

B-52's Heavily Bomb Enemy Supply Corridor So

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Sunday, Jan. 14 (AP)—United States B-52's bombed sections of an enemy supply corridor stretching more than 150 miles from the North-Vietnamese port of Vinh across the demilitarized zone into the northern tip of South Vietnam, American officials reported yesterday.

But overcast skies cut strikes by smaller American fighter-bombers by almost half to 87 during the 24-hour reporting period ended at 8 A.M. Saturday, the United States command said.

The command said that the B-52's, which dropped up to 2,400 tons of explosives in the latest raids, were striking at supply areas and troop positions in efforts to block war materiel and replacements from reaching battlefields in South Vietnam.

While a bombing halt has been in effect above the 20th Parallel since Dec. 30 while peace talks continue in Paris, heavy strikes have been carried out in North Vietnam daily below the line.

Carpet-Bombing Charged

The North Vietnamese Foreign Ministry repeated charges that the B-52's were "carpet-bombing" populated areas in the four provinces below the 20th Parallel and that reconnaissance missions had been conducted above the line "in preparation for new acts of war" against the Hanoi-Hai-phong area.

South Vietnamese military headquarters reported that four North Vietnamese tanks, spotted closer to Saigon than any such armor has been before, had been knocked out by South Vietnamese bombers at rubber plantations 40 miles northwest of the capital.

Allied spokesmen also reported that heavy United States bombing in the region, where a North Vietnamese build-up was reported under way, had set off secondary explosions indicating hits on ammunition caches. South Vietnamese troops reportedly found similar caches.

Lt. Col. Le Trung Hien, chief spokesman for the South Vietnamese military command,



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U.S. bombers struck area between Vinh (1) and the DMZ. Ground fighting was reported near Da Nang (2), northwest of Saigon (3) and in Chuong Thien Province (4).

said that the bombers also destroyed four enemy trucks on Friday. He said that he had no other details about the tanks, except that they were not attempting to attack.

Skirmishes Along River

A series of small skirmishes was reported Friday along the Saigon River corridor between the Michelin and Lai Khe rubber plantations, 35 to 40 miles northwest of the capital, in the region where the tanks and trucks were reported destroyed.

The Saigon military command said that 18 North Vietnamese and Vietcong soldiers had been killed and one man,

seven heavy weapons and 76 rifles captured.

The Saigon River corridor is a traditional infiltration route toward the capital, and military sources estimate that there is a North Vietnamese regiment of as many as 1,000 troops between Michelin and Lai Khe with war materiel stockpiled there.

South of the Michelin plantation a North Vietnamese force of over 100 infiltrated a Government hamlet Friday night but was forced back with at least four men killed, reports said. Government losses were put at three killed and three wounded.

Fighting also was reported on the northern front south of Da Nang, in Kontum Province

in the Central Highlands and in Chuong Thien Province in the lower Mekong Delta more than 100 miles south of Saigon.

Cambodia Loses River Posts

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, Jan. 13 (Reuters)—Communist-led forces tightened their grip today on an important section of the Broad Mekong River, one of Phnom Penh's vital supply lines to the outside world.

The military command confirmed that Government troops had abandoned a string of positions guarding the river banks 35 to 40 miles southeast of Phnom Penh.

Tank Battle in Laos

VIENTIANE, Laos, Jan. 13 (UPI) — Laotian Government

forces knocked out two Soviet-built North Vietnamese tanks yesterday and captured a third in a battle for Muong Kassay, military sources said today.

The tank battle took place on Highway 13, 88 miles north of Vientiane, and sources said one of the Government troops' American-made M-24 tanks had been damaged.

They said a Government position came under heavy mortar fire followed by a ground attack before dawn yesterday.

The company commander was killed and the position abandoned, they said.