

1330 B.S.T. TO-DAYSOUTH EAST ASIA COMMUNIQUE NO. 15Delhi. 18.1.44

On the Arakan front at Nalpanmya, three miles to the south east, and at Razabil three miles to the east of Maungdaw, the Japanese on the night of 15/16th January launched small counter-attacks which were repulsed. Our troops remain in possession of these villages. Near Buthidaung R.A.F. dive-bombers of the Tactical Air Force Eastern Air Command on the 16th January carried out four separate attacks on enemy positions. Bombs were well concentrated in the target areas.

R.A.F. fighters have continued their offensive sweeps against enemy lines of communications. In the Mayu peninsula area and on the Irrawaddy near Frome a number of rivercraft were damaged by machine-gun fire. Enemy occupied buildings were also successfully attacked. On the night of the 15/16th January fighters attacked motor vehicles on the Raungup Pass road and the following night their objectives were rivercraft and buildings in the Akyab area. That night R.A.F. heavy bombers of the Strategic Air Force Eastern Air Command raided railway targets at Rangoon and Mandalay.

In Northern Burma U.S. medium and fighter bombers of the Eastern Air Command attacked the main airfield at Myitkyina on 16th January, dropping bombs along the centre runway and rendering it unserviceable. The formation also set a large launch on fire and damaged a group of barges on the Irrawaddy. Large formations of U.S. fighter-bombers acting in support of ground troops raided troop concentrations and supply and transport dumps in the Sawng Hka and Shaduzup areas.

At Sawng Hka all areas were heavily bombed and covered by machine-gun fire and many fires were started. The operation at Shaduzup was equally successful. American-trained and equipped Chinese troops, operating in the Hukawng Valley, have taken two more villages in the Ninghyen areas.

On the Chindwin front one of our patrols, in a clash with some sixty Japanese, inflicted twenty five casualties. Our own losses were very small.

R.A.F. fighters of the Tactical Air Force Eastern Air Command, on the 16th January in sweeps along the railway between Sagaing and Shwebo and between Katha and Mogaung, damaged four locomotives and a considerable number of rolling stock. River traffic and enemy-occupied buildings were also successfully attacked.

One enemy aircraft was destroyed by R.A.F. fighters on the 16th January.

No allied aircraft is missing from these operations.

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