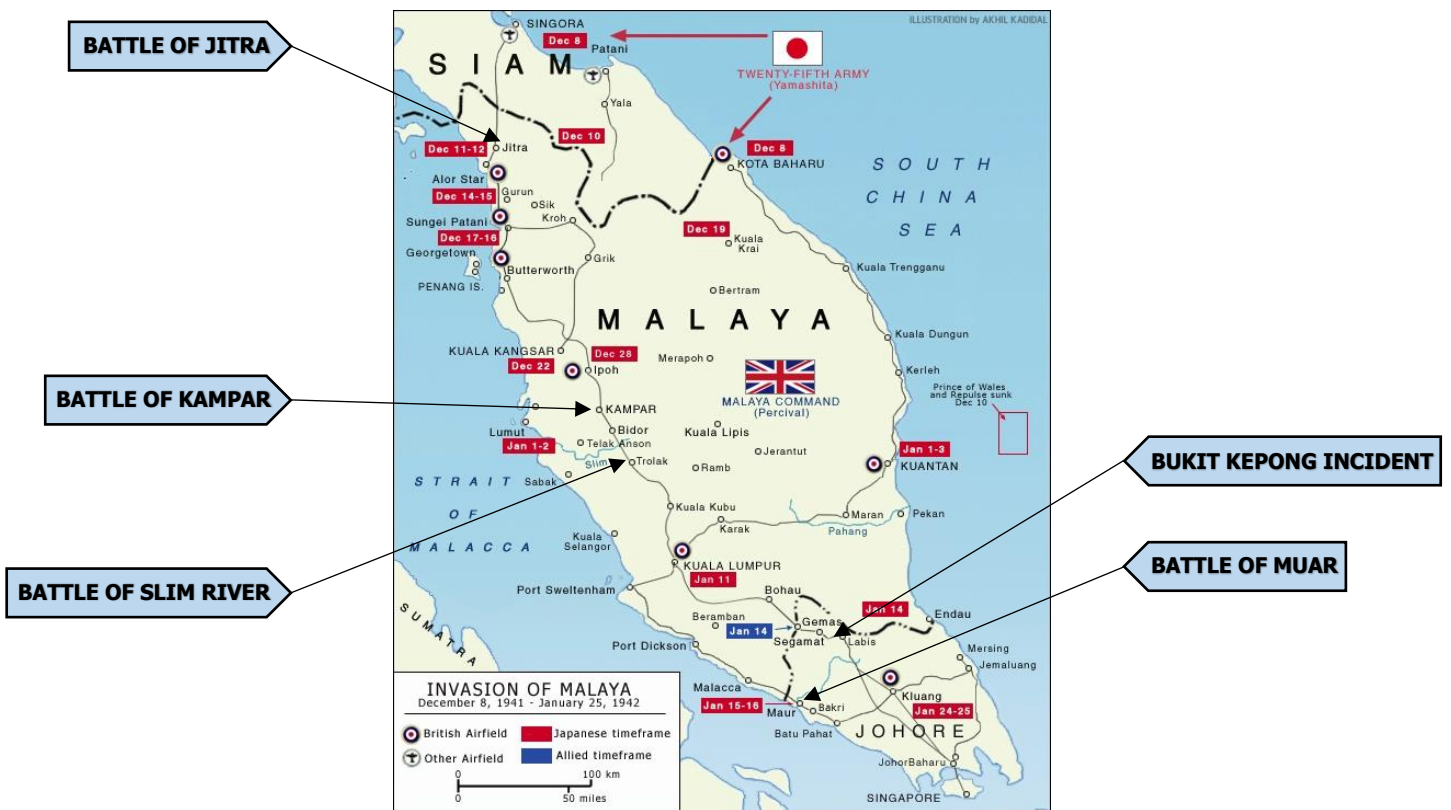
