

FOCUS

Let Them be Rivers of Hope

by Amjad Hossain Khan

The outcome of the summit particularly on water is encouraging. The two Governments have acknowledged the need for settling the water sharing issue of all the common rivers between India and Bangladesh.

H D Deve Gowda, Indian Prime Minister arrived in Dhaka on 6th January 1997 accompanied by an entourage of 17 officials. News media in Bangladesh quoting various sources prior to the visit indicated that the summit level talks may cover a host of agenda including all bilateral relations between the two countries. The visit was considered significant to strengthen the bilateral relations immediately following the signing of the 30 years Ganges Water Treaty. It was reported that the two Prime Ministers may review the joint monitoring of water sharing arrangements.

Of particular importance was the official level talks on sharing of the water of 53 other common rivers. This aspect of the agenda is a follow-up of the recently concluded Ganges Water Treaty. Article IX states that "Guided by the principles of equity, fairness, and justice, both the Governments agree to conclude water sharing treaties/agreements with regard to other common rivers". The preamble of the Ganges Water Treaty of 1996 provides for sharing by mutual agreement the waters of the international rivers following through the two countries, and of making optimum use of the water resources of their region in the fields of flood management, generation of hydropower for the mutual benefit of the two countries.

During the summit level meeting two sides also discussed joint collaboration of the water

resources of the four countries — Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Bhutan on the Ganges and the Brahmaputra river systems.

Bangladesh should endeavour to start dialogue on sharing of water of the Brahmaputra and all other common rivers as a priority. The Meghna river, as part of the Brahmaputra basin, should be included in the discussion for long term benefits, if any, from the proposed Tipai Mukh dam project in Manipur, India. The Kosi high dam project on Kosi river in Nepal is close to Bangladesh, and India and Nepal are already discussing the high dam project. In view of recent developments, it may be worthwhile to pursue the matter for association of Bangladesh in future negotiations. Bhutan has also possibilities of developing high dam projects in Manus and Sankoth. These rivers are tributaries of the Brahmaputra. Any development on these rivers should form a part of the overall water resources management. All these developments should form a larger issue of integrated development of the river basins of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. Nepal and Bhutan already showed their keen interest in such developments. As India is also

now willing to cooperate, Bangladesh may take the initiative for formal talks in the matter.

The summit level meeting on 6th January between Prime Ministers of Bangladesh and India covered wide range of issues to forge greater economic cooperation and they expressed their political will on certain crucial issues. The two sides agreed to reactivate the Indo-Bangladesh Joint River Commission, the Joint Economic Commission and a joint working group on eradicating cross border insurgencies. The two Prime Ministers discussed the importance of regional/sub-regional cooperation among four South Asian countries — Nepal, Bhutan, India and Bangladesh.

While emphasising the need for fostering friendly and active relation among close neighbours, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, "The complementarities that we have in the countries of this region will usher in a new era of development. She added "we have ample scope for greater cooperation in the fields of trade, tourism, development of natural and water resources, flood control and creating employment opportunities for the people."

Reciprocating the sentiment expressed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the Indian Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda underlined the need for building edifice of cooperation between India and Bangladesh for improving the quality of life of their people. Mr Gowda called for tapping the vast natural and human resources of the region for common benefit. He said, "The rivers that flow through the territories of both our nations are a rich endowment" and added "they should become rivers of hope and opportunity". He further said that the potential for joint efforts to improve water management for flood control, irrigation, conservation and navigation are immense. Mr Gowda said that in the near future India and Bangladesh should mandate the experts of both the nations to work out schemes for full harnessing of their crucial resources.

The outcome of the summit level meeting has clearly indicated the political will of both the Governments for maximising the optimum development of the vast water resources among the riparian countries for the benefit of the people.

The Ganges Water Treaty for 30 years is just the beginning of

a new era of hope for the people of Bangladesh. While efforts will be made by both the countries for a treaty on water sharing of all common rivers including the Brahmaputra, the urgency of regional cooperation among the south Asian countries, Nepal, Bhutan, India and Bangladesh, will bring rich dividends to the countries.

