

Title	The Important Role of Kachins In China-Burma-India Theater (1942 – 1945)
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Keywords	Kachin soldiers, Kachin Rangers, Allies, Japan forces, British troop, military and political awakening
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THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF KACHINS IN CHINA-BURMA-INDIA THEATER (1942 – 1945)

This paper mainly focuses on the result of the thorough examination of events and episodes, occurred in Kachin territory in 1942-1945. The aim of writing this paper is to present Kachin soldiers' role during WW II. The Kachin territory was included within Southeast Asia Command's boundaries. Kachin territory Battles in the Second World War should be viewed as a result of the extension of the war between the Anglo-US alliance and Japan. Japan occupied Myanmar at the beginning of 1942. Military and political awakening of Kachin peoples first rooted during WW II. So, this paper tries to highlight (i) the experiences war veterans gained during WWI (ii) the importance of the strategic location of Northern Myanmar and (iii) the role of Kachin Rangers before and after Second World War.

When the World War I broke out in 1914, British brought Myanmar people including Kachins into the war without the consent of the peoples of Myanmar. Recruitments are carried out throughout the country which was not expected by Kachin people. Consequently, many Kachins went to the frontlines to fight the war with Central Powers.¹ After the war, they came back to their native land including the Kachin war veterans.

As a result, war veterans play an important role in military and political movements. Some Kachin ethnics had already served in the Burma Military Police (BMP) which was formed in Bhamo in 1898. In 1914, BMP was transferred to Pyinoolwin in 1916; it was reorganized into a Kachin company of the 85th Burma Rifles.² Kachins were found to serve not only in the Burma Military but also at the front lines in various battlefields of the First World War. On 16 July 1917, Jamedar Kanje Naw had been sent to serve a duty in the Mesopotamia battlefield and he left Kachin region on 31st July 1917.³ Likewise, Nau Nan and Balu Gam from 2 Regiments of 20 Burma Rifles came along with Major C.M. Enrigue to serve in the Borneo island Battlefield.⁴ A total of 349 Kachins from Bamaw regions served in the British Army and fought in various battlefields in the First World War such as Gallipoli and North West Frontier of France, Egypt, East Africa, Iraq and Persia. As the First World War went on, more Kachin soldiers were sent to the battlefield of Mesopotamia such as Sawa Tang and altogether eighty Kachins soldiers on 20 October 1917, Jamedar Gaw Lu Gam and other sixty-six Kachin soldiers on 18 April 1918, Sergeant Maru Naw and fifty-two Kachin soldiers on 5 November 1918.⁵

It was found that Kachin soldiers fought the battles in their respective fields gallantly, which made them won assorted titles conferred on them for their gallantry. These Kachin heroes were⁶ -

¹ Central Powers are Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey. Allies are Russia, France, British Empire, Italy, Rumania

and United States

² Bawk La, Marang, *Biography of Sama Duwa Sinwa Naw*, Rangoon, Nay Yi Yi Press, 1980, p. 45 (Henceforth: Bawk La, 1980)

³ *Jinghpaw Shi Laika*, Vol. IV, No.2, June 1918

⁴ *Jinghpaw Shi Laika*, Vol. XII, No.1, August 1925

⁵ Roi Nau. M, *The Role of Kachin race in the struggle for independence*, Master of Arts (Thesis), History Department, Rangoon University, 1991, p.37 (Henceforth: Roi Nau, 1991)

⁶ H. Naw Awn, *Wunpawng Labau Ginshi (Kachin History)*, Typing Manuscript, 1983, pp.93-96 (Henceforth: Naw Awn, 1983)

Subedar Major Jinghpaw Gam,	1 st class Order of British Empire (O.B.E) ⁷
Jamedar Gaw Lu Gam,	Viceroy's Commissioner Officer (V.C.O)
Jamedar Sam Du,	V.C.O
Jamedar Kumje Naw,	V.C.O
Jamedar Sawam Tang,	V.C.O ⁸
Honorary Captain Myitung Tang	O.B.E, I.O.M ⁹
Honorary Lieutenant Pangh Kum Zau Tu	I.D.S.M, O.B.E ¹⁰
Subedar Major La Sang Gam	King's Victoria Medal (K.V.M) ¹¹
Subedar Major Chyauchi Naw ¹²	
Subedar Major Myihtoi Naw and Bridadier Lazum Tang Ji.	

Military service abroad made the Kachins gain international exposure, which transformed them militarily, politically, and organizationally well-weathered men. Such internationally experienced war veterans Kachins were great help in giving military training to their fellow Kachin nationals. In this way, it has seemed that war veteran nationals become a driving force in the political awakening and revolution movement against the imperialism.

In Second World War, when the Japanese army knocked at the door of Myanmar, British had to retreat to India quickly as they have no military preparation to defend Myanmar from any attack. At that time, Japanese forces occupied Rangoon on 8 March 1942, Bhamo in 1942 and Myitkyina 8 May 1942.¹³ The occupation of Burma was of strategic importance to both the Japanese and Allied Forces, because of Burma's strategic position wedged between the two Asian giants of India and China. For Japan, the occupation of Burma was essential to solidifying their control over Southeast Asia. For the Allies, their strategic goals were the observation of the Japanese position and military powers. The Allies needed to keep the Burma Road open so that the Chinese forces could be supplied and continued to remain in the war and to block the Japanese in getting staging area to invade India and its badly needed resources.

