

# Scorch of the rising sun

Britain's failure – due to its war commitments in Europe – to dispatch armed reinforcements and replacement troops, and the Allied troops' inadequacy in jungle warfare in the Battle of Malaya consigned them to a bitter defeat in just 55 days. Singapore's meek capitulation in Japanese hands followed swiftly in mid-February 1942.

Suddenly, there was... just a complete hush. And we were told that there was going to be a surrender and everything would cease at midday. So that was the end of my fighting. I became a POW.

LIEUTENANT PENROD DEAN, 2/4TH MACHINE GUN BATTALION OF THE 8TH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION

## THE BATTLE PLAN

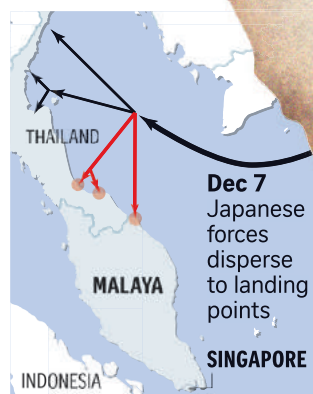
### Japanese conquest of Malaya

**Dec 8, 1941**

**1A** Japan conducts first air raid on Singapore.

**1B** Japanese troops land in southern Thailand and northern Malaya.

• A concurrent surprise bombing of the US naval base at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii severely cripples its naval and air power in the Pacific.



**Dec 10**

**2** Japanese bombers sink British warships HMS Repulse and HMS Prince of Wales.

**Dec 11**

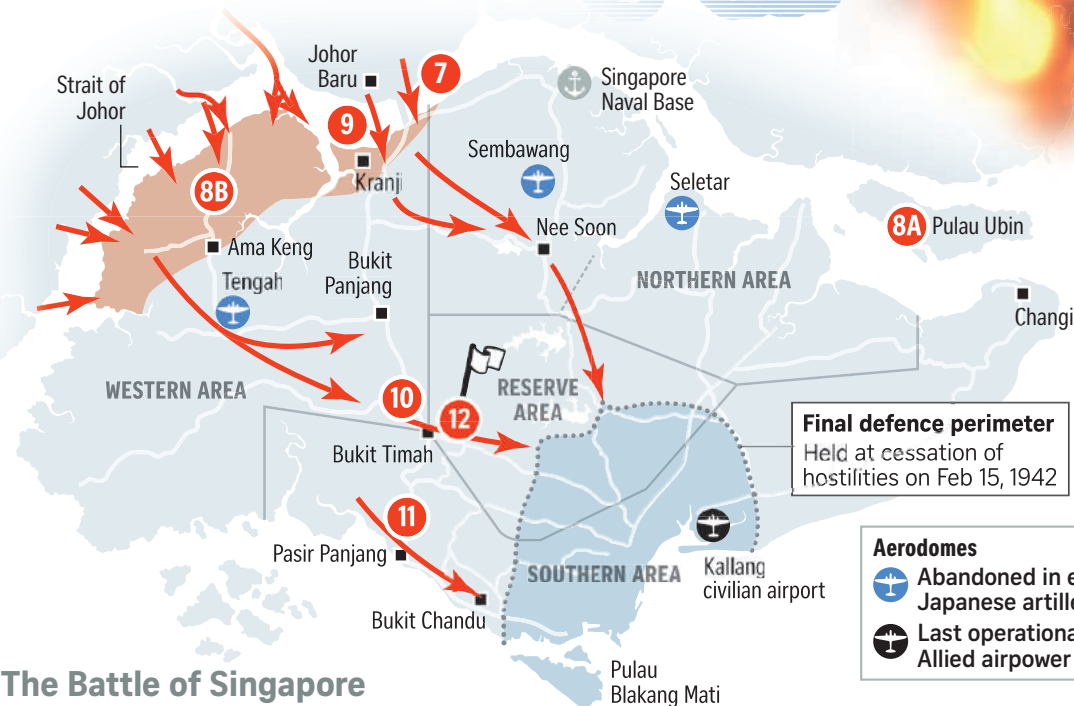
**3A** Fall of Jitra in Kedah. Scores of Allied weapons, vehicles and communications equipment are seized.

**3B** The Japanese start massive air raids on Penang town, capturing it on Dec 19.

**Jan 7, 1942**

**4** The Allies' heavy defeat at Slim River in Perak marks the loss of central Malaya to the Japanese.

**5** Selangor (including Kuala Lumpur on Jan 11), Negeri Sembilan and Malacca fall into Japanese hands.



## The Battle of Singapore

**Feb 8**

**8A** Japanese forces launch eastern feint attack from Pulau Ubin.

**8B** Japanese forces land on Singapore's north-western coastline in the night, swiftly capturing Tengah Airfield and Bukit Panjang village.

Australian soldiers guarding the western area are overpowered and the Japanese fan out across the island.

