

JAPANESE ATE 19 INDIAN SOLDIERS

BRISBANE, Friday: A horrifying story of Japanese cannibalism in the Wewak area, New Guinea, was told today by three Indian Army officers. The men were Captain R. U. Pirzai, Dr Subadar Gurcharan Singh and Jemadar Qasin. They were captured in Singapore when the city fell.

They revealed that 19 Indian soldiers who escaped with them were eaten by the Japanese in four months.

Captain Pirzai said that of the 300 men who came to Wewak with him only 50 got out.

"The Japanese attempted to form a puppet army in Singapore and tried to force us to learn the language," he said. "We all refused and were packed on a typical hell-ship bound for Wewak. On arrival there they again tried to force us to perform Japanese drill. The men refused.

"All officers were segregated and placed in a tiny cell and compelled for three days to sit on a log without food or water, and without movement. A guard pricked us with a bayonet if we moved. Normal personal duties had to be performed on the spot. We were completely exhausted when it was over and could not move, but they forced us to move our stiff limbs at work.

"When the Allied bombing started the Japanese were poorly off for food, but they still drew and ate our food from the store.

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on a diet of grass, suck-suck and rotten coconuts. Anything we could steal from the Japanese was welcome. The Japanese had no meat by this time and stores were growing scarcer.

"The Indians were in a pitiable state with beri-beri, dysentery and malaria. We were all just skin and bone.

"A Japanese doctor, Lieut.-Commander Tumais, formed a party of three or four men and would send an Indian outside the camp for something. The Japanese would immediately kill him and eat the flesh from his body. The liver and muscles from the buttocks, thighs, legs and arms would be cut off and cooked. One night I saw several of these poor devils being sliced.

"Some of the Japanese who were a little squeamish saw this and reported to Lieut. Commander

were a little squeamish saw this and reported - Lieut.-Commander Tumais to the Japanese commander, Colonel Nakasato, but no action was taken.

"Nineteen men were consumed by the Japanese in four months."

SHOT THOSE TOO WEAK

"When the Japanese were expecting an Allied landing they ordered us on a 15-day march to Maprik. All of those who were too weak to go were shot in the head after being beaten unmercifully."

They eventually escaped on the way to Maprik and contacted the

2/8 Battalion of the Australian 6th Division.

Dr. Subadar Gurcharan Singh stated that when he as a doctor stated that his party could not work on the food available, he was beaten with sticks and then with rifle butts by the Japanese.

"Our party of 553 left Singapore, but two officers and 32 other ranks are now, as far as I know, the only ones alive," he said. "I escaped on April 4 this year.

"On the day before the Aitape landing the Japanese drove us towards Aitape, bashing all those who were too weak to move. Many of us could not move, and on April 4 a Japanese, Lieut. Suzuki, ordered his men to shoot us in the head. Several of us made a break for it and got away. We joined some natives, and they fought the Japanese.

"One Japanese stabbed me three times with a bayonet and left me for dead. I summoned what strength I had and got away again.

"I joined another party and eventually we contacted the 6th Division about 16 miles from We-

wak.

"Everything that Captain Perzai has said about the Japanese is true. I had one sergeant in my party, Sergeant Jagath Singh, who told me that he had seen six men's brains cut out and eaten raw by the Japanese—they were so hungry."