

 Sapper Ishwor Gurung was born in Pokhara, Nepal on 15 October 1988. Having passed selection for the Brigade of Gurkhas in Pokhara on 14 December 2007, he went on to complete initial infantry training in Catterick, North Yorkshire and Combat Engineer training at the Royal School of Military Engineering in Minley. He was subsequently posted to 69 Gurkha Field Squadron, part of 36 Engineer Regiment in Maidstone Kent and trained as a Bricklayer and Concreter.

Sapper Ishwor spent the last year preparing for this, his first operational tour. This included a large scale construction exercise in Devon and mission specific training in Ripon North Yorkshire. He excelled throughout these activities, proving not only his burgeoning professional knowledge but his keen desire to deploy on operations in Afghanistan. He was an outstanding sportsman and had represented 36 Engineer Regiment in Divisional cross country competitions and boxed for his Squadron.

Sapper Ishwor had been working with his Troop in support of 2nd Battalion Duke of Lancaster's Battle Group, Combined Force Nad-e-Ali (North), improving the defences at Forward Operating Base SHAHZAD. On 13 August 2010, whilst constructing a new sangar to increase the protection and security to the soldiers in the camp, his Troop came under insurgent attack and Sapper Ishwor was shot by insurgent fire. Despite the best efforts of his Troop to save his life, Sapper Ishwor was killed in action.

The family of Sapper Ishwor Gurung have made the following statement: "Our family is devastated with the news of Ishwor's death in Afghanistan on 13 Aug 10. Ishwor was 14 years old when his father died and he fully supported the family as a young man. He was a very caring and a very bright boy. He followed his father's footsteps, his father was a soldier in the Indian Army. He loved the army and was very proud to be a Gurkha. I am proud that my son served in the British Army and that he died doing a job that he loved."

Lieutenant Colonel Bobby Walton-Knight Royal Engineers, Commanding Officer 21 Engineer Regiment Group said: "Sapper Ishwor Gurung was an exceptionally good soldier. He was enormously proud to be a Queen's Gurkha Engineer, he loved his Squadron and, like every Gurkha Engineer, he loved soldiering. Sapper Ishwor had bags of energy and his motivation never faulted. Even after the longest of days, on the most demanding tasks in the toughest of conditions, he would have a huge smile on his face and be ready for more. His enthusiasm was infectious and his friends loved him for it. He was modest to a fault, polite and, even when covered in dust and mud, still managed to be immaculately turned out. He was exceptionally fit, almost unbeatable at cross country and unstoppable in the boxing ring. Although he was still young, his potential had already been spotted and it would not have been long before he made it as a non-commissioned officer."

Sapper Ishwor died putting his own life in danger to provide protection for others. He was doing a job he loved and was surrounded by friends. It was an honour to have him with the Regiment; his death is an enormous loss to us all and in particular to The Queen's Gurkha Engineers. Our thoughts and prayers are with his mother Sunkumari, brother Ramprasad and sister Richa in Nepal, his wider family and his many friends."

Lieutenant Colonel Simon Hulme MBE Royal Engineers, Commanding Officer 36 Engineer Regiment said: "The loss of Sapper Ishwor Gurung has dealt a heavy blow to all ranks of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers. He was immensely talented as a soldier, a sportsman and an individual. Sapper Ishwor set the example for his comrades to follow. Sapper Ishwor had a bright future ahead of him, his dedication and his ability to focus and apply his efforts in even the most difficult circumstances marked him out above his peers. His bright and enigmatic

smile brought cheer to even the most difficult of situations. He was active in all that he did, thoughtful for those around him and incredibly loyal. His service within the Queen's Gurkha Engineers, although short, will never be forgotten; he has left his mark on all that he did and on all those that he met. He will be sadly missed. Our thoughts are with his mother and family at this difficult time.

Major Ian Moore Royal Engineers, Officer Commanding 69 Gurkha Field Squadron said: "Sapper Ishwor Gurung was an outstanding young soldier. Having breezed through the rigorous Gurkha selection process, he elected to join the Queen's Gurkha Engineers and trained as a Combat Engineer and Bricklayer. He passed every course with distinction and soon established himself as an exceptionally bright and dependable young man. On joining 69 Gurkha Field Squadron in Maidstone, his strong team ethics and desire to learn soon brought praise and plaudit from his commanders and gurus. In particular his willingness to take on any task or challenge was notable and outstripped his relative inexperience. Although this was his first operational tour, he thrived in the austere conditions and revelled in the long hard days. With the energy, drive and enthusiasm he imparted, you would have thought he was a veteran of many tours.

