

NEFIS INTERROGATION REPORT No. 1931/T.
SPECIAL REPORT NEFIS FIELD INTERROGATION UNIT
OPERATION - INVASION TARAKAN ISLAND.

This report summarises information resulting from interrogations on Tarakan Island during the period 2-14 May 1945.

A more detailed compilation of individual interrogations will be issued in due course.

III. TACTICAL DATA ON ENEMY MILITARY FORCES.

Dispositions and Strength of Organisations and Units:
Tarakan Island, N.E. Borneo, 2-14 May 45: A large number of inf's was interrogated and though many statements were conflicting and contradictory it was possible to make what was considered to be a reasonably accurate estimate of the strengths and dispositions of enemy forces on the island. The particulars are not included in this report.

Information was acquired concerning enemy dispositions and strengths on the mainland with particular reference to:-

Tawau	- British N. Borneo.
Malinau	- including Sesajap River area.
Tandjoeng Selor	- including Boeloengan River area.

Details, however, are not included in this report.

With the exception of a small number of collaborators and a few individuals allowed to proceed on leave, no Indonesians were permitted to depart from the island during the entire period of the Japanese occupation.

Native Troops: Tarakan Island, N.E. Borneo, to May 45: Although a number of Heiho personnel were recruited in Balikpapan and Soerabaja by three Javanese collaborators under the command of the Japanese, Yosikawa, only 30 to 40 were taken into actual military service (unarmed). The remainder were employed in various Japanese projects on the island such as oilfields, the airfield and road works. These were not regarded as military personnel by the invading force.

Auxiliary Troops: Tarakan Island, N.E. Borneo, 2-14 May 45: Two hundred Japanese civilians, including some women, took an active part in the fighting. They were armed with locally made spears, jungle knives, etc.

Supply Arrangements and Installations: Tarakan Island, N.E. Borneo, 2-14 May 45: Large stores of rice and tinned foodstuffs were abandoned by the Japanese in the township and its immediate surroundings. Information suggests that large stocks had been removed to defence positions in the hills a few days prior to the invasion.

Enemy Tactics and Methods: Tarakan Island, N.E. Borneo, 2-14 May 45: Land mines, booby traps and even depth charges were used by the enemy on an unprecedented scale in areas likely to be patrolled by the invading force. Such areas neutralised during the day were frequently relaid with mines at night by infiltrating Japanese.

In the early days of the operation, infiltration was facilitated by the extensive tunnelling system prepared by the enemy. Several Indonesians who had actually supervised the construction of the tunnels were interrogated by this section and locations of the tunnels known to them were marked on the map. A full report giving details of sizes, lengths, shapes and directions of tunnels, together with estimates of the number of labourers and time employed on the tunnels, has been prepared for submission to the relevant authorities.

Enemy snipers operated in many parts of the township area, where infiltration was aided by the heavily timbered hills and

Hearsay:


- a. Malinau ($3^{\circ}35'N.$, $116^{\circ}40'E$), N. Borneo, Aug 42: Fifty-three European men and women were beheaded.
- b. Some American PsW (number and status unknown) were taken up river (presumably the Sesajap River) by prahoc and murdered (date unspecified).

XIII. GENERAL.

Attempt to organise resistance at Malinau ($3^{\circ}35'N.$, $116^{\circ}40'E$), N. Borneo, Jan - Feb 42: Towards the end of Jan or the beginning of Feb 42 a Dutch Lieut. named Groeneveld who had crash-landed, arrived at Malinau where he endeavoured to organise resistance against the Japanese. He deposed a relative of the Sultan of Boeloengan, one Datoe Madjit, who contacted the Japanese and asked for assistance. His treacherous action resulted in the unexpected appearance of a Japanese unit, with disastrous results to all Europeans at Malinau.

Prostitution: Tarakan Island, N.E. Borneo, 2-14 May 45: Thirty Indonesian women were imported from Java to serve as prostitutes. Three of these are still on Tarakan, while the remainder, in addition to some Japanese prostitutes, had been transferred to Boeloengan ($3^{\circ}05'N.$, $116^{\circ}30'E$).

Director, NEFIS



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AI2/14853/G

Camp Columbia, 2nd June, 1945.