

Bangladesh: Viewed from Afar The New York Times, Amartya Sen, and the Arsenic Disaster

by Nazrul Islam

Sen's analysis point to the potential role that democratic institutions and press can play in preventing death from arsenic poisoning by poor in Bangladesh villages. Unfortunately, the current situation in this regard cannot be said to be encouraging. The Parliament, the political parties (including the parties in opposition), and many sections of the press are as yet hardly paying attention to the brewing tragedy. Have the rural poor in Bangladesh become so marginalized from the political arena that even their death by the scores fail to be of any consequence for the national polity? Perhaps, Amartya Sen is taking note!

what has happened to the environment. Rehman Sobhan in his recent Nazmul Karim memorial lecture titled "From Two Economies to Two Societies" (carried by The Daily Star of Aug. 29) notes that "after 26 years (of independence), over half the population of Bangladesh still live in poverty; household income disparities have accentuated, and social polarities have widened to the point where we are witnessing the emergence of two societies in what is now one economy. Given this polarized situation, it is no wonder that many of the elite and authority in Bangladesh fail to perceive the gravity of the situation regarding environmental degradation, be it water contamination or air pollution. They can indeed be out of reach of Bangladesh's poisonous air and water by remaining inside air-conditioned cars and by drinking purified bottled or boiled water. Meanwhile, environmental disaster has started to take its toll among the poor and the meek, the members of the other society of Bangladesh. It is clear that there is no coordinated national response to the emergency. Like with air pollution, everything again depends on World Bank. In this case, our response is to have the \$32.4 million World Bank loan for arsenic-control project. Plenty of people are certainly getting plenty of funds. Whether that is proving any difference to women like Pinjira Begum of Miapur is a different story. Most of the experts agree that falling ground water level is one of the main reasons for increased arsenic, and adequate annual replenishment of ground aquifers is a pre-condition for long term solution of the arsenic problem. Yet, the government is pressing ahead with 3,000 crore taka embankment construction from Joydevpur to Demra, when it is clear

that such embankments hinder river water from reaching the interior lands and percolating to the underground aquifers. This is likely to aggravate arsenic problem for Dhaka area. Thus, different components of development effort are not meshing with each other well, and often are proving conflicting.

Some Lessons for Bangladeshi Newspapers

The New York Times story also has something for our newspapers and other media. Among the newspapers, The Daily Star has been consistently reporting on arsenic issue. But, how many of our newspapers, ever thought of devoting a full page on this issue? Many Bangladeshi newspapers have so far chosen to limit the coverage to only a few columns in the inside pages. Apart from the issue of amount of space devoted, there is also the issue of quality of reporting. In most cases, the reports in Bangladeshi newspapers have furnished some numbers. Generally there were no human faces behind these numbers. The New York Times story only gives numbers but puts concrete human faces, with their pictures included, behind those numbers. This puts living human faces behind the story. That makes the report so effective and poignant. It is not that Bangladeshi newspapers are incapable of producing similar reports. Many remember the Daily Ittefaq's reporting on 1974 flood from Rangpur with Basant's picture who was left with only the fishnet to cover her body. That one picture with a name captured the flood devastation more than thousands of words and numbers could do. So, Bangladeshi newspapers and journalists can play an effective role in highlighting and

combating this new disaster that Bangladesh is facing. The question is whether they will choose to do so.

Relevance of Amartya Sen's Analysis

Arsenic poisoning is emerging as a plague poised to kill thousands of people. Such deaths have already started to occur. Just on November 10, The Daily Star reported four such deaths in Barisal. These are common people who live in rural areas and are, therefore, far removed from the seat of power. Political parties do not agitate over their deaths in any way they do with hartal deaths in Dhaka city. Much has been written about Amartya Sen since the announcement of his Nobel prize. Note that there is an obvious parallel between the current arsenic situation and the famines that Sen analyzed. Sen shows that non-availability of food is not the main cause of starvation deaths. Similarly, non-availability of solution is not the reason for arsenic deaths. The simplest solution is to boil water before drinking. But, unfortunately, the poor village people in Bangladesh do not have the purchasing power to buy necessary fuel. However, as Sen shows, it is not absence of purchasing power in the narrow sense that is the whole story. The government provides subsidized gas (unlimited supply) at a flat rate, accompanied by widespread pilferage) to urban dwellers, including the rich. But, it does not do so for the rural population. For obvious political and other reasons, their entitlement set is much more limited than the urban dwellers.

