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# *A Probationer's Training Diary*

**COVER PAGE**

**P. Bhattacharya**

*Learning to Serve*  
*Administrative Training Institute*

*Government of West Bengal*

*A Probationer's Training Diary*

**TITLE PAGE**

**P. Bhattacharya**

**Block FC, Bidhannagar (Salt Lake)**  
**Kolkata-700106**

## PREFACE

*New entrants to the Indian Administrative Service and the West Bengal Civil Service (Executive) have to maintain a Training Diary as part of their district training. While supervising their work in the districts, the ATI faculty has found that in the majority of cases the probationers do not maintain their diaries properly, although these are intended to be records of the details of the training they undergo so that superior officers can check whether they have assimilated the proper lessons from the exposure in the field. During interactions with their Counsellors in the ATI, the trainees have complained that they are handicapped by not having an example to follow. A similar handicap has been reported regarding writing reports of enquiries assigned to probationers in the district.*

*In view of this feedback, the ATI is publishing the diary I maintained in detail as probationer in Malda in 1972, trusting that it will provide civil service probationers with an example of how a training diary can be maintained. We were supposed to send the National Academy of Administration an official training diary and also maintain a personal one. Shri B.N. Yugandhar, the Deputy Director in charge of our training in Mussoorie (now Member of the Planning Commission), had told us in what format the diary was to be maintained. I stopped maintaining the personal diary after 14.8.1972 since nothing of personal interest was happening.*

*The reports of enquiries I was assigned have also been reproduced as they cover a variety of subjects and may provide some guidance regarding how an enquiry report is to be written.*

*As the diary includes coverage of evacuee-relief work in the aftermath of the birth of Bangladesh and of the creation of the first district development plan in West Bengal, the account is of some historical interest. An article I wrote on this which was published in *The Administrator*, quarterly journal of the National Academy of Administration, is appended. Later I was told that the photographs I used to send with my monthly training diary had been put up during a visit to the NAA by the President of India, Shri V.V. Giri.*

*Opinions about places and persons recorded in the diary may reflect the trainee's immaturity but the intention is not to embarrass anyone. They have not been edited out—except in rare cases—in order to preserve the authenticity of the document as a record of a fresh entrant's reactions to district administration.*

*Much of what I have learnt as an officer is owed to Shri S.P. De, then District Magistrate of Malda. Even though he was my boss for just a few months, he left a lifelong mark on me and was a source of inspiration. One of the happiest days in my life was when he and Smt. De graced the marriage ceremony of my daughter Deepanjali in 1999. His demise in 2006 was a personal loss. This publication is dedicated to him and to his gracious wife for their firm guidance and the kindness they showed me.*

October 2006  
(Manchester)

*Pradip Bhattacharya IAS*

*International HRD Fellow*

*Additional Chief Secretary  
Development and Planning Department  
&  
Director, Administrative Training Institute*



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### **Arriving in Malda**

Under Home (General Administration) Department's order No. 8073-GA/5C-186/71 dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1971 signed by Shri N. Nanda, Deputy Secretary, I had been appointed as Assistant Magistrate and Collector in the Jalpaiguri Division and posted to the headquarters station of Malda district. By another order No.8074-GA of the same date, the Governor had been "pleased to vest" me with the powers of a Magistrate of the "Third Class"—which sounded quite a let-down!

Phase-I of the IAS Professional Training in the National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie, was cut short on account of the war with Pakistan in 1971 and we were asked to report to the districts in January 1972. As advised by Shri J.K.Kohli, Deputy Director (Jr.) in the Academy from the West Bengal cadre (1956 batch), I wrote to the District Magistrate of Malda [Mr.Kohli was not sure who the District Magistrate in Malda was] from Mussoorie on 28.12.1971 as follows:-

"Dear Sir,

I am happy to know that for my training I have been deputed to Malda district, under your able guidance, and look forward to an interesting training programme under your supervision.

I will be proceeding to Calcutta on the 9<sup>th</sup> January, 1972, after completing the Civil Defence Training at Nagpur. As we have been allowed only actual transit time, I should be in Malda by the 12<sup>th</sup> January at the very latest. I shall inform you as soon as possible about the exact date and time of my arrival and would be very grateful if you could possibly have someone to meet me at the station as I have never been to Malda previously. I hope some sort of accommodation could also be arranged?

Looking forward to meeting you,

Yours sincerely,"

On 11<sup>th</sup> January 1972 I wrote to him from my Calcutta residence that I would be arriving at Malda Town at 23.30 hours on the 13<sup>th</sup> by Darjeeling Mail, and requested arrangements for accommodation and transport. I had been told at the NAA that some transport would be there to pick me up and that I should go to the Circuit House where accommodation would have been arranged.

I reached Malda railway station around midnight and, to my dismay, found no sign of any vehicle; only cycle-rickshaws were in evidence. I had one portmanteau and a sack containing my father's camp bed that he had advised me to take along for emergencies. A rickshaw took me to the Circuit House. After a lot of knocking and shouting a chowkidar emerged, who said there was no reservation for the Assistant Magistrate and appeared never to have heard of such a designation.<sup>1</sup> On enquiring where I could stay, he guided me to the dak-bungalow nearby. There, too, after a lot of shouting a bleary-eyed chowkidar emerged (later I found he was named Hemanta) and told me I would have to share a room where 2 FCI officers were sleeping. He got them to open the door, and I blessed my luck for having carried the camp-bed (no third bed being available), which I set up with its mosquito-net, and went to sleep.

Next morning, when I stepped out on the verandah, I found that the adjacent room was occupied in solitary splendour by an occupant, who turned out to be the West Bengal Civil Service probationer! The dak-bungalow had no modern sanitation and one had to use wooden commodes that were manually cleaned by female sweepers.

At my request, Mr. S.N. Roy Chowdhury (WBCS 1970) took me to call on the DM in his bungalow office. I went wearing my 'gala-bundh' (buttoned up) suit as I felt this was the first

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<sup>1</sup> Later, as the Under Secretary Home Department, I ensured that our IAS probationers in the Academy were provided with names of the concerned DMs so that they did not face the problems I did.



formal calling-on and I must be properly dressed. Shri S.P.De, the DM, asked me to be seated and then directed me to the Senior Deputy Collector (Sr.D.C.) in the Collectorate for completing joining formalities.

**14<sup>th</sup> January 1972**

**Work done**

Joined duty as Assistant Magistrate & Collector. Copies of joining statement sent to: Chief Secretary, AG West Bengal, Commissioner (Jalpaiguri Division), DM (Malda), Treasury Officer (Malda) under memo number 237(5)-G dated 17.1.1972.

Went through library. Ancient Govt. Orders. Took District Gazetteer.

**Officers met**

Madhusudan Bhattacharya: Sr. Dep.Collr.WBCS – 1962

T.P Ghosh : Dep. Magis. WBCS – 1966

N.R Halder : A.DM, IAS, 1965 batch, here since 1969.

M.B Chowdhury : SDO, Land Reforms (SLRO).

Proshanto Bhattacharya: Dep. Magis. (Prob.) W.B.C.

S.N Roy Chowdhury : Dep. Magis. (Prob.) W.B.C.S

Basak : Agent, S.B.I

C.D Mitra : Asst. Manager, FCI. From Harinabhi

D.C Bhattacharji: Asst. Manager, FCI. From Rajpur

J.N Banerjee : Accounts Officer, A/G W.B

Ajit Dutta : CARE Officer, Malda

**Information gathered**

Tremendously under-staffed administration: posts of 3 Dy. Magistrates vacant.

Result: Monumental backlog of work, especially judicial. Only new dates for cases are given. No sittings owing to pressure of executive work. Over 400 cases lying with Sr.Dy.Colr. alone.

Added distress: Election Booths to be up by 31<sup>st</sup>. January with effect from today. Many booths have been destroyed. Problem of updating electoral rolls & making booths in one week.

Last year Refugees + Flood→ huge backlog of T.A bills which are still unsigned, evoking representations from claimants. One such from Settlement Dept. occurred today, extremely bitter over the delay in payment as they often had to spend out of their own pockets. Sr. D.C. has ½ bills & SDO other ½, both signing as many as possible all day at office as well as at home. Basic hitch: Only ONE clerk makes out pay bills; naturally work is slow. More clerks should be recruited. Vacancies among posts to be filled up at once.

Lamentable lack of furniture & even of a urinal & bathroom in Collectorate. Library not up to date on Season & Crop reports & Manuals.

Dak Bungalow: Lack of necessary fittings; sanitary facilities next to nil & highly unhygienic. Sweepers have occupied all kitchens [one for each room] and garages, so that officers staying here cannot have their meals cooked. No one dares to order these sweepers out. Very heavy pressure on Dak Bungalow & Circuit House.

Housing problem is acute in Malda. Contrast Housing Estates in other districts for Govt. Officers. Circuit House constantly booked. Rooms for hire not available in city. Eating out is a big problem as food in hotels is very bad, except in the State Transport Canteen. Assistant & Dy. Magistrates are not supposed to eat there, but no alternative since cooking at the residence is impossible—no facilities. Messing arrangements for probationers ought to be made.

Malda Museum should be visited—many manuscripts exist, as yet undeciphered.

**15.1.1972**

**Work done**

Met the DM. Sat with S.D.O in his office & accompanied him to court, dealing with Police file.

**Persons met**

Bimal Chakraborty: BDO, Old Malda (since 8 years) WBJCS, [Economics from Asutosh College, young & very efficient]

Kumar Samarakram Majumder: Treasury Officer [Jessore –Home Town] WBJCS

Subhash Chowdhury: Sub-divisional Officer, WBCS 1961 [Chittagong –Home Town]

M.Ashraful Islam: M.P.A (Member, Provincial Assembly), Rajshahi, Chairman Zonal Council, W.Zone-II & Secy. Rajshahi District. Awami League [about 60 years]

Sardar Amjad Hossain: M.P.A Rajshahi.

Azimuddin Sarkar: Ex-Cong [O], now Cong [R]

Bishu Babu “Birendra Nath Mitra”: Cong (O), Ex-M.L.A

S.P De: DM, [1953 WBCS; 1963, IAS with 1959 seniority. Going as Director, Small Scale & Cottage Industries, after Elections. From Mymensingh]

Malda Red Cross Officials.

**Information gathered**

DM is ferociously efficiently; in office from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. literally. Terrific reputation & popularity with all parties, the Army & Bangladesh [their Cabinet has sent him a letter of appreciation & thanks]. Deeply involved in the Bangladesh Movement. Has raised about Rs.5 lakhs for building a College (being opened by the Governor on 21<sup>st</sup>). Heard horrible accounts of Pak. Army killings from him (he had visited & seen some mass graves) as well as Mukti Fauj reprisals. One person in NATOR Thana area, Pak Army priest by day & butcher by night, has been taken as POW by our army despite M.Fouj protests. The matter has been referred to Delhi by Bangladesh Govt. [this from Ashraful Islam].

Acute crisis in Bangladesh of fuel. Pak army destroyed all motor vehicles in and near about Rajshahi and all fuel stores too. About 15000 litres petrol & kerosene have been sent to Rajshahi. To enable its 2 sugar mills to start functioning & so save cultivators any loss, IOC is arranging to send diesel of about 50,000 litres. Islam begged for a few trucks to distribute relief materials received. DM unofficially will do so.

To date, about 1 lakh Hindus have returned to Bangladesh from Malda camps.

The DM believes in “assigning the toughest jobs to Asst. Magistrate” & has given me repatriation duty of Kutubshahar camp (the largest here) & then elections. He told the SDO over telephone that I should learn the work of everyone, from that of the peon to that of the DM and between him and myself there would be no intervention by anyone.

One ex-M.L.A of Cong. (O) alleged taking of Rs.15 bribe in every case by Asst.AEO (Agriculture Extension Officer) Harishchandrapur. DM is going with him on 27<sup>th</sup> to enquire.

DM is sending to Calcutta on Tuesday (18<sup>th</sup>) details for Housing scheme for Govt. servants.

DM meets DC Rajshahi tomorrow. Chief Justice arrives 18<sup>th</sup> for inspection prior to separation of Executive & Judiciary. This was due in Dec.’71 but was postponed.

General camaraderie among officers is encouraging. Each is sincerely concerned about the other’s personal health etc. e.g. SDO about T.P.Ghosh’s fainting fit, DM about SDO’s wife’s health [Caesarean delivery]. SDO is heavily overworked with court and executive work [repatriation programme–problem of truck shortage]. Plaintiffs keep coming at home & office regardless of his convenience & this is harassment & a nuisance. He takes personal interest in giving tips & information to the Ast. Magis. Extremely helpful and courteous. Explained police file handling, Arms Act procedure while handling cases.

Refugees are getting Rs.3 per head, & Rs.1.50 for minors (up to 8 years) [this is @ Rs.1 a day ration: 79 n.p. Rice & Dal; 21 n.p. cash; 15 days is being given]. Passage money Rs.2 up to those within 10 miles of border; Rs.5 for 10–15 miles, Rs.10 for 15 to 30 miles; Rs.1 for minors. Two batches: One to Nawabganj and Shibganj, other to Singabad. Ending by 31<sup>st</sup> January. They are going by special trains & trucks.

Note that though today was a half-day for all clerks & peons, none of the officers observed it. They all worked right up to end of normal office hours (DM, of course, continues till late night).

Note willpower of DM. Used to smoke 70 cigarettes daily. On his son remarking on this, he stopped it overnight totally.

**16.1.1972 (Sunday)**

**Work done**

Watched Malda vs. W.Dinajpur Cricket Match.

Called on District Judge Sri S.K Chakravarty, and the SDO at their residences.

Studied History of Malda from District Gazetteer.

**Persons met**

Manoranjan Dey, BDO English Bazar.

Dinesh Biswas – Office Suptdt. Hails from Chittagong. Brought up in Burma; had huge rice mill; ruined in war; came to Dacca, & then to Bengal after partition, in Commissioner's establishment. 31 years service.

S.K Chakravarty – Dist. Judge. In 1969 was called to National Academy of Administration on the Law faculty. Did not go owing to family problems. Hails from Sylhet. Came here in June 1971.

**Information gathered**

SDO told me of Malda's problems.

Agricultural Economy – i) Sericulture, ii) Jute & Mango.

3 rivers – a) Pagla, b) Mahananda, c) Kalindri, all linked to Padma → floods.

Hence taming these required – i) embankments, ii) re-excavation of beds. Farakka Barrage is of no help here.

3 types of land: a) BARINDA: slopes up – probably part of ancient hills. Grows Aman crops chiefly.

b) TAL: plains. “Aush” crops.

c) DIARA: alluvial, sandy. “Kalai” chief produce, made into chapatis – staple food of people here. Here early crops alone succeed, as depends on early rain & ruined by floods.

Scope for silk industry, mango-processing industry, jute industry exists. Power supply from rivers & Bokaro. No incentives are given. Pisciculture & fishermen rehabilitation in “Beels” possible. From Jute paper can be made – Newsprint possible.

A circular dam exists in Harischandrapur, leaving out (8+1/2) anchals [Congress Government did so because of influential congressites in that region]. Result: this area stays dry while the rest is under 10 ft. water in floods. Hence people breach the dam out of anger. SDO suggests building artificial canals with high embankments along natural paths of flow that exist & can be dug out & link to Kalindri. Have sluice gates at junction with Kalindri & shut these as water in canals drops to a safe level. Thus: -

1. Drains entire Harishchandrapur region.
2. Pisciculture in canals possible.
3. Source of irrigation – Rabi crops.

But local needs are not considered in plans. Acute need for district planning based on felt needs. Malda land is low-producing – 4 mds per bigha in Barinda vs. 30 mds in Burdwan. Proper irrigation + IADP can remedy it.

District Judge has hardly moved around Malda; many threats vs. him by anti-social elements!

**17.1.1972****Work done**

Visited Kutubshahar Evacuee Camp for repatriation work.

**Persons met**

Manik Roy – O.C Kutubshahar Camp

Dilip Kr. Chakravarty – BDO GAZOL

Rabindra Lal Chowdhury – Doctor (evacuee) in K.S Camp from Chittagong.

Mrs. Uma Roy – ex. MLA, social worker.

**Information gathered**

For transport to Kutubshahar camp I went to the SDO. Found a woman in tatters with three small children sitting on the floor outside his door. On enquiry she told me they had come to 'Hindustan' a few days back and had not had a square meal for three days. Roy Choudhuri and I left for Kutubshahar at 1 pm as no transport was available before that. Took along the evacuee, Sita Devi with her 10 year old daughter & 2 children (4 yrs. & another, a sucking babe) to the camp. She is an evacuee, totally destitute, husband killed, not enrolled in any camp. SDO wrote out an order asking her to be admitted at Kutubshahar camp. As she had no way to go there [12 miles] I took her along with her belongings. Roy, the O.C. of the camp, pointed out that such later inclusions created audit problems as under the DM's orders no evacuees were to be allowed to join the camps later. I told him that as I had been put in charge of the camp, he would have to admit her and provide for her food and stay. Heard many complaints vs. the rude behaviour of the auditors who totally fail to appreciate the problems to be tackled by the administration. Roy complained vs. the SDO not giving such orders in writing thereby landing him in trouble with auditors & not backing him up. This makes it most frustrating for him & his work.

Attended repatriation work. This involves:

- 1) Identity Card,
- 2) Ration: 400 gm. Rice; 100 gm. dal  
Rs.3.00; ½ for minors (up to 8 yrs.)
- 3) Passage Money: up to 10 miles from border Rs. 2
 

10 to 30...	Rs. 5
beyond 30	Rs.10
Half for minors (3–12 years)	
- 4) Dhoti/Sari; shorts, shirt, skirt, blouse.

Very slow process. Roy Chowdhury suggested speeding it up by following the Habibpur camp procedure: have muster-rolls with all these details already done & tick off as each gets his. We intend getting this done by going on 19<sup>th</sup> & staying overnight.

Those going on their own are leaving by 19<sup>th</sup>. From 24<sup>th</sup>–31<sup>st</sup> the others leave. Total: over 30,000. Some 2000 are leaving by 19<sup>th</sup>. The rest leave by truck to Nawabganj & Shibganj or by train to Singabad. Capacity of train is 4000. 3 special trains daily.

Reported to DM who agreed to issue a circular that genuine distress cases be admitted to camps & get all the benefits. Intends starting a Woman's Home at Moulpur Camp Asked me have demolition work there stopped at once & report its condition to Mrs.Uma Roy, who is organising this. I met the demolishing contractor at 8 p.m. & told him to stop work & left a message for the BDO, Old Malda, conveying the instructions & to post NVF to prevent theft of demolished material.

BDO GAZOL wanted instructions on what to do with demolished material of Karjadanga Camp. DM asked us to auction them [7 days notice to Anchal Pradhans & Thanas] & appoint NVFs to protect the materials.

Repatriation payment is facing difficulties as bank is giving 10s & 100s (rupee notes), & not 1s & 2s as required. Advised them to get change from UBI. This was approved by DM. Daily about Rs.10,000 is brought to Kutubsahar camp.

The evacuees are all from the working class (agriculturist); extremely poor, mostly with just one piece of cloth. The repatriation work continues till 12 midnight; hampered because original schedule of a batch leaving by 10<sup>th</sup> has been changed, necessitating extra rations & erasures & re-writing of rolls.

The Medical Officer in charge is from Bangladesh. Well-controlled & healthy people now, clean & well organised huge camp. At first dysentery, diarrhoea, cholera were rife & killed dozens.

DM, seeing our conveyance problem, has offered us a Mukti Fouj (MF) jeep.

At SDO's office saw an evacuee girl of 20. SDO said she was at the head of the MF female wing & used stengun & 3" mortar despite her frail figure. Local school students came to SDO agitating for removal of the Acting Head Master He firmly heard them & sent them away. They left uttering threats.

**18.1.1972**

**Work done**

Visited Karjadanga Camp, Gazol & Bamangola BDO offices. Attended farewell meeting of Constituent Assembly of Bangla Desh.

Conducted enquiry into theft from Evacuee Stores.

**Persons met**

Sudhanshu Kr. Das : BDO, Bamangola, WBJCS

Sailendra Nath Majumdar : Special Tribal Welfare Officer; also OC Evacuee Supplies, WBJCS.

Rathin Kar : Dy. Mag, Dist Panchayet Offr, WBCS 1966.

Ram Prasanna Roy : Ex-M.P, Congress.

Kamal Kumar Guha : S.P.(1954), here since 1969.

**Information gathered**

Conducted enquiry into theft of some rice, wheat, dal, milk powder from store-room of Nanda Dulal Sarkar, Store-Keeper Evacuee. Interrogated him, Sunil Mitra (LDC), D.Banerjee [M.V.I Tech], Harendra Nath Chowdhury [Nightguard], Sachindra Lal Dey [Office Peon]. Discovered curious inconsistency between F.I.R & Nanda Babu's statement before me about stores & total contrast with Mitra's statement regarding time of discovery of theft. Prima facie can't fix responsibility on anyone. Interesting that theft attempt occurred in Court & stores on 24/12/ 71.

The Stock Register & receipt shows that on 25/9/ 71, 2 bags of rice [1 Qtl.], 1 bag wheat [95 kg], 1 bag Dal [60 kg], arrived. But Nanda Babu says 2 bags of wheat. No record of milk powder bags at all.

Around 1 p.m. proceeded by Red Cross jeep wagon [MRX 3451 donated by Maharashtra BD Aid Committee; did much M.Fouj work] to:-

1. BDO Gazol. Instructed him to auction Karjadanga shelter materials.
2. Karjadanga [26 miles from Malda]. Excellent shelters. Originally 5000 evacuees. All leaving on their own, leaving only about 150 families (i.e. about 700 heads) to proceed as per Govt. programme on 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, on which trains carrying total of 12000 capacity with run. Hence, requested DM to have them stop at Adina so that Kutubshahar evacuees, going on their own, could board it.

The OC (ex-Army) complained against inefficiency of the 7 Home Guards [they demand rations, which is not authorised, skip work & say they are afraid to do night duty]. Conveyed this to DM at 9 p.m.

OC's repatriation programme halted as ran out of rice. No ration had arrived despite information sent on 15<sup>th</sup>. BDO Bamangola had promised to send his surplus 10 qtl. but sent only Dal. So I drove to-->

3) BDO Bamangola. Jeep made 2 trips & transferred about 480 kg. of rice. By that time [5.30 p.m.] the ration also arrived [150 qtl.], & work could proceed smoothly.

Proceeded to meeting called by Ashraful Islam & Hussain to bid goodbye & thank Malda. This continued till 8.30 p.m. with speeches, tea, songs, and orchestra. Ended with Bangladesh National Anthem [ours wasn't played]. Then went to DM & reported everything. I enquired if Karjadanga shelter materials—the only of this type in W.B. is found in Malda, very well constructed—could not be sent to Bangladesh He asked me to find out the route from there to Porsa in BD, as that would be more direct than sending them all the way to Nawabganj. Also I am to investigate possibilities of organising self-help units among evacuees from Karjadanga to receive the materials in Porsa.

Got DM's permission to attend his meeting with BDOs tomorrow about Crash Rural Works Programme, Elections & other items, as this will give me lots of information.

S.N.Majumdar is to be contacted to provide someone to teach me Santhali. I told him this today when I met him at Bamangola.

Chief Justice arrived tonight. R.Kar is doing Sr.D.C's work from tomorrow, & M.Bhattacharyya is sitting as Election Officer-in-charge. Some unfortunate strained relations exist between him & SDO because of his sending DM a note complaining that SDO was not signing TA bills. He could have just requested the SDO informally instead.

**19.1.1972**

### **Work done**

Attended meetings on C.S.R.E & Elections & Evacuee Repatriation, 11 a.m.-2.30 p.m.

Attended SDO's Court re: S.144, 107 CrPC cases.

Continued my enquiry.

### **Persons met**

P.B. Mukherjee-- Chief Justice of W.B

P.N Sarkar -- Chief Engineer of P.W.D

### **Information**

Meeting began with SDO absent. He was summoned by DM. On arrival he complained of not having been informed of the meeting & took strong exception to this omission. DM mildly reprimanded Sr.D.C. [now OC elections].

CSRE: about Rs.22 lakh is expected for the crash programme. However, as the BDOs are too over-burdened, as also all technical depths, Govt. will be asked to re-make their schemes on a realistic pattern & not to allot any money to Malda for CSRE this financial year. BDOs objected to the Govt. plan of employing just 100 labourers of the locality concerned for the scheme. This is just too small a labour force.

**Evacuee:** Surplus rice left with BDOs from the camp should be sold back to FCI. Other rations to be sold at open market prices. In case of shortage of ration draw from surplus area.

In Malda, shelters should be auctioned off [I am to explore possibility of sending them to Porsa in Rajsahi. Habibpur BDO said this could be done on a route via Bamangola, Pakuhat, Kenpukur, to Agra-Harishchandrapur which is on the border via Punarbhava river. Tomorrow I will investigate this route].

Test relief to be begun at once to repair all election routes. For this 5000 qtl. flour is available besides much wheat. Distribute this at 2.5 kg. a head.

**Election:** Draft list of stations must be out by 22<sup>nd</sup>. Use 1971 list as it is for this. For final list verify conditions of stations. If damaged, repair at top priority, or change (if unavoidable) to adjacent building within same polling area. Where an entire "Mouza" has been washed away

and population has shifted due to erosion (e.g. Kaliachak II), then for election the station location must not be changed. As a rule, changes are to be totally avoided.

Meeting with political parties on 28<sup>th</sup> / 29<sup>th</sup>.

Met the C.J. who is sympathetic about the massive file of cases pending. The District Judge told him about my father.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, I was unaware of the possibility of meeting the C.J. & hence was not in my formal suit, but only a shirt. However he did not seem to mind. The DM told him we require 3 First Class Magistrates if immediate separation is not done (for which Malda is fully equipped & prepared). The Registrar agreed with this.

Interrogated Kuldip Mondol, the Coolie Sarkar, who bore out Nanda babu's version. Fixing responsibility is impossible, I find. Nanda babu's conduct in not warning the night guard after the attempted theft on 24<sup>th</sup> is curious. He says he asked the NVF guarding the garages to keep an eye on the store. I have asked for confirmation of this from the NVF. Nanda babu has an excellent reputation I hear, but the weak links in his report are mystifying. Even the value of the missing stores he put down in the FIR on the instructions of the OC of the Thana. Another theft from another godown of his occurred on 6<sup>th</sup> despite a guard of 6 armed police.

Told SP about Karjadanga guards. He asked for a report from the camp OC. Studied map & gazetteer of Malda. Have asked for a map of Rajshahi.

### **Repatriation Programme for Karjadanga: 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>**

1. Train leaves Eklakshmi R.S at 12 noon & 2 p.m. Halts at Malda court & Bulbulchandi.
2. Evacuees for Shibganj & Nawabganj will be taken direct to their respective P.S. HQ by truck. Others will board the train at Bulbulchandi OR will be taken up to Agra-Harishchandrapur check-post from Bulbulchandi.
3. 3 trucks at Gazole; 6 at Karjadanga, 11 at Bamangola; 5 at Malda Court Railway Station. Eklakshmi is 3 miles from Kutubsahar. Adina Railway Station is 3 miles from Kutubsahar. So evacuees walk about 2 miles to Bamangola, are taken by truck to Bulbulchandi [about 18.20 miles]. Meanwhile, evacuees going on their own from Kutubsahar can catch the train at Adina.

Tomorrow a special train starts from Harishchandrapur station instead of from Samsi or Eklaxmi, in order to evacuate some 1000 people left in Harishchandrapur still, to Singabad. They are from distant spots e.g. Kushtia etc.

Problem at Bamangola of evacuees (on their own) from Karjadanga occupying all buses playing to Malda & so no one can commute between Bamangola & Malda. DM trying to arrange for extra buses.

Those going to Sibganj & Nawabganj will go by truck via Bulbulchandi, Gomostapur, to Sibganj & Nawabganj. Agra-Harishchandrapur is directly East of Habibpur about 10 miles & crossing Punarbhava you are in Bangla Desh.

### **Programme for Kutubsahar: 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>**

Train will leave Adina RS at 11a.m. & 2 p.m. on 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>. Halt at Bulbulchandi. Used by those not belonging to Sibganj & Nawabganj; they will alight at Singabad rail station or Bulbulchandi & catch Bangladesh trains or go by other means. From Singabad they have to cover 8 miles and catch Bangladesh trains from Rohanpur railway station because this bit was destroyed in 1965 war.

35 trucks at Kutubsahar, 5 at Bulbulchandi.

Plan: early morning 10 trucks should transfer luggage to Adina. The evacuees can walk it to Adina. From 1 p.m. all trucks to be loaded & sent off to Nawabganj & Sibganj. Sibganj is about 25 miles from Englishbazar. Nawabganj is about 12 miles to its S.W. Other important

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<sup>2</sup> Lt.Col.G.L.Bhattacharya was shot and abducted on the E.Pakistan border on 4.4.1961 and sentenced to 8 years R.I. He fought the sentence in the Supreme Court of Pakistan where the Govt. of India sent Siddharth Sankar Ray as his counsel. He was released after 4 years. The case caused nation-wide sensation.

thanas are Nachol, Gomostapur for which evacuees will alight from Bangladesh trains probably at Rohanpur & Nachol rail stations.

A great pity that no maps of Malda made after 1947 are available; also no season & crop reports after 1942. I have asked the OS to write to Calcutta for these. I hope they arrive in 1972!

At 7 p.m. went to DM's residence and delved into the only updated maps available (corrected by hand only), thana-wise on 1"= 1 mile scale. Found Agra-Harishchandrapur & Porsha are almost opposite on either bank of Punarbhava, just about 25° 1' N. latitude. Porsha is about a mile or two more north. DM told me that transporting the Karjadanga materials was not unreasonably expensive & if the evacuees were eager for this, only then to arrange to take the materials & that they are being taken by an advocate from Bangladesh, Upendra Nath Chowdhury alias "Bhuto Babu". If he is willing to take Karjadanga & Kutubsahar stuff too, so much the better. DM will ask him & inform me. Otherwise, we will auction them.

15 BDOs in Malda:-

Habibpur	---	Bhaskar Layek
Bamangola	---	S K Das
Gajol	---	D K Chakravarty
Kaliachak-I	---	
Kaliachak-II	---	
Kaliachak-III	---	
Ratua-I	---	Haralal Mistri
Ratua-II	---	Amitava RoyChoudhury
Kharba-I	---	S Ghosh
Kharba-II	---	Haridas Mukherjee
Harischandrapur-I	---	
Harischandrapur-II	---	
English Bazar	---	M R Dey
Old Malda	---	B Chakravarty

**20.1.1972**

### **Work done**

Toured Karjadanga and Kutubsahar with Prasanta Bhattacharya (Dy. Magis.), also Eklakhi Railway Station [11 am-5 pm]

### **Information**

Between 10 am-11 am I attended to some personal work [Renewal of Driving licence; payment of Postal Life Insurance 1<sup>st</sup> premium; submitting medical vouchers for reimbursement]

Left at 11 am along with Prasanta Bhattacharya [Dy.Magis.] for Kutubsahar. Work of preparing Muster Roll in progress in 4 shifts of 9 people at a time, 7 am to 9 am ; 9 am to 1 pm; 1- 4 pm , 4 - 8 pm, sitting at 3 tables. Besides this:-

3 at cash counter;

3 at cloth counter;

2 at ration counter;

4 preparing Shib and Nawabgunge evacuees.

21 in all + 13 women from town [7 on muster rolls & 6 on milk feeding ALPHA scheme]. These girls are all graduates! All payment and ration etc. of each batch of evacuees is being done 2 days in advance in advance [22<sup>nd</sup> for those leaving 24<sup>th</sup>] in order to have time for meeting contingences.

Only 12 Home Guards. Insufficient for the huge camp. Considering the 30,000 strength, 60 should have been deputed. Asked Roy to make out a requisition to the S.P.



Went to Karjadanga. Muster rolls fully done and actual delivery of money ration, clothes going on. 810 people covered by the time I arrived. Only some 1000 are left now. Though about 800 people were supposed to be taken to Sibganj & Nawabganj by Govt. most have left on their own! The OC also said that these people are not at all anxious to have the shelter materials. This is most curious. I did not proceed to Harishchandrapur on hearing of this lack of interest.

Returned to Kutubsahar taking Karjadanga OC's requisition for 4 more guards. Collected Roy's requisition. Visited the woman (Sita Debi) I had brought here. She has got new clothes, ration etc. & has been taken charge of by another family who will take her to Santihar instead of her going alone to Bogura. The families belonging to such areas are going through Hili [through Dinajpur] using their Identity Cards as free passes in buses.

Roy suggested that the 30 young temporary staff recruited for Kutubsahar camps be deputed to convey & distribute shelter materials. I will put this to the DM. No Porsa families either here or in Karjadanga. Impossible to organise the evacuees in Kutubsahar as they are from the labour class & not even a title educated.

Went to Ekalakhi R.S. Terribly dusty journey. Confirmed train leaving from there tomorrow. Contacted Adina RS. They have no orders to stop train there. So I had the SDM tell the Malda Station Master to have this done.

Another change: Banerjee [MVI tech.] said that Bamangola-Bulbulchandri road is very bad & long. So why not have evacuees of Karjadanga entrain at Eklakhi instead of at Bulbulchandi? This change was confirmed by SDM & so tomorrow by 8 a.m. at least 17 trucks congregate at Karjadanga, 3 at Gajol, 5 at Malda Court RS [for the last North Malda evacuees going to Sibganj & Nawabganj.] I will send off Sibganj & Nawabganj evacuees at once by truck. The rest will be sent to Eklakhi RS.

No road for trucks up to Agra-Harishchandrapur said BDO Bamangola. So evacuees are dropped at Kenpukur [about 6 miles from Harishchandrapur ]

I am leaving at 8 a.m. tomorrow for Karjadanga. I will try to recky Adina RS [it seems no driving road exists], Malda Court RS & Singabad RS.

Received case record of a S.144 application to prevent breach of peace, on which I am to enquire who is in actual possession of the land in dispute. Land is in Bamangola.

SDM has novel way of collecting Jawan's Welfare Fund. As he is the Licensing Authority, all merchants come to him & he half jokingly demands according to their capacity. If they demur he says: "Don't contribute" which puts them in unpatriotic light & they end up contributing more than they wanted to!

**21.1.1972 (Saraswati Puja)**

### **Work done**

Sending off 24 trucks of evacuees from Karjadanga [8-12.30 p.m.]

Reception of Chief Justice W.B. at Kutubsahar [1-6 p.m.]

### **Information**

I reached Karjadanga at 9 a.m. to quite a state of confusion. Some 5 trucks had arrived & people had all climbed in without the camp staff knowing anything [ they were busy distributing the cash etc. to the remaining evacuees viz. about 200] I organised them systematically according to--

1. condition of trucks [how far they could go]
2. willingness of drivers to go to Sibganj & Nawabganj.
3. No. of families for train/ Nawabganj & Sibganj.

BDO Gajol turned up & we both worked out everything. In all, 11 trucks went to Nawabganj & 13 to Ekalakhi. The latter are to report back at once & stay at Karjadanga for tomorrow's trip. Neither of us had anything after 8 am, so we arranged for our & our drivers' lunch at Karjadanga.

Suddenly at 12 noon messenger [the AEO Gajol] arrived to tell us that the Chief Justice P.B Mukherjee with family, DM, SDO would visit Kutubsahar at 3.30 p.m. I sent off the BDO at once & stayed back to arrange & send off the last 3 trucks. Three villagers of the adjoining village were caught by the Home Guard as their wives were trying to take some shelter materials. I roundly reprimanded & threatened them & let them off. Told them they ought to be ashamed of depriving refugees. They pleaded it was their ignorant womenfolk who did it & not they!

Went to Kutubsahar & driver and I had lunch quite decent there (rice and fish curry). No staff besides Head Clerk. BDO sent his jeep with money to the OC's home, with orders to buy light refreshments. Meanwhile we arranged a row of tables covered them with clean sheets and from a village the BDO got a "Shamiana" & we put it up. Then we started calling out all evacuees & arranged their sitting. Had repeatedly to berate them in order to keep the approach road free. Only at 3.15 OC Camp arrived with all the staff (all had gone for the Puja) & the refreshments & luckily had managed to grab a mike as well which was set up on 2 batteries + BDO's car battery. OC Gajol Thana came with an excellently turned out guard of honour.

I felt rather self-conscious when the OC & Then the Subedar saluted me very formally & correctly! This was followed by a rash of salutes from the Special Auxiliary Force, men from M.P. posted here. The CJ arrived only at 5 p.m. Massive turnout. We had girls blowing conches at the gate & garlanding him. Then he inspected the guard of honour & then came to the meeting place. The OC (Roy) had made the evacuees rehearse slogans [Joi Bangla, Sheik Mujib Zindabad, Indira Gandhi zindabad, Bangla Bharat Maitri zindabad & Jai Hind]. The DM, Mrs. Gita Mukherjee, & Mr. P B Mukherjee (he can hardly walk) made speeches. Roy, SDO & I took around Mrs. Mukherjee & Mrs. DM & District Judge a little of the camp. Hordes of women insisted on touching our feet. I feel they mistook Mrs. Mukherjee for Indira Gandhi because they cried out "You have saved us." Mrs. Mukherjee found a couple of women she had met previously, probably in connection with her Red Cross work.

I was most embarrassed here as at Karjadanga today at their insistence on garlanding me & touching my feet.

The C.J. wrote a highly appreciative account of his impressions about the camp. Possibly the largest in W.B & definitely the biggest of the 51 in Malda. I looked through the remarks made in the Visitor's Book by distinguished visitors like the DC Rajshahi, the Judicial Secy Bangladesh, Ila Mitra, Sucheta Kripalani etc. All are uniformly full of highest praise. The staff is feeling quite emotionally moved at the ensuring separation from people they have looked after since July 1971 in every way. The evacuees, I saw, are very deeply attached too. After garlanding the CJ they insisted on garlanding the OC & the expression of deepest respect & gratitude on their faces was overpowering.

I must see DM tomorrow to get final decision about Kutubsahar & Karjadanga materials.

Also arrange to have milk canteen materials of Karjadanga sent back to evacuee stores tomorrow, as later Karjadanga will have no coolies left to load them into trucks.

I asked the Karjadanga evacuees about shelter materials & they are most eager to get them. These are (besides Nawabganj & Sibganj) Gomastapur, Nachol, Tanor, Niamatpur Thanas.

I took a look at the Eklakhi Mausoleum (cost Rs. 1 lakh) & the Sona Masjid behind it. Both are adjacent Kutubsahar camp. Evacuees are sleeping on the graves Jalal-ud-din Shah, King of Bengal in 15<sup>th</sup> century & son of Raja Ganesh. He was converted to Islam under a treaty with Sultan of Jaunpur [see Gazetteer, by J C Sengupta, 1969, P.37]. The tomb is built with bricks from Hindu temples like the Adina Mosque.

I found that the CJ's daughter-in-law is my brother's intimate friend's sister; studied English Honours at Loreto College & just finished her BA finals in November. Rubbed in this camp's

uniqueness & excellent administration! They have been thrice to Rajshahi in these few days. Roads are, on the whole, OK but with extremely bad patches.

Roy, informally, was complaining against hesitancy of the ADM [Relief] T.K Das (1968) (he left in Jan) in taking decisions. Also mentioned lack of interest in feedback from field level. Both of these are essential for efficiency which is nil in Malda. The staff suddenly said all together that they were very lucky in getting a BDO & AM like us! I was most annoyed & at once called my car & we left. This sort of flattery to one's face is most irksome specially as I have done nothing beyond surveying a little & minor things like arranging more guards. The Kutubsahar evacuees used to do some "tanter kaj" (weaving) making "gamccha" (thin towels), and some bamboo work like making stools, & sold them. A proposal to start a school for them fell through as war broke out.

Roy Chowdhury went home [Chandernagore] on leave till 28<sup>th</sup>. He shifted yesterday to the residence of the Commercial Tax Officer, who has turned his quarters into a type of Mess, with 4 people staying. Once the Accounts officer leaves on 30<sup>th</sup>. I will occupy the 1<sup>st</sup> room all for myself & be able to do some study in peace & quiet.

**22.1.1972**

**Work done**

Karjadanga evacuation finished.

Enquiry (theft) closed.

Reconnoitred road to Adina RS & supervised work at Kutubsahar.

**Persons met**

Benoy Kr. Poddar – Gajol Extn. Officer (Social Education)

Miss Sabita Pal (BA) & Miss Mina Sanyal (BA)—local volunteers working free at Kutubsahar.

**Information**

9.30 a.m. went to DM & found he was out. So left a note about Karjadanga & Kutubsahar materials & asked for final instructions.

Attended to personal matters at P.O. & then once more interviewed Collectorate night guard about the theft. Nothing further seems to be available by way of information, so I will write out the report tonight, electricity permitting, as already there have been 2 failures. I am writing by torchlight now (6.40 p.m.) Ah! lights are back!

Sent off medical bills of Nagpur for reimbursement.

I have been deputed to Chanchol P.S. for Bakr-Id [ 27-28<sup>th</sup>] about 44 miles from here. So obtained from S.P. the police instructions. Basic thing is not to allow any innovations about places of "Korbani", & all such spots must be out of sight (screened) & out of hearing of other communities. I am wondering whether I should go by jeep, as this would enable me to tour the town on my own. Will ask DM's advice. In that case I must leave on 26<sup>th</sup> after lunch-- seems a good idea.

Proceeded to Karjadanga & reached at 1 p.m. to find it empty of evacuees. The staff & all govt. ration & materials were leaving shortly in 3 trucks. I gave them a letter to T.P. Ghosh so that materials would be unloaded promptly.

Proceeded to Eklakhi R.S. Today the train has:-

Baikadighi (nearby camp)---	Adults : 1009
	Minors : 494
Karjadanga	Adults : 784
	Minors : 261

Yesterday there were about 1100 only. Train left around 5.30 p.m. yesterday as no line clear & also the ASM waited for one of Govt. staff to come with figures--- none could being busy with the C.J.!

Went to Kutubsahar [16 km. from Eklakhi RS & 6 km from proper] & from there the BDO, Extn. Offr. [Social Education], OC & I went to Adina R.S. Terrific dusty journey as roads are kuccha, about 3 miles. Midway the road has collapsed due to floods. Another route is via Pandua & involves 2 miles of metalled highway + 2 miles kuccha good road. I decided to repair the first road-- needs some 10 men-- so that both could be used, the latter for going [a loaded truck might find the broken road tough] & the former for fast return things.

At Kutubsahar fixed up separate parking lots for Adina, Sibganj & Nawabganj trucks for 24<sup>th</sup>. Told OC to arrange for lists of adults & minors in each convoy to be handed at check-posts to obviate delay. Supervised the distribution. They are short of saris I find & many saris in the supplies have gaping holes. Cotton blankets (Tata Textiles Nagpur) will be useless after one wash. Soap cakes (CARE product) are too soft. Obviously the supplier has made hay! Saris were bought by former ADM (Relief) T.K.Das from Calcutta. Many dhotis are single instead of double pieces.

Have to find out why ration requisitioned on 18<sup>th</sup> has not yet arrived. They will run out of stock on 23<sup>rd</sup>. The OC requested me to come tomorrow-- his personal interest as he wants to go to town for a wedding dinner. Gave a lift to town to 2 ladies working here as volunteers. They do not even get travel allowance. Have been working here since November.

Both DM & SDO advised going to Chanchol by road. SDO said if I lacked a jeep, the Chanchol P.S. jeep would pick me up! I will contact the BDO Kharba-I for staying arrangements.

**23.1.1972**

### **Work done**

Called on Rathin Kar, and with him visited Gram Sevak Training Centre.

Attended to personal correspondence.

Sent off Enquiry Report to DM.

### **Information**

Mr.Kar was signing T.A bills of August at home in order to prevent their pre-auditing. He took me to the Gram Sevak Training Centre where a course starts tomorrow. Visited the farm full of mustard, corn and potato crops. Saw the stud cattle kept for artificial insemination and poultry farm. In Malda people are quite indifferent to poultry farming. Mr. Kar told me that hardly anyone came to take the Govt. loans for this. I enquired why tanks were not being cleared of weeds & he said the Tank Improvement Dept. was wholly moribund.

Met the Extension Officer (Panchayats) of Manikchak at Kar's residence. Both explained that political alignment of Anchal Pradhans was cause of no work being done at Panchayat level.

The EOP, Mr. Sarkar, said that after the U F regime subordinate staff had become very arrogant, and young people behaved rudely and insolently with officers. This is largely true.

At the Centre they showed us 2 cartoon films ["The Boat" on family planning & a Canadian one on "Love thy Neighbour"] as a specimen of what they would show on Republic Day.

On returning I typed out & sent off the theft enquiry report to the DM. He has gone to Calcutta for election meeting.

### **Some Remarks on Malda**

*The difficulties faced by a probationer are many with regard to living conditions. One must remember General Slim's dictum which my father used to tell me: "any fool can be uncomfortable!"*

*Courteous behaviour + right degree of firmness helps to bring around the staff. Always pay a few rupees extra to the sweeper, chowkidar & dhobi & one gets excellent results. Above all, treat all subordinate staff with courtesy; it pays dividends.*

*One should not grudge expenses the first few months till one has settled down. Good food is a must whatever the expense. As a preventive vitamin tonics & vit.C are useful.*

*Call on all important officials, specially the Chief Medical Officer and try to get your pay-slip done. Here my neighbour, Accounts Officer from the A/G W.B is of great help.*

*Mosquitoes abound due to bad open drains, & despite a Malaria Eradication Centre. One should always carry a mosquito net, anti-mosquito cream & chocolates in case of food emergencies. Vaccination and inoculation are important.*

*Lack of a club for games is sad. The C.R.P has occupied the only club.*

**24.1.1972**

### **Work done**

Repatriation & Evacuation of Kutubsahar.

Farewell Meeting for Sri Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Law Secretary, Bangla Desh.

Called on ADM.

### **Persons met**

ASP-- Sri Tushar Mitra & Mrs. Bira Mitra

Harigopal Rai-- Chief Executive Officer, Z.Parishad.

Dipannita Sengupta-- Volunteer of Kutubsahar

### **Information**

Instead of 35 only 25 trucks reported to Kutubsahar. I reached 9 a.m. and by 1.30 p.m. the day's programme was over. 15 trucks went to Nawab & Shibganj, taking 105 families. The rest lifted 1135 people to Adina R.S. I went to Adina R.S. & checked everything. Train cannot leave before 5 p.m. as no line clear.

Rushed back, sent orders for ration to be sent. Met the C.E.O of Z.P & arranged for stay at Chanchol. Queried S.P. over Home Guards fate. He said Govt. order was to reduce them as camps were disbanded, so I am to see DM & get extra HG sanctioned. Also till 26<sup>th</sup> parade is over, they can't be sent for duty in camps.

At the meeting in B.T. College, Mrs.De was President & Mrs.Uma Roy Chief Guest. CPI(M), Cong (R), CPI all representatives used the occasion as test speeches for election manifestos! The tremendous purple and poetic language they all used struck me dumb! And what fluency in use of the most poetic metaphors! Mr. Chowdhury (Popularly called "Judge Saheb" as he was District Judge in Dinajpur & a classmate in Sylhet of our D.J.) gave a deeply moving speech, thanking Yahya for making this union of Bengalis possible & repeatedly thanking the "fantastic help" given by people & DM of Malda. He said he wanted not a "Sonar Bangla" but a "Hirer Bangla" (diamond) & begged our blessing that all Bengalis become slaves of the motherland, & give their introduction everywhere only as Bengalis with "manab dharma" as their only religion. He had come to Malda for an eye operation. Was in W.Dinajpur at first. Thanked God for the eye trouble as otherwise he would never have met the wonderful people & DM of Malda. He leaves tomorrow. My driver will help him in loading his stuff, so I'll push off at 7.30 a.m. by truck.

Banerjee (MVI tech) told me the ADM was releasing requisitioned trucks, hence shortage. I at once met him around 6.30 p.m. & told him the situation. He at once agreed not to do so my more & to requisition more trucks for me. It is causing a lot of trouble to the owners (loss of trade & prices are rising because of ensuring supply difficulties).

At his house met the new ASP (1968 batch). His wife is my batch, English M.A. from Jadavpur. Felt very happy to meet someone from Calcutta & a common background of friends. The ASP said the best sweets are available from "Kaligram" a village near Chanchol! Water there is very bad-- full of iron. I should take along a bucket.

**25.1.1972**

**Work done**

Repatriation of Kutubsahar. Arrangement for payment in small denomination notes for Kutubsahar from SBI.

**Persons met**

S.K Talukdar : Asst. Manager FCI.

