

Further development is still going on and by March 1945, the port will have been expanded to the maximum practicable extent.

184. *The Arakan Line of Communication.* This line supplies the area to the south of Chittagong, and the lack of all-weather roads causes the burden to fall mainly on sea and river transport. There are two main routes:—

(a) By road, from Chittagong, via Ramu, to Tumbru at the head of the Naf River, and thence on to Bawli Bazaar and Maungdaw. The road is all-weather up to Tumbru, with the exception of the section between Chittagong and Dohazari.

(b) By water, from Chittagong to Cox's Bazaar and Utakhali; from Chittagong to Maungdaw direct; and by the Naf River from Tumbru to Maungdaw.

In addition to the above, there were two subsidiary sections of the line of communication:—

(i) On the Sangu and Kaladan Rivers, to support 81 (West African) Division.

(ii) On the Mayu River, to support the left flank of 15 Indian Corps.

185. The main difficulties met with on this line of communication are the physical difficulties of road construction in an area which is either mountainous or liable to inundation in the monsoons and where no stone exists; the limited capacity of Chittagong and the very restricted capacities of Cox's Bazaar, Utakhali and Maungdaw; and the shortage of craft on rivers, the mouths of which are under enemy control.

The diversity in the types of rivercraft employed is another factor which causes added difficulties; small coasters, ordinary tugs, "D" type diesel driven tugs of wooden construction, cargo flats, ramped cargo lighters, Eureka tow boats, Higgins barges, a variety of country craft fitted with outboard motors (with a horse-power ranging from 9.8 to 22), and last, but not least, the sampan.

186. As on the other lines of communication, very considerable development has taken place in Arakan. The road southwards from Dohazari has been converted to a fair weather two-way road as far as Maungdaw and an all-weather one-way one as far as Tumbru. The development of the road to Tumbru to two-way all-weather standard is in progress.

Our water communications have been improved by increasing the capacity of the ports in the Cox's Bazaar area from 400 to 1,000 tons a day. Tumbru Ghat is also now capable of handling 1,000 tons daily; and as soon as Maungdaw was captured, Transportation Construction Units raised its daily capacity to 600 tons.

Perhaps the most creditable feat, however, was the way in which much needed reinforcements of rivercraft were sailed into the Naf River. In spite of the fact that the mouth of the river was held by the enemy, Inland Water Transportation units, during the early stages of the winter operations, ran craft down the coast and up into the river—air cover being provided—to supplement the water transport which had been used the previous season. The river fleet in the Naf was thus increased until it was capable of handling 1,000 tons a day

between Tumbru and the numerous jetties which have been constructed between this ghat and Maungdaw

187. *Oil Pipelines.* Oil pipelines are under construction which will, of course, relieve the load on other forms of transport. An American 6-inch pipeline has been completed from Calcutta to North Assam and work on a similar line from Chittagong to the same area has been started. We are laying 4-inch pipeline from Chittagong to Imphal, via Manipur Road, which is nearly finished. The American line from Ledo to the Myitkyina area is being extended, and a British line from Imphal to Kalewa will probably be built.

188. *Summary of Developments on our Lines of Communication.* The main features have been:—

(a) The increase in the capacity of the Assam line of communication.

(b) The increase in the capacity of Chittagong.

(c) The development of the capacity of the sea and river line of communication southwards from Chittagong, from 400 tons to 1,000 tons a day.

(d) The increase in air supply due to the development of the airfields in the Surma Valley and the lines of communication leading to them.

(e) The construction of oil pipelines.

#### *Supply and Maintenance.*

189. The base for our operations in Burma is, of course, India, and all imported or indigenous stores pass through the Indian Reserve Base Depots.

The stocks of stores which we intended to hold on both the northern and southern lines were sixty days' working stock plus thirty days' reserve.

Stores from the Indian Reserve Bases are delivered to Advanced Bases in the Fourteenth Army area, which, for Arakan, are located about Chittagong and Mymensingh, and, for the northern line, at Gauhati and Manipur Road.

190. *Arakan Front:* During the last six months, an average of some 64,000 tons monthly has been moved through the port of Chittagong. A further 4,600 tons is shipped direct from Calcutta to the small ports south of Chittagong. The railway "lift" in this area, ex India, has averaged, over the same period, 19,000 tons monthly.

The northern part of East Bengal is served by Mymensingh from which the requirements of the air force, reserve formations in the district, and the air supply base airfields are met.

The Chittagong depots supply the Arakan, using road, sea and inland water transport.

191. *Assam Front:* For the first three months of the year, the line of communication on this front was unable to meet in full the heavy demands of both the British and United States forces. From the beginning of April 1944, however, its capacity has been notably improved and it can now lift the full requirements of the Allies; the tonnage having risen, in the last six months, from some 3,800 tons *per diem* to 5,200.