

Chronology of Events – Burma 1944 – 1946

1944

January

The 5th Indian Infantry Division commences an advance down the coastal plain of the Arakan. The 7th Indian Infantry Division (in its first operation), attacked down the Kalapanzin valley; with the 81st (West African) Infantry Division advances down the Kaladan valley.

9th January

Units from the 5th Indian Division capture Maungdaw.

February

Japanese 28th Army (55th Division and 54th Division) launch their assault in the Arakan.

5th February

Units from Sakurai Force infiltrate between the positions of the 7th Indian Division.

6th February

Headquarters, 7th Indian Division, is attacked.

6th February

The Administration Box at Sinzweya is surrounded and attacked by Japanese troops.

7th February

Japanese troops attack the Admin Box again. They take the Main Dressing Station (M.D.S.) and murder doctors, staff and patients.

14th February

Japanese troops capture a hill on the perimeter of the Admin Box, but are driven off by the 2nd Bn. The West Yorkshires supported by tanks of the 25th Dragoons.

26th February

The Japanese 28th Army calls off the offensive.

8th March

Japanese 33rd Division commences its advance towards Tiddim.

- 15th March The Japanese 15th and 31st Divisions cross the River Chindwin, and the 31st Division heads towards Kohima.
- 17th – 30th March 17th Indian Division conducts a fighting withdrawal from Tiddim back to Imphal.
- 18th March Advance units of 5th Indian Division arrive at Imphal by air.
- 19th March The lead battalions of the Japanese 31st Division advance on Sangshak, and clash with elements of the 50th Indian Parachute Brigade.
- 20th March 161st Indian Infantry Brigade (5th Indian Division) is flown into Dimapur from the Arakan. On landing, the brigade makes for Kohima.
- 21st March Companies from the 50th Indian Parachute Brigade withdraw from outlying positions to converge on Sangshak village.
- 22nd March Units from the Japanese 31st Division assault Sangshak, but are held off by the 50th Brigade.
- 23rd March Colonel H. U. RICHARDS assumes command of Kohima Garrison.
- 23rd – 25th March The Japanese 31st Division continue to assault the defensive positions at Sangshak, but fail to gain a foothold in the village.
- 24th March Divisional headquarters, 5th Indian Division opens at Imphal, with 9th and 123rd Indian Brigades under command. 161st Indian Brigade is sent to Dimapur, and comes under temporary command of 7th Indian Division.
- 26th March The 50th Indian Parachute Brigade evacuate Sangshak village, and make their way back to Imphal having suffered heavy losses.

- 27th March Lieutenant General SLIM asked General GIFFARD to divert the British 2nd Infantry Division from the Arakan to Dimapur. This is agreed.
- 29th March Imphal to Kohima road cut by Japanese troops at Milestone 72 leaving Imphal besieged.
- 202 Lines of Communication assumes command of the Dimpaur and Kohima areas.
- 30th March Imphal isolated by advancing Japanese forces.
- 1st April First elements of the 2nd Infantry Division arrives at Dimapur.
- 3rd April Headquarters XXXIII Indian Corps (Lieutenant General STOPFORD) opens at Jorhat.
- 4th Bn. The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment are ordered back from Kohima to Dimapur.
- 4th April First elements of the Japanese 31st Division reach the outskirts of Kohima.
- 5th April The 4th Bn. The Q.O.R.W.K. Regiment is ordered back to Kohima and arrives as the Japanese begin to probe the positions at Kohima.
- 6th April The first coordinated Japanese attacks commence on Kohima Ridge.
- 8th April Japanese 138th Regiment cut off Kohima from the 161st Indian Infantry Brigade at Jotsoma, and attack positions held by the 161st Brigade.

