened. We cannot start off with individual training leading to collective training or send our officers to the Pakistan Military Academy, The Infantry School or The Staff College as if nothing had occurred on that fateful day of 17 December 1971.

We cannot just leave the image of the commander, Lieutenant Colonel M. Akram Raja, clutching his sten gun

even after he had been killed lying among the dead and wounded, of his battalion. If we do not learn from the lessons brought out then such a disaster will happen again.

Colonel Imtiaz has analysed the battle in part III of the document. As a former instructor of the Staff College he has gone into considerable detail of the various lessons to be learnt. I sincerely hope that our training institutions will pick it up from there and emphasise the many mistakes that must never happen again.

I congratulate Lieutenant Colonel Imtiaz ul Haque on the document and recommend its reading by all professional soldiers.

Sd/-

Lieutenant General  
M. ATTIQUR-RAHMAN

June 1987  
LAHORE

میرے خاک و خون سے تو نے یہ جہاں کیا ہے پیدا  
صلہ شہید کیا ہے؟ تب و تاب جاودانہ!

**Tariq Ki Dua**

"With my dust and blood hast Thou Created this World - What is a Martyr's retribution ? eternal sub limity !"

From Allama Iqbal's Poem





## PREFACE

Since I participated in 35 Counter Attack at Barapind-Jarpal in 1971 as a Company Commander, therefore, I used to be asked to make presentation about the action by various training institutions, and some formations where ever I served including Command & Staff College Quetta and Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul, 1Corps, 30 Corps, 8 Division and 10 Division.

Lt. Gen (Retd) M. Attiqur Rahman Former Colonel of the Regiment, a very senior officer of Pakistan Army had been persuading me to write down this action. Subsequently, he wrote 'Foreword' for this document. The General Headquarters approved the document for publication, when I was commanding 35 Frontier Force Regiment at Bhimber (AJK), in 1987.

I had been invited on many occasions by the formations concerned to participate in Formation Study Periods on this subject as a guest speaker alongwith other senior officers. Some of these were; Lt Gen (Retd) Irshad Ahmad Khan and Brig (Retd) Noor Hussain, Commander and Chief of Staff 1 Corps in 1971 War respectively, Lt Gen (Retd) M. Attiqur Rahman and Commanders 1 Corps, 30



Corps and General Officers Commanding 8 Division and also 10 Division when the Battalion was at Lahore. Lately, I was asked to make exclusive presentation to 8 Division Officers at Sialkot in November 2007.

The details of this action were also discussed with Lt Col (Retd) Jahangir Hussain Talukdar, an East Pakistani Officer (now Bangladesh) who was on a visit to Lahore in April 2010. He had taken part in this counter attack as B Company Officer 35 Frontier Force Regiment in 1971.

This study is an endeavour to recall and place on record events of matchless bravery of 35-Frontier Force Regiment at Barapind-Jarpal in 1971 War. This gallant action could not get due recognition because of the East Pakistan crisis and over all impressions about the war results. However, this being an addition to the glorious chapter of the Piffer history in particular and the infantry in general needs special attention as some very useful and important lessons can be derived from its account.

As the battle actions are the stark realities of War as some of the best officers and well trained troops may not return glorious due to certain glaring deficiencies in planning, coordination and execution. An effort has been made to carry out critical analysis and draw viable conclusions of the failings, contributing towards the ultimate

result of this battle. I may assure the readers that there has been no intention whatsoever to cast any aspersion on any personality and formation. Since I have participated in the action, some readers may feel that at times I was carried by my emotions, however, I have tried my best to give an impartial account of Barapind-Jarpal Battle (Infantry action only). I may have been straight forward and rather blunt in pointing out/discussing mistakes and short comings.

I pay my personal gratitude to Lieutenant General (Retired) M. Attiqur Rahman for his encouragement and writing a befitting Foreword. I am also thankful to Major General (Retired) Syed Mustafa Anwar Hussain (Former Colonel of the Battalion) and all other officers for going through the script and making valuable contributions.

"Says: Truly my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are for God, the Cherisher of the worlds.

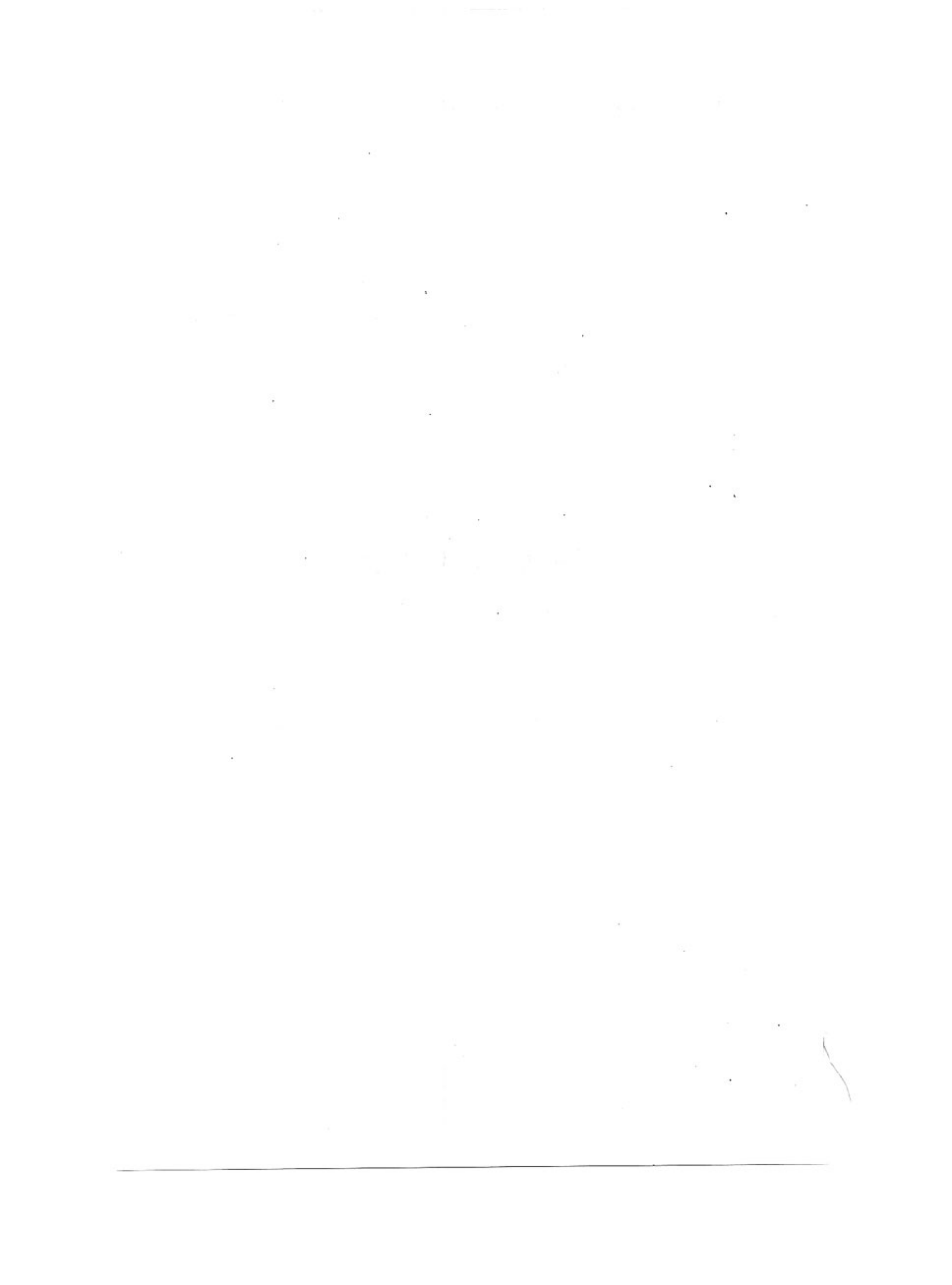
( Al-Quran- Surah Inam- Verse 162



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## **INTRODUCTION**





COUNTER ATTACK OF 35 FRONTIER FORCE  
REGIMENT 1971 WAR

(BARA PIND- JARPAL)

INTRODUCTION

1. Being a participant I endeavour to write one of the most talked about, controversial, tragic, catastrophic and ill-planned but a brave and gallant action of 1971 Indo-Pak War. This was 35 Frontier Force Regiment counter attack at Barapind-Jarpal, in Zafarwal area, Sialkot Sector.
2. The traumatic events of 1971 War leading to the dismemberment of the country have left deep imprints on the minds of every Pakistani and a stigma on the Armed Forces. Unlike other wars and specific battles studied and analysed by us, as students of Military History, 1971 War was our war, fought by us and even we refuse to acknowledge, was lost by us.
3. One could perhaps talk of the lack of efficient military leadership at higher levels. But what happened at Division, Brigade and Unit levels. Some of the commanders did not prepare realistic operational plans at these levels and over-estimated own capabilities or did not understand the implications. However, realities overtook those fanciful thoughts and the result



was that while some people suffered from mental paralysis, the brave soldiers of 35 Frontier Force Regiment fought gallantly, many of them laying down their lives for their country- their Motherland.

4. 35 Frontier Force Regiment action is a consequence of such erratic planning and decisions. The story of 35 Frontier Force Regiment action has been termed as a very unfortunate one, in which the Battalion lost 60 dead in about 6 hours battle; an extreme intense rate of casualties, by any standards.
5. Wars are not fought frequently. As a soldier, I was extremely lucky to have got the experience of being part of 'Reserve' and finally going into a Counter Attack since bulk of the troops are deployed in defence or are in 'waiting'.
6. It was a voluntary but persuaded compulsion to have written this document.
7. I have the great honour of raising A company of 35 Frontier Force Regiment and then Commanding it under Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Akram Raja (Shaheed) Hilal-e-Jurat, in this action. I may mention, that the discussion and description below, is first and foremost to learn some lessons for the future. Once again, I submit that no attempt what-so-ever, is being

made to cast any aspersions or reflections on any formation, unit, rank or individual. Therefore, I request that, this narrative should be taken in the spirit, it is intended to be.

8. **Aim.** The aim of this booklet is to narrate the story of 35 Frontier Force Regiment counter attack at BARAPIND-JARPAL in 1971 War as a participant of this action. This will highlight some of the important aspects of this counter attack which are perhaps not known, thereby, drawing some lessons with the emphasis on the following:-

- a. Battle procedure and handling of the unit.
- b. Inadequacies in planning and coordination.

9. The booklet has been divided as under:-

- a). Part 1. Brief history of 35 Frontier Force Regiment and the circumstances under which the Battalion reached Sialkot Sector and finally saw action in Zafarwal area.
- b). Part-II. Brief summary of actions at Barapind Jarpal.
- c). Part-III. Analysis- Inadequacies and deficiencies in planning and execution of this counter attack drawing certain lessons.
- d). Part-IV. Conclusion





**PART-I**  
**BRIEF HISTORY OF 35 FRONTIER FORCE**  
**REGIMENT FROM THE TIME OF RAISING TO**  
**GOING INTO ACTION**  
**1971**



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**PART-I**  
**BRIEF HISTORY OF**  
**35 FRONTIER FORCE REGIMENT- FROM THE TIME OF**  
**RAISING TO GOING INTO ACTION**

**General**

10. It is important to understand the various moves this young Battalion undertook from its raising till the day it was launched at 'Barapind- Jarpal'. The History of this Battalion is short but replete with glorious deeds.

**11. Raising and Peace Location**

- a. The Battalion was raised at Abbottabad on 19 April 1971 by Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Akram Raja, who became the founder and first commanding officer of the unit.
- b. The Battalion moved by rail to Chaman, some 1027 miles away on 14 May 1971, and carried out intensive training and operational preparedness exercises till 19 September 1971, when it was ordered to move to Quetta for the onward long journey. The Battalion covered this 77 miles distance to Quetta on foot in about 2 days time without any fall out inspite of the fact that the unit had a large number of reservists/ex-servicemen.

- c. Earlier, within a span of two months of round the clock training, the unit with 50% reserve and 20% young soldiers completed the training and firing of all weapons including their field firing, and started giving a look of an old professional unit. The physical fitness and battle worthiness of the unit was reflected in August 1971 when the unit undertook a forced march from Chaman to Kuchlak and back on foot, a distance of about 120 miles was covered in 5 days without any casualty. The Commanding Officer led this marathon march.
- d. By middle of September 1971, things started getting hot and the unit moved to Quetta, as part of 124 Brigade (33 Division which was then in 2 Corps).

**12. Operational Moves**

- a. **29 September 1971.** The Battalion moved to Mehesar, palace located about 40 miles North East of Sukkur and remained concentrated upto the third week of October 1971, when it moved to "Rahimyar Khan-Khanpur" area. Intensive operational training, watermanship and marrying-up with 1 Armoured Division was carried out in this area.
- b. **3 December 1971.** War broke out between Pakistan and India.



- c. **4 December 1971.** The Battalion was ordered to move to Pak-Pattan by rail. While on its way, the destination was changed to Fort Abbas area. Enroute, the unit stayed at Vehari and Chak 174 Dharanwala (Chishtian area) for two nights.
- d. **9 December 1971.** The Battalion took up defensive position at Hakra Canal, Chak 261 in Fort Abbas area.
- e. **10 December 1971.** The Battalion was ordered to move back without any destination. The unit stayed the night at Chak 174 Dharanwala (Chishtian area).
- f. **11 December 1971.** The Battalion reached next Harbour Area near Sahiwal.
- g. **12 December 1971.** 35 Frontier Force Regiment reached Sharqpur, a small town 20 miles north west of Lahore.
- h. **13 December 1971.** The Battalion moved to new location in Range Forest near Qila Soba Singh in Sialkot Sector.
- i. **14 December 1971.** The Battalion was placed under command 115 Brigade and divided into two groups. A and B Companies under command the Commanding Officer and C and D Companies under the 2nd-in-Command. Later, these two companies were given the task

of relief in line for two companies of 34 Frontier Force Regiment at Raya Khas in Narowal Sector. In the evening, A and B Companies under the Commanding Officer moved to new location, Mirowal, in the same sector.

