

# The British Guerrilla Force during INA-Japanese Imphal Campaign: A Case Study on V-Force in Manipur

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**Abstract :** *The “V” Force (Victor/Victory Force) a guerrilla organization, formed by the British in 1942, enrolled from native hill people, responsible for jungle surveillance over the presence and activities of Japanese army and I.N.A., at the eve of Imphal campaign. It was also called stay behind force to harass the lines of enemy communications with ambushes and sabotage, and to provide information from behind enemy lines to the main force of IV Corps. The British employed these guerrilla forces from Arakan to Manipur border. Many died from joining “V” Force and they remained out of remembrance in the history of Imphal campaign, but they stood at the most grievous location in the midst of thicket jungle. This article focus to recalled back their contribution.*

**Key Words :** A. Felix Williams, April, 1942, Assam Rifles, Second World War.

## 1. Introduction

In 1942 the Japanese army pushed the British force out of Burma to Imphal. On the other side the British force prepared to recaptured Burma from India. At the same time Japanese army and I.N.A., prepared to invade India in 1944. Both the Japanese army and British had to cross layers of high mountainous area to captured their destination. These mountainous area is located between Kaboo valley of Burma and Imphal valley, occupied by native hill people Kukis and Nagas. The native people knew well the topographical condition of these area. Therefore, their help and guidance were needed to cross those thicket jungle and to locate the enemy’s position and location. Thus both Japanese-INA and British employed the native people in guerrilla network. As of such, in April, 1942 A. Felix Williams, formerly the commander of the Tochi Scouts, a para- military unit on the North-west Frontier, founded V-Force to harass Japanese lines of communications with ambushes and sabotage, and to provide information from behind enemy lines, at the ratio of 200 tribesmen to one British officer.

## 2. Formation

In 1942 the Japanese army repelled the British Army from Burma and seemed likely to invade India, General Sir Archibald Wavell, commander in chief in India ordered the creation of a guerrilla organization to be recruited from local people; to operate along the frontier between India and Burma. Thus in April, 1942

under Brigadier A. Felix Williams and on the foundation of platoons loaned from the Assam Rifles a force of five military police battalions, composed of Gurkhas under British officers seconded from the Indian Army, “V” Force was established.

## 3. Structure

The “V” Force were divided into six command area under IV Corps and XV Corps :

**I. Ledo Naga Area with HQ at Ledo** under Lieut-Colonel Pozey for operations east, south and south-eastward from Ledo under North Assam Brigade.

**II. Kohima Naga Area with HQ at Kohima** under Lieut-Colonel Lightfoot under Kohima Brigade for operations east and south from Manipur.

**III. Kuki Area with HQ at Imphal**, under Lieut-Colonel E. Murray for operation south, east and south-westward from Shugunu under G.O.C., 23 Division.

**IV. Lushai Area with HQ at Aizawl** under Lieut-Colonel Cuerdon, 109 Infantry Brigade for south, south-east and south-westwards from Aizawl.

**V. Tripura Area with HQ at Agartala** under Lieut-Colonel Haswell for operation south and south-eastwards of Tripura under G.O.C. 14 Division

**VI. The Chin Area Command with HQ at Falam** was located under the XV Corps area.

## 4. Assignment

- to undertake guerrilla operations against the Japanese lines of communications, when they pass through the area.
- to harassed the Japanese and INA in the jungle
- to sent enemy’s position and location to IV Corps
- to facilitated the movement of main force in the jungle as guide

## 6. Enrolled “V” Force Members

The name of the hill people, who joined “V” Force are mentioned below :

### 6. A. CHAMMU AREA

Sl No	N A M E	VILLAGE	REMARKS
1	Shomkhothang, Kuki Group Commander	Koltan	The first to cross River Chindwin with Captain Moran in 1942, always active
2	Inchisung Tangkhul, Group Major	Bongpa	Most capable Group Major, one of the first to join “V”

