

# THE NAVY IN BORNEO

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East Malaysia consists of the states of Sarawak and Sabah (previously British North Borneo). Wedged between these two states is the small State of Brunei, which although not part of Malaysia is closely allied to it. These three States make up about one third of the huge island of Borneo. The rest of it belongs to Indonesia. The border between East Malaysia and Indonesia is 971 miles long and the East Malaysian coastline is over 1,300 miles. The country is rough, mountainous jungle where no roads exist, except in and around the few towns that are scattered mainly along its coastline.

What of the Navy ashore? Among the assortment of sailors ashore there are 15 Communicators who work for the Joint Communication Unit (Borneo) and are divided between the Joint Communication Centres at Labuan and Kuching. Three more work for the detachment of 848 Naval Air Commando Squadron from HMS *Albion* whose helicopters re-supply the troops scattered along certain sectors of the border.

A new UHF relay station has been opened on a mountain top (3,000 feet up) a few miles outside Kuching and CMS's have been worked at ranges of over 70 miles. At the moment two RO's spend a week at a time up there doing the relay work. We

hope one day to get some automatic re-broadcast equipment. Meantime the two sailors, along with some Gurkha signallers, keep their lonely vigil. For those of you who remember the idyllic days of Tanjong Po, they are I'm afraid, no more.

At Labuan, four RO's, together with RS 'Sharkey' Ward, who keeps a fatherly eye on them, again work in a completely Joint Comcen.