

Historic March

Mujib Rejects Enquiry Commission

Students Appeal for Overflight Ban

SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN in a statement on Thursday de-nounced the enquiry commission instituted by the Martial Law authority in Dacca on Wednesday. Mujib thought that such a commission could serve no useful purpose and said that the people of Bangladesh would not cooperate with such a commission in any respect as the commission "is shut out from inquiring into the actual atrocities".

Following is the text of the statement:

"I regret that the 'Commission of Enquiry' which has been announced, on the face of it, can not satisfy the demand voiced by me on behalf of the people of Bangladesh. Its very constitution by a Martial Law Order and the provision for submission of its report to the Martial Law Authority are highly objectionable.

The terms of reference themselves betray the inten-

tion of pre-judging the most fundamental issue and to shut out inquiry into the real issues. The only term of reference is: 'To go into the circumstances which led to the calling of the Army in aid of civil power in various parts of East Pakistan between March 2 and March 9.'

The fundamental issue is thus pre-judged, since what has to be inquired into is whether the deployment and use of force was in aid of ulterior political purposes and not at all in aid of civil power. The 'Commission' is further shut out from inquiring into the actual atrocities, which have been reported from various parts of Bangladesh, involving thousands of casualties. Thus, even the number of casualties and circumstances in which unarmed civilians were shot down can not be enquired into.

Such a 'Commission' can serve no useful purpose. Indeed such an enquiry would

not at all be genuine enquiry aimed at arriving at the truth, but would be a mere device to mislead the people.

"We cannot, therefore, accept such a Commission. The people of Bangladesh shall not cooperate with such a 'Commission' in any respect. No one should nominate any member to this 'Commission' nor serve as its member.

"On behalf of the people we had made a four-point demand on the 7th of March, 1971. One of those demands was that for fair, impartial and public enquiry with proper terms of reference. The nominal and piece-meal acceptance of one of those points and that too in the manner described above can not contribute to the solution of the grave crisis that faces us".

—The Pakistan Observer

March 19, 1971.

Ex-Air Force Men Ready For Action

Pledge Their Services At Mujib's Command

A PEOPLE'S REPORT

Wing Commander (Retd.) Baqie said yesterday that in this crucial moment of nation, the Ex-PAF officials were not sitting idle. They were thinking to lend their active support to make the people trained up in arms. He said that in time he would see Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to have the Programme for future course of action. He was delivering presidential address at a meeting of the Ex-PAF personnel held at Central

Shaheed Minar yesterday.

He said, "We all have been turned to one Bangladesh under the strong leadership of Banga Bandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and appealed to all to make the hands of Banga Bandhu still stronger by lending active support.

Mr. Tajuddin an Ex-PAF personnel while addressing the meeting said that it was not the time to get the things delayed by addressing, a positive programme must be taken to face the enemies. He said, "We must train up our people in the

modern technique of fighting out the enemies", in the light of what we have learnt so long during our active service in PAF.

Mr. Khaleque an accused of the so-called Agartala conspiracy case said "Sgt. Zabur has laid down his life for the emancipation of Bangladesh and still he is a guiding spirit to all the people of Bangladesh to support strongly with their whole heartedness to fulfil the dream of Sgt. Zabur.

—The Pakistan Observer,

March 19, 1971.

From The People, Dacca, March 19, 1971

Friday appealed to foreign powers who supply arms to Pakistan Government to stop use of these arms against the people of Bangladesh.

Naming these as the United States of America, China, Russia and Iran, the student leaders said that they (those powers) had supplied these arms to protect the country from foreign aggression 'not for use against the people'. The people of Bangladesh want support of these countries in their struggle, the statement said.

The Students' Action Committee regretted that some planes carrying arms and armed personnel were allowed refuelling in Ceylon. They appealed to India, China, Ceylon, Burma and Soviet Union not to allow overflight of military planes.

—The Pakistan Observer,

March 19, 1971

Mujib-Yahya Talks Resume Today

SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN and President Yahya Khan are likely to have their third round of talks today (Friday) at 11 in the morning.

President Yahya, who arrived in Dacca on Monday presumably for talks with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with a view to sorting out the present constitutional crisis in the country, had two and a half hours' exclusive talks with the Awami League chief in President Lhaban on Tuesday. On Wednesday he had another round of talks with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman which lasted about an hour.

