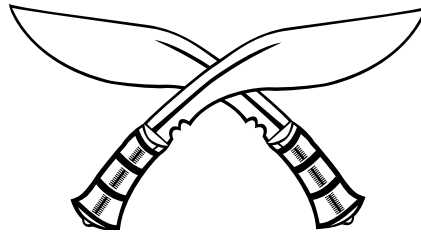


THE JOURNAL OF THE BRIGADE OF GURKHAS



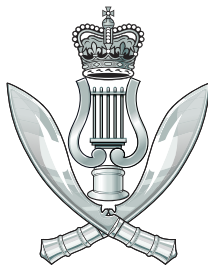
THE KUKRI

2019

Number 70, August 2020

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Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas
Robertson House
Camberley, Surrey
GU15 4NP



Front Cover: Queen's Gurkha Orderly Officers

Captain Dillikumar Rai MVO RGR and Captain Kamal Khapung Limbu MVO QGE

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EDITORIAL

By Gurkha Brigade Association Secretary Major Manikumar Rai MBE

The “4 Pillars” continues to thrive and grow and has become the envy of the British Army, and other institutions, who seek to replicate our “joined up” approach to soldiering.

The Gurkha Museum, guardian of “The Gurkha Heritage” is an institution that other Museum seeks to emulate with its strong links with the other 3 Pillars. It is widely used by Recruits, Service Personnel (SP) and their families, Nepali organisation and members of the public. It is an essential part of the “Gurkha Brand”.

Our service personnel, units and sub-units continue to deploy on operations, Training Teams and United Nation tasks around the world, demonstrating our flexibility and ability to switch from operations, to peace keeping and to anti-poaching roles. These roles demonstrate our flexibility. At home we look after our SP and families by building Mandirs for worship, Messing Areas for relaxation and radio masts to listen to the BFBS (Nepali) service, enabling SP to keep in touch with Nepal and other units. Parbate is now a flourishing publication covering the whole spectrum of activities across the Brigade. Electronically, the GBA website Facebook and Twitter have a large following and it continues to grow thanks to Mick Latter’s hard work and unit contributions.

The Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT) celebrated 50 years of providing welfare and medical support to our veterans in 2019. The GWT has come a long way since its inception in 1969. The tireless efforts of the GWT staff has produced some remarkable achievements; improving the lives of our veterans and their widows. The work continues to make improvements in order to provide efficient and effective service for our veterans.

No other British Army Regiment, or organisation, looks after their people from recruitment, through their army career and on retirement. Long may this tradition continue.

The Brigade of Gurkhas (BG)

The Brigade continues to build on its worldwide reputation. The primary focus of work overseas has been Defence Engagement activities; training and mentoring other Armies to improve their military capability. The reputation of Gurkhas’ professional excellence continues to be enhanced by our officers and NCOs who conduct these activities.

The recruiting tempo has increased, with 400 new recruits selected in 2019, with the aim of raising the Brigade of Gurkhas strength from 3,523 to 4,200 by 2026. 3 RGR has now been formed and work continues to populate the posts in its establishment. QGE is to



grow 2 additional squadrons, and the NATO Allied rapid Reaction Corp Support Battalion (ARRC Sp Bn) will be nearly 100% Gurkha.

The Gurkha Museum

The Gurkha Museum continues to fully engage with the other Three Pillars as well as the public in UK and abroad. They are expanding their educational outreach opportunities both locally and nationally and developing stronger links and partnerships with other museums, organisations and agencies. This year they have consolidated their position in the provision of “Gurkha Heritage” to the serving Brigade, wider Army and the public.

The Museum is finalising plans to make provision for a dedicated fundraising capability. This will enable the Museum to achieve routine fundraising potential from 2020 and at the appropriate time, capital fundraising capability. It is an exciting time for the Museum with new staff, new Trustees, new initiatives and new plans.

The Museum is well on the way to achieving its long-term aim of being an independent and sustainable Museum. It needs our support to develop further to safeguard its future and the Gurkha Heritage.

The Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT)

2019 marked fifty years of The Gurkha Welfare Trust in Nepal. Thanks to the incredible and continued support of the British public, thousands of Gurkha veterans and their families now receive a guaranteed monthly income, have a roof over their head, have medical assistance and live in communities who have vital access to clean water and education.

The GWT currently pays Welfare Pension to just over 4,300 Gurkha veterans and widows and all the 21 medical clinics are fully operational providing state of the art medical care. Work continues rebuilding 100+ new earthquake-resilient houses and, in partnership with DFID, building and repairing 110 water schemes to bring clean water directly to the doorsteps of almost 41,000 people.

In the UK the tireless fundraising effort continues to generate revenue to meet the increasing need of its services in Nepal. Your help, however small, is always welcome and appreciated.

The Gurkha Brigade Association (GBA)

The engagement between the GBA and the Regimental Associations, HQBG, Gurkha Museum and GWT has ensured that our traditions and heritage continue to be maintained and enhanced. The affiliation of RGR Companies to Regimental Associations will allow SP to meet those who have made the Brigade of Gurkhas what it is today.

With the number of members in the Indian Army Gorkhas Association dwindling, the GBA is playing a much larger role in keeping them in touch with the Gurkha Brigade and Gurkha SP and veterans. The 2 Gurkha Welfare Advice Centres (GWAC) continue to do sterling work. Capt Manhendra Limbu (Brigade Welfare Officer) was recognised for his hard work and dedication by being awarded the MBE. They remain committed to providing guidance and assistance to veterans arriving in UK.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all those who contributed articles. It is always difficult to decide what to include when there are so many things going on going practically every week. I extend a particular thanks to Colonel David Iveson late GTR for his invaluable support in proofreading the Kukri articles and Mrs Becky Key, Creative Media Design, at the Directorate of Engagement and Communications for her design work. Thank you both.

ANNUAL REPORT 2019 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF NEPAL

By Lieutenant General NAW Pope CBE
Colonel Commandant The Brigade of Gurkhas

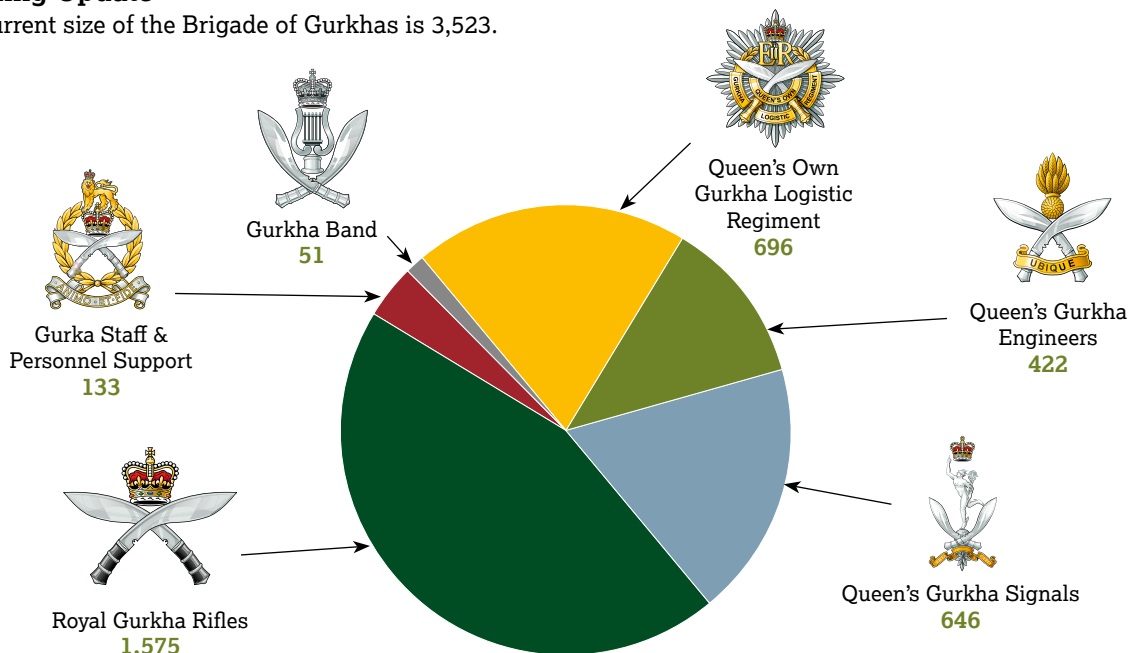
Honourable President,

It is my privilege to present to you my fourth annual report on the Brigade of Gurkhas as Colonel Commandant Brigade of Gurkhas. These reports have been presented to the government of Nepal since the 1950s. I am very pleased to be able to state that all members have represented the Brigade with great distinction and continue to maintain the good name and reputation of the Gurkha soldier. They have served most professionally on operations and training teams around the world as well as training and other tasks in the United Kingdom, Brunei and Nepal. In doing so they serve as excellent ambassadors for Nepal, remain true to their homeland and continue to practise the religions and customs of their forefathers. Such is their quality that the Brigade of Gurkhas is set for further expansion. This will provide even more opportunity for broader skillsets, diversity of employment and extended careers.

I am also delighted to report that the relations between the British Army and the Nepal Army remain as strong as ever. The British Army has and will continue to provide training support to the Nepal Army to meet their needs and I was delighted to note that the training provided to the Nepal Army Cambrian Patrol Team this year from the Brigade of Gurkhas assisted them in achieving a Gold Medal. In addition we were most honoured to be able to host The Right Honourable Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli as part of his official visit here in the summer and understand we may be able to welcome you to the United Kingdom in 2020.

Manning Update

The current size of the Brigade of Gurkhas is 3,523.



1 Royal Gurkha Rifles on a Training Exercise



Prime Minister Oli meeting members of the Honour Guard during his visit

In 2019 we selected 400 new recruits to join the Brigade; they have now completed their initial training and have joined their selected units. Gurkha soldiers continue to make an exemplary contribution to the British Army, as they have done for the past 204 years. It is because of this exemplary service and their unique skills that the Gurkhas have been selected to deliver further growth in the Brigade and British Army.

We will be increasing the number of Gurkha soldiers in our existing Gurkha units; the Queen's Gurkha Signals will increase by two further Squadrons; the Queen's Gurkha Engineers will also grow an additional two Squadrons and the UK led NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps Support Battalion will be nearly 100% Gurkha.

The re-establishment of The 3rd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles is well underway and will be an additional specialist infantry Battalion.

This will see Gurkha employment in the British Army rise from 3523 personnel to c.4200 personnel by 2026. To achieve this, we will maintain our increase in Gurkha recruiting numbers at around 430 whilst the growth is achieved. This growth in the size of the Brigade will offer more career and promotion opportunities for Gurkha soldiers and increase the chances for individuals to serve a full 22-year Army career within the Brigade. Once the initial growth has been met, it is anticipated that recruiting numbers will reduce to c.250 annually.

Operational Activity - Worldwide Operations

2019 saw a number of Gurkha deployments on operations. 1RGR successfully concluded an operational tour in in Kabul, Afghanistan. Other Gurkha units deployed sub-units and Training Teams around the world to support other armies and UN operations.



1 RGR in Kabul, Afghanistan on Operation TORAL



Queen's Gurkha Engineers on Op CABRIT in Estonia



1 RGR arriving in Bosnia for a European Union Operational Deployment



2 RGR on exercise in Australia

Military and Sporting Activities



2019 Army Badminton Champions, Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment



More than half of the British Army's top 100 shooters serve in the Brigade of Gurkhas, including the Queen's Medal for the best shot



Cambrian Patrol Gold Medal success across the Brigade



The Brigade of Gurkhas were again invited to enter a team into the UK Asian Football Championships

Recruiting

This year we invited 400 young men to join the British Army - an increase from the previous few years designed to assist with the planned growth of the Brigade. To comply with UK Employment Law we introduced a range of new tests, whilst maintaining the traditional ones such as the iconic Doko Race designed to test character.



Potential recruits doing heaves



Written Tests



A test of character - the "Doko" race



CGS talking to new Recruits and their families



New Recruits on parade

Recruit Training

On arrival in the UK, recruits attended the 39-week Combat Infantryman's Course in North Yorkshire allowing them to learn basic soldiering and make the transition from Nepali youth to Gurkha soldier. Additional English Language teaching and cultural training are included to assist the young Nepali men assimilate into the Western world and British Army. The close bonds formed during these weeks will stay with the recruits throughout their entire lives, no matter where they serve.



Preparing a defensive position



Tactical training



Cultural visit to the Gurkha Statue, in Whitehall, London



Running to raise money for charity

During the training the recruits apply to their preferred Gurkha units and a cap badging ceremony takes place. Religious Leaders are present to support their religious and cultural needs. On completion of the training there is a large Pass Out Parade and those going to non-Infantry units proceed to the next stage of their training.



Adventurous training - canoeing



Fitness training



Capbadge ceremony



Urban warfare training



Recruit Passing Out Parade

UNIT ACTIVITIES

1st Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles (1RGR)

1 RGR had a successful year with a return from operations in Afghanistan in the spring which was followed almost immediately by training for the assumption of the UK's High Readiness Battalion, leading the Air Manoeuvre Battle Group. In the summer HRH The Prince of Wales visited the Battalion to award their operational service medals and, as Colonel in Chief, mark the regiment's 25th anniversary. The autumn saw part of the battalion deploy to Bosnia on Exercise Quick Response - part of the European Union Force operations in the region.



1RGR travelled to Jordan for Exercise OLIVE GROVE



HRH The Prince of Wales at the 1 RGR Operational Medals Parade and 25th Birthday celebrations

Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles (2RGR)

2 RGR have maintained the tempo in Brunei with courses and exercises, including a prolonged deployment to Australia on Ex PACIFIC KUKRI and taskings in Africa and Thailand. They have also hosted a range of high-profile visitors including the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff and are currently beginning preparation for the Unit Move which will take place in 2020. They marked the 25th anniversary of the Royal Gurkha Rifles with a Parade and Dinner at which the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas were able to provide support.



25th Anniversary Parade



Vice Chief of the Defence Staff visits Brunei

The Queen's Gurkha Engineers (QGE)

QGE have spent the year in two distinct roles. The first several months saw them deployed on Public Duties, guarding Her Majesty The Queen in London and Windsor, as well as being on duty at the Tower of London. The second half of the year saw in particular 69 Gurkha Field Squadron in training as they prepared to deploy on the final tour of South Sudan as part of the UN mission. In addition, soldiers deployed as part of the NATO response in Estonia, Operation CABRIT, and to the Falkland Islands where, in addition to carrying out large engineering projects, they also built 3 Memorials to Gurkha Soldiers who took part in the Falklands Conflict in 1982.



Fit for Role Inspection prior to the start of Public Duties

The Queen's Gurkha Signals (QGS)

Queen's Gurkha Signals had a typically busy year including running the annual Gurkha Welfare Trust Fundraising event - Exercise TRAILWALKER, which was as usual hugely well supported by the general public. In their 70th year a particular bonus was to win the title of Trailwalker Champions.

In addition, as part of Brigade of Gurkhas growth, 249 Gurkha Signal Squadron was reformed in the presence of HRH The Princess Royal.



Signaller Ashish Ghale won a Gold Medal in Poomsae and Silver in Sparring at the Tri Service Taekwondo Championships



HRH The Princess Royal at the reformation parade of 249 Gurkha Signal Squadron

Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment (QOGLR)

2019 saw Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment expand their footprint outside 10 QOGLR and take over 60 Close Support Squadron in 4 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps near Oxford, instantly deploying in support of NATO on Operation CABRIT in Estonia. Following their return there was a chance to mark their formation with a Parade in the presence of the Colonel Commandant. Meanwhile the bulk of the Corps deployed first on Public Duties in London and then onto Salisbury Plain as 10 QOGLR carried out a Regimental level test exercise. They also managed to fit in a short trip to Germany - 500 miles by road in 3 days and the first time many of the soldiers had driven in Europe.



Formation Parade for 60 Close Support Squadron

Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support (GSPS)

GSPS have continued to excel in their roles throughout the Army. They have deployed throughout the world both on operations and exercises, and in addition managed to conduct adventure training throughout Europe and Asia. This year 1RGR GSPS team successfully defended their position as Triple Crown Champions – the corps military skills competition.



Triple Crown Champions

Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas

The Band spent much of the first half of the year supporting Queen's Gurkha Engineers and Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment on their Public Duties. In addition, they visited the Falkland Islands. The Band also supported the rest of the Brigade in parades and events throughout the year and carried out several successful fund-raising evenings in support of the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

In November they led the National Act of Remembrance on Armistice Day from the National Memorial Arboretum. They also undertook tours to Germany, where they marked the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Minden Bridge, and Brunei where they were on duty for the RGR 25th Anniversary Parade. As part of the overall growth over the next few years their numbers will increase by almost 25% and this saw 6 recruits join them in November following initial training.

Honours & Awards



Colonel James Robinson was awarded a CBE by Her Majesty in his final year of service

Support to Nepal 2019



The victorious Cambrian Patrol Team with their Gold Medals

Regimental Association Nepal (RAN)



Gurkha Brigade Association Secretary's visit to the RAN in 2019



Celebrating Holi in Afghanistan



Her Majesty The Queen inspects The Queen's Truncheon to mark 25 years of the Royal Gurkha



The first Memorial to the Brigade of Gurkhas in the Falkland Islands was unveiled in the spring

The Gurkha Welfare Trust

50 Years of the Gurkha Welfare Trust

This year (2019) marks fifty years of The Gurkha Welfare Trust in Nepal. To mark our 50th anniversary we have been encouraging our supporters to 'keep the legend of the Gurkhas alive' by asking them the very simple question - what makes the Gurkhas special to you? Hundreds of our supporters have left stories and photos on our microsite, which can be read at: www.gwt.org.uk/50

Our Year in stats:

Supporting Impoverished Gurkhas

Last year our Pensioner Support Teams conducted just over 7,000 separate visits to Gurkha veterans and their families.

Welfare Pension

This year over 4,500 Gurkha veterans and widows, with an average age of 80 years-old, received a pension worth 11,000 Nepali Rupees per month.

Medical Aid

The team treated over 70,000 medical cases this year.

Residential Homes

This year our two Residential Homes housed 48 residents.

Clean Water And Sanitation

This year our Rural Water and Sanitation Team worked on over 90 new projects which installed over 5,500 separate taps. The final products benefit over 30,000 people.

Staff List as at 31 December 2019

HQBG STAFF

Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas	Colonel J Davies MBE
Chief of Staff	Major A Blackmore RGR
Deputy Chief of Staff	Major Jit Hamal GSPS
SO2 Personnel/Policy	Major Dammarbahadur Shahi RGR
OC BCLT	Major Bijayant Sherchan MBE GSPS
Brigade Secretary	Major (Retd) Manikumar Rai MBE
RGR Regimental Secretary	Major (Retd) B McKay MBE
Executive Staff	Mr G Trafford Smith
Brigade Welfare Officer	Captain (Retd) Mahendra Limbu MBE
Communications Officer	Mr M Latter
QGOO/SO3 Plans	Captain Sanjip Rai RGR
QGOO	Capt Deny Gurung QOGLR
BG Adjutant	Captain W Louw RGR
Finance Officer	Ms A Lopez
Asst Brigade Welfare Officer	Hon Lieutenant (Retd) Tulbahadur Gurung
Superintendent Clerk	WO2 Ram Thapa GSPS
Manning Clerk	Staff Sergeant Ishwor Sunuwar GSPS
Administration Clerk	Corporal Vivek Gharti GSPS
Communications Clerk	Corporal Shekar Gurung QGS
Welfare NCO	Lance Corporal Jeevan Thapa QOGLR
GWAC Welfare Clerk	Mr Bhanu Jabegu

2019 HQBG REVIEW OF THE YEAR

2019 has been an extremely busy and productive year for the Headquarters. It started with celebrations as the New Year Honours List bought a KCB for Lieutenant General Sir Nick Pope (Colonel Commandant) and CBE for Colonel James Robinson (Colonel BG). WO2 Hemanta Gurung GSPS (Superintendent Clerk HQBG) received Commander Regional Command's Commendation in recognition for his hard work and dedication.

Personnel

This year saw a major change in the HQBG hierarchy as we said farewell to Colonel James Robinson, Major Shane Burton RGR (COS), Major Narendra Gurung GSPS (DCOS) and WO2 Ram Thapa GSPS (on promotion to Captain). There were also changes to our junior ranks with Corporal Puspa Gurung (Communications Clerk) and Lance Corporal Suraj Limbu (Welfare NCO) being posted out. The summer leave period saw us say goodbye to Captains Kiran Pun RGR and Kamal Khapung QGE who completed their year tour as Queen's Gurkha Orderly Officers and welcome, as their replacements, Captain Giri Rai Pun RGR and Capt Deny Gurung QOGLR.

We welcomed Colonel Jody Davies MBE, Major Andy Blackmore RGR, Major Jit Hamal GSPS and WO2 Hemanta Gurung GSPS, as Colonel BG, COS, DCOS and Superintendent Clerk respectively.

Visits

We were delighted to host a number of VIPs in 2019 including the Prime Minister of Nepal (The Rt Hon KP Sharma Oli). This was the first time a Prime Minister of Nepal had visited the UK for 20 years.



The Rt Hon KP Sharma Oli signing the HQBG Visitor's Book

Her Excellency Rooslina Weti Pg Kamaluddin, High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam to the United Kingdom and The British Ambassador to Nepal, Ms Nicola Pollitt, also visited HQBG to learn more about the Brigade and its role in the British Army. Ms Pollitt

will spend her first few weeks in Nepal attending the Brigade Culture and Language Team course run by members of HQBG and undertaking a duty trek.



Her Excellency Rooslina Weti Pg Kamaluddin with the HQBG Staff



Events

Brigade Week 2019, the key period of staff effort in the calendar, took place between the 8th and 12th July. Brigade Week involves numerous Gurkha personnel and administrative staff support for many meetings, a briefing day, cocktail party and dinner night. The guests for the dinner night included His Excellency Dr Durga Subedi (Nepalese Ambassador), The Rt Hon Mark Lancaster TD VR MP (Minister of State for the Armed Forces), The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP (Minister of State for Security and Economic Crime) and Lord Karan Bilimoria CBE DL.



Colonel James Robinson, HE Dr Durgabhadur Subedi and Lieutenant General Nick Pope CBE at the Brigade Week Cocktail Party

The Royal Gurkha Rifles celebrated its Silver Jubilee on 9th July 2019 at Sir John Moore Barracks. The Guest of Honour was the Colonel in Chief RGR, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales who cut the birthday cake.



HRH The Prince of Wales cutting the birthday cake with HE Dr Durga Subedi looking on

With HQBG's support, the British and Gurkha veterans of the 1982 Falklands war returned to the Islands on a journey to retrace their footsteps during that campaign. On 23 April 2019 the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas played in front of a small number of local residents, serving soldiers, the Commander British Forces Falkland Islands, the Deputy Governor and 7GR's team of seven as the "Gurkha Stone". Brigadier David Morgan OBE, Commanding Officer Falkland of 7GR during the conflict thanked Colonel James Robinson for coordinating the whole project and making it a huge success.



Unveiling the Gurkha Stone

Finance is still one of our main areas of work and in 2019 we were able to award almost £121,312 in grants to units. This money went towards assisting soldiers on Adventure Training expeditions (hill climbing, hiking, skiing, mountain biking to name a few), providing support for education and welfare, such as family educational days out and team cohesion events, assisting with establishing and refurbishing religious and messing areas for units, and providing grants to Regimental Associations and Trusts to be used directly to support the serving Brigade.

Further Growth in the Brigade of Gurkhas

For the past 10 months rumours of further growth within the Brigade of Gurkhas have been abound. The work conducted at HQBG, discussions at the highest levels of the Army, planning conferences and Ministerial submissions paid off and on 10th March 19 the Rt Hon Mark Lancaster MP, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, announced the further expansion of the Brigade of Gurkhas. This growth will see the Brigade of Gurkhas taking on 677 further posts within the Army.

The 3rd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles (RGR) will be created as a new Unit in the Army as a Specialised Infantry Battalion. The 267 strong Unit will be predominantly RGR, but will include some Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment, Queen's Gurkha Engineers, Queen's Gurkha Signals and UK manpower.

Growth into the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps Support Battalion (ARRC Sp Bn) was part of the Brigade of Gurkhas phased growth programme and this will be further developed with 191 (80%) of the 240 posts in the unit converting to the Brigade of Gurkhas. Once this is complete the Unit will be retitled as the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (Gurkha) Support Battalion (ARRC (Gurkha) Sp Bn).

Along with the previously agreed and announced growth this expansion in the Brigade will see the Brigade move to c.4000 strong. Importantly it will provide increased access to enhanced career opportunities, including promotion and increased chances to serve a full 24-year Army career within the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Conclusion

HQBG has risen to the demands of expansion and remains a proactive and robust organisation poised to meet the challenges of the future. Our strong links and support both in MoD London and Army HQ in Andover continue to serve us well. Brigade units have risen to the challenges and come through with hard work, team effort and high spirits.

Jai Brigade of Gurkhas

HONOURS & AWARDS

As Knight Commander (KCB)

Lieutenant General Nicholas Arthur William POPE, CBE

As Commander (CBE)

Colonel James ROBINSON

As Members (MBE)

Major Nicholas Alexander HEPPENSTALL	QOGLR
Captain Mahendra LIMBU BWO	GWAC
Corporal Netrabahadur RANA	1 RGR

Meritorious Service Medal (MSM)

Sergeant Rameshkumar LIMBU	2 RGR
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Queens Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)

Corporal Navin ROKA	2 RGR
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Joint Commander's Commendations

Major DP CONNOLLY	2 RGR
Lieutenant D LEWIS	2 RGR

Commander Home Command Endeavour Award

Sergeant Bhishmaraj JABEGU	GSPS
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Commander Regional Command Commendation

WO2 Hemanta GURUNG	GSPS
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Comd 101 Logistic Brigade Commendations.

Staff Sergeant Appiah BOSOMPEM	QOGLR
Sergeant Danbahadur YONJAN	QOGLR

Fishmonger's Gold Medal

Staff Sergeant Kishan ALE	QG SIGNALS
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THE ROYAL GURKHA RIFLES



Regimental Battle Honours

History

Amboor, Carnatic, Mysore, Assaye, Ava, Bhurtpore, Aliwal, Sobroan. Delhi 1857, Kandahar 1880, Afghanistan 1878-80, Burma 1885-87, Tirah, Punjab Frontier.

The Great War - La Bassee 1914, Festubert 1914 -15, Givenchy 1914, Neuve Chapelle, Aubers, Loos, France and Flanders 1914-15, Helles, Krithia, Suvia, Sari Bair, Gallipoli 1915, Suez Canal, Megiddo, Egypt 1915-16, Sharon, Palestine 1918, Shaiba, Kut al Amara 1915, 1917, Ctesiphon, Defence of Kut al Amara, Tigris 1916, Baghdad, Khan Baghdadi, Sharqat, Mesopotamia 1915-18, Persia 1918, North West Frontier 1915, Baluchistan 1918.

Afghanistan 1919

The Second World War - Iraq 1941, Deir ez Zor, Syria 1941, Tobruk 1942, El Alamein, Mareth, Akarit, Djebel el Meida, Enfidaville, Tunis, North Africa 1942-43, Cassino 1, Monastery Hill, Pian di Maggio, Campriano, Poggio Del Grillo, Gothic Line, Tavoleto, Coriano, Poggio San Giovanni, Montebello-Scorticata Ridge, Santarcangelo, Monte Reggiano, Monte Chicco, Lamone Crossing, Senio Floodbank, Bologna, Sillaro Crossing, Medicina, Galana Crossing, Italy 1944-45, Greece 1944-45, North Malaya, Jitra, Central Malaya, Kampar, Slim River, Johore, Singapore Island, Malaya 1941-42, Sittang 1942, 1945, Pegu 1942, 1945, Kyauksa 1942, 1945, Monywa 1942, Shwegyin, North Arakan, Imphal, Tuitum, Tamu Road, Shenam Pass, Litan, Bishenpur, Tengnoupal, Shwebo, Kyaukmyaung Bridgehead, Mandalay, Myinmu Bridgehead, Fort dufferin, Maymo, Meiktila, Capture of Meiktila, Defence of Meiktila, Irrawaddy, Magwe, Rangoon Road, Pyabwe, Toungoo Point 1433, Arakan Beaches, Myebon, Tamandu, Chindits 1943, 1945, Burma 1942-45

Falkland Islands 1982

Regimental Marches

Quick March - Bravest of the Brave

Double March - The Keel Row

Slow March (Band) - God Bless the Prince of Wales

Slow March (Pipes) - The Garb of Old Gaul

Affiliated Regiments

The King's Royal Hussars

The Royal Regiment of Scotland

The RIFLES

Colonel in Chief HRH The Prince of Wales KG KT GCB OM AK QSO NPC ADC

Regimental Colonel Major General GM Strickland DSO MBE

Regimental Secretary Major (Retd) B McKay MBE

Serving Officers RGR - Nominal Roll as at 31 Dec 19

Serving Officers in the General Staff

Major General G M Strickland DSO MBE BA (Hons) psc(j)
 Colonel J N B Birch MA MDA psc(j)
 Colonel D J Robinson MA psc(j)

 Colonel M H Reedman BEng MA psc(j)

 Colonel J P Davies MBE MA(Cantab) psc(j)
 Colonel D M Rex MVO BA(Hons)
 Colonel J C Murray BLE(Hons)

Colonel The Royal Gurkha Rifles
 FMC Capability Strategy AH (Mil), MOD
 AD Trg Ops, HQ Army Recruiting and Initial
 Training Command
 Head of the National Security Council Secretariat,
 Cabinet Office
 Dep Colonel RGR and Colonel BG
 Colonel, AH Strategy (Army), DDC, MOD
 Chief of Staff, ACGS Defence Engagement Asia
 Pacific, British Defence Staff, BHC Singapore

Officers of RGR

Lieutenant Colonel G M O'Keeffe BSc, MA, MSc, psc(j)
 Lieutenant Colonel C R Boryer MBE BA(Hons) psc(j)
 Lieutenant Colonel D T Pack MBE psc(j)
 Lieutenant Colonel S W M Chandler BA(Hons) psc(j)
 Lieutenant Colonel C P L Conroy BSc (Hons) MA psc(j)
 Lieutenant Colonel G Chaganis BSc (Hons) MA psc(j) ACSC
 Lieutenant Colonel A P Todd MBE BSc (Hons) MA AADP
 Lieutenant Colonel H P S Stanford-Tuck AADP
 Lieutenant Colonel N J Aucott MA
 Lieutenant Colonel M A Shields MSc
 A/Lieutenant Colonel E P Oldfield
 A/Lieutenant Colonel N J Moran BA(Hons)

SO1 BCD A, JFAC
 CO, Sandhurst Support Unit
 CO, 2 RGR
 CO, Inf BS, Brecon
 CO, 1 RGR
 CO, UOTC Southampton
 SO1 Candidates - Army Advanced Dev Programme
 SO1 Candidates - Army Advanced Dev Programme
 Chief Planner, NRDC, Turkey
 British Military Mission, Kuwait
 ACSC, Shrivenham
 ACSC, Shrivenham

Major A Blackmore BSc, MEd
 Major S S Burton
 Major A M S Hellier BA(Hons)
 Major Dammarbahadur Shahi
 Major M J James MSc, BSc(Hons)
 Major B G Birkbeck BA(Hons)
 Major J M L Cartwright BA(Hons)
 Major Rambahadur Pun
 Major Chinbahadur Thapa MVO
 Major N R Lloyd BSc
 Major D P O'Connor
 Major Chandrabadahur Pun
 Major R T Anderson BA(Hons)
 Major Prembahadur Gurung MBE
 Major Rajeshkumar Gurung
 Major P A Houlton-Hart MBE BEng(Hons)
 Major J A E E Jeffcoat BA(Hons)

COS, HQBG
 Op Tangham HQ, Somalia
 SO2 Tactics, Doctrine & Leadership Group, HQ, RMAS
 SO2 Pers, HQBG
 SO2 PARA/RGR DE Offrs, APC Glasgow
 Bn 2IC, 1 Coldm Gds, Windsor
 SO2 Tac Ops, BATUK
 Snr Trg Major, New College, RMAS
 QM, MTMC
 SO2, DE, 11 Bde
 Bn 2IC, 2 RGR
 OC Gurkha Coy (Tavoletto), Warminster
 COS, HQ 16 Air Assault Bde
 OC, TSD, IBS Brecon
 OC, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
 OC, C Coy, 1 RGR
 Military Assistant to Assistant Chief of the Defence
 Staff (Military Strategy & Defence Engagement), MOD
 COS, AEG, HC
 A Block, MOD
 OC, Gurkha Coy (Sittang), RMAS
 SO2 G1 Personnel Operations, HQ 6 (UK) Div, Upavon
 OC, B Coy, 2 RGR
 A Block, MOD
 GM, BGN
 SO2, G7 EPS, HQ ARRC
 GM, 2 RGR
 HQ COMBRITFOR, Afg
 OC, Trg Sp (Babaji) Coy, ITC Sp Bn, Catterick
 GM, 1 RGR
 XO, Northumbrian UOTC's, Newcastle-UponTyne
 OC, HQ Coy, 2 RGR
 SO2 G3/5 Plans, HQ ARRC
 MA to GOC ARITC, HQ ARITC,

Major Hemkumar Tamang
 Major C P A E Bairsto BSc
 Major Gajendrakumar Angdembe
 Major Prakash Gurung MVO
 Major R E Morford MEng (Hons)
 Major A S Brown BA(Hons)
 Major Muktiprasad Gurung MVO
 Major S T Meadows BA(Hons)
 Major Rajkumar Rai
 Major Shureshkumar Thapa MVO
 Major Gyanbahadur Dhenga
 Major Lalitbahadur Gurung MVO
 Major B E Norfield BA(Hons)
 Major Ramkumar Rai
 Major C E F Russell BA(Hons)
 Major E R Withey

Major Jiwan Pun	OC HQ Coy, 1 RGR
Major J Devall	JCTTAT, Shorncliffe
Major A E Genillard BA (Hons)	SO2, D Cap HOC Trg Plans Army HQ
Major Dilipkumar Gurung	Trg Safety Officer, DIO SDT, Kenya
Major Rajankumar Badgami	OC, Sp Coy, 1 RGR
Major A C Connolly BA (Hons)	ICSC(L), Shrivenham
Major T E B Latham	CTLO, Kuala Lumpur
A/Major J J England MMaths	OC Sp Coy, 2 RGR
A/Major S R Nightingale LLB MA	OC, BGP
A/Maj Dillikumar Rai MVO	SO2, WFA, Spec Inf Group, Aldershot
Captain Dhalindra Bahadur Khatri Chhetri	UWO, 2 RGR
Captain Kushalkumar Gurung	OC FP Pl, ARRC Sp Bn
Captain Mukunda Gurung	SO3, DCMO, APC Glasgow
Captain Mahendra Phagami	Pl Comd Gurkha Coy, Sittang
Captain Milanchandra Rai	RCMO, 2ITB
Captain Bikulman Rai	QM(T), 2 RGR
Captain Ganeshkumar Rai	2IC, CSS Coy, 2 RGR
Captain Dipakraj Ghale	2IC, GCS, RMAS
Captain J K Armstrong BA(Hons)	MOD, A Block
Captain Sanjipkumar Rai	QG00, HQBG
Captain B C Burrows	A Block, MOD
Captain Kiran Pun	2IC Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Captain Babindra Gurung	RCMO, 1 RGR
Captain C J Schroeder MA	CTLO, Kuala Lumpur
Captain Ganeshkumar Gurung	QM (T), 1 RGR
Captain Raju Dura	2IC, B Coy, 1 RGR
Captain Premkaji Gurung	2IC, Sp Coy, 1 RGR
Captain Binodkumar Kerung	2IC, BGP
Captain Bhupalsingh Rai	2IC, GC Mandalay, IBS Brecon
Captain P O V Lambert BSc(Hon)	USSC, Jerusalem
Captain Krishnaprasad Loksam	QM (T), 2 RGR
Captain C L J Collins BA (Hons)	Adj, 2 RGR
Captain H H Gardner-Clarke	A Block, MOD
Captain C F D Diamond Bsc(Hons)	Adj, 1 RGR
Captain Buddhibahadur Gurung	UWO, 1 RGR
Captain Lalitbahadur Gurung (9323)	2IC, A Coy, 1 RGR
Captain Chhatraman Limbu Lingthep	2IC, B Coy, 2 RGR
Captain C R Jones	Pl Comd, RMAS
Captain J A Millar BSc(Hons)	Ops Offr, 2 RGR
Captain Giri Prasad Gurung	2IC C Coy, 1 RGR
Captain Som Thulung	RSO, 2 RGR
Captain Nawalkiran Yakha	RCMO 2 RGR
Captain W J D Patrick	SO3 G3/G5, HQ 77X
Captain C R Boote	A Block MOD,
Captain R A Cassini	SO3 A, CT & UK Operations, MOD
Captain W A Louw	BG Adj, HQBG
Captain Belbahadur Gurung	Pl Comd, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Captain Genendra Rai	2IC, A Coy, 2 RGR
Captain Vijayprakash Subba Limbu	MTO, 2 RGR
Captain J P Christy BA(Hons)	OC B Coy, 1 RGR
Captain Subas Gurung	SO3, FuOps, HQ 1Div, York
Captain Bikash Gurung	Pl Comd, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Captain Bahadur Budha Magar	MTO, 1 RGR
Captain Shreeman Limbu	2IC, C Coy, 2 RGR
Captain Bhaktaprasad Sherchan	Wng Comd, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Captain M F Barney BA(Hons)	Ops Offr, 1 RGR
Captain T W C Hunter BA(Hons)	OC Mor Pl, Sp Coy, 2 RGR
Captain W P Reeve BEng	Adjutant, HQ British Army Training Unit, Kenya
Captain S J Marshall	Trg Offr, 2 RGR
Captain Jiwanprasad Gurung	2IC, A Coy, 2 RGR
Captain Suresh Sambahamphe	Wng Comd, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick

Captain Sangam Rai
 Captain Prem Shreesh
 Captain J G Adamson
 Captain J R Dick BSc(Hons)
 Captain O C H Goldfinger BSc(Hons)
 Captain Kailash Khebang Limbu
 Captain Padambahadur Gurung
 Captain D R Carter BSc(Hons)
 Captain T P Gardner
 Captain S L Sears
 Captain S G Bird BSc(Hons)
 Captain A P B McWilliam
 Captain A J M Aitkin BA(Hons)
 Captain T J Eddings BSc(Hons)
 Captain C J R Hornby BEng(Hons)
 Captain Tarjan Gurung
 Captain Imbahadur Ghale
 Captain Cosmo Frederick Cavell
 Captain Lakhbahadur Gurung
 Captain Madankumar Jimi
 Captain Shivakumar Rai

2IC, Sp Coy, 2 RGR
 Pl Comd, C Coy, 1 RGR
 LO7, LTT, JCTTAT,
 OC Mor Pl, Sp Coy, 1 RGR
 A Block, MOD
 Wing Comd, ITC Catterick
 Pl Comd, Mandalay Coy, IBS Brecon
 IO, 2 RGR
 OC Reece Pl, Sp Coy, 1 RGR
 A Block, MOD
 OC, Mortar Pl, 2 RGR
 Ops/Coord Offr, BGP
 OC ATk Pl Comd, Sp Coy, 2 RGR
 OC Reece Pl, Sp Coy, 2 RGR
 OC BTT, Shorncliffe
 Pl Comd, Gurkha Coy, Sittang
 Pl Comd, B Coy, 1 RGR
 Pl Comd, B Coy, 1 RGR
 Pl Comd, A Coy, 2 RGR
 Pl Comd GCS, RMAS
 Pl Comd, B Coy, 2 RGR

Lieutenant D Lewis MA (Oxon.), MA
 Lieutenant E D Hicks BSc(Hons)
 Lieutenant D W-I Dewick BSc&Econ(Hons)
 Lieutenant W C Rushworth BA(Hons)
 Lieutenant R K Weale BA(Hons)
 Lieutenant J J Hogg BA(Hons)
 Lieutenant N F Pollinger
 Lieutenant B A S Atkinson BA(Hons)
 Lieutenant T G Washington Smith
 Lieutenant R Cannon BA(Hons)
 Lieutenant H L Parker BA(Hons)
 Lieutenant T H J Parsons BEng (Hons)

IO, 1 RGR
 OC MG Pl, Sp Coy, 2 RGR
 Pl Comd, A Coy, 3 RGR
 Pl Comd, A Coy, 3 RGR
 Pl Comd, A Coy, 1 RGR
 Team Comd, A Coy, 3 RGR
 Pl Comd, C Coy, 2 RGR
 Pl Comd, A Coy, 2 RGR
 Pl Comd, C Coy, 1 RGR
 Pl Comd, B Coy, 2 RGR
 Pl Comd, A Coy, 1 RGR
 Pl Comd, B Coy, 1 RGR

2Lieutenant L J Griffin BSc(Hons)
 2Lieutenant A GJ Baker BA(Hons)
 2Lieutenant P D F Foster BSc(Hons)
 2Lieutenant C Fraser BA(Hons)
 2Lieutenant T B L Wood MSci (Hons)
 2Lieutenant A W Fall BSc(Hons)
 2Lieutenant L M Whyatt

Pl Comd, B Coy, 2 RGR
 Pl Comd, C Coy, 2 RGR
 Pl Comd, C Coy, 1 RGR
 Pl Comd, C Coy, 1 RGR
 Pl Comd, A Coy, 2 RGR
 Pl Comd, 1 RGR
 Pl Comd, 2 RGR

Attached and Seconded Officers

1 RGR

Major T B Volker PWRR
 Major O Pope RWELSH
 Major M Bridge PARA
 Major E M J Pretsell RAMC
 Major B S Green SPS
 Captain Dugendra Tamang GSPS
 Mr Shankarmani Nepal Civilian

Bn 2IC,
 OC, A Coy
 QM
 RMO
 RAO
 AGC Det Comd
 Religious Teacher

2 RGR

Major T Lindsay SCOTS
 Major J Marden RWELSH
 Major T Whitmarsh RIRISH
 Major C Trow RAMC
 Major M Sexton AGC(SPS)
 Captain Surendrakumar Limbu Lingden GSPS
 Mr Bhishmaraj Niraula Civilian

QM
 OC, A Coy
 OC, C Coy
 RMO
 RAO
 AGC Det Comd
 Religious Teacher

1 RGR - Battalion News

Operation TORAL: January - May 2019

This year began as the last year ended, with the bulk of 1 RGR deployed in Kabul on Op TORAL 7.

For those not aware of the background, Op TORAL is the UK contribution to the NATO RESOLUTE SUPPORT mission. This NATO deployment began following the end of combat operations and the handover of security primacy to the Afghan Government at the end of 2014. The NATO mission focuses on the institutional development of key Afghan Government Ministries and is delivered primarily through its Train, Advise, Assist (TAA) line of operation.

The responsibility for enabling and protecting those who delivered the TAA in Kabul rests exclusively with the Kabul Security Force (KSF) and their single Battle Group, the Kabul Protection Unit (KPU). For 6 months elements of 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, 3rd Battalion The Parachute Regiment and 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment came together under a single 1 RGR Battle Group Headquarters to be the KPU for Op TORAL 7. In total the KPU consisted of some 6 sub-units drawn from the UK, Australia and Denmark, with smaller elements from Estonia and New Zealand.

The 1 RGR contribution saw just under 300 soldiers deploy from October 2018 until the last man recovered in early May 2019. Throughout B Company (and Bn HQ) were based in the very centre of the Kabul, from where they protected NATO advisors as they conducted missions at locations all across the city. B (Sari Bair) Company also provided a quick-reaction force for incident response. C (Mogaung) Company was based on Hamid Karzai International Airport in the North of the city and protected NATO advisors at the Afghan New Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Headquarters of the Afghan Air Force and also held responsibility for the defence of the RAF's aviation detachment.

The second half of the tour continued at the same relentless pace as the first half of the deployment, with missions for advisors continuing almost every day. The soldiers had to maintain an extremely high level of vigilance and battle discipline, day in day out, and demonstrate significant amounts of grit and determination to remain alert for what was often a relatively unengaging task. The threat of an insurgent vehicle borne IEDs or the risk of an insider attacks by one of the ANDSF however was never far away; the Battalion had its work cut out to try and ensure complacency didn't settle in.

The more significant High-Profile Attacks (HPAs) that the insurgents conducted on Op TORAL 7 happened in 2018, including the action at the G4S base known as Camp ANJUMAN, however the KPU QRF were still stood too on over a dozen other occasions during the



A GPMG gunner provides security to an HLS during Aviation Response Force training

second half of the tour in 2019. The most noteworthy instances were when the KPU provided intimate CASEVAC support to Afghan Police Special Forces and their Norwegian mentors during an HPA on the Ministry of Public Works and also following a significant but ultimately unsuccessful attempt by insurgents to breach into Green Village (a contractor protected accommodation facility for internationals working in Kabul). On that particular occasion OC B had the misfortune of having to extract injured personnel in the middle of a clearly dangerous situation, while the Afghan Police Special Forces and their Norwegian partners began an argument that came to blows and weapon pointing in the middle of his vehicle perimeter!

As well as having to be reactive to the insurgents, there were also times on the tour when the Battalion was given the chance to be proactive and deter insurgent attempts to disrupt life in the city. These missions continued at irregular intervals and saw the KPU trying to deter various types of insurgent bad behaviour during key political or social events that the enemy might want to target. For example, patrolling rocket boxes on the evening before elections or prior to a highly publicised speech by key Afghan political figures. This was novel and rewarding for the most basic reasons; warning



Sahebharu enjoy a splash of paint during the Holi celebrations in Kabul

orders were released, estimates conducted, orders delivered, rehearsals completed, and it was executed as a Coy and not as individual Nodes or Multiples.

During Op TORAL 7, 1 RGR operated at over 100 sites across the city, giving ample opportunity for the soldiers to get out and about all over Kabul. By Spring 2019, as the tour came to a close, over 10,000 patrols had been conducted.

Exercise SWIFT RESPONSE: June 2019

Some of the keener observers may have noticed that so far, no mention has been made of A (Delhi) Company. Unfortunately for them, A (Delhi) Company were not given the opportunity to deploy on Op TORAL and were instead attached to 3PARA on readiness. Naturally this kept them busy, bouncing from exercise to exercise and transiting to and from the drum beat of command group meetings up in Colchester. The highest profile exercise of this period was Exercise SWIFT RESPONSE in Croatia, US EUCOM's largest training event of the year.

On arrival in country, the company went straight into a week of RSOI training to help acclimatise to the notable heat of the Croatian summer and also to conduct battle preparation for the upcoming missions. This included night training, building clearances and company-level advance to contacts. On conclusion of this, the 3PARA BG moved to a staging location and, on orders from 16 Air Assault Brigade HQ, began to prepare for a night mission to secure Ubdina airfield.

A (Delhi) Company were the first boots on the ground, having inserted in several waves of helicopters to secure the hills overlooking the airstrip. This allowed British and French paratroopers to land on their respective drop zones. Having facilitated the parachute insertion, the company subsequently helped to secure the rest of the AO, combatting a challenging enemy armour threat to ensure the airfield was safe for follow on forces to move in and conduct rapid and follow on air landings.



An A (Delhi) Company platoon commander delivers orders on Ex SWIFT RESPONSE

Having successfully delivered a joint theatre entry against a strong enemy, the second mission saw the 3PARA BG tasked to secure a notional train station that represented an important logistical hub. The final mission was a BG clearance across a mountainous region near the border with Bosnia; their task being to push the enemy out of Croatia and cement NATO's foothold in the region. Guided by 3PARA Patrols Platoon, A (Delhi) Company captured some extremely testing high ground. Throughout, the Riflemen surpassed expectations by effortlessly navigating boulders and dense vegetation at night before a skirmish with Croatian armoured vehicles and eventually securing the final objective.



A Section Commander gives arcs while establishing all-round defence on the position

The exercise concluded with a couple of days R&R at the stunning Plitvice Lakes National Parks before the Company travelled back to the UK.

Becoming the Air Manoeuvre Battle Group and RGR: 25 June - August 2019

As A (Delhi) Company fought their way off the HLS overlooking Ubdina and as the rest of Battalion extracted back to the UK from Kabul, Battalion HQ's eyes were already focusing on the next challenge. While the Battalion had been deployed, the Bn 2IC and OC Sp had been working feverishly to figure out the pathway for 1 RGR to take over the role of Air Manoeuvre Battle Group (AMBG) from 3PARA. The AMBG is the lead Unit in 16 Air Assault Brigade, it is held at very high readiness and it is a task that the RGR Battalion in 16 Air Assault Brigade had never been given the opportunity to do



The Queen's Truncheon being presented HRH Prince of Wales, our Colonel in Chief during the RGR25 Birthday celebrations in Shorncliffe on 9th Jul 19

previously. With a re-role on the horizon, and the plethora of courses and validations that come with it, the Battalion would be in for an extremely busy time.

On return from post tour leave the Battalion plan was set, and all went straight to work on preparations. Re-zeroing weapons, Air Manoeuvre briefing days (including visits to Brize Norton) and a lot of Public Order training in order to be validated for an Op ELGIN deployment, if required. Following a successful hand over with 3PARA, the final hurdle for Battalion was to have their readiness SOPs tested by Brigade on Exercise TOTEMIC; could we deliver our high readiness elements

to the airport of embarkation in the given timelines? As if that was not enough, all of this was done concurrently to the preparations for the Op TORAL 7 medals parade, which was combined with the Battalion's RGR25 Birthday celebrations, and was delivered in the same week at HQ Brigade of Gurkha's Brigade Week!

Despite the hectic schedule, the RGR25 Parade on 9 July was one to remember. Attended by HRH The Prince of Wales, alongside many other VIPs and dignitaries, it saw Medals awarded to a large swath of Battalion.

1er Régiment de Chasseurs Parachutists, our partnered French Airborne unit also sent representatives. The Assault Pioneers unveiled the newly constructed Battalion Chautari outside of the Cpls Mess, built with the assistance of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers. The Prince of Wales' Kukri, Tuger Award and Slim Award were also presented and overall, everyone had a fantastic day celebrating 25 superb years of dedicated service to the crown.

Champion Company: July - August 2019

On Friday 9 August, at the final parade prior to summer leave, A (Delhi) Company were announced as the Champion Company of 1 RGR for 2019. Due to limited time, this year's Champion Company competition was composed of just The Afghan Trophy (fitness), The Bullock Trophy (military skills) and The Wallace Memorial Trophy (sports).



HRH Prince of Wales presenting 1 RGR soldiers with their Op TORAL medals



Reluctant Officers' Mess teammates lift the 2019 1 RGR Chelo Champion



Weighted drags on grass made sure The Afghan Trophy competition was a challenge for all!

B (Sari Bair) Company took an early lead in the competition by winning the Afghan Trophy. The first element of the competition involved completing a number of repetitions of different gruelling exercises on the MT square in combats and body armour. This was followed by competitors running up and down hills around the back area of camp, before several other 'battle-PT' style exercises were completed on the sports pitches, including casualty drags, crawling and fire and manoeuvre.

The Bullock Trophy focused on testing a broad range of military skills in the form of a patrol's competition. The competition is named after Brigadier Christopher Bullock MC, who led numerous 'Claret Operations' during the Borneo Confrontation during the 1960s. Each company put forward a patrol to navigate a route around Cinque Port Training Area where they completed a variety of tasks at different stands. These tasks included military knowledge tests, air assault vehicle recognition and more practical command tasks. A (Delhi) Company were announced as the winner of the event.

The Wallace Memorial Trophy included a broad set of sporting events and culminated with the majority of Battalion personnel completing a seven-mile cross-country race across challenging terrain on St Martin's Plain. The Wallace Memorial Trophy was presented to A (Delhi) Company, meaning that overall A (Delhi) Company retained their place as Champion Company for a second year running.

Exercise OLIVE GROVE: August - September 2019

As the rest of Battalion began to disappear on summer leave, C (Mogaung) Coy began their deployment on Exercise OLIVE GROVE in Jordan. This had been eagerly anticipated since early 2019, when planning had begun in earnest out in Kabul (in fact the OC had disappeared to Jordan on a recce during Op TORAL!). Throughout the exercise, C (Mogaung) Company partnered with 2nd Company of the 61st Battalion of the Jordanian Quick Reaction Force (QRF) Brigade. This was in line with the strategic partnership that 16 Air Assault Brigade has with QRF which sees each of the three Battalions in the Brigade assigned a partner Battalion in the QRF.

The exercise was 6 weeks and included an acclimatisation week, a 3-week Live Fire Tactical Training (LF TT) phase, a week-long blank Final Training Exercise (FTX) and finally a short R&R, Adventure Training and cultural package. All the ranges that C (Mogaung) Company conducted, the 2nd Company conducted too; except during the weekends when they bused their way back home (they are all Muglish during the week!). During the weekends, C (Mogaung) Company were therefore able to achieve additional training on UK specific pyro, conduct a locating the enemy demonstration and deploy on a live fire Coy ambush.



Soldiers from C (Mogaung) Company engage targets in a live-fire company ambush in Jordan

Following the LF TT, both companies completed a 61st Battalion led, loan service and international partner enabled (and 1 RGR Bn HQ supported) FTX. This FTX began with a Company Rapid Air Landing (RAL) via C130 onto a desert landing strip and went on to include a 25km insertion march, urban attacks, mobile defence, an air assault and a final Battalion attack led by CO 61st Battalion. This final attack saw C (Mogaung) Coy slog it out in the mid-morning heat against over 20 enemy positions (including DShKs) split between the desert floor and half way up a sheer cliff; a challenging finale by any stretch of the imagination!

In addition to C (Mogaung) Company, the newly reformed Machine Gun Platoon from Sp (Medicina) Company also went to Jordan. Initially they conducted their MMG Basic Cadre while the Rifle Company conducted Fire Team and Section attacks. Both groups then joined together for the Platoon day and night attacks as well as the advance to contacts. They carried significant amounts of weight during the deployment (ammunition, tripods, C2 sights etc), but kept pace with the Rifle Platoons and proved themselves a fantastic battle winning asset on numerous occasions during the FTX. When placed on high ground overlooking an open expanse of undulating desert, they were unstoppable.



Consolidating on an enemy position while Jordanian Armed Forces echelon come through by helicopter

The training opportunities in Jordan were phenomenal. The area used had near 360 degree arcs (watch out for Bedouin) and had terrain that gave so many options to the PRT that almost any type of range could be run. The Company also had the opportunity to conduct RAL training, once in two US C130s on a tarmac runway and once with a Jordanian air frame on a dirt TLZ, and some lucky soldiers even got familiarisation flights on USMC MV22 Ospreys too. During the exercise there were various visits by the Defence Attaché, Defence Section, QRF Bde hierarchy and also Defence Senior Advisor to the Middle East (DSAME), Lt Gen Sir John Lorimer KCB, DSO, MBE. The icing on the cake was a visit by Soldier Magazine that got the Company a front cover slot on the October edition.

For the boys it was a hugely positive experience. C (Mogaung) Company had not conducted conventional warfighting training since Ex ASKARI STORM in spring 2018 due to Op TORAL 7. It saw the first desert and RAL training the soldiers had conducted in recent serving memory and was probably the first time RGR had been in the middle east since the Royal Irish Regiment Gurkha Reinforcement Company deployed on Op TELIC 1! Exercising in Jordan was truly superb; the soldiers will remember it for a long time to come.

Support (Medicina) Company and Assault Pioneer Platoon Cadres: September 2019

Over the summer, Support (Medicina) Company welcomed 34 new soldiers into the Company. The large uptake in personnel in each specialised Platoon meant that an all-encompassing cadre was essential to keep the Company battle ready. The Company therefore set out to train all new joiners in their role as mortar men, machine gun operators, snipers, Javelin operators, recce patrolmen and Assault Pioneers, as well as refresh those already in the specialist Platoons.

Sniper Platoon faced the biggest hurdle as a full Sniper Cadre takes over 10 weeks to complete and is comprised of four phases: conceptual learning, LFTT, Badge Testing and a Final Exercise. The conceptual learning phase was conducted primarily in Sir John Moore Barracks and consisted of navigation, rifle and sniper rifle lessons, fitness and basic Sniping theory. The second phase, LFTT, was conducted in Salisbury Plain training area and saw potential Sniper Number 1s firing out to a distance of 900m. The badge testing phase was an arduous trial of the seven fundamental Sniping skills and finally, the cadre concluded with a gruelling 7 day FTX in adverse weather conditions in Cinque Ports Training Area. At the end of a thorough and demanding cadre seven junior soldiers were deemed to have the requisite Sniping ability to wear the coveted black cap badge and were welcomed as members of the Sniper Platoon.

As mentioned previously, Machine Gun Platoon found themselves in the envious position of being able to conduct their cadre in the deserts of Jordan, attached with C (Mogaung) Company on Ex OLIVE GROVE. The Cadre focused on the General-Purpose Machine Gun Sustained Fire (GPMG SF).



Learning to operate in sniper pairs up to 900m!

Anti-Tank Platoon, Recce Platoon, Pioneer and Mortar Platoon had the rather different prospect of Salisbury Plain. The combined cadre ran throughout September, with the first week in Sir John Moore Barracks and remaining 3 weeks in Westdown Camp. The cadres were purely focused on the delivery of basic knowledge, such as the handling of the 81 mm Mortar for new



New members of Mortar Platoon beginning to question their choice of specialisation

mortarmen; Close Target Recce (CTR) and Observation Post (OP) procedure for Recce patrolmen; the operation Javelin and NLAW for new Anti-tank Rfn; and the use of explosives and water purifications equipment for the Assault Pioneer Platoon. The Cadres followed a three-phase concept. Firstly, they were taught new skills and drills as per their respective Platoon requirements. The second phase saw the Platoons implement these skills and drills in 'dry' exercises. In the final phase all Platoons were fully tested during realistic and challenging exercises which included live firing.

