## Attacks Near Phnom Penh Among Heaviest in Weeks

By MALCOLM W. BROWNE

KOMPONG KANTUOT, Cambodia, June 25—Communist
forces attackéd Government
positions in a wide arc around
Phnom Penh today in some of
heaviest fighting that the country has seen in weeks.

The situation was especially

Special to The New York Times

official said that there was no
try now and that he did
not expect "the next phase"
for the time
to go into effect
being.

There are approximately 75
Americans living here in other
than official capacities. They

The situation was especially serious in this important town, 15 miles southwest of the capital on Route 3. The town was nearly deserted except for soldiers defending it. The Communists were pressing so hard from all sides that the body of a Government officer who fell two days ago still lay unrecovered 300 yards up the road because of the withering fire.

The situation was especially than official capacities. They include businessmen, missionaries and journalists.

Early today, a Communist demolition squad attacked a Government ammunition depot along Route 4 about 10 miles west of Phnom Penh, blowing up a bunker. The rest of the depot was not damaged and no casualties were reported.

The fighting on the east bank of the Mekong about 15 miles

BATTAMBANG PROV. CAMBODIA ₹ Phnom Penh c

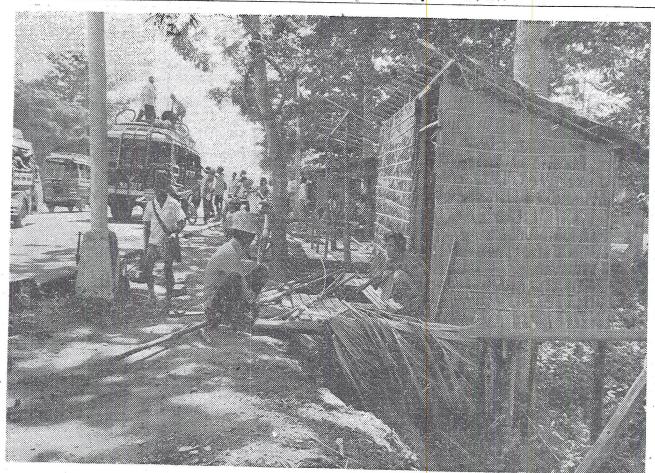
The New York Times/June 26, 1973 Government troops were hard-pressed at Kompong Kantuot (1). Other units reopened supply road to rice-growing area (2).

recovered 300 yards up the casualties were reported. The fighting on the east bank of the Mekong about 15 miles southeast of Phnom Penh, the United States Embassy has compiled during the last two days a list of Americans who would have to be evacuated in an emergency and has updated an evacuation plan. But an evacuation plan. But an in the casualties were reported. The fighting on the east bank of the Mekong about 15 miles southeast of Phnom Penh has been so intense during the last two days that army ambulances allittle riverfront park next to the former royal palace waiting for landing craft to bring in the casualties. in the casualties.

## Success Is Reported

Government positions all along the east bank are reported under very heavy pressure, and the Government charged today that at one of them, Prah Prasap, the Communists had used poison gas. The Government also charged that in the last three days, five villages near Kompong Speu on Route 4 west of Phnom Penh had been burned down with the loss of 152 houses. 152 houses.

The Government also announced a success today, saying that late in the day its troops had cleared the last Communist opposition from Route 5, which, it added would soon be open to traffic again. Route 5 lead from Phnom Penh to a western rice growing prove to a western rice-growing prov-ince, Battambang. After having



Refugees from areas around Phnom Penh have been pouring into the capital and building shacks wherever they can find space. Communist pressure on Kompong Kantuot, a market town of 30,000, has increased squatter problems.

been closed for several months the road was reopened three week ago and rice convoys had just begun to move when the Communists cut it again.

The Communist force operating in the Kompong Kantuot area southwest of the capitly stronger in the last three weeks. Throughout this period it has nearly surrounded Kompong Kantuot, which in normal stimes has been a prosperous market town with a population of about 30,000. The town's only access to Phnom Penh, by way of Route 3, is a narrow wooden bridge across which refugees have been pouring for weeks.

The Communists, besides fir, while, dropping as 500 yards as 500 yards to the main street, and what appeared to be a major Communist attack was beginning. A local garrison commander said grimly that the Communists were extremely strong, include structures, include and expressed the opinion that there were never enough air strikes. He said that his men estaurants, apartment buildings, stores, photographic strikes. He said that his men estaurants, apartment buildings, stores, photographic strikes. He said that his men estaurants and expressed the opinion that the supply of rice was growing short although they were getting enough ammunition. Government armored vehicles came to help only for a few hours aday, he added.

Kompong Kantuot has little strategic importance, but refugees from it have greatly in-