

## Why can't Bangladesh be like...?

DR FAKHRUDDIN AHMED  
writes from Princeton

TAIWAN, for instance... Early last month the writer listened to a lecture by 1986 Chemistry Nobel Prize winner Yuan Tseh Lee at the American Chemical Society meeting at San Diego, California. (More about the host city San Diego later). Professor Lee was born in Taiwan in 1936, had his formal education in Taiwan before completing his doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1965. After a stint as a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard, he took a Professorship first at the University of Chicago and then at Berkeley, where he won the Nobel. In the early 1990s, Professor Lee returned to his native Taiwan and founded a research institute. These days brilliant American scientists go to Taiwan to work with Professor Lee; brain drain in reverse, if you will. And yet, when young Lee was growing up in Taiwan, the tiny island was no more developed than Bangladesh.

It is well known that we Bangladeshis have a literary bend of mind. Yet after Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam in the undivided Bengal era, who else have we produced? Look at tiny Ireland on the other hand. How could a nation of so few people present the world with so many literary geniuses like the dazzling

dozen: John Millington Synge, Flan O'Brien, Oliver Goldsmith, Jonathan Swift, Samuel Beckett, William Butler Yeats, Brendan Behan, Oscar Wilde, Patrick Kavanagh, James Joyce, Sean O'Casey and George Bernard Shaw.

Scotland amazes me. How can such a tiny nation produce so many geniuses in diverse fields such as economist Adam Smith, inventor of telephone Alexander Graham Bell,

Casanova, the epitome of Italy's masculine libido. And Italy remains, along with Brazil and Germany, historically three of the world's best football nations.

None of the above countries can boast of the highest per capita Nobel Prize winners. That honour goes to another tiny nation of only 10 million people, Hungary. Just look at the glittering array of Huns who have won the prize: Zoltan Bay,

most dishonest route to wealth. Then we have to go back to educating our children the Hungarian way with well-qualified and dedicated teachers.

Back to San Diego, as I had promised. It is the city that produced Maureen Connolly, the first woman to win the Grand Slam in tennis. [Margaret Court (1970) and Steffi Graf (1988) achieved the same honour subsequently. Graf added

that Gregory Peck is a man even a man would consider handsome. Very few people know that Gregory Peck had his initiation in acting while attending the most prestigious University of California at Berkeley in the 1940s, the same institution where Professor Yuan Lee of Taiwan won his Nobel Prize.

Coincidentally, when the writer returned home, public television aired a question and answer ses-

sion with Gregory Peck and his fans. Peck admitted to asking the director to give Audrey Hepburn equal billing with him in promoting the 1953 film "Roman Holiday." Peck explained his reasons to the incredulous director: "Look, Audrey is going to win the Oscar for her performance in "Roman Holiday;" if she does not have equal billing, we will all look silly." Gregory Peck was right; Audrey Hepburn did win the Oscar for Best Actress for her role in "Roman Holiday."

Unlike other actors, Gregory Peck had no hesitation in answering what his favourite role was: Lawyer Atticus Finch in the 1962 film "To Kill



All health information to keep you up to date

### Aged first

Brain power declines naturally as we get older? Again, the answer is not necessarily. Eating well and exercising regularly seem to help maintain brain function in healthy older people. Poor nutrition is a common problem among older people who live alone and simply forget to eat regularly. Or, the natural reduction in the acuity of the sense of taste that comes with getting older may diminish interest in food. But healthy people who maintain their interest in food as they get older also seem to maintain their mental abilities.

At the University of New Mexico School of Medicine, a study of 260 healthy adults age 60 to 94 showed that the ones who ate a varied, nutritious diet performed best on memory and thinking tests. A programme of regular exercise also helps by improving the flow of oxygen to the brain.

### Small act, big fact

#### Backpain: Check your footwear

Make sure your shoes and orthotics have enough stability. Stand in them with your toes pointing forward. Now bend your knees 30 degrees and imagine a line from the center of each kneecap straight down to the floor. (If you have trouble eyeing it, make a plumb line by tying a bolt to a piece of string and dangling it.)

If your shoes offer the proper motion control, the line should land between your big toe and second toe on each foot. That means you'll properly centered when your feet hit the ground, and your feet will be less likely to roll to the inside or outside, causing injury and back pain. If you don't pass the test, you'll need new shoes or orthotics.

