Something Deeper than Politics and Communalism at Stake

TS there any question in any one's mind that the most dynamic civilization on the subcontinent today is Hindu civilization? Can Pakistan with its ethnic strife claim to be a representative of Islamic civilization? Can Sri Lanka with its ethnic and religious strife claim to be a voice of Buddhist civilization? Can Bangladesh with its culture divided between three parts, Bengali, Muslim, and mixed up Tagorean secularism, be represen-

tative of any one culture? The answer to the first question is that there is no doubt that Hindu civilization is in the ascendant after a millennium of first Muslim and then British civilization eclipsing it. Indeed, Hindu civilization in its broadest definition, if one looks at writers like Nirad Chaudhuri, Vikram Seth, and Salman Rushdie or at the art of Eastern India or the Bombay movie industry, or in its scientific aspects or business aspects, is undoubtedly one of the most dynamic cultures in this area, if not all of

At issue here is not India. For Hindu civilization embraces more than the narrow meaning of the territorial nation state. For it is a moral, metaphysical, and religious in a broad sense, system of thought that precedes the Indian state in importance. For the Indian State, as I believe Jain argues persuasively, is but an expression of this civiliza-

Nor at issue here is communalism, however much the Babri Mosque incident and impending rebuilding of the Ram Mandir, which Mr Jain unabashedly celebrates, make it seem so. Something deeper than mere politics and communalism is at stake. It is the reawakening of one of the oldest, pre Semitic religion-cultural civilizations in the world.

Nor is it a matter of secularism versus religion. For the old Nehruvian triad of secularism. socialism, and non-alignment. the mainstay of the old Indian = state, is on the wain in this contemporary world where the old ideologies descending from the French revolution are dead.

The above is the message of Girilal Jain's new 1994 book. The Hindu Phenomenon. So important is this message from India, so necessary is it for all thinking people on the subcontinent and the world to read this book, that it has already reached its fourth printing by UPBS publishers in

There are some thoughts here that must be cleared away before continuing. The reviewer admits to a fondness for the author, Girilal Jain, the former editor of the Times of India. For during the emergency in India, this writer formed an acquaintanceship with him that gave an insight into the man's decency, integrity, and intelligence. Mr Jatn is now dead, and we are **BOOK REVIEW**

The Hindu Phenomenon by Girilal Jain

UPBS, 1994 4th Printing: soon to be available from University Press Limited, Dhaka

not likely to see this like again. but one thing must be said of him, and that was that he did not care whether his readers could understand what was written in this paper : he cared more that he understood it completely before he printed it. His concern for the truth of the facts presented was only outstripped by his demand that was written was cogently expressed. He never wrote down to the readership but attempted to write up to the standards of the best readers. Having been put through the paces by this man, it is my opinion that there was no better teacher of editorial journalism than Mr Jain.

Secondly, this is a book written before his death and finished into final form by his daughter who deserves a great deal of credit of preserving her father's style. In this sense, this book is Mr Jain's final testament, the kind of book that must be noticed, not only by his friends, but by his enemies as well.

Finally it must be said that

Girilal Jain is no communalist in any ordinary sense of the word. When he writes of secularism fading or the problems of Islamic civilization on this continent, he writes as a thinker, not a believer. His goal is not to celebrate one religion over another but to put into perspective the rise of Hindu civilization and to justify its rise based on reason. You may believe or disbelieve what he says, but to refute him, you must present a reasoned case. This is what raises this book above mere communalism and places it the school of post modern philosophy, for here you can see the influence, even if indirect, of Leo Strauss and Eric Voegelin, to name two of the most important thinkers in recent years in the west. and these men can write about religion and politics at such a high level that there is no question of communalism. Few Sikhs, Muslims, or secularists will like this book, however: but they cannot ignore it.