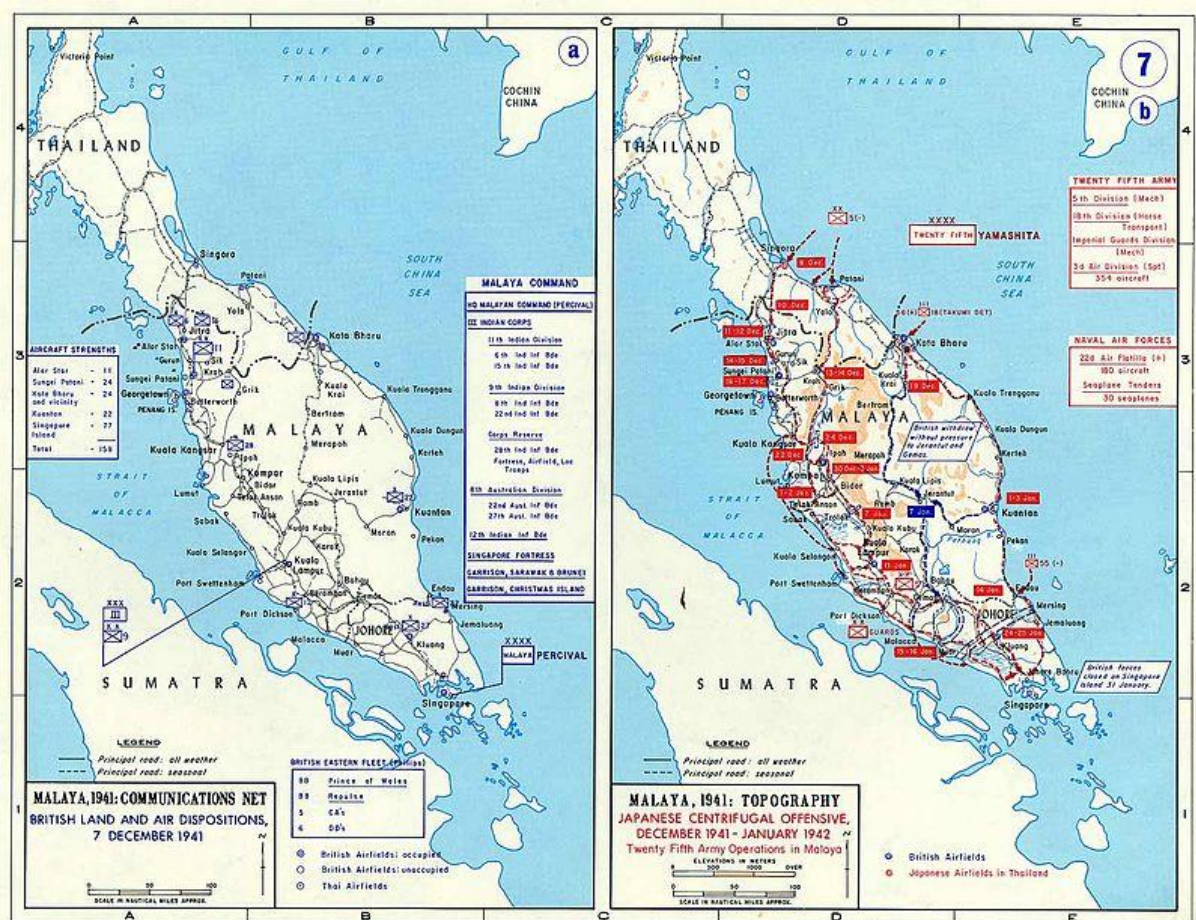