The relevance of Sen's analysis is not limited to diagnosis of the problem only. It is possible to benefit in thinking about the solution too. One implication of the report is that the government should not only give numbers but put concrete human faces, with their pictures included, behind those numbers. This puts living human faces behind the story. That makes the report so effective and poignant. It is not that Bangladeshi newspapers are incapable of producing similar reports. Many remember the Daily Ittefaq's reporting on 1974 flood from Rangpur with Basant's picture who was left with only the fishnet to cover her body. That one picture with a name captured the flood devastation more than thousands of words and numbers could do. So, Bangladeshi newspapers and journalists can play an effective role in highlighting and

THE New York Times, in its November 10 issue, carries a front page (with a full page follow up inside) report on "New Bangladesh Disaster: Wells That Pump Poison." It quotes Willard R. Chappell, a physicist, one of the world's leading experts on arsenic contamination, as saying that "if this were the United States, they would call out the National Guard."

WHO's safety standard for arsenic in water is a maximum of 0.01 milligrams per litre. Sampling tests showed that in parts of 43 districts of Bangladesh's 64 districts, the level is more than 500 per cent of this maximum. The report quotes Dr. Allan H. Smith, an epidemiologist at the University of California, Berkeley, who has visited Bangladesh three times this year on behalf of WHO, to note that "we could be talking about hundreds of thousands of deaths. We just don't know. The cumulative dose is what kills. Every day that people continue to drink the contaminated water could result in more arsenic-related deaths down the road in 5, 10 or 25 years. This is really a major emergency."

It is certainly very depressing to see Bangladesh hit international news again as a locale of disaster. As if flood, cyclone, and other natural disasters were not enough. As if poverty, malnutrition, and other material deprivation were not enough. Now Bangladesh has to emerge as the country of man-made ecological disaster!

Slow, Inadequate, and Conflicting Government Response

The report details how the authorities have been dismissive of the early reports and cautious, and how the authorities are still slow and inept in responding to this serious emergency. It is actually difficult to believe that behind all high sounding speech making, and all cheerfulness around sports tournaments, a disaster of such serious proportions is in the process of unfolding. However, it is not unknown that there are some members of Bangladesh elite who often sneer at environmental concerns. They rather proffer the wisdom that environmental concerns are luxury of rich countries. They would like people to appreciate the material achievements as manifested in the form of nice cars they ride and modern apartments they occupy, and not be worried by

I Won't and You Can't

by Indira Khurana

The bureaucracy does nothing to conserve India's invaluable animals and plants. But it knows how to cry wolf when private agencies want to use these.

IF only governance was all about crying over spilt milk. India's administrators have more tears than all the proverbial waters of Neptune. And spilt milk it is when one of the country's most priceless animals, the Vechur cow, is at the sacrificial altar of bureaucratic impotence.

An application for a patent on certain genes of the Vechur cow, native to Kerala, has been filed by the Roselin Institute of Scotland and PPL Therapeutics, a US-based pharmaceutical company. The institute is not as well-known as its creation — Dolly — the sheep, the first cloned animal.

Why did the institute go for the Vechur cow? Because the animal gives high-fat milk yields on low food requirements. It is a boon for companies engaged in animal 'pharming', in which animals can produce desired pharmaceuticals like hormones in the cow's milk. These products find use in the treatment of diseases. Administrators across the world are becoming aware of this wealth in biodiversity. But not India's very own *babu sahibs*.

The angry outburst of Arnavaz Damania, a genetic resource scientist, is only logical. He wonders why the Indian government expresses outrage when its natural resources are patented elsewhere, as it fails to even appreciate the myriad uses of plants and animals, let alone actually using them.

If the government, the self-appointed custodian of India's biological resource, does not

appreciate nature's gifts, why stop someone else from utilising it? If the peacocks of our scientists cannot look beyond their stuck-up noses and have scant regard for resources that are India's, why kick up a fuss when foreigners stake claim to what they appreciate and want? India is rich in domestic animal resources. Each breed of each animal has adapted to their respective conditions. Indian cattle breeds may not be as productive as some exotic foreign breeds but are resistant to local diseases. They are not fussy about food. While Sikim's small, short-legged Siroi cow can manoeuvre easily along the hill slopes, the Tharparkar of Rajasthan's Thar desert survives hostile desert conditions with ease. These animals are more important to India's national wealth than the bickering scientific community.

The cow in question, native to Vechur in Kottayam, Kerala, is one of these. Almost the size of a goat, the animal is hardy. With low fodder requirements, it withstands the humidity and heat of Kerala. Yet the petite cow obliges with 2.5 litres of high-fat milk each day. Perhaps this was the reason behind the tradition of giving the cow as a gift to a newly-wed daughter. This helped in spreading the breed. The Vechur cow also has a sturdy immune system, and can even resist the foot-and-mouth disease. Our bureaucrats on the other hand are still struggling with the foot-in-the-

mouth disease. The crossbreeding whip of the 1950s banned the keeping of local Vechur bulls. In the 1960s the cow was extensively inbred with exotic bulls. The population of the cow declined. In 1969, when the animal was almost extinct, an attempt was made to conserve the Vechur cow by a veterinary scientist of the Kerala Agricultural University.