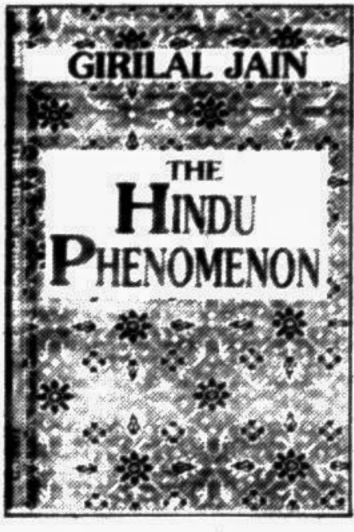
The point here is that we have lost the art of being able to speak about religion during the past seven decades when ideologies like Marxism and Jiberal anti-communism dominated political and social discourse. During this period religion was relegated to private belief, at best among the anticommunist, and became a downright of enemy of the more secular fundamentalist ideologies of liberalism. Marx-

ism, utilitarianism, and social ism. Indeed on the Indian subcontinent religion was scorned outright by most secular thinkers. However, all this has changed.

For over the past fifty years or more years there has been an increasing concern with religion all around the world Although this increased concern has been most clearly delineated among the Muslim nations, it is has also been a factor as not only Mr Jain has pointed out among Hindus and in my own country among Christians, particularly in recent years. Buddhism which has always been a mode of political expression in Thailand and Sri Lanka and, to a lesser extent, in Japan, has not yet had a resurgence of political thought - although some informants in China and Thai land and Viet Nam see it as a new force. In summary, belief has entered into the political equation after a long absence and the amount of study of it and its political impact is evidence of this.

Thus, whether we like it or not political philosophy must once again account for belief and respect it, however much many of us want to see it remain as an ethical and moral force that informs political discourse, but not as a weapon to use in political activities. The challenge against fundamentalisms, religious or secular fundamentalism, is to balance the role of belief and the need to not entwine high moral and ethical beliefs with more reasoned — and by nature power grubbing and often corrupt-part of the struggle for political power. The state must be subject to reason, not dogma, however much the state and political life needs the inspiration of higher cultural and aesthetic values. But this inspiration must be at one remove from the actual political scene of action.

Nevertheless, finding that balance between politics and the cultural aspects of society. indeed maintaining the sense of pluralism and civil liberties in society without in fact undermining the virtues of prudence, fortitude, creative work, wisdom, and self sacrifice, which religion inculcates so well, is at the heart of the current work, wisdom, and self sacrifice, which religion inculcates so well, is at the heart of the current debate in the west and among all the religions of the world. And of find that balance we must once



against confront religion not as something to be dismissed lightly but as a formidable part of society. The state must be secular and be a leading part of society, but it is not the only part of society, for there is an economic part of civil society in which the state's role is highly circumspect, and there is a cultural dimension of society made up of religious institutions, universities and schools and the aesthetic arts that also is part of society. Each of these parts of society are checks on one another in a free society, but one part cannot dominate either one or both of the other parts. Because we live on earth and not in heaven or utopia finding this balance is always difficult. Girilal Jain sees that this is the problem and he is trying to deal with it by means of rea-

His argument has three elements. The first is that Hinduism is not religion in the Semitic sense of the word, and it has created a whole people. peoplehood in the sense that Hindu civilization, for all of its myriad forms and languages and racial groups, forms a unity. The second point is that Islamic civilization in the subcontinent is in retreat, rive by ethnic squabbles and sects fighting sects, indeed, more and more becoming a ghettoized civilization that on the one hand is recoiling from the contemporary world, and on the other hand, trying to maintain its unity through its dislike of other civilizations. especially the west and Hindu civilization. Thirdly, he notes that socialism, secularism, and non-alignment, which elevated the state above society is on the wain, and the state is no longer the arbiter among religions, but is once again receding to its role as one part of society while being more responsive to the cultural influences of the higher ethical and moral principles of Hinduism. a Hinduism taken in its state of grace, not in its communal

