

SAIGON REPORTS CAMBODIA LINK-UP

**Allies Said to Join on Route 4
as Foe Still Holds 10 Miles
—Fighting Termed Heavy**

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Jan. 20 — With a 10-mile stretch of Cambodia's major supply route still under Communist control, advance elements of two allied forces reportedly linked up today in their road-clearing drive.

The link-up was reported here by a South Vietnamese military place as Cambodian troops were engaged in heavy fighting with enemy soldiers at the northern entrance to Pich Nil Pass, 60 miles southwest of Pnompnh.

As a relief force of South Vietnamese marines was approaching from the south, he said, forward ranger and armored cavalry elements of the force reached Cambodian positions.

Route 4, which runs through the pass and connects Pnompnh with the sea, has been cut since the end of November by Communist soldiers entrenched in mountain positions.

[A spokesman for the Cambodian command said

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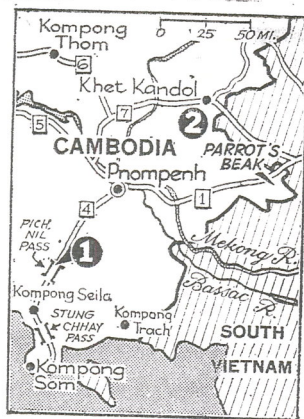
seven Cambodian soldiers, including two officers, had been killed in the fighting at the pass and three had been wounded, Reuters reported. He put the enemy dead at 51. The dispatch also said American helicopter gunships continued their attacks through the day in support of the Cambodians.]

The allied forces — more than 5,000 South Vietnamese and more than 8,000 Cambodians—have been trying for more than a week to reopen Route 4 to relieve a critical shortage of gasoline, fuel oil

ported to be insisting that the Cambodians pay some of the costs of the Saigon troops fighting in Cambodia and also pay debts that Saigon says date from the first days of national independence of both countries in 1954. SEE 22 JAN 71

The debts have been estimated by Saigon at between \$1-million and \$4-million.

South Vietnam is also seeking some reimbursement for an estimated \$800-million in special allowances for its troops in Cambodia.



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Cambodians were under attack at key pass (1). Saigon units fought off foe at Khet Kandal (2).

and other imported commodities in the Pnompnh area.

The Saigon spokesman also reported a sharp enemy attack on a night position of South Vietnamese troops at Khet Kandal in Cambodia near Route 7, not far from the South Vietnamese border.

The attackers, he said, fired 300 mortar shells into the position and followed up with a ground attack. The spokesman said that 56 enemy soldiers were killed and that 6 South Vietnamese soldiers were killed and 12 wounded before the enemy withdrew under artillery fire after 6 hours of fighting.

Meanwhile, Premier Lon Nol, of Cambodia, flew here today for two days of meetings with South Vietnamese leaders.

Private talks between the two allied nations were reported to be snagged on a Cambodian refusal to pay certain amounts requested by the South Vietnamese.

The South Vietnamese are re-