- 9th April
- Lance Corporal HARMAN undertakes actions that later result in him being awarded posthumously the Victoria Cross.
 - First elements from the 2nd Infantry Division clash with a Japanese patrol at Zubza on the Kohima – Dimpaur.
- 10th April
- DIS Hill abandoned, and perimeter of the Kohima Garrison shortened.
- The Monsoon rains begin early.
- 11th April
- The last elements of the 2nd Infantry Division arrives in Dimapur, and start up the Kohima road.
- The 7th Bn. The Worcestershire Regiment attacks Japanese positions at Zubza, but fail to dislodge the Japanese.
- 14th April
- The 1st Cameron Highlanders force the Japanese from their positions at Zubza.
- A company from the 4th Bn. 7th Rajput Regiment manages to find a route through into the Kohima Garrison.
- 16th April
- Troops from the 2nd Infantry Division reach the positions of the 161st Indian Infantry Brigade at Jotsoma.
- 17th April
- Japanese forces take FSD and Kuki Piquet.
- 18th April
- First troops from Jotsoma reach Kohima.
- 20th April
- The Kohima Garrison is relieved and is taken by trucks down to Dimapur to rest and reconstitute.
- 23rd April
- The final Japanese attacks on Garrison Hill are thrown back, and the Japanese now turn onto the defensive.

- 25th April The 4th Infantry Brigade commence their advance behind Mount Pulebadze towards Kohima.
- 27th April The 5th Infantry Brigade is now established on Merema Ridge.

Lee Grant ranks from 149th Regiment, R.A.C. join the 5th Brigade on Naga Hill.
- 29th April The 4th Brigade reaches GPT Ridge.
- 30th April The Japanese 31st Division's commander (SATO) sends a message to Army command stating the division is reaching the end of its endurance.
- 1st May The 4th Brigade occupies Oaks Hill.
- 4th May The 2nd Bn. The Royal Norfolks start to clear GPT Ridge.

161st Brigade clears Two Trees Hill.

The Durham L.I. secure a foothold on FSD Hill.

The 5th Brigade secure Church Knoll and Hunters Hill.
- 6th May The Royal Norfolks continue to clear GPT Ridge, with Captain RANDLE storming a bunker (later to be called Norfolk Bunker), resulting in his posthumous award of the Victoria Cross.

Units from the 33rd Indian Infantry Brigade start replacing units from the 6th Infantry Brigade on Kohima Ridge.
- 8th May 1944 268th Indian Brigade arrives at Dimapur.
- 11th May 4th Brigade clears GPT Ridge.
- 12th May FSD Hill finally cleared by men from the Royal Berkshires.

- 13th May The Dorsets eventually clear the DC's Bungalow with the support of Lee Grant tanks which managed to climb onto the Tennis Court.
- 15th May Treasury Hill secured by troops from the 5th Brigade and 33rd Indian Brigade.
- The Cameron Highlanders attack Hunter's Hill, but are repulsed.
- 20th May 7th Indian Division arrives at Dimapur.
- 23rd May 7th Indian Division assumes responsibility for Naga Hill.
- 25th May SATO requests permission to withdraw, but is refused.
- 28th May Attacks by the 6th Brigade on Aradura Spur are repulsed.
- The 4th Bn. 1st Gurkha Rifles secure Hunter's Hill in a silent attack.
- 31st May SATO orders the Japanese 31st Division from Kohima.
- 3rd June The Japanese troops leave Aradura Spur and complete the withdrawal from Kohima.
- 22nd June Troops from the 2nd Infantry Division and 5th Indian Infantry Division meet at Milestone 108 on the Kohima – Imphal road, and the siege of Imphal is over.
- 4th July Southern Area Army approves the request of the G.O.C. Burma Area Army to abandon the offensive U-Go.
- 16th September The Combined Chiefs of Staff approve Operation 'Capital'.
- 17th December Lieutenant General SLIM proposes Operation 'Extended Capital'.

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| 19 th December | The 7 th Indian Infantry Division and the 28 th (East Africa) Brigade commence an advance down the Myittha valley. |
| 20 th December | IV Corps and XXXIII Indian Corps begin to advance in accordance with Extended Capital. |
| 22 nd – 26 th December | Units from the 2 nd Infantry Division and 20 th Indian Infantry Division start to cross the River Chindwin. |
| 1945 | |
| 7 th January | 19 th Indian Infantry Division starts to cross the Irrawaddy River and captures Thabeikkyin. |
| 9 th January | 2 nd Division captures Shwebo. |
| 10 th January | 7 th Indian Division captures Gangaw. |
| 11 th January | The 19 th Indian Division establishes a second bridgehead across the River Irrawaddy at Kyaukmyaung. |
| 12 th January | Units from the 3 rd Commando Brigade and 25 th Indian Division land at Myebon in the Arakan. |
| 22 nd January | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ 20th Indian Division captures Monywa.➤ The 3rd Commando Brigade lands at Kangaw in the Arakan. |
| 24 th January | The 81 st (West Africa) Division and 82 nd (West Africa) Division (XV Indian Corps) coordinate an attack on the city of Myohaung in the Arakan, which they take successfully, |
| 31 st January | The main Japanese assault on Hill 170 commences at Kangaw. |
| 2 nd February | British forces complete the clearance of Hill 170. |
| 10 th February | 7 th Indian Division secures Kanhla. |