The two Prime Ministers addressed a press conference before the departure of the Indian Prime Minister. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told that they have identified the Teesta river as the next focus of attention along with settling the share of water of all other common rivers. She further said that the two countries have "agreed to work together to further strengthen the regional cooperation within SAARC as well as seeking avenues for having faster track of development involving countries of our regional/sub-regional approach."

Deve Gowda, noted that the signing of the Ganges Water Treaty between the two countries was a landmark event and should usher in a new chapter in relations "based on trust ending past suspicions."

The outcome of the summit particularly on water is en-

couraging. The two Governments have acknowledged the need for settling the water sharing issue of all the common rivers between India and Bangladesh and Teesta river has been identified as the next focus of attention.

It may be mentioned that India constructed the Teesta Barrage near Gazoldoba in 1978 with specific assurance on sharing of water. Bangladesh started construction of the Teesta Barrage at Dalia and completed it in 1987. Unfortunately the sharing of water on Teesta would not be reached due to divergent view of both the sides. Present situation may help in solving the sharing of water of the Teesta soon.

Mr H D Deve Gowda has clearly stated that experts of the two countries be mandated to start the dialogue on the issue of harnessing the water resources of the region.

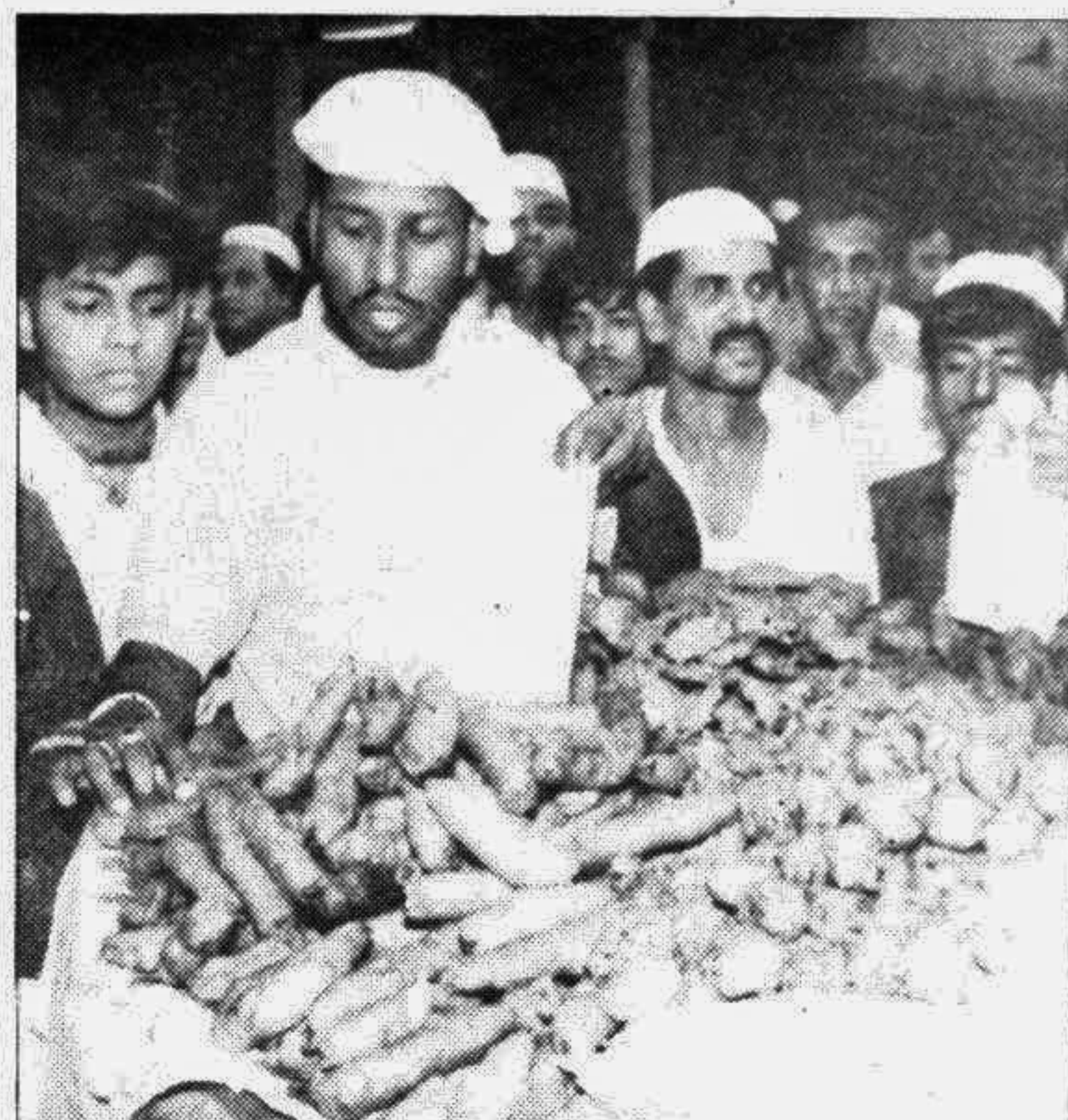
The reactivated Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission has been given the responsibility and the political will for resolving water sharing issues and of harnessing the water resources potentials of the Ganges and Brahmaputra basins, given the political will of the two countries it should not be difficult for them to come to an amicable solution of the vital issues which concern millions of people of South Asia. Let the rivers become rivers of hope for the future.

