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06 FEBRUARY 1968 2125Z
DIST: O/UT
SEA SIGSUM 32-68



SOUTHEAST ASIA SIGINT SUMMARY

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LATE ITEM

REFLECTIONS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE AIR ACTIVITY IN
THE A SHAU VALLEY NOTED

On 6 February an unidentified PAVN element-associated with the PAVN 559th Transportation Group and believed to be active in road security and small scale tactical actions in the A Shau Valley--reported that "our piston-engine aircraft" would fly from Song Chon (unlocated) to the A Shau Valley between the hours of 1200G to 2400G on 6 February. The unidentified elements involved in the message activity were warned against firing at the planes and a later message mentioned picking up firewood and possibly lighting fires at the A Shau airfield.

In possibly related activity, a 6 February message from the tentative 66th Battalion, PAVN 275th Regiment--believed to be located in Nghe An Province, North Vietnam--to its 1st Company stated that "our piston-engine aircraft will be active on the way from Hanoi via Do Luong [18-54N 105-18E], TAN... to Quang Binh from 1700G on 6 February to 0500G on 7 February." (2/G11/VCM/R266-68, 061125Z; R267-68, 061310Z; R268-68, 061522Z) (~~SECRET SAVIN~~)

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NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
SOUTHEAST ASIA SIGINT SUMMARY

This report summarizes developments noted throughout Southeast Asia available to NSA at time of publication on 06 February 1968. All information in this report is based entirely on SIGINT except where otherwise specifically indicated.

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SITUATION SUMMARY

Several Vietnamese Communist units in the Hue-Phu Bai area of South Vietnam's Military Region (MR) Tri-Thien-Hue are using simplified tactical communications procedures, according to SIGINT. In MR 5 the probable Viet Cong (VC) 402nd Sapper Battalion and the suspected Hq, 368B Artillery Regiment have relocated eastward in Quang Nam Province, while in the western highlands, Hq, PAVN 10th Division has moved toward Pleiku city and a military intelligence element of the PAVN 1st Division has reported results of B-52 strikes on its position in western Kontum Province. To the south, activity in MR 1 was highlighted by the move of an unidentified control station from Tay Ninh Province into northeastern Binh Duong Province.

In the western corner of South Vietnam's northernmost province of Quang Tri, SIGINT has reflected engagements between PAVN elements and Allied forces in the vicinity of Khe Sanh. In the central DMZ, an element of the PAVN 164th Artillery Regiment was ordered to maintain close communications schedules because of impending heavy strikes. Farther south in the northern part of the A Shau Valley a piston-engine aircraft from Song Chon is reported to have landed and returned to base on 6 February.

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I. COMMUNIST SOUTHEAST ASIA

A. MILITARY

1. Vietnamese Communist Communications - South Vietnam

Military Region Tri-Thien-Hue

Since approximately 26 January, several Military Region (MR) Tri-Thien-Hue (TTH) units have been noted utilizing a simplified version of their normal signal plan. Users of this plan, which supplements the standard means of communications, include several controlling authorities and at least 16 subordinates, all of which appear to be located near the Hue-Phu Bai area of Thua Thien Province.

The possible Hue Municipal Unit, located on 4 February near 16-27N 107-35E (YD 759198) 4 km south of Hue, currently communicates with approximately seven unidentified subordinates, three of which were located on 4 February near 16-27N 107-34E (YD 742213), 16-19N 107-35E (YD 768045), and 16-20N 107-34E (YD 752073). One of the remaining unlocated stations was formerly a subordinate on the Hq, MR TTH net providing communications to the subordinates of the PAVN 6th Regiment.

The tentative forward element of Hq, MR TTH is utilizing the simplified plan to communicate with at least three subordinates--one serving the possible Hue Municipal Unit. The forward element was located on 4 February near 16-26N 107-27E (YD 620172), and one unidentified subordinate was located on 31 January near 16-20N 107-29E (YD 665191).

