

## **A vignette history of India's 6 Division**

v. 1.0 April 23, 2012

*Mandeep S. Bajwa and Ravi Rikhya*

6 Mountain Division is unique in the Indian Army because it has been raised four times in sixty years. As the 6 (Poona) Division it originally raised in 1903, and came to a sad end in 1916 when it surrendered to the Turkish Army at Kut, in modern Iraq. Raised again in 1920 for Iraq duty, it was disbanded a second time. In 1941 it was reraised and spent the war with 10<sup>th</sup> Army (Persia/Iraq) and disbanded in 1944.

In its modern incarnation, it was raised March 26, 1963 at Nanital, Uttar Pradesh, one of ten mountain divisions raised/authorized because of the Sino-Indian War 1962. Later it shifted to Bareilly, where it remains to this day. It was assigned to protect the mountain districts of the state, which later became the separate state of Uttarakhand.

The division was given 99 (Independent) Brigade which had returned from the Congo. The newly raised 9 and 69 Brigades were also assigned.

Even before it was fully ready for action, 6 Division began its role as the Army's fire brigade. In 1965 it was assigned to HQ I Corps (Sialkot sector, 1 Armored, 14 and 26 Infantry Divisions). In 1971 it fought as part of XXXIII Corps in Northwest East Pakistan/Bangladesh. In 1986, in a remarkable rapid airlift, it was flown into Leh for Operation Trident, which was aborted. In 1990-91 it went to Jullunder District for the Punjab counterinsurgency. In all cases one brigade was left to guard against China. In 2002, the division went to Ladakh for Operation Parakram, which was also aborted.

In 1990 the division formally became what it had been all along for the past 25 years, an Army HQ Reserve. 9 Brigade was made independent, and in exchange the division gained a brigade from the overstrength 8 Mountain Division.

### 1965 Orbat

GOC Maj.-General S.K. Korla

*9<sup>th</sup> Brigade* (remained in Central Sector)

*69<sup>th</sup> Mountain Brigade* [Brigadier Eric Vas]

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Madras
- 4<sup>th</sup> Madras [Lt. Col. H.L. Mehta, KIA]
- 9<sup>th</sup> Kumaon

*99<sup>th</sup> Mountain Brigade*

- 4<sup>th</sup> Rajputana Rifles
- 6<sup>th</sup> Garhwal
- 2/5<sup>th</sup> Gorkha Rifles (Frontier Force)

*6<sup>th</sup> Mountain Artillery Brigade* (divisional artillery)

### 1971 Orbat (Partial)

GOC Maj.-Gen. PC Reddy

Division arrived from Central Command . It left 99<sup>th</sup> Brigade behind. Division was to be used only if needed, because it was also covering for 20<sup>th</sup> Division on the Bhutan-Tibet border. The division was really a spare HQ.

*9<sup>th</sup> Mountain Brigade [Brig. T.J. Verma]* (remained behind in Central Sector)

- 5<sup>th</sup> Grenadiers
- 12<sup>th</sup> Garhwal

*69<sup>th</sup> Mountain Brigade [Brig. G.S. Sharma]* under command 20<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division

- 5<sup>th</sup> Garhwal