

frontier

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Editor : Samar Sen

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FOR GERMINAL PUBLICATIONS (P) LTD.
BY SAMAR SEN FROM 61, MOTT LANE,
CALCUTTA-13
TELEPHONE: 243202

RAY'S SECOND HOAX

WITH a new Governor installed at Raj Bhavan, the Presidential regime in West Bengal has reached the take-off stage. That is at least what the Centre thinks ; otherwise the 16-point programme for the economic recovery of West Bengal would not have been announced so pompously. The Union Minister of Industrial Development was here when the announcement was made, perhaps as a living testimony to his Ministry's support for the programme. And with the Prime Minister scheduled to visit the State for three long days what further proof is needed of the Centre's determination to put the State back on the rails of progress ? What the Centre seems to be reckoning without is the credibility gap that separates it from the people of West Bengal. Experience has taught them to be too cynical to accept any governmental promise at face value, especially when the promise is a word for word repetition of promises which successive governments of the left and the right have failed to carry out.

The performance of the Presidential regime in the sphere of law and order has added to the general cynicism. Mr Siddhartha Shankar Ray's small steps forward have led him nowhere ; it is clear now that he will never make the big leap forward. He has wasted nearly two months in a barren pursuit and to realise what was known to everyone in the State that pledges by leaders of political parties, his own party not excepted, were hypocritical and worthless and that the murder spree in West Bengal is continuing with the consent and cooperation of most parties. Or maybe he knew. But he had to make a show of a dialogue to gain time for his party to equip itself for lusty participation in the pastime of gruesome manhunt. Cossipore-Baranagar may be a new milestone. It is perhaps not fully revealed yet how new the Prime Minister's New Congress is. She herself is said to be worried over reports of her party's involvement in Cossipore-Baranagar and has called for facts from four different non-official sources. The "facts" may cancel one another out, and the Prime Minister may find herself in agreement with the leaders of her party in West Bengal that the victims fell to the anger of the exasperated public ; that the massacre took place in spite of her party's peace efforts. And her clear chit to the party may be followed by similar outbursts of people's anger elsewhere for which quiet preparations are reported to

be under way.

The Centre's sudden concern for West Bengal's economic recovery may be a diversionary move. Mr Ray has not only not been able to improve law and order, but he has allowed it to deteriorate. This may suit his party, but the Government has to keep up a pretence; it can ignore public criticism but should not seem to be doing so. The 16-point programme is a massive dose of soporific. If the Centre were serious, it would have shown the way by lifting the indefinite moratorium on its

own investments in the State. Instead of that it has called upon private entrepreneurs to lift the State out of economic stagnation. For private investors the behaviour of the Centre is the barometer. As long as the Centre hesitates to risk further investments in West Bengal, no private industrialist will agree to sink more capital here. They know what is the worth of the programme and how sincere the Centre's concern is for the economic recovery of West Bengal.

Mere Incidents

To many people outside, West Bengal must be a vast lunatic asylum where people kill one another for inexplicable reasons. Many must have ceased to take any interest in the daily toll as reported in the papers. It is a wayward province that can be written off but for the large capital investments and the port and the now burgeoning army defending the interests of Bangladesh. There is unmistakable evidence of contempt for the mad inhabitants of this State, who are giving vent to the death instinct. But these snooty, contemptuous people have an addiction to law and order without exception and miss the chilling cruelty of the law and order machinery. Newspaper reports blur the outlines.

Imagine a scene at Howrah Station, one of the biggest in India. It is eight-o'clock in the morning. Some people are going to the Coffee House there. Acting on information that they are Naxalites going to a conclave, prowling plainclothes men close in, whip out revolvers and start shooting. Another version is that three men were shot at the turnstile after alighting from a train. There is big commotion, people start running. Two of the attacked men are dead—they were trying to 'hurl bombs' at the policemen in plainclothes—that's what the papers say. There is speculation whether one of the killed is Ashim Chatter-

jee, convener of the Bengal-Bihar-Orissa Border Regional Committee, but there is no description or condemnation of the methods used by

the police at a crowded railway station. Calcutta can take it.

Saroj Dutta, a well-known journalist known for his vitriolic pen and the Secretary of the West Bengal branch of the CPI(ML), was arrested on August 5. The police have refused to confirm or deny the arrest; but there is indisputable evidence that he was taken into custody. The rest is silence.

The administration too knows that the law is an ass and it's no use arresting too many people. There is terrible lack of space in the jails. The best thing is to bump off the trouble-makers. When too many of them are finished off in one operation, there are some motions of protest. That is all. We have to think of and condemn the planned massacre by the West Pakistan army of young East Bengalis. But this side of the border anything goes.

A Bleak Picture

There is not even a single area of economic activity which the Government can say has been making satisfactory progress. The index of industrial production for March shows a paltry increase of 1.2 per cent on the corresponding month of the previous year and the average monthly index for the first quarter of the current year has recorded an insignificant rise of 2.7 points over the similar period of 1970. The 10.5 per cent rise in exports in the calendar year 1970 is not flattering since India's share in world exports has declined to 0.75 per cent from 1.20 per cent in 1963. Four consecutive good harvests have seen the index of wholesale foodgrains prices spiralling from 160 in March 1966 (1961-62 equals 100) to 206 in June this year. Prices of commodities on which there have been no fresh levies have also been skyrocketing. Unemployment figures stand at 16 million in the urban sector and 15 million in the rural sector. Unless there is a miracle the industrial growth rate will remain much below the targeted 8 per cent

to 10 per cent. Capital goods industries, particularly those producing heavy transport equipment, have been the prime sufferers. While the engineering units are still having a large proportion of their capacity unutilised owing to lack of orders and shortage of raw materials, particularly steel, the tardy growth in industrial machinery and chemicals during 1966-70 is attributed to little success in import substitution and this necessitated large imports. As a recent study has shown, shortages have also developed in non-ferrous metals, sulphur, a number of intermediate chemicals, fertilisers, and components for the electronics industry. Textiles have been limping owing to raw cotton shortages. In some areas capacity under-utilisation is due to managerial inefficiency while in some others low investments, particularly depreciated public orders, played the havoc. Perhaps the demand-push inflation could have been abated to some extent, if the demand created for goods in the rural areas in the wake of the "green revolution" were

satisfied. In a feat of devastating originality, the Government has attributed the dip in the growth rate to statistical aberrations. It says that there has been considerable expansion of small industries in recent years and the definition of small industries has undergone a change. But the argument fails to convince as firm data about the small-scale sector are not available.

What has caused the continued decline in India's share in world exports is her failure to take advantage of the boom in international trade. This is, however, unavoidable since half of the country's exports consist of items international demand for which will either decline or increase only marginally in coming years. So long there are shortages of raw materials which go into the production of exportable items and exportable surpluses are not created in products in which world trade is rising rapidly, India's export situation will not improve. Prices have always eluded the grasp of the authorities in New Delhi. The ebullient Finance Minister, Mr Y. B. Chavan, wants to do something decisive about it; he has even threatened physical controls. What seems to baffle him is the "irrational" aspect of the price inflation. Prices of foodgrains are the most important. The marketable surplus does not constitute more than 30 per cent of the total produce but any anti-inflationary drive to be successful must make a dent on it. The less said about the effectiveness of the public distribution system—and the buffer stock in holding the price line—the better. Mr Chavan has at last realised that the economy is being put out of gear through the operation of a parallel economy based on black money. While the black economy has its own effective modus operandi, many have already converted black money into white through benami transactions. Mr Chavan has proposed several measures to curb benami transactions and under-invoicing and over-invoicing anomalies, but experience shows that even though the Government has many times in the past

armed itself with legal powers, it has rarely exercised them. Any drive to unearth black money would invariably result in its taking refuge in the farm sector which continues to enjoy a holiday from taxes. The Indian economy is having a structural crisis which emanates from the growing contradiction between slow industrial

growth and demographic explosion. Indian industries are only interested in making quick profits. The basic needs of the millions of the poor have remained unsatisfied. The present system can neither reduce economic inequalities nor mobilise the immense human and material resources that are there.

South Vietnam Elections

In South Vietnam a new power game is on. The souring relations between President Thieu and his main rival, Vice-President Ky, reached a point when Ky was disqualified from contesting the election because of his inability to secure enough endorsements for his candidature. The situation was heading for a political crisis and rumours of a coup d'etat were swirling through the city. The last-minute reversal of decision by the Supreme Court has not averted the showdown. Ky has reportedly warned Thieu of the consequences if he continues to rig the election.

As for Thieu, not only does he want to win the election, he wants to win it in a big way for he has staked his political career in the election. He has done a good bit of home work for that. Earlier in his term, he lined up behind the U.S. Ambassador, Ellsworth Bunker, to deprive Ky of his political power. This achieved, Thieu began to spurn increasingly his master's advice and throwing all caution to the winds, he went ahead with his scheming. Disgusted with his sharp practices, even 'Big' Minh, the peacenik ex-general, decided to step out of the run for the presidency. With his withdrawal accepted, if agency reports are to be believed, the whole show has been reduced to a farce with Thieu as the lone actor.

Thieu's intransigence, however, has placed his U.S. bosses in an unenviable position. The Americans think that it is in the interest of the Vietnamese people "to hold an open, democratic election... Thieu is the best man for the job, but he should

make a run for it fair and square". But to Washington's discomfiture, Thieu has so far failed to comply. Even in the coming South Vietnamese parliamentary election, Thieu, overzealous to stuff the chamber with his own men, has used the administration to his own advantage. Communists and even neutralists have been weeded out, political parties barred from the election; and he has planted his men in every nook of the country to buy votes by force or fraud.