The writer ex-Chairman, Bangladesh Water Development Board

Dhaka Day by Day

Mouth-watering but not before Sunset

by Anindita Sarkar



If it is Ramadan can temporary shops be far behind to cater to the growing demand for iftari items? This demand for ready-made food is perhaps a reflection of the times we live in. Women have started moving outside their homes and their work pressures often do not permit them to devote much time to the preparation of certain time-consuming food items. Sometimes these makeshift food counters are of immense help to people who cannot simply close their business and go home for iftari. Then again these shops are god-sent for those who are of the opinion that why toil so much when quality things are available — the same principle that has made bread off the shelf so popular.

This growing need has been quickly filled up by these enterprising businessmen — our home grown fast-food joints! Some are regular sweetmeat shops who for that period also branch out into making savory food items. Then there are the established caterers of the city who join the bandwagon and start doing retail business. Few of the more resourceful ones in a bid to outdo their rivals, sit with burning stoves in the

makeshift stalls that crop up on the footpaths and rustle up hot "jalebis" and fritters. Business is brisk to say the least. Another interesting feature is the presence of fruit sellers next to these outlets. Dates, oranges, apples, bananas, cucumbers and often carrots are sold. Perhaps this is for the convenience of the iftari seeker who need look no further. Advertising is made use of very sparingly. Mostly it is through word of mouth or customer goodwill. The few who do advertise make use of red banners which proclaim their specialties — "shahi halim" or special "jalebis" or simply the fact that iftari items are sold here.

Ifitri products at most of the shops remain more or less the same. However this need not be a deterrent, for the spread is enormous. One can choose from a variety of fritters — "pyajao", "beguni", "chops", "Jali kababs" and other meat preparations are also sold. However "special jalebis" and "halim" remain the most popular.

Those who have not yet tried out one of these places, do hurry up. A word of caution though — go well in advance or you might just come back with some very pathetic looking left over!

Large Dams: Back on World Bank's Agenda

by Himanshu Thakkar

Big dams are once again on the agenda of the World Bank, despite unhappy past experiences.

A study titled "The World Bank's Experience With Large Dams: A preliminary Review of Impacts" (dated September 1996) by the Operations Evaluation Department (OED) of the Bank has come out strongly in defence of big dams after a desk assessment of 50 Bank-financed large dams.

It underlines that as the mitigation of adverse social and environmental consequences of large dams are feasible and economically justifiable in 74 per cent of the cases, they are acceptable.

