

Chronology of Events – The Sudan, Abyssinia & Somaliland

1940

- 3 February East Africa Force placed under command of Commander in Chief Middle East (General Wavell).
- 10 June Italy declares war on the United Kingdom and France.
- June First South African brigade arrives in East Africa, together with a South African air contingent.
- July Two West African brigades arrive in East Africa.
- August Italian troops invade British Somaliland, securing the country within the month. Allied troops (two Indian battalions, two African battalions, and a battalion of the Black Watch) are evacuated to Aden.
- September 5th Indian Division arrives at Port Sudan.
- October 1st South African Infantry Division, 11th (African) Division and 12th (African) Division all concentrate in northern Kenya as part of East Africa Force.
- 1 November Lieutenant General Alan CUNNINGHAM, D.S.O., M.C. assumes command in East Africa from Lieutenant General DICKINSON.
- November 1940 10th Indian Brigade attacks Gallabat in southern Sudan, with the object of capturing the fort. The attack was successful, albeit, that the Brigade had to withdraw due to it being bombed and the troops being too exposed.

1941

- Early January 4th Indian Division arrives from Egypt.
- 19 January 4th Indian Division commences attack with Gazelle Force to capture Sabderat. 5th Indian Division commences advance towards Aicota.
- As advances commence, it becomes apparent that Italian Forces have withdrawn. 4th Division follows up, and with Gazelle Force meets the rearguard at Keru.
- 19 – 28 January 5th Division reaches Aicota without meeting much opposition. The leading brigade went onto Barentu, whilst the other turned north to Biscia. This latter move outflanked the Italians at Keru, which forced them to withdraw. 4th Division passed through Biscia and on to Agordat. 10th Brigade attacked Barantu, which was defended by the 2nd Colonial Division, suffering heavy casualties.

28 – 30 January	4 th Division captured Agordat from the 4 th Colonial Division after three days heavy fighting. This forces the 2 nd Colonial Division to abandon Barentu.
1 February	Allied forces find Gallabat abandoned.
2 February	Leading elements of Gazelle Force reach the outposts of the Keren defences. These were manned by one colonial brigade, three battalions of Savoy Grenadiers, with one more colonial brigade arriving as the battle started.
4 February	2 nd Bn. Cameron Highlanders opened battle for Keren, successfully storming a ridge, which became known as Cameron Ridge. That night, 3 rd Bn. 14 th Punjab Regiment passed through the Camerons and captured Brig's Peak.
5 February	The Italians counter-attack, forcing the Punjab battalion back to Cameron Ridge. 1 st Bn. 6 th Rajputana Rifles and 3 rd Bn. 1 st Punjab Regiment come up and reinforce Cameron Ridge, thereby holding the Italian counter-attack.
7 February	East African troops enter Italian Somaliland and advance on Afmadu. During the night, 5 th Brigade attack Acqua Col in an attempt to find a less strongly held way through the defences. 4 th Bn. 6 th Rajputana Rifles lead that attack suffering heavy casualties.
10 February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ 3rd Bn. 1st Punjab Regiment attack up from Cameron Ridge during the afternoon. They successfully capture again Brig's Peak, and move on to the lower slopes of Mount Sanchil. Heavy counter attacks force them back to Brig's Peak, and later to Cameron Ridge.➤ The Acqua Col feature was again attacked by the 4th Bn. 6th Rajputana Rifles. They again reach the ridge but are unable to consolidate their gains➤ 4th Bn. 11th Sikh Regiment also attacked on the right of 4th/6th Rajputanas, but were able to make progress.
11 February	An East African brigade (22 nd Brigade of 12 th (African) Division) captures Afmadu, which had been abandoned. It then turns south for Kismayu. The 24th Gold Coast Brigade heads for the Juba river at Bullo Erillo.
14 February	East African troops enter the port of Kismayu against minimal opposition. The South African Division cross the Juba River and capture Jumbo against heavy resistance. Over the next few days, the Nigerian Brigade is landed at Kismayu and strikes north for Mogadishu.
25 February	Mogadishu is captured by the 23 rd Nigerian Brigade of the 11 th (African) Division.

- 15 March
- Attack renewed on the Keren defence line. 2nd Camerons, and 1st Royal Fusiliers attacking Brig's Peak and Sanchil, achieving partial success.
 - 1st/6th Rajputana Rifles, 2nd/5th Mahratta L.I., and 4th/11th Sikh Regiment also attacked on the left of the main assault. Again assaults only resulted in partial success.
 - On the right of the 4th Indian Division, the 5th Indian Division attacked led by the 2nd Highland L.I., its objective being features below the fort. The battalion becomes pinned down by fire.
 - 3rd/5th Mahratta L.I. and 3rd/12th F.F.R. attack a feature known as the Pinnacle, 1,000 feet above them. This attack, won against much adversity was successful.
 - The 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment moved up and exploited the success, capturing Fort Dologorodoc.
- 16 March 1941
- Attacks are mounted by Allied Forces from the Fort towards the Sphinx, but, without success.
- Allied troops land at Berbera in British Somaliland to reclaim it from the Italian invaders. They then move west to meet the 11th (African) Division.
- 16 – 23 March
- Italian troops launch counter attacks against the Fort, but they are beaten back with heavy losses.
- 17 March
- 11th (African) Division captures Jijiga after moving north from Mogadishu at great speed.
- 22 March
- Allied troops take Negelli in the south of Abyssinia.
- 24 March
- 2nd Highland L.I. and 4th/10th Baluch attack features called the railway bumps below Cameron Ridge. This attack was successful, with Sappers commencing clearing the road through the gorge. A supporting attack by 3rd/5th Mahrattas met fierce resistance but eventually made its objectives.
- 27 March
07.30 hours
- An assault is launched to clear the gorge. As the troops attack, a white flag appears above Mount Sanchil. The 4th and 5th Divisions drive through the gorge in pursuit.
- 4 April
- 'Gideon' Force, an unit of Sudanese and Abyssinnian troops under the command of Major Wingate, attack and capture Debra Markos in the west of the country.
- 6 April
- Allied troops enter Addis Ababa, which had been vacated by Italian troops.
- 7 April
- Allied troops capture Massawa in the north of the country.

Mid-April	4 th Indian Division withdrawn from Abyssinia and sent back to Egypt due to latest Axis advance.
26 April	Allied troops capture Dessie.
29 April	Units of 5 th Indian Division attack the remaining bastion of Italian troops in Abyssinia at the Toselli Pass.
5 May	Haile Selassie returns to Addis Ababa.
13 May	A coordinated attack by 5 th Indian and 1 st South African Divisions begins on Toselli Pass.
19 May 11.15 hours	The main elements of the Italian Army surrender and march out of Amba Alagi into captivity.
23 May	About 8,000 Italian troops under Colonel Maraventano surrendered at Agibar.
10 July	Final extant Italian troops, some 40,000 in number, under General Nasi now located at Gondar.
27 September	25 th (E.A.) and 26 th (E.A.) Brigades, together with Sudanese and Patriot Forces attack Wolchefit at the entrance to Gondar plain. Garrison surrenders.
21 November	Garrison at Kulkaber surrenders.
27 November	Final Italian surrender at Gondar, some 10,000 Italian and 12,000 Colonial soldiers are taken into captivity.