

A river is not a knife dividing the people and the land. It is the source of life itself.

The south-west Bangladesh is suffering and suffering very badly because hardly any water left in the river Ganges at this time of the year.

The sharing of Ganges water between Bangladesh and India might be approached on the 'river is the source of life itself' principle.

THE children of Sarajevo went into action days ahead of the West's deadline for the withdrawal of the Serbian big guns.

After nearly two years of dicing with death whenever they skipped out to play, they gambled ahead of time that the guns around them would be silent and snatched back their lives as they remembered them.

All around them the sounds were reassuring. Overhead — night and day — aircraft of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

"I am always waiting for a grenade to fall," said one woman still unable to shake off the fears of yesterday.

"I lost 30 kilos from fear," said Merdina Tekac, recalling the nightmare of the past two years.

Now at last they were out with their skins enjoying the snow. But if the children were quick to accept a normal life again, their father, Migdat, off for the day from his duties in

Water is Life — Not Death!

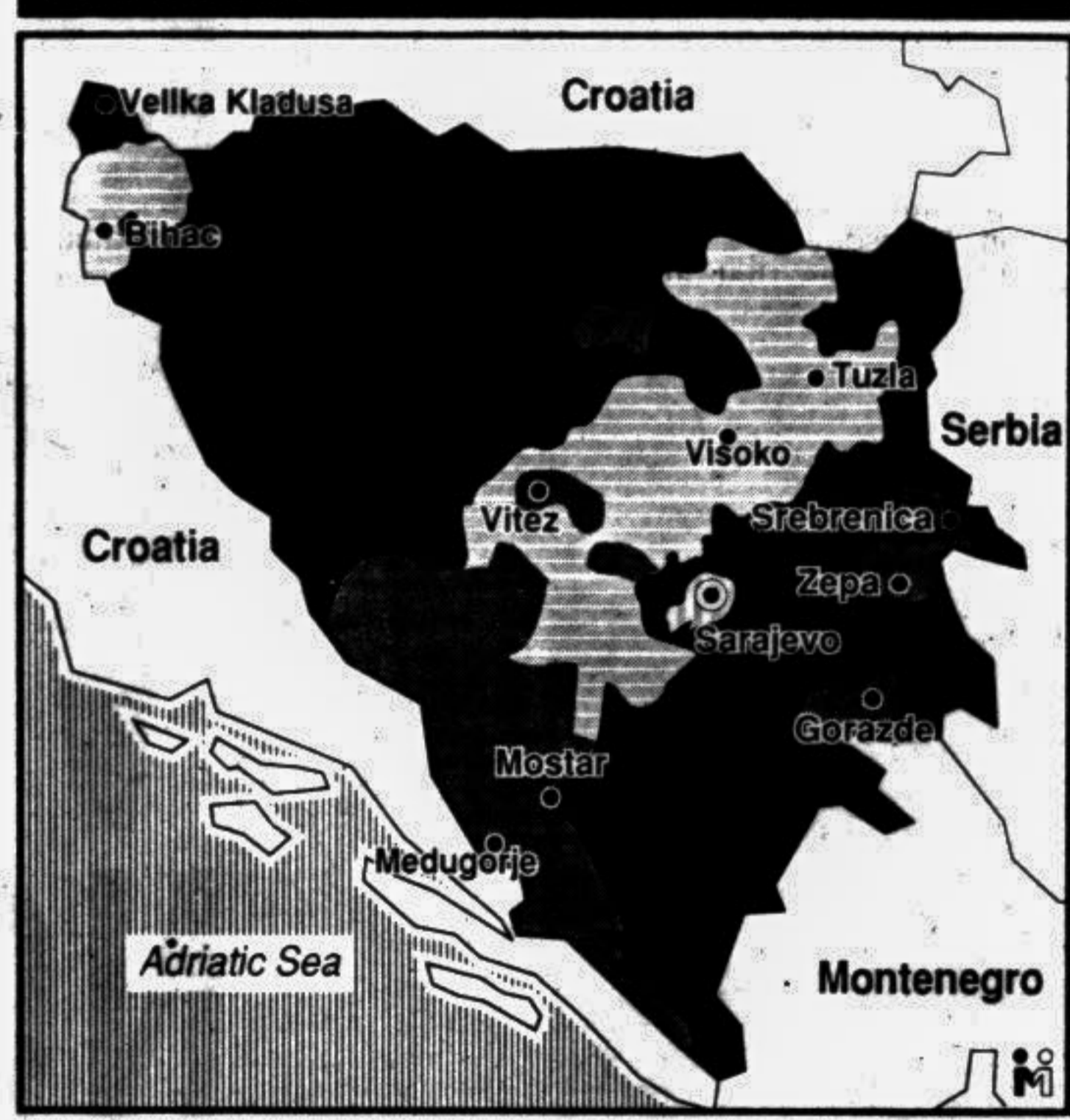
control structures and canals is feasible, then it should not be difficult to develop intensive irrigated agriculture, practically all over the country and also generate surplus water to sell to India.

