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MINISTRY OF  
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### LIEUTENANT COLONEL ARDESHIR BURZORJI TARAPORE

<b>SERVICE NUMBER</b>	IC-5565
<b>RANK</b>	Lieutenant Colonel
<b>NAME</b>	Ardeshir Burzorji Tarapore
<b>SON OF</b>	Burjorji Tarapore
<b>RESIDENT OF (Village/District/State)/ DOMICILE</b>	Poona, Maharashtra
<b>UNIT/REGIMENT/CORPS</b>	Poona Horse (17 HORSE)
<b>SERVICE</b>	Indian Army
<b>DATE OF ENROLMENT/ COMMISSION</b>	
<b>AWARD/DATE OF ACTION</b>	Param Vir Chakra (Posthumous)/ 11 September 1965
<b>WAR/BATTLE/OPERATION</b>	1965 Indo Pak War
<b>OTHER AWARDS WITH DATE</b>	



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Lieutenant Colonel Ardeshir Burzoji Tarapore fondly remembered as Adi, was born on 18 August 1923 in Bombay to Burzoji Tarapore and Nergish. His ancestor Ratanjiba worked as a military leader under Shivaji<sup>1</sup>. At the age of seven, Ardeshir Tarapore was enrolled in Sardar Dastur Boys School Poona. He distinguished himself in athletics, gymnastics, boxing, swimming, tennis and cricket. After leaving school, Ardeshir Tarapore was commissioned on 01 January 1942 in the 7 Hyderabad Infantry. He set his heart on joining the armoured regiment of the Hyderabad State Forces. This dream of his came true when Major General El-Edroos, the Chief-in-Command of the State Forces witnessed Tarapore's brave act of jumping into a bay, picking up the grenade and throwing it away to safety. He was transferred to the 1 Hyderabad Imperial Service Lancers. Later, after the merger of Hyderabad with the Union of India, his date of commission was revised to 01 January 1945 and was posted in Poona Horse.

POONA HORSE is an armoured regiment of the Indian Army. It was raised on 15 July 1817, as a result of the Treaty of Poona, concluded on 13 June 1817 between Lord Hasting and Baji Rao II, the Peshwa. The Honourable Montstuart Elphinstone, who later became the Governor of Bombay negotiated the Treaty of Poona. It was formed from the 3rd Regiment of Bombay Light Cavalry, raised at Sirur on 04 May 1820 by Major Peter Delamotte. The Cavalry element of this Force, which was known as the Poona Auxilliary Horse was later designated as (Prince Albert Victor's Own) Poona Horse. It was amalgamated in 1921 as The Poona Horse (17 Queen Victoria's Own). In the First World War, the POONA HORSE fought in France, Palestine and Mesopotamia. During the Second War, the regiment was part of the British Eight Army. Post-Independence, the regiment was part of Op POLO in Hyderabad in 1948, India-Pakistan War of 1965 as part of 1 Armoured Division and 1971 as part of 16 (Independent) Armoured Brigade. The regiment was equipped with Centurions tanks in both these wars and fought in the Shakargarh Bulge. During the 1965 India-Pakistan War, POONA HORSE had was displayed immense skill in the Sialkot Sector during the tank battle at Phillora, Wazirwali and Butur- Dograndi, and was awarded the Param Vir Chakra. In the 1971 War the regiment fought at Basantar and Second Lieutenant Arun Kheterpal won the Param Vir Chakra and the Commandant Lieutenant Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Hanut Singh was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra. The Battle of Basantar is considered one of the fiercest tank battles in Indian military history and the unprecedented bravery showed by POONA HORSE earned praise from Pakistan army and the title 'Fakhr-e-Hind'.

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<sup>1</sup> Fakhr-E-Hind: The Story of Poona Horse. Lt Gen. Hanut Singh, PVSM, MVC (Retd) (1993). Agrim Publishers, Dehradun.



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The Indo-Pak war of 1965 was the second war fought between these the two bordering countries. While India was still recovering from the damages of Sino-India war of 1962, Pakistan saw it as an opportunity to acquire Jammu and Kashmir with might, presuming India to be weak in terms of defence preparation. The war was initiated on 24 April 1965, when Pakistan Army, attacked our territory in the Rann of Kutch and penetrated six to eight miles inside the Indian territory. This act of illegal occupation of Indian territory constituted violation of Indo-Pak Border Agreement 1960 and international law as per the United Nations Charter. The Pakistani forces subsequently intruded in Kashmir with the launch of Operation Gibraltar.

