

Cambodian Aide Denies Damage to Angkor Wat

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, May 18 (AP)—The head of a national committee charged with protection of the ancient Khmer ruins at Angkor has denied that Angkor Wat was damaged by a Government artillery barrage, the official Cambodian news agency said today.

Agence Khmer de Presse published a cablegram from Tan Kim Huon, president of the National Committee for the Protection of Cultural Treasures in Case of Armed Conflict, to Sisowath Essaro, Cambodia's representative at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

The cablegram said: "Sporadic fighting in Siem Reap Angkor. Cambodian troops have duty to defend human life. About shelling of Angkor monuments themselves, this is purely press imagination. Wish to get action from UNESCO Executive Council to make Angkor park neutral zone."

Authoritative sources told The Associated Press on May 11 that a Cambodian Army captain, acting on his own initiative, had shelled Angkor Wat, the most famous of the ruined temples in northwest Cambodia, and that the barrage had caused severe damage.

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