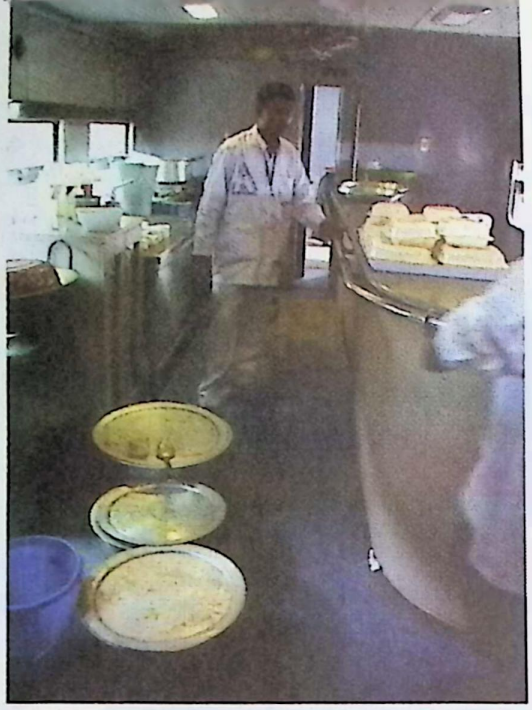
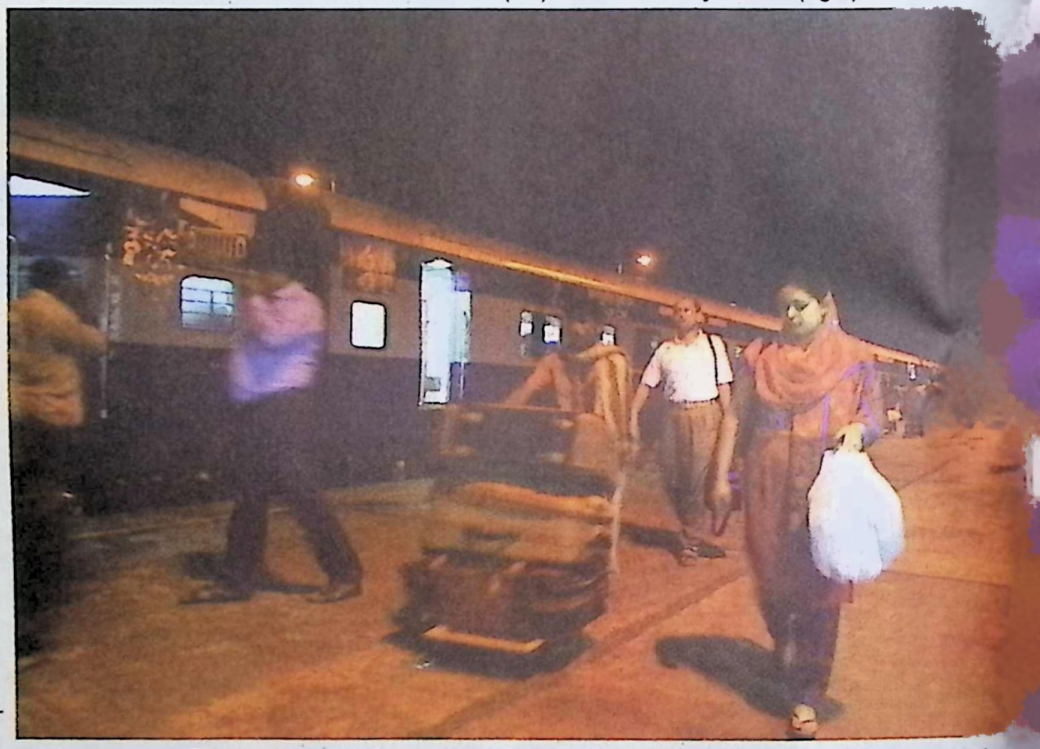




The kitchen (left) and 'western style' toilet (right) on the train.



The starting point 'Cantonement Station' is very basic and getting public transport to go home is a major hassle.

Another concern that some Bangladeshis have expressed is that the train service will become a one-sided affair, that there will be more Bangladeshis travelling to India than the other way 'round, which in economic terms means Bangladeshis will spend more in India.

visa checking to make travel by Maitree easier. Professor Abrar welcomes it, saying, " Any alternative arrangement that minimises the travellers' discomfort is certainly welcome."

Mohammad Zamir, too, believes these problems can be sorted out. "As has been evident, the service has met with small hindrances related to passenger support in areas of immigration and custom clearance. I am, however, hopeful that these minor inconveniences will be ironed out," he says. He thinks the key to the problem lies in "Careful checking of the passengers that should enable us to contain the flow of possible trafficking of persons and smuggling of drugs and illegal weapons across these frontiers."

Another concern that some Bangladeshis have expressed is that the train service will become a one-sided affair, that there will be more Bangladeshis travelling to India than the other way round, which in economic terms means Bangladeshis will spend more in India. Abrar rubbishes such a claim. "Bangladeshis mostly go to India to avail better healthcare facilities; and I am very blunt about it. The cost of services and unaccountability of the doctors and pathologists and others involved in our country are the factors that are