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The Indian Army in Africa and Asia, 1940-42: Implications for the Planning and Execution of Two Nearly-Simultaneous Campaigns.

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Abstract : This monograph analyzes the Indian Army's experience in conducting nearly-simultaneous campaigns in Africa and Asia between 1940-42. The Indian Army planned to defend the famed North West Frontier (NWF) with Afghanistan as well as provide reinforcements to British units worldwide in accordance with peacetime agreements. The continued decline of Allied fortunes during the early war years necessitated greater British dependence on the Indian Army and the need to inaugurate a massive expansion while fighting one, then two, major regional conflicts (MRCs) in different parts of the world. The first MRC in the Near East went well; the second MRC in Asia was a disastrous failure. The paper provides background on the composition of the Indian Army under the British Raj. It examines the state of peacetime campaign plans in 1919-39 with emphasis on specific scenarios, projected scope of operations, and overseas commitments. Rapid Axis successes necessitated greater involvement by Indian troops. The Indian Army doubled its commitment to Egypt and agreed to accept operational responsibility for the Near East: Iraq, Vichy French Syria, and Iran. In the midst of this heavy operational tempo, Japan attacked in December 1941. The monograph analyzes the conduct of these campaigns with respect to their similarity to extant campaign plans, the need to create crisis-action plans, and the ability to set the stage for tactical success. Appendices summarize the Indian Army's peacetime and wartime commitments.

Descriptors : *PEACETIME , *ARMY PLANNING , SYRIA , SCENARIOS , WARFARE , IRAQ , EGYPT , JAPAN , FRANCE , AGREEMENTS , AFRICA , IRAN , GREAT BRITAIN , ASIA , AFGHANISTAN , OVERSEAS.

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