The Military Historical Sites in Malaysia



THE BATTLE OF JITRA

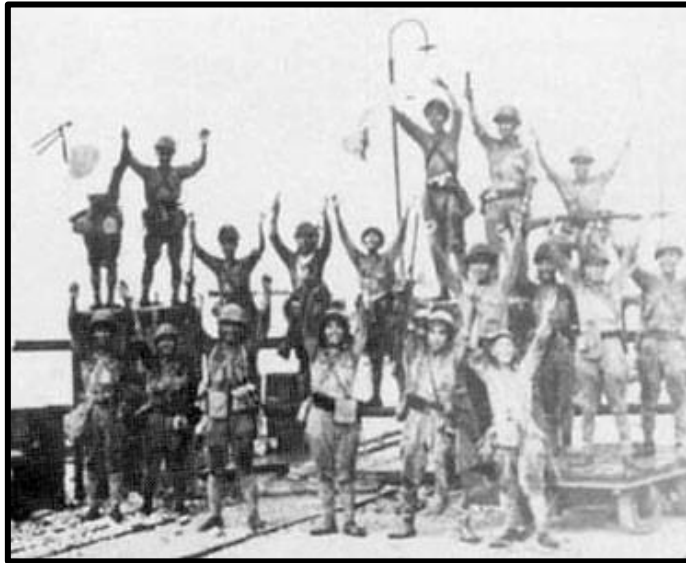


This is one of the first big scale military engagement between the Japanese and British during the Malayan Campaign of the Second World War, on 11-13 Dec 1941. Jitra was mainly held by the 11th Indian Division which comprises mainly Indian troops. These troops were neither well equipped nor prepared and when the Japanese started attacking on 11 Dec 1941, they were still setting up traps and communication systems. Despite this, they still put up a good fight against the well trained Japanese troops. The 11th Indian Division was pushed back quickly by the Japanese as they did not have heavy armour and artillery. The Japanese on the other hand had tanks and thus managed to overrun the Indian troops, securing their victory in Jitra. Following that they headed south towards Penang.

BATTLE OF JITRA	
Date	11 - 13 Dec 1941.
Location	Jitra, British Malaya.
Result	Japanese victory.
Beligerents	
British Indian Division Japan Imperial Army	
Commanders and leaders	
MG David Murray-Lyon MG Takuro Matsui	
Units Involved	
11 th Indian Division 5 th Infantry Division	
Casualties and losses	
367+ killed 6 tanks destroyed 1 tank damaged	

The Battle of Jitra and the retreat to Gurun had cost the 11th India Division heavily in manpower and strength as an effective fighting force. The division had lost one brigade commander wounded (Brigadier Garrett), one battalion commander killed (Lt Col Bates) and another captured (Lt Col Fitzpatrick). The division had lost the equivalent of nearly three battalions of infantry and was in no condition to face another Japanese assault without reinforcements, reorganisation and rest.

Around at the same time, Imperial Japanese Navy aircraft conducted massive air raids on Penang, killing more than 2,000 civilians. After the destruction of most of the Allied aircraft at Alor Star, General Percival ordered that until reinforcements arrive, all aircrafts will be used in the defence of Singapore and for the protection of supply convoys moving north into Malaya. The 11th Indian Division commander Major General Murray-Lyon was relieved of command on 23 Dec 1941.



(The victorious Japanese Army)

THE BATTLE OF KAMPAR



The Battle of Kampar occurred on 30th Dec 1941 to 2nd Jan 1942, and was a battle in the Malayan Campaign during the Second World War, involving the British and Indians troops from the 11th Indian Division and the Japanese 5th Division. On the 27th Dec 1941, in an effort to prevent the capture of RAF Kuala Lumpur, after the defeat at Jitra the 11th Indian Infantry Division occupied Kampar which offered a strong natural defensive position. The mission was to delay the Japanese advance to allow the 9th Indian Infantry Division to withdraw from the east coast of Malaya.

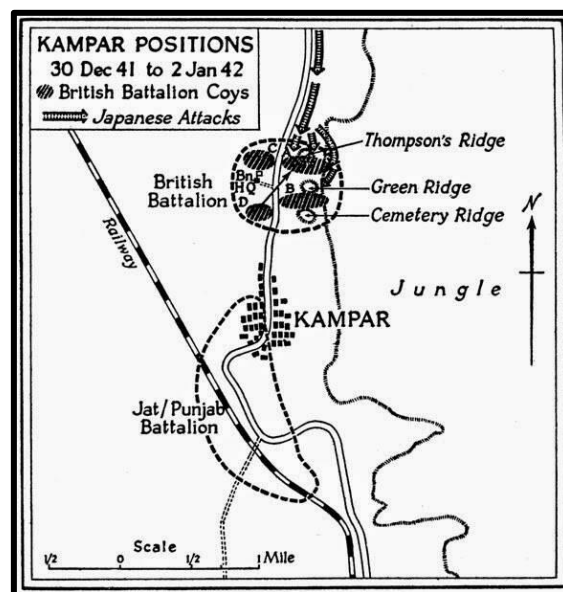
BATTLE OF KAMPAR	
Date	30 Dec 1941 – 2 Jan 1942
Location	Kampar, British Malaya
Result	British Tactical Allied victory.
Beligerents	
United Kingdom	Japan Imperial Army
Commanders and leaders	
MG Archibald Paris	MG Takuro Matsui
Strength	
3,000 infantry	6,000 infantry
	200 tanks
	100 artillery pieces
Casualties and losses	
150 killed	500 killed