- j. **15 December 1971.** During the process of 'relief in line' of 34 Frontier Force Regiment (two companies) orders changed. 35 Frontier Force Regiment 'Orders Group' was called at 115 Brigade Headquarters at Narowal. 2<sup>nd</sup>-in-Command was instructed to bring the Battalion to a new concentration area near mile 11 on road Narowal-Shakargarh. The Battalion was now reverted to 124 Brigade.
- k. **16 December 1971.** At 0600 hours, the Battalion received orders to move back to Narowal. At 0800 hours, A, B and Headquarter Companies moved back to Narowal under the Adjutant. B Company was assigned the mission of capturing enemy Prisoners of War at village Jarpal which was a consequence of a wrong report that one enemy infantry battalion and a squadron of tanks had been surrounded by own troops. Orders were again changed. The Indians had infact, deliberately advanced through a gap in the deployment of 21 Baluch



(Recce & Support) Changez Force. At 1400 hours, the Battalion was placed under Command 24 Brigade and was ordered to relieve an Engineer Battalion at Dhamtal, a place between Narowal and Zafarwal. The reconnaissance for occupation had been done but before the Battalion could take up defensive position, the orders were again changed. AT 1600 hours, the new orders for the Battalion were to concentrate in village Pindi Purbian, a place about 3 miles east of Zafarwal on Track Zafarwal-Shakargarh.

13. The situation perhaps was not so complicated as was made due to the frequent changes in the orders. This uncertainty had, at one time, warranted placing the Orders Group (The four company commanders with the Commanding Officer) mobile in the Jeep shuttling between one formation to another e.g. 115 Brigade, 14(P) Brigade, 124 Brigade and 24 Brigade. The unit as such was split in two groups; one under the Second-in-Command shuttling between Narowal and Shakargarh and between Narowal and Zafarwal, while the other two companies ventured the distance under the Adjutant from Narowal to Dhamtal and Zafarwal. In short 35 Frontier Force Regiment, on 16 December 1971,



was scattered almost, in the whole of 8 Division area, before the fateful decision was taken for the counter attack on Bara Pind-Jarpal.

14. It would be unfair, if the patience, courage and will-power displayed by all ranks is left unnoticed. The Battalion used to cover nearly 150-200 miles distance almost every night by road in the hours of darkness and saw two other sectors; Fort Abbas and Narowal (Raya Khas-Mirowal) where it took up defensive position before coming into the Zafarwal area.

15. Lieutenant General M. Attiqur Rehman acknowledging this from the Battalion history quotes in his book 'The Wardens of The Marches':-

"Flexibility in plans which had always been one of the Principles of War, seems to have been extensively practiced on this Battalion".

**PART-II**  
**BREIF SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**  
**BARAPIND-JARPAL**

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PART-II

BRIEF SUMMARY OF ACTIONS-

BARAPIND-JARPAL

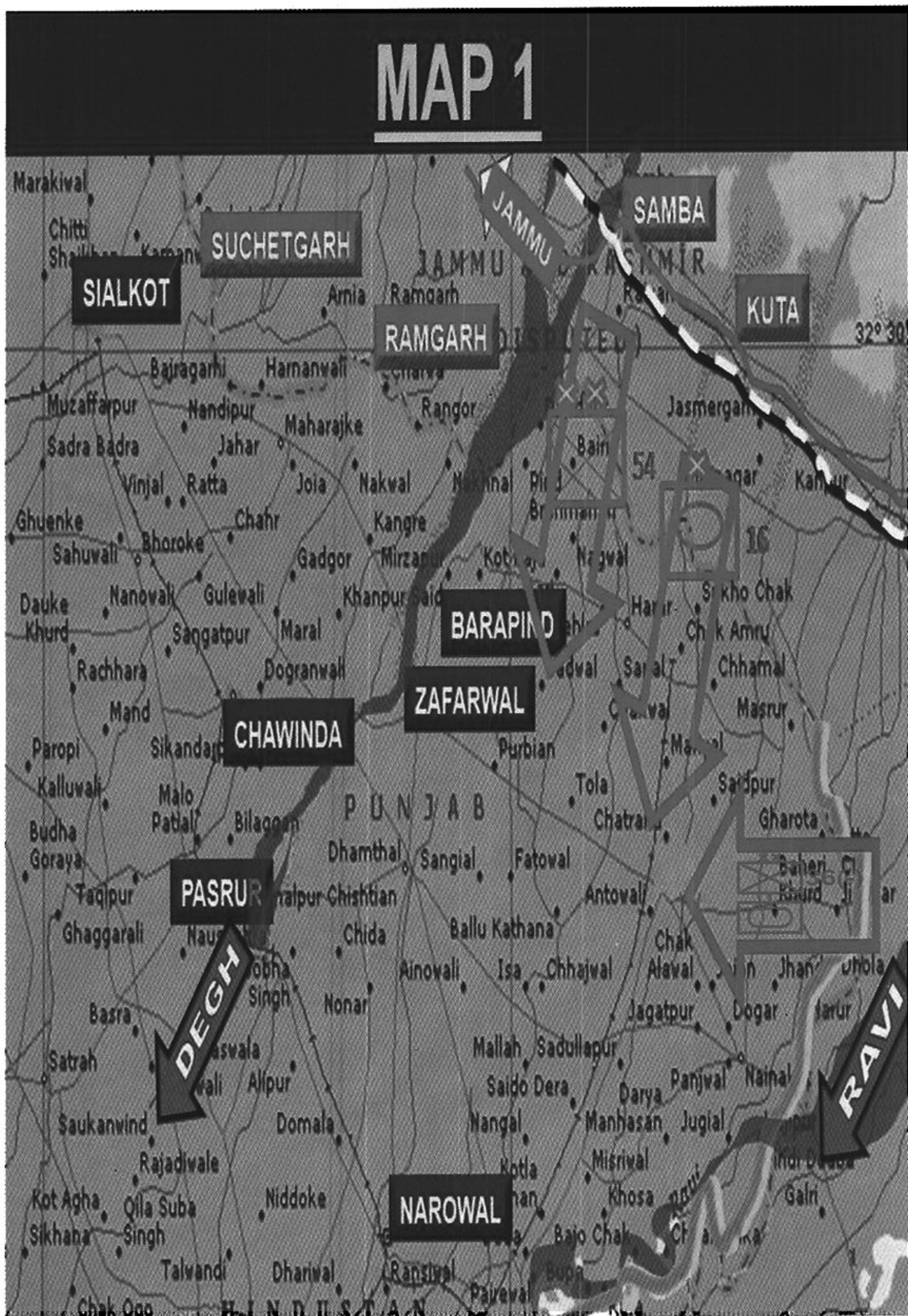
16. **8 Division** Deployment. Map 1. For better understanding, I will give you some idea of 8 Division deployment in general and that of 24 Brigade in particular, before explaining 35 Frontier Force Regiment action. 8 Division had deployed 24 Brigade as left forward Brigade, 14 (Parachute) Brigade was deployed in the centre defending Shakargarh Salient and 115 Brigade was deployed in Narowal Sector. " NISAR Force" comprising 20 Lancers, 33 Cavalry, 23 Frontier Force Regiment and 2 companies of 13 Punjab, were operating ahead of the main defences as Covering Troops and advance positions.
17. The most decisive and intense actions in 8 Division area of operations were fought in Zafarwal Sector. The Indians had put in the main effort between Deg Nadi and Karir Nadi and employed 54 Infantry Division and 16 Independent Armoured Brigade less a Regiment. Secondary effort with 36 Division Minus with one Regiment ex 2 Independent Armoured Brigade and a Squadron ex 14 Independent Armoured

Brigade along Axis Ikhlaspur/Khlaspur-Shakargarh and Nainakot Nurkot. An auxiliary effort by a Brigade ex 39 Division with Armoured Regiment ex 2 Independent Armoured Brigade along Axis Mawa/Dehla-Shakargarh. The enemy advance guard was able to contact main defence of 24 Brigade by 12/13 December after having been delayed for nearly 7 days by NISAR Force operating between border and the main defences. 24 Brigade was defending area Sakoor Bund to Karir Nadi.

18. Terrain Orientation. Map 2. This is for the benefit of those readers who have not served in Sialkot Sector. Important features are Deg Nadi, Basantar Nullah and Karir Nadi flowing in, north south direction. Zafarwal is an important centre of communication between Chawinda and Shakargarh. Road Zafarwal Shakargarh serves as an important lateral in the area of operations. Villages of our interest are Pindi Purbian, Azizpur, Bara Pind, Jarpal, Ghazipur, Lalial, Lagwal and Saraj Chak etc. In addition, it had the famous Sakror Bund.



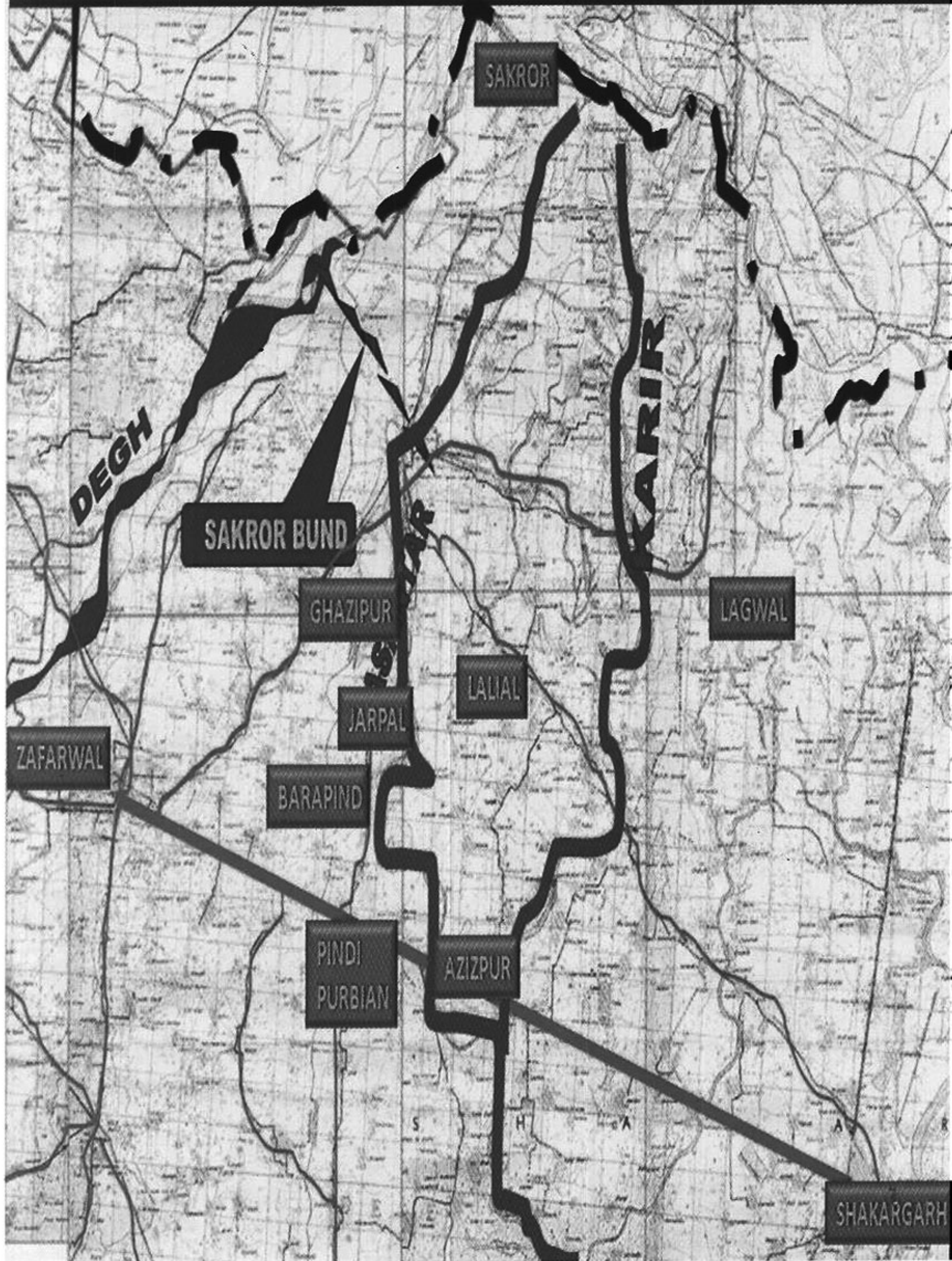
ENEMY OUTLINE PLAN





TERRAIN ORIENTATION

**MAP 2**





19. The Deployment of 24 Brigade. Map 3. The deployment was as under:-
- a. 11 Baluch with under command company 40 Punjab and company Rangers was holding area of Sakror Bund upto and including Ghazipur.
  - b. 24 Punjab with under command company 40 Punjab and few tanks of 11 Independent Armoured Squadron was holding area from including Jarpal to including Azizpur.
  - c. 40 Punjab less two companies, was deployed in defence of Zafarwal Town. This was perhaps the brigade reserve as well.
  - d. The gap between 11 Baluch and 24 Punjab was being looked after by one Reconnaissance and Support ( R&S) Company ex 21 Baluch.
  - e. Headquarters 24 Brigade was located at Rajian which is off the sketch.
20. **The situation as Depicted at Headquarters 8 Division and 24 Brigade on the Morning of 16 December.** Map 4. Based on information available from troops in contact with the enemy, the enemy picture as seen at Headquarters 8 Division and 24 Brigade at approximately 0400 hours 16 December was as follows:-
- a. The enemy having crossed the minefield in area Lagwal, had established a bridgehead by

approximately two infantry battalions and a tank regiment minus in area Ghazipur and Jarpal.