The cadre was a huge success. Every member of Support (Medicina) Company and Pioneer Platoon was involved, either as an instructor, demo troops, a member of the G4 chain or exercising troops. An unexpected highlight of the Cadre was the opportunity to take part in Prime Minister Boris Johnson's visit to Salisbury Training Area. Members from the Anti-Tank Platoon gave a brief about RWIMIK vehicle capabilities to the Prime Minister, who seemed very impressed, although he was less effusive about the 24hr rations he was offered! To add further polish to the Cadre, Commander Field Army (CFA) visited the troops to witness training and share his experiences of working with Gurkhas.

Op ELGIN: September - October 2019

At the same time as Support (Medicina) Company was knee deep in the final stages of their cadres of Salisbury plain, A (Delhi) Company deployed to Camp Butmir in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), on Op ELGIN. A (Delhi) Company's key activity was to take part in Ex QUICK RESPONSE as part of the Multinational Battalion (MNBN), simulating the EU Forces' (EUFOR) reaction to hostilities erupting in BiH. The MNBN was made up of British, Austrian, Turkish and Hungarian companies and was commanded by an Austrian and Hungarian headquarters. A (Delhi) Company came to understand that the occasional Nepali-English confusion was nothing compared to the difficulties in communicating between four different nationalities.

On the morning at the start of the exercise, A (Delhi) Company's promotion wallah received their new rank slides from His Excellency Matthew Field, British

Ambassador to BiH, who came to wish the company luck and provide context to the importance of the exercise to Anglo-Bosnian relations. Each company was dispatched to a separate corner of BiH to operate independently and at reach from the MNBN headquarters. A (Delhi) Company occupied a camp near Capljina, 100 miles south of Sarajevo near the border with Croatia. The company made the road move south through beautiful countryside in their antique Snatch Land Rovers, minus 1 Platoon who enjoyed the luxury of a much faster journey in Austrian Army helicopters in order to secure the Company's HQ. The company was tasked with public order, evacuation and securing of vulnerable points. This involved extensive road moves, operating among and alongside civilians, and platoons working independently from Company HQ.



Helicopter training with the Austrian Army as part of the Multinational Battalion

The Company returned to Sarajevo to conclude the exercise with a Soviet style 'military capability demonstration', complete with the battalion commander surveying his troops from the turret of an armoured vehicle in the manner of a victorious Roman Emperor! The exercise gave junior commanders complete autonomy when working at reach from CHQ, and enabled them to develop their skills in peace support and civilian liaison, in contrast to the rest of the year for the Company which focussed heavily on conventional operations.

JLC - Intake: 2016 November - December 2019

With all Companies of 1 RGR finally back in camp for a short while, it was the ideal time for intake 2016 to complete their Junior Leadership Cadre (JLC) and become qualified for promotion to LCpl under the watchful eye of B (Sari Bair) Company. This year's JLC was broken down into three phases. The first was physical testing and a Command, Leadership and Management (CLM) module. The CLM module was particularly important because it educated the Riflemen on the responsibilities of a commander and tested their spoken English, confidence and presentation skills.

The second phase saw all members of the cadre move to Sennybridge Camp in South Wales. On the way the



JLC candidates line up at the start line for a 2-miler



Clear, Loud, as an Order, with Pauses! A section commander brings his gunner onto the target

Riflemen were surprised by a day of command task lanes in Winchester. This gave ample opportunity for each Rifleman to display his approach to problem solving and leadership; be it either seeking the advice of his syndicate or formulating his own plan without external consideration. This showed the directing staff who was a team player and who was likely to strike out alone. On arrival in Sennybridge, the students completed the infamous “Fan Dance” in the Brecon Beacons. Carrying 25+ kg, they moved in Platoon sized groups over the 12-mile route; demonstrating excellent determination and teamwork in inclement weather and difficult ground.

The first exercise of JLC saw the occupation of harbour areas in extremely unfavourable conditions. Although uncomfortable for all, the conditions allowed the directing staff to see which students had effective administration. Over a weeklong period, the students were introduced to commanding recce patrols, ambush patrols, standing patrols and section attacks. The most

challenging day of the cadre was arguably the day navigation exercise; conducted in near white-out snow. The students collected impressive scores on this event despite the weather; again, demonstrating Gurkha tenacity against the odds.

The second week of the exercise further increased in demand and challenge, with more patrolling which led to two days of Platoon “advance to contacts”. The end of this exercise saw the Riflemen recovered to Sennybridge Camp for a week of military knowledge, combat estimate and instruction tests. For some students this was a welcome relief from the weather outside but for others it was a daunting experience. All of the Riflemen put 100% effort into this phase of the course and the lessons and products they produced were outstanding.

After almost a week in camp the students deployed on the third and final phase of JLC; the final exercise in Caerwent.

The urban-rural interface offers a unique opportunity to test soldiers in a more complex environment and ultimately helps single out those most deserving of promotion. The enemy on this exercise were given free play to attack the students’ how and when they wanted, and this tested the students almost to the point of failure. It is important that Riflemen can make mistakes, analyse the reasons for them and then amend their tactics to suit the enemy they face. The exercise was also privileged to be supported by 845 Squadron from the Commando Helicopter Force in the form of 6 Merlin and 3 Wildcat helicopters, which led to a Company level aviation assault onto an urban objective. This provided pivotal training for our role within 16 Air Assault Brigade and further strengthened our junior commanders’ ability to conduct airborne operations.

Exercise GAULISH: December 2019

The last Battalion event of the year saw Platoons from each of 1 RGR’s Rifle Companies come together under the command of A (Delhi) Company HQ and deployed on Exercise GAULISH. This was an urban operations exercise in the ‘Centre d’entrainement aux actions en zone urbaine’ (CENZUB) training area in northern France. Along with attachments from the Royal Horse Artillery, the Royal Engineers and the Royal Military Police, the Company were bolstered by elements from both Sp (Medicina) Company and HQ (Burma) Company too. The exercise marked a culmination of many months of preparatory training focused on fighting in complex built up areas.

On arrival at CENZUB the Company spent a week conducting an array of initial familiarisation exercises. One of the objectives of this was to demonstrate interoperability between ourselves and our French counterparts, a key element involved familiarising Gurkhas with the FAMAS assault rifle and the AT-4

CS anti-tank weapon which they would be using throughout the exercise. As part of an officer exchange, the Company was fortunate to have Lt Juno Tousignant from 1 RGR's partnered French battalion, 1er régiment de chasseurs parachutistes (1 RCP), as one of the Platoon commanders to help with this conversion. Included as part of the familiarisation week was a package to understand and practice French tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). Whilst many of the TTPs were almost identical to those employed by the British Army, there were some slight variations on occasions and both parties benefited from understanding these differences.

The exercise phase saw the 1 RGR Company deploy to conduct a series of offensive and defensive actions across several exceptional purpose-built urban facilities. These included a train station, high-rise buildings, an underground car park, industrial zones and many other urban features that offered a unique and challenging environment.



The lead section approaches a target building in a company-level urban clearance

The Company was deployed against an opposing force who are permanently based at CENZUB and equipped with several variations of armoured fighting vehicles. In addition to a complex physical environment and a highly capable armoured enemy force, there was a dynamic civilian population that reacted to our decisions, posture and behaviour. In combination, the exercise was a testing scenario for all involved but one in which everyone was able to learn invaluable lessons.

A combination of well-integrated attached personnel, comprehensive pre-deployment training and, in the words of our French directing staff, an “impressive aggressive fighting spirit”, resulted in a very strong performance. According to the staff, the Company achieved the second-best score by a British Army Company since the CENZUB training area was made available to British Forces in November 2010.

Exercise GAULISH was a superb opportunity for 1 RGR, and supporting elements, to have their urban operations



Honing the skills and drills required for night-time room clearance

skills tested. The hospitality shown by our French hosts was exceptional and they appeared to be highly content with both the performance and the bearing of our soldiers. A great way to finish the year on a high.

2019 Achievements

At this point it is only right to try and summarise a whirlwind year of individual and small team achievements for 1 RGR. The Battalion were delighted to watch HRH the Prince of Wales present Lt James Hornby with the Toker Prize and CSgt Mukunda Rajali with the Prince of Wales Kukri during the RGR25 celebrations for their exceptional work in in 2018/19. The year also saw trips to Buckingham Palace for Major Pete Houlton-Hart, Capt Scott Sears and Cpl Netra Rana to be awarded MBEs for Operations, Antarctic expeditions and Paralympic Volleyball respectively. Capt Lalit Gurung was also awarded a Chief of the General Staff Commendation for his work as MTO when the Bn re-rolled onto Foxhound for Op TORAL.



Major Houlton-Hart and Cpl Netrabahadur Rana receive katas on award of their well-earned MBEs

In respect of military skills competitions, both the Shooting team and Cambrian Patrol team had a hugely successful 2019. The Battalion shooting team took the top slot at Bisley and fielded a sniper pair that took first position at both the Army and Tri-service Sniper competitions.



The Battalion rewards excellent performance in a tri-service shooting competition



2019 1 RGR Cambrian Patrol Team is presented their gold medal and a congratulatory letter from CGS

The Battalion even found time for Rfn Anil Thapa to deploy with the British Army Combat Shooting team to Canada, finishing as part of the winning team. The Battalion Cambrian Patrol team again supported the Nepalese Army team's preparations before winning a gold medal for an astounding fourth year in a row.

On career courses and on the Jungle Warfare Instructors Course, 1 RGR continued to win a raft of distinctions and instructor recommendations, including top student positions for Cpl Sujan Shigu and Cpl Bishwas Limbu (Anti-Tank Section Commanders' Course), Sgt Nawaraj Gurung (JWIC), Cpl Premsher Budha Magar (PSBC), Cpl Yuwaraj (Mortar Advanced course) and Cpl Saroj Gurung (RSAS.) The Battalion was also able to make a more concerted effort to increase our representation on P Company and the Basic Parachute Course this year, creating a small but steady flow of success on which we hope to build.

On the sporting field the Battalion has had a year of notable achievements. Rfn Dipesh Sintan came 1st in the light weight sparring category of the Interservice Taekwondo competition. Cpl Raju Tamang finished 3rd in the Dutch International Master Taekwondo competition. Rfn Sujan Limbu was 1st in both U25 categories at the European military sport climbing championship and Army sports climbing championship and was also 2nd in the Inter-service sports climbing championship too. The Nepal Cup and Volleyball teams were both narrowly defeated in the finals, finishing 2nd.

Finally, at the end of November, we were delighted to see that members of the Battalion were rewarded for their work on Op TORAL 7 with the release of the Operational Honours and Awards list. Major Connolly and Lt Lewis received Joint Commander's Commendations for their work in the CJOC and as the Police Liaison Detachment commander respectively and Cpl Navin Roka was awarded a Queens Commendation for Valuable Service. Cpl Navin was the Regimental Signals Detachment Commander with C (Mogaung) Company during the tour and did the Battalion proud under some unique and highly challenging circumstances.

It has been a varied, challenging and thoroughly rewarding year for the Battalion; let's see what 2020 brings!

Jai 1 RGR!

2 RGR - Battalion News

Summary

2019 has been another busy year for 2 RGR. We have deployed C Coy to Australia on Exercise PACIFIC KUKRI, run Battalion Headquarters Training with the CAST North team, run JLC for intake 16 and deployed the BFB Battlegroup to the jungle. Sp Coy soldiers have conducted counter poaching in Malawi for 4 months, and A Coy has trained alongside the Royal Thai Army in Thailand. In addition to this we have continued to uphold the excellent reputation of the RGR in Brunei, supporting the Royal Brunei Armed Forces, and across the Army with success on career courses and events throughout the year.

B (Gallipoli) Coy JLC: Jan - Mar 2019

2 RGR had a rapid start to the year, launching straight into the Junior Leadership Cadre for intake 16 soldiers. The cadre was run by Maj Rob Morford and B Coy out of Penanjong Camp and consisted of the usual mix of conceptual and physical assessments, with the exercise elements of the course moving between the jungle and the urban environments. This gave our next generation of junior leaders the challenge of operating in the urban environment, which they have not done since joining the battalion two years ago. The cadre was a huge success, qualifying all students to promote to LCpl and improving the leadership skills and experience of all involved. Top student was awarded to Rfn Jyotishwar of A Coy, who was promoted to LCpl on conclusion of the Cadre.



JLC Student giving his "Jungle" orders

2 RGR CAST: Feb 2019

In February 2 RGR HQ continued its training cycle with the help of the Command and Staff Trainer (CAST) North team. The team flew from Catterick out to Brunei to deliver valuable training for BHQ and continue a training cycle begun at the end of 2018. In the spirit of creating "tactical frictions" BHQ eschewed the idea of an indoor Ops room and deployed its tents to Medicina

Lines, truly replicating the heat and stress of operating a mobile HQ in Brunei. Despite a recent churn of BHQ personnel the exercise was a great success; with the HQ running smoothly, two full planning cycles were conducted and executed, the report from CAST N came back positive but with plenty of recommendations for its next run out later in the year.

Ex PACIFIC KUKRI 19 - C (Tamandu) Coy Australia Diving: Apr - May

Between April and May C Coy deployed to Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland, Australia for another iteration of 2 RGR's annual overseas training exercise, Exercise PACIFIC KUKRI. This gave C Coy, under the command of Maj Andy Blackmore, a fantastic opportunity to conduct both blank and live firing up to Coy level, with support elements of recce, snipers, anti -tanks and mortars embedded throughout. Shoalwater Bay's subtropical climate and varied terrain gave the C Coy boys a great opportunity to experience something different from the Brunei jungle, and for many was the first time operating in conjunction with support weapons. As well as the tactical elements of the training, it was a great opportunity to test the Coy's ability to deploy overseas and continued The RGR's longstanding engagement with the Australian Defence Force. During Exercise Pacific Kukri, C Coy were given the honour of taking part in Rockhampton city's ANZAC day celebrations, forming part of an 800 strong parade which was watched by 5000 people from the city. The exercise phase concluded with a dawn attack onto Freshwater Camp in Coy strength. The C Coy soldiers exhilarated but exhausted from almost 5 weeks of operating, then returned to camp and turned their focus to adventurous training. Advanced planning meant in January 40 C Coy soldiers were qualified as PADI Open Water divers and were able to enjoy a 3-day diving package on Heron Island which forms part of the Great Barrier Reef. Once again Exercise PACIFIC KUKRI was a triumph for 2 RGR and for C Coy, a huge training opportunity that was capitalised on by all members of C Coy and the exercise's supporting elements. B Coy looks forward to their deployment in 2020 to New Zealand, in the exercise's next iteration.

Support (Imphal) Coy Cadre: Apr - May

2 RGR's annual support weapons cadre was run shortly after Easter leave. The whole of Support Coy deployed to Sittang Camp to enable the Recce, Sniper, Machine Gun, Anti-tank and Mortar Platoons to train and select new soldiers from the Rifle Coys. The result is the Battalion is positioned to offer its full suite of capability to any future deployments.

Ex MESSINES RIDGE: May

Shortly after the conclusion of Ex PACIFIC KUKRI it was BHQ's turn to deploy to Australia, this time in Brisbane as part of Exercise MESSINES RIDGE. 2 RGR HQ

was subordinated to an Australian Brigade HQ for the exercise with elements playing Lo-Con too, all this was part of a much larger Australian Defence Force exercise. BHQ personnel had a great opportunity to see a large joint headquarters in action, and to feel the realities of operating as a small cog in a joint and multinational environment, with its longer planning timelines and fewer freedoms. In contrast to CAST in February the exercise was run at a slower pace, giving plenty of opportunity for BHQ personnel to enjoy Brisbane during down time.

Ex TYPHOON KUKRI: June

As part of a wider drive for 2 RGR to prove its deployability into the jungle, Ex TYPHOON KUKRI (Ex TK) was run in June. The aim of Typhoon Kukri was to test 2 RGR's ability to conduct a battlegroup sized deployment into the jungle and sustain the whole battlegroup once installed. This was a great opportunity for the Battalion, as while we are all confident fighting in the jungle it has been years since the combat service support elements of the battlegroup have been tested in this way. With great support from across British Forces Brunei, especially from 7 Flight, 2 RGR was deployed at reach into Ulu Tutong and the challenge of sustaining the battlegroup began. The CSS team did a great job, combining road, aviation and boat moves to keep all soldiers stocked with front line scales throughout the exercise. Ex TK acted as a warm up for Ex HIKMAT BERSATU, which again would see the Battlegroup deploying into the Ulu Tutong, but this time with a free play enemy.

Op CORDED - Malawi: Jul - Dec 19

This year, 2 RGR have had the privilege of deploying a small team of mostly Sp Coy soldiers on Op CORDED, a counter illegal wildlife trade mission to Malawi and Zambia. In July the team returned to the UK to conduct pre-deployment training and for the next five months they were deployed in Malawi, assisting local park rangers

in the fight against poaching. The areas of Malawi and Zambia that the Op CORDED team were operating in are hotspots for biodiversity, and have particularly large populations of African elephant, as well as being rich in other highly threatened species such as black rhino, lion, pangolin, African painted dogs and others. This makes them a good target for poachers and a high priority for anti-poaching work. The teams were focussed on intercepting poachers, recovering snares and improving the patrolling skills of the park rangers they were partnered with. The Op CORDED team had the honour of hosting His Royal Highness Prince Harry, who visited as part of his Africa tour at the end of September. There was a poignant moment during his visit when a memorial for Guardsman Talbot, who sadly was killed by an elephant earlier in the year, was unveiled. With the Gurkha's natural skill in the multinational environment the Op CORDED team have achieved a lot in a small time and have learned a great many lessons to take forward into future Op CORDED deployments.

Ex HIKMAT BERSATU: September

Continuing from the training objectives of Ex TYPHOON KUKRI, 2 RGR, ably supported by K Troop 42 Commando, a boat troop from the Royal Engineers and a troop from the Kings Royal Hussars, deployed on Ex HIKMAT BERSATU. Once again 2 RGR battlegroup deployed to Ulu Tutong and this time faced a free-play enemy made of C Coy and the troop from the KRH. After a road, heli and boat insertion the battlegroup was balanced in Ulu Tutong, Recce Platoon then led a 10 day advance and clear of the brutal Brunei jungle. Eventually after 10 days of sign but no contacts, the enemy were found, which started a quick planning cycle to redeploy A and B Coy to be ready for the assault with Machine Guns and Mortars in support. Ex HIKMAT BERSATU was unique as it was the first time 2 RGR had deployed the whole unit into the jungle during our current Brunei tour and C Coy provided a varied and



Op CORDED team with HRH Prince Harry

unpredictable enemy force. The difficulties of jungle warfare at this scale were replicated throughout, with resupply proving complex and time consuming, and the relatively simple task of finding the enemy taking 10 days to complete. After a final attack in which the enemy were surprised, surrounded then defeated, the end of the exercise saw 7 Flight conduct their biggest ever aviation lift in Brunei, flying over 200 soldiers out of the jungle in a single day. A huge feat for 7 Flt, and every thanks must go to them for saving the 2 RGR soldiers an extraction on foot after 12 days of patrolling.

Dashain and Tihar

As always the auspicious festival of Dashain was celebrated in grand style by 2 RGR. With the addition of a professional entertainment troupe from Nepal, there was a great selection of entertainments on show and a good time was had by all. Even with Ex HIKMAT BERSATU treading on the toes of Dashain, the Pujari party were still able to conduct all the proper ceremonies on time, and the Battalion distilled its celebrations into one week enabling everybody to take a rest.



Bn TAC on Ex HIKMAT BERSATU

Ex PANTHER GOLD - A (Amboor) Coy: November

November saw A Coy deploy to Thailand for an exercise with the 23rd Infantry Regiment of the Royal Thai Army. The exercise was focussed on building interoperability between the two Armies, with both sides learning from the other's jungle experiences. This saw soldiers from both nations integrating directly into the sections of their partners and following each other's TTPs throughout in a totally embedded environment. The exercise concentrated on the low-level tactical drills at Platoon level which are of use to the Royal Thai Army in securing their borders against smuggling and poaching. Again, our soldiers' excellent ability to work alongside partner nations was in evidence, and the exercise concluded with a full scale karaoke party to celebrate the joint success.



A Coy getting up close with the local wildlife on Ex PANTHER GOLD



A Coy in the FUP on Ex PANTHER GOLD

RGR25 and RI19

This year 2 RGR celebrated the RGR25 by combining the parade and celebrations with the arrival and attestation of Recruit Intake 19. After a gruelling 9 months at ITC Catterick the RI19 Riflemen arrived in Brunei to get their first taste of the jungle on a 2-week induction cadre. The cadre concluded with a jungle exercise under the close supervision of their Gurujis and 2 RGR's excellent jungle warfare instructors. This has truly set the conditions for RI19's further training and integration into the rifle companies. Their final attestation parade was a great success, and Nishani Mai was expertly borne by Capt Shiva and his party.

Alongside the major events of the year there have been significant successes by individuals and small teams across the Battalion. Cpl Subas Rai (B Coy) received the Queen's Medal at the Army Shooting Competition at Bisley.

The shooting team's success has continued in Canada as part of an international skill at arms meet, with Rfn Amrit Gurung being awarded the best shot of the competition. We have had a team in Nepal conducting AT, and there are now many more qualified PADI Open Water divers than last year. We have had a team win the PARAs 10 and most recently the Cambrian Patrol team returned from Wales with gold medals. 2 RGR's



2 RGR Shooting team at Bisley

success on career courses has continued, with many Instructor's Recommendations and Distinctions on the Section Commanders' and Platoon Sergeants' Battle Courses, and 2 RGR Officers and NCOs have continued in that vein on the Jungle Warfare and Operational Tracking Instructor's Courses. 2 RGR have continued their support to the Jungle Warfare Division in Medicina Lines and have sent 2 platoons to provide force protection in BATUK. The annual Champion Company Competition was held just before summer leave, and after a hard fought 2 weeks Support Coy were crowned the winners.

Following the New Year, JLC 20 for RI17 is now underway, before B Coy go to New Zealand for the next iteration of Exercise PACIFIC KUKRI and finally the unit move and subordination to 16 Air Assault Brigade.

Counter Poaching Gurkhas

By Maj Jez England and Lt Niall Pollinger

The last four months have seen members of the 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles deployed on counter illegal wildlife trade operations in Liwonde National Park, Malawi. The team partnered with Malawi's Department for National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) and African Parks (AP); two outstanding organisations. This is the fourth iteration of Op CORDED – the name given to the Defence's counter poaching efforts.

On August 1st 2019, 35 members of 2 RGR along with attachments, landed in Malawi's capital Lilongwe. A road move South and the team were met by sightings of their first wild animals; impala, kudu, waterbuck and elephant all just metres from Liwonde National Park's (LNP) main gate. The ranger training centre in LNP was to be the home for the team for the next four months. Some final training involving tuning in the team's tracking skills to the bush; familiarising ourselves with the Ranger's SOPs; and most importantly revising the dangerous animal behaviour "actions on". We were now operational.

The team operated on a 3-week rotation of long patrols tackling illegal logging in the Forest reserve North of the park; riverine operations combating the poachers

entering the park via the Shire river; and maintaining a QRF at 15mins NTM. Partnered patrols of AP Rangers and Gurkhas achieved fantastic synergy, merging two specialist skillsets to achieve tactical and strategic effect. Whether pursuing poachers before positioning rangers to enact an arrest, or tracking and monitoring black rhino for darting, the tracking prowess of the Gurkha soldiers and AP Rangers was put to the test daily. Operations both during the day and night resulted in large numbers of illegal fishermen arrested and their boats confiscated in a bid to preserve some of the fish species not found anywhere else in the world. Our operations tested everyone to a man in a new environment, with the added threats of dangerous game (including all big 5 species), this was an operation like no other.

From fighting fires day and night to responding to real life emergency casualties, the team deployed in Malawi dealt with an array of life-threatening situations. The list of once in a lifetime experiences too long to mention, the highlights of which include darting and collaring elephant, rescuing a pangolin (the world's most illegally trafficked animal) and assisting in the rehabilitation of cheetah. The climax of this operational tour was the critical role the team played in the largest black rhino translocation in history. The team planned and assisted in the moving of 17 male and female black rhinos from South Africa to Malawi before releasing them within LNP.



Cpl Ananda Thapa on patrol with the Head of Security for Liwonde National Park

Upon landing in Lilongwe in the early hours of the morning, the team escorted the 7 trucks carrying rhino arriving in LNP just after first light. A quick reconsolidation of manpower and the operation started. Trucks and release teams pushed to all parts of the park ready to release their allotted rhino. The operation was at the forefront of game capture release techniques; rhinos were sedated and guided from their boxes using manpower on heavy duty ropes. Coming face to face with the vast and majestic black rhino was a surreal and special experience. The rhino would then go down under the sedatives and teams worked quickly to attach ear tags and assist the vets in checking the rhinos' health.

Once all the work was done it was a case of injecting the reversal and giving the rhino space to wake up and adjust to its new environment. Observed from a quickly climbed tree or the back of a pick-up, a brief moment of relief as another rhino successfully released into the park. With the adrenaline still pumping it was then onto the next one, a conveyor belt of rhino wrestling. By the time all the rhino were released there were a lot of sore bodies, but the stories will be spoken about around fires for many years to come. To see the future of Malawi's

rhino population thriving in the days following the release has to be a highlight of many of the team's careers.

The tangible impact our team had during the tour stretches beyond the realms of the tactical actions on the ground. Community engagement projects culminated in the team raising over £3000 for the park's Happy Readers scheme looking to promote conservation values while teaching young children to read through the medium of interactive story books. Educating the local population about nature conservation and human wildlife conflict is particularly important; as we experienced when a lady, 5 months pregnant at the time, was struck and gored in the abdomen by an elephant. Our medical team's response, led by WO2 Surendra Tamang, to this casualty and their utter dedication to the lady's wellbeing resulted in not only saving her life but also the life of her unborn child. Headlines in international press spoke of the 'miracle' performed by the medics and shed greater light on the incredible work that our partners were conducting daily. This was not an isolated incident; the medics deployed dealt with, and saved, the lives of three individuals during our tour - a testament to the medical skills of each and every one of them.

Unfortunately, as is the case with all good things, it was time for the team to leave Malawi. Lifelong bonds have been forged between soldiers, rangers and the park staff. A shared hardship of 4 months, culminating in an historic translocation of black rhino had ensured that was the case. A small National Park in a small African country would leave an indelible mark on 35 Gurkhas. Liwonde has 35 new lifelong supporters and the World has 35 new conservationists. The African Parks team continue their fantastic work, through hardship and sacrifice; to provide the World with one of its truly special places, protecting some of its most precious species. We are eternally grateful to them.



OC Sp Coy placing a radio transmitter in the ear of a black rhino prior to release

Jai 2 RGR!



Op CORDED team at the gate of Liwonde Training Centre

THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS



History

Formed by the Royal Warrant as the Gurkha Engineers, part of the Brigade of Gurkhas on 28 September 1955. On 21 April 1977 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II approved the title of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

67 Gurkha Field Squadron Royal Engineers was raised at Kluang, Malaya in October 1948. Re-designated 67 Independent Gurkha Field Squadron in September 1994. Disbanded on 31 December 1996 in Hong Kong.

68 Field Squadron RE was raised at Kluang, Malaysia in August 1950.

Disbanded on 18 December 1993 in Hong Kong.

69 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron was raised at Sungei Besi, Malaya on 1 April 1961. Disbanded in Hong Kong on 17 August 1968.

69 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron re-formed on 1 March 1981 in Hong Kong and moved to Kitchener Barracks, Chatham later that month. Re-designated Gurkha Field Squadron and incorporated into 36 Engineer Regiment on 1 April 1993. Moved to Invicta Park Barracks, Maidstone on 13 September 1994.

70 Gurkha Field Park Squadron was raised at Sungei Besi, Malaya on 1 April 1960. Disbanded in Singapore on 31 July 1971.

On 6 August 1982 Support Squadron re designated 70 Support Squadron. Disbanded on 18 December 1993 in Hong Kong. 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron was reformed and became part of 36 Engineer Regiment with effect from April 2000.

Both 69 and 70 Gurkha Field Squadrons re-rolled to Search Squadrons in February 2011.

Both 69 and 70 Gurkha Field Squadrons re-rolled to Force Support in 2013.

QGE has successfully transformed into a Force Support Engineer Regiment and is now firmly established within 12 (Force Support) Engineer Group which sits within 8 Engineer Brigade.

Current Organisation

Regimental Headquarters, The Queen's Gurkha Engineers
69 Gurkha Field Squadron QGE
70 Gurkha Field Squadron QGE

Affiliated Corps

The Corps of Royal Engineers

Regimental Marches

Pipes Far o'er the Sea
Band Wings

Affiliated Colonel in Chief

Her Majesty the Queen

Staff List

Colonel of the Regiment

Lieutenant General R Wardlaw OBE

Officers of the Regiment (as at 31 December 2019)

RHQ

Lieutenant Colonel Mark Jones MBE RE
Maj Purnasingh Tamang QGE
Maj James Kelly RE
Capt Lauren Hardern RE
Capt Ashokkumar Gurung QGE

Commandant
Gurkha Major
Deputy Commandant
Adjutant
GRCMO

Field Officers

Maj James Kelly RE
Maj Buddhibahadur Bhandari MVO QGE
Maj Kamalbahadur Khapung Limbu MVO QGE
Maj Michael Gledhill RE
Maj Ian Pilbeam RE

Regiment 2IC
SO2 G1 Welfare/SSO HQ Brunei Garrison
Senior Instructor Combat, REWW, RSME
OC 69 Gurkha Field Squadron
OC 70 Gurkha Field Squadron

Captains

Capt S Piper RE
Capt C Marris RE
Capt Dirgha KC QGE
Capt Ganeshprasad Gurung QGE
Capt Bishwabahadur Rai QGE
Capt Khadkabahadur Gurung QGE
Capt Govindabahadur Rana
Capt Krishnakumar Pun QGE
Capt Narendradhoj Gurung
Capt Khelebrabhadur Gurung QGE
Capt Nareshkumar Limbu QGE
Capt Ashokkumar Gurung QGE
Catterick
Capt Prithibahadur Chhantyal QGE
Squadron
Capt M Paul RE
Capt G Forsey RE

2IC 69 Gurkha Field Squadron
2IC 70 Gurkha Field Squadron
Wing Comd, Gurkha Coy, ITC Catterick
Quartermaster Technical, HQ ARRC Sp Bn
Perie Troop Commander, 1 RSME Regt
Training Officer, ARRC Sp Bn
Quartermaster, British Gurkhas Pokhara
Operations Officer, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron
Operations Officer, 70 Gurkha Field Squadron
Troop Commander, Curragh Troop, Minley
BGE, HQ, Brunei Garrison
Platoon Commander, Gurkha Company, ITC,

Support Troop Commander, 69 Gurkha Field

Echelon Commander, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron
Echelon Commander, 70 Gurkha Field Squadron

Subalterns

Lt C Collins RE
Lt A Smith RE

Lt K Alexander RE
Lt P Burford RE

Lt Z Tarrant Taylor RE
2Lt S Taylor RE

Lt O Maynard RE
2Lt L Trup RE

Honours, Awards and Achievements

Bowring Trophy 2019

30141874	LCpl Laonya Limbu	Winner
30085137	LCpl Omraj Gurung	Runner Up

73 Training Party Combat Engineer Class 3

Overall Top Student

30312675 Spr Sujan Tamang

Top Academic Student

30312698 Spr Akash Rai

Colonel of the Regiment's Message



As I reflect on the Regiment's achievements of the last year I do so through the lens of the current COVID19 crisis. It goes without saying that our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have been personally touched by the unfolding drama. In such dark times I am sure you joined me in the delight I felt at seeing elements from across the Regiment leading the charge in building the first NIGHTINGALE hospital at Excel: Gurkha sappers very much at the heart of the British Army's response to the most significant challenge our society has faced since WW2.

It has been another year of extraordinary and diverse achievements for the Regiment. 70 Gurkha Field Squadron led the Regiment's commitment to Public Duties in the early part of 2019 and rightly drew enormous plaudits for the exceptional standards which they set. In the meantime, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron showed considerable patience in the preparations for the eventual deployment to South Sudan in December 2019, closing out the UK's commitment to this operation in style.

Success has been the watchword more widely for the Regiment this year, with a superb showing on the CAMBRIAN Patrol and the award of the highly coveted gold medal. Sporting success has been an ever-present quotient too; I was privileged to be a guest at the 'Battle of Invicta Park', a night of Regimental boxing which once more showcased first-hand the Gurkha fighting spirit! And the recent selections for commitments as diverse as the Army Squash Development Team and the Army Mountain Biking team show how central the Regiment remains to the wider sporting achievements of both the Corps and the British Army.

It seems hardly anytime at all since the Commandant, Lt Col Mark 'Jonah' Jones, his wife Lisa and daughter Harriet joined QGE's fold, but there is no doubt that over the last two years they have made an extraordinary impact and their departure in the Autumn will be sorely felt. With the moving on of a Commandant we must also say farewell to his Gurkha Major, Major Purnasingh Tamang and his wife Palmu. Jonah and Purna, supported by their memsahebharu, have been a formidable team and they leave the Regiment in better

shape than they inherited it. I know I speak on behalf of all the Regiment and Pariwar, in thanking them for their commitment and service.

To the future, we look forward to the return to the fold of Lt Col Mark Hendry MBE and Major Kamal Khapung Limbu MVO and their families. I am confident they will build on the excellent legacy of their predecessors, not least the exciting plans for the restoration of 67 and 68 Gurkha Field Squadrons, reinforcing the reputation for excellence which is the hallmark of QGE.

It was a mix of emotions that I announce my time as Colonel QGE will end on 29 Sep 20. The last 4 years have enabled me to return to the fold and remain very much part of the journey that the Regiment has been on. My wife and I have loved every moment and we are deeply thankful to all those in the Regiment and the wider Brigade who have made it so. While I may no longer be Col QGE, I have been honoured by Her Majesty to be selected as the next Colonel Commandant Brigade of Gurkhas from November, vice Lt Gen Sir Nicholas Pope KCB CBE. So, I am delighted my connection with the Brigade continues and look forward to meeting officers and soldiers from across the Brigade in the years ahead.

Jai QGE!

Commandant QGE's Message

Lieutenant Colonel M S Jones MBE RE



As you will read in this year's magazine, it has been another year of extraordinary and diverse achievements for The Queen's Gurkha Engineers. I have experienced the rich array of operational and sporting excellence, culture and heritage that the Regiment brings to all parts of the British Army from initial training at ITC Catterick and RMA Sandhurst, engineer training at 1 & 3 RSME Regiments, specialist training at IBS Brecon and SWS Warminster and overseas in Brunei and Nepal, to the Field Army in 36 Engineer Regiment, the ARRC Support Battalion, the Queen's Dragoon Guards and, most recently, 3 RGR – the new Specialised Infantry Battalion. It has been a monumental year for The QGE. The highlights have undoubtedly been the announcement of the growth of the 3rd and 4th QGE Squadrons as part of Project SHERPA, the large expansion of the Brigade of Gurkhas; and the welcoming of 70 new QGE members as 73 Training Party from ITC Catterick, one of the largest QGE intakes for many years, who passed off the square in November 2019.

Planning continues for this large growth in the QGE, which we anticipate will also include more roles at the ARRC Support Battalion and other Units across the Army. We are still aiming for the first Troop to be established in the 3rd Squadron by April 2021 and to be fully established by 2023. However, progress is slow and deliberate. This is to ensure that the QGE promotion structure (that has improved significantly over the last five years as part of previous QGE growth) is managed properly given that 3rd and 4th Squadron growth will be bottom-heavy. Rest-assured that RHQ QGE is fully engaged with the panoply of stakeholders to ensure that the needs of the QGE as a Regiment are properly considered.

For the elements of the QGE in 36 Engineer Regiment, 2019 started with an exceptional performance between February and April on Public Duties at Buckingham Palace, St James' Palace, the Tower of London and Windsor Castle. This was led by 70 Gurkha Field Squadron, supported by approximately 30 personnel from 69 Gurkha Field Squadron. After Public Duties, 70 Gurkha Field Squadron spent the majority of the remainder of 2019 on Salisbury Plain finessing its competency on HUSKY armoured vehicle wheeled platforms. This culminated with Exercise WESSEX

STORM in August and September 2019 and since then the Squadron has been held at readiness as part of the 3 SCOTS battlegroup as the UK's contribution to the NATO Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Land) (VJTFL). This commitment is known as Operation AGORA. At the same time, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron completed pre-deployment training for deployment to South Sudan on Operation TRENTON 8. In December 2019 the Squadron deployed as the engineer component of the final UK Task Force, responsible for closing the UK's highly successful four-year operation supporting the UN Mission in South Sudan.

The Regiment is continuing to maintain momentum against an extremely high tempo, delivering excellence on operations, training exercises, being on standby for potential short notice deployments across the world and UK resilience commitments. Yet we are still ensuring that the sporting, charity, heritage and wider community engagement aspects are properly attended to. The professionalism of QGE Sappers has been acknowledged once again this year by securing a gold medal in the Cambrian Patrol competition, receiving a Chief Royal Engineer's Commendation, four Commander 8 Engineer Brigade's commendations and many CO's coins and tankards from across ERE Units and 36 Engineer Regiment. Similarly in sport, Cpl Topjang Rai has been selected for the British Army mountain biking team; and Spr Sirish Budha Magar is now on the Corps boxing team.

As ever, The Queen's Gurkha Engineers continues to set the example for others to follow, and I feel extremely proud to be the Commandant. I have far too many amazing personal experiences and memories from 2019 to list them all here. But meeting all of the outstanding individuals serving at ERE at various points throughout the year, seeing 69 and 70 Gurkha Field Squadrons in action every day, experiencing the QGE anniversary and Dashain in Maidstone having been in South Sudan last year, and of course my Duty Trek to Eastern Nepal with the Gurkha Major and Regimental Sergeant Major, including a stop in Brunei to see the Boat Section on the way home, are just a few.

Jai QGE !
Jai Brigade of Gurkhas !

Foreword by Gurkha Major *Major Purnasingh Tamang*



As 25th Gurkha Major of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers, it is my great privilege and I feel humble and honoured to write a note for Kukri magazine.

Due to the limited career opportunities, fragile promotion and career structures for QGE soldiers and Late Entry Officers, RHQ QGE is continually engaging with key stakeholders to address the issues during the QGE growth plan. Not forgetting the importance of Gurkha soldiers' and their family's welfare and cultural needs, they are also firmly on the agenda. It is a great opportunity to address The Queen's Gurkha Engineers issues and interests from the beginning of the planning phase for the growth of the regiment. Although it is fact that new changes will bring new challenges and all issues might not be resolved at once, RHQ QGE is studying deeply and trying to identify as much as possible the second and third order effects of the growth and make long term sustainable recommendations.

Beside operational delivery, maintaining regimental and Brigade of Gurkhas' brand, heritage, ethos and Kaida RHQ QGE continue to deliver and support other functions of RHQ. QGE soldiers are on the forefront of community engagement events and series of fundraising for the regimental chosen charity organisations ie Gurkha Welfare Trust, Pahar Trust, Invicta Park Playgroup and Gurkha Museum. After the successful QGE modern history study day last year, RHQ QGE is reviewing QGE dress code policy this year. RHQ continually maintain the relationship with Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association, QGE Regimental Association Nepal and other local QGE veterans' social events. Regiment highly respect the sacrifice and the commitment made by our veterans.

QGE is fortunate that, as majority of QGE serving personnel are under 36 Engr Regiment, is a diverse regiment. Gurkha soldiers are learning British counterparts' way of operating and best practices each day without diluting the Gurkha heritage and Kaida.

Integration within the diverse regiment is vital and role of the RHQ QGE is fundamental to maintain the right balance.

Although the academic standard and the English language skill of modern Gurkha soldiers is much better comparing to the past ten years, however demand for the modern British Army standard is also high. To prepare our junior soldiers for future critical thinking and better communication skilled Senior NCOs and Late Entry Officers the emphasis has been on the continue personnel development and skill for soldiers. Many QGE soldiers have already acquired GCSE, A level and Engineering and management degree.

The Queens' Gurkha Engineers Families news

This year has been yet another fantastic year to look back with some remarkable achievements by our Gurkha families residing in Invicta Park Barracks and Brompton. At the time of writing this article, 145 families are living in Service Family Accommodation, and inflow of families joining the regiment steadily continues. The concept of a typical Gurkha family, where most of the spouses would traditionally be housewives, is rapidly evolving. As Darwin's quote states, "It is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive but those that best manage change", the majority of the families are either employed or undertaking employment training and university courses. Nowadays many Gurkha families work the for NHS and care sectors. Despite the changes in our traditional family dynamics, families have significantly contributed to maintain and develop our tradition, culture and Kaida, while also promoting community engagement, charity fundraising and excellent social integration with the broader communities.

This news would not be complete without mentioning the QGE ladies' accomplishment of Everest Base Camp

expedition. Inspired from the incredible expeditions set to undertake by Ex QGE Nirmal Purja and Ex RGR double amputee Hari Budha Magar, QGE ladies embarked on their ambitious journey with no prior experience. They reached the summit on 11 Nov 19 on Armistice Day and laid a wreath as a remembrance for our fallen heroes, marking their achievement in QGE history. The aim of the expedition was: to educate and inspire the young generation, enhance team cohesion, give back to those vulnerable people in need through charity fundraising and ultimately test their physical and mental resilience. The team raised a total of Rs 117,600 through various community engagement and fundraising activities which was handed over to Prisoners Assistance Nepal (PA Nepal) by team leader Mrs Palmu Lama Tamang (W/O, GM QGE) didi during the expedition. PA Nepal helps to provide basic needs and human rights to prisoners and their children; particularly taking complete care of children whose parents have been imprisoned. A huge congratulations to QGE ladies' team!

Furthermore, families had several educational visits including Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace, Tower of London, and most notably Gurudwara and Swaminarayan temple on 21 Sep 19. In addition to observing all main festivals and rituals throughout the year, a huge thank you to families for supporting RHQ QGE's initiative to run cultural education sessions for our children.

Jai QGE



QGE ladies at Everest Base Camp



Families visit to Swaminarayan temple

RHQ QGE News

By Capt Ashokkumar Gurung QGE (GRCMO)

RHQ QGE continues to support and manage QGE personnel within the mainland UK and abroad. Another gleaming year collectively for the Regt. QGE soldiers and officers have excelled in all aspects in training and whilst deployed on operations.

Sustainable career structure supported by inflow and balanced outflow has been the theme while delivering phase 3 growth plan. In addition, RHQ QGE has been working tirelessly to ensure the QGE third Sqn is fully supported as part of Project SHERPA. Deeper and wider engagement and collective communication with various stakeholders is ongoing. Regt also bid farewell to Major Rob Oakes RE and welcomed Major Michael Gledhill RE - Commanding Officer of 69 Gurkha Field Squadron.

With a better employment opportunities within ERE units through phase 3 growth and a third and fourth Sqn growth on sight, rate of transfer to the wider Corps has significantly slowed down.

Manning Statistics

Total Liability:	335
Current Strength:	308
Total Undermanning:	27

69 Gurkha Field Squadron QGE

Reflecting on the past year, it is astonishing to think about all the incredible achievements the Squadron has accomplished, both individually and as a team. It epitomises the professionalism and reputation of the Gurkha soldier and as a newcomer to the Queen's Gurkha Engineer fraternity, it is immediately apparent that the reputation that befalls it as an organisation is absolutely true in every aspect of military life; it has been truly awe inspiring.

For the past twelve months, the Squadron's accomplishments have been exhaustingly numerous. With the focus very much being the deployment to South Sudan on Op TRENTON 8, all the other activity has been worked around this Main Effort and the Pre-Deployment Training burden that comes with it.

Squadron Personnel Changes

There have been a number of noteworthy changes within the Squadron Command Group with both the Officer Commanding and Squadron Sergeant Major changing over. Major Jamie Walker left in June 2019 for a NATO job on the continent after an excellent two-year tenure in post, handing over the reins to Major Mike Gledhill, a newcomer to the Queen's Gurkha Engineers. In April 2019, Warrant Officer Class 2 Chandrabahadur Pun took over the post of Squadron Sergeant Major

Footprint

QGE personnel are currently employed in Brunei, Nepal, ITC Catterick, IBS Brecon, SWS Warminster, HQ ARRC, 3RGR, 1RSME and 3RSME. Reconnaissance Sgt (Sgt Sandesh Rai) from the Queen's Dragoons Guards will return to QGE as the PID is a temporary assignment. Major Kamal Khapung Limbu continues to deliver royal investiture as the Queen's Gurkha Orderly Officer while delivering series of courses as a Senior Instructor Combat, REWW, RSME.

73 Training Party

70 x Sappers from Intake 2019, known as 73 Training Party completed their Combat Engineer Class 3 course in March 2020 followed by the Attestation (KASAM KHANE) Parade and continues to attend trade courses in 1 Royal School of Military Engineering Chatham.

from Warrant Officer Class 2 Birendra Kambang, who left the Sqn for the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick. The Squadron also saw many new officers join: Captain Andrew 'Ronnie' Barker as the Echelon Commander, Captain Prithi Chhantyal who successfully commissioned and took up the post of Support Troop Commander, Captain David Emmerson as the Garrison Engineer and Lieutenant Hamaad Basir as H Troop Commander. Sadly, a number had to leave the Squadron: Captain Mark Paul, Captain Govinda Rana and Lieutenant Andy Smith. The Squadron also saw a number of personnel retire after distinguished careers in the Army: SSgt Sher Chongbang, SSgt Neil Orbell, Sgt Jay Pun and Cpl Krishnaraj Gurung; all who leave the Service for greener pastures.

It is also worth noting that the Squadron grew in strength and capability over this period, when in May 2019 it added a Construction Supervision Cell onto its ORBAT with the addition of a Garrison Engineer, one Warrant Officer and five Staff Sergeants. As a result, the Squadron strength routinely sat at around the 130 mark with 9 Officers and 121 Other Ranks. 2019 also brought a new chapter to the history books with QGE growth now having been formalised; the resulting future uplift in personnel and increased opportunities for promotion have had a real positive impact on 69 Gurkha Field Squadron

after a tumultuous period whereby the Squadron were pulled from pillar to post supporting trawls and other people's tasks. The unifying action that comes with any sub-unit operational deployment further augmented this positive mood and made for a great start to the year after finishing its support to 70 Gurkha Field Squadron as the Public Duties Reinforcement Company. Having been warned off for deployment on operations, the Forecast of Events for 2019 firmly focussed on the operational training cycle to get everyone ready to deploy, but that did not prevent the Squadron from adding other activities to the calendar, voluntarily or not.

team leader and SSgt Jayandra Garbuja as one of the managers. The Team took first place in the competition with Cpl Kumar Pun winning the Class A Top Shot of the competition and Lt Andy Smith winning the Class B Top Shot. The Team was then reconstituted to enter the Force Troops' Command Operational Shooting Competition 19, and thereafter, the Army Operational Shooting Competition where Cpl Kumar Pun went on to gain the overall 6th position in the Army 100 and was selected for the British Army Combat shooting team.



Handing over the Command of 69 Gurkha Field Squadron: Major Jamie Walker RE to Major Mike Gledhill RE

Ex KENT NIRMAN 2019

Highlights of construction projects within Kent. Wide range of kit, equipment, materials and vehicles were used to practice and enhance artisan trades, combat engineering and detailed engineering skills including reconnaissance and project management.



Sgt Basanta and a Chautara completed for 1 RGR

Operational Shooting Competition 2019

Squadron personnel made up the core element of the Regiment's Operational Shooting Team that took part in the Royal Engineer's Inter Unit Shooting Competition, with Lt Andy Smith acting as the



Sp Tp constructing Footpath at Invicta Park Barracks



The Regimental Team, under Lt Andy Smith (the tall chap in the rear), and Cpl Kumar Pun next to him with the impeccable moustache



I Troop - Constructing a foot path and a gap for the bridge training at Invicta Park Barracks Training Area

Ex PULNIRMAN 2019

No self-respecting field squadron could go a year without a combat engineer training package down at Weymouth and 69 Gurkha Field Squadron were no different. Clearly, the only time to go is mid-summer and so at the end of July the Squadron made its way down to Dorset for a week to revise its combat engineer skills. Fighting for space against an entire battalion of the Army Cadet Force, the Squadron managed to set up camp, ready for four days of good training. Organised by SSgt Bishnuprasad Gurung, the combat engineers focussed on training that wasn't readily available elsewhere, in particular, watermanship, aerial ropeways and bridging. This was also a good opportunity for the new OC to deploy with the Squadron and get to know the personalities. As always, a management function at the local Gurkha curry house, followed by a squadron messing event, meant that the evenings were filled with good food and entertainment, capping off a spectacular exercise.



Sappers erecting an Aerial Ropeway, a skillset not often practiced



'Towards the gap', building a 12 Bay Double Story Medium Girder Bridge

EX TRAIL WALKER 2019



4 Man Team - Sprs (Pujan, Nirnanjan, Prakash and Sanjok) Time: 11hrs 54min

QGE Birthday and Dashain

For the second year running, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron were tasked with organising the QGE Birthday and Dashain Celebrations. Led by G Troop under the overall leadership of Lt Louis Trup, but with SSgt Suman Ghale organising Dashain and Sgt Lilaram Rai the QGE Birthday. The guest of honour for the QGE Birthday was Lieutenant General (retired) Sir David Bill KCB and Dashain was attended by Colonel of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers, Lieutenant General R Wardlaw OBE, Commander 8 Engineer Brigade, Brigadier J Fossey OBE and just over 600 guests.



The Gurkha Major, Major Purnasingsh Tamang, Lt Gen (retired) Sir David Bill KCB and Commandant QGE, Lt Col M Jones MBE cutting the birthday cake



Producing Potable Water for the Task Force

Mission Rehearsal Exercise, Op TRENTON 8 (27 Oct - 05 Nov 19)

The final exercise to confirm the Squadron's readiness for deployment on operations took place on the Thetford Training Area during a very cold Autumn. The Squadron were split into the two engineer groups, the Bentiu Engineer Group and the Malakal Engineer Group, and it was the first time its personnel donned the light blue beret of the United Nations. The Bentiu Engineer Group, under the command of Major Mike Gledhill, would see the majority of the Squadron under its ORBAT, with G Troop being detached to Malakal under No 1 Company, the Irish Guards. The exercise, run by the Mission Training and Mobilisation Centre, put the Task Force through its paces having to conduct numerous engineer tasks, including real time tasks for the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, all whilst having to react to various scenarios. It was a testing exercise, especially as the weather did not reflect the warm South Sudanese climate. The Bentiu Engineer Group set about building a new road on a green field site to link a future bridge to the other side of the training area as well as fell tens of trees to improve fields of view. The Malakal Engineer Group proceeded to construct concrete pads as well as conducting tree felling. Both groups also had to wrestle with a number of combat engineering tasks including water points and elevated sangars. The exercise climax was a long-awaited mass casualty serial and the consequent influx of Internally Displaced People, both of which were handled in the professional manner one would expect from the Squadron, which was now officially ready to deploy.



Filling the top layer of the Expeditionary Elevated Sangar using a Self-Loading Dump Truck

Op TRENTON 8 (25 Nov 19 - 26 Mar 20)

The Squadron had the pleasure of deploying, as part of a Task Force, to Africa in support of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. For many individuals it was their first deployment and so a lot of excitement ensued. After two weeks of pre-deployment leave on the back of the Mission. Rehearsal Exercise, the Squadron deployed via Kenya to Juba and then onto the two forward locations of Bentiu and Malakal. The Task Force would be the UK's last in support of the UN and therefore it had the momentous job of not only delivering engineer effect, but also closing down the Theatre and returning four years' worth of engineer resources and vehicles, the details of which are encompassed in a sperate article later in the Journal.



The Bentiu Engineer Group, under command of Major Gledhill

It has been a very busy year for the Squadron which was capped off by a very successful deployment to South Sudan. The return home did not see a relinquishing of pace of life, with members of the Squadron thrust straight into Op RESCRIPT, the UK's response to the COVID-19 global pandemic which will no doubt endure for the immediate future; watch this space.



The completion of a route upgrade task for the local population

70 Gurkha Field Squadron News

Ex DHARILO KHUKURI and Ex WESSEX STORM



70 Gurkha Field Squadron on Ex DHARILO KHUKURI 2019

70 Gurkha Field Squadron has had an extremely busy year. The training year kicked off with Ex DHARILO KHUKURI, a combined CT1 and CT2 exercise on Salisbury Plain, during a very hot June. CT1 saw Troops testing and adjusting SOPs, practicing Tp level skills and drills at Troop level AV(W) tactics. This consisted of Troops building cup-lock towers laying trackway, revising demolitions, digging tasks and building a variety of bridges in different configurations. These were then all put into practise at Sqn level during the 2nd phase of the exercise where the Sqn carried out bridge laying serials, vehicle hides and trench digging tasks, an Echelon led Rear Passage of Lines (RPOL) task and demolition tasks. The exercise prepared the Sqn very well, giving everyone the confidence and requisite experience to support a Battle Group in the future.

Off the back of conducting Ex DHARILO KHUKURI, the Squadron went straight onto supporting Ex WESSEX STORM. With lessons learned from Ex DHARILO KHUKURI the Squadron hit the ground running and immediately began a live fire package. The progressive training began with individual fire and manoeuvre lanes and culminated in a combined arms live fire exercise in day and night conditions. The Squadron were fortunate

enough to showcase their skills in a variety of areas including Explosive Method of Entry (EMOE), Bangalore Torpedoes, scatmin clearance and infantry assault bridges. The battlegroup, which included a Latvian element, then moved onto its test phase. 70 Squadron successfully supported the Battlegroup through the two-week test phase providing both close and general support. Highlights included bridge demolitions, fascine crossings and general manoeuvre support. 3 SCOTS were also keen to utilise the Gurkha's infantry skills and the Squadron regularly found itself assisting in wood block clearances or breaking into urban objectives.

After returning from Salisbury Plain the Squadron quickly began preparing for its Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) commitment, again supporting 3 SCOTS. This required specific training which included a two-day cold weather warfare course so that the Squadron was ready to support NATO operations in Arctic conditions. Vehicle specific continuation training was also required. Firstly, the next cohort of Section Comds and Sect 2ICs completed the Husky commander's course. Secondly, in conjunction with the Regimental Training Wing, the Squadron leant into the most recent GPMG cadre which culminated at Lulworth ranges with a pintle shoot.



Echelon and Support Troop on Ex DHARILO KHUKUI 19



*K Troop post Live Fire Tactical Training (LFTT)
on Ex WESSEX STORM*

In November the Squadron was fortunate to receive 70 new Gurkha Sappers straight from completing their Phase 1 training in Catterick. The recruits were then put through a three-week selection course focusing on their mathematic abilities, draughtsmanship potential and an IQ test. Upon completion of the course each recruit was allocated a given trade. They have now completed their combat engineering training at 3 RSME and are looking forward to the start of their trade training later in the year.

As 2020 dawned, 70 Sqn deployed on Ex SHINY KHUKURI, a CT1 exercise in Aldershot. Over a course of a week the Gurkha sappers refreshed their combat engineering skills through completing MBOG and water supply tasks. Their problem-solving ability was tested during a non-equipment bridge build, where junior commanders applied their engineering knowledge to

construct a bridge with limited supplies. The week culminated with an infantry serial, where both Tps conducted ambushes on an enemy force. The exercise was an excellent opportunity for the Sqn to shake out again, and for those who had deployed on Ex WESSEX STORM to share their skills and experience.

This busy period has seen the transformation of 70 Squadron into a well-versed Armoured Vehicle (Wheeled) (AV(W)) subunit and ready to fulfil its readiness responsibilities for the remainder of this year. EX WESSEX STORM saw the Squadron go from strength to strength. It integrated well with the Battlegroup and its own integral REME support. A special note must also be made of REME's standout performance whilst on exercise.

Jai QGE



SCOTS Battle Group, Ex WESSEX STORM

Nigel Gidney
NEWSPHOTO

Gurkha Families News

145 families are living in Service Family Accommodation (SFA) and the inflow of families joining the regiment is continuing. The concept of a typical Gurkha family, where most of the spouses would traditionally be housewives, is rapidly evolving. As Charles Darwin’s quote, “It is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive but those that best manage change”, most of the families are either employed or undertaking employment training and university courses. Despite the changes in our traditional family dynamics, families have significantly contributed to maintain and develop our tradition, culture and KAIDA. This has hugely impacted on promoting community.

The QGE ladies’ accomplishment of Everest Base Camp expedition this year. Inspired from the incredible expeditions set to undertake by Ex QGE Mr Nirmal Purja (NIMS DAI) and Ex RGR double amputee Mr Hari Budha Magar, QGE ladies embarked on their ambitious journey with no prior experience. They reached the summit on 11 Nov 19 on Armistice Day and laid a wreath as a form of remembrance to our fallen heroes. The aim of the expedition was: to inspire the young generation, help to those vulnerable people in need through charity fundraising and enhance team cohesion by ultimately testing their physical and mental robustness. The team raised a total of Rs117,600 through various community engagement and fundraising activities which was handed over to Prisoners Assistance Nepal (PA Nepal) by team leader Mrs Palmu Tamang (W/O, GM QGE) during the expedition.

Excellence in Soldiering - Above and Beyond



The Bowring Trophy Winner 2019 Awarded to LCpl Laonya Limbu



Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL 2019 - Gold Medal Winner, 36 Engr Regt & QGE Patrol Commander - Cpl Kumar Pun QGE



Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL 2019 Gold Medal Winner, ARRC Sp Bn Patrol Commander - SSgt Tilak Pun QGE

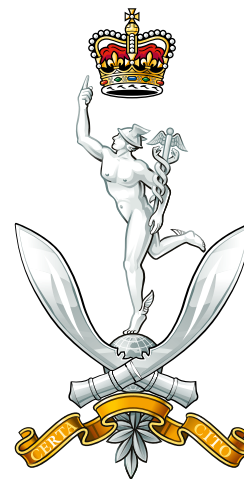


Supporting Bosnian Team for Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL 2019 Capt Khadka (Trg Offr) and SSgt Tilak (CST Tp) QGE ARRC Sp Bn



Capt Naresh Limbu (BGE) and Boat Section in British Forces Brunei

QUEEN'S GURKHA SIGNALS



Two Khukuris point upwards, the handles crossed in saltire, the cutting edges of the blades inwards, between the blades the figure of Mercury on a globe, the latter supported above by a scroll bearing the motto "Certa Cito" and below by nine laurel leaves, the whole surmounted by Saint Edward's Crown.

