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# Big Stepup In Air Strikes

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SAIGON — (AP) — American jets hit North Vietnam with nearly 400 strikes yesterday in the heaviest raids since the resumption of full-scale bombing four and a half months ago, the U.S. Command said today.

The announcement was made just before U.S. presidential adviser Henry Kissinger met with President Nguyen Van Thieu, who has been urging that there be no letup in the bombing of the north.

The U.S. Command refused to say whether the intensification of the air attack was a show of determination by President Nixon to back Thieu's government to the hilt.

But other U.S. military sources suggested that the increase in the number of raids might be attributable to improved weather over North Vietnam.

A communique from the U.S. Command said "more than 370 tactical air strikes" were flown yesterday, ranging from the coast inland to the Hanoi area.

The raiders destroyed or damaged 42 supply trucks, half a dozen bridges, nine storage areas and fuel depots, eight warehouses and an anti-aircraft missile storage area, the communique said.

The biggest strike of the day, the Air Force said, was against the Xuan Mai military training complex 17 miles southwest of Hanoi,

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which contained scores of barracks, other buildings, anti-aircraft missile training equipment and ammunition storage areas.

Air Force pilots flying F4 Phantoms reported destroying several buildings in the complex.

Other Air Force pilots said they damaged a radar station 13 miles south of Hanoi.

Hanoi claimed four more U.S. fighter-bombers were shot down during the raids, raising to nine the number of American planes North Vietnam says it knocked out of the sky in the past three days.

The U.S. Command said it had no plane losses over the North to report. But the Command has a policy of withholding announcement of air losses while search and rescue operations are going on.

The South Vietnamese command announced that North Vietnamese gunners fired more than 2000 artillery and mortar rounds at government positions on the northern front from Quang Tri City to the western flanks of Hue, more than 30 miles to the south.

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