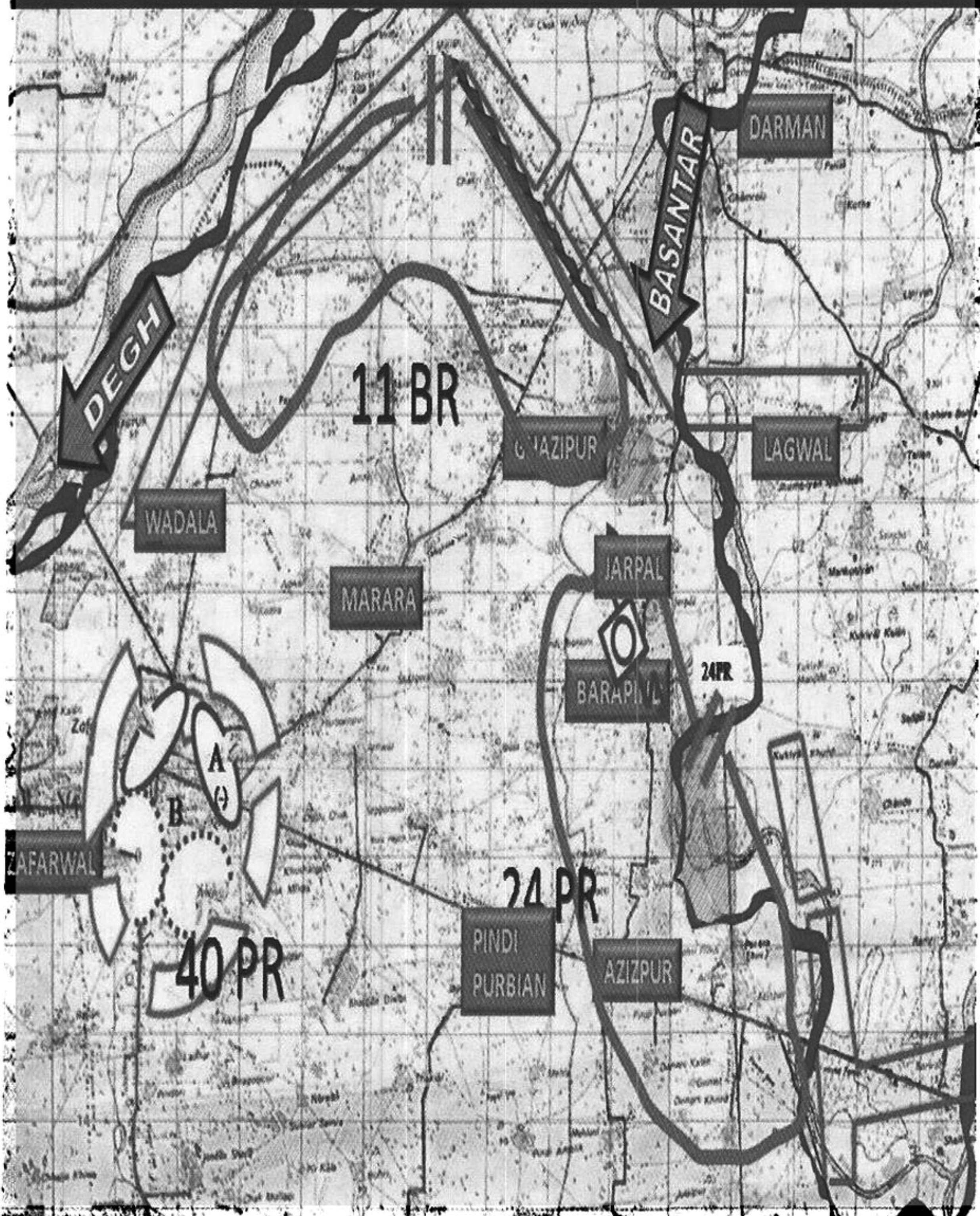
- b. That, Lalial Reserve Forest (RF) and village Ghazipur were still being held by own troops, and that the bridgehead was being contained by a company of 11 Baluch in the north, a company minus of 40 Punjab in the west and a company of 24 Punjab and 11 Independent Armoured Squadron in the south.

21. On 16 December at 0430 hours the General Officer Commanding after having obtained clearance from Commander 1 Corps, ordered 8 Armoured Brigade to launch a counter attack to eliminate the bridgehead as soon as possible. I will not be discussing the counter attack of 8 Armoured Brigade as such, since this is beyond the scope of my booklet, but I would like to draw one conclusion from it. It was learnt that enemy's one infantry brigade (47 Brigade ex 54 Division) supported by one Armoured Regiment (17 Poona Horse with Centurian tanks) and elements of another Armoured Regiment (4 Hodson Horse with T55 tanks) were in the bridgehead, well entrenched. Additionally there were some armoured infantry elements and some anti-tank guided missiles.



24 BRIGADE DEPLOYMENT

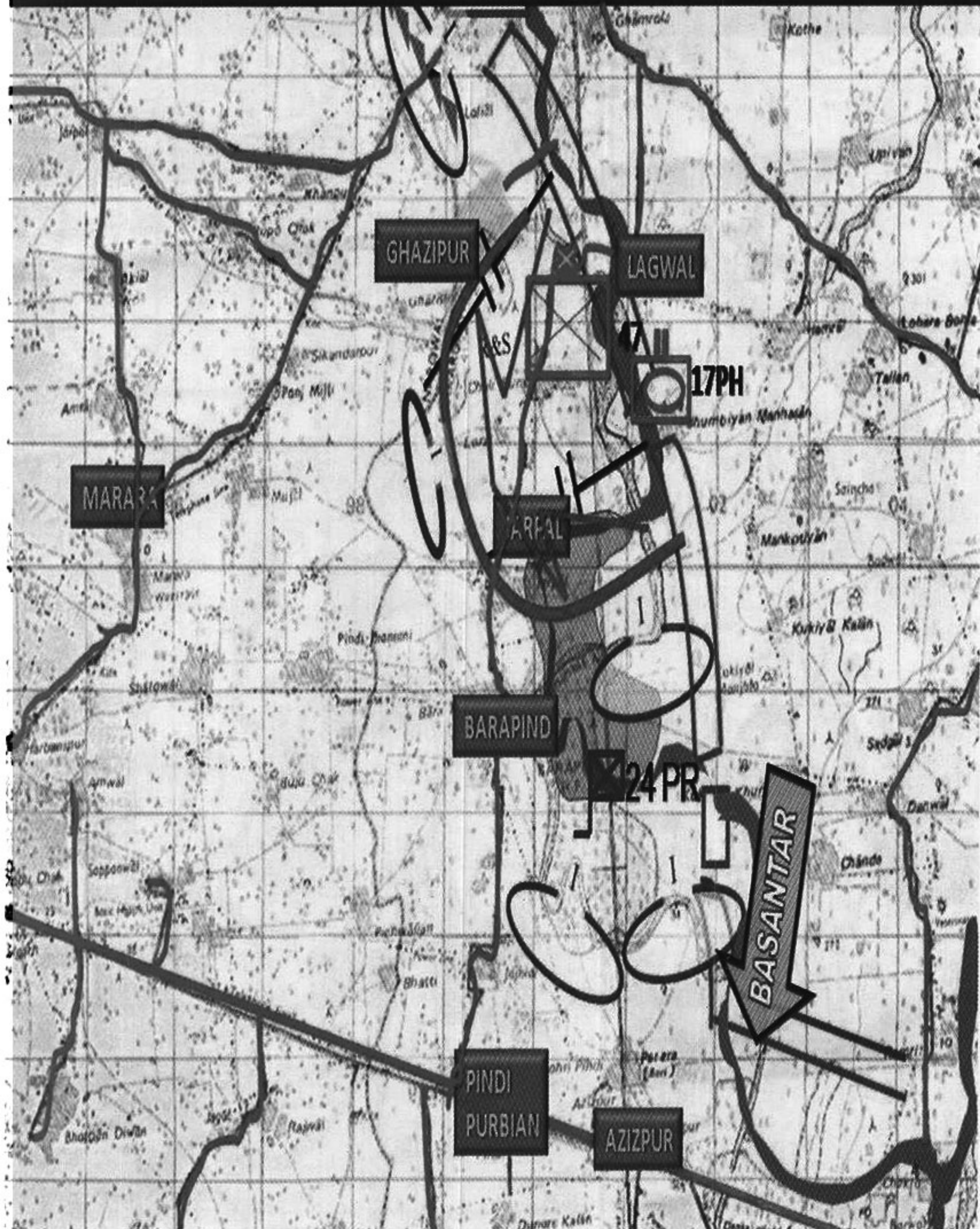
MAP 3





SITUATION ON 16 DECEMBER (1971)

**MAP 4**





23. It is difficult to imagine the impact of the psychological and moral pressures exerting on the Commander's mind who was desperately trying to restore the integrity of his defences, however, it should have been planned properly. It is believed that at 2100 hours on 16 December, Commander 24 Brigade came to Commander 8 Armoured Brigade's Tactical Headquarters at Marara Wazirpur and proposed to put in counter attack at Jarpal with 35 Frontier Force Regiment and 27 Cavalry. Commander 8 Armoured Brigade was reported to have waited till 2300 hours on 16 December and, due to lack of coordination and excessive casualties suffered earlier on the same day, he told Commander 24 Brigade that since the 'Orders-Group could not be held till that time, it was not possible to launch the proposed attack at first light 17 December. As a consequence of this plan which did not materialize, Commander 24 Brigade decided to counter attack Jarpal with 35 Frontier Force Regiment virtually alone, which proved to be a blunder later on.

#### ACTION OF 35 FRONTIER FORCE REGIMENT

24. If you recollect, I had mentioned earlier that by the evening of 16 December, 35 Frontier Force Regiment was asked to concentrate near village Pindi Purbian. The Commanding Officer had still

not been told about the mission of the unit. On query from the Second-in-Command, the Commanding Officer said that the unit was probably there to reinforce the sector. The unit elements which were scattered in 8 Division area, from Narowal to Zafarwal as a result of shuttling between various formations and places as mentioned earlier, kept on pouring in the new concentration area Pindi Purbian till about mid night.

25. At about 2000 hours, the Commanding Officer was summoned to the Brigade Headquarters which was about 6 to 7 miles away from Zafarwal on Road Zafarwal- Narowal. The Commanding Officer alongwith the Intelligence Officer, a Second Lieutenant, left for Brigade Headquarters but could not reach there on time, since they were unfamiliar with the area. They kept searching the Brigade Headquarters till about 2330 hours. The staff at Brigade Headquarters, on the other hand had neither made any arrangements for their guidance nor asked any of the local units to provide a guide; thus precious three and a half hours were wasted in locating the Brigade Headquarters.

26. At about 0100 hours, 17 December 1971, the Intelligence Officer came back with the



Commanding Officer's chit to the Battalion's forward concentration area, at Pindi Purbian and informed the Second-in-Command to brief the 'Orders Group' about the impending operation. 'Orders Group' was called and briefed by the Second-in-Command which was done off the map.

27. Salient points of the briefing are listed below. Refer to Map 5:-

- a. 35 Frontier Force Regiment to capture northern edge of Barapind (if held) and village Jarpal as soon as possible on 17 December 1971.
- b. Attack from the right. C and D companies under the Commanding Officer to capture Jarpal in Phase 1. A and B companies under Second-in-Command to secure northern edge of Barapind and area between Barapind and Jarpal in Phase 2, and be prepared to assist C and D Companies in phase 1.
- c. Forming up place was in the Range Forest east of objective route which was to be shown by Brigade Major 24 Brigade and a guide from a holding unit. The latter (a Second-in-Command of a holding unit) however, refused to come on the pretext that he was suffering from night blindness. Since the commanding Officer was not acquainted with the area,

hence most of the other details of the plan including time and space etc, were formulated by the brigade staff. Brigade staff should have made arrangement for marking and protection of the forming up place (F.U.P). Guidance was very essential in this case since no one had seen the area and it was a pitch dark winter night.

- d. The H hour was fixed at 0430 hours on 17 December 1971.

**Quaid-e-Azam**

Quaid-e-Azam Said,

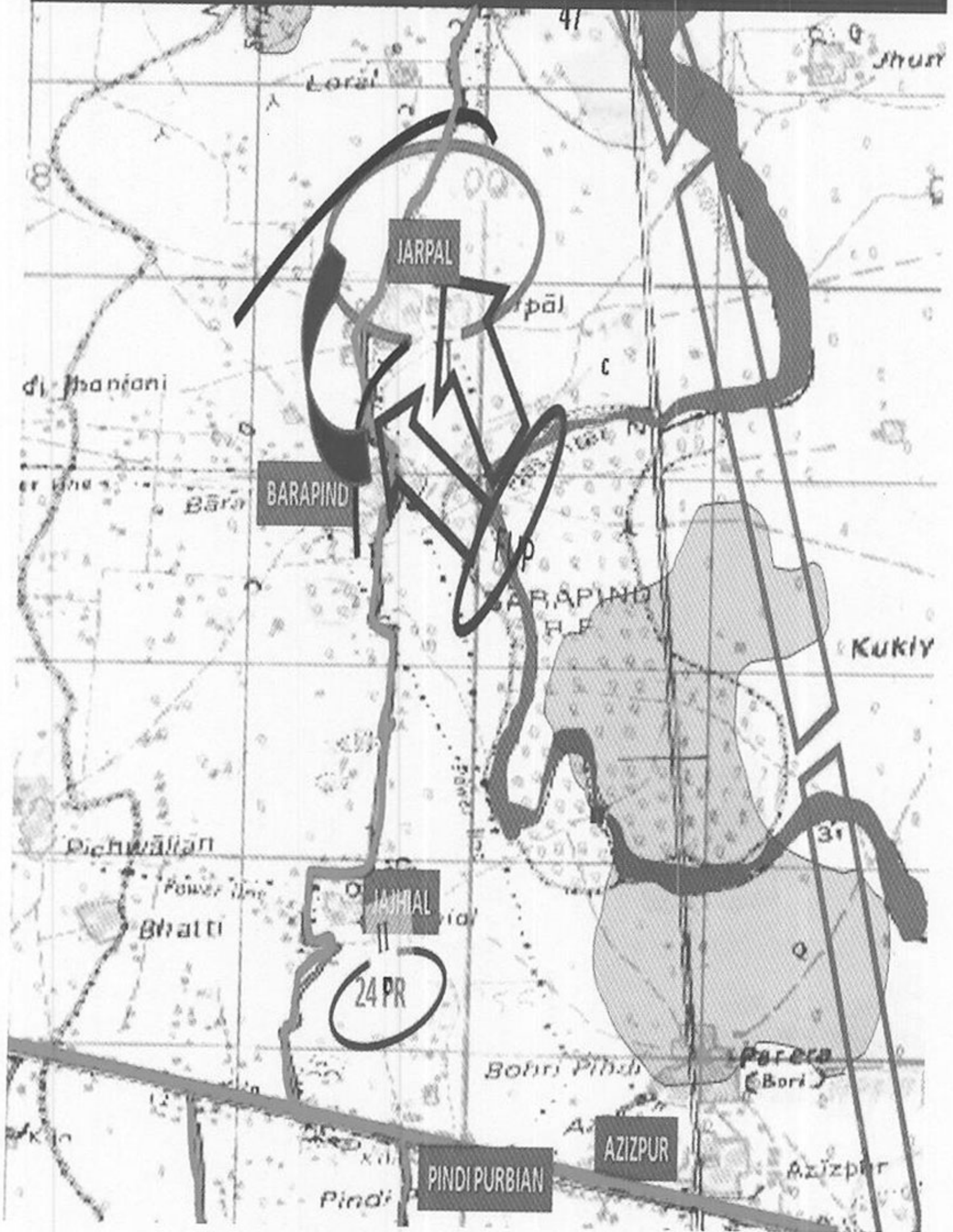
“Keep up your morale. Do not be afraid of death. Our religion Teaches us to be always prepared for death. We should face it bravely to save the honour of Pakistan and Islam. There is no better salvation for a Muslim than the death of a martyr for a righteous cause.”

