

7/8/43 - No. 18.

OFFICIAL NAVAL COMMUNIQUE

SICILY EAST COAST

7th August, 1943.

The coast road near Taormina has again been successfully bombarded by British naval forces. In the same region the waters close inshore have been patrolled at night by the Navy. No enemy traffic has been encountered. Minesweepers are actively at work clearing a channel into Catania.

SICILY NORTH COAST

It is learnt that on the night of 3/4 August, U.S. destroyers on patrol south of the Lipari Islands sank one heavily armed enemy lighter escorted by two E boats. One of the E boats exploded, the other escaped in the early hours of August 6. Five E boats were driven off by American destroyers on patrol off Palermo. Other destroyers and P.T. boat patrols which by night have been pushed as far east as the Gulf of Iola, on the west coast of the toe of Italy, have met no enemy traffic.

Ustica, the island some 40 miles to the northward of Palermo, was occupied by a combined U.S. naval and military force on August 5. The garrison of about 100 Italian soldiers and sailors were made prisoners. There were found 216 Italian civil prisoners and a guard. All Germans left the island on July 11. The civil population of about 1,100 were destitute and without water while many were ill with malaria.

OFFICIAL AIR COMMUNIQUE 7th AUGUST 1943.

Heavy attacks on the enemy in North-eastern Sicily were maintained throughout yesterday by the North African Air Forces. Heavy bombers attacked road communications at Messina and road junctions at Badjazzo and Gesso were attacked by medium bombers.

Fighter-bombers carried out numerous attacks on enemy shipping off the Sicilian coast and scored a number of hits.

It is now known that on August 5/6 twentyone barges and four other small vessels were sunk as a result of attack by our fighter-bombers.

Roads and enemy transport in Sicily and southern Italy were attacked and a large number of vehicles destroyed.

Last night our bombers attacked the docks and railway communications at Naples and continued their attacks on enemy troops and shipping in the Messina area.

During these operations one enemy aircraft was destroyed.

One enemy aircraft was destroyed on the night of August 5/6.

Eight of our aircraft are missing.

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