



**SUPPLEMENT**  
TO  
**The London Gazette**

*Of TUESDAY, the 20th of APRIL, 1948*

**Published by Authority**

*Registered as a newspaper*

THURSDAY, 22 APRIL, 1948

*The War Office.  
March, 1948.*

OPERATIONS IN THE INDIA COMMAND, FROM 1ST JANUARY, 1943,  
TO 20TH JUNE, 1943.

**PREFACE BY THE WAR OFFICE.**

SINCE the conclusion of hostilities with Japan, certain Japanese documents, handed over to the Headquarters of the 12th Army in Burma after the Japanese surrender have been examined. It has been established from these documents, that the Japanese plan of operations in Burma for the winter 1942-43, was to make an offensive into India against the oilfield at Tinsukia via the Hukawng Valley, and with another force to capture Imphal and then Dimapur, in order to cut off any Allied Troops in the Tinsukia area and to occupy Northern Assam. A Japanese document gives as the reasons why these plans were not put into effect, first the Allied offensive in Arakan and secondly the penetration of Brigadier Wingate's 77th Brigade into Northern Burma. By Japanese admissions, Field Marshal Viscount Wavell's operations, described in this Despatch, accomplished their main purpose, which was by offensive action to keep the Japanese forces engaged and thereby prevent an offensive into India at a time when India was unprepared.

The following Despatch was submitted to the Secretary of State for War on 27th June, 1944, by FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT WAVELL, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.C., A.D.C., Commander-in-Chief, India.

1. This despatch deals with the operations and general situation in the India Command from January 1st to June 20th, 1943, the date on which I ceased to be Commander-in-Chief in India. It includes an account of the fighting in Arakan and in Upper Burma during the first half of 1943, and of the planning and preparations which took place during the same period for the campaigning season of 1943-44.

**PLANS FOR FIRST HALF OF 1943.**

2. The objectives I had laid down for the Winter of 1942-43 were the capture of Akyab in Arakan; the strengthening of our position in the Chin Hills (i.e., about Tiddim and Fort White), and the establishment of forces on the Chindwin river between Kalewa and Sittaung, whence the Japanese lines of communication further east were to be raided, and preparations were to be made for a further advance into Upper Burma should opportunity offer.

These British operations were to be combined as closely as possible with operations by Chinese troops directed by General Stilwell (who held the post of Chief of Staff to the Generalissimo, Marshal Chiang Kai-shek). These aimed at occupying North-East Burma as far as an approximate line Myitkyina—Bhamo—Lashio, with the object of covering the construction of a road from Ledo into China, which was being made by American engineers. A Chinese force from Ledo, with American direction but under my control, was to advance on Myitkyina to join hands with a Chinese force from Yunnan, which General Stilwell informed me would advance in strength on March 1st, 1943. I had a conference with General Stilwell on December 10th, at which I undertook to do all I could towards assisting a Chinese advance from Yunnan and reoccupying Upper Burma in the spring of 1943; but I emphasized the seriousness of the administrative problem, our limited resources, and the unlikelihood of any rapid progress owing to road-making difficulties, both from Ledo towards Myitkyina and eastwards from the Imphal plain towards the Chindwin.

The troops actually available in India at the beginning of 1943 and the state of their training and equipment are shown in Appendix A.