The Japanese intended to capture Kampar as a new year's gift to the Emperor Hirohito, and on 30th Dec 1941 the Japanese began surrounding the British and Indian position. The following day fighting commenced. The Allied forces were able to hold on for four days before withdrawing on the 2nd Jan 1942 to Slim River, having achieved the objective to slow down the Japanese advance.

The fierce battles which ensued saw gallant soldiers in the likes of Maj Gen Archie Paris (Commander of 11th Division), Brigadier Henry Moorhead (Commander Amalgamated 15th/16th Brigade), Brigadier Ray Selby (28th Gurkha Brigade) and Lt Col Augustus Murdoch (Commander 155th Field Arty Regiment), Lt Col Esmond Morrison's (British Battalion) and Lt Edgar Newland (Platoon Commander of 30 Leicester's) who held the most forward position of the battalion. His platoon was surrounded and cut off for most of the battle, but Lt Newland and his men fought off all attacks and kept hold of their isolated position throughout the two days.

The half company under the command of Captain J.O. Graham and Lt C.G. Lamb (both officers from the 1/8th Punjab Regiment) who fixed bayonets and charged at the Japanese position. The Japanese fire was so heavy that 33 men including Lt Lamb were killed during the charge. Captain Graham continued to lead the charge though he had only 30 Sikh soldiers left with him. He only stopped when a Japanese mortar bomb fell into the trench and blew both of his legs beneath the knees. Altogether 34 Indian soldiers died in the attack but they retook the position. Capt Graham died of his wounds a day later.

The ferocity of this epic battle brought out the finest characteristics of the Japanese, British and Indian troops engaged. An estimated 3,000 British soldiers defended Kampar area against over 6,000 Japanese soldiers. It was the first serious defeat the Japanese had experienced in the Malayan Campaign. It was one of the battle worthy of mention in the annals of the Malayan Campaign in the Second World War.



The British Battalion position in Kampar on 30 Dec 1941 to 2 Jan 1941.



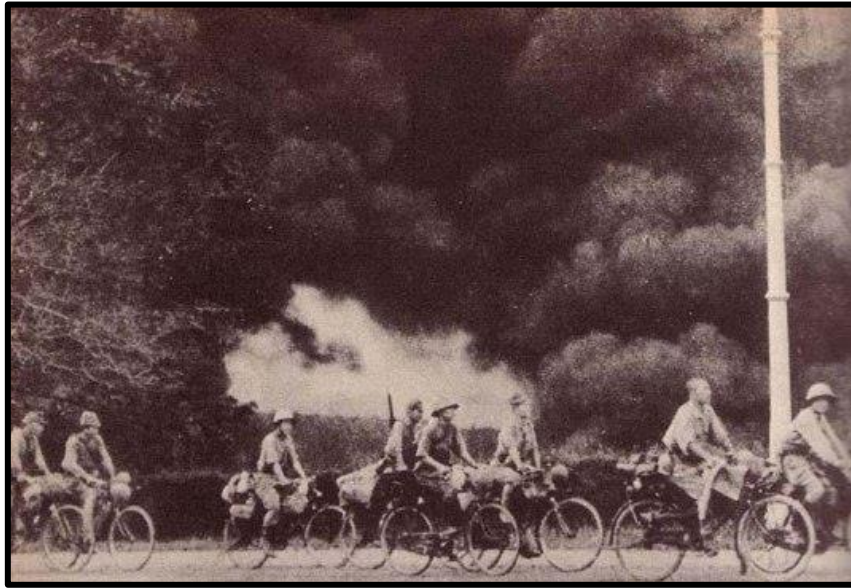
(Sikh Infantry part of the 11th Indian Division artillery and mortar position at Kampar)