Evidently Washington does not like the music. Pressed to pull out its battered troops from Vietnam, at least formally, Washington wants to show to the world that it is not for nothing that it invested so much in men and money in South Vietnam. It wants to show that 'Vietnamisation' is not just one of the White House euphorias and that people's will rules in Saigon. The elections will also add to its bargaining power in the Paris peace talks. But precisely it is on this point that differences have arisen. Only a majority President and a puppet chamber will bring Thieu the strength to fight in any future deal. However, there is danger that the President might overplay his hand and repent it later. For Siagon is famous for its political surprises and the Americans have by now proved themselves crafty in political manoeuvres.

For FRONTIER contact
SANYAL BROS.

26, Main Road, Jamshedpur-1.

After The Euphoria

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

BANGLADESH is the casualty number one of the Indo-Soviet treaty which, we are assured repeatedly, is not a defence pact. The Prime Minister has gone on record that recognition of Bangladesh will not lead to war. But in New Delhi the feeling is that not only is there a slide-back on the recognition issue but there is a planned slow-down in the flow of material assistance to the Mukti Bahini. The leadership in Mujibnagar has serious apprehensions about New Delhi's commitment to ensure an independent Bangladesh. The initiative seems to have passed on to the Soviet leadership which wants a political solution which recognises the oneness of Pakistan and India has acquiesced in this. If the Soviet leadership fails, it might be a minor military conflict which would again give it a chance to play its Tashkent diplomacy. There is nothing in the situation to suggest that the Soviet leadership is prepared to alienate Islamabad or to permit an independent Bangladesh.

New Delhi's anxiety to minimise the significance of the treaty and to make it appear an innocuous affair should hardly surprise anybody. Its signing was hurried at India's instance and the Soviet side got more than it bargained for. It has deterred India more than it has deterred Pakistan and deprived Mrs Gandhi of the little manoeuvrability she had. The kite-flying over her visit to the United States can be traced immediately to a certain anxiety on the part of New Delhi to convince the United States that the treaty and continued United States diplomatic and military support to Islamabad notwithstanding, Indo-United States relations have not deteriorated. One section in the Foreign Office keeps saying that Mrs Gandhi might go to the United States and one gets the impression she is

only too anxious to go. Another section, as part of a well-thought-of plan, keeps spreading inspiring stories that she might not go after all and everything depends on the Nixon Administration's attitude to India and Bangladesh in the coming weeks.

India's foreign policy is supposed to get a new look with Mr D. P. Dhar's occupation of a room in the South Block regularised. The manoeuvre now being executed amounts to a counterpoise act with the object of making sure that U.S. economic aid will not be cut off. There will, however, be no attempt in the direction of normalising relations with China for obvious reasons. Yugoslavia and Rumania are known to have conveyed to India that the treaty would only harden China's attitude to India. The absence of any Chinese reaction to the treaty has intrigued the Foreign Office.

The support the treaty itself got in the country belongs to two clear categories. Non-left parties supported it because they thought it would deter Pakistan and give India the diplomatic and military support for a clean-up in East Bengal. But the CPI's support was conditioned by a different set of factors. The recent conclave of the CPI was significant for the near-eclipse of the seasoned campaigner, Mr S. A. Dange. It was a clash between the Oxford and Cambridge groups, the covenanted officers of the party and the mass leaders who realise that peaceful transition via national democracy does not exactly lie in the party's surrender to Mrs Gandhi.

The covenanted officers, who have derived the maximum warmth from the fur-lined straitjacket and have had their living standards underwritten by rupee trade deals, would rather leave the Bangladesh issue to be settled between the Mukti Bahini and the

Pakistani army. This is a drift from the original position of the party, namely the immediate recognition of Bangladesh. After the treaty, this group is in no mood to embarrass the Prime Minister in any form over any issue. The treaty is supposed to have solved the issue already and the onus of liberating Bangladesh is on the Mukti Bahini. This conforms to the Soviet position.

In domestic politics, the less sophisticated leadership which does not speak the Cambridge and Oxford accent would like to move closer to the CPI(M) and does not rule out extra-constitutional forms of struggle and even violence. The covenanted officers would prefer getting closer to the ruling Congress.

The Soviet leadership seems to have set itself the task of achieving certain ideological objectives through the treaty and the CPI. To a section of the CPI, the treaty is almost the beginning of national democracy in India. This section thinks that all the party needs to do now is to engineer another split in Mrs Gandhi's party and force her dependence on the CPI to make the outfit at the Centre a national democratic coalition, a united front from above which is always easier than a united front from below. In the process, however, the CPI itself might split.

On the eve of the March elections, the CPI seriously believed that Mrs Gandhi would at best get a marginal majority and would have to depend on the CPI. The CPI could win a measly two Lok Sabha seats on its own; everyone of the rest was won in adjustment with the Congress. Mr. Dange was one of those who was opposed to tailism and his group was waiting to see the CPI fail to win 30 seats despite Mrs Gandhi's support. When the CPI found to its dismay that the CPI(M), fighting on its own, had bagged more Lok Sabha seats, the Dange-Rajeswara Rao group stood vindicated and its line of opposition to the party accepting a satellite-status vis-a-vis the ruling party gained credence.

Now Mr Dange is definitely out of the picture and the Party Congress in

October might witness his formal exit. The conflict at Cochin will be between the plain careerists and small-time operators who are already on Mrs Gandhi's bandwagon and the grass-root leaders who know the mass mood. A section in the CPI looks soulfully to the bright boys in the party who know which side the public sector bread is buttered and crossed over in time to blossom as Congress ministers. These outsiders, in a position to wield official patronage, are in a position to control a lobby in the CPI which is a far cry from the days the CPI had a lobby inside the Congress. The tail is wagging the dog.

It suited Mrs Gandhi to use these elements to get the CPI round to supporting her. Now the CPI's sole relevance lies in the treaty. If Mrs Gandhi ever looks to the CPI for anything, it should be only as a sop to Soviet ideological requirements.

The covenanted CPI boys are now prepared to ditch ye elde P. N. Haksar in preference to Mr D. P. Dhar who is part of the machinery to implement the Indo-Soviet treaty, whatever that means.

With the general increase in the Soviet influence, the CPI's importance might decline but as long as the abstraction called national democracy remains an ideological objective to spite the Chinese, the CPI will have its use. If by any change Mrs Gandhi chooses to normalise relations with China, the requirements of the national democratic objectives on this side of the treaty would require another split in the Congress party. This is where the CPI becomes one of the instruments of implementing the treaty in the spirit the other High Contracting Party understands.

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For Frontier contact

People's Book House

Meher House,

Cowasji Patel Street,

Fort, Bombay

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Kerala

Muslim League Takes Over

Ramji

THE Muslim League in Kerala is having the best of both worlds. As a partner of the ruling mini-front, it has become a law unto itself, though it has not overtly taken over the leadership from the CPI. And as champions of Islam and its obscurantist, puritanic aberrations, the League has the liberty to run counter to national sentiments and the official stance over Bangladesh.

The CPI in Kerala is obviously toeing the line adopted by Moscow in its relations with the Arab countries, which allows it to give arms and other aid to Arab regimes which swear by suppression or liquidation of local communists. The compulsions of securing a foothold of influence in a sensitive area induces Moscow to adopt this incongruous policy. Similarly, the compulsions of future elections, obviously, induce the CPI to give the widest possible latitude to the League to carry on reactionary activities.

The Muslim League Home-cum-Education Minister, Mr Md Koya, is being praised by his admirers and followers for his endeavour to spread Arabic in schools and colleges, though there are no takers even among Muslims in Kerala. He has richly deserved the title 'Lion of Kerala' conferred on him by his sycophants who have brought out a big volume depicting the 'Lion' as a champion of Islam in a land of unbelievers. Incidentally, Mr Koya himself released this volume at an impressive function got up by his admirers.

The Home portfolio has come in handy to demonstrate his powers. Though not on a scale prevailing in West Bengal, the police under Koya are doing their best by way of summary arrests, detentions, torture and murder too, inside the lock-ups.

As guardians of vested interests the police have been made the lackeys of landlords and industrialists to fight the peasants and workers.

The arrogance and intolerance of the League leaders has inspired them to try and curb the freedom of the Press. A highly popular cartoonist, 'Mantri' has been secretly "tried" and condemned *ex parte* for publishing cartoons ridiculing the great Moghul posturings and actions of Md. Koya and other League leaders. The League is out for his blood. Mr Mantri, though a teacher in a government school, has all along been tacitly, though not formally, permitted by the Education Department to publish his cartoons, over the past decade. Now he is going to be served a show-cause notice for committing the "irregularity" of contributing to papers without prior sanction of the Department.

With all the unlimited power in their hands the Muslim League leaders have not tried to improve the lot of the downtrodden Muslim masses in Malapuram district, their stronghold. A more ignorant, illiterate, and poverty-stricken section of people than the Muslim masses of Malapuram would be hard to find in Kerala. But, the proverbial worm has started to turn. Signs of revolt against the feudal-type leadership are there. For example, a big section of landless people, led by the Congress(R), the Marxists and the Muslim League rank-and-file-level workers, encroached on a big holding of 900 acres of land owned by a relative of a former League Minister and set up over 30 huts on plots parcelled out among themselves. The League leadership acted at once. Mr Koya sent the police to throw the squatters out. But the police were nonplussed into inaction. For, the people put up a solid all-party front and among them was a big section of the League's rank and file. The police were afraid that their usual ruthless tactics against the havenots might boomerang in this case.