Characteristically, squabbling scientists at the university sabotaged the project. Though the cows under the project calved, they started dying mysteriously in 1993. The sceptics claimed that he cows were not hard-core Vechur. The scientist in charge of the project argued that the cows were poisoned. So much for bovine scientists.

The crossbreeding fiasco shows a disdain for all resources Indian. The effort to improve superior indigenous breeds like the Sahiwal and Hariana have already backfired. The milk-yield has declined. Diseases imported with the foreign breeds have a separate toll. Foot-and-mouth disease alone costs the exchequer Rs 2,000 crore annually.

While native breeds are disappearing in India, they are easy to find if you are in Latin America, Australia and southern US, where 'local breeds' have been cross-bred with Indian breeds. The Ongole cattle, native to Andhra Pradesh, has found its way to Australia, Brazil, Mexico and the US. Brazil now even sells embryos

of Ongole. And no prizes for guessing who imports these. India, of course.

And if you thought it was only animals and known plants like turmeric and basmati rice, read on. The story of *arogyapachai*, the wonder herb, and Kanis, the wonder herb, which will bury any hopes of competence from those who claim to govern this country.

A research institute in Kerala prepared a tonic formulation based on the wonder herb preserved by Kanis and sold to a private pharmacy. They promised to share the benefits from the deal with the tribals. Leftist parties cried foul, claiming that the tribe was being duped. Another institute working closely with the Kanis was severely critical of the deal. It is keeping secret all the tribal knowledge it has documented.

The state forest department has also played its hand, preventing the tribals from selling the herb. Who suffers? Not the scientists, bureaucrats or political parties. It is the vast resource of India's tribal knowledge which will gather dust in government files. There might be a herbal cure for cancer hidden in this treasure chest. But cancer patients will have to wait for India's administrators to find the appropriate method and time to come out with the cure. Pity cancer is not as slow a killer as the Indian bureaucracy.

For once, they do not serve who only stand and wait.

CSE/Down To Earth Features

tion of Sen's analysis is that increasing aggregate food availability by itself will not solve the problem of famine. Instead, increasing the poor's entitlement is the surer way of preventing starvation death. And, this goes beyond increasing his immediate purchasing power. Sen notes that democracy in general, and existence of energetic free press, in particular, are very effective in increasing poor's entitlement. According to Sen, that is the main reason why India could avoid famine during the past fifty years since independence.

Thus, Sen's analysis point to the potential role that democratic institutions and press can play in preventing death from arsenic poisoning by poor in Bangladesh villages. Unfortunately, the current situation in this regard cannot be said to be encouraging. The Parliament, the political parties (including the parties in opposition), and many sections of the press are as yet hardly paying attention to the brewing tragedy. Have the rural poor in Bangladesh become so marginalized from the political arena that even their death by the scores fail to be of any consequence for the national polity? Perhaps, Amartya Sen is taking note!

The writer is Professor of Economics, Emory University, Atlanta, USA, and Coordinator, Bangladesh Environment Network.

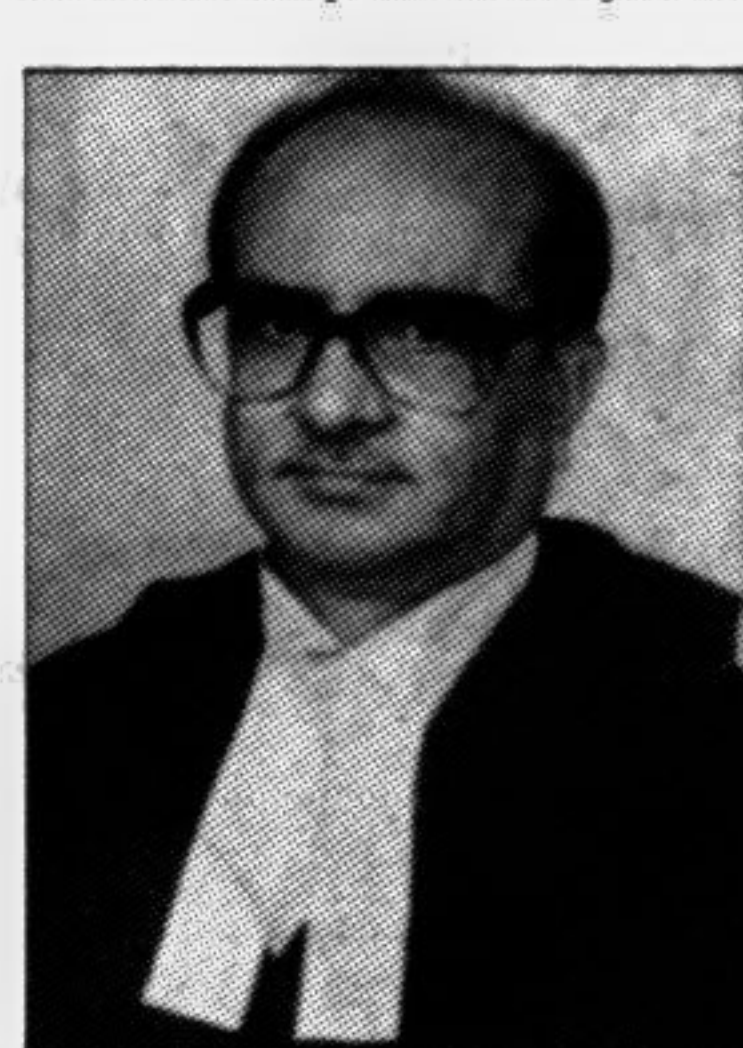
LEST WE FORGET Justice Mohammad Habibur Rahman

