

W0 203/124
MOST SECRET.

No. 1029/70/U.,
H.Q., Diego Garcia,
Ceylon Command, 1 Jan 1944.

COB II
DIEGO GARCIA - PROGRESS REPORT FOR PERIOD 1 - 31 DECEMBER 1943.

1. HEALTH. The health of the garrison remains good and no really serious diseases have been encountered except for one case each of Malaria M.F., scrub typhus and dysentery (clinical). The remaining cases are of the common type and not serious.

Two cases from the local population have been treated - both injuries - and the knowledge that help can be requested from the hospital naturally helps in morale of the all locals and the good will between military and civilians. A few cases from visiting vessels have also been treated by the S.E.M.O.

The S.E.M.O. reports a great improvement in health due to the frequent receipt of fresh fruit and vegetables as well as fresh meat recently. It is hoped that arrangements can be made to continue this.

As far as anti-mosquito and anti-malarial precautions go, a drive is in progress to try and clear all camp areas of flies and mosquitoes, and afterwards keep them in check.

2. FAUN. Enclosed herewith please find Progress Report on Livestock, in triplicate, as rendered to this H.Q. by S.E.M.O.

It will be noted that goats received in December were all males. If a percentage of females could be despatched experiments in breeding might be tried, especially as the new location of goat compound proves to be satisfactory and does not cause illness.

Assistance to overcome vitamin deficiencies in poultry will be much appreciated. No doubt some expert in Ceylon could give advice and suggest certain foods to assist.

The geese seem to have got into a state of stagnation as they remain alive and yet do nothing! However, they are fit and will have to be given yet more time to prove their worth one way or the other.

The garden at Eclipse Point so far has shown wonderful progress and if it proves a success, will be greatly enlarged. A list of seed requirements in confirmation of cable No. DG 389 of 20 December 43 is attached.

3. TRAINING. Training does not appear to be up to the required standard as far as Fortress Scheme training goes. It appears that there have been no general Fortress Schemes recently and so a full test of the communications and general running and manning of the Fortress under battle conditions has not been made. It is proposed during the next two months add to work up to a full Fortress Scheme embodying all personnel. The first scheme was of a small nature carried out on the night of December 29th for the purpose of testing to see whether very lights (the system of alarm) could be seen by all O.P.'s and vantage posts which are normally manned. The result were that signals could be seen but very light cartridges failed in a number of cases to go off, (due to exposure to weather). O.P.'s have now been supplied with sealed ~~xxx~~ containers in which are freshly issued cartridges - and containers will only be opened in emergency.

The next proposed scheme to be held end of January or beginning of February will be two schemes in which Eclipse Point and East Point go into a state of Readiness 4 independently on different days.

By the end of February it is hoped that the communications will have been completely reorganised and relayed in some cases, when a full scheme for the whole Fortress may be attempted.

Further reports will follow.

The technical training of the Coast Battery is to be slightly improved with the addition of a locally made night miniature range which it is hoped will soon be ready.

After the recent stress made on Jungle Warfare, it is hoped that in the next month or two, a field firing range in the jungle (which will need slight clearing of undergrowth) will be made and so

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being in snap shooting targets worked by release wires will be obtained by all units. By this time the majority of the construction work R.A.F., R.N. and army schemes will have been completed and training other than fatigues will be in full swing.

(a) ARRIVALS. 'H.T. Wingsang' arrived on 1 December 43 bringing the following personnel.

12th Indian Coast Battery I.A.

Officers..... 2
B.O.Rs..... 4
V.C.O..... 1
I.O.Rs..... 43
I.E. S.E.R.S.
I.O.R..... 2

25/4 Bombay Grenadiers.

V.C.O..... 1
I.O.Rs..... 8
Sgt A.W. Coy. I.N.
I.O.R..... 1

(b) DEPARTURES. The following personnel embarked 'H.T. Wingsang' on 6 December 43.

12th Indian Coast Battery I.A.