(The 11th Indian Division artillery and Mortar firing at the advancing Japanese Army)



(The Japanese tank company moving towards Slim River)



(The Japanese infantry troops advancing towards Slim River)

THE BATTLE OF SLIM RIVER



Slim River was a military strategic mid-point from North to South of Malaya during the World War II. It was the site of a major battle during the Malayan Campaign between the Japanese and British forces which consisted of troops from India, Australia and Great Britain. In the Battle of Slim River on 7th Jan 1942, some 30 Japanese tanks and motorized infantry battalion completed the virtual destruction of the 11th Indian Infantry Division, where two Indian brigades were

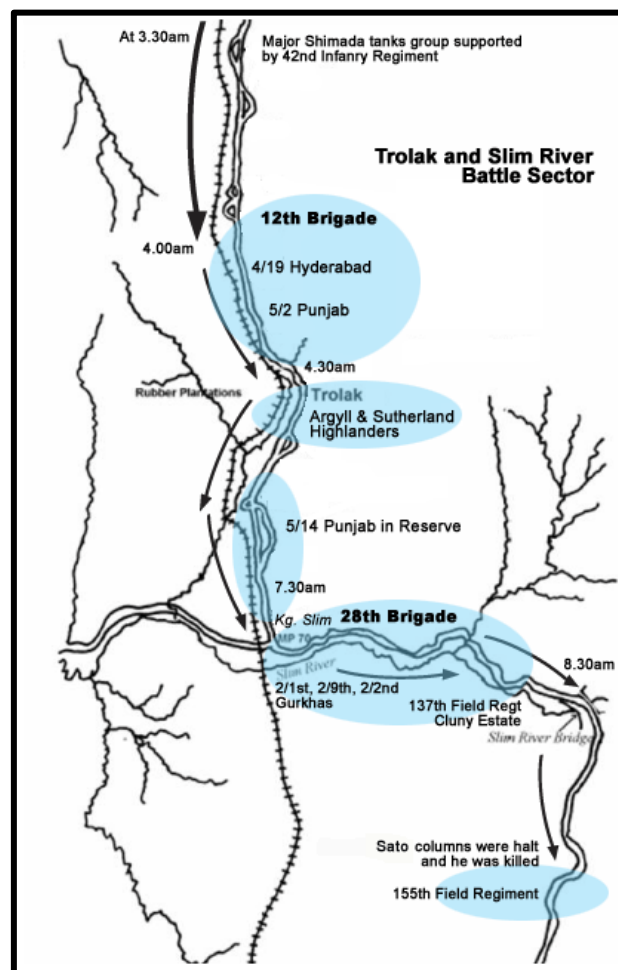
practically annihilated. The Japanese assault force consisted of about 20 tanks, and the Japanese commander came up with unusual plan of a night attack using tanks to spearhead the infantry, a dangerous proposition for tanks considering the extremely low visibility factor which could hamper their crews.

The British fought a losing battle against the Japanese even though they used anti-tank to destroy the Japanese tanks but it did not work after the Japanese captured the goods and ammunition and as well as equipment kept by the British. The 11th Indian Infantry Division had suffered a huge casualties, although some would eventually make their way back to join the fight for Singapore, many more would still be in the jungle after the surrender. The remaining survivors of the two brigades were scattered all over the Malayan Peninsular. The 12th Infantry Brigade had practically ceased to exist and the 28th Brigade was but a shadow.

BATTLE OF SLIM RIVER	
Date	6 – Jan 1942
Location	Slim River, British Malaya
Result	Japanese victory
Beligerents	
11 th Indian Division	5 th Vivision
Commanders and leaders	
MG Archibald Paris	MG Hajme Shimada
Casualties and losses	
500 killed	17 killed
3,200 captured	60 wounded

In all the 11th Division lost an estimated 3,200 troops and a large amount of irreplaceable equipment. The Japanese had managed to attack through a division along nineteen miles and take two brigades at a minimal cost of themselves before noon. This defeat for the British allowed the Japanese to take Kuala Lumpur unopposed. The remaining British troops were ordered to retreat onto South Malaya, giving up Central Malaya, and this allow the Australian 8th Division an opportunity to prove itself against the Japanese Army. The devastation caused by this short battle also resulted in General Percival changing his tactic of defensive prepared position and ordering a rapid retreat to the south where an ambush would be prepared by the Australian division.