by Nasreen Nabi Choudhury

JUSTICE Md Habibur Rahman passed away on 30th November 1998. He was 70. He was the youngest of four children born to Mr and Mrs Md Fazlur Rahman of Rajshahi.

Justice Rahman was a former civil servant of Pakistan. He topped the list in the provincial civil service examination of the then East Pakistan and was the first amongst the candidates from then East Pakistan in the civil service examinations of the then central government of Pakistan. He went on to serve his country in significant positions in both the civil service and the judiciary. This outstanding judge was selected as the first civil servant to serve in the High Court of the then East Pakistan. He upheld the dignity of his office as long as he lived and remains an example to all in the judiciary. Erudite and upright, he was at heart a person of intense piety.

He was a man of great conviction, who believed in clean living. He was always a perfect gentleman. His honesty, integrity and deep understanding of the law played a very important role in establishing the independence and integrity of the judiciary in Bangladesh, where he served for many years as a judge of the Supreme Court. Because of his extreme humility, he never



made himself conspicuous at any stage of his career. He never knew the meaning of vanity or false pretensions of pride. He had a child-like innocence and a love for truth and justice which is unique in this cynical

thought of the good of the nation, sincerely and selflessly. He gave advice to our leaders at critical times in the history of our nation, on how to preserve the sanctity of our homeland. He did so without any regard to political affiliation or personal interest or advancement. Never in his years of service did he allow any selfish concerns to cloud his judgement or opinion on what was the right thing to do for the nation or the situation at hand. His wisdom, knowledge, honesty, humility, love and kindness touched many people. He continued to help others to his last days, never once expecting anything in return.

Justice Rahman is survived by his lawyer wife Mrs Shamim Rahman, daughter of late Dr Mumtazuddin Ahmed, ex-vice chancellor of Rajshahi University, and five children.

Justice Rahman's greatest gift to the many that he touched and especially to his children, was to teach them to always be very humble and simple, to constantly seek knowledge, and adhere to the basic values of our society and faith through all of the tests of life. He succeeded in doing this never through insistence or lecture, but always through examples of humility and kindness, preaching tolerance and sharing with others his deep knowledge on all aspects of life.

An important dimension of Justice Rahman's contribution to the nation is little known. He was one of those rare and dedicated people who always

The Virgin That Appears in Metro Stations

The Virgin of Guadalupe— known as "The Dark Madonna" and patron saint of poor Mexicans — is appearing to believers with greater frequency as the Pope prepares to visit to Mexico. Gemini News Service reports that the Virgin has revealed herself in some unique locations. John Ross writes from Mexico City.

AS Pope John Paul II packs his bags for a mid-January visit to Mexico to canonize Juan Diego, discoverer of the Virgin of Guadalupe, images of the Dark Madonna are suddenly epidemic across the land. In recent months, the Virgin of Guadalupe has appeared on the side of a water drum in Tlanepantla, just north of Mexico City, and a palm tree in Cuautla Morelos where lovers spotted her after a spat.

She also appeared in a fruit shed near Jalapa, Veracruz, where her shape was formed from the resins of newly-picked mangoes and mamas laid out upon a newspaper dated 12 December 1997 — the day on which all Mexico venerates the Brown Madonna. Quintin Lapez, the local priest, told reporters the sighting was the 20th in his parish in the past five years. Apparitions of the Virgin of Guadalupe in the capital's public transportation system have become routine events.

In June 1997, the Guadalupe appeared to a janitor at the busy Hidalgo metro station while she was mopping up a water leak seeping through the subway floor. The apparition disrupted operations at the busy station and police tried to forcibly keep the faithful away, but religious fervour was unquenchable. Now the Virgin of the Metro has her own niche built by the subway system and the Institute of Fine Arts.

Lodged at a station entrance, the shrine attracts a steady stream of petitioners who leave notes and tin *milagros* (miracle) medals and artificial flowers behind in gratitude. Juana Gomez who hawks lottery tickets from a nearby stand, comes every morning to bless her coupons. "The Virgin has helped me to see many winning tickets," Gomez insists. Despite her popular appeal, the Catholic Church is wary of the Virgin of the Metro. "Do me a favour," Father Francisco Macido, vicar of the Basilica of the Virgin of Guadalupe, told well-wishers at the dedication of the niche. "Please don't call this a miracle or else we'll all be in trouble."

