

# CHITTAGONG'S FALL MAY BE IMMINENT

**From Our Special Representative**

MAR 30.—Landing of Pakistani combat forces by helicopter at Sandwip yesterday was viewed by competent observers in Calcutta today as a move of far-reaching tactical implications. They think they may mean that the army of Chittagong might be imminent.

The location of Sandwip island at the mouth of the Padma and about 30 miles to the north-west of Chittagong adds to its strategic importance. Should it be necessary for the army to abandon Chittagong, it is East Bengal's only really defensible port. If it falls, the army of the port is expected to fall back on Sandwip. Sandwip island is a barren tract, it has a negligible population and was of considerable military use during World War II. Its development as an advance base for the army is in progress. It is in small craft up the Padma to points like Noakhali, Dacca, Chandpur and Khulna, therefore, an immediate military operations are prohibited.

Shore batteries installed at Sandwip may be able to command not only this route, but also the sea route to the west. It is now within East Bengal and in the west wing, it may not be possible for the Pakistani army, air force and navy to work out on it. It is the strategic port of the visages naval cover for supply or troop convoys being moved up the Padma along the normal maritime channel.

Pakistanis' apparent attempts to exploit its CENTO and RCD allies like Iran and Turkey, seem to support this theory. To ensure security supply and troop convoys up to the river, Pakistan will need a large number of naval craft which she does not possess (as does not have any aircraft carriers) but would like to obtain from friendly countries.

On the basis of the latest reports from various sources, recovery is expected. Second fighters' unremitting pressure on Chittagong continues. There are even indications that this is steadily growing in intensity, forcing a Pakistani troop-laden ship to remain idle in the port for days. That this pressure is likely to mount in the next few days is indicated by reports of 1500 units, after liquidating Pakistani army contingents in the areas adjacent to the Mizo Hills district, are now converging on Chittagong. It is also reported that they are holding out against the combined army, air force and naval onslaught.

# THE FOR COUNCIL

MAR 30.—The U.N. Thant yesterday with diplomatic countries on the military situation formal move to Council meeting.

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# PUNJABI-BALUCHI TROOP CLASHES

**CALCUTTA, Mar 30.—At-** tacks by West Pakistani troops in Bangla Desh have been somewhat subdued, since last night following reports of clashes between Baluchis and Punjabi in West Pakistan, says UNL.

According to a correspondent of Free Bangla Radio, the clashes resulted in the army operating with their Punjabi counterparts in attacking freedom fighters and the unarmed civilian population.

Barack clashes between Baluchi and Punjabi soldiers in West Pakistan, the same restive following repeat, ed reverses with defections of Baluchis and Pathans from the army.

# Mujibur Rahman—The Thief Of A Martyr

**By PAUL MARTIN**

Maintaining the policy he has hitherto taken even in public rallies, of avoiding the mention of independence. "Let us face it—justice is ruled by the sword if they did not tax us. They reaped the fruits of the land but they did not impose taxes on us. At the moment we are being treated by the Government of the West as a colony and a market place. We have our rights and these were undermined in the results of the election. Only a few days after his election Mrs. Gandhi was sworn in as Prime Minister. My question is—how long will she still wait before she is in?"

**EARLY EDUCATION**

After an early mission school education from the Sikkim graduates from Calcutta Islamia College just before partition. His political life dates back to the early 1940s when he was active in the struggle for the independence of Bengal. He was elected as a member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly in 1946. He came and take with me at his. "Look for your- guard me. They can kill me, they know that the spirit of '78. The people are not yet awake. He has shown

# WHEN DACCA LINES WERE DOWN

**By A Staff Reporter**

WITH the first appearance of troops outside the International Hotel at Dacca on the night of March 25, all sorts of rumours were circulating as to the lobby, hallway, the bar. To confirm his worse misgivings about complete army take-over, Sydney H. Schanberg, New Delhi-based correspondent of The New York Times, who was in Dacca to cover the crisis, called the hotel operator and asked him if he could book a room.

"No Sir," the operator replied. "The lines are down."

"Can you book the a call to Hongkong?"

"No Sir."

"Can you book a call anywhere outside Pakistan?"

"No Sir."

"A call to West Pakistan?"

"No Sir."

"What about the matter? Have you been taken over?"

When Schanberg had left Dacca via Karachi on March 10 after covering the Indian elections, the situation in East Pakistan was

out in the process of unfolding. Why this tearing hurry on the part of the army to unload the ship? After all there were still no troops in East Pakistan. In fact by the noon of March 25 there were even reports of tanks being moved into the city. Why this tearing hurry on the part of the army to unload the ship? After all there were still no troops in East Pakistan. In fact by the noon of March 25 there were even reports of tanks being moved into the city. Why this tearing hurry on the part of the army to unload the ship? After all there were still no troops in East Pakistan. In fact by the noon of March 25 there were even reports of tanks being moved into the city.

# MR JOHN WOODRUFF

explosive but none of the subsequent events could have been visualized. "Right up to March 24 nothing much happened. The Awami League had established its control on the administration. Hopes of talks progressing were raised one day and shot down the next. On March 21 Mr Bhutto joined the talks." He told reporters quite blandly that Mujibur Rahman's demands for "foreign aid and foreign trade were beyond genuine autonomy, bordering on sovereignty."

# IN RETROSPECT

In retrospect, it seems even Mujib had realized the talks would come to naught. On March 23, the living room of his Dacca house at Dhanmandi he told Schanberg: "For one, two, three, four days I will see, then we'll go our own way. He would not state his views quite blandly that Mujibur Rahman's demands for "foreign aid and foreign trade were beyond genuine autonomy, bordering on sovereignty."