Raised in Kuala Lumpur in 1948, by Major A C Cox R SIGNALS, from Gurkha soldiers of each of the eight battalions of the then new Brigade of Gurkhas. They, together with re-enlisted ex-servicemen of the Indian Army, British officers and soldiers of the Royal Signals, formed the Gurkha Signals Training and Holding Wing in early 1949.

The first elements were designated "Royal Signals Gurkha". In 1952 this was changed to "Gurkha Royal Signals". The present badge was granted on 23 September 1954, the date which is now the official Regimental Birthday. The regimental title became "Gurkha Signals" in 1955 and on 21 April 1977, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II approved the title "Queen's Gurkha Signals". On 16 May 1983 Queen's Gurkha Signals restructured to a Regimental organisation.

Since the closure of the base in Hong Kong in 1997, the Regiment has gone through considerable change. QG SIGNALS reduced to a Squadron and then continued to expand to an establishment that includes 3 Field Squadrons, training elements in Blandford and Catterick as well as Troops in Brunei and Nepal. Finally, an addition of 10 posts with 18 (UKSF) Signal Regiment and 16 posts with RMAS, gives our soldiers the opportunity to serve with Special Forces and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

Affiliations and Associations

Affiliated Corps	The Royal Corps of Signals
Affiliated Regiment	32nd (Scottish) Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Association	6th Signal Regiment, The Royal Australian Corps of Signals
Regimental March Past	"Scotland the Brave"

The organisations and units which currently comprise Queen's Gurkha Signals

Regimental Headquarters Queen's Gurkha Signals	Bramcote
246 Gurkha Signal Squadron	York
247 Gurkha Signal Squadron	MOD Stafford
248 Gurkha Signal Squadron	MOD Stafford
249 Gurkha Signal Squadron	Bulford
250 Gurkha Signal Squadron	Bramcote
11 (RSS) Signal Regiment	Blandford
Brunei Signal Troop	Brunei
Nepal Signal Troop	Nepal
Seremban Troop	RMA Sandhurst

Additionally, personnel, in less than a troop strength, are employed in Gurkha Company at Infantry Training Centre Catterick, 15 Sig Regt, 18 (UKSF) Signal Regiment, HQ ARRC, Blandford Garrison Support Unit, Specialist Weapons School Army Training Centres, Winchester Training Centre, Sandhurst Support Unit and D Info Army HQ.

Staff List

Colonel of the Regiment

Major General J J Cole OBE

British Officers

Lieutenant Colonel H J Stoy
 Major T J W Masi
 Major D M Murphy
 Major T M Collins
 Major J Corns
 Major J Carey
 Captain J T Cauldwell
 Captain A J Balfour
 Lieutenant S J W Lonsdale
 Lieutenant A P Newman
 Lieutenant J L Greenhalgh
 Lieutenant M D Hynd
 Lieutenant D J Pretorius
 Lieutenant J McAloan
 Lieutenant K J Constable
 Lieutenant E A Law
 Lieutenant T Weatherhead
 Lieutenant J E Howells
 Lieutenant H B Karas
 Lieutenant S D P Neale
 2nd Lieutenant J A Lowe

Comd QG SIGNALS
 OC 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 OC 247 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 OC 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 OC 249 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 OC 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Ops Offr 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 247 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 247 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 247 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 249 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 249 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Ops Offr 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn

Gurkha Officers

Major Dhirbahadur Pun
 Major Shankar Gurung
 Captain Bharat Shrestha
 Captain Vishal Pun
 Captain Kamal Gurung
 Captain Khagendra Pun
 Captain Subaraj Sunuwar
 Captain Sureshkumar Limbu
 Captain Gyanendrabhadur Rai
 Captain Indrabhadur Thapa
 Captain Simbahadur Chochangi
 Captain Laxmanbabu Rana
 Captain Lalitbahadur Thapa
 Captain Deepak Rai
 Captain Ashok Gurung
 Captain Gopalkrishna Saru
 Captain Robin Rai
 Captain Hembahadur Rana
 Captain Jagatram Rai

GM QG SIGNALS
 OC Sp Sqn, 22 Sig Regt
 OC BST
 Adjt QG SIGNALS
 RCMO QG SIGNALS
 OC NST
 Ops Offr 247 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 2IC 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 2IC 247 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 2IC 247 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 249 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Pl Comd ITC Gurkha Coy
 2IC 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn, 30 Sig Regt
 2IC 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, 2 Sig Regt
 Trg Offr 4 (Mil) Sqn
 OC Battleaxe Tp 3 Sqn
 Tp Comd 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn
 Tp Comd 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn

Gurkha Officers holding E1/E2 Appointments

Lieutenant Colonel Tolbahadur Khamcha	CO/Dep Gar Comd HQ Tidworth & Bulford Gar
Major Hebindra Pun	AMA BGN
Major Ganeshbahadur Gurung	QM 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Major Amritkumar Gurung	QM, HQ JITG Chicksands
Major Omprashad Pun	2IC Sandhurst Sp Unit, RMAS
Major Surendrakumar Gurung MVO	SO2 G6, 2 Med Bde
Major Lokbahadur Gurung MVO	Ops Maj 71 Yeomanry Sig Regt

Foreword by Colonel of the Regiment *Major General J J Cole OBE*

This has been a year of fantastic success for Queen's Gurkha Signals, and I am proud to serve as the Colonel of Regiment. As a member of the Executive Committee of the Army Board, I see a great deal of the overall Army, and I am delighted that the Brigade of Gurkhas - with significant contribution by our Paltan - plays a major part in the Army's operations, exercises and training.

The serving Regiment has now grown to five sub-units, with 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron playing a major role in 16 Signal Regiment, supporting Logistics Commanders; and with 249 Gurkha Signal Squadron now ensconced within 3rd (United Kingdom) Division Signal Regiment. I visited the Headquarters of 3rd (United Kingdom) Division on exercise in Fort Hood, Texas, where the General Officer Commanding was tested within a highly demanding US Corps exercise - ably enabled by our newest Squadron. 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron is now embedded within 1 Signal Regiment, supporting the 20 Armoured Brigade, and preparing for a move to Perham Down to be closer to the training areas and the supported Brigade. Meanwhile 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron and 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron maintain their prestigious roles supporting the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps and the Standing Joint Force Headquarters respectively. These five operational tasks provide our soldiers with varied careers, a breadth of opportunities, and crucially has enhanced the Royal Signals with its operational outputs when they are struggling with manning levels. In the future, we will create a further two squadrons, and my staff in the Army Headquarters are developing plans for their role and location and are building a career model and growth plan that is sustainable. We have had many conversions of officer commissions and soldier engagements in the past year, and this has allowed our talented people to serve for longer, which is fabulous news for them, their families and the Army. In 2019 we enlisted 70 trainees into the Regiment, and I am delighted by their exceptional quality and josh.

So how have we done on the sporting front? Brilliantly! We managed the "double" by winning Nepal Cup 2019 and then Trailwalker 2019. A huge congratulations to the participants, gurujis, and the commanders that have released soldiers for the training. We have also done a wide range of fundraising events: for the Gurkha Welfare Trust, Royal Signals Benevolent Fund, and many more military and civilian charities. Thank you to all that have taken part in fundraising and thank you to the kind donors of funds. Please also remember our own small charity, the QG SIGNALS Trust. I am grateful to Colonel (Retired) Taff Watts MBE for managing this so well, but he does need us to think of ways to help grow it - fundraising, legacies, small monthly standing orders. Please consider what you can do. The Trust has helped our serving Regiment afford some of its religious, social and sporting events; allowed veterans to subsidise



Association meetings in UK, Nepal and Hong Kong; and made benevolent grants such as to the family of the late Signaller Rupesh Limbu whose loss we still mourn.

Many of our soldiers have received commendations for excellence in training, in support of exercises, service in our training bases such as Kenya, and for operational shooting. I am glad to say that the list is long, too long to name them all. But well done and thank you to the commanders that have taken time to write the citations. Congratulations to Captain (Retired) Mahendra Limbu MBE for his award of MBE for service to Gurkha Welfare Trust. Also, our previous Colonel of Regiment has been knighted this year - Lieutenant General Sir Nick Pope KCB CBE for which we are all delighted. Whilst he has recently retired from regular service, he continues to serve the Brigade as Colonel Commandant, and the Corps as Master of Signals. Thank you Pope Saheb!

The Association is being run well by Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Complin and Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Yam Rana, to whom I offer our thanks. Association members have met to celebrate our birthday and other events. I have joined celebrations in Bramcote and Feltham and been delighted to see the mutual support and affection amongst our retired members and serving Regiment together. I hope to visit Nepal again in the year ahead, and I know that our Association members there continue to meet and greet visitors from our serving Regiment and provide camaraderie to each other.

Thank you for reading this note; keep excelling whether you are in service or one of our retired wallah. Do good for our Paltan's name.

Jai QG SIGNALS!

Foreword by Commander *Lieutenant Colonel H J Stoy*

What a year 2019 has been for the Queen's Gurkha Signals, dherai badhai chha to you all!

As Commander, I get asked regularly what the difference is between Gurkhas and British soldiers and one of the replies that I give is that Gurkhas all still see service in the British Army as a privilege. As a result of this everything that Gurkha soldiers do is approached with professionalism, commitment, drive and a competitive edge that is difficult to match elsewhere. Your delivery, be it as an individual, troop, squadron or indeed Paltan, is always first-class and 2019 has been no exception. We are also incredibly lucky to have the continued support from the retired community, association and wider Gurkha Brigade, without whom our lives would be far more challenging.

With five regular sub-units and detachments across the globe the Paltan deployed to more than nine operational theatres. In addition to operations, exercises and AT have spread personnel to the four corners of the earth and, where the Queen's Gurkha Signals go, plaudits and praises have followed in abundance. The exceptional capabilities that our soldiers continue to deliver and reputation are second to none.

There has been much to celebrate about in the Paltan in 2019 our 70th Anniversary year: a fantastic number of promotions; selections for Late Entry Commissions; a plethora of awards and commendations, of particular note a Royal Signals Institution Silver Medal; and plenty of top students across a range of trade and promotion courses. For many, the highlights of the year have been winning the Nepal Cup football, under the Captaincy of Staff Sergeant Bhupal Gurung and Trailwalker which was led by Staff Sergeant Pramesh Shrestha - both incredible feats of physical ability, great teamwork and first-class execution. Operational shooting continues to see successes with an increase in the numbers of QG Signallers in the Army 100 and, most importantly, a development squad who are on the cusp of reaching this elite group. Across multiple sporting disciplines we have representation at Combined Services, Army and Corps levels.

I want to particularly highlight the amazing job that QG Signals representatives do in our various training establishments, particularly ITC, RMAS and 11 (RSS) Sig Regt. The professional investment and leadership displayed has been, and remains, critical in ensuring that the earliest exposure soldiers and officers have to members of the Paltan leaves a long-lasting positive impression on them all. They work some punishing hours and are in many respects, at the vanguard of the Regiment and I know that you would all want to join me in thanking them publicly for all that they do. This year we have seen 70 exceptional Gurkha recruits join the Paltan and I can assure you that the future looks extremely bright. I have seen for myself that they



are bright, ambitious, good fun and utterly committed, we look forward to tracking their successes across the Corps and wider Brigade.

In April 2019 I was fortunate to visit Nepal with the GM for my duty trek. During the visit I was afforded the opportunity to meet with members of the Paltan past and present including Association representatives in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Dharan. We spent three days in Lamjung trekking and meeting retired members of the wider Brigade of Gurkhas and widows, who are now looked after by the Gurkha Welfare Trust. The work of the GWT is extraordinary and seeing first-hand some of what they deliver was humbling. We also went to visit the late Signaller Rupesh's family to present them a cheque from the Paltan and to also give them Rupesh's hat and Khukuri which we had had mounted and framed. It was an emotional occasion and it was clear that they were immensely grateful for the support that they had received from the Regiment. I had never been to Nepal until this visit, and I left feeling hugely privileged to have been afforded the opportunity to meet with so many different members of the Queen's Gurkha Signals family and to have seen a little of this amazing country.

My last word must be one of thanks to the RHQ team. Under the leadership of the Major Dhir Pun, the small team work tirelessly to the good and benefit of all the Paltan. Through this period of significant change and expansion, they have carefully managed a broad range of stakeholders with the best interests of the QG Signals community front and centre. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals!

Foreword by Gurkha Major Major Dhirbahadur Pun

I feel humbled and honoured to write these words as the outgoing Gurkha Major QG SIGNALS for the Kukri Magazine. The responsibility of Gurkha Major has been an honourable, memorable and thoroughly enjoyable. For the opportunity, loyalty and unwavering support I must thank my family and indeed you all, without our shared ethos we would not be as successful as we are. 2019 has been an eventful year for the Paltan, one of growth, history making and the remarkable landmark of its 70th birthday. We have increased in number, from three to five squadrons, all of which continue to achieve success in the UK and across the globe. Our reputation is fierce and as a result we are now expanding to a further 2 squadrons. Our spirit is alive and well as the Paltan has managed to dominate several Brigade of Gurkhas events: Winning the Nepal Cup, Tug of War and Trailwalker 19. Superb contribution from all sub units. Well done and thank you for the continued support to the Paltan. 2020 is looking to be a very promising year and we have much more to achieve.

Growth

As part of A2020R we have seen come online 247 Gurkha Sig Sqn, 16 Sig Regt in Stafford and 249 Gurkha Sig Sqn, 3rd (UK) Div Sig Regt in Bulford. Manning to the sqns continues as the new units are already supporting commitments. Project SHERPA is the planning for the growth of the Brigade of Gurkhas. As part of the Project SHERPA, the Queen's Gurkha Signals will form up 6th and 7th new Sqns. This is fantastic news for the Paltan. Currently, 6th Sqn will form up under 22 Sig Regt, Stafford from early 2021 and 7th Sqn in 15 Sig Regt, Perham Down from early 2023. We will be fully formed as a Regt by 2025 with a total liability of circa 788. There are currently 590 Gurkhas serving in the Regiment including personnel undergoing their basic trade training. This year 400 recruits have joined the Brigade of Gurkhas, which has been the highest number of recruits coming into the UK. We have welcomed 70 members of Recruit Intake 2019 into the Paltan with a forecast of 96, 93, 70, 54, 54 and 54 annual inflow until 2025. With careful career management at the fore of planning we encourage growth; however, we must not rush the process and we must align to wider Corps policy to ensure the longevity of the Paltan's careers. The key is retaining what defines us as Queen's Gurkha Signals. It is my plea to you to protect our Gurkha values and culture which makes us strong and operationally more effective. This is a challenging year ahead for the Paltan, we must make correct decisions today to strengthen the Regiment's future tomorrow.

Looking Ahead

Getting the pyramid right. Project CADUCEUS is transformation of the Royal Signals' future Leadership Model and further refinement of A2020R; it offers both



challenges and opportunities ahead. We need focus, employable and operational effectiveness to make decisions to smooth out our structure. We must also align ourselves with The Royal Signals trade structure and employment opportunities. I see this as progression. We are seeking employment opportunities with Special Forces, 16 Air Assault Brigade, Cyber and Supervisory rosters. These are great opportunities to showcase the talent of our soldiers. We must also ensure our growth pace is right and promotion quota is sustainable and progressive; avoiding choke points and flood gates. Promotion, leavers and transfers must remain stable throughout and not knee-jerk reactions to current wider manning issues. This year 55 personnel were offered VEng Full (Cpl to WO2) who are currently on Open Engagement between Intake 1999 to 2002. We now focus attention on VEng Full for 2003 to 2007 intakes. These are exciting times and great chances for our soldiers.

Opportunities

This year alone we have promoted 1 x Lt Col, 3 x Commissioned, 1 x WO1, 7 x WO2s, 6 x SSgts, 22 x Sgts, 27 x Cpls and 40 x LCpls. In total 107 officers and soldiers were promoted. Conversions: 4 x RegC and 2 x IRC, total of 6 officers converted their Commissioning service. VEng Full Offers: 55 x Open engagement and 44 x VEng Short, total of 99 offered VEng Full - 36% members of the Paltan either promoted or offered longer service, fantastic news for Paltan and individuals. Next year's forecast for the promotion is also encouraging. Good luck everyone.

Visit

It was a real privilege to visit the Queen's Gurkha Signals sub units including Nepal and Brunei and also

Queen's Gurkha Signals Association members and their families in UK, Kathmandu, Dharan and Pokhara. My gratitude and thanks to the members of Paltan Pariwar, QGSA Nepal and UK in providing such a close link between retired members and the Paltan.

Trailwalker UK

Trailwalker was cancelled in 2018, due to heat index forecast for the weekend deemed above the threshold, which would have made the event unsafe. Thus, we had to change the date in August for 2019. Although not ideal for many, with the support of the Regt's chain of command we executed a record breaking, fun and safe event. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to Trailwalker 2019. This event helped showcase and promote the Gurkha Brand. It is a really worthy charity event and Paltan wish to continue it. Trailwalker 2020 will go ahead but other commitments are making it a challenge to deliver. My plea to you all is please let's help to make Trailwalker 2020 successful.

Nepal Cup/Trailwalker Team

This year we hit the Treble. Winning the Nepal Cup, Trailwalker and Tug of War. A massive well done to all those participating and supporting these crucial and tough events. We look forward now to 2020 Nepal Cup and Trailwalker and the Regt is keen to invest further in these fantastic competitions. 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn is leading Nepal Cup Team and 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn is leading the Trailwalker Team - support them please.

Shooting

Members of the Regt are highly regarded in the Army Shooting fraternity. The Paltan have always performed

to a very high standard in Force Troop Commands Operational Shooting Competition and Defence Army Operational Shooting Competition and 2019 has been no exception. There were 16 members from the Regt who received an Army 100 badge in 2019, with Lance Corporal Bijay Gurung, Signaller Bishal Gurung and Signaller Rupak Pun being selected to represent the British Army in Canada and Australia. Furthermore, Staff Sergeant Khagendra Tamang and Sergeant Saroj Rana are currently undergoing the British National Shooting Team Training Camp to prepare for the Commonwealth and Olympic Games. We continue to dominate the ranges.

Corps 100 Celebration

As part of Royal Signals Corps Centenary celebration event, the Corps is planning to send teams to seven continents, to conduct sport challenges and the 204 Festival. Queen's Gurkha Signals has been allocated South East Asia region for AT. Captain Gopal Saheb has volunteered to lead the 20-man QG Signals Adventure Training Team under the exercise name '**BY YOUR BADGE**'. I urge all officers and soldiers to get involved on Corps 100 to promote our Paltan's rich culture and ethos.

2019 has been yet another hugely successful year for Queen's Gurkha Signals. The Regiment is growing at pace, and our reputation continues to grow across the Corps; our Paltan is doing exceptionally well on exercises and operations. I thank you all for your contributions to this. I would like to request all members of the Regiment: serving and retired, including their families to continue to play their part in maintaining our rich heritage of the Regiment.

"Jai Paltan"

246 Gurkha Signal Squadron News

2019 has been a year of significant change for 246 GSS. It resubordinated from 2nd Signal Regiment (2SR) to 1st Signal Regiment (1SR) on 1 April 2019, ending a 20-year relationship, forged following the Sqn's reformation after returning from Hong Kong. Under 1SR our new mission is to achieve Information Advantage by delivering Comd Sp to 20 AI Bde. To do this the Sqn has added a plethora of new C4IS equipment - Legacy Blue System, Land Deployable Gateway, Housekeeper, Reacher, Bowman - to its portfolio, undoubtedly increasing its capability and ability to fulfil its mission and tasks.

As a taste of things to come, during June and July, the Sqn completed its first CT Level 3 exercise with 1SR, Premier Capstone 4. We provided a complete end to end service from TacCIS at the BG level, to WAN at the Bde level using Falcon, and inter-theatre connectivity at the Division level using Reacher. This was especially challenging for the Sqn as its wheeled platforms had to keep pace with the

AFV432s used by 20 AI Bde HQ. Thankfully the British weather was on our side and SPTA was (relatively) dry!

As we look forward to 2020, the sqn will support Op CABRIT providing an excellent opportunity for young QG SIGNALS soldiers and officers to put into practice all that they have learnt over the last 18 months. There is also a unit move planned for the summer - this will see the Sqn move from its current home in York to the newly renovated Perham Down Camp. Interspersed between these big events will be several opportunities to exercise with our new HQ and maximise the extramural activities we do so well to organise. Plenty to do but we would have it no other way!

Outside its primary role, the Sqn has been supporting Corps and Army level military training events. Of note, 246 GSS won a Silver Medal on **Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL 2019** and finished overall third on **Ex**

LANYARD TROPHY 2019. The Sqn also performed particularly well in both the FTC and Army Shooting Championships. At the FTC Shooting Championship, 246 GSS helped 1 SR finish 2nd overall and 2nd in the Corps, whilst at the Army Shooting Championship 1SR finished 6th overall and 2nd in the Corps. Once again, Lance Corporal Homprakash Yongya distinguished himself at the FTC shooting competition, becoming the Champion Shot in the Corps for the second successive year.

Several members of the Sqn competed in the 1SR cross-country and athletics team, helping the Regiment being crowned as the Corps XC Champions and finished runners up in the R SIGNALS Inter Unit Athletics Championships respectively. Lance Corporal Sujan Sherchan, Lance Corporal Dikshan Limbu and Lance Corporal Satkar Shahi were part of the Nepal Cup 2019 winning team whilst Lance Corporal Samso Phago helped QG SIGNALS team to win the Trailwalker 2019. Also, many individuals represented the Sqn, Regiment and the Paltan in Race the Sun 2019, Boulderling, Military League North - Orienteering, Volleyball and Football.

As ever the Sqn has performed exceptionally well this year; we have re-learnt lost skills, re-familiarised ourselves on new equipment and reset to meet new challenges; but most importantly, we have continued to maintain the highest standards befitting of our reputation.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals

Ex MERCURY COMPASS

By Lance Corporal Sandesh Gurung

On Saturday 27 July 2019, 12 members of the Royal Corps of Signals gathered at Barry Buddon Training Camp to start a weeklong Corps Orienteering training camp, Ex MERCURY COMPASS. The exercise was coordinated by Staff Sergeant (FofS) Chaitanya Ijam and

the aim was to provide an ideal training opportunity for Royal Signals Orienteers to identify and develop current and future orienteering talents within the Corps.

This time the teams targeted training ground was the Scottish 6 Days, the largest orienteering event in the UK. First held in 1977, this biennial event takes place in a different area of Scotland each time attracting over 3500 competitors. This year the event took place in the Strathearn area of Perthshire. The event incorporated individual run events at 6 different venues (Auchingarrich, Edinchip, Dundurn/Cnoc-a-Mhadaidh, Culteuchar and Dron, Craig a Barns and Grandtully) with different categories and courses to compete in.

Starting from 28 July until 3 August 2019, each day the team deployed to the orienteering venue, competed in their respective category races and recovered back to the Camp. An informal race analysis session was held daily in the evening where experiences and ideas were shared. Race days provided varied challenges to the team, with some races being long and physically demanding whereas others being short, technical and mentally tiring. Arguably for most of the individuals the very first day at Auchingarrich was the toughest, as most of its area was forested and the terrain was difficult to navigate in. At the end of the exercise prizes were awarded to the overall best male, and the best novice by calculating their total race times; which were won by Sergeant Bir and Lance Corporal Anish respectively. The cup for the overall best sprint was jointly won by Captain Ashok and Lance Corporal Anish.

As the saying goes - "Train hard, fight easy", Scottish terrain consisting of woodlands, rough lands, crags, marshes, up to 500m climbs, provided a unique training experience for the team and with the Corps, Inter-Corps and various other competitions soon approaching for the Corps orienteers, Ex MERCURY COMPASS provided an ideal training opportunity for the experienced and novices alike to hone their orienteering skills for the challenges ahead.



Ex MERCURY COMPASS Orienteering

247 Gurkha Signal Squadron News

After the reformation of 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron on 26 November 2018 under 16 Signal Regiment, the Squadron has played an integral part in the Regiment's new role as the lead Signal Regiment supporting the Army's Logistic Formations. 2019 has seen the Squadron grow from strength to strength with the formation of its third troop, Hong Kong Troop, in April 2019, and has been a busy yet highly fruitful year for the Squadron.

At the beginning of the year, Borneo Troop deployed on a CT2 Exercise KHANJAR OMAN 2019 in Oman delivering ICS support to the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) Field Hospital readiness task. Here it also took responsibility for the deployed JEF Theatre Enabling Group Headquarters. Deploying on very high-profile exercises has become a norm for 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron. Members from the Squadron have also deployed on Exercise SPECULAR 2019 supporting 12 Mechanised Brigade Headquarters, and Exercise JORVIC LOOK, supporting 2 Medical Brigade and 34 Field Hospital.

On an operational front, 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron soldiers have deployed to Operation TRENTON in Sudan, Operation ORBITAL in Ukraine as well as standing commitment in British Forces South Atlantic Island in the Falkland Islands. In 2019 the Squadron have also deployed King Troop on Operation CABRIT 4 in Estonia and Poland, supporting the enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Headquarters as part of NATO operation in Baltic States and Poland region.

At the centre of Regimental life, the Squadron's contribution outside of work has been equally significant. Its soldiers have dominated the Regimental teams on the Operational Shooting Competition (OSC), Lanyard Trophy, Badminton, and Orienteering, achieving great success in all. Aside from these commitments, the Squadron has conducted a number of high-level Adventure Training packages within the UK as well as further afield in Bavaria and Peru, whilst additionally supporting the Regiment and Corps centenary events.

Late 2019 has been an extremely busy period for the Squadron, seeing it taking over JEF Theatre Enabling Group (TEG) task and preparing for the immediate deployment to Exercise DEFENDER 2020 to Germany and Belgium in January 2020 for five months. The new role, JEF will see the whole of the Squadron committed to a Very High Readiness task delivering ICS support to Headquarters 104 Logistic Support Brigade.

247 Gurkha Signal Squadron very much look forward to 2020, which already promises to fully deliver in terms of offering deployments on high profile overseas exercises, trade and individual development, Adventure Training, Sport, and a myriad of other opportunities.

Jai 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron!

Ex KHANJAR OMAN 19 By Signaller Bishal Gurung

The journey for 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron was started with a Malayan Emergency in October 1951. Today, the Squadron delivered its very first CT2/3 overseas communication exercise, Ex KHANJAR OMAN 19, in Oman since its reformation in November 2018.

The exercise was conducted over the period of January to April 2019 with 3 main objectives; to test the viability of Raz Madrasah training area, enhance defence engagement with the Sultanate of Oman Armed Forces and experimentation of new equipment in austere conditions. The exercise involved the Royal Tank Regiment Battle Group and a Coy of Mercian Battle Group as the exercising troops. 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron were responsible delivering a robust and resilient Information and Communication Services (ICS) to 22 Field Hospital as part of the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF), Role 2 Field Hospital deployment.

The exercise kicked in with the deployment of a small advance party to take over the JEF Field Hospital role and its associated ICS equipment from 30 Signal Regiment at the end of Ex SAIF SERIA 3. On completion of the handover/takeover, team from 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron then relocated to Joint Support Logistic Base (JLSB), Duqm. The Network Engineering Room (NER) was re-established and the link was successfully re-engineered back to the UK. With the arrival of the main body in January 2019, the team were complete and eagerly awaiting the staff users. Once the Role 2 Hospital was established within the JLSB, the ICS equipment was laid out as per Information Exchange Request (IER). The ICS services were provided in the form of secure voice and data that enabled staff users to communicate within the training area for daily tasking and provided essential reach back to the UK, which at times proved to be crucial with compassionate cases. The services were utilised by staff users at full capacity for the benefit of the exercise. End of the exercise was called out at the end of March 2019 and thereafter we started tearing down our detachment also. Although preparing to manifest the ICS equipment was much more laborious than I had thought, we managed to successfully complete the process, manifest the equipment and subsequently recovered them back to UK in April 2019.

The exercise proved to be a huge success for the newly formed Squadron, with soldiers of all ranks having gained valuable knowledge and experience. Additionally, the exemplary service during the exercise was recognised with the deployed Commanding Officer awarding Commander's Coin to two of our soldiers, Corporal Mohan Gurung and Lance Corporal Sekhar Gurung.

Jai QG SIGNALS!



Commander's Coin recipients: Corporal Mohan Gurung (kneeling third from the right) and Lance Corporal Shekhar Gurung (kneeling second from the left)

Op CABRIT 4 - Rear Link Detachment (Poland) *By Lance Corporal Prasant Kerung*

Operation CABRIT is the codename for the British Army's operational presence in Eastern Europe as part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence battlegroup deployment.

On 31 May 2019, 6 personnel from 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron deployed on Op CABRIT 4 to Poland for 4 months operational tour which was led by Staff Sergeant Thaman Singh Rana. We were deployed as Rear Link Detachment (RLD) whose main task was to support A Squadron, Royal Scots Dragoon Guards on communication sector and monitor J6 department. The first 2 days after arriving to BPTA Camp was mainly focused on HOTO from the previous ROTO where they helped us develop a day to day work routine within the squadron and the main bits and bobs which was essential for the duration of the tour.

We were mainly involved in maintaining the communication equipment and making sure we were content for the worst case scenario. The most notable achievement in the duration of the operational tour was the establishment of interoperability communication between American and British systems using Tactical Voice Bridge (TVB) which ensured that we would be able to communicate with each other while deployed in the field. Various lessons were conducted by Corporal Utshab Singh Rana, Lance Corporal Prasant Kerung and Lance Corporal Sailendra Rai about ICS support desk and service provided by RLD, Bowman Radios and Communication Information Fill Device (CIFD) and Key Fill Device (KFD) respectively targeting Advanced Signallers in the A Squadron Royal Scots Dragoon Guards.

Despite our busy schedule we were able to participate in various military and civilian events such as Gizycko 10 km run, Olsztyn half marathon, Interoperability

games and Tiger Run Competition. There were Cultural and Historical visits to Gdansk and Worclaw which helped us gain knowledge about World War 2 through concentration camp and museum visits as well as sightseeing. Signaller Sangam Rai also managed to conduct a team cohesion day which consisted of a visit to a Zoo in Kadzidlowo followed by a friendly bowling competition in Olsztyn and lastly dinner out in an Indian Restaurant. We were also privileged to celebrate the Queen's Gurkha Signals 70th Birthday which was led by Lance Corporal Prasant Kerung which enabled us to share the brief history about Queen's Gurkha Signals as well as demonstrate Khukuri Dance (Lance Corporal Sailendra Rai) with traditional Nepalese cuisine to the personnel of A Squadron Royal Scots Dragoon Guards.

Overall, this operation was a huge success which provided everyone with hugely beneficial operational experience.



Lance Corporal Prasant Kerung during CIS training to the battle group

248 Gurkha Signal Squadron News

This year has been a characteristically busy one for the Squadron, defined by the road to ARRC Readiness. From Ex KHUKURI BEACON; employing the Soldier First Syllabus and utilising the experience of our Gurujiharu to impart their knowledge on our young Bhaiharu, through a series of Regimental and Brigade exercises and culminating in Ex ARRCAD FUSION; the HQ Allied Rapid Reaction Corps' (ARRC) readiness validation exercise, where the Squadron provided Information Communications Systems capabilities to deliver robust networks and support to over 500 staff users. The road to ARRC Readiness has been one filled with experimentation, requiring us to remain flexible throughout and alive to capricious uncertainty; something the soldiers have not only engaged with, but relished.

Additional to our primary tasks, we have also upheld our standing operational commitments at home to FORTIFY, ESCALIN, and TEMPERER, as well as some overseas deployments, our soldiers being trusted to fulfil lone assignments to British Forces South Atlantic Islands (BFSAI) and Kosovo, as well as deployments to British Army Training Units in Kenya (BATUK) to facilitate various Army units with CIS delivery.

Closer to home, our contribution to operational shooting competition remains high and recruiting remained key priorities, participating also in a number of community engagement events supporting the local community with a raft of activities and fostering close links with the community.

The Squadron was the lead charity squadron for 2019 on behalf of the QG SIGNALS, achieving our target of £5000 for the QG SIGNALS Association Trust Fund, Royal Signals Charity and Gurkha Welfare Trust. Furthermore, the Gurkha Room in MOD Stafford Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess is now open and curation of fascinating pieces will continue.

I would also be remiss if not to congratulate the QGS Teams on their first and third placings on TRAILWALKER 19, an epic achievement and a huge badhai to Staff Sergeant Pramesh Shrestha: the endurance mastermind behind the Paltan's achievements.

Our time as an Officer Commanding is brief, and we all aim to make the most of it, spending many hours trying to solidify in our mind what kind of a leader we are, and how we will approach our command. We live in hope that our philosophy will chime with the ethos already established within our future squadron, so to arrive and see immediately that the tenants I hold dear, such as: fitness, proactivity, adaptability, enjoyment and positivity, are all very much alive and well within 248 was an absolute joy, and in all honesty, a relief. My family and I have been welcomed into the wider Gurkha community with open arms previously, indeed

before my son had even turned one, he had taken tikka and attended his first Dashain celebration and my beloved family dog had been celebrated at Kukkur Tihar. So, whilst I had a good idea of what to expect, the reality of being intimately involved with the community, built on love and dedication, has surpassed all expectation. Our soldiers owe our community a debt of gratitude, without their support we could not dedicate ourselves in the way we do, nor strive for the excellence that has become synonymous with being a Gurkha. This was perfectly evidenced when we deployed some 200 miles away on exercise in Cornwall: the food, celebratory gifts and messages that were sent down to enable our soldiers to celebrate Tihar, were extremely well received and highlighted how fortunate we are to have such a community around us - we must never forget this, nor take it for granted.

Jai 248 !!!

Ex ARRCAD FUSION 19 **By Corporal Udaykumar Limbu**

With preparations underway for the 70th NATO Annual summit in London, 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron, following the culmination of a series of training exercises throughout the year, deployed down to RAF St Mawgan, Cornwall on Ex ARRCAD FUSION 19 (Ex AF19).

Ex AF19 is the largest training serial of its kind in the UK, testing the ability of the UK led Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) to provide a Corps warfighting headquarters, for the first time held at readiness for NATO. 22nd Signal Regiment, under 1st (UK) Signal Brigade provide the Combat Command Support (CCS) and enabled the command posts for Headquarters. 248's role was to provide the communication services and systems to Exercise Control (EXCON), in order to facilitate the exercise and the REAR Command Post; providing services to some 600 staff users.

Upon arrival to St Mawgan, the Squadron quickly settled in a relatively modest accommodation. Needless to say, the persistent wind and rain in the region was of no surprise and provided no restraint to the normal business of the Squadron as they ploughed on with the task at hand. Not content with the mental challenge of the exercise, the squadron entered into competition for the most distance covered, on foot, during the deployment period.

The build phase saw gradual development of the infrastructure framework in coordination with multiple organisations. Real life support (RLS) was predominantly provided by ARRC Support Battalion while an external vendor provided much of the hardware. As the days pressed on, the Network Equipment Room (NER), providing the five domain

services, over four bearers across the two sites was activated and the Staff Working Environments (SWE) of EXCON and REAR started to take shape.

Following the build phase, the majority of squadron personnel returned to Stafford for the half term break, fortunate timing meant that this coincided with the celebration of Tihar. For those left down in Cornwall, the families of the Gurkha community sent down a care package of delicious food, all of which was very much welcomed. This was a well-earned break after the hectic build phase and an opportunity to recuperate for the forthcoming execution phase of the exercise. Prior to the execution phase, a series of staff readiness checks were conducted. This was also a wonderful opportunity to share Knowledge Skill Experience (KSE) and conduct cross-training activities, which enabled class 3 and 2 tradesmen to sign off their respective trade workbooks.

At Start-Ex the staff users swarmed the complex and the sheer scale of the 500+ staff from 20 countries working together was an incredible sight. Inevitably, there were many challenges and issues throughout the exercise, but dynamic, adaptable approach, coupled with practiced Standard Operating Procedures, proved vital to tackle and resolve the scale of incidents reported daily. The teamwork, relentless pursuit of excellence and agile management of issues demonstrated by the enablers was instrumental in delivering effective services. Once the initial surge of Requests for Change (RFC) came in and the exercise settled, it became relatively calm and all settled into normal battle rhythm.

Among the high-profile visits from COM and COS ARRC, the Squadron were delighted to welcome the QG SIGNALS Gurkha Major (GM) and Pundit. During an evening of messing, we invited other Gurkha cap-badged personnel, along with previous members of the Paltan to hear the GM address regarding the current affairs of the Paltan. The Pundit's spiritual commentary provided much welcomed respite amid the hectic routine of the exercise.

Following an intensive exercise period End-Ex was called by COM ARRC, followed by an address, which set the scene for the readiness posture we are to assume in January 2020.

That evening the Squadron got together for a pizza night social function and Lance Corporal Pratap claimed his prize for the most distance covered, some 450km!

The systems were gracefully shutdown and dismantling of the complex began; which was achieved somewhat quicker than the build phase, and, once the kit was all accounted for a packed up, the Squadron embarked on their journey back to Stafford.

The exercise was a combination of challenges, hard work and learning. The Squadron remained agile and proactive throughout, with the Staff user experience at the forefront of our minds. Overall Ex AF19 was a great success for the Squadron; which has set us up, poised to react to the challenges that an "At Readiness" posture will bring.



Squadron photograph with Sqn OC Major Collins after successfully completing Ex ARCADE FUSION 19.



Corporal Rohan delivering the final attack CSS order.

Ex KHUKURI BEACON 19 **By Corporal Rohan Limbu**

Field Marshal Montgomery said, "Every soldier must know, before he goes into battle, how the little battle he is to fight fits into the larger picture, and how the success of his fighting will influence the battle as a whole." This perfectly sums up what 248 GSS achieved during our CT 1/2 exercise: KHUKURI BEACON 19 during 25-29 March 2019.

On 22 March, all exercising troops and enabling staff, received a deployment order from the Exercise Conducting Officer (ECO), Sergeant Rabin Koyee Rai. Our mission was to deploy to Swynnerton Training Area (STA) to conduct basic military training safely and constructively as per the 'Soldier First' Syllabus. Additionally, there were Top Field Soldier and Most Endeavouring Soldier prizes to be won from the exercise. During the early morning of 25 March, the exercising troops deployed to STA under the command of the Platoon Commander (PC), fresh from his Platoon Sergeant Battle Course (PSBC), Corporal Sunil Gurung.

The first day included safety briefs, pyrotechnics demonstration and occupation of a harbour in the morning. During the afternoon, the troops were delivered lessons on Target Indication, Fire Control Orders, Six Section Battle Drills and Orders. The Orders lesson was an introductory lesson in order to give a flavour and prepare them for the future; as it was a new topic to a lot of junior soldiers, it was very well received.

The second day included Section level patrolling; using traces to conduct clearance patrols. Several

individuals were selected as Section Commander and 2IC to lead attacks. The troops were taught their roles and responsibilities as a Rifleman, 2IC and Section Commander. Later that afternoon, WO2 (SSM) Sanjeev Rai Saheb delivered a lesson on leadership and the qualities of a leader. Following this, everyone received orders from the PC and were tasked to prepare a set of Reconnaissance (Recce) orders.

On the third day, 248 GSS command group paid a visit in the harbour location. The morning included preparation for the delivery of orders. The whole afternoon was spent on individuals delivering orders to the instructors. All 3 sections were then sent out on patrol. The information gathered during the Recce patrol was passed to the PC by all 3 Section Commanders. Then, the PC started to formulate his plan for a Platoon Deliberate Attack. A set of Deliberate Attack Orders were given by the PC and on the final day, we conducted a successful operation.

The attack was the final product of the exercise, where every individual soldier demonstrated their high level of individual battle skills and understanding. Most importantly, they learnt how each role fits into the larger picture and helps to win the battle.

The Top Field Soldier was awarded to Signaller Santosh Malla (O Troop) and Most Endeavouring Soldier was awarded to Lance Corporal Kumar Pun. Overall an excellent and worthwhile exercise, delivered by enthusiastic and professional staff. We, the exercising troops, would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those individuals who have worked tirelessly to organise this exercise and special thanks to Sergeant Rabin Koyee Rai Guruji for his excellent leadership.

249 Gurkha Signal Squadron News

It has been an enormously successful inaugural year for the Sqn. It has seen growth from assisting 206 Sig Sqn by sending QGS personnel on trawls and Regt exercises (including CT6 interoperability OTX WARFIGHTER in Texas, U.S.A.), to reaching IOC on its own bespoke, fully tactical CTC2 validation Ex KHUKURI LIGHTNING and commitment to support Ex FLYING FALCON. The troops have also individually achieved CTC1 on smaller, but no less important, Tp Comms and Mil Skills exercises. In terms of Ops, it has had personnel deployed on Op TORAL and to BFAI, returning with valuable experience to the Sqn.

In Barracks, the Sqn has enjoyed a Royal Parade by HRH Princess Anne to celebrate its reformation on 29 May 2019. Following this, a Regimental muster provided a convenient opportunity to take over all of 206 Sig Sqn's equipment in good order, with the G4 flank further reinforced with an LEA. The pace of life has been frenetic with successes for the Sqn in the Army 100 Shooting competition, strong representation on the Normandy 75 celebrations and the Regiment undergoing an uplift to LBS and BCIP 5.6. Alongside this, the Sqn has committed and contributed fully to the QGS pariwar and kaida, with success in the inter-squadron competition at the QGS 70th birthday, our first 249GSS Dashain and Tihar celebrations, attendance at the BG week and multiple traditional and fundraising events throughout the year. Overall, an extremely active but enjoyable year for 249 GSS, and the Sqn looks forward to first contact with the 3 (UK) Div Staff on Ex IRON PRIMUS in January 2020.

Ex KHUKURI LIGHTNING By Captain Timothy Nixey

A brief pause as the whole Squadron Orders Group synchronise watches. The vision was clear; the brief was obvious. 249 Gurkha Signal Squadron was to achieve CTC2 validation by means of the most ambitious, complicated and demanding exercise that had been attempted by a 3(UK)DSR Sqn in a long while. Every possible vehicle, detachment and soldier was deployed into the depths of Salisbury Plain. Four days later, the long vehicle convoy stretched far off into the awful September weather, the vehicles' occupants armed to the teeth with blank rounds and pyrotechnics, ready to counter and defend their CPs from the Arianan threat.

Initial training and RSOI focused on introducing things that would become second nature; build of a CP including its DRASH Staff Working Environment and its defence stores. Drivers were selected for instruction in MOD2, vehicles struggling through and turning the liquid mud into a bog, under the oversight of Sergeant "Keep Rollin" Tek guruji. The WASPs and RRB detachments fought through, heading to high features to tactically establish the Terrestrial Wide Area Network

and CNR coverage across the entire AO. At the end of RSOI, CP249 was complete, concealed within an unnamed woodblock, ready to provide Command and Control to the exercise.



249 OC Major Corns delivering QBO to the CP commanders

The first week of the exercise tested us all to breaking point. In a safe-to-fail training environment, we were afforded the luxury of mission command to allow us to make mistakes. The challenge of moving our CPs long distances 3 times in 5 days whilst facing an active enemy threat and constant rain left us mentally and physically exhausted. The conventional enemy defeated, we reorganised and rested at CP249. A Mission Exploitation Symposium (MXS) was held for all Cpls and above, to identify our lessons and share best practice for how we could achieve better results in the future. This would prove to be the single most important act of the exercise.

A training day followed whilst our drivers rested; our objectives had been shaped by what we had identified in the MXS. Morale was provided by means of a curry in the field; a traditional chilli-eating competition occurred "spontaneously" amongst the fiery UKP officers. Staff Sergeant (SQMS) Prakash guruji had nothing to do with it (apart from luckily having some chillies handy). Although there was no clear winner, it must be said that 2nd Lieutenant Dan "Action Man" Chirodian, supporting the exercise from 228 (Armd) Sig Sqn, was far less well off than the others!

The second week focussed more on urban siting, providing communications to the staff, and defence of a CP. The threat had changed too, to the Democratic Unionised Mechanised Brigade of Ariana (DUMBA) insurgents, with a credible CBRN threat. CBRN CAZEVACs were certainly a highlight for Staff Sergeant (FoS (IS)) "RD" Richie Cole, who suddenly crashed out from a port-a-loo in dress state 4R in a cloud of green smoke. This "extra" training was possible due to the success of our MXS in identifying and ensuring that we had all learned the lessons on the first week; the

provision of communications was hugely improved in the second week.

Overall, the exercise was a tremendous success. 249 GSS achieved the vision and achieved CTC2 validation. We also importantly achieved OC 249's definition of IOC for the Sqn, in providing all services and systems held in the Sqn, in a tactical environment, to the staff. 249 GSS now have a good level of baseline understanding of where we are at the standard, and where we are still developing as we grow the new squadron. We have identified a training and exercise plan to progress us along our path to FOC and our ultimate goal of Ex WARFIGHTER in April 2021. Most importantly, every man and woman worked exceptionally hard on the exercise and should all be incredibly proud to be part of our Sqn and the QGS pariwar.

Jai Paltan!

Ex KIWI PUTTER **By Lance Corporal Aran Farmer**

With the recent formation of 249 Gurkha Signal Squadron within the Regiment, Lance Corporal Brookes, Lance Corporal Farmer and Lance Corporal Lindfield were tasked to plan a social event with the aim of welcoming the new Gurkha soldiers into Normandy Troop. This exercise was necessary to increase the bond between the new Gurkha soldiers and the existing soldiers of Normandy Troop. In turn, this will strengthen troop unity by creating solid working relationships between all members of the Troop.



Members of Normandy Troop competing at the putting skills

Exercise KIWI PUTTER was also an opportunity to say farewell to two personalities of the Troop; Sergeant Thrower and Sergeant Williams, who over their long service in Normandy Troop have worked extremely hard to maintain the Troop to the highest of standards. Therefore, we believed it was right to use this exercise to wish them the best of luck for the future and thank them for all the work have done for the Troop. The execution of the Exercise took place at Chippenham golf centre. The event consisted of a playthrough of the onsite mini golf course and 100 golf balls to be used on the driving range facility. To ensure this ran smoothly we split the group down into two halves with one group using the driving range and the other using the mini golf course, before swapping over to allow for both groups to engage with the available activities. The price for the event was pre-arranged at an affordable rate of £10 per person for all the equipment and activities, making it accessible for all members of the Troop.

The feedback received from the Troop was that the event was very successful in reaching the aims we set. This was evident as all who attended were able to enjoy the activities and, through some friendly competition, were able to bond with all members of the Troop; the exercise helped to break the cultural barriers down between British and Gurkha elements. It is evident now that the soldiers of the Troop are more comfortable working together in a friendly and efficient working environment, setting the conditions for a harmonious and successful Troop. Overall, Exercise KIWI PUTTER was extremely successful by raising morale in an active Regiment. We appreciate being granted the time to organise and execute this function. As a Troop we will now aim to maintain these bonds and friendships as we progress and develop into the future, ensuring everything the Troop applies itself to is done to the highest standards.

Jai Paltan!

250 Gurkha Signal Squadron News

In temple, Pundit taught us that a lion, whilst moving forward, will always pause and look behind. In 250 this has become somewhat of a code by how we operate. We have moved forward, and at lightning speed, but we are always conscious to look back, reflect and check our arcs.

The winter months of 2019 will remain with 250 for a long time. Sadly we, the wider Paltan and 30 Sig Regt came together to mourn the loss of late Signaller Rupesh. The sense of grief was overwhelming. At the same time, it demonstrated the strength of our community spirit, the bond of the team but also that life is precious. I must take this opportunity to thank the Gurkha Welfare Team in Nepal, Captain Khagendra Pun and Staff Sergeant Surendra for their support and empathy over this difficult time. Staff Sergeant Surendra was the rock for 250, maintaining lines of communication with the family and keeping the squadron focussed. We as team 250, Bramcote Gurkhas and the Regiment could not have got through this without his support.

With the legacy of Rupesh as our motivation to drive us through the year, we dusted the sand from Oman and wiped the sweat from our adventures in Brunei and found ourselves knee deep in snow deploying to Germany on Ex JOINT VENTURE. This was an opportunity, whilst under pressure to achieve interoperability with US EUCOM, to forge a stronger relationship with our new Standing Joint Force Commander, Major Rupert Jones CBE. Through technical excellence, sheer determination and a few nights of messing we affirmed a lasting bond between the Signaller and the Staff. I must highlight Yeoman Shaw, Foreman IS Mellor, Sergeant Judbir, Corporal Lal and the entire team for their fantastic efforts on this no fail deployment.

Last year I reported on the Nepal Cup team's run of bad luck in the Cup. I said, "watch this space". Together on that incredibly warm day in Aldershot we watched, nervously and together as a regiment. The team served us proud. Managed by Captain Khagendra and Staff Sergeant Bhupal and Captained by Sergeant Judbir skilfully played (just) to victory - a huge well done and ramro kaam to everyone who contributed to this special event. With this win and the strength, determination and winning spirit of the Tug of War team, 250 played a major contribution in QG SIGNALS entering the history book. A hearty well done to the many sporting achievements of the squadron.

Back to work, and we tried for a second time in my command to deliver the notorious Trailwalker. With the pressure on, and under significant scrutiny, Captain Mike Heuston and the team drove forward with their new plan and delivered a superb record-breaking event. Attracting more competitors than ever and raising more money than in previous years the QG SIGNALS,

with the support of the Brigade of Gurkhas came together as one and demonstrated just how effective the Gurkha warrior is. From a 250 perspective anything other than a successful and safe event would not have been good enough. But for the Regiment to win the event...wow! Leaving the South Downs, we recovered and went straight back to Technical First - exercising interoperability with our French Army Signallers on a risk reduction task - well done to Corporal Trishna and the team for their efforts in a technically and language challenging environment. More to follow on this.

Over a coffee, I mentioned to the team that I wanted to deploy Gurkha's back to the Falklands. In a heartbeat, Lieutenant Karas, Sergeant Sanjoy and Victor Tp put together a fantastic, innovative and challenging overseas deployment to the Falkland Islands. Showing technical innovation, soldiering skills and all under real austere conditions - they delivered above and beyond. We as a Corps fret about how a troop would operate without Tp SSgts - team Victor proved that all is good! Well done.

We remain committed overseas on operations and exercises, Somalia, Mali, Kenya, Canada, Lithuania, Chad and Nigeria to name a few - globally, the boys continue to fly the Regiment's flag with pride, loyalty and exceptional professionalism.

Finally, our community has of course come together to celebrate the Nepalese and Regimental events. I don't need to thank the soldiers for this, this is our sanskar and kaida and I fully expect them to be committed to this task. But I must thank our families for going that extra mile to make all our celebrations warm, inviting and truly special. It is because of the families and their kind support that make Bramcote a wonderful place to be.

I will stop there; we have done much and have much more to do. You will read the stories and updates from team 250 - who will communicate better the sense of pride, happiness and teamwork we have developed over the past 12 months than I ever could. We hang tough individually and as team 250, tougher than ever. 2020 will be a year for readiness, innovation and fun.

Op TANGHAM

By Lance Corporal Suman Gurung

Across the globe British military training teams are helping countries counter the threat of Islamic extremism. One of those missions, known as Operation TANGHAM, is in Somalia where an Al Qaeda affiliate, Al Shabaab, has been fighting insurgency over a protracted period. Mogadishu, the Capital of Somalia, was once known as the Switzerland of Africa, but in recent years gained a very different reputation.



Lance Corporal Suman with his team on Op TANGHAM, Somalia

Mogadishu came to the world's attention in 1993 when US special forces launched a raid to capture a notorious warlord, Mohamed Farrah Aidid. The mission went disastrously wrong. Two helicopters were shot down and 18 US Rangers were killed, some of their bodies dragged through the streets. The episode later became the inspiration for the Hollywood movie, Black Hawk Down.

Islamic militants Al Shabaab emerged from the chaos, fighting a bitter insurgency against the Government and African Union troops. In 2012 alone hijackings cost the shipping industry seven billion dollars. Six years ago Al Shabaab was pushed out of Mogadishu and the international community stepped up efforts to support the country's Transitional Government.

As part of that the UK has around 65 military personnel stationed in Somalia across a variety of missions. UK personnel support the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) the United Nations Mission to Somalia, directly train Somali National Army (SNA) and provide direct planning and coordinates support to the Somali National Army Headquarters.

Currently three individuals from 250 GSS are deployed to provide and maintain the full suite of CIS capabilities, both inter and intra theatre in a high tempo environment. Across the Brigade of Gurkhas (BG) Major Burton from RGR, Captain Wardall from QOGLR and Lance Corporal Siddhant ex RGR are also deployed. We had the opportunity to celebrate the auspicious occasions of Dashain and Tihar 2019 with those we are deployed with and to share Gurkha culture, tradition and kaida.

Nepal Cup 2019 **By Corporal Bibek Gurung**

The history of the Nepal Cup goes all the way back to India in 1948. It was at this time, His Highness Maharaja Mohan Shamsher Jangabahadur Rana GCIE CBE, Prime Minister of Nepal and Colonel-in-Chief of the Gurkha Brigade, presented the prestigious cup

to be competed for annually in an inter-unit football competition among the Brigade of Gurkhas' Units. With high spirits, competitive emotions, and pride for those fortunate and skilful enough to win it, this tradition has ever since been continued.

This year, the Nepal Cup matches were held over the period 4-13 July. Preliminary matches were played at RMA Sandhurst and the final was played at Queen's Avenue in Aldershot on 13 July, during the annual Brigade Bhela. Many serving and retired Gurkhas, together with their families and members of the wider public, attended the event and watched the final.

Our team prepared and trained for this year's Nepal Cup under the capable and excellent guidance of our team OIC, Captain Khagendra Pun, and team manager, Staff Sergeant Bhupal Gurung. The vision of our team OIC provided us with a definite goal - winning the cup - whereas the planning, direction and team coordination came from our team manager who helped us convert that vision into something tangible and achievable. The first game went well against Gurkha Wing Mandalay; it was a hard-fought game but QG SIGNALS managed to pull out a win. The final score was 3-1; we were proud of how our team played, and happy that we put a smile on our manager's face. Our second match was with Gurkha Company Tavoleto, we won 7-1. The day of our next match against QOGLR, the semi-final, was warm and sunny. Our team of supporters were going crazy, which with the weather made it the perfect recipe for a good game. But the game was not an easy one and saw a couple of our players injured. Despite this, in the end we fought a hard second half and won 4-1 in extra time.

Saturday 13 July at 1500 in Aldershot; we had made it to the final against 1 RGR. There was a lot riding on that game, but I had every confidence that we were going to win. There were much more spectators than we had experienced previously. I had all my family and friends there, so it was a special game for me. Just before half time, our team got a free kick and Lance Corporal Prasant Tamang scored a goal. Over the course of the tournament he had shown that his creativity knew no bounds, and that certainly didn't stop when he lined up a shot with a wall of players assembled in front of him. During the last few minutes, it was 1 RGR who dominated the game. They struck hard and challenged the defences of our team. That was not quite enough for the 1 RGR team, the final score was 1-0 and we were crowned champions. This was a long-time aspired win which caused a great sensation in the ground. There were deafening cheers from our supporters, but the fighting spirit of the opposite team was also being praised by all. Overall the match was enjoyed greatly by the spectators as both teams had performed brilliantly.

That day, on top of winning the Nepal cup, our Paltan also won the Tug of War competition and finished runners up in Ladies' Volleyball competition. It was just



Queen's Gurkha Signals Nepal Cup Team group picture after winning the Nepal Cup

the icing on the cake. This would not have been possible without the support from RHQ, our chains of command, members from our Paltan, and of course, our families.

Blandford Camp Gurkha Community (BCGC) News

This has been another successful year for the Blandford Camp Gurkha Community (BCGC). Our Permanent Staff at 11th (Royal School of Signals) Signal Regiment have been extremely busy in delivering technical and CLM training for R SIGNALS and QG SIGNALS soldiers. Equally, our Gurkha support personnel based at Blandford Garrison Support Unit (BGSU) have been a key enabler in support of training delivery. QG SIGNALS Phase 2 and Phase 3 soldiers have been exceptional; constantly topping their trade and military courses. Additionally, the Blandford Gurkha ladies are an integral part of this fine community that have played a critical role in promoting our culture and tradition across the Garrison. The BCGC is flourishing; fostering our tradition and 'Kaida' across the Garrison and local communities whilst maintaining a close relationship with key stake holders, including the UK Nepal Friendship Society.

Our Gurkha ladies' commitments and contributions have been second to none. Representing the community, the Ladies Volleyball Team won the QG SIGNALS inter-Squadron Volleyball competitions twice setting an example for others to follow. Supporting a plethora of charity organisations, the community raised a total of £7,000 in support of the RSBF, GWT and other local charities. For the very first time, another achievement was the display of a Gurkha cultural stand during the Corps weekend, which became a main attraction of the day. It showcased a Gurkha's complete journey from a village/hill boy through the arduous Gurkha

Recruit selection & Infantry Class 3 training, and finally becoming a tradesman into the QG SIGNALS.