⁷ Joined the army in 1891, became Viceroy's Commissioner Officer in 1912, formed All Kachins Company and became its commander in February 1916

⁸ Took part in the war with the Germany in 1917 and became Viceroy's Commissioners Officer, returned Burma on 30 July 1917 from Germany, took part in the Mesopotamia operation, became the second Lieutenant in 1921 and won the 1st class Order of British Empire, earned the reward of sixty Rupees per month for life long. Japanese killed him on suspicion of British spy in 1944

⁹ Lisu nationals, who served military duty for 28 years from 1908 onwards. He earned a monthly salary of nine Rupees at the beginning and in 1937 it was about 270 Rupees per month. The Medals, he won were India Order of Merit (I.O.M) on 28 December 1916. 1st Class Order of British Empire in 1935 on the occasion of H.M. King George V and Queen Mary Jubilee 1935. King George V himself conferred the title. Coronation Medal on 12 May 1937.

¹⁰ Joined the army in 1912, became the bodyguard of King George V in 1931. He asked the attire of the King on reward for his faithfulness.

¹¹ A Lisu, joined the army in 1914, retired in 1932, won the King's India Orderly Officer, won the King's Victoria Medal, and King George V himself presented the Medal.

¹² Passed Seven Standard in 1909, entered the army, the highest educated Kachin Soldiers at that time, won the Viceroy's Commissioner Officer Medal.

¹³ Major Ba Thaung, *Burma Revolution History*, Rangoon, New light of Myanmar & Guardian Press, 1991, p.113 (Henceforth: Ba Thaung, 1991)

During World War II, Japanese and Allied forces used indigenous ethnic's groups' feuds, cultural attributes, manpower, supplies and knowledge of the terrain to attain their strategic and tactical objectives. This was especially true in northern Myanmar. Both sides relied greatly on the few roads and railroads to transport troops and supplies to the conventional Indian and Chinese fronts, and these routes were highly vulnerable to military operations. To operate in this difficult terrain, assistance from the Kachins was essential. The Kachin live in the mountainous northeast section of Myanmar, mainly in and around the valleys of two upper branches of the Irrawaddy River and along the Chinese border, as well as a small number who live in Assam.

In May 1944, Japan Kempetai Captain Yar E instructed Thakin Net Pe to form Burmese Volunteer Corps (BVC) and had given arms to them. BVC had a force of 257 members and had its office near the port of Myitkyina.¹⁴ Sama Duma Sinwa Naw, U Ohnla, U Marin Gam, U Lahke Shaung and U Karen La met the Japanese military leaders after Myitkyina was occupied by Japanese forces. Through the interpreter Sama Duwa said that he hoped Japanese army would drive out the British and promise the Kachin nationals their independence. Japanese had appointed Sama Duma Sinwa Naw as Kamaing District Commissioner as he was the tribune of Kachin peoples who won the trust of his people and was the leader of the biggest political forces.¹⁵

As soon as Japanese entered Kachin territory, the Japanese showed their true nature of Fascist, committing arrays of atrocities and torture. For example, at the Mogaung Bridge, circle headman U Po Chon, Kachin Duwas and Assistant Commissioners were being slapped and abused: in Myitkyina at the Nganhk bridge (now Shatapru bridge), Saya Lehpai Naw from Washaung, U La Kyone Gam from Myitkyina and Thugyi Zau Seng who were welcoming the Japanese forces, were also being slapped. The worst event Kachin ethnic had ever experienced occurred at Naungnan village, where Japanese asked a boy to climb the bamboo tree, ridiculing the boy as monkey and shot him down. Such event also occurred at Paisi village, twenty-nine miles from Tanhpaye near the Ayeyarwady confluence.¹⁶

While serving as Deputy Commissioner for two years, as Sama Duwa Sinwa Naw abhorred Japanese atrocities and torture, he went on against the Japanese on his own way and style. When he was being persuaded to cooperate with Allied forces, he replied, "I do not want to cooperate with the Allied forces, as I never believe the British imperialist. I will go against the Japanese on my own way and I will not rise against the Allied forces."¹⁷

While Sama Duwa Sinwa Naw and some nationals were planning to attack Japan in close quarter, other nationals joined the Northern Kachin Levies (NKL), by formed the British and the Ranger formed by the American 101 force to wage anti-fascist resistance. During World War II, The Kachin Rangers fought as a member of the military coalition ever formed in Northern Myanmar. The Kachin Rangers operated under a very complicated system of command. Northern Myanmar was within Southeast Asia Command's (SEAC) boundaries, and therefore the

¹⁴ One O One Kyaw Win Maung, *Thakin Net Pe who never surrender to the imperialist*, Rangoon, Bhamo Press, January, 1999, p.41 (Henceforth: Kyaw Win Maung, 1999)

¹⁵ Bawk La, 1980,52-53

¹⁶ Roi Nau, 1991, 45

¹⁷ Bawk La, 1980,55-56

chain of command began with the Supreme Allied Commander, Admiral Mountbatten. As acting Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Stilwell was second man in SEAC, and as commanding General of Chinese Army in India, he commanded a pair of Chinese divisions which had to be fitted into organization.