Tomorrow: Around the world

## LETTER FROM AMERICA

If Bangladesh is to emulate the examples of Hungary, Ireland and Scotland, we have to part with some of our favourite pastimes, such as lying, cheating and impatiently seeking out the shortest and the most dishonest route to wealth. Then we have to go back to educating our children the Hungarian way with well-qualified and dedicated teachers.

inventor of penicillin Alexander Fleming, authors/poets such as Robert Louis Stevenson and Robert Burns, aside from inventing the game of golf.

Of course we can only dream of becoming a country like Italy. Italy boasts not only of fantastic food, but also of painters and sculptors such as Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, astronomer Galileo, electricity's Volta, the inventor of wireless Marconi and the person who led the effort to make the atomic bomb, Enrico Fermi. Let us not forget Marco Polo who captured Italy's pioneering spirit, master of political mischief Machiavelli, and

Denis Gabor, Gyorgy Hersy, Anyos Istvan Jedlik, Leo Szilard and Eugene Wigner. If we include Americans of Hungarian descent, the list doubles. When I asked a Hungarian-American colleague what makes Hungary produce so many geniuses, his answer was simple: Hungary has an excellent education system, especially in math and science.

That really is the bottom line. If Bangladesh is to emulate the examples of Hungary, Ireland and Scotland, we have to part with some of our favourite pastimes, such as lying, cheating and impatiently seeking out the shortest and the

1988 Seoul Olympic gold medal making hers the Golden Slam.] The first time the writer visited San Diego seven years ago, he learned that Marilyn Monroe's late 1950s flick "Some Like it Hot" was filmed on the adjacent island, Coronado. As we were on a guided tour of the city, at one point the guide pointed to a house and said that that is where the city's famous pharmacist Dr. Peck had lived. "Unfortunately, his son did not follow in his father's footsteps. He became an actor. Quite a good one actually. His name is Gregory!" I swear that some mothers around me gasped and almost fainted! I also have to admit

tion with Gregory Peck and his fans. Peck admitted to asking the director to give Audrey Hepburn equal billing with him in promoting the 1953 film "Roman Holiday." Peck explained his reasons to the incredulous director: "Look, Audrey is going to win the Oscar for her performance in "Roman Holiday;" if she does not have equal billing, we will all look silly." Gregory Peck was right; Audrey Hepburn did win the Oscar for Best Actress for her role in "Roman Holiday."

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## Excerpts from the 'declassified' main report of Hamoodur Rahman Commission

### MILITARY ASPECT-XIII

#### MOMENSHAHI-DACCA SECTOR

THIS sector, which comprised Momenshahi, Tangail and Dacca districts (area between Jamuna and Meghna rivers), was the area of responsibility of 36 (A) ad-hoc division. This division consisted mainly of EPCAF units and

small number of regular units under the command of Maj-Gen Mohammad Jamsheed director-general EPCAF, the troops at its disposal were as follows:-

(a) Headquarters 36(A) division (HQEPCAF) Dacca.

(b) 53 brigade (3 battalions) at Dacca up to 20<sup>th</sup> November (later moved to Feni).

(c) 93(A) brigade (two infantry battalions):- Momenshahi-Jamalpur.

! CAF-6 Wings (3 wings EPCAR, 3 wings West Pakistan rangers).

The Indians had against these forces in the area the following troops:-

(a) 95 Brigade (ex-8 division)

(b) 63 Brigade (ex-7 division)

(c) 2 BSF battalions in Garo Hills against Momenshahi district.

In this area Tangail the Madhupur forest and the Munshiganj sub-division of Dacca district were the strongholds of the Mukti Bahini whose activities increased rapidly from 20<sup>th</sup> November, 1971. They blew up a number of roads and railway bridges and attacked numerous police stations.

On 21<sup>st</sup> November one Indian brigade supported by a large number of Mukti Bahini attacked our border outpost at Kairatola. This attack was repulsed but the Indians mounted another attack on 22<sup>nd</sup> November but again met with no success. Then they launched an attack on the Kamalpur post on 29<sup>th</sup> November and surrounded it. Reinforcements received from Dacca managed to relieve this post by breaking the enemy cordon but the enemy maintained its pressure and finally captured it on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 1971. Bengali elements of the EPCF deserted in large numbers in this area and joined the enemy.

