GURKHA MEMORIAL PARK DHARAN



The Main Entrance the Arena

The Gurkha Memorial Park is located north west of Dharan bazaar. It nestles on a verdant 600-meter-high 'Machha Mara Danda' about 4 km from 'Mangalbare'. A small river, Sardu Khola, has to be crossed to get there. The local governing body has already sanctioned construction of a bridge over Sardu Khola as well as a motorable road up to the park. This may take 4 years to be fully completed. For now, there is a rough unpitched road suitable for 4-wheel drive vehicles and cars with high ground clearance that leads up to the park.

Although the idea of establishing a memorial park was brought up by GAESO in 2007, it never got off the ground. Ten years later, in 2017, a committee of 11 members, comprising of retired Gurkha Officers and all ranks and members of the Gurkha Contingent Singapore Police Force (GCSPF), was formed to take up the task under the chairmanship of Captain Hari Bahadur Limbu 10 GR. *This committee is an independent body and is not affiliated to any organization political or otherwise*. All members are unpaid volunteers residing in Dharan.

The aim of the Gurkha Memorial Park is to preserve the legacy of Brigade of Gurkhas in Dharan for posterity before it is forgotten and lost forever. Historically, Dharan hosted the Brigade of Gurkhas recruiting depot for Eastern Nepal from 1960 until its closure in 1989. (I, too, had passed through its hallowed gates in 1973). It is also the place where a large number of former Brigade personnel, mostly from Eastern Nepal, chose to settle on retirement. Today, Dharan has transformed from a sleepy town on the way to Dhankuta to a bustling and vibrant mini city with a teaching hospital located in the former British Gurkha Camp area.

The Gurkha Memorial Park covers an area of more than 12 bighas and was acquired from donations and contributions from serving and retired members of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Currently construction at the main focal point of the park, located at the highest point, is in full swing. When completed, visitors on entering the main gate, under a massive 'Victoria Cross', will be greeted by statues of two soldiers in No. 2 Dress uniform before walking on a bridge over a small artificial pond and arriving at the main square. In the main square, there is a gigantic statue of a charging Gurkha soldier from WW II carrying a rifle in one



Ayo Gorkhali



Main Entrance to Memorial Park

hand and a 'khukuri' in the other, raised to strike the unseen enemy. The statue sits atop a large plinth which in due time will feature the Gurkha 'motto' and 'ethos':

- 'Better to Die than be a Coward'
- 'When you go home, tell your family, we gave our today for your better tomorrow'
- 'If a man says he is not afraid, he is either lying or a 'Gurkha'

High on the wall, behind the statue, there will be a gallery with 13 slots honouring the 13 Gurkha Victoria Cross recipients. Recently it was suggested a further 13 places be allocated for 13 'none – Gurkha VC recipients' (for those who were attached to Gurkha units when they were awarded the VC). Lieutenant General P T C Pearson late 10 GR has kindly volunteered to seek funds for this additional task. All work in the park is financed by donations and grants from individuals and the Gurkha Brigade Association UK.

In order to be self-reliant and start generating funds for the upkeep at the earliest date, work will be carried out in two phases. In the first phase, the following have been identified for immediate action:

Phase 1:

- Memorial Park (under construction)
- Car parks with a separate path for disabled visitors
- Canteen for food/drinks/refreshments for visitors
- Picnic area

Work on the following additional features will be carried out in the second phase:



The Main Arena

Phase 2:

Perimeter fencing
the park is bordered by other private properties

Open auditorium – for use by Regimental Associations and the public

Heli pad – for VIP visitors and emergency

• Dharan view tower – a panoramic view of Dharan can be seen from here

Para gliding launch spot – a temporary launch spot already exists and in use

Children's park
for children's activities

Picnic area – offering amenities for self-catering and feeding

Accommodation huts
for those wishing to spend time up on the hill away from the hustle and bustle of urban life

Botanical garden – will feature local flora

• Camping sites - for leisurely activities and for those starting off on trek

• Gurkha Museum - GBA (UK) has been approached for funding and running the museum

Committee members are also looking at offering trekking services with routes of various lengths, durations and difficulty commencing from the park area.

For potential donors/sponsors, the committee offers them a range of projects to choose from and once it is agreed, donors are fully responsible for the execution of the project until completion. Committee members will also be frequently involved overseeing the project. So far, the following ex Gurkha personnel have contributed towards the making of the Memorial Park:

Main gate at the entry point
Major Balbahadur Tamang MVO MM 10 GR

Gate to the auditorium WO2 Birendra Subba QGS



Construction in progress - Main Arena

Pond and the bridge crossing
Lt Haribahadur Limbu 10 GR,

21161407 WO2 Tikaram Rai 10 GR

21161413 WO2 Badabir Rai 10 GR,

21161451 Sgt Harkaraj Rai QGE

21161446 Cpl Suryadhan Rai QGE

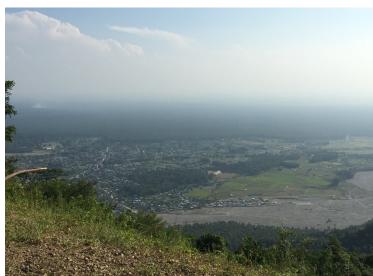
Two shed/resting places Sgt Narbahadur Thapa 7 GR

LCpl Danbahadur Rai 10 GR.

Sgt Ramesh Rai QGS



The Memorial Park when completed



View from the Top

The Gurkha Brigade Association (GBA UK) has agreed to contribute £ 330.00 for every former and current Units of the Brigade including the GCSPF. All Regimental Associations, through the Brigade HQ, have submitted their respective regimental history, made up of 1,300 characters, to be engraved on stone tablets for display at central arena. Finally, to foster a closer link with and gain recognition from other similar organizations, GBA (UK) has been requested for association link with the Brigade of Gurkhas Museum in Winchester, England as well as with the Gurkha Museum in Pokhara.

Anyone wishing to contribute towards the construction of Gurkha Memorial Park may contact Captain Hari Bahadur Limbu by phone +977 9846047507 or by email: hari52limbu@hotmail.com.

Article by: Major (Rtd) Lalit Chandra Dewan MBE 6GR