The Kachins were a great fighting stock who had cut their ways into Myanmar from the mountains to the north. The Kachins had trait that sometimes amused and sometimes touched the Americans who sought to enlist and recognize them who acted against the Japanese: their culture did not recognize deceit in personal relations. One exemplary episode of this kind of simple was the case occurred at Allied camp, when a Kachin national, on his scout mission, entered and uttered. "The Japanese have sent me to spy on you," said the Kachin as he entered the camp. "Please, how do I begin?" But the Kachins' potentialities as scouts, guides and irregulars were obvious; and so Detachment 101 of the Office of Strategic Services was organized in 1942. The force thus formed was known as the Kachin Rangers.¹⁸

The Allies supported the guerrillas from Fort Hertz, the only remaining Allied base in Burma that had an airfield. The three regiments of guerrillas -- the Karen Rifles, the Kachin Rifles, and the Kachin Levies -- were natural jungle fighting units of that time, but they lacked the tactical training and the modern equipment that were needed to effectively battle Japan's mechanized infantry and armor.

In April 1942, Wingate arrived in India to organize guerrilla levies against the Japanese in Burma. But rather than use the Kachin resistance, Wingate chose to lead a long-range penetration group, composed of British regulars and colonial units, behind Japanese lines to exploit the vulnerabilities of the occupation force with unconventional warfare.

The existing resistance of the Kachins and other hill tribes dovetailed perfectly with the British plan to support small units operating behind Japanese lines. In August 1943, a British V-Force team flew to Fort Hertz to reconstitute the Kachin Levies. Stilwell also diverted to Fort Hertz eight officers and 40 sergeants from the American soldiers who had been assigned to train the Chinese infantry divisions. From that remote outpost, they were to expand the partisan war in Burma by advising and supporting the Kachins in conducting guerrilla warfare behind Japanese lines.

The V-Force recruited the hill tribesmen and trained them to collect intelligence report, information and facts and details; to gain and provide early warnings of air attacks; to recover downed Allied aircrews; to conduct ambushes, reconnaissance and flank patrols; and to scout for conventional forces. To complement their experience as infantrymen, the V-Force advisers had acquired skills in language, medicine, demolition, radio and cryptology. They transmitted coded messages to relay their daily intelligence reports and to request air resupply and medical evacuation. British units operated from Ledo north to Fort Hertz, from Kohima to Chindwin, and in the mountains west of Imphal. American teams worked south to Myitkyina, sending their reports to Ledo and to Tagap-Ga, their forward logistics base.

¹⁸ htoigintawng.over-blog.com/article-kachin-rangers

The successes of the V-Force Kachin Rangers and the Kachin Levies, as well as Stilwell's failure to garner support from the Chinese and from the British army for a conventional offensive against Burma, led Stilwell to expand his guerrilla operations. He directed OSS Detachment 101 to establish its headquarters in Assam, in northeastern India. Detachment 101's assignment was to plan and conduct operations against and along the roads and the railroad into Myitkyina, in order to fail and block the Japanese the using of the Myitkyina airfield. Detachment 101 would coordinate its operations directly with the British. Detachment 101's Lieutenant Colonel Carl Eifler was given a free hand in directing sabotage and guerrilla operations. All Stilwell wanted to hear was "booms from the Burmese jungle." By November 1943, at his base in the Naga Hills of northern Assam, Eifler was preparing the first group of Allied agents for Burma.

The **Kachin Rangers** was under the command of [Carl F. Eifler](#) though often the term Kachin Rangers has been used to describe all Kachin Forces raised during the war by the Americans in Northern Burma.¹⁹

The number of Kachins participating with the United States military during the Second World War is estimated at around 8,000 to 11,000. Initially, the Kachin volunteers conducted traditional hit and run guerilla operations. As the detachment recruited more personnel who were Kachins, the detachment was able to establish more bases of operations behind Japanese lines. The Ranger formed by American 101force to wage anti-Japanese resistance. Colonel Stevenson, once the Director of Frontier Areas Administration, had formed the Northern Kachin Levies (NKL) with three company constituting 150 members on 28 May 1942 at Naunghkaing village near Machanbaw. The remnant border patrol and Myanmar rifle, which did not follow with the British withdrawal forces, joined in the NKL, which had its headquarters at Naunghkaing caning out recruiting and training.²⁰

The Americans then began to create independent guerrilla groups of the Kachin people and called in weapons and equipment drops. In December 1943 Stilwell issued a directive that Detachment 101 was to increase its strength to 3,000 guerillas and they were recruited from within Burma many of them "fierce Kachins". As early as in August 1942, Lt. Col Gamble and captain Leach from India arrived at the Fort Hertz Putao.