An unidentified control entity located on 3 February near 16-25N 107-25E (YD 586146) communicates with approximately four subordinates, one of which was located on 3 February near 16-26N 107-33E (YD 725206). Another unidentified control, located on 3 February near 16-25N 107-26E (YD 610150) communicates with three unlocated subordinates.

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Other MR TTH units believed to be located near Hue (and possibly represented on the aforementioned communications nets) include Hq, MR TTH, tentatively located on 4 February near 16-27N 107-35E (YD 766197) and Hq, PAVN 6th Regiment, last located on 29 January near 16-25N 107-26E (YD 608163). The use of these supplemental communications procedures, in addition to the present locations of the units using the tactical plan, might well be a reflection of the current offensive in the Hue-Phu Bai area since the use of tactical plan has, in the past, preceded increased activity by the units involved.

The possible Hq, PAVN 9th Regiment was located on 2 February near 16-34N 107-16E (YD 425491), indicating a move of approximately 25 km in a northwesterly direction to the Quang Tri city area from its former operating area near 16-35N 107-07E (YD 272346). Additionally, the possible Hq, PAVN 9th Regiment appears to be controlling two to three new subordinates in addition to its one original subordinate.

An unidentified MR TTH subordinate indicated on 4 February that it would suspend communications until 10 February. This same terminal ceased communications between 23 and 27 January, during which time a relocation was effected. The latest location of this terminal was on 3 February near 16-08N 107-29E (YD 665863). (2/G11/VCM/R253-68, 050139Z; R246-68, 041303Z; R231-68, 011837Z) ~~(SECRET SAVIN)~~

Military Region 5

In Quang Nam Province three Vietnamese Communist units have made minor relocations. The probable 402nd Sapper Battalion was located in east-central Quang Nam near 15-58N 108-13E (BT 017637) on 4 February, 17 km east of its 3 February location. In the same area, the suspected Hq, 368B Artillery Regiment moved 11 km eastward between 3 and 5 February to a position near 15-56N 108-07E (AT 906623).

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In addition the Hq, MR 5 Provincial Unit Control was located on 5 February in central Quang Nam, near 15-47N 107-57E (ZC 169488), about 11 km north-northeast of this unit's location on the previous day.

To the south, in eastern Binh Dinh Province, the Hq, PAVN 3rd Division Forward Element One was located on 5 February near 14-13N 108-59E (BR 828711). This is the first time this unit has been located since it was reactivated shortly after the first of the year.

In Pleiku Province the Hq, PAVN 10th Division has moved about 7 km closer to Pleiku city. This unit was located near 13-55N 108-11E (AR 971391) on 5 February, 22 km east-southeast of the city and 9 km south of Route 19.

In the western highlands, B-52's hit a subordinate of the Military Intelligence Section (MIS), Hq, PAVN 1st Division killing three of its personnel and apparently collapsing its bunkers, according to messages of 5 February passed from the subordinate to the MIS. The subordinate was located on 3 February in western Kontum Province near 14-41N 107-48E (ZB 001256). According to collateral, B-52's struck on 4 February at 0400 (GOLF) near 14-42N 107-48E (ZB 000270).

The MIS informed another subordinate--located on 28 January near 14-49N 107-41E (YB 894361) in the western Kontum Province area--that the subordinate would be moving and would be receiving a new assignment to protect Communist artillery against Allied ground probes. In a 5 February message the MIS ordered the subordinate to have all of the detachments which had been engaged in "isolated encirclement and pressure" activities against "the enemy" return to a central point to receive the new assignment on the morning of 6 February. The MIS also announced plans to attack ARVN artillery on 6 February.
(2/G12/VCM/R368-68, 051545Z; R367-68, 051510Z; R365-68, 051410Z; R364-68, 050730Z; R363-68, 050655Z; T296-68, 051758Z)
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Military Region 1/10

The 5 February location of Hq, VC 9th Light Infantry Division (LID) in the area just north of Saigon has been determined to be invalid and the element located in that area is now unidentified. Hq, 9th LID was located on 5 February in its normal base area in northeastern Binh Long Province at 11-58N 106-42E (XU 852240).

