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Military system during British period in India and its impact on post independent India

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Abstract
Britain's globe empire was supported by the British Indian Army, founded in 1895 from the East India Company's presidency troops. Much has been written about the Indian Army's colonial and worldwide campaigns as a vehicle of imperial power, but less about its transfer from British to Indian authority after the Second World War. While independence meant the transition of the force from imperial rule to civilian oversight by India's new national leadership, the Dominion of India inherited thousands of former colonial soldiers, including two generations of British and Indian officers indoctrinated in military and cultural practises developed in the UK, colonial India, and the British Empire.

This paper examines the British Empire's impact on the Indian Army's narrative, ethos, culture, tactics, and strategies from 1945, when the army began to transition from British to Indian rule, to 1973, when the government of India reinstated the imperial rank of Field Marshal. The Indian Army's first thirty years after independence saw it fight four major wars and see the final departure of white British officers. While it became a truly national army at this period, its history as an arm of imperial authority was contested and eventually evolved into a crucial part of military identity in the post-colonial age.

Keywords: British army, colonial period, British India, Indian army

Introductions

The British Empire grew during 18th and 19th centuries, with India serving as the jewel in the crown for many. When the British ruled the subcontinent, they referred to it as the Indian Empire, which included Pakistan and Bangladesh. Races, religions, and ideologies weren't homogeneous in the country. In British India, there were Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Christians, and Buddhists, among others. Many ethnic groups from the Himalayan foothills and southern India were represented at the event. There were Princely States, which had a degree of autonomy from British rule, in the vast majority of the country

British India's most important provinces were Madras, Bombay; Central Provinces; Punjab; United Provinces; Bengal; Orissa; and Bihar and Orissa. The North West Frontier Province was another significant province. Burma was a province of India until 1937, when the British Empire granted it independence.

History

During the Indian Mutiny of 1857, British India was taken over by the Crown directly from the East India Company, and this is when the Indian Army was established. Prior to 1858, the Company owned and funded predecessor units of the Indian Army. This was done in conjunction with units of the British Army that were supported financially by the city of London. They kept their own Chief of Staffs for the three presidencies' armies. The Bengal Army was under the overall operational command of the East Indies Commander-in-Chief. There were three Presidential Staff Corps that had most of the officer manpower from 1861 onward. A Commission of Inquiry after the Second Afghan War recommended that the presidency's armies be abolished. During this time, Supply, Transportation, and Pay were all consolidated into one entity. When the Punjab Frontier Force was in charge from 1856 to 1886, the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab was in charge of the force directly [4].

There were still government-controlled forces, such as the Hyderabad Contingent, that were operating in the shadows [5]. Standing higher formations, such as divisions and brigades, were phased out by the military in 1889.

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Peacetime didn't see the need for divisional staffs; instead, the subcontinent's military was dispersed to ensure its own safety. In 1891, the staff corps was reduced to a single organization [6].

Two years later, the Madras and Bombay Armies' Commander-in-Chief posts were vacated [7]. A new Indian army was formed in 1895, and the Presidency Armies were abolished in 1895. The new Indian Army was divided into four commands: Bengal, Madras (which included Burma), Bombay (including the North-West Frontier and the Punjab Frontier Force). Overseeing them were lieutenant generals who had direct access to the Indian commander in chief [8].

India's government issued a notification to abolish the three Presidency armies on April 1, 1895, through Army Department Order Number 981 dated October 26, 1894, which unified the three armies into one Indian Army.

Commands were established for the North, South, East, and West from the combined forces. The Indian Army and Presidency armies continued to provide military support for civil authorities, both in the fight against banditry and in dealing with riots and rebellion. First major external operations for the new unified army occurred during the Boxer Rebellion in China from 1899 to 1901.

The Indian Army

There were a lot of British Indian Army soldiers when they were decommissioned in 1947 [10]. Each princely state had its own army, which was backed up and protected by the British Indian Army [12]. The Indian Army played a critical role in the defense of the British Empire both at home and abroad during World War I and World War II.