Sapper Ishwor had an exceptionally amiable character, a beaming smile and was always ready to share a joke. His selflessness and loyalty to his numberies and the Queen's Gurkha Engineers was unquestionable and he was always the first to offer assistance to those around him. He was the archetypal Gurkha; always well turned out, unbelievably polite and modest to the core. That said, he was never afraid to ask questions and he readily engaged me when he felt the need. My last meeting with him was a typical example of this, as we sat late into the evening talking about his plans for post tour leave in Nepal and what the Squadron would do on its return to the UK.

Sapper Ishwor got involved in everything, whether it was an arduous engineering task or dressing up to celebrate a Nepalese festival. He was exceptionally fit, an outstanding cross country runner and despite his small size, one of the most courageous and tenacious boxers I ever have seen. He was a pleasure to have under my command and was without doubt the sort of soldier every commander wishes for. He had a very bright future ahead of him and would have undoubtedly made an excellent non commissioned officer. His sudden departure has left a hole in our close knit team and we will all miss him greatly. We will redouble our efforts, finish our task and leave a legacy to honour his name.

Whilst his family is far away in Nepal, they are close in our thoughts. Ramro sutnu hos Ishwor bhai. Hami na birsane chaun. (Sleep well young brother we won't forget you.)

Warrant Officer Class 2 Bishwa Bahadur Rai Queen's Gurkha Engineers, Squadron Sergeant Major, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron said: "Although I had known Sapper Ishwor for only a short period of time, he has left an everlasting impression with me. I came to know him very well when I visited his Troop in Patrol Base SHAHZAD three weeks ago. As ever, always cheerful, professional and very hardworking he was a typical Gurkha Sapper. Despite being very young he had the confidence and ability of a much more experienced soldier. Sadly he is no longer with us but will be greatly missed by all the members of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers and the wider Brigade of Gurkhas. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Jai QGE!"

Captain Yambahadur Pun Queen's Gurkha Engineers, Troop Commander, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron said: "Sapper Ishwor was fiercely brave and unswervingly loyal. He was a true Gurkha soldier. He was very professional, extremely likable and, above all, exceptionally helpful. He had a bright future ahead of him and was always keen to learn. He threw himself whole heartedly into everything he did and his zest for life and enthusiasm was an inspiration to all those around

him. ♦ He was without doubt full of life and character. ♦ Sapper Ishwor was a loving family man. ♦ He kept in good contact with his extended family in Nepal and could not wait to see them after the tour. ♦ His passing leaves a void in our lives and we will always have fond memories of him. ♦ He will never be forgotten. ♦ My deepest sympathy and thoughts go to his family, relatives and friends." ♦ Staff Sergeant Bikash Rai, Troop Staff Sergeant, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron said: ♦ "Sapper Ishwor was one of the most hardworking and popular member in the Troop. ♦ He was always proud and loved the job what he was doing. ♦ I will miss him for sure and he will remain in our thoughts forever. " ♦ Corporal Suryabhadur Tumbahangphe, Section Commander, 69 Gurkha Field Squadron said: ♦ "Sapper Ishwor was an extremely loyal and cheerful person. He was the most proactive Sapper who always volunteered and was never afraid to put his life before that of the other members of the Section. I have truly loved him since he was a recruit in training. ♦ He will be sadly missed and he will remain in our hearts forever." ♦ Other Sappers in 69 Gurkha Field Squadron paid tribute to Sapper Ishwor Gurung: ♦ "Ishwor Gurung, our intimate friend and comrade was extremely brave and ambitious. ♦ He always created a cheerful environment and kept our spirits up when we were tired and thirsty. ♦ We joined the Brigade of Gurkhas together three years ago but had never expected this moment. ♦ He will always remain in our hearts and never be forgotten. ♦ Sapper Ishwor was a very good friend and an excellent soldier. ♦ He was very famous amongst his peers and exceptionally friendly with everyone. ♦ He was a fun loving, helpful, kind hearted and reliable person. ♦ Unfortunately he has left us while doing his duty and it is hard to believe we will not see him again. ♦ He will be missed by all in 'Intake 08' and 'Training Party 62'. ♦ He will always be in our hearts and minds. ♦ We will remember you. ♦ Rest in Peace Sapper Ishwor." </p></div>

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