ten years from the acquisition

of the Zemindaris by the state

in the early fifties. The master

Alauddin Khan, the ustad of us-

tads, had come to Dhaka on

way to his ancestral home at

Shibpur, Brahmanbaria. He was

to a very broad spectrum of

musical traditions, thought of

himself, because of his ap-

prenticeship to Wazir Khan.

the veenkar directly de-

scended from Tansen, as a

For years now, editorialists

The public kept shouting up

and columnists have been lam-

basting the government on the

traffic issue, suggesting a range

a storm in Letters to the Edi-

tor columns, and on radio and

television talk shows.

"Mounting complaints" have

been, in fact, a long collective

howl of agony from millions of

Manilans as octopus-like grid-

thing that these citizens don't.

They know that while Jose

Sixpack may loudly deplore

worsening traffic jams, what is

really going to get him

steamed up is to be told that as

part of the solution he can only

drive his car to work three

times a week. Tell him he has

to share his chariot with three

car-pool strangers and he's go-

ing to blow a gasket.

lock tightens its grip on their

But politicians know some-

of solutions.

disciple of the Rampur gha-

N Dhaka of the olden golden days soirees of high music used to be held 'at Ruplal House in Farashgani and at the Baldha Gardens at Wari. These were haunts of the Khan Sahibs, the ustads descending on Bengal from the up countries seasonally. Narendra Narayan Roy Chowdhury, the many splendoured arboricultural collector and tennis player was so enamoured of the Hindostani classical forms that

my foolish fingers without a

realisation that this was not

ever to present itself to me or

anybody else again. Zemindari

was abolished and mehfils at

feudal courts were as dead as

was relatively easy.

N Manila just a decade

You could cruise along

broad avenues from seaside

Roxas Boulevard through the

widest part of Makati's finan-

cial district to E. de los Santos

Avenue (EDSA) of People

Power fame in just half an

meant that the trip now takes

up to three times as long.

much of it spent in gridlock

now synonymous with Thai-

land's capital, Bangkok. It's

easy on the tyre rubber.

must go to the government

which, in its Solomonic wis-

to adopt any draconian solu-

dom. has courageously refused

tions to the problem. One sus-

pects that this was also the

Fidel Ramos announced: "

have asked the Metro Manila

Authority to conduct a thor-

ough review of the entire traf

fic situation and take action on

the problem." His statement

was reported in a progovern-

ment daily as coming "in the

wake of mounting complaints

from motorists and com-

But on Nov. 23. President

Credit (or blame?) for this

though.

Thai approach.

Progress since then has

ago, driving across town

here after a number of decades, some of the music he engaged a famous ustad loving babus at the from Punjab for his wife's mu-Muktagachha rajbari were still sical education. holding out against an irre-But these two houses were sistible pressure from within nothing compared to the Mymensingh Muktagachha and without to migrate to Rajbari of the Acharya Chou-India. They sent out a call to ustad and the grand old man dhuries when music was the ninetyish even at the time matter. The maharaja precould not refuge for old times' siding over a vast zemindari sake. For it was due estate as also the highest cultural pretensions of the time -Muktagachha's intercession that Ahmed Ali Khan, the connoisseurship of high music - not only provided home to sorodiya, agreed to take the foung man under his wings itinerant great ones of Indian and Alauddin was launched on music but also kept salaried his legendary adventure into ustads almost in the style of Patiala or Rampura. On the music of the saints and the other side of the Brahamaputra king. Alas, there was none in was Gouripur where Brajendra this musically poor country who could accompany the Kishore Roy Chowdhuri — the musicologist and only incidengreat master as the tabla. Save tally a zemindar-raja — had usone. The ustad knew about tad Enayet Khan as a tenured him. He had to - for Sakhawat court-musician for many years. Hussain Khan, younger brother of the singer and sangeet-guni Ustad Vilayet Khan was born Salamat Hossain, was a grandthere. I had my liftetime's chance son of the celebrated Inavat of having a taste of the feudal Hussain of Rampur. Alauddin Khan, in spite of his exposure musical ambience as late as in 1954. But it slipped between