If one had to quibble with this book, it is that he does not spend enough time dealing with internal problems of Hinduism, especially the problems

of caste. Indeed he does not clearly state what separates Hinduism from the creedal religions of the Semitic variety like Judaism, and especially Christianity and Islam. For the latter two are universal, open to all men, based on their beliefs. Hinduism, and to a lesser extent Judaism, are based not on a special creed per se, but on the member's birth, that is that one cannot easily become Jew or Hindu, because both systems of thought are based who your parents are and not your beliefs. Indeed the Hindus are a people in the sense that he uses the word because there is a certain inherited belongingness that separates Hinduism from the creedal religions. Thus, in Hindusim there is caste based on blood not belief. Hinduism is not uni versal as is Islam and Christianity. Girilal Jain, by not em phasizing this, can be mislead

For it is true that, taken in its state of grace. Hinduism embraces a wide variety of beliefs. But what it cannot do is embrace all of humanity. For most of us could not be Hindus or accepted as Hindus without accepting the caste assigned to us, assuming we are accepted at all. Thus, while Jain, has presented an explanation of Hinduism at its best, he has not been able to make it em brace mankind, however much Hinduism embraces the ideas of mankind. And Jain sees Hinduism in all its syncretic aspects as being closer to an cient Egyptian or Greek and Roman cultures, more open to the ideas of philosophy, and various beliefs than are the creedal Semitic based religions.

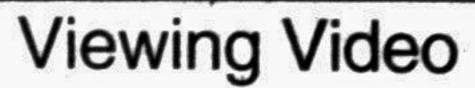
Indeed he goes so far as to say lithduism is not a religion in the creedal sense at all but a metaphysical system of thought. Indeed this distinction between what he calls religion in the "Semitic" sense. i.e. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and his metaphysical view of Hinduism is central to his whole thesis - a thesis that this author finds difficult to accept, first, because he has seen the Hindy worship his god or gods in the same manner as the Semitic pietist worships his unitary God, and secondly because the great thinkers of the Semitic religions — Mainmonides among the Jews, Averoes, Avicenna. to name but two among the Muslims, and Thomas Aquinas, among many others for the Christians, all have a profound metaphysical approach to their religion, as well. Indeed, Jain misses the chance to make the

point that Leo Strauss and Russell Kirk in America have made, that Jews and Muslims are much more likely to be Platonists while Christians have always been Aristotelean precisely in the matter of metaphysics. Indeed, many aspects of Hinduism as this writer understands it, is closer to Platonism as well. His critique of Islam how-

ever is deeper than this. In the beginning, he argues, Islam was an open religion as the "presence of Mutazilites and Kharirijites, and the rise of major philosophers like Ibn Sina and of the Sufi Orders" indicates. Early Islam he contends made major strides in philosophy and the sciences. But in the 13th century, this earlier more experimental Islam was replaced by a stricter orthodoxy that stifled free inquiry. Jain's hypothesis, one held by many Islamic scholars as well, is what lies at the heart of his critique of Islam, This writer does not see, this the same way as he, as he leaves out the damaging effect of western dominance on the Islamic world. Nevertheless. Mr Jain makes the point that for Hindus the west's intervention came as a liberation. while for the Muslims it produced a movement toward inwardness. This inwardness keeps Islam from truly finding a place in the contemporary

However the most important chapter in this book is the one where he critiques the Nehruvian approach to secularism and socialism that raised the state to being the "arbiter" over both the economic and cultural parts of society. He explains in great detail how Nehru skirted many fundamental issues and papered over others so that when socialism failed and its promise of heaven on earth failed, so too did that brand of secularism fail. For Nehru at heart seemed to believe that not only the state but society as a whole should be secular, something that is not possible. For the cultural and economic parts of society are independent and the state cannot dominate them without injuring itself.

What Girilal Jain has done is to make us see Hinduism, and ourselves, through the penetrating eyes of a genius. He is biased in this premises but he is cogent in following his premises to his conclusion. He has boiled down a great of deal reading into a few pages of distilled polemic. Disagree we may - and for some of us must. But we ignore this book only at our own peril.



by Lenin Gani

to do so.