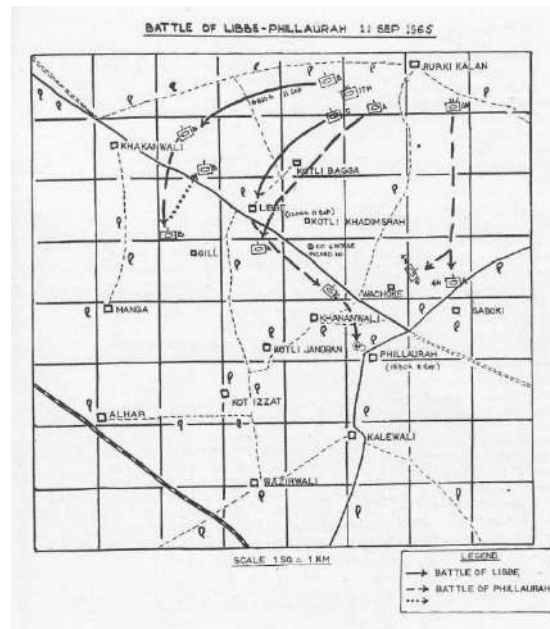
POONA HORSE had returned from collective training in April 1965. On 24 April when the regiment was celebrating the end of a successful training session the order for mobilisation was received. 1 CORPS was responsible to carry out offensives at Sialkot-Shakargarh Sector. 1 CORPS was tasked to secure area Pagowal, Phillora, Chawinda and the Tharoh Cross Roads with a view to securing Marala-Ravi Link Canal (MRLC). POONA HORSE was part of 1 Armoured Division which was commanded by Major General Rajinder Singh Sparrow, MVC. The regiment was commanded by of Lieutenant Colonel AB Tarapore. POONA HORSE was ordered to secure the Tharoh Cross Roads in Phillora by 08 September 1965. The initial attack at Phillora was met with intense enemy firing. The regiment's offensive started with a bang, with a shot fired from Major Narinjan Cheema's tank on the Pakistani post of Kadral<sup>2</sup>. After an intense fight the battle at Phillora was won.

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<sup>2</sup> Fakhr-E-Hind: The Story of Poona Horse. Lt Gen. Hanut Singh, PVSM, MVC (Retd) (1993). Agrim Publishers, Dehradun.



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*Sketch showing Operational Plan of POONA HORSE during Battle of Phillora*

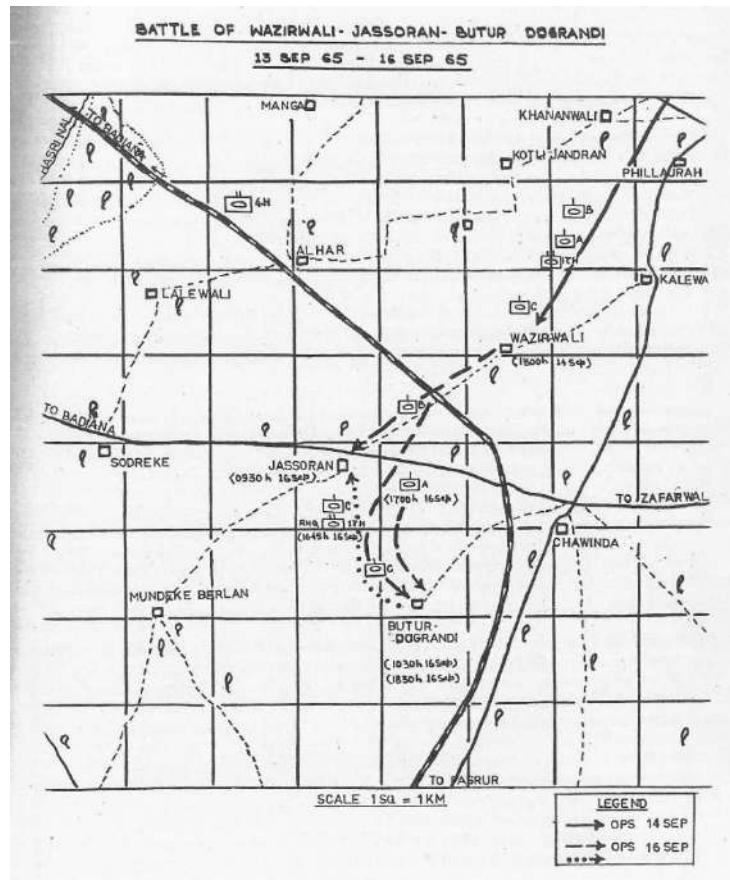
Source: Fakhr-E-Hind: The Story of Poona Horse by Lt Gen Hanut Singh, PVSM, MVC (Retd)