**Quaid-e-Azam**

Muhammad Ali Jinnah



# MAP 5







28. It will be appreciated that there was no time for normal battle procedure and reconnaissance of the objective area, therefore, all the battle drills were set aside for this important mission where 8 Armoured Brigade had already suffered heavily and it had been established that the enemy was very strong and properly entrenched.
29. The Commanding Officer did his best under the circumstances. He had infact requested the Brigade Commander earlier, that since he was unfamiliar with the area and so were his company commanders, therefore, he needed at least one day to prepare his Battalion but this contention was over ruled by Commander 24 Brigade by conveying that this was from the 'higher-ups' and the attack had to be launched as soon as possible. Also that since the Commanding Officer was pious man God Almighty will certainly help him. The Commanding Officer was a brave soldier and above all a mujahid, with his devotion to duty and loyalty, he did not wish to pursue the matter any further and went ahead with the preparations for the ensuing operation.
30. The troops who had been digging during the night, were alerted from their hard earned but rather brief rest and prepared for the battle

hurriedly: I would like to mention here the names of those officers who took part in this counter attack, including the two Forward observation Officers (F.O.Os).

**OFFICERS WHO TOOK PART IN THIS ACTION**

- |    |  |   |  |
|----|--|---|--|
| a. | Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Akram Raja (Shaheed) | - | Hilal-e-Jurat<br>Commanding Officer                                  |
| b. | Major Abdul Maleque                              | - | Second-in-Command (From East Pakistan)                               |
| c. | Major Zulifqar Ahmed (Shaheed)                   | - | Officer Commanding C Company   |
| d. | Major Imtiaz ul Haque                            | - | Officer Commanding A Company   |
| e. | Major Parvez Farooq (Shaheed)                    | - | Officer Commanding D Company   |
| f. | Captain Syed Ijaz Ali Shah                       | - | Officer Commanding B Company   |
| g. | Captain Atta Ullah Butt                          | - | Adjutant   |
| h. | Lieutenant Syed Ibadat Hussain                   | - | Company Officer and Platoon Commander D Company                      |
| j. | Lieutenant Zafar Ullah Pervez                    | - | Regimental Medical Officer (R.M.O)                                   |
| k. | Second Lieutenant AA Shahid Ullah (Shaheed)      | - | Company Officer and Platoon Commander A company (From East Pakistan) |
| l. | Second Lieutenant Jahangir Hossain-Talukdar      | - | Company Officer and Platoon Commander B Company (From East Pakistan) |
| m. | Second Lieutenant Khalid Mahmud                  | - | Company Officer and Platoon Commander C Company                      |
| n. | Second Lieutenant Javed Qayum                    | - | Intelligence Officer   |
| o. | Capt. Noor Hussain                               | - | F.O.O (Ex.46 Field Regt.)  |
| P  | Lieutenant Shabbir                               | - | F.O.O (Ex.46 Field Regt.)  |

31. The H Hour had been planned on paper for 0430 hours as mentioned earlier but had to be changed



to 0500 hours as the troops could not reach the forming up place due to wrong calculation of Time and Space by the Brigade Staff (who had actually fixed the H Hour). Even 0500 hours was rather early and the Commanding Officer tried to change the H hour and the artillery fire plan once again but could not do so since the Battery Commander was not traceable. The battery commander informed the unit after the counter attack that after getting detached from the column, he lost his sense of direction. It is ironical that such an excuse was offered by an officer who had been in the area since April 1971. I may mention that very few of us had even seen the Forward Observation Officers since they joined the unit while we were moving to Forming Up Place.(F.U.P)

32. The objective from Pindi Purbian was about 4 miles and the unit was being rushed in but even then it was not possible to reach there on time although the troops were literally running at times in order to catch up. Own artillery fire started at 0500 hours as planned. Therefore, the much needed and vital element of surprise had already been lost. The enemy was fully alert when the Unit finally arrived in the forming up place at about 0515 hours and the enemy brought down

straight away their Defensive Fires (DFs). One of the first casualties near the Forming Up Place was my Senior Junior Commissioned Officer (SJCO), Subedar Ghulam Rasul of A Company. Since there were no guides and no marking for the whole unit and the unit did not get any time since it was all being done by the Brigade staff. The Brigade Major did point out a general direction with his hand at night as described earlier. All the four companies landed up in a single file one after the other and got involved in the fire and were committed prematurely.

33. C and D Companies attack under the personal Command of Commanding Officer with C Company on the right and D Company on the left, went at 0525 hours and A and B Companies attack under the Second-in-Command with A Company on the right and B Company on the left, went in after 15 minutes as planned. The Forming up place of all the four companies was under the direct observation of enemy defences at Jarpal and enemy troops east and west of Jarpal, hence, the enemy was able to effectively fix every moving soldier to the ground and which also resulted in excessive casualties, ultimately.

34. C and D Companies attack went as close as 50 yards from the forward trenches of the enemy at



Jarpal. Enemy had the complete knowledge of the attack as our artillery concentration fire had been prematurely brought down. The enemy also made intensive and very effective use of illuminants to light up the area. The enemy demonstrated coolness and excellent fire discipline and held their fire till the assault reached about as close as 50 to 100 yards or so when they opened up with everything at their disposal, resulting in very heavy casualties to these two companies. As was learnt later, company ex-29 Frontier Force deployed north west of Barapind also pend up in direction of 35 Frontier Force attack since they were unaware of this counter attack and presumed the attack to be that of the enemy.

35. Almost within half an hour of the attack, three officers; the Commanding Officer and the two Company Commanders of C and D Companies embraced 'Shahadat'. The village of Jarpal was strongly held in spite of what we had been briefed by the Brigade Major 24 Brigade earlier. Before going into the attack at Pindi Purbian, the Brigade Major told us that enemy was about a company only at Jarpal and some elements in area between Jarpal and Barapind. He had told us that in all probability the enemy would have withdrawn at night which was their normal practice.

36. In the meantime, A and B companies which had already been committed in the forming up place wrongly due to absence of terrain information, direction of objective and absence of guides, were pushed ahead as planned under the Second-in-Command. These two Companies moved up and occupied area North and North East of Barapind. This area was not physically held by the enemy. These two companies could not move ahead any further due to excessive ground fire, anti-tank and artillery concentration and our attack being stalled on the right (at Jarpal), and absence of tank support which was felt very badly in the morning. It was now about 0600 hours and the situation was totally unclear and confused due to dust and smoke from intensive enemy artillery fire, winter morning fog and mist. To add to all the many unfortunate incidents, about 12 men of C Company (right forward) and Headquarters Company had been captured by the enemy as prisoners at village Jarpal alongwith the wireless operator of C Company Commander. In the heat of the battle, change of frequency could not take place at this stage, which was done later; however, certain important messages could not be passed on time.



37. The situation cleared to some extent at about 0615 hours when it was known that the Commanding Officer and the two Company Commanders had achieved martyrdom and that there were numerous casualties in C and D Companies and some in other companies as well. The Second-in-Command took over the command of the Battalion. The attack at Jarpal had been halted very close to the objective. At this moment, the enemy could see every movement of ours. Though the attack was pressed in again but at about 0630 hours the enemy brought their tanks forward to east of Jarpal and started shooting at anything that moved in front of them. By now the enemy artillery, tanks and ground fire became very intense. I lost my company officer Lieutenant Shahidullah at this time who was organizing a tank hunting party on my instructions. Since C and D Companies had considerable casualties, therefore, they were forced to adjust their positions little to the rear as they were now coming under the fire of A and B Companies. The enemy had used excessive illuminants and due to intense ground fire as well as enemy artillery concentration, it was not possible to move any elements of A and B companies further who had already been committed in the Forming Up place,

for their assigned tasks which also included to assist C and D Companies. Even if it was done (which was not possible in this case), it would have met the same fate. In any case the information about C and D Companies when reached others, it was almost day and the thrust had already been blunted by the enemy. It should be remembered not to reinforce a failure. Perhaps a fresh coordinated attack from a different direction could have been launched by Commander 24 Brigade while committed troops provided the Fire Base and fixed/engaged the enemy. However, the Brigade did not do anything of this sort. To my mind if the two follow up companies had not been committed right in the beginning, the thrust on Jarpal would have continued, I am sure the violence which 35 Frontier Force possessed, Jarpal would have been captured.

38. Now the Second-in-Command, A Company Commander (myself) and the B Company Commander met near the Barapind Mosque and decided to hold the ground, reorganize ourselves and put up a crescent like position round the enemy in front of Jarpal. At this stage as described earlier, some of the elements of C and D Companies were coming under own fire. In order



to read the situation of Jarpal Companies and give instructions of the Second-in-Command (now Acting Commanding Officer since Lt Col Muhammad Akram Raja had embraced Shahadat), I crawled to those companies and met both the youngsters; the Company Officer Second Lieutenant Khalid Mahmood and Second Lieutenant Ibadat Hussain Shah. I was in C Company area, the extreme right Company which had attacked Jarpal, where I was wounded by artillery shelling, though I was a walking wounded casualty. Before, that I came under intense machine gun fire while moving to those companies which had attacked Jarpal, since anything moving could be spotted by the enemy accurately due to absence of cover and the distance being too close.

39. Due to enemy's heavy ground and artillery fire, some of our own 'F' (fighting) Echelon could not catch up with the fighting elements, till about 0900 hours. A number of messages were sent for the following:-

- a. 'F' Echelon particularly 106 Millimeter Recoilless Rifle to be brought up, on code word "ALFATAH".
- b. Some armour to be made available to give us tank support, since the enemy had brought the tanks forward and were firing effectively.

- c. Some ambulances to be sent forward to pick up the wounded.
  - d. Further orders/instructions from the Brigade Headquarters since they were and should have been in the picture about the situation.
40. There was no response to the above messages. By this time it was 1130 or 1200 hours. The Unit had suffered about 60 dead including 4 officers. One of the Forward Observation Officers Lieutenant Shabbir was seriously wounded and evacuated by one of my Lance Naiks. The other Forward Observation Officer, Captain Noor who later received Sitara-e-Jurat after this action, had been neutralized early in the morning since his wireless set had been destroyed. However, I gave him my reserve wireless set and this young officer then did a very fine job and brought down a lot of artillery fire on the enemy. During this time he was with the Second-in-Command, acting as Forward Observation Officer for the whole battalion as well as the Battery Commander ( I have already mentioned that the Battery Commander had failed to accompany the Battalion, after moving some distance in the morning).
41. Now the grim battle was on, man after man fell Shaheed but no assistance was forthcoming. At about 1200 hours or so, after 6 to 7 hours of gallant



fight, the attack had to be called off under instructions from Brigade Headquarters. It may be mentioned here that at about 1100 hours, four enemy hunter aircrafts straffed the area resulting into some more casualties in men and material.

42. Our unfortunate Battalion had been exposed to enemy and own fire from various directions in the absence of own tank fire and air support although the Battalion had requested for the Air Control Team (ACT) and had three qualified (FACs) Forward Air Controllers available. The Air Control Team was kept with 11 Baluch and not given to 35 Frontier Force Regiment by the Brigade Headquarters for reasons best known to them. The Battalion was subjected to fire both from the enemy as well as our own troops as under:-

- a. Coordinated ground fire from the enemy well entrenched positions at Jarpal, as the direction of our attack was not from a flank; it was almost frontal.
- b. Enemy tank guns kept firing at will on our troops, as they did not face matched opposition. As described earlier the enemy had brought their tanks forward in area East of Jarpal at first light and started shooting with the main guns. Technically it was not a

counter attack by the enemy but it definitely created the effects like that of a counter attack.

- c. Strafing on own troops by enemy air force.
- d. Own artillery fire which was coming occasionally on own troops.
- e. Flanking machine gun fire on own troops from 29 Frontier Force Regiment from area west of Barapind. Infact the Company Commander Major Syed Ali Ahmed Rizvi later confessed this mishap and said, the Forming Up place selected for 35 Frontier Force Regiment which was almost three hundred yards from the objective was Defensive Fire (SOS) Target for his company and that he got artillery fire on 35 Frontier Force Regiment since he was not informed accordingly. Coordination is very very important. Much better results could have been achieved, if properly planned and executed.

42. At this time it was extremely difficult to calculate the remaining fighting strength of the Battalion due to very heavy casualties. To give you some idea, the company wise casualties were as under



**DETAIL OF PERSONNEL KILLED IN ACTION**

<b>Company</b>	<b>Officers</b>	<b>Junior Commissioned Officer</b>	<b>Other Ranks</b>	<b>Total</b>
A Company	1	1	6	8
B Company	-	-	14	14
C Company	1	-	23	24
D Company	1	-	6	7
HQ Company	1	-	6	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>60</b>

**SECRIOUSLY WOUNDED**

<b>Company</b>	<b>Officers</b>	<b>Junior Commissioned Officer</b>	<b>Other Ranks</b>	<b>Total</b>
A Company	-	-	4	4
B Company	-	3	15	18
C Company	-	1	19	20
D Company	-	2	8	10
HQ Company	-	-	6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>58</b>

- All the Companies had their share of the casualties.
- Minor wounded were in addition to above figures.
- I was in C company area when I was wounded with artillery shelling. One of the Non Commissioned Officers of the same company applied Shell Dressing on my wounds.

43. There were about 100 walking wounded casualties. Men who could not walk were evacuated with great difficulty except those close to enemy forward trenches who were evacuated later. The Commanding Officer's body was evacuated on 18<sup>th</sup> morning by the Adjutant Captain Atta Ullah Butt. The troops had

now streamed back a little and were laying in front of the enemy. Cease fire was declared the same afternoon i.e. 17 December 1971 at 1700 hours.

44. The counter attack of 35 Frontier Force Regiment which was undertaken against extremely heavy odds, has been termed as a partial success due to the very violent and courageous action.
45. Lieutenant General Attiqur Rahman writes in his book, "The Wardens of the Marches" "35 Frontier Force Regiment attack had to be called off, not from lack of bravery shown by 35 Frontier Force Regiment and their gallant Commanding Officer but rather from the overall organization of the battle". (Page -170)
46. Although Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Akram Raja was awarded a posthumous Hilal-e-Jurat, the acknowledgement of his opposing enemy Commander viz Lieutenant Colonel Venon Pershand Airy,( later Lieutenant General) Commanding Officer 3<sup>rd</sup> Grenadier Guards Regiment, who insisted on writing the citation for Lieutenant Colonel Akram Raja, is worthy of mention and reads as under:-



## TRIBUTE TO A SOLDIER

"Lieutenant Colonel MUHAMMAD AKRAM RAJA, Commanding Officer 35 Frontier Force Regiment who led the counter attack on Indian position of village JARPAL at 0400 hours on 17 December 1971 has died a real soldier's death, our hats off to him.