Reviving Heavenly by Waheedul Haque a dodo in a matter of less than

> rana. The old man took Sakhawat Hussain to Muktagachha and for a week or so rained both respect and affection on him - respect for the latter's belonging to the former's guru-parampara and affection for being young and musically honest. The maestro wouldn't have much of tabla from him. "I know the instrument and its vidya better than you - even the great Therakwa is junior to me in this. You better sing to me the things no one other than from your khandan can give. Sakhawat Hussain never got such a recognition of his vocal prowess from anywhere else and after this needed none. Sakhawat Hussain was my only true guru - baptized through the proper ganda

ceremony. In my life of a strangely variegated musical exposure, he was my only guru. Guru had naturally asked to me to accompany him to Muktagachha. But I could not manage. After being in the wilderness of unemployment I had only just then landed a job - a 60 taka per mensem thing I live ever since to lament my

Later I had a chance to see and listen to the maestro from very close quarters and also talk to him as a child to his father. But the Muktagachha ambience was never to be a part of my life's experience. Shortly after Alauddin Khan's

Formerly a guy who took his

family to the park for picnics

on Sundays, he's now going to

spend that day parading with a

placard outside Congress, and

periodically hurling insults at

the government through a

megaphone. He'll vote for fas-

cism, communism or anarchy

fon anything and anyone that

will let him drive his car

whenever he wants. It's the

other cars he wants taken off

democracy, a seemingly Faus-

tian pact between irrational

voters and insecure politicians

Singaporean elder statesman

Lee Kuan Yew, in a visit to the

Philippines some months ago,

declared that the country

needed "less democracy and

protest his comment gener-

ated, you would have thought

he'd suggested that the Em-

peror Tiberius be resurrected

From all the apoplectic

Such are the wonders of

the roads not his.

more dictatorship".

lost opportunity.

'Bangkoked'

return to Maiher, the Muktagachha connoisseurs migrated to India.

The other day a friend from my school days phoned to invite me to a musical soiree at his place. I know about the Indian vocalist of immense potential who would perform there but I didn't know the place. The friend advised one to go up a certain road in Gulshan and look for a palace Yes, palace it was literally. In one chandeliered lobby the eream of Dhaka's cultural cognoscenti were milling leisurely, many of them helping themselves to refreshment land so invitingly and with such taste on a long long table.

As we were being hurried

to the mehfil in a dimly lit big hall — perhaps the drawing room but with all furniture taken out and listeners squatting in perfect durber or jalsa style - I eyed the grand and imposing white columns, very greco-Roman, the first I have ever seen inside a residential house. And I would not help think whether Muktagachha was any grander than this. So if I have missed the Maharaja of Muktajachha's mahfil, here I was going to have my feel (or is it fill?) of luxury and class and art at the palace of the prince of Kanchijhuli - the quarters that you hit first in Mymensingh when travelling from Muktagaccha.

Asafuddowla, the top buto run the place. But his Sin-

gapore has no traffic jams. Aspects of Bangkok are beginning to be seen in Manila. The city has long had motorcycle taxis with sidecars, but there's been a great leap lately in the number of two-wheeled bikes with pillion seats for hire, Bangkok-style, a sinister development indeed. Whatever will be next? Street vendors

selling potable toilets? Certain citizens in Manila have in recent years adopted the after-work habit of having a one-for-the-road (or two, or three...) drink rather than going straight home to family and friends, as previously. But who'd venture to go posthaste home with all that traffic?

