CALCUTTA, India, April 2—
Santi Kamal was dressed in
civilian clothes on Friday,
March 26, when he saw several
hundred West Pakistani soldiers
arriving in trucks at Khulna, a
town of about 20,000 in the
south of East Pakistan.

The soldiers, trailing a few
artillery pieces behind their
trucks, came from the north,
presumably from Jessore, and
camped at about 1 P.M. inside
the walled grounds of the Cir-
cuit House in Khulna. Patrols
immediately moved out of the
camp and disarmed the local
police and the Bengali mem-
bers of the East Pakistani
 Rifles, a regional security force.

Most of the officers of the
East Pakistani Rifles were from
West Pakistan and they joined
the soldiers, Santi Kamal said.

At about 4 P.M., the troops,
he said, began patrolling the
streets of Khulna and shortly
afterwards opened fire on a
crowd in front of the local
movie theater. Santi said he
saw at least 30 bodies.

Santi Kamal arrived in Cal-
cutta this morning to seek aid
from the hastily formed under-
ground on this side of the
border. He was met by chance
at the home of a well-to-do
local resident and agreed to
talk only if his real name was
not used. The reason, he said,
was that his wife and five
children remained behind in a

village near Khulna.

A thin nervous man, 28 years
old, he spoke in Bengali and
was closely questioned by an
interpreter. He said that he was
a platoon leader of the Ansars,
a local home guard, in the vil-
lage of Kalara, in Khulna dis-
trict.

When word spread in Khulna
about the disarming of the local
forces, said Santi, several hun-
dred persons, mostly youths,
began parading through the
streets demanding independence
for East Pakistan.

He joined one parade and
heard shots from near the
movie house. About a dozen
soldiers, he said, were firing in-
to a group composed of dem-
onstrators and people heading
home after seeing the afternoon
movie. The soldier, he added,
were shooting at adults and
using bayonets and rifle butts
on children.

During the firing, Santi said,
he rushed toward the soldiers
at one point and was shot.
After that he ran away, but
less than an hour later, he said,
he saw soldiers shoot down an-
other group of about 10 per-
sons.

Later in the day, about 8
P.M., the soldiers broke up an-
other large demonstration and
then began moving from house
to house, shooting and setting
fires with oil torches, said
Santi.

A few hours later he left
town on a bicycle and, after

six hours of pedaling, reached
Kalara, where his Ansar unit
was located and where efforts
were under way to march on
Jessore. The West Pakistani sol-
diers, he said, maintain a large
garrison about three miles from
that city.

Two hundred local militiam-
men set out the next morning
in a borrowed bus and several
trucks, he said, and once in
Jhinkargacha on the outskirts
of Jessore were instructed by
the noncommissioned officer
who commanded them to find
the West Pakistani soldiers and
fight them.

One patrol of 28 militiamen,
including Santi, surrounded a
house in which soldiers were
billeted and waited until a
group of 25 left, he said.

“We waited until they were
all outside,” he said. “They
were walking, they weren’t run-
ning. They probably thought we
had gone.”

Santi said he and a friend
opened fire, hitting several of
the soldiers before they found
cover.

“They didn’t fire back, they
ran, and they didn’t run back
inside the house,” he said.
“They ran the other way and
we hit some more.”

That night, said Santi, he
hitchhiked back to Kalara and
spent the next day there help-
ing to arrange supplies for the
men in Jessore. Then on Tues-
day, he said, he was told to
come to India to seek aid.