The Church has very vigorous criteria for the proof of miracles," explains Father Mario Gonzalez at San Hipolito Church across the street from the Hidalgo station.

Despite the Church's warnings, the Virgins of the Metro are multiplying. In May, a Virgin was sighted on the steps of the Valle Gomez station out by

the airport. "She was crying, it is sign," a station attendant told reporters.

The Virgin has also shown up one stop down the blue line from the Hidalgo station at Revolution near the headquarters of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, which has ruled Mexico for 69 years. To the devoted, her image has been made manifest in gnarly whorls near the bottom of the trunk of a bedraggled tree, wedged between two greasy-waxed taco stands. Blinking Christmas lights signal her presence, as do the usual tin *milagros* and notes scrawled on folded napkins.

Virgin sightings here have similar characteristics. The apparitions are generally first seen by poor people and attract many low-income visitors. The Catholic Church gently seeks to debunk what the "simple people" — as Padre Mario describes them — interpret as a miracle, but the faith of the Guadalupeans inevitably wins out. Donations are collected and a niche or a chapel is built. Stalls hawking snacks and soft drinks, sun glasses, lottery tickets, and religious medals spring up around the shrine, which is usually protected by a guardian, often a person who claims to have made the original sighting.

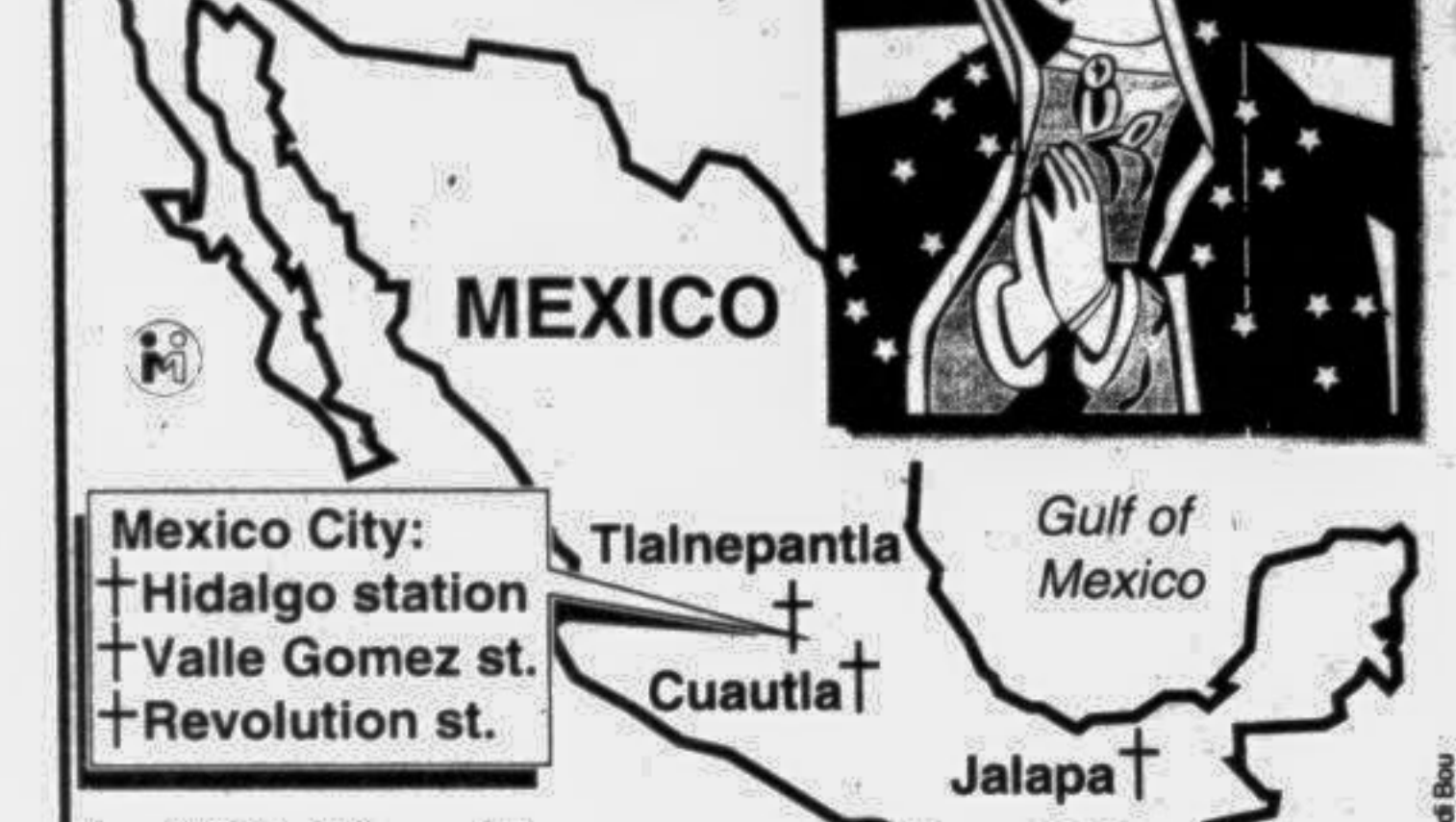
Flower vendor Maria Concepcion Vargas, "La Paloma", is the guardian of the Virgin of the Metro Hidalgo. Asked about other subway virgins, Dona Paloma emphatically questioned their authenticity. "Ours is the only true Virgin of the Metro," she says. "Those others are *chafa* (phony)."