#### SYLHET-COMILLA SECTOR

This sector was the area of responsibility of the 14<sup>th</sup> division, commanded by Maj-Gen Kazi Abdul Majid. It has the following formations at its command:-

(a) Headquarters 14 division #04 #Main headquarters at Dacca but tactical HQ at Bhairab Bazaar.

(b) 27 Brigade ##Kahura-Brahmanbaria.

(c) 117 Brigade #Comilla.

(d) 313 Brigade # Maulvi Bazar-Shamshernagar (south Sylhet)

(e) 202 (A) Brigade - ad-hoc formations #Sylhet-Zakiganj-Tahirpur (North Sylhet)

(f) CAF-7 Wings (3 wings EPCAF, 3 wings Frontier Corps and one wing West Pakistan Rangers).

This force was opposed by the enemy's 14<sup>th</sup> division which consisted of the following formations:-

(a) Headquarters 4 corps # #Agartala.

(b) 8 division (3 brigades) Karimganj-Dharamangar.

(c) 56 division (3 brigades and one armour squadron) Agartala-Khowai-Radhapur.

(d) BSF 18 battalions (shared with 23 division).

(e) Additional artillery units brought from 2 and 5 mountain divisions which were deployed on the Sino-Indian borders.

The Indians attacked on Zakiganj and Athgram in the Sylhet district, supported by the Mukti Bahini and captured them.

On the next day they launched probing attacks on a number of outposts in Brahmanbaria and Comilla sub-sectors which were not only firmly repulsed but Chandrapur post, which had been earlier lost, was recaptured. In the north the Indians advanced towards Radhanagar and Tahirpur and captured the same on 28<sup>th</sup> November. Then they attacked Shamshearnagar in the south of Sylhet on 30<sup>th</sup> November and captured it on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December. Thereafter, they commenced a simultaneous two-pronged attack on Sylhet both from the north and the south. The 56 Indian division also launched a two-pronged attack on Brahmanbaria sector on the night of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 1971, and were able to reach the railway line joining Sylhet with Comilla.

FENI-CHITTAGONG SECTOR

This area, which included the Chittagong hill tracts, was the area of responsibility of two brigades, namely 53 brigade and 91(A) brigade, but after 20<sup>th</sup> November, these two sub-sectors were regrouped under one ad-hoc sector headquarters, namely, 39(A) division, under Maj-Gen M. Rahim Khan, now chief of general staff, Pakistan Army. The formations under this command were as follows:-

Regular brigades:-

a) 53 brigade Feni-Laksham sector

b) 117 brigade Comilla sector with one troop of old M-124 light tanks.

Ad hoc brigades:-

(a) 97 ad hoc brigade - Chittagong and Chittagong hill tracts.

(b) 91 ad hoc brigade - Dhurmghat, Axis Feni-Chittagong Axis Ramgarh-Chittagong (along Feni River)

Artillery

Two field batteries one motor distributed between various brigades.

**Battery**

The enemy forces against this area consisted of 23 division (3 brigades) operating under the command of 4 corps and had in its support additional artillery provided from the corps reserve and a number of BSF battalions.

This force had early in November occupied the northern part of the

Belonia Salient in the district of Noakhali and had posed a serious threat to the line of communication connecting Chittagong with the rest of the province. To counter this threat 53 brigade moved from Dacca to this area but the enemy maintained its pressure against Feni and Ramgarh throughout and on 20<sup>th</sup> November, 1971, launched a brigade attack along the Kasalong Khal in the Chittagong hill tracts towards Rangamati. Although there was not much opposition to this advance by our own forces, the Indians were eventually halted by the Kaptai Lake near Rangamati.

During this period the Indian objective appeared to be the cap-

ture of a sizeable chunk of East Pakistan territory to establish the so-called Bangladesh government which was till then operating from Calcutta. Its most serious efforts had been made in the west towards Jessore-Rangpur where armour and airforce had also been used and the deepest successful thrust was in the Panchagarh-Thakurgaon area where the Indians had managed to penetrate upto a depth of ten miles. Most of the attacks were carried out by regular Indian troops supported by the Mukti Bahini but the enemy move was spread over, all along the border and was poised for advancing in almost all sectors.

The major effect of the Indian movements was to commit the entire forces under the disposal of the eastern command, including its reserves, all along the borders and thus to reduce its capability to offer strong resistance at any particular point in any strength. The forces under the disposal of the eastern command were straddled across the entire border divided into penny packets and were so heavily involved that they were in no position even to extricate themselves so as to withdraw and form a shorter line of defence taking advantage of the natural obstacles available in East Pakistan in the shape of the large rivers.