The three British Indian Presidency armies were first referred to as the "Indian Army" after the Indian Rebellion (the Bengal Army, the Madras Army, and the Bombay Army). In 1895, the indian government raised the first army officially known as the Indian Army, that stood alongside three long-standing presidency armies. However, the Indian Army absorbed these three armies in 1903. The Indian National Army (INA) and the British Indian Expeditionary Force (BEF) in India (1903–1947) are better known as the Indian Armed Forces. Units sent by the British to India (13). Once they had completed Sandhurst, British men were often sent on to serve in the Indian Army. The British Indian Army also had Viceroy Commissioned Officers (V.C.Os.). Former Other Ranks Indian soldiers were given commissions by the Viceroy of India. They were in charge of leading the troops as jemadars (platoon commanders) and as the second in command of companies (Subadars). A vital link between Indian and British commanding officers, he was the unit's most senior Indian officer.

It wasn't until the 1920s that Indian men were allowed to attend Sandhurst College, where they received the same rank as their British counterparts upon graduation. Later, an Indian Military College was established in Dehra Dun and its graduates were awarded the designation "King's Indian Commissioned Officer" afterward. The 'Indianisation' process began in the 1930s in order to gradually replace British officers with Indian ones. More than half a million "Emergency Commissioned Officers" were commissioned by the British and British Indian armed forces during World War II. A British Indian could still only hold the position of brigadier general at the conclusion of World War II [14].

All Indian soldiers who fought in World War II were unpaid volunteers. Many of them belonged to the Punjabi community, despite their diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. It was due to the Indian Mutiny that both the Sikh Regiment and the Punjabi Sikh Regiment were formed. The Indian Army was primarily responsible for ensuring the safety and security of the people of India. When the conflict grew closer, the Indian government approved the possibility of Indian troops serving overseas, which led to the creation of Force Heron, based on the 4th Indian Division. A total of 2,500,000 men volunteered for service in the Indian Army during World War II, making it the largest volunteer army in history. In 1940, Indian troops distinguished themselves in France, Egypt, Libya, the Sudan, Abyssinia, Syria, and Persia during World War II.

Organization

Sixth Madras Light Cavalry regiment soldier is depicted in a painting that dates back to the year 1845.

Madras, 1896: Royal Navy Sappers and Miners.

From Bengal Presidency (Bihar and Uttar Pradesh) to Oudh's rural plains (Uttar Pradesh), high caste Hindus from the Bengal Presidency made up a majority of the East India Company army. Many of these troops took part in the Indian Mutiny and attempted to restore Delhi to Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah II as a result of the insensitivity of their British officers [15].

An informal term for the three presidencies' armies, the Bengal Army, Madras Army, and Bombay Army, was used between 1858 and 1894. When it was formed in 1805 as the "army of the government of India," the Indian Army included both British and Indian (Sepoy) units. As a result of this arrangement, it persisted until in the year of 1902.

In 1903, Lord Kitchener was appointed commander-in-chief of the Indian Army, a position he held until 1909. Of all of his accomplishments, uniting the three presidential armies was his crowning achievement. At his command, he established eight army divisions and brigaded Indian and British forces. Following Kitchener's reforms, the Indian Army's new terminology was "the force recruited locally and permanently based in India, together with its expatriate British officers." [16] Rather, "British Army in India" referred to units of the British Army that were temporarily stationed in India before returning to the UK. During World War II, the combined Indian and British forces stationed in India were referred to as the Army of India.

Command

The Governor-General of India had a military officer as the Commanding Officer, India, who reported to him. Major General Stringer Lawrence was the first person to hold the title in 1748, when the British Indian Army was still in its infancy. In the early 1900s, military officers and their staff were stationed at General Headquarters India. Unlike the British Army, the Indian Army did not require officers to rely on additional sources of income, allowing them to live off their salaries alone. Officer cadets from the Indian Army are in high demand after they graduate from the Royal Military College Sandhurst. In the Indian Army, British officers were expected to be fluent in the Indian languages spoken by their troops, as well as English. British Indian Army generals such as Lord Roberts, Sir William Birdwood, Sir Claude Auchinleck, and Sir William Slim [17] were notable figures.

