

Royal Mail Delivers First Class Service

MOVING the post around Britain is a finely-tuned 24-hour a day operation for Royal Mail — one that relies on the very best in transport, technology and teamwork. Each day Royal Mail handles 63 million letters, delivering to each of the nation's 24.5 million addresses no matter how remote.

It is an enormous achievement which is only possible through a continuous pursuit of quality, backed by substantial investment in employees, training and innovation. And at the heart of the operation is a complex mail distribution network which maximises the use of road, rail and air transport to ensure that customers receive their letters as speedily as possible.

It is a network which has proved its strength, making Royal Mail a world leader in letter reliability. Independent monitoring shows that nine out of ten first class letters land on the doormat the day after posting, while 98 per cent of second class mail is delivered within three working days.

Three major transport systems are at the centre of the mail-moving operation when it comes to speeding the mail around the country: Skynet, Travelling Post Of-

fices and the road transport network.

Skynet is Royal Mail's pillar box in the sky and Britain's biggest night time air charter operation. On a typical working night, it carries 18,000 bags of mail, the equivalent of nearly three million letters, on air routes which bring the far reaches of the country closer together.

The £23 million a year project involves 32 carefully coordinated nightly flights from a network of 21 British airports — all linked to ensure that not a minute is wasted in moving the first class post around Britain. The investment in Skynet has brought increased quality of service and value-for-money for Royal Mail's customers, with room for growth as the nation's mail load continues to increase.

While Skynet flies the flag for Royal Mail in the air, Britain's overland rail network is an integral part of the mail-moving exercise, carrying a quarter of the nation's mail and using 500 trains a day. The core of the operation is Royal Mail's network of Travelling Post Offices (TPOs) — specially built high-speed

trains which carry a million letters a night.

TPOs are Royal Mail's sorting offices on the move, allowing first class letters to travel long distances while the nation sleeps, and arrive ready for delivery from a local sorting office the following morning. They serve a double function: as well as transporting and sorting mail between major centres such as Birmingham and Glasgow, they pick up, sort and redistribute mail for destinations along the route.

The network of 24 TPOs allows millions of late-posted items to be sorted while on their way to their destination for next-day delivery, making the best use of what would otherwise be unproductive transit time.

Providing the vital link for the rail and air network is Royal Mail's fleet of 28,000 vehicles — one of the largest in the country — which covers 435 million miles a year to provide a postbox to letterbox service for everyone. Route planning is controlled through TRANDOS, a £4.5 million computerised system

— and a European first — which controls vehicle routes and schedules. It has proved so successful that savings of up to 20 per cent on total urban mileage have been made — and more efficient routes for the fleet mean less congestion in inner city centres and less pollution.

