

North Vietnam

Troops Dealt

Heavy Losses

SAIGON (AP) — U.S. and South Vietnamese forces intercepted North Vietnamese troops in three regions ranging from the Cambodian border to the Demilitarized Zone and killed nearly 300 of the enemy with a rain of bombs, rockets and shells, military spokesmen reported today.

The U.S. Command reported the North Vietnamese shot down five American helicopters, three of them in one battle, raising to 6,295 the number of U.S. aircraft reported lost in Vietnam war during nearly a decade of fighting.

Eight Battles

Battlefield reports said infantrymen, tanks, armored personnel carriers mounted with heavy machine guns, jet bombers and helicopter gunships cut down the North Vietnamese troops in eight battles as the enemy forces apparently tried to maneuver into position for new attacks on allied bases.

Because the massive American firepower carried the brunt of the battles, allied casualties were reported light.

The U.S. Command said one American was killed and 29 were wounded while field reports put South Vietnamese government casualties at eight killed and 32 wounded.

The biggest battles raged south of Da Nang, where the enemy launched a new offensive over the weekend, along the Cambodian border north of Saigon where North Vietnamese troops are reported massing for a new drive, and less than two miles south of the demilitarized zone.

B52 bombers attacked enemy staging areas along the Laotian border today in an effort to keep fresh North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops from entering through the A Shau Valley to reinforce units mauled in heavy fighting.

Some of the bomb loads were five miles northwest of Hamburger Hill, where American troops fought one of the bloodiest battles of the war last year.

The battle in which three American helicopters were shot down began shortly after noon when enemy troops opened fire on an allied armored column in rolling foothills 40 miles southeast of Da Nang and four miles from the provincial capital of Tam Ky.

American tanks and armored personnel carriers, artillery and helicopter gunships blasted the enemy entrenched in bunkers. The armored cavalry squadron was part of a U.S.—South Vietnamese task force sent into the region after intelligence reports of a buildup there. Fighting raged until dark, and field reports said 96 enemy were killed. U.S. casualties were put at 18 wounded. Three South Vietnamese were killed and two wounded, a spokesman said.

More fighting broke out in the area today, and troops of the U.S. 196th Brigade reported killing 39 more North Vietnamese in three hours. U.S. casualties were described as light.

Today's Chuckle

Procrastination is the thief of time. So is every other big

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