The inflow of the BG transferees and their dependants means the community is growing significantly and the BCGC has been a very comfortable community for them to accommodate. The data captured on 4 August 2019 suggests that we have approx. 355 Pax, which includes QG SIGNALS, transferees, MPGS soldiers and families stationed within Blandford Camp. Although the BCGC is an inclusive culture that integrates all Nepalese origin into the community, any growth comes with a considerable amount of welfare related issues due to a cultural difference. Therefore, a Gurkha Welfare Support Worker is a must in Blandford; however, despite our best efforts, we have not been able to secure one yet due to the funding issue. To sum up, the past 12 months have been hugely productive for the community and it continues to set high standards within the Garrison. The community is thriving and with it our people are succeeding across the spectrum of their endeavours. Finally, for the welfare of the Gurkha community and Phase two QG SIGNAL soldiers, the Garrison Commandant has approved a £20k fund to build a messing hut, to be ready for unveiling in circa June 2020. The Nepali class will see its continuity in the future by having support received from key stake holders from across the Garrison. There has been some work going on to improve the QG SIGNALS heritage project within Blandford museum.

Finally, it has been a true honour and privilege for me to lead this fantastic community on behalf of the Queen's Gurkha Signals. I take this opportunity to thank each member of the BCGC, including Gurkha ladies as well as the wider Garrison community for their truly outstanding support to me during my tenure as the SGC.

Jai BCGC

Royal Signals Association Weekend QG SIGNALS Stand By Corporal Giriprasad Gurung

On 15 June 2019, the Royal Corps of Signals celebrated its 99th birthday. Alongside the Royal Signals Association (RSA) parade, the Corps hosted various stands in Blandford, demonstrating its capabilities to the RSA members, visitors and families.

For the first time in QG SIGNALS history, under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel CL Jardine, Commanding Officer 11th (Royal School of Signals) Signal Regiment / Gurkha Focus, hosted by Major Anderson and Captain Gopal, the event was led by WO2 (SSM) Saindra. Joined by Major Dhir Gurkha Major QG SIGNALS and Mrs Belu Pun, the Blandford Camp Gurkha Community (BCGC) displayed an outstanding Gurkha stand that became the main attraction of the day.

The Gurkha stand was divided in five distinct themes. The main stand was to showcase a Gurkha's complete journey from a village/hill boy, through the arduous selection process and completing their journey with Class 3 Infantry training in Catterick prior joining into the Queens' Gurkha Signals. Visitors, including the Master of Signals were welcomed into a typical model Gurkha village house and a shop which was built by Staff Sergeant Subash Thapa and Corporal Durgaman Gurung. Moving on from there was a Nepali cultural stand, led by Sergeant Kishor Gurung, representing various cultural diversities and societies from Nepal. Leading from this stand was a Gurkha recruit selection process stand, led by Corporal Giri Gurung, providing a greater picture of how a Gurkha soldier goes through an arduous selection process to become a Gurkha in the British Army.

The main highlight of this stand was an introduction to a Doko race. The Doko carrying experience was experienced by visitors, families and children visited

the stand. Then following this was a weapon stand that displayed a selection of light Infantry weapon systems, representing the Gurkha Company, Catterick. An extra flavour was added with the inclusion of a 50cal machine gun, shell scrape sentry position well camouflaged.

The final stand led by Sergeant Rakish Shrestha, Corporal Roshan Baidhya and Lance Corporal Sunil Rai, representing a Gurkha soldier becoming a tradesman into the Queen's Gurkha Signals. This was achieved by displaying elements of modern technologies used by the Corps in a digital age. The team used a motor racing online game wired via a Falcon Network, entertaining the visitors coming through this stand.

The BCGC team would like to thank Major Anderson and Captain Gopal Saru for inspiring the team, WO2 (SSM) Saindra Chemjong for enforcing and implementing their direction. The team was extremely humbled and grateful to have received a visit from Lieutenant General Sir Nick Pope, Master of Signals, Colonel Gunning, Corps Colonel and Major Dhir Pun, Gurkha Major. As part of the Corps Centenary in 2020, the QG SIGNALS will also participate in the Corps CERTA CITO 100 Adventurous Training Expedition to Malaysia, displaying exemplary commitment to support the Corps centenary.

Jai QG SIGNALS



Sergeant Punya Limbu and his team demonstrating the weapon systems that was displayed at his stand



R Signals officers and soldiers get a taste of the gruelling Doko challenge one of the physical tests of the Gurkha Recruitment selection process

Gurkha Museum and Fort Nelson Visit By Signaller Bibek Gurung

“Have you brought the camera?” I was asked by Lance Corporal Dou Gurung as I was the nominated photographer for the day. On 29th July 2019, the Blandford Camp Gurkha Community (BCGC), led by Corporal Durgaman Gurung, made an educational visit to the Gurkha Museum and Fort Nelson, including families and children.



Senior Gurkha Captain, Captain Gopal, explaining the importance of the Gurkha Museum and giving a brief history on Gurkha 200 before the start of the presentation by a member of Gurkha Museum

Upon arrival in the Museum, Mr Doug gave us an excellent brief about the importance of having the Gurkha Museum, including a brief history of Brigade of Gurkhas, capturing the key defining moments. After this, we were escorted to see the main part of the museum before we headed to our next stop at the Fort Nelson.

Arriving at the Fort, WO2 (SSM) Saindra Chemjong and Phase 3 QG SIGNALS JNCOs delivered a superb battlefield brief. Following this brief, we were given the opportunity to explore about Fort Nelson. I was amazed by the outer fortifications, secret underground tunnels and ammunition bunkers of this fort, including an underground tunnel.

The event was very useful, and it helped us to broaden our history knowledge whilst enjoying the weekend with all community members.

Jai BCGC

Brunei Signal Troop News

Brunei Signal Troop (BST) continues to deliver robust and resilient Communication Information System (CIS) support to British Forces Brunei (BFB) as well as maintaining the Garrison Military Telecommunication Network and Exchange. Additionally, the Troop have been busy competing in both military and sporting events, attending a range of courses and not forgetting being highly visible in all Garrison activities.

The last 12 months have been very busy due to prolonged outages and frequent intermittent problems with our primary link, the International Private Leased Circuit (IPLC). Our engineers have worked relentlessly maintaining and troubleshooting the problems until resolution has been discovered. With swift responses and a proactive approach with international contractors and agencies, the lag times between outages of service have been significantly reduced. They have also been fundamental in facilitating both military and residential phone and internet services to more than four hundred



BCGC group photo in front of Gurkha Museum before departing to Fort Nelson for another educational visit

SFAs within Brunei Garrison. From connecting phones to fixing problems with internet services, they have been in a high demand and have not been found wanting, providing great service and support to the wider community. It is to their credit that they have never failed to maintain business continuity.

COMMCEN Brunei has been working hard to deliver a high standard of service across the Garrison. Whether that is secure and secret messaging services via Multi-Platform Terminal Executive (MPTE) secure Fax or Enhanced Video Tele Conference (eVTC). The COMMCEN operators have been professionally handling the countless sensitive messages. During the period of Nov – Jan, COMMCEN is the Focal Point for the early warning system for possible floods in and around the Garrison areas as a part of “OP NEPTUNE”. Likewise, the Crypto Cell has been playing a crucial part in providing precise and accurate cryptographic material in support to numerous exercises, both in theatre and abroad for the resident Infantry Battalion and UK exercising units. Troop Electricians regularly support the maintenance and inspection of Battalions’ Light Field Generators.

As always, BST played a vital role in the operation of BFB. The troop has also been the main source of PTIs and qualified instructors in running mandatory Garrison PT and MATTs for the Garrison Support Troops. On a notable achievement, this year, the Commander BFB’s coin was awarded to Lance Corporal Yonjan Rai for his outstanding contribution towards British Forces Brunei. Troop members have participated in various marathons, specifically the troop members have managed to raise significant amount of fund for one of the leading soldier’s charity SSAFA and the cheque was presented in the presence of Comd BFB. The troop also successfully hosted a number of VIP visits which included the Colonel of the Regt, Comd & Gurkha Major QG SIGNALS and 11 Brigade Commander.

Despite our limited size, BST continues to punch above our weight thriving to be a strong and decisive force across the Garrison, whilst all the time flying the QG SIGNALS flag high up front. Despite many challenges, a high standard of professionalism from our soldiers and strong support from their families have gained the troop a great deal of success. On the other hand, we are also maintaining the strong ethos and kaida of Regt/Bde by celebrating Regt Birthday, Dashain and Tihar in grand style and keeping a healthy PR with all departments within BFB. The BST ladies have been an integral part throughout adding more values to the BFB Ladies Community participating in various charity events, sporting competitions and community engagement programmes and these were greatly appreciated in wider community. BST families have also made both educational and cultural visits such as BST Ladies visit to Rampayoh River and waterfall trails and Labi Longhouse in Brunei.

Overall, 2019 has been a significantly successful year for the members of BST and their families and we look forward to the challenges that lie ahead next year.

Jai QG SIGNALS!

Visit by Commander and Gurkha Major QG SIGNALS By Corporal Damberbahadur Chhetri

Commander QG SIGNALS Lieutenant Colonel H J Stoy and Gurkha Major Dhir Bahadur Pun paid an official visit to British Forces Brunei (BFB) over the period 12-16 January 2019. It was the commander’s first visit to an overseas QG SIGNALS detachment since taking over the appointment as Commander. The current Gurkha Major QG Signals Major Dhir Bahadur Pun who has unforgettable memories in Brunei during his stint as a young rifleman in 1st Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles back in 1981 was also accompanying the commander as a GM for the first time. On the arrival, the visitors were briefly introduced to the troop members followed by an in-house cooked buffet dinner with much chit-chat.

An official welcome function was hosted in the evening by the Troop where the visitors interacted with troop personnel and families. During Commander’s speech, she emphasised the need to maintain a cordial and profound family values while at work or within your own family. She praised the efforts of troop personnel in maintaining the cordial relationship with the rest of the Garrison and echoed the importance of it. Gurkha Major also urged the troop to continue the good work in a professional manner whilst appreciating the true ethos of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

The following day, the Commander and Gurkha Major paid a visit to troop offices in Medicina Lines where the visitors were provided with an overview of troop’s wide range of responsibilities by OC BST, also explaining the troop’s crucial role in enabling and providing communications and communications support to the BFB Garrison. They were then taken to different departments within the troop and were briefed upon their roles and responsibilities. Soon after this, a string of MS and Welfare interviews were conducted by Comd and GM separately on an individual basis which the troop members found very useful for putting forward any of their concerns or queries straight to the highest ranks in the Regiment. After lunch, a regimental roadshow followed by an interaction programme was delivered by Comd and GM which explained on various aspects of current regimental affairs including on current expansion of Regiment and its effect. It was indeed very informative as geographical separation naturally excludes us from dissemination of such updates. As per the programme schedule, the next day involved a day trip to Ulu Temburong National Park with the troop personnel. After a ride from Tukur

Lines to Bandar Seri Begawan, the group travelled for around 3 hours by local water taxi from capital through a network of rivers and channels around the back of Brunei Bay, passing dense mangrove islands and finally arriving at the regional capital of Temburong. Our guide then took the group on a long taxi boats to Bukit Patio nature reserve where we started walking to the top of a walkway (Canopy Walk) to a majestic view of the surrounding countryside and wildlife was truly incredible. The trip package also included an adventurous rafting ride back to start point which the whole group enjoyed very much.

The final day of the visit comprised an early morning educational and cultural visit to the house of a local Iban tribe also called a “longhouse” in Labi region. As the word “longhouse” indicates this is literally a long house. Once upon a time it started out just as one small building meant for a single couple, but as the younger members of the family got married, they would add a small house of the exact size and shape next to their parents/relatives’ house, thus making the house grow longer and longer with each new generation. The hosts of the house we were visiting were very welcoming and excited to see us. The visit incorporated a brief history of Iban tribal people, their authentic cuisine especially the rice wine called ‘tuak’, demonstration and imitation of their traditional method of hunting with a blow pipe and local handmade handicrafts. This trip was a special experience to all of us as we came close to a culture with a long-lived history and impressive survivability.

Commander Queen’s Gurkha Signals and Gurkha Major annual visit to BFB has always been a key

fixture on BST’s FOE. The visit is in line with a long-standing tradition of Commander visiting the scattered QGS elements in the UK, Brunei and Nepal after taking the appointment. It was truly a privilege and pleasure to receive Commander QGS and Gurkha Major here in Brunei.

Ex TIGER BALI RIDE 19 **By Signaller Genuine Rai**

“Bali is a province of Indonesia and the westernmost of the Lesser Sunda Islands. Bali is Indonesia’s main tourist destination, which has seen a significant rise in tourism, mainly in Mountain Biking. Bali is also renowned for its highly developed arts, including traditional and modern dance, sculpture, painting, leather, metalworking and music.”

On 20 November, from Brunei Signal Troop (BST) a small group consisting of 12 service personnel seized the opportunity to explore Bali on an Adventitious Training (AT) Mountain Biking Package. The first day on Bali was mostly used for the recce by our instructors of the entire route.

We started early, with an even earlier breakfast followed by 3 hours ride to our start point. The first route was Batur Volcano Ride. The route was very challenging as it went around the Mt Batur volcano in the middle of the ancient caldera. The route ended after an hour of riding through farmland on double and single tracks, and traverses the cobbled lava flow on jeep tracks. A quick on-board lunch in our finishing point and a ride back to our hotel ENDEX that day.



BST Group photograph taken during Comd and GM QG SIGNALS’ visit.



Staff Sergeant Bhesh and Corporal Bhesh competing with each other around the Batur Volcano route

Next two days were even more challenging, Batur Crater Rim and Lebih-White sand Beach got the best of us. The ride from Besakih to White Sand Beach was a lot harder than the other two, as it was not for the faint hearted. This ride had great climbs and serious downhill sections. Full of fast rocky slopes and knife edge paddy rides, it was very hard not to fall off the bike. Starting at the foot of Mt Agung, the route got the heart immediately pumping with an uphill section, which is quickly rewarded with a fast-downhill section of single track through several stone quarries. Some serious climbing, awesome views and the best finishing point of all our rides at stunning White Sands beach where Bali Rides Mountain Bike tour Guides were waiting with a great lunch package for us. The EX TIGER BALI RIDE ended with a relaxing evening meal at Baliku Beach with the instructors to thank them for their hard work in making the AT adventurous and a memory that we will never forget. The sunset indexed the AT which was a great moment to cherish being a part of the Army.

Nepal Signal Troop News

Nepal Signal Troop (NST) continues to deliver both strategic and contingency tactical CIS/ICS capabilities 24/7 throughout the year in support of British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN), as well as supporting British Embassy and Defence Section, DfID, HQ GWT and AWCs (Area Welfare Centres) based in different parts of the country. Besides its primary role, the Tp has been actively supporting BGN's core tasking of recruitment, supporting on welfare of serving and retired soldiers and families and preparedness for contingency operation.

As part of a major uplift of ICT program 'Defence as a Platform' (DaaP) - the first stage of all three elements Global Connectivity (GC), New Style of Information Technology (NSoIT) and Integrated User Services (IUS) have been successfully accomplished. Local Cloud Solution (LCS) server and Local Access Point (LoAP) has been successfully installed in Kathmandu and Pokhara respectively. NST is constantly engaged with key stakeholders; HQ RC, CPO, ISS, Atlas-Fujitsu, BT, DIO (N), Local and overseas service providers in order to deliver the project. Uplift of IPLC bandwidth from 4Mbps to 10Mbps is completed as a part of GC solution, hence HQ RC decided to withdraw BGN's tertiary link DCN 0018 (VSAT) wef 30 June 2018 and NST is in process of back loading to AIRBUS UK.

NST continues to play a pivotal role in providing ICS support and SME advices to HQ BGN in delivering its core output more efficiently. For example, NST played a critical role in the process of upgrading Civilian Staff Human Resources (CS HR) and Accommodation Service Unit (ASU) software. The implementation of cloud-based PIE software for HR and Oracle NetSuite for ASU are ongoing and heavily relies on the expertise of NST personnel. The Gurkha Recruiting System (GRS) has also been recently upgraded in order to include the newly introduced mandatory exercises to the Recruiting Exercise Criteria.



BST Mountain bikers on Ex TIGER BALI RIDE

The year 2019 witnessed COMMCEN being rebranded to Service Desk and as such it is now the front face of the BGN in providing first-hand information and updates to all BGN staff. This has been restructured by incorporating Regimental Duty Staff (RDS) and is now the hub to address and mitigate any physical and information security issues within BGN. The NST personnel have been heavily involved in rectifying legacy G2 issues within BGN LAN. This has called for installing firewall and anti-virus software, introducing sheep dip terminals and addressing an education piece especially by honing SyOps and InfoSec protocols. Furthermore, NST have conducted Ex PSK 19/01 and Ex PSK 19/02 successfully and have been integral part of the RI20 Recruit Registration and Regional Selection (W) and BGN's Contingency Training Team. NST has been equally involved on social fronts as well, where our SP played key roles during New Year Celebration and BGN Ball 2019.

Ex PURBA SIGNAL KHUKRI 19/4 By Lance Corporal Prakash Tamang

A team of 5 x NST personnel deployed EX PSK 19/04 East over the period of 1-8 December 2019 under the command of Staff Sergeant Sanjay Rai with a goal to routinely maintain AWCs' contingency means of communication HF radios and antennas. Simultaneously, we as a team we had a mission to resolve any issues relating to telephones, installed Wi-Fi and the list goes on. The EX PSK 19/04 was divided into four phases as: planning, preparation, execution and recovery. Planning phase was all to do with the discussion and identification of the objectives that we strive to accomplish in the duration of the exercise. The remaining phases were of further importance phases of the exercise as good administration, timely arrival at the AWCs for the maintenance, conducting refresher training for the AWC staff and resolving any IT related issues they had, were significant. And of course, recovery phase was all about recovering back to BGN safely.

First day, the team deployed to AWC Taplejung making Dharan as the transit point. The next day we arrived in Taplejung just as the sun was still shining and carried out necessary inspections of HF radio and antenna components and carried out necessary repairs and maintenance. We, the exercise team had an excellent brief about Taplejung AWC from AWO Khargabahadur Rai. Overnight stay in Mewakhola Resort Taplejung was decent. We visited AWC Khandbari, AWC Bhojpur, AWC Diktel and AWC Rumjatar in the same manner. Wherever we were, every one of us was humbly treated and the presence of hospitality and family feeling wherever we went was heart-warming. The tradition of welcoming at all of the AWCs had been quite incredible and we felt so much privilege. In return, we had something good to give to them. One of them was the assurance in communication. All of the AWCs were quite pleased and also were very curious to express the problem they had

whether in HF system or their IT systems like Wi-Fi and telephone. Once we acknowledged and addressed their IT issues, they were pleased. It was quite apparent that once in a year military visit like this would boost their confidence in many ways.



Group photograph with AWC Bhojpur staff

All of the AWCs are using ICOM HF radios as primary means of communication. Apparently, routine maintenance of the antenna transmitter, lubricating metallic cables, changing guy ropes and zip ties seemed to be vital aspects of the exercise. The guy ropes and zip ties have to be changed yearly in order for the antenna to properly stay erect so that robust communication was possible. It was very important to conduct refresher training of using HF radio and call signs to the AWC staffs. This boosts their confidence while using the HF radio in peace time and contingency cases. All of the AWCs had a proposal to establish a secondary Ops room in case the main building collapses due to disasters. It was also our aim to identify appropriate site for the secondary Ops room and the possible actions, kits and costs that NST should be aware of.



Corporal Khagendra and Lance Corporal Prakash maintaining HF antenna, AWC Bhojpur

Overall, the Ex PSK 19/04 was a successful one. We managed to accomplish our aims. All of us took this great opportunity to help AWCs with IT enjoying the travel and of course we utilised this time to engulf ourselves with natural beauty that Eastern Nepal has to offer. It was our great pleasure to share our knowledge, meet and greet the staff of all AWCs that we visited. The exercise has proven to be the best time for AWOs and AAWOs to share their amazing past military experiences and joys and sorrows they stumbled upon whilst in service. This also proved to be the fruitful moment for all the deployed NST personnel in many respects. It felt like the whole time had passed in a blink of an eye. It was a great opportunity for all the deployed NST personnel in many ways.

After a successful exercise, we managed to recover BGN safely on 8 December 2019 leaving very long-lasting imprints of the whole exercise in our minds.

QG SIGNALS Detachment - Gurkha Company ITC Catterick

Yet again, it has been an incredibly busy but very successful and impressive year for the QG Signals detachment serving at Gurkha Company, Infantry Training Centre (ITC) Catterick. Despite the massively increased numbers of recruits in comparison to previous years, QG Signals personnel serving in ITC Catterick have been providing outstanding services not only to the Gurkha Coy but whole School of Infantry Training Centre. The Commandant School of Infantry (SCHINF) and Commanding Officer 2 ITB both have been equally impressed and praised on our soldier's exemplary instructor quality, their leadership and total professionalism. They have been continuing to exploit every opportunity, competing, leading and organising various events from the front representing Gurkha Coy events; namely Nepal Cup 2019, 10k Great North Run, Dashain Celebration, Bn AT and many other key events and activities all on the huge responsibilities of our soldiers and Officer. This clearly proves and demonstrates that our soldiers and Officers are highly capable and always leading from the front in most demanding and challenging situation balancing both ethical and moral principles in such a most reputable phase 1 training establishment. Our NCOs have been involving on various others fund raising events throughout the years all adding to the productivity of the community which have been evident and recognised by the Commanding Officer 2 ITB and OC Gurkha Coy.

Ex NORTHERN LONG RIDE By Corporal Amar Gurung

Ex NORTHERN LONG RIDE 19, a type 3 (unit level) adventurous training expedition for 2nd Infantry Training Battalion in and around the mountains of Andalucía, Spain was organized by Captain Lalit Thapa, 4(Iraq) Platoon Comd. The main aim of the exercise was to promote courage, leadership, physical robustness and team cohesion in order to enhance the operational effectiveness of the Battalion by boosting the morale of permanent staff serving in 2ITB, ITC Catterick. The AT package was mainly focused on two activities, primarily the mountain biking and hill walking.

12 service personnel across the ranks from 2 ITB deployed in the early morning of Wed 21 November 2019 heading to the Pure Mountains farmhouse located on an altitude of 1600m on the Rocky Mountains of Berchules in Granada Spain. A heartily and homely welcome from Jenny and Tim (Expedition host) made us feel like we never left our home. The icing on the cake was the weather, which was like the one we had before we left UK, rainy and windy.

On the first day of expedition we started the hike from the farmhouse with beautiful scenery and excellent weather (pun intended) again, rainy and windy. We summed up the day after 26 kms, 6hrs and some tired legs with the altitude at the highest point gained around 1950 m above the sea level.

The next few days were going to be fun after all we loved the mountains and the idea of riding a bike on those mountains was exciting enough. I can hardly express the feelings that went through my heart and mind while riding the bikes on the mountains, which resembles the hilly region of Nepal. The scenic view, perfect weather that changed after day two, the company and the routes for the cycling were something to cherish. The routes were very challenging and demanding, at points it would be very enticing but were designed for advanced riders where some of our team members would come off the bike and carry it on their shoulder. The very next morning was a little awkward to see people changing their gait due their sore legs. In any one day the team covered approximately 35-40 kms on the bikes.

We left the mountains with a very short hike down to the village of Berchules. The next phase of the expedition was Malaga city excursion. The city excursion was designed to explore Spanish culture and tradition. With the likes of electric scooter ride, Picasso museum, coastal walk, it was one of the memorable moments of the expedition. The expedition members had plenty of time to rest and recuperate. Thanks a ton, to the expedition leader for providing us such an opportunity and organizing a magnificent expedition for the Battalion.



Hiking in Sierra Nevada, Spain



QG SIGNALS personnel on MTB action

THE QUEEN'S OWN GURKHA LOGISTIC REGIMENT



History

An eight-pointed Star in Silver, thereon a Scroll inscribed "Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment". Issuant therefrom a Wreath of Laurel all in Gold, overall two Kukris in Saltire, the blades Silver, the hilts Gold, ensigned with the Royal Cypher in Gold.

Lineage

Gurkha Army Service Corps (Gurkha ASC) was raised at Nee Soon, Singapore, in 1958 and comprised:

- 28 & 30 Companies Gurkha ASC raised & formed in 1958-59
- 31 & 34 Companies Gurkha ASC raised & formed in 1959-60
- Headquarters Royal Army Service Corps 17 Gurkha Division re-designated Headquarters Gurkha ASC in 1960.

The Gurkha ASC re-designated as The Gurkha Transport Regiment (GTR) in 1965 and comprised of:

- 28 Squadron GTR
- 30 Squadron GTR disbanded in 1968
- 31 Squadron GTR
- 34 Squadron GTR re-designated 34 Training Squadron GTR in 1967. 34 Training Squadron re-designated The Gurkha All Arms Mechanical Transport (MT) Training Wing GTR in 1970 before being re-designated Gurkha MT School and absorbed into 31 Squadron GTR in 1971
- Headquarters Squadron GTR was formed in 1978
- 28 (Ambulance) Squadron GTR raised as a composite squadron for service in Gulf War 1990-91
- 34 (UNIFICYP) Transport Squadron GTR raised as a composite squadron for service with the United Nations Force in Cyprus 1991-92

GTR was re-designated The Queen's Own Gurkha Transport Regiment (QOGTR) in 1992 and comprised:

- 28 Squadron QOGTR, re-designated 28 Transport Squadron QOGTR in 1993. 28 Transport Squadron QOGTR was re-subordinated to 10 Transport Regiment The Royal Logistic Corps (RLC) in 1993
- 31 Squadron QOGTR, re-designated 31 Transport Squadron QOGTR in 1993. 31 Squadron QOGTR disbanded in 1994
- Headquarters Squadron QOGTR disbanded in 1994
- Headquarters QOGTR was co-located with Headquarters 10 Transport Regiment RLC in 1995

QOGTR was re-designated The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment (QOGLR) in 2001, with:

- 28 Squadron QOGLR
- 94 Stores Squadron, 9 Supply Regiment RLC re-designated 94 Stores Squadron QOGLR in 2002 before being re-designated 1 Supply Squadron QOGLR in 2012
- 1 Engineer and Water Support Squadron, 10 Transport Regiment RLC re-designated 1 Transport Squadron QOGLR in 2005, before being disbanded in 2012

10 Transport Regiment RLC was re-designated 10 Transport Regiment QOGLR in 2006 before being re-designated 10 QOGLR in 2008, and comprised:

- 1 Transport Squadron QOGLR
- 28 Squadron QOGLR, re-designated 28 Fuel & General Transport Squadron QOGLR in 2012
- 36 (Headquarters) Squadron, 10 Transport Regiment QOGLR re-designated 36 (Headquarters) Squadron QOGLR in 2006
- 94 Stores Squadron QOGLR, 9 Supply Regiment RLC re-designated 94 Materiel Squadron QOGLR in 2008, and 94 Materiel Squadron QOGLR re-designated 94 Supply Squadron QOGLR and re-subordinated to 10 QOGLR in 2012

Current Organisation

RHQ 10 QOGLR
 1 Supply Squadron QOGLR
 28 Fuel & General Transport Squadron QOGLR
 36 (Headquarters) Squadron QOGLR
 10 QOGLR LAD REME
 60 Close Support Squadron QOGLR, 4 Regt RLC
 95 Sqn QOGLR, 9 Regt RLC

Campaign Services

Brunei 1962, Borneo 1962–66, Malay Peninsula 1964-65, Gulf War 1991, Cyprus 1991– 92, 2007-08 & 2011-12, Balkans 1995, 1996–97, 1999 & 2001–02, Iraq War 2003, Iraq 2006–07 and Afghanistan 2009-10 & 2011-12

Humanitarian Service

Sierra Leone (Ebola Virus) 2013

Affiliated Corps

The Royal Logistic Corps

Affiliated Colonel-in-Chief

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal

Colonel of the Regiment

Major General A S J Fay CB

Regimental March

Wait for the Wagon

Staff List 2019

Lieutenant Colonel A F West RLC	Commander	RHQ
Major H Hewins RLC	Senior Major	RHQ
Major Indrabahadur Tamang	Gurkha Major	RHQ
Captain S Patterson RLC	Adjutant	RHQ
Captain Deny Gurung	Gurkha Adjutant	RHQ
Captain D Alexander RLC	Operations Officer	RHQ
Captain Rambahadur Rai	Regimental Career Management Officer	RHQ
Captain Ganesh Gurung	Regimental Welfare Officer	RHQ
Captain A Harrison RLC	Intelligence/Plans Officer	RHQ
Captain Anil Gurung GSPS	Regimental Administrative Officer	RHQ
Captain James Fitt AGC (SPS)	Detachment Commander	RHQ
Major N Heppenstall RLC	Officer Commanding	1
Captain Bhim Shrees	Second-in-Command	1
Captain B Parsons RLC	Operations Officer	1
Captain Pawan Sherchan	Troop Commander	1
Lieutenant A Ellitsgaard RLC	Troop Commander	1
Lieutenant A Charles RLC	Troop Commander	1

Major A Brazier RLC	Officer Commanding	28
Captain Prakash Rai	Second-in-Command	28
Captain T Christopher RLC	Operations Officer	28
Captain Surendra Purja RLC	Troop Commander	28
Captain Marsden RLC	Troop Commander	28
Lieutenant D White RLC	Troop Commander	28
Major G Power RLC	Officer Commanding	36
Major K Roberts RLC	Regimental Quartermaster	36
Captain Uttam Limbu	Second-in-Command	36
Captain J Alsop RLC	Regimental Technical Officer	36
Captain E Bill RLC	Regimental Signal Officer	36
Captain Dhungana Rai	Regimental Quartermaster (Technical)	36
Captain G Pryor RLC	Regimental Training Officer	36
Captain Prakash Gurung	Regimental Contract Officer	36
Lieutenant A English RLC	Ops Officer	36
Captain D Webb REME	Officer Commanding	LAD

Extra Regimentally Employed

Major Devendra Ale MVO MBE	SO2 Log Sp	11 Bde
Major Baldeep Tamang	Quartermaster	ARRC Sp Bn
Major Ganesh Tamang	SO2 ES Mat	3 UK Div
Major Rudra Chhantyal	SO2 Infra Basing	Regional Command
Captain Safin Magar	Troop Commander	DST Leconfield
Captain Basantadhoj Shahi	SO3 Family Sp	Regional Command
Captain Dipendra Rai	OC QOGLR Detachment	Brunei
Captain Dawanuri Sherpa	Second-in Command	14 Sqn ARRC Sp Bn
Captain Todhan Ghale	Troop Commander	94 Sqn 9 Regt RLC
Captain Vivekjung Shah	Troop Commander	60 Sqn 4 Regt RLC

Commander's Notes

By Lieutenant Colonel A F West RLC



2019 has been a year in which The QOGLR has made huge strides forward as a cap-badge. Tranche two of five of QOGLR Growth was completed by the end of the year and significant QOGLR footprints are now established in 4 Regiment RLC in Abingdon and 9 Regiment RLC in Hullavington. 10 QOGLR's main focus was training as a regiment, preparing to be held at readiness for a contingency operation in 2020 and 2021. During this year, we have had soldiers deployed all over the world: in Canada, Kenya, Pakistan, Estonia, the Falkland Islands, Belize and Brunei.

The year started with much of the regiment deployed in BATUS, Canada, supporting other units' collective training on Exercise PRAIRIE STORM. As always, 10 QOGLR exploited the opportunity to develop our own skills and drills, whether augmenting the busy RLC Supply Squadron or deploying onto the prairie to assist the Combat Service Support Group on exercise. Almost immediately upon their return, our soldiers changed their combats for blues, and a grouping under the command of Major Nick Heppenstall and 1 Squadron undertook ceremonial public duties in London and Windsor for a 3-month period. During this time, Lieutenant Simon Smith was invited to dine with the Royal Family at Windsor Castle where he represented the regiment superbly. Our time on public duties was a roaring success: the regiment secured remarkable media coverage, including the front cover of The Times, an enjoyable Commanders' Dinner was held in St James's Palace officers' mess with the previous ten Commanders QOGLR in attendance, and Her Majesty The Queen praised our soldiers' "exceptional turnout" which was fantastic to hear.

After the regiment's Kasam Khane parade, 61st birthday celebrations and summer leave, 10 QOGLR deployed to Lincolnshire and Staffordshire on the 101 Logistic Brigade Exercise IRON VIPER as the primary training audience. We were being tested in role as a Theatre Logistic Regiment to determine if we were at the

right standard for a possible operational deployment. Although the weather was foul and the training was demanding, the Brigade Commander judged that, as a result of our hard work and professional excellence, we had achieved the standard required to operate as a regiment in the brigade and divisional context. All we need now is a deployment!

In October, I was delighted to attend the formation parade of 60 Close Support Squadron QOGLR in Abingdon. This was a momentous milestone in the history of our cap-badge and we look forward to the formation parade of 94 Supply Squadron QOGLR in Spring 2020. The RLC regiments gaining QOGLR sub-units have been extremely forward-leaning under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonels Chris Yates and Joe Brown; they have thoroughly embraced the arrival of Gurkha officers and soldiers into their barracks. Of note, 4 Regiment RLC hosted a thought-provoking QOGLR expansion and cohesion study day organised by Major Graham Iles, OC 60 Squadron, with cross briefs from across The QOGLR.

I would like to pay tribute to the previous Gurkha Major, Major Chakrabahadur Khatri, who was instrumental in securing QOGLR Growth and, as a consequence, increased the career opportunities for our people. He handed over his prestigious role to Major Indrabahadur Tamang. The new Gurkha Major arrived just before 10 QOGLR's battlefield study to Monte Cassino: whilst sharing a very small room in an Italian campsite, we were able to make detailed plans for the next couple of years.

Throughout 2019 I was privileged to visit many QOGLR officers and soldiers serving at Extra Regimental Employment. Amongst other locations, the Gurkha Major and I visited the heavily-committed ARRC Support Battalion in Gloucester, we attended the Recruit Intake 19 Pass Off Parade (which was excellent despite the monsoon-like weather!) and visited our instructors serving with distinction at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick. We were also fortunate to visit the Brunei Garrison and were hosted perfectly by Captain Dipendra Rai.

After a year of high achievement, The QOGLR is ready for whatever 2020 brings. With so many Gold and Silver medals awarded for QOGLR teams in the Cambian Patrol and having welcomed the largest number of QOGLR recruits in our history in Gale Barracks in November, I am assured that the future is bright for the regiment. I am due to handover my role of Commander QOGLR to Lieutenant Colonel Giles Sugdon in October 2020. Serving alongside our wonderful officers and soldiers has been my absolute privilege and I wish Giles and the regiment the very best of luck.

Jai QOGLR! Jai Brigade of Gurkhas!

Gurkha Major's Notes

By Major Indrabahadur Tamang QOGLR



I am delighted and honoured to be writing this note for the Kukri Magazine as the 23rd Gurkha Major in the regiment, having recently taken over this prestigious post from the outgoing Gurkha Major; Major Chakra Bahadur Khatri in July 2019.

Newly appointed and still trying to find my feet I was immediately requested by the Commander of QOGLR, Lt Col Alex West, to deploy on the annual Battlefield Study to Monte Cassino, Italy. I was initially worried that this would prolong my acclimatisation as the new GM, but the Battlefield Study was a resounding success and afforded me an invaluable opportunity to get to know a number of the soldiers and Regimental Officers in my first couple of weeks in the role. Towards the end of the study we met up with those regimental personnel also in Italy conducting Adventurous Training. It was fascinating and inspiring hiking around Southern Italy, from Mount Vesuvius, along the Path of the Gods and visiting Pompeii.

My first real challenge as the new GM was initiated by a phone call I received as the plane touched down flying back from Italy. We had had to return to the UK in two tranches and the tranche taking a later flight had had their minibus broken into and passports stolen delaying their return. After swift diplomacy and no small amount of negotiation we managed to get those soldiers who were affected back to the UK after only 5 days.

After some well-deserved summer leave, the regiment started its final preparation for Ex IRON VIPER 19 (Ex IV 19), a Brigade lead CT Level 4 earning validation exercise, while our QOGLR Chefs organised the Commander's Chef Cup. It was incredibly well executed and highlighted the skill and professionalism of our chefs. The majority of personnel deployed on Ex IV 19 from 18 to 21 September, leaving behind a select few to run a Potential NCO course and the Ex UK Trail Walker team. Despite the regiment's frenetic schedule, the team selflessly committed to the training but were sadly

penalised due to injury. The regimental ladies' team were truly heroic, not just completing the 100km route, but doing so in flip-flops!

Ex IV 19 was an arduous mental and physical exercise conducted across the length and breadth of the UK but the regiment achieved its validation just in time for focus to shift onto our annual celebrations and festivities. We celebrated Dashain authentically, including observing ritual services in the temple, prior to a fantastic party. Between Dashain and Tihar, the regiment worked solidly to close down the exercise kit and equipment.

Since joining the regiment, I have witnessed the almost constant training and deployment of our soldiers on trawls; BATUS, BATUK, standing up for Ops TEMPERER, BRIDGE and ESCALIN on top of our internal commitments; Sqn exercises and numerous Brigade of Gurkha festivals. Prior to Christmas leave QOGLR welcomed 92 trainees and conducted a 2-week induction package, teaching about our regimental history and kaida. All 92 trainees were then authorised to return to Nepal on leave to see their families for the first time since starting their training. The regiment commenced its' readiness year from 1 April 2020, with all members of 10 QOGLR now being at 30 days' notice to move and this will continue to be our main focus until April 2021.

HQ QOGLR has kept busy, delivering on Gurkha growth, and managing the deliverance of Tranches 2 and 3 soldiers to 95 and 60 Sqn. 60 Sqn were re-designated 60 Sqn QOGLR on 10 October 19. This was commemorated by a hugely successful parade in Dalton Barracks, Abingdon, and I would like to congratulate all the soldiers and families for a truly auspicious event. As part of their re-designation they also built a Gurkha temple, which was finished and opened 15 January 2020. 95 Sqn QOGLR held their respective formation parade on 23 April 2020 and I was fortunate to re-open their temple in Hullavington on 12 November 2019.

Towards the end of 2019 Commander QOGLR and I conducted a number of MS visits including Brunei where we received a very constructive brief from OC Brunei Detachment Capt Dipendra Saheb. It was humbling to receive such positive feedback about QOGLR soldiers. This was echoed on a later visit to the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick, where all our instructors are doing an excellent job, especially Sgt Niraj Gurung who was singled out as one of ITC's Commanding Officer's Role Model of 2019.

1 Sqn, 10 QOGLR, made history in 2019, leading on the regimental commitment to Public Duties and celebrated 150 years since the sqn's formation with a dinner night in London and bhela in Nepal in early 2020. 28 Sqn, 10 QOGLR, were the lead for organising Dashain in 2019 and I cannot praise Capt Prakash Rai Saheb highly enough for delivering an outstanding program

and celebration. 36 HQ Sqn, 10 QOGLR, organised the Gurkha Welfare Trust Doko Challenge, a testing 5km run, seemingly all uphill carrying upto 15kgs in dokos. It was a fantastic event raising funds and more importantly awareness for the GWT. 10 QOGLR Unit Welfare team lead a wives and partners group on a very successful trek to Annapurna Base Camp. I am delighted to note that QOGLR wider contribution to ARRC Sp Bn, 9 Regt and 4 Regt helped secured gold medals on Cambrian Patrol 2019, and huge congratulations must go to all medal winners. Our Chefs continue to do a cracking job in various locations and have provided first class Gurkha curries to high-profile visits such as the Prime Minister of Nepal and Cpl Suman Thapa won 3 (UK) Div annual Christmas cake competition.

2019 was an incredibly busy year but we worked hard, delivered excellence and retained our well-deserved reputation. No doubt the remainder of 2020 and into 2021 we will face challenges, but I have every faith we will face them with our customary professionalism and flair. Finally, I would like to thank all the QOGLR officers, soldiers and your families for your commitment and the dedication that I have seen since my arrival and I look forward to working with you all in the future.

Jai QOGLR, Jai Brigade of Gurkhas!

Farewell and Tow Out to the Gurkha Major By Capt Deny Gurung

It is a universal truth that everything is changeable; everything appears and disappears when the time comes. Rightly so, the time has come for The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment (QOGLR) to say farewell to its Gurkha Major, Major Chakrabahadur Khatri.

Major Chakrabahadur Khatri enlisted into the Brigade of Gurkhas in November 1990 at British Gurkhas Pokhara in Nepal. On successful completion of Recruit Training in Hongkong, he joined the Regiment and progressed through the ranks and commissioned from the rank of Warrant Officer Class Two in Apr 2009.

As an officer, he has served at various posts before taking the prestigious post of Gurkha Major, which includes; Troop Commander, Squadron Second in Command, Regimental Training Officer, Quartermaster Technical, and Quartermaster 159 Regiment The Royal Logistic Corps. On 18 Jul 2016, he became the 22nd Gurkha Major of QOGLR.

Without a doubt, he has given years of dedicated service towards the Regiment. His commitment and loyalty have been demonstrated through countless achievements. Remarkably, the deployment on Op HERRICK 16 with the Welsh Guards Battle Group as part of the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group, the QOGLR Growth are some of the few achievements. The Regiment has

been on a fantastic journey since his role as the Gurkha Major, and the Regiment is incredibly grateful for his support and guidance.

To say good bye and wish him all the best for the future, the Regiment delivered his farewell in three phases; Phase 1, Farewell from All Ranks and Families including Retired and Phase 2, Breakfast in the Officers' Mess and Phase 3, All Ranks Tow Out.

Phase 1, Farewell from All Ranks and Families including Retired personnel was held during Regimental 61st Birthday Celebration. Celebrating birthdays are joyous but as inevitable as it may seem, farewells are a bit poignant, especially it is for the figurehead. Though the day was full of fun encompassed with the traditional entertainment programme, the farewell of the Gurkha Major polluted the atmosphere. The day seemed like the sun clouded. Upon a quick farewell speech from the Commander QOGLR Lt Col A West, Major Chakrabahadur received a farewell presentation from the Regiment, followed by a showering of Garlands and Khadas until he was fully covered. In the end, he addressed the Regiment for the final time as the Gurkha Major.



Comd QOGLR presents a token of love on behalf of the Regiment



GM Major Chakra and family receive farewell from the Regiment

Phase 2, Breakfast in the Officers' Mess was held on Monday 22 Jul 2019. All the QOGLR Officers including E2 posts gathered in St Omer Barracks Officers' Mess for Tow Out Breakfast. The reception drinks and Buffet Breakfast was organised by the 10 QOGLR Officers' Mess Committee under the watchful eyes of Gurkha Adjutant Captain Deny Gurung. After the final official temple visit by the Gurkha Major and his family, they were received and greeted at the officers' mess in the traditional way. The vibrant atmosphere within the Gorkha Room was exhibited by the warmth and smell of bacon and sausages. Whilst delicious breakfast and fine drinks were consumed, the Commander QOGLR delivered a very final farewell speech followed by the Gurkha Major's speech on the resounding tone of a gong.

Following the breakfast at the Officers' Mess, the final and Phase 3, All Ranks Tow Out was imminent. The QOGLR officers moved to Gale Barracks where the whole Regiment was formed up and waiting for, including families. On arrival, Regimental Garland and Khadas were presented to the Gurkha Major, who was then escorted to an ornamented vehicle. The Regimental other ranks formed on both sides of the road, waving and cheering, the vehicle was then towed by the officers toward the Gale Barracks Main Gate. At the gate, a Regimental Guard of Honour was presented along with traditional bagpipe music led by Cpl Bishal Gurung. Having inspected the guards, the Gurkha Major delivered an inspirational speech to the regiment, which shall be remembered by all. Along with three cheers for the Gurkha Major and prior to leaving the Regiment, the handover of Gurkha Major's baton was passed to the new Gurkha Major, Major Indrabahadur Tamang.

Major Chakrabahadur Khatri now moves to 9 Regiment The Royal Logistic Corps based in Hullavington, and is taking on the role of Headquarter Squadron Officer Commanding. The regiment wish him and his family the very best of luck for the future.

Jai QOGLR, Jai Brigade of Gurkhas!



GM Major Chakra presents a painting to Officers' Mess 10 QOGLR



GM Major Chakrabahadur Khatri is being towed out



GM Major Chakra receives the final Guard of Honour



Handover of Gurkha Major's Baton to Major Indrabahadur Tamang

Ex IRON VIPER 19
By Captain Ed Bill RLC



On returning from summer leave all focus shifted to Ex IRON VIPER 19 to ensure we were fully manned, equipped, and mentally ready for an arduous 3 weeks in the field. The RHQ experimented with configurations and SOIs as the sqns prepared their vehicles before staggering the regiments deployment to Cottesmore to conduct RSOI. The RSOI package, well organised by 17 P&M, allowed the regiment to complete some MATTs, receive a Road to War brief and get fully read into the exercise scenario. After 3 rolling 48 hrs packages the regiment was staged and integrated with elements of 156 RLC, part of our Non-Regular Deployable Component. From Cottesmore the regiment deployed to Swynnerton, across the international border between Gorgas and Atropia. The exercise focussed on End to End CSS, encompassing 104X in the JSA at Hull, through the rear area and DSG units in the Midlands, to the BSGs and front-line units on Salisbury Plain.

10 QOGLR were also the coordinating authority for the 4 other units within the DSG and as such were responsible for security, track plans and internal movements. As soon as the regiment established itself in Swynnerton and started to receive materiel, the threat escalated. The enemy started to use surveillance drones to gather intelligence and call in mortar strikes. Enemy Special Purpose Forces fires, and raids forced the regiment to



Commander Field Army visits 10 QOGLR during Ex IRON VIPER 19

disperse. 1 Sqn, using an innovative mobile headquarters bounced between Swynnerton and Stafford, as 28 Sqn dispersed across Swynnerton training area, using hardened buildings and tree cover to mitigate the threat. 151 RLC soon deployed and integrated with ten 40ft HGVs and numerous green fleet vehicles, force multiplying the regiment's lift capability exponentially. The RHQ embodied dynamism and agility as it planned and executed from 2 customised 15T SVs parked back to back, ready to move at a moment's notice.



A convoy during Ex IRON VIPER 19

As mortar fire shook the walls of the hardened bunkers, the RSM and OC 36(HQ)Sqn galvanised a QRF and set about drone hunting. The RHQ used this opportunity to CHange Of Control, using an innovative Dummy HQ to take the heat as they moved and dispersed the Ops and Plans 15T SVs. Parked 300m apart but connected by fibreglass cables and field telephones RHQ continued to plan and execute concurrently.

As the BSGs moved forward the Lines of Communication extended and 10 QOGLR dispersed further. 36 (HQ) Sqn established a Forward Logistic Node in Weeford Quarry, braving the quagmire and enemy to enable the regiment's front footed approach, forward loading stock and reducing the distance to the BSGs. The RHQ and SHQs moved multiple times, hundreds of pallets of materiel were delivered, and thousands of miles covered by 1 and 28 Sqn while LAD worked solidly to keep an aging DROPS fleet on the road. It was a challenging, innovative and ultimately rewarding exercise for which 10 QOGLR achieved validation from 101X.



Commanding Officer 10 QOGLR confirming the Regiment's fitness for operational deployment as an "in role" Theatre Logistic Regiment

QOGLR Attestation Parade and 61st Birthday Celebration

By Warrant Officer Class Two Nirmal Innam

With a remarkable history of over six decades and on the voyage of making more, The Queens' Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment celebrated its' 61st Birthday on 20 July 2019 at Gale Barracks, Aldershot.

Since its' formation on 01 July 1958 at Nee Soon, Singapore, QOGLR has come a long way, commemorating every year to mark this exceptional history and this year was no exception. It was celebrated by serving and retired members of the regiment, joined by their families to welcome our newest recruit intake with the regiment's customary professionalism and flair.

The day unfolded in two segments: the Kasam Khane Parade, followed by birthday jollification.

Kasam Khane Parade:

The parade square was set, fantastically decorated by 36(HQ)Sqn; vivid blue and gold regimental colours, shimmering in the mid-morning sun, as regimental personnel welcomed families and auspicious guests. At 0950hrs, 195 soldiers and officers marched onto the parade square, heralded by the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Formed up in five contingents including the Kasam Khane party of 59 soldiers from intake 2018. The parade was commanded by Major Heppenstall, OC 1 Squadron, fresh from Public Duties in London. The Colonel of the Regt, Major General A S J Fay CB, presided over the parade and reviewed the troops. On orders the Kasam Khane Party marched towards the dais where they undertook the oath of allegiance. The oath is taken by all new Gurkhas as part of the enlistment process where they swear their loyalty to the Monarch and promise to faithfully defend and uphold them, their heirs and successors, and to obey the orders of the Officers placed over them.



The Colonel of the Regiment inspects the parade

Later, Major General Fay presented Late Entry Commissions to Capt. Uttam Limbu, Capt. Surendra Purja and Capt. Pawan Sherchan. Furthermore, one of the QOGLR gold medals was presented to Mrs Kabita Gurung for her astounding dedication and commitment to the Regiment. After observing the parade, Major General Fay congratulated all who participated and



RI18 takes oath of allegiance touching Regimental Flag

praised for the high standard of the parade and wished all the new soldiers well for their future.

Birthday Party:

For the second segment of this special day, members, families and guests moved to the vehicle park which had been transformed incredibly into a remarkable party venue by 28 Sqn. The celebrations were fuelled by a fully stocked selection of drinks and delicious Nepali cuisine served by the award-winning chefs of 10 QOGLR. After the traditional welcome, the cutting of the cake was followed by a summary of the Regimental history reading and the new members of the Regiment intake 2019 were welcomed with Regimental Journals. In addition, Regimental awards were presented to those who had had outstanding performances over the year which included the Wallace Dutton Trophy to Pte Kamansing Rai, best JNCO Award to Cpl Sagar Limbu and best SNCO Award to Sgt Yongendra Thakuri.



The Colonel of the Regiment cuts the Birthday Cake assisted by Gurkha Major, Association Chairman and the Commander

Momentarily, the time had come for the most anticipated event of The Commander's Sword Competition; the tug of war competition. After a real battle between all the teams, their teamwork, brute strength and cunning strategy, LAD narrowly beat 36(HQ)Sqn. The celebration was still on the go with awesome cultural dance performances by the children and a magnificent Taekwondo Display by the Regimental Taekwondo Team. The day ended with Commander QOGLR presenting the Commander's Sword Trophy to overall winners, 28 Sqn.



Tug of War, the final event of the Commander's Sword Competition



1 Squadron soldiers receiving orders on an Infantry Exercise in Longmoor

It was another outstanding Regiment Birthday, celebrating new achievements and creating new memories. Now looking forward to next year!

Jai QOGLR

**1 Supply Squadron QOGLR
By Maj N Heppenstall MBE RLC**



2019 was a year full of opportunities for 1 Squadron. Operating on a global footing in their core role as Logistic Specialists (Supply), the Squadron's soldiers have maintained and further built their reputation for professionalism excellence. However, it was in the

nation's capital undertaking Ceremonial Public Duties that the Squadron made history.

Deployments to BATUS, Canada, in support of Ex PRAIRIE PHOENIX continued at the start of the year with 1 Squadron's personnel once again forming the largest contingent in 105 Squadron, at times outnumbering the number of permanent staff. 105 Squadron were happy to integrate 1 Squadron personnel - many of whom were returning for their second or even third time! Every soldier who deployed to Canada completed a week-long Adventurous Training package either on the slopes at Banff or climbing the ice near Canmore. Congratulations to LCpl Nitán Gurung and Pte Yogal Rana who were both awarded the Commander BATUS' Coin for their efforts and work there.

In the first major exercise of the year, soldiers from across 1 Squadron deployed to Longmoor Training Area on a dismounted exercise led by Lt Adam Stephenson, SSgt Santosh Ghising and Sgt Danbahadur Yonjan from Ammo Tp. Working throughout the week on section level infantry skills, they finished with a dawn platoon attack. The Colonel of the Regiment, Major General Angus Fay CBE visited the Exercise to observe the final attack and spend time with the Squadron's soldiers.

The start of the year also saw A/WO2 Yogendra Limbu and a team of NCOs from across the Squadron complete the 'Heavy' (Standard) Drill Instructors Course at Catterick; this was made more challenging as they were required to clear the snow and ice from the Parade Square in the mornings! Congratulations to A/WO2 Yogendra who was awarded top student. Two weeks of 'Heavy' Drill training in March introduced the Squadron's soldiers to the new form they were required to be fluent in, followed by two weeks special-to-role training in April, provided by a Short-Term Training Team from the Grenadier Guards.

With new drill mastered, No. 1 Uniforms tailored, rifles freshly painted, and highland brogues buffed to a mirror like finish, in late April, the Squadron (along with the Pipes and Drums and a number of additional personnel from across the Regt) deployed to the Royal Artillery Barracks, in Woolwich. The Fit for Role Inspection followed, where, under the watchful eye of the London District Brigade Major, the Garrison Sergeant Major, and the London District Tailor, supported by the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas, the Squadron undertook a full dress rehearsal for the Changing of The Guard. Passing the inspection with flying colours, on the 5th of May, the soldiers and Officers of 1 Squadron, supported by the Commander, the Gurkha Major, and many families, marched onto the forecourt of Buckingham Palace to undertake their first full Queen's Guard. It was a day that will remain with them and their families for the rest of their lives. The following day, the Squadron was delighted to see that its efforts had been recognised on the front page The Times newspaper and page two of The Telegraph. This is the first time the Regiment has been on the front page of a national newspaper.



1 Squadron front and centre on the front page of The Times newspaper on 6 May 2019



1 Squadron Families Day held at Royal Artillery Barracks, Woolwich

Over the following months, the Squadron would undertake the full range of duties at Buckingham Palace, St. James's Palace, The Tower of London and Windsor Castle. At the start of June, the Squadron was selected to be on duty during the State Visit of the President of the United States of America. During the visit Her Majesty the Queen complemented the OC on the turnout and bearing of the Squadron's soldiers, saying: "Your soldiers look excellent, I have seen them on parade". President Trump was equally complimentary of the Squadron's soldiers and during his visit requested his staff to produce him a detailed brief on the history of the Gurkhas within the British Army.

When not on duty, the Squadron made maximum use of its time in London with a huge number of cultural and education visits being organised by the Squadron's Officers and NCOs. Sgt Danbahadur Yonjan organised an excellent family's day, which, with over 260 in attendance, allowed those who hadn't been able to visit Buckingham Palace, to watch a full parade Queen's Guard parade (supported by the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas) followed by a lunch, awards and games.

Capt Pawan Sherchan (as the Squadron's Ops Offr during Public Duties) arranged for the Squadron to see the Trooping of the Colour parade, visit the new US Embassy in Battersea, visit No 10 Downing Street and the Historical Archives within the Ministry of Defence. WO2 Lalkaji Gurung arranged tickets for the Squadron to watch the inter-Service T20 competition at Lords and Sgt Binod Thapa organised a visit to Tesco's distribution centre and a battlefield study day to Dover Castle.

Charity fundraising was at the forefront of everything the Squadron did in London and in total Cpl Santosh Rai and LCpl Nitan Gurung raised over £620 for the Gurkha Museum in Pokhara and Blink (a Nepal-based charity working to improve opportunities for woman in rural districts). The Squadron's time in London on Public Duties has been formally captured in a series of oil paintings produced by the artist Anthony Cowland. The original of the main painting will be presented to the Gurkha Museum in Winchester in 2020.

A number of individuals from across the Squadron have been recognised with commendations for their time on Public Duties: A/WO2 Yogendra Limbu was awarded a General Officer Commanding London District



An oil painting of 1 Squadron undertaking Ceremonial Public Duties in London, Artist: Anthony Cowland



GOC 3 (UK) Div and Comd 101 Log Bde visit 1 Squadron during the ACPD

Commendation and both SSgt Appiah-Bosompem and Sgt Danbahadur Yonjan were awarded Comd 101 Logistic Brigade Commendations.

Following the conclusion of Public Duties and the Squadron's redeployment to Aldershot, the hard work on the parade square was not yet over! Refamiliarizing themselves with 'Light' Drill, the Squadron set its mind to rehearsing for the Regiment's Kassam Khane attestation parade. This was followed by the Regiment's 61st Birthday celebrations.

Shortly after the Regiment's Birthday, the Warrant Officers and Officers of the Squadron deployed on the Regimental Battlefield Study to retrace the exploits of the Gurkha Rifles in Montecasino. Organised by the Squadron's Ops Offr, Capt Jon Crowley, this event was highly successful and saw over 40 members of the Regiment learn lessons about expeditionary logistics at the Divisional and Corps level. Two concurrent weeks of adventurous training followed in the Bay of Naples for those on the Battlefield Study and Cyprus for the remainder of the Regiment.

Lt Benjamin Ryde, Matt Tp Comd, took on responsibility for organising and running the Regiment's PNCO Cadre which was attended by over 20 newly promoted Lance Corporals, including seven from 1 Squadron. They all performed very well and demonstrated their tenacity and determination to the remainder of the Corps. Congratulations to LCpl Bishal Gurung and Subin Rai, who both finished in the top three of the course!

The Squadron's focus on the return from Summer leave was Ex IRON VIPER 19. A 101 Brigade level exercise, designed to test end-to-end logistics and validate the Regiment for Readiness in 2020, 1 Squadron found itself at exercise's heart, providing the Supply function within the Divisional Support Area. The Squadron's main effort was trialling and implementing the establishment of multiple dispersed locations in order to generate increased resilience within the supply system. To enable this, Section Commanders and JNCOs within the Squadron were empowered and given great responsibility, dispersing across the country and pushing the Squadron to the limits of its command and control abilities.

The Army Combat Power Demonstration followed almost immediately after Ex IRON VIPER 19, during which 60 personnel from across the Regiment deployed with 1 Squadron to deliver the Divisional Support Area stand on behalf of 101 Logistic Brigade. With almost 3000 personnel from across the Military, Defence Industry and civil community passing through the Squadron's stand over the course of the two weeks (including Commander Field Army, the General Officer Commanding 3 (United Kingdom) Division and Commander 101 Logistic Brigade), the aim was to educate people on the sheer complexity and scale of logistic effort that would be required to sustain 3 (UK) Div in a warfighting setting.

