

# HIMMAL

SOUTH ASIAN

February 2000

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# HIMAL

SOUTH ASIAN

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# The Right and the Left

In the article "Deceit of the Right" (December 1999), the authors, Vijay Prashad and Biju Mathew, known for their left leanings, fail to record two things: the deceit of the Left, and the funds channelled to Christian organisations in India by Indian Christians in the US and US church groups. For example, while they talk about the alleged funding of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) from abroad, they do not see anything wrong when the organisations they support receive funding from abroad; or when Christian and Islamic organisations receive funding from abroad for conversions.

In the case of the former, would the authors care to answer questions about the advertisement campaign that *Communalism Combat* ran in Indian newspapers at the time of the 1999 general elections asking people not to vote for the BJP? The organisers of that campaign have refused to state where they got their money from. *India Today* has said that it was the Congress party that provided them with the funds, and the total bill was around INR 7 million (c. USD 165,000). Others have speculated that the funds were received from various organisations in the West, mostly the US, and that some of these funding organisations had indirect links to the CIA.

As to the amount of funds received by various religious groups in India, *The Times of India* (16 August, 1999) stated that Christian missionaries and allied groups continued to be the largest recipients of foreign funds. They received INR 126.7 million in the first quarter of 1999 (January-March) and INR 158.8 million (75.69 percent of the total foreign funds) between April and

June 1999! Significantly, the US, with donations of INR 41 million, displaced Germany as the leading donor.

The report also states that "non-political organisations" were the other major recipients of foreign funds (INR 13.8 million in the second quarter of 1999) followed by Muslim organisations which got INR 6.4 million. Reports in the Indian media suggest that some of these "non-political organisations" diverted part of their funds to the *Communalism Combat* campaign.

It is unfortunate that the likes of Prashad and Matthew, whose visceral hatred of Hindus and Hinduism is well known, get to publish half-truths, lies and innuendos as "analysis".

*Closepet N. Ramesh*  
Associate Professor,  
Communication  
Truman State University  
Kirksville, Missouri

### Vijay Prashad and Biju Mathew respond:

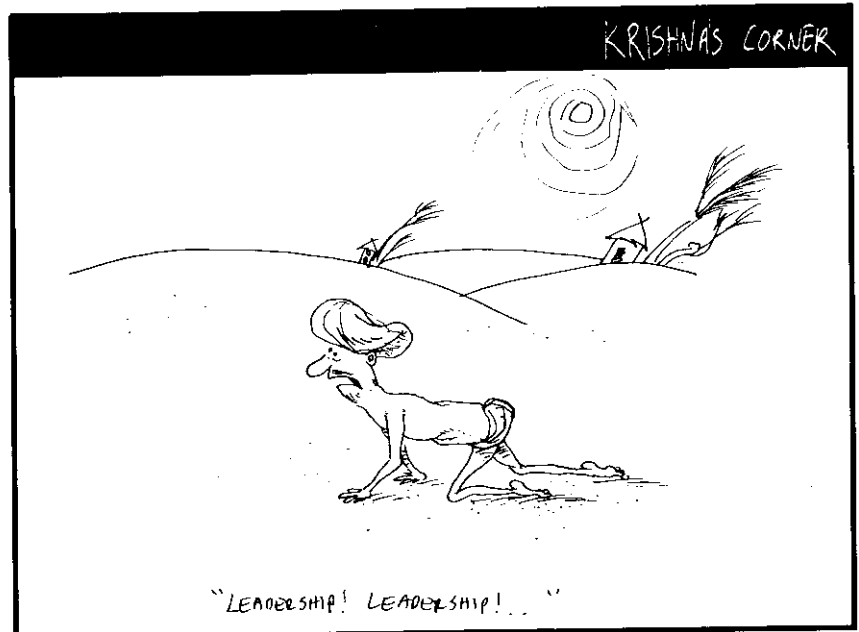
We are not sure where Closepet Ramesh gets his information, but we have no special "visceral hatred of Hindus and Hindu-

ism". We do, however, have an aversion to what Aijaz Ahmad calls the "culture of cruelty" of Hindutva organisations such as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP).

Hinduism is not Hindutva, nor do most Hindus subscribe across the board to the principles of cruelty. Without a doubt there are organisations (from other theological traditions) that proffer their own cultures of cruelty and we are averse to them as well. Our concentration on the Hindutva groups is mainly driven by the demographic advantage of these groups in Indian society, not to speak of the greater power wielded by them. It is their machinations that have to a large extent distorted the social development of both Indian and Indian diasporic life.

Since we spent considerable space in our article on the Islamic Right, Closepet Ramesh was forced to shift gears and target Christians—much like the Hindu Right's own new-fangled anti-Christian movement in India today. Indian Christians make up only 2.4 percent of the Indian population and bear almost no power within the polity. Closepet Ramesh might wish to consult Sumit Sarkar's "Conversions and the Sangh Parivar" (*The Hindu*, 9 November 1999), which makes this point at length. We also recommend that Ramesh read the statement of Tahir Mahmood, chairman of the National Commission of Minorities, Government of India, released in September 1998, which makes it clear that Christians in India are a beleaguered minority who did not cast the first stone in this fracas. The Hindutvawadis took the initiative in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa.

Hindutva's main ideological plank is that Hinduism is endangered, an erroneous notion that allows it to target those who do not fall in line behind the goose-step of







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the Hindu Right. Hinduism, as K.S. Singh has shown in his many volumes, is not one thing. It is a diverse and heterogeneous theological and social phenomenon. The discourse of endangerment is used as a weapon against minorities as well as to whip the supporters of Hindutva into line. We oppose this kind of thinking entirely.

That said, there is merit to the criticism of religion being manipulated for imperialist purposes, as in the canards against Hinduism from the US's Southern Baptist Convention. The Forum of Indian Leftists, to which we belong, was among the many organisations to strongly criticise this kind of theological imperialism. We oppose all forms of forceful missionary activity, whether from the Evangelical Christians or the Vanvasi Kalyan Kendras, the VHP or the Ramakrishna Missions.

However, there is a vital difference between imperialist Christian organisations and the Indian Christians, just as there is a difference between the cruel Hindutva organisations and Hindus. We, unlike the VHP or Closepet Ramesh, insist on this difference and hold the VHP culpable for its acts of cruelty against Indian Christians, a vulnerable minority, just as we hold the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHPA) responsible for its long-range support of cruelty. The underlying principle of Closepet Ramesh's attack is that Christians are foreign to India, while Hindus,

whether in India or in the USA, are essentially Indian. This is spurious history (since Christianity came to India nearly two thousand years ago). It is also the kind of inflammatory rhetoric that has led to the death of Christians over the last two years.

About *Communalism Combat*, all we can say is that no organisation in the USA supports its activities (as the VHPA does for the VHP), but it does not claim to be tolerant and then sponsor cruelty (as with the VHP), and it is not affiliated to any organised political party (as the VHP is to the BJP). We do, however, appreciate the work of *Communalism Combat*, a brave effort in the face of the attacks of Hindutva.

We find it hard to take Closepet Ramesh on faith when his 'sources' ("others have speculated" and "reports suggest") are so very mysterious. Others speculate and reports suggest that Closepet Ramesh is the international agent of the Right: how credible is that?

**Just fascinating**

Just got around to perusing your December 1999 ("Gone West") issue. As a reader of *Himal* for several years now, once again, I found it just fascinating.

I am one of those people who, as a result of numerous business

trips (telecom) to South Asia over the last few years have fallen hopelessly in love with the whole region. My infatuation is probably due, in part, to having seen too many of the prosperous urban areas of India, and not enough of the rural ones, but *Himal* has really sensitised me to the political, economic and cultural issues of the region. Prior to my first visit in 1994 and my subsequent discovery of *Himal*, like most Americans, I was almost totally oblivious of any of these.

It is unfortunate that your message finds only a tiny audience in the West. Most Americans probably regard your part of the world as a primitive, uncivilised backwater. These mis-perceptions are obviously simplistic and superficial, displaying Western arrogance, xenophobia, and a sad ignorance of history, both ancient and modern.

Arthur H.M. Ross  
Phoenix, USA



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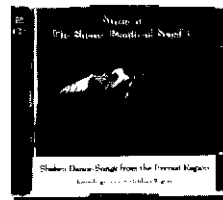
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## Double-edged IT

The "knowledge-byte" that forms the structure of digitised knowledge jostling through computer networks, may be discriminately seen as empowering, dis-empowering or useless (*see Himal November 1999*). The power of the Internet, with its immense potential to re-model institutional structures and, possibly, the whole social fabric, has given a new shape and dimension to the politics of knowledge. But the relevance of these knowledge-bytes to the development agendas of developing countries needs serious intellectual discourse. To render ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) and content "relevant to communities" necessitates scrutiny and strategising of the meta-politics of knowledge in cyberspace. The key point, as futuristic writer Alvin Toffler puts it, is that "the knowledge of knowledge gives power".

In this endeavour, besides traditional computer literacy, software development and its standardisation arguments, one needs to go further into the structured realities of the digital divide between the information haves and want-to-haves. Owing to increased and accelerated digitisation of knowledge and information at the global level, it becomes all the more important for communities to collect, compile and, while digitising their traditional knowledge, make it accessible to and shared with the rest of the world.

That valuable cache of traditional knowledge, earlier handed from one generation to another orally, and, if written, circulated only amongst a small section of people, must be made accessible by the optimal use of ICTs. By "optimal use" I mean all that the Internetworking technologies provide—an interface of television, VCR, radio, etc. This aspect of cyberspace where one is not exclusively dependent upon textual transmission of message and can potentially preserve and send verbal "knowledge bytes" in at much cheaper rates than conventional telecommunication technologies can, is adding a very important dimension. Perhaps future learning options in virtual societies cannot but include the "knowledge bytes" of the so-called unknowledgeable and ignorant.

The validity of Internetworking technologies as part of strategy and medium in the politics of knowledge lies in its being one way by which the internal logic of development of a culture can be better com-

municated and applied for sustainable and equitable development initiatives. By availing of the democratic potential of creative-anarchy available in cyberspace, it also allows hitherto dis-empowered communities to create a better "strategic niche" for their own knowledge and information systems.

The potential of development co-operation and alternative development paradigms is also fundamentally enhanced by the cyberspace created by ICTs. This is a scenario in which the role of civil society becomes crucial. Writing recently on the WTO agenda and the Seattle episode, director of the New Delhi-based Centre for Science and Environment, Anil Agarwal, said that the new century "is going to be a century of the Internet and global

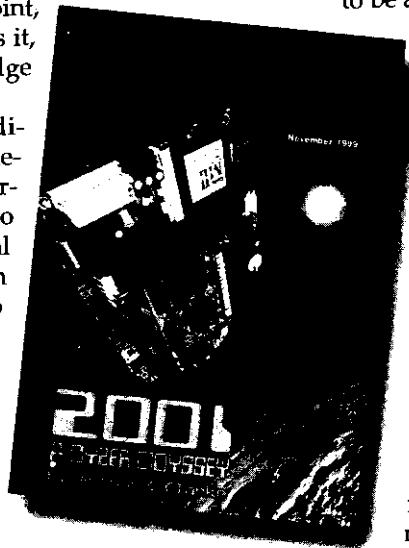
dialogue," where "the civil society will become more and more important. In fact, the Internet played a key role in the mobilisation of activists against the Seattle meet."

This awesome potential of ICTs should not, however, blur our vision for social development. There are certain caveats and limitations to ICTs. It can cut both ways—alleviate as well as facilitate social disruptions. The expansion of ICTs is in itself taken as a manifestation of development but recent research has shown that it is more an indicator of the development of the tertiary section of the national economy, i.e., the expansion

of the services sector through the creation of computer-related hi-tech jobs.

At the same time, the diffusion and spread of ICTs in society and professional institutions is perceived as leading to efficiency, reliability and good working conditions, whereby ICTs become the "permissive factor" enabling the environment for development. This is a contestable argument. The notion of "permissive factor" for institutional change must be qualified with the fact that unless there is collateral change in socio-economic conditions, the ICTs and the cyberspace created by them tend to lose the vitality to provide a platform for generating peace, pluralistic accommodation and conflict management. In fact, the same ICTs may instead facilitate social disruptions and lay the ground for a much stronger and unprecedented destruction of local and global peace.

Zubair Faisal Abbasi, Islamabad





SRI LANKA

# ANYTHING FOR PEACE

A GLIMMER of hope has broken through the gloom. A political resolution of Sri Lanka's bloody ethnic crisis, which has cost an estimated 50,000 lives on both sides of the line in the last 17 years is suddenly a tantalising prospect. On 19 January, Ranil Wickremesinghe, the leader of the opposition United National Party (UNP) who challenged Chandrika Kumaratunga for the presidency on 21 December, indicated his willingness to support the government's constitutional amendments, which the president has consistently maintained was the key to a political solution to what is often called the "Tamil problem". (Cause for hope is also springing from as far away as Scandinavia, as Norway has expressed its desire to play the role of an intermediary in talks between the government and the LTTE.)

Wickremesinghe, however, is not as optimistic as the president that the constitutional changes she proposes is the way forward to peace. Pledging his party's parliamentary support for her proposals, the UNP leader told Kumaratunga: "Our stand is that this problem cannot be successfully solved by the process you intend to resolve the issue. But since you don't have any other solution, we would not block the process."

There is more than a strong dose of realpolitik in the seemingly conciliatory gesture that came at a time when relations between Kumaratunga's ruling People's Alliance (PA) and the UNP had sunk to a new low. The UNP accuses the government of widespread malpractice in the presidential election where the incumbent, who had just narrowly escaped death at the hands of a suicide bomber of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), comfortably won with a 51 percent plurality against Wickremesinghe's 42.

The main opposition party has even filed a

petition against Kumaratunga's election, and the case promises to drag on for a long time. (When Sirima Bandaranaike challenged President Ranasinghe Premadasa's 1988 election, it took the Supreme Court three years to reach a determination.) Also, the judges will have to assess whether established malpractice (assuming the petitioners are able to prove at least some of the charges in their plaint) was sufficient to have altered the result. Even newspapers opposed to Kumaratunga have conceded that the 700,000 plus votes she had over Wickremesinghe would have ensured her victory even on a level field. The gap between the winner and the loser was unexpectedly wide, explained by analysts

as partly due to a sympathy wave that benefitted the president following the assassination attempt.

In the December elections, a group of UNP defectors, including five members of parliament, calling themselves the "alternate" UNP, broke away from the party and

supported Kumaratunga. This group had been trying to entice other UNP MPs to join them so that Kumaratunga could get the 15 or 16 votes that would provide her with a two-third majority in Parliament, enabling her to amend the constitution. Wickremesinghe's counter-move has taken the wind off the sails of potential defectors, some of whom have been angling for an extension of the sitting parliament as part of the price for defection.

Immediately after her election, Kumaratunga did make a much-acclaimed acceptance speech in which she asked Wickremesinghe to join the government and help forge a lasting peace. This had even provoked speculation that she was seeking a national government. "The political fight is never an easy one. I therefore sincerely commiserate with Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe on his unsuccessful effort to win the presidency. And yet I say to Mr Wickremesinghe that he should take heart. He must take heart because the very significant support that he and his party commands can mean only one thing and one thing only:



SENA VIDANAGAMA



SENA VIDANAGAMA

*Working together for peace? Chandrika Kumaratunga (top) and Ranil Wickremesinghe.*



that the people of this country still intend him to play a major role in our effort to forge a new Sri Lanka of tranquillity and tremendous opportunity that stands close at hand."

But within a week Kumaratunga had changed tack, severely attacking the UNP and its leadership over national television and broadly hinting that the opposition party and a section of big business interests were part of a conspiracy with the LTTE to get rid of her. In a rambling three-hour plus talk show, which was supposed to be a discussion but which turned out to be a monologue, all the positive signals of moving towards consensus politics were reversed. The government then began manoeuvring to hit the UNP with a "Conscience Bill", which would allow defectors to keep their parliamentary seats that they risk losing under the present law. This legislation, for which a two-third majority is needed, was also expected to command support from more UNP defectors. Given Wickremesinghe's latest move, there was no indication whether this Bill will be presented as this is being written.

It is clear that the constitutional changes the UNP says it will not obstruct are likely to be

different from the "package" the government has been promoting for the past several months. The UNP is demanding that the new constitution or amendments to the existing basic law should provide for independent elections, police and judicial service commissions and guarantee a free press. Given the way the North Western Provincial Council election was conducted in January last year and the less-than satisfactory manner in which the presidential election was conducted, the UNP knows that without an independent election and police commission in place, a fair parliamentary election by August is impossible.

In all this, the point remains whether LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran will accept any deal that Sri Lanka's Parliament may unanimously offer him. He is an implacable foe, who will want all or nothing. What he seeks is a separate state in northeastern Sri Lanka and it is not likely that this will be on offer. So it will be back to square one and the military option. Lt Gen Srilal Weerasooriya, the army commander, said as much in a recent speech — that no peace is possible without crushing the LTTE. ▲

**आइय**

**करम खाओ**

न कभी नेपाल (काठमांडु) जाएँगे न ही नेपाल से कोई तात्सुकता रखेंगे। 24/12/99 को हमारा जहाज अपहृत कर लिया गया जिसमें हमारे 180 मासूम हिन्दुस्तानी थे। कारण है नेपाल की उग्रवादियों से साठगोट। कुछ हिन्दुस्तानी नेपाल जुआ खेलने या घूमने जाते हैं। ज्यादातर वहाँ हार कर आते हैं। उस देश में हम पैसा खर्चते हैं जो हिन्दुस्तान के खिलाफ उग्रवादियों की मदद करने में काम आता है। आज-के बाद नेपाल न जाकर हम भी यह कहेंगे कि हमने देश के लिये कुछ किया और देशभक्त कहलायेंगे। गुरु तेग बहादुर जी, गुरु गोबिंद सिंह, भगत सिंह, सुभाष चन्द्र बोस की कुर्बानियों का कुछ भी ध्यान करो। दुरारे देश के देशभक्तों को देखो जो अपना धर्म व देश के लिये मानव बम बन कर अपने शरीर की धरिजियाँ उड़ा लेते हैं।

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**THE FALLOUT** of the Indian Airlines hijack went beyond the souring of India-Pakistan relations. The Indian press, in particular the electronic media, raised passions by going overboard in emphasising Nepal's 'fault' for the crisis since Flight IC-814 had originated in Kathmandu. With the result that some groups used it to put out announcements like this one at New Delhi's Karol Bagh. Translated, it reads:

*Let's take a vow  
Neither shall we go to Nepal (Kathmandu), nor shall we have anything to do with that country. Our aircraft which was hijacked on 24 December 1999 had 180 innocent Indians. This was possible because of Nepal's links with terrorists. Some Indians go to Nepal to gamble and they also go as tourists, and most of them lose their money. The money we spend in that country is used to fund terrorists against India. By not going to Nepal from now on, we will claim that we have done something for our country and we will be called patriots. Bear in mind the sacrifices made by Guru Teg Bahadurji, Guru Gobind Singh, Bhagat Singh and Subhas Chandra Bose. Look at patriots in other countries who give up their lives as human bombs for their religion and their country.*

*We pray that our hijacked fellow citizens will come back safe.  
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Rajesh Baccher, Jai Hind Brigade



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# ALL IN THE NATIONAL

**Diplomacy is all about power and victories, not people and lives. International relations are amoral and will sanction just about anything for national self-interest, while sounding high and mighty in public.**

**That is Afsan Chowdhury's conclusion about the US State Department papers on the birth of Bangladesh that appear starting page 14.**

**T**o a Bangladeshi associated with the history of his country's birth, the documents presented in the pages that follow evoke a strange feeling. They are like reading about the unfolding events in the future from some point in the past. These cables are all about facing the past and confronting the future. In many ways, the events of 1971 have ceased to be part of international memory, political or personal. There is no mention of 1971 when large-scale state-sponsored killing sprees are discussed, and Bangladesh provides better copy for disasters and microcredit. As far as the world is concerned, South Asia has been squeezed into matters relating to hostility between India and Pakistan because strategic interests intervene there.

From these declassified documents of Foggy Bottom (*The American Papers: Secret and Confidential, India•Pakistan• Bangladesh, Documents 1965-1973*, Compiled and Selected by Roedad Khan, OUP, Karachi, 1999), it is clear that the big reason why the US wanted Pakistan united was to keep the roaring Reds at bay, be they from Moscow, Peking or from the fabled hills of Naxalbari.

The telegrams are not about the war in Bangladesh or any other war. When they discuss the events of 1971 in Bangladesh, they are actually about another war—the global fight against communism. The events were not about preventing military intervention by US forces but the paranoia of possible US policy failure.

And not in South Asia, but vis-à-vis the Soviets in South Asia. What these documents do is make the US look silly when they talk about human rights and democracy.

These cables are also about political globalisation, the platform on which the present-day chariots of economic globalisation roll on. The Cold War was about economic and political markets. Instead of emerging economies, they were emerging polities. The states didn't matter but the enemy did.

Even as a Bangladeshi, one has to recognise that the most important aspect of the papers is the indication here about the global diplomatic transition that was about to happen. The friendship between China and USA as a coalition against the Soviet Union was what history was all about. The papers do reflect the concern of the State Department on the plight of the refugees but they do not hesitate to say what the stakes of the fight were all about. This is significant because any doubts one may have had about international political amorality is removed. Here, then, is a fine testament to the rules of governing nation states, handling emergence of nation states, and 'managing' the plight of people affected by the process. The depth of professionalism, which may draw admiration, allows tough decisions to be taken, which will affect millions of anonymous lives, of brown and black bodies, clad in scanty clothes.

In 1998, a team of three, including myself, visited Pakistan to talk to the generals and the leaders



BEGART  
INST/UT/E/DR/IK

23 March 1971. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman raises his hand in salute as the Bangladesh flag is raised at his house in Dhaka.



# INTEREST

about what had happened in 1971. This idea that East Pakistanis were thought of as a lesser breed of Pakistanis came through as an idea deeply rooted in many Pakistani minds. The older generation still seemed to hang on to it while the younger 'progressives' were somewhat embarrassed to learn that such beliefs had once prevailed.

## Journey to Pakistan

It was clear that the Punjabi bureaucratic elite considered East Pakistanis as genuinely inferior. An ex-member of the Pakistan Planning Commission blamed lack of competence of Bengalees for their failure to develop economically: "They couldn't write a development proposal properly so I would help them." The gentleman from Punjab had reduced the process of governance to the level of competence in proposal writing. The direction of the state had been truly bureaucratized.

An interesting insight came from the politicians, including Benazir Bhutto, some of whom said that Bengal was anti-feudal while Pakistan was based on feudalism and the conflict was irreconcilable. Said one: "The military in Pakistan has been feudalised as a matter of policy to protect feudalism through land grants. But the Awami League was committed to abolishing it so there was no way out. Conflict was inevitable."

The Awami League won the election of 1970 with victory in 167 out of the 169 National Assembly seats in East Pakistan. The League's election platform was

based on the Six-Point formula, a radical autonomy agenda which had a long history and which included: 1. a federation of the two wings; 2. central government to deal only with defence and foreign affairs; 3. two separate currencies for the two wings or same currency but with measures to prevent flight of capital and each side to maintain separate revenue accounts; 4. separate authority to levy taxes and to collect revenue; 5. separate foreign exchange accounts for both the wings; and 6. setting up a para-military force for East Pakistan. East Pakistanis loved it, West Pakistanis would have none of it.

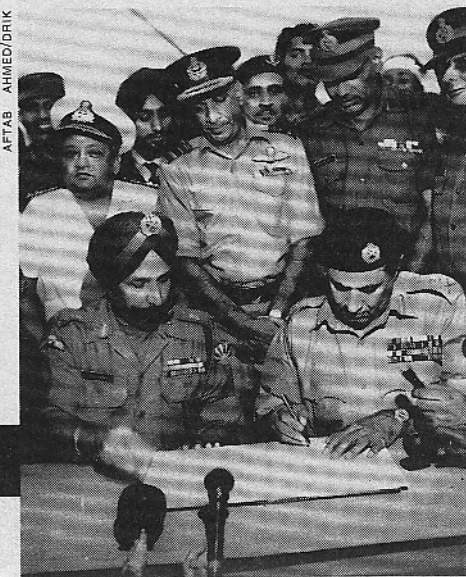
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his Pakistan People's Party (PPP), which had won the majority of the seats in West Pakistan (88 out of 144), took up the cause of the western part, while Sheikh Mujibur Rahman contemplated what it meant to have an absolute majority. Earlier, in 1968, Sheikh Mujib had been put on trial as a traitor in the Agartala Conspiracy Case—for colluding with India to separate East Pakistan—but public resentment and fierce agitation had put an end to the matter. He had to be let go, and as a consequence of a general unrest that was already on, the military dictator, Ayub Khan, handed over power to his army chief Yahya Khan. That was in 1969, and Yahya held the first election on the basis of adult franchise in Pakistan the following year.

Ironically, this handover from Ayub to Yahya was successfully challenged in a Pakistani court in 1972 and the verdict was that the

handing over had been illegal. So what triggered the crisis of 1971 had no real basis in the eyes of the law. The election held under Yahya Khan's martial law was invalid. But by then history had happened.

For Sheikh Mujib, history was on his heels that year. The East was in no mood to compromise on the Six Points and the West Pakistani leadership was not ready to accept the menu. We were told by the reminiscing senior generals, bureaucrats, politicians and journalists whom we met in Pakistan that the decision not to hand over power to Sheikh Mujib (who held majority in the Assembly), was taken at Larkana, Bhutto's ancestral home during a visit by Yahya to shoot game.

The pressure was strong on Yahya to take tough action and cancel the election results. His top brass was for it, and public sentiment was high against Sheikh Mujib and his Six Points in Sindh and Punjab. Everything had been upset because the Pakistani intelligence outfits had failed to predict such a massive Mujib victory. There was no contingency plan.



