

Cambodia and Thailand have no overland overlapping areas, except the maritime overlapping zone, said Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen at a graduation ceremony held here yesterday at the Royal School of Administration.

Cambodia has never known or heard of the 4.6-square kilometer overland overlapping area, he stressed.

The Cambodian premier's reaction was made after Thai media reported that Gen. Wichit Yathip, former Thai deputy army chief, said he had talked with Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen and both sides agreed to withdraw troops from the disputed area, have a joint business at the 4.6-square kilometer overlapping border area, to ask Buddhist monks of the two countries to stay in the Keo Sikha Kiri Svava Pagoda, and to leave the border demarcation issue to the Joint Border Committee.

The Cambodian prime minister denied that he had never agreed with Wichit Yathip on troop withdrawal from the disputed border area near the Preah Vihear Temple, but he acknowledged that he had met with Wichit during the wedding of Cambodian Defense Minister Tea Banh's son in Phnom Penh.

"Wichit Yathip just paid a short courtesy call on me and we had not discussed anything concerning the Thai-claimed overlapping area near the temple because Cambodia has never known where the 4.6-square kilometer area is," he said, explaining that if Cambodia agreed to these points, there would be no Cambodia's complaints to international bodies.

He further underlined that Cambodia cannot withdraw its troops from its own territory in order to exchange with the deployment of a few Indonesian observers, and Cambodia will not at any cost withdraw its request for the interpretation of the ICJ's verdict of 1962 on the case concerning the Preah Vihear Temple, even in this government's mandate or next mandate.

The Bangkok Post on June 5 reported that Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva said on Sunday that he will meet with Samdech Techo Hun Sen if Cambodia withdraws its troops from the

disputed area near the Preah Vihear Temple and that Cambodia should withdraw all border dispute cases from international bodies and return to talks with Thailand.

It is no way to return to bilateral talks as Cambodia-Thailand border dispute near the Preah Vihear Temple has already reached the hands of international bodies – the United Nations Security Council, the ASEAN and the ICJ, he said.