Arguing that the controversy surrounding the large dams has made potential and justified borrowers reluctant to approach the World Bank and other development agencies for assistance, the study says that if these mega projects comply with the new Bank guidelines and the design, construction and operation of new projects take into account the lessons of experience, they should be given a chance.

Attacking this conclusion as flawed, Patrick McCully, campaign director for the International Rivers Network in the US, says: "The sources of data

have been the dam agencies themselves, so the answers are not surprising."

The study also fails to take note of the fact that the Bank has similarly failed to fund many smaller dams, watershed development, preservation and propagation of traditional and local water harvesting systems, which could cater to the water and power needs in different ways, he argues.

A number of international NGOs, including Bretton Woods Project (UK), Urgewald (Germany), Probe International (Canada) have condemned the study as it has not taken into consideration the views of NGOs, citizen's groups, and affected peoples, "which have the most experience in studying and critiquing the large dams which the Bank has financed."

At present, the World Bank is directly or indirectly involved in about 10 per cent of the 250 dams being completed worldwide each year. A recent list shows 604 dams that have been supported by the Bank. But the review only includes the names of large dams (greater than 90 metres) and reservoir area (more than 300 square kilometres) between the years 1956 and 1987.

It excludes the names of those still under construction and those where the Bank was involved after the construction or has been involved indirectly. Also, as controversial dams including Sardar Sarovar, Suvarnarekha, Upper Krishna and Upper Indravati in India, Katsin in Lesotho, Yacayeta in Argentina and Paraguay, and the Pangue in Chile, Guavio in Colombia, Balbina and Tucuruí projects in Brazil, all funded by the World Bank, and dams whose social and environmental impacts have been important, such as Shuikou in China, Aguamilpa in Mexico, Berke in Turkey and Kouris in Cyprus, are not mentioned, critics feel that the selection criteria is unfair.

Detractors see the review's terms of reference and research and research methodology as narrow and likely to lead to biased conclusions. They say the study is partisan as it has not looked at feasible alternatives to big dams and refuse to accept the Bank's defence: "Given the limited scope of this preliminary review, it was not possible to revisit the least cost justification for each large dam project."