16 December 1971. Commander of the Pakistani forces in East Pakistan, Gen A.A.K. Niazi, surrenders to Gen J.S. Arora in Dhaka.



The generals felt that they could let Mujib rule Pakistan only on their terms. And Mujib, sitting on an overwhelming "mandate" could move little any other way. Bhutto continued to threaten. Non-PPP parliament members reached Dhaka to participate in the assembly that Yahya had called, but it was suddenly suspended. Almost immediately, the streets of Dhaka went wild.

Mujib went public and called for the "final struggle" on 7 March and unofficially took over the local administration. The students who controlled the streets had, in fact, declared independence on 3 March. Troops started to arrive in Dhaka by plane, and plans for the March crackdown were finalised. On the night of 25 March, the troops attacked selected parts of Dhaka, including Dhaka University, killing hundreds. The seal had been broken.

### Games of great powers

What is missing in the declassified papers is the sense of crisis and a desire to do anything to avert it. A *New York Times* headline put it along the lines of "What happened to the leverage we never had?". Bhutto and Mujib got personality profiles done, but Yahya Khan was spared in the despatches. Yahya was known to be a committed debauch, a man obsessed with "wine and women". Even in 1970, his fondness for plump and mature women was more than gossip. In Pakistan, everyone mentioned this part of his life to us and said that this suited Bhutto well in his manipulations, though his own life was no less colourful. The tone of writing when the subject is Yahya is almost respectful. This is an indication of where the US intelligence suffered. They were pinning hopes on a man who had not much hope left, and none hoped much from him. But he delivered all there was to the US.

For the US, the Bangladesh crisis doesn't appear as a humani-

tarian issue. The situation analysis came across as brilliant and confident, reflecting the quality of men sent to serve in South Asia. But the cables also expose how diagnosis suffers when you are looking over South Asia's shoulder at something else. For the US, Pakistan had to be saved to prevent communist influence; Pakistan had to be supported because it was a convenient railway station on the way to communist China.

The papers therefore have little to do with the Subcontinent, they are all about the games great powers play. This is also about the Soviet Union's last hurrah. The Indo-Soviet treaty signed in August 1971 made all the difference. Air Vice Marshall A.K. Khandekar, who was the deputy chief of staff of the Bangladesh forces in 1971, says that before the treaty was signed, the guerillas would go into operations without sufficient weapons and logistical support. But that changed after the treaty, and that made a big difference to the eventual outcome. It also means that India had already decided to take the plunge and planning was on for the eventual attack on East Pakistan. From the American documents it is clear that the analysts do not seem to have read this bit of the future too well.

By the time the US government was getting to understand the "meaning" of the Indo-Soviet treaty, the matter had gone too far. Indira Gandhi is righteous and impassioned in her missive to the American President, but Nixon sounds like a man resorting to language to hide what is already a settled matter. That the Soviet Union would soon be crowing in victory can't have been lost to either. Here was the price for obtaining Chinese friendship.

The most depressing part of these declassified documents is the absence of any compassion. Diplomacy is about power and victories, not people and lives. But

understanding this does not make international relations any more palatable as a topic. It has allowed immorality and the sanctioning of any act for the sake of national self-interest, while sounding highly moral in public.

The act of forming nation states also leave a trail of victims behind in various stages of devastation. The people of Bangladesh have birthed a state, but even today, almost three decades later, it meets only the aspirations of the elite, and has failed to fulfill the dreams that drove the people to 26 March 1971. Pakistan risked the mantle of a genocidal state and paid a price by losing half of itself in favour of India, its arch enemy. India won neither a friend nor an ally, but a reluctant fellow traveller, though it did succeed in breaking up Pakistan. True, Bangladesh serves as a market for many Indian goods today, but then it sends migrants to India and is often a haven for the increasingly belligerent insurgents from the Northeast.

The 1971 scenes of suffering are greater than any symbols of victory. But US foreign policy succeeded in the long run. Pakistan thought that the US would bail them out with the 7th Fleet but that didn't happen. In the end Mao shook hands with Nixon, the Soviet Union was humbled, and that is what these papers are all about.

Meanwhile, the Bihari boy, growing up in the wretched "Geneva camps" of Dhaka who still claims the citizenship of Pakistan will probably never see his homeland. He will only gaze at Bangladesh, a land which is denied by and to him. He has a flag but no land. One wonders if his father would have given so much to preserve Pakistan if he knew what the future held.

It was a war which could only accommodate victims. The pain lives on in many hearts. Only the victorious armada of the West has continued to sail on as the papers so eloquently testify. ▲



Excerpts from

# THE AMERICAN PAPERS

Secret and Confidential  
India • Pakistan • Bangladesh  
Documents 1965-1973

Compiled and Selected by Roedad Khan  
Introduced by Jamsheed Marker

Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1999

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(printed with permission)

## **From the Introduction:**

The documents contained in this volume were obtained from the United States National Archives in Maryland during the fall of 1998. These records were made available to the public, under the American Freedom of Information Act, as they became declassified after a given period of time. They constitute a rich and wide-ranging source of primary material for the historian, the scholar, the researcher, or the merely curious. The papers cover the global activities of the Department of State, and whilst a few documents, on account of their sensitivity continue to remain classified, the overwhelming number are made available for public scrutiny. The plethora of material that is available thus inevitably involves a considerable output of time and effort, for research, and an equally prodigious application of talent and selectivity for compilation. The material in this book was culled by Roedad Khan during a period of enforced medical confinement following a surgical procedure in Washington, DC. This is an unusual form of convalescence, but then all who know Roedad would know that he is an unusual man.

For the purpose of good order and balance of perspective, it is necessary to record a few caveats. The first is that these documents, within the stipulated time frame, relate mostly to the bilateral context of Pakistan/US relations and do not cover in depth either multilateral (United Nations activities) or issues involving Pakistan and third countries, most notably India: in such cases the references are largely marginal.

The second caveat is that the most sensitive of telegrams and despatches retain their classified status, and are likely to remain so for some time. The pinnacles are still, so to speak, enshrouded in clouds, but enough remains visible to us of these impressive mountain ranges, the nature of the glaciers, the rock formations, the valleys and the foothills, to enable us to draw conclusions and make judgements that are valuable.

The third caveat is that for the most part the reports emanate from the missions in the field and are transmitted to the State Department. The traffic is largely one way, and we see very little of the instructions that go out to the Ambassadors from State. Nor do we have any records of the decision-making process in Washington that generates the instructions that eventually go out to the Ambassadors. My own experience in Washington led me to the conclusion that in the Administration alone there are at least two centres of power—The White House/National Security Council, and the State Department. To this may be added the CIA and the Defence Department, both of which have always been involved with Pakistan. Then there is the Congress, with its powerful Committees and Subcommittees which both legislate and supervise the implementation of such legislation. Add to this the media, whose influence extends to all branches of the Executive and Legislative organs, and one finds that power in Washington is a indeed a multicentric phenomenon. It is, of course, ridiculous to expect to find, in the despatches contained in this volume, evidence of inputs from the various institutions just mentioned, but the discerning reader would be well advised to keep in mind Washington's multi-faceted power scenario as a backdrop to the many dramatic events that are played out in these despatches.

The reader must not expect to find complete impartiality: the object of the exercise is to defend and further the interests of the United States.

*(Roedad Khan is a former Pakistani civil servant who held several important appointments, including those of Chief Secretary Sindh, Secretary, Ministry of Interior, Secretary-General, Ministry of Interior, Federal Minister in Charge of Accountability, and Adviser to the Prime Minister on Accountability.)*



# ASSESSMENT OF Z.A. BHUTTO

## Department of State

TELEGRAM  
CONFIDENTIAL 132

ISLAMA 09461 01 OF 02 091201Z

11

ACTION : NEA-03  
INFO : OCT-01 SS-20 EUR-12 NSC-10 NSCE-00 INR-07 CIAE-00 EA-18 NSAE-00  
PRS-01 E-04 AID-12 L-02 L-02 PM-03 DODE-00 RSC-01 RSR-01/100W  
.....034586

R 091043Z DEC 70  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6066  
INFO AMCONSUL DACCA  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 9461  
LIMDIS  
SUB : BHUTTO, ZULFIQAR ALI: A PROFILE  
REF : ISLAMABAD 94131, KARACHI 2142 (NOTAL)

1. Following info about Bhutto, whose Pakistan Peoples Party scored a smashing election success in West Pakistan, may usefully supplement bio data held in Washington.
2. Personal. A daughter of Bhutto was accepted as student at Radcliffe in Autumn 1969. Bhutto told former congen Karachi in August 1969 that he had decided to educate his sons at Harvard (Karachi A-126). He himself is a University of California honor graduate in Political Science. Bhutto has two wives, Begum Nusrat Bhutto of Iranian extraction, and a Sindhi wife who remains in the village. The latter, a "purdah" wife owns most of Bhutto's land holdings which, under Muslim law, he cannot take away from her. His relationship with Nusrat has been rocky at times. He has reputation for philandering as well as excessive drinking, but patently these habits have done him no public damage although opponents attacked his morals during campaign. He has at least five children.
3. Views on US during long election campaign, Bhutto and his supporters did considerable sniping at US. His party newspapers in Lahore and Hyderabad were frequently outrageous in their allegations of US "interference", and targetted from time to time on Ambassador personally. In mid-summer personal attacks on Ambassador appearing in Lahore PPP weekly Shahab became so slanderous that DCM met with Bhutto to express our concern.

Bhutto professed ignorance of severity and personal nature of attacks and undertook personally to stop them. Attacks then fell off markedly although some were later resumed. As campaign neared end, Bhutto himself indulged in attacks of personal nature in his Nov 18 speech on Radio and TV he charged one million Muslims kill in Indonesia "because a foreign power wanted it so".

4. Indo-Pak. Bhutto has maintained hard line public stance against India, particularly on Kashmir, and Indian Hicom official here regard him as dangerously jingoistic. However, he opined to Pol counsellor in 1969 that Pakistan would lose nothing by restoration of pre-1965 pattern of economic relations with India.

8. Political system. Bhutto has told DCM and others that he questioned suitability of parliamentary democracy for Pakistan and thought most appropriate structure would include a constitutional role for the military. Earlier he had predicted to former Congen Karachi that if Mujib became Prime Minister he would fail within a year, that it would eventually become Bhutto's turn and he would govern as "a strong man within the Turkish model", with the army in the wings. (His views on these points may be altered by his surprisingly strong election showing.) Generally during campaign Bhutto avoided taking

stand on issue of strong centre versus provincial autonomy. However, in July 26 speech he reportedly said he did not support Awami League Six Points.

9. Among establishment Pakistanis, Bhutto both admired and heartily disliked. Admirers see him as only political leader in West Pakistan who possesses sufficient drive, brains and executive ability to undertake needed restructuring West Pak society. Detectors see him as ruthless, unprincipled opportunist primarily concerned about gaining power and interested in common man and his problems only as means to this end. In September, Yahya told Ambassador he considered Bhutto a bright demagogue, power-crazy and Fascist at heart.

# EAST PAKISTAN BECOMES ONE-PARTY STATE

## Department of State

TELEGRAM  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE 164

DACCA 02586 01 OF 02 110449Z

19

ACTION : NEA-15  
INFO : OCT-01 PM-05 NSC-10 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-08 NSAE-00 P-03  
USIA-12 PRS-01 AID-28 EUR-20 EA-15 RSR-01 /140 W  
.....048005

P 100845Z DEC 70  
FM AMCONSUL DACCA



TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2433  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 DACCA 2586  
SUB: SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN

1. On December 7, 1970, with the massive victory of the Awami league, East Pakistan became a one party state....The stunning Awami League victory is less the victory of a party than the personal triumph of a single man, the undisputed leader of this all-powerful party, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
2. The Sheikh himself is the least surprised at the out-come. During a conversation with Congen officers on June 2, the Sheikh foresaw this possibility observing that those who failed to support him should realize "I am not going to be very generous: in fact, I am going to be quite vindictive."
4. Mujib is a life long, full-time politician. As near we can tell he has never really been gainfully employed since leaving school without a law degree. His visible income is derived from his status as adviser to Great Eastern life insurance company. His administrative experience consists of a two-year stint beginning in 1956 as Provincial Minister of Commerce, Labor and Industry in AL Government of Aatur Rahman Khan with whom he later broke in struggle for control of Awami League. (Mujib eventually won.) Since 1948 Mujib has spent almost ten years in Pakistani jails climaxed by the Agartala conspiracy case which martyrised him in the eyes of the East Pakistani people and guaranteed his rise to power. After a long struggle, Mujib can now savor the sweetness of success and power.
5. Mujib the man is hard to characterise. In private meetings he is charming, calm and confident. While not a worldly sophisticate of Bhutto's stripe, he is well travelled and urbane. He knows Europe, particularly the UK, as well as China and the US (Thanks to a far-sighted Congen who sent him to States on a Leader Grant in 1958). On the rostrum he is a fiery orator who can mesmerize hundreds of thousands in pouring rain. As a party leader he is tough and authoritative, often arrogant. Mujib has something of a messianic complex which has been reinforced by the heady experience of mass adulation. He talks of "my people, my land, my forests, my river." It seems clear that he views himself as the personification of Bengali aspirations.
6. Mujib has also shown himself to be impulsive and emotional when talking of Bengali grievances. He doesn't appear to be a systematic thinker nor to have a reflective temperament. He is primarily a man of action—a mass leader. A favorite theme of his detractors is his lack of intellectual depth, unprincipled opportunism, and lust for power. That he strongly desires power is beyond question. Opportunism is a common charge against any politician. Mujib the politician appears no more or no less guilty of the charge than most politicians. While he may not be an intellectual, Mujib demonstrates considerable mental agility in private meetings. He also has a sense of humor.
7. Mujib has concerned himself little with foreign affairs. Officially he is for "genuine neutrality, withdrawal from CENTO and SEATO, and improved relations with India." Better relations with India will probably in fact be his most pressing concern since he sees at least partial solution to East Pak problems in expanded trade with neighboring India. Mujib, like many Bengalis, is not (except for record) particularly hard on Kashmir. Also like many Bengalis he believes the Farakka issue could be resolved in the context of a general improvement in Pak-Indian relations. In conversation with Congen officers he has shown himself well disposed toward US. Mujib has visited China on two occasions; to attend the Peking Peace Conference and in 1957 as member Pak Goodwill Mission. He admits to finding the Chinese experiment impressive but notes that as a political observer the restrictive and oppressive nature of the society was very apparent to him.

Department of State

TELEGRAM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE 163

DACCA 02586 01 OF 02 110535Z

18

ACTION : NEA-15

INFO : OCT-01 PM-05 NSC-10 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-08 NSAE-00 P-03  
USIA-12 PRS-01 AID-28 EUR-20 EA-15 RSR-01 /140 W

.....048005

P 100845Z DEC 70

FM AMCONSUL DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2434

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 DACCA 2586

SUBJECT: SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN

8. How the Sheikh will sheaf up as leader of Pakistan or whether Indeed a constitution acceptable to both wings and the MLA permitting him to become leader will emerge, is matter for much speculation and future reporting efforts. Certainly overcoming the first hurdle, i.e., constitution making, will be difficult. Mujib's entire campaign had basically one thrust: Anti-West Pakistan. Even if he were inclined to compromise Bengali demands, he would lose stature in Bengal and leave himself open to attack from the more militant (at times



COURTESY: THE EAST PAKISTAN TRADEY



separatist) elements of his own party. One of Mujib's more oft quoted refrains to effect that East Pakistan is part of southeast Asia and not the Middle East raises question as to whether accommodation between the two wings, now with their duly elected leaders, is possible or from Mujib' standpoint, even desirable. In conclusion, Mujib will remain very much a prisoner of his Six Points and "Bangla Desh." Somehow it is hard to imagine Mujib ruling in Islamabad out of touch with and not fortified by his Bengali masses. If he finds himself frustrated in the role as Prime Minister of a united Pakistan, Mujib has a fall-back position which must seem even more feasible to his after December 7, 1970, to seek to strike out on his own as leader of an independent East Pakistan.

**SHEIKH MUJIB AFTER  
ELECTION VICTORY**

**Department of State**

TELEGRAM  
CONFIDENTIAL 371

DACCA 02804 311200Z  
16  
ACTION : NEA-15  
INFO : OCT-01 CIAE-00 DODS-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-06 L-04 NSAE-00 NSC-01 P-03  
RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-20 USIA-12 AID-28 E-15 RSR-01 /126 W  
.....036124

R 301255Z DEC 70  
FM AMCONSUL DACCA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2523  
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
CONFIDENTIAL DACCA 2804  
CORRECTED COPY (CORRECTIONS THROUGHOUT ENTIRE TEXT)  
SUB : CALL ON SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN

1. DPO Carle and I called on Sheikh Mujib this morning to extend our congratulations and those of Embassy and Ambassador on election victory, as well as our best wishes for success in coping with problems ahead. I explained that Ambassador presently in US, but upon return would no doubt wish to call on Sheikh to convey his best wishes.
2. Sheikh was very much "in cat-bird seat," exuding composite aura of confidence in his star, hard-nosed determination to brook no obstructions to his program, charm and friendliness, and residual suspicion of MLA and West Pakistan "vested interests."
3. Sheikh emphasized that AL with mandate of people behind it, was now more determined than ever to push through its program. He warned that any attempt to delay or thwart wishes of the people would be resisted to bloody end. He spoke heatedly of twenty-three years of colonial exploitation and said no power can prevent his party from putting an end to this. The Sheikh was particularly bitter over economic exploitation of Bengal and mismanagement of its resources. He observed that normal trade with India was vital and that joint Indo-Pak approach on flood control was not only necessary but feasible. He cited example of the Indus water settlement which took place despite existence of Kashmir problem.
4. Turning to current political scene Mujib observed that National Assembly could meet late January or early February. He stipulated that it must meet in JGMCA. He predicted that constitution which would call for a parliamentary form of government, more or less on British lines, would be framed in less than one month. In response to our query, the Sheikh said he would definitely seek the cooperation of other political groups in constitution-making as long as they were willing to work within framework of the Six Points. He added that if such cooperation were not forthcoming, majority (i.e., AL) would proceed to pass its own constitution which was already drafted.
6. Queried about press reports that West Pakistan leader Bhutto planned visit, Sheikh replied, "of course, what else can he do?" He added that Bhutto would be most welcome, as would any other political leaders.
7. Throughout conversation, Mujib reiterated his determination to carry out mandate which he believes has been conferred upon him. He warned that frustration of AL program would lead rather quickly to Communism in East Bengal.
9. Mujib introduced to us newly elected MNA Syed Nazrul Islam of Mymensingh, AL Vice-President, whom he said was his Chief Lieutenant and had presided over AL during Sheikh's most recent jail term. (Comment: we still believe that the Sheikh has no deputy in a real sense, and that his flattering treatment of Islam in our presence was for the latter's benefit. Nevertheless, Islam will probably figure prominently in any AL Government.)

**Department of State**

TELEGRAM  
CONFIDENTIAL 851

13 JAN 1971  
ISLAMA 00348 01 OF 03 130849Z  
10  
ACTION : NEA-15  
INFO : OCT-01 CIAE-00 DODS-00 PM-05 H-02 INR 08 L-04 NSAE-00 NSC-10 P  
-03 RSC-01 PRS 01 SS-20 USIA-12 EA-15 EUR-20 O 03 RSR-01 AID-28 /149 W  
112925  
R 130700Z JAN 71  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6507



INFO AMCONSUL DACCA  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 TO 3 ISLAMABAD 0348  
SUBJ : Z.A. BHUTTO ON PAK/US RELATIONS AND OTHER SUBJECTS



1. I had hour's private conversation with PPP Chairman Z.A. Bhutto Jan 12 in his suite on top floor Hotel Intercontinental, Rawalpindi....Principal purpose of my call was to reestablish relations with Bhutto whom we had not seen since last August under our strategy of avoiding meeting with major political leaders in final stages of electioneering. (We had heard meanwhile that Bhutto thought we had deliberately neglected him.)

2. ...I said that I had much appreciated chance to talk with him last August (ref Karachi 1553), and thanked him for effective help at that time in dampening variety of allegations by some of his supporters against Amb. Farland. I added that we had deliberately avoided seeing him in final months of campaign for reasons which were obvious. (I did not tell him that additional factor was Pres. Yahya's request to Amb. that we avoid further meetings with Bhutto until after elections.)

3. Bhutto said he had been looking forward to this meeting. He hoped we could be frank with each other. If we descended only to diplomatic niceties, then at our next meeting we would talk only about the weather and other non-subjects. Our mutual interests were such that we should be frank. I responded that he had voiced my sentiments perfectly.

Department of State  
TELEGRAM  
CONFIDENTIAL 850

VICTOR OF THE  
WEST—BHUTTO

ISLAMA 00348 02 OF 03 131001Z  
11  
ACTION NEA-15  
INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-08 L-04 NSAE-00 NSE-10 P-03  
RSC-01 FRS-01 SS-20 USIA-12 EA-15 EUR 20 O-03 RSR-01 AID-28 /149 W  
113389  
R 130700Z JAN 72/  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6508  
INFO AMCONSUL DACCA  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 3 ISLAMABAD 0348  
SUBJ : Z.A. BHUTTO ON PAK/US RELATIONS AND OTHER SUBJECTS

As to election guesses which he arbitrated to some in Washington, I acknowledged we had not foreseen extent of spectacular PPP victory, along with others and I suspected Bhutto himself; but had been clear to us he had picked up considerable strength in final months of campaign....

9. He then asked my views about domestic political prospects here and I said I would much rather hear his views. Bhutto said first job was to write constitution, and he would try to work it out with Mujib. He did not know whether Mujib would follow "taking it or leave it" posture on Six Points, but in any event there should be agreement on very major degree of autonomy for each province. Bhutto thought center would nevertheless have to be in position to function effectively in foreign affairs and defence and would require various powers to that end.

10. Bhutto evinced hesitancy in speculation on chances of effective collaboration with Mujib. Said he himself wishes collaboration. He agreed that recent public exchanges had not been helpful and blamed UNIM mutant "Vice Presidents" of Awami League structure in West Pakistan for having touched off problem. Assuming constitution were written, Bhutto said he was not yet prepared take position on what would be his proper role in Government. He assumed Mujib would want Prime Ministry. Possibilities which might be open to Bhutto included Deputy PM, Leader of House, or Leader of Opposition. He would have to see.

16. Comment: ...Bhutto struck me as being confident in his new role, but not overconfident. An intelligent man, he is well aware of new responsibilities facing him in making good on popular expectations or, more immediately, in dealing with Mujib and East Pak regional biases. Meeting gave Bhutto vehicle to press his own bona fides as realistic, responsible leader who not only is not anti-American but wants keep lines open for good relations with US. As always, actions will speak louder than words but meanwhile it clearly in our interest to maintain dialogue.

Department of State  
AIRGRAM  
CONFIDENTIAL

AWAMI LEAGUE AND  
BENGALI NATIONALISM

TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
INFO : CALCUTTA, ISLAMABAD, KARACHI, LAHORE, NEW DELHI  
FROM : AMCONSUL DACCA DATE: JANUARY 29, 1971  
SUBJECT : EAST PAKISTAN: QUALITATIVE APPRAISAL OF THE AWAMI LEAGUE  
REF : A. DACCA A-041, 5/01/70 C. DACCA A-079, 10/8/70  
B. DACCAA-059, 6/26/70 D. DACCA 01012

29 JAN 1971



## Summary: A Capsulized Portrait of the Awami League

The Awami League is a vast umbrella sheltering many disparate elements — poor peasants, militant students, workers, middle class professionals, and wealthy businessmen and industrialists. One theme only, binds them together — Bengali nationalism, or, put another way, anti-West Pakistan feelings. This was the entire thrust of the political campaign.

One might wonder, then, how such an incompatible collection, bound together by what some might describe as negative feelings, can long remain a cohesive political force. In our view, feelings are so deep and dedication to running their own affairs is so strong that it provides enough momentum for quite sometime even if the party is totally unsuccessful in attacking the almost overwhelming basic problems of East Pakistan. In addition there is the formidable organization of the party and its extraordinary leader.

There is no doubt that the Sheikh is the undisputed leader, demanding and receiving total loyalty from his subordinates. The party is organized on a province-wide basis down to the union level. The organization is largely vertical with authority coming from the Sheikh through a few close lieutenants down to all levels.

The Sheikh plays his cards close to his chest, confiding wholly in no one but effectively using everyone. Somehow the system works. Without him it would rapidly disintegrate.

The party claims to be committed to parliamentary democracy. How it will work in the future, given the Sheikh's authoritarian ways and the lack for the present of opposition, remains to be seen. How the militant students and restless workers will behave in a one-party state will be something else to watch.

On the economic side, there is a theme of fuzzy socialism running through the manifesto and the Six Points. At the same time, the manifesto suggests that nationalization will have to proceed slowly due to the shortage of Bengali managerial talent. This theme is also echoed by some of the Sheikh's advisors. The rate of nationalization and to what extent this may tend to erode the AL's ever important middle class support will be something else to watch.

Based on numerous conversations inside and outside the AL structure, it is possible to venture some observation on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's leadership style. It appears that the Sheikh acts mainly from instinct rather than from advice. Twenty-five years or more of full-time politics have given him confidence in his own instincts. He is not a thinker or theorizer, but a man of action. Of advisors he has many and listens politely to all. None of his advisors, however, are ever sure to what extent they have gotten through. He tends to assign specific tasks to an advisor on a confidential basis. Rarely under this need-to-know system does one advisor know what another is doing. Somehow he manages to keep everyone happy talking to one man, looking at another, and patting a third on the shoulder.