Concurrent to Ex IRON VIPER and the Army Combat Power Demonstration, the Squadron has for the first time, established a Custodian Account with responsibility for receipting, storing, maintaining, accounting for and subsequently re-issuing stores returned from exercises across the globe. This means that the Squadron's soldiers now have hugely increased real-time responsibilities and the opportunity to operate a live account within the Squadron's lines in Aldershot. The account also has the potential to generate significant savings on behalf of the Army; money that

can subsequently be reinvested to generate better training opportunities.

QOGLR growth is continuing to provide soldiers from the Squadron the opportunity to spend time away from Aldershot where they will undertake different roles and work alongside British soldiers. We welcome these opportunities and are grateful for the increased experiences being gained by Logistic Specialists (Supply) across the Regiment.

There have been several personnel changes within the Squadron over the last year. The Squadron Second in Command, Capt Safin Magar moved on to DST Leconfield and was replaced by Capt Bhim Shreesh, from Catterick. The Squadron Ops Offr, Capt Jon Crowley has moved to be the Adjutant at the ARRC Sp Bn and has been replaced by Capt Ben Parsons (who was detached from the Squadron for nine months to work as the C-IED Support Officer at the British High Commission in Islamabad). Lt Sophie Copson and Lt Stephenson have gone on to Pirbright as a Tp Comd and Worth Down to work in the the RLC Liaison Team respectively. We have welcomed Lt Alexander Ellitsgaard-McNaughtan (who has already made an impressive start in the Regimental Shooting Team: Army 100 and Top Officer) and 2Lt Charles Anderson. A/WO2 Yogendra Limbu has been selected to be the next RQMS BG(K) and WO2 Madan Rana has been welcomed back to the Squadron as the new Squadron Sergeant Major.

The Squadron has a lot to look forward to in 2020. At the start of the year it will commemorate its 150th Anniversary, it will deploy on its 8th consecutive rotation to BATUS and then from April will be held at Readiness on behalf of 3 (UK) Div.



Lt Ellitsgaard-McNaughtan receives an award from the Colonel of The Regiment

On a final note, as 2019 drew to a close, the STWO and I had the opportunity to visit the Squadron's personnel deployed on the far side of the world at the British Forces South Atlantic Islands (the Falkland Islands). Struck by their relentless professionalism and determination when faced with an 8000 mile line of communication, it was a useful reminder that over the course of 2019, Logistic Specialist (Suppliers) from across 1 Squadron have been consistently deployed



Sgt Anil and his team, deployed to British Forces South Atlantic Islands

away from home and have excelled in their core role, in challenging circumstances, around the world. The soldiers of 1 Squadron have a lot to be proud of and I have every confidence that they will meet and surpass the challenges of 2020.

Jai 1 Squadron! Jai QOGLR!

**28 Fuel & General Support Squadron QOGLR
By Maj A Brazier RLC**



As ever, 2019 has been a busy but rewarding year for 28 Squadron, with a number of opportunities coming in what has been the regiment's Training Year.

The first of these was Exercise KHUKURI CHIL, an ambitious squadron level deployment from the UK to Germany by road followed by dismounted training serials

upon arrival. This really set the conditions for later successes, in particular for the two transport troops who would deploy, consecutively, to Canada in the Spring to support 3 Regiment RLC. I was fortunate to visit the Troops on the prairie and left hugely impressed by their ability to re-role to a second line transport role (it could be argued that it's in our DNA). Concurrently the Squadron's Petroleum Operators, seamlessly supported by QOGLR drivers, deployed in support of Exercise FINAL FLOW, the Petroleum Officers' Course test exercise. The summer period also saw 38 members of the squadron have the honour of supporting 1 Squadron on Public Duties; the soldiers loved the experience and were particularly well integrated into the 1 Squadron team, who really made them feel welcome. A word also for the QOGLR Pipes & Drums (mandatory for the QOGLR Pipe President!): on Public Duties, at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo and in supporting a number of high-profile charity events they have been absolutely superb. I congratulate our Pipe Major, SSgt Saroj Gurung on the award of his MBE and commend you to read his annual update.

In September, Exercise IRON VIPER would see the squadron reunite after a summer spread across London, Salisbury Plain and Canada. A "shake-out" on the local training area was much needed, and really allowed our Section Commanders to dictate the training of their soldiers and take ownership for their development, a theme that has run throughout 2019. I was really pleased to see how, on Exercise IRON VIPER, the squadron then took the lessons identified and ensured the regiment's validation was assured. A number of junior soldiers stood out, winning Commander QOGLR's awards for innovation awards, as they sought to question and adapt legacy tactics and procedures. The exercise also saw the start of a programme to replace our DROPS fleet with EPLS; whilst we have fond memories of what has been the workhorse of the regiment for approaching 30 years, the soldiers look forward to the completion of this equipment programme. That said, expect to see new gate guardians in the near future.



Bulk Fuel Installation during Ex IRON VIPER 19

Whilst there has been a feeling of 'change', what has struck me most this year is the work ethic of our soldiers and their drive to deliver all outputs to the very highest standard; in this regard, there has certainly been

no change. This has of course come with challenges, with QOGLR growth meaning the squadron holding manpower gaps of almost 30% so that we can grow our sister squadron, 60 Squadron, in Abingdon. This is absolutely right, and has also allowed many the opportunity to perform the duties expected of a higher rank. Reward has come in the form of 12 promotions to Lance Corporal, 5 to Corporal, 3 to Sergeant, 6 to Staff Sergeant, 1 to WO2 and 1 selected for Late Entry Commission. And they won the Commander's Sword. Well done to all.

I thank the team and so many familiar faces for making me and my family feel so welcome on our return to the regiment. The squadron now looks forward to 2020, with overseas deployments to Georgia and France on the Forecast of Events.

Jai QOGLR!



The Commander's Sword winners, 28 F> Sqn

36 (Headquarters) Squadron QOGLR By Maj G Power RLC



2019 has been another year of change for 36 (HQ) Squadron. The first half of the year saw the squadron continue to operate with a number of gaps in key

appointments. Instead of becoming a burden, this unfortunate position allowed several individuals to 'step-up' and demonstrate the talent and experience that the squadron possesses and is bursting to be put on show. The second half of the year saw an influx of new arrivals, keen to fill the appointments that were previously gapped or vacated by others as they left us to progress through their own careers.

RHQ has seen a much more settled and established staff, Lt Col West has been ably supported by his team and achieved the required validation pass on Ex IRON VIPER 19 that has allowed us all to continue planning and preparing for readiness and whatever the world has to throw at us come April 2020. New arrivals within RHQ have included Major Indra Tamang as the Gurkha Major, Maj Hannah Hewins as Senior Major with both the Regimental Operations Officer and Regimental Information and Signals Officer replaced by Capt Donald Alexander and Capt Ed Bill respectively. In addition, the Regiment has a new Quartermaster, Maj Kurt Roberts (Previous RSM 10 QOGLR) is welcomed back to the Regiment in his new appointment, Capt Gareth Pryor MBE has arrived as the Regimental Training Officer having been selected for Commission and Capt Anil Gurung has arrived as the RAO.

There have also been a number of changes to key personnel within the Squadron Headquarters. Maj Gary Power has arrived as the new OC, Capt Uttam Limbu was appointed Sqn 2IC having selected commissioned from being RSWO, the first ever QOGLR Communications Specialist to achieve this. Finally, WO2 (SSM) Dagalsing arrived from ARRC Sp Bn to assume the appointment of SSM. Once again, the Ops Offr, this time Capt Wardell was trawled for a deployment to Somalia on Op CATAN leaving Sgt Pankaj to take over as Sqn Ops Offr, not for the first time, where he has again provided an outstanding service. Lt Andrew English arrived as the regiment's Contract Offr but was asked immediately to fulfil the duties of Ops Offr, leaving Sgt Pankaj to breathe a huge sigh of relief. the Squadron has continued to play a part in all regimental deployments, be that the QM's department providing CSUPs, the Catering department providing Chefs or Communications Troop ensuring that command and control is maintained at all times. Several soldiers from the squadron have deployed overseas either on operations or exercises, locations include Estonia (Op CABRIT), BATUS, BATUK, Oman and Brunei. The Training Wing staff have also been busy supporting live firing exercises and 28 Sqn deployment to Germany.

As ever, the Catering department remain one of, if not the busiest department within the regiment. The ability to prioritise and multitask a variety of events and commitments while maintaining and building upon the hard-earned reputation is testament to the quality of individual recruited into this trade. The routine annual events which include the Regimental Birthday, Dashain

and Tihar have all been a massive success with high quality gastronomy and service provided as standard. Additional highlights of this year include catering for the visit of the Prime Minister of Nepal, Brigade of Gurkhas Week, GWT Charity Doko Race, RLC Corps Open Day and both the Brigade and Corps Operational Shooting Competitions. Away from their usual duty, the chefs were deployed on Ex IRON VIPER and asked to fulfil a completely different role of providing protection for both the SHQ and more importantly the RHQ. Memories were searched and the skills learned in Catterick, which for some were only months previous while for others were a considerably more months ago, were revised and tested in uncomfortable weather conditions for a three-week period. As expected, the chefs excelled in this environment as any QOGLR soldier would do and proved beyond doubt that no matter what trade or capbadge you join after phase 1 training, once a Gurkha Infanteer, always a Gurkha Infanteer.

Communications Troop have had yet another busy yet rewarding year. They upgraded the entire regiment's communications capability and were instrumental in the step change of how the regiment deploys and operates in the field. It was their innovation and determination that enabled the RHQ to deploy in two converted 15T SVs on Ex IRON VIPER 19. These could then be parked back to back to create a plans and execute ops room or dislocated up to 300 metres to mitigate enemy Theatre Ballistic Missile blasts but linked with fibre cables and comms wire for joint situational awareness. Most impressively they managed to cannibalise a tv aerial using black tape and a little bit of magic to let RHQ watch the rugby world cup while parked in an ammo compound 20ft below ground. A true example of adaptability under pressure.

The squadron has deployed as an SHQ on several exercises over the year, Troop and Squadron training culminated on our deployment to the north of England on Ex IRON VIPER 19, the regiment's CT4 validation exercise prior to assuming readiness next year. All departments from within the squadron were deployed in support of the regiment. Individuals were spread across RHQ, SHQ and both 1 and 28 Sqns with a couple supporting the LAD. Overall the exercise was a great success for the squadron, it allowed the new chain of command to test and adjust our own working practices when deployed, how we fit in and support the rest of the regiment and also allowed us to determine where best to place a headquarters squadron, within RHQ or as a separate entity. Many lessons were identified and learned and will be developed further as we approach readiness.

The squadron was given the privilege of organising a Regimental Level 3 Adventurous Training Package. Not content with sending the regiment to one location, Sgt Pankaj took it upon himself to organise and execute two concurrent packages in Italy and Cyprus, each attended by 50+ soldiers. In addition to hill walking which included climbing Mount Vesuvius, soldiers were additionally offered the opportunity to conduct rock

climbing and mountain biking in unfamiliar surroundings that pushed all to the limits of their comfort zones. The squadron now looks forward to 2020 having proven itself ready to deploy when called upon. All departments are experts within their chosen trades, as individual soldiers and as a collective entity we are certain to succeed whatever we are tasked to complete. It is hoped that the success achieved on promotion and commissioning boards by our soldiers this year continues into the next, that the efforts and ethics of squadron personnel are continuously recognised by the awarding of individual and team awards from both the internal (Regt, Bde and Div) and external chain of command. We will continue to encourage social events that allow us to relax and bond as a squadron, balancing this against the continued requirement for personal and professional development. The squadron is here to support the regiment and ensure that it succeeds in all that it does, long may this continue.

Jai QOGLR!

60 Sqn QOGLR Re-designation Parade By Lt O Pearman RLC

On 10 October 2019 60 Sqn, 4 RLC held a redesignation parade, to officially become part of the QOGLR.

This was a momentous occasion, on the squadron's journey to becoming a QOGLR squadron, which began with the first tranche of GURTAM in December 2018. With the squadron more than 50% GURTAM an auspicious date was selected and plans for the formal redesignation were made. In true military fashion, preparation and rehearsals were all important. Led by WO2 (SSM) Shanchu Lama the squadron prepared to be the centre of attention on the parade square. Everyone had to learn new drill movements, whether GURTAM learning heavy drill, or UKTAP learning light drill: both were to be used on the day. Hours practising drill movements in the hangar, and on the parade square, were invested to make the parade as sharp as it could be.

Finally, the 10th October arrived, fortunately a bright, clear day. After final preparations, including last words from OC saheb Major Iles and SSM Shanchu guruji the squadron took to the parade square. The squadron marched on, in heavy drill in front of an array of honoured guests, including former OCs of the Squadron, and COs of 4 Regt. Fittingly, 60 Squadron were inspected by Lieutenant General Sir Nick Pope, Colonel Commandant of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Throughout, we were honoured to be accompanied by excellent music from the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

A poignant flag change marked the squadron's transition to the QOGLR, and 4 Regt padre, Pandit Ji and Lama guru spoke to provide the moral component of the day. While the re-designation was a new chapter in the history of the Sqn, and the QOGLR, there were reminders of history too, such as the Thornycroft Type J



Lt Gen Nick Pope CBE inspects 60 Sqn QOGLR Soldiers during redesignation parade

vehicle at the rear of the square, that the Sqn had used over 100 years ago, in the first world war, flanked by the modern CST and EPLS.

At the close of the parade, the Bugle Major sounded the advance, and 60 Squadron QOGLR marched off the square in light drill, as the newest QOGLR squadron, and the first Close Support squadron in the QOGLR. In the reception that followed honoured guests took the opportunity to speak with 60 Squadron soldiers about their experience of life in a CSLR, and in a further reminder of the history the QOGLR carries forwards, Retd Col Gillham saheb presented the Squadron with a superb Khotimara khukri.

Every soldier and officer on parade felt immensely proud to have been part of 60 Squadron, and QOGLR history. The next day saw even more blue and gold stable belts, and khukri TRFs, as UKTAP soldiers and officers adopted their new dress regulations.

Jai 60 Squadron, jai 4 Regiment, and jai QOGLR!

Exercise CAMBRIAN PATROL 2019 **By Cpl Milan Rai**

Exercise CAMBRIAN PATROL is the British Army's premier patrols exercise conducted annually in Sennybridge, Wales. The exercise ran over 11 to 20 October 2019 and is open to Regular and Reserve Units from the UK and International Militaries. Exercise CAMBRIAN PATROL is physically demanding and is designed to assess individual and team military skills as well as leadership and navigation over difficult terrain and through challenging and frequently changing weather conditions. The exercise was conducted over a mixture of private and military land, covering 60kms, with each patrol member carrying a 35kg bergen, as well as rifle and equipment.

The aim of Exercise CAMBRIAN PATROL was to provide a challenging, world class patrol exercise in order to enhance operational capability and test soldier's mental resilience, determination and endurance by withstanding 48 hrs of tactical patrolling.

After two weeks of guideline training from the Brigade Training team (BTT), the team from 4 Regt RLC, QOGLR, stepped into the world of the infamous Exercise CAMBRIAN PATROL.

On the 16th Oct, we departed to South Wales for the competition, where we accomplished final battle preparation and administration. Early morning on the following day the patrol competition began. We reported to the RV point where they confirmed the team's composition and confirmed the team's bergens only(!) weighed 35kgs. After the RV we headed towards first checkpoint (CP) which was Orders. Patrol Commander (Ptl Comd) was taken to receive Orders, meantime the rest conducted a kit check. Immediately after Order extraction, Ptl Comd started preparing orders, and concurrently the Plt 2IC built a model. The team were released from CP exactly at 1150 hrs. From that point, our CAMBRIAN PATROL adventure began.

“Teamwork makes the dream work”: as a team we dreamt together to accomplish this mission with self-motivation, enthusiasm and physical and mental robust determination. The road to war began on that extremely chilly, misty and rainy morning. We soon came across an immensely boggy region. It looked like a dark chocolate, well blended in blackberry, as if it was a smoothie. We stuck, fell and tripped. However, with comprehensive teamwork we managed to get through. After three hours continually ascending on honking Brecon hills, we arrived at another CP.

The weather was worse than ever. Stream became river, pond turned into lake, some of them were uncrossable. I felt, it was not raining, but someone pouring bucketfuls of water from the sky. It created an additional illusion and navigation difficulties, especially during the hours of darkness. Almost at the midnight, we arrived into recce location. We set up a stand-off recce, but due to the adverse weather conditions were unable to log any enemy information so we had to conduct a Close Target recce (CTR). Again, it didn't work well. We were barely able to see 10-15 metres, even with NVGs, due to the heavy rain. It was one of the worst recce experiences I have ever had. Eventually, we achieved our mission and rolled forward.

It was 0430 hrs in the morning. Woods were roaring fiercely in our face. Some trees blocked our way and the leaves were dancing like a drunken man. Our surroundings were covered with thick mist and visibility was very short. Arctic cold squall was blowing from everywhere.... the perfect time for a river crossing! I still hesitate to recall that morning. It was the most undesirable and unloved morning ever, but we had no option left, other than face it head on. Finally, we overcame the river sharply and safely.

After 20 long hrs of patrolling we came to the LUP area where we were supplied water and allowed time

to write a patrol report. Work divided equally, we set up ponchos for shelter and started write a report, while other members prepared hot food - the first we had since starting. We were fully charged now to face further challenges.

Patrolling through Brecon's gruelling terrain relentlessly, we completed various missions and tasks at the CP. Amongst them, the one which I've never done was Artillery Target Indication (ATI). It was very new to me and the entire team. Its principle is to call the mortar support to destroy enemy armour.

"Coming together is beginning, staying together is progress and working together is the success". Following Henry Ford's wisdom, as dawn broke, we reached the final De-brief area. I reminisced that closed mouth smile and bright eyes of my team's faces. Another of the unquestionably unforgettable moments of the patrol.

It was one of my toughest competitions ever. I learnt, developed and performed to my best. My feet were seared by blisters, that poked my heart on my every step. I screamed and cried, but only internally. At the end of the competition, I cried again, I couldn't stop the tears that rolled unknowingly from my cheeks but this time it was the tears of joy. The team's efforts were rewarded with a GOLD medal, making those long, gruelling hours absolutely worth it.

CAMBRIAN PATROL truly is a world class military patrolling event. My congratulations go to all the participants who have completed it. I **SALUTE** you.



Ex CAMBRIAN PARTOL team displays Gold Award with OC and SSM

95 Supply Squadron, 9 Regiment the Royal Logistic Corps *By Cpl Raj Kumar Gurung*

Between August 2018 and December 2019, 90 members of the Queen's Own Gurkha Logistics Regiment moved to 9 Regiment RLC. This inflow will continue until early 2023 to fully establish a QOGLR Supply Squadron at Buckley Barracks.

2019 has been a demanding and rewarding year for the QOGLR LSS members of 95 Supply Sqn. We have had personnel deployed to OP TRENTON in South Sudan, BATUK, The Falkland Islands and aligned against OP TEMPERER including the TEMPERER London Augmentation Battalion, OP HIDAGE and the Theatre Enabling Group @R2 component. Our personnel have achieved some remarkable qualifications on the courses front including Section Commanders Battle Course, All Arms Commando Course and Physical Training Instructor course. We have also celebrated some outstanding success with a fantastic number of promotions across the ranks. The RLC and QOGLR soldiers have performed exceptionally well and 95 Sqn were honoured to win the 9 Regiment Commanding Officer's Cup 2019.

In February 19, 95 Sqn deployed on Ex KHUKURI EDGE, organised by SSgt Tirtha Limbu. This included a first week at Longmoor conducting the Sqn SAA competition and MATT lessons and second week on SENTA conducting a Battle Craft Syllabus Exercise. Ex WYVERN TOR followed in May, with the Sqn providing driver details and RLS to support over 2500 youth participants on their navigation across Dartmoor. Following a summer on High Readiness, 20 personnel were able to enjoy several weeks in the Alps as the team navigated the in famous Haute Route from Chamonix to Zermatt on Ex HAUTE PANTHER under the guidance of Lt Nazir. Post-summer, the Sqn deployed to Cottesmore on Ex PANTHERS VENOM 19 in September to conduct trade training in the field under the direction of Sqn Technical Warrant Officer WO2 Harka Tawa. Immediately afterwards, most of the Sqn remained to operate the JSA for Ex IRON VIPER 19 in support of 101 Log Bde, with 10 QOGLR as the primary training audience. A small team also successfully ran CP5 on behalf of the QOGLR on Ex TRAILWALKER. In October, QOGLR soldiers from 9 Regt RLC participated in Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL. With Cpl Raj Kumar Gurung as 2IC and the bulk of the team coming from 95 Sqn, they performed incredibly well and as a testament to the preparation and dedication of those who took part, secured a gold medal for the first time in 9 Regiment's history.

This year the Regiment managed to give a good account of itself on the shooting front. The team qualified for the Bisley Shooting Competition, led by Sgt Surye Gurung from 90 HQ Sqn. The team achieved brilliant results with impressive team scores. A special mention to Sgt Gurung who was the overall RLC WO/SNCO winner



95 Supply Squadron is ready to deploy on Ex IRON VIPER 19

along with Cpl Praveen Shrestha was also recognised as one of the army's top 100 shots.

There is a saying "If we are to preserve culture, we must continue to create it". On 14 Nov 2019, the temple and gumba re-established itself, with the QOGLR Gurkha Major, Indra Tamang and 9 Regt 2IC, Maj Dyer in attendance. The planning and oversight were led by Captain Todhan Ghale, with the facility provided for the use of Gurkhas, The Nepalese community and families. This will help to significantly increase moral and spiritual components of our community, which will ultimately underpin the operational effectiveness of the Regiment. A special thanks goes to Cpl Howell for his contribution on building the spectacular pagoda structure in the temple.

As with tradition, the QOGLR soldiers in conjunction with the Chippenham Nepalese Community celebrated Dashain festival. The main highlights of the evening were the Bada Khana (Dinner) and a fantastic cultural show which was organised by SSgt Tritha Limbu (95 Sqn, SQMS). The evening was a landmark for the Brigade, as it was the first Dashain organised by QOGLR personnel since the redesignation of 94 Supply Sqn in 2012.

In Dec 2019, 9 Regt RLC welcomed 15 newly trained QOGLR soldiers from Recruit Intake 2019. Initially they were received by 95 Sqn and after orientation, had the opportunity to meet the CO, Lt Col J Brown RLC for a welcome brief. The day consisted of numerous activities and concluded in the evening with messing in the community centre, with Recruit Intake 2019 meeting personalities from around the Regiment. Organised by Sgt Arun and LCpl Sandesh, the aim was to ensure a warm welcome to their new home in the Regiment and to maintain Kaida across the QOGLR capbadge. The training year reached its peak in early 2020, with

concurrent deployments to Cyprus on Ex LION SUN and to Germany on Ex DEFENDER EUROPE 20. Being very different exercises, both have provided excellent experience for the soldiers, who continue to show that they are capable of performing in all scenarios and continue to be delivered excellent standards in a highly integrated team.

The QOGLR growth has provided a platform to explore wider opportunities and expand understanding within the wider army. 9 Regiment RLC prides itself as one of the most diverse Regiments from across the Army, and as such QOGLR soldiers have been welcomed with open arms. It has been an exceptional period for the QOGLR team in 9 Regt, with opportunities to develop our trade, sporting and leadership skills. We now look forward to the 23rd April 2020, where a parade will mark the reformation of 95 Sqn RLC to become 94 Supply Squadron QOGLR.

Jai QOGLR!



Newly built Gurkha Temple in 9 Regt RLC Hullavington

GURKHA COMPANY (SITTANG) GC(S) ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST (RMAS)



Staff List

Lieutenant Colonel	C Boryer MBE	RGR	CO SSU
Major	Gajendrakumar Angdembe	RGR	Officer Commanding
Captain	Dipakraj Ghale	RGR	Second-in-Command
Captain	Mahendra Phagami	RGR	1 Platoon Commander
Captain	Tarjan Gurung	RGR	2 Platoon Commander
WO2	Prakash Gauchan	RGR	Company Sergeant Major
Colour Sergeant	Bikas Rai	RGR	Company Quarter Master Sergeant
Sergeant	Bhishma Jabegu	GSPS	Chief Clerk
Sergeant	Uttam Pun	RGR	1 Platoon Sergeant
Sergeant	Prakash Gurung	RGR	2 Platoon Sergeant

Routine Support to The Academy

Another year has flown past and the Gurkha Company Sittang GC(S) has continued to be held in high regard within the high-profile environment of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS). The GC(S) has a pivotal role to play within RMAS. With the total of 74 personnel, the GC(S) has configured itself to support three regular commissioning courses (intakes) that run concurrently throughout the year. This is broken into three 14-week terms. The training and support programme are designed to ensure GC (S) can support every single requirement. GC(S) provides a raft of support ranging from small field exercises to large overseas exercise in Germany, which offers an astonishing training value, complex terrain, extreme weather conditions and variety of different scenarios that includes both rural and urban environment, range safety, ceremonial guards, CE events, security and temporarily filling the gap posts across the Academy.

Our NCOs and soldiers are frequently on routine Academies event and duties too. Apart from these routine support activities for the Academy, there are many other high-profile activities running concurrently throughout the year including; GC(S) Conference, Army level Sports Competitions and Community Engagements events. GC(S), well known as an engine room, provides manpower and other resources to support these activities.

Despite the tempo of commitments at RMAS, GC(S) always finds time to develop our Rfn's and JNCO for the future, organising family events, maintain Coy's traditions, culture and battle honour, running variety of events within GC(S) and across Sandhurst Support Unit (SSU) throughout the year and take part on Bde events including Bde Golf.

Exercises: There are five major field exercises in each term for all three Intakes that runs concurrently; Ex DYNAMIC VICTORY and Ex TEMPLAR'S TRUMPH (Seniors), Ex ALLENBY'S

ADVANCE and Ex SLIM'S STAND (Intermediates) and Ex MONTGOMERY MARKS (Juniors). Moreover, there are 13, small to medium range field exercises that GC(S) provides manpower for. All these exercises are manpower intensive; which means a rapid deployment in the field for the soldiers. On average, a soldier spends 37 nights in the field in a term. GC(S) is far more committed and busier delivering training support now than in the past.

Ceremonial Guards: One of the standing key tasks at the Academy that is the 'Guard of Honour' for Her Majesty's representative at Sovereign's Parade. This is more commonly known as the 'Street Lining' and takes place along the Queen's Walk-in front of the Old Collage during each Sovereign's Parade.

Security: The RMAS, due to its nature and history, is a highly sensitive place and in turn could attract groups or individuals with terrorist intent. The threat to the RMAS is a top priority in the RMAS's battle rhythm. Although routine security responsibility lies with MPGS, GC(S) provides extra security during Sovereign's Parade at the end of each term and during an annual RMAS Heritage Day when thousands of people are expected to attend the event.

Additional Activities

25th RGR Birthday Celebration: This year, we are celebrating 25th Anniversary of the formation of the



Lieutenant Colonel C Boryer MBE (CO SSU), Major Gajendra Angdembe along with GC(S) Command elements and families



All GC(S) families along with the CO's wife, Mrs Emma Boryer



RMAS Heritage Day (HD19)

Heritage Day is an annual symbolic Public Relation (PR) event which will be taking place at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on Sun 16 Jun 19. The Jungle Trail is one of the most eye-catching activities on the Heritage Day that will be conducted by the Gurkha Coy (Sittang). It is mainly consisting of the Jungle survival stands, designed to show the equipment, basic jungle survival and tracking skills that the individual may require to survive in a survival situation in the jungle or elsewhere. In addition, GC(S) display a typically decorated Nepalese house on the day, provide security and Gurkha curry.

Royal Gurkha Rifles (RGR). GC(S) celebrated this event with great zeal in recognition of this unique milestone. This year GC(S) combining the RGR 25th birthday celebration along with an annual family BBQ event to take place on Mon 1st July 2019 at Gurkha Village (newly renovated messing hut), RMAS.

Nepali New Year 2076 Celebration



CO SSU on HD19 survival stand



Teej Night 2019 at Gurkha Company (Sittang)



GC(S) families

Sandhurst Station Families Fun day (FFD19)

RMA Sandhurst Families Fun Day (FFD) is an annual multi-activities event organised by GC(S) within the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMA Sandhurst). The day is open to all families, permanent staff including permanent civilian staff and children who come under RMA Sandhurst. This year, the FFD will be held on Sun, 15 Sep 19. The aim of this event is to entertain all the families, children and permanent staff (military and civilian) from various departments within the RMA Sandhurst and enhance interaction and team bonding. This is a perfect opportunity for all of us to meet and greet while the children have an amazing free activity.

74th Guernsey Island Liberation Day - 09 May 2019

This year, the 74th Guernsey Island Liberation was the seventh year in a row that GC(S) has had the privilege to represent the Brigade of Gurkhas. 2 Pl Comd, Capt Tarjan Gurung led a team of 8 to mark the liberation of Guernsey Island from the Germans on 09 May 1945. It is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 people witnessed the parade. The parade consisted of 21 organisations; eight military, nine uniformed services and four youth, marched to The North Esplanade for the Royal Salute. GC(S) and Chelsea pensioners were invited and sponsored by Dame Mary Perkins, a very generous Gurkha Supporter. GC(S) displayed Khukri and tradition dance (jahurei) right at the heart of town, which drew thousands of people to watch.



Vice Admiral Sir Ian Fergus Corder KBE, CB inspecting the GC(S) contingent



GC(S) displaying Khukhuri Display

Ex Cambrian Patrol 2019

As per last year, this year also Cambrian Patrol was held from 11 Oct 2019 to 20 Oct 2019. A team of 8 men commanded by Sgt Prakash Gurung from GC(S) took part on this challenging and awarded SILVER medal.



Commander Sandhurst Group (CSG) Brigadier J Carr-Smith, CO SSU Lieutenant Colonel C Boryer MBE, Academy RSM, GC(S) OC, 2IC and CSM with the GC(S) Ex CP19 team

GC(S) Annual March & Shoot and Marksman Competition 2019



Commander Sandhurst Group (CSG) Brigadier James Carr-Smith with the GC(S) March and Shoot Teams



Commander Sandhurst Group (CSG) Brigadier James Carr-Smith presenting prizes to the winner - Sgt Prakash Gurung announced 2019 Marksman of the year

Ex DYNAMIC VICTORY (Winter Term)

Exercise Dynamic Victory is the final field Exercise of British Army Officer Cadets (OCdets). They normally go through two different phases in this final exercise, which rigorously test their planning, command and control capabilities in a variety of different scenarios that includes both rural and urban operations. Ex DV takes place at the US Army training bases at Grafenwohr and Hohenfels in Southern Germany. 36 members from GC(S) deployed on this exercise under command of Capt Tarjan Gurung, PC2 from GC(S).



Rifeman Bijaya, Gun group 2IC



A memento given by US Army

RMAS/SSU Battlefield Study (BS) Tour in France and Belgium from 6 - 10 May 19

Members from Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) and Sandhurst Support Unit (SSU) deployed on Ex Academy Initiative, a battlefield study (BS) tour to Belgium and France on May 2019 for five days. The over-arching purpose of the BS is to enhance the quality of courses delivered by the RMAS. This will be achieved by developing instructors' and enablers' knowledge and application of infantry tactics through the historical study of real events, examining the unchanging nature of conflict. The BS focused on examining battles from both WWI and WWII. The first site visited was Bodange, a small village which enabled us to study the Belgian defence, followed by a place called Witry pertaining to German descent operation behind the Belgian front line. This then entailed to

visit Petitvoir town defining German assault and build further discussion of their manoeuvrist approach and operations in the urban environment. Second day started with focusing on obstacle crossings in the vicinity of town called Mouzaive and Bouilon and consideration of light-role Infantry river crossing, associated risk and Mission Command. Third day focused on FIWAF around La Hatrelle on the edge of Ardennes.

This was a well-coordinated and a very effective Battlefield Study tour planned and executed by WO2 Bhupendra Gaha (currently RSM 2RGR). The BS was a cumulation of several low-to-high level vignettes that exemplified Offensive spirit, use of Mission Command and useful insights on scale in ground, time and forces involved.



Battlefield Study Group

Exercise SITTANG WARRIOR 2019 (Adventure Trg)

Gurkha Company (Sittang) conducted a week-long adventurous training (Exercise SITTANG WARRIOR 2019) in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy with the aim to develop leadership skills, teamwork, physical courage and most importantly to improve the retention of the Army by allowing personnel to "see the world". The activities included summer mountaineering and mountain biking. The exercise was planned and led by Sgt Bhishma GSPS. The team were exposed to controlled risk to develop leadership skills, teamwork and physical courage which are Army's Core Values and Standards. These ultimately lead to operational effectiveness of the Army.



Member of GC(S) and SSU personnel during AT in Italy

Exercise SANDHURST FIRST TEE (Ex SFT)

RMAS golfers deployed on Ex SFT, an Overseas Sports Visit (OSV) to Malaga, Spain over the period 16-19 December 2019.

Primary aim of the OSV was to develop team cohesion, team and individual skills by playing competitive matches against different level of players in arduous golf courses. These matches are an ideal preparation to develop competitive edge for future Brigade and Corps competitions. Ex SFT was a great success led by Sgt Bhishma Jabegu GSPS.



GC(S) and SSU members on Ex SFT in Spain

Brigade Inter Unit Golf Competition 2019



GC(S) team with Colonel BG, J G Robinson



Gross Winner Captain Mahendra Phagami

2019 Team winner in Brigade Inter Unit golf competition won by Gurkha Company Sittang GC(S) for the very first time. The team was consisting of OC GC(S) Maj Gajendrakumar Angdembe, 2IC SSU Maj Om Pun MVO, 2IC GC(S) Capt Dipakraj Ghale and PC1 Capt Mahendra Phagami. The Individual winner was Capt Mahendra Phagami, (PC1) from GC(S) with the Gross score 5 over 77. The event was held at Windlesham Golf Club in Surrey.

Inauguration of Gurkha Village (Gurkha messing hut) after a major redesign and refurbishment programme on 11 Apr 19

The original Gurkha village was built in 1996 by the QGE. This site reflects typical buildings of Nepal. It was last re-furbished in Jun 2011 and opened by Maj Gen P C Marriott CBE. For many Gurkhas RMAS is their second home, where they organise many communal activities, social gatherings and official events. Therefore, it is very imperative to safeguard and maintain such a facility to promote our team bonding, unity, prevent boredom for ‘Muglis’ and more importantly to foster our ‘Kaida’, tradition and identity.



Lieutenant Colonel R Bredin MBE (SQM, SSU) inauguration of improved GC(S) messing hut.

Summary

Another busy year just passed by during which the GC(S) reputation has remained high. We successfully delivered our output in all front in an exceptional way and it is widely acknowledged that we are an essential part of the set up here and play a significant role in the success of the RMAS. At the same time, we are a very good and effective front for the Brigade to a very wide and influential audience. We endeavour to continue our total professional support and maintain our culture & kaida and our high standards in the coming year.

Jai Gurkha Company Sittang, GC(S)

GURKHA WING (MANDALAY) INFANTRY BATTLE SCHOOL BRECON



Staff list

Lieutenant Colonel	SWM Chandler	RGR	CO IBS
Major	Prembahadur Gurung MBE	RGR	OC TSD
Captain	Bhupalsing Rai	RGR	2IC TSD
Captain	Padambahadur Gurung	RGR	Sp Pl Comd
Captain	Gethin Davies	RGR	Ops Offr
Warrant Officer Class 2	Rajesh Pun	RGR	DSM TSD
Warrant Officer Class 2	Lalbahadur Rana	QGE	QMSI Aslt Pnr
Colour Sergeant	Dipesh Rai	RGR	CQMS TSD
Colour Sergeant	Manbahadur Gurung	RGR	SD Instructor
Colour Sergeant	Pralon Kulung Rai	RGR	JD Instructor
Sergeant	Deependra Dewan	RGR	Pl Sgt Sp Pl
Sergeant	Sangharsha Rai	QGE	Det Comd Aslt Pnr
Sergeant	Gajendrakumar Gurung	QGE	Det Comd Aslt Pnr
Sergeant	Manjil Gurung	RGR	Det Comd Aslt Pnr
Sergeant	Rijan Rai	GSPS	SSA/GWM Chf Clk

Gurkha Wing (Mandalay) Newsletter By Rifeman Atul Rai, 1RGR

Infantry Battle School being the core establishment of all the infantry courses, is a very demanding unit. Each year the unit runs key courses like Platoon Commanders Battle Course, Platoon Sergeant Battle Course, Section Commander Battle Course, Jungle Warfare Courses, Skill at Arms and Live Firing Tactical Training and many more. Training Support Division is responsible for supporting and ensuring that the courses run smoothly. Gurkha Wing Mandalay, being the largest department within the TSD never fails to stretch out its resources to its maximum potential and strives to becoming more efficient and successful in every aspect.

Gurkha Wing Mandalay consists mainly of the Division Headquarter, Division Quarter Master, Support Platoon, Pioneers Platoon and Signal Platoon. Each sub department has their own specialities and plays their part to ensure the courses run smoothly. Support Platoon provides assets like mortars, machine guns, quad bikes and live firing demonstration for the courses. Signal Platoon provides robust communication systems to the courses out in the field which are the key assets for all the exercises. Likewise, Assault Pioneer Platoon makes the exercises more realistic by providing battle simulation, digging operator and lessons for building trenches. This only proves that it takes all departments to come together and work as one whole in order to achieve any mission. However, despite the busy schedule last year, Gurkha Wing Mandalay took part in numerous events like UK MIDLANDS VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP, WATT 4 CHALLENGE, TRAIL WALKER and KHUD RACE.

UK MIDLANDS VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP; Eleven members led by Lance Corporal Kamal Rana from 1st Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles, managed to successfully secure a trophy by winning the minor unit category. In addition, two individuals taking part in WATT 4 CHALLENGE and managed to win in their respective categories. A main effort last year was TRAIL WALKER. Two teams were registered for the competition. First team being led by Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Shaun William Mark Chandler and second team led by Lance Corporal Ritesh Rai. Both teams did well and completed the race in overall 6th and 8th position respectively. However, the key event for IBS was the KHUD RACE which was held on 20 July 19. The event itself has a history of the Gurkhas thus it made a prestigious event for all the participants. There were both military and civilian participants in the arduous course. The children had their own set of categories as well making it a family event which was the main objective of the event, to be able to engage with the local community and build a better relationship. It was the combined effort of every member supervised by Captain Padambahadur Gurung, Platoon Commander Support Platoon, who worked tirelessly under the horrendous "Brecon Weather" that made the event successful. Closer to the end of the year, Gurkha Wing Mandalay took part in a couple more events like the Brecon Freedom Parade, Nepal Cup, and Remembrance Parade. The outcome of the events itself was an evident of the hard work and commitments

shown by the members of Gurkha Wing Mandalay. However, this is just a milestone of the journey that our great grandfathers have started.

Brecon Freedom Parade



Soldiers from GWM are presenting General Salute to the Mayor of Brecon

TRAIL WALKER



Trail Walker 2019 Team A, led by Lt Col SWM Chandler and the members were Cpl Gaurab Gurung, LCpl Himal Limbu, Pte Prembahadur Thapa - Crossing the finishing line together

KHUD Race



Military and civilian personnel warming up for the Khud Race 2019 - The overall in charge for the event was Capt Padambhadur Gurung, PC SP PL Under the direction from LT Col SWM Chandler, CO IBS



UK Midlands Volleyball Championship 2019, led by LCpl Kamal Rana managed to win the Minor Unit Category

EXERCISE DRAGON BAYONET HIMAL (13 September - 5 October 2019)

By Sergeant Rijan Rai, GSPS

At the heart of the Western part of Nepal is one of the world-famous long-distance treks in Annapurna Region. Its total length extends up to and about 230km but varies on where you start and end the trek. Its highest point is Thorung La Pass which is at an altitude of 5416m touching the edge of the Tibetan plateau. The trek also consists of Tilicho Lake which is considered the highest lake for its size in the world at an altitude of 4919m. Apart from trekking, Mountain Biking is also becoming popular within this region.

14 members from Infantry Battle School took part in the expedition, Exercise DRAGON BAYONET HIMAL, led by Captain Padambhadur Gurung (1st Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles) to the world’s famous Annapurna Region in Nepal.

The aim of the expedition was to provide an opportunity to push the limits of individuals to develop their mental and physical courage in conjunction with developing their leadership skills and to have fun. This region was selected due to its high-altitude long distance off beaten tracks which was perfect for the beginners to understand about mountaineering with beautiful views of the world-famous Himalayan Range.

Our trek started from Kathmandu via vehicle transiting overnight in Pokhara, Chamsey and Koto. From Koto, we started our trek on foot. The first day was typically challenging after 3 days of travel in vehicle against the off-beating tracks. There was also a high risk of Acute Mountain Sickness as we were about to summit just above 3500m for the first time to a village called Meta. However, we managed to arrive our destination, but few members of the expedition were having a mild headache due to the altitude. Hence, we decided to stay an additional day at Meta for acclimatisation. Another challenge we faced was when we were



Phu Gau (Village) - The last village in the north of Nepal and one of the two lost valley of Nepal which was only opened to the public in 2003

discovering the hidden valley of Nar Phu (Nar village and Phu village). It was only opened to the public in 2003 and not many people have explored this region. The region has been lost for a long time to the modern world yet, it did not hesitate to fascinate us with its remote monasteries, gompas and ancient Tibetan culture and lifestyle. The region itself was beautiful surrounded by high mountain peaks.

As the days progressed, our journey started to get better as the expedition members were acclimatised and gained experience. However, when summitting Kang La Pass at an altitude of 5320m, some of the expedition members started to show the symptoms of minor Acute Mountain Sickness. Nevertheless, we did manage to conquer the Kang La Pass but, as we could not risk exposing too much to the high altitude, we had to descend immediately to Ngawal Village. Fortunately, the symptoms started to disappear after few hours after arriving at Ngawal Village. Moreover, on our next stop at Manang Village, we took an extra day off to acclimatise further before we continued our journey to the Tilicho Lake followed by the Thorung La Pass.

By the end of the trip, when we finally conquered Thorung La Pass and arrived at Jomsom, everyone was delighted after a long journey which started on 13 September 2019 from Kathmandu. 11 expedition members were awarded the Summer Mountain Foundation qualification during this expedition. The beautiful Himalayan Range decorated by snow and rivers did manage to put a footprint on our hearts. There were good days and bad, and the weather was not on our side for the most part of our trek. The tracks leading up and down the hills were not easy to conquer either, but regardless of all the challenges we faced, we managed to complete our mission as a team. Huge thanks go to the Adventure Training Group (Army) in Bicester for providing all necessary equipment for the expedition and to all organisations that supported



On route to the Tilicho Lake, one of the highest lakes of its size in the world at an altitude of 4919m



Overview of Nar Village - One of the lost valleys of Nepal which was only opened to the public in 2003



Tilicho Lake, after a successful journey from Tilicho Base Camp. The most exciting journey through out the expedition.

us during this expedition. In addition, thanks to the Gurkha Adventure (Nepal) company for their guidance and assistance to make this expedition successful. I hope, in future, the Adventure Training will gain more popularity and inspire more people to take the opportunity of a lifetime.



GURKHA COMPANY (CATTERICK)

History

Until 1948, recruits for the Brigade of Gurkhas were trained at regimental centres in India. After Indian independence and the division of the Brigade between the Indian and British Armies, British Gurkha recruit training was reformed and renamed the Training Brigade of Gurkhas at Sungai Patani, North Malaya on 15 August 1951.

On 11 June 1971, the depot was moved to Malaya lines in Hong Kong and in December 1994 renamed the Gurkha Training Wing (GTW) and moved to the Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Church Crookham. In 1999, GTW moved to 3rd Battalion, the Infantry Training Centre (3ITC) Catterick and was renamed Gurkha Company. Gurkha Company is currently part of the 2nd Infantry Training Battalion (2ITB) along with the Guards and Para training companies in Helles Barracks.

In 2019, Gurkha Coy consists of 102 Permanent Staff and 400 Gurkha Trainee Riflemen organised into 9 Platoons. Each platoon is named after a Gurkha battle honour. It is here that Gurkha recruits are trained to be part of the modern British Army whilst retaining their proud Gurkha heritage and Nepalese identity. Gurkha Company delivers a 39 weeklong Combat Infantry Course (Gurkha) CIC(G).

Company Mission. To deliver trained Gurkha soldiers in order to meet the operational requirements of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Company Role. To mould a Nepalese youth into a Gurkha soldier, trained to the requirements of the British Army and who retains his Nepalese identity and will live up to the traditions of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Staff List

Major	Rajeshkumar Gurung	1 RGR	OC
Captain	Kiran Pun MVO	1 RGR	2IC
Captain	Kailash Khebang Limbu	2 RGR	A Wing Comd
Captain	Bhaktaprasad Sherchan	1 RGR	B Wing Comd
Captain	Dirgha KC	QGE	C Wing Comd
Warrant Officer Class 2	Sajan Limbu	2 RGR	CSM
Warrant Officer Class 2	Premkumar Jabegu Limbu	QGE	Trg WO
Colour Sergeant	Biken Rana Magar	1 RGR	CQMS
Staff Sergeant	Lokbahadur Jirel	GSPS	Chief Clerk
Captain	Santoshkumar Rai	2 RGR	1 PL Comd
Captain	Suresh Sambahamphe	2 RGR	2 PL Comd
Captain	Ashokkumar Gurung	QGE	3 Pl Comd
Captain	Lalitbahadur Thapa	QG Signals	4 Pl Comd
Captain	Bikash Gurung	1 RGR	5 Pl Comd
Warrant Officer Class 2	Bishnu Thapa	1 RGR	6 Pl Comd
Captain	Basanta Rai	2 RGR	7 Pl Comd
Warrant Officer Class 2	Rajkumar Gurung	QOGLR	8 Pl Comd
Captain	Belbahadur Gurung	1 RGR	9 Pl Comd

Battle Honour	Date	Platoon
SOBRAON	10 February	1
KANDAHAR	01 September	2
TOBRUK	21 May	3
IRAQ	21 March	4
HELLES	25 April	5
ASSAYE	23 September	6
KABUL	23 December	7
ARAKAN	11 May	8
MEIKTILA	03 March	9

Recruit Intake 2019 (RI 19) - Statistics

Total Enlisted	400
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Fitness and Shooting Assessment - (Individual Assessment)

Percentage who attempted and passed Role Fitness Test (Soldier)

2 Km run with 25 Kg Weight at 1st attempt	100% and the fastest time - 8 mins 48 secs
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Percentage who attempted and passed Role Fitness Test (Basic Training)

2 Km run with 15 Kg Weight at 1st attempt	100% and the fastest time - 8 mins 29 secs
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Percentage who attempted and passed Soldier Conditioning Review Test

2 Km run at 1st attempt	100% and the fastest time - 6 mins 30 secs
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Trainee Riflemen to attempt and pass the ACMT	75% (53.67% Recruit Intake 2019 achieved Marksman)
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Language Assessment

Functional Skills (FS) Level 1 pass	72.25%
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FS Entry Level 3 passed	100%
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Trade Selection Test (TST) pass	1	00%
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Average TST score	34.52 out of 55
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Presentations**Units Champion Trainee Riflemen**

Overall Champion Trainee Rifleman	30312684 T/Rfn Sanim Rai
1st Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles	30312684 T/Rfn Sanim Rai
2nd Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles	30312795 T/Rfn Ayush Rai
The Queen's Gurkha Engineers	30312008 T/Rfn Santosh Gurung
The Queen's Gurkha Signals	30312699 T/Rfn Prabesh Gurung
The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment	30312057 T/Rfn Arjun Moktan
The Gurkha Staff & Personnel Support	30312769 T/Rfn Kshiteez Rai
The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas	30312667 T/Rfn Ashish Tamang

Individual Awards - Intake 2019

Champion Shot	30311990 T/Rfn Bikash Rana
Most improved in English	30312705 T/Rfn Umesh Libang
The Fittest Trainee Rifleman	30312057 T/Rfn Arjun Moktan

Champion Platoon and Section

Champion Platoon 2 (Kandahar) Platoon	21169685 Capt Suresh Sambahamphe 2 RGR
Champion Section 2 (Kandahar) Platoon 3 Section	30141872 Cpl Rajesh Chemjong 2 RGR

Permanent Staff Awards 2019

Commandant's Trophy	21171795 Cpl Shankar Magar 1 RGR
Role Model Trophy	21171085 Sgt Niraj Gurung QOGLR



Major General Capps CBE, GOC Regional Command, Reviewing Officer RI 19 Attestation Parade in Pokhara Nepal, with trainees after the parade

Newsletter

Recruit Intake 2019 (RI 19) - Annual Summary

RI 19 Arrival to Catterick

2019 saw the arrival of one of the biggest Intakes in decades, 400 new trainees, to the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) Catterick. Unlike last year, the weather was in our favour when RI 19 first stepped into the UK. Standing nervously on the parade square, in a different part of the globe, the journey from civilian to trained Gurkha Infantry soldier was about to instigate. Gurkha Company's mission is to mould Nepalese men into trained Infantry soldiers capable of joining any unit within the Brigade of Gurkhas and upholding the reputation of their forefathers.

Additionally, it also seeks to encompass and educate the trainees on Kaida and its importance within the Brigade of Gurkhas. This is achieved by permanent staff from all cap badges within the Brigade, each PI a mix of different specialties and expertise which can provide trainees with the best exposure to all units and deliver excellent training.

The first twelve weeks is an exceptionally busy time for trainees and staff. These formative weeks consist of rigorous room inspections, drill, physical training, skill



RI 19 trainees with UK Border Staff at Manchester Airport



WO2 Bishnu Thapa (6 Pl Comd) delivering Fieldcraft lesson on Intro Ex 1

at arms and the first exposure to the Recruit English Package. Although exhausted and often overwhelmed with their new environment the trainees quickly adjust and begin working together in their Sections and form friendships which they will cherish forever. The pinnacle of this period is Passing Off the Square; a special occasion for trainees and permanent staff signifying the end of the first block of training and demonstrating a basic understanding of the standard expected.

RI 19 Introductory Exercises

Introduction Exercises 1 - 3 form the basic foundation of the trainees' soldiering skills and takes place within the first twelve weeks. The training starts with personal administration, individual fire and movement before progressing into a Fire Team attack. Introduction Exercise 3 is a critical output assessment, trainees are examined on their camouflage and concealment, ability to give a fire control order and judging distance. The entire intake had worked extremely hard to get to this point and were relieved once this milestone in training had been accomplished.

RI 19 Attack, Patrol and Defence Exercises

The remainder of the exercises are split into Attack, Patrol and Defence Exercises. Attack Ex focuses on Offensive Operations, particularly Section level attacks, patrolling and the advance to contact. The culmination is a Platoon attack which is the first executed by platoons. They begin to understand the mechanism of the attack and the role of the different sections within this. Patrol Ex continues to build on the knowledge and skills from the previous exercise. There are plenty of section level patrols both recce and standing. The Pl receive lectures and demonstrations on how to conduct an Ambush then get the opportunity to execute one. The final action of the exercise was a raid which put the trainees' patrolling, recce and fieldcraft skills to the test. The platoons tabbed back to camp with full kit, which proved particularly challenging to the trainees. They demonstrated physical and mental robustness to complete the march and this concluded their exercise.



Trainees covering their Arcs after capturing enemy position on Patrol Ex

Defence Ex followed quickly after, this was conducted in Otterburn training area and is the first exercise away from Catterick. It is a defensive and CBRN exercise requiring the trainees to dig down to stage 4 and establish a Coy blocking position. In between digging, different Section strength patrols are launched to recce NAIs and identify ambush locations which the Pl later occupies and executes an ambush from. The scenario also allows each Platoon to conduct a FIWAF operation for the first time and Platoon and Wing counter attack rehearsals. As the scenario developed the CBRN threat became higher, culminating in a CBRN attack from the enemy. The extraction to a Coy RV in full romeo was particularly memorable for the trainees. From the Coy Assembly Area QBOs were delivered and the position was retaken in the early hours of the next morning.

The arduous nature of the Exercise and the severe weather conditions pushed trainees out of their comfort zone and prepared them; both mentally and physically for their Final Exercise.



Trainees from 9 Pl building their section trench on Defence Exercise

RI 19 Final Exercise and LFTT

As final Exercise loomed there were many nervous faces on the parade square waiting for the coaches to take them back to Otterburn. This would be the final test and is the climax of all the training throughout the course. The first day saw the Wings conduct advance to contacts in a Coy context, giving the trainees an understanding and exposure to a larger scale operation. As the week progressed the trainees had the opportunity to demonstrate their skills sets in the various scenarios presented to them. Section level recce and standing patrols were sent out, Platoon ambushes, FIWAF, vehicle searches and route clearances were all conducted to confirm the trainees’ understanding. The final insertion throughout the night across severe terrain proved challenging and at dawn the assault began. As the Platoons began echeloning through one another; all the enemy posts were captured effortlessly.



CO 2ITB paid visit during RI 19 Final Ex

The following week consisted of an extensive live fire package, taking the trainees from individual close quarter battle to a platoon live attack. The improvement in individual skills and drills throughout the week was significant and the work ethic of the trainees was clear to see. This marked the end of the exercises in the course and all were rewarded with a well-deserved weekend off.

RI19 Unit Capbadging Ceremony

One of the crucial day in the life of a Gurkha soldier, Unit Capbadging Parade, all the trainees were anxiously waiting for this moment. Like previous years, the ceremony was attended by the Colonel of the Brigade of Gurkhas, Commanding Officers, Gurkha Majors, Officer Commanding, Director of Music and RSMs of respective Units.

The day commenced with OC Gurkha Company’s briefing to the Unit representatives, where he explained the statistics and procedures involved in allocating trainees to all BG Units. Prior to capbadging parade, Col BG presented RGR 25 award to four recipients from Gurkha Coy. This was shortly followed by Col BG’s farewell. The youngest T/Rfn from RI 19 presented a farewell memento to Col BG. Col BG delivered his final speech to RI 19 and wished them good luck for their remaining training and future career. With the permission from Col BG, the OC Gurkha Coy called out all 400 trainees names with their allocated Units. The CO, GM, OC and DOM of respective units then presented trainees with their new beret and cap-badges. This year 85% of trainees managed to receive their first preference.



Maj Rajeshkumar Gurung, OC Gurkha Coy calling out the names of 400 Trainees with their allocated Unit

All the Units' representatives were given the opportunity to socialise with their new unit members, as well as the instructors representing their cap-badges. This spectacular day was broadcasted live on social media by the BFBS Gurkha Radio and the Forces TV.

Gurkha Coy Religious and Social Activities

Due to the different training wings of Gurkha Coy Catterick and their rotations, many trainees and permanent staff do not get the opportunity to see each other. The various religious and social events during the course are an excellent opportunity to remedy this; events such as Nepalese New Year, Gurkha Coy Birthday, Holi and Dashain/Tihar. These events are an excellent demonstration to the trainees of the Kaida that exists in the Brigade and the moral component of our fighting power, simultaneously, upholding the Esprite De Corps.

The Gurkha Coy birthday is of particular significance, this year was its 68th year since the move from Hong Kong. The day began with a football competition between the JNCOs versus Senior NCOs and Officers. Similarly, there were assorted activities in place for trainees and families to part take in and enjoy. The evening phase included a Cake Cutting ceremony followed by Nepalese delicacies. Some of the trainees and permanent staff showcased their talent to put up a very entertaining program which summed up this function.

The trainees witnessed their first ever Dashain away from their loved ones. Like other BG units, Gurkha Coy

also celebrated Dashain as per the BG Kaida. Kalaratri is the most awaited day of all during Dashain. This day, a sumptuous feast was put on by the Gurkha chefs who pulled out all the stops. SCHINF Comdt, CO Sp Bn and CO 2ITB attended and witnessed the most elaborate and professionally choreographed entertainment package yet. The following day, Tika, Panditji and 2IC Gurkha Coy (Pujari) offered tika and blessing to all trainees and permanent staff. The whole event was a resounding success and signifies the close family relationship the whole Coy has.



Capt Kiran Pun MVO, 2IC Gurkha Coy alongside Panditji and Sgt Sanjeev Gurung, 8 Pl Sgt performing rituals on Maar



Gurkha Coy 68th Birthday cake cutting ceremony

Gurkha Coy Other Activities

The Gurkha Coy calendar has been busy with numerous charity events which saw some stand out performances from trainees and permanent staff. Of particular note was the Gurkha Coy contribution to the PARAS 10 competition, a grueling 10 miles speed march across the undulating Catterick training area. Cpl Netra (QOGLR) lead the team and managed to complete in a reputable time.



Gurkha Coy members in PARAS 10 - 2019

The Great North Run in Newcastle was another event in which Gurkha Coy had a strong showing. Over 200 trainees and permanent staff participated in the event raising money for The Gurkha Welfare Trust and projecting Gurkha Coy into the public eye.

Gurkha Coy also raised money for Gurkha Welfare Trust and The Royal Gurkha Rifles Trust. A cheque of £651 and £500 was presented respectively post RI 19 Pass Off Parade.



Gurkha Coy presenting the cheques to Col Jody Davies MBE, Col BG (RGR Trust) and Lt Col (Retd) Keith Ryding (GWT)

RI 19 Pass Off Parade and Leaving Day

The pass off parade was a particularly proud day for all trainees, their families and permanent staff. The weeks of rigorous rehearsing paid off with an excellently conducted parade. The parade was witnessed by VVIP guests and families of trainees and permanent staff. The Reviewing Officers of the parade were Lieutenant General Richard Wardlaw OBE MSc BEng MinstRE Chief of Defence Logistics and Support and Mrs Johanna Ropner Her Majesty’s Lord-Lieutenant of North Yorkshire.

As the trainees move onto their respective units with an emotional farewell, they are wished the best of luck for their bright future.