The possible element of Hq, VC 5th LID, which was noted sending messages to an unidentified and unlocated entity on 3 February discussing a planned Vietnamese Communist attack on Bien Hoa Airbase, has not been noted in communications since 0832Z on 3 February. This element was located on 3 February in northern Bien Hoa Province, approximately 8 km southeast of the 2 February location of the Hq, 5th LID. According to collateral, U.S. Forces initiated a tactical operation at about 0900Z on 3 February in the general area of Hq, 5th LID's last location.

By 4 February, an unidentified control station--first observed in communications on 18 November 1967 with an unidentified and unlocated subordinate--moved into northeastern Binh Duong Province near 11-16N 106-37E (XT 763446), approximately 50 km southeast of its 13 January position in northeastern Tay Ninh Province. SIGINT also revealed a parallel move by the tentative Hq, PAVN 7th Division Forward Element between 19 January and 4 February.

On 5 February, Hq, VC 274th Regiment--last located on 8 January near the Bien Hoa-Phuoc Tuy border--was noted sending six messages to its superior Hq, 5th LID; these are the first messages known to be passed between these entities since 16 January. These units had been last noted in radio contact on 1 February. Also on 5 February, Hq, 274th Regiment was active with its subordinate probable 2nd Battalion--the first time the regiment has been noted in communications activity with any of its subordinates since 25 September 1967.

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On 5 February, the Military Affairs Section (MAS) of COSVN continued to pass a high volume of urgent messages to the Hq, MR's 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 10. MAS COSVN also passed five messages of an apparent urgent nature to the probable Hq, VC 271st Regiment, and an extremely high volume of 32 messages to the tentatively identified Long An Provincial Unit (LAPU). The suspected LAPU is currently located just south of the Cholon sector of Saigon.

(2/G10/VCM/R060-68 CHANGE ONE, 070610Z; 3/O/STY/R31-68, 052035Z; 2/G10/VCJ/R035-68, 051905Z; 2/G10/VCM/R061-68, 051345Z; R055-68, 050820Z; 3/O/STY/R30-68, 042204Z)

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Military Region 2

Alternate Hq, MR 2 and its element located in eastern Dinh Tuong Province, were observed in limited communications activity for the second consecutive day. This partial communications stand-down, following a month of high message activity on these facilities, may be related to recent VC tactical activity in MR 2.

The probable My Tho Provincial Committee continues to relocate from western to eastern Dinh Tuong Province. On 4 February this entity was located at 10-24N 106-11E (XS 3152), about 13 km east of its 29 January location. (3/O/STY/R26-68; 2/G10/VCJ/R35-68, 051905Z) ~~(SECRET SAVIN)~~

Military Region 4

An unidentified military radio station--which has been active since October 1967--was located on 4 February in southeastern Hau Nghia Province at 10-51N 106-22E (XS 509982), approximately 25 km east of its 26 January position in the extreme western portion of the province near the Cambodian border. This station communicates with an unidentified control authority located in northern Tay Ninh Province.

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2. DRV Communications

DMZ Area

On 4 February tactical voice communications of PAVN elements in the Khe Sanh vicinity reflected engagements with Allied forces. On that date communications between two unidentified entities reported contact with an enemy force, possibly of platoon size. It was further indicated that the enemy had been pushed to the north of Hill 471 (16-38N 106-44E, XD 846393). Also in the Khe Sanh area, a PAVN artillery observer was instructed on 5 February to reconnoiter, survey and report coordinates of targets within the "fort." The observer was also ordered to "guard continuously" when C130 aircraft landed in order to adjust fire.

In the central DMZ an element of the PAVN 164th Artillery Regiment was ordered on 4 February to follow the communications schedules closely because "we are about to strike heavily."