Often there will be newspapers on the table in drinking places, which periodically carry photos of Bangkok's nightmarish gridlocks. "How could the Thais have let this happen?" they say, oblivious to the fact that the main reason most of them are where they are and don't leave before 7 pm is that rush-hour traffic jams make it impossible for

them to get home easily. For sure, we're being Bangkoked. And it seems all we can do is relax and enjoy it. Depthnews Asia

reaucrat and former champion-swimmer, was a worthy disciple of that immortal composer Kamal Dasgupta. If he wouldn't only opt for a career as a civil servant he could easily be Bangladesh's best singer of soulful ghazals and evocative moderns. Once I heard Samina Chowhdury giving a concert of songs set to Asafuddowla's tunes and I was hard put to it to decide which was the more haunting emotionally - and enticing artistically - the tunes or the singing. It was a perfect union. Spying Asafuddowla holding court in a corner and smelling that the artist of the evening would be around him - it was Asaf who had brought the ustad from Calcutta and was hosting his stay in Dhaka — I ambled up to him. He introduced me to a rather shabby and perfectly absent-minded young man. So this was Rashid Hussain Khan! The best among the new crop of brilliant Kheyaliahs after Ajay

It was both interesting and

Chakravarti.

-Magazine

stimulating — at the same time a little disappointing to listen to him. Here was a grandson of the celebrated Nisar Hussain Khan. As such I sat with much anticipation to get my bearings renewed about the Rampur-Shahswan gharana. The surmandal did not shock me as much as it could for I had already heard Rashid in cassette recordings plucking at the Indian version of the Arabian Qamim or the Greek lyre. There was no mistaking the thing as the cover of the cassettes. I have heard of him featuring his portrait with a surmandal. One never expects a Rampur-Shahswan vocalist to sing in accompaniment of this instrument popularised by Bade Gulam. Ali and now adopted by singers without a member and most of them from outside the Patiala gharana. One need not feel uneasy when Pandit Jasraj uses one for his so-called Mewati gharana lacks in renown for anything. But neither the surmandal nor the offered music being so uncharacteristic of his khandah could keep us from marvelling at the way Rushid Khan took hold of the minds of us all in less than minute's

Rashid Hussain Khan chose for his debut in Dhaka a raga which is at once popular and serious - one that has well stood the test of time as well the buffeting from listeners long become impatient with song forms such as kheyal. And Bageshree was an apt choice also because of time of the evening: half past ten. It is not for nothing that Rabindranath used to go sentimental over komal gandhar or the flattened third. And how his Naam

Despite overtures from

President Pasteur Bizimungu,

few refugees are returning.

Some fear being brought to

justice for their role in the

genocide, others are intimi-

dated into staying by the mili-

tiamen, some fear reprisals

of those who were killed.

from the new army or relatives

mised to punish those re-

sponsible for revenge killings

but is to weak to impose its

will throughout the country.

and judiciary, it will continue

to rely on soldiers to impose

reports of incursions into

Rwanda by soldiers loyal to the

former government and of

freshly laid mines around

Kigali, it would appear that the

former government's threat-

ened insurgency is already un

derway. The new government

therefore has little time to

If there is any accuracy in

law and order.

Lacking its own police service ,

The government has pro-

Rekkechhi Komal Gandhar struck Bishnu Dey! Rashid was playing with that same komal gandhar wringing out from it so much dormant elements of pathos. Three compositions he gave in that raga, his changeovers always capitally adding new rhythmic colour

and melodic arabesques. Rashid piece in Koshi Dhani bordered on a Thumri and was less than resounding success. Bade Gulam Ali's two pieces on LP in this rarely performed raga has set a standard hardly matched by lesser mortals. But the young master more than made up the slide into lighter air by picking up Durbari Kanada as the next number. Komal Gandhar again but far from the Bageshree signature note. Rashed knows .his ragas inside out and is at home drawing out from inner recesses a raga's hidden mysteries and wonders. But it must be said that he did not much care to go for this - and. as are all tyari — virtuoso performers wont to revelled in tankari done in delectable time-design.

What is the best part of an hour-long performance of kneval or of any other song form? The bandish, without a whiff of doubt. And specially in kheval does it become specially pricey. Coming as a flitting revelation in the expanse of long improvisatory musical essay it is what gives meaning and structure, colour and purpose to the sprawling performance. Rashid is particularly good in his exposition of the bandish, he takes special delight in it.