N Blackbett a brutal double murder takes place and excop Don 'The Dragon' Wilson is called in to help solve

he crime Apparently the slaving is in



NAME

1. The Quick And

someway connected to a popular female singer with whom the killer has an obsession.

The singer hires Wilson to protect her. She has other problems too. Her financial backer is a notorious big wig who wants her to renew her contract. But she is reluctant

Thus he sends some of his henchmen to convince her. However Wilson is on hand

to put a step to it. After dealing with them and their employer. His attention

returns to the serial killer. The reason why he wants the singer is simply because he honesty thinks she reminds

him of his dead mother. Tracking him down Wilson has to pay a dear price with death of a close friend.

Don't expect this film to give much in the way of subs-

CAST

Sharon Stone/

| The Dead | Section Company Control of Company | Gene Hackman |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| Just cause | (Thriller) | Sean Connery/ |
| | | KateCapshaw/ |
| ** | | Laurence Fishburne |
| Witchhunt | (Comedy) | Dennis Hopper |
| Family Album | (Romantic) | (Written by |
| To the industry of content of the south of the force are the son | The second control of the second seco | Danielle Steel) |
| Sentimental MTV | (Musical) | |
| In The Mouth | (Horror) | Sam Neil/ |
| Of Madness | 97.5 VEX 000 000 000 000 000 100 | Julie Carmen |
| COST PROCESSOR AND SECURITY OF THE SECURITY OF | | (Dir: John Carpenter) |
| Sleep Stalker | | |
| (The Sandman | ** | |
| Last Rites) | | |
| The Sect (written | 300 | - E |
| by Dario Argentos) | | |
| Scanners | 9€ | . 2 |
| | | |

ENGLISH

TYPE

(Western)

production) HINDI NAME TYPE Majdhaar

(The Showdown

Heavyweights

NAME

. Mohini

(Walt Disney

(Romantic) BANGLA

TYPE

(Social)

(Comedy)

Salman Khan/ Monisha Kotrala/Raul Roy CAST

CAST

Prasanjeet/Sumitra/

Faruk Seikh/Robi Ghose

Source: Film Fair Video and other clubs.



Elvis Presley on Channel V in Classic

TELEVISION

Arabian Nights: Story of the Trader and the Goat bearer of the clan. a large knife so that she could

HEHRAZADE continues the story of the trader and the goat, for the curious Sultan.

Duraksha accepts Ghozala as a bride: First wife Duraksha not only decorates and lays the wed-bed for the second wife Ghozala, but also gets her bathed in milk and sandalwood, dresses her up with Royal clothes and scented oils.

A son is born: Soon second wife Ghozala bears a baby boy to Sirajuddin - the torch

Dark Justice

(Robert Dickman), is brought

before the bench of Judge

Nicholas "Nick" Marshall

(Ramy Zada). Simon, who

brilliant philosophy pr-

ofessor and multiple

murderer, Simon Tall

RUMINATIONS FROM ROME

Everybody including first wife Duraksha express joy. Time flies - the boy becomes sixteen years old -Sirajuddin decides to go on a

Chozala is sad and worried. Sirajuddin assures her that Duraksha is there to protect and take care of her.

Ghozala and son are transformed into goats: Duraksha requests Sirajuddin to get him

previously killed five college girls, is a longtime resident of Seegoville Maximum Security Prison For The Criminally Insane and is charged with

of his fellow inmates. Nick senses that Simon has too much power within the walls of Seegoville and enlists

ordering the execution of one

After Sirajuddin's departure, Duraksha, on a pretext, takes Ghozala and her son to the same magician. trading trip for a few days.

sacrifice two goats.

The fire of revenge and

fulfil her long standing vow to

jealousy - suppressed from last 16 years now — erupts like a volcano. First wife Duraksha with help of the magician transforms the second wife Ghozala and her 16-year old son into goats.

