Saigon Force Opens Campaign in Eastern Cambodia

SAIGON, South Vietnam, March 10 (AP)-A South Vietnamese armored force of about 5,000 troops and 100 vehicles swept into eastern Cambodia today in an attempt to prevent enemy attacks on the approaches to Saigon. It was the first major drive into eastern Cambodia since Nov. 22.

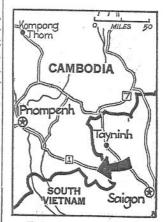
An adviser to the South Vietnamese troops said: "We're going to destroy any bases found in the area of our advance. This is an operation designed to pre-empt the en-emy attacks. Instead of waiting for them to attack, we are attacking."

Reports from the field say that the size of the force could increase to 20,000 men by next week as the offensive developed.

No major contact with the enemy has yet been reported lery strikes. South Vietnamese in the drive, which is north Saigon-to-Pnompenh and eight wounded. the highway, 6 to 10 miles inside Cambodia and 75 to 100 miles northwest of Saigon.

B-52 Role Reported

under way 25 miles farther ninh, a provincial capital. southwest since Feb. 1.



The New York Times/March 11, 1972 South Vietnamese drive is indicated by arrow.

enemy soldiers were killed with the help of air and artillosses were given as two killed

The only American role in the new South Vietnamese drive is air support with B-52 bombers and tactical fighter-bombers, United States advis-The South Vietnamese com- ers reported. The B-52 raids mand reported a major clash had prepared the way for the in a smaller drive that has been new offensive, west of Tay-

In ground action reportedly The command said that 35 involving American soldiers, a

reconnaissance patrol from the soldiers were killed in an am-States command said that one Highlands. American was wounded and known.

United States defenses inside North Vietnam that this indicated the enemy reaction strike reported this lands. year by the command.

Foe Reported Ambushed

From two to four F-4 into this area," the source said. fighter escorts struck an anti- Just north of Benhet, South aircraft-artillery site about 50 Vietnamese border rangers remiles northwest of the demilitarized zone which straddles ers, which one source described the border between the two Vietnams, after it had fired on just built." an unarmed United States re-connaissance plane, pilots said. Binhdinh, Government militia-The United States command said men reported killing 18 North that results of the strike were Vietnamese soldiers and capnot known and that there was turing 3 after a 25-minute clash no damage to the American three miles north of Annhon, planes.

mand said that 23 enemy ported.

Third Brigade, First Air Cavalry Division, fought briefly with enemy forces 32 miles northeast of Saigon. The United base at Benhet in the Central

A source in the field said that enemy losses were un-that the enemy soldiers that were killed had been from the fighter-52nd Regiment of North Vietbombers attacked antiaircraft nam's 320th Division. He said for the ninth consecutive day had moved elements of another in the 90th so-called protective-regiment into the Central High-

> "We know the 64th Regiment is out there, but this is the first time the 52nd has moved

a district town. No South Viet-The South Vietnamese com- namese casualties were re-