After his charming performance of Durbari the young master picked up Pahari which is hardly anything more than a mere dhun - and a very very hackneved sort of that too When he finished his Pahari it was 2.30 in the morning. stole out of the mahfil.' I had to for I was to leave for Mymensingh (but neither Muktagachha nor Kanchijhuto) in another three hours' time.

It is a long time since I had been to an all-night session of high music. Back in the sixties Chhayanat held a series of such sessions featuring Salamat and Nazakat, Amanat and Fateh. Umid Ali and our home-grown Velayet Ali. Those were perhaps our musical haleyon days. After independence, thanks solely to Shafiur Rahman, the Shuddha Sangeet Goshthi has been holding all-right musical sessions for many years. But in this Gulshan palace I enjoyed my only all-night mehfil in the residence of any rais Bangladesh has 3,000 multimillionaires — kotipati— according to above-board bank papers. The real number best be left to imagination. If only as many as one per cent of these cared to take delight in pure music, the best of our feudal legacies could have a glorious revival. And our music revital-

The State Publicity Style

HE state press information department is a huge government complex churning out daily a large number of publicity material depicting the new and notable activities (not only development) of the administration, to keep the citizens and the world informed and updated on what is happening sector, as also to explain the policies of the government.

The latter job is also done effectively by the ministers in their daily public addresses, as the elected representatives of the people.

There are two trends noticeable to the uninitiated target of this constant daily bombardment of the senses. Where this large written output is going? One is reminded of the bottomless-basket image. Not much is reprinted in the nongovt or "free" press. Why?

have to hunt for it office/paper-chasing is endemic in the developing countries). As for verbal publicity, this

is carried out mostly by the min sters, as the civil servants have restricted exposure to the public ears (except at some official high-level seminar or opening ceremony or function - it is not a part of in the country in the public regular duty). The ministers are not neutral in their presentations. These are party and development oriented. The weaknesses, drawbacks, and the national problems (besides the political issues) are not pointed out in sufficient detail to satisfy the enlighter i citi-

> Several examp lay be cited. How many about entrenched corru n the society, and concie action taken by the adminis ration to tackle the situation? The enforcement and prosecution statistics are not well pub-

by Alif Zabr

Either the output or the slant may not be good enough for number — a drop in the ocean. the limited space available to the editors in a five-taka paper devoid of advertisement and low in circulation. The propaganda and the topicality angles have to be carefully studied. There appears to be a tug-ofwar between professionalism and directives.

There are many types of releases from a big organisation, of which the familiar ones are the Press Release and Press Note. Then there are the follow-up and background articles explaining the news releases, which cover an issue or subject with more depth and breadth, for the information of those who are interested in more detail. For example, the ECNEC decisions on approval of new projects simply carry the names of the projects as a news item, without any followup. Official photo stories are rarely seen. The TV stories are more 'visible', but the coverage is not uniform. The TV studios and the news department are: now being re-equipped to meet international competi-

The print media service is supposed to be followed up with more data and information on the projects (including the non-economic projects) in. separate articles, for use by researchers or for reference purpose. There are no official periodical magazines Bengali and English to carry such articles. The same should be available easily and cheaply at the news stalls (one does

lished, and these are small in Take the law and order problem. A person collecting clippings on the issue from the press would hardly be satisfied with the quantity of local material available. The quality of the data and information is another drawback. The authority is practically silent on campus violence, traffic jams, mugging, holdups, group violence, toll collection, juvenile delinquency, and other new evils seen in the society.

