

New Peril at Phnom Penh

Reds Move Up From Neak Luong

Phnom Penh

Heavy fighting broke out southeast of Phnom Penh yesterday afternoon while troops six miles to the northwest braced for an expected night attack. The government called in troops from the provinces to defend the capital.

Communist - led Khmer Rouge troops traveling in dozens of sampans made their way up the Mekong river under cover of an afternoon rainstorm and attacked government soldiers 12 miles southeast of the city center, according to field reports.

Fresh attacks in the area had been expected ever since Tuesday when the government's downriver outpost of Neak Luong fell, leaving as many as 6000 Khmer Rouge free for other action.

Soldiers said the government troops are desperately short of ammunition. The military command called in troops from at least three upcountry garrisons in a last-ditch effort to hold the capital no matter what the losses to provincial enclaves, which are already more than 80 per cent controlled by the Khmer Rouge.

Khmer Rouge gunners continued to pour heavy weapons fire into Phnom Penh's northwest defense line six to eight miles northwest of the capital. An at-



AP Wirephoto

Premier Long Boret danced with a Balinese girl in Bali yesterday

tack during the night forced the government to rush in 1000 reinforcements from the city center after an enlarged bulge in the perimeter threatened to break through.

All available civilian transports were ordered to fly today to Svay Rieng near the Vietnam border, 68 miles southeast of the capital, to bring in troops from that beleaguered province. Other reinforcements were flown in yesterday.

Vice Premier Pan Sothi

said "a tight defense of Phnom Penh" has been the main order of government business since the departure of President Lon Nol on Tuesday.

Pan Sothi reported no moves toward peace talks despite a broadcast by acting President Saukam Khoy on Thursday saying the government is "actively engaged" in trying to contact the other side to propose a truce. The Khmer Rouge have rejected talks with the present government.

Khoy met for an hour yes-

terday with U.S. Ambassador John Gunter Dean and for two hours with his cabinet, but no details of the meeting were released.

Pan Sothi said he expected Premier Long Boret to return to Cambodia in the next few days but did not know when. Long Boret, who accompanied Lon Nol on his flight into virtual exile, has also been rejected by the Khmer Rouge, and some politicians believe he will not come back.

The U.S. evacuation of "nonessential" embassy staff members — contract

SF Chron
4-5-75



UPI Telephoto

A Phnom Penh family jammed itself into a homemade cave yesterday during a pre-dawn rocket attack

employees, voluntary agency workers and others — continued with three planes reported carrying more than 100 persons to Bangkok and Saigon.

For the second consecutive days shelling against the vital airport west of Phnom Penh was relatively light. One person was killed and three others were wounded by 26 rocket and artillery rounds but the fighting failed to stop the U.S. civilian airlift that provides the capital with rice, fuel and ammunition.

Associated Press