

Rezang La Pass, Location, History, Battle & Significance

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Rezang La Pass is a high-altitude mountain pass in the **Ladakh** region of India, located near the **Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China**. It is known for its **strategic importance** as well as its place in Indian military history. Surrounded by rugged mountains and harsh weather conditions, the pass has become a symbol of **courage, sacrifice and national pride**, making it an important topic from both geographical and historical perspectives.

Rezang La Pass Location and Geographical Features

- **Rezang La** is a high-altitude mountain pass in the **Chushul sector of Ladakh**, close to the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** between India and China.
- Located at around **5,200 metres (17,000 feet)** above sea level, the pass has **thin air, low oxygen levels and extremely cold weather**, making the region difficult for both travel and military operations.
- The area has a **dry, rocky and barren landscape**, typical of Ladakh's cold desert. Severe winters and heavy snowfall can make the region difficult to access for several months.
- Rezang La lies near **Pangong Tso and Spanggur Lake** and forms part of the strategically important **Chushul Valley**. Its high ridges provide a commanding view of the surrounding terrain.

Rezang La Pass Historical and Strategic Significance

- Rezang La became an important part of Indian military history after the **Battle of Rezang La on 18 November 1962** during the **Sino-Indian War**.
- The pass was strategically important for the **defence of Chushul**, as control over the surrounding heights helped prevent an enemy advance into the region.
- Its location near the **Chushul airfield** further increased its military importance, as the airfield was an important logistical and operational facility.
- The **high altitude, harsh climate and difficult terrain** made Rezang La a challenging military position, but these same geographical features also provided defensive advantages.
- The Chushul sector continues to hold strategic importance because of its proximity to the **India-China border and the LAC**.

Rezang La Battle 1962 and the Valour of Indian Soldiers

- The **Battle of Rezang La** was fought on **18 November 1962**, when Chinese forces attacked the Indian position defended by **C Company of the 13 Kumaon Regiment**, led by **Major Shaitan Singh**.
- Around **120 Indian soldiers** faced a much larger attacking force. Despite being heavily outnumbered, the troops continued to defend their position under extremely difficult conditions.
- The soldiers fought in **freezing temperatures and at very high altitude**, while dealing with limited supplies, ammunition and difficult terrain.
- The troops displayed remarkable **courage, discipline and determination**, with many fighting until their last breath while defending the post.
- **Major Shaitan Singh** showed exceptional leadership during the battle and was awarded the **Param Vir Chakra posthumously** for his bravery.
- The Battle of Rezang La remains one of the **most memorable episodes of the 1962 war**, symbolising the courage and sacrifice of Indian soldiers in defending the country's borders.

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/rezang-la-pass/>

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