

Cambodia Hints Aid Bid After Bomb Halt

PHNOM PENH (Cambodia) — (AP) — The country's military chief said today that Cambodia may ask the United States and other friendly governments for more military aid after the Aug. 15 bombing deadline.

Maj. Gen. Sosthene Fernandez said his government "has the obligation" to ask for the aid if Cambodian insurgents continue their attacks after President Nixon is legally required to halt all bombing raids in Cambodia next month.

The general also told newsmen that the military situation in Cambodia is not critical at present and it can be handled by his forces. But he acknowledged that his weekly casualties during the current insurgent offensive have been averaging between 800 and 1200 troops killed, wounded or missing.

Draft

The losses, he added, have not been replaced proportionately by new recruits, but a new draft will strengthen depleted units. Fernandez spoke at a briefing for foreigners to present "a true picture" of the military situation. He claimed the situation had been falsely portrayed by the foreign press.

During the last two weeks, he said, "we have scored several appreciable successes on the ground, thanks to U.S. tactical and strategic air support, which we have been getting daily and which has been effective."

Fernandez said recent Cambodian military successes include keeping open three major supply lines: Route 5 to the northwestern ricelands, Route 4 to the Kompong Som seaport, and the Mekong River to South Vietnam.

Bombing

The U.S. Pacific Military command said yesterday it has no information that would substantiate reports of two accidental bombings in Cambodia. The B-52 bombings continued for the 13th consecutive day.

The headquarters of Adm. Noel Gayler, commander in chief of U.S. Forces in the Pacific, gave that answer in response to questions about

reports from Phnom Penh.

One report was that two government soldiers were killed and three others wounded when American warplanes accidentally dropped their bombs on Cambodian positions 18 miles southeast of the capital Friday. Another report said 14 government troops were wounded Thursday when American jets bombarded their positions along highway 2.

South Vietnam

Meanwhile South Vietnamese forces battled guerrillas across the country in a day of scattered clashes Friday that left 77 soldiers slain

on both sides, the Saigon command reported.

The command said 12 government soldiers and 65 Communists were killed in Friday's fighting with most of the losses in fierce fighting near the Mekong delta town of Cai Lay, 46 miles southwest of Saigon.

On the political front, North Vietnam's largest newspaper, Nhan Dan (People's Daily), said Canadian Ambassador Michel Gauvin and the Canadian delegation to the International Commission of Control and Supervision (ICCS), were biased in investigating cease-fire violations.