Across the street at Father Mario's church, popular religion flourishes. On the 28th of each month, worshippers line up for dawn-to-dusk masses to petition San Judas Tadeo for small favours. St. Jude's reputation for delivering miracles in difficult situations has a lot of appeal for Mexicans, thinks the parish priest. For people who live like us from one crisis to the next, Judas Tadeo is a necessity," reasons the powerfully built padre, suited up for a quick game of basketball in the churchyard.

The Virgin of the Hidalgo Metro has made life more difficult for the young Father. We try to discourage religious hallucination. Us Mexicans have only one Virgin of Guadalupe and she is out at the Basilica. She is the only real miracle. These other sightings are just natural phenomena — the Virgin of the Metro was just a water

Dark Madonna

Juan Diego, a 16th century Indian soon to be canonized by the Pope, was supposedly the first to see the Virgin of Guadalupe.



In 1531, it is said, he saw an Aztec woman at the summit of a cloud-wreathed hill, who said: "Tell your people I am the mother of God. I will help the Indians". She is now the patron of the oppressed and the poor. Her name comes from the Aztec name she gave, *Maria Coatlapueh* ("She who crushed the serpent"). As this sounds like Guadalupe - the name of another Virgin in Spain - the new saint was given the same name.

stain. But the people's hunger for God is great. They have the Brown Madonna stamped upon their hearts.

Spotting Virgins is a Mexican speciality. Not only is she imprinted upon their hearts but she is also imprinted upon their T-shirts, pens, watches, and key chains and sells everything from shoes to chocolates. Researcher Jorge Gonzalez at the Autonomous University of Colima studies Virgin sightings. He attributes the epidemic of apparitions to a "cognitive cultural vector". Mexicans are trained from birth to identify shapes associated with the Virgin. "You see what you can name," Gonzalez suggests.

Social class is also a factor in the sightings — the Virgin of the Poor does not often appear in wealthy neighbourhoods. So is ethnic and gender identification. Indian women are particular devotees of the *Virginita* as attested to by the number of *indigenas* who pay daily visits to the Metro Hidalgo shrine.

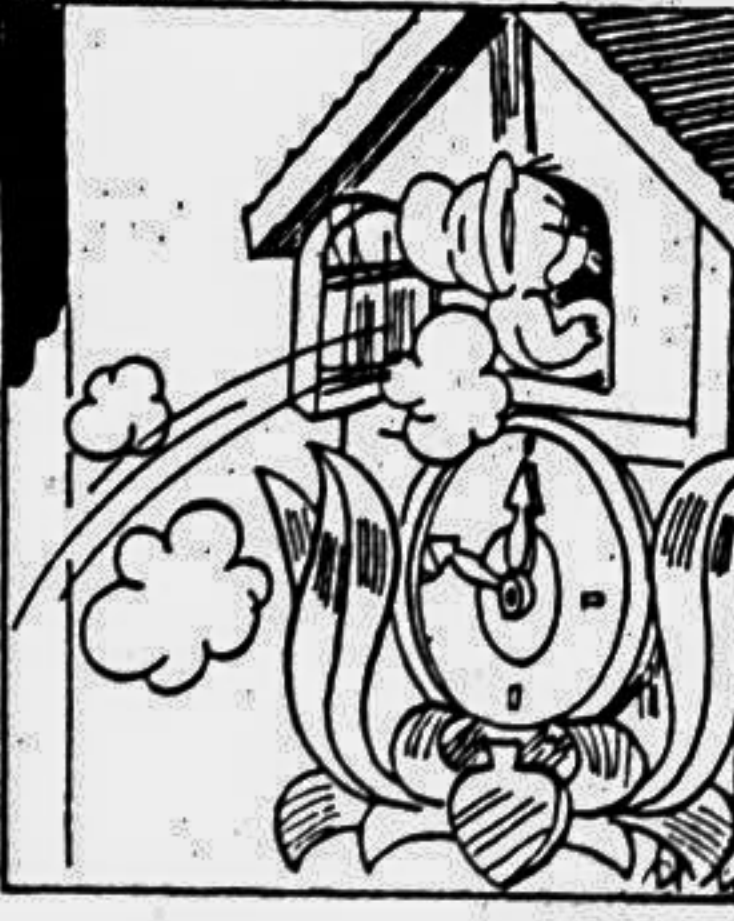
More Virgin sightings are recorded in times of economic and social turmoil, concludes Gonzalez. Just prior to and during the shooting phase of the 1994 rebellion of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation in Chiapas, there were multiple sightings of the *Santo Nino* (Holy Child), and *rayos lucentes* (spectral lights) blazed in the highland forests. In Chiapas, there is a centuries-old tradition of such sightings, presaging Indian insurrections.