Arun Sen : Jt. Secy. Industries (IAS 1956)

**Information**

Reached camp at 8.15 a.m. by an ISUZU (Unicef) truck-- marvel of comfort! One does not ever feel the terrific 50 mph at which it runs on open roads, & the springs & shock-absorbers are superb.

About 30 trucks arrived. Used all for trips to Adina first & around 12 noon shifted to Sibganj & Nawabganj. Terrific confusion made by evacuees over all wanting to go today & complaining their identity slips could not be traced, though they had submitted them. Tears being shed, touching my feet etc. & genuinely distressed at being left behind while their relatives were leaving. They fail to grasp that we have to send as per a programme in order to keep our accounts straight. Anyhow irritates by umpteen cases of missing cards, I refused to go for lunch with the rest & sat down with all the slips & managed to dig out most of them misplaced with slips of other thanas. Sent off 5 extra families to Sibganj & about 17 extra to Adina Railway Station. The Station Master (SM) told me if we could send them by 1 p.m., the train could leave on time, otherwise is held up till 5 p.m.

1521 left from Adina, & another 1000 or more to Sibganj & Nawabganj total over 2500. Many are still suddenly opting to leave by their own bullock-carts, creating further confusion. Around 4 pm reached SBI & requested Agent to supply the Rs. 60,000/- we will draw on 28<sup>th</sup>, in substantial 5s & 1s, to facilitate payment to evacuees.

Told Kutubsahar OC to engage labour & improve the Adina road which has been impaired at spots due to our heavy trucks' trips.

The SDO told me the Govt. has ordered repatriation to be suspended from 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> midnight!!! That means extending our schedule till 31<sup>st</sup>.

Nazir informed me that list of stock verification for Dak-bungalow has been submitted to the ADM. I must get it passed soon!

Tomorrow 9 a.m. parade. No invitation cards because cost would come to Rs.500 & so DM has ordered announcement in public by mikes inviting all public in general.

Went to see DM. For the first time his wife also came out & sat with us. Had tea & sweets. DM agreed to tell SP about NVF. 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> trucks are to take shelter materials to Nawabganj & Sibganj & Porsa. I am being given "Chanchol" because trouble usually occurs there, the DM blithely told me. Arun Sen related many current jokes over the Bangladesh situation. He knows little Bengali.

DM said if he is not allowed to hand over charge after elections he will go on leave in order to avoid continuity of service here. In interest of his children's education, he wants to shift to Calcutta.

At 9 p.m. a procession of 10 Sericulture workers passed by protesting against dying state of the industry and condemning R Banerjee the Dep. Director of Sericulture.

Saraswati Idols are being led for immersion in processions led by an elephant!

Sudhir Kr. Talukdar, Asst. Manager FCI, arrived at 5 a.m. as my room mate. Friendly and accommodating. Told me that Bhattacharji's son who had typhoid was down with pox. He lost a son aged 5 a few months back. Naturally worried. C.D. Mitra is due on 28<sup>th</sup>. I cannot move to all other room till I get a table lamp & a table, as the light is very dim there.

**26.1.1972**

**Work done**

Attended Republic Day Parade  
Repatriation at Kutubsahar.

**Persons met**

S N Majumdar

**Information**

Parade at Police lines ground at 9 a.m. I was the only one besides DM in buttoned-up coat! Rather poor marching by NCC. The CRP fired before the order was given! After the march the parade left even without a “parade dismiss” ritual!

Since last night I have a very painful throat. So bought medicines on way to Kutubsahar. Reached around 11 a.m. Sat and supervised distribution. Women came to change the saris they had got for more colourful ones! Many cotton blankets are rotten and torn. I wonder who is supplying these.

The Madhya Pradesh S.A.F in the camp invited the OC & myself for lunch. Met their Doctor and their Capt. who were passing through. The Subedar was glad at such duties as it brought them close to the public from whom otherwise they live very aloof.

Our evacuees have the most peculiar names on earth: “Unmadini” (mad), “Palano”, “Jhontu”. Excellent material for an article! One chap was hitting his checks with his own slippers in desperation because his two wives were making life hell for him over possession of the new sari we had supplied him! So he begged us to exchange it for a dhoti! All people here want clothes (extra) for each member, not understanding that what we are giving is surplus leftovers, to those specially needy.

One woman’s daughter has been abandoned by the husband. She wants to take her to Bangladesh but this daughter is Indian, yet all alone & is in the camp. She has no registration card naturally. How do we send her & escape the Audit queries?

The OC told me the truck drivers had refused to bring back our staff who had accompanied them to Nawabganj & Sibganj & that the MVI (Tech) had berated the staff for going. I sent off a letter to MVI (Tech) against them as the DM has told the OC that we must send staff to see that the drivers do not extort money from the evacuees.

Played a game of badminton with the staff & left at 4 p.m.

The DM told me due to “Bhuto Babu” having gone to Bangladesh, our shelter material sending for 27-28 was suspended & that save Kutubsahar all other camps should be auctioned after I return from Chanchol.

S.N.Majumdar paid me a visit in the Dak Bungalow. For an hour I required him about why there was no silk, fish, mango industry here. He said cooperatives existed and where so corrupt that they all failed. He agreed that the ADMs who have been decorated (with Padma Sri) are hardly known for their relief work, for which our DM is the one in W.B. From his own experience he stated that if one is prepared for transfers & is honest, no politician can harm one.

He also said the SDO had doubts about M.Roy’s [OC, Kutubsahar] integrity. I also suspect him because he talks too much & tries to flatter me to my face, obviously aiming at taking advantage of my inexperience. Majumdar also has doubts about Banerjee (MVI Tech). Why should Banerjee object to our staff accompanying trucks unless he gets a cut from what the drivers make?

I leave tomorrow at 5 a.m. Majumdar agreed that Malda, of all districts, had the most scope for development. Here every time of “dal” is grown; three rice crops (Aman, Aush, Boro); brinjal, cabbage, cauliflower, potatoes, mustard, jute, onions-- all these! In “Barind” lands, providing of irrigation can combat lack of rain at the proper time. Many pumps were installed & are rusting since electricity could not be provided! “River-lift” irrigation schemes have begun, lifting water from the rivers where fields adjoin them.

**27-28.1.1972**

**Work done**

'Id' duty at Chanchol,  
Visiting election polling booths in Kharba II region.  
Handling communal disturbance in Kapasia village (Kharba II).

**Persons met**

Dipak Ghosh, W.B.P.S. 1962 batch, DSP  
Proshanto Sarkar : O.C. Kharba.  
Hari Das Mukherjee : BDO Kharba II.  
Anil Ch. Mondal : Home Guard, Kharba.  
Purna Ch. Mondal : Pradhan, Gourando Anchal.  
Pankaj Biswas : 2<sup>nd</sup> Officer, Kharba.  
Tushar Mitra : ASP.  
Numerous "Nuniyas" & Muslims of Kapasia village.  
D.N.Das : Constable, Kharba Thana,  
O.C.Ratua Thana.

**Information**

I left at 5 a.m. in pitch dark and reached Chanchol around 8.30 a.m. having missed the road twice at Sovangar, & at Ratua. Samsi road was extremely bad & ruined by 1971 floods. No signs of PWD repairing it, while N.H.34 [to Kutubsahar] is being repaired in-toto though it hardly needs this. What it needs is adding 3 ft. on both sides, so that cars can pass each other without either having to go off the road.

The C.I is on transfer & his replacement comes on 3/2/72. The thana is still empty, waiting for electric connection, when Kharba thana can shift there. The constables directed me to the C.I office & I found the DSP there. He has arrived here in Sept. from Darjeeling.

The Kharba OC also arrived and all were of opinion that no trouble would occur, specially as the local MLA was in jail. With the OC I toured the potential trouble spots where forces had been deputed viz. KALIGRAM, MALATIPUR, GOBINDAPUR, MUBARAKPUR.

Food was brought from "Monomohit Hotel" nearby, belonging to the Chanchol Raja's cook. Excellent cooking and very homely stuff.

The Kharba-II BDO dropped in and with him I toured his election booths up to Goalpara over roads with three feet deep pits at short intervals! The jeep was driven brilliantly at a constant 10 mph. Goalpara has 2 High Schools and there the BDO took written undertaking from headmaster of 2 primary schools that if Govt. gave Rs. 150/- and Rs. 750/- they would repair the buildings (floods had broken them). This took me 3-6 pm.

When I got back the DSP was awaiting me at the sole local cinema hall. Up to 9 pm I was bored there with "Kati Patang". This was free and I could not pay, though I wanted to, as the DSP was present. However, for my driver's & my food I paid on the sly to the hotel owner.

I was about to go to bed in the Dak Bungalow at 10.15 p.m. when the OC arrived with news of trouble in Kapasia village. I at once left to join the DSP who was about to leave for Harishchandrapur to investigate two dacoity cases there when 4 villagers [Hindu Noniyas] from Kapasia arrived with news of Hindu-Muslim trouble which had occurred around 7 p.m. We decided to go with 4 armed constables. These did not turn up till 10.30 though the van was sent to the thana 200 yds. away. The DSP lamented their laxity. So I proceeded to the thana & found them busy packing their bedding. Soundly berating them, I had them loaded into the DSP's & my jeeps along with one of the villagers & a local Home Guard to act as guides.

Covering extremely bad roads often washed away by floods, we got to the village at 12.45 p.m. Found one SAIBU, an injured Hindu, and from got names of alleged Muslim troublemakers who had thrown cow bones in his house & the place of worship. It struck me



as curious how carefully these bones had been covered with baskets of wire. All the Muslim men were absconding, & we heard that some of them had been sent to Bhaluka Road H.P. Getting the Muslim women to open the doors was a problem till they recognised the Chowkidar's voice!

We proceeded to Bhaluka Road, and my jeep's differential got jammed in the kuccha road. Asking the DSP to drive on, I sent the Home guard who brought 2 villagers with implements to dig away the raised portions of the road. Drove on, joined the other jeep at the river bank, walked across the makeshift mud path over it. With the OC, brought back Taleb, Mofizuddin & Hasruddin from the health centre. First two had head wounds & claimed they were sightseers only & had no weapons & that the Noniyas were drunk totally.

Returned to Chanchol at 4 a.m. keeping 4 armed police in the village. At 1 p.m. went with OC again to Kapasia where the BDO, Anchal Pradhan held a peace meeting. Both communities apologised and signed a bond to keep peace & amity. I got back to Chanchol at 4.30 p.m. to find the Asp leaving for Kapasia. Told him everything. He left to see for himself. Feels that it should be played down and so a police camp is inadvisable. He intends to keep the cases hanging & then drop them.

I left at 5 pm and reached Malda at 7.30 p.m., 28<sup>th</sup>, quite tired. No trouble elsewhere, as I checked up from Ratua & Harishchandrapur thana over the phone every now and then. Also called on Ratua OC on way back to confirm it.

**29.1.1972**

**Work done**

Repatriation at Kutubsahar

**Information**

Some 1500 by train and 1550 by trucks repatriated. The problem of disputed and contradictory Regn. certificates is still ever there. People keep arriving begging for Identity Slips. A close watch on genuineness of Registration Certificates is needed as many earlier refugees are slipping out by taking these.

The DM visited the camp in the morning with former ADM evacuees-in-charge, Mr.T.K.Das, now liaison officer in Rajshahi. It was settled that on 31<sup>st</sup> the entire camp staff would go to Rajshahi town including myself.

The DM, when I told him about Kapasia, said he had sent me to Chanchol knowing some trouble was bound to occur!

Went to Singhabad RS [about 30 km. from Kutubsahar]. Trains are reaching around 11 p.m. Wrote a letter to S.M. Malda requesting early trains to leave Adina by 1 p.m. so that evacuees do not suffer over much. From here 6 trucks carry them over horrible roads to Rohanpur [10 miles] where they entrain again.

**30.1.1972**

**Work done**

Repatriation at Nawabganj & Shibganj & Adina.

**Persons met**

T.K.Das, IAS—ADM Liaison, Rajshahi

**Information**

Met ADM T.K Das, liaison officer Rajshahi, IAS 1968 batch, MA (Econ) from Cal. Univ., 1964. He sat for IAS professional test in 1971 as in 1969 he missed it through an arm broken in the riding test. He is officially still on probation, which was extended up to July '71. After it AG has issued no pay slip, so through DM he draws "last pay drawn" every month! No letter yet from GOI ending his probation. Muddle because as ADM he gets Sr. scale, though no probationer can get over Rs. 400/-.

He said ADMs of Basirhat, Bongaon (i.e. 24 Parganas) and Cooch Behar, and DMs of Nadia & Malda had done real work & not those decorated (except SDO Bongaon). He agreed that

our DM was the very best, and that I was lucky in having him. This was confirmed later when I met the Dist. Judge. He has met my batch-mate H.B.Naik in Balurghat today & Naik has complained against the highly stuck-up and impersonal behaviour of the DM towards him. The day he arrived & called on the DM, Mr.Gupta talked to him for 2 minutes and then asked him to leave!

What a contrast to my DM! Das & I went to see him in the evening. He met us most informally across the dining table, along with Mrs. De & Mr. Sarkar [C.E.E, PWD]. We had “Muri Masala”, tea, sweets, papad while discussing business.

I am to make the Rajshahi trip official by taking 3-4 trucks of blankets. I am to carry a letter to the DC about DM’s visit on 9<sup>th</sup>. I am to accompany him along with other probationers, his family & Mr. Sarkar’s, & the SDO.

Today in the camps the staff burst into tears when “Motir ma”, the evacuee cook, left for Shibganj. I sent off Santi Dasi in the first truck with an extra helping of clothes & blankets and took a snap of her with her children. Gave a separate ISUZU truck for sick people. One evacuee died after loading his stuff. With machine like precision his body was taken away by other evacuees while his wife took a dip in the pond and changed into a “Dhoti” and left weeping. Nearly all of Nawabganj left today, so would have Sibganj but I fell short of 5 trucks. Tomorrow with the last evacuees we leave at 9.30 a.m. Mr. Das accompanies us.

The DM has given me independent charge of General Relief, which I am to do along with Treasury Training and Election work simultaneously! I feel quite happy over this. The GR is important as when I am SDO this will form my basic job. However, as I wish to attend the DM’s meeting with parties to decide on polling stations on 1<sup>st</sup> I must return on 31<sup>st</sup> itself and cannot stay over-night in Rajshahi.

Das told me none of his batch had submitted any case reports, & yet they had been confirmed! All of them—except their 5 army batch-mates—are bachelors! The dissatisfaction against army recruits getting prior seniority arises because they block promotion. Thus, in 1969-70 when Mirdha was A.M. here, Halder was ADM here for over 2 years. Mirdha is now coming as DM, & Halder is still ADM! Thus a slow bottleneck is being created. It was the Bangladesh movement which resulted in Das’ batch getting Sr. scale within 3 yrs. as all become ADMs for evacuee relief & liaison. He feels they should all leave Bangladesh & not over stay the welcome, specially as no more liaison work between W.B. Govt., Bangladesh, & Indian Army is needed, since direct Bangladesh-India Govt. links are working.

**31.1.1972**

### **Work done**

To Rajshahi Deputy Commissioner (D.C.) & back. Completed Kutubsahar evacuation.

### **Persons met**

Sri Bhuiyan: D.C Rajshahi

Lt. Col. Ghoshal: C.O., 16<sup>th</sup> Rajput Regt.

### **Information**

At 7.45 a.m. left for Kutubsahar along with three of the girls [Sanyal, Paul, Sengupta] with purchases of sweets & bread for the trip to Rajshahi. My vehicle being under repair, I went in a Unicef jeep. At the camp only 3 truckloads of evacuees were left, all for Sibganj. Told the OC to leave only after the last evacuee had left, and I went to the DM, got letter to Mr. Bhuiyan, and with T.K Das left at 11 a.m. along with a convoy of 5 trucks carrying blankets.

Das gave much in formation about Malda’s political figures:-

Bishu Mitra – Cong (O) is good, and sincere worker.

Barkat Ali-- Cong ® is also good.

Uma Roy-- Cong ® at odds with B.Ali.

Durga Sen-- CPI.

Bimal Das-- CPI is honest

Dinesh Joardar-- CPM present M.P..

Manik Jha-- CPM is real local leader.

Hari Misra-- Jana Sangh. Most votes after CPI in Malda Constituency. Devoted band of young workers. Assists administration.

Passed through Gaur with old ruins, which there was no time to photograph. The original Sona Masjid and Lookochori Darwaza (where the Nawab played hide & seek with his Begums) were striking; so was the Kotwali Darwaza right on the border itself.

Road up to Sibganj in kuccha and bad. Constantly I noticed how it all was just like Malda; not a foreign country at all.

With over 50 camp staff in 2 trucks, we crossed Mahananda by boats to reach Nawabganj town, and through its narrow lanes took up the highway to Rajshahi.

We reached it [60 miles from Malda] around 4.30 p.m. and Das showed us GOALIA CLUB, scene of army murders. We looked into the site of a mass grave & found skull & bones and ropes, clothes. Bunkers abound. On the Rajshahi road 2 bridges we saw blown-up by the Pak army while retreating.

Visited the massive University & Radio Station-- all from outside. Dropping the staff at the Circuit House, Das & I called on Col.Ghosh who provided us with an escort of 6 soldiers, fully armed.

Around 6.10 p.m. we all called on the D.C. After 10 mins we left in order not to embarrass him with so huge a contingent. They wished to market, & we stopped in the bazar, where I bought Mujib's critique of Ayub's "Friends not Masters" (later I found I'd been taken for a ride as only the author's name was identical). Others bought fruits and "gur". We left at 7.30 pm with army armed escort & reached Malda around 12.30. I personally dropped each one of the 13 girls at their homes & gave a letter to one who was sure her guardians would be furious. I got back at 1 a.m. only.

From Col. Ghoshal I heard how the Biharis have forced to live in places worse than any ghettos, with an inch thick layer of flies-- so filthy! He said the Bengali Admn is deliberately exterminating Biharis slowly in this way. The army wants to get out as soon as it can, but no hint is available from the top brass at all.

For lunch we had bread & meat (made in the camp). I had no dinner, as I saw busy ferrying the lorries while the staff ate in hotels. I should have taken chocolates with me-- had planned to but forgot. Took quite a few snaps. The Padma river beside the Rajshahi town is a lovely promenade.

This bad handwriting is due to the fact that ever since & got back from Chanchol. I catch myself invariably dosing as I write this diary! It is quite an effort to keep off sleep and finish the account of daily work. Since 27<sup>th</sup> I haven't had enough rest, actually. "BG Phos" tonic I have been taking regularly is absolutely essential for keeping healthy. That is why in Chanchol, where I had not taken the bottle, I bought VIMGRAN, and found the OC Kharba following my example!

I queried T.K.Das about the future of the raped women. He said that in Bangladesh abortion is still illegal. In India, by special Govt. order raped & pregnant evacuees were allowed to abort themselves till 4 months after the conception (as it is dangerous for the mother after that). A few such cases had occurred. In Bangladesh too Das had suggested to the DC Rajshahi to let him know of such girls, whom he would arrange to be sent to Malda for abortion-- but no response yet due to reluctance of victims to come forward. This is a work for social workers actually. For past-4 months cases, he has suggested sitting up an orphanage for the babies. No social stigma has been attached to the victims as yet.

Some 50,000 evacuees are left still in Malda (non-camp) & about 3.5 lakhs from all camps have left.

Das confirmed that Gupta, DM, W.Dinajpur, was extremely arrogant & aloof, but that as a whole WB cadre was a real homely & happy family.

**1.2.1972**

**Work done**

DM's meeting with political parties to finalise polling booths [11 – 7 p.m.]

**Persons met**

All BDOs, and party representatives.

**Information**

The basic promise of the DM was the inability to make any major changes in polling booths due to shortage of time. The final list must reach the CEO Delhi by end of this week, so printing deadline had to be kept in mind. And that is precisely what the parties did not & would not do. They kept insisting on transfer of part rolls on grounds of lessening distance of booths from 1 to ½ km.

The DM very cleverly assuaged them by directing the E.Officer [M.Bhattacharya] to note all such suggestions, but quietly refraining from incorporating any changes other than those in names of booths [in case it was damaged & an adjoining school was available].

Areas 44–46 of Kaliachak I were kept over at 7 p.m. for tomorrow, for splitting up booths with almost 1300 voters into smaller units.

I made out my January tour-diary for submission to DM & getting TA/DA.

My peon reported for duty today: Makhan Satiar, 23 years service here, chiefly in Refugee Relief. Six sons, pay Rs. 180/- !!

**2.2.1972**

**Work done:**

1. General Relief Office, 2 – 3 p.m.
2. Inspection of Jail & proposed site of Wardens' Qtrs. 11-1 p.m.
3. DM's meeting with BDO is on Relief, Evacuee Camp Staff, Elections, 3-7p.m.

**Persons met**

N.Bhattacharjee : Asst. Executive Engineer PWD.

Tejendra Narain Chowdhury : CMO.

**Information**

SDO took me along to a meeting of ADM, EE, SDO, CMO to select Wardens' Qtrs site. Decided on spot inspection so went to the jail which SDO inspected. Large no. of petitions of prisoners were heard & those coming from Bangladesh were noted down & jailor was asked to inform SDO of their case numbers. Two girls in custody were decided to be sent to district shelters (both missing from homes & residence not traceable).

Inspected & decided on site for Qtrs. The jail is remarkably clean and well aired. A wall is being put up for a special Naxalite cell section to screen & isolate them. Two leaders and some 4 others are now in the jail. They welcome bring with criminals as they can propagate their doctrines. Hence isolation needed. The habitual criminals are very loyal to the staff [they watch the Naxalites] as they know they'll be back here soon after release! They never complain about living conditions either! In G R office I verified and signed bills of payment to FCI for wheat at Rs. 87.35 per quintal.

Attended meeting of DM with BDO's. The following were decided:-

**I. Polling Booths**

Not possible to follow Govt. orders due to numerous technicalities in them [see attached copy]. Hence:-

- a. BDO's are to inform D.I (Primary) about badly damaged schools. DI is to try to restore one compartment to pre flood condition, and report results by 25/2/.

b. Where DI fails, BDO are to make temporary constructions of bamboo mats & tarpaulin on the school site for elections, at a cost Rs. 60/- (payable from Election Contingency).

c. Where small repairs are enough to make a room serviceable, BDOs will present estimate not above Rs. 300/-. If it is up to Rs. 200/- then entire fund will be granted at once by DI. If more, then only the first 50% BDOs will complete work and certify that the room is suitable for use as a classroom.

Rs. 5 lakhs have been awarded for extensive repairs, @ Rs. 2000/- per primary school. Rs. 4.5 lakhs for secondary schools.

## II. Polling Staff

1 ) 1 Presiding officer & 3 staff.

2 ) By 20<sup>th</sup> all appointment letters of training staff to be sent.

3 ) D.A to be disbursed on the spot by Training Officers.

All we 3 probationers, after briefing from SDO, will act as trainers.

Telephones for each BDO HQ., and RT sets for Ratua II, & Kaliachak II & III, as phone reception is too weak.

## III. Test Relief

Approach roads to be repaired by T.R-- 500 tonnes flour & Rs. 5 lakhs for wheat available. Hard crust of road to remain; not too much earth to be thrown otherwise rains will make them useless traps. Only dressing. BDOs are to select & approve the schemes, appoint paymasters, draw cash & disburse. Formal approval from ADM to be taken later.

IV. Route Charts to be prepared on basis of 3 parties per truck & 5 per bus.

V. Contingency Fund of Rs. 1000 per block for petty repairs in recognised schools.

## Evacuee Relief

1) Surplus rice & wheat [bought from FCI] to be resold to FCI DP agents.

2) Dal, oil to be sold in open market after calling for sealed tenders.

3) Empty gunny bags, approach FCI & other Govt. depts for selling them @ Rs. 2

4 ) Alpha scheme, blankets, clothes, all to be returned to HQ.

5) Hutments sell by auction. Usable tents return to HQ after assessing election needs. Disposal of bad ones by a committee of C.E.E., SDO, BDO.

Camp Staff: Govt. has ordered retrenchment, & that these should be assured of preferential treatment in future recruitment.

Asst. Camp Commandants are full-fledged Govt. Servants & surplus Govt. Servant rules to apply to them. A panel of these to be formed on basis of C.R. by BDOs for filling vacancies in any dept.

Camp Assts., Block staff: an assessment report to be sent by BDOs to SDO about outstanding work shown.

DM told me he would formally decide on GR & me after seeing T.P.Ghosh & so I should not sign any more bills now. He noted absence of other probationers from the meeting. Treasury Training Programme will soon be made he said.

Massive processions carrying images of Saraswati for immersion go by every evening even now, specially today with 2 elephants, 2 illuminated trucks, band, sehnai, gramophone records blaring! It seems this continues for nearly a month.

## Instructions regarding Repairs of School Buildings damaged by flood of 1971 out of the flood grant received from Government.

1) The school building damaged by the flood of 1971 need be repaired / restored making suitable for school purpose & covering a floor space equivalent to its pre – flood conditions.

2) An estimate is required for repair / reconstruction of each such to be taken up but it may be submitted along with the final bill for the school.

- 3) Fund will be released in favour of the Block Development Officer's being 50% of the lump estimate submitted by them. As such estimates are subject to scrutiny by District Inspector of schools in consultation with the District Magistrate, Malda according to Govt. order it will be convenient if BDOs mention in the requisition that the proposal thus submitted enjoins the concurrence of the District Magistrate, Malda.
- 4) Pucca Buildings of the Junior Basic schools may not be taken up from this fund.
- 5) Unrecognised Primary Basic Schools as well as structures not belonging to the District School Board should not be taken up for repair and reconstruction from this fund.
- 6) The schools having ambitious plans of pucca building etc. may not be taken up under this scheme as it may upset their plans.

**3.2.1972****Work done**

Visited Nazarat & Treasury Offices  
Election Training from SDO.

**Information**

Saw the Nazarat fully occupied in paying TA bills and fixing election allotment of its four cars, of which three are not working. Told Nazir to pool them with the cars of BDOs being repaired by MVI (Tech.). Got my room bulb changed from 60 to 100, but not my table-lamp bulb as the only way is to exchange my bulb with the Sr. DC's & he was absent today & had locked the lamp in his almirah.

Visited Treasury Officer and learned from him how numbers are given to letters:- Dept./Serial No./(Copies if any)/date. The T.O told me of my predecessor Saptarshi's *faux pas* in asking K.K.Sen ICS (who was on a visit here) when he would become DM!

Dropped into DSP (HQ)'s office. He said he would send the extra HGs after getting a report from BDO concerned. Also called on ASP and discussed the crime problem. Asked for a report on Kapasia incident. In my presence he asked the Kharba 2<sup>nd</sup> officer to beat up the accused in a murder case to get confessions. It seems this is a regular well-nigh official feature of police duties. He regretted that the 2<sup>nd</sup> officer was old & getting soft & did not know how to beat!

Sat for some time in election office reading Handbooks for ERO and Presiding Officers.

The DM. wants recruitment of 5 peons [3 for us probationers + 2 for elections] to be done by 7<sup>th</sup> from class IV camp assistants, petitions made & Employment Exchange. But SDO refuses to issue the interview slips which are only 20. So I talked to DM and he called the Asst. Nazir and the Head Clerk Evacuee Office, & it was decided to call all 124 class 4 camp assts + 62 from EE & petitions on 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> as per a programme I drew up so as not to keep them all waiting all day though the HC repeatedly told me not to bother.

5 <sup>th</sup> :	12 a.m. onwards:	62 candidates
7 <sup>th</sup> :	10 a.m.-1 p.m. :	30 candidates
8 <sup>th</sup> :	10 a.m.-1 p.m. :	30 candidates
	2 p.m.-5 p.m. :	30 candidates
	5 p.m.-7 p.m. :	<u>34 candidates</u>
		186 candidates

Informed them accordingly.

Sat with SDO in court while he disposed of petitions asking for more time, issue of proceedings under S.107 etc. After this, for about 2 hours up to 7 pm he gave me & Roy Choudhuri a talk on Election Presiding Officer's job as follows:

He explained Part Rolls [cf. G.O. 713 AR, 21/4/61] which are voters-lists of the various segments making up the constituency. Referred to 21(a) – Regn. of Electoral rules, 1960 [if voter dead, a copy of the amended roll must be displayed in a conspicuous place of the locality];

22 and 23 Representation of Peoples Act [GO: every application for inclusion u/s 23 to be verified locally about age, citizenship, residing (at least 6 months before qualifying date), sanity]. Petitions can be given at all times but latest (for inclusion) before one week before last date of nomination.

The Presiding Officer [Pr.O.] must check that the polling station [P.S] is O.K for election i.e. exit, entrance, voting compartment, materials (voter list, ballot paper), check ballot box, show empty box to polling agents of parties & put inside it an Identity Slip of P.S. If no agents, Pr.O can proceed. Close it with slit open for poll.

Folding:

a)Vertically, so that name of candidate & his symbol synchronise.

b)Horizontally to conceal b.p. no.

When voter comes, Pr.O is to announce his name & part roll no. for benefit of polling agents.

After each voter has come, underlines his name & ticks women voters.

P.O. 2<sup>nd</sup> will put indelible ink on root of left index finger nail [none for lepers].

P.O. 3 will explain election process.

1<sup>st</sup> & last sl.nos. of ballot papers of the P.S. can be told to the polling agents if desired by them.

Each b.p. has a counterfoil where sl. no., name & signature of each voter is needed.

P.O. signs behind b.p. and on reverse opposite b.p. no., puts distinguishing mark of the P.S. which will stay visible after horizontal fold so that genuineness can be checked while being cast.

Challenged Vote: Must deposit Rs. 2 fee with Pr.O with receipt in return. Agent to convince Pr.O & if a prima facie case appears, the voter must rebut it.

After it Pr.O may himself enquire. If challenge fails, allow voting & forfeit money unless not mala fide challenge, & fill in the particular form. If proved, return money & send voter to police station.

Tendered Votes: Onus on claimant. If Pr.O is satisfied, he can vote after filling in the list and signing. Supply him with b.p. from reverse & keep the vote in a separate cover.

Spoilt & Cancelled Vote: If bona fide mistake, issue fresh b.p. & note its no. in roll, & retain S.C. vote in separate cover.

Returned Cancelled: Separate cover after endorsing on back.

Postal Ballot given to voter posted on election duty outside his constituency.

Election Duty Cert. given if on duty in same const. but in a P.S without his part roll. He can vote in this P.S. Pr.O to note it at end of part roll, mark it EDC.

Time: 7 am to 5 pm non-stop. No one to be allowed to enter compound after 5 p.m. Those arriving before can vote till all have done so, however long it might take.

Pr.O to fill in Form 16, Pt I, 8 sec that columns 1 + 2 = cols. 3-5

B.box to be sealed, put Identity mark of P.S., address tag. Wrap in cloth, sew it, seal & tie with tape & seal again. Agents may seal wherever Pr.O does.

Only ERO, ARO, candidate & poll agents & anyone authorised by Election Commission can enter the voting station.

SDO advised never to act according to oral advice of HC but ask him to put up a note quoting relevant GO in support. He also told me that in Malda no record of G.O.s was maintained!

Here Part Rolls were made in 1965/6 most haphazardly by BDOs so that it is impossible to split them for convenience of polling stations if reqd. Silly mistakes like stamps of "ERO Malda", when ERO can only be for some constituencies, has been current for decades.

**4.2.1972**

**Work done :**

1) Attended Election Enquiry by S N Roy Chowdhury.

2) Began Treasury Training (2 p.m.– 5 p.m.).

3) Called on DM.

4) Fixed criteria & pro-forma for interviews of 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>.

**Persons met :**

Tarapada Majumdar : Accountant, T.O

Sudhansu Chakraborty: Dy. Act. T.O.

Dinesh Chakraborty : Treasurer

P. Chakraborty : Nazarat Dy. Collector [1955]

**Information**

SNRC [Dy. Magis. on Prob.] enquired into the claim of Sri Ashim Maitra to be included in the electoral roll u/s 23 R.P.A. He could not produce any age certificate but SNRC wrote it was obvious from his appearance that he was over 21. He is the District Youth Congress President and member of the Board and produced papers to prove it. Said he had been here over ten years & left Pak in 1947.

I received my training programme up to 30/4/. Before joining Try.Trg. called on Mr. P.Chakraborty, who had returned from leave, to discuss problem of accommodating the new Spl. L.A.O. who was arriving 5<sup>th</sup> dawn with family to stay in Dak Bungalow. I explained the lack of any seats here and had the Nazir fix it up at the Irrigation I.B. for 2 days at last. The Nazir is bent on chucking out the FCI people, who have been extending their stay here without reservation. I refused to tell them anything, so he has booked another FCI person in their room.

I drew up, in consultation with the other probationers, a list of criteria for the interview and told the Asst. Nazir to draw up three evaluation forms accordingly. We will hold it in the NDC's khaskamra. He has kindly agreed to sit elsewhere for these three days. This is to obviate chance of any trouble which might happen in the Evacuee Office premises as they are located outside the Collectorate premises.

Sat with Mr.K.S.Majumdar and joined him in interpreting a rule laid down regarding pensions [cf. Sl. 281 & 2 of T.Rules] as to whether the bill must to be presented on the day the pensioner has signed it or not.

Majumdar & Sukumar Babu told me what I must read for my training:-

- WBSR Parts 1 & 2 ; WB Fin, Rules 1 & 2 ; Treasury Rules Vol. 1 ; Accounts Code Vols 1 & 2 ; India Audit & Accounts ; Practice & Procedure Manual.
- Beside these, I should regard as important:-
- Bengal Municipal Act 1942
- Local Self-Govt. Act.
- WB Panchayat Act.
- Bengal Ferries Act. 1885
- Estate Acquisition Act.
- Land Reforms Act
- Bengal Tenancy Act. [though' replaced, since E.Acqsn. Act. is based on it]

Then he took me to the Double Lock Room which cannot be opened unless both Treasurer & T.O are present. Here non-judicial stamp papers were counted and taken out for the vendors. The system of double checking by counting + account kept in register was explained.

Visited the C.E.O. Zilla Parishad's office—the only one with attached W.C.!

Called on DM in the evening & found him with SDO & "Bhuto Babu". He told B.Babu to collect all shelter materials in Ramkeli & Kaliachak III camps, and blankets lying here. It was decided to disband camp assts. as each camp's disposal work was over. All Alpha Scheme workers services were also terminated from the date the scheme ended in each camp. These girls will be sought to be absorbed in primary schools. OCs and ACCs are to remain. Many ACCs have been posted at the 4 check-posts at Singabad, Mahadipur, Golapganj, Agra-



Harischandrapur, and are to remain there and be gradually thinned as need for manning check-posts lessens.

Many Kharba camps have been auctioned. Thus one 25 shelter camp was sold for Rs. 875. It cost Govt. Rs.2.40 per sq.ft. to build each (100 x 14ft.) shelter. GOI had given estimate of Rs.7 per sq.ft. but here the maximum was Rs.3.10 at the end when bamboos had to be brought from Bangladesh due to scarcity.

Talking of my training, the DM again told SDO to post probationers in toughest voting spots and to have us made presiding officers and to do all the preparatory work & go last of all, the night before, to the booths. The SDO agreed and said this was very necessary otherwise as DM I would issue all senseless orders to SDO. On my protesting, the DM added that I was an extremely sincere learner!

The SDO left for office at 7 p.m. again! We three probationers are to help Bhuto Babu and also with BDO concerned investigate tents & tarpaulins to dispose / retain.

I welcomed this new outdoor work as since the 1<sup>st</sup> sitting in the office has been boring, till the Try.Trng began. But that does not promise much. The DM also played it down as an hour's daily work.

Majumdar spoke very highly of former Ast. Mag. Mirdha's sincere effort to learn & amazing ability to work in the toughest situations. Majumdar referred to wagons of coal lying unloaded without any demurrage being charged, while evacuee relief stores were being asked to be cleared the same day on threat of fine! Obvious link between coal merchants who wish to create artificial scarcity & the Station Master. Unfortunately the DM has no authority here.

**5.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Interviewing 55 candidates for recruiting peons, 12 noon–7 p.m.

### **Information**

I told the TO over the phone of my interview work and telephonically told him I was "present"! Steady night & daylong drizzle has turned Malda's road into slippery muddy accident traps for walkers and vehicles. The Old Malda BDO said that Darjeeling Mail & Kamrup Express, the only two Cal-N.Bengal-Assam trains, were overflowing capacity these days, & that this was true of most trains as many had been suspended for evacuee movement. Proceeded to the NDC's chamber & found it totally unprepared. Told them to get 3 chairs for us + 1 for candidate & to make room by removing a shelf. On removing it, soot & spiders of years were revealed and I blew up at this persisting dirt and asked for a duster to clean it up myself. Required celerity of movement was at once achieved! The NDC on arriving only mildly reprimanded them & told me that it was impossible to make the sweepers work. So I told him to shame them into it by starting the dusting oneself. He was not enthusiastic! These WBCS officers all take for granted that present conditions cannot be changed.

From office library I got WBSR, WBFR, Accounts Code & Treasury Rules.

The age limits for candidates were 18-30, and under-matriculats. 43 came through petitions & 19 from E.Exchange. Most were between cl. V-VIII, & some 9 & 10, but standard of all was abysmal in reading 2 lines of English and in handwriting one sentence! Raychoudhury instead on a little knowledge of English as it would be useful when the peon was to deliver the files & letters. Out of 62, 55 came and we could pick out some 10 so far as recruitable. Everyone had genuine sob stories. Some had motor mechanic, fitters training. The answers one got to queries about who was the P.M of Pakistan were hilarious. One told us that he often joined procession as the Cong ® candidate Shamsuddin Ahmed paid each Rs.3! Yet this boy votes for RSP! Tragic case of a boy whose leg was amputated in police firing, son of a National Award winning Primary School teacher. Govt. has given him Rs. 800 / 900 for an artificial leg, but how to give him a job? Also Rathin Kar said the boy might be a Naxalite like the other 2 involved in the incident. What an acute employment problem!

Also amazing is that everyone of them is member of a family of 6 to 8 children, at times even 11, despite the extreme destitute condition. We centred round queries on cycle-riding, swimming [for floods] cooking [we had hilarious sessions on asking how he would cook chicken curry!].

One amazing fact was that most candidates were terrified to sit down though' repeatedly asked to by me & said it just wasn't "done" in our presence!

Lack of urinal (besides SDO's) in Collectorate is agonising! Both the DM's & ADM's are chamber pots of the Victorian Era type! And these do not seem to be ever emptied. The Commissioner has sanctioned Rs. 6000/- for 2 lavatories at last but when they will come up only the PWD knows.

The rain has lessened the innumerable hordes of mosquitoes & the temperature has dropped-- it is quite chilly. Might help the paddy & the mango crop.

I have filed newspaper articles on WB and mid-term appraisals of plans, for future use in exams / assignments.

**6.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Stock verification & white-washing of Dak Bungalow & Circuit House Annexe [which the 2 Dy.Mag's on Prob. were supposed to do] 10 a.m.–12 noon.

SDO & R.Kar dropped in around 6.30 p.m. for a couple of hours. Also Jugal Kishore Goswami, CTO.

### **Information gathered**

About Rs. 2200 budget for D.B. is left out of 3300. Within this it is hardly possible to get all that is required to make up the stock. Accent should be first on improving living conditions & then providing crockery & cutlery.

In the evening suddenly as the FCI people, Roychoudhury, the CTO & I were chatting, Mr. Kar & SDO dropped in, the latter wrapped in a shawl, shirt & dhoti. The FCI didn't realise who he was till I told them later-- they thought he was a clerk!

We had very interesting discussion on Mujib's speech at Calcutta & the future of the Hindus in Bangladesh. SDO very logically showed how they never have any voice. There were 60 lakhs before March' 71, of which about 10 lakhs stayed back & by now are totally converted--at bayonet point they have had to Talaq their wives & marry Muslims, & wives have been taken away by Paks. Of the others, none wears the dhoti & the "namaskar" hardly exists even among Hindus. Some 40 lakhs will go back, and as they are widely scattered, can never have a constituency as Muslims have in Nadia, Malda, Bankura etc. Hence when Mujib speaks of no communication existing, it should be remembered that the Hindu community as an important unit hardly counts. Moreover, at the present rate, in next 10 years the Muslims will by far outpace the present 9% Hindu population in numbers. Also, how far Mujib's secularism will be implemented by the old administrators & Muslims remain doubtful.

Everyone agreed that Indira's speech today was far more impressive than Mujib's, whose was bereft of emotion & appeal. Kar, SDO & CTO swapped reminiscences of their interviews--most amusing. The CTO was one year my senior in Cal. Univ., MA (English) [Kasturi Gupta's Batch]. All were full of administration for SDO's tremendously varied and detailed knowledge. A student of Economics like Kar, he is well read in Shakespeare, Pol.Science, Philosophy. Kar himself has history as his hobby & therefore was grilled for 45 mins in his WBCS interview by RC Majumdar!

**7.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Auction of Karjadanga huts (2-3 pm)

Interviews [10.00–12.30]

Copied out Repatriation Schedule & Camps

### **Persons met**

Fazlur Rahman: Awami League worker;  
K.P. Sarkar : Sub Dy Collr.  
A.N. Samajdar : Sub Dy Mag.

### **Information**

From 10.00–12.30 interviewed 20 out of the 30 supposed to come. Nazarat was shut when I arrived & opened only at 10 sharp & we started at 10.15. Today camp assts. came-- mostly night guards & all political workers. One boy was most arrogant and chucked his interview card at me and starting interviewing us on why H.Sec. passed boys had been made peons in camps. I controlled my first tendency to throw him out. He also asked why we were pending so much time grilling poor V–VI educated chaps and testing their knowledge of English. Also if being a peon would disqualify them from LDC posts. We explained everything calmly & he became milder & said he had come to see if we were like the interviewer he had seen in movies & I was gratified that he said we did not lecture him as they in movies! All the boys said that had campaigned for parties, when asked if they knew any election procedures. At Gajol BDO office some 8 bidders bid a maximum of Rs. 2005/- only for the 80 sheds [11200 sq. ft. costing Rs. 2.40 a sq. ft. i.e. at last Rs. 22500 !!] Also conveyed to BDO the Sr. DC's order to immediately release his CPM Panchayat clerk for duty at Kaliachak. Mr. Kar has split up the "Coordination Committee" enthusiasts singly in different blocks, to preclude any disturbance.

Visited Kutubsahar: all deserted except the staff busily doing paper work. Problem of rice & dal stocks being ruined by rats & rain. Met DM over this. He booked a trunk call to this Dist. Manager of FCI to ask him to buy these back. Surplus clothes & blankets are to go to Bhuto Babu. F.Rahman [Mastermashai] whom I met at SDO's office, told me they would not work voluntarily under the MPAs because these people had done no M.Fauj's work, but were busy in rivalry & smuggling all the while. Hence their lack of interest in getting the badly needed shelter materials. DM will take a decision regarding Kutubsahar after returning from Rajshahi.

Some camp staff, ex-primary teacher, asked me to get their schools recognised by Govt. so that their jobs are assured. Personal requests to appoint this / that person as peon are also there!

I have decided to use the Kapasia incident for my Law & Order paper and the Evacuee Repatriation as my special paper. About the latter, I issue a circular to all BDOs for reports, besides individually getting personal impressions from them.

All day it has been very chilly, with a gusty icy wind blowing-- rather Mussoorie-like! Yesterday & today studied WBSR Pt I & II, & Treasury Rules too. Have requisitioned other books in the Accounts syllabus. The librarian being deputed for election work getting books is difficult. I have detailed my peon to assist the stop-gap clerk acting as Librarian.

Mr. Sarkar, Sub-Dy.Collector joined today. He was Sub-Registrar earlier. I also met Mr. Samajdar, Dy. Magistrate.

Studied Presiding Officers Handbook 1971, as the current one is yet to come. Seems quite an easy task.

My Medical reimbursement was sanctioned but I cannot get it till my pay slip arrives! Wrote to C.D.Sahni at NAA, enquiring about my LPC.

**8.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Interviews finished (about 90)  
Instruction from DM

### **Information**

From 10 a.m.-1 p.m. & 1-7 p.m. we finished all the interviews. Early morning further appeals in person by candidates/their fathers, to the revolting extent of abject efforts to touch my feet, which I rebuked violently and warned them this was the foolproof way to ruin their chances with me. Most of today's candidates have canvassed for parties & many were post-matriculate and over-age and many had no age certificates.

Met DM after all this. He asked us to eliminate all without certificates & over-qualified & over-age ones. If over-qualified people get peon jobs they will at once start agitating for LDCs, as Govt. Rules allow it. We are also to give preference to camp staff in making the panel, though we have full discretion as to which 5 we are to put at the top. Our marking sheets are to be given to the DM for confidential storing. No need to mention marks of each in the notification about the panel.

As for stores, DM has arranged for a godown here, & the FCI will soon inform him about re-buying the rice.

Ray Choudhuri & I are to go to Porsha and meet Bashir Ahmed Chowdhury, Member Const. Assembly (MCA), & discuss delivery of relief staff. We accompany SDO later to Rajshahi.

**9.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Enquiry at BDO Bamangola office & also on the spot, over physical possession of a "pan" cultivation plot [12.30-7.00 p.m.], 76 miles.

Attended Treasury and saw how revalidation of bills is done [3 days at a time].

### **Persons met:**

D.Banerjee : JLRO, Bamangola

Sadesh Ranjan Dhar : O.C. Bamangola Thana.

People of Ulsipara & other villages of BINTARA Mouja [unit of Land Settlement]

### **Information**

From 11 am-12.30 pm I attended Treasury Office and learnt how bills were revalidated if they had not been presented to the Bank for payment within three days. A note is made in the Advice record.

First 10 days of each month, no bills are accepted after 11 a.m., & after the 10<sup>th</sup> after noon. On 1<sup>st</sup> day, nothing but pay bills are accepted & cleared. For these 10 days the clerks are supposed to work from 8.30 a.m. & get special honorarium for it, but no one comes before 10 a.m. And in other offices, 11 a.m./12 noon is the usual practice.

At 12.30 left with Ray Choudhuri for Bamangola [30 miles]. At 2 p.m. began interrogating the complainant, the opposite party & their witness. Then proceeded 8 miles to Ulsipara for spot-enquiry which ended at 5.15. The report of this enquiry can be seen typed out, so here I will only record what could not find place in the report.

Pujar Md., the opposite party, in presence of the O.C. denied that a compromise had been effected with Chalimuddin Mondal [C.M.], the complainant in OC's presence on 14/01/72, as a result of which he had paid, C.M. Rs. 400/- for the 'panbaraj'. At the spot enquiry, I took him away and coaxed him to tell me the truth. P.Md. broke down—at 1<sup>st</sup> artificially & later genuinely—and confessed to the payment and to not making over a copy of the said agreement to C.M. His reason was that it would be used to controvert the JLRO's finding that P.Md. was the owner & was in actual physical possession of the land as well [the document said: "I P.Md. hereby purchase this panbajra from C.M. for Rs. 400."]. He paid the money out of fear of the O.C., who had already, on C.M.'s diaries, arrested P.Md. for attempted breach of peace. I saw that P.Md. was not capable of such violence, being very thin, small & timid & with only one brother. Also C.M. could not produce any witness from the village Ulsipara to testify to his case. Local villagers confirmed P.Md. I proceeded to the original owner Charan Mondal's house in Bintara village. He was away but I brought his nephew

Lalu Sarkar to the spot & he bore out P.Md's version & further alleged that C.M. and his people also were bad goondas perpetually creating trouble and harassing P.Md.

I advised C.M. that as he had got his money there was no point in continuing the case & he should withdraw it.

Ray Choudhuri's case, also involving P.Md's another plot & CM's relation Noor Md's claim, was more complicated but physical possession of P.Md was confirmed again by Lalu Sarkar.

I asked the BDO to let me know if P.Md. was further harassed by police / villagers. Luckily his own villagers support him.

The BDO told us of how in 1971 floods he was gheraoed for 36 hours in Jalpaiguri by people insisting that everyone should get house-building loan at same rate. Terrible experience—and the DC refused to give the ADC power to use firing to rescue the BDO [2000 people involved] & the ADC refused to go without such sanction! Pure lack of guts & willingness to take responsibility & face the music. When after 36 hours the gherao had thinned down, & people were tired of it, the ADC & police arrived & dispersed them. And such a gherao despite the monumental job he had done for them in getting medicines & food to their totally cut off region. He lost his wife soon after this, and wants a peaceful posting in the town area.

Yesterday morning the DCIO dropped in & in course of our talk he told me that Hannan Choudhury was not a good man! He and one "Mantu Doctor" used to share the returns of M.Fauj Operations (which meant looting) & hence he was removed from Presidentship of the controlling council. He said Bhuto Babu is a good man & so is Bimal Das [CPI leader]. All this has to be set against the DM's tremendous faith & respect for H.Choudhury & M.N Roy's curious accusation of corruption against Bhuto which no one else confirmed [e.g. his staying in the expensive Raj Hotel, as alleged by Roy, was not confirmed].