* * * * * * the aid of his fellow "Night Watchmen". Maria (Viviane Vives). Moon (Dick O'Neill) and gibs (Clayton Prince), to assists him in setting the record straight.

skillfully. - Nick is able to sleep a little easier knowing that justice has

me quite a few special secrets

covert operation works so

Sultan spares Shehrazade for one more night: The soldiers arrive to take Shehrazade to the executioner.

The Sultan's appetite for the story remains unfulfilled He spares Shehrazade's life for one day more so that she can complete the next night the story of the trader and the goat and unveil to him the secret of the two goats.

Episode II on BTV today (Friday) at 8-30 pm

been served and Seegoville will no longer operate according to what "Simon Says." Episode 12 on BTV on Sunday at 9:00 p.m

The Crystal Maze Episode 11 on BTV today (Friday) at 9-05 am

substituted by dhonia pata, and no one will know who was integrated into what! Towards that future dish of integrated cultural pasta — BUON AP-

PETITO!

[Evening Session] series: Law & Order 11:30 Khabar/ The News 11:40 Tomorrow's programme summary 11:45 Closing 9:00am_BBC World 10:00 BBC World News 10:25 Time Out: Holiday

10:05 Retelecast of selected drama: Moner Mukurey 11:15 Film show: Batman 11:40 Prescription 11:55 Shiksha-Dhiksha 12:30 Close down 3:00 Opening announcement 3:10 Recitation from Tripitak 3:15 Cartoon film: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 3:40 Bengali feature film 5:10 News in Bangla 5:25 Sports programme 7:00 Open University 7:25 Modern songs: Malancha 8:00 News in Bangla 8:30 Film show: Arabian Nights 9:00 Magazine programme: Chalachitra 10:00 News in English 10:30 Drama

A scelle from "Caddie" on Star Movies

Friday 24th March

(All programmes in local time)

[Morning Session]

8:00 Opening announcement 8:10 News

BIV in Bangla 8:15 Chil-

Islam: Alor Dishari 8:40 Education,

art & culture for youngsters:

Chetona 9:05 Adventure show:

Crystal Maze 10:00 News in English

dren's programme on

News 9:25 World Business Report

11:00 BBC Newsday 2:00 BBC World Headlines 2:05 Question Time 3:00 BBC World News 3:25 Business Matters 4:00 BBC World News 4:25 Time Out: A Question of Sport 5:00 BBC Newsdesk 7:00 BBC World News 7:05 Everyman 8:00 BBC World News 9:00 BBC World News 9:10 World Business Report 9:25 Time Out: Tomorrow's World 10:00 BBC World Headlines

10:05 Question Time 11:00 BBC World News 11:25 Time Out: Holiday 12:00mn The World Today 2:00 BBC World Headlines 2:05 Question Time 3:00 BBC World News 3:25 Time Out: Film '95 4:00 BBC World News 4:25 World Business Report 5:00 BBC World News 5:25 World Business Report 6:00 The World Today 7:00 BBC World News 7:25 World Business Report 8:00 BBC World News 8:25 Newsnight.

The Star Entertainment Guide

6:00am Jump Start 7:00 International Flights - VJ Petrina 8:00 Rewind 8:30 VJ Sophiva 9:00 The Ride VJ Trev 10:00 The Vibe 10:30 VJ Ruby 11:00 By Demand 11:30 VJ Angela 12:00Noon The Ride 12:30 VJ Trey 2:00 Frame by Frame 2:30 VJ Allessandra 3:00 Big Bang VJ Petrina 4:00 The Vibe 4:30 VJ Ruby 5:00 Over the Edge -- VJ Sophiya 5:30 Rewind VJ Sophiya 6:00 Sigaw Manila 6:30 By Demand 7:00 VJ Angela 7:30 First Day First Show 8:00 The Vibe 9:30 Mescos Gim Show 9:30 Club X VJ Sophtya 10:30 The Ticket 11:30 Classic Concert: Neil Young 12:00mn 1st Day 1st Show 12:30 The Vibe 1:00 Heart & Soul 2:00 By Demand 2:30 VJ Angela 3:00 The Ride 3:30 VJ Trey 5:00 Jump Start 5:30 VJ Rick