			Force	24	Henkhosei Kuki	Khenjoi	Do
3	Chitholeng Tangkhul	Do	First class in patrolling, killed 5 Japs	25	Jampao	Do	Organizing whole group
4	Heileng Tangkhul	Do	He killed 3 Japs	26	Yangshi Tangkhul	Shiroi	Responsible to harassing Japs in the area
5	Kadohi Tangkhul	Do	This boy gave first information of enemy convoy in Kamjong area in June, 1944 Captured 27 JIFFs after killing Jap Officer.	27	Khasung Tangkhul Section Comdr	Punshing	Responsible to harassing Japs in the Pushing area
6	Kallu Tangkhul	Do	Save "V" Force ration and ammunition from Japs.	28	Khaso Tangkhul Group Comdr	Hundung	Gave information and ration to our group
7	Chunglet Kuki. Group commander	Chassad	Saved Lieut Taylor. Only loyal Kuki in Chassad	29	Luisang Tangkhul	Do	Gave information
8	Douhem	Molvailup	Remained loyal throughout	30	Chinaochung Tangkhul	Tungou	Gave information
9	Linko Tangkhul	Kongkal	First class guide throughout Angouching battle	31	Vareisui Tangkhul	Do	Gave information and supplied guides to our troops during Songphel attack in April, 44
10	Changproi Tangkhul	Phenge	Saved Captain Fraser Smith and Lieut. Taylor	32	Ngazam Tangkhul Group Commr	Ukhrul	Gave information on enemy in May and June
11	Naipaleng Tangkhul	Tusom	Captured one Jifs officer	33	Yorching Tangkhul Group Comdr	Do	Organize for information
12	Lengdo Tangkhul	Loushing	Killed 5 Japs.	34	Ruichumhao Tangkhul	Do	Gave information and supplied guides
13	Nganaungai Tangkhul	Marou	Responsible for guarding and rationing behind the Japs advance in Imphal	35	Mishivan Tangkhul	Do	Responsible for enrolling in "V" Force
14	Napileng Tangkhul	Do	Harrasing Japs in May, June and July	36	Chinaongai Tangkhul	Do	Information guides and rescue
15	Ngamjatong Kuki	Singkap	Loyal throughout, killed 1 Jap	37	Kuingai Tangkhul	Phadang	Information and guides
16	Kochainang Tangkhul	Yongphu	Most helpful guide in April, 1944	38	Malungring Tangkhul	Somdal	Sent scouts to Chassad area
17	Mayarjung Tangkhul	Koushou	Brought 1 B.O.R, through Jap lines.	<b>6. B. NAMBASHI SUB AREA</b>			
18	Thainga Tangkhul Section Comr.	Do	Always active	39	Lamkthothang kuki Group Major	Bongbal Khullen	Right hand man in the area
19	Kashikhui Tangkhul, Section Comr.	Shangshak	Responsible for reorganization of "V" Force in Shangshak area	40	Seitinpao Kuki Group Comdr	Phailengjang	Managed his group well
20	Nganaongai Tangkhul, Asst	Do	Assistant to Kashikhui	41	Manungai Tangkhul Section Comdr	Irong	One of the Section Commander to go into Chindwin area
21	Seipo Tangkhul	Apong	Always on patrol during Japs present	42	Ngultinpao Group Commdr.	Phailengjang	Always active on patrol
22	Ungapai Tangkhul	Goda	Several times passed information	43	Demkhothem Kuki	Sanaching	Great help
23	Pakang Kuki	Khotuh	Remained loyal	44	Douthang Kuki Section Comdr	Molnom	Save his section's gun from Japs when