Trainees and permanent staff of Gurkha Coy with CO 2ITB at the start point of BUPA Run



T/Rfn Ayush Rai receiving 2 RGR Champion Recruit award from the Reviewing Officers; Lieutenant General Richard Wardlaw OBE and Mrs Johanna Ropner, Lord-Lieutenant of North Yorkshire



Gurkha Coy March Pass with OC Gurkha Coy leading the parade



Gurkha Coy and GSPS staff in ITC bid farewell to RI 19 GSPS trainees embarking to their Phase 2 Training in Worthy down, Winchester

Gurkha Coy Team Bonding Exercise

Gurkha Coy organised a three-day long team bonding event, Exercise KADMA KAD after the successful completion of 39 weeks of intense training of RI 19. This exercise encompassed an Inter Wing Basketball competition, hike along the trails of Hadrian's Wall and an educational visit to York Minister. The aim of this exercise was to develop team cohesion amongst the permanent staff and to enjoy a well-earned break in order to re-vitalise and develop mental resilience.

The permanent staff of Gurkha Company eagerly awaits the arrival of the new Intake and the opportunity to train the next generation of Gurkha soldiers.

Jai Gurkha Company



Permanent Staff of Gurkha Coy at Hadrian's Wall during Ex KADMA KAD

THE BAND OF THE BRIGADE OF GURKHAS



History

The Sirmoor Rifle Regiment, later 2nd Gurkha Rifles, was the first Gurkha regiment to form a band immediately after the Indian Mutiny in 1859. In the mid-1950s, authority was given to raise an additional 'Staff Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas', until 1970 when both bands were amalgamated as The Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas (2nd King Edward's VII's Own Gurkha Rifles). Twenty years after being formed, the Band undertook its first operational tour of duty by providing support to the Army's deployed medical units during the Gulf War of 1991.

At the beginning of 1994, the Band was re-located on a permanent basis to the United Kingdom, and was re-structured and established as 'The Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas', where it served on short tours of duty with British Forces both in Germany, Cyprus and Nepal, and deployed as a military band to the operational theatres of Bosnia and Afghanistan.

During 2019 the Band's command structure placed the unit within the LONDIST sphere allowing closer relationships between Brigade, the Corps of Army Music and the Army Music tasking Authority. The Band's command structure comprises of a Director of Music (Corps of Army Music), an assistant Director of Music (Gurkha), A Gurkha Bandmaster and a Band Sergeant Major.

All Gurkha musicians undergo basic infantry training with all other Gurkha recruits before being assessed and accepted into the band, where they receive formal musical training, including attendance at the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall.

The band is undergoing an important period of growth as it aligns with all other British Army Bands by becoming larger in order to support the growing demands for musical support by Brigade and the wider Army.

Staff List

Director of Music	OC (DoM)	Captain Shane O'Neill (CAMUS)
Assistant Director of Music	2IC (ADoM)	Captain Basudev Gurung
Senior Band Sergeant Major	SBSM	WO1 Bhojendra Pun
Assistant BSM	ABSM	WO2 Milan Gurung
Band Quarter Master Sergeant	BQMS	WO2 Krishna Tamang
E1 Administrative Officer	AO	Miss Barbara Ramharak

Foreword

**By Director of Music, Captain S O'Neill
OMS MA BMus BA PG Dip DMSL**



Learning that I was to be posted to the Brigade Band as the Director of Music was an absolute honour as not only is the unit unique but famous for its high standard and professionalism.

As an Irishman with a very strong connection to my heritage, history and culture in general, I quickly discovered many traditional similarities which afforded me the ability to understand my Gurkha team at a core level quickly. The Short Language Course and Duty Trek served to reinforce the deep veins that create passion, allegiance, friendship and respect in a group of people who have cared for and nurtured the very essence of being Nepali.

This meant I was able to influence, direct and guide the unit forward as we take our place in the modern digital Army and as the capbadge very much at the front when looking at the public face of the Brigade.

It is to the credit of my team, and in particular the AO, 2IC and the senior team, that the band has transformed so much over the last twelve months. Our C2 was completely reshaped, we have fundamentally changed the way we look at and deliver training in order to better align promotion and career with the wider Brigade, our manning has been increased, our band block expansion is currently under way, our relationships with Army Music and LONDIST have blossomed, career pathways/extensions/VEng opportunities all being improved and available to name some of the work ongoing underneath our very public tasked life.

Make no mistake, being a musician is far from the easy path and it takes a very special individual to commit professionally, emotionally and physically to a very busy unit. I commend every member of the band for their patience and drive during a particularly busy year and look forward to my remaining time as their commander.

The Second Tour of the Falkland Islands of the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas

In Apr 19 The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas completed another spectacular tour of the Falkland Islands. A hugely successful endeavour to celebrate the Queen's Birthday, Commemorate Gurkhas that lost their lives, undertake Defence Activity and demonstrate soft power.

On 18th April 2019, 25 members of the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas flew from RAF Brize Norton to Mount Pleasant Airport, Falkland Islands. The team was led by our new Director of Music Captain Shane O' Neill. It was the debut overseas tour for him with the Band.

The history and relationship between the Falkland Islanders and Gurkhas is a deep and meaningful one. Many Islanders would regale how, even the notion of Gurkhas arriving would cause unease amongst the Argentine forces. They would also say that there was a special place for the Gurkhas in their hearts because of the assistance that was given post conflict. As a result, the hospitality bestowed upon the band was wonderful and very humbling.

The first performance was a capability demonstration at the Mount Pleasant complex on 19 Apr accompanied by the Pipes and Drums of 2 Scots The Royal Regiment of Scotland. The demonstration included Marching Band, Concert Band, Pipes & Drums, Traditional Dancing, Kukri Display and the Hill Boys Traditional Group. This was very well attended and received by all serving Gurkhas and many of their British counterparts working in the complex.



Indoor rehearsal prior to the performance

On 20th April early morning we departed from Mt Pleasant to Stanley for the official Queen's Birthday Parade. This was led by the Island's Defence Force and included personnel from all three services who were based there. The highlight was a lone dolphin jumping in the inlet during the 21 gun salute

The band's brass quintet then moved to the Governor's private residence for an evening reception.



Queen's Birthday Parade at Port Stanley



The penguins observing the Band antics on the beach



Band quintet at Governor's Residence with The Governor Air Commodore Philips CBE



Penguins observing the correct press up position

There was to be a treat for the band the next day. We were flown in a helicopter on a short 10 min flight to a remote area called Volunteer Point. Here we met a land carer and guide who took us to see the famous penguins and offered us many local insights into the history of the area.

Our PTI even managed to demonstrate the correct 'Press Up' technique to the penguins before we left.

To thank the guide, we offered a quick 10 min performance to his family while waiting for the helicopter to return us to base.



Disembarking at Volunteer Point



An impromptu performance for the guides family

This was a truly unforgettable experience for the majority of the band. Not many of us had been in a helicopter before but none of us had ever seen King, Gentoo and Magellan penguins live in their natural habitat before.

The following day, we put on a concert at FIDF Hall, Hillside Camp for the local Stanley community. This was very well received and it was our new Director of Music's opportunity to impress to a packed house, no pressure Sir. Thankfully all went very well and the band enjoyed the chance to perform in a relaxed and friendly surrounding.

On the afternoon of 23rd April, the band provided the musical support to the memorial service and unveiling of the Mani wall to honour 7th Gurkha Rifles on Stanley Road. This was a very moving event with member of the Association in attendance.

We also supported memorial services for the late Cpl Krishna Kumar Rai of QGE and the late LCpl Budhaprasad Limbu of 7GR who were killed during the conflict while clearing a minefield. Being part of the 7GR memorial unveiling and hearing the stories from the Islanders and our Gurkha veterans was pretty special. Additionally, when the OC of late Cpl Limbu recounted the story of how he sacrificed his life it affected everyone in attendance.

As usual for the Falklands the weather dictates all flights and we were delayed. However, as usual (for the band) we sourced a military guide and headed up Mount Harriet and learnt about the tactics and equipment used during the Battle of Mt Harriet on 11 June 1982. An incredible experience with so much left behind to see. Another fantastic learning day for the band.



Memorial Service at the unveiling of the 7GR Mani wall



A reminder of the Falklands war

After a very busy, educational and emotional tour we landed at RAF Brize Norton in the early morning of 29th. The Falkland's tour was extremely successful and historic for all of us which we shall remember forever.

Nepal Day at the Royal Military School of Music (RMSM)

The Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas was supporting the Royal Military School of Music as Roulement Band in Sep 19. As our tour was to coincide with Nepal Day, we decided to run an educational evening in the Junior Rank mess on the evening of the 30 Sep. The intent of this event was to promote cultural education, Showcase Band BG's traditional elements both musically and with traditional dress. It was a unique opportunity to showcase all things Gurkha to the CAMUS CoC and the young British Army music trainees.

The Director of Music and Seniors (in traditional attire) warmly welcomed all guests in a traditional manner with kaida as they arrived. Messing was arranged and the cookhouse staff went above and beyond to create a Gurkha curry fit for all.



The welcoming party at Nepal Day celebration



The Director welcoming guests with the traditional khada

The trainees were quick to become involved and very keen to chat and learn from the band members all about Nepal and Gurkhas. To consolidate their informal discussions Cpl Ramesh Rai had divided the guests into teams and ran a fun but informative Nepal specific quiz. This was very well received and it was lovely to hear the young trainees use their new knowledge during discussions as the evening continued.

Sgts Gumansing and Mani provided the 'icing on the cake' and ensured the celebration of Nepal Day continued with rousing traditional music performed by the Hill Boys. All in all a hugely successful evening of learning, building friendships and understanding.

Band BG, AT 2019 Lake District

The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas concluded their Adventure Training (Ex- Tiger Gurkha Musician) from 04 - 08 November 2019 at Lake District National Park.

A long overdue outdoor group experience that helped leadership, courage, team bonding and unity after an extremely busy eight months of Public Duties and overseas engagements. This would also prove useful when enhancing our future operational capabilities and developing cohesion internally.

On 4th Nov, all members of the band, including our two guest instructors from QGE (Cpl Top Jung Rai and LCpl Bibek Gurung) headed to Holton Training Camp, Lancaster where we were accommodated throughout the week.

Our OIC for the Exercise, SSgt Kiran Mukhiya who had categorised the training into three phases:

- 1 Hiking
- 2 Mountain biking
- 3 Group Orientating and exploring the area

Early in the morning on 5 Nov, after breakfast, we headed for our first exercise towards West Lake area. We were divided into three groups and each was led by a qualified Mountaineering Leader. Our plan was to cover a 12 KM distance within a scheduled time. It was a very challenging hike due to the terrain and weather, however all three groups managed to cover the distance within the time limit and were rewarded with a relaxing drink and the chance to warm up in the country pub at the end.

On 6 Nov, due to previous day's hiking we could feel a little effect on our legs but the spirit within the band members was solid like a rock. After breakfast we headed towards Grizedale for a day's Mountain Biking.

Once we arrived we had a safety brief and were issued our bikes and helmets. After a quick safety check and test ride we headed towards the Grizedale, MTB Trail. We were divided into three groups, depending on the biking skills. Again, each group was led by an MTB Leader. Having pushed all three groups to the limit of their abilities, the reward after a tough 16 Miles was a final fast run back to the carpark. Another fantastic day and a very tired band lead to a perfect night's sleep.



The Hill Boys playing traditional Nepali folk songs



Members of the Band on Ex- Tiger Gurkha Musician

7 Nov: Our final exercise for this training week concluded with individual group orientating and an opportunity to explore the route in and around Lake Windermere. With just a pick up time and place given each group had to plan their day, checkpoints and lunch break. Somehow DOM and ADOM ended up in the same group and to this day it is still a mystery how they made their way back in time. The members of the band were literally all over the area and enjoyed sharing their adventures with each other at dinner time.

On 8th Nov, we bid farewell to Holton Training Camp and sadly headed back home to Sir John Moore Barracks. During our AT week we got wet, cold, tired and even injured (nothing serious thankfully) but it was a good opportunity to refresh ourselves from the hectic life as Army musicians. Every single member pushed themselves personally and can't wait to go on a new adventure in 2020.



Mountain Biking in Grizedale



A demonstration of mountain biking skills

Brunei - 2RGR's 25 Birthday

On 21st of November, The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas travelled in three groups to Brunei with the main effort of providing musical support to 2 RGR's 25th Birthday.

After a long journey we landed safely in Brunei Airport. The weather was hot and humid. There are only two weather types in Brunei, very hot and very hot but raining. After our arrival, we moved to Tucker Lines in Seria, which is the main British camp of RGR (Royal Gurkha Rifles). The first group was lucky because they had two days to acclimatise and prepare for the arrival of the remaining two groups.

Once the entire unit was in situ, we assembled and prepared our instruments and uniforms. Our ADOM (Assistant Director of Music) Capt. Basudev Gurung conducted musical rehearsals prior to the main rehearsal with the troops. The rehearsals were held for two days in a row in a scorching weather. After sorting out every tiny bit of drill detail, music and movements we headed to 'Chautari' for refreshments.

On 28th of November 2 RGR's 25th Birthday started in the morning at 0800hrs. The timings were all planned to prevent us from over exposure to the heat. The parade started with the Reinforcement Party taking their oath. 74 new members from Intake 19 marched on the parade square with pride and dignity. It was a privilege for Recruit Intake 19 to get inspected by General Officer Commanding Regional Command, Major General Duncan Capps CBE. He was also accompanied by the newly appointed Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas, Colonel Jody Davies MBE.

After 'Kasam Khane Parade', the band accompanied by the Pipes and Drums of 2 RGR started a spectacular marching display which gave chills to the crowd. The day was not done yet. After the band marching display, 2 RGR formed up for LSGC, RGR25 coins, awards and certificates presented by GOC Regional Command. The music from the band created a proud and happy moment for the individuals receiving awards. The final speech from GOC marked the end of the parade and the regimental march of the Brigade of Gurkhas called it a day, for the marching troops.

Members of the band still had work to do in order to support the dinner in the Officer Mess. Even Mother Nature herself started crying with joy as we played our music. The rain was so heavy that we had to squeeze in the tent with the respective guests.

The next day we were off to Hornbill School to entertain the young pupils. They were excited to see us and listen to our music. We introduced them our instruments and gave them an opportunity to march around with us.

We concluded the entertainment with the Radetzky



RGR Birthday/Kasam Khane Parade in Brunei

March conducted by the Principal of Hornbill School. On behalf of Hornbill school, we were given a gold badge as a kind gesture of friendship.

On 1st of December, we went to Bandar Seri Begawan, the capital of Brunei. The tourism festival was full swing where our band arrived, there was also an opportunity to get involved. We performed in the middle of the street surrounded by the immense crowd. The crowd was roaring as we played our music with enthusiasm. We entertained them for an hour and got back to camp exhausted but happy.

We had a few days off prior to our return where we got the chance to explore Brunei and Malaysia. After a few days of exploring, shopping and blowing off steam, we headed back to the UK. Our tour was only for two weeks but we managed to complete our given tasks and enjoy the sights before getting back to business.



Marching through the street of Bandar Seri Begawan



Delighted crowds watch the Band's performance

Initial Trade Training for Gurkha Musician (ITT)(G)

By SSgt Bandmaster Sunil Gurung

Each year, a small number of potential Gurkha musicians are recruited into the Band after the completion of their basic training at Infantry Training Centre (ITC) Catterick. They will then begin their first musical training under the supervision of Director of music (DOM) and Assistant Director of music (ADOM) for 3-4 years (unlike our British counterparts). After the in-house training, the musicians are sent to the Royal Military School of Music (RMSM) at Kneller Hall to undertake Career Employment Qualification Class 3 (CEQ3). This process will usually take about 5-7 years from the first date they join British Army to CEQ 3 musician. It is a long and intensive course compared to any other trade in the Army, especially those who do not have any background of western music and instruments.

This year, with the help of DOM and ADOM, I arrived in a brand new post as the first Gurkha Bandmaster (GBM). It was my job to form a brand new training syllabus and formalise an out of date training team, ITT(G). Our task is to design and deliver music training to improve the time of flight from arriving in the band to become an effective musician able to perform in public. On the whole, the primary objective is to cut down the previous 5-7 years process to 4-6 years. It was not an easy task to facilitate a classroom with well-equipped resources. However, we have managed to source all the essential tools such as 2 pianos, smart boards, computers and software, furniture, study books and music from RMSM.

With the now established training programme up and running, we are noticing the positive impact and difference it is making in our trainees' development of instrumental performance, general musicianship, aural perception, fitness and history of music. The ITT(G) team is very confident and optimistic that this training will significantly help to reduce time in training, both Bang BG and RMSM in the future. This means that the newly qualified Gurkha Musician is more aligned to his peers in other Regiments and will compete for LCpl between 4-6 years as opposed to the previous 6-7 years.

Last year, through the Continued Personal Development (CPD) fund, we managed to organise 2 full days of training with composer and Queen Mary's University of London Lecturer, Paul Max Edlin. This year he has agreed to programme a series of training days as part of the entire unit's CPD as well as focus classes with the junior members. His morning sessions will consist of lectures and class training in the theory, aural, history and practical applications of western music to the 14 Trainee musicians and upcoming CEQ candidates. This will offer professional influence allowing a focused effort to streamline the path of a Gurkha Musician in line with the unit's new training mission. The afternoon will be focused on DOM/ADOM and GBM who will be engaged in masterclass type training on score approach, practical but meaningful rehearsal techniques, sound, production focus and best performance understanding.

Jai Band BG

THE GURKHA STAFF AND PERSONNEL SUPPORT COMPANY (GSPS)



History

Formed by Royal Warrant on 30 June 2011.

Staff List

Colonel of the Regiment

Colonel A D Griffiths OBE (COS ARITC)

Officer Commanding

Major Jit Bahadur Hamal

DCOS HQBG/OC GSPS

Officers

Major Bijayant Sherchan MBE

OC BCLT

Major Suryakumar Rai

DCOS BGN

Major Narendra Kumar Gurung

Op TORAL (SO2 J1 HQ UK NSE (AFG))

Major Ashwin Rana

RAO 1 RGR (transferred to SPS in Oct 19)

Major Kamansing Rana

SO Admin Def Sect Nepal (retired in Jul 19)

Captain Anil Gurung

RAO 10 QOGLR

Captain Ang Mingma Sherpa

RAO 22 Sig Regt

Captain Chandrakumar Limbu

RAO 30 Sig Regt

Captain Sumitkumar Joshi

Adj/SO3 G1 MS/Visits HQ BGN

Captain Bijay Limbu

SO Admin Def Sect Nepal

Captain Dugendra Tamang

Det Comd 1 RGR

Captain Surendra Limbu Lingden

Det Comd 2 RGR

Captain Suren Limbu

Det Comd 4 Med Regt

Captain Ram Thapa

Det Comd 16 Sig Regt

Warrant Officers Class 1

Warrant Officer Class 1 Mukesh Subba

MS SA HQ Field Army

GSPS Soldier of the Year 2018

Lance Corporal Nauraj Gurung 1RGR

Foreword

By Major Jit B Hamal - OC GSPS



Firstly, on behalf of the Colonel of the Regiment and all ranks of Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support (GSPS), I wish to congratulate and express my appreciation to our former Officer Commanding (Maj Narendra K Gurung) on a very successful tenure, underpinned by strong leadership and total dedication in driving the GSPS to a new level. I wish him a successful tour of Op TORAL and subsequent appointment as DCOS BGN. A good vision and leadership from our founders and Officers Commanding have carried us to where we stand today - we thank them.

I feel immensely honoured and proud to be appointed as the DCOS HQBG/OC GSPS. As the first officer to commission into the newly formed GSPS and reach this position, I feel that I am perhaps carrying greater expectations of the new generation of officers and

soldiers on my shoulders to provide them with new leadership, vision and inspiration. I am utterly committed to lead my beloved organisation with passion and humility, do my bit to drive it to the next level during my tenure - with the appropriate guidance from the Colonels of the Regiment and Brigade of Gurkhas, and support from our talented officers and soldiers, I have no doubt in leading the organisation to new heights whilst also setting the right conditions for future success.

Over the past 8 years, the previous Col BG had been comparing the evolution of GSPS to a baby, taking baby steps in its' early childhood. In my view, the pace of our development and probably arrived at an growth has been supersonic and GSPS is now a young adult - the needs of the organisation and genetic qualities of its' members achieving early maturity in double quick time, just like a Nepali youth converts to a reputable British Gurkha effortlessly.

Our officers and soldiers continue to live by the GSPS ethos and deliver top class services to the Brigade and wider Army by setting the 'gold standard' examples all-round. From operational duties (Op TORAL, Op TRENTON, Op ELGIN), winning the biggest military competition of the Adjutant General's Corps (AGC Triple Crown) for the second year in a row, to achieving a high number of individual commendations and awards, we have been at the forefront. Of note, we have received 12 new Babujis into our growing family this year - the biggest intake in 25 years.

The GSPS Pariwar is hugely indebted to the Col of the Regt (Col A D Griffiths OBE), former Col BG (Col J G Robinson CBE) and current Col BG (Col J P Davies MBE) for their invaluable guidance, inspiration and support for the betterment of our organisation.

As I draw this to a conclusion, I can assure the ex-Babuji community that the legends of 'Babuji' and its' organic esprit-de-corps 'the band of brothers' is carried magnificently by the current generation. There is no doubt the baton will be passed to the next in better shape by inspiring each other to live by our ethos, and to rise higher and drive further still; Gurkhas first mentality, Sense of family, Pursuit of excellence and Seek to achieve our full potential.

Jai GSPS!

AGC Triple Crown Challenge 2019

The Adjutant General's Corps (AGC) Triple Crown Challenge (TCC) 2019 was held on 8 May 19 in Worthy Down. This is an annual event which promotes esprit de corps and the 'soldier first' ethos whilst strengthening the ties between the various branches of the AGC. For the second year running, 1 RGR lifted the Colonel Commandant's Cup and the Best Male March and Shoot Trophy, with a remarkable finish time of some 14 mins quicker than the next team.



Col GSPS speaking to GSPS members after the prize ceremony

The March and Shoot consists of a 12-mile march with a 15kg pack and weapon, with a shooting competition at the halfway point. The marching time and shooting score are then combined to determine the overall winner. GSPS teams compete for the AGC March and Shoot Cup and in addition, also for the Brigade of Gurkhas Colonel Commandant's Cup.



Sgt Samir Rai (Team Capt) receiving the Col Comdt Brigade of Gurkhas Trophy from Deputy Col Comdt AGC, Lt Gen Skeates CBE



GSPS members taking part in AGC Triple Crown Challenge 2019

Col of the Regt and members delightfully witnessed and hailed the outstanding efforts of all the GSPS teams. The Col GSPS congratulated the winners and other teams for their commitment and arduous training whilst thanking others in support - it's a team game!

Overall, GSPS teams claimed all top three positions and four teams finished in the top ten.

Special Achievements 2019

WO2 Hemanta Gurung - GOC Regional Command Commendation



*WO2 Hemanta Gurung receiving his award from Lt Gen Sir Nick Pope
KCB CBE*

WO2 Hemanta Gurung (Supt Clk HQBG & 2IC GSPS) was awarded the commendation of the General Officer Commanding (GOC) Regional Command in recognition of his outstanding service to the Gurkha brand and wider community throughout his 23 years of distinguished service, most notably as the Sgt Maj and RAWO of British Gurkhas Pokhara on 13 Dec 19.

The certificate was presented to him by Col Comdt Bde of Gurkhas, Lt Gen Sir Nick Pope KCB CBE at HQBG

Sgt Bhismaraj Jabegu - GOC Home Command's Endeavour Award



*Sgt Bhismaraj Jabegu receiving his award from Colonel GSPS,
Col AD Griffiths OBE*

Sgt Bhisma was awarded the GOC HC Endeavor Award by Col GSPS, Col AD Griffiths OBE during the GSPS Kasam Khane Parade on 22 Nov in RMA Sandhurst.

Sgt Sagar Sherchan and Cpl Taraman Gurung - Pers Admin Commendation 2019

Sgt Sagar Sherchan (SSA Blandford Garrison) and Cpl Taraman Gurung (A Coy Senior MPA, 1RGR) were awarded the Personnel Administration (Pers Admin) Commendation by Colonel Mike Sykes OBE (Head of SPS Branch) at the Annual Branch Award Ceremony held at Worthy Down on 13 Nov 19.



Cpl Taraman Gurung and Sgt Sagar Sherchan with their awards

Sgt Sagar and Cpl Taraman are the epitome of the GSPS ethos and the Gurkha brand (true ambassadors for the Bde of Gurkhas).

LCpl Nauraj Gurung - GSPS Soldier of the Year 2019



*GSPS Soldier of the Year 2019 -
LCpl Nauraj Gurung*

GSPS Soldier of the Year 2019 is awarded to Nauraj Gurung, currently serving with 1RGR. The GSPS Soldier of the Year (GSPS SoY) award was established in 2017 to formally recognise the best soldier (up to Corporal rank) who has not only excelled and achieved excellence in many fronts professionally as well as personally, but more importantly lived by the GSPS ethos to inspire others as a junior leader and role model, thus bringing the cap-badge and the Gurkha brand to the limelight in that year.



GSPS members taking part in the first ever Commissioning and Kasam Khane Parade

GSPS Commissioning and Kasam Khane Parade 2019

The first ever GSPS Commissioning Parade for newly commissioned officers and Kasam Khane Parade for other ranks was held at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) on 22 Nov 19. This special event was attended by many GSPS members and families from across the UK as well as representatives from Brunei and Nepal.

The event was held in 3 phases:

1 Parade

- Commissioning of 3 Officers (Capts Dugendra, Ram and Bijay).
- Kasam Khane: 25 other ranks including 12 new young Babujis (RI19).
- Awards: GOC Home Commamd’s Endeavor Award to Sgt Bhisma Jabegu and Col GSPS Coin to Cpl Suraj Rai.



GSPS JNCOs taking part in Kasam Khane “Taking the Oath” in presence of Col and OC GSPS



The Col of the Regt addressing the Parade

2 Briefing/Forum

Colonel J P Davies MBE (Col BG) addressed the meeting who was delighted to see so many of the GSPS members in attendance. He highlighted the HQBG’s current key work strands re the BG growth and the opportunities that will present. OC GSPS, Maj Jit Hamal then updated the forum of the GSPS specific growth as well as opportunities and challenges, emphasizing the importance of individual and team excellence in seizing the opportunities with both hands.

3 Officers’ and SNCOs’ Ladies Dinner Night

Held at the Indian Army Memorial Room, Old College RMAS amidst families and distinguished Guests. The GSPS Soldier of the year 2018 (Cpl Taraman) and 2019 (Cpl Nauraj) were special guests to the Dinner Night. Delicious food by the Queen’s Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment (QOGLR) Chefs, music by the AMS Brass Quintet and the ambience from piper (Cpl Nirmal Thapa RGR) were in the menu. OC GSPS welcomed the distinguished guests and expressed his gratitude to them for looking after GSPS and everyone who made the whole occasion astoundingly successful whilst congratulating and inspiring both ‘soldier of the year’ award winners.



Col of the Regt, OC GSPS, Col Caroline Hull (Prof Head of SPS) and Mrs OC GSPS (Arati Hamal)

Col GSPS presented the prestigious award of GSPS Soldier of the Year 2019 to LCpl Nauraj and addressed the dinner with his words of appreciation, wisdom and encouragement.

All in all, a wonderful day to be remembered...



GSPS Offrs, WOs and SNCOs and their families with Col of the Regt and invited guests at GSPS Dinner Night 2019 Old College, RMAS

GSPS Intake 2019 Graduation Ceremony

On 14 Feb 20, the twelve youngest members of GSPS Pariwar graduated on successful completion of their Service Initial Personnel Administration Course (SIPAC) at Worthy Down, Winchester. This has been a remarkable journey in their development through early part of Military Service since joining as young men about a year ago.



GSPS Intake 2019 with their SIPAC Trainer Sgt Rakam Thamshuhang at the Graduation Ceremony



GSPS RI19 at the SIPAC Graduation Ceremony with Col and Mrs A D Griffiths OBE, OC SIPAC, SSM and Instructor

The Reviewing Officer for the ceremony was Col of the Regt GSPS (Col A D Griffiths OBE) who inspired the new members with his words of wisdom to continue excelling in all fronts by way of maintaining the GSPS ethos. The ceremony was witnessed by OC GSPS, officers and members as well as permanent staff and students of other courses.

Capt Peter Taylor/Best Academic:
Pte Suraj Gurung (2 RGR)

Best PT (Fittest):
Pte Hemanta Jirel (1 RGR)

The OC GSPS (Maj Jit Hamal) also congratulated them on exceptional performance and being real ambassadors for the cap-badge and importantly the 'Gurkha' brand by setting top standards in the Tri-Service training environment and welcomed them to a special family 'Babuji Pariwar.' He also thanked Sgt Rakam for being an exemplary instructor, leader and mentor, and above all providing a big brotherly care and guidance to his younger brothers throughout their development.

GSPS Photo News

Everyone had performed brilliantly on the course. The following individuals were selected for a few special awards:

Top Student:
Pte Kshiteez Rai (2 RGR)



OC GSPS presented the GSPS beret and cap-badge to new members at the Cap Badging Ceremony at Gurkha Coy ITC Catterick



New Members of GSPS



The previous and current OC GSPS with retired and wider Army Babujis (the new RA members) at the Babujis' Bhela in Sandhurst



Past and present Babujis and their families at the 4th Babujis Bhela in Sandhurst



Col GSPS presenting a farewell memento to Col BG (Col Robinson CBE) from all members of GSPS at the GSPS 8th Birthday Party



Col GSPS and former OC GSPS (Maj Narendra) cutting the 8th GSPS Birthday cake in presence of Coy members and families



GSPS 8th Birthday, GSPS Cup and Families Day was held in Aldershot in May 19



GSPS Intake 19 with Sgt Rakam and SIPAC Squadron during their Field Exercise



GSPS Members participating in AGC X Country Championship 2019



GSPS Intake 19 Educational visit to Gurkha Museum with their Instructor, Sgt Rakam



Col of the Regt, OC and 2IC GSPS with representing QGO Officers at the Gurkha Statue in London during Remembrance Parade



RAO Det BFB taking part in Royal Brunei Armed Forces Alpha Challenge - 10 KM Beach Obstacle Race

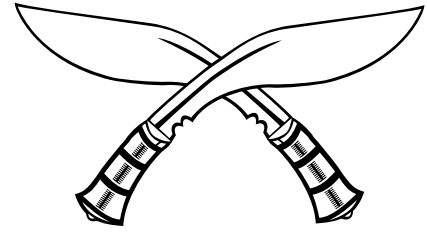


Cpl Bishal taking part in Community Engagement during Op TRENTON deployment in South Sudan



GSPS Nepal Cup team 2019

BRITISH GURKHAS NEPAL (BGN)



Staff List

Headquarters British Gurkhas Nepal

Colonel R T Goodman MBE	Comd/DA/Dir GWT (N)
Lieutenant Colonel P C Wettenhall QG SIGNALS	D Comd/COS
Major Surya Rai GSPS	DCOS
Major Muktiprasad Gurung MVO RGR	GM
Major P Cooper R WELSH	QM
Major (Retd) Rajeev Shrestha QG SIGNALS	BUWO
Captain Sumitkumar Joshi GSPS	Adjt
Captain N S Fidler AGC (SPS)	RAO
Captain Khagendra Pun QG SIGNALS	OC NST
Captain R S Murray R SIGNALS	SO3 G2/3/6
Captain L Walsh RLC	SO3 G4
WO1 (RSM) Kamalbahadur Pun Magar RGR	RSM
Mr T G Howard	Civ Sec
Mr Sisirkumar Pandey	CS HR Manager

Defence Section British Embassy Kathmandu

Major Hebindra Pun QG SIGNALS	AMA
Captain Bijay Limbu GSPS	SO Admin

British Gurkhas Pokhara

Major S Nightingale RGR	OC
Captain Binod Kumar Kerung RGR	2IC
Captain Govindabahadur Rana QGE	QM/MTO/CAO
Capt Alexander Philip McWilliam RGR	Ops Coord
Major (Retd) Manbahadur Gurung GSPS	Records Offr
Captain (Retd) Ganeshkumar Rai RGR	SARO
Captain (Retd) Hariprasad Rai QOGLR	ARO (E)
Captain (Retd) Ashok Sen RGR	ARO (W)
Captain (Retd) Tirtha Gurung RGR	ARO Coord

Defence Infrastructure Overseas (Nepal)

Captain Balkrishna Gurung RE	SEFM
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British Gurkhas Dharan

Mr Chandrakamal Rasaily	Head of BGD
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Foreword By Colonel RT Goodman Commander BGN



2019 has proved to be another significant year for British Gurkhas Nepal. From record numbers of new recruits to implementation of the 7th Indian Central Pay Commission increase for the Gurkha Pension Scheme, it has been a year in which the initiative and dedication of the military and civilian staff in Nepal has been tested and they have come through with flying colours. Upfront I must highlight that much of what we achieve in Nepal relies heavily on the support and assistance from a broad range of stakeholders and I am grateful for the dedication and friendship of the wider Brigade of Gurkhas, Headquarters Regional Command and the many members of the Veteran community that continue to serve and support our endeavours. A secondary theme in year has been that of relationship building, in particular with One HMG but also across the international community and Nepali structures.

We have been privileged to brief visiting Australian Generals, Nepali Ministers, DFID staff and diplomats from various embassies. BGN is very proud of its hospitality and we hope that our efforts in this respect are supportive of wider UK and Brigade engagement in Nepal.

In recruiting I could not be prouder of the efforts of the team based in Pokhara and those they lead in the annual recruiting cycle. February saw the successful conclusion of Recruit Intake 19 (RI19); the largest intake for some 34 years. Central Selection (CS) successfully delivered 400 recruits for British Army and 120 for the Gurkha Contingent of the Singapore Police Force. An impressive feat that stretched the capacity of British Gurkhas but was delivered in exemplary fashion; credit must also go to the team from Infantry Training Centre Catterick who also managed this significant new cohort with their usual professionalism. Scarce had Major General Capps CBE watched the new recruits march of the parade ground at BGP than the team launched straight into RI20 planning with a target even larger than the previous year! As 2019 closed, Registration and Regional selection had completed in good order, including the implementation of the new Army Physical Entry Standards as the backbone for Gurkha selection. As ever, British Gurkhas remains proud of its recruiting mantra of “free, fair and transparent”; tenets that continue to support our privileged ability to operate in Nepal and which remain critical in respecting and protecting our most valued potential recruits.

This year we have also pushed hard (quite rightly) to strengthen our engagement with our Veteran community. In conjunction with the significant work conducted by the Regimental Associations of Nepal (RAN) there have been changes in a number of areas. Key to this has been the establishment of the Communications Officer role, a new member of the civilian staff working for the Gurkha Major to modernise and improve our externally facing communications. New initiatives here include the quarterly production of the newsletter - Gorkhali Khabar, a BGN product for our Veterans that covers topics from contemporary BG unit activity to welfare and pension assistance.

As ever, the Records office remains a hugely important facility, having managed over 3000 cases this year. It is clear that there remains much to do in support of Veterans and further investment in this facility is on the cards. Likewise, the Gurkha Settlement Office (GSO) has remained a central focal point for our veterans who require assistance on UK settlement related matters and the application of UK National Insurance Number. The GSO has recorded a total of 5600 visits this year and looks to remain busy for a number of years to come.

Although less well known to the wider Army than recruiting, the Gurkha Pension Scheme (GPS) management remains a critical output for BGN. The Pension Paying Offices have distributed pensions to more than 22000 Service pensioners over the year.

Noteworthy is the uplift which was applied to GPS pension rates in light of the 7th Indian Central Pay Commission (CPC) implementation. The majority of back payments from this (to 2016) were completed in July and this increase has seen annual payments through BGN Imprest increase to circa £105 million, a figure that never fails to excite the RAO!

In 2020 the DCOS will be planning and advising on modernisation mechanisms to bring Records, GSO and GPS functions closer together to ensure a better service to Veterans well into the future. A recent quick win here has been to place two of our civilian staff alongside the Gurkha Welfare Trust staff at Area Welfare Centres (AWC) in Kathmandu and Dharan.

Our support to the serving BG and the wider Army has continued apace. The soldier's link with his family in Nepal is of paramount importance and the quality of support we can provide continues to evolve. Our renewed measures have included an active engagement with key stakeholders and more crucially, the communication with BG units via HQBG's Gurkha Majors' Cabal and ad-hoc arrangements. This has brought tangible dividends in Nepal and the UK. The Brigade and Unit Welfare Officer (BUWO) and his staff have dealt with a significant number of issues ranging from Compassionate / Casualty cases to dispute assistance of various natures and VISAs for new members of the BG family. The total caseload stands at 517 for the calendar year. As routine BGN has supported a number of Adventurous Training expeditions and duty treks as well as facilitating a rather unique Military Short Term Training Team from the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment who were conducting Defence Engagement with the Nepali Army's cavalry.

Amongst the circa 400 visits we hosted this year, highlights included: the Rt Hon Mark Lancaster, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Defence Veterans, Reserves and Personnel; HE Ms Nicola Pollitt, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Nepal; Lt Gen NAW Pope KCB CBE, DCGS; Maj Gen PAE Nanson CBE, GOC ARITC; Maj Gen GM Strickland DSO MBE, Col RGR; and Brig S Stockley, Head of Delivery, Overseas and Training Region, DIO.

Alongside the delivery of routine commitments, enthusiastic staff planned and executed and excellent staff ride to India, examining the 1857 mutiny and associated uprisings; here staff from BGN, HQ RC and HQ BG took part in Ex UTTAR PRADESH KHUKURI and enjoyed 10 days of education and history that harkened back to some of the earliest actions of the Brigade.

As I write this slightly after the end of 2019 I would like to take the opportunity of this forum to thank all staff and families in British Gurkhas for their sterling efforts and humour in a busy year. An absolute pleasure to serve alongside you all.

Jai BGN

NEPAL SIGNAL TROOP

Update - 2019

Nepal Signal Troop (NST) continues to deliver both strategic and contingency tactical CIS/ICS capabilities 24/7 throughout the year in support of British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN)'s Mission. In addition, the NST has provided support to the wider HMG organisations and GWT Area Welfare Centres located across the country. Besides its primary role, the troop has actively supported the delivery of BGN's core tasks: Gurkha recruiting, support to BG personnel and their families, support to the veterans and contingency preparedness.

As part of a major uplift of ICT program 'Defence as a Platform' (DaaP) – the first stage of all three elements Global Connectivity (GC), New Style of Information Technology (NSoIT) and Integrated User Services (IUS) has been successfully accomplished. The Local Cloud Solution (LCS) server and Local Appliance Device (LoAP) has been installed in Kathmandu and Pokhara. The NST has constantly engaged throughout with key stakeholders; HQ RC, CPO, ISS, Atlas-Fujitsu, BT, DIO (N), local and overseas service providers in order to deliver the project. The uplift of IPLC bandwidth from 4Mbps to 10Mbps has been completed as a part of the GC solution.

Likewise, the NST continues to play a pivotal role in providing the ICS support and SME advice to HQ BGN in delivering its core outputs more efficiently. For example, NST played a critical role in the process of upgrading Civilian Staff Human Resources (CS HR) and Accommodation Service Unit (ASU) software. The implementation of cloud-based PIE software for HR and Oracle NetSuite for ASU remain ongoing, this being heavily reliant on the expertise of NST personnel. The Gurkha Recruiting System (GRS) has also been recently upgraded in order to include the newly introduced mandatory exercises to the Recruiting Exercise Criteria.

The year 2019 saw the restructuring of the COMMEN to incorporate the Regimental Duty Staff (RDS). This initiative has brought tangible benefits in terms of resilience and redundancy. The Service Desk is now a central hub charged with communicating updates and addressing any physical and information security issues within BGN. Staff have also been involved in rectifying legacy G2 issues with the BGN LAN. This has called for installing firewall and anti-virus software, introduce sheep dip terminals and address an education piece especially by honing SyOps and InfoSec protocols. Furthermore, the NST has conducted Ex PSK 19/01 and Ex PSK 19/02 successfully this and has played a role in the delivery of the RI20 Recruit Registration and Regional Selection (W) and contingency training.

Queen's Gurkha Signals 70th Birthday

The formation day is not only important for the regimental personnel and their families but is also a significant day in the history of the British Army. Be it



DCOS BGN Major Surya Rai, Chairman QGSAN Major (Retd) Balbir Pun & OC NST Captain Khagendra Pun cutting the cake

serving or ex-servicemen, we celebrate this day every year with great pride. This year along with RHQ in Bramcote, Nepal Signal Troop also celebrated the QG SIGNALS 70th birthday on 14 Sep 2019 in BG Kathmandu.

This year's celebration was attended by members of the NST, QGSAN members and families. The event commenced with QGS serving personnel parading in regimental mufti. The regimental history was read out both in English and Nepali. This was followed by a speech from BGN DCOS, Maj Surya Rai who was the chief guest. After the cake cutting ceremony, tipan tapan and drinks were served. It was a great opportunity for members of the troop to meet many of our esteemed veterans who had made significant contributions to the regiment. The day concluded with the delicious lunch which was appreciated by the veterans.

Ex PASCHIM SIGNAL KHUKURI 19/3

By Cpl Nishan Gurung

Ex PASCHIM SIGNAL KHUKURI (PSK) is an exercise conducted four times a year by Nepal Signal Troop (NST) to carry out mandatory inspection of High Frequency (HF) contingency communication capabilities at Area Welfare Centres (AWCs) scattered across the various parts of Nepal. 'P' in the PSK could be either 'Purba' or 'Paschim' depending on the region of the exercise. A team of four, led by Troop OC Capt Khagendra Pun, deployed to cover the AWCs in the mid and far western Nepal from 3 to 9 Nov 19.

The first stop was AWC Chitwan, a four-hour drive from Kathmandu, situated in Bharatpur. Upon arrival, the ever-energetic Senior Area Welfare Officer (SAWO), Maj (Retd) Yambahadur Rana MVO MBE welcomed us and treated us with icy cold water – a soothing treat to beat the heat which was testing. Last time I experienced such temperature was during my deployment on Op TELIC - 7. The mercury level would have matched that in Basra!

After an exchange of pleasantries, we were given a reorientation of the place which was useful. One conversation followed after another and it was evening already. The sun had set and it was getting dark. Meanwhile, a member of staff was busy preparing food beside the perimeter fence and within minutes, the call for dinner came and the messing was served. It was absolutely delicious. The mosquito attack was terrible, however. With the Dengue virus spreading at an alarming pace nationwide, it was prudent to apply some caution.



Ex PSK 19/3 Team with AWO and AAWO in AWC Butwal

SAWO saheb invited us for breakfast the following morning. After breakfast he gave us an insightful brief on the AWC's mission, responsibilities and future projects. The day's work then began with the inspection of the antenna and other associated task such as applying grease. This was followed by a refresher training session delivered to the AWC staff. After the completion of the task, we headed towards the next leg of journey.

By the time we reached the hills of Daunne, it was past midday. We therefore tried to find a suitable place to eat. As all the restaurants along the road did not pass the 'self-assessed' hygiene standard, we continued towards Butwal. On arrival at AWC Butwal, we quickly settled into work and managed to carry out the inspection and maintenance work by evening. The completion of the tasks was important because we had some distance to cover and it was going to be the longest leg of the journey.

As planned, we left AWC Butwal for our next destination early in the morning. After a long drive, we finally reached AWC Bheri located in Birendranagar. The good news was that we managed to complete the tasks on the same day. We were hosted to a messing session in the evening which was superb. Also present were two students from the Survival Nepali Language Course attached to the AWC as part of the syllabus.

The following morning, we took the opportunity to visit historical places such as Kakrebihar and Bulbul Lake. Once back, we delivered voice procedure training for staff at the AWC. We then headed towards AWC Gulmi. The road was narrow and rough. By the time we reached Gulmi it was dark already. However, we managed to



L. Ghan providing HF lesson to the AWC staff

complete the tasks as per the schedule – the head torches came in handy.

The next destination was Pokhara, a seven-hour drive via the scenic towns of Tansen, Mirmi and Syangja. We reached BG Pokhara well before dark allowing us to carry out tasks as per the OC's direction. The following day, we headed back to Kathmandu and took a short detour en route to visit the historic Gorkha Durbar. We arrived in BG Kathmandu past midnight.

The tour gave us an excellent opportunity to explore the western part of Nepal. It was a very successful exercise by all accounts. We learned about the tremendous work of the AWC staff in helping our veterans. Needless to say, the aim of the exercise would not have been achieved without their assistance and generosity.

Ex PURBA SIGNAL KHUKRI 19/4
By LCpl Prakash Tamang

A team of 5 x NST personnel deployed on EX PSK 19/04 East over the period 1 - 8 Dec 19 under the command of SSgt Sanjay Rai. The aim was to conduct inspections on and maintain the AWCs' communication assets - HF radios and antennas as part of the contingency capability, as well as to resolve any issues relating to telephones, installed Wi-Fi and so on. The EX PSK 19/04 was divided into four phases as: planning, preparation, execution and recovery. The planning phase was all to do with the identification of the core objectives of the exercise. The main tasks included the delivery of maintenance work, a refresher training session for the AWC staff, and resolving any IT-related issues.



Cpl Khagendra and LCpl Prakash maintaining HF antenna, AWC Bhojpur

On the first day, we deployed to Dharan for an overnight stop. The following day we arrived in AWC Taplejung well on time. This enabled us to conduct an inspection of the HF radios and antenna components. We also carried out the necessary repair and maintenance work on the same day. The AWO very kindly gave us a brief on his area of responsibility and what his organisation had done in terms of support to our veterans. After Taplejung, we visited AWC Khandbari, AWC Bhojpur, AWC Diktel and AWC Rumjatar. In all of these AWCs we carried out similar tasks as per the exercise serials. Throughout, we were looked after superbly. It was such a privilege to have had the opportunity to meet AWC staff and to resolve issues involving the HF and IT systems.

The AWCs used Icom HF radios as a primary means of communication. So, the continued maintenance of the kit - antenna transmitter, lubricating metallic cables, changing guy ropes and zip ties was the prime focus of the exercise. Equally, it was important to conduct refresher training on the use of HF radio and call signs for AWC staff to avoid skill fade. The GWT(N) had decided to establish secondary ops room in all AWCs in case the main building collapsed because of natural disasters. Our aim therefore was to identify an appropriate site for it as well as to establish the requirement in terms of equipment and costing.

Overall, Ex PSK 19/04 was a great success. We managed to accomplish our aims. Each of us gained a good deal in terms of experience and exposure. It was a good opportunity indeed and to realise that our veterans could benefit from the work we did was such a refreshing feeling.

Ex VALLEY RIM WALK 19

By LCpl Pujan Rai

Ex VALLEY RIM WALK is a one-day event designed for serving personnel and their families to go and enjoy the outdoors. This year, the event took place on Sat 30 Nov 19 on the Bhanjyang - Machchhegaon route. The aim was to enhance team bonding, and foster good working relationships among staff. The event also enabled serving soldiers to refresh their navigational and leadership skills.

As the organiser of the event, I delivered a safety brief before leaving camp early in the morning. Transport was arranged to get to Pharping – the walk began from this point. It took us 45 minutes to reach Hattiban. The Champadevi temple was the next big marker on the trail and we reached the place after nearly two hours. At Chaap Bhanjyang we stopped for lunch. The chicken curry was delicious. Lunch taken; we were soon on the trail enjoying the scenery. It took us



Group photograph with AWC Bhojpur staffs



BGN Service Personnel captured the best view of the day after a moment to remember VRW

another two hours to reach Machchegaon, the finishing point. We left the place at 1600 hrs on our way back to BGN. The event was a great success and thanks to all those who took part.

Ex UTTAR PRADESH KHUKURI By Sgt Mimal Thapa GSPS

Ex UTTAR PRADESH KHUKURI was a Battlefield Study (BS), a tailor-made staff ride for military personnel, delivered by a team of military, academic and travel experts. Following endorsement from Regional Command (RC), a team of 22 individuals from different cap badges based in British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN), RC and Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas (HQBG) deployed on the BS to Uttar Pradesh, India over the period 22 September to 29 September 2019. The BS had several aims and objectives to increase the operational effectiveness of BGN personnel. The main aim was to understand the events and causes of the Sepoy mutiny of 1857 against the British Crown, to better understand the similar cultural differences in any conflict the British Army would face in today's contemporary operational environment. The study also examined the role of the British Indian Gurkhas in the mutiny of 1857, the contribution of the Maharaja of Nepal as well as the tactical and strategic decisions taken by the East India Company leading ultimately to the Crown taking control of India.

To enhance the learning experience the deployed personnel were broken down into syndicates for the exercise and questions allocated to each syndicate

which required preparatory work. After research, syndicates were required to brief the remaining participants on their area about the events at stands during the tour.

Due to flight delays of over 6 hours, the flight left Kathmandu on the afternoon of 22nd September rather than the morning. This meant that the planned activities for day 1 were compressed into day 2. Upon arrival the group was picked up by the locally pre-arranged coach and the group was ferried to the hotel. Early in the morning the following day, i.e. day 2, the group left the hotel for the Delhi Ridge, including sites such as Flagstaff Tower and Hindu Rao House, to study the mutiny from the British perspective with details on the British fleeing the city and taking up defensive positions at the tower and the Hindu Rao House

The group moved into Delhi itself visiting the grave of Brigadier General Nicholson, an inspirational leader who died in the assault on Delhi. The group then learned more about the mutiny and the recapture of Delhi. At the Kashmiri Gate the tale of the assault on the city from the East India Company forces was discussed before moving to the Powder Magazine reviewing the role of the officers and soldiers who delayed the advance of Indian Sepoys.

The Telegraph Office was next where the news of the mutiny was communicated to the Punjab and the responsive actions taken by the chain of command of the East India Company was studied. Due to the flight

delay Delhi Fort was closed so the group spoke about Delhi from the rebels' perspective on the bus on the way to Meerut. This included how the fort was held by the rebel forces and the role of Bahadur Shah Zafar – the Mughal king and the appointed leader of the rebels, the reason why although the rebellion failed despite the East India Company being outnumbered by 10:1.

Day 3 began with a visit to a place where the mutiny started in Meerut. The group examined the reasons as to why the Indian Regiments had mutinied by analysing the prevalent political, economic and social issues. The Indian Army provided an escort around the cantonment which included the visit to the parade ground in Meerut where the Muslim and Hindu Sepoys rejected to use cartridges due to rumours that it had pork and cow fat grease in them, this being against their religion. In addition, the group visited St John's Church and the Commandant's House and discussed the impact the Evangelicals and the church had on the relationships between the East Indian Company and the natives. This was followed by a visit to the memorial park which was built after the independence to glorify the mutineers. The group had a chance to study the similarities and differences in culture between nations and religions which still exist and how similarities have occurred in more recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Although not part of Indian Mutiny of 1857 the group studied the Muslim influence within a majority Hindu society including how Muslims and Hindus have co-existed for centuries, by visiting The Taj Mahal, an architectural masterpiece. Next was a visit to the Agra fort. Agra was never captured by the rebel forces and the fort provided refuge for more than 5,000 Europeans during the rebellion. This gave a chance to explore life for the Europeans still in India during the mutiny. The group then left for Gwalior in the afternoon for an overnight stay.

A visit to Gwalior fort on day 5 gave an insight on the gigantic fort controlled by the Scindhia Marathas, which was captured by the rebels in 1858 and the location of the final battle of the Mutiny before the remaining rebel leaders fled. In Gwalior, the groups looked more into the Doctrine of Lapse and why the nobles had joined the rebellion, prominent among them being Manikarnika Tambe (Rani Lakshmbai) - the 29-year-old widowed queen of Jhansi who is believed to be one of the fiercest freedom fighters against the East India Company. Here the group learned about the extraordinary heroic deeds of the Rani from the Indian mutineers' perspective.

The following day, the group visited Kanpur and examined the siege of General Wheeler's makeshift mud entrenchment and the ambush of the surrendered British troops boarding boats in the Ganges at the Sati Chaur Ghat by the Hindu Rao's forces. The group also paid a visit to the Bibighar Well, where the corpses of the butchered women and children were dumped by the mutineers in 1857, followed by a visit to the memorial park to discuss the revenge of the British.



BGN SPs pose for a group photograph in front of Flagstaff tower



The group in front of the remains of the Kashmiri Gate



The group in front of the Bibighar Well



Another group photo in front of the Indian Mutiny Memorial in Meerut

As well as taking the city surrender; Muslim and Hindu soldiers were forced to eat pork and beef then killed with the alternate death rituals (Hindu's buried and Muslims burnt).

The final day of the BS saw visits to Kaisarbagh and Sikunderbagh Gardens in Lucknow; where more than 2000 rebels perished when the British stormed it in 1857. The study was then followed by a visit to the famous British Residency compound where the besieged Garrison held out until it was relieved in 1858; an epic event which became a symbol of British courage and endurance during the seize, the effects of which are still visible. The group also looked at the involvement of Gurkhas as well as the loyalty shown by the Maharaja of Nepal; this led to the East India Company returning a vast tract of land (four districts in the west of the Tarai) seized during the Anglo-Nepalese war of 1814-1816.

In summary, Ex UTTAR PRADESH KHUKURI was a massive success. The BS enabled participants to gain a better understanding of the tactical, operational and strategic decisions taken by the East India Company and the history of the Brigade of Gurkhas. In addition, this was an opportunity to learn how contemporary Indians view the Indian Mutiny of 1857 as their first Indian War of Independence as well as the current relationships between Britain, Nepal and India.

Support to the Soldier **By Maj (Retd) Rajeev Shrestha** **Bde and Unit Welfare Officer**

It has been a busy year for my department this year. I arrived in post in Apr 2019 upon retirement and have found the demands of the BUWO mantle all the more rewarding. Support to the Soldier remains one of BGN's key outputs and my department delivers a significant chunk of tasks relevant to this space, ranging from support for compassionate cases, marriage registration to assisting dependants in the visa application processes for the UK and Brunei. Furthermore, I am also the Unit Welfare Officer (UWO) for BGN and this adds a unique flavour to what my job entails. My good fortune is that I am ably assisted by a close-knit team of three civilian staff - Yogendra Tamang, Mani Shrestha and Madhukar Lama, and a SNCO – SSgt Chitra Gurung QOGLR. They have between them more than 60 years of collective experience. That they have expertise and skills acquired over so many years has made my job that much easier.

BGN is classed as an Isolated Station (IS) because of its geographical location and relative size as well as the limited access to welfare provisions. One of my priorities as a UWO was to work on improving welfare facilities for BGN Service personnel and their dependants. To that end, I approached Regional Command (RC) for an uplift on the welfare grant allocation. The outcome was positive; they raised the amount from £4,000 to £8,000. In addition to this grant, we managed to secure additional funding to go towards a number of welfare projects including the improvement of Junior Ranks' Club (JRC) and canteen at BG Pokhara and the introduction of monthly movie shows catering to all age groups.

On the wider BG units' front, we managed to revise a number of policies and revised our working practices to better support the members of the BG and their dependants. We revised the dress policy for the SPs and their spouses when visiting the welfare office. The relaxation of the dress code meant that they felt more comfortable. This has been relevant particularly to young Gurkha spouses, some of whom may have never been to a military establishment before and the experience can be overwhelming. The introduction of a system enabling to pre-book appointments has allowed individuals and their dependants to plan their visits sensibly. In particular, this has helped those who live outside of the valley. Likewise, the introduction of online visa application desks has significantly reduced the amount of time required previously.

The working relationship with the BG units has improved over the year. The introduction of unit welfare briefs has played a pivotal role in achieving this and has enabled us to bridge any communication gap which may have existed before between BGN, the individual and the BG unit. These briefs have proved hugely beneficial in terms of the ability to expose issues at the unit level.

Likewise, the introduction of the compassionate card which contains all relevant information has enabled a wider understanding of the procedure among Service personnel and notably, their families in Nepal. In a similar vein, BG personnel have benefitted from the ability to use the welfare flat in BG Kathmandu which we have managed to establish.

I envisage 2020 to be no different. The improvement on welfare provisions for BGN Service personnel and dependants will continue to remain my focus. I anticipate an increase in the volume of workload as the BG continues on its growth glidepath as part of Project SHERPA. Worth mentioning is the point about those who have transferred to the wider British Army or former members of the BG currently serving on different terms such as Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS), Military Provost Guard Service (MPGS) and Single Service Continuity Post (SSCP). We also support this cohort as they have family links with Nepal. My department is the single point of contact between them and their parent unit for welfare matters. We are currently scoping options on how we can further extend the service to include Pokhara and Dharan as part of the outreach concept.

On a personal note, I opted for a voluntary retirement after 30 years and feel honoured to have been given the opportunity to serve in Nepal. Needless to say, it is a unique privilege not available to all. I feel ever so lucky in this regard; to serve the Brigade as best I can will remain my continuing motivation.

Jai BGN!

British Gurkhas Dharan

**By: EO(L) Mr Chandra Kamal Rasaily,
Head of British Gurkhas Dharan (HD BGD)**

British Gurkhas Dharan (BGD) is a small unit located inside the old British Ghopa Camp which is approximately 500 km east of Kathmandu. BGD can be reached by 35 min flight from Kathmandu to Biratnagar and one-hour drive from Biratnagar airport to BGD. By road it takes approximately ten hours to reach BGD. BGD consists of Mov Det, MT section, RP Section and Pension Paying Office (PPO) and Record Office. Head (HD) BGD is appointed as the overall in-charge of BGD. A total of 24 Civilian Staff (CS) are employed within BGD: HD, IC MovDet, Asst HD BGD/Porter major, 3 x drivers, 9 x security guards, 2 x labourers, 2 x part time cleaners (1 at BGD and 1 at PPO) and 4 x PPO staff (including 1 x Pension Information Officer (PIO)) and Record Office Investigating Officer.