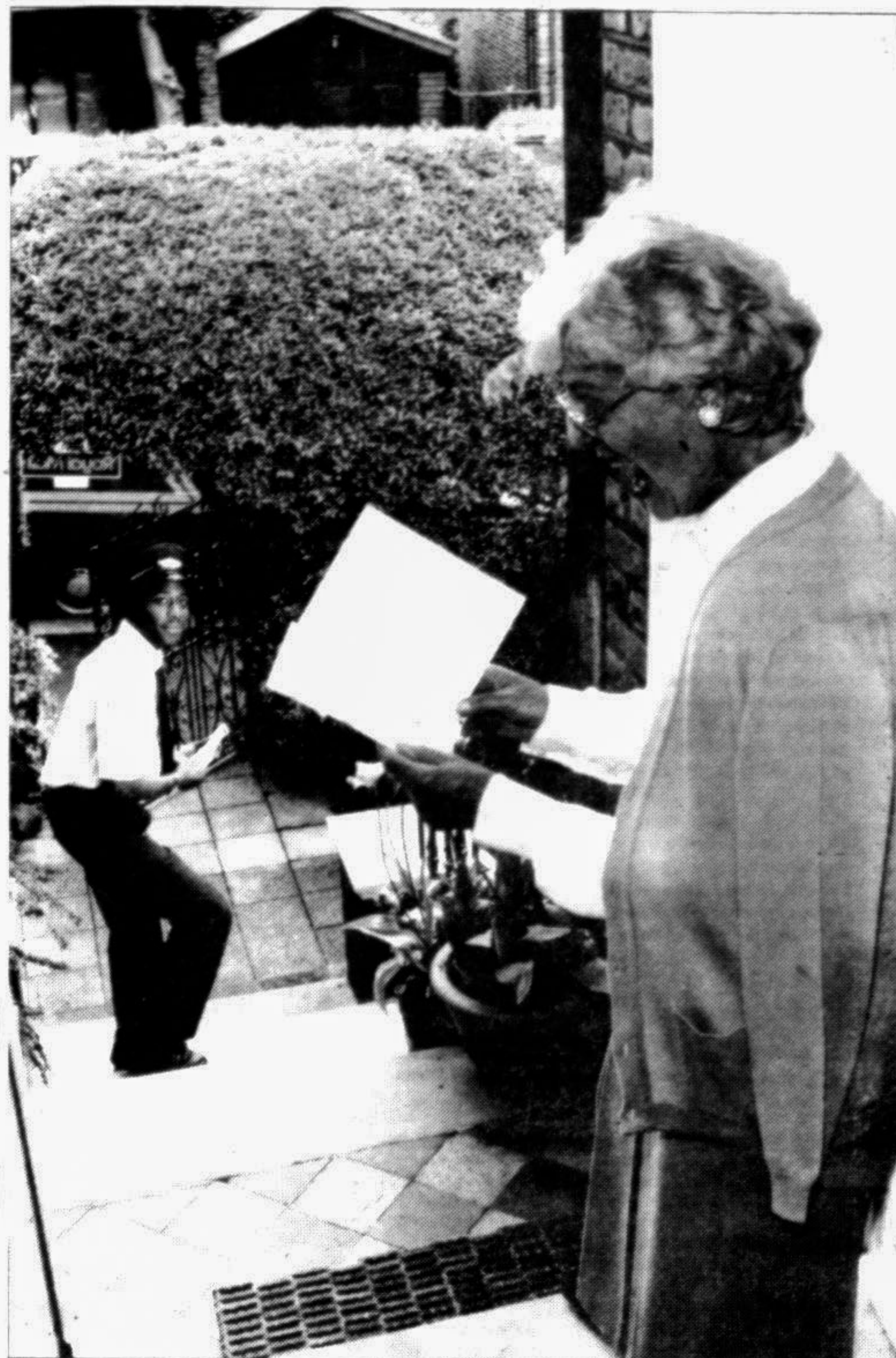
The system, one of the biggest of its type in Britain, automatically works out millions of different routing combinations to optimise the use of Royal Mail's vehicle fleet. Through its precise operation, routes can be amended quickly to take into account traffic problems such as the new one-way streets, long-term roadworks and heavy motorway congestion. And it enables Royal Mail to respond quickly to changes in customer demand patterns, such as new customers, new industrial estates and varying mail volumes.

Mail collection routes have been mapped on to the system and digitised computer map information has been developed for most of Britain's towns and cities to al-

low the system's technology to be used to the full. As part of its commitment to caring for the environment, Royal Mail has converted all its vehicles to lead-free fuels and is experimenting with vehicles specially adapted to cut down on noise and exhaust emissions.

In London, the Mail Rail — Royal Mail's underground automated train service — carries mail through the centre of the city while rush-hour traffic grinds to a halt overhead. And in rural areas, it is not just the post that is carried by Royal Mail — a network of 180 Postbus routes offers local families a lifeline for getting to work, school or shops, as well as ensuring the nation's mail reaches the remotest of country areas.

Another new national focal point for road-rail mail distribution now under construction in London, as part of the Royal Mail's prestigious £150 million Railnet project, is dedicated to getting even more letters delivered on the first working day after posting. As an interchange for handling the daily mail volume of 64 million letters, it will link road, rail and air in a fully integrated distribution network with a consequent reduction in mail van movement on central London's busy roads. — LPS



Distribution of mail by air, road and rail transport in Britain has been honed to a high standard to ensure the quickest and best ways of sending mail across the country for delivery to the door.

