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Mr Beale, announced the response for irrigation day, after recent rain along the river systems.

All restrictions on irrigation of the Macintyre river have been lifted for 10 days.

Water allocations for the irrigation have been raised 20 per cent for rivers pumps and for irrigation in Government schemes.

The allocations for the Murray have been raised 30 per cent.

Mr Beale said the increases were higher for the Murray than for the Murrumbidgee because the Murrumbidgee had had more rain.

The Weather Bureau forecast tonight that the rain which has fallen in the north-east quarter and the upper and lower Western areas would ease tomorrow.

Beneficial rains

The rain, which has been experienced over the past 48 hours, has brought relief to west to west winds of up to three inches to some areas.

Fine day for Canberra

Fine weather is forecast for Canberra today.

Conditions are expected to be mild, with moderate north-west to west winds and a maximum temperature of 55 degrees.

No rain fell in the 12 hours ended 9pm yesterday.

727 makes a request stop

A Boeing 727 airliner of TAA's jet fleet broke its scheduled Adelaide-to-Sydney flight at Canberra Airport last night so that the Western Australian Minister for Railways, Industrial Development and the North-West, Mr Court, could keep an appointment.

He was due to address and a few minutes later the surprise landing was being made an honorary member of the institute.

Lord Casey described Dr work as "father and member of what is now the complex of CSIRO divisions at Fishermans Bend".

Conventions reports—Page 8

25 YEARS AGO IN CANBERRA

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Map showing the battle area.

17 AUSTRALIANS DIE IN 'BATTLE'

'An epic of courage', says commander

Seventeen Australian soldiers have been killed and 26 wounded in the bloodiest battle by Australian forces in the Vietnam war. At least 193 Vietcong regular troops are reported to have died.

The Australian casualties occurred when Delta Company of the 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, encountered a Vietcong force estimated at between one and two battalions on Thursday afternoon in the Phouc Tuy province.

The Australian Task Force Commander, Brigadier O. D. Jackson, described the battle as "an epic of courage that will go down in Australian history".

The company was outnumbered eight to one and was under heavy fire for more than three hours. The soldiers had only a handful of ammunition rounds between them when reinforcements arrived.

During the four-hour battle, Australian and New Zealand artillery pounded the area with almost 3,000 shells and Super Sabres and F-4 Phantoms of the US Air Force dropped 35 tons of high explosives and napalm on the Vietcong.

The Prime Minister, Mr Holt, and the Minister for Defence, Mr Fairhall, expressed sympathy for the relatives of the Australian casualties.

Mr Holt said: "Australia is saddened by the loss of these splendid men. My sympathy goes to those who are believed and to the wounded in their suffering".

Mr Fairhall said: "The sympathy of every Australian, along with that of the Government, will be extended to the relatives."

"This clash was not unexpected following the introduction of the Australian force into the Phouc Tuy province, which had been under Vietcong domination for a long period."

Mr Fairhall said that at least 138 Vietcong had been killed in the clash, but a later Australian Associated Press message from Baria in the central Phouc Tuy province quoted an Australian spokesman as saying that at least 193 Vietcong had been killed.

The latest clash brings total Australian casualties in Vietnam since 1962 to 70 killed and 273 wounded.

Total Australian casualties in the Australian Army during the Korean War were 1,558, including 281 killed.

Australian armoured personnel carriers, being retreating from the battle also struck and inflicted heavy casualties.

In Canberra last night, both

Police fire over pro-Sukarno crowd

BANDUNG, Friday (AAP). — An angry crowd of President Sukarno's supporters clashed today with armed soldiers in this West Java city.

The soldiers fired over the heads of the demonstrators.

The pro-Sukarno crowd of about 2,000 strong took to the streets of Bandung in a march on the anti-Sukarno slogan of "Action Front (KAMI) headquarters."

Armed soldiers on horseback and on foot surrounded the headquarters and drove demonstrators to Sukarno demonstrators off. At least one demonstrator was hurt.

Fear of civil disturbances

It was the first time that Sukarno supporters have openly demonstrated in the heart of an area considered anti-Sukarno.

Students opposed to the Indonesian President are believed to be strongest in Bandung and Djakarta.

The turnout of pro-Sukarno forces here indicated the possibility of civil disturbances, with major clashes between followers of President Sukarno and his opponents.

While the pro-Sukarno group swept through the city streets this morning there was no sign of anti-Sukarno students.

But these students had been out in force last night and painted almost every major building in Bandung with slogans such as "Sukarno go to hell," "Sukarno we hate you," "Sukarno equals communism," and "Sukarno is of the Communist school".

Carried weapons

Apparently the wall paintings touched off today's demonstration.

The crowd included some students but was largely made up of older men. Many carried weapons, including bamboo spears, knives, bike chains and steel clubs.