The second round of talks between the President and Mujib on Wednesday was followed by the talks between President Yahya and National Awami Party leader Khan Abdul Wali Khan.

—The Pakistan Observer,

March 19, 1971.

Bhashani NAP's Volunteer Corps

AT A WORKERS meeting held in Dacca the National



Compiled by Ekram Kabir, Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and Dipak Kumar Karmakar

Awami Party (Bhashani) has decided to build up a strong volunteer corps, who will help make successful the public meeting to be addressed by Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani on March 23, reports APP.

According to party's General Secretary Mr Masahir Rahman the meeting called upon the women to join the meeting.

—The Pakistan Observer, March 19, 1971

Mass Movement

THE WORKERS' UNION of officers and other staff of Water Supply and Sewerage Authority, Dacca, in a meeting on Monday expressed their solidarity with the people's movement in Bangladesh, says a press release of Dacca Water Supply and Sewerage Authority on Thursday.

According to the press release the officers and other employees of the organisation reiterated their whole-hearted support to the stand taken by Mujib in his struggle for the emancipation of the people of Bangladesh.

They have also contributed a sum of Rs. 5,646 to Awami League Relief Fund.

—The Pakistan Observer, March 19, 1971.

Bomb

DACCA, March 18 — Two bombs were hurled at the Provincial Governor's House last night. The bombs were thrown from the outer section of the north-east side of the governor's house. The bombs exploded respectively at 7 pm and 8 pm in the late evening, but no serious damage was caused by the incident.

It should be mentioned that, one similar incident occurred at the governor's house few months back.

—Sangbad, March 19, 1971

March 18, 1971

Another Food Ship Gone Missing

CHITTAGONG, March 18: It is feared that an American ship with food grains, bound for Bangladesh, has been moved to some other direction. It should be mentioned that two similar incidents occurred before this one.

The name of the ship is surmised to be 'Irana Elizabeth'. The ship was carrying 43 thousand tons of wheat for Bangladesh. It took wheat from Brownville or Corpus city of the United States, and was expected to reach Chittagong port by the third week of the current month.

By this time, some message from the captain should have reached here. On the other hand, the agent of the ship, Mss Mercantile Trading has not got any information about it either.

—The Ittefaq March 19, 1971

TV Demands Troop Withdrawal

DACCA, March 18 (ENA) — The second class employees and officers of the television

station in a general meeting demanded the immediate withdrawal of military forces from its premises. The demand of the law enforcing agencies that, soldiers have been sent back to their barracks was confirmed as false and baseless in the meeting.

The meeting also denied the allegation, which was published in the newspapers that, on March 3, the law enforcing agency were forced to open fire to save the TV station from the unruly mob. On the contrary, the meeting confirmed that the TV station was never a target of the general mass and they never struck violence at the station.

The meeting also expressed their all out co-operation and solidarity with the peoples' liberation and expressed their shock over the unwise incidents that have taken place throughout the province for the last fortnight or so.

Among other things, the meeting demanded the rendering of programmes connected with the people's movement in Bangladesh. At the end of the meeting they

also decided to contribute their salary for one day to the Awami League charity fund.

—Sangbad, March 19, 1971

AL Leaders

THREE Awami League leaders left Dacca on Thursday for Chittagong to make an on the spot enquiry into the recent firings and incidents, according to an AL press release, reports APP.

In response to the telegraphic request made by Moulana Bhashani, president of National Awami Party, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, AL Chief has sent the three party leaders to Chittagong who would assess the situation and report accordingly.

The three Awami League leaders are: Mr M Mansur Ali, Leader of Parliamentary Party in East Pakistan Assembly, Khandakar Mustaque Ahmed, Vice-President of East Pakistan AL and Mr Abidur Reza Khan, MNA-elect.

—The Pakistan Observer, March 19, 1971



Demonstrators call on fellow women to fight for liberation.

