



The President's Daily Brief

10 December 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

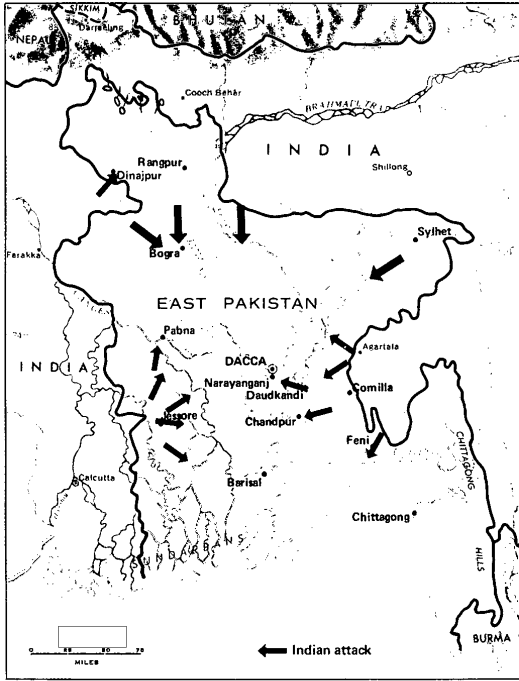
Indian forces in East Pakistan continue to close in on Dacca, but there appears to be no major change in the fighting along the Indian - West Pakistani border. (Page 1)

In Cambodia, some Communist forces have moved farther from Route 6, and government troops have begun new operations in the Phnom Penh area. (Page 3)

Taipei's recent international setbacks have set off increased expectations of political reforms at home. (Page 4)

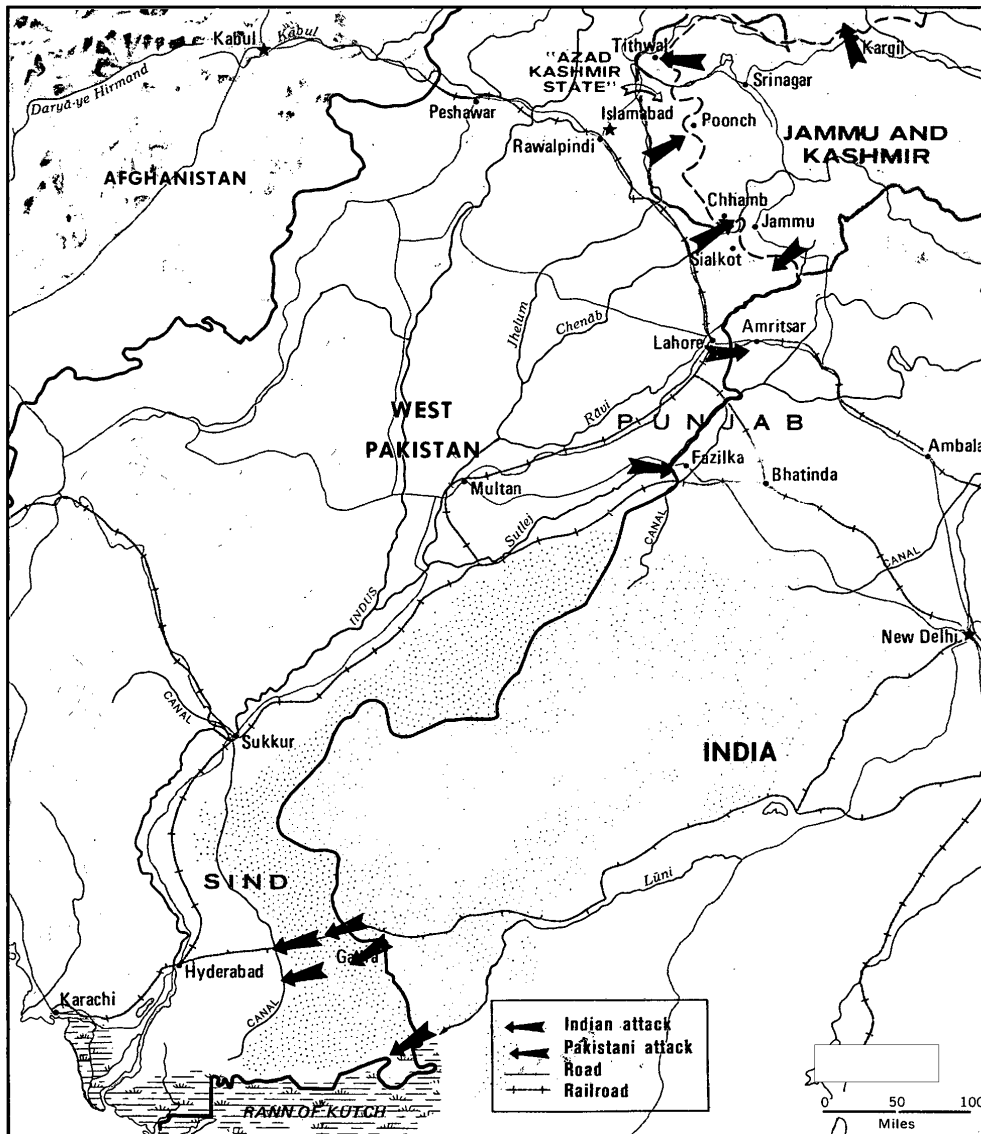
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INDIA-PAKISTAN

