

Chronology of Events – Malaya

1939

12th September 1939 Force 'Emu', comprising the 12th Indian Infantry Brigade, arrives in Singapore. It remained an independent formation under Malaya Command.

1940

26th October 1940 8th Indian Infantry Brigade arrives in Malaya.

October – November 1940 The 6th and 8th Indian Infantry Brigades arrive in Malaya.

November 1940 Headquarters, 11th Indian Infantry Division arrives in Malaya and assumes command of the 6th and 8th Indian Infantry Brigades. GOC 11th Indian Infantry Division is Major General MURRAY-LYON.

1941

February 1941 1st Bn. The Leicestershire Regiment arrives in Malaya and relieves the Seaforth Highlanders.

February 1941 Headquarters 8th Australian Infantry Division and 22nd Australian Infantry Brigade arrive in Malaya.

March 1941 15th Indian Infantry Brigade arrives.

March 1941 Four Indian States battalions arrive. The Hyderabad Bn. is sent to Kelatan, the Mysore to Jahore and the Jind and Kapurthala to Singapore.

April 1941 22nd Indian Infantry Brigade arrives, and the 9th Indian Infantry Division is formed.

16th May 1941 Lieutenant General PERCIVAL assumes command of Malaya Command.

June 1941 Headquarters, III Indian Corps opens in Malaya under the command of Lieutenant General HEATH.

8th December 1941 Japanese troops land at Kota Bharu in north eastern Malaya, and at two locations in southern Thailand.

- 10th December 1941 H.M.S. Repulse and H.M.S. Prince of Wales sunk by Japanese aerial attack off the eastern coast of Malaya.
- 21.00 hours Japanese troops run into the ambush laid by 1st/14th Punjab Regiment near Changlun.
- 11th December 1941 Fighting starts at the main Jitra position as enemy troops attempt to force their way through the area held by the 1st Leicestershires and 2nd/9th Jat Regiment. Initial attacks are repulsed.
- 19.00 hours Japanese troops overrun the positions held by 2nd/2nd Gurkha Rifles at Asun.
- 12th December 1941 Units from 11th Indian Division commence withdrawing from the Jitra position.
- 13th December 1941 12th Indian Infantry Brigade moves to Ipoh in northern Malaya and comes under command of III Indian Corps.
- 17th December 1941 Penang evacuated.
- 30th December 1941 Japanese troops reach the Allied positions at Kampar held by the 11th Indian Division.
- 1942**
- 1st January 1942 Main Japanese attack starts against defences held by the British Battalion. Attacks are repulsed.
- 2nd January 1942 In a bid to outflank the Kampar position, Japanese troops are landed south of Allied lines at Telok Anson and exploit inland. This forces the withdrawal of the 11th Indian Division back to the Slim River.
- 5th January 1942 The remnants of the 11th Indian Division pass through the positions held by the 12th Indian Infantry Brigade.
- 6th January 1942 Japanese tanks probe down the road and run into the forward positions held by the 4th/19th Hyderabad Regiment.

- 7th January 1942
03.00 hours onwards.
- The Japanese 42nd Regiment together with twenty tanks launch a night attack down the main road. The 4th/19th Hyderabad Regiment is scattered, and the Japanese continue down the road. They cut through the 5th Bn. 2nd Punjab Regiment and then the 2nd Bn. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. The Japanese also scatter the 5th Bn. 14th Punjab Regiment, and are only stopped after penetrating sixteen miles by two guns from the 155th Field Regiment.
- 8th -14th January 1942
- Headquarters III Indian Corps and 11th Indian Infantry Division withdrawn from front line operations to rest and refit. The 8th Australian Infantry Division forms the basis of 'Westforce' together with the newly arrived 45th Indian Infantry Brigade, and 'Eastforce' to defend the Muar River position.
- 14th January 1942
16.00 hours
- Units from the Japanese 5th Division are ambushed at Gemas by 2nd/30th Australian Infantry Battalion. Heavy casualties inflicted on the Imperial Guards.
- 15th January 1942
- 2nd/30th Battalion withdraw back to main positions.
- 16th January 1942
- Japanese troops cross the Muar River and attack the 45th Indian Infantry Brigade.
- 17th January 1942
- Units from 53rd Infantry Brigade move up to support 'Westforce'. A counter-attack to retake Muar is planned, but the Japanese attack first and fierce fighting takes place, during which 45th Indian Infantry Brigade ceases to exist as a formation, with the brigade commander killed in action.
- The 6th Bn. Royal Norfolk Regiment and 3rd Bn. 16th Punjab Regiment are attacked on a ridge near Yong Peng, and after successfully repulsing several attacks, the units are forced off the ridge, effectively cutting off 'Westforce'.

- 18th – 22nd January 1942 Remnants from 45th Indian Infantry Brigade and two Australian battalions, (the 2nd/19th and 2nd/29th) form up into a column and fight to break out from their encirclement. British and Australian units fight to keep the withdrawal route open.
- 27th January 1942 Allied forces commence retreat across the Straits of Johore onto Singapore Island.
- 31st January 1942 Last Allied troops cross the causeway, which is blown up by engineers.
- 7th February 1942 Japanese troops cross the Straits of Johore by boat and land on Singapore.
- 8th – 14th February 1942 Allied troops are increasingly forced back towards Singapore City.
- 15th February 1942 GOC Malaya Command, Lieutenant General PERCIVAL decides to surrender. Allied forces ceased hostilities at about 17.15 hours. About 80,000 Australian, British and Indian troops are taken into captivity, adding to the approximately 50,000 killed, wounded and captured during the campaign on the Malayan mainland.