

4 Oct. 1989

66 more cases of malaria confirmed

By FIONA MACMAHON

ANOTHER 66 Vietnamese boat people from the Hei Ling Chau detention centre have contracted malaria, taking to 255 the number of cases confirmed since the start of September.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said 55 cases were confirmed over the weekend and another 11 on Monday.

Despite the continuing

increase in cases, the department said yesterday "that the situation is now under control".

Of the 255, 170 are receiving treatment, 83 in Princess Margaret Hospital and 87 in a special sick bay on Hei Ling Chau.

The victims are all in satisfactory condition.

The outbreak of malaria among the boat people on Hei Ling Chau comes only

weeks after the Vietnamese were moved there because 21 boat people contracted cholera on Tai A Chau.

The Department of Health believes all malaria cases have been imported from Vietnam, where the disease is endemic.

It is understood that the particular strain of malaria contracted by the Vietnamese has an incubation period averaging about two months.

Most victims are also believed to have come from the same area in Vietnam.

Tests by the Regional Services Department on Hei Ling Chau have proved negative and the island has been treated with larvicidal oiling and residual spraying.

But the RSD has admitted that they did not check Tai A Chau for any strains of malarial mosquitoes when the island was disinfected.