"Popular spirituality in Mexico is highly syncretic. Behind every saint and under every alter, one can discover Indian roots. The shrine of the Guadalupe was imposed atop Tepeyac hill upon that of Tonantzin, the Aztec earth mother. That's where Indian Juan Diego had passed to worship when the Brown Madonna made her debut appearance.

This charming legend, which became the cornerstone of the evangelization of Latin America, probably never happened. Despite the scheduled visit of Pope John Paul II to canonize Juan Diego, there is no historical evidence that he ever existed. The garment upon which the imprint of the Virgin miraculously appeared was actually hand painted, probably by an Indian artist whose Christian name was Marcos.

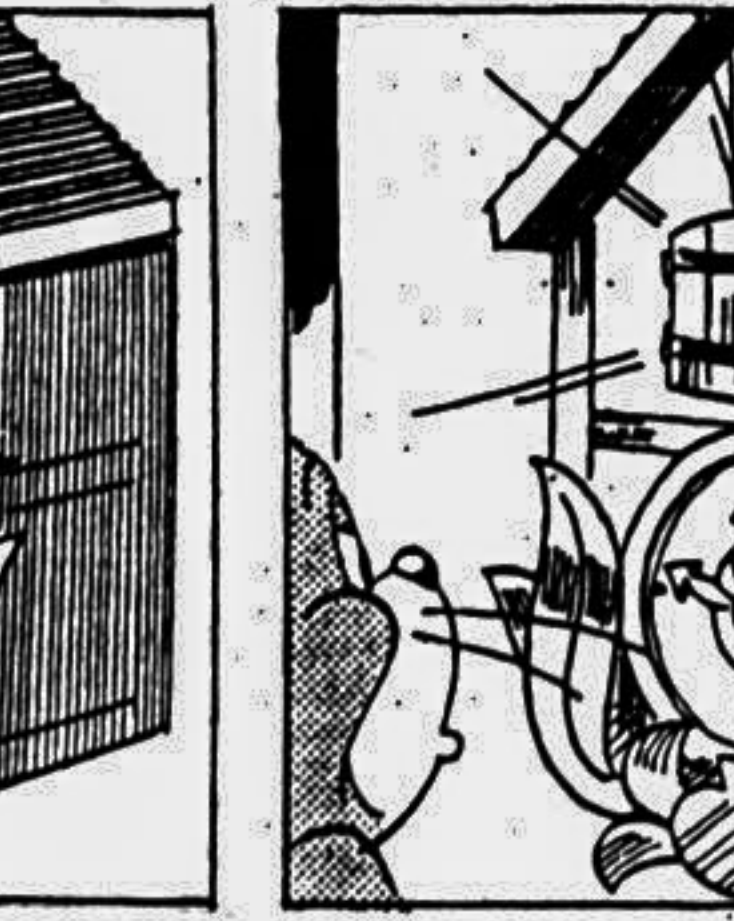
It is not a big step from revelation to revolution in Mexican history. Liberation from Spain was won behind the banner of the Guadalupe carried into battle by Padre Miguel Hidalgo's brown and black rebels. A hundred years later, revolutionary martyr Emiliano Zapata carried the image of the *Virginita* into battle. Cesar Chavez and Mexican farm workers marched with her to win justice in the California fields. The Zapatista Army of National Liberation honours Guadalupe every 12 December: its first public outpost was in village called Guadalupe Tepeyac.

TOM & JERRY



Jaies Bond
BY IAN FLEMING
DRAWING BY MORAX
POISING AS AN ENGLISH CIVIL SERVANT ON HOLIDAY, BOND PREPARES FOR A MORNING OF SNORKEL-FISHING