The possibility of the enemy launching an offensive against East Pakistan either in isolation or in conjunction with an attack on West Pakistan had been foreseen by the GHQ and operational instructions issued to eastern command upon the hypothesis that the most probable and dangerous effort that the enemy would mount would be in the Bogra sector directed on the Hilli-Gaibandha neck and finally aimed at the capture of Bogra. It was also considered possible that the enemy would make an alternative effort against Bhairab bridge-Daudkandi-Chandpur area, and in order to meet these possible threats the eastern command had formulated the following operational concept:-

(a) The main defensive manoeuvre to be undertaken in areas west of river Jamuna-Padma.

(b) Forward defensive posture to be adopted.

(c) Immediately on commencement of hostilities, offensive to be launched to wrest initiative from the enemy. For this purpose two task forces were to be created, one in area Mymensingh-Jamalpur and the other in area Moulvi Bazaar, for capturing possible Indian territory.

(d) Strong mobile reserves to be placed at Aricha both in the offensive and defensive role.

(e) Secure all lines of communications and vital installations and the maintenance of law and order by Mujahids, police and Razakars.

(f) Each sector to be made logistically self-sufficient for 30 days.

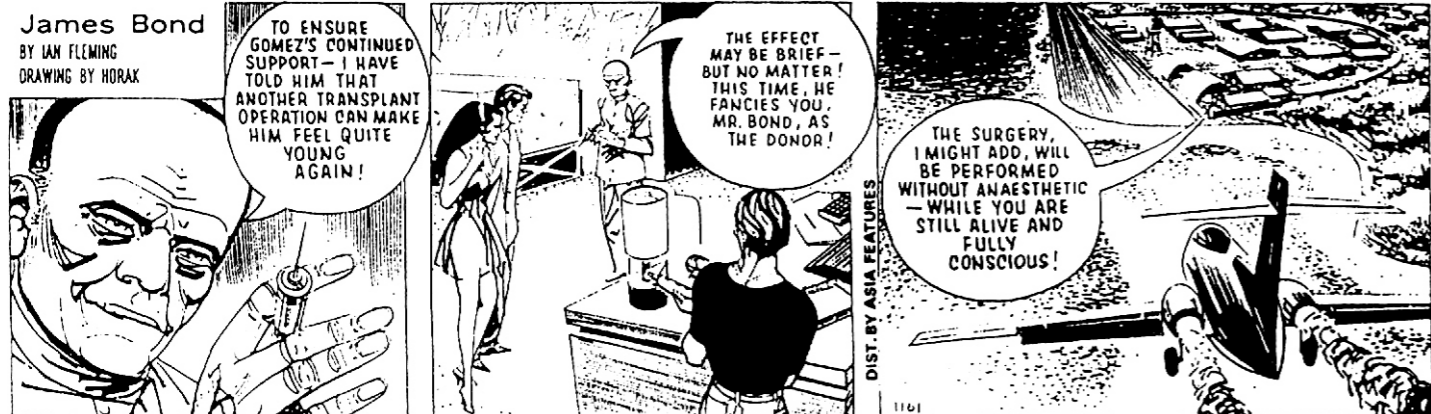
These operational plans, it will be noticed, did not provide for any withdrawal movements for the "defence of Dacca at all costs" as required by the mission assigned to the eastern command under the operational instructions issued on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1971 by the GHQ.

No such withdrawal plan for the ultimate defence of Dacca was also envisaged by the GHQ at Rawalpindi. Indeed the retaliation contemplated was to launch offensives into Indian territory and wrest the initiative from the enemy. The basic concept throughout appears to have been to deny to the enemy any portion of the territory of East Pakistan and thus to prevent it from setting up any government of so-called Bangladesh on any portion of East Pakistan. As subsequent events will show, this was a serious lacuna in our military planning, for which we had to pay dearly and lay down the arms of our forces, although our fighting forces in East Pakistan were almost intact. When the plan was at last modified and the eastern command was told in a series of signals starting from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> December to defend Dacca at all costs regardless of the loss of territory it was too late, for regrouping was no longer possible.

#### TOMORROW: MILITARY ASPECT-XIV

## Garfield®

by Jim Davis



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