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| 12 th February | 20 th Indian Division commences crossing the River Irrawaddy. |
| 14 th February | 7 th Indian Division commences crossing the River Irrawaddy at Nyaungu. |
| 21 st February | Units from the 17 th Indian Division commence their dash for Meiktila some eighty-two miles from the bridgehead over the Irrawaddy. |
| 22 nd February | The 19 th Indian Division starts its advance towards Mandalay. |
| 24 th February | The 48 th Indian Brigade (17 th Indian Division) captures Taungtha, to be joined by the 63 rd Indian Brigade. |
| 26 th February | 63 rd Brigade makes a wide sweep of Meiktila and captures Thabutkon airfield. |
| 27 th February | Units from the 99 th Indian Brigade commence their fly-in to Thabutkon airfield. |
| 28 th February | Units from the 17 th Indian Division start their attack on Meiktila town. |
| 1 st March | The 17 th Indian Division, supported by tanks from the 255 th Indian Tank Brigade in clearing Meiktila. |
| 3 rd March | The final Japanese troops are cleared from Meiktila. |
| 4 th March | Thabutkon airfield abandoned, and Meiktila airfield opened for operations. 99 th Indian Brigade assume responsibility for the defence of Meiktila airfield. |
| 7 th – 14 th March | The 17 th Indian Division sends strong armoured columns on sweeps out of Meiktila on offensive strikes against Japanese forces. |
| 15 th March | Japanese forces commence sustained attacks on Meiktila. |

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| 17 th March | 63 rd Brigade sends out strong columns to disrupt the Japanese attacks and dislodge their artillery. |
| 18 th March | Units from the 99 th Brigade undertake sweeps out from Meiktila. |
| 20 th March | The 19 th Indian Division captures Fort Dufferin and secures Mandalay. |
| 22 nd March | Units from the 7 th Indian Division clear the road to Meiktila. |
| 23 rd March | The 20 th Indian Division makes contact with the 17 th Indian Division north of Meiktila. |
| 24 th March | Units from the 20 th Indian Division makes contact with units from the 19 th Indian Division. |
| 27 th – 29 th March | The Japanese troops make their final efforts to retake Meiktila, but are repulsed. The 63 rd Brigade counter attacks and force the Japanese out of their positions around Lake Myindawgan. |
| 30 th March | The 14 th Army commences its drive towards Rangoon, with IV Corps making the armoured thrust along the Sittang valley and XXXIII Indian Corps advancing down the Irrawaddy valley. |
| 10 th April | The 17 th Indian Division destroys the final garrison and units of the 33 rd Army at Pyawbwe. |
| 12 th April | The 7 th Indian Division from XXXIII Indian Corps captures Kyaukpadaung on the Irrawaddy River. |
| 20 th April | XXXIII Indian Corps secures Magwe, with IV Corps securing Pyinmana. |
| 25 th April | The 5 th Indian Division from XXXIII Indian Corps secured Toungoo. |

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| 1 st May | 17 th Indian Division captures Pegu. A parachute attack on Elephant Point starts the attack on Rangoon. The Japanese abandon Rangoon and retreat eastwards. |
| 3 rd May | British forces occupy Rangoon. |
| 1946 | |
| January | Headquarters 12 th Army redesignated as: Headquarters, Burma Command. Under the command of Lieutenant General H. R. BRIGGS |
| January | Formations under the command of H.Q. Burma Command are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 17th Indian Infantry Division (33rd, 48th and 63rd Infantry Brigades). ➤ 98th Indian Infantry Brigade. ➤ 82nd (West Africa) Infantry Division. |
| May | 82 nd (West Africa) Infantry Division commences departure from Burma and returns to West Africa to be disbanded. |
| September | Last units from 82 nd (West Africa) Infantry Division depart from Burma. |
| 1948 | |
| January | Burma becomes an Independent Republic. H.Q. Burma Command closed. |