### C. The King: Sheikh Mujib's Personal Leadership Style.

Based on numerous discussions with individuals, both within and outside the formal structure of the AL, it is evident that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is guided by instinct, rather than blindly following the advice of advisers or would-be advisers. This instinct derives from years of experience as a professional politician. Despite the catchy slogans and lofty ideals characterizing his party, Mujib is less a visionary than a shrewd, pragmatic political animal. Although Mujib politely listens to advice, and sometimes actively seeks it, he feels no compulsion to act on it if it runs counter to his own inclinations. He reportedly is suspicious of intellectuals and does not indiscriminately accept their advice....

Possible office holders in an AL Government. Speculation regarding allocation of ministerial portfolios and other assignments in an Awami League Government centers on the following persons:

Post	Name
Prime Minister	Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
President	A. M. Yahya Khan
Speaker of NA	Zahiruddin Ahmed, MNA
Foreign Minister	Dr Kamal Hossain, MNA
Important Ministry	Syed Nazrul Islam, EPAL Vice President; MNA
Finance Minister or Economic Planning Chief	Rehman Sobhan, leftist economist at Dacca University
Commerce Minister	Matiur Rahman, President Dacca Chamber of Commerce, or M.R. Suddiqui, District AL. Both are MNAs.
GOEP Chief Secretary	Capt. Mansur Ali, EPAL Vice President and MPA from Pabna.
Important Diplomatic Post	Kamruddin Ahmed, Dacca attorney, author and exdiplomat and Alamgir Rahman, ESSO General Manager

Other party manpower resources include, reportedly, some Bengalis who were "303ed," some Bengali CSPs and pro-AL academics, as well as the legions of MNAs and MPAs.



## F. Likely Foreign Policy Orientation.

Some of the major features of AL-dominated government's foreign policy would be as follows:

1. Indo-Pak. Relations with India are central to the AL's foreign policy outlook. The AL strongly favors restoration of trade with India. Although not "pro-India," the Party hopes that outstanding disputes can be settled amicably and seems willing to put "good faith" to the test regarding Indo-Pak relations.

Department of State

TOP SECRET  
SECRET 593

YAHYA KHAN TALKS  
ABOUT SPLIT

1 FEB 1971

ISLAMA 00944 021112Z

10

ACTION SS - 45

INFO OCT-01 /046 W

000153

R 011235Z FEB 71

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6741

SECRET ISLAMABAD 0944

EXDIS

CORRECTED COPY

EYES ONLY FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SISCO

SUBJ : POSSIBILITY OF EAST/WEST PAKISTAN SPLIT - CHINA'S ROLE

REF : ISLAMABAD 930

1. During my lengthy conversation with President Yahya (Reftel) he worried aloud about the possibility of a split-up of the two wings. He said that such an action, to him, was the most disturbing element in the current formulation of the constitution, and in the political processes which might adversely flow there-from. He said that he had no intention of giving his official sanction to a constitution which had inherent within it factors which would bring about dissolution of Pakistan: A united country was a national goal which he cherished. Paraphrasing the words of Ayub Khan, he said he did not intend to preside over the dissolution of Pakistan.

2. I recalled that I had carefully explained to him during our first meeting that it was the policy of the United States to respect the unity and integrity of Pakistan, and that I had publicly reiterated this policy on every occasion. Further, I said that propaganda to the contrary had been spread by those whose interests were inimicable to the interests of the United States. That the United States was covertly attempting to divide the two wings was not only false and fallacious but that it was contrary to the most

*Note: document incomplete. pages missing from original document.*

Department of State

TOP SECRET  
SECRET

US-PAK  
RELATIONS

TO : Department of State  
INFO : ANKARA, BANGKOK, CALCUTTA, CINSTRIKE/CINCPACAFSA, COLOMBO,  
Dacca, KABUL, KARACHI, KATHMANDU, HONGKONG, LAHORE, MOSCOW,  
LONDON, NEW DELHI, PESHAWAR, RANGOON, TEHRAN, ISLAMABAD (20)  
FROM : Amembassy ISLAMABAD DATE: FEBRUARY 2, 1971  
SUBJECT : POLICY APPRAISAL-PAKISTA  
REF :

## II. US INTERESTS

United States national security interests in Pakistan have declined sharply with the ending of the "special" US-Pak relationship. We ceased military assistance after the 1965 Indo-Pak war. We now have a policy limited to selling spares and non-lethal end-items (in addition to a small grant training program) although in 1970 we offered to sell some arms under a one-time exception....

In terms of our broader interests in South Asia, Pakistan's continued enmity with India remains a matter of serious concern. It presents a danger to the internal stability of the sub-continent, wastes resources needed for economic development, and provides a political handle for the Soviet Union and China to enhance their influence.

We have consistently believed that the unity of Pakistan is in our interest. We recognize, however, that recent and anticipated developments make continued unity doubtful over the long run and that we can do little to prevent a breakup. A violent rupture would counter our desire for stability in South Asia and would present a greater potential for radical political developments in both wings, particularly the West.

Even peaceful separation would probably strengthen fissiparous tendencies in West Pakistan and enhance the prospects for an authoritarian regime there. An independent East Pakistan, virtually without an army, could be hard put to protect itself against a potential Naxalite threat. It might also be a target for Chinese adventurism since the Chinese would no longer be bound by the need to maintain good relations with a central government....

On balance, we conclude that the continued unity of Pakistan will present us with fewer problems and pose a lesser threat to area stability than separation of the country into two independent states.



# YAHYA ON MUJIB AND BHUTTO

## Department of State

TELEGRAM  
CONFIDENTIAL 568

2 FEB 1971  
ISLAMA 00964 01 OF 02 021024Z  
10  
ACTION NEA - 15  
INFO : OCT - 01 CIAE - 00 DODE - 00 PM - 05 H - 02 INR - 08 L - 04 NSAF - 00 NSC -  
10 P - 03 RSC 01 PRS - 01 SS - 20 USIA - 12 AID - 28 RSR - 01/111 W  
130807  
R 021020Z FEB 71  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6749  
INFO AMCONSUL DACCA  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 TO 2 ISLAMABAD 0964  
SUBJ : PRESS. YAHYA'S VIEWS ON MUJIBUR, BHUTTO, AND PAKISTANI POLITICS

1. Much of the time during my conversation with Pres. Yahya (RefTel) was consumed in his musings on the character, political and family background, social and political philosophy, etc. of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The most salient observations which he made follow under separate headings.

2. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman - His formal education was adequate but not extensive. His life had been preoccupied with political agitation prior to 1947 and subsequently.

He utilized his extended prison term for the purpose of building a nucleus of his now successful Awami League. The development of his Six Point Program was the outgrowth of a provincial attitude built upon Bengali nationalism. Mujib's preoccupations are totally Bengali preoccupations, trade being one, he most certainly would favor close economic ties with India. (Yahya digressed while discussing this aspect of Mujib's philosophy and made a categorical statement to the effect that he felt there was nothing wrong in the re-establishment of trade and trade routes with India, at least to the extent in being prior to 1965.) Mujib has rekindled the fires of Bengali nationalism to the point where they may be difficult to control. Though definitely in command of the forthcoming Assembly, nonetheless Mujib is fearful of Bhutto because he realizes that Bhutto is educationally far better equipped, more knowledgeable and adroit in public affairs and is "faster on his feet" in any area outside East Pakistan.

3. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto - He was born to a very wealthy and conservative family. He has an educational background which is considered outstanding. He received training both in the UK and in the US. Ayub Khan recognized Bhutto's talents and took him into the power center while Bhutto was in his early 30's. When Bhutto fell from Ayub's favor he went directly to Yahya for advise. Yahya counseled him to move slowly as his future was still ahead of him. Bhutto left Pakistan for some months and returned apparently with the desire to topple all that stood in his way. It

was at this time that he began his socialistic ranting. Bhutto is not a socialist but an extremely bright opportunist who has sensed the direction of the political tide now running and has adapted his entire posture to it. He is fearful of Mujib neither because of Mujib's abilities nor his philosophy but because Bhutto recognizes the strength of Mujib's present political position and the need to reckon with it. It is more for pragmatic reasons than philosophically that Bhutto has aligned himself with China. Bhutto's PPP is showing signs of strain; Bhutto promised all things to all men, including outlandish promises to his own lieutenants, and there is going to be trouble in attempting to fulfil his public and private commitments.

5. President Yahya said that he had also pointed out to both Bhutto and Mujibur the provincial nature of their source of political power. He noted that Mujibur had no political support in the West wing and that Bhutto had received no support in the East wing. In an effort to build in Pakistan the concept of a two-party system, Pres. Yahya had counseled both leaders to work in harmony until the next election, and meanwhile they should both attempt to build a base that would be nationwide. He said that Bhutto thoroughly un-

derstood this but that Mujibur was more reticent in accepting the idea.

6. Pres. Yahya, in summing up his observations, noted that the Awami League had done its homework well and had formulated concrete ideas on constitutional provisions and had established a well-knit organization in East Pakistan. The PPP, on the other hand, had spent most of its effort politicking and had done little in the way of developing definite propositions. As a result, Bhutto and party are not nearly as prepared as the Awami League in coming forth with constructive proposals. Hence the PPP would like to forestall the opening of the assembly whereas Mujibur, Yahya concluded, is striving to convene the assembly on Feb 15 and there is some possibility that this may come to pass.



Mujib and Bhutto meet for talks in Dhaka before the army crackdown.

RASHID TALUNGEN/DRIK

Department of State

TELEGRAM  
SECRET 165

YAHYA IS WORRIED

ISLAMA 01660 251321Z  
42  
ACTION SS-45  
INFO : OCT - 01 /046 W  
042373  
P 251200Z FEB 71  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7077  
INFO AMCONSUL DACCA PRIORITY  
SECRET ISLAMABAD 1660  
EXDLS  
SUBJ : MY FEB. 25 SESSION WITH YAHYA: INTERNAL POLITICAL CRISIS  
DELIVER ACTION OFFICER OOB FEB. 25.

2. For first time in my experience with him, Yahya was clearly worried about next steps on difficult road towards representative government. He seemed disheartened by impasses between Mujib and Bhutto regarding constitution. He recalled all the various hard things he had done to bring political process along this far. His remarks indicated that while his regard for Bhutto was still low, he thought Bhutto did have a point in insisting on some give by Mujib re Six Points. Yahya said he had twice invited Mujib to confer with him here, and Mujib had twice declined. Now President was proceeding to Karachi this afternoon (Feb. 25) to have another talk with Bhutto. He confided that, in event Bhutto-Mujib impasse was not somehow resolved before March 3, he was considering deferral "for week or two" or later than that if need be of his own appearance at National Assembly in Dacca (which Yahya implied would delay opening of Assembly). Yahya did not indicate what he thought might happen if impasse not broken fairly soon. But he spoke in a tone of despair of "blood and chaos" which might ensue.

Department of State

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20520  
CONFIDENTIAL

RECONCILIATION  
UNLIKELY

MARCH 3, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR MR HENRY A. KISSINGER  
THE WHITE HOUSE

SUBJECT: RECENT PAKISTAN DEVELOPMENTS

Enclosed for your information is a copy of a memorandum prepared for the Secretary by the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs.

Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.  
Executive Secretary

Enclosure:  
As stated.

CONFIDENTIAL

MARCH 2, 1971

SUBJECT: East Pakistan Protests Postponement; Chances of Reconciliation Slight—  
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

A general strike has tied up Dacca, capital of East Pakistan, today and will extend to the entire province tomorrow as Bengalis express their opposition to President Yahya's indefinite postponement of the National Assembly scheduled to convene in Dacca on March 3. Yahya has now gone further as he has dismissed the conciliatory East Pakistan Governor, replaced him with an army general and has reinforced martial law regulations, including press censorship. In response to the general strike, the new governor has imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew this evening. There have been reports of sporadic violence.

East Pakistan leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has responded vehemently. In a press conference yesterday he denounced Yahya's decision on postponement as allowing continuation of the "long-standing conspiracy to maintain the colonial status" of East Pakistan. He observed that Bengalis "knew how to shed blood" and "could not be sacrificed," but urged his people to follow democratic processes of non-violence and non-cooperation. In reaffirming his adherence to his party's Six-Point autonomist program, Mujib seems again to have ruled out any possibility of compromise. He is scheduled to address a major rally in Dacca next Sunday to "announce his plans for the future."

....

Our Consulate General in Dacca estimates the chances of continued unity in Pakistan to be near zero. The chances of reconciliation between the two wings have clearly diminished.



**DESPERATE ATTEMPTS TO  
KEEP PAKISTAN UNITED**

**Department of State**  
TELEGRAM  
CONFIDENTIAL 517

PAGE 01 ISLAMA 02214 121541Z  
53 5 45  
ACTION NEA-08  
INFO : OCT-01 SS-20 CCG-00 SSO-00 NSCR-00 NSC-10 INR-07 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 PM 03  
DODE 00 RSR 01 RSC 01 /051 W  
032586  
R 121310Z MAR 71  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7333  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMCONSUL DACCA  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
CONFIDENTIAL ISLAMABAD 2214  
LHMDS  
BANGKOK FOR AMBASSADOR FARLAND  
SUB : CHANCES FOR POLITICAL SOLUTION  
REF : DACCA 726, ISLAMABAD 2192

1. In general we agree with analysis in Dacca Reftel. We still in breathing spell after events of last weekend although crisis continues. Military has not yet tipped hand re response to Mujib's demand for end to Martial Law and for early transfer of power as condition for Awami League attendance at National Assembly. MLA answer will probably not be known at least until Yahya goes to Dacca and sees Mujib.
2. At same time, Mujib's ability to step in as de facto ruler of Bangla Desh has strengthened his bargaining position vis-a-vis West Pakistan. We hope realities of situation in East will help tip balance in favor of further effort by MLA to seek negotiated settlement with Mujib rather than impose solution by bayonet. While, as Dacca points out, we do not know whether emotion or logic will prevail, our hopes for settlement somewhat greater than day or two ago...
3. Bhutto is on good behavior in face of undertone of criticism in West that he is to blame for provoking present crisis by his earlier refusal to attend NA session. We read his March 10 telegram to Mujib offering to come to Dacca for talks as showing some give in his previous hard line. It in his interest to participate in dialogue on crisis and not leave discussions entirely to Yahya and Mujib. PPP shares AL desire to end military rule. Next expected public word from Bhutto is at March 14 rally he holding in Karachi.
4. Regarding possible solutions, confederation idea (Para 4 Dacca Reftel) could be appealing to Bhutto, who expressed interest in it to AP correspondent about a month ago. However, we believe army would be inclined resist proposal under which Center would have little more than fig leaf of power. Army would probably read confederation as merely way station on road to formal separation. Moreover, if public opinion in West Pakistan interpreted confederation proposal as subterfuge to permit eventual split, Bhutto might find it politically inexpedient (whatever his private sentiments) to accept.
5. Possible variation, which even closer to de facto independence, would be confederation in which East and West had own armed forces and foreign offices, but were bound together by joint defense and other agreements. Disadvantage of such arrangement, which would probably be acceptable to Mujib, would be that unity of Pakistan maintained in name only.
6. Other solution, which mentioned in Para 7, Dacca Tel would be transfer of power to some sort of interim government—either in provinces, Center or both. This might be acceptable to Bhutto, if substance and not merely facade of power passes to elrked representatives. We assume that arrangement which included interim government at Center as well as in provinces would also be more palatable to Mujib. Think it conceivable military might also accept, provided President Yahya retained ultimate power pending adoption of constitution. Advantage of such arrangement, in addition to putting politics to work, would be further defusing of situation and allowing East and West to seek to work out new relationship in calmer atmosphere than presently exists. (We note precedent in somewhat analogous Congress-Muslim League interim government formed in undivided India.)

**MUJIB TAKES OVER  
EAST PAKISTAN**

**Department of State**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520  
CONFIDENTIAL

15 March 1971

TO : THE SECRETARY  
THROUGH : S/S  
FROM : NEA JOSEPH J. SISCO  
SUBJECT : MUJIB TAKES OVER EAST PAKISTAN; YAHYA FLIES TO DACCA  
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced in Dacca early today, that his party, the Awami League, was taking over the administration of East Pakistan on the grounds that the party had a majority (288 of 300) in the Provincial Assembly. Mujib acted unilaterally and in defiance of President Yahya Khan's Martial Law Administration which continues to be the Government of Pakistan. The fact that Mujib's announcement contained 35 "directives" for assuming control of the administration indicates that it was deliberate and carefully planned move.

In taking this step, Mujib has directly confronted the Yahya government but has carefully avoided an unqualified declaration of East Pakistani independence and has based his action on the "democratic" voice of the people as expressed in the December election. The Yahya regime must react quickly to this critical move, and Yahya himself has flown to Dacca to talk with Mujib.

The options available to Yahya appear to be two, either of which would further endanger the already fragile unity of Pakistan. If Yahya acquiesces in the step, he has forfeited his martial law powers, at least in the East, and would be hard pressed to retain them in the West (see below regarding Bhutto's speech on Sunday). If Yahya, or others in the military, decide to resist Mujib's action by force, East Pakistan will be engulfed in a struggle between the military and the Bengali nationalists, the outcome of which can only be eventual independence of Bengal and the breaking of all ties with West Pakistan — unless, as seems unlikely in the long run, the army can successfully contain a rebellion. Mujib's statement called on Bengalis to resist "by all possible means" any force used against them.

In a speech in Karachi on Sunday, West Pakistan political leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto demanded that power be turned over to majority parties in each wing, Bhutto's in the West, Mujib's in the East. Bhutto's speech, in fact, may have triggered Mujib's action. It may also indicate what has been suspected for some time, that Bhutto has decided that his chances of attaining power in the West are best achieved by a split — total or nearly so — in the country. However, Bhutto has less opportunity to act than Mujib because the army is strong in the West and could probably contain a rebellion.

The day's events cast further doubt on continued unity in Pakistan. Yahya's response will be the most important determining factor.

## Department of State

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20520

CONFIDENTIAL

## INDIA FEELS "DEEPLY AGONISED"

March 29, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR : NEA - MR. Sisco  
THRU : NEA - Mr. Van Hollen  
FROM : NEA/TNC David T. Schneider  
SUBJECT : Indian Reaction to Pakistan Events

### INDIAN ACTIONS THUS FAR

Embassy Delhi reports that Mrs. Gandhi has agreed to discuss with opposition leaders a resolution to be presented in the Parliament March 30, offering support to the "freedom struggle" of the people of East Pakistan. Swaran Singh made a statement before the Parliament on March 27 that the GOI was "gravely concerned" at events in East Pakistan. He said India was prepared with other nations and international organizations to provide humanitarian relief to the victims of the conflict.

Mrs. Gandhi, on the same day, spoke of the "deep agony" of the Parliament, and said that the GOI had looked forward to the peaceful transfer of power in Pakistan to the people's democratically elected representatives in anticipation of improved India-Pakistan relations. She said, however, that in the current situation the GOI had to observe certain international norms and, therefore, the less the government said, the better.

Ambassador Keating was called in to see Foreign Secretary Kaul March 27. Kaul said an unusually large influx of refugees was expected and asked for our ideas about coping with refugee problem. He expressed the hope there would not be outside intervention in East Pakistan and mentioned rumors of possible Chinese assistance to the GOP. He asked if we would exchange information we may have on the situation in East Pakistan with the GOI.

### TENTATIVE ESTIMATE OF INDIAN FUTURE POSTURE

Initially, the Indians are likely to confine their actions to expressions of sympathy for and perhaps support to East Bengalis. They will watch closely for signs as to the strength and prospects for success on the part of East Bengal dissidents....

So long as there was a good prospect for a democratic Pakistan in which East Bengal was the predominant force, India strongly favored a unified Pakistan. However, we doubt the GOI would favor a unified Pakistan in which the West was predominant and the army and Bhutto dominated the West. The army and Bhutto are blamed for Pakistan's confrontation policy and the 1965 war.



COURTESY: THE EAST PAKISTAN HUMANITARIAN



## WHAT IS AMERICA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS?

Department of State

TELEGRAM  
SECRET 933

STATE 062078  
52  
ORIGIN SS-10  
INFO OCT-01 /011 R  
66608  
DRAFTED BY : IO: SNHNSON  
APPROVED BY: S/S-0: MR. HOLLY  
NEA/MR. BOVATT  
016935  
R 131758Z APR 71  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
SECRET STATE 062078  
EXDIS  
FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE ON 12 APR FROM NEW DELHI. QUOTE:  
NEW DELHI 5311  
EXDIS  
DEPARTMENT PLEASE REPEAT ISLAMABAD AND DACCA AT ITS DISCRETION  
SUBJECT: SOUTH ASIAN REALITIES AND UNITED STATES INTERESTS

1. It may be helpful for me to outline the essential situation in South Asia, as I see it. Fundamental power relationships are shifting decisively as a result of the abortion of democracy in Pakistan, the eloquent reaffirmation of political maturity in India, and the military repression and national resistance in East Bengal. Some home truths are apparent: Pakistan is probably finished as a unified state, India is clearly the predominant actual and potential power in this area of the world; Bangla Desh with limited potential and massive problems is probably emerging...
5. ...it is futile and harmful to seek to put India on notice concerning intervention. India has no intention of direct military intervention and every intention of covert arms supply (New Delhi 4861). The GOP can only be irritated but not deterred by a warning from the US on arms supply, because it seeks thereby to contribute to a quick end to the Bangla Desh struggle, to gain leverage with that movement's leaders, to underscore the credibility of Indian support elsewhere, e.g., Bhutan, Burma, Nepal, Ceylon; to facilitate the termination of Indo-Pakistan confrontation in the East, and to contain internal pressures, particularly in West Bengal, for more direct action. In this regard, it is important to recognize that India is not the cause of East Pakistan dissidence, and there is no comparison between Pakistan's oppression and repression of East Bengal and India's opportunistic response to the current Bengal national outburst. The United States need not support covert arms supply but we should recognize that Indian objectives in the present case are largely consistent with our own. Moreover, we should resist the GOP effort to involve US in condemning India.
6. I question if it is in US interest to continue to refer in official communications and public statements to events in East Pakistan as an "internal affair". "Internal affair" in this context has become a code phrase in India and Pakistan for acquiescence in the military repression. Also, that phrase overlooks the murky question of legitimacy in a situation where a self-appointed military clique has set out to destroy the duly elected national majority representation. Then, too, it is perhaps relevant that we already are involved in this "internal affair" to the extent of having provided much of the military means to Pakistan. I do not cite these points as arguments but to illustrate that the United States has more to lose than to gain by reiteration of the "internal affairs" formulation.
8. I believe it is only prudent to assume that classified correspondence with the GOP will be published if suits either Yahya's or his successor's purposes. Accordingly, I would regret to see the United States on record at this time with language suggesting any acceptance of Yahya's alleged commitment to democratic process of sincerity in negotiations with Mujibur Rehman. For the same reason, we should eschew the "internal affair", "external involvement", and "if requested by the GOP" formulations, be firm and candid about our opposition to the misbegotten policy of military repression in East Pakistan, and in general address ourselves to influencing the GOP to change that policy with an eye on the historical record which surely will not deal kindly with the present Pakistan military regime.
10. ...the United States has interests in India, West Pakistan, and "Bangla Desh" which probably cannot be equally well served. Where the necessity for choice arises we should be guided by the new power realities in South Asia which fortunately in the present case largely parallel the moral realities as well.

CHOU EN-LAI  
TO YAHYA

Department of State

TELEGRAM  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE 520

ISLAMA 03360 131456Z  
42  
ACTION NEA-15  
INFO : OCT-01 EUR-20 EA-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-0 L-04 NSAE-00  
NSC-10 P-0 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-20 USIA-12 CCO-00 SSO-00 TO-16 AID-28 NSCE-00  
NIC-01 RSR-01 /14  
014818  
P R 131410Z APR 71  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7896

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ISLAMABAD 3360  
SUBJECT : CHOU EN-LAI LETTER TO PRESIDENT YAHYA  
REF : ISLAMABAD 3311

1. There follows full text Chou En-Lai letter to president Yahya as carried by APP April 12:

Begin text: I have read your Excellency's letter and Ambassador Chang Tung's report on your Excellency's conversation with him. I am grateful to your Excellency for your trust in Chinese government. China and Pakistan are friendly neighbours. Chinese government and people are following with close concern development of present situation in Pakistan. Your Excellency and leaders of various quarters in Pakistan have done lot of useful work to uphold unification of Pakistan and to prevent it from moving towards split. We believe that through wise consultations and efforts of your Excellency and leaders of various quarters in Pakistan, situation in Pakistan will certainly be restored to normal. In our opinion, unification of Pakistan and unity of people of East and West Pakistan are basic guarantees for Pakistan to attain prosperity and strength. Here, it is most important to differentiate broad masses of the people from handful of persons who want to sabotage unification of Pakistan. As genuine friend of Pakistan, we would like to present these views for your Excellency's reference. At same time, we have noted that of late Indian government has been carrying out gross interference in internal affairs of Pakistan by exploiting internal problems of your country. And Soviet Union and United States are doing the same one after other. Chinese press is carrying reports to expose such unreasonable interference and has published your Excellency's letter of reply to Podgorny. Chinese government holds that what is happening in Pakistan at present is purely internal affair of Pakistan, which can only be settled by Pakistan people themselves and which brooks no foreign interference whatsoever. Your Excellency may rest assured that should Indian expansionists dare to launch aggression against Pakistan, Chinese government and people, will, as always, firmly support Pakistan government and people in their just struggle to safeguard state sovereignty and national independence.

**The Secretary of State**

WASHINGTON

**DANGER OF  
INDO-PAK WAR**

MAY 26, 1971

**SECRET**  
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Possible India-Pakistan War

The situation in East Pakistan is evolving to the point where we now believe it possible that it could touch off a war between India and Pakistan. In the event of such a conflict, the possibility of Chinese pressure on India along their border, followed by increased Soviet military assistance to India, cannot be excluded.

