

Conclusion

Stage-one operations were concluded earlier than scheduled and with a huge success. In the southwestern theater, the Japanese Navy had advanced as far as Ceylon and defeated British fleets, while in Burma the Japanese Army continued its advance after having occupied Rangoon on 8 March. The air attacks on the Australian key point of Port Darwin were [also] continued, and India seemed to show tendencies to gradually break away from Britain.

In the southeastern theater, Rabaul on the island of New Britain had been occupied on 23 January, and land-based air units had immediately advanced there. Then, the capture of key places in British New Guinea (Lae, Salamaua, and Port Moresby) and strategic places in the Solomon Islands (Tulagi, etc.) had been ordered at the end of that month. The aim was to secure defensive positions in the area to the north of eastern Australia by taking control of the waters (the Coral Sea), while cutting off the area’s communications with mainland Australia. Lae and Salamaua were captured on 8 March, and the preparations for the capture of Port Moresby was in steady progress.

Meanwhile, the enemy on the Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines surrendered on 9 April after the attacks by the Fourteenth Army from 3 April onwards, while the days of the Corregidor stronghold were numbered.

Through the stage-one operations, [Japan] acquired the resources areas of the South, which, as to the oil it craved, allowed the country to expect that 1.7 million tons could be acquired in the first year of the war, which was about six times as large as [the prewar estimation of] 300,000 tons.

The shipping losses since the beginning of the hostilities were as shown in the following table. Compared to an estimated loss of 800,000 to 1,000,000 tons for the first year of the war, only about 260,000 tons were [actually] lost in these four months. Particularly, the loss caused by enemy submarines, which had been the chief concern, was [only] about 150,000 tons, and moreover, the loss sustained by regular transports, which was supposed to give a rough idea of [the loss in] the transport of resources in the future, was just 30,000 tons.

For Reference: Shipping Losses Classified by Cause⁽¹⁹⁸⁾

Caused by Year/month	Submarine		Aircraft		Shells/Mines		Ordinary Shipwrecks		Total	
	Ships	Total Tonnage	Ships	Total Tonnage	Ships	Total Tonnage	Ships	Total Tonnage	Ships	Total Tonnage
1941-Dec	6	31,673	3	16,901	0	0	2	6,585	11	55,159
1942-Jan	9	41,104	2	9,686	3	2,133	5	19,455	19	72,378

1942-Feb	6	29,000	4	4,619	1	6,566	2	8,085	13	48,270
1942-Mar	11	47,017	3	10,516	4	25,331	0	0	18	82,864
Total	32	148,794	12	41,722	8	34,030	9	34,125	61	258,671

Shipping Losses Classified by Tasks⁽¹⁹⁸⁾ (excluding shipwrecks)

Loss sustained Year/month	In Engagements or Transport for Operations		In Regular Transport		Total		Remarks
	Ships	Total Tonnage	Ships	Total Tonnage	Ships	Total Tonnage	
1941-Dec	9	48,574	0	0	9	48,574	The ships operated by the Ship Management Association and shipwrecks on the Japanese sea were calculated as [losses sustained] in regular transport.
1942-Jan	10	36,064	4	16,859	14	52,923	
1942-Feb	10	39,196	1	989	11	40,185	
1942-Mar	15	70,909	3	11,955	18	82,864	
Total	44	194,743	8	29,803	52	224,546	

The attacks by enemy submarines, particularly U.S. submarines, lacked aggressiveness, and the performance of their torpedoes was bad, too. On top of that, just during the phase-three operations of the Dutch East Indies operation, twenty-nine enemy submarines were reported to have been sunk. (The number [of enemy submarines] actually sunk was four.)

Thus, the prospect of acquiring the southern resources was bright and the consolidation of a long-term absolutely unbeatable position seemed certain, which led the Government and Imperial General Headquarters to even start mulling over steps to facilitate the conclusion of the war.

It can be said that the major reason for this success was owed to the remarkable service of the air units. That is to say, the Carrier Task Force completely destroyed the U.S. Fleet in Hawaii, while the land-based air unit sank two significant battleships of Britain off Malaya, and easily defeated the U.S. Far East Air Force in the Philippines, which had been considered very strong. Also after that, the air units were busily engaged in all directions; between 4 January and 6 April, the Air Unit of the Southern Task Force reported having brought down 334 enemy aircraft with certainty, along with 135 aircraft unconfirmed, having sunk seven naval vessels and warships, three submarines, eighteen merchantmen of 10,000 tons or more, as well as having inflicted damage on seven naval vessels and battleships, nine destroyers, two submarines and seventeen merchantmen of 10,000 tons or more. Japanese losses on the contrary were very small, as shown in the following table.⁽⁷⁵⁾

Causes	Land-based Attack Planes	Land-based Reconnaissance Planes	Fighter Planes	Flying Boats	Total
Crashed themselves	12	6	14	2	34
Hit by bombs or marked by bullets	2	0	2	0	4
Total	14	6	16	2	38

The losses sustained in the Philippines and Malaya in the beginning of the hostilities were also very small as shown in the following table. Although in the map exercise at the Naval College, a loss of 160% of the Type-0 fighter planes and 40% of the land-based attack planes had been anticipated before the advance to Java, this turned out to be just a groundless fear.

The Losses Sustained in the Air Campaigns over the Philippines (From 8 December till 3 January)⁽⁷⁵⁾

Causes	Land-based Attack Planes	Land-based Reconnaissance Planes	Fighter Planes	Flying Boats	Total
Crashed themselves	1	0	13	1	15
Hit by bombs or marked by bullets	0	0	2	0	2
Total	1	0	15	1	17

The Losses Sustained in the Air Campaigns over Malaya (From 8 December till 15 February)⁽⁷⁵⁾

Causes	Land-based Attack Planes	Land-based Reconnaissance Planes	Fighter Planes	Flying Boats	Total
Crashed themselves	5	1	3	0	9

Furthermore, the power of the Carrier Task Force was tremendous; the on-target rates in the attacks on the heavy cruisers and the carrier in the Ceylon attack were respectively 88% and

82%. An example of the comparison of its aircraft’s performance in air combats was as follows, which gave the impression as if they were matchless.

The Air Strikes on Colombo (as reported)⁽⁷⁵⁾

Type of Aircraft	[Reported by] Fighter Planes		[Reported by] Carrier-based bombers		Total	
	Confirmed	Unconfirmed	Confirmed	Unconfirmed	Confirmed	Unconfirmed
Spitfires	12	5	0	0	12	5
Hurricanes	18	3	6	0	24	3
Swordfishes	8	2	0	0	8	2
Defiants	1	0	0	0	1	0
Total	39	10	6	0	45	10
The Loss Sustained by Japanese [Aircraft]	One carrier-based fighter plane and six carrier-based bombers crashed themselves					

While these results show how powerful the Japanese air forces were, they also suggested that the war from then on would be fought over the command of the air. However, there were many in the top echelons of the Japanese Navy who still stuck to the view that large vessels and giant guns were also required, due to which, despite the recognition of aircraft power, drastic measures to provide [adequate aircraft] were not carried out. [The Navy] further failed to take adequate measures against [enemy] submarines, partly due to its overoptimistic judgment on the enemy submarines. And along with quite a number of other problems that were kept within [the Navy], such as the leakage of information concerning operations (for example the Colombo operation) and the fact that the lessons of war were not immediately put into practice, the Navy shifted to stage-two operations.