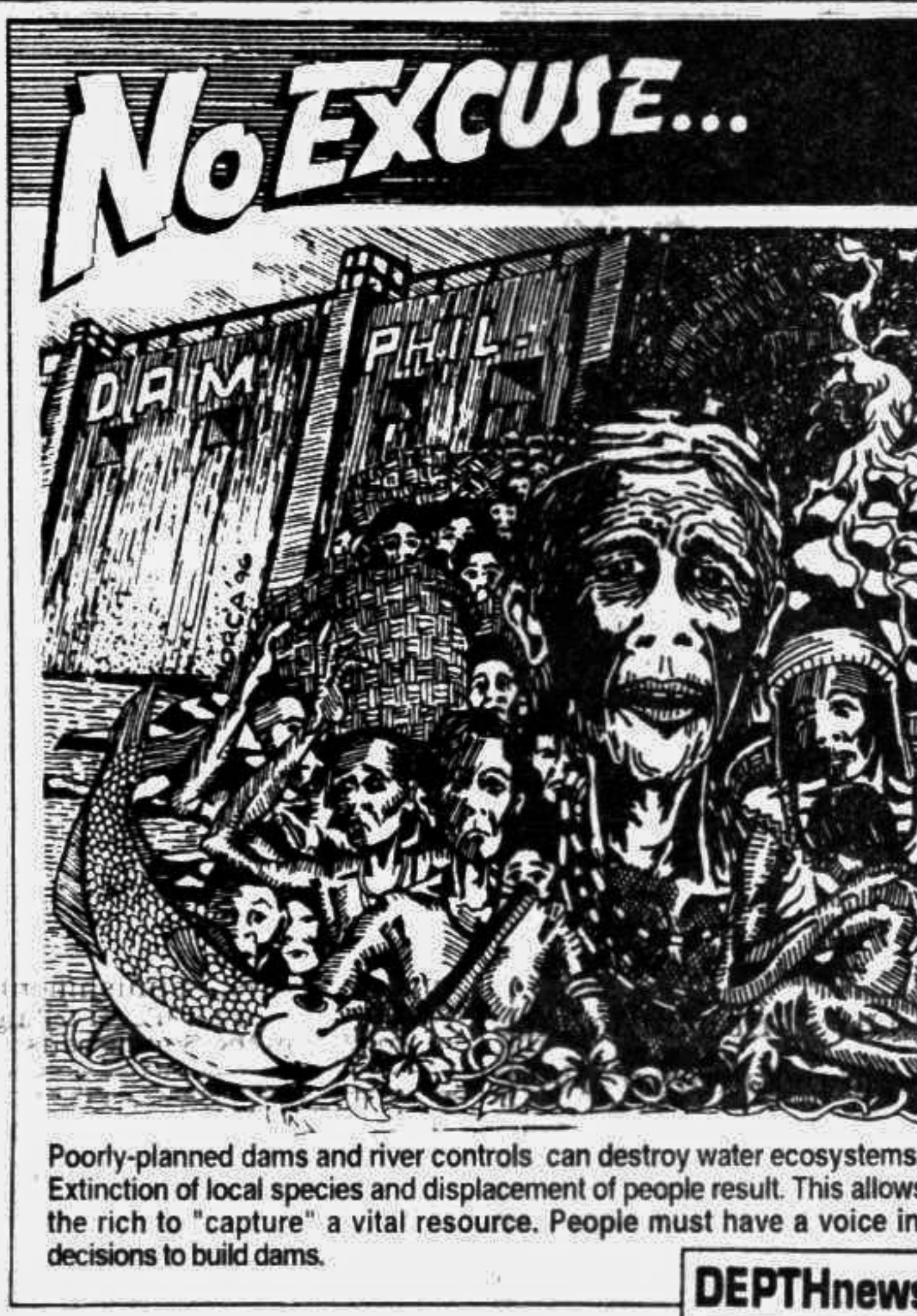
They are particularly criti-

cal of the study's claim of presenting an economic, social and environmental evaluation of big dams as only 14 of the 50 large dams reviewed in this report were appraised after the Bank guidelines concerning resettlement impacts were adopted in 1980 and only one was appraised after the first guidelines on the environment were produced in 1986.

Ironically, the study itself admits that only a quarter of the projects that have been reviewed were implemented so as to comply with the Bank's current criteria.

The study also confesses to cost overruns in 59 per cent of the projects under review due to inflation, underestimation at appraisal, design revisions, contract problems and unexpected geological conditions. But it says that a deterioration of economic returns with passage of time cannot be ruled out since the Bank has not normally monitored the implementation of follow-up measures required to sustain the benefits of the projects, including the safety, sedimentation, and the adaptation of operations to changing needs and conditions.

CSE/Down To Earth Features



DEPTHnews

The Daily Star Entertainment Guide

Monday 20th January

(All programmes are in local time. There may be changes in the programmes.)

BTv

3:00 Opening announcement
Al-Quran Programme summary
3:10 News in Bangla 3:15 Patriotic song 3:20 Recitation from the Bible 3:25 Cartoon Film: The Lone Ranger 3:50 Relecast of selected programmes
4:45 Educational programme
5:00 News in Bangla 5:25 Dolan Champa 5:50 Sports programme
6:30 Anu Paramanu
6:50 Open University 7:00 The News 7:25 Band show 8:00 News in Bangla 8:45 Package Drama 10:00 News in English 10:30 Janamat 10:50 Comedy series: Seemfield 11:30 News in Bangla 11:35 Tuesday's programme 11:40 Close down

BBC

07:00 BBC Newsroom Inc. World Business Report/Asia Today 7:24 Hours 10:00 BBC World Headlines 10:05 The Money Programme 11:00 BBC Newsday 02:00 BBC World