**10.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Survey of route to Porsha & arrangement to receive relief materials sent there [10.30 a.m. – 5.30 p.m.], 153 Km.

### **Persons met**

Bhaskar Ch. Layak : BDO, Habibpur

Abul Hasan Choudhury: Chairman of Natpur Awami League unit

Ikramul Haque : Secy – do –

Asraful Islam : Family Planning Officer

### **Information**

Left at 10.30 am in a jeep with SNRC, peon, & the 2 A.M's of FCI (Mitra & Talukdar), with me driving. Pretty bad road up to Bulbulchandi. At Habibpur, the BDO had just got back from Porsha, and he told me he had investigated the situation & what he told me I confirmed myself when I went there [see Report for details].

Extremely bad village roads, reminiscent of Chancole-Kapasias, on the Kenpur-AgraHarishchandrapur portion. The ferry is a makeshift affair of bamboo mats laid over two boats joined together. The river is hardly 20 yards across, but is pretty deep. These people are obviously not used to ferrying cars across, because the bamboos had sharp points which were lethal for tyres! We arranged in Nitpur for these to be remedied and strong ropes to be provided for tying the boats securely to the "ghat" (jetty).

B.A Choudhury being away to attend the DC-DM conference today at Rajshahi, I talked to the local party leaders. The welcome they gave was wonderfully warm, and they repeatedly expressed gratitude to Malda & to India & wanted us to stay overnight so that they could take us more into the interior & show us the state of affairs.

We were shown a very large no. of bunkers of the Paks, and told how they destroyed even palm trees because the sound of the ripe "Tals" falling was like explosions & they apprehended M.Fauj had come! We were also shown earth covered pits where they suspect

mass graves because of the stench there when they entered the area on 19 Dec. A local M.F. commander came to request arrangements for stocking the arms the Mujib Bahini had surrendered (.303s, stenguns, anti-personnel mines). He told us how they had been trained in India & commanded by Indians, & how retreating Paks themselves had shot down Razakars who wished to accompany them.

The Paks never killed local people in that same locality, but always took them elsewhere, so that they victims could not be traced later.

We saw the crater made by a mortar which landed in the hospital compound just 2 days before the surrender. The Paks had torn down all tin roofs & brick buildings to build their bunkers.

As for Razakars, they are arrested, & enquires are conducted into their activities & if heinous, they are finished off.

In this area Paks had shot less people but harassing local people was no less. Arms captured were mostly Chinese. The M.F chap expressed his amazement at the way the Pak Army kept on attacking though' their men were being shot down (Chinese human wave tactics).

We had taken along lunch in a tiffin carrier [30 luchi, tarkari and 12 chumchum, worth Rs. 6/-]. They insisted on our having tea, sweets, samosa, nimki & 2 fried eggs each! I was made to sit all in solitary splendour in a cushioned chair, with the others before me-- as if I were the chairman of a meeting ! Most embarrassing.

We returned via Bamangola's NH34 as the road is far better. I typed out yesterday's reports.

Enquiring about local police arrangements in Nitpur, I found that an OC had been posted, but was out of station. There were also a couple of policeman, I was told, but bulk of the work was being done by Ansars, as I saw. The P.S & Hospital were undamaged as they & the Dak Bungalow had been used by the Pak army. I hardly saw any women around-- exactly 2 as a matter of fact and no Hindu [they constitute about 5% of the population I was told].

**11.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Treasury Training (11.30 a.m.– 12.30 p.m.).

Making of panel on basis of interviews

Met Habibpur BDO & communicated

DM's instructions. Went & returned via Bamangola [4-8 p.m.]

### **Information**

Met DM at 10.30 am. and submitted my report on which he passed orders that:-

1) Fuel & foodgrains were to be sent to Rajshahi, Gomostapur & Natore only. If DC Rajshahi agreed, oil could be shipped direct to Porsha.

2) Shelter materials: a programme to be fixed by BDO Habibpur for sending them. DM felt that it would be much faster if the evacuees were told to come & take away what they needed from the river bank, than trucking them to Nitpur. But BDO said to me that the needy areas being 81 miles from Nitpur, this was not practicable. And owing to scarcity of petrol, only one such truck could be sent across to carry these materials.

3) Bhuto Babu to maintain liaison. He came at this time and informed us that Dr. Basir was so unpopular in Porsha that he wasn't ever to be found there. So who was to receive the materials? He was satisfied when I told him of the Secy. & Chairman of the local AE unit.

At present, without export & import license, nothing is being allowed to be taken in / out of Bangladesh. I learnt of this when a photographer from Nawabganj came with an application to be allowed to buy equipment here as his has been destroyed.

Habibpur area materials will provide for about 6000 families. The camp staff is to act as guards for it when dumped on river bank. BSF will be told not to interfere if Bangladesh people purchase fuel etc. locally & take it across.

Kutubsahar materials will go to Nachol area by truck. Roofing materials like polythene are coming direct to Dacca from abroad.

Roy Choudhury & Rathin Kar came with me, the latter practising driving. We went & returned via Bamangola as the road is better. Kar told us his experiences during the flood, working under Mr. De & how he has gained in self-confidence & got excellent training under his guidance. He was put in charge of transshipment of relief materials when all bridges & roads were gone. That is when he realised the terrific power a Dy. Magistrate wields & had an interesting brush with the army & reporters. Kar warned me against talking freely to the T.O. as he never keeps confidences.

In the Treasury I sat with the Accountant and the Treasurer. Learnt how bills are passed: the total, the major head & minor head, are checked, advice is made out & this is sent to SBI while the party gets back the bill for presentation at SBI. The bank daily sends back a scroll showing receipts from Treasury payment, which is checked with the list of advices sent. The Dy. Accountant does this as well as compiles the daily account statements of each head each day from the various clerks. On 1<sup>st</sup> the accounts go to AG.

For stamps, the major head is Fourteen written as XIV for receipts & 14 for payments. After receiving the demand slip from vendors, the Treasurer makes out the indent for the stamps needed in the register & submits it to T.O. who then opens the Double Lock. Single Lock does not exist in Malda [keeping 1 month's estimated stock out of the Double Lock].

The DM told me it was not required that I stay Treasury all day. After an hour or two I could proceed on other duty. Also, an officer is being sent by SDO Nawabganj to take receipt of relief materials from us formally. We will provide the transport & send it direct to Porsha if so decided. I have asked 4 trucks to report at Habibpur, but I find due to lack of a godown none of the trucks can be unloaded here & made free for Habibpur!

Roy Choudhury & I prepared a panel of 20 from the candidates interviewed, of these we took 4 from those working on daily basis as umedar peons already, 2 from Employment Exchange, and 14 from the evacuee surplus cl. IV staff. The interview marks were given to the DM for confidential filing.

The din of these pigs under my window grows worse every night with the piglets squealing to suckle the sow. Horribly raucous and smelly. Cold water is the only treatment to drive them away momentarily. Future probationers staying here please note! I got this advice from the ASP's wife.

The FCI people are leaving the DB and moving in with Roy Ch. in his "mess" [C.T.O.'s residence].

**10.15 p.m.:** Bhuto Babu just came with Fazlur Rahman (ex Air Force) of Sibganj. The plan is:-

1) Shelter materials and also Roofing materials if available of Kutubsahar to Nachol.

Shelter materials and also Roofing materials if available of Habibpur to Porsha.

Shelter materials and also Roofing materials if available of others to Sibganj.

Nachol to start last of all. At present use 20 trucks for Porsa & Sibganj. At Porsa get Awami League to call local headmen of Santhals to organise teams for taking the materials.

At Sibganj the materials will be unloaded at various schools where the evacuees are now staying. The BD Relief officers will also come & pay Rs. 100/- to each for making their huts on their land.

Coolies for lifting the materials on to trucks here will be provided by the evacuees themselves [Mr. Rahman will arrange this].

2) Surplus stores of camps be sent direct. Destination to be fixed on Bhuto's return from Calcutta where he is going to meet his mother (he has not seen her a year).

He promised to take me to Nachol & show me 2 villages: one totally demolished, the other depopulated, so that I understand the plight of the people. Shelter materials must be given

direct to people & not at Thanas / offices, he said, as in the latter case they might never get them.

He belongs to Nawabganj, was educated in Cal. Univ. and is the only son of his parents. His father is dead.

**12.2.1972**

**Work done**

Arranging trucks for sending shelters to Porsa & Sibganj.

**Information**

Only 2 trucks were free, I found. Others are lying loaded with surplus camp stores for 10/15 days, as no godown available. The DM told me to unload these on Circuit House Veranda & have the BSF men who were posted there guard them. This gave me a minimum of 5 trucks for Sibganj, besides 2 for Habibpur. More will be available as the 6 which carried foodgrains to Rajshahi return. The programme calls for 10 to Sibganj & 10 to Porsa.

Took Fazlur Rahman to BDO, Old Malda, and fixed up loading of Mukatipur tomorrow at 8.30 a.m. for Sibganj. This will be followed by Moulpur, Kuriapara & Kaluadighi.

Rahman & I then left for Sibganj Baraghoria Camp [about 30 miles from Malda Collectorate]. Tomorrow's shipment will be for Kanshat area; thereafter for Harinagar & Baraghoria. Rahman's house is in Harinagar—what a scene of devastation! Not a single house with 4 walls. Terrible destruction, including temple of Kali, Radharani, Annapurna & Lakshmi (the last one's straw effigy is intact though' everything of the temple is rubble).

**NB:** Sibganj town is famous for its huge size "chum-chum" sweet. At Baraghoria & Ranikuti-hat I was treated to some by the Boards' Chairman. Good; virtually a meal!

Local boys have gheraoed the area's Relief Board people demanding immediate reopening of schools ( all are now occupied by returned evacuees ). Need for shelters is great & in massive doses. Baraghoria camp has some 580 families. In all about 150 families are in school in this Union (that is what they call their zones).

Rahman told me that he had proposed bringing shelter materials a month back but was not heeded by MPAs (members of provincial assembly) who were more interested in Razakars etc. They were more bothered about deciding who would be in charge of relief operations, while people were clamouring for food as rations ran out. Finally on Rahman's suggestion they gheraoed the MPA & made him get them ration from Nawabganj. The SDO of Nawabganj, he said, just sits smartly in office without any contact with the actual misery of people. He deplored the snail-like speed at which Govt. was moving. No attention was being given to making the Malda-Sibganj road tolerable, though' it is the sole lifelink & will be impossible once it rains a little.

On the way I stopped many of our returning trucks (from Rajshahi) & told them to stay at the garage for carrying relief materials & not to proceed to FCI for carrying food. The FCI is supposed to get its own trucks for this.

The Baraghoria campers wanted to go back Malda as they were far better off in our camps, & complained they were not properly looked after. We explained that resources being scare here, this was inevitable.

Rahman told me how he had to resign as Dacca Airport-in-charge (a post he held from 1948) because of persistent harassment by the West Pakistan Civil Airforce Regional Manager & deliberate campaign to oust Bengalis from the staff. However, they could not touch his service records, which he claimed to be full of appreciation of his hard work & sincerity. They are 7 brothers & "Mastermashai" [cf. 7.2.72] is his elder brother.

Rahman is pressing me to depute all trucks for Sibganj first, but I won't agree as Porsa people are equally needy.

This morning the FCI Ast. Mngrs. left & came back to report Mitra's watch missing from here. I took them to the P.S. as the sweeperess was recalcitrant (she was the only one to enter



the room for sweeping). Later I heard she had been interrogated by the OC & told to hand it back if she had taken it.

From library took Accounts I & II books. Some 18 Civil Defence personnel arrived early morning & are camping in the compound-- one way of having it kept clean!

**Sunday, 13.2.1972**

**Work done**

Loading of Mukatipur shelter materials (9-11 am).

Accompanied Rathin Kar to Pukhuria where Ratua II Block-HQ will be shifted. (12.30-5.30 pm, 70 km.).

**Information**

Extremely miserable rainy day all of a sudden. At 9 am. I went to the garage pool & found not a single truck had left though' Mr. Rahman had been there from 8 am. I at once had Ashit Saha [offg. MVI (Tech)] send 8 trucks & went ahead with Rahman in a jeep. Started off loading operations and went back to garage to see if any more trucks were available. Sent off the single free one to Habibpur. DM was not in, as the Rajshahi DC with family & staff is suddenly coming today. One of the trucks I intercepted on way to Sibganj yesterday was carrying this message to DM, as T.K.Das had not been able to get through to him by phone. I am worried that the trucks might get stuck going to Sibganj as it has been raining. That will stall operations till the sun dries the road.

At 12.30 pm. Kar came and asked me to accompany him to Ratua where he was going to inspect the proposed new site (Pakhuria) for the Block office (now at Ariadanga). This has been necessitated by the recent gherao & forced paying of House Building Loan by local Maithilis against the BDO. Also, the new site is far more central a place for the Block's 7 Anchals. The Anchal Pradhan & the villagers are ready to do everything to have the office here. We inspected the newly built house, its records, quarters available for staff.

The roads are very dangerous because of the alluvial clay which becomes very slippery if wet. The result was the jeep, driven by Kar, skidded into a hedge! Fortunately there was no damage. The jeep itself is difficult to drive smoothly because of a cracked carburettor and loose throttle spring.

Talking of my impressions of the Collectorate, in response to Kar's queries on returning from Ratua, over a cup of tea in my room, I told him there was so much scope for development here, specially pisciculture. He agreed. I further asked why the office began only at 11. He said this was a result of the lax attitude of Ganguli, the previous Sr.Dy.Collr. He intends to start it at 10 henceforth by enforcing the rule of 1 day's leave cancelled for 5 late arrivals. After all, if Treasury can start at 10, why not the rest? He told me the O.S. was an active Co-ordination Committee chap and so any office reforms have to be done carefully. OS himself never comes before 11am.

Kar commended me on my ideals, dynamism & willingness to work & tour, and said I was quite a different kind of Asst. Magis. He advised me to beware of the attitude we tend to develop on becoming ADM's of knowing everything & getting egocentric.

Around 11.30 am 2 of the Kutubsahar Camp Assts. came see me. Actual reason was to enquire about job possibilities. I explained that unless their political leaders passed orders sanctioning more posts, we were helpless though' wanting to help. All these boys are Youth Congress and are confident of winning 8 of the 10 Malda seats & getting a majority in the Assembly. Hence I repeatedly stressed our inability to help unless the Ministers sanctioned posts. Also I pointed out the restrictions vs. any expansion, owing to need for economy following the war, as also decision to give WB employees DA at Central rates [Rs.5 crores]. They appeared quite convinced. And I also unobtrusively stressed our political neutrality by saying I would not vote at all so that I could genuinely behave non-partisanly.

**14.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Treasury Training.

DM's meeting with BDO's [12.30-5 pm.]

DM-DC Rajshahi meeting & dinner [6-10.30 pm]

### **Persons met**

J.K Bhattacharya : Civil Liaison officer, Rajshahi.

M.A.Sallam Khan : R & R.O, Porsa

Md. Motizuddin Mondal : C.O. (Dev.) Porsha)

Col. B.K Sen : Sector Commander, BSF 74 Bn.

### **Information**

In the morning Rahman dropped in to report that 4 trucks had successfully gone to Sibganj & unloaded & returned. Others could not proceed due to rain. Today, if I can give him one truck more, the Mukatipur camp can be emptied. This is possible if I can get Nandababu to unload one truck of its tin cans.

Such a pity that the Ratua II camp of Madiaghat can't be taken as it involves crossing the ferry. Still I will enquire of the DM.

The DM asked me to be present at the 6 pm. meeting with DC Rajshahi. However, the DC had gone to Behrampore and turned up only about 6.30 pm. Representatives from Porsha [the O.C. (Dev), Relief Officer, & Awami League Chairman] were present as also our Liaison Officers in Rajshahi, Col. Sen the BSF Commander [74 Bn.], and BDO Habibpur. 1/6 of Nawabganj relief materials were allotted to Porsha direct from here. Unofficially they were free to purchase fuel locally as well. This was followed by a good dinner at Tourist Lodge. Mr. Bhuiyan is being made Dy. Secy. in Govt. of Bangladesh, hence the emergency final meeting. The DM upset my plans by declaring he would handover 15 trucks to the DC, from which the DC would allot one for Porsha. This was given in writing by the DC to the DM in an official letter dictated on the spot.

Col. Sen is a man capable only of worst army tradition vulgarity and ancient bawdy jokes to which only Mr. J.K Bhattacharya responded with embarrassed laughter. All he can think of is wine and sex—that was his sole contribution to the evening's proceedings.

Mr. J.K Bhattacharya is 1959 batch, Dy. Secy. to GOI Ministry of Transport. Last year did his MA in Economics from Harvard. Very affable and jolly. Apprehensive of Pimputkar coming as Transport Secy! I told him and Das & the DM & DC some of our Academy's amusing incidents which they relished highly.

After the meeting, the DC, DM & we (except BDO & Porsha people) retired to a room where the DC roundly condemned the AL (Awami League) politicians as no-good, selfish and greedy corrupt people. Asrafur Islam, for instance, is constantly apprehensive lest it come out that he was a Mukhtiyar's clerk while Bhuiyan was a Dy. Magistrate in the same place. Hence he constantly tries to assert his importance. It seems, when Gen Aurora met them, the DC referred to "My Govt's order" at which Islam heatedly retorted, "What do you mean by YOUR Govt, it is OUR Govt., WE are the Govt." & so on! Kamaruzzaman was labelled by the DC as ignorant of BD's ideology, without education & out for cheap popularity. With Mujib as PM, all these, specially Nazrul Islam & Kamaruzzaman are relegated to the background & are struggling to build up party bases.

DM said that more than the AL people, the NAP workers had worked sincerely and a re-election might change everything.

SDO told Bhattacharya & myself how an evacuee Hindu, who had returned to his big house, evicting the Muslim forcible occupant with help of Mukti Fauj, was badly beaten up with his family & thrown out on orders of Khaled the local AL MPA. Further, while taking evacuees from Singabad to Rohanpur the AL workers had extorted Indian money in exchange for Pak

money, and the 50 tons of wheat given them for getting the road repaired by T.R. had vanished without the road being touched.

Further, the allegations the DCIO had made to me vs. Hannan Choudhury were disproved from what I heard here. Tremendous in-fighting within themselves had given rise to such calumnies, but Kamaruzzaman had personally approved of Choudhury & told him to continue his work.

In the Treasury I sat with the Dy. Accountant and learnt about compilation. Daily the accounts are checked as follows:-

**Payments (total of the following):-**

Gross Amount [includes Transfers]

Reserve Bank Deposit

Misclassifications (by Bank)

Central Deposits.

**Net Receipts (total should equal payments):**

Central

Provincial

R.B Deposits

Transfers

I asked them a question which foxed them all. Now in the R.B register, if Receipts exceed Debits, the balance is classed not under Cash Account but under list of payments. If debits are more, then put in Cash Account. This is the system; but WHY ?

Dinesh Chakraborty, the Treasurer after a while brought me the answer from Account Code Vol-2, Art. 52 (Daily closing of Accounts). Since the daily balance must be NIL, payments = receipts, hence if receipts exceed debit, the balance has to be shown under List of Payments to make the balance 'nil'.

Dinesh Babu is the nicest person I have met here-- very cool, ever smiling, perfectly courteous and with a very clear grasp of everything. He has taken up Treasurer's job as it is least strenuous and he is due to retire.

My pay slip has yet to arrive despite Mr. Banerjee's having given the details to the concerned officer. Today the other members of the Audit party took the details from me & told me in the AG one must always go to the clerk concerned & not the head of department. They knew the person & would ensure I got the pay slip very soon.

Lesson: always be on good terms with audit/accounts department!

Note that though Treasury is supposed to compile daily accounts, they have to do this next day, backdating it, as the bank never sends their daily accounts in full that very day. This month Treasury is sending the 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> accounts only this week because numerous mistakes occurred in recording transfers, necessitating numerous erasures and corrections.

Meeting with BDOs was a repetition of earlier instructions. However, we are falling short of wheat for TR—only 570 tons are available for 15 blocks. DM referred them to me as "Director-General of Evacuee Movement & Transport" when they wanted to know when their surplus ration would be lifted! It is fun to be wholly in charge of vehicles!

**15.2.1972**

**Work done**

Treasury Training

Moulpur inspection

DM's meeting with Transport Operators

**Persons met**

Anil Roy: Hony Commandant, BSF, Home Guards, Civil Defence etc.

### **Information**

Today Dinesh Babu taught me how Bills are drawn up by Drawing Officers, checked, and passed, and entered in the register of that head.

No other work here. So I took a jeep to inspect Moulpur loading of shelter materials. Some 11 trucks had left today loaded with all of Mukatipur. I intend inspecting tarpaulins available at Bamangola tomorrow & send off the serviceable ones to Porsha [Rahman of course wants it all for Sibganj]. 5 trucks lifted all of Moulpur that was yet un-auctioned. Such a pity they could not decide earlier on taking these materials. Entire Karjadanga could have gone to Porsha. Condemned condition tarpaulins of Bamangola I will bring back to be used as ink-wiping rags in elections.

Today's jeep really played up! It stopped halfway and I felt pretty foolish on not having brought a driver along! However, on opening the carburettor, we found not petrol, but plenty of water. How on earth did it get into the tank!

From about 4 to 7 pm. I sat in the DM's meeting with transport operator & others. It was decided to keep to last year's rates of Rs. 80/- per truck & Rs. 60/- per bus, the latter to join on 9<sup>th</sup> March, the former on 8<sup>th</sup>. All buses to report except those on trunk routes. Taxis would be needed for short trips only; so no need to requisition them.

Jalpaiguri is being approached for trucks and jeeps. We are not to use the ISUZU trucks in any work other than evacuee relief-- not for elections. Hence vehicles are badly required.

DM had a long session with Subhash Chowdhury CPM local worker. Chowdhury launched into a paean of praise on DM's work during floods & evacuees. He is writing a book on this! DM was enjoying it immensely & constantly pulling his leg. There had been 3 or 4 police firings yet no party had been able to make capital of any. Chowdhury said it wasn't possible because the DM himself was the biggest politician of them all. The Manikchak firing in which a woman was killed is regarded by DM as the most successful point of his career by way of tackling an explosive situation successfully. He exploited the UF strife by at once contacting Sushil Dhara & requesting him to stop Bangla Congress from making a scene. Then he himself took out a procession with the corpse right up to the burning ghat. Chowdhury said that DM hadn't got decorated because Siddhartha Ray & Barkat Ali didn't get on, while the Islampur ADM was Ray's man. Also DM's decision in floods to make over charge at once if more rations were not sent from Calcutta, stood against him, though it had succeeded in getting food for Malda. Chowdhury confirmed that all Calcutta newspaper reports at that time, ostensibly by their Malda-based reporters, were actually transcripts of DM's daily bulletins as no reporters were here.

DM was amused to recall how no UF meeting in Malda could be held anywhere except in his chamber, all parties regarding him alone as their common bond! And here alone public meetings were never big unless DM called one!

Chowdhury expects 5 seats to go to Cong (R) & rest to CPM. DM notes all such forecasts in a separate notebook.

During all this Nazir turned up with samples of blankets to be bought for Circuit House. DM asked me to decide. I rejected all but 4 of Binny. For the rest, DM told Nazir to write to supply best quality stuff.

Received an extremely informal & friendly letter from A.K.Mitra (DD, NAA). Wholly unexpected and heart warming. He is looking forward to my "exciting letter"! Further, I heard today from Presidency College that my three medals have arrived.

Only disappointment was that cheques I had deposited in SBI on 28/1 on Calcutta banks have not yet been cleared, so that I have just Rs. 32/- in the bank, with insurance premium to pay, & the trip to Chanchol ahead! The NAA should take steps to ensure prompt receipt of pay slips. I wonder if others are facing the same difficulty.

**16.2.1972**

**Work done**

Tarpaulin inspection at Bamangola, 10.30 am – 5 pm  
Visited Kuriapara camp in Old Malda, total about 130 km.

**Persons met**

Sudhir Chakraborty: Curator, Malda Museum.

**Information**

On way to Bamangola with all probationers, we also visited Kuriapara camp, near Narayanpur [some 2 miles from N.H.34], saw trucks being loaded. Rahman wants to go to Sibganj tomorrow to see the requirements.

At Bamangola, we first went about 8 miles to Mudipukur and loaded 55 serviceable tarpaulins onto the accompanying truck. Then from the Block Office godowns we took another 83, and sent these at once to Habibpur for transmission to Porsha. The condemned ones number 63. Using these as ink rags in elections is dangerous because, as BDO pointed out, so many diseases had been rife among the evacuees living in them. We didn't touch the flood relief tarpaulins as Prashanto Bhattacharjee [Dy. Mag. on prob.] pointed out we would need these during our yearly floods.

We returned via Old Malda, to have a look at the town. I believe the houses inside the town are all in one row with common walls and no windows—this being a precautionary measure against “Bagdi” dacoities.

Met the DM who told me not to send any more tarpaulins till Bhutobabu & he & I had a meeting to decide requirements. However, we should continue our inspection & classification.

With SDO we decided to leave early on 18<sup>th</sup> for Rajshahi; proceed on 19<sup>th</sup> to adjoining areas (Natore) & return through Bogura, Dinajpur. We will have to take jerry cans of fuel along.

At SDO's residence, met Sudhir Chakraborty, journalist, history enthusiast & Curator of the museum. He told us of the founding of Englishbazar. There is a diary of those times of a Nilkuthi owner. Our present English Office was one such Kuthi & had a tablet to that effect, which the U.F Govt. removed. He confirmed the existence of a judgement in Bankim's own hand in our Record Room. The house he used to live in is now “Malati Hotel” to the right of the Netaji bust. He is a Hindi enthusiast and edits “Gauda Barta”, & is also a Homeopath. Prescribed a medicine for my chronic cold, after long discussion with the SDO who is also an amateur homeopath. I recited some of Jaishankar Prasad's compositions to prove that Hindi can be musical too. Kar related amusing stories of an IAS officer's 4 attempts to pass the Hindi Departmental Test.

**17.2.1972**

**Work done**

Signing some files for DM in Sr. DC's office.  
Assisted in fixing up Election Training Programme.  
Attended talk on Panchayat System in WB, by Rathin Kar.

**Information**

With Kar I helped in making out the proforma for informing polling personal about the training programme. In the afternoon I attended his talk to Gram Sevaks on role of youths in Panchayats. An extremely informative and inspiring talk in which he showed them how they could spread new ideas about agriculture farming, how ensure paying of taxes to Anchal Panchayats to benefit villages in developmental work [any per capita tax collection above the 1968-69 rate will be multiplied by 1961 census of that Anchal & the amount paid to that Anchal is incentive to collect taxes]. He spoke extempore having been told about this talk only this morning.

The SDO's unsigned 1971 election TA bills are a problem. Kar asked DM if they could be signed by me. DM asked the bills to be sent to him [DM] for signing if SDO would not! Problem for the training officer [Kar].

I spent some time at Kar's house listening to tapes of songs & of his one-and-half year old daughter. They insisted on taping a song of mine too.

Bhutobabu & Rahman came in the evening. In Calcutta he has arranged with Sucheta Kripalani & another organisation to rehabilitate & reconstruct 8 villages in Nawabganj area. He now wants Rahman to give him figures about number of loans needed in Sibganj, no. of fishermen & nets they need, since with these details he can get huge amount of aid. Foodgrains to be given in Boalia village where 500 were killed, so that no controversy over its distribution rises. Rahman says another 100 truckloads of shelters are needed in Sibganj. As this is impracticable & Porsha must also be attended to (as Bhuto agreed at once) I have decided to send Kaluadighi stuff to Porsha, & Ramkeli material to Sibganj.

Tomorrow we all sit with DM and decide finally. Bhuto also told me to tell DM not to give over 15 trucks right now to DC Rajshahi. He is 100% correct. It will stop all relief movement. I typed 4 foolscap pages of my letter to the Academy. I wonder if it will be read in full!

**18.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Meeting of DM with Bhutobabu.

Visited Ramkeli Camp [16 km. away]

Visited Farakka barrage for shifting Block office of Kaliachak-III there [86 km in all; 3-8 pm]

### **Persons met**

Anil Mitra: Exec. Engineer, Farakka.

Mondal: P.A to the G.M., Farakka.

### **Information**

The DM had kept up till very late and so did not come down till 11 am. He was initially inclined to give up the idea of sending Kutubsahar materials since 15 of our trucks had to be made over to DC. Knowing this, I perforce made the MVI Tech send 12 trucks to Kuriapara so that at least today a final large consignment could reach Bangladesh. I pointed out to DM how smoothly the operation was running and how urgent the need was, as I had myself seen. He promptly agreed to hold over the trucks till end of February, and that I was free to engage them wholly for this work. About sending the surplus camp rice to Bangladesh, he would talk to the R.R. Commissioner. He also told us that he had sent reports to Delhi of the amazingly smooth liaison between Rajshahi & Malda, and how probationers & Bhutobabu were working hand in hand.

BDO Habibpur met us in Collectorate and complained that materials he sent to the ghat at 9.20 were being unloaded by Porsha people only 4 hours later, & that initially the gang-leader was signing receipt of the stuff! He also noted that the officers there would not stir a step without the MCA's nod! I told Rahman to go to Porsha & ensure prompt unloading. Otherwise we would divert it all to Sibganj. He was unable to go there as my jeep driver (Mukherjee) did not know the route.

We went to Ramkeli and found some 10-15 truckloads of materials stacked inside the Big Sona Masjid [15<sup>th</sup> century]. I sent a chit to the MVI to send 15 big trucks here tomorrow morning, and 5 small ones to Kaluadighi, so that operations are speeded up.

Then with Rathin Kar & BDO Kaliachak (III) I proceeded to the Farakka Office Colony this side of the river. Mr. Moitra, the E.E., asked us to meet the GM about getting houses for the office & staff quarters. We drove across the lovely road bridge which was opened at 8 am. today, as the first Malda officials to use it! Met the PA of the GM (he was busy with

meetings) who asked us to send him the floor space we required at once since the police had already approached them for similar reasons.

On way back we stopped at Mita Talkies in Kaliachak & warned the manager for having shown only 2 Bengali films in 1971, inspected sanction & ventilation of hall & returned to Malda at 8 pm.

**19.2.1972**

**Work done**

11 am checked work beginning at Kaluadighi & proceeded to Nitpur & thence to Porsha via Bamangola. On way back, surveyed Rahutala shelter materials, and reported to DM at 6.30 pm. [176 km.].

**Persons met**

O.C.(Dev.), Relief Officer of Porsha and Awami League Chairman & others.

ACC Rahutala Camp.

**Information**

As I have these trucks only till end of February, I want them to do double trips. The drivers at Kaluadighi are agreeable provided they can leave by 10 am. This part of loading them early was assured by the camp staff. I sent a note accordingly to Banerjee. Today 10 trucks went to Ramkeli, 5 to Kaluadighi, the rest being otherwise busy. 3 are at Habibpur.

Bhuto dropped in around 9 am. We are to meet him in Rajshahi on 22<sup>nd</sup>. He is leaving to build up 4 villages in Nawabganj. He lamented lack of character building despite the BD struggle, and contrasted the single-minded dedication of Naxalites to the instability of AL & NAP workers. Also, he does not believe in waiting for the administration / leaders to send relief. He motivates & bullies people to help themselves. Once he threatened not to allow any rations to reach Rajshahi through Nawabganj if the local people of Nawabganj did not get their rations. He assured me of help in emptying Malda of all shelter materials by end of February.

With Rahman I went to Nitpur. Here I found the ex-secy. of its AL virulently inveighing against the CO (Dev.) & other officers for not getting the people rations. 1300 maunds were lying at Rajshahi for them but lack of transport and controversy over who would bear transport costs was holding up delivery. They lack the willingness to organise funds from local level. Every citizen in Porsha owns at least 1000 bighas I found! There is not a single thatched hut, but everywhere in Porsha I saw elegant mud houses with tin roofs, and a massive 3 storey mosque. No lack of money at all but lack of sincerity and willingness to bear hardship. When I asked why they did not approach DC Rajshahi through Malda as it was shorter & no transport problems, they explained it was because of the 6 mile lack of transport between Nitpur & Kenpukur. Rahman was most disappointed at this attitude. I even offered to cover that difficulty by asking the Chairman to come in my jeep to Malda & proceed to the DC, but there was no response! They are more eager to feed guests & show them around instead of organising themselves to get & use most profitably whatever relief material they get.

Two villages here have been razed to the ground. I could not visit them as I lacked sufficient petrol. To whatever Rahman said I mostly tried to keep quiet but could not help urging them to go and get at least a letter authorising one of them to receive relief straight from here. They nodded courteously & went on fulminating!!!

However, the RO himself stays at the ghat & is distributing 4 bamboos & 1 roofing mat to each man, union wise.

In Habibpur complaints against late unloading were again made. More than 3 trips are not possible at this rate. From what I saw of Rahutala & Bulbulchandi Camps, we need at least 5 trucks giving 4 trips daily here. And still we have some 10 truckloads left at Kuriapara, 20 at Kaluadighi, and the huge Kutubsahar.

Hence we rushed to the DM and asked for 20 requisition trucks. He agreed & told me he was immediately sending 5 trucks to Rajshahi as without these all distribution of relief material had been held up! I insisted he must not without replacing every one of the 20 he means to send soon, in instalments. He said he would tell the ADM to do this immediately.

He also imparted the astonishing news that the Home Secy. who was arriving here on 21<sup>st</sup>. wanted me to meet him!!! I suspect it is all DM's doing, because he told me when I demanded trucks: "When you are working so very well, why shouldn't I give you trucks". I felt immensely pleased, specially because beyond running here & there & co-ordinating the movement, I've been doing nothing extra. The actual loading etc. has been left to the camp staff. However, in Kutubsahar, I had done that too.

I came back caked with dust all over. I haven't dared to look at myself in the mirror especially at my hair!

I received my LPC from NAA yesterday & today the T.O said I could draw my pay on its basis.

**20.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Visiting airfield with DM & SP to fix arrangements for PM's public meeting.

Meeting with Home Secy, W.B in evening.

### **Persons met**

M.M Kusari: Home Secy. W.B.

D.C. Mukherjee: I.G. Prisons

### **Information**

I managed to send off some 20 trucks to Ramkeli, Kuriapara and Kaluadighi today, waiting apprehensively for DM's orders about 5 trucks! In the evening reminded him & he told ADM to get me 20 trucks. ADM was in a fix as to how to get them! I'll have to be after him. Tomorrow I will go with him on his tour of River Lift Irrigation Schemes with the Agricultural Commissioner, as it will give me a good idea about Malda's agricultural state.

In morning, accompanied DM to the airfield along with SP & PWD Asst. Eng., where with great difficulty we chalked out the arrangements of the crowd for her meeting on 29<sup>th</sup>. Main problem was that (150 x 150) sq. metres was being taken by the helipad, as also the blueprint for her meeting sent by Delhi was difficult to superimpose on our available space.

Around 7 p.m. a peon summoned me to the DM. Guessing that the Home Secy had arrived before time I went in my formal suit. At first he paid me no attention, but later asked about my previous job (as lecturer in English) & highly approved of my having left it.

Our ADM had also taught Economics in a college, like R.Kar too. Kusari said Asst. Magis. were the most anglicised & pointed out my buttoned up coat, which he said he hardly even wore & that I shouldn't make any more. He said he wore dhoti & kurta at dinner & even at the huge banquet for Mujib & the DM. He said I'd find all I had learned at NAA useless academic stuff, & reminisced about how in Metcalfe House his batch would come to dinner in lungis & care two hoots for knives & forks & how the Principal Mr.Bapat condoned it fully!

The DM was in shirt-sleeves, the SP in uniform, ADM in coat & tie, Kusari in a lounge suit (despite all his Bengalliness!). He is from Dacca, it seems. He & DM are on most friendly terms. He was accompanied by DM's batch-mate, I.G prisons, who paid a surprise visit then to the jail & criticised it for having just one sentry & said a jail break was easy.

In the morning, while waiting for DM I talked to Mrs.De. He himself was a lecturer in Economics (MA Cal.Univ.) having studied Econ Hons. purely on his own in E.Pak as no Hons. was available in his college though' Univ. gave him special permission for it. As eldest son, he had a very tough life supporting his parents, brothers & sisters who only now have become independent finally. They have a 3 Kattah plot in Salt Lakes & 2 sons in classes 10 &



8. Former is not interested in studies & took Science despite their advice not to. She wants him to do Eco. Hons. & then IAS. I offered to help them out in English. He used to study while Mr. De could attend to him, but now he has no time at all. He has insomnia too & so gets up late on holidays (today at 11.30 a.m.). She is a very simple motherly lady without the least affectations.

DM said Kanwar had been here yesterday but I was away & so could not meet him. He is being given hardly any work. DM told me how in floods he gave T.K.Das sacks of "chira" & told him to deliver this to the people even if he had to bodily carry them himself--& so he did!

**21.2.1972**

**Work done**

Visiting 6 River Lifts Schemes with Agr. Commissioner (AC).

**Persons met**

S.K Banerjee IAS: Agriculture Commissioner.

**Information**

From 11 to 3.30 pm, SDO, ADM, BDOs of Old Malda & Habibpur & Engineers visited 6 River Lift Schemes of Irrigation. We first saw Lakshmipur, then Char Lakshmi- pur, then 1 mile by boat to 4 other sites, which involved walking over 3 miles in a very hot and scorching sun. Very satisfactory crop yield.

Before this, 9.30-10.30 the BDOs and AC had a meeting discussing problems of distributing Agri loans and needs for shallow tubewells to be linked to pumps.

The DM left for Jalpaiguri for Election meeting. He and the ADM have given me enquiries to complete before Elections, on a land dispute and a claim for relief.

It was decided that we leave at 9 am tomorrow, and return on 23<sup>rd</sup>. We have planned to force SDO to take us up to Sara bridge over the Padma. We are taking SDO's jeep and an ambulance. 8 of us. (4 probs., SDO, Kar, MVI tech., Sudhir Chakravorty).

LPC without payslip from AG WB is not enough for me to draw my pay!

**22-23.2.1972**

**Work done**

Trip to Rajshahi Town, via Sibganj & Nawabganj on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

23<sup>rd</sup> : From Rajshahi to Natore, Pabna, Sara Bridge, and back to Malda.

Total of 484 km. covered; started 9.30 am, returned 8 pm.

**Persons met**

SDO Nawabganj

Dr. Misbahul Haque : Chairman R & R Committee Nawabganj.

D.C Rajshahi.

Sardar Amjad Hossain-- MCA Rajshahi and numerous journalists and budding litterateurs of Rajshahi.

**Information**

Party consisting of SDO, Rahman, Sudhir Chakravorti, Kar, Banerjee (MVI tech.), myself & Sarkar, & 2 drivers [Ghanashyam & Satya Goswami] left in a jeep & an ambulance at 9.30 a.m. after I had a heavy breakfast at SDO's house.

Our ambulance's accelerator rod broke at a sharp dip in the Sibganj road, & after stopping at Kanshat school, where the SDO talked to the evacuees, we reached Sibganj town, accelerating by hand! There the rod was welded by a smith & we proceeded smoothly to Harinagar where we stopped & had refreshments, took pictures of the devastation. Earlier, we had stopped to snap the Chhota Sona Masjid, where graves of 2 army martyrs of Bangladesh [Capt. Jahangir & another] had been newly made.

We reached Nawabganj around 3 pm and had a sumptuous lunch in Bhuto Babu's house: fish, meat, dal, curry, sweets. Then we proceeded to meet Misbahul Haque, MCA & thence to

the SDO. Haque's conversation revealed that the politicians are making & dismissing officials at will. The SDO's office & his house were brilliantly clean, roomy & superbly furnished—what a contrast to ours! We were told that added problem was 75000 Behari Muslims driven out of Dinajpur by the Mukti Fauj which had killed 4000 of them, all for their participation on the Pak side. These were utterly destitute starrng & dying like flies.

Then we left for Rajshahi Circuit House. There we were invited by Amjad Hossain, MCA, to a meeting of local litterateurs. An exhibition of newspapers & books on Bangladesh & Martyrs' Day [21<sup>st</sup>] had been put up. They emphasized the difficulties & dangers in which their journalists worked & claimed their headlines & printing to be superior to our Bengali dailies. Sudhir Chakravorti was asked by them to speak on our behalf. We stayed there overnight, skipping dinner & left 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5 am direct to Porsha, where our SDO found his father-in-law's house flattened by Indian bombing. We visited the famous Sara Bridge on Padma river, a span of which had been blown up by retreating Paks. We visited the Dighapatiya Raj Palace, which is now a Bangladesh Militia training centre. In the former we saw an antique brass cap-a-pie armour set besides lovely gardens & chandeliers. It is now a "Raj Bhawan" (Governor's House). The former is dilapidated & lacks any historical fragrance. The Rani's Kali Temple is more interesting with the idols all broken by the Paks. Lack of time resulted in missing out the famous "kancha golla" of Natore.

We were back in Rajshahi where we bought Martyrs' Day covers & stamps, ate excellent chicken & fine rice at a Hindu Hotel (makeshift) for just Rs. 2.50 in the Court compound & talked to Mr. Bhuiyan who is leaving on 24<sup>th</sup> to be Dy. Secy. of Agriculture.

All through, we had no difficulty as Bhutobabu was our guide. We reached Malda around 8 pm. The roads Nawabganj onwards are excellent & I thoroughly enjoyed driving on them. However, since I came last on 31 Jan, people are already slower in moving off from the main road to give way to cars! Marketing is no problem as Indian money is welcome [market exchange prices: Rs. 1/- as Rs. 1 & 2/- as of Bangladesh currency]. Mr. Kar bought 2+1/2 kg of date-palm juice "Gur". Before we left Rajshahi, we were feted at the "Rajshahi-Barta" office & given sets of 10<sup>th</sup> Jan-21<sup>st</sup> Feb copies of the paper. Earlier at yesterday's function we got sets of commemoration publications.

I found our SDO terribly conscious of maintaining India's image. He told us not to buy anything so that we did not give the "tourist" impression. He also was in a tearing rush to get back & quite scared of unknown dangers though' Bhutobabu was with us. The result was we missed Natore's famous sweets and were able to get stamps only by deliberately losing his jeep & staying back! Mr.Kar felt extremely annoyed at the SDO never consulting us about the plans, & not even telling us the plans but just whizzing off & expecting us to follow in tow.

**24.2.1972**

### **Work done**

Arranging for trucks to send shelters.

Attended function to separate Judiciary from Executive in Malda & W.Dinajpur.

Left for Calcutta at 5 pm. to bring election stationary materials.

### **Information**

15 trucks have to be sent at once to Bangladesh as otherwise internal distribution of refugees & food is impossible. Repeated radiograms to this effect are coming from the R.R. Commissioner. When I went to the DM, he confirmed this & told me I must leave at once for Calcutta as radiogram had arrived today for us to take delivery on 25<sup>th</sup> of Election materials.

I gave election office time till 4 pm. to draw an advance of Rs. 300/- for fuel & arranged for a truck as no bus would be available by this evening. Santosh Banerjee was to accompany me. The SDO told me to meet the Asst. C.E.O. Mr. P.K. Ganguly & get a letter of authority on

basis of which the stationary would be given to me. From here I took another letter too from the OC Election. He advised me to take my peon along as well.

I went to attend the function, being the only probationer invited. The District Judge made me sit on the dais, so did the High Court Registrar. But I left soon to sit with others as the DM of W.Dinajpur arrived & there was a shortage of chairs! The C.J. read out a history of Malda, and the DMs read out the Govt. notifications. The Judicial Secy. also spoke, followed by N.N.Kundu [PSP leader]. Meanwhile DM called me aside and told me to contact Bimal Sur, Suptdt. Govt. Sales Emporium & get a fine China dinner set & cutlery for the Governor who would arrive on 28<sup>th</sup>. I was to buy it from wherever possible, through them thus avoiding need to call for tenders.

**25.2.1972**

**Work done**

Getting stationary

Buying crockery

Going to AG for my pay slip.

**Persons met :**

Ashok Kapur: Under Secy, Home Dept.

Suptdt. Stationary.

S S Gopalan: Accounts Officer, GA-II, AGW.B.

B. Sur: Suptdt. WBG Sales Emporium.

Banerjee: Sales Supervisor.

Das: Asst. Director Cottage Industries.

**Information**

Having the jeep was a great help in all the running about. Mr.Ganguly was not available, but I was directed to the clerk concerned who gave me the authority + 1000 copies of Presiding Officer's Handbook.

Next I went to the AG office & gave Gopalan a copy of my LPC & was assured of my pay slip by another week.

I proceeded to the Stationary Office in the Bengal Govt. Press premises in Gopalnagar Road, & met the Suptdt. who said our stuff would be loaded at 3 pm. I left Santosh Banerjee, my peon & the truck there & went to the Govt. Sales Emporium, & tracked Sur to the office of the Dy.Dir. of Cottage Industries & there found him gone. The Asst. Director kindly tracked him down by phone back at his office! So I went back, & he, I & his sales supervisor looked through Chandni Chowk & New Market & at last bought a good set of crockery, cutlery & 6 cut glass glasses & one jug costing Rs.700/- , Rs.125/- and Rs.30/- respectively. Trouble was that Bengal Pottery is not making any more fine China dinner sets.

I went back & got gate passes for the truck. It had been loaded fully & could leave tomorrow. I intend staying back on 26<sup>th</sup> to rest, & leave on 27<sup>th</sup>.

Arranged for my driver's & peon's food at nearby Punjabi Hotel, & for their sleeping in the jeep & the garage.

**27.2.1972**

I reached Malda at 4.30 pm, having left Calcutta at 9.30 pm & halting for about an hour at Behrampore Tourist Lodge for food, i.e. 6 hours journey, including a trip to Plassey. Only a monument stands marking the site, with a model of the battle in the adjoining PWD Dak Bungalow.

Delivered the crockery, only to hear that Governor is not coming finally!

**28.2.1972**

**Work done**

Tackling drivers' strike

Checking arrangements for Prime Minister's meeting

Election training class

**Information**

Today I struggled to settle the sudden strike launched by the Isuzu truck drivers. They refuse to take the 15 trucks to Bangladesh unless a guarantee of future employment is given. They were earning well as public drivers of taxis & trucks previously & were persuaded to leave that for Govt. jobs. Now where will they go? DM was furious because they had refused to follow orders, without discussing things with him. He even talked of getting the army to drive the trucks. Mysteriously the leader of the drivers got to know this! He claims to be an ex-central C.I.D. & member of Malda Congress Committee. I mediated and DM agreed to meet 3 of them if I bought them along. I did so. DM agreed that he would try to absorb them as he had the Camp Assts, provided they obeyed orders first. Their leader Sankar Saha was adamant & wanted written commitment like what, he said, had been given in Murshidabad.

All this while the Rajshahi District Controller of Food was watching it all. Mr. Abdul Goffran had come to take delivery of the trucks & use them to distribute rations. He said threats of hungry processions were imminent. Both DM & I appealed to drivers not to spoil the reputation of Malda's generosity & that some temporary sacrifices are necessary for international goodwill. They seemed amenable but after talking with their union & the Cong® people (one of whom is a Collectorate clerk) refused. I felt quite angry at their lack of trust in the DM-- & all on part of Saha, & not so much the rest.

In the evening I went with DM to see arrangements for PM's meeting. Mikes were just being set up & DM put me in charge of checking them. No Congress volunteers visible at all, as opposed to the excellent organisation by the CPM for Jyoti Basu's meeting today. I was at the airfield 7.30-9.30 pm and found that the generator's current wasn't coming to the mikes. Went to report this to DM who was most worried. Mrs.De very kindly gave dinner, as I was most ravenously hungry, & I left at 10.30 pm with the SDO in his jeep for airfield. Found that current had finally come through and reported back to DM who was much relieved.

In morning attended election training class held by Kar in a local Cinema Hall.

**29.2.1972**

**Work done**

PM's meeting

**Information**

From 7.30-11.15 am I was at airfield and left only after testing personally every set of mikes & seeing all in operation. Amazing work by PWD in 4 days, putting up all the barricades & the rostrum. The mikes are from Calcutta by people who do the Brigade Parade Ground meetings, to avoid 1971's mike-failure which almost led to a lathi charge in PM's meeting.

I met SP's wife & 2 daughters (14 & 10). He peculiarly keeps her out of public gaze & she is hardly ever seen in functions. He seems to want to keep her out of sight & hearing of others, as if apprehensive of what she might say! The elder daughter is in class 11 though' only 14!