The 27th Battalion reported that the 5th, 6th and 7th Companies had succeeded in killing 48 Americans, destroying 11 vehicles and killing and capturing many local government and self-defense personnel. The battalion also reported suffering 42 dead in a battle near Ba Thung (16-48N 106-59E, YD 120600), in a 5 February message.

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PAVN High Command

On 5 February, PAVN High Command was noted communicating with Hq, PAVN 90th Regiment and attempting to contact Hq, PAVN 803rd Regiment. This is the first noted instance of these regiments being in direct contact with Hanoi. (3/O/STY/R12-68, 2/G11/VCM/R260-68, 052020Z)

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Overland Infiltration

On 6 February an unidentified communications entity

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which is involved in road security and tactical activity in the A Shau Valley, and possibly associated with the PAVN 559th Transportation Group, was observed passing the following message to one of his subordinates believed to be located in the northern part of the A Shau Valley:

"From 1200G to 2400G on the 6th of February 1968 our piston-engine aircraft...from Song Chon [unlocated] to A Shau (C val land) and then return. Pay attention and do not fire."

This is the first SIGINT indication of enemy air activity associated with this entity.

(2/G11/VCM/T1018-68, 061220Z; 3/O/STY/R166-67, R157-68)

~~(SECRET SAVIN)~~

PAVN Rear Services

Messages passed by DRV Rear Services elements on 1 and 2 February disclosed plans for shipping gasoline and medical supplies during the month of February. Substation 102 (unlocated) is to receive 200 tons of gasoline to be transported directly from Hanoi, and also plans to ship 80 tons of medical supplies to Relay Station 8 (unlocated). The latter station was to receive undetermined amounts of gasoline and medical supplies transported from unlocated areas "N9" and "N10" by Companies 4 and 6, respectively.

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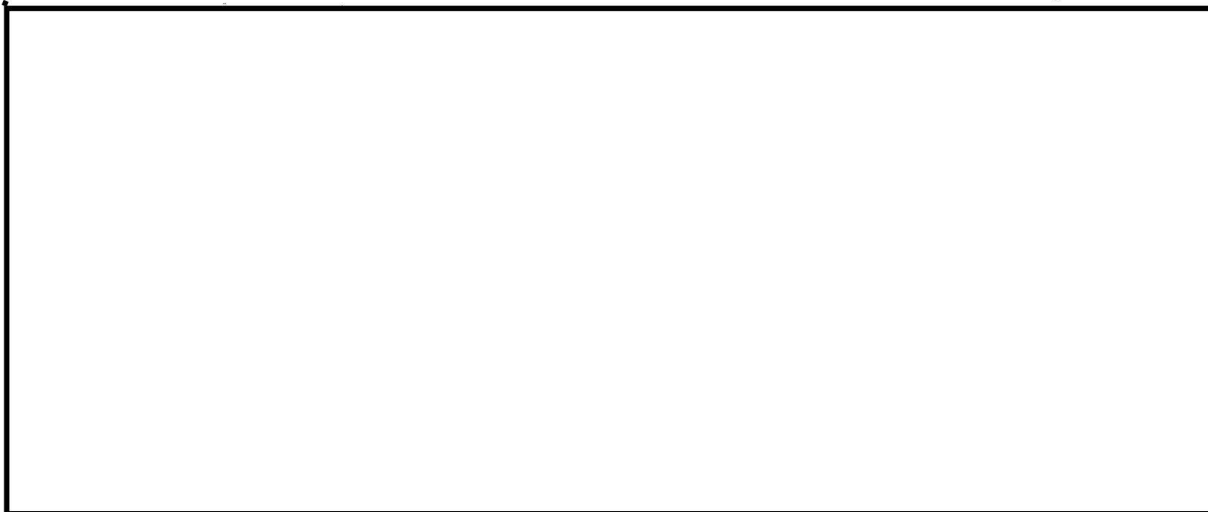
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