Soldiers in armoured cars followed the crowd as it moved through the city. Several times soldiers carrying pistols fired over the heads of the demonstrators, apparently in an effort to keep them moving.

The main clash between the soldiers and the demonstrators came before the KAMI students headquarters.

There was no report of shots fired in this clash.

DIJAKARTA. — A powerful sense of Indonesia's unity, he said.

The students said they regarded the speech as a guarded command to Communists and their sympathisers, scattered since the coup attempt, to consolidate their strength for further upheaval.

On Wednesday President Sukarno said Indonesia would not recognise Malaysia until after elections in Sabah and Sarawak and would not rush back into the United Nations.

Today's statement urged the People's Consultative Congress, the nation's supreme policymaking body, to ask the President to account for his speech.

KUALA LUMPUR, Friday (AAP) (Reuter). — The Malaysian Minister for Sabah Affairs, Tun Mustapha, said yesterday elections on the issue of presentation of the State in Malaysia, as required by the recently signed peace accord with Indonesia, would be held next year.

Arrangements were already under way, he told reporters before departing for his home province after a visit here.

"The people of my State will sink or swim with Maternal solidarity of Indonesia's unity," he said.

The second platoon on the left moved to help but was quickly pushed down by a second Vietcong force.

Up to 1,000 Vietcong then snatched past the doors of the trap, pouring in concentrated fire from mortars, automatic rifles, automatic rifles and grenade launchers.

Operating in strength on an extended front of 1,000 yards, the Vietcong moved in to wipe out the Australian company.

Waves of Vietcong

For more than three hours, the Australians held out, with rubber trees their only shelter.

The Vietcong repeatedly charged the small Australian force but were being pushed back suffering heavy casualties.

The Vietcong were climbing rubber trees to get a better view of the Australian company.

Trapped in ambush

BARIA, SOUTH VIETNAM, Friday (AAP). — The bloody battle for survival by the company of Australians from the 6th Battalion against hundreds of Vietcong main force troops was fought in a raging tropical storm which reduced air support to bombing by radar.

The fighting took place 42 miles south-east of Saigon, and four miles east of Baria.

A company size patrol of rubber plantations east of the Task Force area turned into a fight for survival when Delta Company ran into a Vietcong force estimated at between one and two battalions at 4.15pm yesterday.

Delta was moving forward in wedge-shaped formation with the two leading platoons 300 yards apart.

The platoon on the right suddenly ran into a company of Vietcong.

The Vietcong allowed the Australians to get within 150 yards before opening fire.

The Vietcong gradually lost the initiative as reinforcements and armoured personnel carriers fought their way through.

At about 6pm, as the armour moved into the battle, a company of Vietcong was moving on the area.

Air strikes continued in an apparent flanking manoeuvre against the trapped casualties.

The Communists often had to leap over piles of their dead as they charged the Australian positions.

Artillery silenced the Vietcong mortars early in the battle.

At close range the "tracks" opened up with their 50 calibre heavy machine guns, smashing into the guerrilla force.

Waves of United States Air Force F-100 Super Sabres and F-4 Phantoms were called in to deliver loads of 500 and 1,000 lb bombs as well as napalm.

heavy rainstorms, the pilots bombing by radar.

At least 35 tons of high explosives smashed into the Vietcong positions.

RAAF and US helicopters were called in to deliver the wounded as soon as the battle was over.

The wounded were flown to Vung Tau for treatment.

Montreal will see sculpture first

An abstract sculpture in bronze created especially for one of Canberra's central office buildings will be on public display for the first time, not in Canberra, but in Montreal, Canada.

Melbourne sculptress, Miss M. Redpath's fee for commissioning by the National Capital Development office \$20,000.

Commission to produce the abstract which will eventually be the centre-piece of the forecourt at the new Commonwealth Avenue offices in Parkes.

Before the work comes to Canberra, however, it will be for six months the central feature of the forecourt of the Australian pavilion at Expo 67, the International Exposition in Montreal from April 28 to October 8.



AA 727 JET

TAA official, explained the surprise landing. "I think it is purely case of honouring a commitment."

The aircraft would not be late in Sydney, he said.

Apart from Mr Court a team of PMCA's Department staff, specially selected from Adelaide to

Ordeal in the snow

The best full account of the ordeal of young Victorians who were rescued this week after 23 days lost in the Snowy Mountains is to be published in the Saturday Evening News.

Two witnesses refused to testify at an US-American Activities Committee hearing on conditions — Page 7.

Other pages

Queensland's Premier, Mr Nicklin, said yesterday his State has asked the Commonwealth for more cash. Victoria, NSW and WA have also requested additional funds. — Page 5.

Professor Geoffrey Howe examines the prospects of a judicial finding of great human interest. — Page 11.

Reviews — Page 11.

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