They had organized local peoples for the anti- Japanese resistance. Then they began anti-Japan resistance by forming battalion of 500 strong local peoples which had its headquarters somewhere near the Sumprabum. On 7 November 1942, they managed to reoccupy the Sumprabum from the hands of Japanese forces. After that these forces were reformed into Kachin Levies consisting of six companies, (G, S, N, L, No.5 Company and headquarter) each with 125 privates. . In addition, Lt.Col Gamble and captain Leach had established Home Guard for local security. Of these six companies of Kachin Levies, No.2 Company was under the charge of Major Nphan Naw who won the title of Medal of Cross (M.C), while Major Denis

¹⁹ Hogan, David W. Jr. [*U.S. Army Special Operations in World War II*](#). CMH pub; 70-42, 1958, ch. 5.

²⁰ Bawk La, Marang, *Biography of Sama Duwa Sinwa Naw*, Rangoon, Nay Yi Yi Press, 1980, p. 56 (Henceforth: Bawk La,1980)

Rosner Gordon led No.4 Company.²¹ We are unable to find out the commanders of the remaining companies. The outstanding men from Kachin Levies were: Naw Seng, Ah Di, Labya Tang, Sharet Hpung, Kareng Tang, San Dawng Hpung, Wa La Naw, Shen Ran Tong, Kum Shin Tu, La Mai Tang, Chang Khaw, Durm Gum Zau and La Maung Sha Roi.²²

In the year 1943, Kachin Levies attacked Japanese forces stationed at Sumpiyan village. They opened a base camp at Ngumla village from where Kachin Levies waged a resistance was against the Japanese, preventing their penetration in to the triangle area and Putao region. Therefore some say that Japanese had never been in the triangle area and Putao region. Kachin Levies also occupied a Japanese outpost at Pasi village and then went onto attack Japanese forces at Dru village. It was a month long struggle to take over the post in which ten Kachin Levies gave their lives. After that, Kachin Levies advanced toward the Japanese forces at Tiyanzup village where Japanese had fortified the village with the strong fort. Kachin Levies struggled to seize it for about three months. In the battle, the commanding officer of Kachin Levies, British Major Phear Stone and captain Rogers lost their lives. And then Kachin Levies assaulted on the Japanese forces at every village and occupied one after another along the routes from Sumprabum to Myitkyina. These villages were Sanang Hka, Gaung Dou, Shing Dan, Hpung Nun, Hka Garan Yang, N-Saw, N-Ja Kalu, Wa Tsat, Htang Jin, Kawa Pan Mai Htawng, N-Jsip, Hpung Ing, Tayu Yang and Tang Hpre.²³

In the month of October 1942, some American soldiers arrived in Hukaung valley. While they were conducting reconnaissance, Zing Htung Naw had met with the American Intelligence officer. Then American had formed the Kachin Ranger. Also in the month of September 1944, American had formed American – Wunpawng Ranger in the mountain of Kasen in Gauri area, Bhamo district, calling it 101 Ranger. The headquarters of it had in Bhamo, consisting of eleven battalions with the force of about ten thousand men under the command of General Joseph Stilwell.²⁴

Battalion formed in the month of October 1942, in the following areas were: (1) G. Battalion in Kasen Bum (Gauri) (2) S. Battalion in Sin Lum mountain range (3) N. Battalion Nbapa area (4) L. Battalion in Lweje area and the 5th Battalion as the people militia at the Shawa Hpawng village and finally the Headquarters Battalion. Each Ranger Battalion at that time was able to recruit more than a thousand men. Exactly one year after their formation, G. Battalion and N. Battalion attacked the Japanese forces that based at the Sin Lum mountain ranges.²⁵ Then G. Battalion in cooperation with S. Battalion, moved towards the Japanese forces and drove them out from Kyare, Bum Chyang, Bumsin and Kaing Htaik, finally advancing till to Hsenwi. N. Battalion had fought the Japanese forces at every village such as Gauri Lung Hkat, Lahtaw Hpat

²¹ Married a Kachin woman and lived in Myemyint ward, Myitkyina

²² H. Naw Awn, *Wunpawng Labau Ginshi* (Kachin History), Typing Manuscript, 1983, p103-104 (Henceforth; Naw Awn, 1983)

²³ Bawk La, 1980, 57-58

²⁴ Naw Awn, 1983, 105 - 108

²⁵ (a) *Jinghpaw Hpyen Dap Labau*, Bhamo, Pension Hpung, 1954, pp. 58 – 59

(b) Roi Nau, 1991, 50

Gum, Lahtaw Kka pra, Dingsin, Ura Bum, Lai Law and Yitzang from their way Sin Lum to Lashio.²⁶

At the same time, American 101 force had already arrived in Putao and Sumpura Bum region. With the help of American 101 force, nationals in Putao and Sumpura Bum region were able to form Resistant Force (Mihprap Dap) to wage a resistant war against the Japanese. It had dark green uniforms with a badge of lightning symbol. Resistant force was not given proper training, but was formed urgently for exigency cases. British Major C.M.N. Enriquish recorded about the Resistant Force like that: -

*"I know, Kachins are unrivaled in ambush battle. Should the proper trainings were given: they will become first class guerrilla force. They resistance Japanese occupation forces marvelously."*²⁷

