

Vietnam Said to Capture An Island Off Cambodia

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By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON, June 13 —An island off the coast of Cambodia was captured this week by Vietnamese troops in fighting between the two recent Communist victors in Indochina, United States intelligence sources say.

The battle was fought for Poulo Wai, a tiny rock island in the Gulf of Siam, about 60 miles from the Cambodian coast, according to the sources.

The United States cargo ship Mayaguez was fired on and captured by a Cambodian gunboat off that same island May 12 while the freighter was en

route to Thailand. At the time, the Cambodians asserted that the ship was in Cambodian waters because it was several miles off the island. The seizure set off a three-day crisis culminating in United States recovery of the ship and its crew.

Intelligence sources say that Vietnamese troops landed on Poulo Wai the night of June 10. This island has been claimed in the past by both Cambodia and Vietnam.

Cambodian soldiers resisted

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their one-time allies and fighting continued until the Vietnamese troops overran the island and took control of it, these sources say.

There was no word on the size of the contending forces or casualties. The intelligence sources would not say how they learned of the battle. But it is believed that United States planes had been keeping watch on that area since the Mayaguez episode to guard against a repetition of the incident involving other American ships sailing those waters.

There have been traditional differences between the Vietnamese and Cambodian peoples and some United States officials think these may be surfacing again.

Apart from this, officials say the possibility that there is oil beneath the Gulf of Siam has intensified disputes over islands and seaward boundaries. Cambodia is quarreling with Thailand about their common boundary, and United States officials say the issue of offshore rights is also involved in that dispute.

Intelligence specialists say the Cambodians have seized a number of Thai fighting boats inside their claimed 12-mile coastal waters since the Mayaguez incident.

Thai-Cambodian Clash

BANGKOK, Thailand, June 13 (UPI)—A Thai police boat and a gunboat manned by Cambodian Communist seamen exchanged fire in the Gulf of Siam, wounding six officers on the police craft, Thai authorities said today.

The officials said the six men were in good condition in a Bangkok hospital following the clash early yesterday about 10 miles from Thailand's Kut Island in the gulf, 180 miles southeast of Bangkok and 20 miles off the point on the mainland where Thai and Cambodian territory meet.

Thai marine police responded to a radio call for assistance from fishing boats reporting that they were under attack from the Cambodian gunboat, the officials said.

They said the two vessels were about 200 yards apart in a heavy rainstorm when the exchange of fire took place. They said the Thai patrol boat withdrew and it was not known whether there were any casualties on the larger Cambodian vessel.

Police officials denied reports that a Thai border patrol policeman was wounded yesterday in an exchange of fire on the Cambodian frontier 130 miles northeast of Bangkok. No shooting incident occurred, the officials said.