Point to note, an instance of a Japanese atrocity was committed in the area of the rubber trees around Trolak. In this area were a number of Argyll and Hyderabad soldiers wounded. Lt Ian Primrose reports that after he regained consciousness from an injury during the fighting he discovered that the Japanese were dividing the wounded into those who said they could walk and those who said they could not. Lt Primrose decided he could walk, which was fortunate as the Japanese soldiers proceeded to shoot and bayonet the wounded who could not walk. Afterwards the survivors were forced to dig graves for the dead and then told to carry the wounded Japanese.



The 11th Indian Army Battle Group position at Slim River on the 7th Jan 1942.



(The British Artillery gun bombarding the advancing Japanese troops)



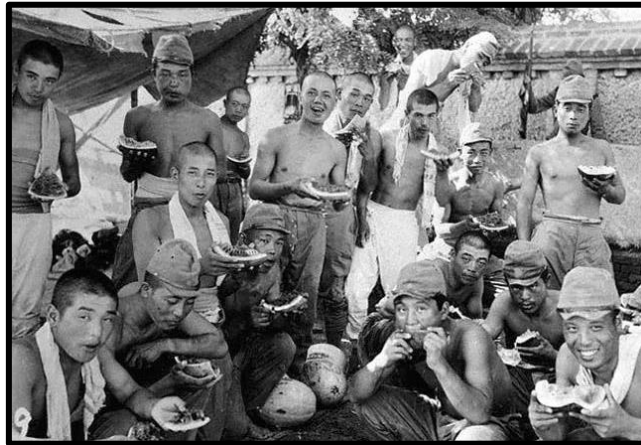
(The British troops waiting for the advancing Japanese infantry at the road side)



(The Allied troops before the battle starts)



(The British Mortar Platoon firing at the Japanese position)



(The Japanese troops celebrating their victory at Slim River)

THE BATTLE OF MUAR



The Battle of Muar was the last major battle in the Malayan Campaign during the Second World War. It took place from 14-22 January 1942 around Gemensah Bridge and on the Muar River. After the British defeat at Slim River, General A. Wavell, commander ABDA, decided that Lt Gen L. Heath's III Indian Corps should withdraw 240 kilometres (150 miles) south into the State of Johor to rest and regroup, whilst the 8th Australian Division would attempt to stop the Japanese advance.

The Allied forces inflicted severe losses on the Japanese forces at the Gemensah Bridge ambush and in a second battle a few kilometres north of Gemas town. Members of the 8th Australian Division killed as estimated 700 soldiers from the Japanese Imperial Guard Division, in the ambush at the ridge itself, whilst Australian anti-tank guns destroyed several Japanese tanks in the battle north of Gemas.

Although the ambush was successful for the Allies, the defence of Muar and Bakri on the west coast was a complete failure which resulted in the near-annihilation of the 45th Indian Brigade and heavy casualties for its two attached Australian infantry battalions. This was the first engagement between units of the British 18th Division and Japanese forces in Malaya.

During the Battle of Muar, members of both the Australian Division and the 45th Indian Infantry Brigade were making a fighting withdrawal when they became surrounded near the bridge at Parit Sulong. The Allies fought the larger Japanese forces for two days until they ran low on ammunition and food. Able-bodied soldiers were ordered to disperse into the lush jungle, the only way they could return to Allied lines.