			demande
45	Dalsang Tangkhul Section Comdr	Kasung	First to go down to Chindwin river in 1942
46	Lenthang Section Commander	Phaijang	Informer in Kangpat area
47	Ngulkhohem Kuki Group Commander	Kongbe	Good in Nambashi area
48	Katungmo Tangkhul Group Comdr.	Sorte	As above
49	Phunang Tangkhul Group Commander	Do	Do
50	Mipa Tangkhul Group Comdr.	Nambashi	Escaped from Japs and brought information
51	Tepa Tangkhul	Khonglo	Killed 3 Japs
52	Thohao Kuki Section Comdr	Mollen	Very loyal
53	Chungkholet Kuki	Galbung	As above
54	Ngashihong Tangkhul	Kasom Khullen	Influence over other Tangkhul
55	Tepa Group Comdr	Sorte	Fight Japs in the area
56	Aphangza Tangkhul group Comdr	Tangkhul Hundung	Work well
57	Machileng Tangkhul Group Comdr	Chongdan	Exercise well
58	Demkhokam Group Comdr	Lhakhan	Escaped from Japs and brought information
59	Nehkhokhai Kuki Group Comdr	Lhakhan	Good service
60	Lunhol	Kamjong	Good informer in Kamjong area
61	Pakang Kuki Group Comdr	Sita	Refused to joined Japs
62	Yamjatong Kuki	Do	As above
63	Ngamlapao Kuki Section Comdr	Do	Remained loyal in Sita area
64	Mollun Group Comdr	Darchin	Right hand man in Sita area
65	Holman Group Comdr	Womko	Gave much information in Womko area
66	Kolok Group Comdr	Darchin	Captured by Japs
67	Angchare Section comdr	Larong	Remained with the Japs and passed information to us
68	Mono	Darchin	Very active in Sita area
69	Mote Group Comdr	Larong	Useful in Chindwin patrols
70	Angton	Thangbinou	As above
71	Thumpa	Duthang	Very active
72	Darshon Lamkang	Larong	Gave most valuable information
73	Jamkhotang Kuki	Samukom	Capable in Kaboo valley patrol
74	Maniram Section Comdr	Kwatha	Do
75	Dhansingh	Do	As above

	Section Comdr		
76	Sohol	Sebong	DO
<b>6. C. MOMBI AREA</b>			
77	Thampan Group Mayor	Khobung	Several times in action with Japs
78	Mono Group Comdr	Do	Always active
79	Bering Group Comdr	Namphou	As above
80	Betham Group Comdr	Phiranlehao	Do
81	Vummang Group Comdr	Kongtal	Loyal leader
82	Volsung Group comdr	Aman	Took part in patrol
83	Thongjang Group comdr	Kultuk	Have took successful ambious
84	Thungdil Group Comdr	Chandel	Loyal leader
85	Chingpao Group Comdr	Lhoukol	Good informer
86	Vumon Group Comdr	Semol	The only loyal Kuki
87	Thumthung Head Cleak	Chandel	Good service
88	Angno Assistant	Thorham	Took part in hazardous patrols
89	Angnew Quarter master	Khubongkhul	As above
90	Lomthung Section Comdr	Namphou	Good interpreter
91	Heljachin Group Comdr	Paldal	Patrolled Manipur river day and night
92	Thonghem	Semol	Remained with the Japs sent information
93	Benang Section Comdr	Phiran Khullen	Interpreter in Kaboo valley
94	Shongthu Section Comdr	Chalong	Bringing information from Wantam area
95	Korong Section Comdr	Thorham	Good for duty
96	Angul	Phiran machete	Reliable
97	Renoul, Section Comdr	Khobung	Organized ambushes
98	Ngamrung, Section Comdr.	K. Khullen	Hard worker
99	Besan	Anal Khulen	Hard worker
100	Darno	Do	Do
101	Mono	Toupakpi	Took part in several ambushes
102	Thangkhosay	Do	Hard worker
103	Beshol Section Comdr	Lambung	As above
104	Besang	Modi	Saved two "V" Force from Japs
105	Kono, Section Comdr	Chandel	Willing worker

106	Kono, Section Comdr	Thorham	As above
107	Chosel	Anal	Willing worker
108	Vumjapao Section comdr.	Kongtal	Escaped from Japs with information
109	Linkhokam	Do	Do
110	Semjahao, Section Comdr.	Yangdum	Influencial
111	Sonjapao, Section Comdr.	Do	As above
112	Suaka, Section Comdr	Lamkot	Do
113	Koting, Section Commander	Betup	Useful interpreter
114	Holkhokhai, Gr. Comdr	Aimolyoupi	Loyal Kuki
115	Konjam	Do	Hard worker
116	Thongkhosei	Aimoljpopi	Brought information

117	Ontong	Do	Loyal worker
118	Sochin	Pallel	As above

## 7. Conclusion

The hill people employed at the hazardous situation during World War-II in the hill area of Manipur remained out of historical remembrance, though many of them paid their life and therefore, this article is presented in their memories.

## 8. Acknowledgement

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