To retake Myanmar, American and British had planned the operation Capital. To implement the operation it was necessary to establish a communication line between India and China by which forces and supply were to take in for the American and Chinese forces. The result of it was the well-known Ledo road or Stilwell road. Thus 5307 force commanded by General Stilwell and Chinese forces advanced on to occupy the Myitkyina Airfield. The two forces moved on in the flank, one passing the Nawye pass and the other the Kumong Mountain. These forces had reached Myitkyina on 17 May 1944 and occupied the Airfield.²⁸ In the operation, Kachin nationals who served as guides in the American 101 force were Zing Htung Naw, Kumrin Gam, Subader Dingrin Chyangai, La Mai Zau Seng Kahtan Bum Gum Ja, Forest ranger Ngaw Yang Naw and N.Waw Ma Tsaw.²⁹

In the Myanmar-China border area, Duwa Zau Bawk Led the Japanese resistance. He formed at least two Kachin Levies. One was formed in northern Shan State after meeting General Win Gate in the month of March 1943. This Kachin Levies was made up with the Seventy British was veterans. In July 1944, after meeting Chinese General Dawn Goi Ching and American 101 force, he formed a Kachin Levies in the Sino-Myanmar border area. The combined forces of Duwa M.Zau Bawk's Kachin Levies and Kachin forces led by British appointed captain Kunje Taung, attacked the Japanese forces at Lwekan and Tamoenye and occupied these places. Later Tamoenye became the base camp for the Kachin Levies.

In May 1943, with fifteen men and forty-five porters, Captain Vincent Curl marched from Fort Hertz to the western slopes of the Hukawng Valley.³⁰ While they were conducting reconnaissance, Zing Htung Naw had met with the American Intelligence officer. Then, American had formed the Kachin Ranger. Also in September 1944, American had formed

²⁶ Bawk La, 1980,59

²⁷ Roi Nau, 1991, 48

²⁸ Kyaw Win Maung, 1999, 36

²⁹ Lawang Li, Duwa, *History of Myitkyina*, Typing manuscript, p.30

³⁰ (a) Kristine Withers, *Detachmant 101: A Microcosm of the Evolutionary Nature of Warfare*, Kansas, Department

of History, College of Arts and Sciences, Kansas State University, Manhattan, 2011, p. 22 (Henceforth: Kristine Withers, 2011)

(b) Lt. Col. W.H. Peers to Brig. Gen. W.J. Donovan " Report covering Period 31 October to 30 November, 1944", p.2

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Three hundred Kachin fighters joined M force, and a large number of Myihprap veterans joined H and K forces, which was the result of the reorganization of 5307th Second Battalion. The 5307th also employed many Kachin scouts and coolies not to Detachment 101. The Kachins had very few weapons with which to fight the enemy – a few knives, spears, crossbows, arrows, and some old-type flint guns. The Japanese terrorized the helpless Kachins by killing the men and young boys and raping the young girls. Some were even burned alive in their villages, while others managed to escape the massacre and fled deep into the jungle. This is why the Kachins hated the Japanese with a passion. They wanted to kill as many of them as possible and drive them out of their region.³² The famous Kachin Rangers, or as they were clawed earlier Detachment 101, were initially recruited from disrupted fragment of Kachin Companies, and from the remnants of the Military Police. The existence of a guerilla force employing unique methods of fighting was a great assistance to the Allies; and that goes for the Kachin Levies as well as for the Rangers. They had acquired by this an intimate knowledge of Japanese disposition, numbers and dumps, and of course they were invaluable as guide.³³ The Kachin Rangers fought as a member of the military coalition ever formed in Northern Myanmar. The Kachin Rangers operated under a very complicated system of command. The Kachins are a great fighting stock who has cut their way into Myanmar from the mountains to the north.³⁴

The Americans found the Kachins to be natural guerrilla fighters. The Kachins camouflaged the site to appear as natural as possible, placed their automatic weapons to rake the trail, and planted pungyis in the foliage alongside the path. Once the Japanese entered the area, the fire of the automatic weapons drove the surprised enemy troops into the undergrowth, where they impaled themselves on the pungyis. Having inflicted losses, the lightly armed Kachins usually left the area quickly, avoiding prolonged engagements. In contrast, the Americans often displayed too much readiness to stand and fight, not recognizing a guerrilla's responsibility to minimize his own casualties while maximizing those of the enemy.³⁵

The Americans then began to create independent guerrilla groups of the Kachin people, calling in weapons and equipment drops. In December 1943 Stilwell issued a directive that Detachment 101 to increase its strength to 3,000 guerillas, they were recruited from within

³¹ H. Naw Awn, 1983, 105-108

³² Personal interview with Duwa Zau Rip at his resident at Sitapu ward, Myitkyina, 22 December 1999.

³³ Major C.M. Enriquez, *In Quest of Greatness*, The Kachin Veterans Committee, General Office, No. 11 Kyunpintha

Qr, Myitkyina, 2003, p.34

³⁴ htoigintawng.over-blog.com/article-kachin-rangers

³⁵ Personal interview with Duwa Zau Rip at his resident at Sitapu ward, Myitkyina, 22 December 1999.