Indian troops in East Pakistan are closing in on Dacca. The river town of Chandpur and the ferry crossing at Daudkandi apparently have fallen. The Dacca radio stopped its broadcasts at 8:15 AM on 10 December (last night at 9:15 PM EST) and has not been noted to have resumed. The Indian drives elsewhere in the province are maintaining their momentum although Pakistani forces are holding on in a number of isolated areas. In a radio appeal to Pakistani troops yesterday, Indian Chief of Staff Manekshaw urged them to surrender and said they faced "certain death" if they tried to escape by sea.

If Pakistani forces try to make a stand at Dacca, they are unlikely to be able to hold out more than a few days. The commander of India's eastern front has said that Pakistani troops trying to reach Dacca or to make their way to various ports are being attacked from the air. Orders are out to treat all captured Pakistani troops as prisoners of war, but the commander has admitted that, in areas where there are no Indian troops and the Mukti Bahini are in control, there may have been some "political eliminations."

On the western front, the Indians claim to have beaten back several Pakistani attacks in Kashmir around Poonch and to have made a slight advance near Chhamb, the area of the largest Pakistani offensive. The Indian drive in the Sialkot area has been halted, according to the Pakistanis, but in the south the Indians continue to push deeper into Sind Province with almost no opposition.

The Karachi area was heavily bombarded from the air again yesterday. The strikes of the past two days in the harbor area have dealt a major blow to West Pakistan's POL supply. According to an Esso official, about 30 percent of the port's oil storage capacity--some 15 percent of the country's total--has been destroyed or seriously damaged. Oil fires pose a threat to the remaining storage areas.

