

'Mukti Bahini' is in disarray in Bogra

BOGRA, May 2:—'Mukti Bahini', the so-called Liberation Army propped up by the defunct separatist Awami League, is completely disorganised and in disarray in the Bogra district, writes Altaf Yawar, AFP's special correspondent after a 3-day visit to Bogra and Rangpur districts.

He says in a despatch: "The Pakistan Army Commander of the region told me in an interview that the 'Bahini' men now fought in groups and were a disjointed lot. They were so fearful of the crack Pakistan Army troops that merely the arrival of the troops made them flee from their pockets which were being speedily wiped out in the countryside of Bogra district.

The field officers busy in the 'coup de grace' in Bogra district told me that now the "Bahini" men kept up the mo-

rale of the gullible people of the areas where they operate by telling them: "Yours is the last pocket to be annexed to the Bangla Desh. All other areas of East Pakistan have been cleared of Pakistan Army. If you provide shelter to us you will be richly rewarded by the Bangla Desh government".

"During my meetings with field officers based in Bogra town I came to know that main Indian aid to 'Bahini' came in the form of explosives to destroy road and rail communications in the region. This was coupled with Indian know-how and expertise. I was shown the main bridge near Plasbari village about 25 miles from Bogra town on the Bogra-Rangpur road. Pakistan Army has repaired the damaged 10-yard portion of the (Continued on page 8 col. 8)

'Mukti Bahini' is in disarray

(Continued from page 1)

bridge but the officers said the lay out of the dynamite plan was certainly the work of a regular army. The bridge is now serviceable and all types of vehicles pass over it.

When Pakistan Army took possession of the bridge it found many unused explosives which were certainly not of Pakistani origin. The field officers also showed me Indian-made hand grenades captured during operations. Besides the Pakistan troops captured heavy machineguns binoculars and compasses which were of Indian origin.

A haversack left back by a fleeing Indian infiltrator contained, among other things, a note-book giving names of Indian agents in the area, an outline plan of operation and marked maps of the area. A wireless message intercepted by a Pakistani signaller in the Kulaghat near Lalmanirhat in which someone leading a band of infiltrators was heard shouting; "our ammunition has run short. We are also suffering from malaria and there is also no food". The reply from the other side was: "Don't worry. Hold on. When you come back you will be promoted".

While in Bogra town I also met people from different walks of life. Noteworthy among them were Mr. Abdul Majid, Manager of National Tubes Branch, Mr. Abdur Razzaq a business executive of the National Trading Company and Mr. Tajuddin, owner of Noorani Bread and Biscuit Factory. The premises of all of them had been looted.

They told me that some local Awami Leaguers and Hindus were very thick with each other. When the son of prominent Awami Leaguer, Jabbar Talukdar went around town killing people he was joined by two Hindus. The control room of the Awami League in Circuit House was frequently visited by Indians in plain clothes. On March 28 the control room commanded two trucks of Seth Radha Kishan of Bogra to bring Indians from Hilli, a Pakistani settlement on the India-Pakistan boundary line. They said, according to their estimate three to four thousand Indians had visited Bogra until it was secured by the Pakistan Army.

I also visited a camp where about 800 men, women and children from Santahar and Bonarpara were taking refuge. They had managed to escape mass killing at these two places. A relief committee has been formed in the town to give the refugees food, etc.

When I returned from Bogra, the Army authorities were calling a meeting of the senior officers of the civil administration to make efforts to restore normal life of the town where miscreants, anti-state elements besides Indian infiltrators had been very active till the recent past.