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imagery analysis report

Mobilization Exercises and a Mobilization Base MRD in the Central Asian MD, USSR (S)

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MOBILIZATION EXERCISES AND A MOBILIZATION BASE MRD IN THE CENTRAL ASIAN MD, USSR (S)

INTRODUCTION

1. This report discusses two separate mobilization exercises in June and July 1982, one involving the 80th Guards (GDS) Motorized Rifle Division (MRD) and the other the 8th Guards MRD. Both divisions are in the 17th Army Corps area, Central Asian Military District (MD; Figure 1).¹ This exercise activity prompted further analysis of the installations containing the 80th GDS MRD. A search of the imagery revealed the existence of a collocated mobilization base division, in addition to the cadre MRD and training units previously known to be garrisoned there. (S/WN)

2. The 80th GDS MRD is the training division for the Central Asian MD. The division consists of cadre-level subunits with additional units attached for training purposes. Attached training units usually operate and train independently of the cadre division. The organization of this training division is typical of Soviet training divisions.² (S/WN)

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4. The 8th GDS MRD is a cadre division subordinate to the 17th Army Corps. The entire division participated, as did most of the cadre 80th GDS MRD, in mobilization exercises on [redacted]. The simultaneous exercises were unusual because cadre divisions mobilize and exercise infrequently and are low-strength divisions that require extensive preparation to mobilize. (S/WN)

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FIGURE 1. 17TH ARMY CORPS AREA, CENTRAL ASIAN MILITARY DISTRICT, USSR

DESCRIPTION

80th GDS MRD Mobilization Exercise and Collocated Mobilization Base Division

5. The 80th GDS MRD, garrisoned at Otar Army Barracks North AL-1/Headquarters MRD (BE [redacted]) and Otar Army Barracks Southwest AL-4/Reserve Equipment Storage [redacted], was involved in a mobilization exercise in June and July 1982. A major portion of the mobilization exercise was observed in Otar Training Area North-northwest 1 [redacted] on [redacted]

(Figure 2). The following units of the cadre MRD were deployed:

- Elements of two motorized rifle regiments (MRRs) including two tank battalions, two antiaircraft missile and artillery batteries, and one artillery battalion,
- FROG battalion,
- Multiple-rocket-launcher (MRL) battalion,
- Artillery regiment,
- Antiaircraft artillery (AAA) regiment, and
- Probable reconnaissance battalion.

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In addition to the above units, approximately 250

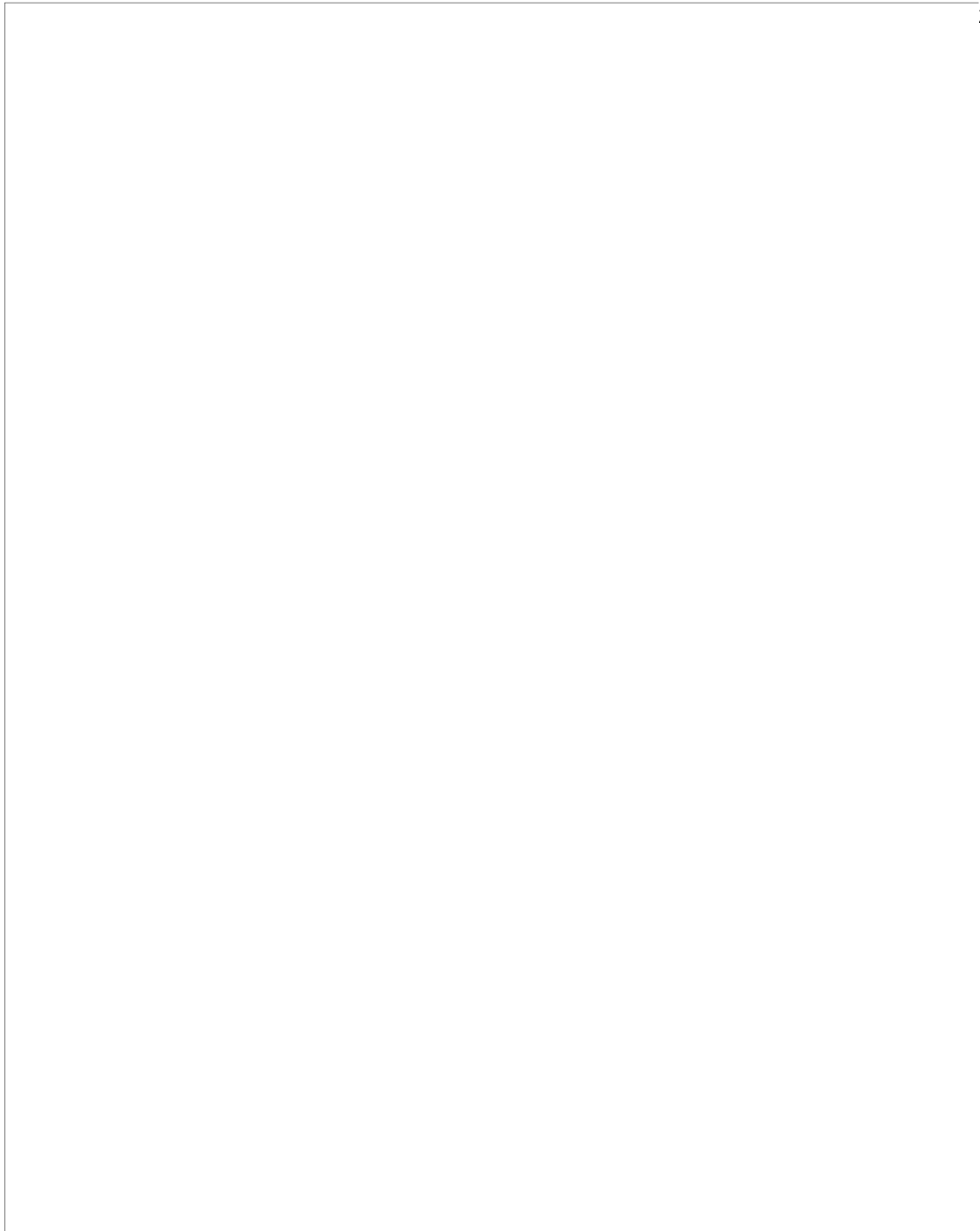
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support vehicles and 350 squad tents were observed. (S/WN)