**Feb 9**

**9** The elite Japanese Imperial Guards Division moves in at Kranji and via the repaired Causeway.

**Feb 11**

**10** Bukit Timah Hill, with its reservoirs, food depots and ammunition stocks, are taken.  
General Yamashita makes the Ford Factory his headquarters.  
Allied troops withdraw to the final defence perimeter around the city area.

**Feb 14**

**11** The Japanese, with their superior numbers and weapons, win the brutal Battle of Pasir Panjang.  
280 patients and staff at Alexandra Barracks Hospital are massacred over two days.

**Feb 15**

**12** Lt-Gen Percival and his commanders convene at the Battlebox in the morning.  
Hours later, Lt-Gen Percival and his surrender party (below, right) officially surrender Singapore to the Japanese forces.

## Battlebox facts

29-room bomb-proof bunker built 9m underground between 1936 and 1941

Abandoned two days before the start of hostilities and again used just four days before the fall of Singapore as the final command headquarters



## THE COMMANDERS

### Lieutenant-General A. E. Percival

- Born: Dec 26, 1887
- Rose from private to the rank of lieutenant-colonel with his eminent service in World War I.
- A Japanese attack plan on Singapore – drawn up during his 20-month tour of

duty in Malaya in 1936 but rejected by the War Office – compares closely to that used by the invader in 1941.  
Retired in 1946 with the honorary rank of lieutenant-general.

### General Tomoyuki Yamashita

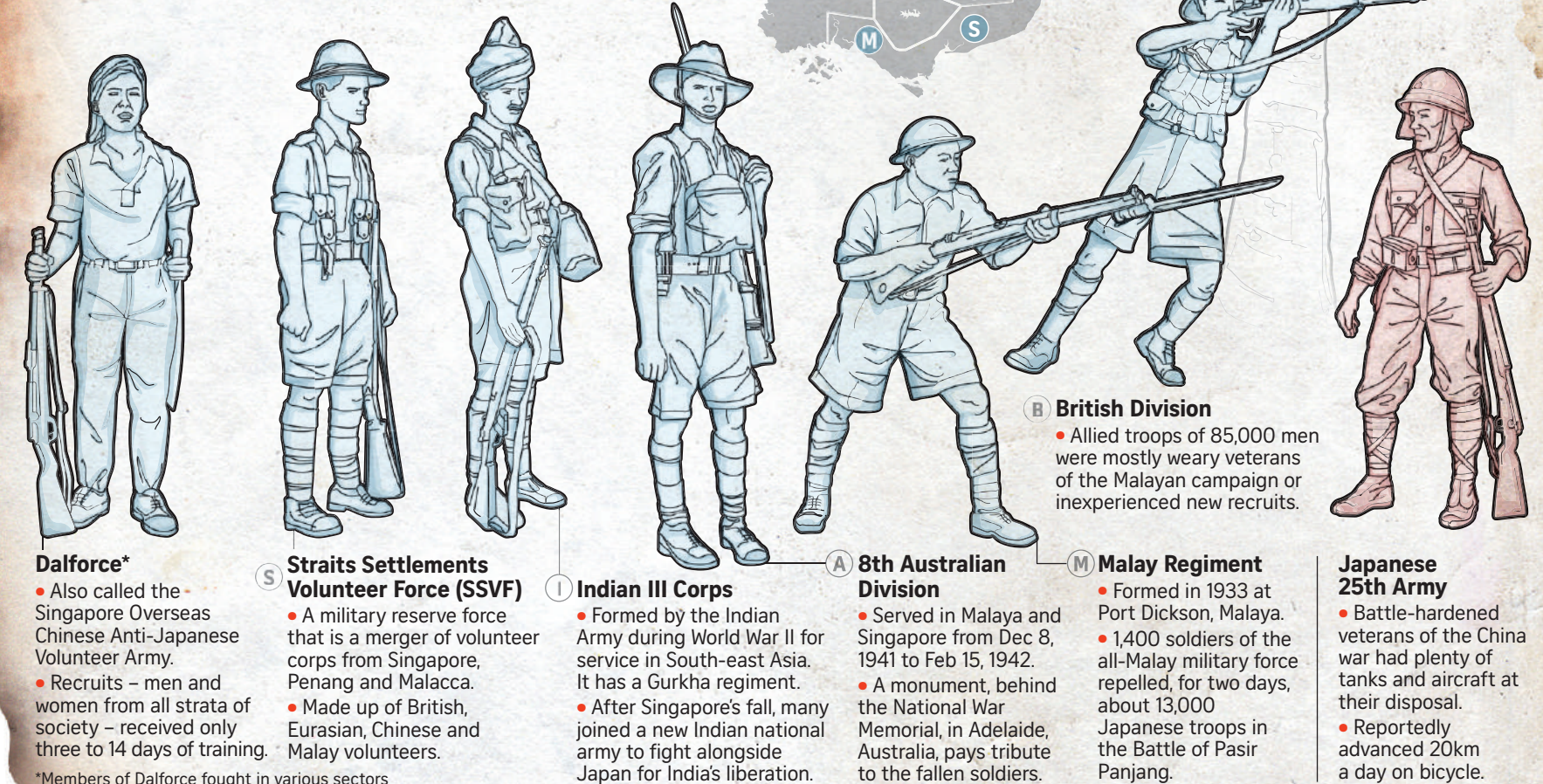
- Born: Nov 8, 1885
- Nicknamed "Tiger of Malaya".
- His 25th Army – comprising the 5th, 18th and Imperial Guards divisions – captured Malaya and Singapore.
- Convicted of brutal atrocities committed by