Feature Development

Women Builders of Modern Bangladesh

FAR from the madding crowd, amidst the bamboo grooves and Gajaree trees in the District of Tangail is the sleepy village Goral with a population of 10,000. Here, for the past four years, thanks to the untiring efforts of a Bengali entrepreneur family of Mr. Ghulam Muhammad and Ghulam Morshed, who have made good use of the bamboo grooves, their Continental Basket Manufacturing Ltd. is exporting bamboo-made cottage crafts to USA, Canada, Japan, and most countries of Europe. When I visited the factory recently, I found piles of exquisite bamboo furnishings ready for shipment to Portugal. I also found some factory hands lacquering the bamboo furnishings.

baskets for export told me that they earn, somewhere in between Taka 600-700 depending on the number of baskets they weave. They come around 9 a m from their village homes

whole day with male colleagues. As they are traditional village girls brought up in a society where they learn from an early age not to speak out for themselves, these timid girls, though they were earning valuable foreign exchange for our country, kept their mouths shut and the male factory hands gave answers to the many of my queries.

Mr. Abdul Majid Mian the master crafts man who trains the Goral village girls told that after a three-month training course, the village women stay in their respective homesteads where the factory supplies them with the raw materials and they continue weaving baskets for exports. The trained cottage craft workers later earn in the range of Tk 1000-2000 per month with the help of more family members participating in basket making depending on the supply and demand orders from



bringing their lunch and work till 5 p.m. When asked one of the girls if they received any opposition from their parents or village elders as they are being trained by men and work

abroad. Twenty to twentyfive women attend these courses of basket-weaving daily. So the factory here at Goral is using the same method as the Russians did after the Great October Revolution when Lenin, the great champion of women's cause, freed the Russian women from the shackles of a male-dominated society. My journey to Goral to see for myself the dynamic role the silent women there were playing to build up our national economy was indeed rewarding. I can well visualise how our bamboo products will be capturing the world market by the 21 century and the Bangladesh rural women's participation in national development will gain in importance. The suckling mother at Goral Factory has left an enduring memory for me and though I did not turn my camera lens to focus the great miracle of motherhood in fear of outraging village taboos and shattering the purdah conception of this Goral village women, the ageless mother-infant picture remains as Madonna-like as ever.

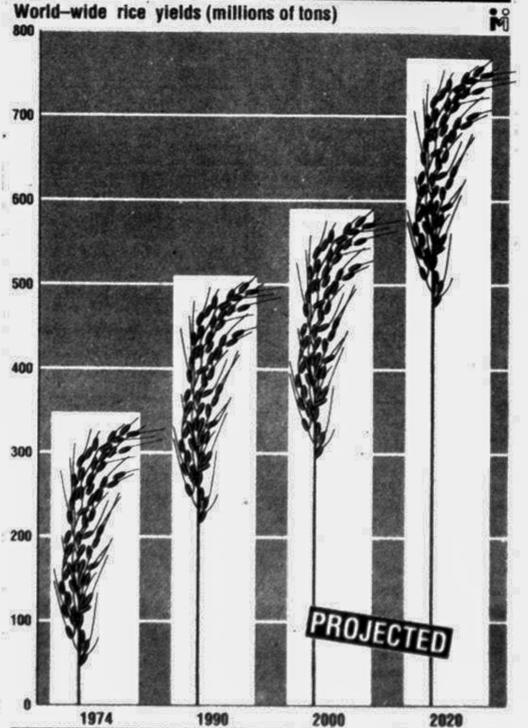
New Rice Holds Hope of Second Green Revolution

A hybrid rice currently limited to the cooler regions of China could herald a second green revolution. It is outyielding the first generation miracle rice by 15 to 30 per cent. Rice feeds about half the world's population. Dr Dat Van Tran, of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), says that with wider hybridisation involving indica and japonica, rice yields may shoot up by as much as 50 per cent. It is claimed to use the same or less inputs for earlier high yielding miracle rice such as the variety IR8. Production in China is now covering 13 million hectares — more than one-third of the country's entire rice-growing area—but varieties suitable for the tropics or sub-tropics are still in the experimental stage. Rice expert Van Tran says the present technology, based on what is known as a three-line system for breeding seeds, is so sophisticated and labour intensive that it can be adopted only in limited social and economic conditions. He explains: "Seed production is a single major problem for the adoption of hybrid rice in many countries. It is ten times higher than conventional methods."

