

Mascarenhas' report in Sunday Times malicious

LONDON, June 21:—The Pakistan High Commission yesterday denied a report in last week's Sunday Times by Pakistani journalist Anthony Mascarenhas which claimed the Army was pursuing a genocide policy, reports Reuter.

In a long letter to the Sunday Times, published today, Mr. Abdul Qayyum, the High Commission Press Counsellor, said the report was "malicious and misleading."

He wrote that it was regrettable that the Army's "legitimate action to quell rebellion" and save citizens from further massacre was described as genocide.

Mr. Qayyum said that Mr. Mascarenhas' reports of famine prospects in East Pakistan bore out his Government's attitude that the "rebel elements" were causing destruction and hardship in East Pakistan.

He denied that Bengali officers had been weeded out of the Pakistan Army. He said

that many had recently been promoted, one to General. He added that President Yahya Khan had invited all Pakistan refugees to return irrespective of religion.

Mr. Qayyum said that Mr. Mascarenhas' statement that leading professors and teachers had been killed was disproved by several of them appearing later on television.

He added that foreign correspondents had been allowed to tour East Pakistan, and had filed uncensored despatches.

"His report is neither true, nor authoritative, it is based mostly on hearsay anecdotes collected second hand from a very limited area around Comilla and Dacca.

"He saw far less than many of the foreign reporters who had toured East Pakistan extensively and filed their despatches well before June 13, and yet he has rushed into making sweeping generalisations", said Mr. Qayyum.