



1949 Report on the 164th and the 166th Division

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Summary:

The history and basic information on the 164th and the 166th Divisions of the People's Liberation Army, or the divisions composed mainly of ethnic Koreans.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

- English Translation

The 164th Division

1. The 164th Division is a Korean division. It was originally the Independent 11th Division of the Northeast Liberation Army. It was formed through the merging of three units: the Jilin Military Region's Ji'nan District Army, the Ha'erbin [Harbin] Korean Detachment, and the 3rd Independent Mudanjiang Regiment.

After the "8.15" Japanese surrender, in December 1945 Jilin formed a peace preservation corps. In March 1946 this peace preservation corps was re-organized as the 24th Brigade, while also being in charge of the Yongji District Army. In May 1946 the brigade broke away from the Yongji District Army, was transferred to the Gongzhutun region, and prepared to become the 2nd Echelon of the Siping Defense Squadron. After the withdrawal from Siping, Ji[lin], and Chang[chun], the brigade moved to Wuchang to rest and regroup. In June 1946, the 24th Brigade then moved to the Ji'nan district where it established a military base. In December 1947 the brigade then established the Ji'nan District Army. In April 1948 the Independent 11th Division of the Northeast People's Liberation Army was established. The Independent 11th Division consisted of the Ji'nan District 72nd Regiment (originally the 7th Jilin peace preservation unit, later changed to the KVA's 7th detachment , and in September 1946 re-organized as the Ji'nan District 72nd Regiment) into the 1st Regiment of the Independent 11th Division, the 3rd Ha'erbin Korean Volunteer Army Detachment (formed in October 1945 as the Ha'erbin Peace Preservation Army's Korean Independent Corps, then changed in January 1946 to the 2nd Regiment; along with the Korean Volunteer Army's 3rd Detachment--incorporated into the Songjiang Military Region in December and changed to the 8th Regiment) into the 2nd regiment of the Independent 11th Division; the 3rd independent regiment of Mudanjiang Military Region (April 1946--the foundation of Mu Ling County's Peace Preservation Corps, changed in April 1947 to the Mudan Military Region's Independent 3rd Regiment) into the 3rd Regiment of the Independent 11th Division. With the liberation of all of Northeast in November 1948, the Independent 11th Division was changed into the 164th Division of the People's Liberation Army; commanding the 490th, 491st, and 492nd Regiments and directly subordinate to the Northeast Military Region Command. In July 1949 the division entered North Korea.

2. When the Independent 11th Division was organized in April 1948, Wang Xiaoming and Song Jinghua were the Division Commander and Political Commissar respectively. In July 1949 Division Commander Wang Xiaoming and Political Commissar Song Jinghua were transferred and both positions of Division Chief and Political Commissar were given to Li Desan. The division was organized as a command headquarters, political department, supply department, sanitation department, division guard battalion, mountain artillery battalion, instruction team, and propaganda team. The division consisted of three subordinate regiments, each regiment's three battalions, each battalion's three infantry companies and one machine-gun company ; Each regiment had a directly subordinate guard company, reconnaissance, communication and working company, mortar company, infantry cannon company, and anti-tank company. Authorized staff for the entire division constituted 11721 people. When the division entered Korea in July 1949 the actual staff for the entire division stood at 10,821 people; 5,297 long-barreled rifles; 3456 bayonets; 588 hand guns; 320 light machine guns; 104 heavy machine guns; 206 submachine guns; 8 anti-tank guns; 1 automatic machine guns; 14 flare guns; 32 rifle grenade cylinders; 67 grenade launchers; 87 60mm cannons; 3 rocket launchers; 26 mortars; 12 anti-tank cannons; 1 infantry cannons; 1 recoilless rifle; 2 machines cannons; and 734 horses.

3. When the Independent 11th Division was organized in April 1948, the division was involved in activities near the Ji(lin) and Chang(Chun) regions and was engaged in a blockade mission during the Changchun campaign. After the liberation of Changchun, the division took charge of the Changchun garrison. In the past they were involved in small combat and lacked experience in large-scale operations. With the liberation of all of Northeast in November 1948, the division was newly organized into the Northeast regular division.