On the Bangladesh issue the League is more pro-Yahya than

otherwise. The League MPs in Delhi refused to sign a memorandum protesting against the genocide there and the trial of Mujib. The League leaders in Kerala have been mum over the entire issue. In the Kerala Assembly, the attempt by a member to raise the Bangladesh issue for discussion was summarily ruled out by the Muslim League Speaker. This, in spite of the fact that the Chief Minister had condemned the genocide in Bangladesh and called for generous donations to the refugee relief fund. But this was outside the Assembly. The attempt of a top ranking CPI MLA to raise a discussion on the recent Indo-Soviet treaty was also throttled by the Speaker, although the CPI and other groups were all for such a discussion. To the CPI benches, it was a very humiliating and frustrating experience. The consensus about this is that religious bigotry has triumphed over significant realities and that the CPI has been reduced to the level of lackeying to the League so that they may have the benefit of a borrowed mass base.

The Congress(R) and the mini-fronters are now engaged in a hard-headed, tight-fisted bargaining about over the issue of Congress entry into the Cabinet. The mini-fronters asked the Congress to do so some time back, but Mrs Gandhi has laid down that the Congress may accept office only on its terms. The mini-fronters together muster only 35 seats while the Congress has 32 in the Assembly. The Pradesh President has announced that Congress could join the Ministry only if it is given proportional representation, which works out to four Congress Ministers against five of the mini-fronters. The Congress has also claimed a deputy ministership and some lucrative, power-centred portfolios. The KRSP which holds the two lucrative portfolios of PWD and Revenue, is determined to keep up its revolutionary image by clinging on to these portfolios. The Muslim League is reluctant to part with another lucrative portfolio, Education, and the power-packed portfolio, Home. The toppling game could start again in Kerala considering the

inordinate thirst for office among a section of the Congress leadership. But the final say rests with Mrs Gandhi. Doubtless, when the time is ripe she might give the green signal and then it would be the end of the Achutha Menon Ministry. Even in this contingency the League would emerge right side up. The Congress cannot do without the support of the League.

None
✓
Bihar

The Hunting Hounds

N. K. SINGH

BIHAR has been proved to be closely following the pattern set up by West Bengal; jail-killings have started here too. But, thank God, the iron has not yet entered the soul of Biharis and there was much hue and cry—termed by a local newspaper as “wide public resentment”—over the firing in Patna Jail on July 7 and in Hazaribagh Jail on July 25 in which 2 and 17 prisoners were killed respectively. At both these places the killings were attributed to alleged “jail-breaking” attempts by Naxalite prisoners.

In Patna Jail there was a scuffle between the prisoners and the jail staff over the death of a convict—described by the jail officials as a suicide case. However, it was alleged in the Assembly that the convict did not kill himself. Following the death of the fellow prisoner, the prisoners, in a riotous mood, allegedly damaged the office records, burnt the grain godown, damaged the central observation tower and ransacked the carpentry and iron-smithy shops of the jail. In the melee ten prisoners including five Naxalites, escaped. [Later on a CPI(ML) wall-poster claimed that “they are safe among the masses.”]. Indiscriminate firing started (about 150 rounds were fired) in which two prisoners were killed and 42 wounded. And as usual, the prisoners—especially the Naxal boys—were taught a good lesson.

There was a heated discussion in the State Assembly and the Chief Minister was compelled to order a judicial inquiry into the episode.

Hazaribagh

But what happened in Hazaribagh Central Jail on the evening of July 25 was “a case of coldblooded murder”—as a Patna daily called it. The newspaper commented: “It is for the first time in Independent India that so many prisoners have been killed in a firing inside the jail without any policeman or warden or any other jail official losing his life. It is also significant that no prisoner escaped from the jail. No gate was broken. There is no indication that any damage was done to the jail walls.”

The story, as gathered from various sources, goes like this: At about 3 p.m. some Naxalites attempted to break out. According to the jail officials, they exploded 15 bombs—later the number was brought down to a reasonable four—in their bid to escape. They were fired upon which quelled them down. But this was not enough. The jail authorities let loose the hardened criminals supported by wardens on the Naxalites. This, said the Deputy Commissioner of Hazaribagh, was in accordance with Rule 366 of the Jail Manual according to which “the convict prisoners could assault fleeing prisoners to maintain discipline within the jail premises. They could even use weapons except firearms to face such a situation.”

Later, the preliminary enquiry conducted by the same D.C. revealed that 13 Naxalites died as a result of the operation of Rule 366 of the Jail Manual. The report said that only four out of the 17 Naxalites killed died in the firing and the remaining 13 from “other types of injuries caused by convicts and officers.” So, the 109 rounds fired in the jail proved less fatal than Rule 366 of the Jail Manual. A deeper enquiry into the episode confirms this opinion. All the 27 injured Naxal prisoners undergoing treatment in the jail hospital had received bullet injuries. It means that all those who had received “other types of injuries caused by

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convicts and officers" died instantaneously.

The Chief Minister, Mr Bholu Paswan Shastri, was happy over the West Bengal way of tackling the Naxalite problem and he lost no time in declaring that the firing was "certainly justified"—even before a departmental investigation was held. After visiting the jail for 90 minutes he came to the unavoidable conclusion that the prisoners deserved to be murdered by the jail authorities. Congratulating those criminals who helped the authorities in "quelling the Naxalite attempt", he further disclosed that his Government was thinking of rewarding these 'lawful' criminals.

As expected, these 'reactionary' statements of the Chief Minister evoked wide resentment among the leaders of the 'leftist' brand. Almost all the 'left' parties demanded a judicial inquiry into the episode, in whose absence, a fire-eating MLC of the JSP threatened, it would be treated as "a plot to kill the Naxalites." But the Chief Minister would not yield. He instead ordered two official inquiries—one by the Commissioner of Chotanagpur and the other by Mr S. V. Sohni, additional member of the Board of Revenue—both of almost the same rank.

Pleading for judicial inquiry, a Patna newspaper wrote: "Nearly three weeks ago when there was firing in Bankipore Central Jail, in which two persons were killed, the Bihar Government took a few hours' time to decide that a judicial inquiry should be held into the incident. In the case of Bankipore Central Jail the prisoners did actually break jail and some actually escaped. In the case of Hazaribagh Central Jail there was no jail-breaking... If the legislature had been in session, the CM could not have treated the grave development so lightly."

What the outcome will be of the official inquiry—being held in camera—in the light of the Chief Minister's unequivocal verdict—the firing is "certainly justified"—can be easily imagined. Is there any bureaucrat with enough courage to come to a different conclusion?

Tripura

Farewell To A Governor

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

AUGUST 6, 1971. The scene: Agartala airport.

As the sun rose, carloads of the IAS, IPS, etc., stationed in Tripura flocked to the airport, followed by truckloads of police and armymen. These bureaucrat princes and their wives alighted from their cars with an air of aloof dignity and stood under the flowering creepers overhanging the entrance to the VIP room while the armed police personnel took up positions with a clatter of boots and rifles. The chatter of waiting passengers in the lounge stopped. The mellow playing of the police band was heard.

After some time the hard faces of the bureaucrats and their memsahibs who stood with garlands in hand glowed as the car carrying His Excellency the Lt. Governor was seen. The memsahibs scrambled to earn the distinction of garlanding him at the first chance. After other rituals had been gone through, the airport staff announced the imminent departure of the aircraft. At this stage some chaprasis were seen tying a rope around the car in which were seated the Lt. Governor, Mr A. L. Dias, his wife and the Chief Minister. The bureaucrats now lined up in parallel rows holding the rope in firm grip, as the devout Hindus do in a Rathajatra festival, and pulled the car to the ladder of the aircraft, singing hymns in chorus. While the Lt. Governor and his wife looked on benevolently, the Chief Minister could not but watch it with embarrassment.

As the plane took off and vanished in the western sky, profound grief seemed to have overpowered the souls of the bureaucrats and the memsahibs. Some of them could not even suppress a sob, as if they had all been left orphans. But the Chief Minister burst out in anger and told them that all that was quite unbecoming of a country wedded to socia-

lism. The bureaucrats hastened to explain that they had simply followed the military convention of bidding farewell to a dignitary of the rank of Lt. Governor.

It is needless to point out how much the bureaucrats adored Mr Dias. What comes to mind immediately in this connection is the manner in which he sought to endear himself to the masses during his eighteen months in office. Immediately after taking over as Lt. Governor Mr Dias turned his attention to reviving the pristine tradition of mass contact which the erstwhile maharajas of this State once used to maintain. Once he decided to pay a visit to a village, the bureaucrats saw to it that his decision was proclaimed in it by beating of drums and the village chief was left with elaborate instructions to arrange for his reception in keeping with the tradition of the days gone by. On the appointed day, people from the village as also from the adjoining villages came to receive the 'Lat Saheb' in a procession. Amidst blowing of trumpets (shingas) and wild thud of drums the Lt. Governor seated himself on a specially decorated dais. Then the function of the impromptu 'darbar' started with a dance recital by tribal belles, reminiscent of the ritual of invoking the pleasure of kings. After the pleasure of the Lt. Governor had thus been invoked, he asked the village chief to tell him the problems of his village. With folded hands and eyes downcast in reverence, the village chief said something as briefly as possible. The Lt. Governor heard him with kind attention and made a commanding signal to the official standing erect near the dais holding in his hands an embroidered vessel on which was placed a purse. At once the official held the vessel aloft within the reach of the Lt. Governor and the latter, in his turn, took the

purse from the vessel and handed it over to the village chief asking him to distribute the money among the poor villagers. And now it was for the villagers to shout 'Jai Lat Saheber Jai'.