Burma many of them "fierce Kachins".³⁶ When Stilwell authorized the detachment to expand, it consisted of 29 American officers, 65 enlisted men, 103 agents, and 1,966 armed Kachins. By November of 1944, the Detachment had 400 Americans and 6,000 Kachins under its command.³⁷

And then, I would like to present about the geographically of Northern Myanmar. Separated from India, China and Tibet by an inverted U-shaped bend of great mountains, the Himalayas and their giant spurs, North Myanmar is divided by the Kumon Range into compartments. West of Kumon Range, the headwaters of the mighty Chindwin River, flowing north, carved out the Hukawng Valley. Directly south of the Hukawng Valley is the ridge of Jambu Bum. South of Jambu Bum lies the long narrow Mogaung River Valley. East of the Kumon Range a tributary stream of the Irrawaddy points a long slim finger north from Myitkyina to the Himalayas; at the head of this valley is Fort Hertz, whose airstrip and garrison were the last Allied foothold in Myanmar in 1942 and which had been held by the Allies ever since.

After crossing the Patkai Range, the Ledo Road emerged from the mountains at Shingbwiyang, at the northwestern corner of the Hukawng Valley. About ten miles south of Shingbwiyang is the Tanai Hka, whose course, though winding snakelike, still follows a definite direction from southeast to northwest. So the road's trace would initially run roughly parallel with Tanai. The western wall of the Hukawng Valley is the Wantuk Bum.

It also became, some says, the center of Kachin narionals' political movement.³⁸ In the anti-Japanese war Kachin nationals who won the military medals were.³⁹

The Category of Military Cross

Major Nhpan Naw (Jinghpaw)

Major Subedar A Grawng Upung (Rawang)

The Category of Burma Gallantry Medal

Subedar Lahpai Nhkat Naw Song (Shan State)

Subedar Major Ah Di (Lisu)

Subedar Labya Tang (Jinghpaw)

Subedar Sarep Hpung (Rawang)

Subedar Kareng Tang

Jamedar Sam Daung Hpung (Rawang)

Jamedar Wa Lu Naw

Jamedar Shing Ram Tang

Jamedar Kumshin Tu

Jamedar Lamai Tang

³⁶ Dunlop, Richard. *Behind Japanese Lines*, New York: Rand McNally & Company, 1979, p. 248, 255-262

³⁷ Kristine Withers, 2011, 67

³⁸ Ah Nan, *Kachin Sub-state in Northern Theinni (1947-1962)* M.A Thesis, Mandalay University, 28 September 1987, p.48

³⁹ Naw Awn, 1983, 103-104

Jamedar Chang Hkaw
 Jamedar Dum Gan Zau
 Lamoung Sharoi.

On 3 August 1943, Japanese forces retreated from Myitkyina. After the successful driving out Japanese from the Kachin territory at the end of Second World War, all Kachin Youths Vigilant Association (Pawng Yawng Ram Rawt Hpung – (P.Y.R.Hp) was established under the leadership of U La Htoi at the place known as Nyaung Kaung – Sin Lum mountain in the present Momauk township. It consisted of about fifteen members of Japanese war refugee youths and veterans of Kachin Ranger. The major function of the Association was to open the eyes of youths politically by opening youth training courses. The P.Y.R.Hp was also founded at the Balawngkwng ward in Bhamo, under the auspices of U Zau Awng.⁴⁰