The PM arrived an hour late by helicopter at 2.15 pm. Before this we [DM, SP & myself] were telling Cong. volunteers here to fill the enclosures as people poured in-- some 3 lakhs in all. PM spoke for 10 minutes followed by Abdus Sattar's Bengali translation & presenting all Malda candidates on the rostrum. In all 20 mins. only and for that so much work! I felt most relieved when it was all over. The crowd hardly clapped at her speech & was remarkably quiet & undemonstrative.

Taught DM's eldest son Goldsmith's "Village Schoolmaster". What pleasure to teach poetry again!

**1.3.1972 (holiday)**

Today is a local holiday as Holi is celebrated here today. I stayed indoors. At 3 pm reported at election office & with other probationers checked Kharba & Ratua constituencies' polling

stations & part nos. in the original & final print copies. Found a few clerical mistakes. Checking of ballot papers begins tomorrow.

In evening I found all hotels closed-- so no dinner besides some chocolate I luckily had. At DM's met Bhutobabu. DM told me to send only what I could by 8<sup>th</sup> March & sell the rest. Bhuto & I will go to Nachol on 3<sup>rd</sup> to survey route. I am sceptical about what more I can send as trucks are scarce. DM hopes to reach a final understanding with truck drivers tomorrow.

On my remarking that last 3 years little developmental work had been done owing to calamities, DM referred to the irrigation schemes into which immense money had been poured leading to a potential green revolution, also the biggest fishery project in WB was done by him. The Dept. had mistakenly chosen a site without surveying it, thinking it was a silted up canal on the map, which could bring water from Bhagirathi to fill the project lake. Actually it was Gauda's ramparts! What our DM did was to unofficially get cooperation of SP, PWD, Sericulture & dig a canal thro' test relief from there to the lake across police firing range, sericulture grounds, PWD road! This would have been impossible through applying to Govt. for sanction. And now it is WB's biggest project.

I heard Mr. Mirdha is not coming here & that our ADM is going this month as a Dy. Secy. Bhutobabu said he had seen Bihari Muslims crossing into Malda. Chains have been set up by dalals between both check-posts and those waiting to cross over. This is a great potential danger & DM immediately contacted the BSF over this for more alertness.

**2.3.1972**

### **Work done**

Enquiry in Nandinadaha Gramsabha about House Building Grant [9.30-6 pm; 130 Km. by jeep; 8 miles by buffalo cart; 6 miles by foot. Total:150 Km approx].

### **Information**

Left at 9.30 with BDO Bamangola and went up to Sathian in the jeep [Chandpukur Anchal]. Crossed Hariya river & went by buffalo-cart to Taltola. Then walked to Nandinadaha village. The b.cart was a new experience. Quite well padded with blankets and proceeded briskly. Bullocks would have gone faster, I was told, as buffaloes cannot stand much heat though' they are much more hardy where mud is concerned.

In the village the Pradhan took us around his village & Rangamati village, showing the completely destroyed houses. They lack the withal to make these—needs at least Rs.100. Trouble is they lack know-how & have to employ labour for making the mud walls unlike the Santhals who rarely wait for Govt. grants. This entire place is on the bank of the Punarbhava, and lots of shooting by Paks was usual. The people are all 1947 refugees, and have received maximum relief all through & seem to have become used to getting it! But when wheat is given, they sell it, being averse to eating it. I soundly rebuked this attitude & the Pradhan undertook to stop such selling of G.R in future Most lamented having nothing to eat but I did not see any signs of starvation/malnutrition. They are unenthusiastic about bamboo huts. Obviously they must be having enough valuable stuff to insist on mud walls. Laments were made that all crops were being ruined by pests; yet none had ever gone to the AEO for remedies! That made me sharply reprimand them & they accepted it.

Unfortunately the Punarbhava is Bangladesh's, otherwise valuable River-lift schemes could be started at Khutadaha, Nandinadaha, Taltola & Songhat. Also from Hariya river at Adadanga, Ashrafpur, Dondanga and Hanspukur. Curiously, none wants to take pumps on loan. All want hard cash & hence go for shallow tubewells which are useless as here no water is found underground. Along Hariya a few have pumps & are hiring these out @ Rs.5/- an hour. The result is lush greenery there.

On way back at Taltola people made me visit Haripal village. This is low lying and so worse ruined. As these are chronic areas, point of giving house building money is nil. They all say

the floods these last 2 years have been because of Farakka. The flood has covered much land with sand, I found, but wheat is growing.

What is needed is not money grants but tractors, seeds, water to make them self sufficient & prosperous.

On getting back, DM told me the trucks drivers are refusing to go to Bangladesh & he has wired Calcutta accordingly. I was to go with army patrol to Chanchol on 6<sup>th</sup> & return after 11<sup>th</sup>, but DM said he wants me here to do distribution, be Presiding Officer, & do reception too, as I would never get a chance to be PO later. So I am to leave Chanchol on 9<sup>th</sup>. DM insisted I should never go empty stomach [no lunch today-- luckily my chocolate + a glass of milk at Taltola--which villagers insisted I have]. He also offered to sanction R.L.I schemes, & suggested I use Punarbhava by cutting a canal under TR schemes into our land.

**3.3.1972**

### **Work done**

Visited Kutubsahar to check loading of shelter materials.

Visited Boalia village [Gomostapur] and Rohanpur Ghat in Bangladesh. [2 – 5 pm; 68 km.].

### **Persons met**

Moinul Haque: Gomostapur Thana Awami League Secretary.

### **Information**

At 7.30 a.m. I was awakened by a man from Maharajpur referred to me by SDO. He wants 4 truckloads more. I wrote accordingly to the MVI (tech).

A little later Rahman & Bhutobabu turned up. The latter had taken the “Bastuhara Sahayak Samiti” team to Harinagar, and they have decided to supply 500 looms at once and fishing nets. We decided to leave for Nachol at 2 pm. Meanwhile Rahaman & I left at 9 am for Kutubsahar where I told the labourers not to shorten the roofing structures but to cut the bindings so that they could be sent whole. In the present size that they are being cut down to, no useful purpose will be served. They have become too small for any hut.

No further trucks have reported.

I attended the 10 am election training class and jotted down notes and inspected working of the ballot box.

At 2 pm I left with Bhutobabu. Earlier he had given Rahman letters to Rajshahi MCAs asking them to arrange for taking our truck drivers on deputation, as otherwise all relief work was at a standstill.

We crossed through Kumarpur checkpost into Bholahat thana & thence via Daldalia Union to Boalia where 500 inmates had been slaughtered & then to the ghat nearby [27 km. from border] across which is Nachol. Best would be to drop materials here. Moinul Haque met us at the ghat. He said it would be no use contacting MCAs. Rather tell SDO Nawabganj to send his Relief Officer for receiving whatever we sent.

Haque, like Bhuto, is bitter against the display of arrogance & power by MCAs. Both feel that a re-election won't give 90% of them any nomination at all. Bhuto said Mujib has been told by the youth cadres to scrap these people & intends holding an election in Jan. 1973.

Moinul is non-communal & genuinely secular and very worried over the Benoy Roy incident. This gentleman had been driven out of Boalia in riots years back. After liberation, Haque invited him back & made occupiers vacate his house. They went to the MCA, Khaled, who had the Mukti Fauj militia drive them out. His wife was molested. Bhutobabu had warned him at such action. Bhuto does not wish to enter politics; wants to relax & re-start his civil & criminal practice. He is a double MA in History [Islamic as well as General, 1962, 63] & LLB. He said people mostly patronised Hindu lawyers, & doctors, having more faith in their integrity!

All the Collectorate offices have been taken up to check ballot papers. No other work is being done. Orders have come to prosecute any BD refugees staying back after 7/3/72 under Foreigner's Act.

**4.3.1972**

**Work done**

Attended Treasury

Attended Election Office

**Information**

Met ADM in morning before leaving for my assignment to enquire into a complaint regarding settlement of Ryotwari Rights in Milki, Atgama Mouza. He advised me to take the JLRO along, as without him & the files on that case, I would be at a total loss. The JLRO could not trace the file, his clerk being absent & as the BDO had, surprisingly enough, not told him anything about the proposed enquiry. JLRO, Mr. Ghosh gave me the background to the case: several peasants jointly cultivating land, claim rights now. The approved list, after BDO's enquiry, is Cong + CPI hence the CPM peasants lodged this protesting plaint. I went there & told the Gram Sewak that nothing could be done till after elections, as the JLRO is also a Presiding Officer.

After this I saw proposed counting arrangements at Zilla School & BT College in company of DM & OC Election. Then sat in Treasury for an hour, and then checked packing of election materials for each booth.

Had a long talk with DM in the afternoon. He repeatedly warned me never to go without food for a long time as this had ruined his health through gastric ulcer [he had to have an operation in 1952, which was not effective]. He was Dy. Mag. in charge of Relief in Malda; then posted to Krishnanagar where he later became SDO; then Alipurduar (during the Shoulmari Sadhu affair who was supposed to be Netaji) & Barrackpore SDO. Promoted to ADM in Bankura, then ADC Jalpaiguri & then Jt. Director Industries. He reminisced about Prof. Benoy Sarkar teaching every Arts subject in Cal. Univ., about the jam-packed classes he used to take, about his own interview [he got highest mark in Const. Law & in Pol. Science] where Dr. P.N. Banerjee only asked him science questions & after he prayed against this as unfair to the Chairman, then Banerjee concentrated for 20 mins on Const. Law. He also told me:-

1. For writing on District Plan, to take up Agriculture, Irrigation, Industries, Roads.
2. For special aspect, take up rural electrification of N.Malda thro' Barauni, to power pumps. The S.E.B. will give me details. Also, see BDO Harischandrapur-I for this.
3. Evacuee Repatriation as special paper. He also assured me that the break caused in my Treasury Training by the army duty at Chanchol would be condoned, and no extension of training would be necessary.

I have been made Presiding Officer in the Town school, where a bomb burst in 1971 elections! Quite thrilling. My peon has made himself the 3<sup>rd</sup> P.O.

Today received a letter from Home-GA about a meeting of our batch called by Mr. J.K. Kohli on 3<sup>rd</sup>. Though dated 23<sup>rd</sup>. Feb., the letter was sent only on 1<sup>st</sup> March & reached me today! I wrote off a reply.

**5.3.1972 (Sunday)**

Cooked meat at SDO's and learned a lot about his youth. He got 60% in his IAS interview but because of his lower paper marks stood 111<sup>th</sup>, while 110 were taken!

Helped in various work in election office all evening. I am now in Distribution on 10<sup>th</sup>, presiding officer at female booth in Town School on 11<sup>th</sup>, then in Reception immediately followed by duty in the Strong Room till 13<sup>th</sup>! Received my appointment letter. I was assured that my peon & 2<sup>nd</sup> PO are so experienced that I'll just have to sit back & not worry.

I leave at noon tomorrow with the army patrol to Chanchol.

Wrote up my Official Diary from 14/1 to 5/3 from 9.30 to 11.30 pm. tonight! Probationers must have the habit of writing up both diaries simultaneously, otherwise this huge backlog remains to irritate one.

The Official Diary must not contain any avoidable breaks in Treasury Training.

**6.3.1972**

**Work done**

Treasury training

Muharram magisterial duty with army column to Chanchol

**Information**

I attended Treasury for about an hour & then after much trouble could get a jeep, as all were either out or in precarious condition. I left at 12.30 pm, instead of the scheduled 7 am as army had wanted to leave after lunch. Met Lt.Col. D.I. Malik, C.O. 33 Light Rgt. (Artillery) & left at 1.30 pm. with Major R.Gopal, four 1 tonners, 2 jeeps & 90 men. The army proceeded at 35 km/ph, so I reached Chanchol only at 5 pm! They camped in the Thana & Major Gopal, OC Kharba, C.I. Mr Pronob Roy & I drew up a list of spots to tour:-

*Kaligram, Galimpur, Koboya, Sitalpur, Mubarakpur, Mokdoompur.*

I found the only other room in the I.B. turned into Cong [O] Shri Bishu Babu's office thanks to the Z.P. Chairman who was occupying the other room & left after I arrived. He was horrified at the sanitary arrangements & the dilapidated condition of the place.

I had dinner at my familiar Monomohit Hotel, whose proprietor was most gratified but apologetic because of his inability to reach the food anywhere due to rush of customers during elections.

**7.3.1972**

**Work done**

Army patrolling continued.

Today we started at 9.30 am & returned 2.30 pm after having breakfast with the Major & discussions about places the two BDOs wanted us to cover. In Kharba (II), we were asked to go to Jalarpur, Choralmani, Bishnupur. We could not go beyond Malahar owing to bad roads. Furthermore, due to driver's fault one 1 tonner flipped over from the road. It had to be righted after cutting away much of the road. This was on way to Malakar. Luckily no one seriously hurt & vehicle ran OK after it. I procured Arnica for the driver's sprained leg from Chanchol. The Major & I get along famously & he requested his CO to arrange for me to stay on with them. However this is not possible.

Took Major & C.I's wife & little daughter to see the Bengali movie running—an imitation of "Sound of Music".

**8.3.1972**

**Work done**

Army patrolling continued.

From 8 am we left to tour Harishchandrapur & managed to cover only the Northern portion: Tulsihalta, Kushida, Guhila, Baroi, Pema. From BDOs I got names of other sensitive spots & left a list of this with the Major. Returned at 230 pm.

Visited the library [librarian is Sri Kedarnath Banerjee] & found 1874 [1<sup>st</sup>ed] Vol.3 of Forster's "Life of Dickens" and devoured the exhaustive & rare "Memories of Gaur & Pandua" by Abid Ali Khan of Malda, written for Lord Curzon's visit to the ruins. Interesting anecdotes are recorded like Arjun having executed the mysteriously named Sataisghara tank & that this was Virat & Kichak's area! I jotted down notes of places where Gour ruins exist & hope to visit them soon. Listed library's rare books. Note the priceless Folios on Ajanta & Ellora dated 1860s at the Chanchol library, microfilmed by National Library.

Election prospects of Cong® not very bright as Bishu Babu has split the Congress vote. Hence CPM can win.



Touring with army is irritating because of their 20-30 Km. speed. Hence it took so long to cover areas & we were unable to cover Southern Harishchandrapur. I arranged with BDOs to send guides by 8 am on 10<sup>th</sup> to army at Chanchol for complete touring when S.N.Majumdar replaces me.

### 9.3.1972

Today we toured Ratua to Bhaluka Bazar from where the Cong® insisted we tour the CPM Jaggannathpur (all very sullen Muslims I found!) and then Pukhuria whence I left for Malda around 2 p.m. and reached at 3 p.m.

Attended Treasury at 4.30 p.m.

Drew Rs. 15/- contingency for my polling party (No. 584, station 56 at Town H.S. in English Bazar Constituency). My party consists of:-

Aparna Das Gupta, Lady Gram Sevika, English Bazar block

Sudhir Ch. Acharjee, clerk, Dist. Cooperative Office

Makhan Ch. Satiar, peon.

according to my appointment letter of 14/2/72 (!!!), Memo No. 179-1184.

Makhan has purchased bamboo sticks which, tied to a table top & with gunny bags, will make the voting compartment. He took money to get a “surahi” & 2 glasses for the booth. He suggested we leave the ballot boxes in the booth in custody of the accompanying police.

### 10.3.1972

#### Work done

Presiding Officer duty

#### Information

Reported at distribution centre at 8 am. Slight mix-up of centres for each constituency owing to lack of co-ordination last night. Benches for polling staff, marked party-wise had not been lined up before the correct counters. This was rectified. Then we had coolies bring the ballot paper trunks & at 9 am. I began distribution with R.Kar & 2 clerks & 2 peons, to Kaliachak. This has the largest number of booths [99], yet working at top speed we finished much before other counters at 11.45 am.

Then I collected my materials & picked proper boxes personally as I found that my staff were not sure as to which were defective, not having properly attended to the training. I confirmed my selection by checking with BDO English Bazar about how to see if boxes were defective [once closed, the slit cannot be opened without opening the box itself].

I left at 12.30 with the 4 Home Guards & 2 Madhya Pradesh Special Armed Force (MPSAF) [both from Kutubshahar & were delighted to be with me] & selected a room as our booth. The adjoining party for the men’s booth had not turned up. Their Pres. Officer came later, quite at a loss as to how to reach with materials. So I sent him back with a note to T.P.Ghosh requesting to allot transport to this party. I found this chap, though quite experienced in elections, extremely uncertain about what to do. He is from the Gram Sevak Trg. Centre & has never heard of T.P.Ghosh etc!

Makhan rigged up a lovely voting compartment, tying bamboo sticks to the legs of a table & sewing 2 gunny bags all around. I added a 3<sup>rd</sup> one as a roof & ensured no movement inside is visible from outside. Using the 2 doors, I arranged the booth so as to have clear entrance & exits. I also got proper chairs for the P.O.s as only desks would be horrible without backrests. Finally, from local sweet shop I arranged for our dry-lunch tomorrow (we won’t have time for rice & curry) consisting of “looohis” & fried potatoes & brinjals.

We have 942 voters in our list—all women. Miss Das Gupta (in her 40s) was P.O. here in 1971 too & expects great delay as many women will like to sign!

We checked all our materials & the ballot paper serials & stamped them all with the P.S. mark 42/56. Left at 4 pm after locking & arranging for night patrolling.

From 6.15 am to 9.15 pm I was at the Malda Town School booth. At first I signed some 100 ballot papers, then at 6.45 Makhan & I prepared one ballot box in presence of all agents. Polling began at 7 am punctually & ended at 5.15 pm., with big lulls 10.30-11.00 & again 11.30-1.00 pm. Maximum voters 150 in the 3-5 pm period. Usually it took 1 to 1+1/2 min. to record a vote.

I did work of every polling staff replacing them for short intervals while they had food which I had arranged to be brought by the Dak Bungalow chowkidar from a sweet shop. He reached 1+1/2 hours late while we were just conquering pangs of hunger [not having had anything besides tea before we arrived]. Lack of a tea-stall nearby made things worse. I had a slab of chocolate which I distributed to all of us after poll was over. Then the sealing, packing & making the b.p. account & diary took us up to 8 pm. as we proceeded slowly, waiting for the vehicle. Finally, I sent Makhan, at 8.30 pm & he turned up at 9.15 pm with it. We went & deposited all articles at the B.T College reception. I gave Makhan dinner at Raj Hotel & had it myself too [the 2 others had left already]

Wonderful to see some 300 trucks, & more jeeps, buses etc all pressed into election work & even a special train. I am to report at the strong room at 6 am tomorrow, to replace H.G.Roy. Learnt my job from him at B.T.College before returning to DB. On way reported to DM who was pleased.

My booth had 632 out of 942 votes i.e. 60%, while the adjoining male booth had 50% only. Overall polling has been very dull I heard from DM. He ascribes good female turnout to our PM's influence.

I got some 5 blind voters—no other abnormal cases, & only 8 voters were outside the booth at 5 p.m. The polling agents—all college boys & girls—were most helpful in tracking down sl. nos. of voters in cases of confusion. The MPSAF armed guard, Dhan Singh, was extremely helpful as well in odd security jobs. His younger brother & nephew have died in the recent war, in Kashmir front. So I left him my address if I could help anyhow. He was extremely grateful. Amazingly dutiful: he had not sat down right from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.! Work of polling staff very admirable, specially Makhan's superb packing & sealing techniques. A thoroughly educative & enjoyable day's work.

**12.3.1972 (Sunday)**

**Work done**

Election duty: strong room in-charge.

**Information**

I took charge of the strong room at 6.15 a.m. today and up to 12.30 p.m. personally received Harishchandrapur & Kharba ballot boxes & polling materials & arranged them serially. Then I arranged the statutory covers of English Bazar & Kharba constituencies in separate individual bundles for facilitating sealing.

Laxity in Reception was clear because many stations had failed to include some covers & many hadn't signed them or shown the station no. on them.

Attended instructions on counting by H.G.Roy. Begins at 8 a.m. tomorrow. I am to report at 7 a.m.

Had a long talk with Gorachand Chakraborty, Sub Dy. Coll. on probation here joined on 4<sup>th</sup> Feb, & to appear in MA English (1971 batch of C.U.). His father was Law Secy. [K.K.Chakraborty] & now member of Language Commission & erstwhile prof. of English in Rajshahi with Dr. Amalendu Bose. We exchanged reminiscences of Univ. life & I gave him some tips about Malda, specially that he must meet DM often, & must search out work & not wait for it to be given. He is rather timid—asked me what work could he get tomorrow, since he hadn't been given any officially! I have asked him to join me & I'll give him work. As he wants a residence, I booked him in the adjoining room here. Has appeared for WBCS.

**13.3.1972**

**Work done**

Election duty: strong room in-charge continued & counting.

**Information**

Today from 7 a.m. I was in charge of the strong room at BT college, sending batches of 12 boxes to each constituency of the 5 in the college premises. This was over by 12.30 p.m.

After lunch I was busy sorting the statutory covers, & then around 3 pm joined the ADM, helping him to stamp & decide doubtful & rejected cases. The number of rejected votes was alarming & showed serious lack of voter education. Found quite a few from my own booth too! Unique case of Presiding Officer also acting as Asstt. Returning Officer! Many Presiding Officers, we found, had given voters the voting stamp in red ink! Most rejection were 'No Marking' or 'Blank Area Marking', 'Multiple voting' & v.v. few otherwise. One had an appeal for H.B.Grants tagged on to it!

Bimal Das won easily in English Bazar after we completed the 6 rounds of counting at 11 am. Result was declared &, after sealing all the ballot papers & strong room, we left at 1 am 14<sup>th</sup> totally exhausted!

Luckily the office provided us snacks at intervals & finally a light chicken & paratha dinner too. Complete Congress & CPI landslide. Not a single CPM seat!

In counting process, I saw a lot of K.S.Majumdar's real character. He was constantly needling counters to ask DM for a second day's allowance of Rs. 6 & they were deliberately slowing counting to reach 12 p.m. but failed in this. Also he constantly loudly criticised M.S. Bhattacharyya, OC Election for being a miser & not spending money freely for refreshments for the workers! And of course he was all the time praising himself & his own proficiency! Most irritating.

The ADM's patience and ability to sit & work for hours [8 am to 1 am] was amazing really. He inspired a new liking & respect for him in me. As for me, I was constantly being pulled between Strong Room and ARO's table & got irritable at the fag end.

**14.3.1972**

**Work done**

Treasury training.

Election duty—sealing statutory packets.

**Information**

Today I was in the Treasury from 11.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and then proceeded to B.T. College where I helped to seal all statutory packets for Harischandrapur constituency. This carried on till 5 pm after which I attended a tea party to all officers & drivers & clerks thrown by Hannan Chowdhury who arrived to see DM before he is transferred.

DM agreed to R.Kar & S.N Majumdar's request to be allowed to go to Dacca before DM leaves Malda. We will leave on 17<sup>th</sup> & I'll carry along a convoy of trucks to Rajshahi with rice & blankets. Thence on to Dacca. We need passports for this as Rajshahi onwards is not an official trip. Curiously, when, later, M.S. Bhattacharyya made the same request it was rejected by DM!

Letter from AG arrived saying they had not yet received my LPC from UP AG & hence could not issue payslip, but that provisional payment could be arranged under F.D. Memo No. 1782-F of 27/5/1970.

The packing & sealing today was haphazard—each constituency following a different method: some sealing each packet, others sealing package of 10 packets. Showed need for uniform instructions to be laid down clearly beforehand.

All officers including DM are apprehensive of the Congress' brute majority as a threat to Democracy which is basically Govt. by opposition. At the same time, all are relieved at the prospect of no elections for another 4 years [Parliamentary Elections then].

Here are Malda's results:--

English Bazar

Bimal Das [CPI]	:	25,116.
Sailen Sarkar [CPM]	:	14,287.
Hari Prasanna Misra [TS]	:	6,319.

Harishchandrapur

Gautam Chakraborty [C]	:	23,433.
Ilias Raza [W.P]	:	21,418.
Peshkar Ali [C-O]	:	1,361.

Sujapur

A.B.A. Gani Khan Chowdhury [C]	:	32,911.
Mannan Sekh [Ind]	:	9,418.
Habibur Rahman [ML]	:	4,623.

Kaliachak

Samsuddin Ahmed [C]	:	23,933.
Promod Ranjan Das [Ind]	:	23,740.
Dhirendra Saha [RSP]	:	7,459.

Manikchak

Joshilal Mondal [C]	:	25,460.
Sudhendu Jha [CPM]	:	18,036.

Kharba

Md. Mohbubul Haque [C]	:	25,512.
Nazimul Haque [CPM]	:	24,843.
Birendra Kr. Maitra [C-O]	:	3,074.

Habibpur

Rabindra Murmu [CPI]	:	27,027.
Parkar Murmu [CPM]	:	13,207.
Boila Murmu [Ind]	:	4,514.

Gajol

Benjamin Hembrom [C]	:	26,075.
Suphal Murmu [CPM]	:	14,561.
Shyam Tudu [JS]	:	2,783.

Ratua

Nirendra Sinha [C]	:	21,755.
Md. Ali [CPM]	:	18,668.
Ali Nabed [Ind]	:	755.

Malda

Gaphrur Rahman [C]	:	27,420.
Md. Ilias [CPM]	:	16,286.

**15.3.1972****Work done**

Treasury training etc.

**Information**

Attended Treasury 11 a.m.–12 noon. Then proceeded to send AG (WB) a declaration under FD memo no.1782 F dt 27/05/70 for issue of provisional payslip.

From DM I learnt that I was to proceed tomorrow with 450 Qts. of rice & all gift blankets (some 30 bales) to DC Rajshahi so that he got these before our DM lands in Dacca. We were to deliver these & then were free to see Dacca as well. He said this to me in M.S. Bhattacharyya's presence & naturally when we were making out permits for ourselves, he also wanted to come. Thereupon S.N.Majumdar tactfully explained that he must get DM's

prior permission first as we had got. DM is possibly rather displeased with MSB over his over-prudence in election expenses. BDOs have been complaining to DM that those in Zilla School got lavish food, but not those in BT College.

I secured 4 jerry cans & sent off trucks to Habibpur, Kutubsahar, Harishchandrapur & Ratua to pick up residue rice. The drivers are anxious to please & but for their political leader would probably also go to Bangladesh.

With MVIs I met DM who agreed to hire whatever trucks I needed at market rates of Rs.125/- instead of Rs. 80/-. I hope to get these early tomorrow morning.

**16.3.1972**

**Work done**

Delivered Relief material at Rajshahi.

**Information**

The trucks arrived around 7 a.m. and I had 7 of them loaded with some 244 Quintals of rice [much of it had got spoilt I am afraid] and 32 bales of blankets. Trucks sent to Block Offices had not returned, so at 2.30 p.m. we left [R.Kar, S.N.Majumdar, G.C.Chakraborty & M.S.Bhattacharyya]. MSB got in when we went to collect letters to DC and to District Judge Dacca. DM told us to take him along. Delay occurred in getting the letters (because DM had not done them yesterday). Each of us had one small bag containing night wear, toilet accessories & a bed sheet. We also had permits stating we were on official duty to Bangla Desh, from the DM.

I found the dirt road much better this time as the freshly put extra earth had been flattened down & packed hard by trucks passing. However, our silencer's joint came off and we had to tie it up & proceed noisily to Sibganj. There at Lokman Khan's garage (he was killed by Paks) the nuts were all tightened (they were all loose) & we went on to Nawabganj & found 5 trucks stranded there though they had reached at 3 pm as the ferry pontoon run by C & B Dept. was closed as the workers refused to work without extra payment. So we crossed by boat & found out Bhuto Babu who took us to SDO. SDO contacted C & B officer and arranged for extra labour from the ghat at Rs.1 each. It needs 14 men in all. At first he was going to lend the C & B Razakars from the jail [an illegal act since it was dark! Bhuto at once suggested local hiring]. He was worried over how to pay the extra money! Luckily the C & B officer undertook to adjust this.

Then we left around 9 p.m. The DC was out, so we searched out the ADC's residence, which was a total contrast to the splendour of the DC's residence. Probably he has not been able to get a Govt. residence. He was extremely courteous & immediately arranged for our accommodation in the best five rooms on Circuit House (CH) 1<sup>st</sup> floor. He also told us that our 2 trucks had reported to the Controller of Food. This was a big relief as I had forgotten to tell them to report at the C.H. After this we again went to the D.C. & met him. He is 1962 C.S.P., with prominent long side burns, very stylish and highly sophisticated anglicized Bengali accent. He immediately signed the receipt, & contacted the C & B & Controller of Food over getting our truck across the very same night. Fulminated a lot against the unwillingness & irresponsibility of the labourers. "Fruits of Democracy" he said sarcastically. He was DC Faridpur during the Pak crackdown & only fled at the fag end into Muktanthal. His sympathies are not very pro-Bangladesh. Not once did he query us about food & accommodation.

At the CH I found a separate suite for me, as I was known as the ADC/ADM of Malda (this nomenclature stuck to me throughout despite my actual designation stamped on my card--anyhow it was most useful!). The mix up occurred chiefly because they do not have such a probationary post. An Asst. Commr. is a substantive permanent rank.

We had curry & puris brought by S.N.Mazumdar, sharing equally with the driver, and decided to leave by 3.30 a.m. tomorrow. The DC and Bhuto had advised us to catch the 1<sup>st</sup>

ferry at 8 a.m. at Nagarbari Ghat otherwise we would be delayed a lot. This is 20 miles from Pabna. From the Aricha Ghat (where we would land) Dacca is 55 miles.

At the CH we met Amjad Hossain, MPA, who wanted to accompany us to Dacca. We agreed as the company of a local man was most useful.

**17.3.1972**

**Work done**

Visit to Dacca

**Information**

We set out by 3.30 a.m. and stopped for a quick breakfast of hot puris, curry & sweets at Pabna & reached Nagarbari at about 6.45 a.m. to find a massive queue of relief trucks and private cars which were there since last night as there had been a big quarrel over letting Indian relief trucks get priority, leading to stopping of the ferry. We were lucky to get on the ferry (called Faridpur) along with 8 cars & 6 trucks. The ferry took about an hour. Total lack of any management at both ferries was cause of much confusion. The journey over sailing-boats dotted river Jamuna was delightful & the breeze carried away all the tiredness.

We reached Dacca around 1.30 p.m. driving straight to the Indira-Mujib meeting venue, already full of people. Then we went to the MPA Hostel, where Amjad kindly gave us his room & shifted to share Sankar Gobinda Choudhuri's room. We dropped Amjad at the meeting & finding New Market shut, as Mujib's birthday is a national holiday, proceeded to the District Judge's brother's house (which our driver knew) & found his wife & son there & they took us to his house (a rented one, as the official residence is still occupied by the previous incumbent). He most kindly accompanied us & showed us the High Court, Ramna (where the Kali temple & adjacent masjid have both been completely destroyed—not a stone remains), Shahid Pillars (also destroyed). Then we went to see the "Buri Ganga" by Nababpur Road. Just the contrast between Old & New Delhi! And what a rash of rickshaws, totally fearless & lawless! DJ told us here once rickshaw had bumped against his car & promptly demanded Rs.5/- compensation, which he paid! We got held up in the jam of people returning from the meeting. DJ said he had never seen such a crowd in Dacca. From Maranchand's shop he bought us curd 2 seers & Pranhara sandesh 1 seer (Mrs. Gandhi was given this sandesh). We saw the teeming steamer terminal & tried to do some shopping. Found nothing to our taste. The DJ explained that at present stocks were practically nil & hence prices had shot up. Earlier Karachi nylons were sold for Rs.15/- to 20/-, stainless steel was very cheap too, but none available now. M.S.Bhattacharyya bought a Chinese wristwatch steel band, and an English make-up face powder for his wife. Rest of us bought the daily *Ittefaq*. Then we went to Kamalbari Rly. station, a soaring architectural beauty, open on all sides & so lovely that it has become an evening promenade place! Here on 25<sup>th</sup> March army machine-gunned everyone present & rivers of blood flowed on the platforms. The station is not yet finished. The DJ pressed us to come after a year & see how prosperous Bangladesh would then be. Even this year they are exporting Rs. 22 crores of jute & much fish.

The DJ told us how Marwaris were black-marketing fuel, by diverting illegally part of the consignment sent to Bangla Desh. He also lamented the bad advisors of the Sheikh who had printed his photograph on currency notes. All the present MCAs need to be scrapped, he said. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Capital the Paks were building near the city is again strikingly modern architecture. At the nearby Sabhar region where Pak army was stationed we saw huge bomb craters.

**18.3.1972**

**Work done**

Return to Malda

**Information**

Left at 5 a.m., stopped at Pabna for lunch at Pabna Boarding. The Hilsa & Rohi were not as tasty as our own. Fish is Rs. 3/- a seer. I bought 2 saris for Rs. 25/- and Rs. 30/- and an atlas

of Bangladesh. Quite a scarcity of good saris & none over 80 counts of thread, as looms have not yet started work.

Memorable ferry from Aricha to Nagarbari, as for miles we saw the muddy Padma & blue Jamuna running side by side yet miraculously never mingling. There were 8 ferries of which 6 were bombed out. Only 2 are running between Aricha, Goalandar & Nagarbari plus two more U.N. barges (massive affairs carrying a dozen trucks at a time). The jeep cost us Rs.18/- and each person's ticket is 75 paise. Eggs were sold at the ghat at 8 for a rupee, and chicken for Rs. 3/- only!

We reached Rajshahi around 6 p.m. and the DC told us our trucks had been unloaded & had gone back. He has been touring the thanas, seeing relief work. He criticised corruption in the relief committees by politicians. He is meeting DM, W.Dinajpur for food from there tomorrow. Once the Singabad-Rohanpur rail link is done, the food problem will be largely solved as no transport crisis will hamper it. By boat also some 14,000 quintals have arrived. The ferry is now working on a 24 hour basis for relief trucks. DC told us about their CSP & EPCS training centres in Lahore & Dacca: huge palatial affairs. His attitude is most feudal & authoritarian I fear!

Reached Malda 9.30 p.m. (a total journey of 904 km.) carrying "Kanchagolla" of Natore Kali temple! The audit party is leaving tomorrow & so gave me dinner.

### 19.3.1972

Today I found the DM had gone to Cal to get his transfer order. At 6 p.m. Sudhir Chakraborty (journalist) came to hear an account of my trip for an article. He had wanted me to write but I had refused. I had also called G.C.Chakravorty (Sub.Dy.Coll.) as a witness to what I said. Sudhir babu told us about his past involvement from the age of 11 in the independence movement, leading to arrest & pin-pricking of his nails, which are still all ruined & he can't write properly yet. Had his education in Malda, Patna, BHU, Lahore due to constant arrests & harassment by the Intelligence Bureau. Did his MA in Ancient Indian History & then in Iconography from Lahore. Curator of the museum here from 1956. Joined Communists in 1947 & left in 1971 due to its entente with Congress. In 1942-45 was a Lt. in army in N.Burma!

In the evening I taught DM's son Keats' "To one who has been long in city pent" & Scott's "Lochinvar" & had dinner there too. A welcome change from canteen food! The DM's wife is extremely friendly—almost motherly. In the course of our talk she let me know that both DM & SDO thought highly of me—a compliment I swallowed avidly!

### 20.3.1972

#### Work done

English Office Training.

#### Information

I sat with the Head Astd., Saroj Babu, who is to retire soon. He explained to me first of all that this office was the most important in the Collectorate as it controlled all other depts. He showed me the file index which revealed all the different manifold affairs under it (including the Establishment). He explained that under each major heading there were files for each sub-head & so a file would be marked in roman + Arabic numerals. Thus XVI signified the subject head of "Library, Forms, Stationary", while 5 stood for "Library—Books purchased for". I went through the files on Archaeology and found that silver coins of Shah Alam's time had been found, and that thrilling excavations at Nalrajar Garh in Cooch Behar had revealed Gupta age fortifications. I also went through the file on Malda Museum. It gets a grant of Rs.600/- annually & has rare Bengali MSS which the N.Bengal Univ. wants to catalogue & decipher. No follow up action has been taken on these.

The file on Board for Defence Personnel revealed touching cases of families of soldiers killed or maimed in action. To one the Governor had sent a letter of appreciation which the ADM personally made over to the family.

There is even a Meteorology file with the post of an Observer sanctioned who takes readings of barometer in ADM & DM's rooms as also of the rain gauge! These are termed gorgeously as "Observatories"!

Files are brought forward to the next year if:-

- 1.They are not bulky.
- 2.Contain correspondence which needs to be referred to constantly.

The documents are classed as:-

- A- permanent
- B- Destroy after 12 years
- C- Destroy after 3 years.

Letters reach the OS who sends relevant ones to English Office H.A., who classifies them as above & passes them on to the Reference Clerk who enters them in the Receipt Register in Form 16. On the letter he marks:

- a) Receipt No. (serially)
- b) File collection number

On the file cover he enters the no. & short subject of the letter, & the sl. no. is also noted on the letter.

In the Issue Register, besides the letter, the date it is sent is noted in the Receipt Register in the "action taken" column. If the nature of a letter so requires, in this column we note "no reply required" (NR).

Every month a list is compiled from the Issue & Receipt Registers of pending letters, & monthly reminders are sent for letters which have not been answered.

On the office copy of letters being issued, on the left, receipt no. of letter replied to, & its sl. no. in the file are noted. On the right, we note the sl. no. & issue no. of this letter. I went through the *Bengal Ferries Act, 1885*, with un-amended references to the Lt. Governor & such more antiquated stuff. One ferry's tolls are being auctioned on 27<sup>th</sup>. I went through its file & will attend it.

Visited the SDO who had been to Kaliachak today. There the PWD had acquired land 4 years back & now the ex-owners were refusing to let it make a road to Farakka through it until compensation was paid. PWD had acquired it stating work had to start at once, & nothing has been done for 4 years, & no compensation paid. The land is a "leechu" garden of 50 bighas, and was acquired just as the fruit was ripening. All the trees were cut down & the owner left without any avocation & compensation. Naturally he has refused to let the PWD commence work. SDO flatly told PWD to pay some compensation at once & refused to restrain the people by police, which might well lead to firing.

With SDO visited K.S.Majumdar's house, hearing his wife recently fainted from gastritis. She is fine now, we saw. Majumdar signed my Treasury Certificate today after much botheration, making me promise him a dinner at Tourist Lodge & to transfer him my district when I became DM. Blackmail of sorts!

Called on ADM & gradually conversation veered to K.L.Gupta's attitudes. Mr.Halder said he had known him as highly courteous till he became DM, since when he has changed wholly. He added that the DM-ADM relationship in every district is rather strained. The ADM is in charge of Estates Acquisition, but his staff are transferred without consulting him, though' a GO has said this ought to be done. In every district the SLRO Office complains of stepmotherly treatment from the Collectorate, including Malda.

**21.3.1972**

**Work done**



English Office training continued

**Information**

In English Office I studied the National Savings file as this, I was told, would be a leading priority when I would be SDO. Malda is way behind the target of 1971-72, I found, and W.B. showed an overall deficit though' the all India turnout overshot the target. Reason for Malda is obviously floods.

Looked through LSG Act, AIS Rules, WBGPF Rules. I was told by Sukumar Babu that library should get some new editions of the rules. I enquired & found Rs. 300/- outstanding. Got a list of books needed from OS & will try to go to Cal & get them, with emphasis on what we probationers need. I have brought along the connected file for that purpose.

The SDO has asked me to supervise House Loan distribution in wards 2, 4, 15 & 16 of the English Bazar Block by 31<sup>st</sup> March. This is impossible as it needs enquiry, bond, surety, disbursement. No enquiry is yet complete in any ward except No. 7 & the AROs have not yet seen me though I left a message to that effect.

Tomorrow Kutubsahar stores will be brought to the Collectorate.

**22.3.1972**

**Work done**

There was a small hold-up over the trucks going to Kutubsahar. Drivers said Banerji (MVI-tech) had ordered that no truck astt. was to accompany trucks. They refused to go without them. I ordered them to take & go-- but to do the job.

Later MVI met me & showed me a Fin.Dept. order saying Astts. were to go only on long journeys. Further, Astts. jobs were terminated in Feb. I said he needn't worry & I'd take the responsibility for today's *faux pas*. However, he ought to have told me too.

AROs saw me & I decided to go out with them at 9 am tomorrow on enquiries. People are irritable because during floods they had done a through enquiry & no money had come as a result. Hence AROs are often being abused.

Dealers brought crockery, cutlery, utensils I had asked to be bought for Dak Bungalow. I approved those I liked. All Malda's shops have got together & supplied these as one, so now they must give us 3 tenders to satisfy Govt. regulations.

Bangladesh trucks loaded with FCI rations have been held up at our border as they lack proper permits from Bangladesh. Today a Dy. Magistrate arrived from Bangladesh to solve this as well as our strike problem. DM is not yet back.

In English Office I found that some Rs.600/- had been allotted to Library for buying books. On enquiry found the NDC had surrendered Rs.200/- without consulting Librarian, so that at present only Rs.150/- were left. I decided to draw this & go to Cal & get books probationers would need. ADM approved it, but I must see DM first.

Went to Kutubsahar to supervise loading of rice & then went to Sataisghara, just opposite Adina mosque, ½ mile inside. Reeks of historical aroma. Huge tank with excellent water & underground passages to it. A little excavation will reveal wonders: some sort of rampart is hidden under the earth. Arjun is supposed to have dug this tank! The ploughs are turning up tons of Gaur type old bricks, hence a little digging will bring out so much.

**23.3.1972**

**Work done**

House Building loan enquiries.

Tour to Calcutta

**Information**

Nothing to do in English Office. In the morning toured wards 15 & 3 with AROs. Extensive flood damage, chiefly the plinths have sunk and walls have cracked (gaping at places). Many have repaired on their own. Many didn't know that HB Loans were being given. Hence at last minute petitions are pouring in. I told AROs to keep these separate with receipt dates. We

could state we could not consider these owing to severe limitation of time. The salary upper limit will have to be raised to Rs.4000/- p.a. from Rs.3000/- (lower limit is Rs.500/-). Otherwise many will not be eligible. Made notes of particularly needy & badly damaged cases.

In afternoon, at 5 p.m. left for Cal with M.S.Bhattacharyya & G.C.Chakraborty. MSB was taking a Civil Rule on Estate Acquisition along with him. I went to get books for Collectorate within Rs.100/- (since NDC has surrendered Rs. 200/- I found!).

Before this, selected door & window screens, bed covers & sheets for DB.

DM is leaving in April first week and wants to brief us before he leaves.

**24.3.1972**

Reached Cal at 1 a.m. Bought books available in our syllabus, most of them being out of print. Hence had to purchase private publications.

Also called on Mansure Habibullah, CPM defeated candidate (by 59,000 votes) and Govt. appointed lawyer, for the case with MSB. He asked us to see him on Sunday when he would have everything ready.

**Saturday, 25.3.1972**

Purchased law books on Land Reforms & Estate Acquisition. Got my Provisional LPC. No. other IAS probationer in W.B. has got it.

**Sunday, 26.3.1972**

Got lawyer's advice on the suit.

**27.3.1972**

### **Work done**

Return to Malda

Establishment section training

### **Information**

Left Cal at 5 a.m. and reached Malda at 2 p.m.; a total of 818 Km.

Attended Establishment Section and learnt how to draw up salary bills. Estt. deals with salary, TA/DA, leave etc. of staff. Head Clerk Dhiren Babu complained of it being a wholly thankless task, & involving abuse from every quarter! He draw up my salary bill as an example (most welcome!).

The H.C. is Shri Dhiren Saha, joined Govt. service in 1941 & is in this post since June, 1970. At DM's met Prof. S. Chakraborty, Head of English, Malda College, & the Dy. Controller of Exams of North Bengal University.

**28.3.1972**

### **Work done**

Establishment Training.

Sent letters to AG (WB) about pay for 1-14 January.

Wrote to Dy. Dir. PLI for pass book for my PLI Account.

### **Information**

I entered all the new stuff bought into the Dak Bungalow stock register in the morning.

Two new Sub-Dy. Coll. (prob) have arrived in DB:

Paritosh Samajdar [Ex Estt. UDC, Writers for (1+1/2) years.

Joyram Banerjee [Ex Sanskrit teacher, Berhampore]

So now in Malda there is a record number of 7 probationers.

In Estt. I looked up the ancient Chapman Report on functioning of Dist. Admn. & suggestions for improvement. At that time every Collector maintained staff was inadequate. Malda had 32. Now has 250 & same complaint! Estt. should have 12 clerks, but has 3 only. Consequently, guard files are in a mess and work is affected. There ought to be separate guard files for leave, pension, pay, TA etc. & specialist clerks for each. The O.S. has refused to forward the Estt. Head Clerk's plea, so I personally took it to Sr.DC who fully agreed &

sent it for OS' comments before putting up to DM. OS' patronising attitude towards probationers is highly irritating.

In Estt. the following registers are maintained:-

1. Attendance
2. Late Attendance
3. Bill Register
4. Advance Register
5. T.A. Bill Register
6. Acquittance Roll [money of clerks comes in lump & is taken by each after signing in a muster roll].
7. Service Book Movement
8. Pension
9. Gradation List of Permanent Staff
10. Gradation List of Temporary Staff
11. Staff Register
12. Allotment Register
13. Periodical Increment Register
14. Casual Leave
15. Earned Leave

I also read the *Bengal Records Manual 1943* & found chapter I was devoted to English Records as follows:-

- A) Current Correspondence
- B) Fresh Letters how treated
- C) Replies Letters how treated
- D) Reminders
- E) Forward Diary (this is not being kept by anyone, but is essential for relieving burden on memory as to what letter to write when, as also increases efficiency).
- F) Confidential Correspondence
- G) Arrangement of Files & Collection of recent English correspondence.
- H) Arrangement of Files & Collection of Old English Correspondence
- I) Classification, Presentation, Destruction of English Correspondence
- J) Procedure for destroying B & C papers
- K) Classification, Presentation, Destruction of Gazettes
- L) Classification, Presentation, Destruction of Registers
- M) Classification, Presentation, Destruction of Treasury Records.

Reading this after doing Eng. Office was most helpful as everything became very clear.

I also found no record/note is kept when files are taken out, resulting in great inconvenience in tracing then, as happened today. Basic cause is shortage of staff.

From HC (Estt.) I borrowed his manuscript of a short summary of TA rules in just 2 pages, as also the TA Guard files and WBSR-(II). I will type this out in full as it will be most helpful to everyone—ought to be polycopied.

I got my pay 14 Jan-29 Feb today as also my medical re-imburement. What a relief! However, as my P.F. No. has arrived, next month I must pay arrears from July @ Rs.50/- per month as also deduct 133/- towards the Rs.400 pay advance I had got.

I have decided to tip the Chowkidar @ Rs. 5/- per month, sweeper at same rate & my peon @ Rs. 10/- per month.

**29.3.1972**

**Work done**

HB Loan distribution

**Information**

From 10.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. supervised distribution of H.B. Loans in municipality wards 2, 3, 16 approx Rs.46,000/- (I had drawn 50,000/-). All other probationers also supervised other wards. We together disbursed about Rs.2 lakhs or more. Now for tomorrow we are short of some Rs.30,000/- purely because SDO, due to political pressure, accepted petitions till today. Hence the slab had to be re-made, & now tomorrow may have to be reduced, which will mean terrific popular indignation against the distributing AROS.

Khas land	: Rs.50
Yearly income 601-1500	: 75
Yearly income 1501-2000	: 100
Yearly income 2001-3000	: 150
Yearly income 3001-5000	: 250

Basically again lack of planning & organisation. The money had arrived in Feb. but file lay on SDO's table for 12 days; hence in fag end of March everything was rushed through. Renewed enquiries were not possible. Meanwhile, since the flood time enquiries, many had got better jobs & were hence eligible for higher loans. They are most indignant now & we officers are helpless to ascertain genuineness of their claim on the spot. Thus, the SP sent one man to me & personally rang up to say he had a good job @ Rs.200 pm, though earlier he had none. On SP's verbal assurance I had to allow him to get the loan, no certificate being given though' I had asked for one.

Another problem is a farewell dinner to DM. Convention is only Collectorate Officers directly under him [38] do this. SDO wants to include all officers of all depts. who came in close touch, i.e. some 20 more, including MVIs & O.S., which Rathin Kar, M.S.Bhattacharya and I all dislike, as this will turn it into a very heterogeneous affair & impossible to organise neatly. Once again lack of planning from start--no clear principle. Such discriminatory invitation will generate bad blood too Better: call every Head of Deptt. But SDO won't listen.

Reactions to my tips were interesting. Besides the glad surprise—obviously they are not tipped every month by others—services improved!

**30.3.1972**

### **Work done**

Disbursement of H.B. Loans completed [11 a.m. to 9.30 p.m.].

