

MEDALS AND MEMORIES MINUTES



Tul Bahadur Pun

In Mogaung, Burma 65 years ago, a young Rifleman seized a Bren gun and started firing from the hip as he charged a heavily bunkered Japanese position. Rifleman Tal Bahadur Pun was the last man standing of his platoon from the 6th Gurkha Rifles as the sun came up behind him. He and two other men had made it 510 meters but there were 27 meters over open ground, deep mud, shell holes and fallen trees to go. Against all odds, the 21 year old Rifleman, a clear target for the enemy, took the bunker and provided the covering fire that allowed the remainder of his platoon to reach their objective, a railway bridge. Pun received the Victoria Cross for valour during his World War II service for the British Army. Today, Pun is still firing from the hip and again almost the last man standing as he fights the British Government for veteran Gurkha pension and settlement rights. The much decorated soldier who attended Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1953 and had tea with the Queen mother won his own battle to settle in the U.K. in 2007 after much publicity surrounding his case. However, Rifleman Pun has not stopped fighting as there are still 27 meters to go and he hopes to achieve his objective once again—equality for Gurkha veterans.