

Pearl harbor



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Pearl Harbour 7th December 1941: It was the day when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour, a naval base of the United States of America. This was a planned sneak attack by the Japanese who wanted natural resources, especially oil, for its expansion and America refused this. However, the question that comes to our mind is that whether this strategy of the Japanese was a good one that went bad or was it a bad strategy overall. This tactic by the Japanese was the first long range air carrier based attack in any warfare. This was the reason that the United States was caught off guard completely. The American never thought that Japan was capable of performing such an act. However, rumours of Japan's surprise mass attack had been reported but were not taken seriously. (Conn, Engelman, and Fairchild, 2000)

The answer I think it was the former, though the strategy was a good one it had completely gone wrong. Now you may ask why? The Japanese had developed the technology, attack strategy and skills to successfully accomplish the impossible as they had been planning this for at least six months prior to the main attack. The Japanese had good defensive plans against the US. Such as fortifying individual islands with troops, reinforcing air squadrons and also they kept a large fleet to retaliate in case the US attacked. So what went wrong? It's simple, the Japanese became overconfident and they changed their plans and instead of implementing this defensive plan they went further to attack the US Midway. It turned into a big disaster and the Japanese lost a huge number of their carriers and thus with their naval and air forces which were in a weak situation now, they could not resist the American troops and they reached the Japanese air space itself. Another factor of this raid going wrong was that the commander of the

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Japanese fleet became nervous and he aborted the third strike attack of the two which had already taken place, which was aimed at the oil supplies and repair facilities of the US fleet. If this had taken place then the US would have had a difficult time in retaliating. The attack plan of the Japanese would require the loss of one-third attacking force of the planes and two carriers. Another problem was of refuelling the planes over the Pacific and also fixing of wooden fins on naval torpedoes so as to stabilize them in shallow waters. (Conn, Engelman, and Fairchild, 2000)

Many messages were dispatched about the movements of the Japanese fleet but the American ignored them as they thought a formal war declaration would be given. The Japanese had thought of everything when they launched this war. Their spies at Oahu gave them the exact data about the location and quantity of vessel of each type at the harbour. However, there weren't as many battleships and aircraft carriers as the Japanese had hoped. The Japanese could only accomplish a part its goal they had planned to hit the US hard which they did but it was not strong enough and the Japanese had to pay a dear price for this movement as the US came back with a vengeance. (Conn, Engelman, and Fairchild, 2000)

In the end we can say that the Japanese had planned this attack careful but it was an act of sheer foolishness though brilliantly planned. Though they achieved a part of their goal but they failed to defeat the US completely. This is why they had to pay the price dearly because they had awakened a sleeping giant. If only the Japanese did not become over confident and had stuck to their defensive strategy then they would have gone to a long drawn battle with the US and perhaps would have had the US negotiate a peace which would have left the Japanese in control but well that's a different story.

Reference

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