The 166th Division

1. The 166th Division is a Korean division. It was originally the Independent 4th Division of the Northeast Liberation Army but was re-organized as the Li Hongguang [Li Hong Gwang] detachment.

After the "8-15" Japanese surrender in 1945, a group of Korean cadres from Yan'an went to Northeast to organize a KVA; they organized three detachments. About sixty cadres of the KVA 1st detachment in South Manchuria enlarged their detachment and established the Korean Volunteer Army. Toward the end of 1945, together with three Korean companies from Tonghua, Liuhe, and Qingyuan, plus two Korean battalions from Ji'an and Huan ren, the KVA 1st detachment of the South Manchuria Korean Volunteer Army was formally organized. In the end of March 1946, it was regrouped as six battalions and renamed as the Li Hongguang detachment in Tonghua. This detachment was engaged in guerilla fighting in the rear of South Manchuria. In April 1948, it was organized as the 4th Independent Division of the Northeast Peoples Liberation Army --directly subordinate to the administrative structure of the Northeast Military Command. With the liberation of all of Northeast China in November 1948, the division was renamed the 166th Division of the People's Liberation Army, commanding over the 496th, 497th, and 498th regiments and directly subordinate to the Northeast Military District Command. In July 1949 the division entered North Korea.

2. When the 4th Independent Division was organized in April 1948, Wang Ziin was the first and Liu Ziyi was the second division commander and Fang Husan was the political commissar. In April 1948 division commander Wang Ziin was transferred and the position of division commander was given to Liu Ziyi. In July 1949, Liu Ziyi was also transferred and the positions of both division commander and political commissar were held by Fang Husan. Normal combatants enlisting prior to "8-15" constituted 0.2 percent of enlistees; those who enlisted during the liberation war constituted 2 percent; and enlistees in Northeast China following liberation stood at 97.8 percent of combatants. The composition of their class backgrounds was as follows: 51 percent farmers, 12 percent workers, 9 percent merchants, 2 percent office workers and freelance professionals, and 26 percent students. The level of education for this division was above average. For division cadres, those who enlisted during the Anti-Japanese War stood at 14 percent; the other 86 percent were post "8-15" enlistees from Northeast China. The composition of cadre class backgrounds was as follows: 31.9 percent farmers, 14 percent workers, 2.4 percent merchants, 12.4 percent office workers and freelance professionals, and 39.3 percent students. According to regular organization rules, the division has: a command headquarters, political department, supply department, sanitation department, division guard battalion, mountain artillery battalion, an instruction team, a propaganda team, three subordinate regiments, three battalions for each regiment, three infantry companies and one machine-gun company for each battalion, regiment guard company, reconnaissance, communication and working company, mortar company, cannon infantry company, and an anti-tank company. The authorized number for this division was 11,721 people. When the division entered Korea in July 1949 the actual staff for the entire division stood at 10,320 people.

6,044 long-barreled rifles; 1,833 bayonets; 722 hand guns; 281 light machine guns; 91 heavy machine guns; 878 submachine guns; 2 carbine rifles; 13 flare guns; 69 rifle grenade cylinders; 31 grenade launchers; 91 60mm cannons; 33 mortars; 10 anti-tank cannons; 3 mountain artillery cannons; and 935 horses.

3. While still known as the Li Hongguang detachment, the 166th Division was responsible for the task of regional defense and bandit mop up in the Tonghua of South Manchuria. From 1947 to the spring of 1948 the division participated in the battles in Jinchuan, Huinan, Hailong, Shancheng Zhen, Chaoyang Zhen, Qingyuan, Nanzamu, Meihekou, Xian, Xifeng, and Kaiyuan. In October 1948 they took part in the pinning down of Gongzhuling, and in early November the assault on Shenyang. The division's style of combat is respectable; they actively carry out operations. However, they lack experience in large-scale warfare. With the liberation of all of Northeast China in November 1948 the division was newly organized into a regular division.