The Government of India was indeed gracious enough to have inducted Mr A. L. Dias as Tripura's first Lt. Governor. High expectations were raised in both official and non-official circles that at last the problems which had so long been considered intractable were going to be solved because Mr Dias was said to be a man of high administrative genius. What was considered more important in this context was that he belonged to the ICS, the legacy of our colonial past and the glory of our semi-colonial present. He was no doubt quite alive to the problems of this State and perhaps that is why he began applying his administrative prowess to making the impenetrable bureaucracy more impenetrable, vesting it with more despotic powers to perpetuate the system. So far as government employees were concerned, his relationship with them was no better than that of a military dictator in the garb of a civil administrator, always hell-bent on stifling their voice of dissent. Unlike his predecessors, his genius lay in the art of acquiescing in every deed of the ruling clique.

His abhorrence knew no bounds when he saw people living in abysmal misery, the like of which he had never seen before. He felt he was sitting on the top of a volcano when he came to realise the massive unemployment situation in Tripura. His initial preoccupation with these problems soon made him fear that Tripura would also go the West Bengal way. So as a remedial measure he paid the highest premium on maintenance of 'law and order' and, next in order of priority was his emphasis on the 'green revolution.' As a result, Tripura saw swarms of police, CRP, BSF and the like, apart from a vast military force. The repressive measures were tightened up ruthlessly with a view to perpetuating the reign of terror. With these measures, the

halcyon days of the tyrant bureaucrats and the kulaks began and 'law and order' was maintained. What magic the much vaunted 'green revolution' has produced is still shrouded in mystery, but the unemployment situation and the wretched condition of the poor and landless peasants became worse. The only achievement that the people of this State have known during this period is the construction of a metalled road to a local

church where Mr Dias, a devout Christian, used to offer prayers.

If to be able to speed up the process of putrefaction is a testimony to administrative efficiency, then it must be said to the credit of Mr A. L. Dias that he has done his job fairly neatly. So much so, it has earned him as high an elevation as the Governorship of West Bengal. We have reasons to be happy over his departure.

Dual Power In Bolivia

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

(This article was written before the latest crisis in Bolivia where the right-wing army rebels are reported to have seized power.)

A struggle is about to break out with unusual intensity and ferocity as different sections of Bolivian society jostle for position and the forces of reaction prepare to strike at any moment. On the one hand stand the United Front Government representing the organised working class, peasants, revolutionary students and the national-minded sections of the armed force. On the opposite side of the spectrum with fingers on the trigger stand the diehard militarists, and a section of the smug and satisfied middle class. These are backed by the Roman Catholic hierarchy and the mining magnates of the U.S.

So far it is the United Front, which came to power in October, 1970, which has held the initiative and continues to do so, thanks to the all-round vigilance and the political mobilisation of the masses. The struggle reached a high level when the masses forced the convocation of the People's Assembly. This assembly which concluded its session in July, was not a gathering of deputies composed of the elite speaking on behalf of the "illiterates". *Panorama*, a Buenos Aires publication, reported that the 221 deputies who took their seats in the Palacio Legislativo on June 22 did not

look like stereotype legislators. They were the shirtless ones (tin miners working underground wear no shirts), Indian features, small dark heads, calloused hands, work clothes, no ties. Analysing the composition of the Assembly it said that the "shirtless ones" consisted of 60% of the organised workers, the others being peasants and students. The left-wing parties were also represented.

The holding of the Assembly in the Palacio Legislativo is itself significant. This is where the old assembly used to sit and which was closed by successive military juntas. The United Front asked President Torres to fling open its doors and this transformed a workers' and peasants' Congress into an Assembly of the People whose word and resolutions could well become law. The shirtless ones, the majority of whom are the Inca Indians who previously could only enter this Palacio as sweepers, now sit there as potential legislators. It is this that has made observers to remark that dual power is being established in Bolivia.

Bolivia, situated in the Andes, is a vast territory of 400,000 square miles but with a population of less than 4 million. It shot into world news with the tragic death of Che Guevara. Over 54% of the population are Inca Indians who had left a record of a great and mighty civilisation. The Euro-Americans, that is those of

mixed descent, are 30% while the Europeans are 11%. The Indians occupied the bottom rung of the economic ladder, being forced to work in the tin mines under inhuman conditions.

By October 1970 it became clear that the rule of President Ovando was finished. He had the distinction of alienating both the left and the right wing. In any case for some time the real President though invisible was the U.S. Ambassador. It was the latter who decided that Ovando had to go because American counter-strategy demanded that there be a strong bulwark to counter the revolutionary tide which was sweeping not only Chile but also Peru and Uruguay. Hence Bolivia was to be the bulwark of reaction. The right-wing generals thus ousted Ovando but they were not able to take power, for facing them was the armed might of the workers and peasants, which sprang from the united front leadership. The *London Times* said of the 4th October Revolution that General Torres with "the backing of the Air Force, students, left-wing workers, and a ragtag army of peasants emerged today as Bolivia's strong man." What the *Times* referred to as "ragtag" consisted of an army of 7,000 armed peasants who had kept their guns even though some of them were 50 years old. They marched to show their solidarity.

The revolution of October 4 was a bloodless one. Faced with the might of the masses the right-wing generals gave in. But the people who took to the streets burnt compromising police records of revolutionary nationalists and socialists, took over a U.S. building and sacked two U.S. information offices. At the same time the students, armed this time with guns surrounded the gaols which kept political prisoners. At gunpoint also

they took over the two right-wing newspapers. It was at the height of this revolutionary power that Torres, one-time commander of the Bolivian army, said, "I am a workers' President".

However, Torres has granted the People's Assembly only consultative power. The Assembly during its sessions passed resolutions urging expulsion of all U.S. military and intelligence forces and institution of workers' self-management of State-owned tin mines. In equipping themselves the workers have emerged from the plane of trade union activity. They have entered fully into the political arena with a socialist programme. The degree of its vigilance and the height of its political consciousness can be gauged by one of its resolutions which said "In the likelihood of a coup the Assembly Popular as expression of the workers' power will take the political and military leadership of the masses in the struggle. If a coup d'etat takes place the Assembly Popular will call for a general strike and the occupation of the factories and mines as the first response of the working masses."

It is almost 20 years since the Bolivian masses rose led by the MNR (National Revolutionary Movement), smashed, with the peoples' militia, the feudal apparatus and took over the commanding heights of the economy by nationalising the tin mines, owned chiefly by the U.S. companies. But this, far from improving their position, made their plight even worse. Nationalisation benefited only a tiny section who now got management jobs. The U.S. came back with a vengeance and it penetrated not only the MNR but the army as well. Thus in its heyday the U.S. had in Bolivia a swarm of advisers, USIS men, AID, Peace Corps, Alliance for Progress, instructors to train Rangers (who hunted and shot down Che Guevara) FBI and CIA agents. And such was the parlous state of the economy that Bolivia had to live on handouts from the U.S. surplus food stocks while the civil servants had to wait for grants from the U.S. which paid their sala-

ries. The nationalisation proved a fraud, for the Bolivians were saddled with a huge compensation payment for some old and useless mines. But the biggest blow was when the Bolivian Government, now a puppet of the U.S., refused to build a smelter plant although one was offered free of charge. The result was crippling transportation costs of tin ore which benefited the transport companies. The U.S. also controlled the price of tin which plummeted downwards according to the whims of the manipulators. The result was that nationalisation brought no profit but only increasing misery to workers. Those who toiled in the nationalised mines thus worked for the U.S. manipulators and transport barons. The tiny section of Bolivians in the nationalised concerns were hand in glove with the U.S. financiers. That is why the workers are now demanding self-management of the factories and mines.

The revolution of 1952 was a popular one, for the armed force was the people's militia. But in the intervening period the militia was slowly edged out by the regular army, part of which came under the U.S. and other foreign interests. But the people's militia was never completely eclipsed. Mr Cedric Belfrage (see *Explosion over Latin America*) when he visited Bolivia in 1962 met a volunteer militia in trim. It had six big machine guns, 250 rifles, all ten years old. A miner who was a leader of the militia told him: "I guess maybe we should keep our powder dry. But don't make a mistake, our fellows can shoot".

It is perhaps this, coupled with the vigilance of the masses, that is forcing the right-wing reactionaries to pause and wait.

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Dollar In The Doldrums—II

A. K. ESSACK

IF the export of capital was the first cause of the precipitous decline of the dollar, then the militarisation of the U.S. economy is the second major factor. The U.S. spends 30,000 million dollars annually in Indochina and another 5,000 million on the maintenance of its farflung bases. The extent of militarisation can be seen in the sharp rise in the defence budget which is another way of saying that the U.S. economy has become sharply militarised. The figures for 1953 and 1965 show that these coincided with the Korean war and the war in Vietnam.

U.S. War Expenditure (In U.S. million dollars)	
1947	15,000
1953	50,000
1965	50,000
1967	70,000
1969	80,000

In the current year, it has reached a staggering total of 1,018 thousand million dollars. Not only does this absorb 20% of the productive labour force, but also 100,000 U.S. firms are involved one way or another in military production. And not only that the most advanced research in the fields of physics, chemistry, nuclear energy is being conducted under the war atmosphere. What they are now applying in the military field will be made available to industry ten years later for civilian use. With the present trend, it would appear that the amount will increase in the near future. Nixon has already given the green light for the MIRV, the multi-purpose vehicle project. This can only mean greater and heavier expenditure for the U.S. masses to bear to enrich a few monopolists.

The militarisation of the economy is not something which is peculiar to the U.S. alone. In fact this is the trend in all imperialist countries in the world. Thus in 1914 the Wes-

tern countries spent on an average 5% of their national income on defence. Today the figure stands a 25% and in some cases a 30%.

The effect of a militarised economy is twofold. It leads to permanent inflation, and to a chronic deficit in the balance of payments. Both these are found in the U.S. economy. It is these factors which have so weakened the dollar that it can be knocked about by the mark, the yen, the swiss franc and the florin.

