

had reached the Sunle-Htinzin area, though their concentration was hindered by swollen streams. The third brigade (the 21st) of the Division was protecting the road in the rear.

52. *Ukhrul Area.* At the end of July, command of the Ukhrul area had passed from 20 Indian Division to 4 Brigade of 2 British Division.

6 Brigade of this Division was responsible for a sector of the main Kohima-Imphal road, and 5 Brigade was operating in the Tamu sector under 23 Indian Division. 4 Brigade was operating in the Ukhrul area with patrols as far as Humine.

In the middle of August columns were directed on Homalin to destroy what was left of the enemy between the Angouching Range and the Chindwin. At the end of August these columns were actively engaged in clearing this area despite rising streams. The other two brigades of 2 British Division were withdrawn to Kohima.

53. *Myothit-Thaungdut Area.* On the 10th August "Tarcol", a special force of two battalions and a detachment of engineers, was formed from troops of 20 Indian Division to drive the enemy from the Myothit-Thaungdut area.

In the third week of August, "Tarcol" was increased by an additional battalion. Having successfully crossed the difficult Yu River, this force was, at the end of the month, advancing on Tonhe, after destroying weak enemy parties which they met.

Patrols from an Indian battalion of this column reached the Chindwin River on the 30th August, the first troops to do so since the Japanese crossed it at the opening of their offensive in March.

#### *Summary of Operations in August.*

54. *Arakan.* Activity limited to patrolling.

55. *Chin Hills and Chindwin.* During the month, the advance along the Imphal-Tiddim road had continued. By the end of the month our troops had crossed the Assam-Burma frontier and reached a point 21 miles south of the border. Numbers of tanks, guns and vehicles had been captured.

The Japanese were constructing defences in the Tiddim area and appeared likely to make a stand.

Further east, British and Indian troops advancing to the south-east had captured the village of Tamu on the 4th August. 11 (East African) Division, which then took over from them, had begun operations east and south of Tamu and, by the end of the month, were within four miles of Sittaung. To the south they had reached Htinzin.

56. At the end of August, the Japanese were holding positions astride the Tamu-Sittaung track, the track Tamu-Yuwa, in the hills to the east of the Tamu-Kalemyo road, and astride the road at Yazagyo.

57. North of Tamu, "Tarcol" had captured the village of Thanan, 12 miles north-west of Thaungdut, and were advancing on Tonhe.

58. *North Burma.* Myitkyina was captured on the 3rd August after a siege lasting 78 days. The greater part of the garrison of 6,000 was annihilated, although some troops escaped down the Irrawaddy on rafts.

Chinese forces crossed the Irrawaddy east of Myitkyina and moved down the Myitkyina-Bhamo road to Kazu where, at the end of August, they were consolidating.

About 20 miles west of Kazu, detachments of Kachin Levies were in contact with the enemy along the east bank of the Irrawaddy.

36 British Division was advancing down the railway south-west of Mogaung and had captured the village of Pinbon.

50 Chinese Division had completed its concentration in the Mogaung area.

#### *Events in September.*

59. *Tasks allotted to 15 Indian Corps—Early September.* On the 4th September, General Slim in an Operation Instruction warned the Commander, 15 Indian Corps, that Fourteenth Army would launch large-scale offensive operations across the Chindwin into Central Burma about December and that his rôle would be:—

(a) To secure his present positions in Arakan, including Maungdaw.

(b) To keep open the sea line of communication through the entrance to the River Naf.

(c) To destroy any Japanese force which might launch an offensive in the Arakan. (It was possible that the enemy might attack in Arakan as a counter to our offensive across the Chindwin.)

(d) To exploit any withdrawal or excessive thinning out of the Japanese forces opposing him.

These orders amplified the Operation Instruction which I had issued on the 29th July regarding our post-monsoon operations. It became necessary, however, to amend these orders at the end of September, but I shall deal with this in a later paragraph.

#### *Operations in September.*

60. *Arakan Front—15 Indian Corps.* In pursuance of the Corps policy of anticipating the enemy on important tactical features, and with the object of securing bases for operations directly the monsoon was over, moves were made by 25 Indian Division during September. As events proved, it was not always possible to anticipate the enemy, and sharp fighting on a small scale was frequently necessary to evict him. By the middle of September units of 25 Indian Division were firmly established along the main spine of the Mayu Range. Small but violent enemy counter-attacks on the nights 14th/15th and 15th/16th were heavily repulsed, as was another determined attack at the end of the month. The situation then was:

25 Indian Division:—patrolling to the east and south-east down the Kalapanzin River, after having advanced well south of the Tunnels Area.

26 Indian Division:—one brigade in the Taung Bazaar and Goppe Bazaar areas respectively, with one brigade in reserve.

81 (West African) Division:—continuing its concentration which had begun some three weeks previously in the Singpa area (five miles west-north-west of Mowdok).

61. *Chindwin Front—33 Corps:* (a) 5 Indian Division (*Imphal-Tiddim Road*). The advance down the Tiddim road continued. On