A welcome antidote to the trend of condescending Nepali research on Mustang.

Nothing of consequence happened on the way. We didn't pay the steamer because we had no money. As we marched ahead we saw somebody had burned bundles of Burmese currency notes. Their money looked like ours except for a little more red. When we reached Katha, we saw a heap of new rifles and ration boxes with no signs of any troops. Only a number of Burmese families with their children were there. The men had gone to war. The British had left them there with future plans to shift them to Machina, but then without making proper arrangements. Only six or seven family members were from our regiment and more than 1,500 were families of soldiers from other regiments.

They implored us to take them with us. We had just escaped death and chances were slim that we'd let them tag along. We told them that they could not keep pace with us. The babies had to be carried and they would need food and clothing. We marched on. They followed. The bombardment started three or four miles out of camp. Since only women and children were in the column, they must have been torn to shreds.

It was an exhausting march to Tavurtur. There was a river, a pier and boats. The Burmese boatman did not bring in the boat even though we kept hollering. I asked the barge gun operator to fire a few volleys, which he did. After that we asked him in Burmese whether or not he would bring the boat to our side of the river, if not we would set his entire village on fire. To substantiate our threat we aimed the tower towards the sky and produced an enormous ball of fire. That display of firepower killed three people, and made him bring the boats. We joined four boats together with bamboo to make a barge and crossed the river. The moment we reached the other side, we received word that the Japanese were only two miles away. To prevent the Japanese from using the boat we hacked it with a machete and set the pieces adrift on the current. We came upon a village and ordered the locals to bring rice and chicken. We were dead tired but had to take care of ourselves. Eating rice and chicken curry, it felt like Dasi.

We left very early the next morning, each of us carried about 2kg of rice in our bags. The hunger was unbearable. There was nothing to eat. There were no rain and the atmosphere was dry. We decided that since the British soldiers had cholera and since it is a contagious disease, it was prudent to keep a safe distance from where they stayed.

When we reached the summit of the Naga hills, there was nothing to eat. There were 3/5 of us and a handful of raw rice. The lunch was unbearable.

Today's Naga people will talk to strangers, but in those days as soon as they saw us they muttered incomprehensible words, and they will talk to strangers, but in those days as soon as they saw us they muttered incomprehensible words and disappeared. ☏