Down The Drain

A militarised economy employs a vast section of the population which otherwise would be on the streets. In doing so, it creates purchasing power in the people thus employed. A people in the streets, unemployed, have no purchasing power. Under normal conditions of production this purchasing power of the employed would see a corresponding amount of consumer goods on the market, or, if exported, an equivalent amount of money returned to the U.S. at least. But in a militarised economy this is not possible, for the goods produced do not find their way into the domestic U.S. market. Thus, if 30,000 million U.S. dollars are spent by the U.S. in Vietnam and Indochina, there is nothing to show in return. This amount of money "goes down the drain" so to say. The result in the U.S. itself is that there is more paper money in the form of the U.S. dollar, but few goods. This means that prices will rise. And since this has been going on for a number of years it means that the U.S. is faced with permanent inflation. It has been estimated that prices have arisen at a rate 5% to 6% annually and even U.S. economists concede that if this disastrous dip continues, in ten years time the dollar will be worth just half of its present rate. There was a time when countries just could not do what the U.S. is at present doing—work-

ing full-time to print paper money in the form of dollar bills. There is nothing to stop it now because the clause that the currency should have at least 25% gold reserve was quietly scrapped.

The dollar has been fixed as the world number one reserve currency by the Bretton Woods Agreement of 1944. It is the only currency which is valued in relation to gold at 35 U.S. dollars to an ounce. At that time the U.S. financial position was sound in relation to the Western currencies for they had become exhausted as a result of the war. At that stage the saying that the "dollar is as good as gold" went well for them.

But now in the seventies this is no longer so. The dollar is no longer as good as gold. Some say that it is no more valuable than a brass farthing, and in any case it is no longer a welcome guest in the monetary vaults of Western finance, particularly the EEC countries. So when the dollar leaves the U.S. it is like an inflated balloon, more air than substance. With this sick dollar the Western countries have put up for a long time. Now there is increasing talk that the dollar must go the same way as the pound sterling and franc—it must be devalued.

The second result of the militarisation of the economy has been that the economy has recorded huge deficits. In 1970, this totalled 12,500 million U.S. dollars. Only recently John Connally, the U.S. Secretary for the Treasury, announced to a glum Senate that the balance of payments deficit for the first quarter of this year stood at 5,500 million U.S. dollars. He added that "this level of deficit is not sustainable". In other words it means that the U.S. will not be able to halt the trend which at the present rate will mean a deficit of 22,000 million U.S. dollars at the end of the year.

Shock Absorbers

Those Western European countries who have been holding dollars, or exchanged them for their own currencies knew that by doing so they were helping the U.S. to finance the war in Indochina, as well as help reduce the growing deficit. In other words they were being used as shock absorbers. But this could not last long, particularly when an avalanche of dollars just descended on to their money markets. Some of them like France who have no particular love for the dollars have decided that the time has come when a stop must be made to prop up the dollar. This U.S. currency must go the same way as did the pound sterling in 1967 and the franc in 1969—i.e. devalue. Thus moves were made to oust the dollar from its leading position as No 1 world currency. Thus reports say that France had approached Japan with a proposal that they "lower simultaneously the current foreign exchange parity of leading nations including Japan—in such a case, the virtual devaluation of the dollar will be larger... it will bring down the value of the over-assessed dollar nearer to its actual value."

Actually the dollar was being quoted as much as 41 dollars for an ounce of gold—6 more dollars than as laid down. This then was the de facto position of the extent of devaluation of the dollar, particularly as the other currencies have maintained their position in relation to gold.

The U.S. now realises that there are no miracles which could save the dollar from its precipitous downhill decline. And there was no use pretending that all was well. In a hard hitting statement Conally said to the Foreign Committee of the Senate that "the simple fact is that in many areas, others are outproducing, outthinking, outworking us and out-trading us." He issued an appeal to U.S. businessmen and America's trading partners to pull her out of the financial bog which was slowly sucking her in. To her trading partners Connolly suggested three measures: The security agreements made with the free world must be maintained—maintain NATO

troops in Western Europe and Asia—but the burden must be shared fairly. Multi-national cooperation on behalf of developing countries must be broadened. The British, French and other imperialist nations must open up their former colonies for U.S. penetration by aid and trade. The competitiveness of the American economy must be encouraged by liberal trading agreements". He was referring to the Himalayan tariff walls erected by some countries to keep out the U.G. goods. He said, "Twenty years ago these practices must have been understandable, but could not be justified now that those countries have recovered their economic power".

This was not the first time that such appeals were made. Nor was it lost on America's trading partners that her own tariff walls were equally high. There were 200 bills before Congress, all aimed at protecting the U.S. monopolists from the invasion of foreign competitors.

These will fall on deaf ears as they did in the past. Therefore the only way out for the U.S. to do is what the

Heath government is doing in Britain, squeeze out as much as possible from the workers domestically and intensify exploitation of the countries of the Third World.

But the American working class like its British counterpart is highly organised. Inflation has hit them, and now the bosses are putting pressure on the trade union bureaucrats not to ask for wage increases. In other words, while inflation is galloping, the workers are asked to agree to wages being frozen. But are the American workers, railway signalmen and other rail workers went on mood to do so? Some time ago strike, paralysing decisive sectors of the U.S. economy such as steel, coal and automobiles. Within two weeks industrial activity was reduced by 5.8% Nixon had to climb down and promised to increase their wages. Like the one in Britain, America also has an anti-strike law. But as in Britain it is being defied by the workers.

The question one may ask is why does not U.S. imperialism pull out of Indochina and close up her farflung military bases and thus save the U.S.



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the ruinous drain of the dollar? The answer is she cannot, just as she cannot stop the export of the dollar where profits are higher. The militarisation of the U.S. economy was designed to save the U.S. from another disaster that overtook it in 1929 which was the crisis of overproduction. From then onwards capitalism realised that the era of laissez faire was finished for good and that there had to be State intervention to save

capitalism. The State could not take over existing enterprises, nor would it start new ones in competition with the existing monopolies. In fact the State had to be used to further the interests of the super-monopolies and it was in militarisation that the solution was found. This postponed the crisis which has now hit the U.S. harder than ever before.

The future then is one where there

will be increasing confrontation between the workers of industrialised countries and their own monopolist bourgeoisie and the imperialist countries and the former colonies. And just as capitalism is meeting with an increasingly radicalised and militant working class on its home ground, so too in the former colonies it is meeting with an increasingly awakening people.

Pakistan : Patterns Of Exploitation

SUMAN SARKAR

DADABHAI Naoroji in 1901 estimated the annual economic drain from India to England to be £30,000,000. In a recent Ph.D thesis Dr Aminul Islam of the Planning Department of erstwhile East Pakistan gives an estimate of the transfer of real resources at shadow prices from East Pakistan to West Pakistan which came to about Rs 50 crores per annum. Although an exact comparison of these two estimates is a difficult task it is nevertheless easy to understand that the magnitude for East Bengal has been large as compared to the estimate for India as a whole and that East Pakistan has been bleeding quite heavily during the fifties and sixties.

The general picture emerging from the meagre statistical information available also fits easily into Dadabhai Naoroji's scheme explaining external and internal economic drains. A logical corollary may be that Pakistan's dual economy had a duality which was based primarily upon disparities between two geogra-

phic regions of which one was the metropolis and the other a colony.

The elements of exploitation have persistently been present almost in all spheres of economic relationships as between the east and the west, and the politically dominating west's so called national economic policy tacitly sanctioned such exploitation during the postwar decades. Thus although plans for economic development came into existence they resulted in a gradual impoverishment of the majority of the people in East Pakistan and the building up of West Pakistan.

Apart from the political factors, some initial differences in the structural orientation of the two regions comprising Pakistan largely determined the relative strength of the exploiting classes in the west. The

industrially less developed east has had a population density much greater than that in the West. Its infra-structural facilities were almost absent at the time of partition. Consequently her dependence on agriculture was all pervasive. But the monsoon rice-jute agriculture of the riverine east constantly suffered from uncertainties associated with weather and severe shortages of capital while the irrigated wheat-cotton-rice agriculture of West Pakistan was in a much more advantageous position. Agriculture in the east was also affected by extreme poverty in contrast to the kulak agriculture in the west. This is in part reflected in the differences in the size distribution of farms as between the two regions (Table 1).

Table 1

Size Distribution of Farms in East and West Pakistan

Size of farms (acres)	per cent of Farms	East		West	
		per cent Farm area	per cent of Farms	per cent Farm area	per cent of Farms
Less than 5	78	43	49	10	
5 to under 12.5	19	38	28	22	
12.5 to under 25	2.5	14	15	26	
25 and above	0.5	5	8	42	

Average farm size (acres) 3.5 10.1

Source : Pakistan Census of Agriculture 1960.

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In the industrial sphere, on the other hand one reason behind the discrepancy between the west and the east might be the operation of different social and political forces limiting the growth of local entrepreneurship in the east. According to a recent international conference paper¹ the East Pakistani Muslims did not have much interest in trade or commerce, nor did they have either the opportunity or the liquid capital to participate in industry and trade. As for the Muslim immigrants in East Pakistan who had a better entrepreneurial capacity, the prevailing attitude of the industrial licensing authority was one which virtually treated them as outsiders. On the other hand, most of the East Pakistani Hindus for obvious reasons could not benefit by the system of open general licensing and the Korean boom. As a result windfall profits earned during the Korean boom could not go into industrial investment in East Pakistan as they did in West Pakistan. Furthermore, since there was no pre-established administrative set-up for starting a government in the east and since the Muslims there were politically, educationally and economically backward than the Hindus most of the top places were gradually filled with West Pakistani officers.

In West Pakistan better infrastructural facilities were available from the very beginning and entrepreneurship came from the Muslim immigrants from India. As a result a number of industries including cotton textiles, woollen cloth, sugar, fruit canning, chemicals, telephone, cement, fertilizer etc could be easily developed by the PIDC. Furthermore, over 70% of the total general administrative expenditures including defence was incurred in West Pakistan during the initial years.