The British Army in India

After the Indian Mutiny, the British Army stationed thousands of troops in India, mainly infantry. Despite the fact that they were not part of the Indian Army, these units were under the control of the Indian Army. Following the partition of British India on August 15, 1947, there was a brief military presence of the British in the two new republics of India. With British Army Headquarters in India, the 1st Battalion, The Somerset Light Infantry, was the last British Army unit to leave independent India. This was the final Pakistani unit to leave Karachi on February 26, 1948, the 2nd Battalion, The Black Watch.

Army of India's organizational chart

Each of India Command's four subordinate commands was presided over by a general or a lieutenant general prior to the war:

In the North, the helm;
The Southern Command;
Eastern Division's Chief of Staff
A division in the west.

Western Command was renamed the Western Independent District in 1938, near the end of World War II. Each command had a number of Districts, each of which was headed by a different Major General. In April 1942, in response to the Japanese invasion threat, Eastern Command and Southern Command were renamed Eastern Army and Southern Army, respectively. As a result, the Western Independent District was absorbed into North Command in 1942 when it was renamed North Western Army. A new command was established in India's central region in May 1942 [19]. For the duration of World War II, the highest-ranking units were as follows:

The Western Army
The South's Army
The Eastern Army;
This is where all the action takes place.

1946 was the year in which the United States and British Indian armies were returned to a peacetime setting following the end of World War II's Central Command. With the transfer of the Northern Command to Pakistan and the transfer of the other commands to the new Indian Army, India was quickly on its way to a split.

Final say belongs to the corporation

The British Indian Army was formed in order to protect the British East India Company's factories in India. In 1793, the armies of the Bengal, Madras, and Bombay presidencies sacked French Pondichéry. The Dutch trained Travancore's military, known as the Nair Brigade. There were some mutinies in the Bengal Native Infantries and Cavalries in Indian Rebellion of 1857 [20]. Rebels received less aid from soldiers from the Bombay and Madras armies than expected. During the Siege of Cawnpore, the rebels committed some of their most heinous crimes. To put it simply, the rebellion failed because of a lack of resources and coordination among the rebels. There had been numerous retaliations against the rebels before the British put an end to the conflict in 1858.

Personnel

In the British Army, both British and Indian commissioned officers held the same rank. King's Commissioned Indian officers (KCIOs) had the same power as British officers starting in the 1920s. Those who served in the Viceroy's Commissioned Officers were all of Indian descent. They were commissioned officers in almost all respects, but they were only in charge of Indian troops and were subordinate to all British KCIOs and KOs in their respective commands. Captain was the cavalry's Subedar Major, and Jemadar was the Risaldar-Major. Moreover, they served as the cavalry's equivalent of British Majors (see below).

The first world war saw 1.75 million men enlist; most of them were stationed on the Western Front; the second war saw 2.5 million men serve; every single one of them volunteered. Havildar Majors, Quartermasters and Havildars or Daffadars (Cavalry) equivalent to Captain were among non-commissioned officers. Naiks or Lance-Daffadars (Cavalry) were also in the ranks of non-commissioned officers, and Lance-Naiks or Acting Lance-Daffadars (Cavalry) were also in the ranks of non-commissioned officers.

Soldiers were known as Sepoys or Sowars (Cavalry), the Indian term for a British private. Other branches of the military made use of British Army ranks like gunner and sapper to create their own units.

The Indian Mutiny of 1857, also known as the Sepoy Mutiny in Britain, saw the transfer of three East India Company presidencies' armies to British control.

After the "Mutiny," the British began recruiting "martial races," including Sikhs, Awans, Gakhars, and other Punjabi Musulmans. Their ranks were augmented by Balochs, Pashtoes, Marathas, Bunts, Nairs, Rajasthani Rajputs, Yadavs and Kumaoni Gurkhas, Garhwalis, Janjuas, Maravars, and Kallars [21].

In the British army, Gurkhas were known for their reputation of rarely revolting. British forces replaced the Khalsa Army in the second and third Anglo-Sikh Wars, and they became the Sikhs' army.

