



RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
RAJYA SABHA

*Respected Rajnath Singhji*

18 October 2019

**SUB: Request from the family of Braveheart Major Akshay Girish to withdraw Mention-In-Despatches**

I write to you regarding a request made by the family of Braveheart Major Akshay Girish for withdrawal of Mention-In-Despatches awarded to him. As you may be aware, Major Girish made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty fighting terrorists in the Nagrota terror attack on 29 November 2016.

Major Girish's family has for the past two years, written to the former Raksha Mantri and Army Headquarter multiple times that the award of a Mention-In-Despatches is an "unprecedented dilution" of Shaurya Chakra which he was recommended for after the incident at Nagrota.

This is an issue that I have pursued for a long time and I am enclosing correspondence of Major Girish's family on the same. Although a review committee to look into the "supreme sacrifice of Major Girish" was constituted by the then Raksha Mantri Smt. Nirmla Sitharaman in January 2019 after receiving representation from the family, however, I understand that the Army Headquarters (MS Branch) in a letter dated 27 December 2018 itself had already conveyed to the family that review of the award to Major Girish "is not warranted".

Major Girish's family is now requesting your intervention that the Mention-In-Despatches be withdrawn as they feel it is a "dishonour to Major Girish's courage, valour, and sacrifice in saving many precious lives and defending the Nation".



As an MP who is available to veterans and families of our soldiers to help facilitate their communication with the government, I am forwarding Major Girish's family's request to you for your kind consideration.

I would also request you to kindly invite Braveheart Major Akshay Girish's family and meet them.

Sincerely,

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

**Shri Rajnath Singh**  
Hon'ble Minister of Defence  
Government of India  
New Delhi

Enclosed:

- 1: Letter to RM from Major Girish's family dated 21 September 2019
- 2: Letter to Military Secretary from Major Girish's family dated 20 September 2019

To,  
Shri Rajnath Singh  
Honourable Raksha Mantri  
Government of India

21<sup>st</sup> September 2019

Respected Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh Ji,

**Issue of Denial Of Justice and Deserved Honour to Martyred Major Akshay  
Girish**

1. Further to my letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019, I once again seek to draw your attention to the issue of justice and honour to my martyred son Major Akshay Girish that has remained unresolved for over 2 years:

- Major Akshay Girish of 51 Engineer Regiment effectively leading the QRT against the Jaish e Mohammed terror attack in Nagrota on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016 fought courageously for hours to save many lives including women, children and men trapped by the terrorists, before valiantly making the supreme sacrifice. Recommended for Sharya Chakra by all senior officers in the Chain of Command, his name featured under 'Mention in Despatches' (MID) on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2017.
- Shocked and anguished at this unprecedented dilution despite conspicuous gallantry and selfless devotion to duty to save lives and defend the nation, review of award was immediately sought and duly escalated to Hon. Raksha Mantri for resolution. Former Raksha Mantri Smt N Sitharaman met us twice on this issue and on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018, in presence of COAS Gen Bipin Rawat, she suggested a review of gallantry award to my son Major Akshay Girish with civilian and military members being part of a Review Committee.
- On 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019, Hon RM gave a public reassurance of review saying 'a Committee has been constituted to look into the supreme sacrifice of Major Akshay Girish' and invited me to depose and assist the Committee. (Attached)
- The same afternoon of 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019, I deposed before a 3-member army inquiry presided over by Major General Suresh Menon and handed over documents in support of our representation for review of award to Akshay. No civilian members were part of the inquiry. My statement was not taken in writing. I was told that they were reviewing the response of the QRT which was led by my son to counter the terror attack on Nagrota Cantonment and the circumstances of his supreme sacrifice. They had called all members of the QRT and other senior army officers to depose on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> January 2019.
- The army inquiry thus convened between 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> January 2019. Next two and half months, no information was conveyed to us despite repeated reminders to Former RM.