6:30am Spiderman 5000 7:00 Kidstreet 7:30 G I Joe 8.00 Jem PLUS 8:30 Aerobics Oz Style 9:00 The Wind in the Willows 9:30 Playabout 10:00 The Sullivans 10:30 Great Vegetarian Dishes 11:00 Fashion Television 11:30 Donahue 12:30 Santa Barbara 1:30 The Bold & The Beautiful 2:00 The

Oprah Winfrey Show 3:00 Riviera

3:30 Great Vegetarian Dishes 4:00

Aerobics Oz Style 4:30 The Sulivans

5:00 Small Wonder 5:30 Robotech 6:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 6:30 Batman 7:00 Home and Away 7:30 Neighbours 8:00 MASH 8:30 Remington Steele 9:30 Dynasty 10:30 The Bold & The Beautiful 11:00 Santa Barbara 12:00mm Star Trek 1:00 India Business Week 1:30 Doogie Howser M D 2:00 Anything But Love 2:30 Neighbours 3:00 Mini Series: Champange Charlie 5:00 The Sullivans 5.30 Crossbow

6:00am The World Of PRIME Rugby 7:00 Live NCAA Sports Basketball Regional Semifinals 11:30 The

World of Rugby 12:00noon Australian Rugby League H/L Round 2 1:00 India Cricket Scene 2:00 European Snooker League 3:00 World Wrestling Federation Wrestling Spotlight 4:00 The Asian Football Show 5:00 Talking Baseball 5:30 NBA - Inside Stuff 6:00pm NBA Game of the Week Charlotte at Orlando 8:30 NCAA Basketball Regional Semifinals 1:00mm NBA -Inside Stuff 1:30 NBA Game of The Week Charlotte at Orlando 3:30 The Asian Football Show 4:00 World Wrestling Federation Wrestling Spotlight 5:00 European Spooker League

7:80am Friday Fury: Tatooed Dragon (Hindi Subtitles) 9:30 Family Conrack (Hindi Subtitles) 11:30 Oscar Winner: The Hustler (Hindi Subtitles) 1:30 Oscar Winner: Black Narcissus (Hindi Subtitles) 3:30 Family: Conrack (Hindi Subtitles) 5:30 Oscar Winner Fantastic Voyage (Hindi Subtitles) 7:30 Family: Evil Under The Sun (Arabic Subtitles) 9:00 US Top Ten 9:30

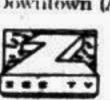
Friday Fury: Tatooed Dragon (Arabic

Subtitles) 11:30 Oscar Winner: The

Hustler (Arabic Subtitles) 1:30 Film

Club Il Maestro (Arabic Subtitles)

3:30 Classic: Black Narcissus (Arabic Subtitles) 5:30 Action: Downtown (Arabic Subtitles) 2:30 Khana Khazana



Baap Re Baap 4:00 Ras Barse 4:30 Akbar Birbal 5:00 Regional Feature Film 7:30 Hum Honge Kamyaab 8:00 Double Trouble 8:30 Close Up Antakshari 9:00 Philips Top 10 9:30 Andaz 10:35 News 10:50 Sitara 11:20 Bazaar Buzz 11:30 Film Deewane 12:00 Banegi April Baat 12:30 Parvarish 1:00 Laylak (Arabic) 1:30 Infotainment 3:45 Close Down.

