

Report on IAF Operation

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Indian Air Force

The Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent consisted of 18 members, of which 7 were Officers and 11 Airmen. This was the first time that no Chetaks were available for SAR and communication duties. During the expedition 152.05 hrs were flown in 293 sorties airlifting 2,93,191 kg of load. The load consisted of 99,895 kg of construction materials, 12,290 kg of spares, 51,746 kg of rations and 1,28,870 kg of fuel.

The helicopters were ferried from Chandigarh on 27 Nov 92 and reached Goa on 30 Nov 92. Both helicopters were lowered into the hold on 2 Dec 92.

The ship reached fast ice on 25 Dec 92 and it was decided to take the helicopters out the next day. This could not be done due to strong winds. The helicopters were finally taken out on 30 Dec 92 in spite of high winds. The helicopters were assembled and the first air test done on 31 Dec. late in the evening.

The first sorti to Maitri was carried out on 1 Jan. 93 and thereafter the IAF team was geared up to meet all the required tasks. It was initially decided to fly one aircraft at a time, the other being standby for search and rescue. The continuous bad weather during January made it imperative to fly both aircrafts together in order to meet all the expedition tasks. Out of the average of 15-20 good weather days statistically available in January, this year only 11 good weather days were available. Out of this two days had to be utilised for the 50 hrs servicing of both the aircrafts, which was done one after the other.

In spite of the constraints forced by the weather, the team utilised every available opportunity to fly. The order of priority of carrying load to Maitri as given by the leader was as follows :

- (a) Construction materials for generator shed and 4 × 62.5 kVA generators.
- (b) Spares and allied equipments.
- (c) Rations and fuel.

A detailed summary of day to day flying for January and February 93 are placed in Tables 1 and 2 respectively.

Table 1: XII Antarctica Expedition: Summary of Flying-January 1993

Date	No. of Sorties	Hours Flown	Load Carried (kg)				Fuel	Pass	Weather Condition			Remarks
			Const Mat	Food	Spares	Spares			Good	Partial	Bad	
01	07	4.35	4620	300	-	-	26	G	-	-	-	
02	Nil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B
03	Nil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B
04	Nil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B
05	02	1.20	1240	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	B
06	Nil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B
07	15	9.20	13295	200	-	-	10	G	-	-	-	-
08	10	6.50	11800	-	-	-	05	G	-	-	-	-
09	02	1.25	2450	-	-	-	01	-	-	-	-	B
10	07	4.25	5565	-	720	-	26	-	PF	-	-	-
11	05	2.05	2120	-	-	-	28	-	-	-	-	B
12	16	10.45	14810	500	300	900	22	G	-	-	-	-
13	13	9.05	12090	200	1100	-	08	G	-	-	-	-
14	14	8.10	10945	-	1000	-	51	G	-	-	-	-
15	11	6.30	5800	-	2020	-	10	G	-	-	-	-
16	Nil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B
17	Nil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B
18	02	1.20	2000	-	-	-	08	-	-	-	-	B
19	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B
20	Nil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B
21	02	0.55	-	-	-	-	-	G	-	-	-	50 Hrs servicing
22	10	4.35	5960	400	-	-	10	G	-	PF	-	-do- A & E Check done
Bad Weather prevailed from 23 Jan. to 27 Jan.												
28	05	2.30	4500	-	-	-	09	-	-	PF	-	-
29	Nil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B
30	16	8.55	1800	-	6100	12060	13	G	-	-	-	-
31	18	9.30	900	-	1770	24300	05	G	-	-	-	-
Total	156	92.15	99895	1600	12290	37980	242	11	03	17	-	-
Total forward load 151765 kg												
Total backward load 18150 kg												

Table 2: XII Antarctica Expedition : Summary of Flying - February 1993

Date	No. of Sorties	Hours Flown	Load Carried (kg)				Weather Condition			Remarks		
			Const Mat	Food	Spares	Fuel	Pass	Good	Partial		Bad	
01	12	6.35	-	-	-	15980	42	G.	-	-	-	
02	21	9.50	-	-	-	25080	16	G	-	-	-	
03	03	1.45	-	-	-	2700	02	-	-	-	B	
04	14	7.35	-	13970	-	2800	13	G	-	-	-	
05	03	1.00	-	2850	-	-	01	-	-	-	B	
06	12	6.25	-	16436	-	-	16	G	-	-	-	
11	05	2.20	-	5500	-	-	16	-	-	-	B	
15	17	8.00	-	11000	390	7800	16	G	-	-	-	
16	27	9.35	-	-	-	24645	75	G	-	-	-	
17	20	5.55	-	-	-	11895	111	G	-	-	-	
18	03	0.50	-	-	-	-	-	G	-	-	-	
Total	137	59.50	-	49756	390	90890	308	7	-	-	11	
Total of Jan. & Feb. 1993 =												
	293	152.05	99895	51746	12680	128870	550	18	03	28		
Total forward load 293191 kg												
Total backward load 44410 kg												