We had recovered his body on 18 December 1971 after having been told by one of the prisoners of war captured by us. The prisoner also helped us in identifying the dead body. We found both his arms frozen after his death, in the position in which he was holding his sten gun, which indicates his determination to get ahead.

In this action Lieutenant Colonel MUHAMMAD AKRAM RAJA displayed courage, determination and personal bravery of the highest order in keeping with the tradition of the soldiers.

This heroic deed of Lieutenant Colonel MUHAMMAD AKRAM RAJA, a brave soldier should not go unnoticed.

Praying for the departed soul"

Field  
18 December 1971

Signed/ Xxxxxx  
Lieutenant Colonel  
(V P AIRY)

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**PART - III**  
**ANALYSIS**  
**&**  
**LESSONS LEARNT**





**PART-III**  
**ANALYSIS AND LESSONS LEARNT**

**GENERAL**

47. The breach in area Jarpal - Barapind constituted to some extent a serious threat to the integrity of 8 Division defences which would not have only threatened the left shoulder of 8 Division defences but also had far reaching strategic consequences. The enemy penetration was contained but at a very high cost. However, a number of lessons can be learnt from this action which is discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.
48. Absence of Design and Mishandling of Reserve. Apparently no counter attack for Barapind contingency had been planned by the Division even after having Corps Reserve placed at their disposal. 35 Frontier Force Regiment and earlier the Armoured Brigade had been hurriedly launched which displayed unpreparedness combined with the fruitless sally east of River Bein, all pointing to a singular lack of design in the conduct of defensive battle. The unit experienced the worst handling of being in reserve before and after the outbreak of hostilities.
49. Major General Fazal Muqeem Khan writes in his book Pakistan's Crises in Leadership, "at 0500 hours on

December 17, 35 Frontier Force Regiment was launched with the aim of recapturing Jarpal village. The counter attack was only a partial success. The few counter-attacks which 8 Division tried during the War were most noticeable by their lack of planning. The units were hurled into battle without having been given enough time for planning and preparation. The worst example of this attack was on December 17, when against all protestations of its very gallant commanding officer, 35 Frontier Force Regiment was sent into battle for almost certain massacre". (Page 215-216).

50. Lack of Battle Intelligence. It was lack of information which resulted in the disaster of initial counter attacking force of Armoured Brigade. Subsequently a rational analysis of the information should have resulted in a change of plans and proper preparation for the elimination of the bridgehead at Jarpal. To this end 35 Frontier Force Regiment attack should not have been launched in a hurry. I think it was the biggest tactical mistake committed by the Commander 24 Brigade and his Staff. Troops in contact should be trained to pass correct information. This had been one major weakness in our training and amply demonstrated in 1971 War.
51. Loss of Surprise. Surprise had completely been lost due to pre-mature artillery fire and expected direction



of attack. Lt. Gen. M. Attiqur Rahman writes in his book "Warden of the Marches, 35 FF led by its courageous Commanding Officer was met by fully alerted enemy, well dug down in strong defences. One of the earliest casualties was the Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Muhammad Akram Raja. He had lived and died in the highest traditions of Profession."

"Think not of those who are slain in the way of Allah as dead, Nay, they are living, with their Lord they have provision". (Quran-3/169)

52. Sound Knowledge of Terrain. A sound knowledge of terrain is a pre-requisite for all troops operating in the area. 35 Frontier Force Regiment was completely new to the area and had reached there only during the hours of darkness. Therefore, this battalion could not have produced any significant results since it had no time for reconnaissance, planning and orders. Commander 24 Brigade should have given this responsibility to 40 Punjab and employed them in the counter attack, since they were well familiar with their own area of operations, if at all the counter attack had to be launched the same night, which is a debatable issue.

53. Lack of Coordination. There was complete lack of coordination between armour and infantry, holding and attacking troops, Headquarters and subordinate

troops and also with supporting arms specially artillery. This had been amply evident by the following:-

- a. 29 Frontier Force Regiment ex 8 Armoured Brigade was not informed of 35 Frontier Force Regiment counter attack and thus fired on us.
- b. Armour support of 13 Lancers was only theoretical since no thought was given to the physical state of the regiment in view of the reverses suffered by them on 16 December.
- c. Forward Observation Officers joined the Battalion on the move to Forming Up Place. I as Company Commander did not know the Forward Observation Officers given to us. It was in the broad day light on 17 December that I saw a young officer lying in front of me, in a pool of blood. When I asked him who he was, I discovered that he was one of the two Forward Observation Officers given to us. He was Lieutenant Shabbir who requested me for evacuation. Initially I did not agree to his evacuation in view of the intense fighting going on but later I changed my mind in order to save his life and had him evacuated by Lance Naik Muhammad Din, my wireless operator and I manned the set myself for some time.



54. Planning and Rehearsals for Counter Attack. All the teachings, battle drills and battle procedures were set aside and the counter attack of 35 Frontier Force Regiment was launched in a most ill-planned and hasty manner. The following aspects may be noted:-
- a. No time was given for reconnaissance, planning and orders.
  - b. Chances of success of counter attack were not fully evaluated and appreciated at all.
  - c. Proper guidance arrangements were not made and the Forming Up Place was not marked by the Brigade Headquarters. Brigade Major 24 Brigade just indicated in a general direction at night, where we were to form up for the attack. Most of the troops were not clear about the objective since it was not visible in the darkness. I did not know the objective as a Company Commander. Only general direction of attack was pointed out.
  - d. No rehearsals were carried out for the deliberate counter attack.
  - e. No armour and air support was made available although the Battalion had requested for the same.
  - f. Flanking Direction of Attack. Map 6. Direction of attack selected by the Brigade was not a flanking one and the Battalion had to suffer heavy casualties. Perhaps going further right and phasing the attack properly would have been

better, while the enemy at west of Jarpal and Jarpal village should have been fixed and engaged from Barapind area by own tops deployed west of Barapind i.e. company 29 Frontier Force Regiment should have provided Fire Base. This way the artillery, mortars and Recilless Rifle fire would have been available for a longer duration and enemy softened up.

- g. From this flanking direction, phase 2 of the Battalion should have gone with armour in close support, since it would have been almost the tank light.
- h. In addition, the counter attacking troops should have been fresh when they were launched.

**Peace Within and Peace Without**

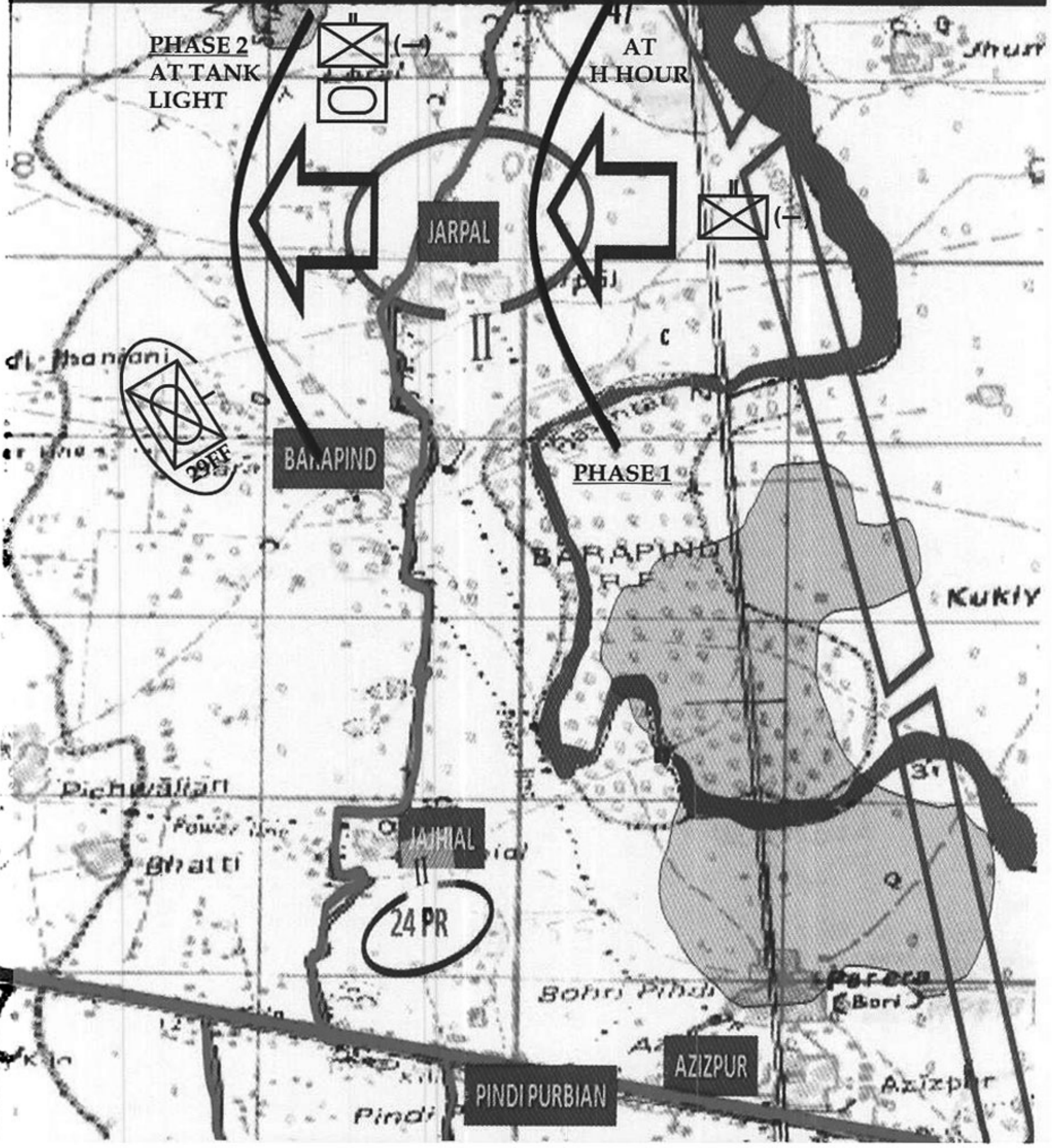
“Our object should be peace within and peace without. We want to live peacefully and maintain cordial and friendly relations with our immediate neighbors and with the world at large. We have no aggressive designs against anyone. We stand by the United Nations Charter and will gladly make our full contribution to the peace and prosperity of the world.”

(Quaid-e-Azam-15 August 1947)



SUGGESTED DIRECTION OF ATTACK

MAP 6



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55. Staff Work. The Staff Work had been extremely poor. The time and space calculations were totally wrong. After launching the Battalion, the staff did not bother to keep themselves abreast with the progress of the attack hence could not tackle any future eventualities. The staff reactions to the changed adverse battle scenario were rather poor for the reason that the earlier part of the operation must have been missed by the Brigade Major since he was on his way back to his Headquarters. Some views on the poor staff work may be observed as under:-
- a. Lieutenant General Attiqur Rahman has considerably understated when he says "Staff Work could not be said to be even adequate" while discussing 35 Frontier Force Regiment action in his book "Wardens of The Marches".
  - b. In the same context, Lieutenant General Altaf Qadir has said, "If you see the staff work done for the counter attack of 35 Frontier Force Regiment, You will start crying".

Lieutenant General Altaf Qadir  
Member Hamood Ur Rahman  
Commission  
(Address to the 1979 Staff  
Course,  
as a Guest Speaker).

56. I think all the teachings of the Staff College had been ignored and set aside. May be we have to take fresh stock of our teachings in the Command and Staff College and ensure that due emphasis is given to staff work and its practical application. Staff College may include this as an exercise or IE for future Staff Officers as not to commit such mistakes when confronted in future.
57. Importance of influencing the Battle By Commanders. Importance of visits and presence of commanders, where the key battles are being fought, should be given due cognisance. Commander 24 Brigade located himself about 10 miles behind the scene of action and was not in a position to influence the battle in any manner. At the same time, Commanding Officer 35 Frontier Force Regiment was much too forward. In 1971 War, we have experienced that most of the attacks came to a halt on the 'Shahadat' of their Commanding Officers. Therefore, we have to determine the correct place for a commanding officer in an attack, from where he could influence the actions of all the four companies not only two, since he is the man who matters and not the Second-in-Command.
58. Motivation. Motivation plays a vital part in enhancing the fighting capabilities of an outfit. I can easily say that 35 Frontier Force Regiment was



perhaps one of the highly motivated and indoctrinated Battalions of Pakistan Army in 1971 War. The Battalion was under great pressure right from the start. After the outbreak of hostilities, the Battalion travelled almost 150-200 miles distance every night and saw three Sectors in this small War, but their morale remained very high despite the very trying conditions. Even after the 'Shahadat' of the Commanding Officer and the two Company Commanders which happened in the first 30-45 minutes of the battle or so the troops stood nearly 6 hours facing heavy odds. The number of casualties suffered by the Battalion speaks of its bravery and a very high state of discipline. All ranks including the remaining officers (three of them were Bengalis) displayed courage and bravery of the highest order. One of the Platoon Commanders of A Company who embraced 'Shahadat' was Lieutenant Shahid Ullah from East Pakistan.

59. Battalion Level Tactical Considerations. Some aspects at battalion level which need considerations are:-
- a. All the four companies should not be brought in the Forming Up Place in single file or B line and get committed simultaneously. The follow up companies be formed up in depth not under the direct fire from the objective area. The same be launched in the second phase or as directed by the

Battalion Commander. In 35 Frontier Force Regiment counter attack A and B Companies were planned to have been committed 10 minutes after the first phase companies were launched, but were actually committed straight away hence were inextricably involved in the battle pre-maturely and could not be used for any other task.

- b. 'The Fighting Echelon' (F-Ech) including Recoilless Rifles should have been taken at night to area Barapind, moving a little behind with some time gap after the rifle companies had left the Forward Assembly Area. A Battalion Fire Base should have been planned or alternatively 29 Frontier Force Regiment should have been asked to provide the necessary support since they were already deployed towards west of village Barapind. The combat power of an infantry battalion could not be generated due to obvious reasons.
- c. Junior Commissioned Officers have again been rather hesitant and inactive. They should not be given platoons to command. They should not be given responsibility for important tasks. The late Commanding Officer had made Naib Subedar Adjutant incharge of the fighting ('F') Echelon, which never arrived on time. It was only when the



Adjutant was sent back that we got part of the 'F' Echelon up.

d. Forming up place selected by the Brigade Staff was rather too close to village Jarpal. All the four companies had been committed almost when they reached the Forming Up Place. After an hour or so of fighting, the troops found themselves to be in the open, right in front of the enemy. The companies could not form up or/shake out properly and at one stage almost all the companies were mixed up with each other. It was not possible to extricate, reorganize and move forward. Even if the Commanding Officer had intended to withhold attack of A and B Companies, he could do very little in this respect as they had been committed very early in the battle and therefore could not assist C and D Companies in their attack, as desired.