Three things have created the danger of war: continued military repression, economic dislocation and lack of political accommodation in East Pakistan; the very heavy flow of refugees to India (over three million, according to the Indians) which is imposing a very great burden on India; and Indian cross-border support to Bengali guerrillas.

The possibility of war introduces a new and greater threat to US interests in South Asia. The threat is likely to remain as long as the East Pakistan conflict remains unresolved. We agree that President Yahya is not likely to take steps to bring about a political accommodation until he realizes, himself, how essential it is. We cannot force him to this realization and therefore we are not imposing political conditions on our assistance. We believe, however, that we should avoid taking actions which might ease the internal pressures on him to take such steps on his own accord.

We are engaged in a series of actions in regard to both Pakistan and India, designed to reduce the danger of conflict between the two. A list of actions already taken is attached.

We have been emphasizing three key points to the Pakistanis, both here and in Islamabad. First, it is essential that they get international relief activities started up in East Pakistan. Pakistan seems to be on the point of agreeing to this. Second, it is equally vital that they restore peaceful conditions in East Pakistan and persuade the refugees in India to return. Pakistan has acknowledged the need to do so and President Yahya has issued a somewhat contentious public announcement welcoming "bona fide Pakistan citizens" back. Third, we have continued our emphasis on the need for political accommodation, but with little result so far.

We have pursued three courses with regard to the Indians. First, since the refugee burden seems to be India's major problem now, we have taken a number of steps to encourage India to manage this problem by getting international assistance rather than by taking direct action against East Pakistan as some Indians are urging. Partly because of our actions U Thant is getting an effective international assistance program underway. We are already helping and will be stepping up our assistance. Second, we have taken up with the Indians their cross-border support to guerrillas and have privately cautioned them against direct action. Third, in order to persuade the Indians that a solution to the East Pakistan problem can be achieved without their direct military intervention, we have confidentially briefed them on the positions we are taking privately with Pakistan.

William P. Roger



## BHUTTO AT THE INTERCONTINENTAL

## Department of State

CONFIDENTIAL SA-23

TO : Department of State, Wash DC  
INFO : Amembassy, ISLAMABAD  
Amconsul, Dacca  
Amconsul, KARACHI  
FROM : Amconsul, LAHORE  
SUBJECT: Social Habits And Political Methods of Mr Bhutto

Date: June 28, 1971

The files of the United States Government are replete with Bhutto stories, but a few more are always an agreeable way to relieve monotony, and add fresh insights into the character of the man who may become the predominant figure in the government if any real transfer of power is to take place.

Recently, noting that I had called (with Laingen and Hataway) at rooms 538-42, Intercontinental Hotel, the manager of the hotel an Austrian named Rudolph Richter, discoursed at some length on the problems he had encountered during Mr. Bhutto's most recent sojourn in Lahore.

It seems that every time Mr. Bhutto moves into the Intercontinental a certain matron who controls a stable of girls moves in at the same time. Richter said these girls are not prostitutes and there is no prostitution "as such". However, each evening the girls go to Mr. Bhutto's suite where they perform songs and dances for Mr. Bhutto's guests. Richter said many men come in from the nearby villages wanting to see Bhutto or ask a favor from him. However, Bhutto is usually too busy during the day talking to leading officials or politicians. Therefore, he keeps the villagers waiting in the corridors until nightfall. But in the evenings he invites them in to watch the songs and dances performed by the girls. Liquor flows copiously and the singing and dancing, abetted by stamping and clapping of the villagers goes on until the early hours of the morning. Richter said on Bhutto's last visit there "orgies" kept up until 4 a.m. for three straight nights and could be heard all over the hotel, including by him sleeping two floors below. Naturally he received numerous complaints from the other guests, including one from a colonel in the Army who said that if it did not stop he was going to "shoot" Bhutto. At several points Mr. Richter was on the verge of calling the police, but finally brought the matter to the attention of Mr. Bhutto himself and Bhutto immediately apologized and curtailed the noise.

Richter said that on the whole he gets along fine with Bhutto, who is a very obliging guest, and he believes the reason is that prior to the election he "had it out" with Bhutto over what he considered an unpardonable breach of ethics. One evening he heard a great commotion in the hotel kitchen and found Mr. Bhutto standing on the kitchen table making a speech to the hotel workers. Bhutto was saying, in effect, that the workers should make plans to take over the jobs in the hotel that they really wanted, for soon the hotel would belong to them.

Richter said that he told Bhutto outright that he considered this a violation of the rights of hotel guests and that if Bhutto made any more such speeches he would personally "throw him out." Richter said that he thinks he caught Bhutto by surprise by the boldness of his challenge for after muttering something like "You do not dare," Bhutto immediately started to apologize. Bhutto said that the workers had asked for him and that he had felt obliged to respond.

To this Richter replied "What you do in the privacy of your hotel room is your own business, but you have no right going down to the kitchen and making speeches." Ever since that time Bhutto has been extremely courteous to him. Richter believes Bhutto sensed that he might carry through with his threat and that the result could be some nasty publicity that would not be helpful to Bhutto.

Richter's evaluation of Bhutto is that he is a brilliant man of tremendous energy. He can go through a vigorous working day and stay up and party all night. By some of the flamboyant methods just described, he has a charismatic appeal to uneducated people who absolutely dote on him and swallow anything he has to say. However, Richter considers him a very dangerous man precisely because of these qualities.

## KISSINGER WANTS REFUGEE RELIEF AS LEVERAGE

## THE WHITE HOUSE



SECRET/NODIS/SENSITIVE  
MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

PARTICIPANTS:

THE PRESIDENT

HENRY A. KISSINGER, ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT  
JOHN IRWIN, UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
THOMAS MOORER, CHAIRMAN, JCS  
ROBERT CUSHMAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE  
MAURICE WILLIAMS,  
DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR, AID  
JOSEPH SISCO, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE  
ARMISTEAD SELDON, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, ISA  
HAROLD H. SAUNDERS, NSC STAFF

DATE AND PLACE: 3:15-3:40 P.M. WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11, 1971, IN THE PRESIDENT'S OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING OFFICE

The President said that he felt it was important that he state his views on just how the emphasis must be played in

the South Asian situation. It is "imperative" to play it this way, he said. He then spoke along the following lines: We must look at this situation above all in terms of US interests. The interests of the US would be jeopardized by any development that could break into open conflict. We must avoid war. We must restrain those who want to be involved in a war....

....he could not emphasize his position too strongly. Some Indians seem to think their interests would be served by war. Some Pakistanis would be willing to have a war. No one knows what the USSR wants. The interests of the US would not be served by a war. The new China relationship would be imperiled, probably beyond repair, and we would have a very sticky problem with the USSR.

The President then said that he had been going to India since 1953 and indicated that he knew both the attractions of the Indians and Pakistanis and the difficulties of dealing with them.

He "holds no brief" for what President Yahya has done, but the US cannot allow India to use the refugees as a pretext for breaking up Pakistan. It seems that is what some Indians want to do.

The US must use its influence in the other direction. The USSR has signed a treaty with India. Some think that the Russians want to punish the Pakistanis for their relationship with China. In his view, the Russians are looking at this situation as they looked at the Middle East before the June war in 1967. The danger is that they may unleash forces there which no one can control. Another problem is that if the Indians go into East Pakistan or send guerrillas, the Pakistanis may well go to war even though they feel that would be suicidal.

We want to help India but we will not be parties to an objective of breaking up Pakistan. The President said he will ask Congress to cut off all aid to India if there is a war....

The President asked Dr. Kissinger whether he had found any give in Yahya.

Dr. Kissinger replied that he felt that Yahya would listen if we could put our suggestions in the form of suggestions on a refugee program. The issue is whether we are going to use relief to squeeze Yahya to accept certain political conditions or whether we are going to use relief to deprive the Indians of an excuse to attack.

## Department of State

TELEGRAM  
SECRET 429

**US URGES  
RESTRAINT**

ISLAMA 08187 111417Z  
51 ACTION NEA-11  
INFO : OCT-01 EUR-14 NSA-05 IO-11 CIAE 00 INR-06 RSC-01 DODE-00 PRS-01 PM-06  
NSC-10 SS-14 RSR-01 / 081 W

035717

R 111305Z AUG 71  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECTATE WASHDC 037  
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMCONSUL DACCA  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
USMISSION USUN  
SECRET ISLAMABAD 8187  
SUBJ : CONVERSATION WITH PAK ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF: INDO-PAK MILITARY  
CONFRONTATION  
REF : ISLAMABAD 8185 (NOTAL)

1. In conversation Aug 11 with General Abdul Hamid Khan, Pak Army Chief of Staff and second only to Pres Yahya in MLA hierarchy, I asked for Hamid's assessment of current military situation between India and Pakistan. I said we would particularly appreciate his estimate on dangers of escalation. We were deeply concerned on latter subject and, as General Hamid doubtless knew, we had been counseling restraint on both parties. I said we believed that a war would be in no one's interest. We placed utmost importance on both sides' avoiding actions that would exacerbate situation.
2. Hamid acknowledged there are risks in having troops face each other in close proximity on both sides of border, as is now case in East Pakistan. It was clearly not in Pakistan's interest to have war, however, and at this point he did not see indication that India wanted war.
3. Hamid noted that Pak forces were far inferior to India's numerically and logistically. No senior Pak military commander would want to take on war with India, and indeed it was firm GOP policy to exercise restraint. Pak troops would of course do what is necessary to defend themselves, but Pakistan would not initiate any war. I said I had heard rumors of some sentiment among Pak military that direct action should be taken against Mukti Bahini bases within India near East Pak border. Hamid admitted there was some feeling that, as strictly military matter, enemy bases should be taken out. But such proposals were voiced primarily by local company commanders and QTE there had been no decision to take any such action UNTE. I said we believed it most important that greatest restraint continue to be exercised.
4. Hamid said he was aware of sharp and widespread pressures on Primin Gandhi to move against Pakistan, but it was his impression that she had thus far succeeded in holding the line. He appreciated that, as politician, she had to bend with political pressures and had accordingly made number of very forceful statements. She continued publicly to keep options open as, for example, in recognizing Bangladesh government, but she was still resisting pressure to take that step.



**INDIAN & PAKISTAN  
PREPARE FOR WAR**

**Department of State**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

SEPTEMBER 22, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY A. KISSINGER  
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: South Asia: Preparations for Hostilities — Intelligence Indicators.

Although the WSAG meeting scheduled for September 21 was canceled, a paper prepared for it by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research assessing recent military intelligence indicators remains of interest. A copy of that Paper, which was cleared by both CIA and DIA, is attached.

Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.  
Executive Secretary  
Attachment:  
Preparation of Hostilities

**SECRET**

SECRET/NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM/  
NO DISSEM ABROAD/BACKGROUND USE ONLY

SEPTEMBER 17, 1971

Assessment:

Both sides are in high state of readiness and each is already prepared to respond to an attack by the other. Either side could in some sectors (Pakistan in the West and India in the East) initiate hostilities on short notice. The extent of preparations on both sides appears to reflect the estimate on the part of each that the next round of hostilities would almost inevitably result in a total — possibly decisive — conflict and would be far less susceptible to international mediation than the 1965 war.

None of the military moves reported to date may yet be interpreted as an indication that either side now intends to initiate or to provoke a war; rather both sides still appear anxious to avoid full-scale hostilities as long as possible. Whereas Pakistan's short-term intentions appear to be clearly defensive, India's intentions are less certain. Indian military moves may be intended not only as precautionary and deterrent measures but also as a means of maintaining psychological pressure on the Government of Pakistan to reach an accommodation with the Awami League. There are other indications and reasons to believe, moreover, that India may soon take some new political and/or covert military initiative on Bangla Desh which will at least exacerbate tensions if not provoke an attack by Pakistan....

**YAHYA TO  
NIXON**

**Department of State**

TELEGRAM

CLASSIFICATION  
SECRET/EXDIS

ACTION : Amembassy ISLAMABAD  
INFO : Amembassy NEW DELHI  
Amconsul DACCA

STATE  
EXDIS

SUBJECT : Yahya Letter to President Nixon  
Following is text of letter from President Yahya to President Nixon dated Oct 9, delivered to White House Oct 19 by Pakistani DCM Farooqi:

BEGIN TEXT

Your Excellency,

I write to express the sense of gratitude of the Government and the people of Pakistan for your sympathetic understanding of our difficulties during the recent crisis. We also appreciate your Government's continuing interest in the affairs of the sub-continent, particularly, its concern for the well-being of the people and for the preservation of stability and peace in the area. In this context, may I state briefly, Mr. President, the latest position on the state of affairs in the sub-continent.

In an already tense situation India's Land, Sea and Air Forces have been brought to a state of confrontation against Pakistan's frontiers in both the wings.

There are 7 divisions of the Indian Army which are deployed against West Pakistan and additional forces have been put in a state of readiness to move to forward positions at short notice.

A total of nearly 8 divisions have encircled East Pakistan.

Substantial forward moves have taken place from the rear to the forward operational positions in the last few weeks. In addition, the deployment of Indian Forces on the Sino-Indian borders have been rearranged in a manner

that these could be simultaneously utilized in an offensive against Pakistan's frontiers as well.

The Indian Air Force has activated and occupied forward airfields and special facilities and stockpiling have been carried out. Tactical air-centres have also been established near Pakistan's frontier.

A total of nearly 26 squadrons, inclusive of supersonic aircrafts, are today positioned against Pakistan. There is a virtual combat air ring around East Pakistan for offensive purposes.

The Indian Navy has been put to a state of war preparedness with sixty percent of its forces deployed against the coasts of West Pakistan. The remaining strength of the Indian Navy is positioned to move against the shores of East Pakistan.

Mr. President, the inevitable conclusion that one can draw from this offensive posture of the Indian Armed Forces is that it is pointed in the direction of conflict and not of peace. Our concern is all the more grave since India has shown no inclination to give up its policy of instigating and assisting armed infiltration into East Pakistan. It continues to support, train, and launch rebels and insurgents who seek the dismemberment and destruction of Pakistan. I am constrained to say that if this state of affairs continues it may lead to dangerous consequences; a situation which we in Pakistan — and I am sure all the friends of Pakistan and India, particularly, the United States — would wish to avoid.

It is most unfortunate that to justify its aggressive posture, India continues to exploit the humanitarian question of displaced persons. As you perhaps know, Mr. President, my Government has taken several constructive steps for the return and speedy rehabilitation of these persons who are our own kith and kin. This contrasts sharply with India's totally negative attitude and leaves us with no doubt that India does not wish an amicable settlement of this problem.

I would wish to add that the political situation in Pakistan is rapidly progressing towards the objective I have set out for transferring power to the elected representatives of the people. I have already taken some decisive steps, including the appointment of a civilian Governor in East Pakistan, fixing a time schedule for holding bye-elections in December this year, declaration of general amnesty and release of detained persons. These efforts towards the civilianisation of provincial government in East Pakistan have evoked a highly favourable response from the people. In addition, the food situation in the province is fully under control and the industrial and economic life is rapidly returning to normal. A very healthy improvement in the atmosphere in East Pakistan is thus discernible.

Mr. President, since you have always taken a keen personal interest in the preservation of peace in the sub-continent, I do hope that you would share my belief that whether it be for the creation of a climate conducive to the return of the displaced persons, or for the normalisation of situation, it is essential that India and Pakistan should work out necessary ways and means to reduce tension and allow normalcy to return at the earliest. Having this in mind, may I urge you to impress upon the Government of India the need for urgent constructive steps with a view to arresting further deterioration of the situation in the sub-continent. As I have always maintained, war will solve nothing. I, therefore, earnestly hope that wise counsels would prevail in India and the Indian leaders would exercise restraint and caution in this highly surcharged atmosphere. I would request you, Mr. President, personally to take up this matter in your talks with the Indian Prime Minister during her forthcoming visit to Washington. On my part, I shall welcome any constructive suggestion that you may wish to offer in this regard.

With warm personal regards,  
A.M. Yahya Khan End Text

Department of State  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

SECRET

WARNING INDIA  
AND PAKISTAN

October 13, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY A. KISSINGER  
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Situation Report: India/Pakistan

**India-Pakistan**

As a result of indications of a military build-up on both sides of the Indo-Pakistan border and of an early massive increase in cross-border infiltration, we instructed Ambassador Keeting to see Mrs. Gandhi and Charge' Sober to see President Yahya (a) to propose a pullback of military forces, (b) to point out to the Indians and the Pakistanis the grave damage to our bilateral relations which would result if either provoked a conflict, (c) to indicate the importance which we attached to a political settlement with the elected leaders of East Pakistan, and (d) to ask the Indians to prevent a massive cross-border infiltrations of guerrillas....

President Yahya's response to the pullback proposal was positive but he did not indicate any change in his political scenario, which continues to exclude the Awami League and its exiled leadership. He expressed immediate willingness to pull back his forces in the West and to consider ways in which this might also be done in the East. He



suggested that the Indian and Pakistani military commanders-in-chief meet to work out the details.

Foreign Minister Swaran Singh (Mrs. Gandhi was unavailable) accused the US of "distorting" the sequence of events leading up to the present crisis and emphasized the need for genuine reconciliation in East Pakistan. He nevertheless categorically stated that (1) the Mukti Bahini was not present on the Indian border in such numbers ready to march openly into Pakistan; (2) the Indian Army would not undertake diversions to cover a Mukti Bahini attack, and (3) India would not attack or make any incursion against Pakistan. He also said India would consider withdrawal of Indian forces if Pakistani forces withdrew....

## WEST LOSING CONTROL OF THE EAST

## Department of State

SECRET/NO DIS

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523

NOVEMBER 5, 1971

LIMIT DISTRIBUTION  
MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY  
THROUGH : S/S  
SUBJECT : A.I.D. DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT ON PAKISTAN  
A. PRESIDENT YAHYA KHAN'S CONTROL IN EAST PAKISTAN IS INCREASINGLY LIMITED.

**Growing Isolation of President Yahya Khan:** In Islamabad October 27, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, Secretary to the Cabinet, told me that President Yahya Khan was increasingly isolated from events in East Pakistan. He believed the Army reporting from East Pakistan had been misleading the President about recent development. The same points, concerning President Yahya Khan's growing isolation and misleading reporting from East Pakistan, were made by M.M. Ahmad, Economic Advisor to the President.

**Autonomous Army Control in East Pakistan:** The Pakistan Army in East Pakistan has achieved nearly autonomous control of the province, in many respects independent of the policies and direction of President Yahya Khan in Islamabad. Only foreign affairs affecting East Pakistan is firmly in the hands of Islamabad. The relative isolation of President Yahya Khan is probably the result of many factors. Indication of this isolation are that: (a) Army commanders in the East pursue independent military operation, (b) the army governs the province behind the facade of the puppet civilian Governor Malik and his cabinet — who are completely dependent on the Army for their personal security — with limited reference to Islamabad, (c) little but Pakistani successes and India's perfidy is reported from Dacca to Islamabad, and (d) President Yahya Khan lacks independent means of observation, reporting and verification of events in the East.

## NIXON AND INDIRA GANDHI

## Department of State

TELEGRAM  
SECRET

ACTION : Amembassy NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE  
INFO : Amembassy ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE  
Amembassy MOSCOW PRIORITY  
Amconsul CALCUTTA PRIORITY  
USUN PRIORITY  
Amembassy LONDON  
Amembassy TEHRAN  
STATE  
EXDIS  
Deliver opening of business  
INDEX : MOPS, PFOR/IN, PK  
SUBJ : Indo-Pakistan Military Escalation  
FOR AMBASSADOR



PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU/ODI

1. We are increasingly concerned at military actions and intensive exchanges of fire along Indo-East Pakistan border. Pattern these incidents beginning with Kamalpur and Belonia and possibly Indian offensive against variety of points in Jessore area. There is evident danger of further escalation.
  2. You should seek earliest appointment with Foreign Minister Swaran Singh to express on behalf of USG our grave concern at recent military engagements along East Pakistan border. These engagements represent serious danger to peace in South Asia. It is our expectation that India will avoid actions which are likely to lead to war. You should say that as the President told the Prime Minister in Washington, any Indian decision to have recourse to war would not be understood by the USG. We are also urging Pakistan to avoid actions which could lead to war.
  3. You should note that President Nixon was particularly gratified at Mrs Gandhi's expression of her desire for peace and assurance that India would not initiate hostilities. Moreover, you should tell PM that in her discussions here we took four concrete steps to try to meet the situation: (a) We dried up the military pipeline to remove this as an irritant to Indian-American relations; (b) We indicated continuing material support for the refugee program; (c) We conveyed Yahya's willingness to take the first step in withdrawals provided this step reciprocated on the other side; and (d) We discussed certain ideas designed to try to get the process of political accommodation started. We have not had a concrete reaction from the Indian government with respect to (c) and (d) above. Above all, time should be allowed to give these ideas an opportunity to work.
- END ROGERS

Department of State

TELEGRAM  
SECRET 880

YAHYA AGITATED

STATE 214210

47

ORIGIN SS-07

INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 /008 R

66611

DRAFTED BY: S/S-O K.R.PETTEWAY

APPROVED BY: S/S-O: C.THOMAS

..... 053543

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

SECRET STATE 214210

EXDIS

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO DACCA, KARACHI, LAHORE, NEW DELHI ROM ISLAMABAD NOVEMBER 19, 1971, QUOTE:

SECRET ISLAMABAD 11484

SUBJ : CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT YAHYA

REF : STATE 206661 AND ISLAMABAD 10927

1. SUMMARY: I briefed Pres. Yahya in accordance with State 206661, concluding with observation time running out for negotiations and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the qte key thereto unqte. Yahya differed with my position, noting that Mrs. Indira Gandhi was the key rather than Mujib. From this position Yahya expressed disinclination to permit Mujibur Rahman to designate a Bangla Desh representative who could speak on his behalf and negotiate for the Bangla Desh movement with the GOP. Said GOP would be happy to meet with Bangla Desh leaders as previously agreed to and as discussed Nov. 2. Yahya proceeded post-haste with his plan for political settlement through promulgation constitution, convening National Assembly on Dec. 27, and transfer of power qte several weeks unqte thereafter. Indicated it was within province of civilian government to deal with Mujib and Bangla Desh as new government so desired. Declared his plan of action was GOP's blueprint. Yahya reaffirmed his decision to avoid war if at all possible and that he would not be institutor thereof: however, if India starts war, total resources of nation will be dedicated to effort of survival. Noted that Mujib will be first casualty. To ease refugee problem, Yahya indicated he is contemplating asking UN to take over all facilities refugee centers in Pakistan and establish circumstances under which returning refugees would be accepted under care and protection of UN. End Summary.

7. ...Yahya opined that once the populace in the East Wing became aware of the extent of authority which the East Wing will have unto itself as a result of the constitution, he believed that a greater degree of support would be given his government....

8. During the entire conversation it was obvious that Yahya was preoccupied with the deteriorating law and order situation in East Pakistan as well as his concern for the military activity along the border of East Pakistan. He referred at length to several Indian army penetrations into Pak territory and made specific reference to incidents at Belonia. He noted that this action in itself was enough to have precipitated war but that he had promised various world leaders that he would exercise the utmost restraint even under undue provocation, and this was what he was continuing to do. He hoped, however, that Mrs Gandhi would not interpret this posture of restraint as an indication of cowardice since such a miscalculation would only bring disaster to the Subcontinent. Continuing this line of comment, Yahya said that while out-manned and out-gunned by a ratio of five to one, it would be foolhardy for any military leader to initiate an act of aggression: but, by the same token, it was most foolhardy to prod into military action a nation which had as its cause the very soul of self-survival....

10. An opportunity arose whereby I floated the idea of possible referendum in East Pakistan. I told Yahya that, based on information which he had told me about his interview with Newsweek, it appeared that this idea might merit consideration. He reacted that a referendum was qte highly unnecessary unqte. There had been a referendum in Bengal leading to the formation of East Pakistan. A new referendum in East Pakistan would give rise to similar demands in West Pakistan, creating serious tensions between Sind, Punjab, Baluchistan and the Northwest Frontier.

12. Comment: I more and more have the impression that Yahya believes he is being boxed in by the numerous pressures which are being exerted upon him at home and abroad....war must be averted, I am convinced that Yahya will not precipitate it unless provoked to desperation, but I think it is altogether proper for me to report that I sensed in Yahya the first signs of agitation.

Department of State

TELEGRAM  
SECRET 966

STATE 221252

44

ORIGIN SS-07

INFO OCT-01 SSO-00CCO-00 FILE-01 /009 R

66611

DRAFTED BY: S/S: T. ELIOT

APPROVED BY: S/S-O:S. HOLLY

.....017092

P 082021 Z DEC 71 ZPF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC





TO USMISSION NAFO PRIORITY  
 SECRET STATE 221252  
 EXDIS TOSEC 12  
 FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO DACCA, LAHORE, KARACHI NEW DELHI,  
 USUN FROM ISLAMABAD DECEMBER 8, 1971, QUOTE:  
 SECRET ISLAMABAD 12215  
 EXDIS  
 SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT YAHYA DEC. 8  
 REF: ISLAMABAD 12205

1. SUMMARY: Yahya proceeding with his blueprint for transfer of power. Has sent Bhutto on short visit to UNGA. Yahya completely amenable to UNGA resolution in form reported. Appears resigned to loss of East Pakistan by Indian military action. Advised me of possibility INS Vikrant sunk. End summary.
2. I met with President Yahya at his residence at 1230 hours local Dec. 8. The conversation lasted for about 30 minutes and was strictly informal. The man just wanted to talk.
6. The conversation concluded on the subject of present military moves being made by both India and Pakistan. Yahya said it was now patent that India plans to hold in the West while it militarily dismembers East Pakistan. He said the GOP armed forces in East Pakistan would fight qte to the last Muslim, for not only their country but their faith is in jeopardy. Unqte....
8. As I was leaving, Yahya said that, although the war news was generally bad, he had heard from his Navy C-in-C that one of GOP's recently acquired French submarines may have qte quite possibly unqte sunk the Indian aircraft carrier, the INS Vikrant, while it was engaged in India's Naval blockade of Chittagong.