¹ M. Akhlaqur Rahaman : The Role of the Public Sector in the Economic Development of Pakistan"—Paper presented at the conference in Kandy organized by the International Economic Association, Ceylon, June, 1969.

A Pakistani Strategy

The development policy of the Government underlying its Five Year Plans was characterized by two fundamental objectives, namely mobilization of economic surplus from agriculture to the modern sector and promotion of the growth of entrepreneurship. As for the first objective the idea was one of redistributing income in favour of the savers in the higher income groups as against the lower income groups. Since the feasibility of a direct taxation of agriculture was very limited under the prevailing tax structure, mainly dependent upon foreign trade and the narrow urban sector for most of its revenue yield and since the financial sector was too undeveloped, a combination of deficit financing and maintaining adverse terms of trade for agriculture was chosen by the Government. Thus with an overvalued domestic currency representing a tax on agricultural exports and with additional taxes on particular traditional exports the Government was ultimately successful in taxing the poverty-ridden agriculture more heavily than any direct taxation could achieve.

However, this policy of indirect income transfer had certain side effects which cannot be overlooked. First, lack of principles and even favouritism associated with the licensing policy, a policy of deficit-financing and the simultaneous existence of artificially achieved low wage-goods prices in the urban areas were responsible

for the abnormally high profits earned by a few inefficient industrial units producing import-substitute consumer goods. There however existed an under-utilization of capacity in some other industrial units for want of imported inputs. Second, this notorious licensing policy was accompanied by a credit policy which paved the way for further concentration of economic power. On the whole, it can be seen that for East Pakistan the Pakistani policy of transferring incomes from the agricultural sector to the modern sector and the concentration of wealth in the hands of an urban few, mainly belonging to West Pakistan, were a source of what Dadabhai would have called 'internal economic drain'.

The fact that Pakistan's development strategy in essence was one which tended to make the relatively backward region of the country poorer is evident from the disparities observed in respect of regional financial as well as physical capital investments and inputs and the discriminations between the two regions regarding specific agricultural incentive policies.

The division of total investments between the two regions had been uneven since the pre-plan days and continued to be so during the plan periods. Recently however, public investment in infrastructure showed a tendency to increase in the east. But the rates of growth of private investment as well as total investment have been much higher in West Pakistan than in the east (Table 2).

Table 2

Growth of Total Investment in Pakistan
1963-64 to 1967-68 (in crores of rupees)

Year	East Pakistan				West Pakistan			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
			(3) as % of				(7) as % of	
	Private	Public	Total GRPEP		Private	Public	Total GRPWP	
1963-4	54.8	164.0	218.8	11.7	209.1	167.6	376.7	88.8
1964-5	81.7	172.1	253.8	13.5	261.4	198.6	460.0	30.7
1965-6	68.1	147.2	215.3	11.0	239.7	164.1	403.8	17.2
1966-7	81.9	219.0	300.9	14.9	291.8	196.0	487.8	19.6
1967-8	103.8	271.5	375.3	17.2	364.7	228.5	593.2	22.5

Original Sources: Public sector figures—Government of Pakistan, Final Evaluation of the Second Five Year Plan (1960-65) and the Mid-Plan Review of the Third Plan, April, 1968. Private sector figures: Estimates of the C.S.O. quoted by the Planning Commission in the Mid-Plan Review of the Third Plan.

GRPEP—Gross Regional Product of East Pakistan

GRPWP—Gross Regional Product of West Pakistan

As regards the role of the private sector in industrial development it is interesting to note that in recent years private investment in East Pakistan accounted for only about 22% of Pakistan's total private investment. This lag in East Pakistan's private investment is however directly related to the distribution of industrial loans between the east and the west by the different specialized financial institutions (see Table 3). East Pakistan's share in these loans has evidently been much smaller than that of West Pakistan.

Table 3

Regional Distribution of Loans

By P.I.C.I.C., I.D.B.P., and H.B.F.C
1961-62 to 1966-67
(in crores of rupees)

Year	P.I.C.I.C.		I.D.B.P.		H.B.F.C.	
	East	West	East	West	East	West
1961-62	2.9	9.5	8.7	8.1	—	—
1962-63	4.7	10.3	11.0	6.9	1.2	3.7
1963-64	0.9	13.2	19.5	14.9	3.2	3.2
1964-65	3.8	22.7	8.6	15.0	3.5	3.6
1965-66	7.6	14.0	4.7	14.9	3.2	2.9
1966-67	—	—	15.1	17.3	3.0	3.0

Source: M. Akhlaqur Rahman, The Role of Public Sector in the Economic Development of Pakistan—Paper presented at the conference held by the International Economic Association at Kandy, Ceylon in 1969.

P.I.C.I.C.—Pakistan Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation.

I.D.B.P.—Industrial Development Bank of Pakistan.

H.B.F.C.—House Building Finance Corporation.

In agriculture again, there was a marked contrast between the east and west. According to one estimate* while public investment in agriculture and irrigation in constant prices amounted in the east to Rs 150 million, that in the West was Rs 285 million in 1959-60. The corresponding amounts in 1964-65 were Rs 210 million and Rs 386 million for the east and the west respectively. It should however, be noted that the 1964-65 figure for West Pakistan would become much larger if the Rs 910 million expenditure incurred by the Government in the Indus Basin Works were also to be taken into account. The quality of the extension work in the east also was much inferior to that in the west.

The agricultural price policy of the Government also in some cases contributed to the widening of east-west disparities. The price stabilization measure adopted by the Government may be a case in point. A scheme of buffer stocks made up mainly of the PL 480 supplies made possible the stabilization of wheat price in West Pakistan during the early 1960s. This wheat price stabilization, accompanied by an enormous duty reduction in the case of cotton, contributed to the growth of cotton output there. But the price of rice was not effectively stabilized in the east. As a result the cash crop producers, especially the small farmers, were adversely affected in East Pakistan.

Finally, it is interesting to note that the disparity was even more glaring in the case of distribution of two of the most important agricultural inputs, namely seed and fertilizer, between the two regions (see Tables 4 & 5 below). The availability of Government subsidized tubewells for irrigation purposes have also all along been much more restricted in the east than in the west.

* G. F. Papanek; *Pakistan's Development: Social Goods and Private Incentive* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1967).

Table 4
Fertilizer Distribution in Pakistan in Recent Years

Year	Quantity In thousand nutrient tons	
	West	East
1960-61	31	24
1964-65	87	45
1965-66	71	54
1966-67	116	77
1967-68	193	115

Sources: East Pakistan ADC; West Pakistan ADC; Economic Survey of East Pakistan 1967-68

Table 5

Distribution of Improved Seeds of Major Crops

Year	(000 Tons)	
	East Pakistan	West Pakistan
1961-62	3	—
1964-65	9	31
1965-66	8	56
1966-67	6	38
1967-68*	12	128

Source: Mid-Plan Review of the Third Five Year Plan 1965-70, and Economic Survey of East Pakistan 1967-68.

* planned

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Youth And Cinema

MRIGANKA SEKHAR RAY

AS almost everywhere in the world, a media revolution is invading the American campuses and a new generation of film-makers, fed constantly on film and TV tradition, is emerging from the schools and colleges. They are bitten by the celluloid bug and the pain often results in the highest forms of artistic ecstasy. These young people start their training at a very early stage in their career, and even during their childhood, they become adept in cranking their cameras, often the popular 8 mm mini, and they are also drawn toward animation. They look around and shoot what they see. At later stages of their film-training, mostly in secondary and elementary schools or in the more specialised courses in NYU and UCLA they are provided with specific and professionalised technical know-how. As they grow into maturity, loving and living with films, they develop a new kind of mentality a completely sight-oriented mind. Temperamentally, they are restless, passionate and bubbling with revolutionary ideas and their style reflects their peculiar mental make-up.

Recently in Calcutta we have seen a collection of such student films, about a hundred of them, in an eleven-day programme sponsored by the American University Centre. The film-makers represent a cross-section of the American youth, some in their early teens, others in the prime of their twenties; some just beginning to learn the craft, others have learnt most of it, but what startles us most is the tremendous impact the film medium is creating on these young people and it is really amazing to find so many creative minds at work. The films are varied in nature and style, ranging from complex studies in abstract designs to straightforward and realistic documentation. Many of the young folks making their first films are naturally fascinated by animation

and colour drawings and there are quite a number of interesting experiments in this genre. *Mathematical Integration* is a delightful essay in animation, absorbing the formal patterns enumerating the mathematical principles and *M.o Mondo* is a Dadaist study of a blind infant as he gropes along an uncharted path, full of turns and twists symbolising the dark recesses of the womb. The simple poetry of pop culture often has a great pull for these film-makers. The films *Eulogy*, the fictionalised tragedy of a pop-singer, *Jeremy*, an excellent blending of music and painting and *It's About The Carpenter*, a simple carpenter's encounter with the members of the hostile society while he is carrying a cross to the Greenwich village, have all charm and technical expertise. Satires there are many, most of them directed against the conventional values of the mechanised world and often the modest irony turns into violent indictment, as in *Electric Labyrinth*, imparting a horrifying but prophetic vision of a soulless computer-dominated society. Surrealism also finds much favour with the boys, and films like *Incident In A Glass Blower's Shop*, *Rhythmic Oppressive Apr 23*, we find man's revolt against his own personality told in a highly formalised manner. There are also cinema-verite type films, harnessing the camera to make film with purposeful social messages of protest against the establishment. There are some drab, unproductive and pretentious ventures like *Radio Movie* or *Song For My Sister* where the limits of the medium are stretched to a deadend. The ninety-minute-long feature *Whiskey Flats* is an exciting film dwelling on the reality of the film and the reality of day-to-day existence and problems arising out of the conflict between these two types of reality. Done with a high degree of exuberance and freshness, this film might be regarded as the summing

up of the youthful experiences with the camera.