### **Information**

Work started rather late, as all AROs failed to submit precise figures of their requirements. They were all instructed to cut down on the amounts, so that we did not run short of money. Within 2 hours, the Rs.48,000/- in reserve & what we had left over from yesterday, was disbursed by us to the concerned AROs. The OC, loans, A.R. Samajdar, then went to draw the balance of Rs. 50,080/- from the Bank.

Meanwhile, I visited the SDO to find him besieged by indignant public claiming they were not getting loans though' they had filed petitions. Chief cause was that most had filed yesterday/today! However, the most vociferous section came from the Krishnapalli area. I found that my suit was a god-sent passport as all the crowd invariably made way & listened to me. I found out 330 cases in that area were being given loans, showed them this, whereupon they all calmed down & looked guilty!

I had worn the suit deliberately despite the heat, expecting it would help in getting through crowds. It helped in rescuing the SDO even! He could not have food the whole day, as he was either pestered by visitors or signing hundreds of loans to be distributed in the blocks—all by 31<sup>st</sup>!

In the afternoon I heard from DM's peon, Jabbar, that last night DM had taken overdose of sleeping pills because of exhaustion resulting in insomnia. Three doctors were called in as he was delirious and pulse was sinking. I at once went over & met him. He is signing papers in

bed & is recovered. He told me that he would be leaving on 3<sup>rd</sup> & that Midha would arrive on 6<sup>th</sup>. ADM will leave around first week of Baisakh. He intends to give probationers independent charge of some depts, so that work goes on despite transfer of NDC & Sr.DC. [R.Kar will revert to his DPO work]. DM also remarked that no other IAS probationer in W.B was being trained like me!

At 9.30 pm we found ourselves with a balance of Rs.10,000/- i.e. not above 6 cases per ward. In a few wards some had not come for the money! Funniest thing is that in the SBI today, a large number of S.B. Accounts were opened, and sweets disappeared from all shops—all the result of this loan money. All AROs said that the unprecedented number of petitions stemmed from the rumour spread by touts that this money would not have to be returned to the Govt. by loanees. Many AROs have been grossly abused & threatened because of their refusal to grant loans to ineligible candidates. Actually, all relief ought to be stopped because:-

1. The really needy never get it as touts turn them away;
2. The money has to be written off as irrecoverable loss to Govt.
3. The money is spent not on real assets but consumer goods.

The AROs were requesting some tiffin allowance as they have been working all hours ever since floods, evacuees, & now this, & always being abused by the public. SDO asked Loans HC to see if something could be arranged. We were all instructed not to divulge that Rs.10,000/- balance remained, otherwise public would raise hue and cry.

**31.3.1972**

### **Work done**

Treasury Inspection by ADM, assisted by O.S., myself, P.Bhattacharjee [Dy.M.], G.C.Chakravarti, & K.P. Sarkar, T.O., Treasurer.

A boring job in which random checks of actual quantities of stamps was done (11 am-1 pm). A thorough checking would take 24 hours. What was done was hardly enough to detect any irregularities, as none of the packets containing round figures were opened & counted. Only the loose portions were counted.

As usual the T.O. was jabbering away non-stop about how ICS officers would check banking treasuries. At present in WB there is only one banking treasury, in Murshidabad.

In the evening M.S.Bhattacharya came with 4 relatives who wish to go to Adina & Gaur. I went with MSB to get a vehicle but the evacuee drivers are striking & would not let me take it out & they will stop all office vehicles from Monday. I believe a deputation went to the ADM & behaved most rudely on 29<sup>th</sup> night.

Last night Treasury staff worked till 11 pm because teachers came with bills & even the bank opened at that late hour! Complaint is that bank will get much overtime but our staff get nothing for their hard work well beyond office hours. From Treasury Contingency something could have been given as tiffin at least.

I took a look at MSBh's remarks on C.C.Rs of the Collectorate staff. Minoti Chatterjee & Sukumar Banerjee have been highly recommended. Of the other ladies, Gita Mukherjee is useless, & Mrs. Banerjee is so-so. The Election HC, Madhu Das, he has only described as "reliable", as he once claimed train fare though he had gone by bus. The rest are average, except Bimal babu [Judicial Peshkar].

**1.4.1972, Saturday**

Today till 1 p.m. I was with M.S.Bhattacharya and some relatives of his seeing Gaur and Pandua. Managed to see the Prophet's footprint (Qadam Rasul) brought from Mecca 600 years back by Hussain Shah.

DM has, in pursuance of a Govt. radiogram, asked that whatever rice is left should go to Bangladesh at once. However, problem is that no public trucks are willing. Their drivers complain that hotels refuse to serve them food on grounds of shortage, & that no help is forthcoming in case of breakdowns. The last convoy experienced this when one truck got

stuck on the river bank & lay thus for 24 hours till SDO Nawabganj himself came. Only one truck is willing to go & I had this loaded up & deputed Gorachand & Joyram to go with it tomorrow.

Another telephonic message arrived from PA to RRC that on 2<sup>nd</sup> 19 trucks & 1 ambulance should be given to Bangladesh. However, the drivers refused unless guaranteed alternative employment. SDO & I went to DM & stated the situation. He was disgusted & when I related anti-Indian stance in Nawabganj, he said it was a reaction to our not sending the trucks. I drafted a message giving the account of their processions refusal even to hand over keys & tools & threat to stop all Govt. vehicles from Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> & sent it off after DM had modified it (left out last bit) to RRC, Chief Secy., Home Secy.

At 9 pm SDO drove up to my room with another message from DM:- Rehabilitation Ministry has refused to put up the file with proposal for extension of services of camp assistants and drivers to the PM till trucks are made over to Bangladesh. We dug up MVI (tech.) & some drivers & told them to let us know, in writing, their stance tomorrow. DM wants to meet them at 10 am.

We could easily split the drivers. The RRC has recommended retention of 11 drivers in Malda, so we could pick these & announce that only they were retained. However, it might lead to physical violence. What amazes one is the short-sighted policy of the Trade Union Co-Ordination Committee & Joint Committee leaders, Durga Sen, Bimal Das. The direct slogan shouting leader is Janardan Mitra.

Rumours are afloat that Rs.2 lakhs of HB Loan have been surrendered! Some Youth Conj. Boys asked me & I firmly told them not a paisa remained. Uma Ray has been trying to contact me to give loan to a few more cases. Luckily I have been out.

#### 2.4.1972, Sunday

Today DM refused to meet the drivers & asked SDO to arrange it all. At night when I called on DM, I found he had been plagued by insomnia all day & night. He said that J.Mitra had submitted a memo to the CM which he had sent off, along same lines as their demands. He also said that Uma Roy & Durga Sen were the most harassing & unscrupulous politicians here & that Manik Jha (CPM) was at least courteous & decent in conduct. As his health is not good, DM can't be definite about leaving. I managed to get verbal permission from him that MSB could leave at once. Otherwise there is danger that someone else might get his post as Burdwan SDO.

In the evening, Samaddar & I had excellent food at R.Kar's & then at S.N.Majumdar's. Kar told us how to prepare for departmental examinations and case records. Joyram and Gora got back at 8.45 pm from Nawabganj. The SDO has been transferred but they dug out the 2<sup>nd</sup> Officer and were dumbstruck by his lovely bungalow! No trouble came up luckily, but food scarcity is really acute & people can be seen starving specially those who have been driven out from Dinajpur.

Panchayat Elections are to be held this month after 5-6 years so Kar is very busy.

#### 3.4.1972

##### Work done

A little office work, consisting of signing a few fair copies for DM. Got one truck loaded again with rice for movement tomorrow to Nawabganj.

In the afternoon saw DM about need to have a panel for appointing peons. He agreed to my suggestion of using the first panel we had made & adding a few other evacuee staff to make a panel of 20.

R.Kar wanted DM to recommend his application for getting extra pay since he had been working as Sr.D.C. DM refused saying that an officer must never think of special pay when he gets extra work as such mentality will be the start of deterioration of his quality as an officer. If he still wanted to apply, DM said he would strongly recommend his case. DM is

inclined to make Kar continue in his present post. He feels, however, that the new DM should be free to choose his officers & so he must not make any changes. He hopes to give over charge on 8<sup>th</sup>.

MSB is also following suit I suggested to all probationers that we give him a farewell feast, inaugurating the Dak Bungalow's new utensils. This we aim to do on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>. We also intend to present him & his wife a book.

Today MSB handed over charge of Gour gold & moonstone to R.Kar. We probs were present & felt & weighed the heavy gold mohurs (253 tolas i.e. about Rs. 50,000/-). The moonstone is supposed to bring luck & was touched to our foreheads! Also a number of gold coins.

In the evening, around 7 p.m., leaders of Trade Union Committee met DM in my presence. They pretended ignorance of the contents of the radiogram which said services of drivers would be retained as long as those of camp staff. DM nearly lost his temper when they wanted a written order retaining their services, despite the radiogram! Seeing this they capitulated & agreed to send all trucks tomorrow. DM put me in charge of this. SDO here blundered in giving vent to his anger at the rude conduct of the drivers, which led to hot exchanges, & DM had repeatedly to make SDO shut up. After others had left, he again told SDO never to lose his temper & use insulting language in the heat of moment.

Getting trucks & formalities done is a problem as MVI(T) is in hospital since last night with coronary trouble. Could not get his assistant either. Left a message for him and all drivers to attend early tomorrow morning. S.N.Roy Chowdhury, Samaddar will go. Samaddar gave the excellent idea that the public truck, carrying rice, proceed to Rajshahi after unloading & bring back our drivers.

Drafted DM's letter to DC Rajshahi. Permits for every driver have to be made. Fitter, mechanic & MVI (Tech)'s assistant will also accompany us. The truck cleaners are furious as their jobs are gone—though' it was merely on a daily basis till Feb. 72.

Very major discrepancies are visible between Kutubsahar OC's chalans & the materials received by Nandababu. The OC is away in Calcutta. He must be brought to book.

**4-5.4.1972**

### **Work done**

Delivery of trucks to ADC Rajshahi. Left Malda 4 pm., reached Rajshahi 3.30 am. Left Rajshahi 12.45 pm on 5<sup>th</sup>, reached Malda 4 pm. Distance covered: 290 km.

### **Persons met**

Hafizur Rahman: Dy.Magis., SDO-in-charge, Nawabganj.

O.C. Nawabganj, P.S. & 2<sup>nd</sup> officer.

A.D.C. Rajshahi

Addl. S.P. Rajshahi

C.I. Rajshahi

Phani Bhushan Majumdar & entourage: Food Minister, Bangladesh

### **Information**

We were scheduled to leave at 11 am. I sent off Gorachand & Samaddar with 50 Qtls. of rice in a public truck, to make arrangements for ferry to work non-stop. Here I had Ashit Saha, MVI(T)'s Asst., put the tools, air coolers in each truck & prepare the receipts for each truck. DM asked me to send all big 18 trucks & only 1 small one. Further, Govt. would provide permanent employment at once for drivers whose trucks were gone. So I chose Chittesh Sarkar's truck (small). The ring-leader, Sankar Saha, was not taken.

However, around 12 noon, drivers suddenly refused to go till they got their O.T. & D.A. arrear bills. This arose because their asstts. were out for their blood, as these asstts. have no jobs since Feb. & are aggrieved as drivers capitulated yesterday. So getting asstts. the O.T. was a sort of sop. We could not pay till the new allotment came from Govt. but they wouldn't listen & claimed they haven't a single pice on them, though' they were paid on 3<sup>rd</sup> March. I

really felt furious, rang up DM who calmly said they are welcome to sit back. He also asked me, when I met him, to wait & see the reaction—how very shrewd he was!

I had drafted a reply for OC Evacuee Relief to Chief Secy's query about whether trucks had gone and was about to send it off, when Sunil Pandey, one of the decent drivers, asked for 15 mins. more. Exactly at 1.30 p.m. I was told they were all ready to go. I sent trucks to get fuel & told DM accordingly. Permits were made out with some changes, as drivers of 3 trucks were not present & substitutes were found. I also searched for my companion, S.N.Roy Chowdhury, but he had disappeared. On my return I learnt he had left office early!

Left at 4 p.m. At Mohadipur waited till all trucks arrived, had them and driver's names noted & gave instructions that none of these trucks were to be allowed to return with these drivers. Told the O.C., Capt. Parmar, the reasons.

Meanwhile, prior to leaving, Bhutobabu suddenly arrived from Cal with his mother & wanted a lift. So I took them in the ambulance.

At Bangladesh checkpost I also left a list of trucks with same instructions.

The road was worse—tons of fresh earth had ruined its hard surface. On the way, truck of Sankar Das, one ringleader, fell into a ditch trying to save a cyclist. Had to be towed out. We reached the ghat around 7 p.m. Samaddar came over and took me to the thana where SDO in charge was waiting just to meet me. He had booked 2 rooms in Rajshahi CH for the "ICS officer from Malda", because the police he had rung up don't understand "IAS". He had been waiting even after office hours just to meet me. A man with fine ideas & plans. Acute shortage of officers as usual: he is the sole officer at present!

Around 10 pm. ferry stopped & the majhis refused to work. The motor-boat driver also had left quietly. Meanwhile, 10 vehicles were still left. We had food at thana & they also arranged for drivers & refused payment. We three then crossed back & guarded trucks while their drivers went for food. Quite lovely at night beside the river. Ferry was forcibly started again at midnight, and trucks were all across around 2 am. We crossed in the last one. They stayed back for the night. In the ambulance we three shot off & reached the C.H. at 3.30 am and dropped off to sleep.

In the morning I found quite a few drivers gone without telling me. Irresponsible conduct throughout. I collected all keys separately, met Amjad Ali in one of the rooms. He rang up ADC who came at 9 a.m., DC being in Murshidabad. Their mechanic checked all tools & some friction arose, so I ordered both parties to come direct to me. That solved it. I would give keys to one truck at a time, & the mechanic I asked to sign all the receipts. ADC signed all these after mechanic had finished.

Meanwhile, their Food Minister arrived & his group roundly attacked the District Controller of Food. Basic need is repairing Rohanpur-Singabad rail link. Can't see why they are not tackling it though' they all say it is crucial. I was introduced to the minister who seems deaf & not efficient. The bureaucrats (ASP, ADC) didn't hesitate to criticise in private in my presence the arrogant behaviour of the entourage.

Anyhow, after all papers were signed & stamped & we had lunch at a small hotel at Rajshahi Court, we left at 12.45 p.m. & reached Malda at 4 p.m.

I went direct to DM dust covered as I was & was asked to go straight up to his bedroom. He seems better. He made me have Chira, milk, banana and related how on 03/04/1971 he had sent 2 coys BSF with 3 inch mortars to regularly shell Rajshahi Pakistani positions, & showed me letters from Ashok Mitra, Secy. Planning Commission & personal advisor to PM, approving it through a cryptic letter saying he was glad to see the good work being done. I left him at 5 p.m. Later his peons came to invite me to a dinner all peons were throwing for DM. I was the only other officer asked! At night when I went, Dr. Banerjee was attending the DM who had started sweating profusely & felt unwell during a function at Malda Women's College. Pressure was o.k. Dr. diagnosed it as wind & mental anxiety. We had a fine dinner.



**6.4.1972**

**Work done**

Attended Relief Office, signed all loan bonds of 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>. Took *Relief Manual*. Might have to conduct an enquiry into allegations of misappropriation of HB grants & loans in Ratu-II Block. Inspected & selected commodes for the D.B.

Luckily on 5<sup>th</sup> no sessions court was held as lawyers were unprepared! Postponed to May.

M.N.Roy saw me today and claimed he had counted the bales of clothings wrongly & that what we had found was the actual figure. We will wait till Nanda Sarkar comes back from leave & then go into details of the matter.

Pressure of work is not allowing me to write my monthly letter to the Academy. Tough finding time.

**7.4.1972**

**Work done**

Court work

Preparation for CM's visit

**Information**

Attended Court of T.P.Deb & recorded evidence of a committal case. He is most helpful & told us we could take all the case records from his Peshkar. He will try & get us all the cases we need, once other magistrates join. Court S.I. just does not know how to have a witness declared hostile & has not studied the evidence & would never cross examine beyond "You have been bribed"! At present he is the only one! Separation was premature, he held, as the WBSJ simply does not have enough officers for the posts available. Consequently, as in the past, only new dates of hearing are being given.

The Dist. Judge assured us there was no need to go to Balurghat to get Sessions cases, as we had been planning. Once the Addl. S.J. joins, we would easily get all we wanted, he said.

After recording of case, I got DM's message to proceed to CH with some probationers to receive Barkat Ali, Min of Irrigation & Power at 3 pm. Till 6 pm he had not arrived, so with DM's permission I left.

At CH met Sri N.P.Bagchi, Dy. Secy. Irr. & ex-ADM Malda. He is not being transferred as the Min. wishes to settle down before any changes are made in the set-up. Hence Mr. Halder is not going as Dy. Secy. obviously. The SDO later explained that N.P.Bagchi had done a lot of string pulling to continue in this post & that he was assiduously "sir-ing" the Minister when he reached around 7 p.m.

DM put me in charge of getting vehicles for CM's visit to Miahhat on 10<sup>th</sup> to inaugurate Mahananda Embankment Project. CM is very eager to encourage rural elec- trification as well & hence will visit Bhadoi village in Harischandrapur, He wants to inaugurate an electrically powered shallow tubewell too, but we do not have even one such!

At the airstrip at 8.30 am we need enough cars for 35 people [press, security etc.]. Then to Hchpur 10 jeeps must be sent on 9<sup>th</sup>. On 10<sup>th</sup> CM will entrain at Samsi & be back here. Vehicles needed to take them to airstrip again.

It's rather curious how I am meeting the man who was my father's counsel in his appeal to Pakistan Supreme Court. And again, on 4/4/61 my father was captured in E.Pak & on 4/4/72, I was a welcome guest there! How times change!

Had a nice time at night teaching DM's son "Passing of Arthur". Extremely receptive to imagery and radiations of meaning though a science student.

I heard that the DM has written to the Govt. that R.Kar & M.S.Bhattacharya are brilliant officers. This was told me by MSB in strict confidence (the DM had told him this). MSB's giving over charge is postponed as Burdwan sadar SDO has written he cannot leave before end of April & has fixed 5/5/72 as the date of joining over charge.

**8.4.1972**

**Work done**

Requisitioning transport

**Information**

Personally went to every Govt. Deptt. and requisitioned their vehicles. Most were either out of station or defective & not roadable. Thanks to my driver, Reazul, I got jeeps from people on our list, e.g. Malda Co-operative Bank, (here I showed great interest in small savings & the agent Mr.Roy was thrilled, as I learnt from his talk later with T.P.Ghosh), M/S. Chunilal Shah, Settlement Deptt.

I need DM's van, car, & one bus at airstrip at 8.15 am to take DM + 27 others [including 17 press people] to the special train. Then at Hchpur I need jeeps [as nothing else will negotiate the dam-top road] for 50 people, i.e. at least 9 jeeps, besides 4 for the S.P.

I developed quite a headache with all the running about. Only 3 reported by nightfall. I hope the rest come. SDO, who is OC transport Hchpur, is fuming at lack of vehicles & refuses to go there without enough vehicles. All private jeeps there have been taken by the Cong® party. One way out is using is using Unicef jeeps, but DM has rightly prohibited this.

DM asked me to detail all other probationers to accompany CM on 10<sup>th</sup> to Hchpur. They must carry their lunch & not eat with the CM's party. Pretty anxiety causing situation & no normal work is done at such VIP visits. What a botheration!

**9.4.1972**

**Work done**

VIP visit transport arrangements.

**Information**

From 8 a.m. till 5.30 p.m. I was constantly at the Nezarat waiting for jeeps to arrive, ringing up DM to know if any more were coming, sending messengers to bring drivers! DM decided to use UNICEF jeeps, so I had to get hold of drivers. Most were not found at home. That raised the question of duplicate keys. After much search Asit Saha was finally found [the drivers were amazingly obedient & cooperative except Sankar Saha who feigned fever & would not drive, whereupon I gave his truck to another]. I sent a jeep to bring BDO Gajol's jeep as its driver was injured. They returned without it as the garage key could not be found & BDO was absent. Luckily, in the evening the jeep turned up with another driver! Suddenly from W.Dinajpur pool one jeep & from Berhampore 2 jeeps reported—all due to DM's quiet efforts. DM also wanted 3 trucks for Hchpur & 2 for Malda airstrip. The MVIs said no trucks would be available on Sunday, so our UNICEF ones were pressed into service by substitute drivers. Finally, at 5 pm I was really amazed to find ready a convoy of 13 jeeps even after sending 2 to the police. SDO left with these at last. He had been reluctant to go when DM told him in the morning. So DM asked me to depute the most responsible probationer. I unhesitatingly picked S.N.Roy Chowdhury. He was briefed by DM & came ready. By then, seeing so many jeeps, the SDO was ready to go & left. SNRC was told by DM to stay back to help me.

Effect of telling SNRC that I had picked him out on DM's orders has been an interesting display of interest in the work by him & a dropping of the devil-may-care casual attitude. The other probationers are sadly lacking in sense of responsibility and duty. Even though DM is giving over charge on 15<sup>th</sup>, two of them [J.N.Banerjee & P.K.Samaddar] are going on leave on 13<sup>th</sup>. SNRC unhesitatingly withdrew his application for leave. All of them have the attitude "Why should I go to the DM till he calls me? Such a waste of time"!!

After the convoy left, I had 2 jeeps in hand only, plus one old pool jeep. DM added that at Hchpur there would be 3 station wagons & 2 jeeps more [18 vehicles in all] from Irrigation & SEB, enough to carry 50 people. For Malda there is 1 luxury bus for the Press, DM's land rover & car, and my own 3 jeeps-- more than enough.

A really tiring day. I haven't felt so tired even after the Dacca journey. Result of mental anxiety.

We asked DM what to do about our case records. He told us to meet the District Judge and request him to allot for us 4 cases at once.

**10.4.1972**

**Work done**

Chief Minister's visit

Revenue Munshikhana training

**Information**

I was again at the Nezarath from 7 am. One more jeep from CMOH reported, as also that of the Special Officer Tribal Welfare (SOTW), so that I had 5 in hand—what luxury!

Last night ADM was frantically sending me messages for a jeep! I told him he was to go in DM's car—and so it turned out. DM also went. I was in full formal regalia—the only one so dressed. Could not be present when plane arrived as I was sent off to get fruits for CM's refreshment. I managed to reach the train in time and handed them over to Barkat Ali [Irr. Min.]. ADM had disappeared in the crowd. I later heard he was tucked away in some of the compartments behind, though he was to accompany CM as representative of the district. On way back the same thing happened. The accompanying probationers unanimously deplored ADM's complete lack of sense of his position as DM's representative. At all the functions, he & SDO were left out & kept standing!

The tour went off extremely fast, about 1 hour before time, as the train reached 1 hour in advance. CM had arrived at 8.30, left station at 9.00 a.m., came back at 3.45 & left around 4.30 pm [delayed by a representation from UNICEF truck drivers & assistants]. On the way from station to airfield, a young chap in goggles & colourful bush-shirt took a lift in my jeep. I found out to my consternation—after I had given him the rear seat and thought it polite to introduce myself—that he was Bhaskar Ghosh, Jt. Secy. to CM [1960 batch]! He, however, didn't mind in the least & was extremely informal and friendly.

The plane crew (without hostess) had been accommodated in the Circuit House. Their bill is to be paid by their company [chartered plane]. Instructions had been left at Tourist Lodge not to issue more than one bottle of beer per head!!

Between 10.30 a.m. and 1 p.m. I also took training in the Revenue Munshikhana from the HC Sri Jamini Nath Chaki.

Initially, the Revenue Peshkar (RP) dealt with collection of arrears of revenue from defaulting zamindars by sale of lands under the Sunset law. Nowadays this is defunct and RP is concerned with civil suits (in local civil courts) and civil rules (H.C/S.C).

To obtain arrears in revenue, Govt. can file civil suit; but this takes time. Hence under *Public Demands Recovery Act 1913*, a Certificate is issued in respect of arrears in Public Demands, as per schedule in the *Certificate Manual*. Power to issue these are vested in SLROs, ROs, JLROs by Commissioner, though the Collector is supposed to be the only Certificate Officer (CO). Appeals against Certs. are also made to the Collector.

The Govt. Pleader (GP) is the RP's legal advisor with a panel of 3 lawyers to help him, just as the JP has the Public Prosecutor [in Malda, GP & PP are the same person]. When appeal against, say, vesting of lands in Govt. are made this, panel represents the Govt. If the Court awards costs to the Govt., the GP has to recover this through filing execution suits & other legal means.

GP gets Rs. 100/- per month as Retainer's Fee, and when a complaint is filed in court by the public, his job is to produce a written statement in reply, free of charge. Or he may allot the job to one of the panel members. Often a panel member may not agree with GP's written statement (w.s.), in which case a further w.s. by that member has to be filed in court.

I was also called at 12 noon–1 pm. to record my statement by AR Samajdar in departmental proceedings against the Night Guard, on the basis of my enquiry report of 23/01/72. He is likely to get benefit of doubt & be let off with a stern warning.

DM approved my suggestion of sending the remaining 120 Qtls. of rice to Nawabganj. This must be done before 15<sup>th</sup>. As for the 30,000 pieces of soap & some 100 kgs of soyabean oil, we have to get CARE's instructions about their disposal. Structures remaining in Habibpur block are also to be sent to Nawabganj [since the small Isuzus cannot negotiate the Porsha route].

**11.4.1972**

**Work done**

Training in Revenue Munshikhana.

Evacuee Relief Work.

Arranging farewell dinner for DM & 2 Dy. Magis.

Visited Museum.

**Information**

The GP is appointed by the Legal Remembrancer on recommendation of Collector, according to provisions of Legal Remembrancer's Manual.

The RM was the most important office since the Collector's chief function of collecting revenue was done through it. This becomes clear on seeing Register 26 [Inspection Book] which contains inspection remarks about all deptts.

RM also deals with all security bonds of all Collectorate staff. Originally Land & LR was also part of RM [Khashmahal] but because of its expansion, it has become a separate office now.

The Loans Office staff are being diverted to L & LR following a G.O. but no definite order about the number to be diverted has come. So we are proceeding on a 50-50 basis. Earlier there were 3 BDOs in Malda & loans were routed through L.O., but now 15 BDOs control disbursement & so the ensuing change. For the same reason, Revenue Officers are being made into JLROs, but this has been hampered by court injunctions.

The following are the registers maintained in the RM:-

<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>
7	-- Revenue Agent
7A	-- Rev. Agent Clerks
8	-- Miscellaneous
8-II	-- Notice u/s 80 CPC
11	-- Processes of all deptts. given to Nazir for service.
15	-- Appeals from decisions of the Collector and his subordinates.
25	-- Claims to money in deposit
26	-- Inspection
26A	-- Standing Orders
27	-- Petitions
28	-- Departmental Proceedings
29	-- Order/decree for recovery of dues
35A	-- Attachment u/s 146 CrPC.

There has been no inspection after 1960, I find, and no standing orders are to be found! The RP advised me strongly to read Carter's Settlement Report on Malda. He narrated some very interesting accounts of V.S.C. Bonerjee's conduct when he was DM here: how every new DM would issue, in the past, new standing orders without scrapping the old ones. I took another look at the Chapman Report to see the organisation of the office: absolutely brilliantly down. Another such comprehensive report is called for.

I asked Nanda babu to load all the remaining rice on to our trucks, & to write to CARE about the soyabean oil & soap, & to RRC about the butter-oil. A list of the vehicles made over & their drivers was also made out & I substituted the names of those who had actually driven the vehicles when their drivers could not be found.

All probs. went to see the museum. It abounds in Vishnu & Surya images & some Buddhist ones too. What is unique is one Surya with bare feet which is found only in S.India, the booted feet being a Scythian influence. The 12 images show heavy decorative work, in which the central image has become less important, also the sculpting lines are less bold. Another unique thing is Saraswati with a ram as her “vahan”, and Vishnu with mace in left hand (Madhava pose). Some exquisite Uma-Maheswaris are also there. Buddhist influence in the Chamunda images is visible thro’ the “Bhumi-sparsha mudra”, as also Hindu influence on Buddhism thro’ the “Upaveeta” on Buddhist statues.

We decided to give a joint farewell dinner to DM, M.S.Bh., P.Chakravorty, from officers under DM’s direct control only, which comes to 40 people. SDO dissociated himself totally as he wants heads of all deptts. in the district to be invited—which means a terrific crowd of over 100, and nothing above a tea party, since many outsiders will not contribute. The DM refused to express any preferences but as it is jointly for 2 Dy. Mgts. too, clearly heads of other deptts. cannot be called. Unfortunately, 3 probs. are going on leave due to various urgent personal affairs. We also decided to present him “The Life Divine” of Sri Aurobindo, & R.Kar contacted a businessman & bullied him into promising to get it for us from Calcutta. The DM on being asked by R.Kar the secret of his success with politicians, army & police, said that all he could say was:-

(a) personal relationship—he was best of friends with every head of deptt.

(b) looking at admn. as one whole & never encouraging departmentalisation & compartmentalisation.

The result has been prompt & efficient response to any request/order made to BSF, police, Rlys, politicians. When he joined in 1969, he called all the CPM leaders & clearly stated his position & asked them to state their’s & thus reached an understanding & adjustment. Thus, if they occupied land, which Govt. was unable to take due to injunction, he was with them, but not if it was doubtful ownership/some owner existed.

He told us how in 1969-70 he had been the only W.Bengal cadre man so far to be posted to New York, but had refused as his mother was acutely ill. Then it was Brussels & then Tokyo, all of which he had to refuse, much to the Chief Secy’s chagrin. He had also in 1971 been posted as Secy, State Electricity Board, but Barkat Ali had it cancelled as he wanted the DM to stay on in his district!

All probs are going to sit for IAS as age has been raised to 26. I am their coach!

It was interesting to hear from Mrs. Uma Roy (ex MP Cong R) on 10<sup>th</sup> that boys she knows to be Naxalites have joined Youth Congress. She is worried as to how control the cadre now!

**12.4.1972**

### **Work done**

The day was spent chiefly in collecting contributions @ Rs.7/- per head from participants in the farewell function. BDOs luckily had a meeting with DM, when they could all be informed. Quite a few are on leave on 15<sup>th</sup> I find. We are meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> morning to finally decide on the menu and details of organisation of the dinner.

Hearing about this the office staff suddenly decided to give a farewell too! O.S. went to ask DM about it in evening.

We decided to tell SDO to go ahead with tea party of all deptt. heads & DM, as this is done in other districts.

Called on P.Chakrabarti’s wife & invited her to the function as Mrs. De has also been asked.

The OS has recommended that I take over as NDC when P.Chakrabarti makes over charge on 3 May-- a post no. IAS prob. has ever held, or any IAS cadre man either.

Commenced report on Feb.-March to NAA.

Philip Hembrom gave me my first lesson in Santhali. The vowels have the German Umlaut & ablaut in places.

#### **13.4.1972 (Holiday)**

##### **Work done**

Accompanied Sr.D.C. in evening on inspection of 2 cinema halls in Kaliachak area & warned one for not showing required number of Bengali films.

Trucks with remaining rice & our dhobi Suren Das went to Nawabanj with SNRC.

#### **14.4.1972 (Holiday)**

In the morning, BDO English Bazar, Sr.D.C. & SOTW met at my place & decided finally on the menu, cook & timing. Then we went to call on Mr.R.N.Midha at the C.H. He asked R.Kar about the methods followed here for development schemes & said he would be stressing these more.

We also called on Mr.Halder. He is now going to be ADM (General) Burdwan (replacing Midha) & will leave next month. Mr.T.K.Das is replacing him here.

In evening we went marketing for tomorrow. BDO E.B. fixed up the chicken (Rs.6 a kg), raw mangoes, & fish from the Govt. fish seed farm.

In evening met Dr.Mulk Raj Anand at DM's bungalow. He is on his way back from Dacca where he had gone as PM's personal cultural emissary. He is photographing & publishing a feature on Muslim architecture of Bangladesh. He was accompanied by Ajit Neogi, President Bangla Academy of Rajshahi, & Miss Dolly Sahiyar, editor & photographer of MARG which will publish all this. I am to guide them around Gaur & Pandua early morning tomorrow. Then they will go to Dinajpur & thence to Rajshahi & Dacca again.

Dr. Anand feels P.Lal lives in the past & that he considers that no great literature has been written after the Mahabharata. He is espousing the Nanak, Kabir, Gandhi line of philosophy & refuses to accept Sri Aurobindo's mode of thought. He also feels we must create new myths & discard old ones & has discussed these in his "Destiny of Man", awaiting publication. It is interesting to see the rivalry between the elite litterateurs! After all Lal got the Nehru fellowship two years before Anand (who has got the Akademi award this year).

#### **15.4.1972, Saturday**

##### **Work done**

Guided Dr. Anand & Miss Sahiyar round Gour & Pandua.

Arranged DM's farewell.

##### **Information**

From 6.30 a.m. till 12 noon I was touring Gour & Pandua with Dr. Anand & his photographer & Mr. Neogi They are doing this for MARG, next year. Had lunch with them at C.H. They also visited Museum & took some snaps & Dr. Anand wanted the curator to come to Delhi & get a Rs.1 lakh grant! He was disgusted with the dirt in the tour & told Mr. Midha to appoint an Executive Officer to the Municipality & get it cleaned up as it was a disgrace to India.

DM fell very ill with terrible headache & dizziness around 5 p.m. At 9 p.m. I summoned the DMO in consultation with Mr.Midha. Around 10 pm his personal Doctor Banerjee also came & decided it stemmed from weak glasses. Then I took Mrs.De & the 2 sons & all of us had dinner [36 in all] & the presents were made by the ADM. The DM's "Life Divine" arrives tomorrow.

What was fascinating about Adina was the fusion of Hindu & Muslim art by local craftsmen to create a new Bengali art. Thus, in the Badshahi-Takht, swastika & Muslim petal work form an incredibly intricate design. Again, Hindu carved panels form doorway decorations with the deities smashed. Muslim & Hindu petals co-exist. The former curve inwards, the latter

backwards. All this was pointed out by Sudhir Chakravarty who also believes that this place was originally a Buddhist monastery, as no mosque has such a vast open-air compound. Tantipara mosque was also a fascinating contrast of slate & terracotta, but Adina stole the show, with every panel in the courtyard having a different design.

Dr. Anand denounced Chavan & Jagjivan Ram as the obscurantists preventing implementation of Land Reforms & mentioned Mr. Pimputkar as also part of this. He was attacking them right & left. A firm follower of Nanak & Gandhi.

Mr. Neogi presented me some lovely pictures of Hindu sculptures of Dacca & Rajshahi Museums. The wood carving of a deity form & a metal Lakshmi of 9<sup>th</sup> century are really amazingly delicate and lovely.

**17.4.1972**

**Work done**

Recorded Sessions Trial up to 2 p.m.

Went to Manikchak to deliver cheque to a soldier's wife [80 km.].

Sat in DM's meeting with O.C. Relief, Supdt. Excise & Tank Improvement Officer [N.Ghosh].

**Information**

The Sessions Trial was u/s 395 IPC [dacoity] & the accused had no lawyer and expressed inability to engage any. The judge just dictates witness' evidence & the typist types it out. Wonderful garbled English: "bhitagar; golmal; jetha-sasur" etc.! Also rather shocking was the judge's soundly reprimanding & rebuking & sarcastically cracking jokes at witnesses slow to comprehend & answer queries.

In the afternoon I went to Manikchak, to a village, to give a Rs.100/- cheque to a wounded jawan's wife. But as the cheque was crossed & in favour of DM, it would be v.v. tough for them to cash it. So I brought it back & gave it to DM who told OS to encash it & give me the cash.

DM is interviewing every officer about his difficulties & is stressing Development, Flood, Relief, Excise most.

**18.4.1972**

**Work done**

Accompanied DPO to Maliachak-II BDO office at Mothabari [64km].

Took loans training from OC loans.

Court Records.

**Information**

A.R. Samajdar, OC loans, told me of the various types of loans and the different types of securities they required. The basic criteria are the need, the ability to repay, the actual utilisation. Loans can be agriculture, cattle purchase, fertiliser (in this one great care has to be taken that actually loan is used for buying fertiliser; it can be given in kind too). Security ought to be (if land) thrice amount of loan. Loans up to Rs.750/- are given by SDO; thence to 2000 by Collector, & beyond that needs Commissioner's prior authority. In cases of distress, with Commissioner's prior permission, BDOs can distribute loans up to Rs.600/-, directly on their own authority. Interest on loans is 6 and 1/4%.

I read & compared *Bengal Loans Manual 1918* with this. The Statutory Rules of the Agr.Loans Act are important.

I finished my report to NAA-- came to a good 11 pages, with daily typing for this whole week.

Court was even more interesting as the witnesses were even duller today & the judge was proportionately colourful!

I am to interview 300 for 4 posts of Asst. Inspectors of Excise. So I have put in one probationer on each day!

**19.4.1972**

**Work done**

Sent off letter to NAA.

Attended Court.

Training in Judicial Munshikhana.

**Information**

Today's evidence was medical & of police, hence most dreary. But the PP recalled having arraigned this accused in 1962 and dug out the 2 previous cases, both ending in conviction for dacoity. The judge was in great doubt over admissibility of the evidence, but finally recorded it, though' refusing to frame charges considering the post conviction as basis as well. He was cross-examining PWs on accused's behalf. Narrated a few fascinating stories of cases he had tried in which police had tried to frame the accused (this came up due to accused's plea that police harassed him for his not bribing them).

Sat with Judicial Peshkar and learned of Judicial Munshikhana's functions:-

- I) Accounts & Cash [magisterial & elections]
  - II) Reports & Returns
  - III) Power (magisterial)
  - IV) Arms, Ammunition, Explosives (contains thrilling police reports. I read one on a Naxalite rifle snatching attempt in the city).
  - V) Appeals & Motions
  - VI) Acts, Rules, Orders on separation of Judiciary & Executive
  - VII) Maintenance of Law & Order
  - VIII) Jail Matters
  - IX) Miscellaneous
  - X) Motor Vehicles
  - XI) Cinematography
  - XII) Press & Regn. of Books & Magazines.
  - XIII) Rent Control & W.B Premises & Tenancy Act.
  - XIV) Entertainment Tax.
  - XV) Passport to Bangladesh & other than Indian.
  - XVI) Birth & Death Regn.(in case of delay)
  - XVII) Citizenship [electoral rolls are a basis]
  - XVIII) Appointment of panel pleaders [by DM on recommendation of Dist. Judge & approval by L.R.].
  - XIX) Departmental Inspection [again neglected, but Commissioner's notes in 1971 on how to expedite case work by using services of R.Kar & relieving SrDC of some work, is interesting, the DM's reply quashes all the suggestions as impractical].
- T.P.Ghosh in course of conversation revealed that SP De used to drink a lot in 1971. R.Kar confirmed it. It came up because of Sudhir Chakravarty's articles attacking T.K.Das' intoxicated conduct in 1971 & his total lack of knowledge of his job. Hence he failed to impress Col. Luthra who left with the idea that Malda was hopeless in evacuee relief (DM was out).

**20.4.1972**

**Work done**

Court Records.

Office work [Motor Vehicles Section].

**Information**

Judge, after a lot of citing of cases by PP, accepted previous conviction a relevant u/s 14(2) and interrogated accused u/s 342 about it. Accused denied all but these convictions. Judgement fixed for 22<sup>nd</sup>.



DM has deputed me to do stock verification of Circuit House & renovate it all. A phone extension is being fitted in the VIP room.

He also wants me to go to Rajshahi to give 450 qtls of Russian broken rice, and bring back the detailed tool chart which I made the mistake of leaving with them. I drafted a letter to DC Rajshahi & gave it to OC relief for putting up to DM. As for the rice, we will write them to send their trucks (i.e. the ones we gave). The rice is lying with FCI.

I have also to go on an enquiry at Ratua II BDO office into allegations of misappropriation of loans by staff.

Sat in Motor Vehicles (M.V.) section, saw the forms & read *MV Act 1940 & Bengal MV Rules*. Pure routine work.

**21.4.1972**

**Work done**

Training in Gun License Section.

Court work

Visited Ratua II Block Office. [75 km.]

**Information**

The G.L. Section works under the *Arms Act. & Arms Rules*, which we have studied in the NAA. Here, as there is no outlying SDO, the DM issues all licenses with SDO signing for him. The section has registers:-

1. Application
2. License [with sl.no. of the year and also license gets sl.no. right from 1<sup>st</sup> time]
3. Thana Register [particulars of the person & record of renewal fee]
4. Cancelled license (also copied in 2 and 3)

Took down arguments in Committal cases. One might be discharged. Mr. Deb undertook to provide us with 4 cases & 2 committals by end of May.

M.S.Bhattacharyya is handing over charge on 22<sup>nd</sup> & leaving on 24<sup>th</sup> (Monday). P.Chakraborty is leaving on 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

Visited Araidanga for enquiry but BDO & HC were on leave. So left a sealed letter intimating I would come on 26<sup>th</sup> & names of both parties [3 pm to 6 pm].

Electricity is playing up hell these days: off & on sporadically.

**22.4.1972**

**Work done**

Court work.

Office work.

**Information**

Sessions judgement delivered today. We will have to sit in court & copy whatever evidence we have missed. The accused got 6 years RI & left nonchalantly.

In office I drafted a letter for DM suggesting we return the Rs.100/- cheque to the Citizen's Council for cancellation & asking for a Bearer's cheque or an MO to the person affected. DM approved it.

Told Sukumar Babu that my next spell of training must be with SOPD & Sericulture so that I can complete my 2 assignments by 30/6.

S.P.De had sanctioned honorarium to about over 150 people of our staff for Flood Relief Work before he left. In the list made by OS several who really worked, like the Judicial cashier, Asstt. Nazir, are out, & people who didn't are in! DM should not have done this just before leaving. Those left out are refusing to work beyond 5 p.m. even though work be left half done.

M.S.B. handed over charge of OC Election to A.R.Samajdar. He leaves on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**23.4.1972, Sunday**

Called on the DM in the evening, and we talked for about an hour, exchanging notes on the Academy. He was probationer here in 1969 (1968 batch with T.K.Das, our ADM), then SDO Diamond Harbour, and from March 1971 ADM, Asansol. The last post, he said, was really tough as it included 3 Divisional HQ of Railways, and highly industrialised sectors with a couple of processions of sophisticated, educated workers every day. He hoped I would be SDO at such a spot, since the industrial relations posit a totally new problem.

Malda, he said, is a relief district. If this aspect is well tackled the rest is easy work. He agreed to take me with him on tours. I told him a little of the muddle in Evacuee Establishment Accounts as the new HC was a crook. He said he would look into it on returning from his trip to Siliguri tomorrow [a meeting on Cooperatives]. He also told me to ring up DC Rajshahi & fix up delivery of the rice. Some jeeps have to be sent to Bangladesh from us via Cal.

DM said he had wanted to shift me to the Circuit House but Commissioner's DO forbidding it arrived yesterday. He promised to get sanitation in DB done soon.

Rather forlorn to see the DM's bungalow without any crowd of visitors & a generally empty look!

**24.4.1972**

**Work done**

Interviewing 54 candidates for post of Asstt. S.I. of Excise 10.30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Farewell tea party for ADM.

**Information**

Pear Md., Inspector Excise, and I interviewed 54 candidates. 6 did not turn up. Even MA, B.Com & B.A. pass people turned up & showed ignorance of basic English and G.K. One insisted that Russia had fired Apollo 16, and that S.S.Roy was our Governor, and that "I love to play cricket" was through English of "ami cricket kheltey bhalobashi."

The other probationers sat in for some time to get an idea of the standard I was setting. The 2 posts for SC & ST are already more or less chosen, so just 2 left out of 300! One BSc schoolteacher could not tell me the Relativity formula! Some (about 3) good candidates did turn up.

Mr.T.K.Das arrived today, but Mr.Haldar wishes to leave around 3<sup>rd</sup> so Das is returning to Calcutta on leave. Anyhow, Samaddar organised a farewell tea party & we presented "Purba Banglar Shreshtho Kobita" and "Bidyapati-Chandidas" (Rs.11/- in all).

Terribly hot and terrific dust-storms all the time.

**25.4.1972**

**Work done**

Enquiry into ryotwari settlement of khas land in Atgama mouza.

Excise interviews.

Seeing off M. Bhattacharya.

**Information**

From 7.30 a.m. to 11 a.m. I was carrying out the enquiry standing on the disputed lands, with villagers, pradhan, VLW, Gram-Adhyaksha [whom many abused as not truthful] and Cong R, CPI, CPI (M) representatives. The last has made this petition.

I decided to give land to the landless and not to those already having land, however little—this was acceptable to all. But only 5 plots were available of 0.36 to 0.40 decimal area of acreage. At the fag end, a fight began between contending landless people, so I quietly left. One serious case of forgery came up: no such person as Sk. Aijul exists yet land was allotted to him and he had signed for it. I have asked the JLRO to show me the relevant papers tomorrow.

From 1230 p.m. I was at DM's bungalow, booking a call to DC Rajshahi which finally did not materialise by 3 pm, so I cancelled it. Also typed out my report on today's enquiry for ADM to see.

After this, sat in on Excise interviews being done today by J.N. Banerjee. Only 1 good candidate among the 40 interviewed today. Many did not come.

M.Bhattacharya made over charge & left by the night bus at 10.30 p.m. He left behind 2 boxes which we'll try to send with ADM's luggage as it is going direct to Burdwan. P.Chakraborty has not been allowed to leave till election of CM from Malda is over.

2 jeeps have to reach Cal by Saturday to be handed over to the govt for being given to Bdes. I might proceed with them.

A serious situation is developing in Malda due to failure of mango crop which provided varied employment to coolies, basket makers, women making chutney, jelly etc., and above all to all village folk by way of food. Problem is that one TR scheme costs about Rs.15000/- per month and at least 1 is needed in each Anchal. About 12 in each Block and there are 15 blocks, i.e. Rs.180,000 x 15—which money is not available!

**26.4.1972**

**Work done**

Visited Habibpur BDO office

Submitted report to ADM

Ordered to proceed to Calcutta to deliver 2 UNICEF jeeps

**Information**

From BDO Habibpur took final figures of shelter materials sent to Bangladesh. None left. Left HQ at 11.30 a.m. and returned at 2.30 p.m.

Gave report of enquiry to ADM who ordered JLRO to proceed accordingly.

TK Das, unable to take over charge as Halder wishes to give over on 3<sup>rd</sup>, wants to return to Cal and is going in one of the jeeps to be given to RR Dept. DM asked me to go, with receipts of trucks given to Rajshahi and get 2 jeeps from Transport Dept.

Mr.Das was aggrieved at the DM's behaving formally with him and for telling him he must not take leave in future. Mr Midha and Das were batch-mates in NAA and great friends there. I am also to hand over 2 handles of an ambulance and try to get one mainspring from Standard Motors.

**27.4.1972**

**Work done**

Left for Calcutta at 5 am with 2 jeeps. One had left with Mr Das last night. Reached Cal at 1 pm. Today is a holiday [Prophet's birthday].

**28.4.1982**

**Work done**

11 a.m.-2 p.m. handed over jeeps to Aneesh Kr Majumdar, Dy RRC. These are being kept by the Central Inland Water Transport Corporation. Had to be checked for defects and tools. Both jeeps are highly defective [battery, cut-out, carburettor]. Mr Majumdar strongly criticised Luthra for asking Isuzu trucks to be divested of air coolers—he had tried to sit on the file but Luthra was adamant.

Called on Mr De in his office and made over a list of 11 drivers deserving special consideration for their conduct compiled by MVI(T) and SDO. Also called on his family at the State Guest House. They have got a flat opposite St.Lawrence thanks to Mr Jainal Abedin, the Minister. MR De's trouble has been diagnosed as serious sinusitis and inflammation. M.Bhattacharya and I met at Mr De's office. He has met the Dy. Secy. and has decided to proceed and join on 3<sup>rd</sup> at Burdwan, hoping the present SDO will go on leave.

S.N.Roy, Dy. Secy. Transport, was out. Called on Mrs Lina Chakraborti [Dy. Secy. Home-GA] and S. Chakravarti [Under Secy. Home, ex-SDO Barrackpore].

Our SDO has been appointed Administrator of Malda Municipality which has been superseded.

**29.4.1972**

**Work done**

Met S.N.Roy [1966 IAS]. He said it was not possible to give any jeeps, as first priority went to buying Ambassadors for every Minister. The vote-on-account budget gives only Rs.3 lakhs. They intend asking for more and will be able to give us an idea after 15<sup>th</sup> May. We can expect ONE jeep around Dec. '72! He was most sympathetic about the needs of the district, but his hands are tied.

Took TABC inoculation in the evening.