Why Kyaw Min Reads Trash Instead of Dickens

Cut off from new books by years of censorship and economic stagnation, Burmese are desperate for a good read. S. Satyanarayan of Gemini News service reports on an information famine.

SITTING in his ramshackle hut in suburban Rangoon, at 45 Kyaw Min is too old to be reading teenage novels and yet he is enjoying the experience. Given the sheer shortage and high cost of English-language books in Burma, he has little choice.

"Of course I prefer my Shakespeare and Charles Dickens but these days I have to read whatever trash comes my way," he explains.

It is a dilemma common to thousands of educated Burmese who do not know the concept of choice when

Bangladeshi Fashion

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A combination of black-and-white both in sarees and kurtas dominated all through. Maheen explained that market research and past experience, showed that black-and-white combination is the most popular both for male and female garments.

The Moving White panjabis were for the first time introduced at the show, which were not available at Aarong earlier and this collection is going to be the fashion-house's exclusive. Another set of exclusive collection called Heritage — which included sarees and kurtas — focusses upon our ethnic and traditional culture. A Different mix of fabric and tribal jewellery are used deliberately to bring out the richness of the country's culture.

With the recent success stories of Bangladesh's readymade garments and textiles industries, fashion shows are now being taken seriously in order to put Bangladesh on the front line in the international market. Aarong's step in this direction is very much to be appreciated. With the show-house's two overseas outlets — London and Vancouver — and its export-led strategy for designer-wears, it needs to disseminate more information through fashion shows with Bengali catwalkers abroad.

it comes to information. They have been shut out from the rest of the world by three decades of military rule and subject to severe censorship. The rising prices of published material is only the latest addition to their cup of intellectual woes.

Since the opening up of the economy in 1990, prices of almost all essential commodities have risen several-fold and books have been a major casualty. In a country where the highest government salary does not exceed 3000 Kyat, the starting price for English-language books is 500 Kyat, well above the reach of most citizens. The scarcity of foreign exchange has also held back imports of newly-published material, leaving already bare bookshops even emptier.

"Leave alone literature, many educational institutions in the country don't even have textbooks for their students in several subjects", says a Rangoon University lecturer. He says many schools and colleges now lend out the same set of textbooks to students year after year to overcome shortages.

Burma's 45-plus universities and colleges produced 27,000 graduates last year, of whom nearly 2,000 were engineers and health professionals. But the lack of up-to-date educational material and research literature is creating a large pool of qualified yet ignorant manpower.

Most citizens blame the military rulers for the dismal state of educational institutions and the failure to nurture the intellectual capabilities of the people.

"Before the coup, Burma was easily east Asia's most forward-looking economy with a large number of very skilled and educated personnel," says Dr Sein Win, who remembers how several Burmese universities once had standards comparable with those in the West.

Apart from stifling all intellectual discussion in educational institutions, the military — which came to power through a coup in 1962 — is also accused of taking the country back in time by ban-

ning the teaching of English at the primary school level and implementing a "Burmese only" policy. Though the policy was relaxed in the late 1980s, the damage had been done with the creation of an entire generation of students with little knowledge of

number of qualified people. It is common in Rangoon to see postgraduate students working as taxi drivers and engineers running roadside shops.

"The biggest problem in Burma is the fact that most of the officials overseeing edu-

been the regime's main opponents and are seen by it as a "natural enemy."

Since the 1988 pro-democracy agitation, which was largely led by students, the military authorities have been trying to "depoliticise" campuses. Re-opened in 1992 after three years' closure, universities are now under strict surveillance for signs of "dissident" activity, which includes publishing any literature, organising debates and staging plays and song performances.

But one of the dilemmas facing the military regime is that its attempts to open up the economy is also inadvertently exposing the population to foreign influences.

