

Ho Chi Minh City Calling

Hong Kong

Saigon became Ho Chi Minh City yesterday as far as South Vietnam's official radio is concerned.

As Radio Oiaiphong came on the air it emphasized that it was broadcasting from Ho Cho Minh City.

Formerly the radio had used either Saigon or Ho Chi Minh City as the name of the capital.

The name of the late North Vietnamese president was given to Saigon shortly after its fall on April 30.

But, Ho Chi Minh City was often not used officially. The media indicated that the city would be renamed only when it became worthy of the austere revolutionary leader.

The capital is today a very different place from the Saigon of a bare six months ago.

The city has been cleaned. Many streets and squares bear new names associated with the April 30 victory or patriots.

Girlie bars and night clubs formerly thronged with American servicemen are closed.

Hundreds of thousands of refugees have left the capital for a new life in economic development zones set up by the revolutionary administration.

But whether Saigon should be struck officially off the maps and replaced with Ho Chi Minh City was still not clear.

There has been no official renaming ceremony.