- On the night on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019, an army officer came to our home unannounced and told us to go through the report of the army inquiry. No copy of report nor any letter was given to us.
- The report which we quickly perused clearly brought out the leadership, courage and valour of Major Akshay through statements of team members. Major Akshay effectively deployed the QRT to pin down the terrorists to one location, prevented their escape and fought fearlessly for over 2 and half hours. As families were trapped inside the building, unmindful of his own safety, he entered the building, and engaged a terrorist hiding inside a room in a gunfight. He was hit by multiple bullets followed by a grenade launched at him by a UBGL. How long he lay injured is not clear. He was not evacuated and his body was recovered late evening. The report had no reference to the award or its dilution and important documents I had submitted were not part of the report.
- On 30 March 2019, ADGPI put out a public tweet saying 'fresh examination of the operation has been conducted by the martyr has been carried out and outcome has been perused by the parents of late Major Akshay Girish'. (Attached)
- As the issue of review of award remained unresolved, after General Elections and Government formation, I wrote to you as our new Raksha Mantri, on June 17<sup>th</sup> 2019, requesting your intervention and a meeting. (Attached)
- While awaiting a response, to our shock and surprise, on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019, we received two letters from the MS branch. A letter dated 9 Sept 2019 along with another letter dated 27 Dec 2018 that refer to our requests for justice to Major Akshay. (Attached)
- The letter of 27 Dec 2018 specifically states that based on a representation made to Hon RM on 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 2018 (Attached) for appropriate honour to martyr Maj Akshay, a committee was constituted at an appropriate level to investigate the actions in Nagrota and that the Mention in Despatches (MID) to Akshay remains unchanged.
- When the Army Inquiry was convened on 3rd January 2019 to review the counter terror response of the QRT and the circumstances of Major Akshay Girish's supreme sacrifice, how was the decision to retain the MID taken on 27<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018?! Why were we, a family already in deep anguish, given false assurances that an unbiased Review Committee with civilian members and army personnel would review and resolve the issue of deserved gallantry award to Akshay? (Reply to MS Branch on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019 is attached).
- I would like to point out that our efforts for review of award to Major Akshay Girish have constantly been supported by his Unit, Regiment

and the Corps of Engineers as all believe he has not been given due recognition and honour. (Attached)

- Also, the status of two grievances registered as PMOPG/E/2018/0191511 & PMOPG/D/2019/0123197 that remain 'under process' since April 2018 and April 2019 respectively have still not been redressed.

2. After 2 years of efforts and hope, our faith in the fairness of the system of awarding Gallantry Awards has been shattered by the arbitrary manner in which justice to our soldier son is being denied.
3. Our stand has been consistent on not accepting the MID for Akshay as this unprecedented dilution of Shaurya Chakra he was recommended for to a mention defined as 'not gallant enough for gallantry award' is a dishonour to his courage, valour and sacrifice in saving many precious lives and defending the nation.
4. In the hope that justice and due honour to a martyred soldier matters to our government led by most respected PM Shri Narendra Modi Ji, please grant a meeting to ascertain the facts and resolve this issue which not only continues to cause great anguish to family, regiment and concerned citizens, but has also shaken people's faith in the system of gallantry awards.

Thank You.

Regards and Jai Hind.



Meghna Girish

(mother of martyred Major Akshay Girish)

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Mrs Meghna Girish

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Sadahalli, Bengaluru-562110

20 Sep 2019

The Military Secretary

MS Branch, Integrated HQ, MOD ( Army)

New Delhi - 110011

**Justice & Honour for Martyred Major Akshay Girish**

Dear Sir,

Further to Hon Raksha Mantri's public reassurances on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 that a Committee had been constituted to review the issue of justice to martyred Major Akshay Girish , I , Meghna Girish was called to Delhi to depose and assist the Committee. On the afternoon of 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019, I deposed before an Army Inquiry presided over by Maj. Gen. Suresh Menon and also submitted documents to support our representation for review of award to Akshay.

It is with shock and surprise that we now receive these letters from Jt Dir/ MS (X) , dated 9 Sept 2019 and 27 Dec 2018. The letter of 27 Dec 2018 specifically states that based on a representation made to Hon Raksha Mantri on 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 2018 for appropriate honour to martyr Maj Akshay Girish , a Committee was constituted at an appropriate level to investigate the actions in Nagrota and that the MID to Akshay remains unchanged.

When the Army Inquiry was convened on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 to review the counter terror response of the QRT and the circumstances of Major Akshay Girish's supreme sacrifice, how was the decision to retain the MID taken on 27<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018 ?! Why were we, a family already in deep anguish, given false assurances that an unbiased Review Committee with civilian members and army personnel would review and resolve the issue of deserved gallantry award to Akshay?

The review was sought because an officer recommended for gallantry award of Shaurya Chakra along the Chain of Command was named MID (Posthumous) in the final list - an unprecedented dilution of award, without parity, for similar actions and outcomes.

In not taking corrective action to honour a soldier officer who effectively led the QRT, fought long and hard to save women, children and men from Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists in a hostage situation and made the supreme sacrifice defending the nation, it is obvious that the system has once again failed Akshay.

Major Akshay Girish needs no award. After 2 years of efforts and hope, our faith in the fairness of the system of awarding Gallantry Awards has been shattered. Our stand has been consistent on not accepting the MID for Akshay. Please do not insult Major Akshay Girish's

courage, valour and sacrifice any further. Please specify a date for the MID to be officially withdrawn vide Gazette Notification with his name erased from the list of MID.

Thank you.

Jai Hind



Meghna Girish



Wg Cdr Girish Kumar(Retd)



Sangeeta Ravindran

Copy To;

1. Hon Raksha Mantri , Govt of India
2. Defence Secretary , MoD , Govt of India
3. COAS , Integrated HQ, MoD ( Army)
4. Adjutant General, Integrated HQ, MoD ( Army)
5. E-in-C , Integrated HQ, MoD ( Army)