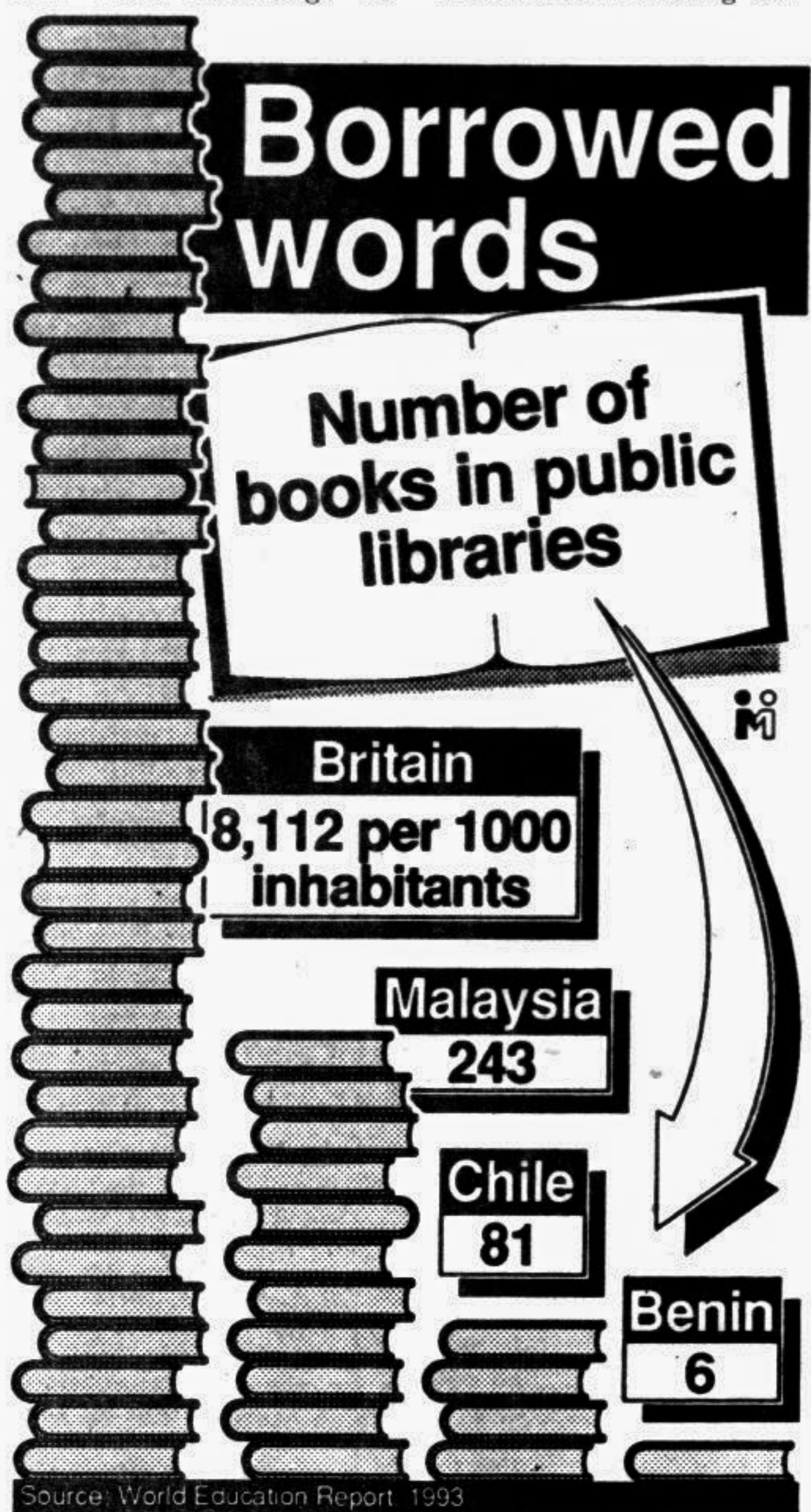
With foreign investment worth US \$2.5 billion flowing in since 1990 and thousands of visitors entering the country every year, it is experiencing increasing difficulty in controlling the influx of uncensored information in the form of books, video and audio cassettes.

A good example of the problem confronting the regime concerns its decision a few years ago, under pressure from the tourism lobby, to allow the setting up of satellite dishes by hotels catering to foreign tourists. In April this year the government stopped issuing licences and cracked down on the scores of illegal dishes that had sprung up all over the country.

