Challenges of the KMT:

- While the KMT initially controlled much of China, support from peasants were limited. People never made firm commitment to Chiang, they would commit to local warlords or communists but had no conception of a nation state with Chiang Kai Shek as their leader, affected way he could use his military.

- KMT suffered defeats from CCP who employed guerilla tactics. Made Chiang even more determined to defeat them.

- On September 1931, Chiang’s forces wanted to deliver knockout blow against Communists in Jiangxi. However, this coincided with Japanese invasion of Manchuria. Caused Chiang to divert his forces north but did not use them to fight Japanese. Chiang faced a predicament, as Japanese were consolidating force in the north, while communists firmly entrenched in the South.

- Chiang’s American and British advisors suggested attacking Japanese. However, Chiang was more concerned about destroying the Communists.

- In late October 1934, Communists went up against Southwest Wall of Nationalist blockade. The nationalists initially appeared to have a military advantage, however there was divided loyalties between commanders. Chen Jitang, a warlord in command of the nationalist soldiers in the Southwest Wall sought to undermine Chiang, as he believed Chiang only sent them to battle in order to weaken Chen’s army. Therefore, he signed agreement with PLA, allowing it to pass without a fight.

- In 1935, Japanese broke their deal with Chiang, started to expand westward to Inner Mongolia.

  - Tactics used

KMT Tactics:

- Instigated attacks on communist relentlessly, launched major assaults with intent to annihilate Mao’s army

- Fought in conventional tactics

- Hitler sent Wehrmacht commander Hans Von Seeckt to serve as Chiang’s military advisor. In December 5, 1933 Chiang Kai Shek mobilised over 1 million men to blockade Jiangxi province. They constructed fortifications around the province to surround the Communists and the strategy was successful by 1934, Communists lost over 50% of their territory. Under Mao’s strategy when the Nationalists advanced, Communist soldiers would retreat. Now, the Communists attempted to hold their ground however, they fared poorly against the better equipped nationalists. Often had to fight fort against fort, nationalist forts made of concrete, communist forts made of soil and wood.