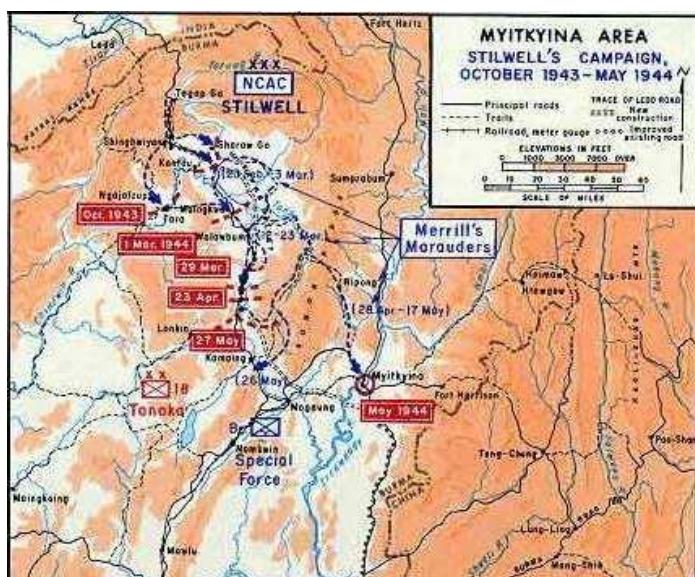
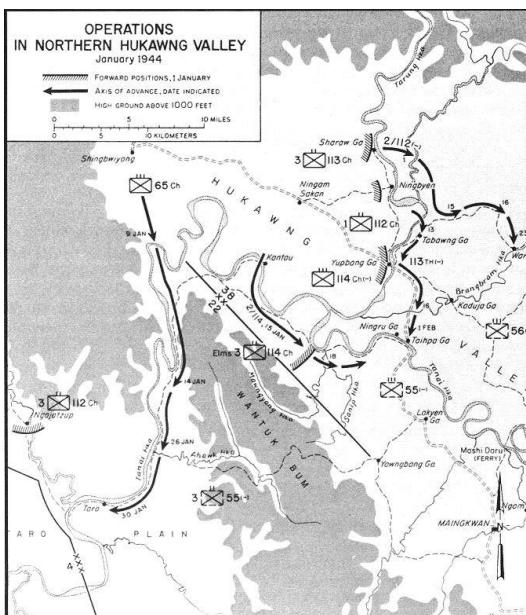
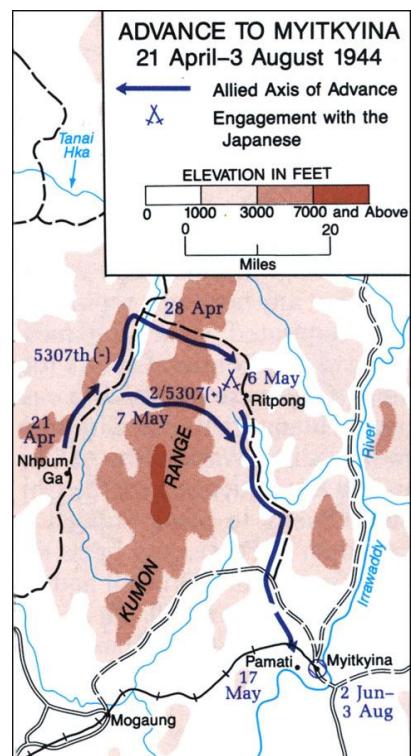
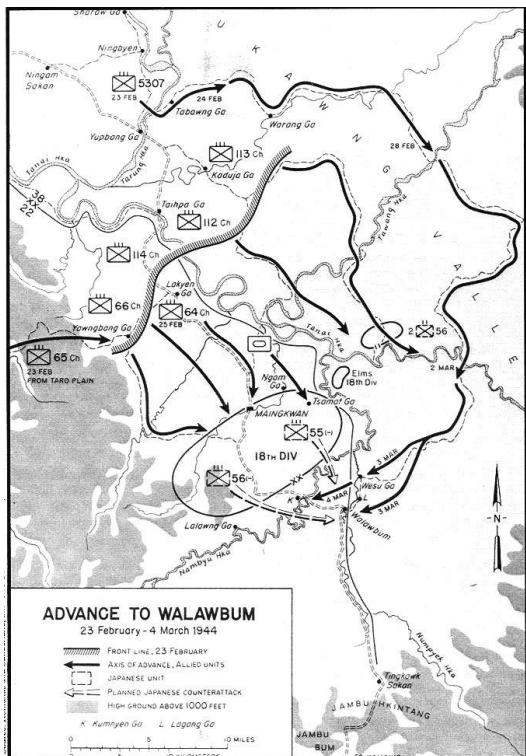
Beside, setting aside some losses of Kachin nationals in the Japanese resistance, the resistance brought about the emergence of energetic and vigorous Kachin Youths, who took part in the independence struggle, in cooperation with the Myanmar proper based on their experiences of politic, military and international exposure, gained while in abroad during the Japanese resistance.

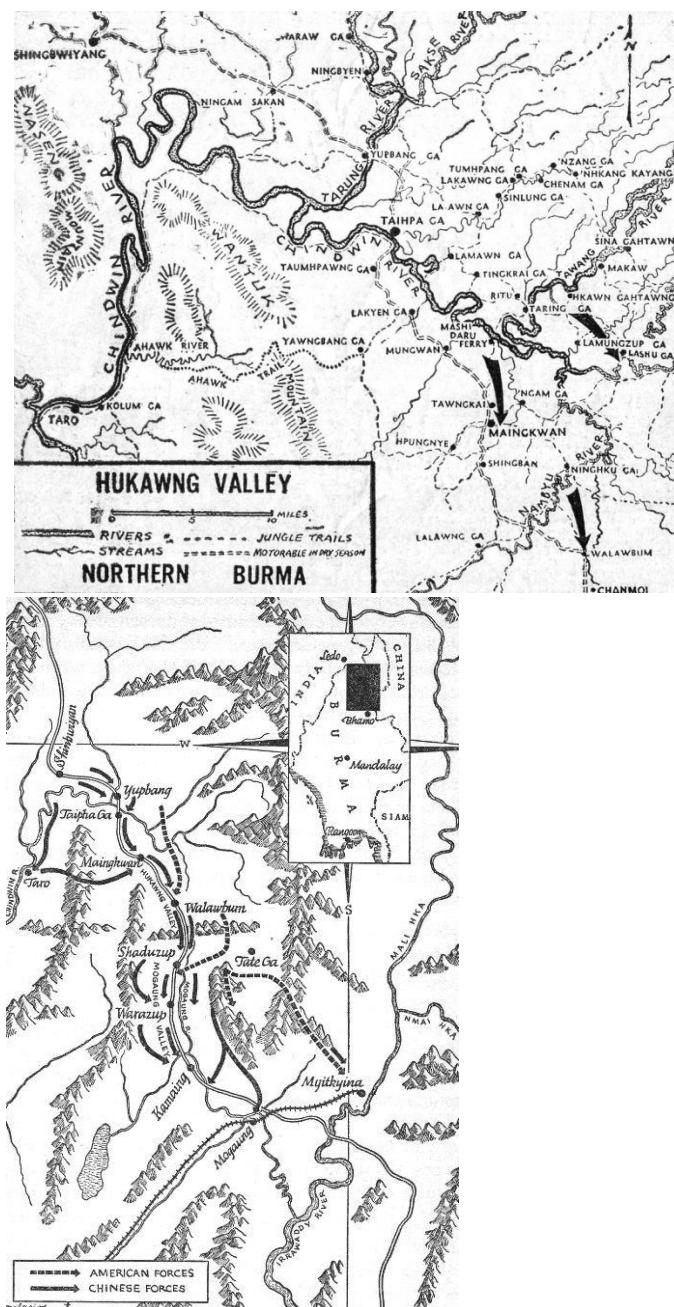
The year 1944 saw the successful driving out of Fascist Japan from Kachin territory and it was a time that the AFPFL was formed under the leadership of General Aung San for Myanmar freedom. After the war, concerning with the formation of Executive Council, the AFPFL and the viceroy disagreed over it. Therefore, General Aung San and party went on a journey to do organizing work in about 27 townships in Upper Myanmar. The journey began in the month of November 1945 and lasted for thirteen days. Lamung Zau Tawng accompanied General Aung San in the journey and held a press conference on 16 November 1945 at the AFPFL headquarters.⁴¹