News 02:15

The Money Programme 03:00 BBC World News 03:30 Time Out: Top Gear 04:00 BBC Newsdesk 06:00 BBC News Headlines 06:05 World Focus: Assignment 07:00 BBC World News 07:15 World Business Report 07:30 BBC Newshour Asia & Pacific 08:30 Time Out: Film 97 09:00 BBC World News 09:15 The Money Programme 10:00 BBC World News Special 10:30 BBC World News Special 11:00 BBC World News Special 11:30 BBC World News Special 12:00 The World Today Special 02:00 BBC World Headlines 02:05 The Money Programme 02:50 Building Sights 03:00 BBC World News 03:30 Time Out: The Travel Show: Holiday 04:00 BBC World Report Inc. World Business Report/24 Hours

CHANNEL V

6:00am Frame by Frame 7:00 Rewind VJ Sophiya 8:00 Frame by Frame 9:00 Jump Start VJ Alessandra 10:00 Frame by Frame 11:00 The Vibe VJ Luke 12:00 Rewind VJ Sophiya 1:00 By Demand VJ

Trey 2:00

Frame by Frame 2:30 First Day First Show 3:00 Sansui Mangta Hai 4:00 Planet Ruby 4:30 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 5:30 Big Bang 6:00 Rewind VJ Sophiya 7:00 By Demand VJ Trey 8:00 Planet Ruby 9:00 BPL Oyel 10:00 First Day First Show 10:30 Launch Pad VJ Samira 11:00 The Ride 11:30 Over The Edge 12:00 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 1:00 Hayash 2:00 Frame by Frame 3:30 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 4:30 Asian top 20 VJ Trey

STAR PLUS

6:00am Home and Away 6:30 The Sullivan 7:00 Aerobics Oz Style 7:30 Star News 8:00 Sky News 8:30 Star News 9:00 Aerobics Oz Style 10:00 Ann Willan's Look And Cook 10:30 Videofashion 11:00 Kate & Allie 11:30 The Oprah Winfrey Show 12:30 Dynasty 1:30 Santa Barbara 2:30 The Bold & The Beautiful 3:00 Lifetime 3:30 Bunyaad 4:00 Home and Away 4:30 Land of the Giants 5:30 Adventures of Black Beauty 6:00 Kate & Allie 6:30 Ann Willan's Look And Cook 7:00 The Amul India Show 7:30 Star News (Hindi) 8:30 Small Wonder 8:30 The Bold & the Beautiful 9:00 Imthan 9:30 Star News 10:00 Yes Minister 10:30 Chicago Hope 11:30 The Bold & the Beautiful 12:00m Santa Barbara 1:00 The X Files 2:00 Star Trek 3:00 Quincy 4:00 The Oprah Winfrey Show 5:00 Barnaby Jones

STAR SPORTS

6:00am Live The 1997 Australian Open Day 8 From Melbourne, Australia 12:00 World Wrestling Federation Raw 1:00 GLF: Inside PGA Tour 1:30 India Tour Of South Africa India v S. Africa 3rd Test Match Day 4 H/L 2:30 Live India Tour Of South Africa India Vs South Africa 3rd Test Match Day 5 From Johannesburg, South Africa 9:30 SDD Australian Open Night 8 1:30 India Tour Of South Africa India v S. Africa 3rd Test Match Day 5 H/L 2:30 Australian Open Day 8 Highlights 3:30 Hilton Chinese National Basketball League 96-97 Zhejiang vs Beijing 5:00 Trans World Sports

STAR MOVIES

7:30 Western: Bullet For The General 12 (Arabic Subtitles) 9:30 Family: A Touch Of Truth 12 (Hindi Subtitles) 11:30