The Remembrance Sunday Service was held at the British Gurkhas Nepal Cemetery at BGD on Sunday 10 November 2019. This year, the Colonel of Brigade of Gurkhas (Col GB) attended the service as the most senior Serving Officer and the chief guest was Capt (Retd) Rambahadur Limbu VC MVO. In addition, the families of those Killed in Action (KIA), veterans and their families, members of the Regiment Associations of Nepal (RAN) Dharan, and significantly this year, Potential Recruits who were on their Regional Selection East, and the teachers and students of the Depot School Dharan. The service was run in the presence of a Chaplain from UK, a Hindu Priest and a Buddhist Lama.



Col BG, GM BGN and QM BGP with Capt (Retd) Rambahadur Limbu VC and Indian Army representative before the Remembrance ceremony

In the East, the trekking schedule normally commences in September finishing in April. In 2019 a total of 18 trekkers carried out duty trek in various parts of the eastern region and carried out tasks ranging from meeting Service and Welfare pensioners living in remote areas to inspecting Gurkha Welfare Trust sponsored projects. BGD provided porters and trekking store as per normal.

This year, BGD also conducted porter training. The aim was to educate porters on cooking, health and safety, communication, first aid and basic English. Coord BGP and his team ran the training. This training session is vitally important given the large number of duty trekkers who visit Nepal each year. It plays an important part in ensuring that the porters are able to adequately look after duty trekkers under their care. At present, BGD has a total of 39 registered porters who assist the trekkers as well as provide support during the Regional Selection East at BGD and the Central Selection at BGP.



Eastern porters preparing the meal during Porter's training East

BGD also provides the space for Potential recruits (PRs) during the Registration phase in May to July and the Regional Selection East in October to November. This year BGD successfully organised, for the first time, a one-day sport and team building event for the civilian staff.

After the close down of the Dharan enclave in 1989 the Pension Paying Office (PPO) relocated to Duhabi which is around 30 KM south from Dharan. In 1999 PPO again relocated to Itahari and finally in 2007 to Dharan at the Standard Chartered Bank Nepal Limited (SCBNL) premises. The PPO BGD is operated by 5 staff and continue to provide service to 6,018 retired servicemen, widows and GCSPF pensioners from the eastern region. Currently 1,227 pensioners collect their pension in cash from the PPO counter whilst 4,389 pensioners receive pension through their nominated Nepalese banks and 291 pensioners receive pension via Area Welfare Centres (AWCs) in the hills. It should be noted that the pension disbursement through AWCs is carried out only on a quarterly basis whereas the PPO remains open from

Monday to Friday except public holidays. In addition, PPO BGD also looks after 87 Gurkha Contingent of Singapore Police Forces (GCSPF) pensioners.

The break down is provided below:

Service pensioners	3,536
Ordinary Family Pensioners	2,284
GCSP	87
Undrawn cases	111



During field visit by PPO – 21155790 Manbahadur Dewan

PPO staff also conducted home visits for those who are old, frail and bedridden in order to renew the Life Certificates.

In a similar vein, the Record Investigating Officer carried out a total of 26 cases as instructed by Record Office, BGP. The Record Investigating Officer's role in BGD was created to provide veterans support involving the verification of record details such as date of death/birth/marriage and family information.

Jai BGD

British Gurkhas Pokhara Newsletter (Unit correspondent)

British Gurkhas Pokhara (BGP) has had a very successful year in 2019. Other than recruiting, BGP has enabled many duty treks and visits, maintained and developed a contingency footing and enabled maintenance of records and pension paying facilities to our veterans. Maintaining good relations with Regimental Associations Nepal (RANs), conducting community engagement with the Royal Nepal Army and Police, Regional Government and the local population has always been a vital part of life in BGP.

Over the year, BGP has supported the various activities of the GWT (Nepal) and Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Association (KAAA) as required. BGP has hosted many key assurance visits and inspections throughout the year - the results of which have been outstanding. Apart from this, BGP has conducted several mandated training periods for its military and civilian staff. The team also conducted two ATs and took part on a battle study run by BGK. Most important of all, BGP has made a considerable commitment to keep the dependants engaged through a multitude of activities ranging from routine temple services, festival ceremonies, coffee mornings, sports and treks.

**Recruiting
By Maj S Nightingale RGR, OC BGP)**

Following the success of Recruit Intake (RI) 19 which attested 400 Trainee Riflemen into the British Army, the Recruit Cell felt prepared to undertake the larger challenge of recruiting 432 in RI20.

Ably led by Capt (Retd) Ganesh Rai, the Recruit Cell has gone from strength to strength. One of the biggest strengths of Gurkha Recruiting is that the process and the mantra has largely remained the same for many decades. The terminology has changed, the people have changed, the tests have changed and more than ever, Nepal has changed; but the rigorous process of selection through a number of stages in a free, fair and transparent manner has not changed.

As a result, Gurkha Recruiting has the ability to develop and improve year on year. Indeed, there is no excuse for it not to do so. That being said, despite a strong process, competent people and a supportive Chain of Command, RI20 was in many ways, a year of significant development and challenge.

The Statement of Recruit Requirement for RI20 was 432 - the largest number of Gurkhas recruited in 35 years. From a G4 point of view, this was a challenge as we would need to call forward 720 to Central Selection causing many headaches for QM BGP.



Trainee Riflemen take an oath in front of CGS and GM BGN



RI20 Trainee Riflemen group photo after Attestation parade with all dignitaries and recruiting staffs



RI20 PRs undergoing medical tests during Regional selection East, Dharan



RI20 PRs setting off during repeated lift and carry assessment under watchful eyes of DRO, PTIs and gallawallahs during Regional selection West, Pokhara

This year we also introduced the British Army’s new Physical Employment Standards (PES). This involved physical tests which we had not experienced in Gurkha Recruiting before. As such, it was difficult to predict how our Potential Recruits would react - unsurprisingly perhaps, they pretty much all passed!

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The phases of Gurkha Recruiting have remained the same. We held our normal advertising campaign, visiting every district in Nepal and also introduced social media to the process. We also did a PES roadshow where AROs East and West travelled around with a PTI demonstrating the new tests. Registration saw an enormous increase in the number of applicants - over 12000 - of whom around 10,000 passed Regional Selection went very smoothly, although there were some concerns that the British Sahebs were enjoying the delights of Dharan a little too much.

Overall, it has been a thoroughly successful year. I am sure those that are selected from RI20 will be

ACIOs (BGP/BGD) TOTAL									
ACIOs	TOTAL APPLIED	FAILED				TOTAL FAILED	TOTAL PASSED	PREFERENCE	
		MID THIGH PULL	HVS	HT	DOCS			BA	GCSPF
BGP	7179	8	804	82	252	1146	6033	4149	1884
BGD	5058	5	81	51	188	325	4733	3042	1691
Total	12237	13	885	133	440	1471	10766	7191	3575

exceptional. My thanks go to my 4 S/AROs in the Recruit Cell, our wonderful Gallawallahs and all those from the Brigade of Gurkhas who have supported Recruiting during my tenure.

Training - “BGP a learning organisation”

Complacency can easily creep in to an organisation whose majority of workforce remains in one job for a very long time. This applies to the civilian staff of BGP who are its primary workforce; consisting of approximately 120 staff. BGP takes great pride to be a learning organisation. It ran several mandated training for its military and civilian staff throughout the year. Its guard force and dog handlers were trained on their roles and responsibilities every six months, to keep a tight grip on the unit’s security. BGP medical staff trained 24 civilian staff on First at Work during February and November 19. This year the Ops Cord ran Porter Training in Dharan for the 39 porters from the East. Porters who are part time employees have multiple employability skills other than their main job such as chefs, kitchen assistants, escorts, general labour etc. When not employed, most of them return to their farms or businesses.

Contingency Training

Ops Cord BGP planned and ran contingency training twice this year. The later training consisted of a tabletop exercise and revision of key skills such as first aid, CASEVAC, Heli marking etc. The next 36 hrs saw all camp occupants including dependants responding to an earthquake scenario at night; checking of grab bag, head



BGP staffs undergoing CASEVAC serial during contingency training.

count, building of temporary infrastructure for eating and sleeping and setting up of ops room. Throughout, various exercise scenarios were injected to test the search and evacuation of casualties, reaction to mass casualty situation, extraction of children from local school etc. GWT who worked alongside BGP in a shared operations room proved to be a very useful source for assessing the wider situation caused by the disaster - due to their foothold across the nation. A Nepalese Army helicopter supported the exercise to enable air medevac.

Driver Training

EXERCISE DAKCHHYA CHALAK 19 was a refresher driver training conducted by MT Sgt over two days for its civilian drivers. The training consisted of off-road driving, recovery, wheel changing and documentations.

BGP Health Fair Day

MT Sgt organised a BGP health fair on 13 Aug 19. The aim of the Health Fair was to provide a forum in which members of the BGP and their families received healthy lifestyle information and education from Subject Matter Experts to encourage and influence behaviour change. Stands included mental and oral health, injury prevention, road traffic accidents, sexual health, alcohol/substance misuse and nutrition. Later, there were lectures by local SMEs including a psychologist from India

Kalikhola Combined Mess “Bringing Team Gurkha together”

Kalikhola Mess is the combined Officers and SNCOs Mess in BGP. Its members include 12 Service Personnel and around 60 civilian staff who are mostly retired Gurkha officers working as Gurkha Support Function, GWT (Nepal) and KAAA. OC BGP is the Presiding Member and 2IC BGP is the PMC. The mess is central to the enduring unity of the three organisations in Pokhara which make up “Team Gurkha”. The mess is very highly regarded, not to mention the plaudit it receives regularly from high ranking

military and civilian dignitaries who visit the mess. This year, it hosted a dine in for Colonel R T Goodman MBE, Comd BGN and dine out of Lt Col S J Whitlock, Fd Dir GWT(N). The summer ball whose theme was ‘jungle safari’ was organised on 31st May 19 in hotel Shangri La, Pokhara by Sgt Bikash Dewan, BGP Senior tech.

BGN Commander’s Cup 2019

This year’s BGN Commander’s cup was organised in BGP on Wednesday, 11 Dec 19. Most SPs from BGN along with the families attended the event. Due to a bigger number of SPs in BGK, they were divided into two teams whilst BGP SPs remained as a team. The teams competed in volleyball, basketball and football. For the ladies, a badminton competition was organised. Team BGP won two events; football and basketball while team BGK won the volleyball. This year’s overall winner of BGN Commander’s cup was BGP. The event culminated in a BGN messing; a once in a year event that allowed majority of BGN service personnel and families to come together who otherwise would not have had another such an opportunity.



BGP team - overall winner of BGN Commander’s Cup 2019



BGP, KAAA and GWT(N) ladies pose for a group photo during Jungle safari themed Summer Ball



BGP CS and SP pose together for a group photo at the end of BGP CS sports day

Civilian Staff “Pillars of BGP”

BGP Civilian Staff (CS) Sports Day

This year’s BGP CS Sports day was organised under the supervision of Capt Govindabahadur Rana, QM BGP on 26 Sep 19. All available CS and SPs participated in the event led by Mr Yuwaraj Gurung. The event included 5-sided football, mixed cricket in the morning and fun games in the afternoon. Participants were divided into 4 teams: Machhapuchhre, Annapurna, Mardi and Dhaulagiri. This year’s overall winner was team Mardi.

BGP CS Team Building Exercise

Like previous years, this year’s annual BGP CS team building exercise was organised on 8 Mar 19 by Capt Meenjung Gurung, then QM BGP. All available CS, SP, GSF and their families attended the event which consisted of a 1-day trek in Syangja that finished at the outskirts of Pokhara.



Group photo taken during lunch break in Mattikhana, border between Kaski and Syangja

**Quartermaster Department Updates
(G4 Challenges)**

By Capt Govindabahadur Rana QM BGP

The Quartermaster Department (QM Dept) has been a key pillar of success for Gurkha Recruiting. During Advertising, BGP provided drivers and Land Rovers to assist the Rect Cell in visiting most districts in the western part of Nepal including Darchula and Humla; the districts with most remote and austere conditions. On completion of the Regional Selection West, the G4 team immediately deployed to British Gurkhas Dharan for the Regional Selection East; a road move of over 500km carrying logistical stores and supply. Getting up at 0300 hrs to prepare food, setting up the stands, and closing down often late in the evening, was the daily routine which lasted for almost a month. With hot and humid conditions and the outbreak of Dengue Fever, our hygiene operator worked extremely hard by swing fogging every morning and in the evening after closedown. As soon as the G4 team recovered to BGP from BGD, the time arrived again to prepare accommodation, stores and set up for the Central Selection. This year, due to an increase in the PRs' number and recruiting staff, a tented camp had to be set up on the football pitch. With new physical tests and procedures, the failing rate from each test was very low, resulting in a large number of PRs staying for a longer period of time thus adding an additional burden on accommodation and feeding. BGP Kitchen Staff provided a meal of up to 1500 personnel in various situations.



G4 team setting up tents at BGD

In addition, G4 staff continued to support various inspections, scheduled from the UK including LSAI, LEA, security, fire, and health and safety inspections. The Porter Major managed over 30 porters who were continually busy providing guides/porters/chefs; a multi-skill task to support duty treks which included numerous VIPs such as the Chief of General Staff. The Unit Catering Manager (UCM) delivered chef training to 45 x Area Welfare Centre (AWC) Assistants by deploying himself to 7 x AWCs and 2 x Residential Home in Kaski and Dharan. Despite the busy schedule throughout the year, the G4 team is very proud to support not only BGN but the Gurkha Welfare Trust Nepal (GWT(N)) and Kadoorie Agriculture Aid Association (KAAA).



G4 team distributing basic clothing to newly selected trainee Rifemen

Ex TIGER MANANG KHUKURI 2019

By Sgt Bikash Dewan, Snr Tech BGP

This year British Gurkhas Pokhara (BGP) conducted an Adventure Training (AT) over the period 19 – 26 Oct 19, in the Manang region of Nepal. Five Service personnel from BGP and two from British Gurkhas Kathmandu (BGK) participated in the AT led by Capt Govindabahadur Rana, QM BGP. It was a multi-activity AT which consisted of trekking, mountain biking, rock climbing and white-water rafting.

We left BGP camp on Saturday, 19th Oct with three porters, two drivers in two BGN Land Rover Defenders loaded with kit and equipment for the event. Our destination for the day was Taal where we camped overnight. After an early breakfast the following day, we set off for the first day of trekking to Lower Pisang. We reached Chame on the second day and Manang on the third. Our admin team met us in each location every day.



BGN AT team take a break on second day of 3-days trek



The group pose in front of famous Octopus waterfall on second day of cycling

BGP Family Team Bonding *By Sgt Shivakumar Rai, MT Sgt BGP*

Families BBQ at Burjung Khola, Bajhoket

This event was organised by Capt McWilliam, Ops Coord BGP on 26 Jul 19 in Bhurjung River shore, Bajhokhet. All available BGP SPs and their families attended the long-awaited event. There were BBQ, drinks and music arranged for the event. The most fun part was swimming in the river and rafting using the floats sourced locally. The view and the county life experience afforded were mesmerising. The occasional rain fall that would pour upon us did very little to affect the mood and morale of the team. Overall it was a fun event made more exciting by the regular appearance of leeches often on the feet but not sparing any other parts of the body!

Trek to Australian Base Camp

BGP organised a family team bonding event on 21 Dec 19 to trek up to the Australia Camp including an overnight stay. The aim of the event was to foster team bonding among all ranks and families of BGP. There was a total of 21 personnel who participated in the event including children.

We left the camp at 0945 hrs for Dhampus which took us nearly an hour and a half to reach. There, we had about an hour to explore the village. By that time everyone looked hungry and excited to start the trek. After a quick lunch, we started our trek towards the Australian Camp.

The route was quite uphill, and the view of the Mountain Range was breath-taking and particularly captivated the kids. After nearly two hours we finally reached the Australia Camp at 1600 hrs. Unfortunately, the weather was not in our favour; hence the Mountain View was not as clear as we had expected. After a quick break for administration, we all gathered in the garden for a BBQ. There was a singing competition where everyone took part and danced. A Thakali khana set was served for dinner later. After dinner, the children mostly retired to their room for rest while the remainder stayed a bit longer chatting and enjoying time in the wilderness.



The team ready to explore the cold waters of river Seti on final day of the AT week

On day 4, we started our mountain biking descent back to Chame from Manang. On the way, we set up and organised an introductory session of rock climbing on the outskirts of Chame. We all learned the basics of rock climbing and tested our skills. The following day, we continued our mountain biking through challenging downhill routes and breath-taking views up to Jagat where we loaded our mountain bikes and drove up to Tanahun for overnight camping.

Although the original plan was to conduct white-water rafting in the Marshyangdi River, it was full and was therefore deemed to be unsafe. As an alternative we rafted the Upper Seti River in Hemja, Pokhara instead.

The next day, we woke up early to view the magnificent sunrise and the mountain range. After breakfast, we began our trek towards Dhampus. On Capt Govindabahadur Rana, QM BGP's initiative, we picked litter along the route to Dhampus. The trek was downhill this time. The children found the walk downhill easy and we reached Dhampus within an hour.

After a quick rest, we headed towards the Gandaki Trout Farm for lunch and it took us about 2 hours to reach there. After lunch we visited the farm run by the Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Association. We were given a guided tour of the place by the manager. Later in the evening, we headed for BGP.



BGP SPs and dependants posing for a group photo prior to dispersing



BGP SP, GSF and their families pose with Mt Machhapuchhre and Annapurna range in the background.

The two days spent with our BGP families was a great experience. The children had a fun time in the hills. We hope to conduct similar team bonding events in BGP in the future.

KADOORIE AGRICULTURAL AID ASSOCIATION BRITISH GURKHAS NEPAL (KAAA BGN)

Staff List

Colonel (Retd) A M Mills OBE, late QGE
 Major (Retd) Krishna Gurung BEM, ex QG-Signals
 Captain (Retd) Dudman Gurung, ex-2 GR/1 RGR
 Engineer Narayan Gurung BE M Tech
 Captain (Retd) Rajan Rai, ex-10 GR/2 RGR
 Capt (Retd) Pradip Limbu, ex-QOGLR

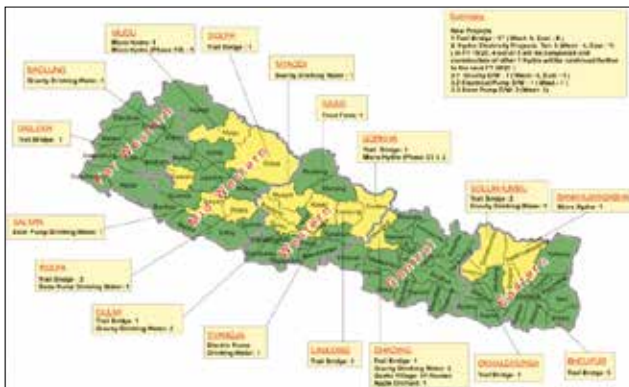
Director
 Deputy Director
 Training Director
 Technical Director
 Projects Director
 Administrative Officer

It has been another exciting year as we continue to help the poor and their communities in the middle and upper hills. Our work involves the provision of infrastructure, employment training, medical camps, agriculture, discretionary projects, and rebuilding villages damaged during the 2015 earthquakes.

In addition to our full-time staff, numbering some 73, we also employ 183 seasonal tradesmen, all trained by us, to work through the construction season, as well as numerous villagers who assist as they can. So, in simple terms, we're a large Gurkha Independent Field Squadron.



The bridge at Chomrong, spanning 287m



KAAA Projects FY 19/20

The projects achieved in FY 19/20 are shown on the map above. Amongst the highlights were our longest ever trail bridge, at 287 m, and micro hydro projects in Upper Gurkha, which, at altitudes of 12,000 feet and using multiple water sources, have their challenges. Meanwhile our Earthquake Team has now rebuilt 450 homes out of a planned total of 800. For these, we use sandwich foam construction which gives excellent insulation throughout the year.

In the field of agriculture, we have established a model trout farm producing some 8.5 tonnes of trout a year, and an apple orchard numbering some 2,000 trees in Northern Dhading. The profit from these ventures is ploughed back into the budget, allowing us to assist other needy villages.



Earthquake reconstruction



The trout farm, Bujan Khola

Many readers will remember the Director of the Kadoorie Charitable Foundation, Colonel (Retd) Christopher Lavender MVO, late 2 GR, who has now retired after 22 years at the helm. We wish him and Griselda a long happy retirement and thank them for their help and advice over the years. The new Director is Peter Paul de Groote who until recently was the Director Médecins sans Frontières in Delhi; to him, success and happiness in his new role.



Christopher and Griselda Lavender trekking in Baglung

It is a great honour to play our part in Team Gurkha. We very much value the help we receive from GWT, the Brigade and the Embassy and, after 50 years of successful partnership, we look forward to many more.

THE GURKHA WELFARE TRUST

Gurkhas living their lives with dignity

Director

Mr Al Howard, Director, The Gurkha Welfare Trust

The Gurkha Welfare Trust Nepal staff list

Headquarters British Gurkhas Nepal

Colonel R T Goodman MBE

Director GWT(N)

Headquarters GWT

Lieutenant Colonel S J Whitlock RE until Sep 19

Lt Col EA Davis QG SIGNALS from Sep 19

Major (Retd) Hemchandra Rai MBE BEM Ex GSPS

Lieutenant (QGO) (Retd) Purnabhadur Gurung Ex 1 RGR

Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) J R White MBE Ex QGE

Captain (Retd) Hikmatbahadur Gurung Ex 1 RGR

Field Director

Deputy Field Director

Support and Human Resource Manager

Deputy Director Plans and Resilience

Programme Director Rural Water &

Sanitation Programme

Head of Assurance

Head of Individual Aid

Project Engineer

Logistics Officer

Financial Advisor

Coordination Officer

Medical Director

Senior Medical Practitioner

Operational Medical Manager

Medical Advice Cell Doctor

Major (Retd) Hitman Gurung MVO Ex QGS

Major (Retd) Yamkumar Gurung Ex QGS

Captain Anthony Butler RE

Mr Ombikram Gurung

Mr Sindhulal Shrestha

Mr Mohan Darlami

Dr Gerda Pohl

Dr Satish Gurung MBBS, MD

Ms Sushila Khadka Sherpa

Dr Suraj Baral MBBS, MD

Area Welfare Centres (AWCs)

Cluster 1

Hon Lieutenant (QGO) (Retd) Haribhadur Rana Ex 1 RGR

Hon Lieutenant (QGO) (Retd) Krishnadhaj Sahi MBE Ex QGE

Hon Lieutenant (QGO) (Retd) Kharkabahadur Thapa Ex QGS

Staff Sergeant (Retd) Gambhadur Thapa Ex QGE

Major (Retd) Yambahadur Rana MVO MBE Ex RGR

SAWO Butwal

Cluster Manager Butwal

AWO Bheri

AWO Gulmi

AWO Chitwan

Cluster 2

Major (Retd) Sovitbahadur Hamal Thakuri MVO Ex QOGLR

Sgt (Retd) Bishwaraj Gurung Ex 6GR

Major (Retd) Prembahadur Ale Ex QGS

Capt (Retd) Gamarsingh Gurung Ex RGR

WO2 (Retd) Deepak Kumar Shrestha Ex RE

SAWO Kaski

Cluster Manager Kaski

AWO Lamjung

AWO Syangja

AWO Tanahun

Cluster 3

Captain (Retd) Pimbahadur Gurung Ex GSPS

Hon Lieutenant (QGO) (Retd) Thakursing Gurung ex 2 RGR

WO2 (Retd) Shriprasad Tamang Ex 1 RGR

Insp II (Retd) Shyamkumar Rai Ex GCSPP

SAWO Bagmati

Cluster Manager Bagmati

AWO Gorkha

AWO Rumjatar

Cluster 4

Captain (Retd) Purnaparsad Limbu Ex 2 RGR

Sergeant (Retd) Birbahadur Limbu Ex 2 RGR

Colour Sergeant (Retd) Subhash Rai Ex 2 RGR

Captain (Retd) Badrikumar Rai Ex 2 RGR

SAWO Dharan

Cluster Manager Dharan

AWO Diktel

AWO Bhojpur

Sgt (Retd) Mangalsingh Tamang Ex QGS
 Insp II (Retd) Govinda Kandangwa Ex GCSPF

AWO Khandbari
 AWO Tehrathum

Cluster 5

Captain (Retd) Kedar Rai Ex QG SIGNALS
 Hon Lieutenant (Retd) Punendraprasad Limbu Ex 2 RGR
 WO2 (Retd) Khargabahadur Rai Ex 2 RGR
 Hon Lt (QGO) (Retd) Khemraj Maden Ex QOGLR
 Sergeant (Retd) Dewaraj Rai Ex 2 RGR

SAWO Damak
 Cluster Manager Damak
 AWO Taplejung
 AWO Phidim
 AWO Darjeeling

Honorary Area Welfare Officer (HAWO)

WO2 (Retd) Satyasagar Ghale Ex 6 GR

HAWO Dehradun (Dharamsala)

Liaison Officer Gurkha Settlement Office (LO GSO)

Maj (Retd) Gyanbahadur Limbu MVO Ex QOGLR

Last year (2019) marked fifty years of The Gurkha Welfare Trust in Nepal. Thanks to the incredible and continued support of the British public, thousands of Gurkha veterans and their families now receive a guaranteed monthly income, have a roof over their head, have medical assistance and live in communities who have vital access to clean water and education.

As we continue to support Gurkha veterans, their widows and communities across Nepal we rely on your support.

With your help, last year:

- 4,831 Gurkha veterans and widows across Nepal received our Welfare Pension.
- 1,000 Gurkha veterans or widows were awarded Emergency Hardship Grants.
- 406 family members received a Home Carer's Allowance.
- 227 disabled children of our core beneficiaries received a Disability Support Grant.

- All Welfare Pensioners received a Winter Allowance of warm winter clothing.
- 73,500 cases were treated by our medical staff.
- 2,817 people attended two medical camps.
- 48 vulnerable Welfare Pensioners received round-the-clock care at our two Residential Homes.
- 30,342 people had clean water piped to their homes thanks to 101 build and repair projects, and 5,252 taps were installed.
- 28,647 children benefitted from our Schools Programme, which included six major refurbishment projects and two brand new model schools.
- 103 earthquake-resilient houses were built for Gurkha veterans and widows whose homes were deemed most at risk of collapse in the event of another earthquake.
- 666 ex-Gurkhas received advice from our two UK Welfare Advice Centres.



Gurkha veteran with hat and jacket donated by GWT

Other news from 2019

2019 marked our 50th year supporting Gurkha veterans and their dependants, which was cause for congratulation in both Nepal and the UK. Each of our 21 Area Welfare Centres held their own event in traditional Nepali style, while here in the UK we organised a celebratory curry lunch at the Gurkha Museum in April. This was well-attended by current staff and trustees as well as original Trust fundraiser Anthony Wieler, several of our former chairmen, and vice-patrons Field Marshal The Lord Bramall and Field Marshal Sir John Chapple.

Last year we took pre-emptive action by building 103 new earthquake-resilient homes for Gurkha veterans and widows. Studying the structural weaknesses of pensioners’ homes destroyed in the 2015 earthquake encouraged us to take this action to protect our most vulnerable pensioners. Our homes are built to an earthquake-resilient design and they can withstand the heavy rains and strong winds of the annual monsoon season.

We were delighted to welcome bestselling author and Trust supporter Alexander McCall Smith CBE to Nepal in January to see first-hand the vital work we do. The author, who is best known as the creator of the No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency series, visited Gurkha veteran, and recipient of our Welfare Pension, Lal Bahadur Gurung during his trip. He wrote; *“We met in the courtyard of his son’s house. He walked quite well for a man of 105, supported by a walking frame bought for him by The Gurkha Welfare Trust. He sat down, and I sat down opposite him, our interpreter at his side. He told me his story. After signing up, he had been sent to India, and from there to Iraq. Then he went on to Egypt, where he fought in the Western Desert. I asked him whether he had*

been under the command of Montgomery, and he said no, it was Mr Churchill who was in charge. Then he was taken to Italy, with the invasion, and he fought at the Battle of Monte Cassino. He said: “I lost many friends. Many of us did not come back.”

We were saddened to hear of the death of Lord Bramall at the end of 2019, at the age of 95. From his time serving in World War Two until his retirement in 1985, he was part of almost every UK military campaign, serving as Colonel of the 2nd King Edward VII’s Own Gurkha Rifles in the late 1970’s, then Colonel of the entire Brigade of Gurkhas and, finally, the Head of the British Military from 1982 to 1985. He became Vice Patron of The Gurkha Welfare Trust in 1999 and was a staunch supporter until his death.



Field Marshall The Lord Brammall chatting Lieutenant General Pope and Major Bishnu Pun



A GWT built earthquake-resilient home

2019 also saw the loss of one of the Trust's most generous supporters, philanthropist Sir Michael Uren, who died in August aged 95. Sir Michael donated the funds which enabled us to build our two Residential Homes in Nepal. Thanks to his generosity, our most vulnerable Welfare Pensioners will receive essential round-the-clock care for the rest of their lives, a tremendous legacy to leave, and grateful residents at both homes in Kaski and Dharan held their own puja in his honour.

In June, we were delighted to hear that both our Chairman and a member of our UK team had been recognised in the Birthday Honours list. Lieutenant General Sir Nick Pope KCB CBE was appointed to the military division of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath. Nick is Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the British Army and the official head of the Brigade of Gurkhas, as well as the Chairman of The Gurkha Welfare Trust. Mahendra Kumar Limbu MBE was made a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for services to Gurkha personnel and their families. Mahendra is our Welfare Officer in Aldershot, providing advice and support to Gurkha families choosing to settle in the UK.

We strive to provide our staff in Nepal with the very best training, to enable them to perform their roles to the utmost in a challenging environment. Working in partnership with the Institute of Advanced Motoring, we ran two motorbike riding courses to train 33 members of staff in 2019. This training will enable our staff to travel out to Gurkha pensioners in remote locations safely and quickly. Last year, we also partnered with Team Rubicon to deliver emergency response training to GWT staff across the country, using practical scenarios to help them plan how to react in the event of a natural disaster. This vital training will be rolled out to more of our staff in February 2020, enabling us to better support our veterans and their dependants and communities, when the very worst happens.

Back in the UK, we have been humbled as always by the unstinting support of the public for our work in Nepal - and the lengths some will go to on our behalf. Trailwalker remains one of the highlights of our fundraising year and, in 2019, 232 teams completed the 100km challenge across the South Downs in aid of the Trust and our charity partner Oxfam GB, together raising close to £1m. The Queen's Gurkha Signals were the first to cross the finish line in 10 hours and 25 minutes, beating reigning champions the Royal Gurkha Rifles. A further £12,000 was raised by six individual supporters who ran the London Marathon for us, three of them crossing the finishing line in under four hours. And we rounded off the year with a traditional carol service in St Lawrence Jewry in the City of London, the week before Christmas. The church was filled to capacity, and the stirring event raised another £8,000 for the Trust.



The GWT Trail Walker Team

What next in Nepal?

Our financial aid

We currently pay a Welfare Pension to just over 4,300 impoverished Gurkha veterans and widows (as at 31 Dec 2019) who do not receive a British Army pension, because they did not serve the requisite number of years. There are around 270 World War Two veterans still receiving our support. Just over half of our Welfare Pensioners are over 80 years old and more than 20% are over 90. Amazingly 63 of them are over 100!

In July 2019, the pension was raised to 11,500 Nepali Rupees (NPR) per month, or roughly £82. This 5% increase ensures the pension continues to cover the cost of the shopping basket we use, so that its value is retained.

Our Medical Aid

2019 was the first full year that all of our medical clinics were fully operational. Each of our 21 Area Welfare Centres now has a medical clinic available to Gurkha veterans and their families which offers world-class facilities, delivering a high standard of free medical care for Gurkha veterans and their families. Each medical clinic is equipped with top-of-the-range equipment, a pharmacy, and highly trained doctors and nurses.



Gurkha attending at a medical clinic

Our Pensioner Support Teams will continue to visit and assess Gurkha veterans and widows in their own homes to provide medical check-ups and home aids, and other welfare assistance. We will also run four medical camps in remote areas of Nepal.

Our Residential Homes care for 48 vulnerable Welfare Pensioners and provide intensive rehabilitation to others who have been left frail and immobile due to illness or injury in two new dedicated double-bedded facilities.

Earthquake Homes Programme

We are again this year rebuilding 100+ new earthquake-resilient houses a year for our most vulnerable Gurkha pensioners.

Water projects

In 2019/20, in partnership with DFID, we will build and repair 110 water schemes and bring clean water directly to the doorsteps of almost 41,000 people.

School Projects

We are building three new schools in 2019/20. Each of these major projects will include teacher training and library installation.

Community Centres

In 2019/20, we will build two further community centres in remote rural areas, as a gathering place in time of both disaster and celebration.



One of GWT's Water Projects



Namaste



THE GURKHA MUSEUM

Vice Patrons

Field Marshal The Lord Bramall of Bushfield KG GCB OBE MC JP (died 12 Nov 2019)
 Field Marshal Sir John Chapple GCB CBE DL
 Lieutenant General Sir Nicholas Pope KCB CBE
 Colonel D.R. Wood MBE

Chairman of the Trustees

Mr M.R. Brooks MA

Elected Trustees

Brigadier J.A. Anderson OBE (up to 11 December 2019)
 Colonel C.M.J. Barnett MBE
 Lieutenant General Sir David Bill KCB (from 7 May 2019)
 Mr J.W. Bulbeck MSCI
 Major J.R. Harrop (from 7 May 2019)
 Mr J.R. Knox MA (up to 11 December 2019)
 Mr S. Maslin FCA
 Mrs S. Rai (from 7 May 2019)
 Colonel W.F. Shuttlewood OBE

Ex-Officio Trustees

Colonel J.G. Robinson CBE, Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas (to 17 September 2019)
 Colonel J. Davies MBE, Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas (from 17 September 2019)
 Major Chandrabahadur Pun, OC Gurkha Coy (Sittang) (to 21 March 2019)
 Major Gajendra Angdembe, OC Gurkha Coy (Sittang) (from 21 March 2019)

Staff (as at 31 Dec 19)

Director	Mr Gavin Edgerley-Harris
Assistant Director	Mrs Christine Bernáth
Commercial Manager	Mrs Charlie Martin
Collections Officer	Mr Doug Henderson
Administrative Assistant	Mrs Alison Burt-Darcy
Museum Assistants	Meghbahadur Rai Mekbahadur Rana Hombahadur Pun
Receptionist	Mr Timothy Norris

Director's Report 2019 By Gavin Edgerley Harris

As one of the Four Pillars of the Brigade, the Gurkha Museum continues to fully engage with the other Three Pillars as well as the public in this country and abroad. Both locally and nationally we are expanding educational outreach opportunities and developing stronger links and partnerships with other museums, organisations and agencies. This year we have consolidated our position in the provision of Gurkha heritage to the serving Brigade, wider Army and the public.



Director with Colonel Mike Kefford at the 7GR Memorial near Mount William – 23 Apr 19

Staff

In February this year, Christine Bernath, Charlie Martin and Doug Henderson were given the opportunity to travel to Nepal. During their stay they visited British Gurkhas Kathmandu, British Gurkhas Pokhara, the Nepal Army Museum and the Gurkha Memorial Museum. Christine Bernath also visited the Indian United Services Institute in October as part of a National Army Museum initiative to provide a museum curator's course for Indian military collections. A new administration assistant, Marta Lourido, joined the staff in October and as always, the three Gurkha staff, Megh, Hom and Mekh continue to provide work and service at the highest level.

Trustees

After serving seven years as Colonel BG, Col James Robinson CBE stood down in September as ex-officio Trustee of the Gurkha Museum Trust with Col Jody Davies MBE becoming the new ex-officio Trustee in his place. Likewise, Maj Chandrabahaur Pun stood down as a Trustee in March and replaced by Maj Gajendra Angdembe as OC Gurkha Company, Sittang. Further new Trustees appointed this year this year are Lt Gen Sir David Bill KCB, Mrs Sudha Rai and Maj John Harrop.

Volunteers

Volunteers at the Museum provide invaluable help and assistance in enabling the Museum to function efficiently and provide a high level of support. We currently have about twenty-five regular volunteers that assist in the shop, archives, collection and stewarding exhibitions. They are to be commended for the quality of their work, commitment and time freely given.

Education and Outreach

Since my last report we have had 24 visits from Brigade Units and units from the wider army. This accounted for nearly 1,000 soldiers which is over 10% of our total visitors up to November this year. I would particularly like to thank The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment for their tangible support for the Museum's Armed Forces Day event in June. Of note are the visits from Gurkha Company Catterick as part of Ex Tesro Khadam. In addition to the Unit visits, Nepalese Communities continue to organise large group visits with Kamal Purja bringing 275 to the Museum in May from Maddhat Shamuha. This group also visits nearby Hillier Gardens where there is a Gurkha Memorial Chautara. This year has also seen the Museum develop a partnership with Hillier Gardens which will help with the education and outreach development of us both.

Together with the other military Museums in Peninsula Barracks we have had 597 school children visit from ten different schools across the region on STEM subjects, history and remembrance. Children's craft events throughout the year continue to attract large numbers of children and parents, currently numbering 300.

Staff from the Museum have given lectures on Gurkha heritage to Gurkha units in Camberley, York, Maidstone and Warminster and to special interest groups in Hampshire, Wiltshire and Berkshire including a regional Royal British Legion Annual Conference in Newbury.

Lectures

Lectures this year have increased in number and variety. In May Adrian Hayes spoke about his experiences on



Some of Recruit Intake 2019 visiting the Museum - 24 May 19

K2; in June Dr Robert Lyman gave a lecture on Viscount Slim; Brig David Morgan spoke about the Falklands and the Director gave an evening lecture entitled Bandits, Revolt and Confrontation regarding operations between 1948 and 1966. Of particular note was the lecture by Tim Bean on Imphal and Kohima. It was so popular it was repeated the next day with over one hundred people attending both dates. Garfield Smith was instrumental in arranging this talk which in total raised over £4,000 for the Museum. The Museum also hosts six winter lunchtime lectures on behalf of Winchester's Military Museums on various military topics which receive good local support. We also continue to host the Sirmoor "Armchair Battlefield Tour" lecture series given by Maj Gordon Corrigan.

Next year the Museum will be instigating seminar format events with multiple speakers and a curry lunch. Two so far being planned will be on the topics of Mountaineering and Valour.

Exhibitions

Doug Henderson curated this year's summer exhibition entitled *Between Two Worlds* detailing life and activity in the Gurkha Brigade between the two world wars. The exhibition, opened by the Colonel Brigade of Gurkha designate, Col Jody Davies, ran from 1st August for one month and attracted 725 visitors. This was an 18% increase over last year's attendance.

GBA

I would like to thank the Regimental Associations for their help and support throughout the year. Many Associations and Trusts hold their meetings here in the McDonald Gallery and 6GR, 7GR, 9GR and 10GR all hold their annual reunions at the Museum. The financial support given to us by the Associations and Trusts is most welcome and is a very important element of our annual income. It helps us protect and preserve Brigade heritage and to educate and inform others of the contribution that Gurkhas have made to this country.

GWT

This year has seen a significant strengthening in liaison with the Gurkha Welfare Trust. GWT staff have been to the Museum on a number of occasions to find out more about Gurkha heritage and the Museum. The Gurkha Museum staff entered teams for the Doko Challenge and Trailwalker raising over £1,700 for the Trust and on 11th April the Trust and their guests celebrated their 50th Anniversary with a Curry Lunch at the Museum. GWT Trustees continue to hold meetings at the Museum and earlier in the year Museum and GWT staff jointly attended three days of training by the Brigade Culture and Language Team in our McDonald Gallery. Last month GWT and the Gurkha Museum featured together on BBC's Antiques Roadshow when Maj Bishnu Pun was interviewed with

the medals of his father Capt (QGO) Bhagtasing Pun MM. The medals are held at the Museum.

Commercial and Communications

Charlie Martin, our Commercial Manager has expanded the product range of our shop with new lines for all age groups. Trading continues to develop as new opportunities to market and advertise the shop are taken. A number of new unique and Gurkha branded products have been added to the range including a USB memory stick in the form of a kukri! A children's item that is proving most popular is the Museum's Gurkha Tiger soft toy called Nepti. Part of the trading development is through the website and social media platforms and these are playing a far greater role in promoting our products as the number of followers increase. Facebook has seen a 30% increase in followers, Twitter a 9% increase and for Instagram 50%.



Lieutenant General Sir Peter Duffell at the Museum Book Launch of Gurkha Odyssey -13 Nov 19

Acquisitions

There have been welcome donations to the collection and archives. Of note was the donation by WO2 Lalkaji Gurung of QOGLR and LCpl Doran Gurung of the Brigade Band of their father's campaign medals for Malaya and Borneo. Later in the year there was a donation of a large archive of papers relating to Lt Gen "Joe" Lentaigne, a 4th PWO Gurkha Rifles officer who commanded the Chindit Force in Burma after the death of Orde Wingate. Most recently the family of Maj Indrajit Limbu MBE MC 10GR came to the Museum to present Maj Indrajit's medals to the Museum. The event was attended by the Chairman of Trustees and Gen Sir Garry Johnson with other members of 10GR Regimental Association. The 25th birthday of The Royal Gurkha Rifles was marked with the publication of a book recording the Regiment's first 25 years. A copy of this book signed by the first four Regimental Colonels was presented to the Museum.

Friends of the Gurkha Museum

Friends Membership is almost exactly the same as last year and stands at 596. Membership charges have risen this year to £20 for single membership, £30 joint and £200 for life membership. I would encourage all to join and enjoy the benefits of free entry and many discounts for the shop, gallery bookings and the café at Peninsula Barracks. The AGM and Tea held annually in May is to be commended as a way of learning more about the Museum and next year there will be other Friends only events.

Legacies

We have produced legacy information material for circulation and have added it to the Museum website. A fundraising and legacy strategy will be produced in the new year when it is hoped there will be more effective measures to raise awareness of our need to be financially supported via legacies.

Conclusion

At the time of this report the Museum is finalising plans to make provision for a dedicated fundraising capability. This will enable the Museum to achieve routine fundraising potential from the start of the new financial year in January and at the appropriate time, capital fundraising capability. There are several factors



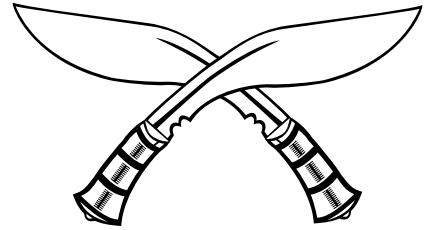
Chairman of Trustees accepting the donation of the Medals of Hon Major Indrajit Limbu MBE, MC from his son - 24 Sep 19

that are affecting the choice of time in launching plans for the re-development of the displays and archives and the Trustees are mindful that this should be done at the right moment. It is an exciting time for the Museum with new staff, new Trustees, new initiatives and new plans.



Director with Kamal Purja and some of the many Maddhat Samuha visitors – 25 May 19

THE GURKHA BRIGADE ASSOCIATION



Staff List

President	Lieutenant General Sir David Bill KCB	
Life Vice Presidents	Field Marshal The Lord Bramall of Bushfield KG GCB OBE MC JP Field Marshal Sir John Chapple GCB CBE KStJ DL General Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE	
Chairman	Colonel D G Hayes CBE	
Secretary	Major Manikumar Rai MBE	
Chaplain	The Rev P Clemett BSc	
Office	Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas Robertson House, Camberley Surrey, GU15 4NP Telephone: 01276 412737 Fax: 01276 412694	

Regimental Associations

The Sirmoor Rifles Association 2nd King Edward VII's Own Goorkhas (The Sirmoor Rifles)

President	Brigadier I Rigden OBE
Chairman	Colonel WF Shuttlewood OBE
Hon Secretary	Major ND Wylie Carrick MBE
Chairman Sirmoor	Sathis Captain Raju Gurung
Hon Treasurer	Captain EC Mackaness
Editor of Sirmooree	Colonel NJH Hinton MBE

6th Queen Elizabeth's Own Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association

President	Brigadier JA Anderson OBE
Chairman	Lieutenant Colonel D McK Briggs
Hon Secretary	Major Manikumar Rai MBE
Gurkha Secretary	Major Kushiman Pangilama Gurung
Regimental Trust Secretary	MFH Adler Esq TD
Editor of Journal Major RG Beven	

7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association

Chairman	Lieutenant Colonel RC Couldrey
Hon Secretary	Major PH Gay
Gurkha Secretary	Major Dilkumar Rai
Editor of Journal	Colonel DR d'A Willis CBE

10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles Association

President	Lieutenant General PTC Pearson CB, CBE
Chairman	Colonel NDJ Rowe
Hon Secretary	Major HGW Stanford
Gurkha Secretary	Captain Capt Ashok Rai
Treasurer	Major SA Archer

The Royal Gurkha Rifles Association

President	Major General GM Strickland DSO MBE
Chairman	Colonel DM Rex MVO
Regimental Secretary	Major B McKay MBE

D/Chairman & Gurkha Secretary	Major Dammarbahadur Sahi
RGR Journal Editor	Major B McKay MBE

The Queen's Gurkha Engineers Association

President	Major General R Wardlaw OBE
Chairman	Colonel MP Carter
Hon Secretary	Lieutenant Colonel I Moore
Gurkha Secretary	Maj Prembahadur Ale
Hon Treasurer	MFH Adler Esq
Editor of Magazine/Website	Major A Gooch RE

Queen's Gurkha Signals Association

President	Major General JJ Cole OBE
Chairman	Lieutenant Colonel M R Complin
Secretary	Lieutenant Colonel Yambahadur Rana.
Treasurer QG SIGNALS Trust	Colonel RJ Watts MBE

The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment Regimental Association

President	Major General ASJ Fay CB
Chairman	Lieutenant Colonel Chris Green
Hon Secretary	Maj (Retd) Palijar Tamang
Gurkha Secretary	Captain Nandaprasad Kala
Chairman Ex-Serviceman's Assn	SSgt Basanta Gurung
Secretary Ex-Serviceman's Assn	SSgt Prakash Raut
Hon Treasurer	Lieutenant Colonel LM Evanson-Goddard
Editor of Journal	Lieutenant Colonel JD Fenn

Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support

President	Colonel A Griffiths OBE
Chairman	Major Jit Hamal
Hon Secretary	WO2 Hemanta Gurung

Former Regiment Associations

1st King George V's Own Gurkha Rifles (The Malaun Regiment) Regimental Association

Brigade Secretary

3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles Officers' Association

Brigade Secretary

4th Prince of Wales's Own Gurkha Rifles Officers' Association

Hon Secretary R M R Lloyd Esq

5th Royal Gurkha Rifles (Frontier Force) Regimental Association

Brigade Secretary

8th Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association

Brigade Secretary

9th Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association

Hon Secretary D Craddock dc@elitehomesltd.co.uk

Regimental Association officials may be contacted through The Secretary of the Gurkha Bde Association

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Gurkha Welfare Centre (Salisbury)

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Letter from Nepal 2019 By Lt Col JP Cross OBE

I think I came across an unusual political similarity between Britain and Nepal occasioned by the Tories' election victory, the 'not one of us' syndrome. I explain: one reason for the Tories' election victory was because people in the north-east of England not wanting Brexit, and those in the original Maoist base in mid-West of Nepal 'not happy' with Kathmandu, both of which I put down to what some people call Collective Memory and others morphic resonance. I reckoned that the seeds of the Tory victory were sown maybe more than two thousand years ago when that area become mixed up with the dispute between the Romans and the Natives, and later on with the Picts and Scots v. the Angles and Saxons mostly taking place in the area of north-east England that deserted Labour in the election. The Doomsday Book shows particularly harsh measures in assessing that area and even later with the War of the Roses, a looking inwards has kept the population abhorrent in its attitude to strangers butting in and mucking them about. In Nepal's case, the mid-Far West is the only part of Nepal to the south of which the British did not build a railway up to the Nepal border, so hardly any trade or different people, and

no new ideas (in 1977 I found that British and Indian Gurkha recruiting was unheard of). Nepal was a closed country when I first visited it in 1947, so influences from outside were instinctively foreign so not wanted – 'not ours'. I see both as examples of pre-modern value systems based on introspective insecurity – or am I guilty of trying to knock a non-existent nail out of sight by stretching coincidences? Somehow, I like to think 'probably not'.

Thinking on to the loose boundaries between religion, superstition, belief and magic, In 2002 I gave a lunchtime talk to the RUSI on the history, religion and politics in Nepal. I started by saying that history was dead politics, religion belief with magic and politics belief without magic. One of the late king's private priests offered to make me an honorary Hindu - one can only be a Hindu if born such (the infamous General Dwyer of the Amritsar massacre in 1919 was an honorary Sikh) - 'as it will help you with your citizenship'. I am also an honorary Buddhist and when it came time to write what religion I followed for my citizenship papers, Buddhiman put 'animist'. As my

grandmother taught me: 'Said the bishop when asked to a feast/where he ate almost nothing but yeast/ "I may not rise as high/As my God in the sky/But I want to get started at least."' But here religion is changing: there is a new type of Christianity, 'God's family', that allows linking itself to bits of Buddhism and Hinduism it likes; a Brahmin who went to earn his living in the Gulf is now an Imam and has translated the Koran into Nepali; Brahmins in Nepal are shortening their mourning periods and other religious periods.

Buddhiman is a keen golf player and has had two 'holes in one'. He likes to go and 'swing a club' of an early morning and I often go with him in the car to the golf course. We always arrive before dawn and one day, I, having left him sitting in his car, started my morning walk towards a bosky part. A couple of minutes later a leopard walked in front of Buddhiman's car having come from my direction. I only knew about it when I got home: I'd have known about it earlier if it had been hungry. He tells me that there are two of them, presumably m and f.

Writing *Jungle Warfare* one of the points that interested me was 'how others see others.' In my senescence I am still interested: how much of what or who we see is 'real'. Near us is a youth club and on the outside is a most cleverly painted outline of a man's head with eyes superciliously cast downwards, or that is how it looks from across the road. Look at it from nearer by and the outline is made up of 12 birds with outstretched wings.

One of my mantra is 'react to the unexpected' and that was put to the test recently. For 13 years I have helped with Boys & Girls Class 8, 9 and 10 basketball and have ensured such continues after my death. The day before my last birthday I was asked to report to the town ground at 0715 hrs, but I knew of no scheduled match. Awaiting me was a huge cake with an icing map of the b/b court. A match of the over 40s was being played for my benefit. After I had cut the cake it was distributed by a group of girls wearing b/b logo T-shirts. A smiling girl brought me a slice and fed me my first bite, accompanied by much appreciative laughter. Three days later, on returning from my morning walk in another part of town, I was beckoned to enter a shop by the woman shopkeeper. I declined but she insisted. I again declined but she seemed adamant. In I went and as I crossed the threshold, I was taken completely by surprise by being hugged and kissed by her. Such had never happened before – anyway, not quite like that. I was told to sit down and offered a Coke, which I declined, then another sort of cold drink, which I also declined. In a corner of the room was the lass who had fed me that piece of the birthday cake sitting on a chair eating her morning meal. Once more she smiled. I had declined the drinks as I knew that reciprocity is the name of the game and, I make it almost a fetish not to drink on a morning walk. I stood up and said I had to go. I saw a boy, sitting against the light, looking hopefully at me and almost in desperation the lady of the shop asked me to ensure he was enlisted into the army. I said I

could in no way help and if any potential recruit arrived with a 'chit' recommending him, he was barred from the selection process (something I introduced in 1979). However, I blessed the lad, hoping that he would have a bright future, and left. The daughter, having learnt my background at the b/b, obviously had seen my approach as she was having her meal and Plan A - or was it B? - was hastily put into operation!

I was walking one morning when I noticed a fresh-faced man walking beside me on my left, and deafer, side. I said nothing and, a hundred or so yards on, I looked over to a shop on the other side of the road whose owner and I chi-ike. 'What are you doing?' asked the man, still at my side. 'Seeing if the owner is in his shop,' I answered. 'It's me: I'm here,' he said, to my utter embarrassment. Normally having a few days' growth on his face, the freshness of it that day had taken me by surprise. I apologised and he delightfully said, 'Not to worry, it will be my turn in due course.' Later I wondered what other people could have given such a gentle retort.

Since 1998 I have, twice a year, given lectures to young officers out from England and Brunei to learn Nepali, my subject being 'about it and about' rather than the language itself. The new British ambadress, mid-30s with two children, attended one of them. I felt it was a good opportunity, not only for her but for the young men who might be attached to the embassy one day, to tell them that the word 'diplomacy' comes from the Greek meaning 'a piece of paper folder in two' while the Nepali word means 'the concept of deception'. There is, embarrassingly, a J P Cross Award for the best speaker (it will last as long as language instruction lasts). One of the points I make when I present it is for them to speak slowly, clearly and simply to their soldiers when talking English to them: 'did you see the dog's tail in the moonlight?' rather than 'did you observe the canine appendage in the lunar effulgence?'; 'this new display can recognise speech' or 'this nudist play can wreck a nice beach'? and 'don't use jargon' when I tell them that, during Borneo Confrontation a Royal Marine soldier said to a Gurkha who was commanding some local Border Scouts, 'I want four hands on watch at 8 o'clock' to which the answer was 'I have two hands on my watch at 8 o'clock.' But I have not said that if the officers said 'A fair cop' to them, the hapless Gurkhas might think they referred to a blond policeman.

Yes, I know: that's quite enough...

The Gurkha Stone

By Brigadier (Retd) D P de C Morgan OBE

Late 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles

(This is an edited version of an article originally produced for the 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association Journal 2019)



The Gurkha Stone in the shadow of Mount William, the Falkland Islands

Prelude

In March 2018, I led a small party of British and Gurkha veterans of the 1982 Falklands war back to the Islands on a journey to retrace our footsteps during that campaign. Our visit was assisted by the Falklands Veterans Foundation and amongst the memorable events of the trip was the invitation to visit Government House in Port Stanley and meet the Governor, His Excellency Mr Nigel Phillips CBE. Later, during the 7th Gurkha Rifles All Ranks Reunion that took place at Tomlinscote School, Frimley, on Saturday 12 May 2018 I was tapped on the shoulder by the Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas, James Robinson, who asked me whether I was aware that of all the infantry units of the 1982 Falklands' Task Force involved in Operation CORPORATE the only one that failed to have even one solitary monument on the islands was the 1st Battalion 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles. It appeared that the Governor had contacted James after we had left to inform him of this fact and put it to him that perhaps he ought to do something about it! As it so happened, a detachment of Queens Gurkha Engineers was due to visit the Islands later in the year and plans were already afoot to send the Brigade of Gurkhas Band there to play at HM The Queen's Birthday Parade in April 2019. There was thus

time for us to come up with a plan and actually produce a suitable monument before the key date of 21 April 2019.

An instant planning committee was formed consisting, purely because they happened to be nearby, of James, Colonel Mike Kefford, Lieutenant Colonel Bob Couldrey, our regimental association chairman, and myself, and it was Mike who suggested that the stone should be constructed in the shape of a Mani Wall. This had several advantages. First, unlike all the other 64 memorial stones in the Falklands, it would not follow the Christian religion, but would be Buddhist in nature. It would thus be unique and, on further examination should shout, 'NEPAL'. Secondly, it would be relatively quick and easy to construct, as stone is plentiful in the Falklands. Finally, even its location was fairly easy to determine. It had to be at, or near, the foot of our wartime objective, Mount William. It would thus be a monument that, if placed beside the main road into and out of Stanley, would become a natural place for visitors to stop to investigate.

One might ask, at this stage, why we had never created a permanent record of our presence in the Task Force. The answer is quite simple. We did not take part in a major battle; our casualties were light, and our one death had been recorded on the Falkland's memorial in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral in London. Nobody had ever erected a monument in Borneo or Malaya or Hong Kong to say "we were there" so why should we start now? However, given that every other regiment had erected at least one if not many more monuments it now seemed right for us to create something to simply say, "the Gurkhas were here too". So, within minutes major decisions had been made, and James started the wheels in motion knowing that he would have the total support of the Governor in the Falklands, and already had the muscle with the engineers in situ to get things done. It was later decided to have three plaques on the wall: the first would be a short explanation of what the battalion did in 1982; the second, and prominently in the centre, would be the 7 GR badge; and then on the right facing the viewer an equally short note to explain what a Mani Wall is.



Operation CORPORATE 1982, soldiers of D Company 1/7 GR on Mount William at the end of hostilities

After a degree of discussion, a 2019 party was formed. It included Mike Kefford, who had commanded D Company during the operation, and his wife Carol, John Palmer, who was the Anti-tank Platoon Commander and was subsequently sent off to Fox Bay once hostilities were over, Jeremy McTeague, who had commanded 11 Platoon under Mike and was to be our team photographer and chef for the trip, Machendra Limbu, who had been Mike's orderly in 1982 and was the only one to bring his 7 GR-badged beret with him, Corporal Dharmaraj Rai, who was in B Company but also came representing the Nuneaton Gurkha Ex-Servicemen's Association complete with flag, medals and badges, and finally myself having been Commandant of 1st/7th Gurkhas during Operation CORPORATE.

We all met up at Brize Norton on 17 April and took off in an aircraft produced by Condor Airlines (a German subsidiary of Lufthansa, I gather) and in the early hours of the 18 April arriving, after what can only be described as a 'hairy' landing, at Mount Pleasant in East Falkland at around 5pm local time. After a day's rest at Liberty Lodge, our home in Port Stanley, and familiarization around Stanley we spent a few days visiting the major battlefield sites before the formal ceremony to unveil our memorial.