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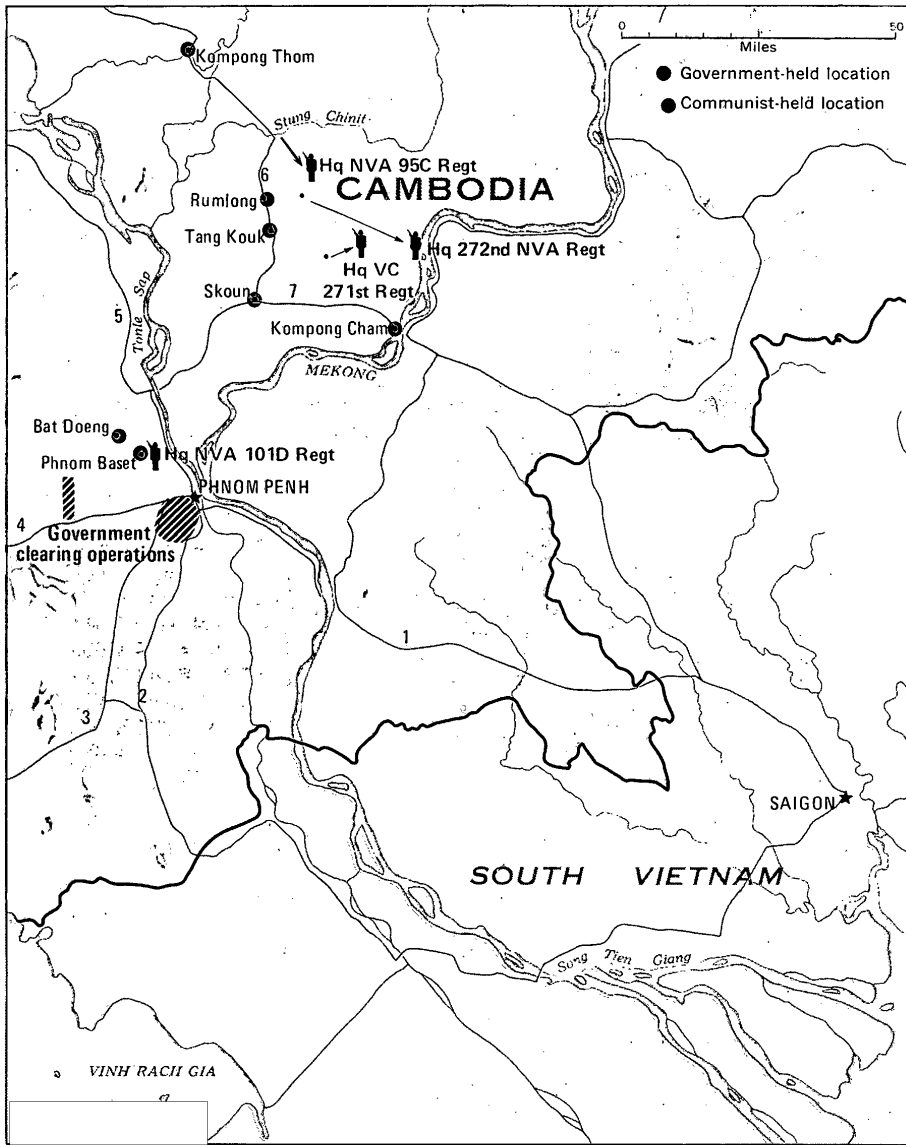
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There are now reports that the Indians are shifting some aircraft from the eastern to the western front where opposing air force strengths are now fairly even. Most of Pakistan's fighters are based in the north, where they have been supporting ground operations and attacking Indian airfields. There are fighter squadrons at Karachi, but they appear to have offered little opposition to Indian bombers.

On the sea, most of Pakistan's naval units have now been driven into Karachi port.

Both Indian Foreign Minister Singh and Pakistani Foreign Minister-designate Bhutto are expected to be on hand at the UN by today. Pakistan has accepted and India has now formally rejected the General Assembly's call for a cease-fire and troop withdrawal. There is a growing consensus at the UN that efforts to stop hostilities will soon have to be shifted back to the Security Council, although India and the USSR are likely to continue to block all cease-fire proposals at least until Dacca has fallen.

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CAMBODIA

Radio direction finding shows that the 271st Regiment of the Vietnamese Communist 9th Division, which had appeared to be moving toward remaining government positions on Route 6, has now shifted farther to the east. A second 9th Division regiment, the 272nd, apparently has left the Rumlong area of Route 6 and taken up a position near the west bank of the Mekong River. Current evidence suggests that only one North Vietnamese regiment, the 95C, remains within easy striking distance of government forces at Tang Kouk. An intercept of 6 December indicates that the Communists have been conducting reconnaissance of the Route 6 area near Skoun.

Government forces would be ill-prepared to withstand any determined Communist attacks. At Tang Kouk, for example, the morale of Cambodian officers and men is dangerously low.

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In the Phnom Penh area, elements of two government brigades have linked up with a battalion at Phnom Baset, 12 miles northwest of the capital. They encountered no resistance, but the presence of the North Vietnamese 101D Regiment near Phnom Baset may presage heavy fighting. Cambodian commanders are now reporting large enemy troop concentrations in the area.

The Cambodian Army has launched several new clearing operations around Phnom Penh. The largest, involving seven predominantly Khmer Krom battalions, will sweep between Routes 2 and 3 south of the capital, where several hundred enemy troops are said to be operating in small units. To the west of the city, another four battalions will try to maneuver behind suspected Communist positions.

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NATIONALIST CHINA

Taiwan's recent international setbacks are giving new impetus to proposals for political reorganization and reform, long advocated in various student and press circles. Some Nationalist officials are now arguing cautiously for a clearer expression of Taiwan's "separate identity," and one, Vice Foreign Minister Yang Hsi-kun, has even proposed that the government system be drastically overhauled and the country be renamed "Republic of Taiwan."

With the surfacing of such sentiments among Nationalists, native Taiwanese are beginning to press their own aspirations more strongly. In early December, associates of one local politician passed the US Embassy a document that calls for an expanded Taiwanese role in a reorganized government, a reduction of military forces, and a policy of "political neutrality."