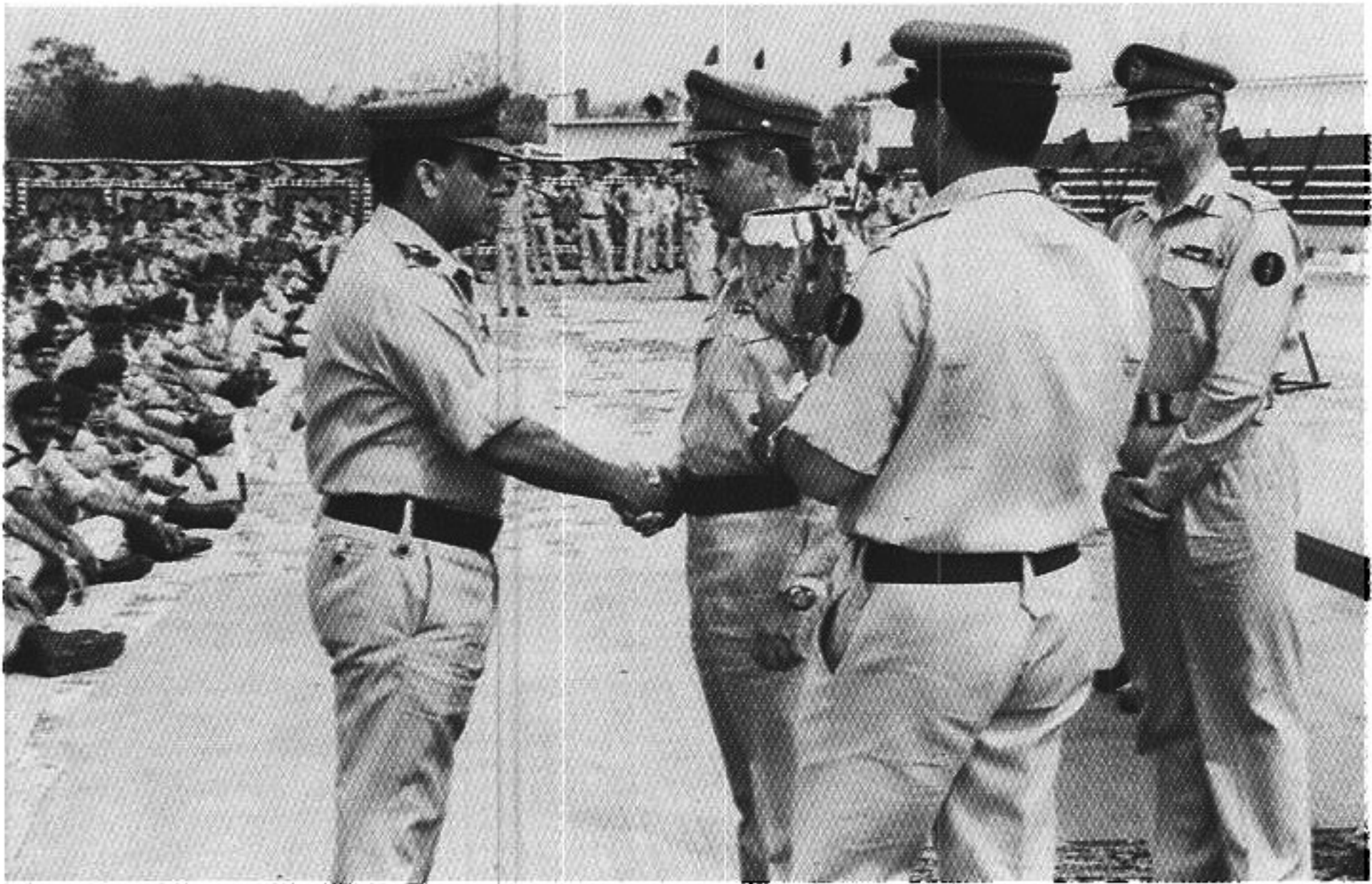
60. The space was not at all sufficient for forming up place and for an objective of a battalion. After I came to know that C and D Companies had lost their Company Commanders, I crawled to D and C Companies to read the situation and pat the two Company Officers; Second Lieutenant Khalid Mahmood and 2 Lt Ibadat Hussain Shah. Any thing which moved was spotted by the enemy due to lack of cover. I came under enemy machine gun fire for

nearly five minutes when I was between A and D Companies and the bullets were almost touching my back but I crawled and reached D Company (left forward company). I had to give them instructions of Acting Commanding Officer as well that we must hold this area and readjust our positions. We had requested the Brigade Headquarters to send us some reinforcements, tanks and air support.

61. In this short war of 14 days, 35 Frontier Force Regiment experienced the following:-
- a. Move by rail.
  - b. Extensive move by road.
  - c. Defence. (Hakra Canal); for a very short period.
  - d. Relief in Line (Raya Khas -Mirowal in Narowal Sector)
  - e. And finally, the Counter Attack (Barapind- Jarpal)



## **35 FF AT OKARA - 1986**



Lt. Col Imtiaz ul Haque, Commanding Officer 35 FF Regiment receiving Corps Inter Battalion Education and Religious Education Trophies from Lt. Gen Raja Saroop Khan, Commander 2 Corps, at Okara in 1986. Major General Shafiq Ahmad, GOC 14 Division is also seen.





**PART- IV**  
**CONCLUSION**





## PART-IV

### CONCLUSION

62. It has been my ardent desire for all these years since 1971 to write an account of this battle in which I participated as a Company Commander of 35 Frontier Force Regiment. My endeavour has been to bring out all that is known to me about this counter attack. I may have erred at places and may have narrated certain incidents which may not look to be exact. However, I wish to assure the readers that this is not intentional as I have tried to be objective all along. The whole exercise is intended to bring out certain lessons, the study of which will enable future leaders to ensure that the mistakes are not repeated and they are more successful in their combat actions against our adversaries, as and when these take place.
63. I feel that there is lot to learn from this counter attack because it brings out clearly the importance of training units, commanders and staff at various levels. A close scrutiny will reveal that there have been several inadequacies and numerous failings in various channels of command and in the battle procedure that ensued. An effort has been made to analyse these.
64. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that the Battalion acquitted itself admirably, displaying indomitable determination and courage despite the hardships it

encountered. The action of 35 Frontier Force Regiment in its very first year of raising was so bold and violent that even the enemy commander opposing this action could not resist praising it; especially the Commanding Officer who was awarded a posthumous Hilal-e-Jurat. Perhaps an award of posthumous Nishan-e-Haider would have been more appropriate. As far other officers, Junior Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks who laid down their lives in this action, I feel that better recognition should have been given to their acts-of-deeds and given gallantry awards. The action of 35 Frontier Force Regiment will always be remembered and will go down in the history of Pakistan Army. The Motherland and all the Pakistanis can be rightly proud of those brave sons who fought bravely or fell as martyrs. I pray to the Almighty Allah to enlighten us, show us the right direction and give us guidance and courage to defend our Pakistan against external aggression and internal turmoils the way our Shaheeds have shown us the path. Amen.

65. In the end it reminds me of Lord Tennyson's poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade" which bears similarity to this counter attack of my Battalion in 1971, to be known as "The Charge of the Bulls" A few stanzas of this poem are reproduced.



**The Charge of the Light Brigade**

Half a league, half a league,  
Half a league onward,  
All in the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.  
Forward the Light Brigade  
Charge for the guns! He said:  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred

- Forward, the Light Brigade!  
Was there a man dismayed?  
Not though the soldier knew  
Some one had blundered  
Theirs not to make reply  
Theirs not to reasons why  
Theirs but to do and die  
Into the valley of Death
  
- Rode the six hundred  
Cannon to right of them  
Cannon to left of them  
Cannon in front of them  
Volleyed and thundered  
Stormed at with shot and shell  
Boldly they rode and well  
Into the jaws of Death  
Into the mouth of Hell  
Rode the six hundred

By: Lord Tennyson

Written by:

Lieutenant Colonel Imtiaz ul Haque  
Commanding Officer 35 Frontier Force  
(Officer Commanding A Company  
35 Frontier Force Regiment in  
1971 War.

06 October 1987.





**APPENDICES**  
**(I-II-III-IV-V-VI)**





**APPENDIX-I**

LETTER OF PERSUASION BY LT. GEN.M. ATTIQUR RAHMAN

Lt. Gen. M. Attiqur Rahman  
226, Munir Road,  
Lahore Cantt,  
Ref No.D/10  
20 April 87

Lt. Col-Imtiaz ul Haq, psc, fsc (t), (I) Q.S.L.  
35 Bn The Frontier Force Regiment  
C/o FPU-15

Dear Imtiaz

This is to thank you for your Order of the Day on the auspicious anniversary of the battle Barapind and Jharpal.

My urdu is hopeless and while I had the Order of the Day read out to me I did not quite follow the battle procedure before the battle.

You will recall that I met you at the Piffer gathering last year and you informed me that you were preparing a digest, of the events just prior to the battle. Perhaps you have done this and further perhaps you do not want to publish it yourself. This is understandable.

Brigadier Khalil Ahmad, who has now joined the ages, used to go over the battle with me and we openly cried together over its mismanagement.

I am trying to help our little Army in every little way I can and I am writing away-hoping that some of it may be useful. Perhaps you know how much or how little has been

written about this battle. As you must have realised I have become sentimentally involved- Heaven knows why?

If you could let me have, in English(!) a chronological order of events leading up to the battle, say from the start of the war in 1971 perhaps I could write an article for the Infantry Journal or the Staff College. We could be co-authors or you could be the sole author, or I could be the sole author. This would be up to you entirely.

My aim would be to examine the battle procedure and the management of troops prior to battle. The valuable lives lost must not go waste as if nothing has happened and "business as usual" attitude prevails.

Let us have a professional look.

All the best

Yours sincerely

Sd/-

(ATTIQR RAHMAN)



**APPENDIX-II**

**TRUE IMPRESSIONS**  
**OF**  
**FEW SENIOR OFFICERS LETTERS**  
**AND**  
**EXTRACTS/IMPRESSIONS FROM SOME OTHER**  
**SENIOR OFFICERS LETTERS**  
**ABOUT 35 FF ACTION**





TRUE IMPRESSIONS OF THE LETTER OF COMD 1 CORPS  
1971 WAR

Lt. General (Retd) Irshad Ahmed Khan,  
131, Shadman II, Lahore  
2 April, 1992.

Dear Imtiaz,

My sincere thanks for the treatise sent by you in which you have given a graphic account of the spirited counter attack on Jarpal by 35 FFR in the 1971 war. You have rendered commendable service to the Army by recording in black and white the happenings of the historic encounter in which you yourself were an important participant as a company commander. You were witness to worst possible chaos and highest possible valour, the two phrases that sum up the story of the operation. Your battalion made history in that battle and you have narrated it vividly for posterity.

Despite the unforgivable mess made by higher headquarters the battalion almost reached its objective as you clearly described on the ground on 15<sup>th</sup> July 91 during 8 Division's Study Period which I also attended. The unit managed to advance that far through sheer tenacity of the daring C.O. and unflinching loyalty of his equally brave subordinates out of whom sixty sacrificed their lives.

Even a junior officer with rudimentary knowledge of tactics would know the indispensable requirement of day light reconnaissance of the objective before a deliberate night attack, but in this unfortunate case the Brigadier' who

was the higher commander on the spot, nonchallantly decided to dispense with that vital prerequisite and asked the battalion to go ahead with the attack in perilously short time. On that night I myself was present at 8 Division Headquarters and I wish I was told the grave situation that had developed during the night. I don't think the Brigadier conveyed to Divisional Headquarters the plea of the hapless C.O. to allow him some more time for organizing a properly planned attack.

I agree with the lessons drawn from the operation by you. However, the dauntless C.O. apparently decided to be in the front wave in assault to reassure his comrades that he himself was also prepared to make the supreme sacrifice that they were being forced to make as a result of the crazy orders from above against which he had made his plea as persuasively as his self esteem as a soldier permitted.

Lt. Col. Akram Raja certainly was worthy of the spontaneous tribute his opposing commander paid him the day after the battle which I quoted in his citation for the award of Nishan-i-Haider that I still feel he fully deserved. May his shining example guide our future generations.

With regards.

Sincerely,

Sd/-

Lt. Gen (Retd) Irshad Ahmed Khan



**TRUE IMPRESSION OF THE LETTER BY LT.GEN ABDUL  
WAHEED (LATER CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF)**

Lt. Gen Abdul Waheed  
**HQ 12 CORPS**  
Quetta Cantonment  
Telephon Mil: 2122  
No.PF/5977/1  
22 January 1992

My dear Imtiaz,

Trauma and ignominy of defeat must not eclipse the acts of heroism. Bravery and chivalry of Lt. Col. Muhammad Akram Raja and his command in 1971 War is the finest example for posterity to emulate.

1971 war was an unfortunate case of blunders at national, political and strategic levels. The then military strategy evolved did not commensurate with the policy which could fully safeguard our national interests. At tactical levels there were a number of follies committed. However, the fighting units did rise to the occasion. Frontier Force Regiment can rightly be proud of its combat contributions in 71 War. 35 Frontier Force Regiment's action at Barapind and Jarpal can be rightly termed as one of the finest operations at unit level in the annals of history of warfare. Combat glory is not earned cheaply. It is attributed to the tenacity and highest sacrifices of valiant sons like that of 35 Frontier Force Regiment, led by Lt Col Muhammad Akram Raja. Their blood must be avenged.

I have gone through your paper. Your endeavour is a profound reflection which is a positive step towards the all important and vital necessity of recognition and record for emulation in the next war. Your analysis of action at Barapind and Jarpal highlighting misinformation, miscoordination and the disregard of battle procedures can be of great value for the combat units.

Next round with India is going to be decisive. Our victory, Insha Allah will wash the stigma of 71 war and the blood of our shaheeds will be vindicated. I pray that the combat future of 35 Frontier Force Regiment is brighter than its glorious past.

With my best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Sd/-

Lt. Gen Abdul Waheed  
(Later. General - COAS)



EXTRACTS/IMPRESSIONS OF SOME OTHER SENIOR OFFICERS ABOUT 35 FF ACTION

GENERAL AKHTAR ABDUL REHMAN KHAN

- No doubt your young Battalion can rightly feel proud of its worthy traditions. The supreme sacrifice, devotion to duty and courage of conviction displayed by Lieutenant Colonel Raja Muhammad Akram (Shaheed), Hilal-e-Jurat, the Commanding Officer, shall remain the cherished hope of many to match his valour.