6. Activity was first observed on [redacted] in one of the cadre MRRs at Otar Army Barracks AL-1, when a battalion of 40 BMP armored personnel carriers (APCs) was out of garrison. Prior to this, none of the 96 BMPs of the cadre MRR had shown evidence of movement since their arrival in 1980. The BMP battalion of the cadre MRR should not be confused with the very active BMP APC training regiment, parked adjacent to the cadre MRR (Figure 3). The entire BMP cadre MRR had vacated the garrison by [redacted] (Figure 4). (S/WN)

7. During the mobilization exercise, some divisional assets, previously considered as subordinate to the 80th GDS MRD, remained in garrison

while similarly equipped units participated in the exercise activity. An artillery regiment and an anti-tank battalion, previously considered as subordinate to the 80th GDS MRD, remained parked in the open at Otar Army Barracks AL-1 throughout the mobilization exercise. These two units, which rarely move and are not training units, are actually mobilization base assets (Figure 5). In addition to this artillery, approximately 55 antitank guns and at least 15 57mm AAA guns were parked in the general storage area during the exercise. On [redacted] the 53 antitank guns had been formed into three separate groups. These three battalion-sized antitank units represent the mobilization base artillery battalions for three MRRs. The AAA guns are the AAA regiment for the mobilization base MRD (Figure 6). (S/WN)

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8. The artillery battalion involved in the mobilization exercise was subordinate to the active BMP-equipped MRR of the 80th GDS MRD. This battalion was observed in garrison at Otar Army Barracks AL-1 on [redacted] before returning to covered storage (Figure 7). The cadre artillery battalions, subordinate to the BTR-60 MRR and truck-equipped MRR, were not involved in the exercise and remained in garrison. (S/WN)

9. The AAA regiment that participated in the mobilization exercise left behind 14 AAA guns at Otar Army Barracks AL-1. In addition, a battery of AAA guns are permanently emplaced in an AAA training site at Otar Army Barracks AL-4. (S/WN)

10. The tank training regiment attached to the 80th GDS MRD is housed at Otar Army Barracks Northeast Roslavskiy AL-3 [redacted]

This regiment remained in garrison throughout the mobilization exercise (Figure 8). The 80th GDS cadre tank regiment and the probable mobilization base tank regiment are both housed at Otar Army Barracks AL-4 (Figure 9). Previously, this installation was believed to house the 80th GDS cadre tank regiment and the tank battalions subordinate to the three MRRs of the 80th GDS MRD. However, on [redacted] tanks were observed in the BMP-equipped MRR at Otar Army Barracks AL-1 (Figure 10). Further analysis confirms that tank battalions for all three MRRs are at Otar Army Barracks AL-1. It, therefore, can be concluded that the area next to the cadre tank regiment at Otar Army Barracks AL-4 has probably been occupied by a mobilization base tank regiment. The mobilization base tank regiment remained in covered storage during the exercise, while tanks from the cadre tank regiment participated. (S/WN)

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11. Another mobilization base unit housed at Otar Army Barracks AL-1 is the MRL battalion. During August 1980, a battalion of 18 BM-21 MRLs (Figure 11) was brought into the installation and was moved to covered storage shortly thereafter. A second MRL battalion, consisting of 18 BM-14 MRLs (Figure 12), was observed there in February 1981 prior to being moved into vehicle sheds. As mobilization bases usually receive older equipment, the BM-21 MRL battalion is probably subordinate to the 80th GDS MRD, and the BM-14 MRL battalion probably belongs to the mobilization base MRD. (S/WN)