Inter-country water transfer is not a new idea in view of water scarcity becoming a spreading global problem.

Over four decades have passed since the Farakka Barrage was constructed. During this period, the population of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal has increased enormously.

NATO's new assertive policy in Bosnia — first an ultimatum over the withdrawal of big guns around Sarajevo and then the shooting down of Serbian warplanes — has already changed the lives of citizens in Sarajevo.

Bosnia



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Letters for publication in these columns should be addressed to the Editor and legibly written or typed with double space.

An active life

Sir, Every one wants a long life. But there is no virtue or substance in a long life without meaningful work.

Politics of production

Sir, The 110 million people of Bangladesh are grateful to the developed democracies of the world for their cooperation.

Another doctrine, 'historical use', maintains that a country's rights to a given water source depend on how much it has used the water in the past.

WINDOW ON ASIA

The problem therefore now is to augment supplies of water and work out the stable system of sharing the enhanced river flows.

Several arguments enter the debate on how such water rights should be allocated. The territory of origin doctrine states that India (and also Nepal for that matter), may control the allocation of Ganges water since the source is within its territories.

The solution lies under the doctrine of 'equitable apportionment' which requires that each country's rights to water from a shared source be assessed according to current and future needs and access to alternative sources.

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severely reduced both due to upstream withdrawal as well as reduced flow from the mountain catchment areas. Hence even without Farakka barrage, at which point the river gets divided, the amount of water reaching Bangladesh would have severely declined during the dry months.

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net gain to India-in particular. India is opposed to such a scheme and favours transfer of water from the eastern rivers of Meghna-Brahmaputra system to the Ganges from where India can also draw its requirements.

The upstream solution of Bangladesh directly confronts the downstream tail-end Indian design. Located at practically two extreme ends of the river Ganges, sharing of whose water is in dispute, there seems to be no compromise solution in sight.

River is the source of life itself — it must not be construed as the knife to generate hostility among countries and peoples. Let the leaders of both Bangladesh and India be convinced of this basic fact and then proceed to work out the ideal solution for the benefit of all.

The much sought after commitment would be possible if and only if the leaders of the two countries, in a bold bid to resolve, are prepared to accept the fundamental truth that river is the source of life itself and it ought not to be used as the knife to divide the lands and the peoples.

After the NATO Strike — II

'If One Loses Hope, there is No Life Left'

Petar Hadji-Ristic writes from Sarajevo

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the Bosnian army: But for many of the older generation with homes and property still intact, departure seemed out of the question.

"If one loses hope there is no life left," said Veda Dervanovic in her cold cafe, still in business although most people could not afford to step inside.

There were reports of many Serbs and Croats who had already found a way to leave during the siege.

"I don't want to live here any more," said one man as he patrolled a main road. "More will leave than will return. I have no church, no nationality and no leader — and I don't need one."

UN relief planes still bring in most of the city's food, most shops are still locked up; only essential services are working, factories are closed, some destroyed or plundered.

But for the relief flights bringing in basic rations of flour, beans and rice, 430,000 people would have starved to death. Yet people complain of gnawing hunger and loss of weight.

"There is no life here. The Serbs will fight again, there will be no peace. Anyone with a brain in their head will go," predicted Ilija Bosnak, an ex-communist now working for

political leaders are shedding crocodile tears. Even the so-called intellectuals with their 'misfit' programmes are rather pushing the country towards maybe a sort of civil war and this has created division among the people contributing to further anarchy.

The mass scale nationalisation immediately after liberation of the country in 1971 made the large industries sick and negative politics has added to their aggravation.

The mass media need to be reformed to meet the challenges of making the country developed and people motivated in that line.

We deeply expect that the present government will be very drastic and firm to implement ban such as for the greater interest of the nation.

sugar, meat, fish, corned beef and high-quality food.

In the main city market some additional food is on sale — but everything is priced in German Deutschmarks and must vie for the title of most expensive food in the world.

A kilogram of beef sells at 70DM, a kilo of rotting apples 17DM, a litre of cooking oil 90DM. For the majority of the city's people who earn the equivalent of 2 DM or less a month, buying anything there is impossible.

The siege has set the economy on its head. A second-hand car sells for a tenth of its pre-war price because a litre of petrol costs 30DM and it is unsafe to drive anywhere.

Even the 10,000 graves of the victims of the mortars and snipers crammed into the sports grounds beside the Olympic stadium have barely one flower.

Except for those working in essential services, men are assigned to guard-duties and women are without work. For most, the day ends early. At night there is little to do other than eat and go to bed.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic struggled to answer this in a radio and television interview hours after the NATO deadline: "Nationalists came to power in a moral wasteland and they implemented their policies without obstacles... nothing opposed the evil here... the communist ideology bears the blame for the evil which happened."

His views might have been shared by many, but could hardly reassure the parents of the children playing in the snow.

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