

# Bangladesh: A Lingerin Illness

**DACCA, From A1**

price of a ticket were screaming into the camp.

Bearded policemen in fraying white uniforms and pith helmets made token efforts at waving along the usual traffic of clattering, overloaded buses, the cars of the rich and the middle class, ornately painted cycle rickshas and lumbering, wooden wheeled handcarts pushed by heaving human draft animals.

Along the broken sidewalks and on overgrown traffic islands, the beggars, the maimed and twisted refuse of the Subcontinent, plied their ancient profession, seeking alms in the name of Allah.

Shops many of them with shelves full of costly goods, were open, although customers were scarce. In the drab gray halls of the Secretariat, the center of government apparatus, peons and clerks dozed and gossiped outside their masters' offices.

Telegraph and telephone

services were operating—not terribly efficiently, but they never did. In short, Dacca life appeared normal.

To a frequent visitor, all this seemed a chilling indicator of just how severely the people of Bangladesh have been punished in the four years since they won their hard-fought independence from Pakistan.

The abnormal has become normal.

"It's true," said a Westernized Bengali professional man who only recently was released from jail, where he'd been held for alleged opposition to former President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Since then, he said, his telephone line has been cut and security officers have kept a constant watch at his office and home. "We've been beaten down so badly and so often we no longer know what normal life should be."

The professionals, the in-

tellectuals, the newspaper editors and the wealthy know and understand. But the great masses of Bengalis no longer do, assuming they once did. Hope still breathes, but it's a hope founded on innocence and, all too often, ignorance.

"What do you think?" a waiter anxiously asked. "How does the situation look to you?"

"I'm afraid for you," the visitor answered. "For all of you."

"Oh, no," he replied with a quick smile. "Everything will be all right now. Prices will come down."

That is the one basic hope most Bengalis have in the new three-man military dictatorship, that with martial law will come price controls and they will be able to feed themselves. Beyond that, there's little else that concerns most people.

Of course, they don't know very much of what has happened. For those few who are literate, newspapers contain

local news of substance. When thousands of armed troops ran wild Nov. 7, killing at least 34 officers and their families, the censored press reported only that the soldiers had installed Maj. Gen. Ziaur Rahman as their new leader.

There is virtually no flow of public information between Dacca and other towns and cities. Instead, news has been replaced by rumors. There have been rumors of soldiers shooting, looting and raping in the cities of Chittagong, Rangpur and Syedpur.

Is it true? Everyone seems to know someone who saw it or heard it, but no one seems to have been there himself.

A top-ranking official linked directly to the military high command summoned me to his office a few days ago and disclosed details of a siege by Indian forces and Indian-armed Bengali guerrillas on northern border outposts near Haluaghat. "Why don't you have this printed in your own papers?" I asked him. "Oh, our people are simple," he replied. "There would be uncontrolled rioting against Indians here and against Hindu Bengalis. It would provoke India into direct confrontation."

By now, with international radio reports carrying the news to Bangladesh, word of the border attack is probably circulating. It's too soon to know what the repercussions may be, but the three military officers running Bangladesh today know their grip is tenuous at best.

"All of us would give up our jobs and walk the hell out of here at the drop of a hat," one

of the three told a foreign visitor recently. "These jobs have been forced on us, and there's precious little in it for us."

With leaders as seemingly reluctant as these, what chance does Bangladesh have to get through the current crisis and, perhaps, one day regain a normal way of life—at least normal by the measurements applied elsewhere in South Asia?

"I'm afraid there's no salvation for us," said a Bengali I've known for the last four years, one of the few friends who was willing to risk being seen with a foreign journalist.

"All our institutions are gone. Everyone is afraid he's on someone's revenge list. We don't sleep any more. My God, what is to become of us?"

## Arms Bill Is Passed By Senate

**WEAPONS, From A1**

needs to keep work going—especially on the radar system (PAR) to eventually serve as a long-range detector which can "see" into the Arctic to discover missiles attacking the United States, supplementing the existing Distant Early Warning line.

Kennedy's successful substitute would allow work to go forward on the PAR but dismantle the weaponry and other parts of the ABM, which he said would reduce future operational costs from about \$85 million a year to about \$18 million.

The bill now goes to conference with the House, which voted \$89.2 billion for fiscal 1976 and \$21.7 for the transition, a total of \$111.9 billion. The White House request, sharply cut by both chambers, was \$87.8 billion for fiscal 1976 and \$23.1 billion for the transition—a total of \$110.9 billion.

In addition to the difference on the Safeguard ABM, the Senate bill restored some funds for intelligence activities, for the XM-1 tank, for the SAM-D missile, for six new Boeing 707 airborne warning and control planes instead of the House's two, for a maneuverable reentry vehicle prototype for the Trident submarine system, but killed long lead-time nuclear parts procurement on the controversial B-1 manned bomber. Both bills allow a go-ahead on the F-18 Navy fighter.

## Wife Slaying Suspect

Jasper Gitchest Jr., 31, of 908 Eastern Ave. NE was charged with homicide yesterday in the fatal shooting of his wife, Barbara, 31, in their apartment.

## D.C. Council Backs Minority Hiring Bill

**COUNCIL, From A1**

City law now allows 18-year-olds to vote.

The Council also voted for a bill that would allow companies insuring taxicabs here to raise their rates by 20 per cent.

The Council votes were on first reading. There is a second, and final reading scheduled within two weeks.

Under the new affirmative action bill, each city department would be required to tell the Council at budget time the exact number of males, females, blacks, whites and Spanish-speaking employees at each office and agency and the pay level of each employee.

The numbers of blacks, females, and other minority groups would be compared to the number of people in these categories in the city's general work force. The difference would be the agency's goals, "not quotas", according to the bill.