12. The following mobilization base MRD units, collocated with the 80th GDS MRD, have been identified on imagery:

- Otar AB Southwest tank regiment
AL 4/Reserve
Equipment Storage
- Otar AB North AL-1 three artillery
/HQ MRD battalions (MRR)
(Gen Stor Area) AAA regiment
- Otar AB North AL artillery regiment
1/HQ MRD antitank battalion
MRL battalion
(S/WN)

13. Most of the 80th GDS MRD's subordinate units that participated in the exercise had returned to garrison by [] On this date, only a convoy

of 60 BMPs remained in Otar Training Area North-northwest 1. Some vehicles and equipment which had not been returned to covered storage were observed at Otar Army Barracks AL-1 and AL-4. These included elements from the tank regiment, the BMP-equipped MRR, and the artillery battalion from the BMP-equipped MRR. (S/WN)

Upgrading of 80th GDS MRD

14. An upgrading of the 80th GDS MRD appeared to be underway. Construction which began at Otar Army Barracks AL-4 in 1980 has progressed significantly. Nine of 12 16-bay, double-depth vehicle storage sheds and one of four six-story, apartment-type barracks under construction have been completed by March 1983 (Figure 13). (S/WN)

15. Fifty-five BTR-60 APCs arrived at Otar Army Barracks AL-4 on [] and occupied two of the completed vehicle storage sheds. Since the BTR-60-equipped MRR garrisoned at Otar Army Barracks AL-1 was equipped with only one battalion of BTR-60s, these 55 additional BTR-60s were probably subordinated to the MRR at Otar Army Barracks AL-1. The BTR-60s were either temporarily stored at Otar Army Barracks AL-4 or the remainder of the MRR units from Otar Army Barracks AL-1 may be relocated to Otar Army Barracks AL-4. (S/WN)

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8th GDS MRD Mobilization Exercise

16. The entire 8th GDS MRD (cadre division) was also involved in a mobilization exercise on [redacted]. The units of the 8th GDS MRD are garrisoned at Pereval Kurday Army Barracks AL-1/Training Area 1/Headquarters MRD [redacted] Frunze Army Barracks AL-5 [redacted] and Rybachye Army Barracks AL-1/Training Area 1 [redacted]. (S/WN)

17. Elements of the MRR garrisoned at Pereval Kurday Army Barracks AL-1—the engineering battalion, reconnaissance battalion, and signal battalion—were dispersed throughout the area surrounding the installation. In addition, at least 260 squad tents were in the area. Since harvest mobilization was also underway during this time, some of the tents might have been used for this activity and not for the mobilization exercise (Figure 14). The tank regiment and artillery regiment were also out of garrison, but their location could not be determined. (S/WN)

18. The MRR and chemical defense battalion, garrisoned at Frunze Army Barracks AL-5, were observed at Frunze Training Area 1 [redacted] approximately 5 nm northeast of the installation (Figure 15). The MRR was deployed in unit structure with 160 squad tents. (S/WN)

19. The third MRR for the 8th GDS MRD is housed at Rybachye Army Barracks AL-1. The MRR was observed in the local training area north of the installation along with 140 squad tents (Figure 16). (S/WN)

20. The mobilization exercise of the 8th GDS MRD had probably ended by [redacted]. The units from Pereval Kurday Army Barracks AL-1 and Rybachye Army Barracks AL-1 had returned to garrison by this date. Although Frunze Army Barracks AL-5 has not been imaged since [redacted] the units housed there probably returned to garrison about the same time as those from Pereval Kurday and Rybachye. (S/WN)

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SUMMARY

21. Both the 80th GDS MRD and the 8th GDS MRD were involved in mobilization exercises at the same time and both exercises ended at approximately the same time. These concurrent exercises, along with the 80th GDS MRD being garrisoned in the 17th Army Corps area support the proposition that the 80th GDS MRD, even though subordinate to the MD, would probably

become part of the 17th Army Corps in the event of a conflict. (S/WN)

22. The existence of the mobilization base MRD assets collocated with the 80th GDS MRD was determined during the mobilization exercise. Equipment belonging to the 80th GDS MRD was removed from covered storage and participated in the exercise. However, training equipment and the units now identified as part of the mobilization base MRD remained in place. (S/WN)

REFERENCES

IMAGERY

All available satellite imagery acquired from [redacted] was used in the preparation of this report. (S/WN) 25X1

DOCUMENTS

1. DIA. DDB-1100-UR-81, *Ground Order of Battle: USSR (U)*, Jan 81 (SECRET/NOFORN/WNINTEL*)

2. CIA/OIA. IA 82-10058, *Soviet Training Divisions (U)*, Nov 82 [redacted] 25X1

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*Extracted information is classified [redacted] 25X1

Comments and queries regarding this report are welcome. They may be directed to [redacted] Warsaw Pact Forces Division, Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC, [redacted]. The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of [redacted] Conventional Forces Division, OIA/CIA. (S) 25X1

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