**INDIRA WRITES  
 TO NIXON**

AMBASSADOR OF INDIA  
 WASHINGTON, D.C.  
 December 15, 1971

Excellency,  
 I have the honour to convey to Your Excellency the following message from Her Excellency the Prime Minister of India, Mrs Indira Gandhi:-

"Dear Mr President,

I am writing at a moment of deep anguish at the unhappy turn which the relations between our two countries have taken.

I am setting aside all pride, prejudice and passion and trying, as calmly as I can, to analyse once again the origins of the tragedy which is being enacted...

All unprejudiced persons objectively surveying the grim events in Bangla Desh since March 25 have recognised the revolt of 75 million people, a people who were forced to the conclusion that neither their life, nor their liberty, to say nothing of the possibility of the pursuit of happiness, was available to them. The world press, radio and television have faithfully recorded the story. The most perceptive of American scholars who are knowledgeable about the affairs of this sub-Continent revealed the anatomy of East Bengal's frustrations.

The tragic war, which is continuing, could have been averted if during the nine month prior to Pakistan's attack on us on December 3 the great leaders of the world had paid some attention to the fact of revolt, tried to see the reality of the situation and searched for a genuine basis for reconciliation...

War could also have been avoided if the power, influence and authority of all the States and above all the United States, had got Sheikh Mujibur Rahman released. Instead, we were told that a civilian administration was being installed. Everyone knows that this civilian administration was a farce; today the farce has turned into a tragedy.

Lip service was paid to the need for a political solution, but not a single worth while step was taken to bring this about. Instead, the rulers of West Pakistan went ahead holding farcical elections to seats which had been arbitrarily declared vacant.

There was not even a whisper that anyone from the outside world, had tried to have contact with Mujibur Rahman. Our earnest plea that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman should be released, or that, even if he were to be kept under detention, contact with him might be established, was not considered practical on the ground that the US could not urge policies which might lead to the overthrow of President Yahya Khan. While the United States recognised that Mujib was a core factor in the situation and that unquestionably in the long run Pakistan must acquiesce in the direction of greater autonomy for East Pakistan, arguments were advanced to demonstrate the fragility of the situation and of Yahya Khan's difficulty.

Mr. President, may I ask you in all sincerity: Was the release or even secret negotiations with a single human being, namely, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, more disastrous than the waging of a war?

The fact of the matter is that the rulers of West Pakistan got away with the impression that they could do what they liked because no one, not even the United States, would choose to take a public position that while Pakistan's integrity was certainly sacrosanct, human rights, liberty were no less so and that there was a necessary inter-connection between the inviolability of States and the contentment of their people....

We are asked what we want. We seek nothing for ourselves. We do not want any territory of what was East

Pakistan and now constitutes Bangla Desh. We do not want any territory of West Pakistan. We do want lasting peace with Pakistan. But will Pakistan give up its ceaseless and yet pointless agitation of the past 24 years over Kashmir? Are they willing to give up their hate campaign posture of perpetual hostility towards India? How many times in the last 24 years have my father and I offered a pact of non-aggression to Pakistan? It is a matter of recorded history that each time such offer was made, Pakistan rejected it out of hand.

We are deeply hurt by the innuendos and insinuations that it was we who have precipitated the crisis and have in any way thwarted the emergence of solutions. I do not really know who is responsible for this calumny. During my visit to the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Austria and Belgium the point I emphasized, publicly as well as privately, was the immediate need for a political settlement. We waited nine months for it. When Dr. Kissinger came in August 1971 I had emphasized to him the importance of seeking an early political settlement. But we have not received, even to this day, the barest framework of a settlement which would take into account the facts as they are and not as we imagine them to be.

Be that as it may, it is my earnest and sincere hope that with all the knowledge and deep understanding of human affairs you, as President of the United States and reflecting the will, the aspirations and idealism of the great American people, will at least let me know where precisely we have gone wrong before your representatives or spokesmen deal with us with such harshness of language.

With regards and best wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Indira Gandhi."

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest esteem.

L.K. Jha  
Ambassador of India

His Excellency Mr Richard M. Nixon,  
President of the United States of America,  
Washington D.C.

**Department of State**  
Washington, D.C. 20520  
CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR MR HENRY A. KISSINGER  
THE WHITE HOUSE

**NIXON REPLIES**

December 17, 1971

Subject: Draft reply to Mrs Gandhi's Letter of December 15, 1971

Pursuant to your request, enclosed is a suggested Presidential draft reply to Mrs Gandhi's letter of December 15. As you requested, it has been phrased in stern language.

Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.  
Executive Secretary  
Attachment:  
Draft Reply

Clearance:  
NEA-Mr. Sisco  
Drafted by:  
NEA: CVanHollen: atm 12/17/71

CONFIDENTIAL  
DRAFT REPLY

Dear Madam Prime Minister:

I have received your letter of December 15, 1971 in which you seek to place the responsibility for the war in the subcontinent on others and in particular the United States. I reject this view.

When we met in Washington you said that India wanted a peaceful solution. We accepted this statement at face value. You were assured of our intention to continue to carry the main financial burden for care of the refugees. You were informed of President Yahya's willingness to take the first step of military disengagement if he could be assured that India would reciprocate subsequently. You were also informed of various ways which could be utilized to get talks started between President Yahya and Bangla Desh representatives. We never made any claims that these





proposals met India's position fully. They were proposals which would have started the process of negotiations. I had thought that this was one of those times when statesmanship could turn the course of history away from war. If there is a strain in our relations, and there is, it is because your government spurned these proposals and chose war instead.

The United States did not condone Pakistan's use of force in March of this year, but this action by the Pakistan Government does not justify the use of force by India to dismember another state, particularly when there were proposals available to you and your government which could have started the process of military disengagement and political accommodation. Your insistence that political accommodation could only come by immediate release of Mujibur Rahman amounted to a precondition which the Government of India was fully aware could not be accepted by the other side. It is for these reasons, Madam Prime Minister, that United States officials have said privately and publicly that India bears the main responsibility for broadening the hostilities in the subcontinent. The subsequent disregard of the Indian Government of the repeated calls of the UN for a cease-fire and withdrawal of military forces confirm this judgment.

Sincerely yours  
Richard Nixon

## Department of State

TELEGRAM  
SECRET 203



PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU/DO

## PRESIDENT BHUTTO

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INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE  
SECRET KARACHI 022  
EXDIS  
FROM THE AMBASSADOR  
SUBJECT : DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT BHUTTO JANUARY 3 - RELEASE OF SHEIKH  
MUJIBUR REHMAN  
REF : KARACHI 010 AND ISLAMABAD 0062  
DEPARTMENT DISTRIBUTE OTHER ADDRESSEES AS APPROPRIATE

2. I met with President Bhutto in his Karachi residence at 1100 hours local time. The conversation which ensued lasted for approximately 45 minutes. Among other matters discussed was the aforesaid subject...
3. ...Today he said he wanted USG to be knowledgeable beforehand of his determination, albeit the same contained certain political risks to his new administration, of publicly announcing, during the speech which he planned to deliver in Karachi today at 1500 hours local time, the unconditional release of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman who is now with certain members of his family and with Kamal Hossain in Rawalpindi. In answer to my question concerning the procedure he contemplated in effecting the actual release, the mode of travel, etc., Bhutto said that he was not prepared to discuss these aspects since the modalities thereof would be worked out between him and Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, and desires of the Sheikh would have primacy. He advised me however that he would keep me thoroughly informed as plans develop.
4. In response to my inquiries concerning the Sheikh's incarceration, Bhutto advised me that, ironically, the Sheikh had been held in the same prison and the same cell in which he heretofore had been detained. As soon as he assumed power, Bhutto said that he had the Sheikh removed from his cell and taken first to a guest house where he stayed on night en route to Rawalpindi. Bhutto commented that as far as he was concerned and in accordance with what he had told Mujibur, he (Mujib) was a "free man" upon his arrival in Rawalpindi...
5. Bhutto's report of his conversations with Mujib are most interesting and not unexpected. He said that Mujib had been virtually cut off from all outside sources of information. While he (Mujib) assumed that war of some major proportion had gone on, and that "perhaps a part of East Pakistan had been occupied by India," he had no idea of the magnitude of the "tragic defeat" which Pakistan had suffered. Bhutto then went on to note that he had briefed Mujib as fully as possible during their conversation and had made available to him newspapers, radio and a TV. The president reported that during the conversation he in no way made any demands upon Mujib. Neither did he ask for any commitments on Mujib's part, nor did he establish pre-conditions for the Sheikh's return to the political arena. Further, he noted that Mujib seemed "almost stunned" by the changed circumstances in which he found himself, and appeared highly despondent to learn that Indian troops occupied all of the East. Bhutto also noted that during his conversation the Sheikh, referring to Indian occupation and domination, repeated time and time again that he would not be one to accept alms.
6. In a general discussion of U.S. policy during the crisis period beginning March 25, Bhutto not only expressed satisfaction thereof but opined that GOP needed the continuing goodwill and support of the United States. He then went on to say in regard to U.S. policy, that as early as April he, too, had been working towards a political accommodation between the East West Wing through the constitution of a political government which would come

into being by a transfer of power. Qte the efforts of the United States to move Yahya in the direction of political accommodation was not only laudatory but would long be remembered. He added that given time the U.S. effort would have been fruitful since a civilian government would have taken over on December 27 and Mujib's release would have been effected therewith and negotiations could have been instituted. He added that this effort however was doomed by the fact that "India never recognized the partition of the sub-continent in 1947."

## BHUTTO WRITES TO NIXON

From: Nawabzada A.M. Raza,  
HQA., H.K., S.Pk.

IMMEDIATE  
EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN  
2315 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008  
February 7, 1972

My Dear Secretary of State,

The President of Pakistan has asked me to convey the following message to President Richard M. Nixon:

BEGINS:

Your Excellency,

I am addressing you on a humanitarian matter of great urgency which is causing utmost distress to my Government and people. This concerns the safety and security of hundreds of thousands of non-Bengalis including women and children whose very existence in East Pakistan is threatened as a result of planned retaliation and reprisals by armed personnel.

Following the occupation of East Pakistan by the Indian forces in December 1971 a reign of terror was let loose against the non-Bengalis particularly the Biharis in Mirpur and Mohammadpur localities of Dacca involving several hundred thousand persons for many days. The beleaguered residence of these areas were denied essentials of life to the extent of even stopping milk for infants.

Soon after his return to Dacca Sheikh Mujibur Rahman gave the assurance that everyone in East Pakistan including the non-Bengalis would receive full protection and that their lives and properties would be safeguarded. We welcomed this statement.

However, it is a matter of great anguish that the armed personnel in East Pakistan are committing savage atrocities on the non-Bengali residents in Dacca and other places in East Pakistan particularly Chittagong and Jessore. Incidents of brutality including rocket and mortar attacks on the unarmed Biharis have been reported by neutral observers. The International Red Cross teams have been refused access to the affected localities which are without food, medicines and water. These unfortunate people are now living in a state of extreme terror, helplessness and starvation. They have issued desperate appeals to the international community for relief and succour.

Your Excellency in view of the over-riding humanitarian considerations and to avoid further bloodshed of innocent people I request your personal intervention with the Indian Government whose forces are still in East Pakistan and with the elected leaders in East Pakistan for the safety and security of the non-Bengali community. As parties to the United Nations Charter and in accord with the Geneva Conventions definite responsibilities devolve on all the countries to move in and to take active cognisance of and to stop the atrocities and killings of innocent people. Your prompt and positive contribution towards this end would not only earn the gratitude of the Government and the people of Pakistan but would also serve the greater cause of humanity.

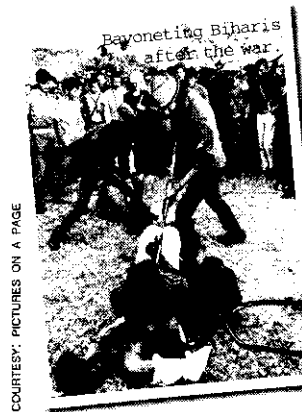
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto  
President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan  
ENDS.

I will be grateful if you could kindly transmit the above message to its high destination.

With my respects  
and Sincerely,

A.M. Raza

The Honorable  
William P. Rogers,  
The Secretary of State,  
The Department of State,  
Washington, D.C.





**THE DECCAN Herald** reports a brewing legislative battle in Karnataka on the subject of **home toilets**. The 1993 Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act lays down that you cannot contest village panchayat elections (about eighty thousand will be elected all over the state and nominations have just been made) unless you have a loo at home. This is a progressive measure meant to ensure that those who propose to speak for the public have some sense of public health and sanitation. But Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly in Bangalore, Jagadish Shettar, has objected to implementation of the Act, for "the compulsory toilet rule would allow creamy sections alone to contest elections". So now I am having second thoughts. If the objective of the Act is to keep the impecunious from running for village office, then better that this rule be scrapped, and the nomination be open to one and all. In age-old fashion, there is always the *maidaan*.



**FROM THE** mail column in *Kuensel* comes heartening news of the ascendance of Bhutanese music over Hindi and Nepali tunes. Chewang Rinzin from Quilon, Kerala, on a trip home recently, found that the public buses were playing **local development music** rather than imported cassettes. "Unlike previously when Hindi and Nepali music dominated every other sounds, there are now some sensible cassettes being played like the one from the video 'Music for Health', whereby very significant health messages on sanitation and hygiene, dangers of drug abuse, protection against STDs, etc, are conveyed to the public, besides entertaining them throughout the journey." My only caution to Mr Rinzin would be that development messages, howsoever nicely prepared, have a very short life on the popularity charts, and hopefully the popular culture of Bhutan will produce enough modern music to counter the Hindi and Nepali imports.

**NADARAJAH JEYAKUMAR**, a 38-year-old hunk living in England, steals "ladies underwear, meaning G-strings, thongs, swimwear, tights and camisoles", according to *The Colombo Island*. The police in Middlesex had been foxed by the lingerie snatching that had gone on for more than four years. So some "outraged women laid bait in the form of a washing line full of smalls and waited for the **panty perv strike**". An intrepid ex-police dog sniffed out Jeyakumar and a paratrooper boyfriend of one of Jeyakumar's victims captured him. He was wearing a pair of panties and ladies swimsuit when caught, and he told police that the garments were supposed to 'support' his hernia. In

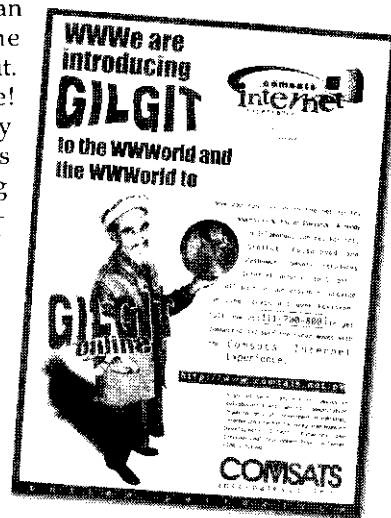


his house, officers found 15 sacks of underwear. Well, there are much, much worse things you can do than snatch a few sacks of harmless underwear.

**RAM DAYAL** Gandhi "not only looks like Gandhiji but has also adopted his lifestyle" reports *The Hindu* of Madras, presenting this silhouette photograph of aforementioned Ram Dayalji. A stick, a shawl, a clean-shaven pate, and prominent ears. Give me a setting sun, and I will make you a Gandhiji too! Even Manisha Koirala could!

**OCCASIONALLY**, THE voice of sanity and reason comes across in the mail columns. Take this letter in the 4 December issue of *The Colombo Island*. "I feel the undue attention paid to food is contrary to the underlying principles of Ramazan," writes Nihara Wahab in *The Colombo Island*, making a strong point that this "obsession with food" during **Ramazan overburdens the women** of the household. "I often feel that the world is cruel to women, and it is worse during the holy month," to the extent that women find it difficult even to concentrate on prayers, between making special foods for breaking fast, attending to children and elderly, and doing normal household chores. Additionally, "I also find that Muslim and non-Muslim domestic helps are over-worked during this period."

**STEVE CASE**, of American Online (now AOL Time Warner), eat your heart out. **Gilgit Online** is here! As the advertisement by Comsats Internet Services states, "Now you can log on to the net in the mountain capital of Pakistan." There are some advantages to being a hill station with a reputation of can-do, for then people come to help you. The Gilgit weblink, for example, is a social sector project of Comsats in collaboration with the Special Communication Organisation of the Pakistani Government, the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in Kathmandu, and the International Development Research Center (IDRC), Ottawa.



**LET'S HEAR** it from all over the Subcontinent for the **First Women Bank Limited** of Karachi for making it through a full decade. It is good news, and all those who would like to congratulate the bank in person, send

an email to [fwbl@biruni.erum.com.pk](mailto:fwbl@biruni.erum.com.pk). I myself learned of the grand event from *The News*.

**STILL ON** the gender question, here is a subject which raises complex issue on what some would think is a simple black-and-white issue. A letter to *The Nation* in Karachi: "I belong to an orthodox family and my parents are very strict when it comes to **observing purda**. Acting upon the orders of higher officials, the Director of Colleges appointed a man as our botany teacher. When my father came to know of his appointment, he immediately ordered me to discontinue my studies. As I want to save my other sisters from the same fate, I request the Chief Secretary to appoint me a female lecturer in the Dera Ismail Khan College."

**THE CHARMING GRAND MOTHER OF THE YEAR**

A **REPORTER** for *The Independent* of Dhaka is peeved that the question paper on General Knowledge set for the students of Class Seven of Khulna Public College in this years annual examination carried a question, "Give a **brief sketch of killer Ershad Sikder**." The reporter is surprised that the "teachers of the reputed education system think that school students need to know about the life sketch of terrorist Ershad Ali Sikder of the city who has been accused of killing some 24 persons." But of course they do, and it is the reporter who I think needs to go back to school, perhaps even join Class Seven of the Khulna Public College, Khulna.


**AT LEAST** there will (one hopes!) not be a bikini ramp section on this one. The Lion Ladies of Dist 306B planned a "The **Charming Grand Mother of the Year**" contest. I ask the Lions Club ladies to let us know how the event progressed so that I can present it before Himal readers. Did you go for memory retention? Did you count wrinkles? Number of offspring? What criteria, what results?

**THE ASTROLOGICAL** world is wild with delight that their predictions of "some kind of trauma involving aircraft at the dawn of the new millennium" came to pass with the hijacking of **Indian Airlines Flight IC-814**. Mars apparently transiting Capricorn ruled by Saturn, which is why, whereas we all know that the Y2K bug's presumed arrival was what had the astrologers predicting aircraft-related events. As astrologer Mr S.P. Pahwas said in the December issue of *Astrology: Soul of All*, "pilots and others have to be very careful". And so it was hijackers rather than the Y2K vector which came through for the jyotishis.

**WHEREVER THERE** is a concentration of rich Western expatriates or tourists, there is an attempt by the local vendors to keep the brown-skinned riffraff out in order to protect their custom. There are buses in Nepal,

for example, which will not take locals even if they can pay the regular fare. And so one is not surprised to hear from *The News* that Tribal Arts, a warehouse that specialises in antique Pakistani furniture, was serving exclusively "dollar-wielding foreign diplomats and tourists". "We do not deal with **Pakistani types**," was the shocking statement of a salesman, who identified himself as Riaz. The gentleman, however, did have some points to make in his own defence, one of which was: "A lot of foreign ladies come here and Pakistani men follow them around." That, too, would be true. So, within nationalism and the proclivities of the aggressive South Asian male, what is the proper policy to follow?


**APPEAL**  
 Chief Executive  
 Islamic Republic of  
 Pakistan  
 Finance Minister  
 Chairman Central Board of Revenue



We all request to help save the local industry from further distress & losses due to discriminatory levy of excise duty, highest import duty on raw materials, against plastics & other packaging, resulting import of empty cans from abroad, loss of revenue, massive labour retrenchment & loss of investment.

**Pakistan Can Manufacturer's Association (PCMA)**  
 Tel: 042-5811229/5811333 Fax: 042-5811666

**A balancing act deemed to fail.**  
 Appeal to Gen. Pervez Musharraf, the Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, to rescind the Zoning Regulations in the City of Karachi.



The sugary industry has no choice. It is damned if it once and damned if it doesn't. We appeal to you to forth help us.

Association of Builders and Developers (ABAD)  
 Chairman and Members of Central & Regional Committees of ABAD

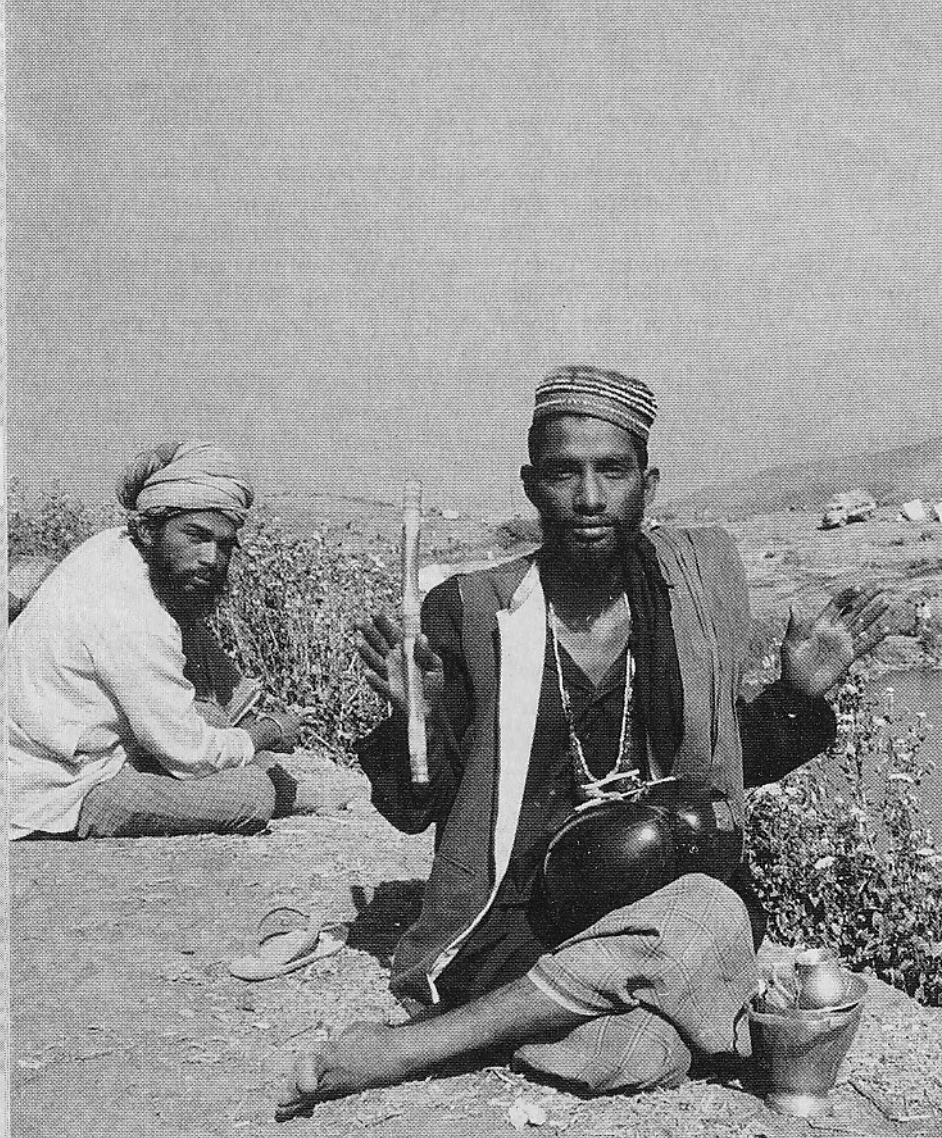
**APPEAL**  
 Honorable Chief Executive of Pakistan,  
**General Pervaiz Musharraf,**  
 Honorable Governor of Sindh,  
 Anwar-ul-Haq Mirza, Chief Minister  
 Honorable Chief Minister of Punjab,  
 General Musharraf Hussain Usman

Many leading industrialists of the country, including the sugary industry, are facing severe losses due to the discriminatory levies and taxes imposed by the Government of Sindh and the Government of Punjab. We appeal to you to rescind the Zoning Regulations in the City of Karachi.

Association of Builders and Developers (ABAD)  
 Chairman and Members of Central & Regional Committees of ABAD

**THIS IS** not way for a self-respecting country and its media to go, and if the Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf has been reading the papers, he will know this to be true. The way to get policy changes through is not lobby groups (see the accompanying ads, by the Pakistan Sugar Mills Association, the Association of Builders and Developers, the Pakistan Can Manufacturer's Association) to buy expensive advertising in the English press and make **appeals to the good general**. For example, ABAD complains that (sic) "taking undue advantage of ill-conceived, ill-planned and obsolete building by-laws and Zoning Regulations, an NGO has terrorized the socio-economic conditions of the city of Karachi." The sugar wallahs, meanwhile, complain of the high-handed attitude of banks imposing unnecessary and hostile conditions and say to the general, "We appeal to you to come to our rescue." One would have hoped that issues like these were subjects of debate in the press and electronic media, in colloquia and seminars, and as and when necessary demonstrations and even hartals, why not? But not this whining adverts bought (obviously) by those who can.

