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- Latin America

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- 2010/12/11
- 2010/12/10
- 2010/12/09
- 2010/12/08
- 2010/12/07
- 2010/12/06
- 2010/12/05
- 2010/12/04
- 2010/12/03
- 2010/12/02
- 2010/12/01
- 2010/11/30
- 2010/11/29
- 2010/11/28

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- 00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07
- 08 09 10

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- K L M N O P R S
- T U V W Y Z

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- Q R S T U V W X
- Y Z

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courage is contagious

Viewing cable 04RANGOON1100, ALLEGED NORTH KOREAN INVOLVEMENT IN MISSILE

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the structure of a cable as well as how to discuss them with others. See also the FAQs

| Reference ID | Created | Released | Classification | Origin |
|---------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 04RANGOON1100 | 2004-08-27 08:08 | 2010-12-09 21:09 | SECRET | Embassy Rangoon |

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

Friday, 27 August 2004, 08:08
 S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 001100
 SIPDIS
 EO 12958 DECL: 08/26/2014
 TAGS PARM, PINR, PREL, KNNP, BM, KN
 SUBJECT: ALLEGED NORTH KOREAN INVOLVEMENT IN MISSILE
 ASSEMBLY AND UNDERGROUND FACILITY CONSTRUCTION IN BURMA
 Classified By: CDA, A.I. RON MCMULLEN FOR REASON 1.5 (A/C).
 ¶1. (S) SUMMARY: North Korean workers are reportedly assembling SAM
 missiles and constructing an underground facility at a Burmese military site
 in Magway Division, about 315 miles NNW of Rangoon, according to XXXXXXXXXXXX .
 This unsolicited account should not be taken as authoritative, but it tracks with
 other information garnered and reported via XXXXXXXXXXXX. End Summary.
 ¶2. (S) XXXXXXXXXXXX
 ¶3. (S) XXXXXXXXXXXX some 300 North Koreans are working at a secret construction
 site west of Mambu, Magway Division, in the foothills of the Arakan Yoma
 mountains. (Comment: the number of North Koreans supposedly working at this site
 strikes us as improbably high. End comment.) The XXXXXXXXXXXX claims he has
 personally seen some of them, although he also reported they are forbidden from
 leaving the construction site and that he and other outsiders are
 prohibited from entering. The XXXXXXXXXXXX was confident that XXXXXXXXXXXX had
 the ability to distinguish North Koreans from others, such as Chinese, who might
 be working in the area. The exact coordinates of the camouflaged site are not
 known, but it is reportedly in the vicinity of 20,00 N, 94,25 E.
 ¶4. (S) The North Koreans are said to be assembling SAM missiles of
 unknown origin. XXXXXXXXXXXX the North Koreans, aided by Burmese workers, are
 constructing a concrete-reinforced underground facility that is 500 feet from
 the top of the cave to the top of the hill above. He added that the North
 Koreans are blowing concrete into the excavated underground facility.
 ¶5. (S) The XXXXXXXXXXXX is supposedly engaged in constructing buildings for 20
 Burmese army battalions that will be posted near the site. Of these, two
 battalions are to be infantry; the other 18 will be artillery, according
 to this account.
 ¶6. (S) [XXXXXXXXXXXX
 ¶7. (S) COMMENT: The [XXXXXXXXXXXX second-hand account of North Korean
 involvement with missile assembly and military construction in Magway Division
 generally tracks with other information Embassy Rangoon and others have reported
 in various channels. Again, the number 300 is much higher than our best estimates
 of North Koreans in Burma, and exactly how the XXXXXXXXXXXX allegedly came to see
 some of them personally remains unclear. Many details provided XXXXXXXXXXXX match
 those provided by other, seemingly unrelated, sources.
 ¶8. (S) COMMENT CONTINUED: We cannot, and readers should not, consider this
 report alone to be definitive proof or evidence of sizable North Korean military
 involvement with the Burmese regime. The XXXXXXXXXXXX description made no
 reference at all to nuclear weapons or technology, or to surface-to-surface
 missiles, ballistic or otherwise. XXXXXXXXXXXX This account is perhaps best
 considered alongside other information of various origins indicating the Burmese
 and North Koreans are up to something) something of a covert military or
 military-industrial nature. Exactly what, and on what scale, remains to be
 determined. Post will continue to monitor these developments and report as
 warranted. McMullen