What then, has this fare got to offer to the young people of this country, who are either trying to break into films or are hovering on the fringe? Truly, one envies these film-makers who have all the opportunities. The picture here is so very frustrating. But no purpose is served by useless brooding, nor should it be imagined for a moment that any solution of our crisis would be served on a platter by foreign agencies. Our problems are our own and we have to fight these out.

Letters

Cossipore-Baranagar

The gruesome, cold-blooded murder of about 100 youth said to be Naxalites in the Cossipore-Baranagar area is a heinous crime to be condemned by all left and democratic-minded people. It also shows that our Naxalite friends, with all their sincere yearning for Revolution are playing with fire, and that people are more terrorised than politicised. In this suffocating atmosphere of terror and tension, they are losing their sympathy with the whole left movement. They are increasingly developing a fear psychosis, a sense of desperation and prevarication. That is why they pathetically fail to resist the 'white terror' loosed by the fascist ruling clique. It is a horrible but painfully rewarding experience for the left and democratic movement in West Bengal. It should make a critical analysis of the sad incident and try to draw the right lesson so as to deal a death blow to the foul game being played by the imperialists, monopolists, and their local henchmen.

Individual or group terrorism is alien to Marxism-Leninism. It devours its own creator. Sushital Ray Choudhury died fighting against this line and Ashu Majumdar and others died implementing it.

CHARBAK KAR
Calcutta

Count the dead and compare and contrast the atrocities, you will find that never before in India's history had a group of young men, be they criminals or revolutionaries, suffered such torture at the hands of the police as the young Naxalites. They, however, excite opposite reactions (Mr Chakrabarty's letter, August 21). A different reaction took place in Czarist Russia about the 'Nihilists'. The great Russian writer, Ivan Turgenev, expressed this in a poem:

To you who desire to cross this threshold, do you know what awaits you?

I know, replied the girl.

Cold, hunger, abhorrence, derision, contempt, abuse, prison, disease, and death.

I know, I am ready, I shall endure all blows.

Not from enemies alone, but also from relatives, from friends.

Yes, even from them...

Are you ready even to commit a crime?

I am ready for crime, too.

Do you know that you may be disillusioned in that which you believe, that you may discover that you were mistaken, that you ruined your young life in vain?

I know that, too.

Enter!

The girl crossed the threshold, and a heavy curtain fell behind her. Fool! said some one, gnashing his teeth.

Saint! some one uttered in reply.

SUSMITA SEN
Calcutta

More than 100 youths have been killed at Baranagar-Cossipore by Naba Congress mastans and the police. Should not the 'world famous' intellectuals of West Bengal raise their voices against this massacre of revolutionary youths? When Yahya Khan's military killed the common people of East Bengal, we saw their crocodile tears; but when the Indian military kills Naga and Mizo rebels—they keep silent. When Yahya tries Sheikh Mujib, they are terribly shocked; but when police-CRP-military and Congress and CPM

mastans are killing revolutionary youths, they are silent. Can you show any reason why the intellectuals of West Bengal should not be called running dogs of Indian reactionaries?

The CPM gave a call to "rise up" against this "mass massacre" at Cossipore-Baranagar. Who are these "masses"? Are they not the same people whom CPM leaders call "anti-socials" and "police agents"? Why should people "rise up" against the massacre of police agents? And, according to the jargon of the CPM "to be vocal" means to cry out in a shriller voice in processions; and "to rise up" means "to vote for the CPM".

SATYA BISWAS
Belegkata, Calcutta

Birbhum

A. B. (August 7), referring to the question of popularity of the CPI (ML) in Birbhum, asks whether absence of effective opposition means popularity. Of course not everybody supports the party, of course there are elements who do not offer resistance out of fear. But why should the common people come out to save pawnbrokers or other exploiters? Their sympathies will be with the CPI (ML).

A. B. says "The 'Red Army' is nowhere to be found but the common people are suffering. A 'Red Army' is not dropped from heaven nor sold on the market. It is formed by the Party. When the Party set itself to this work the onslaught from the ruling class came. The CPI (ML) has succeeded in showing the people the true nature of the ruling class.

At the end A. B. pretends sympathy for revolution. He fears that 'potential revolution' is being destroyed by pseudo-revolution. What is a 'potential revolution'? Perhaps "Khetee Kishan Kale Majur Jot Bandho, A Larhai Banchar Larhai, A Larhai Jitte Habe, Amader Sangram Chalchhe Chalbe". A. B. is afraid of a beggar having his pocket picked.

BIJAY GHOSHAI
Suri, Birbhum

Treaty Of Peace

Despite stout official denial, the Indo-Soviet Treaty is nothing but a defence pact, a military alliance. It is similar to the Soviet-UAR Treaty of Friendship And Cooperation. The latter contains specific provisions for training facilities, supply of military hardware and equipment, etc. True, there are no such specific provisions in the body of the Indo-Soviet Treaty. But without entering into any formal protocol, India has been getting these facilities from the Soviet Union ever since the autumn of 1962. Is it not a fact that when we received military hardware and equipment like the MIG, helicopters, mountain guns, missiles of various types and submarines, etc., our boys went to the Soviet Union for the necessary training there? Our boys are still getting various sorts of training in the Soviet Union to improve their combat effectiveness in various fields.

In fact this treaty has given the *de jure* status to what has so far been the *de facto* practice, probably for the purpose of reassuring Indians. A top official of the External Affairs Ministry, when asked whether, in the context of the background, it will be correct to say that whatever existed so far in spirit has been reduced to writing, replied: "Yes. It was there in spirit; but it needed a body. And we have provided it by this treaty. However, body without spirit is of no use."

But against whom is this treaty directed? Is it against Pakistan? Or, somebody else? If so, who is this somebody? It is now admitted that talks on this treaty had been going on, in utmost secrecy in Moscow, for about two years, i.e. the talks began in the second half of 1969, probably around September that year when the then External Affairs Minister, Mr Dinesh Singh, went to Moscow. Those were the days when India and Pakistan were stated to be basking in the glorious sunshine of 'Tashkent' and enjoying Soviet support in terms of arms supply and other benefits. It may also be

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recollected that Mr Brezhnev, at the Conference of pro-Moscow Communist and Workers' parties of quite a number of countries held in Moscow from June 5 to 17, 1969, for the first time spoke of the desirability of "collective security" in South-East Asia to "repel any intrigue of the forces of imperialism and expansionism". Those were the days when the 'hot line' connecting the White House and the Kremlin was very much 'hot' with talk of cooperation and collaboration in "partnership for peace". Those were the days when Sino-Soviet border clashes took place. Speaking on the subject at a meeting of the Congress Party's Standing Committee Mr Dinesh Singh said "there should be no doubt about India's sympathies (for Russia)". Later on Mr Singh made a similar pronouncement in the Lok Sabha.

A little earlier, on March 19, 1969, All India Radio in its 8.15 morning English news broadcast gave this important piece of news: "A member of the Presidium of the Soviet Peace Committee, Mr Pyotr Reshetov, who is now on a visit to India, has suggested the constitution of a common front of the peace-loving peoples of the Soviet Union, India and Burma against the adventurist policies of the Chinese Government. He was answering a question on the recent Sino-Soviet border clashes at a press conference in Ahmedabad yesterday..."

Indian Express of March 20, 1969 carried an item under the caption "Russia Seeks Common Front" to dish out the same story.

Those were the days when the hold on power of Mrs Indira Gandhi's Government was too insecure for any such major move (Bangalore session of the AICC made the position worse). It is clear that it has been marking time so long for an 'auspicious moment' which has now been provided by the sabre-rattling of General Yahya Khan and by a probable thaw in Sino-American relations. Thus even the fig-leaf was no longer considered necessary for India to become a willing but unequal and weak partner in Brezhnev's

'collective security' programme. Our 'China policy' has failed and non-alignment is gone.

How long should we allow ourselves to be exploited by the Soviet Union and continue to fight its war against China as ours? The Sino-Indian conflict is nothing but a tragic projection of the Sino-Soviet conflict. India has been pushed into it. The process started in 1955 when the Soviet Prime Minister, Mr Bulganin, paid an official visit to our country during which he was accompanied by the CPSU Chief, Mr N. S. Khrushchev. A former officer in our External Affairs Ministry recently wrote that by 1955 Khrushchev and Nehru "were exchanging views on the need for containing China and both felt that for at least two or three decades China would not be strong enough to upset the apple cart".

The assessment proved totally wrong and the apple cart got badly upset.

Will the new treaty bring us more embarrassment? Or, will Brezhnev's "collective security" programme fare better than the Khrushchev scheme for 'containing China'? Whatever may be the reply, will not our leaders pause and ponder a little even in this late hour to keep our options free?

KALIKINKAR CHAUDHURI
New Delhi

China And Pakistan

The letter 'Good American' (August 7) from Charbak contains mountain-high terminological perversion. China's adherence to "Five Principles" is so steadfast that her diplomatic ties are increasing rapidly. And none but the blind and deaf would say that China does not 'oppose the imperialist policies of aggression and war'. To meet Nixon does not in the least mean subscribing to Nixon's dirty policies. Read the recent speech of Chou En-lai to the American intellectuals.

Name a single instance of revolutionary struggle (not a mere arms-wielding struggle) that China has not

supported or assisted—ideologically or even materially. Name a single country (regardless of the socio-political character of the ruling class) whose anti-imperialist role, if any, has not been lauded by China.