In 1973, blacks constituted 69 per cent of all D.C. government employees, 77 per cent of all employees grades 1 through 8 and 40 per cent of all employees grades 9 through 120.

Women, in the same year, constituted 54.9 per cent of city employees, of whom 63 per cent were in grades 1 through 8 and 39 per cent in grades 9 through 18. These 1973 figures are the latest ones the city has.

The exact number of blacks, women and Spanish-speaking in the general work force in the city is unknown.

The bill, if passed, could cause major readjustments in such city offices as the corporation counsel and the police department where few women or blacks hold high positions.

The bill, jointly sponsored by Council members Marion Barry and John A. Wilson,

contained no deadline for city agencies to meet their goals but only implied that the Council would be looking for improvements each year the figures are sent to it.

In another development, Council Chairman Sterling Tucker introduced his first major piece of legislation—a bill to create an independent housing and Economic Development Finance Corporation.

The city-run development corporation would be able to lend money to promote and stimulate housing and business development, particularly in the city's riot-damaged corridor and downtown.

Such a corporation has long been advocated by city officials. Aides to Mayor Walter E. Washington told the Council two weeks ago the mayor was formulating similar legislation.

But Tucker one-upped the mayor and beat him to the introduction of such legislation. In his statement on the bill, Tucker criticized the mayor on his slowness.

"The executive branch has supported the concept of an urban finance development corporation for several years and endorsed it as a priority" in January. "Nevertheless, 10 months later, the Council has not received an executive proposal. Meanwhile, the housing shortage has worsened, businesses continue to leave the city..."

### Amin to Visit China

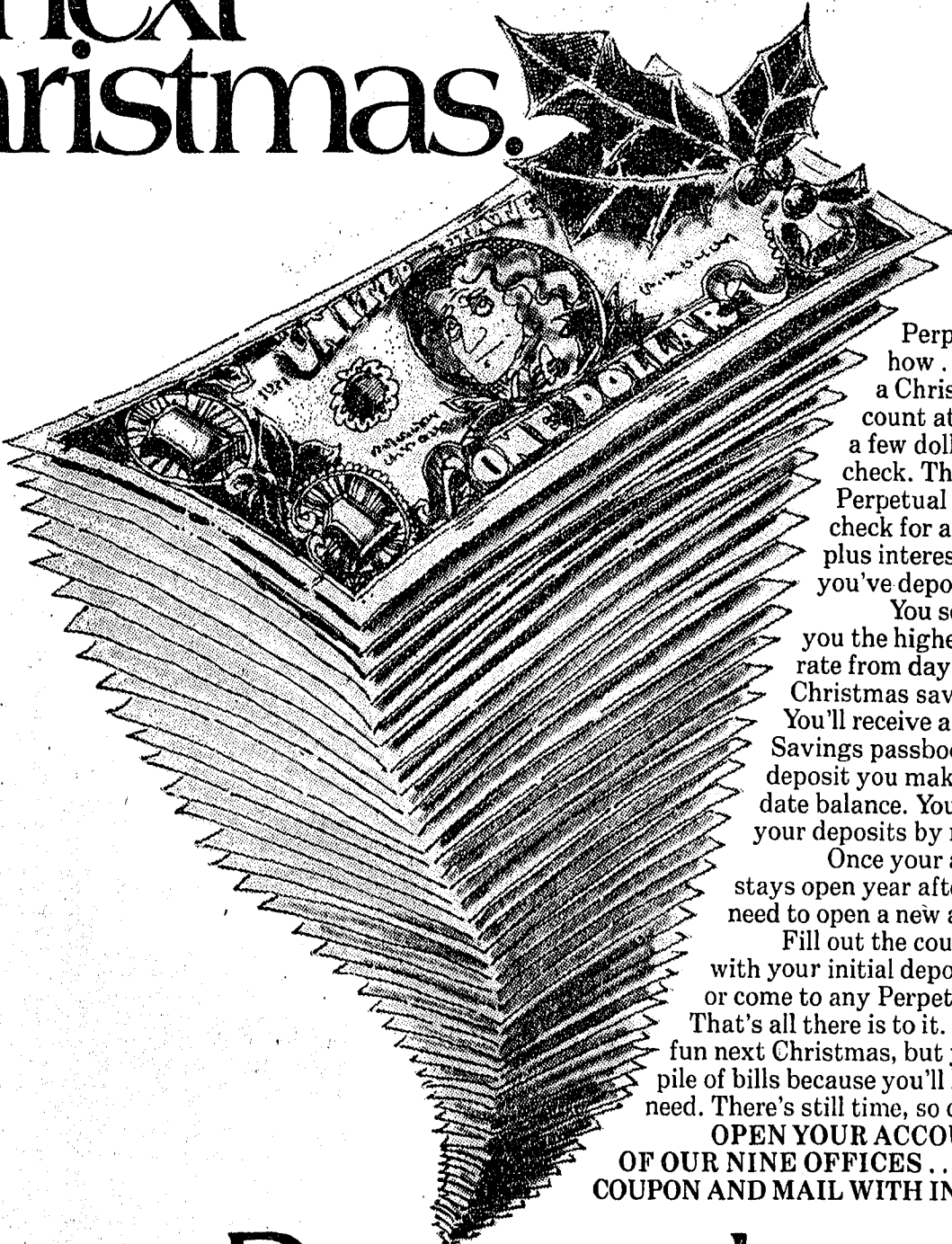
**LONDON, Nov. 18**—Ugandan President Idi Amin has accepted an invitation from Chairman Mao Tse-tung to visit China, Radio Uganda, monitored here, said today. The radio did not say when the visit would take place.



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