

SOUTH EAST ASIA COMMUNIQUE NO.97

New Delhi,  
9.4.44.

On the 8th April there was slightly increased activity on the Arakan front. Indian troops supported by effective artillery and mortar fire repelled with heavy casualties a strong counter-attack made by the Japanese on one of our positions south of Maungdaw. Later, our medium artillery engaged an enemy strong-point.

During the successful operation by British troops near Buthidaung on 7th April, one 47 mm anti-tank gun was captured and another destroyed. Further losses were inflicted on the enemy in the same area on 8th April.

A Japanese counter-attack on the hill feature North of the Imphal Plain captured by our troops yesterday was repulsed without difficulty. To the South-west, patrol activity continues.

On 7th April Japanese pressure on the outskirts of Kohima was maintained. A counter-attack against a small initial penetration was successful, and our operations are proceeding.

In Northern Burma our levies continued in contact with the Japanese at the Tiang River crossing on the Sumprabun-Kyitkyina road, and harassed enemy lines of retreat in that area. The Chinese 22nd and 38th Divisions have made minor advances on the Upper Mogaung Valley front. Our tank, artillery, infantry and air co-operation was effective in an attack on Wanazup on the road South of Shaduzup. Heavy bombers of the Strategic Air Force, Eastern Air Command, on the night of 8th/9th April attacked Mandalay marshalling yards. Mediums bombing the Victoria Lake dumps, Rangoon encountered enemy night fighters and damaged one.

On 7th and 8th April fighters of the Tactical Air Force attacked rivercraft and enemy positions in the Arakan, Mayu and Kaladan areas. I.A.F. dive-bombers report good concentration of bombs south of Buthidaung. Dive-bombers, fighter-bombers and fighters in strength maintained their offensive against objectives in the Chindwin valley, Chin hills, Naga hills and North West Burma on 7th and 8th April. Gun positions, enemy troops, camps and communications were attacked and in many cases fires were started in target areas. Aircraft were again active in support of ground troops in North Burma on 7th and 8th April. Mediums, dive-bombers and fighters combined in one attack on petrol and ammunition dumps west of Mogaung. There were two explosions in the target area, and smoke rose to 5,000 feet. One large building exploded and burnt out. Long-range fighters in daylight on 7th and 8th April and on the night of 7th/8th April continued their attacks against rail targets in south and central Burma. The Air Commando Force of the Tactical Air Force in support of ground troops heavily bombed and strafed gun positions in the Mawlu area. From all these operations, two Allied aircraft are missing.

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