—**Chhetria Patrakar**



YOGINDER SIKAND

# The temple manifesto

A Sufi shrine in South India revered by Hindus and Muslims alike has been a symbol of tolerance. But all that may change if a plan to turn it into a Hindu-only temple goes ahead.

by **Yoginder Sikand**

It has been one of the rarest symbols of religious harmony, almost a believe-it-or-not place. A shrine that attracts both Hindus and Muslims, believed to be the final resting place of a saint revered by people from both communities. But it may not remain that way for long if Hindutva activists have their way in what essentially is an attempt to bolster their rather weak presence in India's south.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the even more radical Bajrang Dal (BD) contend that the Swami Dattatreya Baba Budhan Giri dargah in Chikmagalur in Karnataka state, some 300 km north-west of Bangalore, regarded as one of the oldest Sufi shrines in the region, ought to be a Hindu-only temple. The campaign began in the early 1990s, picked up steam in 1998, and flared up following the death in October 1999 of the custodian of the shrine, Pir Sayyed Muhammad Shah Qadri Qalandar.

The Hindutva activists want the Sufi priest's body to be exhumed from the dargah premises, where his relatives and ancestors lie buried, and have demanded that his son, Sayyed Muhammad Ghaus, be barred from customarily succeeding him to the position of Sajjada Nashin. For the dargah's Hindu and Muslim worshippers, this goes against the whole philosophy of co-existence and harmony that the shrine symbolises, as its very name so strikingly reveals – Sri Dattatreya Swami Baba Budhan Dargah.

Muslims believe that the founder of the cave-shrine, an Arabian Sufi called Dada Hayat, is one of their own, while Hindus take him to be the incarnation of their god Dattatreya (see box overleaf). In any case, the dargah being a Sufi shrine, it would be open to worship by people of all faiths. None of the available royal records show any Hindu ruler of the area to have had

*Fakir procession carrying sandalwood paste at the Baba Budhan Dargah.*



problems with the shrine being tended to by the family of Muslim Sajjada Nashins. Indeed, Hindu royalty had recognised them as Mathadipathis (Heads of the Shrine), and also by the honorific of Sri Dattatreya Swami Baba Budhan Swami Jagadguru. They were also given certain privileges at par with the heads of some leading Hindu shrines. In the erstwhile Hindu kingdom of Mysore, the Sajjade Sri Guru Dattathreya Baba Budhan Swami was among 17 'gurus' to have been exempted from appearing in the civil courts, the only Muslim priest to enjoy that honour.

In the mid-1960s, a dispute arose over the shrine. But that had nothing to do with religion, at least not initially. The Karnataka Waqf Board, the organisation in charge of all Muslim endowments in the state, had issued a notice claiming that the dargah came under its jurisdiction, which was challenged by the Muzrai Department (the Commissioner of Religious and Charitable Endowments). The Sajjada Nashin supported the Muzrai Department's stance, argu-

ing against the Waqf Board's claim on the ground that the dargah was not exclusively a Muslim shrine as it was venerated by both Muslims and Hindus.

In a 1975 directive, however, the state government vested the dargah with the Waqf board, which was reversed in 1980 by the Chikmagalur District Court. The lengthy legal wrangle finally reached the Supreme Court, which entrusted the Muzrai Department with the authority over the dargah, and confirmed the Muslim Sajjada Nashin as its sole administrator, while also directing that the dargah's rituals not be tampered with.

Meanwhile, the dispute was given a communal turn and was sought to be projected as a Hindu-Muslim feud. The rightist Hindu groups, in a bid to expand their limited base in South India, began whipping up communal sentiments. Several Muslim and Christian places of worship in Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu were on their 'temple-list' - including a Portuguese-built church near Pondicherry, an Eidgah at Hubli (Karnataka) and the Baba Budhan Giri shrine.

By the late 1980s, fuelled by their pan-India agitation which culminated in the razing of the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya, the Karnataka unit of the VHP launched a campaign to capture the dargah in the name of 'liberating' it, and set up a "Committee for the Protection of Data Peetha". On 3 December 1989, in violation of the Supreme Court directive on the dargah rituals, a puja to the three-headed Dattatreya was carried out outside the cave-shrine by a group of VHP priests.

Since the demolition of the Babri Mas-



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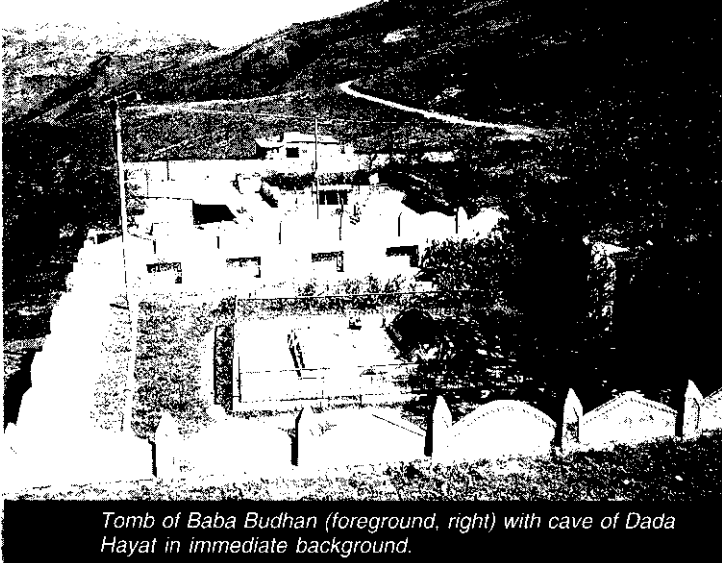
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Tomb of Baba Budhan (foreground, right) with cave of Dada Hayat in immediate background.

YOGINDER SIKAND

# Sufi coffee

The Swami Dattatreya Baba Budhan Giri dargah is one of the few institutions of its kind in India. Its founding is associated with a Sufi from the town of Taif in Arabia, Dada Hayat Qalandar, about whose life not much is known except from some hagiographies.

Shaikh Abdul Aziz Makki (more popularly known as Dada Hayat) was the among the first of the Qalandars, or wandering dervishes, who arrived in India in the early Islamic period. He apparently gave up Christianity to embrace Islam when Muhammad declared his prophethood in Mecca, and joined the Ahl-i-Suffa, a group of some 400 of the Prophet's special disciples who are regarded as the precursors of the Sufis. The hagiographies present Dada Hayat's arrival in South India as a result of a command issued to him by the Prophet to travel to the Chandradrona hill in Chikmagalur where his dargah stands today.

It is said that when Dada Hayat and his disciples finally reached their destination, night had already fallen. His disciples went off to sleep while Dada Hayat entered a cave on the top of the mountain and began preparing for night prayer. Just then, he saw a group of *palegars*, local feudal lords, and their henchmen dragging along a man bound in chains. The cave where Dada Hayat sat was one used by a Brahmin and a *jangam*, a Lingayat priest, as a court to try criminal cases. When they saw Dada Hayat inside the cave deep in meditation the *palegars* were enraged. They unsheathed their swords and rushed towards him in a bid to kill him, but legend says that due to divine intervention the swords fell from their hands and the chains around their captive suddenly snapped loose.

Realising that Dada Hayat was no ordinary mortal, they begged him for forgiveness. The next morning, the Brahmin and the *jangam*, who had witnessed the miraculous events of the night before, came to the cave. They stood before the meditating Dada Hayat and repented for having opposed him. It appeared to

them that Swami Dattatreya, the much-awaited incarnation of the Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, had appeared to them in the form of Dada Hayat.

They spread the news among the local Hindus, who began flocking to the cave in large numbers to pay their respects to Dada Hayat. So impressed were the people by Dada Hayat's kindness, love, compassion and tolerance, that many of them converted to Islam at his hands. Thousands of others who did not wish to renounce their ancestral religion, began regarding him as the incarnation of Dattatreya.

The identification of Dada Hayat with Dattatreya became so complete over time that in the records of the *inams*, or land grants, given to his dargah, the Muslim *sajjada nashin*, or custodian, is inevitably referred to by the Hindu honorific of Jagadguru, "Preceptor of the World".

Popular lore has it that because the Prophet Muhammad blessed him with a long life, Dada Hayat is still alive today. It is said that after establishing his shrine at Chandradrona, he left through a tunnel in his cave for a long visit to Arabia and Central Asia, from where he brought along a Yemeni, Sayyed Shah Jamaluddin Maghribi, to look after the dargah.

Maghribi is today popularly known as "Baba Budhan", and the hills around Chandradrona is named after him — the Baba Budhan Range. Maghribi, a renowned Sufi himself, is said to have been accepted by Sultan Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur (1557-79) as his spiritual preceptor. It was Maghribi who played a major role in reviving the dargah of Dada Hayat. After staying there for four years, he went on a long journey that took him to holy places in Iraq, Syria and Arabia. While in Yemen, Maghribi procured some coffee seeds, which he brought back and spread the cultivation of coffee in south India. Today the hills around Chandradrona and beyond are covered with vast coffee plantations which form the mainstay of the local economy.

Before Maghribi passed away in the mid-16th century, he nominated his nephew, Sayyed Musa Hussain Shah Qadri, as successor and the *sajjada nashin* of the dargah. The custodianship of the shrine continues till date with this family. The late Sayyed Pir Muhammad Shah Qadri Qalandar, the *sajjada nashin* whose death has raked up a fresh controversy over the dargah, was the 15th in line from Sayyed Musa.

Over the centuries, various Muslim as well as Hindu rulers patronised the dargah, endowing it with considerable wealth and land. They included Channamaji, the Hindu queen of Nagar, Haider Ali and his son Tipu Sultan, rulers of Mysore, and Sri Krishnaraja Wodeyar III of Mysore. It is this Muslim-Hindu royal patronage that has helped the dargah emerge as one of the unique pilgrim centres for both Muslims and Hindus. ▲

—Yoginder Sikand

jid, a three-day annual affair called the Datta-treya Jayanti Utsav has been held here from 1 to 3 December. In November 1998, the VHP and the BD, with support from some leaders of the local Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), launched a mobilisation drive all over Karnataka to take over the Sufi shrine. While senior Hindutva leaders made threatening remarks, the then BJP MP, Ananth Kumar Hegde from the neighbouring Karwar constituency, went on to declare that he would despatch 'suicide squads' to ensure the success of the campaign.

Karnataka's claim to communal peace was tarnished as violence accompanied five chariot processions that criss-crossed the state, reaching Chikmagalur on 30 November 1998 under tight police protection. Although the district administration banned the assembly of four or more persons within a 10-km radius of the dargah, there were about 10,000 Hindutva activists at the shrine.

There was fiery rhetoric, with speakers warning of a bloodbath unless the shrine was "liberated".

The activists tore down the dargah's green flags and replaced them with saffron ones. The administration and police merely watched, saying that their intervention would only worsen the situation. Encouraged by this, some activists carried a Dattatreya idol inside the cave and worshipped it. Another group also tried to install a Ganesh idol inside the shrine, but were stopped. (Tradition does not permit the removal of Ganesh once installed.)

It was less than a year later that the 15th Sajjada Nashin of the dargah died. He was succeeded by his son, Sayyed Ghaus Muhiuddin Shah Qadri, as administrator of the shrine. Hindutva leaders protested, demanding that a Hindu be appointed in his place and that the body of the late Sajjada Nashin be exhumed from its resting place. Two months

later, the VHP organised a three-day Dattatreya Jayanti festival at the shrine amidst tight police security.

Predictably, fiery slogans were raised and threats of forcibly 'liberating' the dargah were issued. Some Bajrang Dal activists pelted stones on Muslim graves lying in the vicinity of the shrine. The controversy over the dargah shows little sign of abating, especially because the Hindutva leadership is well aware of its considerable mobilisational potential. The state has chosen to see the issue as simply one of law and order, and allowed the Hindutva groups to carry on with their campaign relatively unhindered. A unique institution that has for centuries been bringing people of different religions and castes together is emerging as one more communal battlefield in India. The biggest casualty, once more, is, and will be, tolerance. ▲

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# Nepal's remittance bonanza

Nepalis working abroad earn more hard currency for their home country than all exports, tourism and foreign aid put together.

by *Rajendra Dahal*

Most articles on Nepal by foreign correspondents tend to begin with: "Nepal, one of the poorest countries in the world..." It is true, the country's per capita income is among the lowest in the world, it has a poor industrial base, and agricultural production is lagging behind population growth. They all point to an economy going nowhere. Yet, when a commercial bank recently made an initial public offering of shares worth NPR 175 million (USD 1 = NPR 69), it was oversubscribed within a week to the tune of NPR 1.4 billion. Nepal, the poorest country in the world, seems to be awash in cash.

The domestic job market, too, is a paradox. Nepal's economic growth rate had once reached 8 percent sometime in the mid-1990s, enough to absorb the 300,000 or so people who enter the labour force every year. By 1998/99, however, it had slowed down to 3 percent, which meant only 100,000 new jobs were created. With a population of 23 million, 200,000 unemployed youth every year would have formed a large enough group to create social imbalance or political upheaval.

*Providing a lifeline to the economy: British Gurkha stands guard for Elizabeth R.*



But nothing of the sort. In fact, banks in remote districts report difficulty in keeping up with interest payments due to the burgeoning savings. Nepal's per capita income grew by NPR 1500 (about USD 20) in 1998/99 compared to the previous fiscal year. Balance of payments rose by 100 percent to reach NPR 9 billion in Nepal's favour. The government's current account, which had been in the red in previous years, also showed a surplus last year, and foreign currency reserves marked a 16 percent increase to reach NPR 75 billion. And although imports from India doubled, Nepal's banks still have convertible and Indian currency reserves to cover a whole year's imports.

Where is all this money coming from? The only explanation is the remittances from Nepalis working abroad, a cumulative amount that is now larger than the money generated by Nepalis exports, tourism, and foreign aid put together.

## Worker profile

It has been nearly 200 years since Nepalis, in significant numbers, began seeking work outside the country. It started with the 1814-1816 Anglo-Gorkha War when some of the defeated soldiers, rather than face humiliation at home, sought employment in the army of Ranjit Singh of Lahore. Soon after the

War, the British themselves recruited the former adversaries into their own forces. This tradition has continued to the present day in the British, and then, after 1947, in the Indian Army as well. Currently, there are 3400 Nepali citizens serving in the British Army and 48,000 in the Indian Army.

Perhaps by virtue of this long history, the only figures the government has on remittances from outside the country are what the British and Indian governments pay their former soldiers. And this has been substantial. Till as late as 1971, the earnings of British Gurkhas were the highest source of foreign currency for Nepal. (Tourism, and then exports, took over the top spot later.)

The contribution of British and Indian soldiers to the country's economy is still considerable. Besides the serving soldiers, there are 26,000 pensioner from the British Army, while ex-Indian Army servicemen number 105,000. According to the government's Economic Survey 1999, the pensions paid to these two groups amounted to NPR 6.2 billion in the first eight months of 1998/99 alone. (With the recent British decision to raise Gurkha pensions by 100 percent or more, this amount will rise quite significantly.)

What the government hasn't kept track of are the earnings of other Nepalis who work in India and elsewhere. For it is not only as soldiers that Nepalis make a living outside their country. Traditionally, people have moved south of the border into India to find work, and the bulk of them still goes there. But there is a

huge number who have also gone to other countries, mainly in the Gulf region and East Asia. There is no data on the number of people working outside the country at any given time, although estimates run into hundreds of thousands. The only known study on Nepalis working abroad was conducted by British scholar David Seddon, with his Nepali counterparts Ganesh Gurung and Jagannath Adhikari, for the British aid agency, Department for International Development (DFID).

According to the study, made public late in 1999, a whopping NPR 35 billion came into the country in 1997 as remittance from the 392,000 Nepalis (out of a national population of around 22 million) working in nearly 20 countries around the world (see table). But because the figures mentioned in the DFID study are three years old, even they do not tell the complete story.

The number of Nepali workers in the Gulf has risen dramatically in the last few years. A Labour

Ministry official in Kathmandu says the number of Nepalis in the Gulf has already crossed 200,000 (more than twice the number provided by Seddon), with almost 100,000 in Saudi Arabia alone. The number of Nepalis in Qatar has also risen rapidly, especially since new regulations put in place by that Gulf state that provide working visas only to Nepali nationals and exclude the other countries of South Asia.

Even the profile of workers going to the Gulf has been changing over the years. While Nepalis earlier went as labourers, drivers or brick-layers, in recent years, college graduates have been making their way over to the oil-rich countries. Today, it has become common to see Nepali stewardesses in Gulf airlines, managers in hotels and other professionals.

The DFID study put the number of Nepalis in all of East Asia at

34,000, but a British Gurkha office in Kathmandu has a tally of some 70,000 Nepalis working in Hong Kong alone. Most of them are children and relatives of former Gurkhas who were granted 'Hong Kong IDs' by the departing British since they were born in this former colony in the years when the British Gurkhas were stationed there.

There are an estimated 50,000 or so Nepalis working (legally and illegally) in the other countries of Southeast and East Asia. Of these, around 2000 (mostly former British Gurkhas) are employed as security officers in Brunei and Singapore, and sources say their annual per capita savings on average amounts to more than NPR 1 million. There are thousands more scattered across Japan, Taiwan and South Korea. In 1998, there were 2173 Nepalis working legally in Ja-

Country	Number	Remittance
West Asia	90,000	NPR 1.5 billion
Europe/America	15,000	NPR 4.4 billion

Seddon, et al. 1997

pan and an estimated more than 10,000 working illegally.

In the case of India, the DFID calculation included only those Nepalis in the Indian Army and those working for the public sector. If the unorganised/private sectors were to be taken into account, the study believed there could be as many as one million Nepalis working in India. Due to the open border the actual number Indians or Nepalis living/working in each other's country can at best be guesstimates.

**Hundi**

Based on the national living standards survey by Nepal Rashtira Bank, the central bank, it is estimated that Nepalis working in India were sending back NPR 40 billion annually. But even such an estimate is lacking in terms of money coming from other countries.

The preferred mode for money transfer for Nepalis in countries other than India is *hundi*, which entails payment in rupees within Nepal for a premium on hard currency deposited abroad. The foreign-earned wealth then comes into the country in kind, the bulk as gold. Based on the declarations of gold imports at Kathmandu airport, and the fact that there is no record of any bank having provided foreign currency for the import of gold, it is believed that all the money used to purchase this gold is hundi money. However, says chief financial adviser at the Nepal Rashtira Bank, Yuvaraj Khatiwada, this amount cannot officially be called "Remittance", and the Bank places under "Transfer Net" and "Service Net".

The amount under these two headings during 1998/99 totalled NPR 35 billion. By this reckoning alone, the total annual remittance is NPR 75 billion. (For comparison, Nepal's annual budget for 1999/2000 is NPR 78 billion.) But surprisingly, there is still no official acknowledgement of

the substantial role that this money from outside plays in keeping the country's economy afloat. Analyses of Nepal's economy whether by government, academics or donors, do not recognise this contribution.

Only in recent years has the Nepali government been taking note of the importance of foreign employment for the Nepali economy. Even then, it views it more as a safety valve to relieve the pressure of unemployment rather than as a source of income. Neither has there been any attempt by the state to regularise entry of cash through banking channels. With such huge remittances coming into the country, making an obvious difference to its economy—perhaps even sustaining it—it sure does not pay to ignore this economic lifeline. ▲



# The importance of being the

by **Ranjit Devraj**

The flight of Ugyen Trinley Dorje in early January from the Tsurphu monastery outside Lhasa, dodging Chinese border guards and braving the icy Himalayan winter was a dramatic one, to say the least. But neither Chinese nor Indian officials profess to be impressed by the feat. But the fact is that the 'defection' by the 17th incarnation of the Gyalwa Karmapa, head of the 'red-hatted' Kagyupa sect of Tibetan Buddhism, was the most important single departure since the Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959.

India's trepidation at the sudden appearance of the Karmapa at Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh, headquarters of the Dalai Lama's government-in-exile is understandable, given that the refuge given to the Tibetan religious leader and his followers has always been a sore point in relations between Beijing and New Delhi. Relations are yet to mend fully after the 1962 war, and in recent times they have been bedeviled by India's belief that Beijing has materially supported Pakistan's nuclear and missile programmes. And just when relations had begun to warm up, in 1998, had come Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes' claim that China was India's prime potential enemy.

Beijing, obviously embarrassed by the flight of the lama it had helped choose and nurtured, first reacted by saying, hopefully, that the 14-year-old Ugyen Trinley had gone to India to collect some possessions left behind by his previous incarnation. But after Trinley indicated that he preferred to stay on in India, China issued veiled warnings against allowing the Karmapa from being allowed to engage in political activity. The Indian gov-

ernment has so far maintained a studied silence on the Karmapa question and committed itself to nothing.

There is thus, so far, no saying if the Karmapa will be accorded refugee status, or if he will be given travel papers. Or, most important, whether he will be allowed to travel to the Rumtek monastery in Sikkim, the Kagyupa headquarters established by the 16th Karmapa in 1962 after fleeing Tibet, and be allowed to set up residence there and claim the "flying crown" and other fabulous accoutrements of the sect.

These are questions Indian officials feel they need not answer. For one thing, the Karmapa cannot formally assume the crown until he comes of age (which is necessary to complete his assumption of the leadership of the Kagyupa). This is four years away. Then there is the matter of the rival claimant to the ancient Karmapa incarnation — Trinley Thaye Dorje.



*Ugyen Trinley, soon after his installation as the Karmapa in 1992.*

The pretender, Thaye Dorje, who lives in West Bengal hill town of Kalimpong, not very far from Rumtek, is backed by the Shamarpa Rinpoche, one of the four incarnate regents traditionally charged with finding and recognising each Karmapa. Of the four regents, the current Shamarpa is the oldest and now running in his own 13th incarnation. Additionally, he also happens to be the nephew of the 16th Karmapa (who died in 1981 but did not leave behind any letters predicting his reincarnation as is the general practice, leading to the delay in finding his successor and consequent controversy of the two Karmapas).

The lineages of two other regents, Gyaltsab Rinpoche and Tai Situ are no less impressive — both being in their 12th incarnations, and they support Ugyen Trinley. At stake is control over the vast wealth of the Karmapas which include a string of 200 monasteries around the world, including Rumtek. Indeed, the Kagyupa is known to be the most successful in spreading the Tibetan Buddhist 'word', helping it achieve unprecedented popularity today in the West.

The Shamarpa line had suffered a break in the 18th century when an incumbent was accused of political interference and instigating a war with Nepal. His ceremonial red hat was ordered buried in the Shamarpa monastery in Lhasa and the temple itself converted into a court house as an ultimate dishonour to the lineage.

The line was revived by the current Dalai Lama — an act he may now be regretting. Because the present Shamarpa has questioned the right of the Dalai Lama to recognise the Karmapa as he has

# Karmapa

done in favour of Ugyen Trinley rather than his own candidate. According to the Sharmapa the Dalai Lama belongs to the Gelugpa sect and cannot decide on the leadership of the Kagyupa.

Till recently, the Sharmapa and his candidate had the support of the Indian establishment. K. Sreedhar, former chief secretary of Sikkim and once a high official in the Union Home Ministry, had argued as recently as in 1997 in a secret report to the Government of India, that India's interests lie with the Thaye Dorji rather than with the 'Chinese' Karmapa.

Where Gyaltsab Rinpoche and Tai Situ pulled off a coup was in getting both the Dalai Lama and Beijing to recognise Ugyen Trinley as the 17th Karmapa back in 1992 and who was duly enthroned in the Tsurphu monastery in Tibet that same year. Sharmapa objected to Ugyen Trinley being crowned in Tsurphu with the blessing of Chinese authorities rather than at Rumtek. To get his own back, in 1994, he had Thaye Dorji crowned as the Karmapa at a ceremony conducted in New Delhi at the Karmapa International Buddhist Institute.

At present, Ugyen Trinley not only enjoys the recognition of the Dalai Lama and Beijing but he also happens to be in India. Which means that sooner or later the Indian government will have to follow suit in recognising the position of Ugyen Trinley's claim. For the Kagyu sect has millions of followers across the Himalayan Buddhist belt stretching from Ladakh through Himachal Pradesh and Nepal to Sikkim, Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh, and this alone will act as a pressure on New Delhi.



KAGYU THUBTEN CHOLING FOUNDATION

*The Tsurphu monastery (left), and the Karmapa performing a sacred dance outside it in 1998.*



COURTESY: ROSE AND HUENIGER FINEARTS

The Sharmapa's new tune is that Ugyen Trinley has come to India only to collect his fabulous flying crown and return with it to Tibet. The flying crown was the gift of a grateful Chinese emperor to the fifth Karmapa (1384-1415). Said to be woven out of the hair of angels the wearer always holds it down with his right hand lest it fly away. The Sharmapa has said, rather unbelievably, that Ugyen Trinley's arrival was stage-managed by the Chinese. But Dharamsala has indicated that Ugyen Trinley fled Tibet because of the continuing persecution of monks by Chinese authorities.

"It would appear that the Tai Situ Rinpoche group had wittingly or unwittingly played into the hands of the Chinese," Sreedhar wrote in his 1997 report, in which Indian interests are clearly outlined. "Given the fact that Sikkim occupies a strategic position it would be undesirable to have a situation where

a Tibetan reincarnation who is basically a Chinese national recognised by the Chinese, formally occupies a position in a monastery in Sikkim."

Sreedhar had cautioned the Indian government of the "clear intention of the Chinese to expand their influence on the religious consciousness of not only the Tibetans but also of the population in the entire Himalayan region." Sreedhar believes that the recognition of Ugyen Trinley was Beijing's way of preparing for the post-Dalai Lama scenario. Sreedhar's theory is important given that the Dalai Lama has announced that he may be the last of his line.