General Akhtar Abdul Rehman Khan  
Chairman

04 May 1987

Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee

\*\*\*\*\*

- "It was heroic battle which in bravery has no parallel. The account is first hand narration".

Lt Gen Muhammad Aslam Shah  
Commander 1 Corps

21 September 1987

\*\*\*\*\*

- I felt infinitely proud and satisfied after going through your write up on "BaraPind-Jarpal" operation. It is a very fine, forthright and detailed account of a battle that we are all proud of as soldiers. The officers and men put up indeed a very gallant show in this operation.

Lt. Gen Imran Ullah Khan  
Headquarters 10 Corps  
21 July 1987

\*\*\*\*\*

- It has been a historic event.

Major General (Later Lt. Gen)  
Pir Dad Khan, M.S.

\*\*\*\*\*

- The account engulfs good exposure of the operation and high lights the active, spirited and professional pursuits of 'The Charging Bulls' in general and imperishable deeds of valiant men in particular. The action has been well described.
- Research work so rich in material indeed reflects your personal interest and perseverance that has gradually elevated it to its present standard. I am sure it will help as candle of light to the Units and all of us will benefit from your battle field experience.

Major General Ahmed Ali,  
General Officer Commanding  
10 Division

29 October, 1987

\*\*\*\*\*

- Indeed it is a matter of great honour and pride for a battalion to have performed such great deeds of valour and chivalry in the defence of the country.
- The Army can very rightly boast of a unit like the 'Charging Bulls' the deeds of which are a beacon for all of us.

Major General (Later Lieutenant General) Farrakh Khan  
General Officer Commanding 6 Armored Division

23 April 1987

\*\*\*\*\*

- I think you must be having the longest Roll of Honour amongst the units who fought on the borders of West Pakistan during 1971 War with India.

Brigadier (Later Major General) Irshad Ullah Tarar

\*\*\*\*\*

- I found the account very interesting as well as educative. The vivid description of unit and sub unit



actions is not only factual and honest but it also gives a personal touch.

- My personal interest with this gallant action is because of my association and friendship with your outstanding and brave commanding officer, Lt. Col Muhammad Akram Raja and also because a newly born Frontier Force unit participated in the Counter attack.
- I must commend you for writing this most important chapter of your regimental history.

Major General  
Muhammad Hussain Awan  
Headquarters 23 Division  
31<sup>st</sup> May 1987

\*\*\*\*\*

- You are one of those lucky Commanding Officers who have seen their own Battalion in action during War. The glorious performance of your Battalion during 1971 War has been written in the history in golden words.

Brigadier (Later Lt. Gen)  
Muhammad Nasir Akhtar  
Headquarter 44 Indep Inf Bde Gp

29 April 1987

\*\*\*\*\*

- I have been highly touched by the befitting tribute you have paid to the Shaheeds of Barapind and Jarpal by recording the history of the battle account. May Allah grant us all strength to follow their footsteps, Ameen.

Major General M. Abdus Sami  
General Officer Commanding 14 Division

\*\*\*\*\*

- Personally I have always felt proud whenever 35 Frontier Force Regiment is discussed anywhere.

Brigadier (later Major General) Ghazi ud Din Rana

20 April 1987

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **THE PRAYER OF THE BELIEVERS**

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Praise be to Allah,  
The Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds;  
Most Gracious, Most Merciful;  
Master of the Day of Judgment.  
Thee do we worship,  
And Thine aid we seek;  
Show us the straight way;  
The way of those on whom  
Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace,  
Those whose (portion)  
Is not wrath,  
And who go not astray.

— Al-Quran, Surah-Al-Hamd Verses - 1-7 —



APPENDIX III

BENGALI OFFICERS

- Most of them fought very well both in 1965 and 1971 Wars. 35 FF Regiment had 3 Bengali (East Pakistani) Officers who fought extremely well in 35FF Regiment counter attack at Barapind-Jarpal in 1971 War.
- Major Abdul Maleque, the 2<sup>nd</sup> in Command (21C) was a senior Field Officer who had earlier served as Brigade Major (BM) in a Brigade Headquarters in Sulemanki Sector, West Pakistan.
- Lt. Shahid Ullah, embraced "Shahadat" fighting gallantly in this counter attack. He was organizing tank-hunting parties on the instructions of his Company Commander, when an artillery shell fell on his head. He was the only son of his widow mother. His name was somehow not recorded in the Roll of Honour Board at the entrance of the P.M.A. Cadet New Mess, which was subsequently added in 1974. He had come to 35 FF from 16 FF at the time of Raising. He was recommended for Sitra-e-Jurat (S.J).
- 2 Lt Jahangir Hossain Talukdar was a brave young officer. He manned Machine Gun (MG) when its No.1 fell shaheed and he brought lot of fire on enemy positions at Jarpal for quite some time. He is now a retired Lt. Col and settled in Bangladesh. Detail of

this counter attack were discussed with him during his recent visit to Pakistan, in April 2010.

- Lt. Gen. M. Attiqur Rahman writes in his book "The Wardens of the Marches". The unit history has recorded for their East Pakistani Officers in these words: "These officers had fought shoulder to shoulder with us and never has there been any doubt about their loyalty. They will be always remembered by all ranks of the unit. They were Major Abdul Maleque and Lieutenant Jehangir Hossain Talukdar. Our tribute also goes to Lieutenant A.A. Shahid Ullah, also an East Pakistani Officer, who was killed on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1971 in the attack on Jarpal. This courageous young officer will never be forgotten by the unit." (Page 191)

#### **HOW TO COUNTER AGGFRESSION**

Fight in the Cause of Allah,  
Those who fight you,  
But do not transgress limits,  
For Allah loveth not transgressors,  
And slay them  
Whatever ye catch them,  
And turn them out  
From where they have  
Turned you out;  
For tumult and Oppression  
Are worse than slaughter

— Al - Quran, Surah Al Baqra - Verses, 190 - 191



APPENDIX -IV

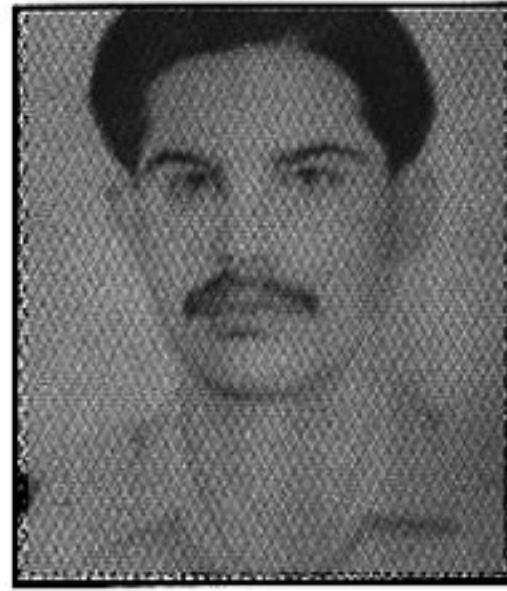
ROLL OF HONOUR (SHAHEDS)

OFFICERS, JUNIOR COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND  
OTHER RANKS WHO EMBRACED SHAHADAT DURING  
35 FF ACTION IN 1971

NAME OF OFFICERS/JCO;



Lt Col Muhammad  
Akram Raja



Maj Zulfiqar Ahmed  
Recommended for S.J.



Maj Pervez Farooq  
Recommended for S.J.



Lt. AA Shahid ullah



Subadar Ghulam Rasool

SUMMARY OF SHAHEEDS

Lt. Col	1	L.Hav	3
Majors	2	Nks	7
Lt.	1	LNKs	5
Subedar	1	Sepoys	36
Hav	4		
		Total :	<u>60</u>

ترانہ  
چار جنگ بلز

دشمن کو خاک میں ملاتے ہیں  
مشکلوں سے نہ کھبراتے ہیں

ہم خون جگر لٹاتے ہیں  
ہم دست و سحر ا کے باسی

ہم سپوت ہیں راجہ بٹالین کے  
ہم چار جنگ بلز کہلاتے ہیں

خون دے کر ساٹھ شہیدوں کا  
جب بھی پکارا وطن نے ہمیں

آج پھر یہ حلف اٹھاتے ہیں  
دیکھ کیسے جان لٹاتے ہیں

ہم سپوت ہیں راجہ بٹالین کے  
ہم چار جنگ بلز کہلاتے ہیں

ہے بلند پفرز میں مقام اپنا  
گواہ ہے بڑا پنڈ اور جرپال

ہر میدان میں زور آزما تے ہیں  
ہم کیسے وطن بچاتے ہیں

ہم سپوت ہیں راجہ بٹالین کے  
ہم چار جنگ بلز کہلاتے ہیں

گواہ ہے وی پی ایری بھی  
توڑ کر ساری دیواریں

ہم آگے کیسے جاتے ہیں  
رستے ہم کیسے بناتے ہیں

ہم سپوت ہیں راجہ بٹالین کے  
ہم چار جنگ بلز کہلاتے ہیں

تاریخ گواہ ہے راجہ کی  
آفیسر ہوں یا ہوں جواں

ہم کیسے لوہا منواتے ہیں  
سینے پہ گولی کھاتے ہیں

ہم سپوت ہیں راجہ بٹالین کے  
ہم چار جنگ بلز کہلاتے ہیں



**APPENDIX -VI**

**EXTRACTS OF HAMOODUR REHMAN**  
**COMMISSION REPORT ON**  
**SIALKOT SECTOR (PAGES 215-219)**  
**FOR READERS INTEREST**

**SIALKOT-SHAKARGARH-NAROWAL SECTOR**

62. This was the area of responsibility of 1 Corps. The total frontage of the area extended to 180 miles, from Marala. Headworks on the Chenab to the escape channel of Marala-Ravi link into the Ravi River near Mirowal. This is more or less a flat area fit for large-scale manoeuvres, including the use of armour. It faces the Indian boundary between the East Punjab and Jammu through which run the main lines of communication between India and occupied Kashmir. The main road on the Indian side (Kathua-Samba-Jammu-Akhnur) runs approximately parallel to our boundary ranging within 5 to 12 miles thereof.

63. This is a very sensitive area so far as the Indians are concerned. It is, therefore, strongly defended and the Indians have twice launched major offensives into our territory through this area in order to add more depth to their own lines of communication.

64. Within this area fell the Dharam enclave at Kasowal, a strip of Indian territory on our side of the Ravi and our own enclave at Jassar fell on the Indian side of The Ravi. The Ravi, though a major river, has now ceased to be an effective obstacle for offensive operations, as after the

implementation of the Indus Basin Treaty most of its waters had been diverted into Indian canals originating at Madhupur Headworks. The Indians were, therefore capable of directing a major offensive across the river Ravi through the areas of Raya or Jassar to isolate the areas of Shakargarh-Damthal-Pasrur.

65. From intelligence reports it was known that the Indians would maintain a defensive posture against West Pakistan and Azad Kashmir till her aim in East Pakistan had been achieved. Thereafter, she would divert a part of her strength from the east to the west and launch an all out offensive to force a decision. This offensive, it was further expected from the information available, was most likely to be launched against the 1 Corps area from Samba-Kathua direction with subsidiary attacks across the Ravi further to the south with the objective of capturing Gujranwala or Wazirabad.

66. Thus enemy intentions appeared also to receive confirmation from his troops deployments which seemed to indicate that most of the Indian reserve formations were concentrated against this area with the exception of 1 Armoured Division and 14 Division less one brigade group which were deployed in area Muktasar-Ferozepur-Lalabad, and the 14<sup>th</sup> Independent Armoured Brigade group plus brigade group of 14 Division which was in area Ajnala-Fategarh-Churian, north of Amritsar.

67. In this view of the matter, the mission assigned to 1 Corps by GHQ was to involve and fix enemy reserve



formations so that they were not able to extricate themselves to counter our own army's main offensive in the south. Alternatively, the mission of 1 Corps was to neutralize and inflict maximum casualties on enemy forces in the event of the enemy invading our own territory and be prepared to carry the war into enemy territory under favourable conditions.

68. Under this mission the tasks assigned to 1 Corps were:-

- (1) To deny the vital areas of Marala headworks, Sialkot, Pasrur and Narowal and Jassar and Raya crossing over River Ravi while defending the area of responsibility.
- (2) To eliminate Dharam enclave on the commencement of hostilities.
- (3) To take initiative to improve local defensive postures and exploit weak spots revealed in enemy dispositions.
- (4) To facilitate the launching of army reserves through the Corps area.

69. The army reserve in north was given the task, if necessary, to do the following:-

- (a) Cut enemy line of communications Kathua-Samba-Jammu.
- (b) Destroy enemy bridge-head across River Ravi in area Jassar-Narowal.
- (c) Destroy enemy para-landing in area Wazirabad bridges.

- (d) Restore situation in area west of Marala-Ravi link, either by counter attacking the enemy bridge-head across the link or taking up counter-penetrating positions on road leading to general area Gujranwala Wazirabad.

70. The forces at the disposal of 1 Corps for this purpose were:-

1. 8<sup>th</sup> Division: 3 Brigades in holding role.
2. 15 Division: 4 brigades + one integral armoured regiment.
3. 8<sup>th</sup> Independent Armed Brigade.
4. Regiments of M-47/48 tanks. Corps Reserve.
5. Corps artillery and Corps armoured (recce) regiment.

71. In addition it could, if necessary, also call upon the assistance of the army reserve north, which consisted:-

1. 6<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division.
2. 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

72. This army reserve was located behind Marala-Ravi link and was to be placed under 1 Corps for counter offensive tasks in the corps area.

73. As against this, the enemy formations, as far as known, were:-

- a. 26<sup>th</sup> Division (4 brigades)
- b. 39<sup>th</sup> Division (4 brigades)
- c. 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Armoured Brigade (Holding formations deployed area Jammu-Samba-Kathua).



- d. One brigade group (plus) (holding area Dera Baba Nanak).
- e. 36 Division
- f. 34<sup>th</sup> Division
- g. 2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Armoured Brigade Group.
- h. 26 Independent Armoured Brigade Group (from No.5 to 8 army reserves Samba-Pathankot-Gurdaspur).

74. In addition to above the Indians also had the 14<sup>th</sup> Independent Armoured Group+ one brigade group ex-14<sup>th</sup> Division in area Ajnala-Fategargh Charian. This force was so located that it could be used either against our 1 Corps or our 4 Corps as and when the occasion arose.

75. Our own 8<sup>th</sup> Independent Armoured Brigade Group was to operate both under 8 Division and 15 Division to eliminate enemy bridge-heads or penetrations of the main defence positions and generally in conjunction with army reserve north.

