

## **Gallantry of Sikh Troops Indo-Pak War of Dec 1971 Recalled**

***EXCERPTS FROM CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP BY MAJ. GEN. MUKESH KHAN, EX OF PAK ARMY***

THE MAJOR REASON FOR OUR defeat are Sikhs. We are simply unable to do anything before them despite our best efforts. They are very daring people and are fond of martyrdom. They fight courageously and are capable of defeating an army much bigger than them.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1971 we fiercely and vigorously attacked the Indian army with infantry brigade near Hussainwala border. This brigade included Pakistan army's Punjab regiment together with the Baloch regiment. Within minutes we pushed the Indian army quite far back. Their defense posts fell under our control. The Indian army was retreating back very fast and the Pakistani army was going forward with great speed.

Our army reached near Kausre-Hind post (Kasure). There was small segment of Indian army appointed to defend that post and their soldiers belonged to the Sikh regiment. A few number of the Sikh regiment stopped our way forward like an iron wall. They greeted us with the ovation (slogan) of 'Bole-so-Nihal' and attacked us like bloodthirsty hungry lions and hawks. All these soldiers were Sikhs. There was even a dreadful hand-to-hand battle. The sky filled with roars of "Yaa Ali and Sat Sri Akal". Even in this hand-to-hand fighting the Sikhs fought so bravely that our desires, aspirations and dreams were shattered.

In this war Lt. Col. Gulab Hussain was killed. With him Maj. Mohammed Zaeef and Capt. Arif Alim also died. It was difficult to count the number of soldiers who got killed. We were astonished to see the courage of those handful of Sikh soldiers. When we seized the possession of the three-storey defense post of concrete, the Sikh soldiers went onto the roof and kept on persistently opposing us. The whole night they kept on showering fires on us and continued shouting the loud ovation of 'Sat Sri Akal.' These Sikh soldiers kept on the encounter till next day. Next day the Pakistani tanks surrounded this post and bombarded it with guns. Those, handful of Sikhs got martyred in this encounter while resisting us, but other Sikh soldiers then destroyed our tanks with the help of their artillery. Fighting with great bravery they kept on marching forward and thus our army lost its foothold.

Alas! A handful of Sikhs converted our great victory into a big defeat and shattered our confidence and courage. The same thing happened with us in Dhaka, Bangladesh. In the battle of Jassur, the Singhs opposed the Pakistan army so fiercely that our backbone and our foothold were lost. This became the main important reason of our defeat; and Sikhs' strength, safety and honour of the country, became the sole cause of their victory.

***[Courtesy: Sr. G P Singh (Hemkunt Press)]***