Impact of British Army after Independence

When Pandit Nehru first raised the Indian flag on the Red Fort's ramparts on August 16, 1947, he had just delivered his "Tryst with Destiny." Later, India's political elite worked hard to persuade the general public that the country's independence from Britain was solely due to its efforts. It was because of this belief that the British Empire ruled the subcontinent for more than two centuries through the British Indian Armed Forces.

Because of their British ancestry, these officers and men were viewed as mercenaries and major obstacles in India's struggle for independence. He and his colleagues treated the military with complete disrespect and disregard because of Nehru's antipathy toward the military. The fear of being overthrown by his generals was palpable, as it was in our neighboring country and many other newly independent states. This view of the military was not only incorrect, but also ironic, as it conveniently overlooked and even buried a simple but compelling truth.

In spite of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress' nonviolent tactics, the British government remained determined to rule over its Empire. A Japanese-aided attack on eastern India by the Azad Hind Fauj (INA) forced the British to reassess their strategy. Approximately 35,000 British Indian Army officers and men voluntarily deserted their previous allegiances to join Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, prompting

him to form the INA. Because of the servitude of their British masters, it doesn't matter how much they fought against them [22].

After the Red Fort trials and an increase in incidents of indiscipline among RIN Mutineers, it's impossible to overestimate the number of people who refused to follow British orders and behaved badly. According to the Hindu newspaper, a British soldier named Joginder Singh was sentenced to life in prison in February 1946 for protesting the British military's decision to show the film "Ganga Din" in a Greek cinema, among other examples. During the film, the protests of Joginder Singh were ignored, so he went to the cinema and attempted to disrupt the show. A British security guard who tried to stop him from smashing the projector was killed as a result of his actions.

Sword arm of the Empire, British Indian Army, became distrusted as a result of such incidents. They had no choice but to flee quickly while they still had the chance. Consequently, the British government announced on June 3, 1947, that it had agreed to divide British India into two separate states, and Parliament approved the Indian Independence Act of 1947 on June 4, 1947. Lord Mountbatten chose August 15 as the date for the handover of power as a tribute to the surrender of Japan in World War II. When Jawaharlal Nehru declared 26 January as India's Independence Day in the 1929 Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress and celebrated it from 1930 to 1946, no one knows why.

Following the partition of India in 1947, two-thirds of Indian Army formations, units, assets, and indigenous personnel went to the Dominion of India and one-third went to Pakistan [24]. It was renamed the Brigade of Gurkhas after the British Army absorbed all four Gurkha regiments, which were mostly based in Nepal. The British Army units that had been stationed in India returned to the United Kingdom or were transferred to other locations outside of India and Pakistan. Lashmer Whistler was the commanding officer of Headquarters British Troops in India, where he oversaw emigrating British soldiers at the time of partition. On 28 February 1948, the 1st Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry, was the final British contingent to leave the country [25].

The current Indian and Pakistani armies are largely descended from the Indian Army of pre-partition India. The Bangladesh Army, which was formed from the Pakistan Army following Bangladesh's independence [26], shares many similarities with these two forces.

Political leaders and bureaucrats have not been deterred from slashing the military's capabilities and lowering its status and prestige while neglecting the services it provides in the following generations. Consequently, finding qualified volunteers has proven difficult, particularly among the ranks of the officer corps. Employee morale has suffered, and the top management is increasingly distrusted because of the perception that it is corrupt and serving its own interests [27].

Because of the military and civilian bureaucracy's dysfunctional relationship, military-to-political relations have become even more abysmal. To put it another way: Because of this, the military can't keep up with the complexities of modern warfare because it is constrained by outdated methods [28]. Over time, deliberate neglect has resulted in obsolete inventories and huge shortages of critical equipment.

In commemoration of our country's 70th birthday, there's a lot to ponder. India's "all-weather" friend and rising and hostile China are determined to keep India in their immediate neighborhood, in addition to an unrelentingly hostile and intractable neighbor such as Pakistan. With insurgencies ravaging many of our northeastern states, China jumped right into supporting and funding Maoist insurgents operating out of our country's interior. Internal and external threats to U.S. security pose a serious threat to the country's sovereignty and way of life, and that cannot be denied at this time [29].

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