



Gamma/Photoreporters

A RIFT TURNED CHASM: West Pakistani soldiers repulsing angry crowds in Dacca last March, before fighting began. Contempt for Bengalis is common in Western troops.

A Pakistani Terms Bengalis 'Chicken-Hearted'

The following dispatch was written by a correspondent of *The New York Times* who was expelled from East Pakistan on June 30.

By **SYDNEY H. SCHANBERG**
Special to *The New York Times*

FARIDPUR, Pakistan, June 29—Maj. Nazir Baig, the martial-law commander in the Faridpur District just west of Dacca, is a chunkily built Baluchi tribesman from West Pakistan who has spent nearly six of his 20 years of military service in East Pakistan.

His contempt for the Bengalis of this eastern wing of the country is not only common but also proudly held in the Pakistani Army, which began its military campaign to crush their movement for provincial autonomy on March 25.

The Bengalis, he said in an interview, are a "chicken-hearted people" who "never miss a chance to stab you in the back."

Major Eager to Talk

The Bengali Hindus, a minority in this heavily Moslem province of 75 million people, are the worst, according to the major, because they have been "sucking the blood" out of East Pakistan and sending their money to India, Pakistan's Hindu enemy.

During a recent week of traveling through East Pakistan, it was evident that, although many army officers were less articulate than Major Baig, they shared his opinions.

The interview with the major—held in a building that once was the headquarters of the popularly supported Awami League party which campaigned

for autonomy and is now banned—lasted more than two hours. He was eager to talk, to try to convince a foreigner of the correctness of his views. He was often fervent.

He said that his troops had met no resistance when they entered Faridpur, "not a single bullet," and he explained the destruction in the town and the killing of townspeople by saying it was all done by miscreants—the word used by the Pakistani Government to describe the Bengali insurgents.

Major Baig denied what frightened townspeople whispered to a visitor—that the killing and destruction were entirely the army's work.

Only an 'Odd Pinprick'

"Our men are properly motivated," he said. "They have been told they were brought here to help another Moslem brother in trouble. There was no case of rape or looting or any antisocial activity. Islam as a religion forbids this kind of thing. This is a Moslem country where they have come, not a foreign land."

Asked if there was any resistance in the area now, he said: "Nothing except for an odd pinprick". This disappointed him as a professional soldier, he said.

"The Bengalis," he went on, "are very, very soft and chick-

en-hearted people. The sound of just one bullet sends hundreds of these people flying like chickens. They have no guts."

He added, "They are lambs in front of you, tigers behind your back. They are a people who never miss a chance to stab you in the back."

The major said, after a pause, that maybe his assessment did not apply to "100 per cent" of the people, "the common man here," he said, "is very simple and has very limited needs and is not very troublesome."

Pressed about why so many Hindus were killed, the major again denied that his soldiers were responsible. Then he added: "Out of such a large population, if a few innocent people suffer in such abnormal conditions, is it not natural?"

Major Baig said that the Hindus had dominated the teaching profession in East Pakistan and had subverted the province by teaching un-Islamic concepts. "This rot has happened now in East Pakistan because of this," he said. "These teachers and all the Hindus have not accepted Pakistan as a reality. They live in a dreamland. They believe that Mother India will be united again."

The major was confident, however, that India would never be able to swallow Pakistan.