The Chinese claim that yields of the new generation of hybrid lines can be raised by 15-20 per cent on top of the present level of ordinary hybrid rices which yield rises of 15-30 per cent. Scientists in Japan have induced a temperature-sensitive genetic male sterile (TOMS) mutant — a system claimed to have potential in the tropics. Advantages are said to include rapid breeding cycles, simplified seed production of male sterile lines and closer linkage between hybrid and ordinary breeding. The first green revolution raised the average rice yield from 2-3 tons a hectare to 4-6 tons. It came about as a result of the discovery of variety IR8 in 1963.

The FAO says world rice production jumped by 46 per cent between 1974 and 1989, but in the Eighties yields reached a plateau and those of IR8 seemed to decline. Despite the general growth of rice the present pace may not be enough for the future as population pressures rise. It is now hoped that hybrid rice will raise the average yield for irrigated rice in the tropics to 7-8 tons a hectare against the 5-6 tons obtained from conventional rice now. — GEMINI NEWS

Yields to 2020



WITH Cold War tensions receding in North-East Asia, neighbouring countries that have long confronted each other across the ideological divide now talk of joining hands to build a new Hong Kong-type entrepot in the strategic sub-region. The focus of growing attention is the Tumen River Basin development project. The interested countries are China, the two Koreas, Mongolia, Russia and Japan. The ambitious scheme calls for spending at least 30 billion dollars over the next 20 years to construct a huge international trade and transport complex in the river delta which lies at the border area between China, Mongolia, Russia and North Korea. The complex, which under one plan will consist of up to a dozen specialised ports plus an inland railroad center, will become the terminal of a 10,000 km land bridge connecting Asia's eastern seaboard with Europe. Experts from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which was instrumental in bringing the six countries together, say

North Asia United over Tumen

the project will open up vast untapped, resource-rich areas in north-east China, Mongolia and Siberia and integrate the economics of these six countries to a degree unthinkable just two years ago. "This is a classic example where the sum is greater than the parts," said Roy Morey, the UNDP's resident representative in China. "From the economic standpoint, each country stands to gain more cooperating with each other," Morey said. Strong interest in the Tumen River scheme was evident in the UNDP-sponsored meeting in Manila of aid officials from 27 Asian government in January. The proposed project has become a "hot subject of discussion" at such high-level bodies as the State Planning Commission, the Commission on Science and Technology and various line ministries, said YT Long, who headed

China's delegation. The North Korea delegation pressed for "maximum UNDP funding" for preliminary studies on the proposed programme and reiterated Pyongyang's recent announcement that three coastal cities near the mouth of the Tumen River would be turned into free ports, open to all countries. For Beijing, the project offers the prospect of developing the long-neglected north-east, which has far fallen behind China's booming southern provinces. But the project may be even more vital to Mongolia and North Korea which are both emerging from decades of autarky. Both countries have been severely traumatised by the sudden withdrawal of Soviet trade and aid over the past two years. Mongolia's exports to the former East Bloc countries, which used to absorb over 90

per cent of its total exports, came to a virtual halt, plunging the economy into depression. "Given the very small size of its domestic market (about two million people with a per capita income of less than US\$600), clearly Mongolia could not hope to succeed economically unless it becomes an integral part of larger, international market," wrote economist Young Kim in a 1991 country report for the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB). The Tumen River Basin project promises to meet such needs, but it faces many pitfalls. An inter-governmental programme management committee (PMC) that includes representatives from each of the six countries will meet this month to plan what needs to be done in the next 18 to 24 months. At this point, the programme may get caught in a chicken-or-egg dilemma.

Governments may hold back on large infrastructure spending unless private business shows enough interest in investing in the project. Business may stay away unless the infrastructure is put in place by governments. Much of the investment and loan funds are expected to come from Japan and South Korea. Private business in these countries remain wary of investing in such hermit states as Mongolia and North Korea which continue to have horrendous country-risk ratings. In an era of trading blocs, the lure of North Asia may prove irresistible to Japan and South Korea. An economic grouping comprising the two Koreas, Japan and north-east China would have a population of 300 million (equal to that of the European Community), have a combined gross national product of nearly three trillion dollars and account for almost one-third of world trade. Sometime in April 1993, the governments will have to decide whether they will seriously commit themselves to the programme and thus justify full-blown feasibility studies. — IPS