**30.4.1972**

**Work done**

Left Calcutta at 5 p.m. and reached Malda at 1 a.m. after numerous stoppages due to short-circuit in jeep's wiring.

**1.5.1972 (holiday)**

Had a long talk with DM in the evening. He told me at length about the sad state of affairs at Durgapur which had become a liability to the nation. The Management, under Gen.Wadhera, was buying compromise at any cost. The whole thing pointed out that a change in attitudes on part of workers was needed—a sense of duty and dedication. In Malda also people had got used to living on TR and GR and this attitude needs changing. Bengali's expensive food habits were a factor in the poverty, e.g. fish they must have.

He also said that I would do well to keep a little aloof from other officers, though never become a snob. I need not call SDO "Sir", and he, as probationer, never called anyone by his first name at it might tempt the other to call him by his first name. He agreed that a club was needed but the present one, being open to all, would not do.

He also said that having been here before, he knew the defects of most govt. servants here [this came up while I mentioned K.S.Majumdar and he fully agreed with my impression and laid it down to his inferiority complex].

He told me that the present practise is to post as DMs of Midnapore, Hooghly, Howrah, Burdwan and 24 Parganas officers who have already done a district. Hence Mr.Midha had to come to N. Bengal before he can get any of these.

**2.5.1972**

**Work done**

Meeting with BDOs on Relief: 1130 a.m. to 1230 p.m. and 230 to 330 p.m.

District Development Plan, 1<sup>st</sup> meeting: 330-5 p.m.

**Information**

The DM pressing hard for settlement of Evacuee Accounts, got commitments from every BDO that they would submit their accounts by 5<sup>th</sup> latest. Only Ratua-II was absent. The DM is very scrupulous about time-bound schedules, I found. He also wanted them to submit CSRE schemes very soon and to be careful about financial matters since in English Bazar and another Block, defalcations had been spotted.

The RWS was instructed to finish sinking 10 tubewells in each block by end of June. In reserve we have 203 tubewells to be given later during floods.

BDOs were asked to try to recover tents given out in 1971 as also tarpaulins. The main reason for failure of people to return them was the Rs.20/- HB grants. For 1971 Rs.3 crores 31 lakhs were spent on HB grant! A round-up of loans given and now needed was also made. At present we have only a fresh grant of Rs.50,000/- Agri loan.

CP loan: 1970-71—30 lakhs

Need in 71-72—30 lakhs

Fertilizer loan: 70-71—16 lakhs

Need in 71-72—26 lakhs  
Agri HB loans 90 lakhs needed for seeds  
Artisan loans: 8 lakhs  
Sericulture loans: 21 lakhs  
HB grant: 28 lakhs + separately 3.31 crore for floods  
Shallow tubewells: 70-71—16 lakhs  
71-72—30 need lakhs

GR this year is only 0.2%, i.e. practically nil. BDOs should not, therefore, inflate situations.

Structures of camps left in Ratua-I and Kutubsahar to be give to SOTW as per GO.

BDOs were very resentful over Collectorate staff getting double TA and DA and honorarium for floods while Block staff who did the real work have not even got tiffin allowance. DM sympathetically appreciated this and pointed out that those at the centre of power always got the benefit.

The District Plan meeting consisted of DM pointing out how every dept's work was inter-linked with that of others and hence need for integration. He asked each dept to submit its plans by end of June. I undertook to make a précis of the Planning Commission's book on "Guidelines for District Plan" to be polycopied and given to each dept. I did this to stop the DM from giving the sole copy of the book to the PWD Executive Engineer who would only sit on it. The EE practically monopolised the whole meeting after he arrived late by focusing all attention on his own problems.

**3.5.1972**

**Work done**

8 a.m. to 230 p.m. enquiry at Araidanga

**Information**

Reaching at 930 a.m. I found the BDO out. Got hold of HC and began looking through muster-rolls of 29<sup>th</sup> (the day on which forcibly staff were made to distribute loans late at night) to track down whether the petitioners were correct. Found that irregularities had been made in case of CP loans by giving it to block staff who had lands in another block [see report for details]. BDO claimed this was OK as all blocks were under the same Collector. But the relevant GO does not authorise this. Besides there is no certificate from the other block saying he has not taken any loan from there.

I also called those petitioners who were available. They protested against depriving local peasants and giving loans to those having land elsewhere and there too not being genuine cultivators (as they are full time office staff). They alleged large scale irregularity on 29<sup>th</sup> when Adhyaksha's list of HB eligibility was "lost" and a new list was made by BDO's people and money given to several in the same family. I settled 9<sup>th</sup> May as the next date of enquiry.

DM called a meeting of all officers under him at 3.30 p.m. and stressed that we all must come punctually at 10.30 a.m., whereupon the LAOs entered the meeting at 3.45 p.m.!!! The Spl.LAO is quite an obnoxious person. Anyhow, he was told to speed up matters about acquiring land for PWD (Roads) purposes.

DM also asked us all to behave politely with the public even if we cannot do anything for them.

A pension clerk is urgently needed in the Establishment as people newly retiring are getting pensions only after a whole year. The person is to come from the DPO office, but is not being released by him for some reason. I have to talk to him about this.

DM had S.N. Roy Chowdhury do verification of CH and then I made out lists of what was needed. He wants to buy most from Calcutta. Only immediate needs like towels, buckets, table cloths, we bought locally in the evening. DM wants sober colours only. A decent crockery and cutlery set is also needed. I might have to go to Calcutta for this.

The 3 bachelor Sub Dy probationers have now occupied the quarters held previously by M.Bhattacharya and T.P.Ghosh, and have started a joint mess there too. The Spl.LAO is out to get M.Bhattacharya's rooms which Gorachand has had white-washed at his own expense and got re-wired too.

**4.5.1972**

**Work done**

The whole day was spent in going through the Planning Commission's Guidelines and marking out passages for making a summary. Incredibly good suggestions but one wonders if they will be followed.

Phone message from Dy RRC that GoI wants original receipts of vehicles we handed over to Rajshahi. So I have to get attested copies of these done & send the originals with Asst. Nazir proceeding to Cal tomorrow with 2 jeeps needing extensive repairs.

DM suggested I write to DC Rajshahi for getting back the original duplicates left with him. I shall also write a D.O. to the ADC to whom I actually handed these over.

DM told me that as Asst. Magte I had the unique chance to mix freely with all people without any difficulties of rank which I'd have once I became SDO. So this opportunity ought to be utilised fully as it will never occur again.

**5.5.1972**

**Work done**

Session trial 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Letters to DC and ADC Rajshahi

Called on Mr. and Mrs. T.K.Das

**Information**

The trial began an hour late as the charge by the committing magistrate TP Ghosh had been framed badly, and the PP did not have an amended version ready. This was reframed, and then cross-examination of PW-1 took us right up to 2 pm as the defence lawyer Bimal Sanyal laboriously crossed on every point of the Chief and the FIR. Judge got irritated, so did everyone else. In the whole day only 2 PWs were examined instead of the scheduled 5.

Drafted letters to DC Rajshahi from DM asking for return of receipts of trucks. Also sent off a D.O. to ADC about it.

Called on T.K.Das at Circuit House. He advised me of the convention of only calling as "sir" officers with over 6 years seniority, i.e. from 1964 batch. He said that my "sir-ing" the Under Secy. in Cal. had produced a lot of laughter and amazement among other officers present. We should have been told this in the Academy. The DM, of course, is always "sir" whatever his batch.

**6.5.1972**

**Work done**

Sessions trial 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Called on DM

**Information**

Again trial began only at 12.15 p.m. due to a "full reference" on account of death of oldest member (89) of the Bar. All Judicial officers and Bar members came in full regalia. Tributes, fulsome, were paid.

The judge hurried the defence on and at times came down sharply for unnecessary queries. Today's witnesses 5 were left undone plus all DWs. Judge thought of special court on 8<sup>th</sup>, but then decided not to change, and to sit up to 6 pm on 9<sup>th</sup> if necessary.

I am to sit in on an interview board on 8<sup>th</sup> at 11 am for selecting some Panchayat worker.

Called on DM in evening and showed him some books I had. He had expressed a wish to see them, as he finds no general interest books here. He kept my "Myths of N. Europe" and vol.37 of Mahabharata (P.Lal's).

He told me that as SDO I must emphasize settlement of khas land, as in Malda out of 40,000 acres only 6000 had been settled. He is calling a meeting of E.A. dept. on 16<sup>th</sup> to tackle this and asked me to be present too.

He went on to explain that the old system of Collector camping out and touring enabled people to get direct redress. This was not done now because the people had, to some extent, lost faith in the admn, and the Collector's attitudes had also changed. Mr.Midha intends touring widely, however, once he has settled down here, and promised to take me along.

He failed to understand why Mr.De was so busy always. The volume of work is no less but Mr.Midha has his evenings after 6.30 pm to himself.

He likes biographies, light humour (no novels), Kennedy books, ghazals at dead of night [not the filmy ones however]. He said I was welcome to take a few days' leave whenever I wanted to visit my parents in Cal. He had thought they were elsewhere and hence had insisted I get back soon from my last trip. He also offered to put us up in the CH when my wife comes. He suggested she join WBHS as they get few MBBS at subdivision level and will be happy to get her. So she can also earn.

### **7.5.1972, Sunday**

With the DM engaged in readying CH for CM. Crockery was set apart. I got the Dak Bungalow dhobi to deliver all the curtains and bed sheets by tomorrow evening. 2 more ministers are also coming. The ADM is shifting, hence, to his bungalow tomorrow from the CH. A list of necessities was made.

I typed out half the synopsis of the District Plan Guidelines.

### **8.5.1972 (holiday)**

Rabindra Jayanti. In the morning went for interview to Gram Sewak Training Centre. Ast. Operators of RLA from ex-Census staff. Of 29 only 2 came, one refused the job as below his qualification. The other was unsuitable. The EEs, Agri-Mechanical and Agr-Irrigation should be included in our district plan. These are Mr Chanda and Mr Datta. I was the Board's Chairman.

Afternoon 2-8 p.m. I was buying Odonil etc. for CH, then getting the frig cleaned and with DM bought cloth for sofa set cover to be given tomorrow evening. DM put me in charge of looking after CM and I am not to go to Ratua-II tomorrow, but stay here till the CM leaves. He is coming by Darjiling Mail tomorrow night.

### **9.5.1972**

#### **Work done**

Sessions court 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Receiving Chief Minister

#### **Information**

Today in the morning I finished typing summary of the guidelines on district plan (had typed till midnight yesterday). Showed it to DM who told me what changes to make. Then, at the office, he made a round of all the various depts and was disgusted at the dirt and dust not cleaned. After CM leaves he wants Nazir to put-up requirements of furniture.

Today witnesses were finished—defence put up only 2 out of its 10. S. 342 CrPC was done. Arguments tomorrow.

In evening I went to CH and heard another lady was accompanying CM and his wife. For I shifted, on DM's orders, Irrigation Minister from suite 3 (he isn't staying here actually as he has his own house). For Bhaskar Ghose also 1 suite was readied. I myself changed the low power bulb because everyone else failed to detach it from its shade—so there I was precariously balanced on 1 table atop another, fiddling with the stuff while they were thinking of calling mechanics! Irrigation Minister is making complete food arrangements, so that saves us a lot of bother. The sofa covers arrived. A calling bell was fitted to the room as

also a table fan, and a bed-switch for the room lights. I made sure the Odonil was working. Around 8 p.m. I rushed and got a flask for keeping cold water beside CM's bed!

DM asked me to go to the station by 10.45 pm with the security station wagon, which had come from Cal. An Ambassador car from Cal was also to come but didn't reach finally. As the Nazir had mistakenly told my jeep to come at 11, I disturbed ADM and took his jeep's keys and drove off myself with a peon. Train came at midnight instead of 11.40 p.m. Massive slogan shouting by C® cadres (YC and Chatra Parishad). I spotted Mr Ghose in red sport shirt and sideburns and had my peon take his luggage to my jeep. After we had fixed CM and party's luggage in the station wagon, we left. Mr Ghosh, on hearing that Ast. Mgtes were forbidden to stay in CH, promised to talk about it to Mr Raghavan, and said I could permanently occupy a suite now that we had a new commissioner, JC Sen Gupta.

The CM enquired if mosquito nets had been fitted, when DM apologised for sub-standard condition of CH! If that was provided, nothing else mattered, he said. DM and I left at 1230 am. The CM's security men were put up in dak bungalow by shifting the accounts officer into another room with 3 people! Not a single room in any hotel/tourist lodge is available. Many people came for accommodation to DB. The Audit party has been asked to shift to Gram Sevak Trg Centre, but are unwilling.

**10.5.1972**

**Work done**

Sessions Court up to 1 pm

Copying committal enquiry case records

**Information**

Arguments of both sides were heard today. The P.P. argued brilliantly, demolishing most of the defence. The hitch over why Molina, a woman, should have accompanied armed men and be the first to set fire to the cottage, was got over by my suggesting Lady Macbeth to the PP who rammed this home with a quotation from the play, and then bringing in the Prakriti-Purusha concept!!!

Rest of the day I spent in copying out missed out bits of evidence in a committal case.

Only 1 "independent" candidate has filed nomination. Probably a C® stooge to ensure a contest. DM chalked out framework of election procedure.

I re-drafted the district plan guidelines synopsis and got a list of all district level officers.

**11.5.1972**

**Work done**

Long sessions with Mr Bhaskar Ghose in morning and with him, DM, ADM in evening.

CM filed nomination today and met Special Officer Plg & Dev (SOPD), R Kar.

**Information**

Met Mr Ghose at 10.30 a.m. at CH. He enquired where I had been yesterday and then was curious about my briefcase. So I told him of its historical value. A "Jugantar" reporter who was with him recalled the 1961 days. Mr. Ghose, hearing that Mr. Ray had represented my father in the Dacca Supreme Court, wanted to introduce me to the CM tomorrow noon.

R. Kar turned up, just back from Panchayat directorate meeting in Cal, as Chief Secy had wired him to meet CM here. As CM left to file his nomination, he waited. Mr. Ghose was most annoyed with Youth Congress boys occupying and infesting the CH and treating all its furnishings like vandals, even sleeping on the sofas, tho' CM had gone out and they ought to have followed him. CM is not using govt vehicle when he goes on election work. The lady with Mrs. Ray, Miss Chitra Banerji, is a touch trade union Youth Congress leader from Asansol tho' she looks young and feminine.

CM wants MBBS exams postponed, but Cal Univ must take the credit of graciously acceding to the demands. Hence Mr Ghose trunk called the Pro-VC and not finding him tried Mr Suresh Mathur and left this message with him.



He told us that Mr Ray has remodelled the CM's secretariat on Cabinet Secretariat lines with 3 officers [Secy, JS, Dy Secy—tho' the Secy is actually of JS rank too]. There are 6 P.A.s from Finance pool, all supposed to be very senior people, tho' hardly used. The Confidential Assistant (CA) is a political person—this time a lady from YC who handles all CM's political contacts and appointments. The JS deals as liaison officer with all other depts with only Chief Secy above him, getting the necessary reports and administrative work done. The CM's tour programme etc. is made by the P.A.s

The CM, he said, told Irrigation Minister not to do any electrification/irrigation schemes in the Old Malda constituency till elections were over. But the Minister won't listen. He called the SEB Divl. Engr. And told him that if the following 3 or 7 villages were not electrified by end of June, he (the minister) would have to resign, so "apni amakey bachan" and get it done! After this, CM got back, so I left to arrange for getting him all Cal papers of today and R.Kar met him and told me later that CM had told him that the guidelines were theoretical and he would have to get practical stuff and do the plan by end of June as the Planning Board would in July begin formulating the State Plan. The SOPD would be the counterpart of the Planning Board Secretary in the district. Kar was impressed by CM's detailed interest and not indulging in big talk. I had also told Mr.Ghose of Kar's triple charge as Sr.D.C., D.P.O., S.O.P.D. This Mr.Ghose told CM who disapproved.

No work could be done by me in the afternoon as I'd intended to study Sericulture, but found all our jeeps out of order! Sat with DM and ADM and saw a crank from Kalimpong called Thakurdas who was filing his nomination here as also in Raiganj! He also told Mr.Ray that he would not stand unless Mr.Ray campaigned properly! Either that, or no campaigning at all!

In the evening I dropped in from office at CH. Found all papers had been sent by Publicity Officer [when DM had told him, he seemed at a loss as to how to get them]. A second set also arrived which I'd arranged to get. These I gave to Mr. Ghose who was most pleased. He showed me some of the fortnightly reports from the Agr. Commissioner, Industries Secy, Information Secy. The last one writes just 5 lines that there's nothing to report! The finest report was the one from Industries, very detailed and interesting. Mr.Ghose said our Information Dept was totally slanted. During 1967-69 not a single issue of the West Bengal magazine can be found to refer to the Naxalite troubles. Hence, credibility gap with public. Critical articles and appraisals ought to be printed so that people begin to believe in what information this magazine will supply.

We then went across to DM's bungalow. There, with ADM, we chatted till 8.30 p.m. The conversation began with living conditions of DMs and the offices. DM had intended sprucing up his office, but seeing the way the clerks had to work with broken furniture, filthy curtains, unswept rooms, he refrained. Comparisons were made with the lovely spacious furnished houses of DMs in Bihar and other states. The proposal in WB to give DMs furnished houses had foundered because DMs wrote back that this should be done from SDO stage, since by DM stage officers had accumulated their own furniture. Supplying furnishings would mean no DA for transporting their own stuff either, which no one liked. Mr Ghose told us how, as a probationer, in Bihar and Bangalore, he found DMs having free drinks in hotels and free luxurious dinners in clubs from local contractors without the least compunction. In Mysore, Mr Midha said, DM hardly comes to office or does any routine work. That way the WB cadre has much more of an honourable life. Besides, where tangawallas rush into DM's chambers for GR, half-naked and emaciated, lovely spacious buildings would be incongruous. However, as in Cooch Behar and Seuri, the bungalow ought to be situated far from the office so that processionists have to trudge quite some distance!

The topic then shifted to Writers. The awful congestion and the miserable working conditions of the clerks were never seen by the Secys. Mr.Ghose was very bitter at the prevalent attitude

among the IAS that the more supercilious, cynical you were about anyone who was eager to do things, the more you were intelligent. At one stage, an IAS officer would be praised by colleagues on basis of the number of lathi charges he had made. There was a total lack of a sense of urgency, responsibility, courtesy of answering D.O. letters (because the "burra saab" will be busy going to a test match/party/film and can't sign a letter which a clerk has sense enough to see demands an immediate reply). The obscurantist attitude towards planning ahead was pointed out with concrete instances by Mr Ghose. He is convinced that the wagon shortage is 50% cooked up, resulting from lack of planning: for wagons you need in Sept '72, tenders must be placed now, but no one does that and when the emergency comes, you run a-begging to the railways who simply can't provide wagons at short notice. He also came down hard on the inertia and negative attitude to any change. The directorates have been asked to vacate writers'—with a little imagination the vacant plot opposite Great Eastern hotel could be used to build a skyscraper to house all directorates. But nothing such is done. The first response is "no money"; when that is given, it is "no materials"; and after that "labour is not cooperating". The very atmosphere of WB is such that after 3 years as a Dy. Secy. one gets into the same rut. So this has to be fought and changed. The CM fully agrees that it is worth spending whatever is necessary to improve working conditions of the staff as it will result in improved returns of output. The CM has already decided to renovate the little cubby-holes which are the offices of Secys and install a central air conditioning plant.

Talk turned to reluctance of police to act despite clear instructions of concerned ministers. This is hangover from UF days, but Mr. Ghose hopes it will slowly disappear. Any how of a C<sup>®</sup> flag and they don't act, tho' Subroto Mukherjee and CM have clearly given orders to act impartially. Mr. Ghose gave 2 instances where local goondas and CPM did lawless acts in name of C<sup>®</sup> and police didn't act till Subroto Mukherjee said they were not C<sup>®</sup> at all. He reminisced about the old days when processions used to be stopped 1/4<sup>th</sup> mile from office and a single constable could make an arrest in a village. The fault in the breakdown also lay with the admn which failed to react and keep step with changing public ethos. Thus, if a constable was beaten up, you taught the villagers "a lesson" instead of going and appealing to their sense of law and order. This resulted in hatred → violence vs. police.

He told us why Cal Police were so much more effective than W.B. Police. Ranjit Ghosh, Spl. IG, had ensured that the credibility gap was narrowed down. Earlier, the police used to mostly have friendly contact with middle class people. But during Naxal attacks on police, these people would shut their doors and ring up the HQ and abuse their inaction. But in bustees, the inmates would run out to capture the assailant—a basic sense of unchanging values. So, the IG asked the thanas to get contact here by telling the bustee dwellers that the police would help to get them hospital beds, school seats, expedite ration cards, if they helped police. Hence Naxalites has to fell to suburbs: the bustees became "white" areas. He gave instances from his own career where talking to furious crowds had helped. Mr Midha mentioned how in Asansol when trade union leaders would get over-heated, he would just ask, "should I tell your cadres how you live and behave in private?" They would at once quieten down and sidle out.

Mr. Ghose gave an instance of how a mistake of his as SDO Barrackpore was taken up by J.C. Talukder as his own fault with Dr. B.C. Roy. A fascinating incident over the Udayan villa refugee handicrafts institution. But today, they all lamented, such guts and willingness to back up juniors was gone. In 1967-69 superiors would refuse to guide and would ask you to proceed on your own discretion.

On my referring to ARC reports being rejected, Mr Ghose said at times this was good, e.g. the report on Personnel Management was made by a committee consisting of central services men who recommended that IAS should only remain at district level and not get any secretarial posts—which is absurd totally. Again, they were using the IIPA as an anti-IAS

forum. What was needed was to broad-base and variegate the recruitment of IAS to include doctors, engineers, as this would cushion clashes with technical heads of depts. Mr.Ghose told me that the Personnel dept. had asked that every officer should revert to districts after 3 years in Sectt. Most of our Secys have been holding that post for over 10 years! Hence, frustration, ossification, cynicism. Change is essential, either by going on deputation to GoI or abroad.

Mr.Ghose took a look at my assignments and for the questionnaire on land, referred me to the DLRS, Board of Revenue.

P.K.Samaddar was sent to Cal by DM today to find out if a certified copy of electoral roll extract was essential for a nomination, or if a certificate stating the roll number would be enough. He has orders to return tomorrow night, whatever the difficulty.

**12.5.1972**

### **Work done**

Accompanied Secy to CM in his work

Sat in on Wakf Estate (Bais Hazari) trust committee meeting with DM

Evening talk at DM's bungalow.

### **Information**

After attending office, I went at 1130 to CH and found a massive crowd waiting to see the CM. Found JS at DM's office writing up points from fortnightly report of each dept. alphabetically. He finished around 1 pm, when it was too late for me to meet CM who was leaving for a public meeting. So we came back and he trunk called the CS and Relief Minister Santosh Roy for reports on drought in Purulia, Bankura with CM's instructions to tackle it on a war footing. In Purulia, GR has been raised from 0.5 to 2 and ½ % and will now be made 3 and ½ %. OF the Rs.60 lakhs allotted, 57 lakhs have been spent. For TR out of rs.1.40 crore, 86 lakhs b\spent. More cant be given without Gol's vetting since it will involve tapping the Famine fund and the DMs have not reported any such condition tho' the press is flashing it prominently. The only way out is to dig massive deep wells all over the place to tap the water. Tubewells can't be sunk because of the rocky subsoil at 150 feet. Wells dry up. People go out at 4 am as far as 8 miles to dig in river beds and scoop out the water into pots!

Talking of what we learn in NAA, he said it is the management techniques that one should learn and read for this management in govt. Why can't we discard the colonial present system of an army of clerks feeding an officer without the power to sign a single letter? This was needed to rule another people, not for one's own people. In UK each officer keeps his own files in his filing cabinet. Each assistant has his allotted work which he disposes of independently. There is no veneration of files with every reminder and note being kept. Letters go directly to persons concerned and are disposed of by them independently. He said Mr.A.N.Jha had tried to do a little cutting out of duplication of files in Information Ministry and this failed because officers complained of being unable to cope without clerks! Result of generations of such training.

Mr.Ghose did his MA (English) from St. Stephen's, joined IAS 1960. Director of NAA was Mr.A.N. Jha. Was SDO Barrackpore, Ast. Mgte at Burdwan (where he hardly met DM twice for tea as the DM constantly looked down his nose at him) and then posted on personal staff of Mrs.Gandhi (then Information Minister) for some months. Then ADM Delhi plus Secy to Lt. Governor and then back as DC Cooch Behar, followed by Director of Census 1969-72 (part time job at present).

Spl. Officer to CM (i.e. PA—he was BC Roy's PA too, Sri Saroj Chakravarti) is arriving today. Mr Ghose had asked the people in Cal to send along a PA with CM, but was told this wasn't required as the files being taken were not important. But first thing CM did on reaching Malda was to tell Mr Ghose that the files had urgent matters and that these must be disposed of at once. So the PA is finally coming!

The Wakf Estate meeting was pushed through in 15 mins by DM who quickly Okayed everything. The Secy is 85 years old! They have a Qadam Rasul which they bathe 9 times during Id!

In evening, ADM, DM, JS, I and a Jugantar reporter talked of Nixon, Kennedy murder (Mr Ghose being convinced that the money which remove Kennedy was pushing on Nixon, otherwise how would he proceed as he was doing vs. even CIA advice that mining Haiphong would be useless). Robert Kennedy was the brains of the lot and was aiming at reverting FBI and CIA to their normal work by slashing budgets. Hence removed.

A youth of the Uma Roy group was arrested under MISA today. Hue and cry to CM who would not release if he is a goonda. They claim Barkat has framed up all this.

**13.5.1972**

### **Work done**

Seeing off CM and party

Met Mrs. Maya Ray [12-1.30 pm]

### **Information**

The Spl. Offr. to CM, Sri Saroj Chakravarti, had arrived and was selecting the files to be taken back to Cal by him tonight. I got one D.O. letter from CM to Chowdhury Abdul Karim, MLA Islampur, retyped as the name of the MLA was put down wrongly. Generally hung around, doing some chores. In breathing spells amid the work of preparing files needing CM's signature, Mr.Ghose told me and Subimal Sen Gupta (Jugantar reporter) of the past days when the Chief Secy. S.N.Ray would keep the cadre in line by such amazing transfers as sending an SDO to become Aast. Mgtte and ADMs back to SDOs! But he saw to it that their seniority was kept, e.g. the reverted SDO would become DM as he would have usually. He told us how R.Gupta came down hard on V.S.C.Bonnerjee for his rude behaviour as Commissioner with DM, claiming the Nazir had overcharged his CH bill!

Met Mrs.Ray by chance & she called me into her room and we chatted for over an hour as CM finished files and received deputations. She said this was the first time she had been comfortable in Malda CH and profusely thanked DM and me for the bed switch and the colour choice of the flask, the lamp, the fan which happened to be her favourite one luckily (pale green). She was full of good words for the new batches of IAS officers who were dynamic and had ideas as opposed to the fossilized old Secys of WB who simply would not adjust to new reforms in admn. She realises that this is the last chance the party has of making good and hence Mr Ray and his bunch of young ministers are determined to show results. Most of them having been financial losers by joining politics have no reason to make money here and will not countenance corruption. Health directorate is possibly the most corrupt and murderous, she said.

She was a III year medical student in London when she dropped that for Mr Ray. As he was in law 18 hours daily, to be with him, she took it up too. She feels irritated by crowds and avoids getting into crowds of deputationists lest she say something unlike Mr Ray's statements. She described him as a "karmayogi".

She enquired about my accommodation and on hearing of Mr Raghavan's order said she would personally talk to the Commissioner and get it changed and that I should tell Mr Ghose about it as well. She is deeply concerned with weeding extremists out of the party. Wants cadres to have a sense of discipline and not come in crowds and make a lot of chaos. She also feels it is good if they dress smartly.

She has a very perfect BBC accent. Spoke mostly in English. Suggested we have 4 Janata stoves for quick cups of tea and cooking without fuss.

They left at 2 p.m. for Raiganj. Thence to Jalpaiguri on 15<sup>th</sup> for Tea Planters' Association meeting. Mrs Ray will stay on in Raiganj while Mr Ray will campaign again towards the end of the month.

Miss Chitra Banerjee, the TU leader of Asansol who specialises in coal field area and brought down congress vote deficit to 8000 from 36000 this time, was wearing sapphire nose-drop and ear-drops! Mrs Ray told me all the cadre came from good, wealthy families, hence were truly idealistic and without vested interest in their work. Assured me that Miss Banerjee was usually in soiled clothes and stayed in coal-field area, leading processions.

Barkat Ali was telling the Divl. Engr. SEB to electrify the villages in Mr Ray's constituency—if necessary just for a month and then withdraw it! I told Mr.Ghose this—a fatal thing to withdraw power after giving it. He at once decided to tell CM to have a clear understanding with Barkat over election tactics.

In evening I called on Prof. S.Chakravarty, head of English, Malda college (3 honours students, all mediocre) and talked literature after ages.

Typed out summary of TA Rules. Should be of great help to officers.

**Monday, 15.5.1972**

**Work done**

Enquiry at Kaliachak-I, 1030 am to 3 pm, 28 miles in all.

Met new WBJCS probationer Mihir Banerjee. He joined on 13<sup>th</sup> (Saturday). Research student in Anthropology at Jadavpur Univ., 1968 MSc.

**Information**

Found that the allegation made about loan distribution was true, viz. given to members of the same family. But I checked the deeds and found each member had separate land and hence entitled to loans. Took total amount of loans given anchal-wise so that BDO can't be said to have favoured any one anchal. A quarrel between factions in C<sup>®</sup> led to this allegation, the alleged offenders told me. He is a member of the anchal board. The BDO is quite ignorant about technical requirements to be followed for loans. Later, back in Collectorate I verified from Loans HC that no certificate was needed for Agri HB loans from BDO of block where land was situated that the applicant had not taken loan there. Details are to be found in my report. I gave BDO till Saturday to supply me various other details like names of applicants registered but not given money owing to lack of funds. He feels no more loans should be given here. The loanees themselves told me they earn Rs. 10,000 to 20,000 in December every year from silk and if needed can return the entire loan at once.

A number of loans were sanctioned direct by Mr De and ADM without recommendation of BDO. This should not have been done. Loan forms are also selling in Malda, against law.

The receipts from Dy.RRC acknowledging receipt of receipts for trucks sent to Rajshahi was got today from the Astd. Nazir Adhir Saha.

The Cong (O) candidate Ali Nabed has withdrawn from the contest here.

In the evening helped Sr.D.C. pass his driving test for permanent license.

Information from PSC arrived today that departmental exams are to start on 10<sup>th</sup> July and for sending our names for it.

**16.5.1972**

**Work done**

Met Suptdt. of Sericulture, K.P. Raha, 11 am to 1230 pm

Drought meeting with DM, OC Relief, SDO

**Information**

Mr Raha gave me the whole background to concentration of sericulture in Malda whereas at one time it flourished in Bankura, Purulia, Birbhum—most of WB and was the livelihood of the poor tantias. They changed over to cash crops (paddy, jute) finding this more profitable with ready markets. In Malda it continues because the land is so high and surrounded by such deep ditches that enough irrigation for paddy is not available hence they perforce stick to mulberry. A self contained reeling and weaving industry is not set up here owing to lack of

planning as well as need to locate production centre near markets. Much of Malda yarn goes to Benares and other spots, and a little inside WB. The reelers get Rs.8 per diem D.A. and yet were about to strike for more, led by Janardan Maitra, CPI supported. The Minister has promised to back up the Suptdt who refuses to pay more for less work. The govt are unable to make profit here either because buy raw materials at a just and more than market price. Also sell it similarly at no profit. Result: they are unable to cover even the depreciation cost of Rs.40,000/-

At the meeting, the RLA EE Mr Chandra was rung up by DM and castigated. 50 acres of ripe paddy are about to be ruined because 3 RLA pumps are without operators and the EE is least concerned! Source of trouble was dispute between BDO and AE over site of pump. This was resolved by DAO, but EE seems blissfully ignorant about it. AE, PHE, having no stocks for tubewells, DM rang up Dy Secy Health, NK Saha and ensured that materials would be sent tomorrow for 300 tubewells. The PHE is rather timid, probably because was let down earlier by his superiors and so reluctant to handle fiscal matters involved in recovering tubewell pipes installed for evacuees. DM undertook to pay for this out of his Rs.3 lakh allotment.

Officers will tour each block to check extent of drought, number of TR schemes begun. I am to check up on a reported starvation death in Ratua-II. All schemes given have been sanctioned as CM told over phone that we must not worry about money now. GR is increased to 1% of population.

**17.5.1972**

**Work done**

Enquiry at Ratua-II; visits to Ratua-I and Old Malda [9 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.; 109 km] for enquiry into drought condition.

**Information**

Accompanied by Mihir Banerjee [sub-deputy on probation] I completed the enquiry at Ratua. The complainants repeatedly stressed their deep respect for BDO and high opinion of his gentlemanly conduct and shock that he should have got "innocent youths" arrested "nefariously"! I brought back entire muster rolls of 24 and 29 Jan 1972 distribution to satisfy their demand. They alleged multiple LTIs by the same persons and that I should get this checked by experts. Details of my enquiry are to be found in my report.

Around 2 pm I left for Ratua-I, reminded Sr.D.C. there to check up on drought condition. In Ratua-II Boro crop has been good over the 3000 acres, but nil sowing in 5000 Aus and 12000 Jute areas. Also no jute seeds in the market. The Rs.5000/- allotted to the block means 2 people per gram sabha get the loan! Cash allotment for tubewells has not yet been made known, so he is unable to place indents. I assured him that all his 13 TR schemes would be sanctioned.

Verified from BDO Old Malda that the R-II cashier had not taken loan from here (his land is here).

**18.5.1972**

**Work done**

Visited Sericulture farm at Piyasbari

Called on district industrial officer

Court work.

**Persons met**

P.Saha: Suptdt. Sericulture Farm

P.K. Dutta: DIO

Tushar K. Bhattacharya: UBI Field Officer (Agr)

**Information**

From 8-10.30 a.m. I was at the Piyasbari seed farm, 9 miles from town. Mr Raha was originally here for 12 years and did a lot of work discovering 300 year old manuscript on

Gour. Then he was in Behrampore and now is back in Malda. He told me the genesis of silk in China 5000 years back and how it came here, and then the history of its troubles. Japan is taking over through mechanisation. We are now cross-breeding with Japanese worms. These breed twice a year but produce 4 times the silk that indigenous ones produce.

Then I went round the breeding rooms (78-80 degrees F and 80% humidity), saw worms spinning cocoons, then how these are cut, larvae tested for disease. One worm was dissected to show the silk glands and the silk fibre (I brought it back) and a moth was crushed to paste for microscopic examination by me. Saw how moths breed, lay eggs. The farm is a lovely green expanse studded with 26 tanks. Cool even in day.

In afternoon visited DIO's office and took details of his work: Mango industry (pushing on despite defalcations in the cooperative), Bakeries, Carpentry, Tailoring, Handloom (gamcha, sari, pit looms chiefly), Biri making, Bricks, Tiles, Shoes, village blacksmiths. Recently schemes for drug manufacture and diesel repairing park workshops have come. Under the WB State Aid to Industries Act:

DIO can give loan Rs. 2000/-	
BDO	400/-
DM	10,000/-
Director	15,000/-
Secy	25,000/-
Govt	1 lakh

Capital invested (plants and machinery) is not to exceed Rs.7.5 lakhs.

Also recommends loans to UBI under Lead Bank scheme. 22 such recommended, but highly technical forms and their length holds up time. Needs to be simplified. I decided to write to Mr De about this and to meet DP Bagchi, Dev. Offr. UBI also.

Copied records of a committal case. At residence of Mr Raha met UBI field officers TK Bhattacharya, whom I had been asked to meet by HB Naik, my batch-mate in W. Dinajpur. He confirmed cold relations between DM and Naik. Naik is staying in a dilapidated dak bungalow. He plans to visit Darjiling in June and has asked me to come.

**19.5.1972**

### **Work done**

Attended meeting of ADM and mango merchants.

Attended court and took down summary of judgement.

### **Information**

The meeting was between Eastern, North Frontier railways and mango merchants. The crop is down to 1 lakh 20,000 qtls, one fourth of last year, but they are demanding same number of wagons. This was scaled down. Railways promised to supply all that was needed without delay. The merchants were urged by ADM to shift the marketing and transshipment centre from Rajmahal to Malda. They agreed provided they get land for a market. They explained why last year they deserted railways for trucks—because the wagons were delayed and even a day's delay can spoil the mangoes.

The accused were given benefit of doubt and acquitted. The judgement is massive. The judge pointed out several lacunae in the prosecution case.

**Saturday 20.5.1972**

### **Work done**

Visited reeling factory at Madhughat 10-1145 a.m., 18 miles

Got figures on agricultural damage caused by drought so far here from DAO.

### **Information**

Suptdt of Sericulture took me to Madhughat. Here I saw how the cocoons are soaked alternatively in tepid and hot water to loosen the gum, then in cold water, and then reeling starts. With the Japanese cocoons reeling is at top speed, but indigenous cocoons' thread is

weak and so it has to go at less than half the speed. After initial reeling, there is re-reeling on larger reels and then each batch's thickness is tested (should be 16-18 Denaiar). Thereafter it is pressed into box-like frames and sold. This has to be bleached before colouring to remove the gum and that reduces its weight considerably.

The plant is working 70 reeling machines now. Due to lack of enough Jap cocoons, cannot do 100. Using indigenous cocoons means working very slow, with very high overhead costs.

The outer floss of cocoons is sold as "raw silk"! If enough Japanese cocoons are got, the industry can make Rs.1 lakh profit. At present, is losing some half lakh and with Indian cocoons loses 4 lakhs!

In afternoon, all probationers except Roy Chaudhuri and myself were assigned 3 blocks each for taking tubewell materials to them by tomorrow. The Suptdt Engr and EE PHE turned up to meet DM and assured him that they would keep stock ready always and would ask for 200 instead of 150 so that a buffer stock for floods was available.

2 questions arise:-

1. Why are not the tubewells maintained properly to cut out ancillary costs in crash repair programme?

2. Why does not PHE have a planned programme of sinking tubewells everywhere every year and so avoid such hectic work in which the worst materials are supplied and work is perfunctorily done.

Relief Minister rang up for figures on drought. So I rushed to DAO and found:

1. Boro paddy 5000 acres damaged—Rs.81 lakhs.

2. Aus area is 1.70 lakhs; Jute is 1.60 lakhs. Only 15% has been dry sown and without rain only 5% will germinate, i.e. Rs.59 million loss. Aus is Rs.30 per maund and Jute Rs.50 per maund. Boro yield is 20 tonnes per acre, Rs.81 per tonne.

3. Vegetables 5000 acres out of which 500 damaged, i.e. Rs.1 lakh.

Weather is suddenly changing. Quite cold NE breeze (Jalpaiguri is facing flood danger), but no rain, despite clouds.

**22.5.1972**

### **Work done**

Visiting schemes with DIO, 9 to 11.30 a.m.

Went to Manikchak with SOPD, 330 to 6 p.m., 90 km.

### **Information**

With DIO first visited a "cottage" industry in a luxurious 2 storey house. The young men of the family are producing agarbattis—about Rs.4000/- p.m. and all are sold out @ Rs.6 a dozen packets. They are getting the sticks from Mysore, scenting them here (I saw the process). They have to print their address as "Calcutta" otherwise people don't buy, and it costs them Rs.6 per 1000. In Malda it costs double and never less than Rs.12-15, while from Cal, including carrying costs, it is Rs.10 maximum. Later I tested their sandalwood variety and found it really excellent.

We next visited a "small scale industry"—a tiny cabinet-making shop. Lack of spirit in the market is bothering him. Has steady customers and making decent profit.

Next, SENCO Bakery. Usually made 4-5 qtls of bread daily. Bad "O" quality flour, due to bad supply from FCI to Siliguri mills, is forcing him to make only 1 qtl daily. Also because heat is spoiling bread. Invested 1 lakh. Costs him Rs.215 per qtl; sells at Rs.250. Biscuits he has started a fortnight back—40 to 50 tins daily, 1000 pieces in each, costing him Rs.12 and selling at Rs.18, undercutting outside Cal biscuits that sell at Rs.23 a tin.

Next we visited Onkarnath Agarwala's ice and ice-cream factory. Power trouble is plaguing him, forcing frequent shutdowns due to voltage fluctuation. He makes about 50 blocks of 50 kg each daily, sells each at Rs.5 or 6, making 25% profit.



We finally visited Automobile Repair shop opened by unemployed engineers cooperative. Unfortunately, their loan is help up because the Secy is too busy with a contract in Bhaluka to call a meeting and pass a resolution for this. DIO is prepared to advance them Rs.1500 from cooperative bank and be reimbursed by the govt. loan when it arrives. They are so badly off that they lack the Rs.30 to get their signboard which has been lying ready in a shop! And yet they insisted on feeding us sweets, four a head!!! After much pleading it was reduced to 2. I went to the paint shop and arranged for the signboard to be taken today and paid for later. They were quite amenable. Speaks well of the boys that they never thought of taking it on credit. The shop is very well placed opposite a petrol pump on NH 34 at Mangalbari, a little after the Mahananda bridge.

DM has gone to attend CM's meeting in Cal. Both Senco and the ice factory have come up in 1969 under the present DIO. We also visited a lens grinding affair he has helped by loans and found it held up for lack of space. The JLRO is to be moved to expedite giving the khas land just behind the shop so that machine's tables can be set up.

Went to SOPD office and dug out the file on N.Bengal Pharmaceutical Works which is lying here instead of going to govt for getting the Rs.1 lakh loan. I found the reason is that the LAO is to give his report on the proposed land but has merely forwarded Kanungo's report. Took it to Collectorate and found Spl. LAO there. He insisted that under G.O.s he was not to give any report. Kar requested him to write, "I agree to KGO's report" but even for this he wants a formal reference to be made to him. And he began his perpetual cribbing about not getting the most experienced staff for his office tho' proportionately speaking he has better quality staff than any other office. His objection is that he has to train them up and should get people who have had experience in LA work. He threatened to write to DM that he would be unable to continue the proposed LA schemes otherwise. LAO finally did the needful at end of May.

News came from Manikchak that Chowkidars of an anchal are on hunger strike because Pradhan has not paid them their salary of Rs.97 for months. Hence SOPD and I went there. Pradhan was reported away, so we talked to the Secy of the anchal and with EOP arranged for disbursement of pay and if necessary sack the pradhan. The D-Day is 25<sup>th</sup> morning when Pradhan returns.

Manikchak BDO expressed resentment over DM's behaviour on Sunday at a meeting he had with all BDOs. It seems Sushil Ghosh of Kharba-I was putting forward that TR dealers were facing great difficulty in lifting stocks from town, so why not make the delivery orders on Samsi godown of FCI? At this the DM is supposed to have said, "Don't talk like a street urchin; you bloody well have to do it." Whereupon all BDOs have decided to keep quiet totally about their difficulties. Comparisons are being drawn with MR De who never spoke thus and who even in 1969 and 1971 floods never lost his temper as Mr Midha seems to have done ever "so slight a matter" they say.

I also find that I am not aware of these meetings. During Mr De's time I hardly ever missed such a meeting. It is a result of my going very very rarely to DM's office, because he does not seem to take me into confidence or encourage me or take personal interest as Mr De used to do. Mr De's house was almost like a home to me. Mr. Midha is somewhat cold and aloof I find.

Began studies for departmental exams.

**23.5.1972**

### **Work done**

Toured with DIO 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., 21 km.

### **Information**

First we went, along with Handloom Development Officer, to Sahapur to a weavers colony of 100 looms, both pit looms and more mechanised Chittaranjan looms. Thread from Kaliachak. Excellent dying. Saris 10 cubits of 40 counts. During pujas up to 60 or 80 counts, selling at

Rs.10 or 11. With a little designing, at Rs.12. Better quality than Nadia saris which capture market owing to lower price. I was told the Gangarampur saris are even better (W. Dinajpur). Many of this Sahapur people are relations of Harinagar. They wanted grant @Rs.500/- each for getting thread-rolling drums, otherwise in rains they can't proceed winding the thread in the open round beams of looms. Each drum costs Rs.400. One loom is Rs.500. I made DIO draw up a draft petition for them to CM, concerned minister, Mr De and DM, asking that earlier practice of buying Rs.5000/- worth cloth from them by Small Industries Corpn be re-started; the rural industries scheme be begun, ensuring free flow of loans. They also used to make plain silk cloth but lack of market has ruined production.

On way back we stopped to see the 100 looms being made at Bastuhara Sayahak Samiti for Harinagar by Bansilal Sohni.

After this we went to mango processing cooperative. The Executive Officer told us the history. A capital of Rs.5 lakhs out of which the secy had embezzled over 1 lakh and set up a rival business. At present it is breaking even and beginning export to Europe, specially W.Germany of one inch slices of mango dipped in brine. Trouble is it is a very slow moving product and can't be sold fast as it is consumed slowly. I tasted the tomato sauce and mango chutney. No artificial ingredients, wholly genuine. Also saw the process. A boiler was bought in 1967 as also a vacuum machine for canning, but demand is not enough to warrant such massive production as would need a boiler. However, he intends to begin canning next year.

After this we went to the GoI training institute for carpenters and blacksmiths and saw what beautiful designs can be made on lathes. The trouble is that people learn here but then can't get jobs.

Back in office found Bimal Chakravarty, BDO Old Malda and asked him about Sunday's incident. His version, and the most dependable one, was that the trouble arose partly out of Ghosh's habit of speaking extra loudly out of anxiety to convince and partly out of language barrier. Ghosh had put forward difficulties and said that TR dealers "der aro somoy ditey hobey" meaning "should" and not "must" as DM understood. DM flared up and said that when the CM asks him to do something, he does not argue but sees it is done, whatever the difficulties. So one should not talk irresponsibly like a street urchin. DM had also charged Hcpur-II BDO with letting him down over something he had told CM. This was disproved. Later, other BDOs repeated Ghosh's difficulties and DM accepted their contentions. Bad presentation was cause of the trouble.

**24.5.1972**

**Work done**

Routine office work.

In the afternoon, DM ordered P.Chakraborty, myself, 6 assistants and 2 peons with 7 armed police to proceed to Cal at 8 a.m. tomorrow to bring ballot papers. The police will provide a prison van and we will take a jeep.

I am to clarify the question of payment for 21 evacuee drivers who should have been discharged on 30 April but were given notice on 25 May due to late receipt of GO ordering retention of only 9 drivers till 31 May.

**25.5.1972**

Left Malda only at 9.30 a.m. as DM wanted to give me certain personal chores in Cal to do for him. The van was a rickety affair and reached Cal after 3 breakdowns at 11 p.m. We got there at 8.30 p.m. due to jeep breakdown at Behrampore in a very heavy downpour. Extremely fine weather. We took lichis from the gardens lining the road at Beniagram. No cheaper than Cal (Rs.3 per 100).

**26.5.1972**

**Work done**

Checking ballot papers.

Work of checking the 72000 ballot papers began at B.G. press.

I went to Dy. RRC who directed me to Ast. Secy RR Dept and also the ex Financial Adviser and present Dy Secy Finance Dept. Both assured me no special sanction was needed for paying the drivers 1 month salary in lieu of the undelivered notice. I trunk-called DM from Under Secy's room and dictated this to his CA and intimated our arrival by 7 p.m. on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>.

**27.5.1972**

Ballot papers were packed and stitched and sealed in 2 boxes by 6 p.m. We are to leave Cal at 8 a.m. tomorrow.

**Sunday, 28.5.1972**

Left Cal only at 10 a.m. due to various hold ups. Blazing sun. Reached Malda 6.10 p.m. and were highly irritated to find no one to receive the boxes. Sent jeeps for the Election HC and T.O. The HC stood by, not even able to provide coolies, while the police lifted the boxes inside the double-lock. All completed by 7.30 p.m. Reported to DM and retired.

I have brought my cousin brother from Cal with me and his reactions to the Dak Bungalow and Malda's whimsical power supply are amusing to the veteran that I've become!

**29.5.1972**

### **Work done**

Visited and photographed Sahapur weavers village. Also went to the mango processing coop and bought samples of all their products. They have just received a letter from NDC requiring a massive quantity of canned mango juice and so will put the boiler in operation. This was some 20 miles in all today, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

In evening took all WBJCS probationers to sericulture farm at Piyasbari and photographed and took samples of cocoons of both types. 18 miles, 5-7 p.m.

**30.5.1972**

6-10 a.m. with WBJCS probationers toured all of Gour including the "baisgazi" (22 yards high) wall. Saw indications of brick foundations 3 feet below land being ploughed. 40 km. 1130 a.m. to 2 p.m. the ADM made me sit with him and finally interview the top 20 Excise asst. sub inspector candidates from the past interviews. The evacuee staff refused to be interviewed and just submitted certificates. The ADM claims he has the right to interview them.