The second most important Tibetan religious figure is the Panchen Lama. Here, too, there is controversy over an incarnation installed by China and one chosen by the Dalai Lama, the latter having disappeared after being taken into "protective custody" by the Chinese in 1995. In any case, both Panchen Lama 'reincarnations' are too young to be political players, which is why the importance of the Karmapa, who ranks third in terms of importance, to both the Chinese and the Dalai Lama. The leadership of Himalayan Buddhism could well be in the hands of Ugyen Trinley.

Beyond the modern version of the Great Game that is being played out there is the true spiritual dimension to the whole Karmapa tangle. There are those who would argue that since the Karmapa incarnations trace their lineage to the Bengali saint Tilopa (988-1069) they are more Indian than anything else. In a sense, Ugyen Trinley may have simply come home to India...

# Old boys' do's

SAARC may be beyond repair, but are the non-governmental 'friend's-friend' networks doing any better?

by Pratyoush Onta

Two incidents occurred in quick succession in the last two months that had a bearing on more than two South Asian countries. The first was the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane and the second was the expelling of a Pakistani diplomat by the Nepali government on charges that he was involved in the circulation of fake Indian currency.

The first event was accompanied by jingoistic reporting by the Indian media which portrayed Nepal as a "security liability" for India, a terrain supposedly infested with Pakistani ISI agents. Counter reportage in the Nepali media meanwhile speculated that the hijacking itself was the doing of agents of the Indian intelligence agency, RAW, and the event and its reportage in the Indian media were all part of an Indian grand scheme to incorporate Nepal within a extra-territorial Indian "security arrangement".

The second incident, that involving the diplomat, was described by the Pakistani ambassador in Kathmandu as one in which all diplomatic norms had been violated by Nepal. As far as mutual trust among these three South Asian countries were concerned, it seemed to have hit a new low. In this scenario, it is pertinent to question what role the scores of intra-SAARC initiatives at confidence building have had in fostering South Asian cooperation and whether the record so far give us much reason to be hopeful?

## Non-governmental types

In terms of visibility, the largest initiative thus far toward cooperation in South Asia has been the inter-state official organisation, SAARC. Even before its founding in 1985, various exercises had been held regarding the potential benefits that would accrue to the entire region after the realisation of such an association. The potential of SAARC seemed so promising that its enthusiasts overshadowed its sceptics. However, 15 years down the road, SAARC languishes amidst the pomp generated by its own formal activities and organisational inefficacy. It is now seen by many, as Jawaharlal Nehru University academic Kanti Bajpai put it in the last issue of *Himal*, as "beyond tinkering and rehabilitation".

As a way to transcend the limitations of official SAARC, other initiatives have been alive in the region for much of the last 10 years. These activities, earlier

described as "non-official SAARC exchanges" are increasingly being referred to as Track-II initiatives. While there is no complete agreement on the definition of Track-II, these initiatives include meetings of ex-bureaucrats, retired military personnel, businessmen, scholars, journalists, NGO workers, activists and various other professionals in cross-South Asian forums. There are some though who would like to distinguish Track-II initiatives (where state officials sometimes appear in their personal capacity) from others they call Track III (meeting of purely non-governmental types), but I make no such distinction in this analysis.

A 1997 study noted that there were more than 40 different types of Track-II "dialogue channels" in South Asia. The number is much higher now since the growth rate of Track-II initiatives has increased since the study.

## Who are these people?

Large amounts of money and intellectual energy are being spent on organising these Track-II meetings and on the establishment of corresponding regional networks. Communication between participants has recently been facilitated by email. The overall visibility of Track-II individuals, institutions and networks, seems to be on the rise. Despite these achievements, the participants seem to be not very successful in building robust rapport among states, civil societies, media or for that matter, the people of South Asia.

I say robust in the sense that it would, for instance, obviate the kind of hostile reportage generated by the Indian media against Nepal and Pakistan in connection with the recent hijacking. In other words, if Track-I has failed to show results, is the record of Track-II initiatives any better? Or are Track-II people simply "pests", as recently described by the Indian columnist Swapan Dasgupta?

Some self-reflection amongst Track-II participants regarding these questions is evident, for instance, in the various papers presented in the June 1999 dialogue on confidence-building measures (CBMs) organised by the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, Colombo. One could also find evidence of it amongst participants at a recent Track-II meeting held in Kathmandu during which Smitu Kothari of Delhi-based organisation *Lokayan* stated that when it comes to Track-II initiatives,



it is not easy to answer what the exact constituency of each participant is: who is representing whom and how is that made possible?

Unfortunately, adequate time was not given to this question during that meet. Unfortunate because it could have perhaps provided some clue as to why Track-II initiatives have so far failed to deliver. I believe Track-II has been ineffective in part because no one has bothered to really find out how current participants have arrived in the scene. We do not know how active, competent and effective Track-II participating individuals and institutions are in their respective primary terrain within the various countries of South Asia. At the current stage it is very likely that those invited to participate in Track-II initiatives might simply be those with access to such meetings through one or other means: old boys' networks, personal friendships with meet organisers, incestuous referencing, Internet presence based on facility with English, etc. The repetitive appearance of a group of people in all kinds of initiatives—from peace to environment to human rights to water rights to CBMs to other themes—suggests that these connections are indeed at work.

Given this, it is very likely that those inside Track-II are themselves not the most competent or effective individuals or institutions in their respective countries. They are not necessarily the agents who have built confidence in their own civil society. Participated in by individuals who are non-optimally effective in their own turf, it is not strange to find out that Track-II has thus far failed to build effective confidence *across* South Asian countries.

As someone who has watched the scene from Nepal, I take it as significant, and cite as an example in support of my argument, that two of the most important public intellectuals in Nepal today, Khagendra Sangraula and C.K. Lal, have never been invited to participate in any South Asian Track-II initiative outside of Nepal. Sangraula, a leftist writer with no party affiliation, is considered by many to be an institution by himself. Lal, a sympathiser of the Nepali Congress, is a civil servant engineer, a bilingual (English and Nepali) columnist and until recently, radio commentator. Between the two of them, they produce an amazing number of write-ups each month that represents what I would call the best social analyses from the 'progressive' and 'democratic' platforms, respectively, in Nepal. Their effective presence in the world of public discourse in Nepal and their

non-presence in Tariq Banuri's A-team of "activist-academics" (see last issue of *Himal*) is an indication of the problem that besets Track-II processes. And in their case, facility in English is not even a problem.

The history of Track-II processes is such that it has been much easier for the likes of Dipak Gyawalis and Kanak Mani Dixits from Nepal to hob-nob with the Ashis Nandys and Smitu Kothis from India, Imtiaz Ahmeds and Iftexhar Zamans from Bangladesh, Tariq Banuris and I.A. Rehman from Pakistan and so on, than for them to forge effective and long-term alliances with the likes of Sangraula and Lal within Nepal. Too many biographical and social histories, one could say, have kept these variously brilliant Nepalīs disjointed in their efforts to build an effective civil society inside Nepal (and, I am sure, the same can be said of other countries as well). The investment—intellectual and organisational—necessary to bridge the apparent and real chasms separating them within Nepal is of a much larger scale than those currently creating and sustaining Track-II initiatives. Unlike perpetual sceptics, I am not against the Track-II process. In fact I am for it. However, the easiness of Track-II hob-nobbing has stunted its own potential as an effective force in the region.

That said, the process of self-reflection by Track-II participants must continue at a much more vigorous level. Current and future participants, both individuals and institutions, must be asked to demonstrate better credentials of work done at home before claiming Track-II membership. In other words, substantially more homework must be demanded from them and from the organisers of Track-II meets and networks.

In addition, for countries like Nepal with infant modern civil society institutions, it might be appropriate to also ask whether some of the intellectual energy now being spent on regional networking could be better used to build more effective intra-national civil society platforms. Such efforts will eventually enhance the confidence of civil society inside Nepal, and enable it to be a real champion of social justice vis-a-vis the diabolic tendencies of the state, the market and the extremists, both of left and right orientation. It will upgrade Nepali competence and bargaining position in South Asian initiatives of all tracks.

The worthiness of Track-II participants can only be gauged by how much more effective they have become, as a result of participation in regional initiatives, in their own home turfs. ▲

## Request for Proposals



India Foundation for the Arts (IFA) is an independent national grant-making organisation in the arts, invites proposals, outlining application requirements, for the latest round of grants to be made under the arts collaboration programme. If you want to apply for an IFA grant under the arts collaboration programme, please write for an RFP (available in English and some other Indian languages) to: The Executive Director, India Foundation for the Arts, Tharangini, 12<sup>th</sup> Cross, Raj Mahal Vilas Extension, Bangalore – 560 080; Tel/fax: 080 - 3310584 / 3310583; e-mail: ifabang@blr.vsnl.net.in .

**The last date for receiving completed applications is April 30, 2000.**

## Thumbs up for the general

In the age of information nothing is written in stone. A modern day Moses coming down the mountain might be carrying moral dictates as soft and floppy as the tablets they're written on. In recent weeks even sacrosanct concepts like "democracy" and "self-determination", long teetering on the edge of the superfluous in the thrall of their many shady defenders, have sunk to new lows. The recent coup d'etat in Pakistan is the latest example of the ever-changing morality of the global investment community championed by the US, the World Bank and the IMF. News services in many countries acknowledged the tacit blessing these world-governing bodies bestowed upon Pakistani General Pervez Musharraf who deposed and arrested democratically elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and selected members of his government. The press in the United States however shares a certain synchronicity (not to mention countless board members) with our global banking and investing societies and their mysterious doings. It's almost a sixth sense.

Any article about corruption in Pakistan's system of government written before the October 12th coup would certainly have included the military, which commands over a third of the country's budget, in its list of offending bureaucracies. After the coup, however, virtually all American press reports speak of the difficult job the military will have cleaning up governmental graft. Not mentioning the military while discussing Pakistani institutional graft is so illogical, so jolting that a clearly coordinated effort at the editorial level was necessary. Not surprisingly most of the sources quoted in these articles have been either military or sheepishly pro-military opposition to the military not being a viable option in public discourse in Pakistan at this time. This fact is rarely noted in the US press, while the absence of mass demonstrations is reported as "widespread public approval". A piece in the Oct 21 *New York Times*

quotes Mehreyar Pataudi, senior VP of the ASKRI Bank in Pakistan in scathing criticism of the national banks without identifying the ASKRI Bank as being owned and operated by the Pakistani military.

Repeating the same catch phrases and even the same headlines over and over again in articles written by different writers at different news outlets might appear too cynical for reasoned public discourse (or at least too obvious) but sceptics should remember how frequently they heard the exact phrase, "weapons of mass destruction" during another recent mobile morality moment. When it comes to going along with an agency style simplification of complex issues members of the US press frequently 'just do it'.

These three headlines topped stories by three bylined journalists in the *Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *San Francisco Chronicle* in late October in the span of less than a week: "Pakistan Coup Leader Targets Corruption" "Pakistanis Cheer General's Uphill Fight Against Graft" "Corruption Top Priority In Pakistan—Hopes Rest With Coup Leader". Democracy be damned; this man's on a mission from God.

Opinion pieces in the *Chicago Tribune* (Oct 30) and Pakistan's English-language Jang News International agreed that Pakistan's 62 percent illiteracy, a vast majority of the population living in devastating poverty and the lack of a proper middle class conspire to disqualify Pakistan from democracy. This is a formula typically interpreted as a popular mandate for a style of leadership in high hats and jackboots.

EDMUND ZIMMERMAN IN "SOME EXPENDABLE ASPECTS OF GLOBAL DEMOCRACY" IN A SYNDICATED COLUMN DISTRIBUTED VIA WWW.SYNDICATE.COM.

## In-flight TB

Described as "Ebola with wings", a new form of drug-resistant tuberculosis is spreading throughout the globe, creating the potential for a deadly global pandemic. International air travel has been described as one of the "open spigots" for the transmission of the disease, known as multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, or MDR-TB.

To those medical experts who have followed its spread, the threat posed by drug-resistant TB has been characterised as "the real millennium bug". Jet travel is bringing the problem home to many countries where the disease was thought to be under control. The disease has now been recorded in some 104 countries.

A new report by a team of doctors at the Harvard Medical School, titled "The Global Impact of Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis", outlines the threat:

\* Humanity is facing a man-made threat, unknown a few decades ago. About a third of the world's population is infected with TB. The drug-resistant strain exacerbates the problem.

\* A steady stream of MDR-TB cases is fed by a large number of "spigots". Generally, transmission is abet-

## Nine killed, hundreds hurt in police-Maoist clash in Accham

By a Post Reporter

KATHMANDU, Jan 15—Nine persons—two Maoist guerrillas and seven locals—were killed and hundreds of others injured yesterday when police tried to launch a cultural programme in a school in Accham district.

According to sources, Maoist insurgents shot and killed the dead bodies of themselves and cremated. A large number of Maoist insurgents shot and killed the dead bodies of themselves and cremated. A large number of Maoist insurgents shot and killed the dead bodies of themselves and cremated.

the insurgents on Friday. Chief District Officer of Surkhet Dhruba Prasad Sharma said three unidentified persons came to his shop at 6 p.m. yesterday killed him with a musket. Sharma said the three are at large.

Chalauri, 21, Chaudre Karni, 45 and Ram Singh Chalauri, 60 are in critical condition. Sources say some 35 police entered Dhungata School in Thakur VDC near the site of the clash on Friday.

died in the Maoist related activity. Police have seized three muskets and seven bags of hand bombs from the site.

Meanwhile, three policemen and two locals who were injured in the Maoist bomb attack in yesterday are in hospital where the first treatment was given. The police had herded a group of people who were in Liwang, the hospital in the area.

According to the police, Keshav Khatry and old Kim Bahadur were serious condition.

Likewise, according to the Mid-Western Regional Police Office, Ram Bahadur Chalaune of Ramghat-5 in Surkhet was killed by the insurgents on Friday.

Chief District Officer of Surkhet Dhruba Prasad Sharma said three unidentified persons came to his shop at 6 p.m. yesterday killed him with a musket. Sharma said the three are at large.

of the clash is still not clear as the telecommunication service in Kamalbazaar near the site is out of order.

Bhupal Man Bista, secretary of MP Ram Bahadur Bista from Accham, said this is the first time a police-Maoist clash of such magnitude took place in the region.

According to Bista this is also the first time so many persons have

Of the injured, Nar Bahadur

THE KATHMANDU POST

ted when people are crowded into substandard conditions: Russian prisons, the barracks associated with South African mines, urban slums, to cite a few examples. Inadequate or incomplete TB treatment can foster the drug-resistant mutants of TB. Poor prison-type conditions, in particular, serve as an "epidemiological pump", potentially generating millions of cases of new infections.

\* International travel "guarantees movement of infecting pathogens". Decades ago, the migration of TB from country to country could be likened to that of a spreading ink blot. However, international air travel literally leapfrogs the traditional means by which TB spread, enabling infected persons to carry the disease from one continent to another in less than a day. Decreased ventilation in crowded and confined environments is a contributing risk factor. According to the Harvard report, "Transmission of multidrug-resistant strains of TB has already been documented during commercial airplane travel."

Theoretically, the pressurised confines of a jetliner cabin, where the air is recirculated frequently, should provide a measure of protection against the spread of infection. According to a 1998 report by the World Health Organisation (WHO), "Tuberculosis and Air Travel", the high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters on many airliners, capable of capturing material as small as 0.3 microns, should remove the tubercle bacillus, which is 0.5 to 1 micron in size. In addition, cabin air circulates from the overhead to outflow vents near the floor. The laminar airflow limits air entering and leaving the cabin to the same seat row. However, a single plenum can circulate air throughout the entire cabin, even on aircraft with multiple heating and air conditioning zones, according to the WHO report. If cabin air recirculation is restricted as a fuel-saving measure, the potential for infection increases. In a telephone interview with *Air Safety Week*, Dr. Paul Farmer, one of the co-authors of the Harvard study, said simply, "The level of risk increases with the length of the flight." At the same time, he explained, "You can get infected in five minutes." A passenger sitting next to one could cough up the bacilli from a cavity in the lung; in this case even the most aggressive cabin air recalculation and filtration effort may be for naught.

For dealing with the global spread through air travel of MDR-TB, Farmer said the airlines simply are not in a position to "give a chest X-ray to every passenger". Rather, he said, "air circulation helps; HEPA filters help".

The WHO report offered a specific checklist of recommended actions for airlines, to include:

\* Ensure that aircrews are properly trained in first aid, especially in precautions when exposed to body fluids. Emergency on-board medical equipment should include gloves, HEPA masks and biohazard disposal bags.

\* Pre-arrange access to physicians with expertise in communicable diseases.

\* Maintain records of all illnesses and medical emer-

gencies on board flights for at least three years.

\* Minimise ground delays, a period in which cabin air circulation may be restricted.

\* Install and properly maintain HEPA filters on all aircraft. The Harvard Medical School report on MDR-TB may be found at <http://www.soros.org/tb/index.html>. The WHO report on TB and air travel may be found at <http://www.who.int/gtb/publications/aircraft/PDF/98-256.pdf> Farmer, tel. 617/432-3718

FROM "INT. AIR TRAVEL IS ENABLING THE SPREAD OF A VIRULENT, DRUG-RESISTANT FORM OF TUBERCULOSIS" IN *AIR SAFETY WEEK*.

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FROM A CIRCULATION LIST ON THE INTERNET.



THE ASIAN AGE, NEW DELHI



## The bus and Madhuri D.

On the Daewoo bus from Islamabad to Lahore, the overhead screen was showing Bollywood song sequences. All eyes were fixed on Rani Mukherjee when suddenly the screen blanked out.

My neighbour wanted to know why. The hostess explained that a maulana travelling on the bus was objecting to the video.

"He has even requested us to switch off the audio channel," she added.

My neighbour was incensed. His forehead bore the tell-tale mark of a man who has touched his head on the floor in prayer five times a day for the past four decades.

"I am also a namazi but I see nothing wrong with the video. If the maulana sahab doesn't want to see, let him not look up. Why should he ruin our trip?"

Others joined in the protest and after a few minutes, Rani Mukherjee was back on the bus. After watching a few more songs, my neighbour turned to me and said, "It's not that I like this stuff but it's the principle that matters."

I asked whether the growing popularity of Indian TV and films was making Pakistanis look at India in a new light.

"There is definitely more curiosity, more understanding. Most people I know would love to visit India. But then eventually, almost against our will, politics asserts itself."

I was reminded of what a Saraiki writer in Multan had told me. "The same man who sways to a Lata Mangeshkar song can curse India the next minute. The governments may have created this situation but this is the reality."

But hadn't Nawaz Sharif joked that if India gave Pakistan Madhuri Dixit, all our problems would be over. I asked the man on the bus. "Well, you know what happened to Nawaz, don't you?" he replied. "Anyway,



THE TIMES OF INDIA

even Madhuri will not be able to convince us that Kashmir is not a part of Pakistan."

At this point, a third passenger, who had evidently been following our conversation with great interest, turned to us. "Here we are arguing over Kashmir and Madhuri went and married some doctor in California. This is the fate of our two countries. *Ladte hum hain aur faida America ko hota hai* (We are the ones who fight but America is the one who gains)!"

SIDDHARTH VARADARAJAN IN "HOW MADHURI DIXIT'S MARRIAGE MIGHT BE A METAPHOR FOR INDO-PAK RELATIONS" FROM THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA REVIEW.

## Offending South Block

Our long-time absconding foreign editor, Sunil Narula, was in the office last week bearing the sad news that he was quitting since the UN had extended his consultancy to run their press office in Pristina (Kosovo) to two years. During the course of his farewells in the city, Sunil spent an afternoon at the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) at South Block. When he came in he was visibly shaken. "You know they (MEA) really hate *Outlook*." I encouraged him to expand on the theme, hoping that at least one mandarin might have a kind word for the magazine. The hostility, unfortunately, was near unanimous. Even though I had some inkling of this response, I asked Sunil if he could explain why India's "fastest growing weekly" was so passionately disliked. "They are not used to having their version of events challenged or questioned by the media." It seems foreign policy is one area where the press is supposed to report obediently. Nothing more. But, surely, we are not the only ones guilty. "That is true, but in our case they also strongly object to the tone." What is wrong with the tone? "It is considered disrespectful, which in their jargon means against national interests." I worried for a day or two at the grave implications. At *Outlook* we try extremely hard not to cause gratuitous offence and yield to no one in our appreciation of the heavy burdens carried, in, say, formulating and conducting foreign policy. Alas, journalism is not about being hated or loved. In many ways, displeasing the high and mighty, especially those who rule, is part of our mandate. In a democracy, media which does not periodically cause offence is failing to its job. At any rate, if forced to choose between being loved or hated, I would, with great reluctance, prefer the latter.

VINOD MEHTA IN DELHI DIARY, *OUTLOOK*.

## Gandhi Succeeds

A little brown naked man lies in a bare prison yard, and by his simple refusal to eat brings two warring classes of his countrymen together and the proud Empire to terms. It seems incredible, but it is true. Gandhi's readiness to die of starvation has achieved this result on the sixth day of his fast, and the British government,

whose India office worked Sunday and Sunday night lest Gandhi die suddenly, has agreed to revise that portion of its recent communal plan which provided for separate electorates for the depressed classes. When ever before did a political prisoner behind the bars achieve anything like this by a simple readiness to die rather than to accept what he considered an intolerable award?

EDITORIAL IN *THE NATION*, NEW YORK, 5 OCTOBER 1932, REPRINTED IN *THE NATION: AN ALTERNATIVE HISTORY*, 10-17 JANUARY, 2000

## South Asian woes

People of South Asia say unemployment, rising prices and other economic problems are their most pressing concerns.

According to a survey conducted by ORG-Marg Research Limited, 23.3 percent of the respondents in Nepal, 13.2 percent in India, 25.3 percent in Sri Lanka say high prices and economic problems are the issues they mostly care about.

Similarly, 22.7 percent Nepalese, 31.8 percent Indians, 17.2 percent Sri Lankans and 20.6 percent Bangladeshis say unemployment/underemployment and job loss is their another worry.

South Asia, home to every fifth of humanity is among the most backward regions in the world and is also a home to the largest numbers of poor.

The survey was conducted by ORG-Marg Nepal in four countries of South Asia viz Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh last December. According to the survey report released here, the survey covered 1808 people as the sample size in the report.

Out of the 1808 respondents, 1051 were from India, 257 from Nepal, 250 from Sri Lanka and 250 from Bangladesh. "Since, our organisation doesn't have residential office in Pakistan, the country wasn't included in the survey," said Sandeep Ghosh, Country Manager, ORG-Marg Nepal.

The report says, people in the region point to: rise in crime and lawlessness/violence and widespread corruption/moral decay as other major problems.

16 percent of Nepalese people think widespread corruption and moral decay as the major problem faced by the country. While, 10.8 percent Indians and 6.8 percent Bangladeshis think that way. Terrorism is another major problem for the people in the region.

Since crime, violence and lawlessness engender unemployment and poverty, economic problems in general seem to trouble the people most.

The survey also reveals that 43.6 percent of the Nepalese people think government is tackling the problem of environmental pollution most effectively.

While 22.5 five percent of the Nepalese people think the government has failed to tackle any of

## INDO TIBETAN BORDER POLICE "AUCTION NOTICE"

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

the burning problems. Likewise, 18.8 percent think terrorism has been tackled best, 17.3 percent think drug abuse has been tackled best and 11.7 percent think declining quality of education has been addressed most effectively.

People in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh think national security and terrorism have been tackled best in their respective countries.

FROM "UNEMPLOYMENT, RISING PRICES PRESSING ISSUES FOR SOUTH ASIANS" FROM *THE KATHMANDU POST*.

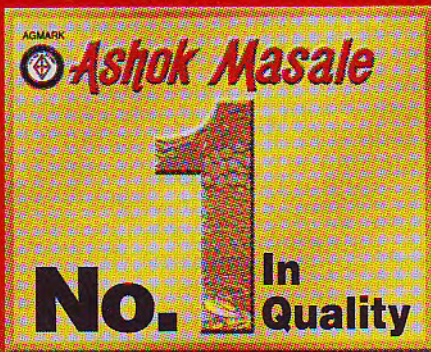
## In memoriam

The extinction of any flame that is lit to relieve the darkness of our world, in any corner of human habitation, is always a setback for the humanistic endeavour everywhere. The assassination of Dr Neelan Tiruchelvam in July 1999, was however a singular eclipse, such was the stature and dynamic commitment of this scholar and humanist in the cause of peace, the harmonisation of races, and the defence of human dignity. Still, it is clear that, for Sri Lanka especially, there is a powerful resolve that such an eclipse will prove merely partial, and that Neelan Tiruchelvam's legacy will endure, which however makes me particularly also sad that I cannot be present at the commemoration of his passage among us, and pay tribute to the example that his life has been.

The travails of Sri Lanka are very much part of the season of unreason into which our world is plunged from one edge of the globe to the other. I add my hopes and prayers to those of all who struggle to nurture and fulfil a vision of a global society from which has been banished, permanently, the spectre of violence and dehumanisation, a vision that will move to realisation on the foundation of a true humane community.

MESSAGE FROM WOLE SOYINKA TO THE NELLAN TIRUCHELVAM COMMEMORATION PROGRAMME HELD IN COLOMBO, 31 JANUARY-1 FEBRUARY, 2000.





