Background & Recent Trigger

- **Historic Friendship**: Once among the world's friendliest nations, Cambodia and Thailand shared strong diplomatic ties.
- **Recent Escalation**:
  - On **May 28**, a **Cambodian soldier was killed** in a clash at the **Emerald Triangle** (Thailand-Cambodia-Laos border).
  - Both sides blame each other for starting the violence.
  - Cambodia sent troops and heavy weapons; Thailand reinforced border security.

Tit-for-Tat Measures

- **Military & Political Moves**:
  - Troop build-up, though some withdrawal on **June 8** to ease tension.
- **Economic & Media Retaliation**:
  - **Thailand** threatened to cut electricity & internet to Cambodia; restricted Thai workers from Cambodian casinos.
  - **Cambodia** banned Thai TV/movies, cut cross-border internet, and **blocked Thai produce imports (June 17)**.
- **Legal Dispute**:
  - **Cambodia** took the case to the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)**.
  - **Thailand** rejected ICJ jurisdiction, insisting on bilateral talks.

Historical Context

- **Colonial-Era Borders**:
  - Borders mapped by French colonizers (1863–1953); **1907 map** placed **Preah Vihear Temple** in Cambodia, disputed by Thailand.
- **Past Clashes**:
  - **1959 & 1962**: ICJ ruled temple belongs to Cambodia.
  - **2008–2011**: Military skirmishes displaced **36,000 people**.
  - **2013**: ICJ reaffirmed Cambodia's sovereignty over the temple, but surrounding areas remain disputed.

- **Joint Boundary Commission (JBC)** exists since 2000 but has made little progress.

Political Dynamics

- **Leadership Factor**:
  - Thai PM **Paetongtarn Shinawatra** vs Cambodian PM **Hun Manet**—both children of influential leaders (**Thaksin Shinawatra** & **Hun Sen**).
  - Personal family ties complicate public perception of negotiations.
- **Thai Military's Role**:
  - Seen as a potential destabilizer; analysts warn border tensions could be used to **stoke nationalism or justify a coup**, echoing past political upheavals in Thailand.

What's Next?

- **Peaceful Resolution Uncertain**: ICJ involvement vs Thailand's push for bilateral talks prolongs deadlock.
- **Risk of Escalation**: Nationalist pressures and military posturing could trigger renewed conflict.
- **Economic & Social Fallout**: Cross-border trade, labor movement, and regional ASEAN stability could be affected.