

APPENDIX "B."

G.H.Q. OPERATION INSTRUCTION No. 19.

To

G.O.C.-in-C., Eastern Army.

1. Since there is now no possibility of capturing Akyab before the monsoon, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief directs that the object of operations before the rains in that area will be to regain the initiative and inflict a severe defeat on the enemy. To this end offensive operations will be initiated on both sides of the Mayu River.

2. At the same time you should consider, and prepare—so far as this can be done without weakening your offensive action—positions to be held during the monsoon period.

3. Your positions must cover the Maungdaw—Buthidaung road, Maungdaw airfield and the mouth of the Naf River, with as much depth as possible in front of them. If possible, the Indin landing strip and the Yezogyaung—Apaukwa track should be covered. The latter offers the shortest route to the Kaladan Valley, which may be of considerable importance in operations after the monsoon.

4. The forces under your command in the Mayu area have advantages over the enemy of numerical preponderance, better equipment and the support of superior air forces. If these advantages are skilfully used, it should be possible to take successful offensive action and achieve your object. The enemy's over-confidence engendered by recent successes may lead him to expose himself to an effective counter-stroke; particularly East of the River Mayu.

5. You will, in conjunction with A.O.C., Bengal, draw up joint plans to implement the above policy. An appreciation and copies of Directives issued to the Naval and Air Force Commanders are attached.

(Sd.) A. W. S. MALLABY,

Major-General,

for Chief of the General Staff.

New Delhi, 1st April, 1943.

Copy to G.O.C.-in-C., Eastern Army; Lieut.-Commander R. D. Franks, O.B.E., R.N., C.O., Mayu Force; A.O.C., Bengal; D.M.O.

Dated 1st April, 1943.

AIR HEADQUARTERS (INDIA) OPERATION INSTRUCTION No. 1.

(Issued in conjunction with G.H.Q. Operation Instruction No. 19, dated 1st April, 1943.)

This instruction relates to the air action to be taken between now and the end of the monsoon.

Object.

2. The object of these operations for which you are jointly responsible in conjunction with G.O.C.-in-C., Eastern Army, is to inflict a defeat upon the Japanese land forces and secure before the rains and hold until next dry season a position in Arakan which has been indicated to G.O.C.-in-C.

3. Accordingly, the policy for the employment of the air forces under your command must be directed to gaining and maintaining a favourable air situation best calculated to assist the military object.

Air Operations: Bengal Command.

4. The air action to be undertaken by the air forces under your command should be considered as being in two phases, viz.:—

1st Phase:—from now until the monsoon breaks.

2nd Phase:—during the monsoon.

1st Phase.

5. To keep the Japanese air forces on the defensive and maintain air superiority over the area of our land operations.

(a) *Fighter Operations*.—Offensive operations in strength are to be undertaken primarily in forward areas. In this connection the operation of fighter aircraft from Maungdaw and establishment of an effective warning system will be important.

(b) Bomber and long-range fighter attacks are to be carried out against enemy occupied air-fields as a primary task.

(c) Attacks against opportunity targets and enemy communications leading towards the theatre of operations, particularly river communications north of Akyab, are to be undertaken as a secondary task.

2nd Phase.

6. (a) You are to endeavour to maintain a forward fighter offensive policy, to ensure the continuance of local air superiority, and to protect our coastal shipping southwards from Chittagong.

(b) Attacks against enemy occupied air-fields are to be continued when opportunity offers and with the same priority attacks against lines of communication and shipping in the enemy forward areas.

7. Subject to the above you are to conserve your air effort during this phase, and to build up reserves in order to operate with maximum force in support of sea and land operations immediately after the monsoon.

8. Copies of Directives issued to the Naval and Army Commanders are attached.

(Sd.) G. B. A. BAKER,

Air Vice-Marshal,

Senior Air Staff Officer.

To

A.O.C., Bengal.

Copies to G.O.C.-in-C., Eastern Army (5 copies); Lieut.-Commander R. D. Franks, O.B.E., R.N.

Office of F.L.O. (India), New Delhi.

OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTION—MAYU FORCE.

Forces.

1. Your command consists of the two Burma M.Ls. and two L.C.S. at present in the Mayu River. Your immediate Naval Superior is the Naval Officer in Charge, Chittagong.

Object.

2. Your object is to assist by all means in your power the military operations.