Worried that rising inflation might spark off political riots, the regime has also started jamming the programmes of the British Broadcasting Corporation and Voice of America. Radio has become the main means by which many Burmese keep abreast of events in and outside Burma.

"In this day and age no regime can keep its people in the dark forever. It is a losing game," says an Asian diplomat in Rangoon. Censorship, he points out, could not keep the regimes of Eastern Europe from collapsing under the weight of their own lies.

The writer is an Indian freelance journalist who specialises in the Southeast Asian region.



Source: World Education Report 1993

English. Another major factor preventing intellectual development has been the backwardness of the economy, which has been unable to create enough jobs for the

causal affairs come from military backgrounds with little education or understanding of it," says a Burmese writer. Throughout the military's reign, students and teachers, he points out, have

Revulsion They Feel

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guarantee that the mere destruction of the old order will yield a new one more equitable or progressive. When an entire community has been corrupted, even the waging of a revolution becomes a dicey affair. No cleaning can be done with an unclean mop and no salt restore when the salt itself should have lost its savour. Under the circumstances, the only way out of the impasse is a resolute piece by piece reversal of the old order through the steady expansion of education generation after generation. The process cannot be anything but slow and painful. Such haste as we must make needs to focus itself.

On this single issue of education, in terms of both quality and spread. Literacy, as a basic instrument of education, is necessary on a mass level here and now, coupled with planned vocational training to create the spectacle of a nation at work. Simultaneously, our colleges and universities need to feed into our national life an expanding stream of scientists, engineers, doctors, economists, administrators and skilled workers who can carry forward the task of socio economic regeneration and reformation. With competence harnessed to work, a new work ethic should emerge and our present preoccupation with empty slogans and idle disputes over a whole range of noisy non-issues should gradually disappear. Whatever else we may do in whatever other sphere of our national life, education remains the key to our salva-

tion. It has been the neglect of education which has brought us to this sorrowful state of affairs, and education in its most catholic sense is the only way out of the labyrinth.

I am aware there is much controversy over what the goals, the system and the structure of our education ought to be. Fine, let us engage in these disputes earnestly and with sincerity, with an open mind ready to garner the best we can from all corners of the globe. Let us worry about education and even quarrel over it if we must. So long as it becomes and remains our foremost concern for the next three or four decades, with a resolute readiness to invest the lion's share of our resources to its refinement and spread, we can look forward to the future with hope regardless of the many problems that beset us in the present. Whatever we may immediately do to reform our political, economic and social life to survive as a civilised community, our effort will not take us beyond mere survival until education decisively turns the tide. Also worrisome, bordering on horror, is the galloping increase in our population. It gobbles up whatever little we achieve from year to year, piling problem on problem in every field ranging from education, health care, employment, housing and civic amenities to plain law and order. We are just too many with too little to go round, caught in an unholy scramble for even the basic necessities of life. If there is any issue at par with education which decisively cripples our ability to cope with the problems that beset us, it

is this burgeoning population. Population control and education, education and population control, are the only two points where we may strike with some hope of breaking out of this vicious circle of decadence. Many other issues will cry out for our attention as we go along, but none should sway us from our singular concentration on education and population control over the next three or four decades. This is the only way to break the siege.

I recollect I started out on writing these lines as a spontaneous response to a film that I had seen ("Not Without My Daughter") I understood why many in the West shrink from us in horror as we go screaming through centuries' revolutions in an attempt to throw away the yoke of centuries of decay and decadence. More than the revulsion they feel, my concern has been with the flaw in ourselves as Muslims. I think we do well, when overtaken by depression, to do a little "unreeling on the couch" as I have done in this article. It rambles, moves by free association raking up the most painful rocks that rattle, and in doing so hopefully provides some insight into what we may do to restore some sanity and decency to our lives.

The Writer is the only Bengali to have been awarded the Sword of Honour and the Gold Medal from the Pakistan Military Academy. He resigned from the Pakistan Army in 1973 and joined the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. In 1994, he retired as the President of the Institute of Regional Studies. He lives in Pakistan.

