

## **Jun 1975 - End of Civil War. - Occupation of Phnom-Penh by Khmers Rouges.**

The five years' civil war in Cambodia, which had begun with the overthrow of Prince Norodom Sihanouk as Head of State in March 1970 [see [24025 A](#)], ended on April 17, 1975, when Phnom-Penh was occupied by the forces of the National United Front of Cambodia (NUFC), otherwise referred to as the Sihanoukists or *Khmers Rouges*. The NUFC's strategy had been aimed throughout at the isolation of the capital, and by 1974 all the main roads leading to it had been cut. An offensive launched on Jan. 1, 1975, gave them control of the Mekong, and after the end of January supplies ceased to reach Phnom-Penh by water. The city thus became entirely dependent on air supplies, but as the NUFC closed in their delivery became increasingly hazardous, and after the U.S. embassy withdrew on April 12 they ceased entirely. The city fell five days later. Details of the military and political developments leading up to the NUFC's victory are given below.

The military situation remained in a state of stalemate during the last nine months of 1974. The republicans continued to hold all the principal towns, and on July 9 recovered Oudong, which had been taken by the NUFC on March 18 [see [26508](#)]. The NUFC, on the other hand, controlled the greater part of the countryside and all the main roads, and strengthened their grip on Highway 4, which links Phnom-Penh with the port of Kompong Som [see map on page [24188](#) in volume XVII, 1969-70, where Kompong Som is still described as Sihanoukville].