The next phase of the operation moved towards Chawinda. The POONA HORSE was tasked to isolate Chawinda from the North by establishing a pivot at Wazirwali, to destroy Pakistani armour. The regiment commenced its advance at 1200 hr after the execution of the first phase was successfully done by 4 HORSE and 16 CAVALRY. Chawinda was a prominent place from where the enemy artillery observation posts brought down very heavy and accurate shelling. The next phase was to capture Jassoran and Butur Dograndi. The POONA HORSE with 8 GARHWAL and B Company 9 DOGRA were assigned this task. Lieutenant Colonel Tarapore requested the Brigade Commander 1 Armoured Brigade Brigadier (later Lieutenant General) KK Singh for permission to move A Squadron out of Wazirwali to reinforce C Squadron in Butur Dograndi. It was here that Lieutenant Colonel Tarapore passed his famous transmission to his Adjutant, “Hello 25, let us go and join them”<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Fakhr-E-Hind: The Story of Poona Horse. Lt Gen. Hanut Singh, PVSM, MVC (Retd) (1993). Agrim Publishers, Dehradun.



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*Sketch showing Operation Plan of POONA HORSE during Battle of Wazirwali-Jassoran-Butur Dograndi*

Source: Fakhr-E-Hind: The Story of Poona Horse by Lt Gen Hanut Singh, PVSM, MVC (Retd)

At the Battle of Chawinda on 11 September 1965, POONA HORSE launched an attack on Phillora in the Sialkot area. Lieutenant Colonel Tarapore led the southern thrust of the offensive, which advanced on the right flank. The offensive was met with a massive armour charge from Wazirwali by the Pakistani Army between Phillora and Chawinda. Under constant enemy tank and artillery fire, Lieutenant Colonel Tarapore held his ground and gallantly attacked Phillora. He refused to be removed after being injured. On 14 September 1965, he led his unit to the capture of Wazirwali, followed by Jassoran and Butur-Dograndi on 16 September 1965. Despite being hit multiple times, he kept his pivots in both locations, assisting the supporting infantry attacking Chawinda. Inspired by his command, the unit attacked the enemy armour, destroying around sixty Pakistani Army tanks while sustaining only nine tank fatalities. Lt Col Tarapore's tank, on the other hand, was hit and engulfed in flames, and he died a hero's death.



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Lieutenant Colonel A.B. Tarapore's heroism during the six-day epic action was in keeping with the greatest traditions of the Indian Army. He was cremated on 17 September 1965 in Jassoran in accordance with his desires. His ashes were taken to Poona and later immersed in the Sangram on 29 November 1965<sup>4</sup>. He led with exemplary leadership and immense skill and laid down his life in the highest tradition of the Indian Army and was awarded Param Vir Chakra posthumously.

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<sup>4</sup> Fakhr-E-Hind: The Story of Poona Horse. Lt Gen. Hanut Singh, PVSM, MVC (Retd) (1993). Agrim Publishers, Dehradun.



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## CITATION

Lieutenant Colonel Ardeshir Burzaji Tarapore (IC-5565), Poona Horse, (Posthumous)  
(Effective date of the Award: 11th September, 1965)

On 11 September 1965, the Poona Horse Regiment under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Ardeshir Burzarji Tarapore was assigned the task of delivering the main armored thrust for capturing Phillora in the Sialkot Sector in Pakistan. As a preliminary to making a surprise attack on Phillora from the rear, the regiment was thrusting between Phillora and Chawinda when it was suddenly counter-attacked by the enemy's heavy Armour from Wazirwali. Lieutenant Colonel A. B. Tarapore who was then at the head of his regiment defied the enemy's charge, held his ground and gallantly attacked Phillora with one of his squadrons supported by an infantry battalion. Though under the continuous enemy tank and artillery fire, Lieutenant Colonel A B Tarapore remained unperturbed throughout this action and when wounded refused to be evacuated. Inspired by his leadership, the regiment fiercely attacked the enemy heavy armor destroying approximately 60 enemy tanks at a cost of only 9 tank casualties, and when Lieutenant Colonel A. B Tarapore was mortally wounded the regiment continues to defy the enemy.