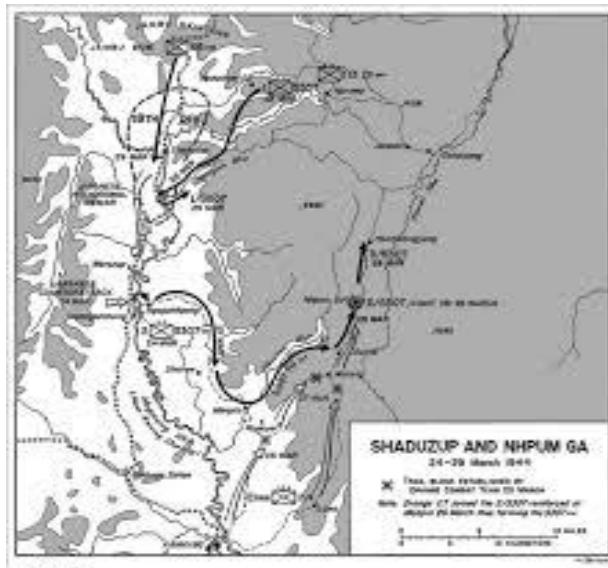
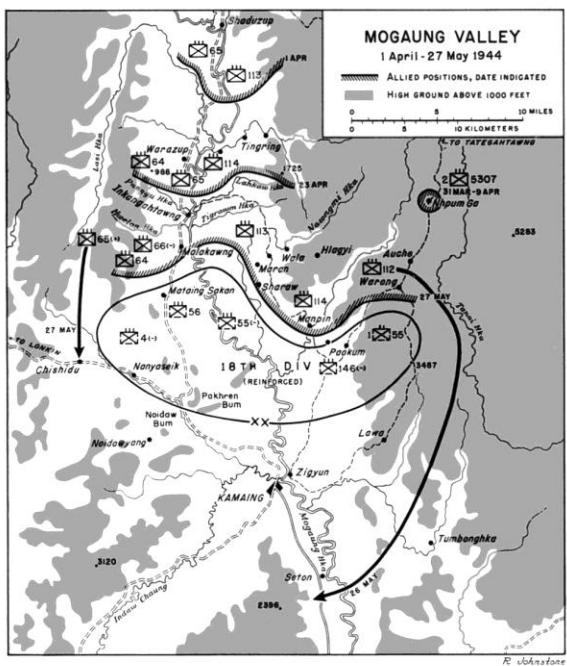
In conclusion, as we have seen, political repercussions in the wake of the First World War had not had much impact upon Northern Myanmar. But the Second World War had been of great significance for Northern Myanmar. The First World War had been confined mainly to Europe but the Second was widespread, involving Japan and East Asian countries as well. Northern Myanmar and Kachins were also directly involved in the War. Kachins employed various methods and tactics in the war. They were heavily involved in the heterogeneous China-Burma-India Theater. They fought as levies with the British, supported Wingate's two Chindit expeditions; fought, collected intelligence, reported weather and rescued downed-Allied aircrews for Detachment 101; fought with Merrill's Marauders and the Chinese, and fought with the Mars Task Force. By all these accounts, it can firmly say that Kachins played a significant role in the victory over Japanese, achieved by allied in the China-Burma-India Theater.

⁴⁰ Kyaw Win Maung , 1999, 81-82

⁴¹ Chairman of Kachin State, the Signatory at Pinlon.







JIM FLETCHER WITH KACHINS. Kachins operated behind enemy lines.
Photo by Jim Fletcher.

Kachin Rangers