the troops under his command and hanged at Los Banos camp in Manila, Philippines, on Feb 23, 1946.



## THE FIGHTING MEN

Singapore is divided into four sectors – northern, western, southern and reserve – with assigned troops to defend the coastline of each sector.



## WAR ARMOURY

### At the start of the Battle of Singapore

Allied forces	Japanese
158 Aircraft	560 (Two plane types shown on the right)
0 Tanks	150
85,000 (About 70,000 were armed)	Soldiers 67,000
9,000 Killed	3,507 1,714 died during the battle for Singapore



### Mitsubishi G4M (Betty\*)

- Crew: Seven
- Long-range bomber
- Most numerous and famous of Japanese bombers in World War II – notable for the sinking of the HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse.



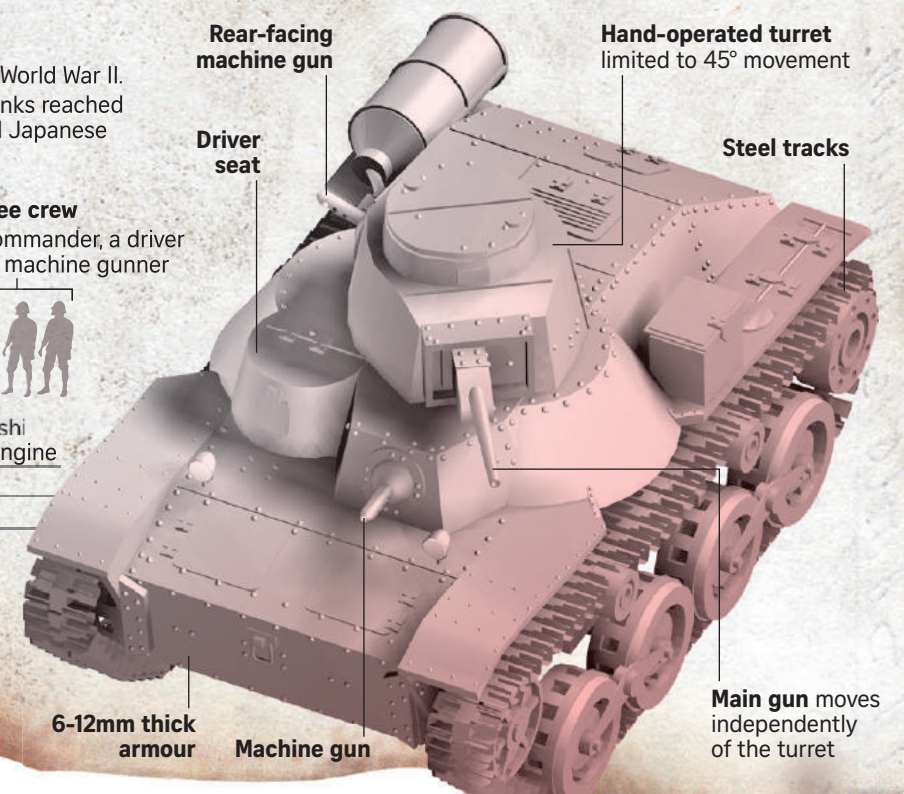
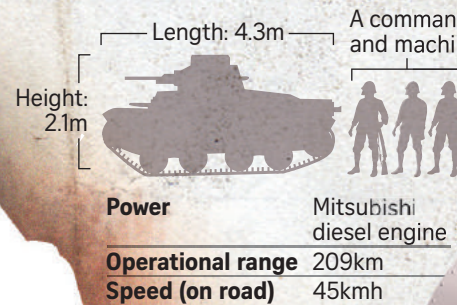
### Nakajima Ki-43 Hayabusa (Oscar\*)

- Crew: One
- Lightweight and highly manoeuvrable fighter/interceptor aircraft.
- The second-most produced fighter after the Mitsubishi A6M Zero series during World War II.

\*Codenames by the Allies

### Japanese Type 95 Ha-Go light tank

- Most widely used Japanese tank during World War II.
- During the battle for Singapore, these tanks reached Bukit Timah within a few days of the initial Japanese landing on the island.
- 2,300 vehicles produced between 1935 and 1943.



## The British surrender delegation's march towards Ford Factory

Major Cyril Wild (with the white flag)