The government is trying to overcome its tarnished image and forestall outright domestic disaffection with talk of a program for "rejuvenation." Its plans, however, involve no curtailment of the power of Nationalists from the mainland and are no more than gestures toward the Taiwanese majority. No major government figure has endorsed Yang's proposals, and these represent--as does the Taiwanese document--mainly trial balloons to test the climate on Taiwan and in the US for significant change. The popular expectations aroused by such talk, however, are likely to increase the pressures on the government for an adjustment to "post-UN" realities.

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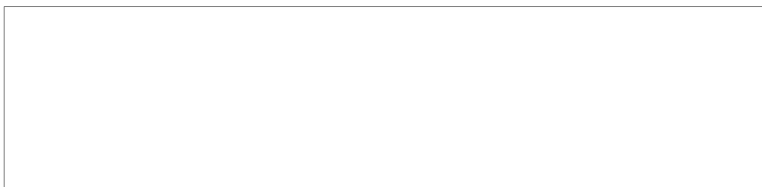
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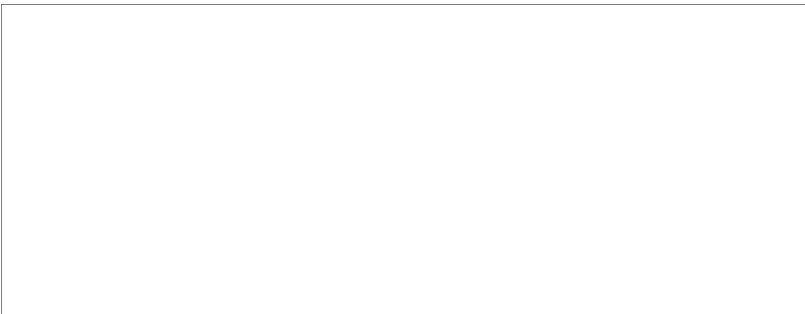
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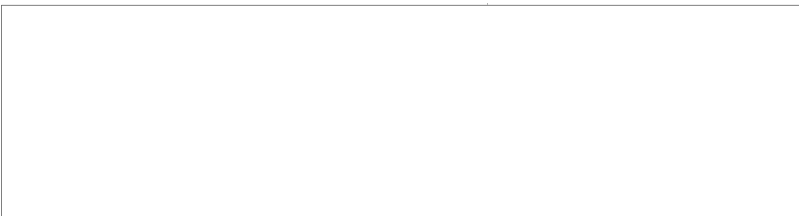
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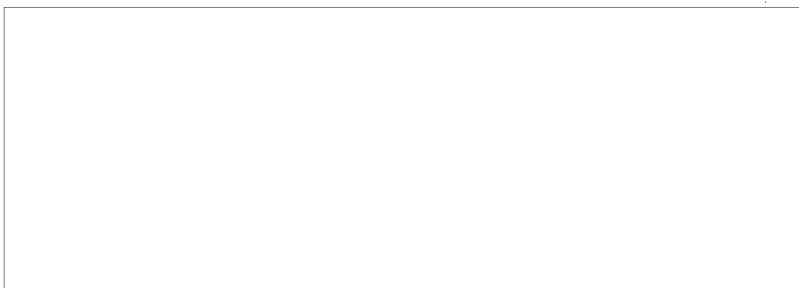
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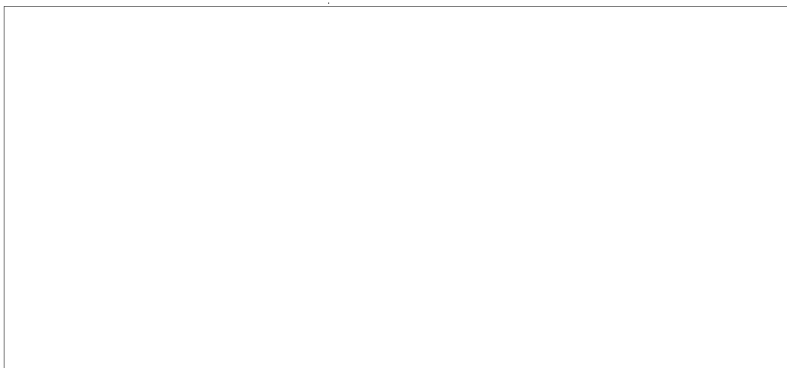
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