Officers..... 2
B.O.Rs..... 4
V.C.O..... 1
I.O.Rs..... 40

25/4 Bombay Grenadiers.

I.O.R... 1 (on medical grounds)

5. WORK & CONSTRUCTIONS. The R.A.F. Building scheme is almost complete now - and only a few things remain to be done.

- Water tanks to be completed.
- Removal of certain native huts in the camp area.
- Completion of petrol storage tanks.
- Receipt and installation of two 72" ranges for canteen - This matter has been taken up with the Chief Engineer, Ceylon.

Work is then to commence on the completion of the 6" gun blast walls, erection of 8 huts (to be received) and one or two other small buildings - all at Eclipse Point. When this work commences, the I.N. Company, which is at present at East Point, will move back to Eclipse Point.

Consent to carry on construction has been demanded for January and also for February.

Authority is being requested in a separate letter for the construction of a proper garage and P.O.L. store - both essential.

6. COMMUNICATIONS. Major MANNERS, R. Sigs., arrived on S.S. EMPIRE MOUNTAIN, on 17th December 43 together with two of his B.O.Rs and the submarine cable for laying between East Point and Marianne Point. This was laid on 20 December 43 and communications are now complete to R.A.F. at East Point. Facilities have been provided so that in the event of the submarine cable breaking down, telephone tapings can be made at East Point and Marianne Point, and lamp communications resorted to as before.

As a few days remained spare for Major MANNERS R. Sigs., and his two B.O.Rs., these days were utilized in seeking advice on telephone communications as a whole from Major MANNERS and inspection of communications by his two B.O.Rs. All three worked very well and their assistance and advice was very welcome.

A certain re-organization of the signal layout has been considered necessary and at the same time, a complete overhaul of existing lines. This may take a few weeks to complete due to shortage of personnel who can be spared from other duties, but the final answer should improve communications 100% and obviate the present rather frequent break-downs. Cable for this has been indented for and is urgently required.

7. TRANSPORT. The engine parts of one launch were despatched to ADDU ATOLL for overhaul and are expected back soon. The other launch is not at all satisfactory and requires a complete on local overhaul. A separate report will be made later.

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All vehicles except one Ford 30 cwt. and one Chevrolet 30 cwt. running, the latter requires a new radiator (already indented for but not yet received). The Ford cannot be put on the ex road as the engine is completely U/S and gear box faulty - both 3rd line repairs. separate report will follow.

8. EQUIPMENT. The provision of a workshop with necessary equipment is essential to assist in repairing all types of equipment - could be usefully employed to assist Navy and R.A.F. as well as Army. Equipment should include laths, vertical drill, complete set of workshop tools etc., and also three months' supply of raw materials (steel, brass etc.)

9. LIASON. As a new arrival to this Fortress as O.C. Troops, it is found that the co-operation and will to give assistance between the services and with the D.O. Company could not be finer. Relations are in all respects most cordial.

J. Mackay

MAJOR R.A.

KKT.

O.C., TROOPS, DIEGO GARCIA.

Distribution :-

G.S. Branch, G.H.Q.(I). .. 2 *Give Stock - Progress Report not forwarded.*
 G.S. Branch, H.Q., C.A.C... 2 (Cipher analysis to follow.)
 File. 1

APPENDIX "A"

SEED REQUIREMENTS.

Items.		Quantity.	Ozs.
Potatoes.	..	..	16
Brinjals.	..	..	16
Ladies Fingers..	..	..	8
"Trenti".	..	..	16
Cucumber.	..	..	12
Radishes horse..	..	..	32
Turnips.	..	..	32
Carrots.	..	..	32
"Barson".	..	..	16
Lettuce.	..	..	64
Spinach.	..	..	16
Best root.	..	..	32
"Karala".	..	..	20
Onions.	..	..	16
Pumpkin.	..	..	32
Corriander.	..	..	32
Marrows.	..	..	32
Mint.	..	..	..
Sweet potatoes..	..	..	32
Capsicum.	..	..	8
Water Melon.	..	..	16

Probably in bundles

1944.

1943.

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