3:00 Khoobsurat 3:30

8:00 am Bismillah &

Basecrat 8:07 Aaj Ke Trogramme 8:10 Hamd-O-Naat 8:20 Boltay Haath 8:35 Sajray Phul 9:00 Daster Khawan 9:15 Ilaqai Prog 9:40 Health Forum 10:00 Khabrain

10:15 Raigzaar/Nashaib 11:05 Full House 11:30 Commerciais 11:40 Sports 12:50 Juma Spot Close Down 2:00 PTV2 Insignia 2:02 Bismillah 2:10 Aaj Ki Nashriyaat 2:15 Fehm-Ul-Quraan 2:40 Natka Rang 3:30 Chotay Baray Log: EP:4 4:20 ETV Lab 4:50 Songs 5:00 Aasaan Hesaab-l 5:25 Taleemi Nizam 6:20 Alou Courses 6:50 Al-Akhbar 7:00 The News 7:20 Sesame Street 8:10 Mugabil Hai Aaina 8:20 The Big Idea: 8:50 Sophia: 9:00 Khas Khas Khabrain 9:02 Sophia (Remaining Portion) 10:00 Khabarnama 10:25 Video Count Down 11:15 Oa Programme 11:55 English Feature Film

Mere Geet (Rpt) 8:30am Geet Gata Chal (Rpt) 2:30 Action "Lahu Ki Awaaz" 5:30 Hindi Film Hit Songs 7:15 Tere Sur Mere Geet 7:45 Geet Gata Chal 8:15 Gunjan 8:45 Sangeet 9:15 Guldasta

9:30 Social "Lajwanti" B/W

8:00am Tere Sur

a regular customer, all stock, not just Hindi, Bangladeshi and Pakistani films but also - my films from a bygone era. The

pocket. I know that I and all my mixed group of subcontinental friends, with domestic helps who need specialized entertainment, are regular "Prince Video", of which I am

here too. The video rental stores

Continued from page 11

seem to be a thriving business for they like the groceries. have the entire subcontinental community market in their clients. These shops, like the main attraction — old. Bengali atmosphere inside these tiny rental shops, neatly organized and run by very well mannered staff, with a background of music from films, is like being on an exotic island, cut, off from the Roman reality outside. It makes a nice change in hectic day. The most interesting and heartening fact about the video business is that the video

shops in Rome are all Bangladeshi owned or man-

Regarding another field where I have witnessed this special Bangladeshi spirit of enterprise, I will end by relating an encounter I had a few days ago. I was attending a special cooking class at the restaurant of the sports club where I go for my acrobic sessions. As we, the six member class, were being ushered into the spotless kitchen by Franco, our endearing, potbellied chef and Maestro. I noticed that the helper/apprentice was a fellow Bangladeshi, encased in jeans and apron. When someone asked me what my nationality was, and I replied, the boy almost dropped the knife with which he was dissecting the shrimps for our Risotto alla Crema di Scampi. "I am Bangladeshi too!" he said proudly. After that, in between Franco's lecture-demonstration, my compatriot slipped

in Bangla. "Apa," he whispered, "I would forget that pinch of nutmeg if I were you," or Actually the white wine is best added more towards the end."

At first I thought of ignoring his remarks, then it transpired that it was really he who did most of the cooking, with-Franco merely supervising. With growing appreciation I watched the dexterity with which this Bengali chef-to-be chopped and sauteed. His Italian was rudimentary but the fluency with which he handled the cuisine was admirably Italianissimo! I began to smile mentally. The world over, food in most North Indian restaurants is cooked by Bengali chefs, and now I had discovered that at least one Italian restaurant, to my knowledge, had this same behind the scene secret! Could the day be far when, while dining at an Italian restaurant, we may even order, instead of a Fettucine Alfredo, a Linguini alla Badsha Miya or Zuppa Bengala!!

Till that day arrives how-

. ever, the fact is that it is a very hard life for these boys. trying to carve a place in a foreign country where language is only one of the many hurdles. One of the positive factors about Italy, however, is that the attitude of the Romans is still not hostile towards the ethnic unemployed. But as the Bangladeshis slowly infiltrate areas of employment which. unlike the odd jobs or menial jobs, are just as much in demand for the Italian working class. I predict a day when the traditionally tolerant attitude of the host country will be considerably strained. That is still a long way away although every now and then one does see a slight exasperation or arrogance that wasn't there before. But Rome has been a historical melting pot. Perhaps in time a new ingredient will be added to the Italian stew perhaps Prezzemolo will be