What is normally heard, over and over again, are partyoriented self praise, and denunciation of others. The smugness stinks. The Benga' i mind is negatively critical ar id adverse to seek the grand points in others' efforts, The Opposition, for example, vehemently criticize every thing and everybody as a matter of distorted principle. Hat e campaigns are the order of the day, coupled with introlerance. The goals sound iron ical: consensus and national effort by those who live in water-tight compartments in different worlds!

driven home in this commentary is that the official publicity and the information service are neither balanced nor adequate. The effectiveness of propaganda lies in hiding the technique. Crudeness may reach a stage when it could be revolting; and the effect is just the opposite of the effect sought. What a waste on both

The point sought to be

RWANDA still on the rack

Postcards from Hell

1. Goma, Zaire: No-one can imagine what it is like. Hundreds of thousands of dirty. scabby, sick people arrive in your home town. They machete down all your trees, they light fires and cook on your pavement, they defecate and vomit on your doorstep and throw their dead brothers and sisters over the fence into your garden.

2. Bukavu, Zaire: At one no torious squat. Alfajiri. in the town centre, an old Rwandan woman is beaten to death one night. Her crime: she used a stinking hole in the ground to relieve herself and had no money to pay for using this

After two months in Rwanda and in refugee camps in Zaire as a spokesperson for the World Food Programme, film-maker Gillian Hazell says "I have read through most of the newspaper and magazine articles about the situation but none of them for me really give a picture of the horrors that people saw and are still living and working with." This is her anguished description of what she saw:

3. Katale camp, north of Goma: Driving out of town it becomes obvious that the number of people dying is on a Biblical scale. Along the road-

side mats are rolled up with

ter, water and food. 4. Bukavu, college squat: They need firewood, and all branches within reach are hacked down. With no more branches, they hack around the frunk of the massive trees into the base, with no thought for safety. During a storm one night, when sheets of hailstones and water pound their inadequate shelters, some trees are blown down, killing more children and a pregnant

Goma, Zaire: Children arrive, dirty, hungry and naked. Women, cutting from bolts of bright Zairian cloth, stitch simple shifts which transform the abandoned children from pitiful victims to sparkling fashion models with the first smiles appearing, after they solemnly regard one another's

6. Rwanda: Once across the border the atmosphere chan-

fertile country, with disquieting sound of silence. No cars, no animals, not one soul in sight on the three-hour drive from the border with Zaire to the capital, Kigali. Noone remains to harvest the abandon crops, but one's imagination provides a soundtrack - the screams of one million people as they are massacred.







Refugees in Zaire. More than half Rwanda's population is dead or displaced

Peace in Jeopardy in a Land without a State Guy Vassall-Adams writes from Kigali

HE extremists who masterminded the genocide in Rwanda have partly succeeded in their goal of undermining power-sharing: the rebels who ousted them are in office but not in power.

Nearly four months after the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) took control and an nounced the formation of a government of national unity, Rwanda barely exists as a nation state

The new government struggles to function without any state apparatus and without the money to put it in place. Ministers lack everything from typewriters and telephone to civil servants and a judiciary.

Schools, hospitals and businesses were plundered by soldiers and militiamen loyal to the former government.

Without its own police force, judicial system and civil administration, the government is impotent to respond to most of the challenges it faces.

Even the people are missing. Of the country's 7.2 million inhabitants in April, one million are dead, 1.8 million displaced within the country and two million are living outside its borders. The refugees include the militiamen responsible for the massacres

persuade the extremists to come to political accommoda-

Worried by the possibility of guerrilla counter-attacks, the new

government in Kigali is pressing the UN to phase out food aid to

Rwandan refugees in order to force them to return home. But the

activities of former militiamen in the camps is just one of litany of

problems that threaten to make peace and reconstruction impossible.

This might take the form of broadening the government to include more ministers from the former ruling party, the Movement for Reconstruction and Development (MRND) The new Cabinet has a majority of Hutu members, but only one Minister is drawn from the MRND.