To 'Charbak' East Pakistan's Mujib-led gruesome episode is a revolutionary struggle. Based in Calcutta's MLA hostel, patronised by anti-labour Sanjoy Sen, Mahindra etc., nurtured by Indira, the so-called provisional government of 'Bangladesh' is more concerned about itself and about the location of the would-be capital than about the workers and peasants. To date it has not said anything about the workers and peasants—not even for the sake of a programme. Revolutionary indeed!

The General Line says, "On the national question the world outlook of the proletarian party is internationalism, and not nationalism and oppose reactionary nationalism... The 1960 statement says, 'Communists expose attempts by the reactionary section of the bourgeoisie to represent its selfish, narrow class interest as those of the entire nation; they expose the demagogic use by bourgeois politicians of socialist slogans for the same purpose...'" Can the Mujib-led nationalism claim to be even progressive? Not when the primary objective was to seek recognition of its demagogic entourage from the imperialist powers. Mujib had East Pakistan's neo-bourgeoisie in mind; not a general cross-section of the Bengali nationality and certainly not the working class. Devoid of an elementary anti-imperialist platform, devoid of any programme for the working people how can it be expected that nationalism Mujib-style would be supported by China—and certainly not when that chauvinism acts as an appendage or tool of the Indian reactionaries.

It is malicious to say that Mao Tse-tung is 'disarming the revolutionary forces in Bangladesh'. Who are these 'revolutionary forces'? EBR, EPR etc, once a part and parcel of the Pakistan Army? Of course the 'revolutionary forces' are now being stren-

thened by Indian Armed Forces—only to precipitate a war that cannot definitely be a war of the Indian people. The atrocities of the Yahya-led Government are undeniable. As in the past, the people of Pakistan (both wings) would fight him and his government and would decide their own destiny. The Indian Government's aggressive claim to lead the Pakistani people's struggle is not only ridiculous but also a fraudulent plot. At the moment the Indian reactionaries are waging a war against us and to fight them will be our war.

We all ((including 'Charbak') must decide either to fight the Indian reactionary neo-fascist ruling agents and their armed forces or align with them and carry out gun-running, subversion and landings of the type staged in Cuba by Kennedy & Co. The choice is ours and there isn't any fence to sit on.

AMAL SUR
Howrah

Kataragama

The story in your paper *Kataragama Desecrated* describing how members of the Ceylon Army publicly shot a girl, alleged to be an insurgent, in the Hindu holy city of Kataragama, is very widely known in Ceylon; but in the whole of India, only your journal has had the courage to publish it. What has happened to the devout Hindus of India? Aren't their newspapers horrified that Kataragama, the most sacred city in Ceylon for Hindus, the abode of that most powerful deity Skanda (Murugan), the city to which thousands of Indians flock every year (with foreign exchange granted by the Indian Government) has been desecrated? Support for a friendly 'socialist' Government which is crushing its revolutionary youth is more important than all the gods of the Hindu pantheon.

However it must be noted that the Ceylon Government took a dim view of the Kataragama incident. The politicians of Ceylon, all very superstitious, used to visit Kataragama on every occasion, to request the god for

victory at elections and to offer thanks after the event. The act of the Army alarmed the Government, for what use would all the Indian, U.S. and British arms and helicopters be if God Skanda turned hostile? Hence a trial of three army men involved in the killing has begun. This single trial is being used to show that "democratic" governments respect the democratic rights of citizens. But what about the many thousands of young men and women killed in the other towns and villages of Ceylon? To bring their killers to trial would involve the trial of almost the entire Ceylon police force and the Army. The truth about army and police atrocities is known in Ceylon. But our press is gagged. We therefore rely on courageous journals to reveal the sordid truth about Bandaranaike Socialism.

S. B. PIYADASA
Colombo

Not Weakened

Bourgeois papers are now busy reporting that Naxalism is on the wane as a result of the serious intra-party conflict, between Mr Charu Mazumdar and Mr Ashim Chatterjee and of the stern steps taken by the police. But ideological struggle and its correct handling strengthen a party instead of weakening it. So the contradiction between Mazumdar and Chatterjee will enrich the party when it is able to take the right line.

DEBASIS BHATTACHARYA
Calcutta

Terrorism And Marxism

Apropos Mr Chakrabarty's letter (August 21), of course, terrorism, both in our country and in Russia has proved a failure, but so has revisionism, so has ministerialism. Yet they appear again and again in this or that form all the world over. Why? Because the conditions that give rise to these features still operate, so long there are classes, there will be class struggle; so long there is

capitalism there will be revisionism and its sin—anarchism. Lenin said revisionism will remain up to the periphery of the revolution. Mr Chakrabarty has thoroughly missed the points of Mr Mitra's (not Dutta's) article.

NIRMAL KUMAR CHAKRAVARTY
Calcutta

Leaderless People

I am afraid the Awami League leadership will crack up. On the one hand a large number of leaders are living in hotels and depositing their money in Indian banks; on the other millions of refugees are moving into camps or living under the sky. There is no communication between the leaders and the people.

SUJIT DEV
Calcutta

Vidyasagar

Mr Dipak Banerjee's letter on Vidyasagar (July 24) is an unreasonable attack on Mr Benoy Ghose's analysis of that great personality. Does Mr Banerjee expect from a Marxist an un-Marxist analysis? Besides, irrespective of his particular world outlook, it is on the very subject of Vidyasagar that Mr Ghosh has conducted his research. He is the Vidyasagar scholar of Calcutta University. He certainly has not painted Vidyasagar as an enemy. He has simply analysed Vidyasagar's role in the historical context with its limitations. If Vidyasagar desired "to educate the whole people", how can one explain the quotations given in the article? Moreover, desire and action cannot be equated. I would say that, despite his many shortcomings, Sir Ashutosh did much to transform Vidyasagar's desire into reality.

TARUN CHATTERJEE
Calcutta

Our agent at Varanasi

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AUGUST 28, 1971

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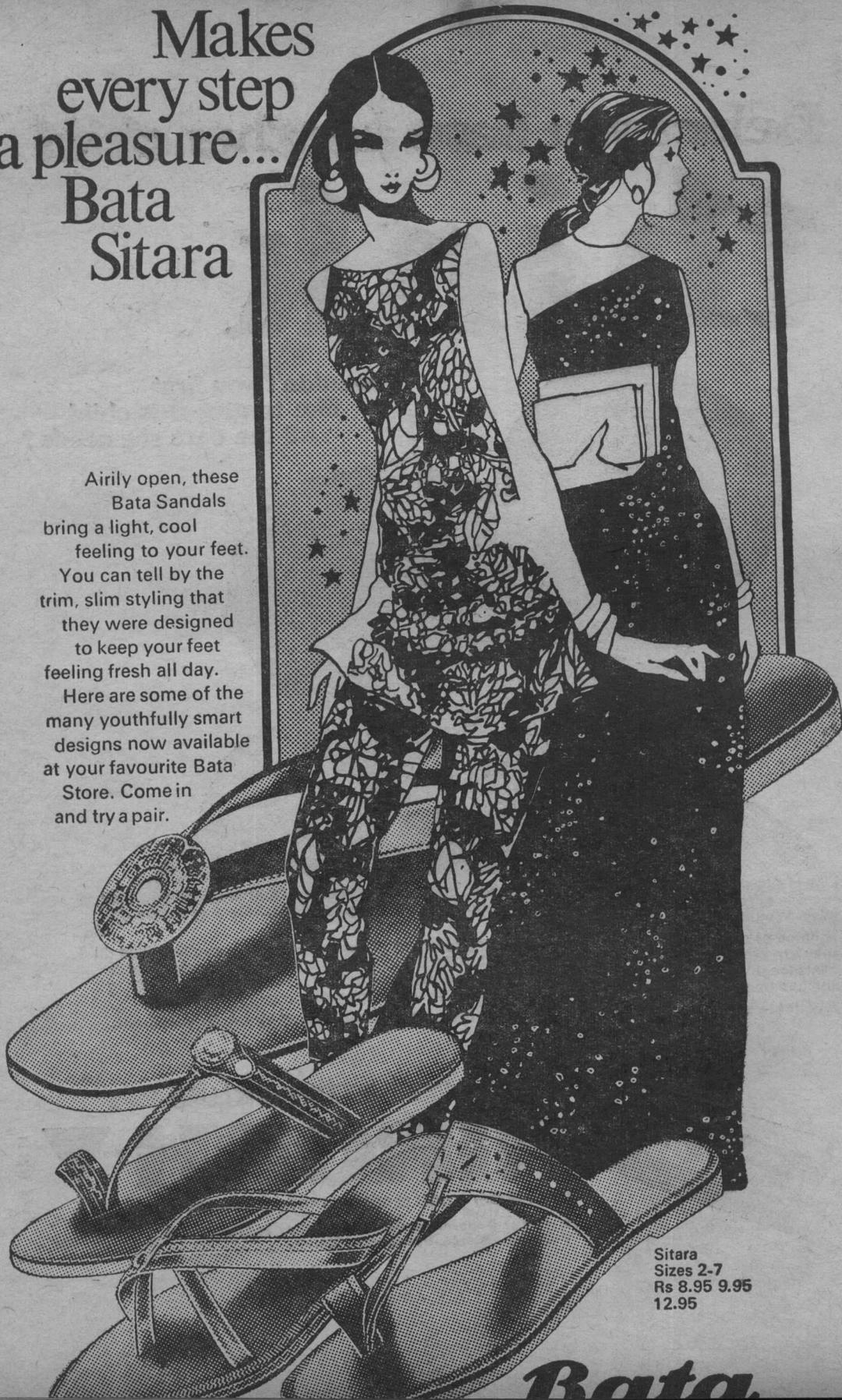
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