**31.5.1972**

6-10 a.m. visited, with probationers, Pandua [Kaji Masjid, Eklakhi], Adina and then a thrilling excursion through a forest into the underground bathing rooms of Sataisghara. Clay pipes are set in the ceiling and all sides but the question is how the water came from the adjoining tank which is 20 feet below the level of the rooms. Draupadi is famed to have bathed here. Tragic to see clear indications of a fortress wall and 1 sq. mile area of buildings of which foundations are clear, but no archaeological dept is interested. Travelled 60 km. in all.

In the evening went to Piyasbari to see spinning of cocoons. Then to Sagardighi. 25 miles. Sent off my cousin by night bus to Cal. Two I class cases are ready on 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. One sessions trial on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**1.6.1972**

### **Work done**

Preparation for departmentals

Discussion with Establishment Head Clerk about staff shortage

### **Information**

Took *Preventive Detention Act* from the PP and also *W.B. Security Act* from library and determined the important sections in consultation with Sr.D.C.

Estt. HC pointed out that High Court injunction vs. promotion of LDCs to UDC was effective only from the appellant downwards and did not apply to those senior to him. 7 UD posts are vacant and badly need to be filled up. A 12½ % increase in staff has been ordered, of which DM on his own can make some 13 appointments on a yearly basis. The HC complained that the OS would invariably work at cross purposes with him and not let any section work smoothly so that his power remained unimpaired.

T.B. Deb, Mihir Banerji and I decided to write to archaeological survey to excavate the Sataisghara area. Deb said he had done so about the now famous Pandu Rajar Dhibi and I am hoping similar results will follow here.

**2.6.1972**

**Work done**

9 a.m.: enquiry into survivors of an office clerk

3-630 p.m.: went with Suptdt Sericulture to houses of private rearers and to Gandhi Ashram and a private reeling concern to be inaugurated by CM. 70 km.

Called on T.B. Deb at his residence.

**Information**

Sripati Bhuvan Chowdhury, C.I. of the SLRO office, died on 21<sup>st</sup> and I was asked to enquire into the date of death and surviving family members in order to provide swift relief without waiting for succession certificate etc. It was an awful experience as the 2 married daughters tightly clasped my hands and feet begging for a job for the 22 year old unmarried sister. I could leave only after giving my word I would do my best. They have 3 brothers, 17 years and below, and the widow.

ADM held that such an enquiry had no legal basis and the order sheet and case supplied to me were irregular. It seems this has been the convention here.

In the afternoon proceeded to house of a silkworm rearer. He has 7 bighas land from which he produces 30 maunds of cocoon selling at Rs.400 per md. at least. Costs him a maximum of Rs.3000/-. This year loss is 60-70%. Suptdt told him and other growers that they should not ask the CM for money loans but for permanent assets like tubewells for irrigation. They all enthusiastically agreed.

We also visited the Gandhi Ashram at Jalalpur and saw the silk and khaddar cloth. This is all brought from outside. They bring the cocoons here, make the yarn and send it out for weaving. However, cotton yarn is made here from raw cotton from Punjab. I saw how this is done in the more mechanised charkhas. The girls get Rs.1.50 to Rs.2 a day only. Cocoons are now selling at Rs.600 a maund.

On the way back we stopped at the private Silk Khadi Seva Mandal which is to be inaugurated (the electric motor for the yarn) by the CM on 6<sup>th</sup> evening. The SEB's top staff (state level) is arranging everything. The owners have just to look after the ceremony part! In the evening called on T.B. Deb and we both heard Sri Sudhir Chakravarty's articles and tried to think how to publish his excellent history of Malda. We also decided to move the archaeological dept. to excavate Pandua.

**3.6.1972**

**Work done**

Preparation for departmentals

Arranging Circuit House for CM

**Information**

Studied the WB Security act and the PD Act in office and completed answering questions from them in writing. This took all day.

Election materials were distributed to parties. Spl.LAO (R.P.Chakravarty) and Asst. Inspr of Excise had to be fetched by police from their homes as they were late. The former was going marketing! He is indignant at being made a Presiding Officer despite his rank! He has been

making a nuisance of himself, clamouring for clerks, and a phone and a jeep. He has been worrying the sub-deputy probationers a lot too by his inconsiderate conduct regarding their residences.

In the evening DM asked me to prepare CH as before for the CM who is arriving on 5<sup>th</sup> night. Instructed Nazir and will go tomorrow to supervise all. DM lent me some magazine and novels to read.

**4.6.1972**

**Work done**

Circuit House arrangements

Reception of ballot boxes

**Information**

In the morning went to CH and started off the cleaning and sprucing up. For once the frig was really clean!

Took position at the Reception counter for stations 31-60 at 5 p.m. Other 2 counters were supervised by Kar and S.N.Majumdar. Majumdar's parties, being nearest, arrived first and he finished first too. My 30 were all over by 11 am except no. 31. I went finally to enquire at the transport centre. Found his vehicle had returned here in the morning as defective and had not been replaced! Finally the party came (R.Sarkar, Excise Suptdt) having spent 4 hours in the mango garden booth by candle-light! BDO Ratua-II had failed to send a vehicle or even make sure that the only tubewell there was in order.

All parties were in but for 14-18. It began raining too. And at 1.30 am I left, on DM's instructions, with 3 jeeps to go up to Madia ghat and see if they had got bogged down. Met the bus at Milki 10 miles from town. They had got stuck. All was over at 2.30 am!

**5.6.1972**

**Work done**

Refurbishing CH

**Information**

Today I was occupied in readying crockery etc. at CH. No Odonil in market, so we borrowed from Tourist Lodge. 2 cars came for CM from Cal—ambassador and a Comet (Plymouth). With these and 2 jeeps I proceeded at 11.15 p.m. to the station. Train arrived around 12.15 p.m. Before this, the Irrgn minister chatted with SP and DM, proudly showing the 60-65% polling as he had hoped. Says he is sick of the strain. Tomorrow night they go to Raiganj and on 7<sup>th</sup> to Murshidabad.

I received Bhaskar Ghose and he told me to write to him a letter at once about the Commissioner's order regarding CH. Massive crowds at the CH.

**6.6.1972**

**Work done**

Counting, packing, tabulating results.

**Information**

At 8 a.m. I recalled that Spl. Offr. to CM was to arrive by train at 8.10 am. Frantically rushed to BT College (counting and reception centre) and, as expected, found a vehicle. Rushed to the station and found police had also sent a jeep and that train was over 1½ hours late. With a sigh of relief I left, leaving a pool jeep as well.

On way back I saw Asif Currimbhoy, the famous playwright, leaving the Tourist Lodge and met him. He is on his way back from Bhutan. The play on Gandhiji is being published abroad and only an abridged version here due to the many controversial portions in it. Dr.Mulck Raj Anand had mentioned me to them, they said.

From 10 a.m. I was at the BT college. Since BC Lahiri in the strong room was efficiently doing the sorting and sealing, I went down and helped in counting as reserve staff when any were absent. Then DM told me to take over supervision of packing and tabulation. At 4.10

p.m. we declared Ray the winner. He came in an indigo banlon banyan and trousers and was nervously fiddling with his clothes as results were declared. He garlanded and shook hands with his opponent. This man told the Statesman that if he won, he would not join Congress (R) as they would make him CM. He wished to remain an MLA and serve Malda! His next wish is to contest against Mrs. Gandhi.

Results are:-

Thakur Prasad Chetri	1459
S.S. Ray	39003
Rejected	1380
Grand total	41842 (58% polling)
Electorate	7201.9

Chetri forfeited his deposit, yet without any posters/agents he got 1459 votes by purely individual campaigning.

In the evening, DM, ADM and I went to a function at which CM at 8.30 pm (2 hours late) switched on electricity for a private silk reeling institute at Sujapur. An exhibition of silk and khadi and fabulous Baluchari saris (@ Rs.500/- each) of Bishnupur was put up. Fine khadi @ Rs.6 a metre, cheaper than Gandhi Ashram.

Got back dead tired around 10 p.m.

**7.6.1972**

**Work done**

Cinema hall enquiry

Receive Central Study Team

**Information**

Assisted S.N.Roy Chowdhury at an enquiry into complaints against conditions in Bichitra Cinema Hall. Seats are mostly broken, latrines not well cleaned. Fortunately, exhaust fans are in order. Manager promised to rectify all by 1 month. Said seats were ruined by public if electricity failed.

Reminded all officers of all depts about district plan statements. Many have sent already. Figures often not available as Census results not yet out.

In evening, DM told me to receive Central Study Team. Arrived 2 hours late at 8.30 p.m.—one solitary PHE man from Centre plus Suptdt and Exec Engrs PHE. The DAO (district agriculture officer), Suptdt. Sericulture and A.E., PHE, were waiting with me. The “team” leaves for Raiganj at 8 a.m. tomorrow. Farce of a visit. DM gave him his summary of drought figures. The member kept harping that shallow tubewells ought to be discouraged due to recurring maintenance and re-sinking problems. DM and SE explained that STWs were more attractive because:-

1. Farmer was personally in charge of it and was thus sure of getting water.
2. Deep tubewells can be set up only at 2 mile intervals, but cover only 100-150 acres. Problems of theft and operators and cost and time to sink it discourage farmers. Hence until an alternative to STWs is given, they have to be provided.

The SE was constantly rubbing into the member that whatever was being spent now was purely on drought and creating no permanent asset in long term planning.

The tight schedule does not allow any field survey—all the better because the little rain has led to some sprouting of mulberry and some sowing.

I trunk-called DM W.Dinajpur. Balurghat line was terribly faint, so told operator to tell DM that central team would be in Raiganj at 10 am tomorrow. I also arranged their dinner from tourist lodge and had my food with them as it was past 10 am and hotels would be shut. Had to give them a vehicle for Raiganj as both their vehicles were giving trouble—hence the delay in reaching Malda from Behrampore.

**8.6.1972**

**Work done**

Reception of central study team

**People met**

EE PHE North Bengal Divsn.—Mr.Thakur

SE PHE—Mr. Ghoshal

Central Health Engr—Mr. Dorairajan

**Information**

The Drought Study Team arrived 2 hours late at 8.30 p.m. consisting of 1 solitary person from Delhi [Health Dept] accompanied by SE and EE PHE, leaving for Raiganj 8 a.m. Farce of a visit, as it boiled down to taking the DM's report which they could have had in Cal. The SE said this tight schedule and the visit had political reasons. The amount to be given had already been decided upon. The visit was purely throwing dust in the eyes of all. The member was worried over the money wasted in sinking and re-sinking tubewells and all the drought relief money and was in favour of long term plans of sinking deep tubewells. However, DAO pointed out that DTWs were not allowed to be sunk nearer than 2 miles apart and as they can't irrigate over 150 acres, much will be left dry. Also, the time for sinking and cost involved and dependence on the power supply discourage farmers. On the other hand, sinking STWs is within a farmer's monetary capacity, wholly within his control and without any restrictions on distance, hence they prefer this.

The DM and the SE of PHE repeatedly stressed the ravages wrought by drought. The DAO, Suptdt Sericulture, AE PHE were present too. At 1030 p.m. the session gave over. As both their vehicles were out of order, DM gave his own station wagon for taking them to Raiganj. In office, probationers who have been going to blocks are unearthly hours with tubewell pipes, strongly criticised the total lack of liaison: no one in blocks is ever around to take delivery. Further, it's meaningless of SDO to insist on their going even at night as no one receives them that late. Roy Chowdhury recounted how SDO in front of clerks and evacuee staff at Kutubsahar had berated him for not counting all the bales of blankets tho' he himself had told him earlier this was not necessary. They are all furious with SDO for his inconsiderate orders and also for his neglecting signing loan bonds of the Rs.3 ½ lakhs we distributed in the town. The Spl. LAO was not in the list for his harassment and nauseating sweet talk of probationers. BDOs English Bazar and Old Malda were hurt at getting letters from DM criticising slow tubewell sinking tho' they had sent 3 reports that all work was complete.

**9.6.1972**

**Work done**

With DM toured Old Malda RLI schemes 11 a.m.-2 p.m., 50 km.

Submitted enquiry report on Araidanga.

**Information**

In the morning, I typed out the report on Araidanga loans. When I submitted it to DM, I found BDO Old Malda there. DM told him not to treat me as Ast. Mgte but to teach me how to inspect TR work, cash-book of block and all other functions of block.

Then all 3 of us went out. First to Jalanghi, on NH 34 where we saw the new dirt path made by TR and the dam he had made by TR. Found a tubewell out of order. Then to Muchia anchal. On the way we got down to test newly installed tubewells. I told DM about Sahapur weavers needing loans to buy drums to wind thread. Our destination was Char Lakhipur where in the midst of the drought we saw a rich harvest because of the water. The villagers would not let DM go without tea and sweets and hare highly sentimental and so he had to wait a full hour while they got it from across the river. Meanwhile they spoke of their problems. All are refugees. This was wasteland and they reclaimed it. All were full of praise for Bimal Chakravarty. Their need now is for settlement of these lands as they possess no

sale deeds and hence can't take large fertiliser loans by mortgaging land. Due to use of IR-8 rice they need heavy loans before harvest. On an average they make a clear profit of Rs.700/- per acre and are eager to repay loans at once.

After getting back, I had a bath, changed and was back at office. Decided to go with Kar on anchal panchayat inspection to Samsi tomorrow. Told Raha to prepare figures and data for my Sericulture paper. Am meeting him at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

2 evacuee drivers have got jobs as drivers in Irrign. Dept. Posts were made by the minister on SDO's plea (so SDO told me). But there is some confusion over absorbing Sunil Pandey in the pool. Once cleaner, Mukul Sil's name has been put forward and approved by DM—only his appointment letter has not been signed.

Supervised loading of tubewell materials going to Habibpur. The evacuee tubewells in Kaluadighi and Kutubsahar are also being sent.

B.B.Mondol, Relief Commissioner in 1971 has been suspended; R.Ghosh is next on the list. Sudhir Chakravarty told me CBI investigations have begun against S.P.De on charges of misappropriating Rs.5 lakhs of Women's College and money from shelter materials sent to Bangla Desh.

**10.6.1972**

**Work done**

Sericulture data gathered

Samsi anchal inspection with D.P.O. 10.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., 68 miles.

**Information**

At 9 am sat with Raha, Suptdt. Sericulture, and took various papers from him containing details about Sericulture. The legend about its origin, however, was not given in detail. The Encyclopaedia will have to be referred to for this.

At 10.30 am left with D.P.O. for Samsi. Halted en route at Ratua-I, got details from BDO: the EOP has not audited accounts of this anchal after 1968-69. Many irregularities exist. We went to the spot, found that the former secy and one of the tax collectors had swiped a lot of money. A long inspection note was dictated by D.P.O. to me. 2 EOPs of Old Malda and Habibpur will do the audit and the ex-secy now at Bamangola will be called to explain. The tax collector claimed he had surrendered all cash to the secy who never gave him any receipts for this. We also visited the new anchal building in Samsi. Found it occupied by NVF guarding the FCI godown. Roof needs to be done properly, as it leaks. The Pradhan is also at fault as he abandoned his duty of checking the cash book to the secy. He is an ex-dacoit and well off and offered to pay back if it was proved that taxes had been deposited with him, as the collector also stated.

At 7 pm, Sudhir Chakravarty and I proceeded to TB Deb's house. Here Sudhir babu read out his history of Malda. Excellent work with such startling information as that the Kosi and Saraswati flowed through Malda. Deb offered to try to get it published by Bangiya Sahitya Parishad. We all exhorted him to finish the book fast.

**Sunday, 11.6.1972**

**Work done**

Visited Kharba-I and II offices at Chanchol with DM, 8.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m.

**Information**

Electricity failure woke me up at 7 a.m. and at 7.30 DM's peon told me I was called at 8.30 a.m. Had a hurried breakfast [missed lunch completely] and at 8.30 we left for Chanchol. En route stopped in Kharba-II block area to check TR work. Workers here wanted gangs of 16 instead of the new order of 10. 200-250 are to be employed per scheme.

Kharba-II is doing well on its tubewell programme. Kharba-I is slower as the Youth Congress scared away contractors and have taken up the work and are going very slow. However, by



18<sup>th</sup> both will complete 35 tubewells. Kharba-II was asked to send, thereafter, its contractor to Bamangola.

Some YC boys met DM here and wanted improvement of the local college, more TR, more tubewells, electrification, etc. DM told BDOs to show them the programmes of our various schemes. This satisfied them somewhat. They are anxious to improve college finances and have B.Com started here.

On way back we stopped at a GSI drilling project at Ratua-I. DM asked Mr Thapliyal if any rigs could be had for Bamangola. He has a spare one, but it is very big and meant for 4000 feet and takes 3 days to transport. Smaller ones might come to Rajmahal. DM intends to write to the DG of GSI for loan of rigs, as have been given in Purulia.

Unbearably hot today. All along the route the same phenomenon of lush greenery (shallow tubewells) and arid land. In Kharba, some 180 loanees have begun setting up 84 tho' govt. grant for only 40 has come! BDOs gave people encouragement hoping for more money. Quite a fix! But after a year's full crop, these people can easily repay the loans.

**12.6.1972**

**Work done**

Sessions trial attended

Reminders for district plan data

Block training at Old Malda

**Information**

Sessions murder case no.6 of 1972 u/s 201 & 302/304 IPC. 4 PWs examined, including parents of the murdered woman—their only child. They broke down while giving witness. The accused is her 2<sup>nd</sup> husband. She had some 5 acres land—love marriage after murder of her 1<sup>st</sup> husband (not solved).

Some 21 officers have yet to send the plan data. I rang up many of them and also arranged for a written reminder to be sent. Many are waking up only now to the existence of our letter. It includes 5 BDOs.

Took block training from Bimal Chakravarty, BDO Old Malda on TR. This is instituted for landless labourers and those with land up to 2 acres, when there is unemployment among agricultural labourers. The schemes are sent by the gram panchayat/anchal relief committee. The following points should be kept in mind, besides making TR production oriented to create assets:-

1. when constructing a dam along a river, always consult the Irrgn dept.
2. if a new road is being made, remember that acquisition is not permissible. The land must be donated and the road maintained by gram panchayat.
3. technical schemes to be prepared by SAE and priority of schemes fixed by block relief committee.
4. in case of dams, for every 3 ft height, decrease width by 1½ feet to keep it stable. For tanks, for every 2½ ft depth make it 10 ft deep. Have inlet and outlet diagonally opposite and some netting at outlet to prevent fish escaping.
5. paymaster and dealers are to execute bonds. If paying in cash, the former is to execute fidelity bond of Rs.1000/-.
6. muharrir enters names of labourers per pit.
7. pits are 20x5x1 usually, emphasis being on length so as not to erode cultivable land.
8. normally a scheme is not to exceed Rs.10,000/- and employ about 200 people in 10 gangs. In harder soil, DM can sanction a lower amount to be dug and so employ more people to make 1000 cft.
9. The amount dug is recorded and token is made in triplicate. 1 copy is given to each gang, 1 to dealer, 1 to paymaster. Duty card showing number of labourers and work done is given to BDO and a copy to SDO.

10. Hours are usually 6 to 11 am.

11. only earthwork is allowed and only labour costs are given. But the 1971 GO said that 40% of labour cost could be used to get materials. This was helpful in making Boro dams in Old Malda.

The Agriculture dept supplies deep and shallow tubewells, RLI pumps, fertilizer & other loans.

The Community Development dept used to provide loans to promote agriculture, e.g. animal husbandry, small irrigation, land reclamation, development schemes. At present hardly any is given above Rs.100/-. Loans for pump sets, tractors are also given. At present only bullock cart wheels being given. Loans up to Rs.500/- to buy sheep, cattle, poultry, digging ponds, reclaiming land @ Rs.250 per acre; developing land by fertilizer @ Rs.350 per acre. At present, all the above is NIL.

CD dept also gives subsidies to society:

- a. kuccha road scheme/culverts, maximum of Rs.5000/- now. Approach earthwork is to be done by local contribution of the area.
- b. Grant to improve schools up to Rs.5000/-, 1/3 to be local contribution. Only building of primary school with DI's approval to avoid duplication; for secondary schools, the same; or library/equipment grant of Rs.2000/- with 1/3 local contribution.
- c. Every block to have 8 male and 4 female social education centres [adult education, various crafts] each getting Rs.500/- the place being donated to govt. a trainer will get Rs.10 per month and allowance Rs.10 for contingency. At present NIL.
- d. BDO has a grant of Rs.50 for sports, exhibition, jattras, important festivals given through the above centres/youth clubs.
- e. Subsidies to individuals under miscellaneous agricultural scheme, never above 50% or Rs.150 chiefly to encourage, giving seedlings in winter and seeds in summer free to the poorer. Popularise plant protection instruments or agricultural implements by giving subsidies. Now when this would be highly beneficial when farmers have take up high yielding seeds and need subsidies, it has been withdrawn.
- f. Rural water supply through CDP. In stage 1 each block had a mechanic and a mate. EE sent materials to BDO, local people gave 15%. Now outright cash to BDO, no local contributions.
- g. Sanitation schemes, rural arts and crafts, production-cum-training centres. This last would have 15 trainees, 1 demonstrator, 1 trainer and basic materials. Cooperatives would be set up if many trainees were interested and as a loan the centre would be given to them. Now defunct. In Old Malda such centres for carpentry, tailoring, weaving were set up.
- h. In stage 2, HB loans were given 12 ½ % of cost given by party and loan given in stages. Agri and Coop depts would supplement BDO by giving funds through block/agri-marketing schemes. Pump sets and STWs would be given with these with 2-5 acre holdings getting priority. BDO can give up to Rs.3000 but party has to bear 25% of the total cost. It is best not to give it in cash, but tell supplier to deliver that amount of materials. Ensure completion of work, measure depth, get all vouchers and then give 75% of cost or Rs.3000 whichever is less. Whole land is mortgaged for the loan. For pumps, 10% of cost and carrying cost is given by loanee. BDO sends list per priority to DAO who intimates parties. Loan given on hypothecation of pump itself.

**13.6.1972**

**Work done**

Sessions trial attended

Piyasbari nursery

Old Malda block touring Kaluari and Mandirpur DTWs with areas of 60 and 45 acres at present; and TR work [50 km]

### **Information**

At 8.30 a.m. went to Piyasbari and photographed worms making cocoons.

At trial 4 PWs were examined. Investigation is highly perfunctory.

In the block, AEO (Agri Extn Offr) told me about STW and DTW. For STWs land minimum to be 2 acres, depth 100-150 ft, water level of the spot to be 20-21 ft in May-June. AEO enquires and recommends and BDO sanctions, GP certifies land is free of encumbrances, then 75% expense or Rs.3000 is given after completion. Banks & Coops also give loans. Govt takes 3 and 5/8% interest. If late, 4 and 5/8%. Bank takes 10%. Bond to be registered. Group of 5 who together have not above 8 acres can take STW loan. A total of Rs.4000 can be given, but no scope for group loan in pump scheme. STW to be done in clusters so that later electrification is easy. Diesel cost comes to Rs.1.50 per hour. Normal coverage 5-8 acres. If 4 inch pipes are used, then 10 acres. Ruston pump is best for STW.

General benefit if provided by DTW which command 100-125 acres during kharif and 50-60 acres in Rabi crops. For DTW and RLI the farmers have to pay a water rate of Rs.11 per acre for 1<sup>st</sup> crop and Rs.15 per acre for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> crops. Farmers are going in more and more for Boro instead of Rabi. This needs more water, naturally area is command is reduced. Hence a crop-wise rate on water is needed. To make a DTW/RLI, farmers give a proposal with map of command area and donation of the site (half bigha for DTW, 1 bigha for RLI). The district committee (DM, EE, DAO, DE of SEB) decide the priority-wise gradation. In Old Malda there are 14 RLIs, 19DTWs of which only 9 are energised. Distance between 2 DTWs to be 2 miles at least and depth 400 ft. It is important to have pipelines to cut out wastage due to bad drainage canals. Here all DTWs have pipelines.

Guidelines for site selection:

- a. no absentee landlords in the command area because they are never interested in investing for better production.
- b. Tillers should be owners and poorer to benefit.
- c. Slope of land to be regular. If undulating, then arrange staging of pipelines.
- d. Layout of pipeline to be for maximum benefit to land, should not be left to contractor. Usually 1 main and 2 subsidiary pipelines covering 4000 ft. here they are underground with spouts at spots. Repair is difficult and leakage will spoil crops. In Bihar they have concrete surface channels which are much better.
- e. Availability of power. Fluctuation leads to stopping of pumps and engenders lack of confidence in farmers. No such trouble with RLI. Time lag between power failure and resumption of work by DTW is 7 to 10 days! DTW are meant to run 8 hours but in Boro season they run even 22 hours.

For Boro, extra pump is needed. DTW is meant where crops need less water. Now allowed for clay soil and for HYV seeds as these take only 70-100 days to ripen.

RLI produces 20 mds/bigha boro, 8 mds wheat, 5 mds jute. DTW gives 15-16 mds boro, provides an extra Aus crop along with Aman. About 7-8 mds/bigha of Aus (local seeds), rabi 8-10 mds and Aman 8-10 mds also, boro 15 mds/bigha.

Problem of just 2/3 mechanics for these pumps in the whole district. Also dual control of pump staff: BDO gives pay while maintenance is by Agri-Irrgn/Agri-Mech. Fuel supply system is wholly dependant on private sources. Great potential in RLI since surface water is plenty. More block staff needed here as continual guidance is called for. Also continuous motivation to urge repaying of loans.

Problem in DTW: people refuse to give 1 ft of land for drainage canal: they want irrigation by water overflowing from one plot to another. There is much waste.

### **14.6.1972 (holiday)**

Today is a local holiday for Ramkeli Mela to celebrate Sri Chaitanya's meeting with Roop and Sanatan under the tamal tree here. I visited the mela round 4.30 p.m. This time there is

not much of a crowd as there was in previous years. Not above 1000. quite a colourful affair with wares and sweets of all types and games, even an electric ferris wheel which was a massive attraction. Took 12 snapshots of the fair. The police and health dept had set up posts inside the Baraduari mosque. Quite a few children were lost and found.

**15.6.1972**

**Work done**

Sessions trial attended  
To Gajol and back

**Information**

More PWs completed. Arguments tomorrow. The I.O's investigation has been very perfunctory and the D.J. is most annoyed over this. Found BDO Old Malda busy in block committee meeting, so went to Gajol to remind BDO about plan figures. He was out, so came back empty handed.

**16.6.1972**

**Work done**

Visiting CSRE scheme in Gajol with DM and SOPD  
To Japanese seed farm with BDO, Old Malda  
Rural electrification data obtained from Subhendu Banerjee, Divisional Engr SEB  
(Construction wing)

**Information**

At 9 a.m. SOPD, DM and myself left for Gajol block. There on Bamangola road, Saluka mouza, we saw a CSRE scheme of digging a 4 miles long irrigation canal linked to "Mora Tangan" which will enable boro crops in 200 acres more. 10 gangs each of 9 + 1 gang leader [all are higher secondary qualified], 3 work assistants [of which 1 is a graduate]. Work is nearly ended and will be over before rains. We also saw the dam put across the dried up Tangan creating a reservoir for the canal, but the embankment on one side is too low and won't keep the water during rains. Dam might be built lower down. DM asked BDO to tell AE to speak to him about this.

We then proceeded to Bamangola where at 11 am we found no one in the office. BDO had gone to inspect tubewell sites. DM marked all absent in the attendance register of the block as also of JLRO office. He also told BDO to ensure attendance punctually.

After return, I proceeded to S.Banerjee, DE of SEB. He looks constantly harassed—quite understandable. NN Banerji is DE of Maintenance i.e. will supply the power after everything is constructed. S.Banerjee said that power minister told him not to bother where power would come from as that was not his business. He was just to set up the poles and wires. He is facing a shortage of poles—a whole forest in Siliguri has been denuded in the process. Poles are available in Bankura and this is being tapped now. He told me his difficulties after much pressing. His AEs (Banerji, Choudury, Ghosh—last one is in charge at Chanchol of Rural Electrification of North West Malda] are curiously hesitant to say anything in his presence—some sort of tension is in the air. He gave me details of schemes and even a map of the non-plan fund schemes. He promised to try and get a map of the rest.

With Old Malda BDO visited Japanese seed farm—a barren tract near Kaluadighi, without provision for water, no villages nearby, never visited by DAO, and no way to repair the Japanese machines. A waste of effort. There is one manager who is wholly frustrated tho' at first he had been very enthusiastic. Now he wishes to resign and return to his Bihar farm.

**Sunday, 18.6.1972**

At 8 a.m. left for Adina with Sudhir babu, photographer Sudhir Das and district publicity officer Ray. We returned at 3.30 p.m. having taken some 34 pictures of Adina, Pandua, Sataishghara, and Gaur. Das is the govt. approved photographer for police cases, so I have doubts about the quality of the snaps, but he is the best in Malda. We went around the whole

of Sataisghara too. I aim to come again next Sunday just to explore it. Das charged Rs.3 per shot for 3 copies of each contact print.

19.6.1972

**Work done**

Block training

Sericulture study with DDI

**Information**

At Old Malda was trained about contingency, pay and allowances, allotment register, monthly expenses in form B from P & A register, register for schemes and expense for each. From 3-6 p.m. with Umapasanna Bhattacharya, DDI, collected information about plan targets, allocations. He told me a few things off the record, e.g. O.C. of Experimental Station is just a matriculate—so what expert experiments can be going on! Ministers come and say something must be done—and that is all.

21.6.1972

**Work done**

Sessions trial—judgement

Block training

Sericulture

**Information**

The accused were acquitted. In the judgement adverse remarks were made vs. the IO and copy sent to SP. It is of no use because no action is taken. DJ launched into a 30 minute discourse on inevitability of suffering fruits of karma even if these accused escaped sentence. With lawyer Debi Ghosal an argument ensued over education of children—if an RK Mission education made him unfit for the wicked world as Ghosal claimed! All the while the other lawyers awaiting their cases were fuming I guess! Copied main points of judgement. In the block learnt how cash book is checked with duplicate carbon receipt [DCR], vouchers and bill register.

Then went to Sericulture office from where I contacted D. Bagchi, development officer of UBI the lead bank about its help to rearers. They have put up a huge Rs.1 crore scheme, result of which is that no immediate help is being given.

22.6.1972

**Work done**

Commissioner's meeting attended, 10.30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Sericulture

**Information**

People had given me the impression that Mr J.C.Sen Gupta was a very stern, rude man. But all were astonished at his mild speech, smiling face and quiet conduct. 1<sup>st</sup> meeting was with officers, and I quietly slipped in when called by SDO and started taking notes of all he said—seeing which DM was pleased and I could stay on for the next meeting on floods too. The points made are attached.

From his remarks it was clear that we might have to do 2 subdivisions! I followed him to the CH and managed to ask about history of Malda being published. He suggested the Education dept which bears 50% of the cost, the publisher bearing the rest and price to be fixed by the dept. he also said I could stay in CH with Collector's permission unofficially. He would not change Raghavan's order since the CH was meant for the Commissioner who used to be called Comr of Revenue & Circuit [functioned as a circuit judge, the CH being his court]. Coming to know that he would be lunching at the tourist lodge before leaving for Siliguri, I preceded him and had lunch with him. Rice is barred for him. He eats very little, is very soft spoken. Is unable to attend CM's meeting with DMs because the sub area commander in Siliguri has asked for a meeting and this is more important to keep, as a question of prestige

and politeness to army arises. He has done 5 districts. Agreed I do sub divisional training in Raiganj—it is just a mini DM affair and the SDO must not run to DM every time but take decisions and keep him informed. He told me how in Asansol he had stepped into a strike by rail employees and solved it by accepting many justified demands. When rail authorities asked his authority to do so, he told them they were welcome not to accept it, but in future he would never be available if trouble arose! And he only told his DM after it was all over. In the meetings he laid great emphasis on drainage of flood water. Embankment leads to silting of river bed which gets higher leading to higher dams [in Jalpaiguri it is already 20 ft high above ground!] and when breach occurs, devastation is because of the huge wall of water. Flooding is a natural process and fertilises the land too. What is needed is draining it out fast. In 1950 in Jalpaiguri floods no loss of life occurred because people could see the water slowly rising and move out. It is not so when a dam breaks. The E.E. Irrgn was hurt at Comr's reference to engineer-created flood in DVC but Comr told him that experts should consider the common man's viewpoint too, as they tend to see all in their specialist light. He gave examples of people taking a GP's opinion after a specialist's. On flood gave excellent comparison of bathing with shower on and drain plugged leading to drowning. Since rain will come, dams only keep the water on land from escaping and so artificially create a flood even if the river is contained.

Dr. Jainal Abedin had come also to CH and berated CPI union leaders for striking in the filature. He hinted at Mr.Sengupta becoming Relief Comr in place of B.Mondol (under suspension). I borrowed Raha's paper on III and IV Plan allocations for Malda's sericulture. Began work on my paper.

Mr. Sen Gupta is Comr Presidency Div holding additional charge of North Bengal till Mr. K.Menon joins (he is on deputation in Delhi).

**23.6.72**

### **Work done**

Information on power and sericulture gathered

### **Information**

Clarified several points mentioned in D.C.Sirkar's papers on sericulture from Raha. The so-called cocoon market at Jalalpur is actually a cocoon testing centre! Also found out that of the various hybrid races evolved by Sarkar, none are in use today as they all proved unsuitable. Contacted DIO and found out what industries he envisages as possible if power is available in sufficient quantity. About 20 in all, which I will include in my paper on Rural

Electrification:-

1. mini paper mill from jute sticks and bamboo
2. yarn twisting, jute and cotton
3. tanning
4. jute twine
5. aluminium utensils
6. plywood products from mango logs
7. power driven laundry
8. cornflakes from maize
9. agricultural implements
10. repair of above
11. modern auto servicing
12. cast iron foundry—GI pipes, water sheeting, parts of STWs
13. power loom
14. cold storage
15. flour mill
16. tool room shop for repairing and forging

17. semi-mechanical bakery

24.6.1972

**Work done**

Snaps of filature at Madhughat  
Sericulture information

**Information**

Along with Raha and staff of Peddie silk reeling institute Amal Datta [maternal uncle of Bimal Das, CPI MLA] went to filature. Datta took photos of reeling, re-reeling, cooking, cocoons, making “books” from hanks.

Planned outing to explore Sataisghara tomorrow with Raha.

25.6.1972

Explored Sataisghara 8 a.m. to 230 p.m. Mr.Datta took photos. With help of a local santhal, traced a field to east of Sataisghara where I found some Buddhist statues and even a broken effigy of Dakhin Rai, worshipped in Sunderbans as god of tigers. Went to the ultimate end and found the moat at the other boundary of this palace area along with 2 hillocks which were towers at one time according to Abid Ali.

26.6.1972

**Work done**

I class case attended  
Visit to jail for training

**Information**

G.R.713/70, State vs. Ujjal Chakravarty u/s 5 and 6 of Explosives Act attended.

Went for jail training to jail. A couple of petitions were made by some prisoners against cases vs. them pending for over 2 years. I told the jailor, PC Talukdar, to note their cases and let me have the petitions next day.

In the jail, besides checking the stock register of supplies, one should also check, the SDO told me, :-

- a. supply according to number of prisoners and cooking of same amount 142 gm rice per head. Atta mixed with bajra given at night. One day meat, another day fish for 1 meal. In the morning, 30 gm sattu.
- b. Hygienic conditions of stay and of cooking.
- c. Random check of entry and exit register of prisoners.

In the evening called on Prof Santosh Chakravarty and borrowed a few Bengali books including a superb article on the Ramayana by Buddhadev Bose.

27.6.1972

**Work done**

Information from sericulture, SEB.  
Work in SOPD office

**Information**

Did not go to jail at 7 a.m. as planned as P.Chakravarti, our ex-NDC, turned up as my roommate as he is to depose as witness in a sessions case.

From Raha obtained information that sericulture in Malda had reached near-saturation point. Irrigation etc. would enhance crop of mulberry by 10 or 15 maunds to 25 to 35 maunds per acre per crop, but thereafter the law of diminishing returns would apply. Rather shift accent to W.Dinajpur—a place called Gokhra in Raiganj subdivision where water is just a few feet below the surface and conditions are ideal for mulberry. Jainal Abedin, Commerce and SSI minister is from West Dinajpur and wants it flooded with silk.

D.E., SEB, told me of their requirements: steel 800 MT [50 got so far]; cement 300 MT [50 bags so far]; poles 50,000 [10,000 so far].

Sat in SOPD office as ADM wanted me to trace out a reference of a telegram. Also contacted defaulters. Many submitted statements today itself.

**28.6.1972**

**Work done**

Visited jail 8 a.m.

Went to Habibpur and back: 34 miles

**Information**

At jail took the 2 petitions. Looked through the food register, inmates register. Though it was made a district jail, the staff have not yet been posted. For the "hospital", bread and milk and biscuits are brought.

Called on the District Judge as he is leaving on 1<sup>st</sup> to join as L.R.-cum-Judicial Secy-cum-Legislative Secy of Tripura govt. he said, "I will miss you very very"! we conversed about his children's education and I undertook to tell my friend who is teaching in RK Mission, Narendrapur to look after the son (class 10, Science stream).

Earlier, T.B.Deb told me frankly how utterly corrupt ... was and that he was going ahead with separation despite acute lack of WBJS officers because jobs were thus being created and he was taking money for appointments.

Went to Habibpur to pick up previous departmental exam questions from Layek and see tubewells sunk. He wants leave for 3 days but ADM will not sanction till DM returns this evening.

DM sent me a note through OS at night wanting to see me at 10 a.m. on 29<sup>th</sup>.

**29.6.1972**

**Work done**

Met DM at 10 am

Went to Manikchak and back in afternoon: 42 miles.

Completed paper on sericulture at 1 a.m. on 30<sup>th</sup>

**Information**

DM handed me a guidelines paper on the district plan committee and asked me to get all the information on minimum needs and employment incentive projects in various fields by 1<sup>st</sup> positively.

Coming across Bimal Chakravarty, I took his advice on where to get the information. I'll have to go to all 15 blocks. He is giving over charge to M.R.De who has managed to be posted from English Bazar to Old Malda, thus cutting out Das' chances of leaving Bamangola. Chakravarty is waiting for clearance to leave from govt. Till then he will be attached to the Collectorate.

Yesterday a man had come from Masalandapur village of Harischandrapur-II on the border of Kharba-II to complain about a ZP road which was made so high that they could not use it due to steep gradient. Also the canal dug due to the earth dug up was loosening foundations of many houses. The canal was linked to a nearby tank. Rains would send water rushing down it at a terrific pace and ruin the houses. ADM ignored the plea, saying the road was important and a little difficulty should be borne. But I thought it was a serious situation. The man had contacted the EOZP and engineer too, but none had gone to the spot. I wrote out a letter to BDO Kharba-II to enquire and report and will follow it up when I go there on 1<sup>st</sup>.

Layek got his leave, so to enable him to catch the Rajmahal launch at 4 pm I rushed him there in my jeep.

From BDOs Manikchak, Harischandrapur-I (he had come) and Old Malda I took the details needed. Also had SOPD's office look through statements received, but these details were not there. Intelligently, Amar Banerji, the clerk handling the plan file, rang up the relevant depts asking for the information. Through Harischandrapur-I BDO I sent advance intimation to Kharba about my needs. Will visit Sadar blocks tomorrow.



There is some anger in evacuee office due to DM appointing a non-evacuee to vacant post of pool driver tho' Sunil Pandey's claims were highest. DM did it on his own, not consulting anyone.

**30.6.1972**

**Work done**

Touring Kaliachak-I, II, III, Bamangola, Gajol, EB blocks, 10.30 a.m. to 7 p.m., 190 km. Vishnu image from Kharba was placed in museum today

**Information**

Submitted my sericulture paper with photographs, samples of Japanese and Nistary cocoons and yarn and a silk gland of a silkworm to DM for forwarding to the NAA. DM enquired if I was aiming to top at the NAA! I told him it was just genuine interest. Gave a copy to Raha too. He promised to point out mistakes so that I could send an addendum and corrigenda. I set out for Kaliachak and found K-II the worst off for accurate information. The K-III BDO, Ajit Chakravarti, is sending out Gram Sevaks to investigate and report on every tubewell and so make a register. I suggested this to every block I went to. K-I already has one perfectly kept. Got back to town at 2 p.m., had lunch and from SOPD office again rang CMOH, DIs and other depts and got information and promises of sending information by noon tomorrow. Then met the 2 DIs, BDO EB and then went to Bamangola and Gajol. The latter faces hunger strike by Youth Congress unless more TR and tubewells are given. I met DM who said this would be sanctioned—no problem.

Evacuee drivers' services have been extended for another month.

**1.7.1972**

**Work done**

7.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Harischandrapur, Kharba, Ratua and back, 125 miles  
Met fishery office, sericulture, PWD Roads

**Information**

Whole day spent in touring 6 blocks to collect information. MVI (T) accompanied me as he had to inspect a taxi at Harischandrapur. Got most of the information except tubewells in toto from Ratua-II.

At SOPD office found information from DIO, CMOH and Irrigation. Then set out to Sericulture and got his figures; then to Fishery, whom Raha helped to give figures! Finally to Mondol, EE (Roads) who also provided the needful. Got PWD's on phone.

Till midnight typed out the entire information according to the planning board's paper.

**Sunday, 2.7.1972**

Submitted paper to DM who wants more details and gave me 2 more days to tour Blocks. He will set SOPD to contact offices while I get field figures. After this I am at liberty to go for exams, he said. Our paper must reach by 7<sup>th</sup> July. T.K.Kar, Dy.Mgte from Midnapore (1963 batch) arrived yesterday with family in CH. Problem of accommodation again!

**3.7.1972**

**Work done**

Toured blocks, 151 km, 11.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m.

**Information**

Today I covered Kaliachak and Manikchak. There being no BDO at K-I when I went, I left the information required with the HC. This was a mistake because in my hurry on the way back I did not go through what they had given. Consequently, figures of K-I's STWs and DTWs remained unknown. I should have prepared a clear proforma for each block before setting out.

At 9 a.m. Kar and I met DM who told him what information to get from the depts. I decided to leave after having food and so left only at 11.30 which was also because of delay in getting petrol due to current failure. At K-II I was told that the EOSE was not giving the needed

information as he was not under BDO and his tour diary did not need to be forwarded by BDO. As a result, no control could be exercised. I called him and gave him the job and left for K-III. There discussing poultry possibilities took a lot of time. Came back via K-I to K-II where they had worked out everything. I left for Manikchak, crossing the Bhagirathi at Atintola ghat and joining the highway at Amrity which cuts the distance short by half. At Manikchak I reached around 6.30 p.m. Luckily BDO, EOP all live in the staff colony. There we sat till 8.30 p.m. by lantern light, repeatedly getting blown out by the stiff gale, carefully checking the type list of schools with the original as the EOP suspected some had been left out. Setting up milk supply scheme, a dairy, brick and tile units proposed. I had intended to go to Habibpur as well as they also have a staff colony, but as it was 8.30 p.m. there was no point and I got back.

**4.7.1972**

**Work done**

Toured north Malda 7.30 a.m. to 7 p.m., 200 km

**Information**

Left proforma at Ratua-II with HC as BDO was out on tour. At Ratua-I did the same, but the BDO Haralal Mistri took some time to understand. When I picked up his data on way back, he was NIL on SSIs possible and could not care less. His figures were quite wrong too—he told me had had 12 RLIs when he had none!

On way to Kharba, met Ghosh-Hazra on the road who told me he had kept all ready. I had told SOPD office to ring all BDOs and dictate my proforma and that all extension officers must be present today. He had been gheraoed yesterday by over 10,000 (was quite undisturbed about it). Their leaders slipped away as the crowd got uncontrollable. BDO rang up SDO and got police to allow him to leave office. He was going to get 9 more TR schemes sanctioned. I told him jokingly that he had engineered the gherao in order to get the extra schemes sanctioned.

At Chanchol I found all the information not ready at Kharba II and they had only told Kharba I to have extension officers present. So I sat at Kharba I discussing with AEO, FEO and EOSE. Then left for Harischandrapur. First finished II and then went to I (both have very young extension officers) where I found everything ready—even lunch for driver and me! I was very grateful as I'd thought there would be no lunch for us today. In this area north of Kalindri, no DTW has been set up due to the difficulty of bringing the massive rig across the river. This should be overcome soon when the Nurpur bridge is completed.

On way back, at Kharba when I went to collect the completed data, I was surrounded by peasant women clamouring for GR—but not looking undernourished at all. They held my hands and feet and would not let me go. Then I followed Ghosh Hazra's trick—distributed paper telling them to make lists of names. The crowd melted away into orderly queues. I told BDO to take the lists and submit to DM.

**5.7.1972**

**Work done**

Toured Barind area, 10.30 a.m. to 5 p.m., 110 km, no lunch

Compiled data with SOPD and Bimal Chakravarty & met DM in late evening

**Information**

Another sit-in strike at Gajol by Congress for more TR and GR. BDO was in his quarters with shut doors. The HC is rather deaf and with very slurred speech and the typist was gazing quietly at the chart given him about the information wanted. I dragged out all officers and collected necessary information including the fantastic need for 300 secondary schools! The MLA, Benjamin Hembrom, was also there and said in Calcutta all necessary steps for liberalising TR and GR had been done.

Proceeded to Bamangola where the kuccha bridge has been cut through to let water hyacinth flow out so that boats can ply. Collected data here and then ferrying across the jeep went to Habibpur and found Layek still on leave. From AEO, EOI and VAS took data.

Lesson: I should have on 1<sup>st</sup> or even on 3<sup>rd</sup> sent proforma by letter to these blocks who would have had time to give more precise data.

Getting back late [was to see DM at 4 p.m.] I found figures of EB still not come in. Went over, deliberately lost my temper when I found the extension officers had not been told of my message by the HC. Old Malda sent their data just before I was leaving for EB. At EB I told BDO Ghosh that he must tighten up his control and soundly berated HC.

Meanwhile Bimal Chakravarty (BC) and Kar had been compiling data. Last night I had stayed up till midnight typing out data I had collected so far and given these to Kar and suggested BC be pulled in being fee now having made over charge of OM block. We proceeded to DM with these and discussed the data. It was decided to include these as annexures while DM would write a sort of general survey of the plan. It was decided to start drafting tomorrow from 9 a.m. BC was a great asset due to his great field experience because of which he could provide figures which we lacked.

**6.7.1972**

### **Work done**

Drafting plan from 9 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. at DM's office

### **Information**

Today after Kar had made out an outline of the chapters as per DM's dictation. We went with all papers to SOPD's office. Now began the work of preparing costs, necessitating repeated contacting of PWD and departmental officers. A tremendous amount of figure manipulation had to be done because the requirement of roads for 178 villages comes to over 1000 km which is impossible. So, comparing the distance from the highway with interconnecting roads between the villages, it was found that the distance is cut down by 50% and we consequently reduced it to a realistic yet convincing 625 km. most figures were similarly made realistic by B.Chakravarty. most of the block demands were over-exaggerated, specially that of schools as in Gajol.

Other probationers also helped, specially KP Sarkar who holds a degree in statistics. Not having the preliminary 1971 census report, Sarkar's study of past figures and future projection was excellent. The most amazing one was finding the landless labour without homestead. BC estimated it as 5% of landless labour [this he estimated 15% of agricultural labour]. Later in the census 1961 figures we found we were correct about this 15% estimate.

**7.7.1972**

### **Work done**

District plan 9.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.

### **Information**

After preliminary discussion on progress up till now with DM, work began again. Now block-wise break-ups of each scheme were made as the DPC meeting was postponed to next week. Only Benjamin Hembrom turned up today and we felt rather put out at this lack of interest shown by MLAs after so much frantic work. Anyhow, DM had rung up Power Minister and insisted that MLAs come, so this also gave us time to go into more detail. At this late stage, DI Primary blithely informed that the figures he had supplied—and which had been stencilled—were wrong! Luckily the new figures did not necessitate a very great change.

I also got from DI figures for cost of mid-day meals and free text books and we introduced this into the annexure. The page had to be re-stencilled. DM told me to do the bit on tourism., met the tourist lodge manager today when he came to SOPD with more suggestions about

changes in the lodge, specially its Bar which truck drivers were infesting. A new Bar should be opened elsewhere for these people. Wrote out section on Tourism.