# SHOOTING AT NIGHT

"Later, sporadic automatic weapons fire could be heard all over town. By 1 a.m. heavy machine guns and artillery had opened up and the first fires visible. The first night of shooting and burning.

# MR SYDNEY H. SCHANBERG

was only a retelling station on an agreement; some passengers could neither board nor disembark.

# NOTEBOOKS SEIZED

In Karachi began the search by the Customs. It seemed strange. After all the correspondents were being moved from one part of the same country to the other. It took minutes to reach the airport. Notebooks, carbon papers, typed sheets, hand aid wrapper even a set of stamps I had bought for my children were seized or tampered with." Schanberg, the lucky one who managed to persuade the officer to let him carry his notebook in fact there is a possibility that the officer was impressed by the name and address of a close associate.

# PAKISTAN Jia Khans' Appeal For Recognition AGAIN

**CALCUTTA, Mar 30.—The** Government under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is the sovereign legal authority in the Desh and is entitled to recognition by all countries of the world.

# Diplomatic Offensive By India

**FROM OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE**

**NEW DELHI, Tuesday.—As** reports of gross atrocities by the West Pakistani Army in Bangla Desh continued to pour in and with the increasing influx of refugees from across the border, India has launched a diplomatic offensive to plead on behalf of the people of the

# THE FLAG OF FREEDOM

**SHILLONG, Mar 30.—A** red circle round the map of East Pakistan in the office of the Indian High Commissioner in Shillong is the sign of a diplomatic offensive.

The flag flutters proudly at various border posts along the India-Pakistan frontier. The flag flutters proudly at various border posts along the India-Pakistan frontier. The flag flutters proudly at various border posts along the India-Pakistan frontier.

# Pak Army Chief Flies To Dacca Via Colombo

**FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT**

**COLOMBO, Mar 30.—The** number of Pakistani military aircraft overflying Ceylon or using airport facilities in Colombo have lately increased.

Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff flew to Dacca in a military aircraft via Colombo last night. Unconfirmed reports allege that Pakistani troops in civilian clothes were currying troops in civilian clothes to Dacca via Colombo. Ceylon continues to give diplomatic clearance to Pakistani military aircraft on the basis of the Pakistan Embassy Military Attache's assurance that no airlifting of arms and ammunition was involved.

Meanwhile a ship carrying West Pakistanis, which left East Pakistan on the eve of civil war docked in a Colombo harbour today. Another ship carrying West Pakistanis, which left East Pakistan on the eve of civil war docked in a Colombo harbour today. Another ship carrying West Pakistanis, which left East Pakistan on the eve of civil war docked in a Colombo harbour today.

# U.K. TO DEMAND COMPENSATION ARMY ATTACK ON BRITISH COUNCIL

**LONDON, Mar 30.—The** British Council office in Dacca was attacked during fighting there the British Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home, who is on a tour of the East.

Reporting to the House of Commons on the situation in East Bengal, he said the incident occurred on March 28. Damage could have been avoided, he said, if the Council staff was not there.

In reply to a question, Sir Alec said the British Government was responsible for the attack, as we understand it, on the British Council office, and we have brought this matter to the notice of the Pakistani authorities and will, of course, in due course, ask for compensation."

About two weeks ago some 500 British and Pakistani women and children were evacuated from East Bengal. The British community there now numbered about 700. He had no reports of injury to the British community.

# PAK FLIGHTS VIA CEYLON NO LOCAL DEMAND FOR BAN

**FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT**

**COLOMBO, Mar 30.—There** has been a total absence of local public demand here that Ceylon should deny airport facilities to Pakistani aircraft.

The Opposition demand in the Indian Lok Sabha has not been echoed by any political party or trade union organization.

# Jia Khan's Appeal For Recognition

CALCUTTA, Mar 30.—The Government under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is the sovereign legal Government of Bangla Desh and is entitled to recognition by all democratic countries of the world. Maj Jia Khan, provisional Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation Army, declared this morning, reports UNI.

In a broadcast over Free Bangla

## Ceylon Asked Not To Allow Landing Of Pak Planes

From Our Staff Correspondent

KRISHNAGAR, Mar 30.—The Provisional Government of Bangla Desh has appealed to the Government of Ceylon not to provide landing and refuelling facilities to West Pakistani aircraft at Colombo airport.

A spokesman of the Provisional Government told this reporter today that the West Pakistani aircraft touching Colombo were bringing troops, arms and ammunition to Bangla Desh. He said that if Ceylon continued to provide landing facilities to West Pakistani aircraft she would be directly responsible for the genocide in Bangla Desh.

The spokesman said that the strength of West Pakistan Army in Bangla Desh on March 15 when Gen Yahya Khan arrived in Dacca was about 18,000, much less than a division. But now, according to current estimates, their number

Radio on behalf of the Sheikh. Maj Jia Khan said: "The new democratic Government is committed to a policy of non-alignment in international relations. It will seek friendship with all nations and strive for international peace.

"We have already formed a sovereign legal Government under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman which pledges to function as per law and the constitution.

"We therefore appeal to all democratic and peace-loving countries of the world to immediately recognize the legal democratic Government of Bangla Desh."

He appealed to all Governments to mobilize public opinion in their respective countries against the "brutal genocide" in Bangla Desh.

Maj Jia Khan said the Pakistan Government was trying to confuse and deceive the people of the world through contradictory statements.

"But nobody will be deceived by Yahya Khan and his followers," he said.

PTI adds from Jalpaiguri: "A free and sovereign Bangla Desh is now a settled fact, and no power on earth will be able to deny independence", an Awami League leader, who crossed the border with some of his colleagues yesterday said at a vast public meeting. He acknowledged the Indian people's "unstinted support" for the freedom movement.

The meeting urged Mrs Gandhi to help the people of Bangla Desh in all possible ways and recognize it as a "free country".

CALL TO STOP