On 11 September 1965, the 17 Horse regiment launched an attack on Phillora in the Sialkot sector at the Battle of Chawinda. The southern thrust of the attack, commanded by Lt. Col. Tarapore advanced on the right flank. Between Phillora and Chawinda, the attack met with the Pakistani Army's heavy armour charge from Wazirwali. Lt. Col. Tarapore held his ground and gallantly attacked Phillora under the continuous enemy tank and artillery fire. When wounded, he refused to be evacuated. He led his regiment to capture Wazirwali on 14 September, and Jassoran and Butur-Dograndi on 16 September 1965. Though his own tank was hit several times, he maintained his pivots at both these places and thereby helped the supporting infantry attacking Chawinda. Inspired by his leadership, the regiment fiercely attacked the enemy armor and destroyed approximately sixty Pakistani Army tanks, suffering only nine tank casualties. However, Lt Col Tarapore's tank was hit and was enveloped in flames and he died a hero's death. The valor displayed by Lt Col A.B. Tarapore in this heroic action, which lasted six days, was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Indian Army.

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Reference: Gazette of India, Notification No. \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_





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3. Fakhr-E-Hind: The Story of Poona Horse. Lt Gen. Hanut Singh, PVSM, MVC (Retd) (1993). Agrim Publishers, Dehradun.
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5. Param Vir: Our Heroes in Battle. Maj Gen Ian Cardozo. (2003). The Lotus Collection, Roli Books Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, India.

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10. Legend of Col Tarapore, the Man who took down 69 enemy tanks almost single-handedly (scoopwhoop.com) (Accessed on 16 September 2022)  
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## VIDEOS

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2. Param Vir Chakra- Lt Col Ardeshir Burzorji Tarapore (Aaj Tak) (Youtube) (Accessed on 16 September 2022)  
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<https://youtu.be/EpD2mF1lb54>
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## MEMORIALS

A bust of Lieutenant Colonel Tarapore has been installed in the National War Memorial, New Delhi within the Param Yodha Sthal.



## OTHER INTERESTING RESOURCES<sup>6</sup> BOOKS

Fig 1: Param Vir by Major General Ian Cardozo

Fig 2: The Brave: Param Vir Chakra by Rachna Bisht Rawat

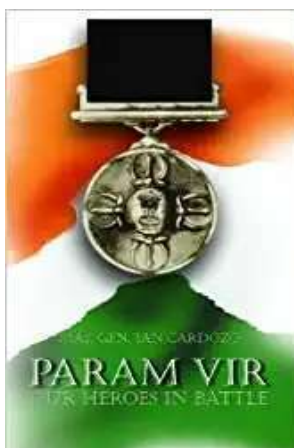


Fig 1

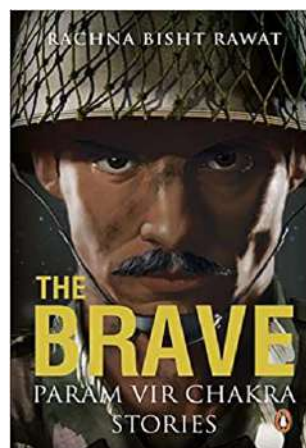


Fig 2

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## COMICS

Fig 1: Lt Col Tarapore by Major Rajpal Singh

Fig 2: Lt Col AB Tarapore Param Vir Chakra (Aditya Horizons)

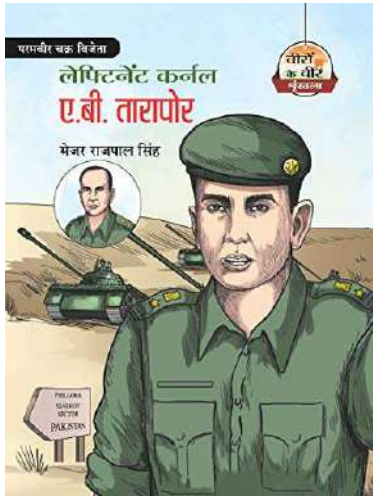


Fig 1



Fig 2

A housing complex named Tarapore Enclave in Vasant Kunj is named after the Lieutenant Colonel Tarapore