The Gurkha Stone

On 23 April 2019, which turned out to be a dry but typically windy day, the Gurkha Band played in front of a small number of local residents, a few serving soldiers, the Commander British Forces, the Deputy Governor and, of course, our team of seven. It was good to hear our regimental band march, 'Old Monmouthshire' played again, and to see the stone covered in the 7 GR black flag which had been brought down south especially for the occasion. At 1300 hours precisely James Robinson stepped forward and explained how the ceremony would proceed. As this was not a memorial stone no wreaths were laid, but instead the Deputy Governor and I moved up to the wall and gently removed the 7 GR flag, thus formally 'opening' the Gurkha Stone. I then spent a few moments trying to explain the importance to the Brigade of the stone, how it would last longer than any of us and would become a permanent reminder to visitors to the Falklands that Gurkhas were present in 1982 and that, when allowed, we had played our part to the full. I then publicly thanked and congratulated Mike Kefford for his original thoughts, the Queen's Gurkha Engineers for their work in the design and construction of the wall, our regimental association for helping to defray the costs, James Robinson for not just taking control of the whole project but also making a huge success of it, and finally Nigel Phillips CBE, the Governor, for providing the initial inspiration for the whole idea.

We then all went our various ways before the Band came around to Liberty Lodge for a quick celebratory drink before leading us to their cookhouse for a superb bhat. It had been quite a day.



*7 GR veterans with Mount William in the background
From left, Dharmaraj Rai, Mike Kefford,
John Palmer, David Morgan, Jeremy McTeague
and Machendra Limbu*



Unveiling the Gurkha Stone



The plaques on the Mani Wall

The Name

Some might suggest that the stone should be named the Seventh Stone. After all, the regimental badge is proud and, as the Americans say, 'Front and Centre' on the wall. Also, it was the 1st/7th Gurkha Rifles battle group that went to the South Atlantic in 1982. However, I feel strongly that the Seventh went to the South Atlantic representing the whole of the Brigade of Gurkhas, and that anyway it will always be remembered by future generations of Falkland Islanders, and visitors alike as the Gurkha Stone whether we, in the Seventh want to call it something else. So, let it be 'The Gurkha Stone'.

Krishnakumar Rai Memorial

After the short ceremony at the Stone we all moved across the road for a matter of a few yards where we found a newly constructed small stone memorial dedicated to the late 21159021 Corporal Krishnakumar Rai of the Queens' Gurkha Engineers, that had been made by the same team that had created the Gurkha Stone. Krishnakumar was killed whilst clearing a number of mines situated just south of the main road leading to Stanley in November of 1982. Although there is a tree that has been planted in his name in the Stanley Arboretum, as there is for Buddhaprasad (see below), there was no permanent marker of his death in the islands until now, nor was his death recorded on the St Paul's Cathedral memorial as it occurred after the official ending of the war. So, the band played, two minutes silence were observed, and wreaths were laid by myself, by the Commander British Forces in the Falklands, by James Robinson on behalf of the Brigade and by the Deputy Governor. The presence of his stone, situated as it is so close to the road, will ensure, I hope, that the sacrifice of this young man's life so far from home will never be forgotten by future generations.



*The plaque in remembrance of
Cpl Krishnabahadur Rai QGE*

Buddhaprasad Limbu Memorial

The next morning dawned bright and cool but with a promise of a beautiful Falkland day as our team set off from Liberty Lodge. Approximately one and a half hours later we arrived at the outskirts of Darwin and at the site

of the memorial stone to the memory of 21161666 Lance Corporal Buddhaprasad Limbu that had also been built by the Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

A small crowd of locals from Goose Green slowly assembled around the stout monument with its suitably engraved plaque that marked the spot where the Argentines had dug in a heavy .50 Browning machine gun which the 2nd Battalion of the Parachute Regiment had had trouble in removing during their epic battle in 1982. It was this trench that Lance Corporal Buddhaprasad was detailed to fill in, and in so doing hit a British unexploded grenade with his spade killing him instantly. Two others, Corporal Chandrabahadur Tamang of D Company and Rifleman Dipmani Rai of the Signal Platoon were also hurt in the explosion.



*Plaque in remembrance of
L/Cpl Buddhaprasad Limbu 7 GR*

After a short introduction again by James we opened the proceedings with a speech by Mr Eric Goss MBE, who was the manager of the Goose Green farm and de facto head of the village community there before and throughout the war, and subsequently received official recognition for his leadership. Largely for the benefit of both the young soldiers in the Band and for those who were new arrivals to Goose Green and Darwin, he set the scene by describing life in the village under Argentinian occupation. I then briefly explained the situation as it affected the battalion leading up to the time we landed at San Carlos and D Company was sent up to the Sussex Mountains.

Finally, it was Mike's turn. Lance Corporal Buddhaprasad Limbu had been his company signaller throughout the war and he spoke eloquently and clearly about Buddhi's progress with D Company during the most dangerous parts of the war leading up to his tragic death on the 24 June 1982. It was obviously a difficult and an emotional time for all of us, but particularly for him.

Summing up I recall thanking all those who had had anything to do with the construction of what will be a lasting memorial. It had been built beside the main road and overlooked the two villages of Darwin and Goose Green on the very spot where a young 23-year-old boy



The memorial cairn for L/Cpl Buddhaprasad Limbu with former members of D Company, from left Machendra Limbu, Mike Kefford and Jeremy McTeague, near Darwin, Falkland Islands

who had travelled all the way from the hills of Nepal died trying to protect future generations of islanders. A lady from Goose Green came up to me as we were leaving and said, in a very gentle, quiet voice: "Please do not worry, we will never forget him or any of your Gurkhas". Oh dear, it was an emotional day!

The Meaning

So, it is thanks to His Excellency, the Governor, to the leadership shown by Headquarters, Brigade of Gurkhas and particularly to the skill, dedication and tenacity of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers that the Gurkha presence in the Falkland Islands in 1982 will not be forgotten.

It has taken 37 years, but at last people who visit the Falkland Islands – and over 65,000 regularly come by ship and by air every year from around the world – will be able to see that once again Gurkhas did their duty in the short but brutal war of 1982 in the same way, and with a similar sacrifice that their predecessors had done on behalf of the British Crown for 167 years before them. Once the serious side of our trip had been completed, we turned our attention to the pleasures of the Falklands. We spent two days walking the ground around Mount Harriet, Goat Ridge, The Tumbledown and Mount William. We got close to a bunch of penguins. We drove around East Falkland to see other battle sites. We admired the modern Brigade Band whilst they entertained a large and most appreciative crowd in Stanley. We had a cream tea in Government House and signed our names under the billiard table as

is the custom for visiting veterans. We said our farewells to Ali Dodd, our host at Liberty Lodge, who had looked after us so brilliantly for the past nine days, just before going out on our last night out with friends from Fox Bay that concluded an already full, happy, fascinating and, at times, emotional programme.

My Story Opening of the Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey, Thursday 7 November 2019 By Lt (Retd) Santosh Ghale 2 RGR / PC Santosh Ghale - Kent Police

On the 7th November 2019, I represented Kent Police in the opening ceremony for the Royal British Legion Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey. There were also representatives from all current and past regimental associations who came together at the Field of Remembrance.

The Field of Remembrance has been organised by The Poppy Factory since 1928. Over 300 plots are provided so that relatives, friends and fellow Service men and women can remember those who have lost their lives while serving in the Armed Forces. The proceeds from the Field of Remembrance are traditionally given by the Poppy Factory to The Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal every year.

HRH the Duke of Sussex (Prince Harry) and his wife HRH the Duchess of Sussex (Meghan Markle) opened the 91st Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on Thursday 7th November 2019.



Police Constable Santosh Ghale – Kent Police

After the service at the Westminster Abbey Gardens, being a retired Gurkha, I was also invited by the Colonel of the Brigade of Gurkhas (thank you Col BG Sahib) to attend a small service with the members of the Gurkha Brigade Association to the Memorial of the Brigade of Gurkhas on the Horse Guards Avenue, Whitehall. Another small service was held with a bugler from The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas performing last post with 2 minutes silence followed by wreath laying for the Serving and Past Regiments and Corps of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

My Background: I served 24 years in the Brigade of Gurkhas of the British Army (1982 to 2005) and retired as Lieutenant in 2005 from the 2nd Royal Gurkha Rifles. I joined Kent Police in March 2008. I have been with Kent Police for 11 years and 8 months now as a constable. I transferred to SB & CT Border Policing in September 2010 and worked at the Channel Tunnel Policing Unit (CTPU) for 3 years. I currently work at Coquilles in France along with Border Force (Custom and Immigration). I moved here in October 2013.

After thoughts: My attendance although voluntary, is treated as a duty. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to truly be a central part of the one of our nation's most iconic events. I felt a lot of pride in representing the force at a sombre but prestigious service.

I felt that the event was worth my attendance and the poignancy of the occasion will stay with me for a lifetime.



*L to R - PC Santosh Ghale (Kent Police),
Colonel Jody Davies MBE
(Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas) and
Major Dammar Bahadur Shahi
(SO2 Personnel & Policy)*

ALLIED AND AFFILIATED REGIMENTS BRIGADE ASSOCIATION NEPAL

The Queen’s Own Rifles of Canada 2019

The Queen’s Own Rifles of Canada, the nation’s oldest Infantry Regiment in continuous service, had another busy year of accomplishments under the Command Team of Lieutenant-Colonel Frank D. Lamie, CD and Chief Warrant Officer Donovan O’Halloran, CD.

The Regiment has the privilege of being entrusted with light infantry capability, including parachute, complex terrain, and reconnaissance capabilities. Since the launch of the Canadian Army’s Strengthening the Army Reserve initiative (StAR), the Regiment has experienced tremendous growth—nearly doubling in size since 2017.

In 2019, the Regiment continued to support both domestic and international operations. Several members deployed to the Middle East as part of Op IMPACT, where Corporal Sonatin received the US Army Achievement Medal for his service in Iraq. Closer to home, the Regiment responded to flooding in Ontario as part of Op LENTUS.

Members of the Regiment participated in several international exercises, including Ex IBERIAN STAR in conjunction with 7th Battalion, The Rifles. The Regiment successfully led a Tactical Training Group in the Ex MAROON PHALANX series, which culminated in an Airborne insertion and live-fire defensive training. In addition, numerous Riflemen qualified through the Basic Parachutist and Basic Reconnaissance Patrolman courses, and Master Corporal Kusi-Appiah became one of the first Reservists to complete the gruelling Patrol Pathfinder course.

In June 2019, the Regiment sent a delegation to Normandy for the 75th anniversary of its landing on Juno Beach on D-Day. In attendance was incoming Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel, Olympic gold medallist Vicky Sunohara. A formal change of command was held in September at Toronto’s landmark Casa Loma, home to the Regimental Museum and archives.

In February 2020, the Regiment proudly hosted the 203rd Toronto Garrison Officers’ Ball, with nearly 800 attendees including the Command Team of the Canadian Army, Lieutenant-General Wayne D. Eyre, CMM, MSC, CD and Chief Warrant Officer Stuart Hartnell, MMM, MSM, CD. The evening’s entertainment was provided by the Regiment’s Band and Bugles.



Far Right: Commander of the Canadian Army Lieutenant-General Wayne D. Eyre, CMM, MSC, CD


FLOOD RELIEF OPERATION LENTUS

We’re supporting our provincial, local and volunteer partners to help with relief efforts. Since 20 April, 2019 soldiers, sailors and aviators have been:

- filling and moving sandbags
- providing assistance to citizens
- conducting wellness checks
- clearing routes
- assisting with the evacuation of persons
- supporting efforts to protect property from flooding

Operation LENTUS is the Canadian Armed Forces response to natural disasters in Canada.





OBITUARIES

Obituary List

The Editor records with regret the deaths of the following members notified between 1 January and 31 December 2019.

2 GR

Maj BEA Pascoe,	6 Mar 2019
Lt Col H M Manuel TD	6 Aug 2019
Major RAF Waterton	6 Aug 2019
Maj J J Mole	9 Sep 2019
Field Marshall, The Lord Bramall of Bushfield KG, GCB, OBE, MC, JP, DL*	12 Nov 2019
Major Ron Berry	11 Dec 2019

4GR

Major Michael Anthony Bowyer *	13 Dec 2019
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5 RGR

Major Kenneth Edward Nunn MBE*

6 GR

Colonel John Slim, 2nd Viscount Slim, OBE, DL*	12 Jan 2019
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9 GR

Tim Hatton OBE*

10 GR

Brig Christopher Pike DSO, OBE*	15 Jul 2019
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QGE

Major Peter McMaster CB	18 May 2019
Lieutenant General Hugh Cunningham KCB	12 Sep 2019
Major Leo Gatfield	30 Nov 2019
Major Tony Sowerby	07 Dec 2019
Lieutenant Colonel Cyril Hastings MBE	24 Dec 2019

Note: Those marked with an () after their date of death have their Obituary published in this Journal.*

Field Marshal Lord Bramall of Bushfield KG GCB OBE MC JP



Field Marshal Lord Bramall, who has died aged 95, brought a wealth of personal experience - ranging from the Second World War, when he earned an MC, to the Falklands War, when he was head of the Army - to the task of exposing complacent thinking on 21st century defence policy.

In the House of Lords and in letters to The Daily Telegraph and The Times he stressed the need for a proper defence review along with the “peace dividend” after the fall of the Soviet empire. Shortly before the allied invasion of Iraq in 2003 he expressed unease about the muddled policy of confrontation instead of containment.

He also recalled the hawkish Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer saying during the Suez crisis that, of course, British troops could get to Cairo, but then asking: “What the bloody hell do we do when we get there?”

Bramall’s astuteness in picking his way through the Whitehall minefield was honed by his experience of two key reorganisations. In 1963 he played a leading part in Earl Mountbatten’s overhaul of the Ministry of Defence,



Bramall: astute in picking his way through Whitehall

a trial of strength which clipped the wings of the three armed services and reduced the obstructive powers of their entrenched bureaucracies.

The national defence effort was henceforth under one Secretary of State responsible to Parliament, with the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) paramount over the single service chiefs of staff. Bramall was appointed OBE for his contribution to these reforms.

Some 20 years later, when he himself was CDS, he broadly supported further moves towards greater centralisation within the Ministry of Defence. But when the ambitious and energetic Secretary of State, Michael Heseltine, proposed more centralisation of strategy, allocation of resources and budgetary control, it meant that the individual service chiefs would, effectively, lose their policy role to an office of budget management.

They were to become accountable to the CDS who, in turn, would be clearly responsible for providing military advice to the government and for the conduct of operations.



Bramall in Beirut

Heseltine telephoned Bramall when he was in Cornwall on a Friday evening to tell him that the report containing his proposals would be released on Monday before they could be leaked.

Bramall responded with a fierce rear-guard action to ensure that “the single service chiefs were kept in play” and that the changes did not degrade the specialist sea, land and air advice in the formulation of policy and decision-making. In this, it has been argued, he was only partly successful; and he felt hurt at being bounced into accepting the reorganisation.



Dwin Bramall as a schoolboy

Edwin Noel Westby Bramall was born on December 18 1923 at Rusthall in Kent, the son of an unambitious officer in the Royal Artillery who served in both world wars, but had difficulty finding work since his wife refused to go to Egypt, where the family had a cotton business; she tried running several enterprises, including a hire car company, and had marked Left-wing inclinations that were shared by their elder son Ashley, who became Labour leader of the Inner London Education Authority.

Young Dwin was educated at Eton, where he played cricket for the school for two years - the second year as captain, when Eton beat Harrow by nine wickets in a one-day match. A lifetime’s interest in painting was sparked by being taught by Wilfrid Blunt, and at the age of 16 Bramall had two of his paintings hung in the summer exhibition at the Royal Academy.

In August 1942 he enlisted at York, and served nine months in the ranks, where he learnt to be “on the receiving end of bloody stupid orders”. After attending an officer cadet training unit he was given a war emergency commission and joined the 2nd Battalion, King’s Royal Rifle Corps (KRRC).

Bramall was put ashore on Juno Beach in Normandy with the leading element of his battalion on the evening of D+1 (June 7 1944).

As a platoon commander, he had a narrow escape when a briefing he was attending came under intense German 88 mm fire. He and a comrade dived for cover under a truck. "Do you think we have had it?" his companion asked him, as they lay side by side. "It looks rather like it," was Bramall's reply. A shell came straight through the vehicle. The companion took the full force of the blast and died instantly; Bramall escaped unscathed.

In July he was wounded at Fontaine-Étoupefour, south-west of Caen, and evacuated to England, but five weeks later he rejoined his battalion to help clear the Falaise pocket. Crossing the Somme, he took a bullet in the shoulder.

Then in October, close to the Dutch-Belgian border, he was commanding a daylight reconnaissance patrol ordered to obtain information about the enemy in a thick wood known to be mined, when a German post engaged them with a pistol and grenades at close range, hitting Bramall's sergeant.



Being presented with his MC ribbon by Field Marshal Montgomery: Bramall was proud of this picture

Bramall retaliated with grenades and a sten gun, wounding two and taking one prisoner, while seven other Germans withdrew, leaving behind a machine gun and several bazookas. The patrol then came under fire from other enemy positions in the wood before returning with valuable information. He was awarded an immediate MC.

Before the ceremony at which Field Marshal Montgomery pinned on the ribbon, one of Monty's staff gave Bramall a word of warning: "The Field Marshal will ask you if you have ever met him before. He won't mind a 'Yes' or a 'No' - but he will be very upset if you say that you cannot remember."

Outside Goirle, near the Dutch-Belgian border, Bramall, going to the aid of a corporal who had lost a leg in a

minefield, trod on a mine but it failed to explode. On reaching the Dortmund-Ems Canal in April 1945, the CO and his company commanders took over a flat to get out of the pouring rain.

As Bramall thumped away on a piano, a crowd of local people gathered outside to listen in some bemusement to a loud and tuneless rendering of the Eton Boating Song.

He fought on to Hamburg and finished the war in Denmark, then he was appointed staff captain and posted to Gwalior in India. After receiving a permanent commission and being promoted major, he was posted to Okayama in occupied Japan as Divisional Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General.

Bramall went to the War Office in 1947 and served in M04, the Middle East department, before moving to the School of Infantry as an instructor. After Staff College he was posted to the Canal Zone in 1953 for three years and then, after 18 months at the Winchester depot, to Derna in Libya, where he commanded a company of the 1st Battalion, KRRC.



In 1949, just before getting married

After serving as Staff College instructor he returned to regimental duty in 1962 as second-in-command of the 1st KRRC, in Berlin and later at Colchester.

In 1963, to help overhaul the MoD, Bramall took over from a superior officer to play a leading role in the small military team which was to see the three services departments moved into the MoD building, and the national defence effort put firmly under one Secretary of State responsible to Parliament, with the CDS paramount over the single service chiefs of staff. It was a reform that was to survive virtually intact for almost 20 years. He then commanded the 2nd Battalion, KRRC, in Malaysia in 1965 during the Confrontation with Indonesia, and was Mentioned in Despatches.

Despite his formidable presence, Bramall was the most approachable and unassuming of men. Learning one day

that it was his driver's birthday, he told the man that he would give him a present to mark the occasion. A few hours later, the guard on the camp gate was astonished to see the CO's vehicle approaching with Bramall sitting to attention at the wheel and his corporal lolling back in the passenger seat.

Promotion to brigadier came in 1967 when Bramall left Staff College as General Staff Officer (Grade 1) and took command of the 5th (Airportable) Infantry Brigade at Tidworth. After attending the Imperial Defence College in 1970 he was sent to Germany as General Officer Commanding, 1st Division.

Two years later Bramall commanded the British troops in Hong Kong; he was then knighted in 1974 on being promoted to full general as Commander-in-Chief, United Kingdom Land Forces.

Bramall returned to the Ministry of Defence as Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff (Personnel and Logistics) in 1978 to be confronted by a crisis. The Labour Government had imposed a policy of pay restraint on government employees, and the Treasury was insisting that recommendations to increase military salaries to take account of inflation could not be fully implemented.



Trekking in Nepal, 1978/79

The service chiefs feared that an exodus from the services would turn into a flood, and Bramall was deputed to brief the press "off the record". The facts that he presented were no less embarrassing to the government for being beyond dispute.

There was ministerial anger, but the media pressure made an important contribution to the eventual pay award and helped to staunch the outflow of skilled service personnel.

When Bramall became Chief of the General Staff in 1979, he received a sharp reminder of his origins when his mother rang saying: "I wish to speak to my baby." When her son picked up the phone to protest: "Mother, you really cannot say that sort of thing. Everyone will think we are stark raving mad," she replied: "You are my baby."

When the new Conservative Government demanded stringent counter-inflationary measures he deftly offered to make reductions in the Rhine Army, knowing that this was politically impossible, and the Royal Navy took the brunt of the defence cuts.

When the Argentines invaded the Falklands in 1982, and it was decided to send a task force to recover them, Bramall was not "bubbling over with enthusiasm".

He felt the crisis could have been avoided, and resented the casualties that would be inevitable. But he responded strongly when a ban on the use of Nepalese troops was proposed because it would cause trouble at the UN.



Bramall with General Sir Frank Kitson and John Nott, Defence Secretary, seeing off troops bound for the Falkland Islands in the QE2

Pulling rank as a former commanding officer of the 2nd Gurkhas he told the Defence Minister John Nott, who had served in the regiment, that if they were held back now it would be impossible to send them anywhere again, and added that he was counting on Nott's support to defend the proposal against the Foreign Office.

Mindful of the costly mistakes made at Gallipoli and Anzio, he added his voice to those of his colleagues who urged a rapid breakout of the bridgehead after the landings. The campaign reinforced his reservations about the limitations of the service chiefs; however good their planning, however sound their advice, they could not succeed without the dynamic leadership and inspiration of the prime minister of the day.

After the successful campaign Bramall boarded the ferry carrying the 2nd and 3rd battalions of the Parachute Regiment off Ascension Island and told them: "When you are old men you will be able to say, as they said after Agincourt, after Alamein, after Arnhem: 'I marched, and fought, and won the Falklands, and showed the incomparable quality of the British Army.'"

Bramall was promoted to Field Marshal in 1982 and, in October that year, he succeeded Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin as CDS. After the Falklands War, the pressure for defence cuts eased and the reorganisation of the MOD took place in a period of relatively comfortable budgetary stability.

But when the four main roles of British forces came up in discussion - nuclear deterrence, defence of the home base, land and air contributions to the defence of the central and northern fronts, and the naval contribution to the defence of the eastern Atlantic - Bramall was instrumental in adding another.



Lord Bramall stumped by Derek Fatchett, Labour MP for Leeds Central, during the House of Lords and House of Commons cricket match, 1993

The fifth pillar, as it became known, was the concept of using indirect military influence to work for a stable balance of power in the Middle East and was very much Bramall's brainchild.

He believed that Britain should make full use of her historic links in the area – political, military, industrial and intelligence – to help her friends to help themselves. To this end, he set up an Out of Area Co-Ordinating Group to give the necessary impetus and direction to the many agencies involved.

In October 1985 Bramall was succeeded as CDS by Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fieldhouse. He became a JP and was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Greater London as well as a trustee of the Imperial War Museum, a useful combination when he discovered he had left his field marshal's baton at home; a phone call led the temporary loan by the National Army Museum of another which had belonged to Field Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood, VC.

There was also some concern when he returned from a tree-planting ceremony to find that his Order of the Garter star was missing; discreet inquiries revealed that he had planted it with the tree.



Saying goodbye to Cpl Rukun Rana of the 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles

As chairman of the Imperial War Museum's trustees from 1989, Bramall guided through some large development schemes and took the keenest interest in the work of the staff on the museum sites. The Land Warfare Hall at Duxford, designed to house and display the Museum's most important land warfare exhibits, was opened by Bramall on behalf of the Prime Minister

in 1992, while at Lambeth Road, space was found for new permanent exhibitions including "Secret War" and "Conflicts since 1945".

The idea of mounting a permanent exhibition about man's inhumanity to man, and specifically the Holocaust, was initiated by Bramall shortly after he became chairman. The project was completed in 2000 and opened by the Queen.



Elected a member of MCC in 1949, Bramall served as a trustee for almost 10 years and greatly enjoyed his time as president in 1988-89. For several years he was chairman of the Dorchester Hotel.

He was Colonel Commandant of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Green Jackets (1973-84), representative colonel commandant of the Royal Green Jackets (1979-82) and colonel commandant of the Special Air Service Regiment (1984-92). He was colonel of the 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles (1976-86).

In 1992 he published with General Sir William Jackson *The Chiefs: the Story of the UK Chiefs of Staff*. Among several astringent judgments he wrote that one general officer was "better known for his abilities as a tennis player than as a profound military thinker".

In 2017 many of his articles, speeches and letters were collected in *The Bramall Papers: Reflections on War and Peace*.

Bramall's later years were blighted by false allegations that along with other public figures he had attended parties at which children had been abused. The investigation, which involved a dawn raid on his house by 20 police officers, was ended early in 2016 and Bramall later received £100,000 in compensation from the Metropolitan Police and an apology from the Commissioner, Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe.

In July this year the man who had made the claims, Carl Beech, was convicted of perverting the course of justice and fraud, and sentenced to 18 years in prison. Bramall, whose wife died before he was exonerated by the police, said: "I can honestly say I was never as badly wounded in all my time in the military as I have been by the allegations."

Dwin Bramall was appointed OBE in 1965, KCB in 1974, GCB in 1979, KG in 1990 and created a life peer in 1987.



Sir Edwin Bramall as he then was, in the mid-1980s with Lady Bramall, who had to set up home countless times during his many postings

He married, in 1949, Dorothy Avril Wentworth Vernon, the daughter of Brigadier-General Henry Vernon, who admirably coped with the demands of a life which compelled her to set up home 27 times in the first 30 years of marriage. She died in 2015 and he is survived by their son and daughter.

Lord Bramall, born 18 December 1923, died 12 November 2019

Sir Max Hastings writes: Dwin Bramall was one of the most commonsensical chiefs of staff I ever met, never afraid of speaking truth to power, or indeed to everyone. He was extraordinarily honest to me after the Falklands war, during which he was CGS. When I interviewed him for the book about the conflict that I wrote with Simon Jenkins, he freely avowed that he had opposed dispatch of a task force as too risky. He discussed with brutal frankness the shortcomings of some senior officers. He told me explicitly that the decision to award a posthumous VC to Lt Col H Jones after the battle of Goose Green had come from the prime minister, not the Army.

All this was dynamite at the time. Likewise in 1984, when I published *Overlord*, a study of the 1944 Normandy campaign, which was among the first to assert that the German army was tactically superior to the British and Americans: a storm descended on my head from enraged veterans, in which I might have gone under had not Dwin and Michael Carver, the two most distinguished survivors of Normandy, come stridently to my support, saying and writing that every thinking soldier who had been on the battlefield knew that what Hastings wrote was true.

Bramall was CDS and I was a working journalist when President Reagan announced his “Star Wars” anti-ballistic missile system scheme. Dwin said to me at lunch that day with his usual directness: “Our scientists say this represents funny farm time for the president. The whole thing is barmy.” He was right, of course, and it was a huge help to me to be able to write in such terms with such authoritative support.

In the decades after his retirement we lunched together regularly. I found him unfailingly witty, wise and brave, the last not least when the police conducted their deplorable, shameful investigation into his alleged sex abuse offences, which disgraced the senior policemen involved.

I wrote several articles in his defence, not forgetting Field Marshal Lord Guthrie’s private remark: “I would sooner believe this sort of thing about you or me, Max, than about Dwin Bramall.” He was an outstanding soldier and a delightful man, whom it was a privilege to know.

Colonel John Slim 2nd Viscount Slim OBE, DL



As a teenager John Slim spent his school holidays with his father. This might not seem so unusual, until it is the front lines in India and Burma. There the 16-year-old witnessed the gruelling fighting endured by what noted that his father was the wartime commander of the 14th Army and that the “holidays” were taken near became known as the “forgotten army”, as well as its ultimate victory over the Japanese.

Unsurprisingly, as soon as he was old enough, the gung-ho young Slim joined his father’s regiment, the 6th Gurkha Rifles. Cutting a swashbuckling figure, square of jaw and bushy of eyebrow, he served as a supernumerary aide-de-camp to his father’s friend Major-General “Punch” Cowan in the final months of the war in the Far East - months in which his father came to be regarded as a national hero.

Just as unsurprisingly, this made a deep impression on him. As a 19-year-old subaltern in what was by then an army of occupation, Slim toured the ruins of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by motorbike. This could be attributed to youthful curiosity, but it also indicated the restlessness

of a man on a quest to make a name for himself, and, perhaps, escape from the shadow of his father.

John Douglas Slim was born in Quetta, now in Pakistan, in 1927. He was the only son of the then Captain William "Bill" Slim and his wife, Aileen (née Robertson). He enjoyed his childhood in India, describing himself as a "cantonment brat" and remembering a life of vast landscapes, personal freedom and the warmth and privilege of an affectionate household with cooks and servants, picnics and polo. He attended the Rashtriya Indian Military College at Dehradun, where he became fluent in Urdu.

After the war, on return to Burma from Japan, he commanded a platoon of the 6th Gurkhas for 18 months during the tense period of political manoeuvrings that led to the country's independence outside the Commonwealth in 1948. In that year he was treated in hospital for dysentery and advised against continued service in Asia. He moved to Scotland to secure a regular commission with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

Slim went to Korea with the 1st Argylls in 1950 and was regularly engaged in action over the ensuing months, including the advance on Songju in late September after the breakout from the Pusan bridgehead. On his return to Scotland he met Elisabeth Spinney, known as "Buffy", and they were married in 1958. When she was with her husband in Aden and Cyprus in the 1960s, she kept a pistol in her bag and was renowned as the fastest draw from a handbag. They had three children: Mark, who is now the Third Viscount, and Chairman of trustees of the Burma Star Association, Hugo and Mary Ann.

The Far East continued to beckon and Slim applied to join the Malayan Scouts, who were to be reorganised as the 22nd Special Air Service (SAS) Regiment. He was selected and became involved in the pioneering of techniques for parachuting into dense jungle. After this he commanded an SAS squadron and was in East Malaysia in 1965 during Indonesia's ill-judged confrontation with Malaysia. He then moved to South Arabia, where elements of the regiment were deployed until the end of the British presence there in 1967. Appointed to command 22 SAS that year, he turned his attention to worldwide counter-insurgency operations.

After completing his command of 22 SAS, he was appointed OBE and left the army as a Colonel to start a new career in business. His working life became divided between associations and charities with which his father's name was inevitably linked, and after the initial reform of the House of Lords, he became an elected hereditary member and attended the House regularly. He spoke well without notes and his views on defence, security and veterans were respected.

As the 2nd Viscount Slim, a title he inherited in 1970, he kept alive the memory of the 14th Army as president of the Burma Star Association and this will be his most

enduring memorial. He put his heart into the interests of the steadily dwindling number of survivors of the gruelling Burma campaigns and the widows of those who died in the conflict. No one wearing the coveted campaign star ever failed to win his attention.

In his work for the SAS Regimental Association, as president from 2000 to 2011 and patron until his death, he was equally assiduous for the welfare of veterans and their families. He also represented the interests and achievements of the regiment in the Lords and in any debate on its history or future.

In the end he may not have entirely avoided the long shadow of his father, but his military achievements could be judged on their own merit. He was always, to everyone, good company, and though he boomed like a foghorn, he was ironically aware of his own theatre.

BRIGADIER CHRISTOPHER PIKE DSO, OBE* 10GR



Brigadier Christopher Pike, who has died aged 85, was an outstanding frontline commander who saw action with the Gurkha Rifles in Malaya, Borneo, Hong Kong and Cyprus.

In March 1966, during the Confrontation with Indonesia, Pike was commanding D Company 1st Battalion 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles (1/10 GR) in North Borneo.

He was ordered to find out whether the enemy had infiltrated during a lull between unit handovers, and a

reconnaissance in strength established that they were building a new base near the junction of two rivers. Pike calculated that an ambush close to an enemy base would not be expected, and deployed his three platoons accordingly.



Christopher Pike, circa 1974

When they were in position, a large landing craft carrying 35 Indonesian troops and stores approached. Heavy fire at point-blank range resulted in considerable losses to the enemy. The engine stopped, the boat canted over and slewed into the bank downstream. When the Indonesians retaliated from the opposite bank with machine gun and mortar fire, Pike ordered one platoon to withdraw. Two others remained in position and, four hours later, two small enemy boats were sunk, again with heavy losses.

His commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel (later Major General) Ronnie McAlister paid tribute to the impudent daring, cold courage and immaculate planning of an operation which laid claim to being the most successful single action in the whole of the conflict.

Three weeks later, patrols reported to Pike that several new enemy bases had been set up within 800 yards of his company hide. He decided to make a night withdrawal from this precarious position and under cover of darkness his men clipped an exit route through thick secondary jungle.

Knowing that the Indonesians would come looking for him, he laid ambushes along the tracks they were likely to use leading to the border.

Having wrested the initiative from the enemy, his force had very much the better of the fierce engagement that followed the next morning. He was awarded a DSO. The citation paid tribute to his courage, coolness, leadership and tactical sense. In 1966 after receiving his DSO at Buckingham Palace, with Gurkhas from his battalion: Pike cared deeply about those under his command and their families.

Christopher James Pike was born on November 10 1933 at Graaff-Reinet in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, and was educated at Hilton College, Natal, and at Sandhurst, where he excelled at sport. He was commissioned into the 10th Gurkhas and joined 1/10 GR in 1954 in South Johore during the Malayan Emergency. Regimental and staff appointments followed.

In July 1967 Mao's Cultural Revolution threatened to spill over into Hong Kong, and in the border village of Sha Tau Kok several police were killed and wounded by Chinese militia. As a result, 1/10 GR was ordered to clear British territory of armed infiltrators. Two companies, one led by Pike, together with armoured cars, set off to relieve the beleaguered police, who were pinned down at the border post.

A machine gun opened up from Chinese territory but, given the danger that the intervention would lead to full-scale conflict, the battalion did not return fire. Pike was the first into the border post and later that day the police and their casualties were evacuated from Sha Tau Kok and the village was back in British hands.

In 1974 Pike commanded 1/10 GR when it was deployed to protect the Eastern Sovereign Base in Cyprus during the Turkish invasion of the island. He was appointed OBE for his leadership and professionalism during the battalion's seven-month tour.

He subsequently instructed at the National Defence College, Latimer, and was then General Staff Officer, Grade 1 (Adviser) to the Dhofar Brigade in Oman. On promotion to colonel he commanded British Gurkhas at Dharan in Nepal. On further promotion he was Brigadier Brigade of Gurkhas, Hong Kong, and in these two last appointments he worked selflessly to improve the well-being and conditions of retired and serving Gurkhas.

Approachable and good-humoured, Pike cared deeply about those under his command and took a close interest in the soldiers, their families and their futures.

"Enjoy your soldiering," he used to say, "and if you can't, then quit." He played cricket, tennis and squash well and even when he was CO he was in the battalion hockey side that won the Infantry Cup and were runners-up in the Army Cup.

Long leaves were spent in South Africa with his parents and his brother, fishing in Kwa-Zulu, Natal, and game-



Christopher Pike in 1966 after receiving his DSO at Buckingham Palace, with Gurkhas from his battalion

watching in the Kruger National Park. One leave was spent with a scientific expedition in Kenya researching the effects on elephants of their overpopulation. After leaving the Army in 1988, he was the administrative director for a group of solicitors in Norwich. In retirement he enjoyed time with his family and gardening, golf, fishing, ornithology and sailing. Christopher Pike married, in 1967, Prue McDermid, who survives him with their daughter and two sons.

Christopher Pike, born 10 November 1933, died 15 July 2019

Major M A L (Tony) Bowyer (4 GR)



Michael Anthony Lloyd (Tony) Bowyer was born on April 2nd, 1924 in Wolverhampton, Staffordshire to parents Vincent (Julian) and Alice (Perry) Bowyer.

Julian had survived Gallipoli in 1915 and was a county champion water-polo player. Together, Julian and Perry ran the Lord Nelson public house in Salop Street, Wolverhampton.

Tony won a scholarship to Wolverhampton Grammar School aged 11 and excelled in sport, particularly Soccer, swimming and Cross-Country running. He won the open mile race on consecutive years, leading from the front all the way. He also became a regular member of the Cadets.

In 1942, he won the Martin Wilkes scholarship to Pembroke College, Cambridge to read Classical History where he would eventually gain a 'War Blue' in Soccer.

His studies would be interrupted when he joined up for the War in 1942 with the Queen's Royal Regiment and after training at Maidstone and Wrotham Camps in 1943, he was enlisted in January 1944 at Officer training school at Belgaum in India on route to join the 4th/4th Prince of Wales Own Gurkha Rifles. He left Belgaum for Burma in November 1944 and soon saw active service defending the Mawchi - Toungoo road as Infantry Company C Commander, working alongside the Indian Army 19th Dagger Division, in the successful Mandalay Hill Campaign in 1945. At this time, he was only just 21 years old!

He remained in Burma at Kalaw, training C Company and keeping peace alongside the 17th Indian Division (Black Cats) until September 1946. He then left Rangoon for Calcutta on SS. Ethiopia, then on via Dalhousie to Bakloh, the Regimental centre where he was in charge of Sport and Education of new Gurkha recruits. He would remain in Bakloh until disbandment of the 4th/4th in April 1947 (just before Independence of India) and his return to England and to conclude his studies at Pembroke.



Tony Bowyer with a Gurkha soldier in Burma

Tony would be commended in the Regimental History of the 4th/4th Volume 3 for his part in the Battle of Waybonin in March 1945 where his much-admired Colonel Hamish Mackay declared that: 'It was a big responsibility, but Bowyer was made of good stuff and did well'. He was also commended for his ability to speak fluently to his men in both Urdu and Gurkhali.

After the war and the completion of his degree, Tony married fellow Wolverhampton girl Brenda Sutton in 1949. She had received his proposal of marriage from the jungle in Burma and had replied by telegram: "The Answer's Yes!". They honeymooned in Switzerland.

He then re-entered the world of Education: first at Repton School in 1949 then at Wrekin 1950 and Cheltenham College 1953 -1962 where he took an active part in the CCF, taking boys on 4 Nijmegen Marches and himself winning the Territorial Distinction Medal in 1964 for his service as second in Command of the 5th Gloucester Regiment since 1953.(Mentioned in Dispatches.)

He went on to become Headmaster of Oldbury Technical School at the young age of 39 in 1963 and later Highfields School, Wolverhampton in 1968 where he was awarded the Churchill Fellowship medal in Education in 1977 leading to lectureship tours and school exchange trips in America.

Tony led a fund-raising campaign that enabled him to successfully pursue his dream of opening a hostel and school for Gurkha orphans in Subathu, the new home of the Regiment and he was invited to lay the foundation stone there in 1982 and again visit for the final opening in 1987. It was a great honour for him.

Tony was also a fine actor, taking leading roles in plays at school, university and amongst the troops in the Far East. He was also a leading player at Oldbury Repertory Company from the 1960s to 1980s.

He was noted for his wonderful sense of humour and great mimicry skills; however, it was his enduring optimism and warmth which really stood out. He always encouraged those around him to aim that little bit higher. He was a born leader and always led by example.

After the death of Brenda in 1994, Tony finally retired to Scotland where he lived many happy years with his second wife Sheila, at their beloved home 'Mistletoe' near Dumfries. He died peacefully aged 95 on December 13th, 2019 and is survived by his widow Sheila, his son Mark, daughter Julie, grand-daughters Camilla and Lucy and great-grand-children Finley and Molly.

Major Kenneth Edward Nunn MBE 5GR (FF)



Kenneth was born 7 August 1921, Hampstead, London. His father worked as Departmental Manager (Cocktail bar!) at the Ritz Hotel, London.

Kenneth's father served in the Rifle Brigade and on retirement was Steward at the Border Club, Carlisle. and continued in hotel management. This resulted in the family moving to Carlisle, Wallingford, Haytor, Highcliffe-on-Sea, Torquay and finally Warminster. Kenneth started his first job in Bristol.

After the outbreak of war, Kenneth joined the University OTC and later the LDV (Home Guard) Mobile Machine Gun Platoon. He passed his Certificate 'A' and in 1941 took Certificate 'B'. When his "Call Up" came, Kenneth enlisted in the Royal Fusiliers but was placed on Class 2 Reserve until the Certificate 'B' results were known.

In autumn of 1941 it was confirmed that Kenneth had passed his Certificate 'B' which qualified him attend an Officer Training School.

Kenneth elected to go to the Indian Army and so was posted to the OTC at Bangalore. His choice was influenced partly because his best friend at the OTC was going there and his Godfather, Alf Dakin, had been in India as a tea planter.

In the November of 1941 Kenneth reported to Ramilles Barracks, Aldershot and on 5 December travelled by train and embarked on the SS Strathallen (a troop ship) bound for India. They sailed for India in a convoy of merchant and naval vessels. and were attacked at night by submarines and many ships were sunk. Christmas Day was spent in Freetown harbour and they rounded the Cape of Good Hope and docked in Durban for a few days shore leave in January 1942. They finally docked in Bombay on 29 January 1942.

He travelled by train from Bombay to Bangalore where we joined the OTC. The OTC in Bangalore contained several hundred potential officers. There were two companies (150 to 200 cadets) from our troopship - a mixture of regular NCOs from the pre-war army, Territorial, Regular and conscript NCO and a few, like Kenneth, from University, OTCs. In addition, there were cadets from the Indian Army (Sikhs, Dogras etc). They mixed in the same messes to eat and this helped Kenneth to learn a little about India. It was so hot that if you wished to play tennis the best time was 6 a.m. - before parades. There was a United Services Club (for officers) to which we became Honorary Members. Their curry lunches on Sunday were very popular!

The training was a mixture of lectures and field exercises. Unless a cadet committed some serious crime they were all commissioned. On 27 May 1942 Kenneth was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 5th Royal Gurkha Rifle.

The 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles (FF) was undergoing rapid expansion in 1942 and his first job was 'Assistant to the Assistant Adjutant' - an office job probably because he had office experience in 'civvy street'. A high priority was to learn Urdu and pass the 'Elementary Urdu Exam' without which war time officers could not be promoted to higher ranks (and get more pay!). At the same time, he had to learn Gurkhali as the Gurkha troops could not speak Urdu (or would not!).

In August 1942 Kenneth was on 'attachment' to the 4th Battalion, who were some 20 or 30 miles away. He had expressed a wish to join the 4th as his friend from Bristol, Pat Baytegh, was in the 4th. Unfortunately, he was away on a course at the time and on his 21st birthday he was among strangers and with very little money. He returned to the Centre and in November was formally posted to the 4th. But before joining had to attend a Management Course at Ambala in the Central

Province. There he learned the basics of the care of mules and horses (chargers).

He finally joined the 4th Battalion in Nowshera situated between Rawalpind and Peshawar.

Kenneth was appointed Animal Transport Officer; in charge of 52 mules and 9 chargers with 6 NCOs and 60 Riflemen under command. A fellow officer taught him to ride a charger with the help of the following:

*"Your head and your heart keep up
Your hands and your heels keep down
Your legs well into your horse's sides
Your elbows well into your own"*

Nowshera had an Officers' Club similar to others in India which he visited on weekends. Kenneth met his Brigade Major, John Masters, who after the war became a successful writer - Bowani Junction etc..

He recalls Pathans from the hills coming into the camps at night to steal weapons, clothing etc. and we had to double our sentries.

After a few months in Nowshera Kenneth moved to Chhindwara a jungle training camp in the Central Province. He was then moved from being the Animal Transport Officer to join A Company as a Company Officer under Thomas McBride. Shortly afterwards he selected to go on a Guerrilla Warfare Course at Sangor training school. Here he learned, among other things, how to use explosives (gun cotton, plastic high explosives etc.). On his way back to the battalion he met a Gurkha Officer at a rail junction, who greeted me as 'the New Quartermaster Sahib'! Kenneth explained that he had just been trained to go out on patrol using explosives. The Gurkha Officer explained that our Quartermaster, Oliver Kirby, had obtained a staff posting and that he had been appointed in his place.

After a few months in Chhindwara, where we trained in jungle warfare ready for active service in Burma, we moved again to a camp in Bengal, south of Calcutta. Here again we were engaged in further training and equipping for jungle warfare. Here, after swimming in a canal, I suffered further ear problems after riding on a motorbike afterwards. However, this did not show for several days when we were in Chittagong, a port on the east coast of Bengal. This time I was admitted to Chittagong hospital for a few days and on release joined the battalion in Dohagari by train. We then moved forward into the Arakan where we took up position at Tanjong Bajear on the Kalapanzi river.

Colonel Tim Hatton OBE (9 GR)



Tim entered Pangbourne from Bigshotte Preparatory School in 1939 (Charles Cust Exhibitioner). Left March 1943 to join the Indian Army Cadet Scheme.

He was Commissioned into 9th Gurkha Rifles from Officers' Training School Bangalore, India and joined 2/9th Gurkha Rifles, then 3/9th Gurkha Rifles. He saw active service in the Far East (Sourabaia, Java; Thailand; Sumatra and Malaya) concluding with the Partition of India in 1947. He escorted 100,000 non-militant Meo Muslims in strict purdah on foot across India into Pakistan across the most unfriendly territory. Tim retired in 1948 with rank of Captain.

Tim then joined HM Colonial Service in 1948 as prospective ADC to the High Commissioner of the Federated Malay States, who was killed shortly after in an air collision over Heathrow. He served in the Royal Malayan/Malaysian Police Service until 1967. He retired as Director of the Malaysian Special Branch having served throughout the two Malayan Emergencies (Communist Terrorism and Indonesian Confrontation).

Tim was awarded the MBE, OBE and Colonial Police Medal as well as various awards from the Malayan, Malaysian and Selangor State Governments (e.g. KMN, PJK, PKS, PJM). He returned to the UK for family reasons in 1967.

On return to the UK he took the Open Examination for entry into the Home Civil Service and was appointed Principle in HM Treasury. He also became Honorary Treasurer of the British Atlantic Committee, soon to become the Atlantic Council of NATO, of which Tim was appointed a member of the President's Advisory Committee.

He was elected Freeman of the City of London in 1978 and was for many years Chairman of the London Branch of the Voluntary Aided Schools Association and the Director of the United Westminster Schools Foundation and the Royal Foundation of Greycoat Hospital. Both included secondary schools in the state and independent sectors of education. In addition, he was Chairman for ten years of the Governing Body of an independent school; Committee Member of the Round Square Conference Group of Schools; a Governor of the Hellenic College of London for six years and was Vice-President of the English-Speaking Union, Salisbury Branch.

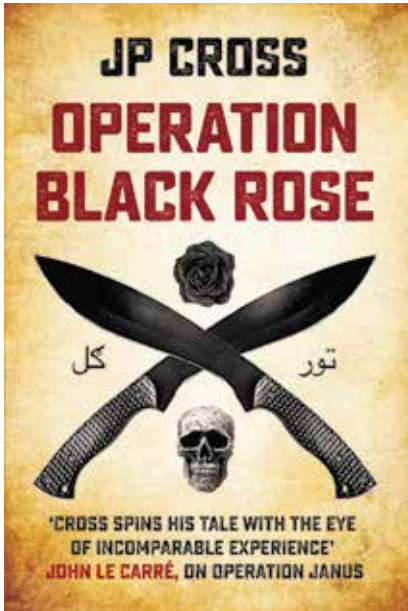
He received an award from HM King Constantine, the Hellenes Honorary Membership of the Round Square Association of Schools in recognition of outstanding service beyond expectation.

He has two sons from his first wife, the late Joanna Tarver; he and his second wife Sarah moved to Salisbury in 1994. Tim was a Salisbury Cathedral Guide and a Friend of the Salisbury Cathedral for eighteen years and much enjoyed helping foreign tourists, making their visit to the Cathedral more of a memorable occasion. He is a published author and wrote *Tock Tock Birds*, *A Spider in the Web of International Terrorism* and *The Man Who Moved A Cathedral*, published in the UK and Malaysia.

BOOK REVIEWS

Operation Black Rose By J P Cross

Reviewed by David Willis



Available from Monsoon Books, 2019, as paperback, ISBN 9781912049585 or eBooks, ISBN 9781912049592

There are not many novels set within the context of Gurkha service and fewer which expose some of the activities of the Indian National Army, the odious World War 2 creation of Subhas Chandra Bose. Lieutenant Colonel John Cross OBE has helped fill the gap with Operation Black Rose, a new story featuring his fictional character, Jason Rance of the Gurkhas. In chronological terms this is a prequel to those already published although the books in the series can be read in any order. It is written with his customary verve and sharp eye for period detail. Beneath the entertaining fictional topping are some surprising truths gleaned from his historical research, from the experiences of people John Cross knew personally or knew of, and from his own long military career with Gurkhas after being commissioned in 1944.

This tale begins in 1938 with a young Jason living in Malaya where his father works for British intelligence. Whilst war clouds gather in Europe there are burgeoning concerns in the Far East about Japanese ambitions and their links with Indian nationalists who are intent on subversive activities amongst the Indian population. Jason unwittingly crosses a group of young nationalist fanatics - the 'Tor Gul' gang, named after their leader who is scarred with a black rose-shaped birthmark - whose members have sworn to inflict violent retribution on the British in general, and Jason in particular, in the cause of independence for India. Sent home to England to complete his education, the story follows Jason's

subsequent adventures which take him back to India where he is commissioned into the 1st Gurkha Rifles and then to the war in Burma and the climactic and decisive confrontations with his enemies although the roles are now reversed and it is Rance who is the predator.

The Indian National Army, the putative military wing of the radical Indian independence movement, provides the central theme for the narrative as it is the focus of activities by the Tor Gul gang members once war breaks out. The story of the INA, faded in Western memory, remains alive in India with Dum Dum airport in Calcutta renamed in honour of Netaji ('Leader') Subhas Chandra Bose in 1995. This army was recruited firstly from Indian army officers and soldiers captured by the Germans in North Africa in 1941 and then from Indian prisoners of war of the Japanese following their successful campaign to capture Malaya and Singapore in 1942. Some men volunteered willingly, others were coerced into joining and a few signed up with a view to escaping later; but most remained loyal to their regimental oaths and refused to turn traitor whatever they might have thought about Indian independence. The author describes the true, shocking savagery of unsuccessful efforts by renegade Indians to force the survivors of one Gurkha battalion to change sides and it is humbling to read about the loyalty and courage of those who resisted and suffered or died for a matter of honour.

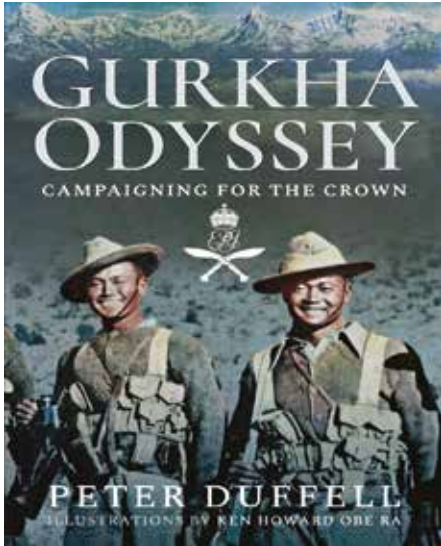
The action is narrated at pace and in a variety of settings. There is a tremendous cast list of players which includes the well know war leaders in addition to many junior real-life figures alongside the fictional characters. The prime minister of Nepal attempts an astonishing intervention, but no story spoiler here; and there is a super vignette of General 'Vinegar Joe' Stilwell, the American advisor to the Nationalist Chinese army in Burma, a man whose dislike of the British almost equalled that of the slippery, self-important Bose, who also makes an appearance. One of the attractions of the book is the insight into many aspects of wartime service: officer training at Dehra Dun; the role of the regimental centre; the unfriendliness of some older regulars towards new young officers ("temporary gentlemen"), the awfulness of a retreat in the face of a tactically superior enemy; the importance of signals intelligence - here, 'Magic' wireless intercepts, the American equivalent of 'Ultra' - and much more. John Cross's first-hand knowledge of operations in Burma, of Nepal and its language, and of Gurkhas at war shines through. And then there is shamanism, with a surprising plot twist.

Now in his tenth decade, Colonel Cross retains a remarkable acuity of mind in weaving together such interesting historical threads with the fictional plot and shows an enviable mental and physical stamina in the labour of writing. Long may he continue to entertain and inform.

Gurkha Odyssey Campaigning for the Crown By Peter Duffell

with some illustrations by Ken Howard OBE RA

Reviewed by The Times Literary Supplement



Imprint: Pen & Sword Books

Pages: 290, ISBN: 978 1 52673 057 2

Published: 19 October 2019, Hardback £25

Gurkhas

By Allan Mallinson

There is a story from the Second World War that epitomizes the relationship between British and Gurkha soldiers. Women of the voluntary services were ministering to troops during the Burma campaign. Some Gurkha riflemen joined the queue for the tea urn. One of the volunteers tried to direct them instead to the queue for fare more “appropriate” to Indian troops, whereupon a British soldier protested “No, miss; them’s not Indians. Them’s Gurkhas. Them’s us.

The diminutive hillmen of the old Kingdom of Gorkha, now Nepal, have faithfully served the crown since the Anglo-Nepalese war of 1816, but the British Army doesn’t retain them for sentimental reasons. They remain formidable, adaptable soldiers. In their time they have fought in jungle and desert, the trenches of the Western front, the Apennine mountains, the wind-swept moors of the Falklands, and most recently in Afghanistan. In 1965, Acting-Captain Peter Duffell, aged just twenty-five, won the Military Cross leading a company of the 2nd King Edward VII’s Own Gurkha Rifles (the Sirmoor Rifles) in Borneo. He describes his book as “a fragment of history - some footnotes from a military journey with the Gurkha soldier at its heart”.

It’s an inspiring journey, delightfully related, but a story not without its trials. Perhaps worst of these were the savage defence cuts at the end of the Cold War, when the then Lieutenant-General Sir Peter Duffell had to

struggle hard to save the Brigade of Gurkhas from the axe to both root and branch. Why should a single British regiment be reduced, a single British soldier made redundant, while “foreign mercenaries” were kept? The argument had force, except that it was the old fallacy of the excluded middle. Infantry recruiting in Britain was sticky and likely to get worse (demographics), whereas there was an almost inexhaustible supply of Gurkha volunteers. Such had been the reforms in Gurkha organisation and training too, driven in large part by Duffell, that individual companies could now reinforce British regiments with comparative ease. A compromise was reached: a reduction in numbers, but retention of the structure, including not just infantry but engineers, signals and logistics - a base for contingency expansion.

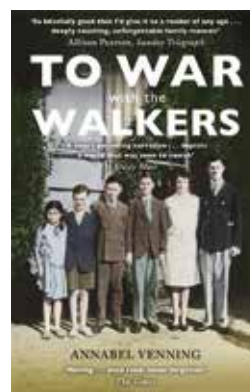
As I write, an extra Battalion of Gurkha infantrymen is being raised, and extra companies of Gurkha engineers, signals and logistics - the only true boost for today’s struggling British army. QED

There have been many books written about Gurkhas, but few with so deep an understanding of the cultural, historical and spiritual dimension, and none with so acute a view of the future.

TO WAR WITH THE WALKERS By Annabel Venning

Reviewed by Lieutenant General Sir Peter Duffell

*Three Soldiers, a War Bride, a Nurse and a Doctor:
One Family’s Extraordinary Story of the Second
World War.*



Published by Hodder & Stoughton 2019

ISBN 978 1 473 67930 6

Hardback 313 pages £20

Those who fought with the Gurkha soldier in Burma, or campaigned with him in Malaya or Borneo, will have known of General Sir Walter Walker. A ruthless commander on jungle operations he was as fearless in front of his superior officers as he was in the face of the enemy; those who served under his command

were in awe of his record and cautious in his formidable presence. For me, nearly sixty years on from my first interview with him, he remains an outstanding if at times a controversial General.

Of Walter's brothers and his sisters - Edward, Peter and Harold, Bee and Ruth, we knew little and would certainly not have had the temerity to ask. Now Annabel Venning, has revealed all in describing the stories of the six Walker siblings and their extraordinary adventures in the Second World War. In so doing she has turned a faded sepia photograph from the family album into a vivid set of colourful portraits that are gripping human citations and together form a remarkable social history.

Annabel Venning's military background has shaped her writing career. The daughter of a distinguished 2nd Gurkha who had the sense to marry Walter's elegant daughter she has a deep understanding of military culture. Further, she is a gifted writer and journalist as she demonstrated in her highly successful first book - *Following the Drum*. Her new offering is the result of a detailed exploration and research into the lives of her Grandfather's family that included a challenging battlefield tour in Burma; her narrative is affectionate, lucid and objective, sympathetic to occasional human frailties but never sentimental.

Between the wars the six Walker children grew up in solid middle-class surroundings and schooling in the West country - a disciplined family life that more than anything, was to prepare them for the challenges that were to come as the Second World War beckoned.

Edward and Walter were both graduates from Sandhurst and each had a distinguished war – Edward commanded the 1st Jaipur Infantry and won the DSO in Italy while his audacious and hugely disciplined Walter was similarly rewarded in Burma. A third brother, happy-go-lucky Peter, also went to India but as a tea-planter in Assam, and only volunteered for military service on the outbreak of war. His dramatic tale of fighting with 1/8th Punjabis in Malaya, the humiliation of the Singapore surrender and his harrowing experiences as a Japanese prisoner of war with the awful mental and physical scars that remained are painful to read.

Two further siblings, Harold and Ruth were both in St. Thomas's as medical student and nurse at the height of the Blitz and while dealing with victims were themselves lucky to escape with their lives as their hospital and quarters were bombed. We follow their wartime adventures as Ruth eventually nurses in wartime Cairo and Harold recovers from injuries to qualify as a surgeon and become a distinguished consultant.

Finally, there is Bee, the eldest sister, the Norman Hartnell model with her stunning good looks, many suitors and romantic adventures who managed to retain a wealthy and occasionally racy lifestyle through widowhood and remarriage right to the end.

Annabel Venning brings a great cast of siblings vividly to life and portrays not only their wartimes adventures with all their gallantry and distress but also the whole raft of family fortunes and relationships before and after that searing experience. She shapes her narrative with great skill and if the brothers and sisters all luckily survived the dangers of war, then surely, they deserved their luck. I knew that Walter was an extraordinary man - but as this engaging book reveals, so in their different ways were all the Walkers.