THERE is no such thing as competition in exercising. Every body is different. It does not matter that one person can get into seemingly advanced position in a week of practice, while another is still in a comparatively elementary position after practising for nearly a year. As long as you go to your own comfortable limit you are getting the same benefit, no matter what stage or level you are in. Likewise, it does not follow that someone is slim and athletic will progress faster than a middle-aged person who is of heavy build, so be AWARE OF

fitness royale
with rani padamsee



ONLY YOURSELF. These is no hurry, and no prize for the person who reaches a certain level first. You are a receiving full benefit from your first day of practice, because you are listening to your body, and allowing it to take you a little further only when it is ready.

Apart from the aerobics (jogging, skipping, dancing, brisk walking etc) all other exercises should be done slowly. Do them slowly with control, really feeling what is happening to the body. You can feel exactly when you have gone far enough and you stop. This prevents any pulling or straining of the muscles, ligaments and joints. When you are concentrating and becoming so aware of the particular section of the body that is moving, then automatically all other thoughts are erased from your mind. This clearance of the mind, even if it is only for a few minutes, brings tremendous mental relaxation.

fast forward. Learning and executing the movements correctly should be your first priority, just breathing normally. When you are absolutely sure you know the movements than begin to use the individual breathing instructions. Initially it is diffi-

You may find that moving slowly is a little difficult at first because we are used to doing everything quickly in



cult to coordinate both. Set aside sometime daily for yourself and use it wisely for your own benefit.

Sit on the floor. Bend knee pull thigh towards chest, keep back straight. Lift other leg off the ground while breathing out and breath in as you lowers. Eventually you will be able to raise the leg much higher and keep your body straight. Stomach pulled in. Try to relax the rest of the body and isolate your leg movement. This way the benefits will be more. Increase count as you progress.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

1 Asset	38 Playwright	4 Thorough-	inspiration
5 Chore	41 Ump's call	5 Scoff	24 Islamic
8 Corridor	42 On	6 Eventual	26 Filibuster-
12 Symbol	43 63-gallon	7 Urged	ers'
13 On a staff	unit	8 Trailing	tactics
13 Zsa Zsa's	48 Trailing	9 Grad	27 Vivacity
sis	the pack	10 Trevi	28 Helper
14 Author	49 Right angle	11 Meager	29 Land-
Wiesel	50 Fiery	12 Actor	owner's
15 Business	51 Moreover	13 Holbrook	document
costs	52 Bishopric	14 Dust foot	31 Tibia's
17 Emanation	53 Ready for	15 Grouch	location
18 Van	the picking	16 Verbi-	34 One with
Gogh's	DOWN	17 Actor	taking
19 Teutonic	11 Voter in	18 Actor	ways?
20 tongue	16 Actor	19 Actor	35 Mid-May
21 Ship of the	16 Actor	20 Dust foot	honore
desert	2 Third O.T.	21 Grouch	37 Kramden's
24 Wouldn't	22 Verbi-	22 Verbi-	wheels
release	38 Framer's	23 Werewolf's	38 Framer's
25 Public dis-	39 Last-ending	23 Werewolf's	39 Last-ending
26 Poor loser	abbr.	23 Werewolf's	abbr.
30 Bother	40 Colonial	23 Werewolf's	40 Colonial
31 Binge	41 Look	23 Werewolf's	41 Look
32 Prevarica-	lecher-	23 Werewolf's	41 Look
33 "Lifeboat"	ously	23 Werewolf's	41 Look
actress	44 Bulling	23 Werewolf's	41 Look
35 Put	bravo	23 Werewolf's	41 Look
together	45 Yale	23 Werewolf's	41 Look
36 Creditor's	student	23 Werewolf's	41 Look
claim to	46 Sound	23 Werewolf's	41 Look
properly	enhancer	23 Werewolf's	41 Look
37 Filleted	47 Buck's	23 Werewolf's	41 Look
	mate	23 Werewolf's	41 Look

CRYPTOQUIP
D J N V J A L E U Y M Z V L I R L W Z H
D L S M X Y Z I L W E
R L R S M U H U I L A P X L P W ?
R L L V J M A N
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THEY SAY A DREAMY
REALTOR HAS LOTS ON HIS MIND.
Today's Cryptoquip clue: R equals P
The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.