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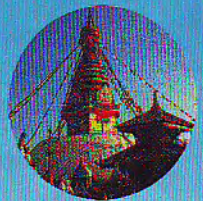


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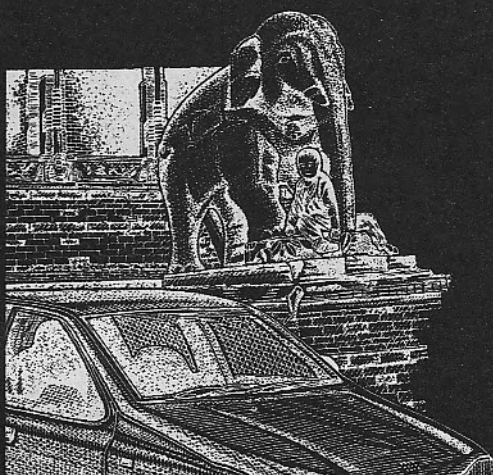


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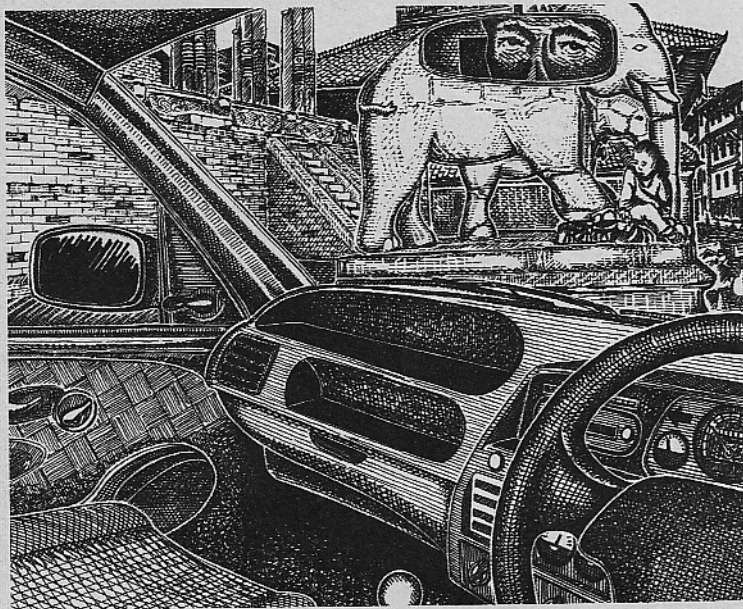
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# THREE HUNDRED RUPEES



a short story by manjushree thapa

He was sick of the way the bus rattled his bones and tired of the women behind, who had chattered incessantly for the whole of the journey.

"Strange," the younger one remarked, as they passed a vast, tarred lot filled with colourful cars, "Like a garden made of metal."

"Look at all those lights on the road," the other woman said. Her voice was loud and nasal. "And they won't give our village even one bulb! And look at those houses, they're all offices."

"So many offices.... what do people do in them?"

"They sit at tables and develop the country. See how wide the road is."

"And so many motor-cars. Where do they go at night, all these motor-cars?"

"To the stalls of their owners."

The bus swerved sharply and juddered to a halt. Rohit stood up, anxious to leave its chilly confines. Had they reached the bus park? Beyond the windows he saw the gleam of buses: yes. Looping his black-and-white book bag across his shoulders he jostled through passengers even as they were standing up. A woman clucked "Tch" as he brushed against her. "What's the big rush?" someone griped. He paid them no mind and squeezed past to the conductor, a boy with a grin far too sly for his twelve years.

"Open the door," he urged the boy. "Why don't you open the door?"

The conductor kicked the door open and Rohit stepped out, dressed in a wrinkled gray tunic with traditional close-fitting trousers, a flower-patterned cap and Chinese cloth shoes that sold for fifty-five rupees in his village. To stave off Kathmandu's corrosive fog he had added a black waistcoat and a scratchy gray muffler. His face was dark and wrinkled, his hands rough from farm work and his breath, a white evaporating cloud. Everything around here in the nation's capital, smelled of grease and machinery. Lethely he walked up to the front of a large building with square glass windows, to where a row of buses were parked. Some of them were local, he knew, and others went all over the country. A sense of the vastness of the world washed over him. There were so many places he hadn't been to: the horizonful of farmlands to the south, the manicured tea estates in the east. And beyond, India. Everyone went to India these days to work as doormen.

He approached a young man standing beside an emerald-green bus.

"I need to get to a place called Chetrapati," Rohit said to him and the young man, who was wearing very fine modern jean-pants, pointed with his chin across the road. "We're going to Patan, Chetrapati's over there."

Rohit's eyes were open but he wasn't seeing much: a haze of trees, a block of buildings blurred in the yellow-blue hues of dawn: Kathmandu.



Rohit withdrew, slightly embarrassed, and looked across the road. There were no buses there, just a row of three-wheeler auto-rickshaws. Still, the man had spoken with authority, and so Rohit made his way over to the auto-rickshaws, stopped at the first one, and asked the driver, "I need to get to a place called Chettrapati."

The driver was wearing shiny black glasses. He mumbled something that Rohit didn't understand, then leaned back and opened the canvas door. Rohit climbed in head, arms and legs first.

"Close the door," the driver commanded and Rohit obeyed. The inside of the rickshaw was lively, with red-and-yellow linoleum mats. The walls were plastered with pictures of, yes, naked women. Rohit turned away, mortified. How shameful! What would have happened if he'd boarded the auto rickshaw with his wife? How humiliating that would have been! Shyly, he turned back to the pictures to examine just how salacious they were. A naked woman smiled back at him, a giant cigarette between her legs.

The rickshaw blurted out a roar and lurched erratically onto the road. It steered itself out of the bus park and batted a way towards the city hidden behind a veil of fog. Rohit vaguely remembered this stretch from his first trip into Kathmandu last year with his brother. It was like this then, too: trucks and buses showed up suddenly and roared off into the fog.

"Come for a visit?" the driver shouted above the racket. Rohit hmm'ed, reluctant to talk to a man who kept pictures of naked women in his rickshaw. But he was of a gregarious disposition, so couldn't help responding after a while, "I've got relatives here."

"Your son?" The driver leaned out to spit, and Rohit saw the saliva streak past him. He leaned out and spat too, marvelling at the way the wind whipped at his face. But it was too cold, and he drew back.

"My brother. He moved here a year ago."

"I've got a son," the driver said. "Studying at the campus. Day after day I drive past his dormitory, but I don't stop to see him. Know why?" He turned back briefly, offering a profile of his dark glasses. "His friends would laugh because I'm a driver. Imagine that! Can you just imagine that?" Rohit clucked sympathetically.

"Unthinkable," he agreed. "Is that how a son should think?"

The driver swerved towards a narrow alley. "Is that how your own son should think?"

Rohit thought of his infant son in the village, all laughter, gurgles, shit and piss. He agreed, "That's not how a son should think."

"How many sons do you have?" the driver asked.

"One," Rohit said. "And four girls."

"Where?"

"Just outside Dhorphirdi." The driver shrugged. Rohit

couldn't believe he didn't know of it.

"Tanahun District," he said. "An hour off the road. Dryest patch of land you ever saw—can't farm a crop! The bus stops right at the bridge to Dhorphirdi." The rickshaw sputtered to a sudden halt and the driver said, "This is it, Chettrapati."

Peering out of the window, Rohit saw that they were hemmed in on all sides by narrow cement buildings. "Oho," he exclaimed, "Look at all these houses. How dusty they look. How will I ever find my brother? Who are all these people? Do they live in these houses? Look at that girl with white hair! What happened to her?"

"She's a foreigner. Forty-two rupees."

"Forty-two!"

"What I said when you got in."

"One rupee fifty," Rohit cried indignantly. "That's how much it should be. I came here last year and took a similar bus, don't think I don't know anything..."

"This is a private rickshaw," the driver snarled back, turning to glare at Rohit through his dark glasses like an ominous insect. He pointed at the headboard. "Look at the meter: it says forty-two rupees."

"Enough to feed a whole family!"

"Forty, then. But nothing less."

"Taking advantage of innocent villagers," Rohit cried, but he realised there was nothing to do but pay.

He took a long time fishing for a fifty-rupee bill and waited morosely as the driver counted out the change. A thief of a place, this city. And so noisy, so full of people whose heads bobbed up and down, up and down the streets. He saw the white-haired woman again and wondered why there was a ring in her nose if she was a foreigner. The driver nudged him out of his trance, handed back a bill, and leant back to open the door for him.

"Go on," he said brusquely.

Rohit hadn't fully stepped out when the rickshaw revved up again and chased off after a car. He took a firm hold of his black-and-white book bag. He must find a chautara with a green tin awning. *Green tin awning*, he'd been told. Young men, old men, women of all castes passed before him in a swirl of colors. Look, Rohit said to himself: girls wearing pants. Then he saw it, across the road, a high, covered platform at the centre of the stream of traffic, and it had a green tin awning. Chettrapati. He headed towards it and felt the impact of a warm, soft body and then the sudden metal edges of a bicycle.

"Don't you have eyes!" someone yelled. A horn honked. A few cars swept by. A large man shoved him off the sidewalk. Rohit waited until the road was finally clear, and scurried to the platform. A few men were lying down on its bare cement floor. Tch: how cold they must be. By their high cheekbones he thought they might be Tamangs. Porters: they were all carrying braided hemp ropes with which to ply their trade.



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Rohit squatted down beside them, imagining the life of a city porter, carrying chairs, desks, cupboards from truck to shop, shop to truck, from one merchant to another. What would make a man live such a life? A flood maybe, or a landslide that carried away his house and fields. Some of Rohit's fields had been destroyed in the last monsoon. If they'd all been washed away, he'd have had to find another patch of land to settle, or seek a job in the city. But the gods had blessed Rohit and his brother with not a few kattha of farmlands, part of which he had just sold at his brother's insistence. The fog seemed to thicken, and a silver mist rolled through the street, swirling over the commotion of the street. The cold of the platform stiffened Rohit's bones, and he drew his grey muffler over his nose savouring the damp warmth of his own breath.

A long time, maybe an hour, passed as he distracted himself with the sounds and sights that ebbed and flowed before him. What was the reason, he wondered, that motorcycles made such a racket, but cars just glided by so silently? How much would all the signboards on this street cost? If everyone came to the city and stopped farming, what would people eat?

"Uncle," he heard a voice eventually, and turned to see a thin boy dressed in a blue school uniform, standing a little way off. It was his nephew, Keshab. "Nephew," he said warmly, standing up. "Come and pay your respects to your old uncle. How tall you've grown, how like a city boy." He held out his hand in blessing, but noticed a certain stiffness about the boy as he bowed.

"Where's your father?" Rohit asked warmly, trying to win the lad over. "How far to his shop?" The boy pointed vaguely towards one of the intersections and began to trot towards it.

"What do you have in that nice school bag?" Rohit asked in an indulgent tone, following behind. "Books that teach you English?" But Keshab said nothing, and slipped so fast through the crowd that Rohit found himself scurrying behind. "You must be the tallest boy in your class," Rohit called out after his nephew, as Keshab ducked into a dark unpaved alley. They followed the alley to a temple where the road opened on to a larger, pitched road, dense with traffic. An ambulance raced by, wailing like a widow. Rohit stuck close to his nephew as they darted through the cars across the road. On the far side was a large pavement full of street vendors selling shirts, caps, peanuts, vegetables and fruit. Keshab stopped and pointed further up along the sidewalk. "There's Baba, over there."

And there he was, Rohit's younger brother, Narayan, sitting on the pavement at the epicentre of a concentric array of bananas. Rohit noticed that Narayan didn't rise in greeting, let alone bow, as he walked up to him. He tried not to mind this slight; his brother had lost the patchy tanned complexion of a villager and his face was as pale as wheat. His hair was

combed back and oiled, and he wore a sweater and impressively clean trousers of terry-cotton. The transformations people go through in a year! If it wasn't for the dent in both their noses, Rohit thought, no one could tell that they were the same father's sons. His nephew Keshab had disappeared, and for a while, Rohit just stood on the pavement, towering over his brother's concentric display of bananas.

"Sit," Narayan finally suggested, and Rohit squatted beside the bananas, holding onto his book bag.

"Sit more comfortably," Narayan insisted, a hint of annoyance in his voice. Rohit settled down into the gritty pavement. His brother, he noted, was sitting on a straw mat. The protocol was all wrong. Pretending not to notice this affront, Rohit turned a keen, interested eye at his surroundings. A dim sun was finally glowing through the fog, putting a glint in the glass, steel and mica facets of the city. The building across the street had windows like dark gray mirrors. On the road so many cars were packed together, inching along like a giant metal snake. "Where does that go?" Rohit asked, pointing at a manhole cover, then answered his own question, "To the sewers, of course."

Fashionable ladies walked by, their shoes clacking against the pavement.

"How much do your bananas sell for?" he finally turned to his brother.

"I take what I can get." Narayan's tone was flat and bored. "Do you want some? Hungry?"

"So early in the morning?" Rohit demurred, too proud to admit to hunger in the face of such a lack of ceremony. He essayed a smile. "Nobody eats at such an early hour."

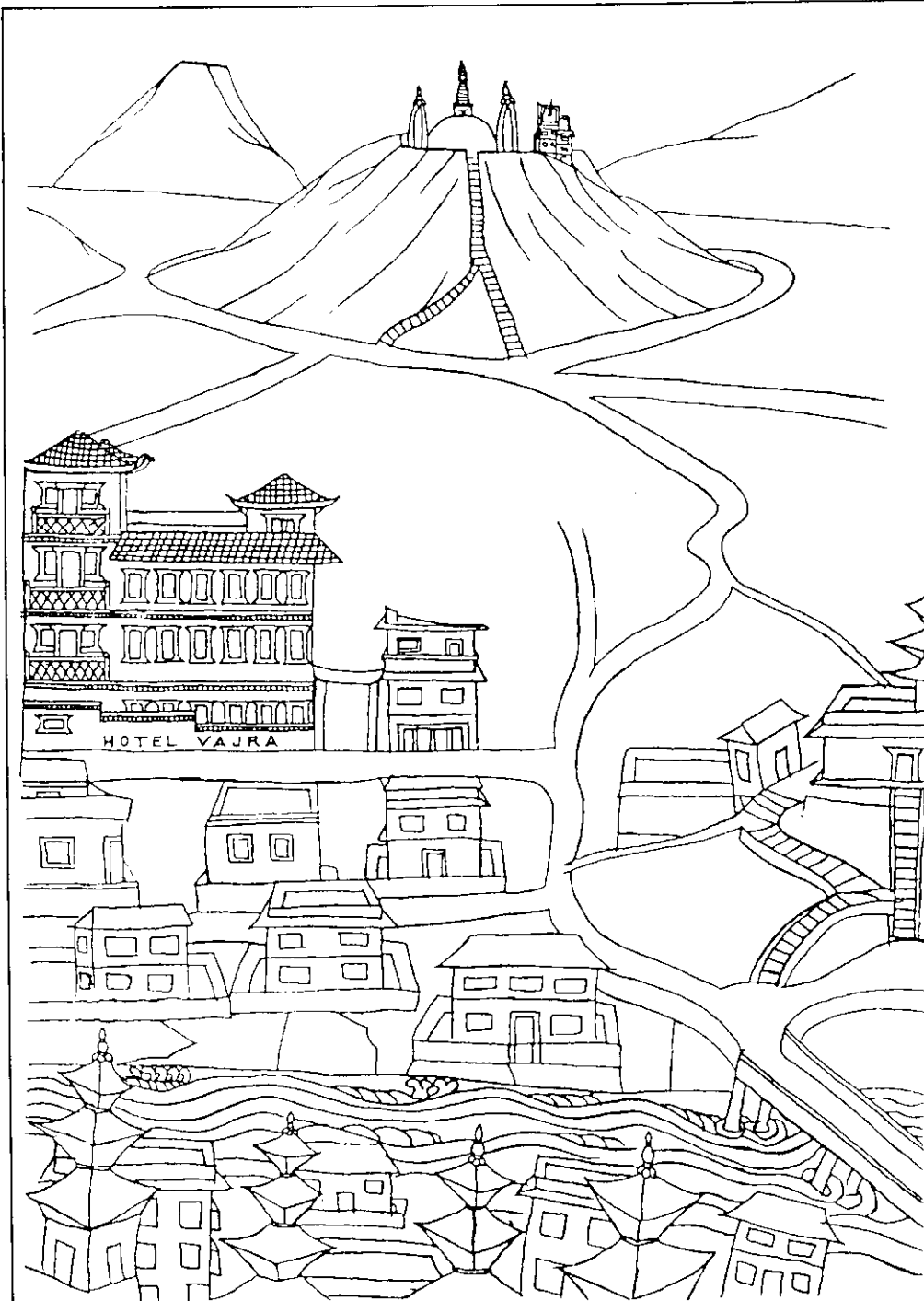
"And did you bring the money?" This was why Rohit had never taken to Narayan: the boy didn't have the least courtesy, showed no considerateness for anyone but himself. He had been crass, grabbing and greedy all his life. Rohit reached into his black-and-white book bag and took out a roll of bank notes. "Fifteen thousand," he said gruffly. "Your share."

There seemed to be a sly innuendo in his brother's response: "I heard land was fetching twice as much at Dhor."

Are we Dhor?" Rohit snapped back. "Is the government digging a road all the way to our door? Are they bringing us electricity?" He didn't like Narayan's direct, fixed stare. "Anyway, our fields are mostly sand. And with the landslides last monsoon...."

Narayan sank back on his straw mat, his wheat colored face spoiling. "Everyone thinks," he spat out bitterly "I have it really good in the city, that I'm earning, my wife's earning, my son's in school, that I don't have troubles of my own." Gesturing contemptuously at his bananas he seemed to want to say something more but didn't.

Rohit could hardly believe what he was hearing. "Are you suggesting I'm a thief?" He reached into his black-and-



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white book bag and pulled out the deed of sale. "Signed by the chairman of the Village Development Committee!" He waved the papers in front of his brother. "Look for yourself and see the thousands and thousands of rupees I've robbed you of!"

Instead of bowing in shame, Narayan grabbed the documents and began to look through them. The gall of the boy! Had he forgotten the times Rohit had washed him, fed him, clothed him, mended his pants, defended him from bigger boys, sheltered him from their step-mother's wrath? All the times he'd taken the cows to graze so that his brother could attend school? Rohit wanted to remind his brother of the sacrifices he'd made, but now a woman in a sari had come up to the display of bananas, all fluttering nylon and flowers. Narayan put aside the deed and sold her a dozen bananas; both brothers watched her as she minced away in dainty high-heeled shoes. The flowers in her hair, Rohit noted, were plastic.

Narayan handed the paper back to Rohit. For a while, both the brothers sat in a huff, their expressions identical and hard. Rohit started shivering from the cold of Kathmandu's meagre sun. His stomach began to growl, and he shifted and coughed to cover the sound. After what seemed like ages, Narayan mumbled something about tea and headed for a tea stall nearby. Watching his brother buying tea, he was suddenly filled with remorse. Where was his sister-in-law? Where had his nephew disappeared? Why did they not invite him to their dwelling to serve a proper meal there? Rohit was curious to see their lodgings; built of cement, it would surely be better than the old clay hut back home. Narayan came back with two glasses of black tea. They both sipped in silence. The hot drink soothed away the cold and eased his hunger.

So he asked, "And Keshab's mother, where is she?"

"She works at a factory." Narayan's tone was conciliatory. "Otherwise she'd make a meal for you in our rented room."

"Rented room?"

"We pay a thousand a month."

A thousand a month! Rohit felt a pang of guilt about the eight thousand rupees he'd skimmed from his brother's share by tampering with the land deed. Eight months of rent in this relentless city. Suddenly he wanted to get out of Kathmandu and back to his own Dhorphirdi. He gulped down the last of his tea.

"I should get back to the bus park." His bony knees cracked as he stood. "There's a meeting tonight—about the breached irrigator canal...I mustn't be late"

Of course, Narayan didn't insist he stay. Instead he looked relieved. "I'll show you to the bus, older brother." Taking Rohit by the arm he led him further up the street to a four-way intersection. There, he pointed at a battered blue mini-bus. "Sit next to the window so you can see where you are. Get off at the bus park and ask at the ticket counter for the

Pokhara bus."

Rohit hoisted himself aboard. The aisle was crowded with girls in starched college uniforms. It seemed awkward and rude to push through these girls who were so pretty, so prim. So he remained by the door, clutching a bar.

"Older brother," Narayan said awkwardly, reaching up to slip some soft notes into Rohit's hand. "You must be...I couldn't even feed you. And the bus fare...such a long trip." His expression became doleful as he mumbled, "There are restaurants by the bus park..."

Embarrassed, Rohit shoved the money into his book bag. Then a man clambered into the bus, knocking against Rohit's knee.

"Room, I need some room," he said. "Can you move a little?" From the running board, he reached down and hauled up two bleating goats. Rohit pressed against the side of the bus to make room, then followed the man with the goats past the neat college girls. At the front of the bus, he managed a window-side seat and turned to wave at Narayan, but it seemed his brother had already left. The man with the goats sat across the aisle.

"Such goats," Rohit commented appreciatively as the animals bleated in alarm. "Are you selling them in the bazaar?"

"If I get my price," the man responded thoughtfully. "Only if I get my price." "And how much will this big one fetch?" The man took out a cigarette from his coat pocket.

"I'll take what I get," he said, striking a match. "Eight-nine hundred, a thousand, twelve hundred, depending."

"Twelve hundred!" Rohit leaned forward and plucked a hair from the goat's rump and inspected the root. "There isn't that much fat on it."

"I'll take what I can get," the man repeated. The smell of his cigarette made Rohit realise how hungry he was. The man's muffler was the same scratchy grey as his own, but cleaner. The man's pants were of thick black wool. He was wearing shoes, but no socks. No, it now seemed that he *was* wearing socks, the colour of skin. The bus started up with a rumble. Rohit sat back in his seat fascinated by the sight of the skin-coloured socks: if a man didn't look closely he'd hardly see the fine ribs and seams. As the bus lurched forward, Rohit was suffused with a sense of the infinite illusions of the city, of the layers and layers of things that presented one face now and the next moment showed another. Look at Narayan: the boy was so rude, so coarse, but knew in his heart that he owed Rohit his life. He didn't show it, but he knew. How could he not? Rohit checked his book bag to see how much money his brother had given him. He counted again. One, two, three hundred. Was it too much or too little? The bus ground on.

He turned to the owner of the goats across the aisle. "How many meals can you buy in this city for three hundred rupees?"

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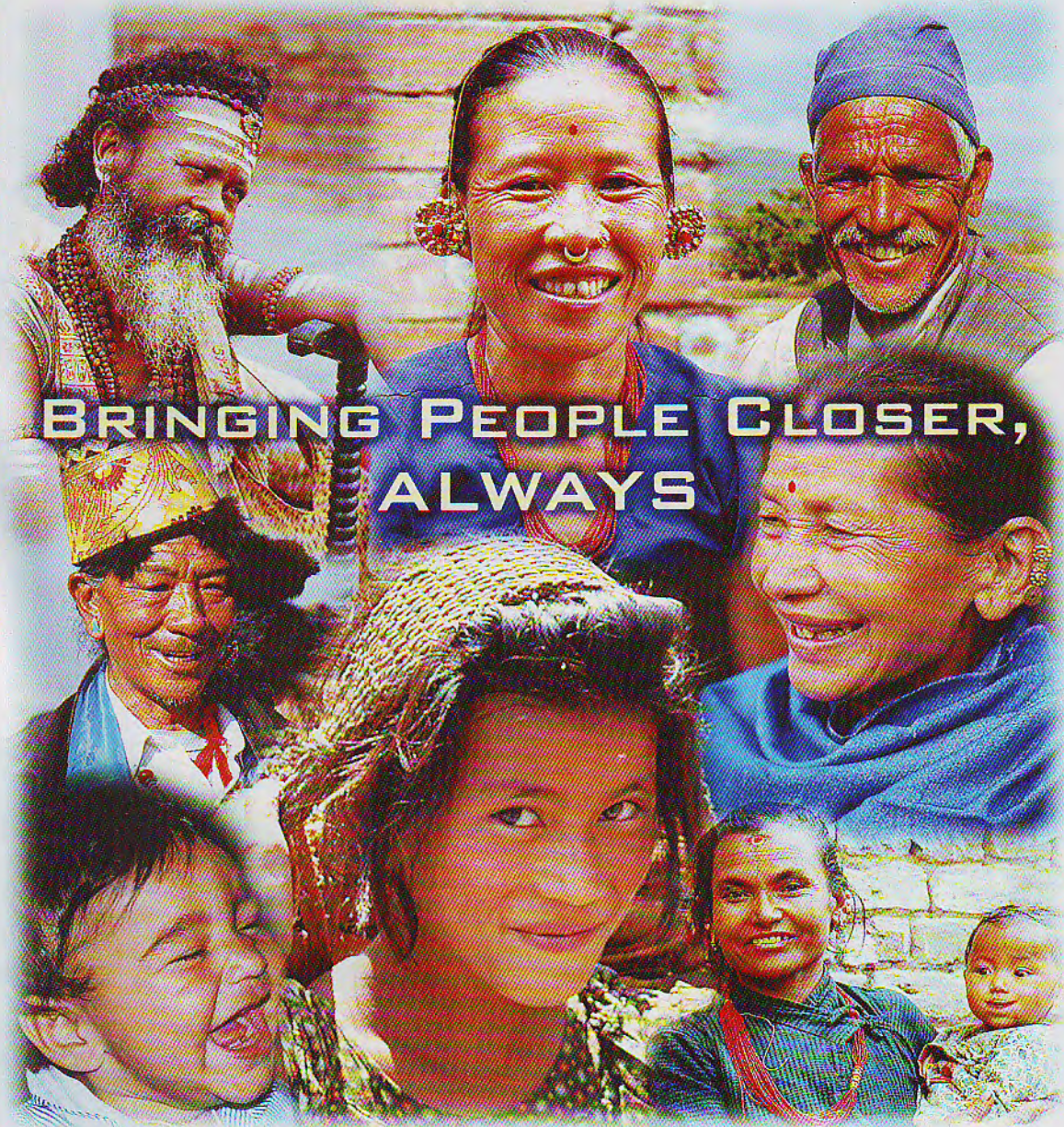
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