Andaz on Zee TV at 12:30

Classic: The Diary Of Anne Frank 12 (Hindi Subtitles) 1:30 Family: Once Upon A Forest 3:30 Classic: Above Us The Waves 12 (Hindi Subtitles) 5:30 Family: Cocoon 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 7:30 Film Fiction: White Fang 15 (Hindi Dubbed) 9:00 Int'l Film Fest Of India Highlights 9:30 This Week That Year 10:00 Star Movies Special: The 54th Annual Golden Globe Awards 1:30 World Cinema: Cinema Paradiso 15 (English Subtitles) 3:30 Comedy: The Book Of Love 18 (Hindi Subtitles) 5:30 Comedy: Dream Date 15 (Arabic Subtitles)

ZEE TV

5:30 Surtal 6:00 News 6:30

Highlights

The Golden Globes on Star Movies today

Star Movies brings viewers one of the most prestigious events on the Hollywood entertainment calendar — The 54th annual Golden Globes.

The star-studded ceremony, which recognises the very best in film entertainment, will be screened today at 10:00 pm only on Star Movies.

Just at little over 10 years ago, the Golden Globes struggled to get televised. The voting committee is comprised of members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and back then it seemed no-one was particularly interested in what they thought.

But now the globes are considered to be the pre-Oscar event. The television rights to this annual ceremony fetch big money.

Contenders for the Best Dramatic Film include *Shine*, *The People vs Larry Flynt*, *The English Patient*, *Breaking The Waves* and the winner of the Cannes Film Festival's top prize, *Secrets and Lies*.

Mel Gibson, who won his fair share of awards at various ceremonies last year for his Scottish epic *Braveheart*, is up for Best Actor in a Drama for his role in *Ransom*. His competition includes one-time Oscar-winner Ralph Fiennes (*The English Patient*), Woody Harrelson (*The People vs Larry Flynt*), Liam Neeson

Jagran 7:00

ZED 8:30 Dream Merchants 9:00 Hum Zameen 9:30 Gaane Anjaane 10:00 Sallaab 10:30 Positive Health Show 11:00 Daak Ghar Apra

Ghar 11:30 Nirma Aahat/Teer Kamaan 12:00 Suno Suno Tring Tring 12:30 Celeste 1:00 ZED 1:30 Asian Sky Shop 2:00 Hum Paanch 2:30 Tara 3:00

Raahat 3:30 Mere Ghar Ana Zindagi 4:00 Pakeezah 4:30 Lijjat Khana Khazana 5:00 ZED 5:30 Akbar Birbal 6:00 Cartoon

6:30 Love Stories 7:00 ZED 7:30 Raahat 8:00 V3/Zara Si Jhalak 8:30 TVS Sa Re Ga Ma/Jhalak 9:30 Campus 10:00 Parivartan 10:30 News 11:00

Daraar 11:30

Close Up Antakshari 12:00 Parivartan 12:30 Andaz 1:00 3 Malabar Hill 1:30 Raahat 2:00 Commander 4:00 Index 4:30 All Out For No Loss 5:00 Jagran

PTV

8:00am Tilawat Aur Tarijuma/Hamd/Naat 8:20 Cartoon 8:30 Khabrain 8:45 Abb Pata Challa 9:05 Khat Famaish 9:20 Sargam Sargam 9:45 Ilaaj-Bal Ghiza Pakistan 10:05 Shab Daigh 10:35 English Film: Gool Troop 10:55 Milli Naghma 11:00 Khabrain 11:10 The Saint (Roger Moor) 12:00 Shama (Drama Serial) 12:55pm Quran-e-Hakeem 1:02 Bismillah 1:15 Angaar (Drama Serial) 2:00 Shehrara (Drama Serial) 2:50 The Face Of Cultural 3:15 Roushni 3:30 Fairmayer 4:00 Ghardani 4:35 Biology for 10th

Geography/ Chemistry 5:55 Inter College Quiz 6:25 Aioo Courses 7:00 Tararum (Drama Serial) 7:45 English News 8:00 Potluck 8:20 Ali Baba 8:45 Tum Sa Kahani Tha (Serial) 9:00 Break For Headline News 10:00 Khabrain & Commercial News 11:15 Classics Drama Serial: Janglee 12:20 Special: TBA 1:00 Khass Khass Khabrain/ Close down

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