76. In execution of this mission the Commander, 1 Corps decided to defend strongly along the line of Degh Nadi in the Pukhlian salients and along the line Zafarwal-Shakargarh-Nurkot in Shakargarh salients. The other portions of these two salient were only to be lightly held. The intention being that the enemy would only be given light resistance if he advanced into these areas. No mine field was laid in the Pukhlian area but mines were laid in two layers in the Shakargarh area.

77. Above the line of Degh Nadi the Pukhlian borders were held by 4 Ranger's Companies and only one regular infantry company under the control of 15 Division. The 8<sup>th</sup> Division's main position was 8/10 miles behind the border on the Samaba-Akhnur side and 11 miles away from the border on the Ravi River side. All the three Brigades of the 8<sup>th</sup> Division were placed along this defence line and the rest of the area of Shakargarh salient was covered by a "Changez Force" composed of 1 Corps (recce) Regiment (Sherman). 1 armoured Regiment ex-8 Armoured Brigade Group (M47/48) and one Infantry battalion ex-8 Division to cover the main defence position between Degh Nadi and Bein River. Some reserve elements and rangers provided the screens and reconnaissance elements in area east of Bein River.

78. With this deployment the 8<sup>th</sup> Division launched an attack with 115 brigade group at 2130 hours on 3rd December on the Dharam enclave, which was expected to be strongly defended by the enemy, but contrary to all expectations the enemy hurriedly abandoned the area and this enclave was captured by the first light of next day.

79. In the next two days nothing happened in this area except for exchange of some artillery fire but at 1900 hours of 5<sup>th</sup> December the enemy's infantry and armoured columns started approaching 8<sup>th</sup> Division area from the direction of Samba-Kathua between Degh Nadi and Bein River. 20 Lancers of Changez Force engaged the enemy but



soon withdrew behind the first layer of the minefield. The same night the Indians attacked the Pukhlian salient also in 15 Division's area and over ran the positions which were manned by rangers. The Indian attack came from north and east along Degh Nadi. The 15 Division quickly reinforced its Gondal and Sindhra positions on Chaprar Burd facing Pukhlian but the enemy made no move in that direction. Instead the enemy consolidated his gains and crept close to Marala Headworks.

After ceasefire it was found that the Indians were within machine-gun range of the headworks. The evidence given by GHQ is that during the war they had no knowledge of the enemy's advance so deep into Pukhlian salient, but came to know of it only after the ceasefire.

80. In the Shakargarh salient the enemy after the first encounter with the Changez Force retained the initiative but seemed to be in no hurry to advance. It probed its way through very cautiously and very gradually, occupying only areas vacated by our own troops and avoiding pitched battle.

81. This movement seems to show that the enemy was not anxious to involve its reserves in the 1 Corps area in any haste. The Changez Force continued its delaying action against the enemy from 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> December when the enemy forces established contact with 8 Division's main defences along Zafarwal-Shakargarh line. The enemy had actually advanced between the minefields and it was there

for nearly 5 days but no effort was made to counter-attack and destroy the enemy between the two minefields. Indeed, it now appears that no such move had even been planned by either the Corps or the Divisional Headquarters, in spite of the fact that the Changez Force had been assigned the task of holding up the enemy in this area. The logical objective of such a drawing tactics should have been to draw the enemy into the killing ground and destroy it there.

82. The story was the same in the area east of Bein River up to Ravi River which was again captured by the enemy without much opposition. Our rangers and Recce support elements withdrew to the west of Bein River, i.e. along Shakargarh-Nurkot line when the enemy started probing into the area. A counter-attack was launched only on 10<sup>th</sup> December at 1630 hours by the 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Brigade from 3 sides converging at Nainakot. The enemy was pushed back about 3 miles east of River Bein but as night fell the counter attack was suddenly called off, because the enemy pressure was building up again in Zafarwal-Shakargarh area. This pullback was so hurried that a troop of tanks which was still east of Bein River, was in the confusion prevented from retreating by the closure of the gaps in the minefields. This troop was lost to the enemy in the process.

83. The Changez Force had fallen back to the rear of the main defences along Zafarwal-Shakargarh line by the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> December but again nothing happened between 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December. During this period the



enemy got the opportunity to build up his strength in front of Zafarwal-Shakargarh line and then attack Shakargarh during night 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> December but his attack was beaten back.

84. The main attack of the enemy, however, came at 2035 hours on the night of 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> December. The fighting continued throughout the night and by early morning at 0445 hours the enemy had succeeded in establishing himself in area Barapind-Jarpal-Ghazipur within the main positions of 24 Brigade covering Zafarwal after breaching the second minefield. The Corps decided at last, to eliminate the bulge created by the enemy. The 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Brigade was thrown into attack at 0630 hours and the 13Lancers at 0800 hours. A fierce battle ensued in which 13 Lancers suffered heavy losses. In the meanwhile 31 Cavalry also joined the battle but its leading squadron was badly mauled.

85. It transpired that the enemy had two armoured regiments and two infantry battalions along with a large number of anti-tank guided missiles in this area. Barapind was reclaimed but the counter-attack of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Brigade came to a grinding halt. Our losses were unduly severe. The threat of enemy breakout from Jarpal-Ghazipur area was, however, not yet eliminated. It was, therefore decided to continue the counter-attacks and a tank plus infantry attack was ordered to be launched at first light of 17<sup>th</sup> December.

86. Again there was considerable confusion with regard to this attack. This 35FF, which had arrived in Raya area on 15<sup>th</sup> December, was ordered first to Dhamtal and then to Jarpal area to launch the attack. The attack had to be supported by 13 Lancers. The battalion, which had arrived at Dhamtal at 1600 hours on 16<sup>th</sup> December at once ordered to reach Pindi Purbian by 1900 hours. When it reached there the plan for the attack could not be coordinated between the Commanders of 8<sup>th</sup> Armed Brigade and 24 Brigade, as the former thought that a coordinated attack at first light was not feasible but the latter decided to issue orders to the Commanding Officer of 35FF to launch an attack in the morning. Headquarters 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Brigade was not informed about these developments. At 0530 hours of 17<sup>th</sup> December the battalion 35FF went into action without armour support. The enemy opened up with a heavy volume of tank, artillery and small arms fire. The battalion suffered very heavy losses and lost its commanding officer, two company commanders, one young officer, one junior commissioned officer and 55 other ranks; 73 others were wounded. By 1300 hours the remnants fell back to Pindi Purbian without achieving anything. The enemy continued to maintain its pressure throughout the day and endeavoured to expand the bulge but fortunately it was stopped by the PAF's timely assistance and close ground support. The PAF destroyed the enemy's follow up echelons in the area of Dharman and beyond.



87. The battle in this area resulted in the loss of approximately 350 square miles of territory and 534 villages.

88. One cannot help feeling that 1 Corps in interpreting the mission assigned to it took an unduly passive attitude and did not endeavour to build up any offensive defence posture nor did it, when giving up, territory, put up any determined resistance or inflict any serious rate of attrition on the invading army, even when the opportunity to do so had presented itself during the course of the war. It was at one stage felt that the enemy had committed most of his reserve formations, located in the area Samba-Kathua-Pathankot-Gurdaspur, into this salient, yet it appears that whatever he achieved in the Shakargarh salient was done without unbalancing his capability to react to a possible counter-offensive by the Pakistan Army.

89. Although the disparity in strength between the forces available to this Corps and the enemy was not too great, yet this Corps, it appears to us, failed at a critical juncture to take advantage of the opportunities that were presented to it during the course of the battle to regain its position. Several Junior Officers, who appeared before us, have been critical of the conduct of the operations of this Corps. Some have maintained that the whole concept of the Corps plan was defective. It misinterpreted the mission assigned to it by thinking that the main defences should be positioned at or near only the area which had to be denied at all costs to the enemy. While the others could be left only lightly defended.



It has been suggested that it was a mistake to concentrate one regular battalion on Marala headworks itself and leave the Pukhlian salient in the charge of ill-equipped and poorly trained rangers.

Similarly it is maintained that advantage was not taken of the successful operation of Changez Force and it was not followed up as it should have been by attacking the enemy when it had been drawn within the two minefields. It is said that it was repeatedly suggested to the corps and divisional commanders to concentrate their artillery fire against the enemy but they paid no heed to these suggestions which came from the junior officers. The manner in which the 13 Lancers were sent to their destruction is also adversely commented upon. Indeed, even the senior officers have been critical of the conduct of the operations of this corps and have expressed the view that the reluctance of the high command to launch the main counter-offensive in time was largely attributable to the confusion created in this area.

The object of involving and fixing the enemy reserve, it is suggested, could also have been achieved if the corps had undertaken a limited offensive into the enemy territory itself right from the outset of hostilities. With army reserve north present behind the corps defence line, such an offensive action would not have been an undue risk, at any rate. It would have prevented the loss of our own territory and the displacement of a large number of our own citizens.



commented upon. This area was not too far away from the General Headquarters but it appears that the latter did not exercise any influence over the operations of 1 Corps either during the planning stage or during its execution. It is not known why, if the Corps Commander was not in a position to discover the flaws in its own plan, the GHQ could not have pointed out the same to the Corps Commander. The responsibility for the failure in this area must also be shared by the GHQ, for, the evidence before us shows that the Chief of Staff of the Pakistan Army personally visited this area more than once during the operations.

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**APPENDIX-VII**

**SOME EVENTS/IMPRESSION BY SOME INDIANS**

- Col. Ran Palsoka, MC has given significant details about the battle of Barapind in his book "The Grenadiers" published in 1980. Some extracts were also reproduced in the "Piffers U.K. in May 1993 under the tile of "A Matter of Honour" The Indians call this "Battle of Basantar- Dec 71".
- This was a bitterly fought battle on both sides. Stiff fighting took place at Jarpal. Opposing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grenadiers and a Squadron of 5 Poona Horse. 35 Frontier Force Regiment was led by Lt. Col Muhammad Akram Raja.
- Two Param Vir Chakars, the highest Indian gallantry awards were given to Indian Officers. One to Major Hoshier Singh Cheema of 3 Grenaders (a hardy Sikh Jat from Sisana in Hissar Distt.) and the other posthumously to a Poona Horse subaltren.
- Interestingly, Major Qasim (a Muslim officer from Daska) also fought in this action, from the opposing side, since soldiers have to fight.



APPENDIX-VIII

DEFENSE NEEDS - ECONOMISE

EXPENDITURE

EXTRACTS FROM A PAPER WRITTEN BY COL®  
IMTIAZ-UL-HAQUE(AUTHOR) AND SENT TO G.H.Q.  
FOR CONSIDERATION, 1N 1999. (WAR ON TERROR  
HAD NOT STARTED YET).

1. It is extremely difficult for Pakistan to maintain a huge standing army, therefore, big military expenditures have to be curtailed to manageable levels, so that the country can develop and the civil society, and the tax payers get their just and due share in political, social and economic development, particularly when Pakistan has taken shelter under the Nuclear Umbrella.
2. This capability in itself is enough of a "Deterrent" for India and Pakistan not to indulge in Military Adventurism or an all out conventional war. This is the latest reality on the Military front in our geo-political region.
3. We should not blindly follow the pattern of Indian Budget. They are bent upon to make Indian people poorer and poorer. We are smaller in size by nearly 7 times but have to maintain Defense Forces' size about half of

theirs. Indians allocate huge amount for defense. Their allocations are un-realistic.

4. Now that the big powers have realized and hopefully would try to resolve the core issue of Kashmir. We should try to reduce military expenditures but at the same time making the Defense Forces a "real potent force" which can deliver the "Real Punch" when required. Air Marshall (Retd) Noor Khan some years back analyzed and suggested a 20-25 per cent cut in Pakistan's Military strength. As a war veteran soldier, I totally go along with him since Military liberation of Occupied Kashmir may be ruled out in the present scenario. There was a time for this option, which we did not capitalize i.e. in 1949, 1962 and 1965 when the Indian Forces were weaker and not properly re-organized.
5. Ours, is purely for self defense oriented requirement. Problem of Kashmir will be solved "Inshallah" but differently. Diplomacy should be at its best. The principle of austerity and correct utilization of defense budget allocation is equally applicable for defense force 'managers and high-ups'. All non-professional activity in the armed forces must stop and finances thus saved be utilized to



modernize them. "FIRE POWER BE INCREASED AND MANPOWER REDUCED".

6. A detailed and realistic analysis and assessment by the three forces will establish the exact requirement. Every activity and requirement must be "priced" and allocation asked for accordingly.
7. Though method of warfare has changed to some extent particularly displayed in the Gulf War of 1990, recent Afghan War, war on Iraq by United States and its allies and Israeli attacks on Palestine and Lebanon. Air power has been used mostly to soften up the targets and reduce the resistance as far as possible, before the "Ground Forces" actually go, mop-up, and clear the remaining/left over pockets of resistance and hold the ground. Hence the importance of "Ground Forces, which cannot be under estimated and has not been reduced. In fact the Ground Forces should be equipped with better and lethal firepower with all modern and sophisticated gadgetry and weapons in order to cause maximum damage to the enemy. One can argue that the size of our infantry division may be reduced less formations operating in mountains (which is

- too big as compared to the modern armies) but the firepower must be increased substantially.
8. As stated earlier, the "Gulf War" has amply demonstrated the importance of Air Power", in all future wars with India, Air Power is going to play very important role, except in mountains of Kashmir where unconventional warfare will have more chances of success, as happened in Vietnam, Korea, and Afghanistan.
  9. We should try to get our up-dated F-16s from USA and modernize our combat aircrafts. We should also get more 'Mirages' and Migs' by improving our relations with France and Russia or get more combat aircrafts from other countries including China.
  10. There is a dire need for a "Formidable and Integrated Air Defense System". Due to resource constraints, the best answer is to have a very effective and integrated air defense system of Army, Air Force, and Navy. We must have most modern AntiTank, Anti-Air Craft and Anti Missile Weapons Systems Integrated and Coordinated within three forces. AWACs and other most modern Early Warning Systems be acquired.
  11. Last but not the least, Pakistan Navy be made most modern, with latest sub-marines, frigates



and if possible, we should have air craft carriers, so the jets can take off and land, in order to counter the Indian Navy threat perception and do the needful.

At the end I would say that our foreign policy should be realistic and pragmatic. We must try to develop good relation with all countries of the 'Region', including Russia. If we had good friendly relations with USSR (now Russia), perhaps Afghanistan would not have been invaded.

(Please note: War on terror had not started when this paper was written).

#### The Character of the Army

"What a society gets in its armed services is exactly what it asks for, no more no less. What it asks for tends to be a reflection of what it is. When a country looks at its armed forces it is looking in a mirror. If a mirror is a true one, the face that it sees will be its own."

General Sir John Winthrop Hackett

**APPENDIX-IX**

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