BATTLE OF MUAR	
Date	14 - 22 Jan 1942
Location	Muar, British Malaya
Result	Japanese victory.
Beligerents	
United Kingdom Australia British India	Japan Imperial Army
Commanders and leaders	
BG. Hurbert Duncan MG. Gordon Bennett LTC Charles Anderson LTC Frederic Gallenhan	MG. Takuro Matsui MG. Takuma Nashimura Capt. Shiegeo Gotanda
Units Involved	
9 th Inf Div (BI) 8 th Division (Au) 45 th Inf Bde (BI) 53 rd Inf Bde (UK)	Twenty-Fifth Army: Imperial Guards 5 th Div 3 rd Air Div
Strength	
4,000 infantry 60 aircraft	8,000 infantry 400 aircraft
Casualties and losses	
3,100 killed 145 captured (POW)	500 killed 15+ tank destroyed

The wounded prisoners of war were kicked and beaten with rifle butts by the Imperial Guards. At least some were tied up with wire in the middle of the road, machine-gunned, had petrol poured over them, were set on fire. Anecdotal accounts by local people also reported POWs being tied together with wire and forced to stand on a bridge, before a Japanese soldier shot one, causing the rest to fall into the Simpang Kiri River and drown. 110 Australians and 35 Indians soldiers are massacred by the Japanese Guards.



(The position of the Allied Forces at the Battle of Muar)



(The Allied soldiers firing at the Advancing Imperial Army)



(The Allied soldiers regrouping during the Battle of Muar)



(The Japanese Infantry moving south after the Battle of Muar)

THE BUKIT KEPONG INCIDENT

Bukit Kepong Incident was an armed encounter which took place on February 23, 1950 between the Federation of Malayan Police Force and the Malayan Communist Party during the First Malayan Emergency (1948-1960). The conflict took place in an area surrounding the Bukit Kepong police station in Bukit Kepong. The wooden station was located on the river banks of the Muar River, about 59 km from Muar town.

The incident started just before dawn at about 4:15 am with the Communist gunmen launching a guerilla assault on the police station leading to the deaths of almost all of the police officers stationed there. When they began siege, the attackers strongly believed that they would be able to defeat the policemen and gain control of the police station within a short span of time. This would be due to several factors in their favour: their arms and numerical superiority and the relative isolation of the station.

According to eyewitness accounts, there were about 180 Communist attacking, led by Muhammad Indera, a Malay Communist. Despite the odds, the policemen led by Sgt. Jamil Mohd Shah, refused to surrender, although numerous calls by the communist for them to lay down their arms were made. Several officers were killed as the shooting continued. In the final hour of the battle, the Communist set fire to the officers' barrack and station. Two women and their children were burnt to death in the married quarters. At that point only 3 policemen plus a village guard still alive. They ran out from the burning station, unable to withstand the heat. Then they assaulted the Communist position, killing at least 3 of them. Only about five hours after the first assault was fired did the communists manage to break their defences and set the place ablaze.

During the attack, reinforcement were sent from Kampung Tui as the battle reverberated throughout several of the nearby village. Reinforcement group comprising the villagers and 13 Auxiliary policemen were ambushed by the Communists enroute about half a kilometer away from the station. Several village guards were wounded and two Auxiliary police officers killed as the Communists were using automatic weapons.

Altogether 14 policemen, 2 civilians, 5 auxiliary policemen, 2 wives and two children were killed in the incident. The total number of deaths is 25. Those who survived the bloody encounter were 4 policemen and 9 family members, including their wives and children. The Communists eventually retreated after setting fire to the village office and robbing a few stores.

The battle at Bukit Kepong is considered to be a tragic defeat although it strengthened the government and people's resolve to fight the Communist insurgency. A small force defending against overwhelming odds gave the war against the Communist insurgency a massive boost in terms of morale and honour. Some drew comparisons between the Bukit Kepong incident and the Alamo, where Bukit Kepong policemen, similar to the Texans, came under overwhelming odds and fought to the last man.

BUKIT KEPONG INCIDENT	
Date	23 Feb 1950
Location	Bukit Kepong, Muar, Johor
Result	Communist Terrorist
Beligerents	
Malayan Police	Malayan Communist Party
Commanders and leaders	
Sgt Jamil Shah	Lek Tuan
Penghuku Ali Mustapha	Muhammad Indera
Strength	
25 policemen	200 communist
Casualties and losses	
14 killed in action	40 killed.
4 wounded	



(The Malayan Police Force stationed at Bukit Kepong in 1950)



(The Main Office in the Perimeter of the Police Station)



(The Communists terrorist involved in the Bukit Kepong Incident)



(The Communist Terrorist killing the Malayan Police Force during the incident)

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