

6. On return the team halted at BATHU post to question the Post Commander and his men who were responsible for capturing prisoners. Adjutant SOC KHY and Sgt PHOEUN in charge of Khmer military personnel manning the BATHU post were questioned and details regarding capture of prisoners were ascertained.

7. After completion of questioning of personnel connected with the raid the team returned to Svay Rieng to question the prisoners who were detained at Provincial HQ. Seven prisoners were produced before the team. One of the prisoners, an officer of the South Vietnam Army Lieut HUYN TAN TAI when questioned stated that he belongs to 1st Battalion of the 38th Regiment of FAVN. He was in charge of a company of 43 men which was part of a Battalion more than 200 strong. Their Battalion was patrolling the border territory near the Vietnam-Khmer frontier for the past few days. They had started their operations on 29 Apr from village BINH THUN in Vietnam approx 20 K.M. from the frontier. On 30 Apr they marched towards MAT CAT. They spent two days, (30 Apr and 1 May) in GUNG DINH. On 2 May under orders of his Commanding Officer (Capt) they moved to MI THANG DONG and crossed the frontier into Khmer territory and started search of villages BATHU and SAMRONG. He had 15 men, volunteers from various section of the battalion, under his command besides the 3 scouts. For this operation all were armed with personal carbines and one Machine Gun. At 8 A.M. when his party entered the villages SAMRONG & BATHU they saw some villagers trying to escape. At this he ordered to open fire because he took them as rebels. Some of his men searched various houses. After firing a number of shots his men exhausted their ammunition and between 10 and 11 A.M. villagers and personnel of the Khmer border post surrounded them in the village. Since all their ammunition had been finished seven of them were captured by the villagers and Khmer military personnel and taken as prisoners.

His Commanding Officer (Capt) who was in possession of a map of the area did not accompany the search party into the villages of BATHU and SAMRONG. At the time of surrender their arms were taken over by Khmer military personnel. They did not open fire on inhabitants of any other village within Vietnam territory. In their own country people did not run on seeing troops approaching villages. He was not sure about the location of the boundary line.

8. Another prisoner by name PRUM XAY was also questioned who stated that:-

He was Cambodian by origin and belonged to Svay Rieng Province. He was an ex soldier of the French Colonial Army and at present was serving with the Vietnam Army 1st Battalion 38th Regiment. He was a member of the party which was ordered by Battalion Commander (Capt) to search villages SAMRONG and BATHU in the Khmer territory. Lieut HUYN TAN TAI was in command of this party. On hearing the shots being fired and seeing villagers running away he opened fire with his Machine Gun. One complete belt of ammunition (the total ammunition available with him) was fired. Some of his companions searched houses. Later on they were surrounded by Khmer military personnel and as they had no ammunition left they surrendered to Khmer troops and were taken prisoner. In all one officer and six soldiers were taken as prisoner. Battalion Commander (Capt) did not accompany the party in this operation. Capt had some maps in his possession which he took with him.