By Hanna-Barbera



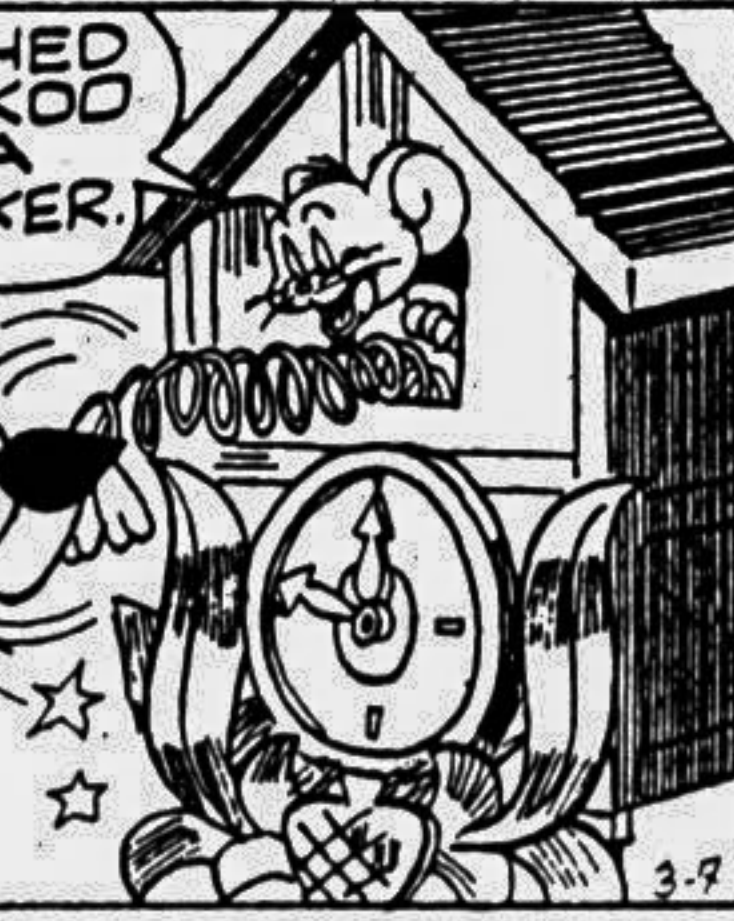
"UNAWARE THAT HE'S BEING WATCHED FROM AMONG THE PALM TREES"

By Hanna-Barbera



"MM... YOU MAY OR MAY NOT BE A CIVIL SERVANT, MR. BOND. BUT THERE'S NOTHING PHONY ABOUT THOSE RIPPLING MUSCLES!"

By Hanna-Barbera



"SUDDENLY I GET THE FEELING THIS ASSIGNMENT COULD BE FUN!"

Farmers Take Aim at Genetic Seed Firm

S. N. M. Abdi writes from Calcutta

FARMERS in India are attacking American biotechnology giant Monsanto, whose genetically engineered cotton seeds are undergoing field trials in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Although Monsanto has been given the go-ahead by the federal Government, farmers in the two southern states oppose the multinational seed company's introduction of the "terminator" seeds — genetically modified but sterile — and have set several experimental farms on fire. MPs have urged the Government to issue a clarification to put an end to panic that has gripped farmers, while the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly has passed a unanimous resolution requesting that the federal Government to ban Monsanto.

These trials are paving the way for the entry of the terminator gene, which would make it impossible to generate seeds for subsequent crops and would force growers to depend on patented Western technology every sowing season," said Bangalore-based Mahanagar Shiksha Nandanam, a farmer who turned to teaching law and is now a full-time proponent of farmers' rights. "This technology, ostensibly for protecting crops from pests and for improving quality and yields, could affect millions of farmers and threaten the country's overall strategies." Although Monsanto has denied propagating the "terminator" seeds, any of the 40 trial farms it runs with its Indian partner, Maharashtra Hybrid Seed Co., Monsanto's critics have capitalised on its reported bid to acquire Delta and Pine Land, the American inventors of the controversial technology. "Even if the terminator gene is not being clandestinely introduced, successive generations of these transgenic crops

will be less productive than the first. For sustained levels of high productivity, farmers will have to buy seeds from Monsanto every year," said Rameshwar Sharma, head of the biotechnology centre at the Indian Agriculture Research Institute in New Delhi. The Statesman newspaper said in an editorial that "what makes Monsanto's field trials suspect is the secrecy surrounding [the company] and the contradictory statements made by its spokesmen."

"Even the Indian Council of Agriculture has no information about the experiments," it said. Monsanto was roped in after last year's unprecedented cotton crop failure, which led hundreds of farmers to commit suicide in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. It promised to introduce transgenic cotton seeds capable of secreting a toxin that kills bollworms when they try to chew on the plant. However, the Geneva-based People's Action Group and independent farmers' bodies are convinced that the seed giant is using the opportunity to enslave Indian cotton growers by introducing the terminator seeds. Several non-government organisations supporting the cotton growers have warned other farmers that Monsanto is also lobbying hard to secure government permission for experimental farming of edible crops like tomato, potato, maize, soybean, mustard and papaya. NGOs have also pointed out that although the genetically engineered BT (Bacillus thuringiensis) cotton seeds are pest-resistant, they are not really eco-friendly, as they pose a threat to beneficial species like bees, butterflies and beetles.

Courtesy: South Cina Morning Post