The government is reported to have made approaches to other MRND members, but no offers have yet been taken up. Progress might prove difficult to achieve. The government has to tread an extremely fine line, between realism about the concessions which might secure a more peaceful future. and the need not to alienate its

own supporters. But if refugees are to return in significant numbers, the reign of terror exercised by

the militiamen in the refugee camps around Goma in Zaire must be brought to an en.d. Aid agencies have threatened to pull out of the camps unless the international community acts to weaken the militiamen's control over the clistri-

bution of relief The UN is currently considering what to do. One propesal is for a multinational force to move into the camps and disarm the militiarnen. This might be the single most effective way of promoting peace in Rwanda but it is not clear whether member states have the political will.

If large numbers of recent refugees return, the government faces a potential crisis over property claims. About 300,000 Tutsi refugees and their dependents have returned to take over property. land and businesses. If recerit refugees now return, many will find that their livelihoods have

been expropriated. International support could make a significant difference. After months of dithering and delay. a UN force of 5,000 peacekeepers is now in place and beginning to be deployed throughout the country. The peace-keepers have a mandate to protect civilians and help supply humanitarian aid; they may be crucial in upholding human rights in the coming weeks and months.

The UN is also sending human rights monitors to keep an eve on the situation and collect initial evidence to prosecute individuals responsible for the genocide. Of the 147 monitors which the UN estimates are needed, only 52

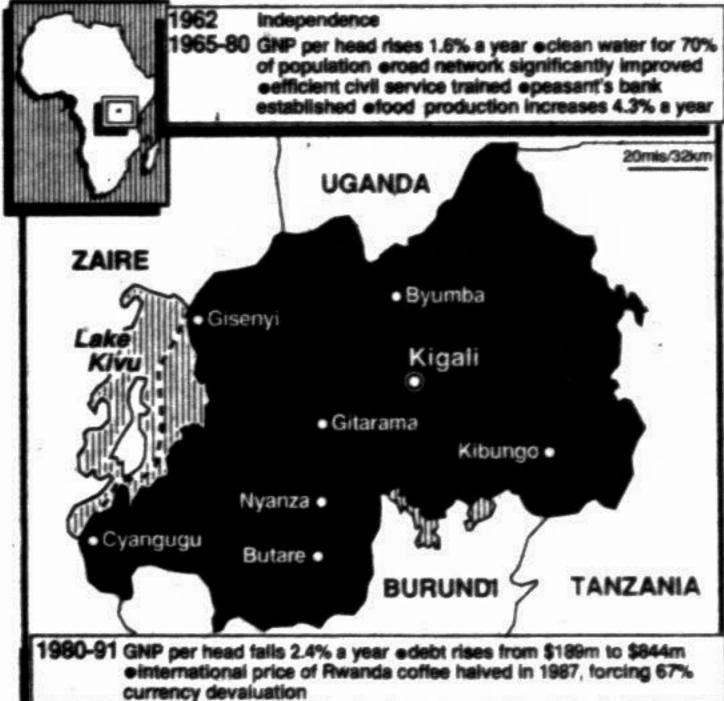
have arrived. The Security Council has established an international tribunal to prosecute those responsible for the genocide.

It is doubtful whether these initiatives will be enough to prevent future war.

At the same time, the government and its neighbours should get round a table and find a durable solution to the region's refugee crisis. Gemini News

Guy Vassall-Adams is author of 'Rwanda: An Agenda for International Action, published by Oxfam.

Rwanda: growth, decline and collapse



Structual adjustment programme begins erebel Rwandan Patriotic Front invades 1993 Peace accord •UN forces arrive

President Habyarimana assassinated eHutu extremists set off genocide campaign emost of UN force withdraws emillions flee [9]

feet sticking out, swollen, callused feet. Stiffened, bloated, naked bodies swelling in the sun, with babies erying amongst them trying to suckle from lifeless breasts; some struggling so close to death they lay down gasping their last breath and hugging the stinking corpse of their loved one. People walk past them oblivious. Men. women and children, in the never-ending procession searching for shel-

5. SOS, largest orphanage in

new clothes. ges. Here is a beautiful, lush.

7. Food distribution, Kibumba

camp, Goma, Zaire: A flat area is roped off and policed by aid workers with large sticks. One Continued on page 12