**Saturday, 8.7.1972**

**Work done**

District plan 11.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. at SOPD office

**Information**

DM told me that he could not find time to write the paper and so Kar and I should do it. I went over with my paper on Tourism and Kar dictated with my help till 2.30 p.m. Thereafter I took over wholly. The other probationers (except Proshanto Bhattacharya and Joyram, both on leave) in turn were the amanuenses! Got expenditure on incentives for enrolling girls. The dictation was completed around 6.30 p.m. Only the epilogue, summing up everything, remained. Total costs etc. had been made up by BC before he took leave for today last evening. Probationers were highly sceptical over the mere 10 MW asked for covering all the Vth Plan programme. We decided to check up with DE of SEB about it once again. Tonight for about 2 hours the first heavy downpour took place, rousing a lot of hope and giving relief!

**Sunday, 9.7.1972**

**Work done**

District plan, 10 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.

**Information**

It rained only up to Old Malda's northern boundary yesternight! Gajol a little and the rest nil. So prospects are no better at all.

Today stencilling was thoroughly checked and corrected by me, as DM asked me to stay all day while the stencils were being cut for the general introduction. I also re-worked the whole paper on tourism and felt happy with the finished product finally.

Yesterday from Sudhir babu learnt that Ranjit Choudhury, CA to DM, was an excellent actor who did female roles too and singer. Had interesting conversation with him about Sudhir babu (he is called "gurudev" by Sudhir) and how he had mellowed with age and experience. SC is not above 51-52 despite his appearance and pretensions to appear much older. Ranjit babu affirmed that SC was one man true to his friends at any cost and a sincere and genuine man.

Due to the hurry, a number of typing errors were found in the stencils which I corrected. One page had to be redone. I wish we had not hurried so much. Balurghat's meeting is only on 15<sup>th</sup>. Our DM, probably because of his little experience, was very anxious tho' the MLAs showed no urgency!

**10.7.1972**

**Work done**

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at DM's chamber on plan

3-5 p.m. meeting of DM with BDOs

5 p.m. met AE PWD with Kar

**Information**

The DM dictated the conclusion to Kar. He now wants to include a chapter on sanitation in English Bazar and Old Malda towns! SDO flatly said this would take 2-3 days, and quite rightly. This ought to have been thought of long back when we began our work. A chapter on unemployment was also included after Kar and Sarkar had somehow worked out the figure which was not available in the census handbook of 1961. much of the introduction is from the gazetteer which DM praised a lot, so I took the chance of making him agree to get a number of copies of it. I worked out the total cost and the total employment and found this at variance with BC's figures earlier worked out. By now DM agreed not to rush the parts still left! So we could wait till after the DPC meeting tomorrow at 3 p.m.

DM has prepared a flood relief plan outlining duties of various officers. M.S.Bhattacharya who was here today for deposing in a case, felt it was just the elementary framework and that what would happen during the flood could not be put down on paper. Amar Singh (my batch mate in Burdwan), he said, had sent off his paper on the district plan already and that he comes for an hour to office and pushes off. I wish I had that much time and could write a few articles!

In the meeting on tubewell sinking with BDOs, EB got a bang for its 22 two only and DM clearly said that De, the former BDO, had not given it top priority and the rest must be sunk by 15<sup>th</sup>. Trunk call came that CM, Power Minister and PU minister are coming on 14<sup>th</sup> and leaving on 15<sup>th</sup> night by train. They wanted us to give a vehicle for PU minister to go to W. Dinajpur so we told them this was impossible as CM and Power Min would be here and that DM Balurghat be asked to send one.

BDOs wanted AROs' services so that lists of loan defaulters could be drawn up without which Cattle Purchase and Fertiliser loans could not be distributed. Now some AROs are doing accounts in evacuee office and other stay put in town instead of the blocks. When DM asked SDO where AROs were, he said, "If, Sir, you dispose their services in other depts without telling me, I can't say where they are." DM: "You needn't talk to me like that. It is your business to know my order when I pass one." SDO shrivelled up! He was all "Sir, Sir" thenceforth. DM said he would see to it that AROs were placed in the blocks. TP Ghosh who ought to have sent a copy of the order to SDO looked a duffer and escaped by saying that it had been routed through OS.

Bamangola and other Barind BDOs were told to finish sinking very fast as CM would be furious. But even CM can't provide us with rigs to break through rocks!

After the meeting, Kar and I went to N. Bhattacharya, AE PWD, for sanitation schemes. He could not give any without surveys but suggested we could budget 10 lakhs for drainage plus converting service latrines into sanitary ones @ 1000 for a family of 15 (750 such in EB). We left telling him not to tell SDO that we had come!

Old Malda municipality sent its drainage schemes coming to Rs.2.5 lakhs.

No rain in most blocks. It is a scandal how the relief office has not yet sent CARE the reports for May and June. Every time Ghosh is pressed, he refers to DM FCI not supplying reports and sits back. DM and ADM are not anxious either. Result is CARE will stop wheat shipments from 12<sup>th</sup>. All that is needed is sending a man to the 5 godowns and get details!

**11.7.1972**

### **Work done**

District plan 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon

DPC meeting 3-7 p.m.

Museum 8 a.m.

### **Information**

At 8 a.m. I went to the museum where 20 coolies took nearly an hour to put the Vishnu statue on its "vedi". Weighs about 30 mds! Left instructions with Mali to thoroughly clean the mud so that a good photograph could be taken next Sunday.

Bimal Chakravarty, Kar and I went to DM's at 9.30 a.m. and there we re-did the total employment and costs. Eng. Bazar Municipality plans SDO gave us at 3.30 pm. So all was ready for completing the plan now.

In the meeting only 5 MLAs out of 10 came—Shamsuddin Ahmed, Jakhilal Mondol, Niren Singh, Mohababul Haque and Bimal Das. We finished at 7 p.m. including a plan by SOTW for SC and ST. MLAs were very critical of RLI schemes not working and the EE merely asked his AE to answer! Costs for many projects were changed by EE PWD, so a lot of cancellation and correction will be needed. DM should have not stencilled so early and waited till after the meeting. Lack of experience. Tomorrow at 9 a.m. we meet again.

**12.7.1972**

**Work done**

District plan 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Information**

DM told us at 9 a.m. to complete the final corrections and write out the conclusion by today evening. He left to tour the blocks with the SDO to see for himself the actual drought position. We began work at 11 a.m. with BC and Sarkar. Luckily we called the AE (Roads) to find out the cost of linking underdeveloped areas and making crucial bridges. PWD EE very casually had affirmed the bridges would cost Rs.1 lakh each. Today he backed out pleading unfamiliarity with the location! The bridges cost Rs.10 lakhs each! This and the extra roads sent costs rocketing and after a lot of double checking we reached Rs.66 crores (recurring and non recurring) at 5.30 p.m.

Tomorrow the extra annexure is to be stencilled along with the conclusion and the proceedings of yesterday's meeting which I wrote out. Extra chapters were added on the bridges.

In all other districts sub-committees have been formed on each dept for the plan. So we are quite ahead!

Rathayatra today on dak bungalow road, taken some 200 yards to Mukdampur. Huge crowds, shops, all for 7 days more.

**13.7.1972**

**Work done**

Reports for CARE

District plan 11.30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Information**

After Rizvi had told me about stopping of wheat by CARE yesterday evening, I told DM today morning of the situation and that some of us should go and collect the reports. I also wrote out what information had to be brought. He took me to the Collectorate, called SDO and T.P.Ghosh and soon K.P.Sarkar and J.Banerji were off to Harischandrapur and Samsi respectively to get details. The rest would be covered by FCI district manager himself. I felt very glad at DM's prompt action.

Then he asked me and Kar and BC to redraft the plan along lines and language of II and III five year plans. All day we were at this and had to make many changes in the syntax. The conclusion and block wise annexures were also typed out. In the evening DM told us to take more time and insisted on copying the III plan language to give it a professional look—tho' now no one will bother to read anything but the annexures.

**14.7.1972**

**Work done**

District plan, 10.30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Touring Gazol block 3 to 8 p.m.

**Information**

We sat down, Kar, BC and self, with the III plan and redrafted portion of our plan language wise putting in some high-flown terms. Meanwhile Sudhir babu came and read out his article on Sataishghara, resulting in Kar and BC wanting to go there. Having completed 75% of our work, we left at 3 pm and visited it and I picked up a bit of a clay pipe and some superbly glazed pottery bits. Then we went to Eklakhi station to see the lake studded with white lotuses and then crossed the railway line to go to Raikandighi where a stupa was supposed to be. Only found a hillock full of bricks. On the way back visited the Rajadighi Mission (Protestants) but no missionaries were in. it is primarily a maternity and female disease centre and Mr. VSC Bonerjee's Norwegian wife used to work here.

Went to Gazol block. The BDO is on the verge of collapse. Even Congress has refused to make lists for TR. People are out of their control. Running schemes is impossible—over 1000 people start working in place of 300.

**15.7.1972**

**Work done**

Redrafting district plan 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Information**

The whole day was spent in completing redrafting of the plan. Today I did all the work, adapting the III plan language as desired by the DM. a lot of verbiage which no one will ever bother to read. From 4 pm the redrafted version was typed out, with me typing quite a bit as the office typist found excuses to slip out every now and then. We took the completed version to the DM who still began altering minuscule bits that hardly improved the syntax very much. It was rather exhausting to see further corrections! He called us at 930 am tomorrow for finally finishing the work—so we devoutly hope!

He granted me 5 days leave very reluctantly (18-22) yesterday saying I was doing “useful work” and should not be away too long. Today he urged me to come back sooner in view of the worsening drought (tho’ what I am to do to ease it I fail to see). In Cal I’ll try to expedite BC’s release order. A BDO in 24 Parganas who had the UBI interview on the same day joined work on 13 June being near Cal, while BC is still waiting.

**16.7.1972**

**Work done**

District plan 930 a.m. to 12 noon, 3 to 6 p.m.

**Information**

In the morning DM redrafted bits of our draft—not always for the better. Stencilling was begun, but we ran out of stencils after 14 pages. About 15 more are needed. This will be done tomorrow. It was necessary to sit constantly by the typist to read out DM’s pencilled amendments. Kar was with me till 1 pm and I took over after that. In the evening told DM about need to get a spring for the ambulance and he lamented that these things were not brought to his notice—e.g. the CARE affair for which he was glad I had told him. Within 1 day reports pending for 2 months had been obtained! It seems daily reports are sent from godowns by special messenger to DM FCI, but mysteriously these were not compiled at all and DM FCI seems to be ignorant of their having been sent.

**17.7.1972**

**Work done**

District plan

**Information**

Today stencilling and cyclostyling of 25 pages was complete, only leaving the contents and the very last page which DM had asked not to be done till he got back. He left with Irrigation minister around 11 am for north Malda and had not got back at 6 pm when we finished the cyclostyling. To get paper in time [getting stencils took 3 hours!] I grabbed the shopkeeper and sent him off in a jeep. That worked. Also berated Madhu babu (now JP) for flouting DM’s orders to move down the whole JM. He said no space was there downstairs, so I said he should first obey orders and then plead his case. Also told OS who will put it up to DM. told MVI (T) to see DM directly about spring for the ambulance.

Leaving today 10.30 p.m. by bus for Calcutta.

Returned on 23<sup>rd</sup> morning with wife, put up at dak bungalow. In Cal I found I’ve lost 5 kg!

**24-26.7.1972**

Routine office work, nothing to record except joining of 2 more probationers: S.Rahman WBCS & S.S.Maity WBJCS. Latter was a U.D.C. in Animal Husbandry; former a clerk in Central Information Service. On 23<sup>rd</sup> evening called on DM, ADM.

Circuit House is still being repaired; besides team of MLAs led by Maya Ray arrived to inspect starvation death reports set afloat by Jainal Abedin.  
24<sup>th</sup> night dinner invitation by ADM.

**27.7.1972**

**Work done**

Enquiry at Boldanga village into petition against bribe asked for by Bhagchas clerk in JLRO Habibpur office. 100 km, 11.30 a.m.– 6.15 p.m.

**Information**

I found JLRO never sees the Bhagchash case register. Many peculiar features like pending cases are not included in pending list, dates on order sheets are all wrong & no dates placed for 3-4 months! One date of an unsigned order is 25.12.71 ! Unfortunately the poor petitioners have no witnesses though they speaking truth because they insisted they hadn't signed, on the typed petition but on a handwritten one. The touts are also milking them dry, taking money (Rs.24) for getting copies of judgement in their case tho' not even a hearing had been held yet. JLRO admitted to avoiding cases due to great pressure of work. It was difficult getting understood by & to understand what the 2 Santhals were saying, but I gathered that the dates set down in the order sheet were all made-up & the actual dates had not been recorded. On a random check, I found a very large number of cases with orders similarly unsigned. The JLRO admits to being too soft to control his clerks. Often routine sending up of cases is not done in time. I told the clerk – Sunil Kr. Basu - & the petitioners to be present on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>, as also the Muharrir.

In the evening with T.B.Deb called on Raha where animated discussion on mediums and planchet took place. At night quite a heavy downpour but just for some minutes.

**28.7.1972**

**Work done**

Relief work – movement of supplies  
Arrangements for visit of CM & other Ministers

**Information**

I was summoned this morning by DM. Found SDO, ADM, OC (Relief) & FCI DM there. I was made liaison officer between FCI & Relief to ensure no bottlenecks went unnoticed. FCI was instructed to let BDOs lift TR quota direct from closest godowns instead of coming to town. I was also put in charge of vehicles for sending supplies to distressed pockets. Milk Powder has to reach N.W. blocks but trucks can't now be ferried. So wired BDOs to send their jeeps to other side of Madia & we would send the supplies by boat to that side. This is scheduled for tomorrow at 2 pm.

ADM showed it would be much cheaper to give G.R. to 50% of Malda i.e. 8 lakh people, comes to 1300 MT per week, costing Rs. 15 lakhs till 15 Aug. while 450 T.R. schemes @ 2–5 per anchal meant Rs. 22 lakhs @ 50 Qtls per scheme, 2300 gm per head, 31<sup>st</sup> July – 6<sup>th</sup> August. Employing 139751 men daily, & 978260 per week. DM told SDO to arrange 2.5% GR in town before any agitation took place. This could be done from the list made in 1971 floods which contained income slab of each person. I contacted AROs, & told them to submit this list for fixing a ceiling of income for GR distribution.

Some 517 bags of milk powder have become unfit for consumption because Govt. sat on it & did not tell us if we could give it under GR in 1971. Such a tragedy! German Baby Food gift cans have arrived; gruel kitchens will be opened by Marwari Relief Society & Sevaksamaj / Sevashram.

In the evening DM told me to arrange CH as CM + 3 mins [PWD, Agr, Irrigation, C&SSI] arrive tomorrow & meet officers to assess the situation. Only 3 rooms are habitable at present the rest being under repair. Have to run about a lot tomorrow – prepare CH, do enquiry at Habibpur, supervise sending milk powder to N.W.Blocks. A strenuous day ahead.



The Muharrir of Habibpur JLRO officer came & admitted that the clerk habitually took bribes & delayed official work. Told him to get me eye-witnesses.

**29.7.1972**

**Work done**

Relief Movement.

Circuit House

Habibpur 2 enquiries [2p.m.- 6.30p.m.] 100 km

Receiving CM: 11 p.m. – 12.30 a.m.

**Information.**

Usual helter-skelter over CH; even more now due to repairs which had to be done in every bathroom & the renovation which had to be stopped & bamboo “machas” all dismantled. Electric fittings of tube-lamp, fan, bell, bed switch had to be made. When I got back from Habibpur, all wires were lying on floor, so called back mechanics to wire them underneath the matting. Also more wire had then to be bought as DM wanted fan to be shifted to a different spot in the room nearer the beds. Doing this was a huge job needing a switch board & much else & was completed only at 8 p.m. Rose-water was brought for sprinkling [SDO’s idea which DM enthusiastically took up]. The drawing room was readied for tomorrow’s meeting; then DM dismantled it & said it should be done only tomorrow!

Irrigation Min. turned up sniffed at the odour of paint & said CM could not stay here but at tourist lodge [luckily DM had told me to fix up 3 rooms (including one air-cond. suite) so all the labour & Rs. 50 spent on CH today went wasted. Further one sofa set was sent by cart to T. Lodge from CH! Shortage of jeeps as usual. Meeting also at Z.P. Hall & not C.H.

Statesman reporter is here & the 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> paper has carried lead stories on Bamangola & Gajol. Marwari Relief Society has turned up today too.

For the milk powder, I sent Gorachand & Maity with truck carrying full quota for Ratua & Harishchandrapur and only Kharba II’s quota [because they have no trailer]. I intend sending across a trailer for Ratua. Told them to be very firm if coolies at the ghat objected to our using our own coolies. At night they reported that Kharba I jeep had refused to take powder for II ! Luckily Joyram Banerji had come with jeeps & had taken the powder. Ratua-I refused to take II’s shipment. If co-ordination & consideration is so pitiable inside Malda Then what of the state & India! I must come down hard on this. Also TR tokens are not being supplied in full quantities. This time press has been given 10 days time to submit by 5<sup>th</sup> while earlier 3 –5 days were given. This must be rectified also.

At Habibpur I reached at 3 p.m. due to hold up in the Relief Office. Layak had also to meet DAO & Jt. Dir. about his A E O’s indiscipline & refusal to do relief duty. The clerk, Sunil Basu, had returned the Rs.17 yesterday to the petitioners! Their statement I recorded once again, then Basu’s, who at first denied then admitted to taking the money but that Hasda had forced it on him. The case is quite clear. He said he never takes bribes, but from other sources his corruption is widely known. After this I went & met mother of Chapal Bagchi, a soldier killed in war, to get details of dependants. They are living purely on his provisional pension; there is no other income. 7 brothers & sister + mother. One lady in Cooch Behar has filed claim to PF as his wife! Completed this enquiry too & was telling DM who told me not to think of anything but CM now!

**30.7.1972, Sunday**

**Work done**

Meeting of CM with all officials & MLAs.

**Information**

Arranged transport for VIPs & meeting began around 10.30 a.m. at Zilla Parishad. CM came in his indigo sport shirt and in quite a temper with his P.S. for delay in getting out the proper

file. He had all doors closed and asked only officials & MLAs to be allowed. The District Congress, Press & Y.C. President were not allowed to enter.

CM first took down names of all BDOs and asked them the crop conditions, no. employed under TR, starvation deaths. Except for Harishchandrapur-I, Kaliachak II & III, E.B. the other Blocks are in bad condition & there is acute malnutrition in every block.

Harishchandrapur has stopped TR as earth is not available, nor labour after 9 inches rain it has had recently.

Kal III : 1000 employed daily

Kh I : 4000

Bgola : 12000

Habibpur : 8960

Kal I : 2000

Manikchak : 2000

Hcpur II : 10,000

Old Malda : 4000

Kh II : 5500 [including PWD]

Hcpur I : 300 [PWD]

R I : 8500 (+PWD)

R II : 8100 (-do-)

Kal II : 1500

E.B. : 500

Gajol : 20,000. Reports of 2 starvation deaths found baseless as they had eaten that very day as also earlier days. CM said not to insist on cutting of 80 cft of earth.

CM announced the following programmes to be taken up at once integrated with relief work to restore the loss of purchasing power of people, so give cash:-

(a) Homestead: 1000 sqft vested land + Rs.150 to landless rural labourer without land; if has a little non-agr. land, then just Rs.150; if no khas land available than Rs.75 to buy it (= 20 times of annual rent) + Rs. 150.

MLAs to help in keeping watch that money is not eaten up.

(b) Flood Control Schemes: Mahananda scheme--raise labour force from 1000 to 6000.

(c) Family Planning: Immediate need is 300 MT cement– i.e. 15 wagons. Employment will be 2000. CM asked telex to be sent to B.R.Gupta for allotting cement wagons to PWD.

Employees to be taken from panel fixed by BDO. Preference to local unemployed engineers in tenders, specifying Rs. 2.50 wages & BDO's panel of labour giving preference to families without any earning members.

(d) Special Water Supply Scheme: Tubewells sunk in blocks: CM berated BDOs for hesitating on going beyond target of 35 despite extra cash left. This attitude of Govt. Officers was responsible for sorry state of people. He said unless we implemented schemes we would not be spared if this Govt. fell. Why did they not observe his press statements and act accordingly, without waiting for govt. orders? [Who would save us from audit queries then, one asks?]

(e) CSRE: 31 pending with Govt., 8 sanctioned. CM said that 18 more would be sanctioned at once (this came next day).

CM confidentially wanted collection of land rev. to be stopped & GR 10% ad hoc to be given, also in town but not announced [but in press conference he announced both]

Marwari Relief society to feed 25000 daily in 5 centres, to include pregnant & nursing women.

All BDOs to give information on :-

1. Rainfall up to date this year vs. normal.

2. Aman normal, & this year's transplantation.

3. Aman still left & how much expected if rains.

4. Aus, jute, silk

Conditions of Blocks:-

Kaliachak III: Crops prospects bad, Jute is OK, Aus late. No deaths.

Kharba I: Bad crops. No Aman possible. Can sow if rains within a week.

Bamangola: Boro impossible. No Aman. Acute unemployment.

Habibpur: No aman. No sowing/ transplanting

Kal I: Jute 40%; Aus 80% damaged. Mulberry 80% damaged.

Manikchak: Jute 40% in good condition, but if no rain, will be gone.

Hcpur II: No aman sowing. Malnutrition in every village.

Old Malda: Only 50% aus sown.

Kharba II: No aman. Acute malnutrition in tribal pocket.

Hcpur I: 9` rain.

Ratua I: Bad crop. Only seedlings in RLI places.

Ratua II: No aman. No seedlings.

Kharba II: 50% aus sown.

Eng Bazar: 60% aus sown. Can recoup if rains

Gajol: Aus & Jute 90% damaged. Chiefly aman area. V. bad prospect.

Thereafter Jainal Abedin, Minister for Coops, told officers to recover loans from those able to pay. CM flew into rage with CPI MLAs because of a CPI demonstration while the meeting was on. Refused to see their demands & the CPI MLAs walked out of the meeting.

**31.7.1972**

### **Work done**

All papers on Chapal Bagchi taken.

Relief Office.

### **Information**

DM summoned me at 8 a.m. to a conference with SDO, SOPD, EOZP on relief CSRE being started at once in Gajole. DM told me he wanted me & Kar to concentrate on finding out what local industries could be set up with money from the Industrial Finance Corp. & that hence I should not go to Siliguri but concentrate here. He also put me in charge of all Relief Movements, specially of milk powder.

From CA got file on Bagchi with all enquiry reports. Needless duplication of effort due to part of it being in English Office & part here. SDO Cooch Behar reports wife exists but no mention of scrutinising any evidence of it. Also report that one Sandhya Bagchi was on ration card of his mother at Kaluadighi camp.

In Relief Office despatched baby food to Barind area & Mchak. These are all Australian cans of vegetables, fish etc.

**1.8.1972**

### **Work done**

Manikchak enquiry 3 – 5.30 p.m. 86 km.

Called on Bimal Chakravarty.

### **Information.**

A draft of Rs.500 had been received from Citizen's Council for payment to Bagchi & to Saha's family. Former I held up. For the latter I went to Manikchak to the wife (husband wounded & in hospital). Took down details as per questionnaire & gave her the Rs 300/-.

In the evening called on Bimal Chakravarty who is agitated over still not getting his release order. Has decided to go to Cal tomorrow to get this done personally.

In office checked up on Red Cross Distribution & despatched to Mchak, the only one left.

Rate is 2 bags per anchal. Stock is just 200 bags left & DM told me to hang on to it. From

Jalpaiguri we are getting CSM (Commissioner's quota). Told Red Cross Secy Sachin Chakravarty to get more supplies.

**2.8.1972**

**Work done**

Completed Bagchi enquiry: 32 km, 1.30 – 3 p.m. and connected office work.

**Information**

Sent off R.T. message to Ratua I & Kharba I asking their jeeps to be present at Madia on 4<sup>th</sup> for the milk powder. Today's trip was off as none had come from Ratua I yesterday to the office to take the message.

Sent Radiogram to DC Cooch Behar requesting confirmation about evidence of marriage of alleged wife.

Sent off list on tourism in District Plan to Sri S.Singh, Director of Tourism. Atrocious typist made it into S. Sinha ! Luckily saw this & had it all retyped.

Confronted Bagchi's mother with evidence of this ration card list. She said her son had brought in this girl as his adopted sister & not as wife.

Took ADM's wife & Sr.D.C. to Museum. My findings have been kept in a separate glass case there.

**3.8.1972**

**Work done**

Enquiry at Kaliachak I: 10.30 a.m. – 2 p.m. 28 miles

**Information**

Enquired into allegations of serious irregularities in distribution of C.P. Loans in Kal-I Block. Large number of people cited by petitioner admitted to not having any land at all! All alleged having to pay Rs.50 to Gram Sevak. He of course denied it but admitted to giving loan twice to same person under different names. BDO as usual said it was not possible for him to look into veracity of each case. I fixed 4<sup>th</sup> for closing of enquiry as some had not turned up—even went to their houses but they had gone away.

Submitted report on wounded/ disabled servicemen to DM.

**4.4.1972**

**Work done**

Milk powder biscuits CSM sent in 2 trucks to Ratua, Kharba & Hcpur. The trucks could finally be ferried across. MVI(T) & Bimal Chakravarty & I went in another truck to supervise this. Luckily MVI (T) had taken along landing mats; they were most necessary to prevent trucks bogging down. Sent bags @ 2 per anchal; 1crate biscuit per block; 1 bag sugar of 64 kg per 2 blocks. Took a good 2 hours. Called on DM.

**5.8.72**

Had to go again to Habibpur & Manikhak for taking signature & LTI of the next of kin on my report as per DM's orders, 9.45 a.m.–2 p.m., 64 miles.

**6.8.1972, Sunday**

Rains began in Malda. Called on SDO. He was out & came to see us at night. Governor might be coming to tour Malda & see TR.

**7.8.1972.**

Enquiry at Kaliachak 11 a.m.–2 p.m., 34 miles. Witnesses not coming. They want a date late in August. I agreed. Heavy rains.

**8.8.1972.**

**Work done**

We are short of a driver of a truck as he is sick. So today's Red-Cross material to NW Blocks had to be sent after getting back 1 of the 2 trucks we have given to SEB for fitting transformers to DTWs. I also shifted from 1496 jeep to the driverless truck, for sending milk powder etc to blocks.

Studied for Departmentals. District Judge called on us with family in evening. Extremely informal though a great gossip about IAS officers' extra-marital affairs e.g. in Darjeeling.

**9.8.1972**

**Work done**

Got break-up of Red Cross milk powder & our own stuff sent so far. Red Cross can get 1000 bags more from Siliguri + 1000 blankets. Our supplies so far:-

	<u>M.P.</u>	<u>CSM</u>	<u>Sugar</u>	<u>Baby Food,</u>
E.B.	31	-		2730+79+55+467
O.M.	24	16	64kg	-----
Gajol.	34	28	``	-----
Habibpur	32	26	``	2737 +
Bgola	22	16	``	2732 +
Mchak	22	22	``	2739+80+59+-----
K-I	22			
K-II	14			
K-III	22			
R I	18	18	``	
RII	14	14	``	
Kh I	16	16	``	
Kh II	14	14	``	
Hcpur I	14	14	``	
Hcpur II	16	16	``	

**Soap**

@ 9 cartons per block except E.B. – 10, Gajol –11, Habibpur, Bgola 10 each.

Biscuits: at least 1 case + 6 cartons per block.

O.M, R-I, Mchak @ 2 cases; Gajol, Habibpur, Bgola @ 3 cases; Kal I & II @ 5 cartons only; Kal & E.B. no cases.

Total Milk Powder = 281 bags. Biscuits: 88 cartons; 16 cases; CSM: 184 packets; Sugar: 8 bags; Soap: 140 cartons + 134 pieces; Baby food 13,668+396+279+2,335. Clothings @ 2 bales per block.

**Red Cross.**

<u>29/7/72</u>	<u>M.P.</u>	<u>WSB</u>
Gajol	24+10	5
O.M.	12+10	
Bgola	12+10	3
Habibpur	22+10	
K I	27+10	
K II	24+10	
K III	28 +10	
Mchak	22 +10	5
R I	21 +10	7
R II	15 +10	
Hcpur I&II	55 +10	
Kharba I&II	40 +10	
	-----	----
	482	20

I was sent today to K-II with ad hoc 75 qtls GR for badly affected areas of Rajnagar, Char Babupur, Panchanadapur etc. Good rain but useless because only Aus area; so unemployment continues. Gorachand has been posted in Das Gupta's place. Departmental exams roll number and programme arrived.

**10.8.1972**

**Work done**

Supplies of cloth, CSM, MP sent to Manikchak & Kaliachak. With Red Cross decided on quotas to various blocks.

Mr.Raha invited us to dinner. Sudhir Chakravorti has written a scathing article on Ministerial study team's visit. Raha had typed out copies of my sericulture report & gave me a copy which I'll give DM's CA.

**11.8.1972**

**Work done**

Nothing special in relief work except that decided to send bales of clothings on 14<sup>th</sup> to N.W. Blocks, as on 12<sup>th</sup> the trucks are not available. On 13<sup>th</sup> they will be used for secretly picking up B.D. people in Shahapur & sending them across the border at Hili. Prepared for Departmentals.

**Saturday, 12.8.1972**

**Work done**

DM would not agree to let me go for exams before 15<sup>th</sup>. He had refused to let eligible BDOs go, which he can't do. Luckily changed his orders today, allowing them.

Studied for Departmentals.

**14.8.1972**

**Work done**

Sent clothings to NW Malda. Bimal Chakravarty got his resignation accepted finally.

Radiogram arrived around 11.30 a.m. and at 4 p.m. we had a farewell which DM attended & asked me what to be done! So I told him that some praiseworthy words + the present [*Bangladesher Chhoto Galpo*] were in order. DM said Bimal Chakravarty was one of the best officers & he wished others would live up to his standard.

Midnight Independence Silver Jubilee function attended. 2 minutes silence. Arranged to have the flag floodlit. At 5 pm the order came that no flags to be flown tomorrow on vehicles.

Henceforth see Official Diary.

Appendix I  
**ORDERS**

**Office of the District Magistrate, Malda.**  
**Dated, Malda, 17<sup>th</sup> January, 1972**

**ORDER**

Shri Pradip Bhattacharjee, I.A.S., Assistant Magistrate, Malda is hereby posted at Kutubsahar Evacuee camp to arrange repatriation of evacuees there and also to supervise repatriation of evacuees at Karchadanga Evacuee camp. He will also supervise distribution of ration, passage money and cash component, blankets, clothings etc. at the above camps. He will be in charge of repatriation of evacuees from Malda court Rly. Station to Shibganj and other places in Bangladesh and also look to the work of repatriation of evacuees at Singabad Station.

He will be assisted by the camp staff who are working at these places.

Sd/- (S. P. De)  
District Magistrate, Malda.

**Memo No. 249/1(1)/G dated 17.1.72**  
**Office of the District Magistrate, Malda.**

Copy forwarded to:-

1. Shri P.Bhattacharjee, IAS, Assistant Magistrate, Malda for information and necessary action please.

(S. P. De)  
District Magistrate, Malda.

**GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL**  
**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, MALDA**

This is to certify that Shri PRADIP BHATTACHARYA, IAS Designation ASSTT. MAGISTRATE, MALDA in the Home Dept., DM's office is proceeding to Bangladesh by land on official duty, his specimen signature is given below.

All concerned authorities are requested to render him any assistance or courtesies that might be necessary.

Specimen Signature of  
Shri Pradip Bhattacharya

Sd/-  
Signature of the Authority.  
Name : S. P. De  
Designation District Magistrate, Malda

Attested  
Signature  
Sd/-  
District magistrate, Malda

Seal



**Programme of training of Shri Pradip Bhattacharya, I.A.S.,  
Asstt. Magistrate and Collector, Malda, on probation.**

14.1.72 to 3.2.72.	Evacuee Relief and repatriation work.
4.2.72 to 16.3.72.	Training in Treasury work.
17.3.72 to 24.3.72.	1. English Office 2. Court work. 3. Misc. enquiries.
26.3.72 to 7.4.72.	1. Establishment Section. 2. Court work. 3. Misc. enquiries. 4. General Relief Department including Food Section.
8.4.72 to 17.4.72.	1. Revenue Munshikhana. 2. Certificate Department. 3. Court work. 4. Misc. enquiries. 5. Loans Department.
18.4.72 to 24.4.72.	1. Judicial Munshikhana, including M.V. Section and Gun License Section. 2. Court work. 3. Misc. enquiries.
25.4.72 to 30.4.72.	1. Record Room, Library and Forus Section. 2. Court Work. 3. Misc. Enquiries. 4. Eastes & Acquisition Deptt. 5. Compensation Department. 6. Touzi Department.

He will maintain a diary in which the nature of training taken should be recorded. The diary should be put up to me after completion of training in each department.

He will also do Misc. work in the Election and General Relief Deptt. as and when entrusted by District Magistrate / Addl. District Magistrate.

Sd/- S. P. De.  
District Magistrate, Malda.

Office of the District Magistrate, Malda

Memo No. 491 (10) G

Dated 4.2.72

Copy to :- 1. Shri Pradip Bhattacharya, I.A.S., Asstt. Magistrate & Collector, Malda.  
(on prob.)

2. The Treasury Officer, Malda.
3. Office Supdt., Malda Collectorate.
4. Officer-in-charge of the department concerned.
5. Additional District Magistrate, Malda

sd/- S.N.Roy Chowdhury  
(for) District Magistrate, Malda.

**Programme of Training of Shri Pradip Bhattacharya, I.A.S., Assistant Magistrate and Collector, Malda (on probation) for the month of May and June, 1972.**

- 1.5.72 to 31-5-72
1. Development Department – Local Development Works, visiting of N.E.S. Blocks with District Magistrate S.D.O. or S.O.P. & D. ( under District Panchayat officer).
  2. Agricultural Deptt.
  3. Sericulture
  4. Industries Deptt.
- 1-6-72 to 3-6-72  
manual and
5. Chowkidari Deptt. – study of L.S.G., chowkidari panchayat Acts.
- Up to 10-6-72
6. Case Works
  7. preparation for Departmental Examination
- 12-6-72 to 21-6-72
1. Block work with Block Dev. Officer, Old Malda, checking of assessment lists, Audit and Inspection of Anchal Panchayats.
  2. To study function of the Agricultural Examination agency under the Community Development programme with S.O.P. & D.
- 22-6-72 to 26-6-72
3. Jail
  4. Case works
  5. Preparation for Departmental Examination.

He will maintain a diary in which the nature of training taken should be recorded. The diary should be put up to me after completion of training in each department.

He will also do Misc. works in the Election and General Relief Departments as and when entrusted by D.M./A.D.M.

R.K. Midha  
District Magistrate, Malda

No. 1584 (10) –G/ dated 6.5.72

Copy forwarded to: 1. Shri Pradip Bhattacharya, IAS, Asstt. Magistrate & Collector, Malda, (on probation), Malda.

2. Treasury Officer, Malda
3. Office Superintendent
4. O/C, of the Deptt. concerned, for information.

Sd/-  
District Magistrate, Malda

**Distribution of work among the Gazetted Officers under District Magistrate and Collector, Malda up to 31.3.72.**

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Name &amp; Designation</i>	<i>Department of work</i>	<i>Emergency Substitute.</i>
1	Shri.S.P.De, IAS District Magistrate, Malda.	1. General Administration and Law and orders. 2. Political Economic, confidential, Military and International matters. 3. Anti-corruption and vigilance work. 4. Minority Board matters. 5. Chairman, R.T.A. and licensing of Motor vehicles. 6. Licensing of cinema including Assessment Tax and Arms Licenses. 7. Relief. 8. Treasury and stamps. 9. Appointment, Transfer, promotion, Disciplinary matters of the staff and leave of Gazetted Officers, O.S.,H.A.,C.A., Nazir and Steno to D.M. 10. Tours of Gazetted Officers. 11. Discretionary grant. 12. Selection. 13. Press and publicity. 14. Development and planning. 15. Policy matter related to Estates Acquisition (including settlement of Khasland and vested lands within Englishbazar Municipality. 16. Municipalities, Panchayats and Zilla parishad. 17. Pool Vehicles, Launch, Circuit House and Dak Bungalow. 18. W.B.N.V.F. 19. Nazarath. 20. Explosive, Carbide, Calcium, poison and other Miscellaneous licenses. 21. Land Acquisition and Requisition of Houses. 22. Controller of Civil Defence. 23. Licensing Excise shops.	Shri N.R.Haldar, IAS, Addl. District Magistrate, Malda.

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| 2 | Shri N.R.Haldar, IAS,<br>Addl.District Magistrate,<br>Malda.      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Charge of the district in absence of District Magistrate.</li><li>2. Criminal Administration including appeals and motions and jails.</li><li>3. Estates Acquisition (except policy matters and matters allotted to Collector including non-agricultural tenancy and tours of E.A.staff.</li><li>4. Touzi and Cess.</li><li>5. Citizenship Registration.</li><li>6. District Registrar.</li><li>7. Revenue Munshikhana including functions under P.D.R. Act.</li><li>8. Refugee, Relief and Rehabilitation Deptt., including Evacuee Section of the R.R. &amp; R. Deptt.</li><li>9. Passport</li><li>10. State Excise matters (excluding Excise licensing) and tour of officers of Excise deptt.</li><li>11. Record Room and Copying department.</li><li>12. District Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Board.</li><li>13. Tribal Welfare.</li><li>14. Leave other than C.L. of office staff excluding O.S., H.A., Nazir, C.A. and steno to D.M.</li><li>15. Social Education.</li><li>16. Tank improvement.</li><li>17. Rural Health.</li><li>18. Forest</li><li>19. Additional Controller of Civil Defence.</li><li>20. Loans.</li><li>21. Food and Supplies.</li></ol> |  |
| 3 | Shri S.C.Chowdhury,<br>W.B.C.S., Subdivisional<br>Officer, Malda. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To remain in charge of the District in absence of Magistrate and Addl. District Magistrate.</li><li>2. Sub divisional Officer.</li><li>3. General and police File.</li><li>4. Criminal matters and Law and Orders.</li><li>5. Officer-in-charge, Pool</li></ol>  | Shri P.Chakraborty,<br>Deputy Magistrate<br>& Deputy<br>Collector. |

- Vehicle.  
6. Officer-in-charge, Motor Vehicle Deptt. and Secretary, R.T.A.  
7. Education Tax.  
8. Rural Development.  
9. E.R.O. & R.O. as appointed by the Election Commissioner.  
10. Arms Act.  
11. Registration of Presses and Books etc.  
12. Relief matters including Refugee Rehabilitation.  
13. Superintendent of Malda sub-jail.  
14. Food and supplies as empowered under different enactments, rules and orders.  
15. Loans as empowered under different rules & orders.  
16. Establishment, appointment, transfer and disciplinary action in respect of tahsildars.  
17. Eviction cases under Bargadar Act.  
18. Eviction of unauthorized occupation from public land.  
19. Licensing as empowered under the Law.  
20. Cases under the West Bengal Premises Tenancy Act.  
21. Appointment, dismissal and other allied matters of Rural police (chowkidars and daffadars.)  
22. Deputy Controller of Civil Defence.

4 Shri Rathindra Narayan Kar, Deputy Magistrate & Dy. Collector & S.O.P. & D., Malda.

1. Senior Deputy Collector.
2. Ferries
3. Establishment
4. Signing of bills on behalf of D.M. and Collector & Controlling Officer in respect of T.A. bills of the non-gazetted staff.
5. Revenue Munshikhana (excluding Civil Suit).
6. General Department.
7. Evacuee properties.

Sri. T.P.Ghosh, Dy. Magistrate & Dy. Collector in respect of the work mentioned in items 1-13 & Sri A.R. Samajdar in respect of other items.

8. Passport.
  9. Food and Supplies (sub-charge as far as D.M. is concerned).
  10. Border consignments addressed to D.M.
  11. National Savings Organisation.
  12. Officer-in-charge, Judicial Munshikhana.
  13. Cinema Licensing Section including Amusement Tax work.
  14. D.P.O.
  15. O/C, Chowkidari Section.
  16. S.O.P.D.
  17. Secretary, Zilla Parishad.
- 
- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| 5 | Shri Madhusudhan<br>Bhattacharyya, Deputy<br>Magistrate & Dy.<br>Collector. | 1. Officer-in-charge, Election.  | Sri S.N.Majumdar,<br>W.B.C.S.   |
| 6 | Shri P.Chakraborty,<br>Deputy Magistrate &<br>Deputy Collector.             | 1. General Files and Police<br>Papers.<br>2. Nezarath Dy. Collector.<br>3. Trial of Cases.<br>4. Certificate Officer (General).  | 1. Sri T.P.Ghosh,<br>Dy. Magistrate &<br>Dy. Collector.   |
| 7 | Shri T.P.Ghosh, Dy.<br>Magistrate & Dy.<br>Collector.                       | 1. Criminal cases.<br>2. Officer-in-charge, Evacuee.<br>3. Signing of fair copies.<br>4. Signing of bills on behalf of<br>D.M./ Collector.<br>5. O.C. General Relief.  | Sri A.R.Samajdar,<br>Sub-Dy. Magistrate<br>& Sub-<br>Dy.Collector.  |
| 8 | Shri Atul Ratan Samajdar,<br>Sub-Dy.Magistrate & Sub-<br>Dy.Collector.      | 1. Officer-in-charge, Loans<br>Deptt.<br>2. Signing of Loans Ledgers.<br>3. Verification of services of<br>Non-gazetted Officers.<br>4. Signing of bills on behalf of<br>D.M./Collector in respect of<br>Loans Deptt.<br>5. Record Room. | Sri K.S.Majumdar,<br>Sub-Dy.Magistrate<br>& Sub-<br>Dy.Collector.<br>Except for signing<br>bills which will be<br>done by Sr . D.C. |
| 9 | Shri K.S.Majumdar, Sub-<br>Dy. Magistrate & Sub-Dy.<br>Collector.           | 1. Treasury Officer.<br>2. Sub-charge of M.V. Deptt.<br>3. O.C. Civil Suit.<br>4. Signing of fair copies on<br>behalf of D.M./ Collector.  | Sri A.R.Samajdar,<br>Sub-Dy.Magistrate<br>& Sub-<br>Dy.Collector.   |

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| 10 | Shri P.Bhattacharya, IAS, Asstt. Magistrate and Collector, (on probation). | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training.</li> <li>2. Routine work of the English Deptt.</li> <li>3. Misc. enquiries as ordered by D.M./A.D.M.</li> </ol>   |  |
| 11 | Shri S.N.Roy Chowdhury, Dy.Magistrate & Dy.Collector, (on probation).      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training.</li> <li>2. S.D.R.R.O</li> <li>3. Signing of fair copies on behalf of D.M./ Collector.</li> <li>4. Misc.duties as ordered by D.M./A.D.M./ S.D.O./Sr.D.C./O.C., Election.</li> </ol>                                 | Sri P.Bhattacharjee, Dy.Magistrate & Dy.Collector (on prob.)     |
| 12 | Shri Prasanta Bhattacharjee, Dy.Magistrate & Dy.Collector, (on probation)  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training</li> <li>2. Form and Stationery.</li> <li>3. Library.</li> <li>4. Misc.duties as ordered by D.M./ A.D.M. /S.D.O./Sr.D.C./O.C. Election.</li> <li>5. Signing of fair copies, on behalf of D.M./ Collector.</li> </ol> | Sri S.N.Roy Chowdhury, Dy.Magistrate & Dy. Collector (on prob.). |
| 13 | Shri R.P.Chakraborty, Dy.Magistrate & Dy. Collector.                       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Special Land Acquisition Officer.</li> <li>2. House Requisition.</li> <li>3. Certificate of fairness of rents.</li> </ol>   | Sri B.C.Lahiri, Addl. Land Acquisition Officer.                  |
| 14 | Shri B.C.Lahiri, Sub-Dy.Magistrate & Sub-Dy.Collector.                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Addl.Land Acquisiti on Officer.</li> <li>2. To remain-in-charge of the L.A.Office during the absence of Special L.A.O.</li> <li>3. Signing of fair copies in respect of L.A.Deptt.</li> </ol>                                 | Sri S.N.Das, W.B.J.C.S. District Compensation Officer, Malda.    |
| 15 | Shri A.K.Majumdar, Supdt. Excise.  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. State Excise work.</li> </ol>   | Sri Sk. Pear Md., Inspector of Excise.                           |
| 16 | Shri Sk.Pear Md., Inspector of Excise.                                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inspector of Excise.</li> </ol>   |  |
| 17 | Shri S.N.Majumdar, Dy.Magistrate & Dy. Collector.                          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Special Officer, Schedule Castes &amp; Tribes.</li> </ol>   | Sri N.Ghosh, T.I.O.  |
| 18 | Shri N.Ghosh, Tank Improvement Officer.                                    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tank Improvement Officer.</li> <li>2. T.I. Certificate Officer</li> </ol>   | Sri S.P.Roy, Subdivisional Compensation                          |

			Officer.
19	Shri S.N.Das, Sub-Deputy Magistrate & Sub-Deputy Collector.	1. District Compensation Officer. 2. Touzi and Cess.	Sri S.P.Roy, Sub divisional Compensation Officer.
20	Shri S.P.Roy, Sub divisional Compensation Officer.	1. Sub divisional Compensation	Shri N.Ghosh, T.I.O.
21	Shri M.B.Chowdhury, Sub-Deputy Magistrate & Sub-Deputy Collector.	1. Sub-divisional Land Reforms Officer.	Shri S.N Das, Sub-Dy. Magistrate & Sub-Dy. Collector, D.C.O.
22	Shri Manoranjan De, Block Development Officer, Englishbazar.	1. Block Development Officer and Ex-Officio Circle Officer, Englishbazar and Ex-Officio Chief Executive Officer, Anchalik Parishad.	
23	Shri Bimal Chandra Chakraborty Sub-Dy. Magistrate & Sub-Dy Collector.	1. Block Development Officer and Ex-Officio Circle Officer, Old Malda and Ex-Officio Chief Executive Officer, Anchalik Parishad.	
24	Shri Bimal Chandra Chakraborty Sub-Dy. Magistrate & Sub-Dy Collector.	Block Development Officer and Ex-Officio Circle Officer, Kaliachak-I and Ex-Officio Chief Executive Officer, Anchalik Parishad.	
25	Shri Sambhunath Dasgupta, Sub-Dy. Magistrate & Sub- Dy. Collector.	1. Block Development Officer and Ex-Officio Circle Officer, Kaliachak-II and Ex-Officio Chief	
26	Shri Ajit Kumar Chakraborty.	1. Block Development Officer and Ex- Officio Circle Officer, Kaliachak-III and Ex-Officio Chief Executive Officer, Anchalik Parishad	
27	Shri Dilip Kumar Chakraborty.	1. Block Development Officer and Ex-Officio Circle Officer, Gazole and ex-officio Chief Executive Officer	



Anchalik Parishad.

- |    |   |  |
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| 28 | Shri Shyamapada Saha,<br>Block Development<br>Officer, Manikchak.             | 1. Block Development Officer<br>and Ex-Officio Circle Officer,<br>Manikchak and ex-officio Chief<br>Executive Officer, Anchalik<br>Parishad.           |
| 29 | Shri Haralal Mistri,<br>Dy.Magistrate &<br>Dy.Collector, (on<br>probation)    | 1. Block Development Officer<br>and Ex-Officio Circle Officer,<br>Ratua – I and ex-officio Chief<br>Executive. Officer, Anchalik<br>Parishad.          |
| 30 | Shri Amitava Roy<br>Chowdhury, Sub-Dy.<br>Magistrate & Sub-Dy.<br>Collector.  | 1. Block Development Officer<br>& ex-officio Circle Officer, and<br>ex-officio Chief Executive<br>Officer, Anchalik Parishad.                          |
| 31 | Shri Ghosh Sub-<br>Dy.Magistrate & Sub-<br>Dy.Collector.                      | 1. Block Development Officer<br>& ex-officio Circle Officer,<br>Kharba – I and ex-officio Chief<br>Executive Officer, Anchalik<br>Parishad.            |
| 32 | Shri Haridas Mukherjee,<br>Sub-Dy.Magistrate & Sub-<br>Dy. Collector.         | 1. Block Development Officer<br>& ex-officio Circle Officer,<br>Kharba – II and ex-officio Chief<br>Executive Officer, Anchalik<br>Parishad.           |
| 33 | Shri Ananda Ghosh Hazra,<br>Sub-Dy.Magistrate & sub-<br>Dy. Collector.        | 1. Block Development Officer<br>& ex-officio Circle Officer,<br>Harishchandrapur – I and ex-<br>officio Chief Executive Officer,<br>Anchalik Parishad. |
| 34 | Shri Amiya Kumar<br>Pattanayak, Sub-<br>Dy.Magistrate & Sub-<br>Dy.Collector. | 1. Block Development<br>Officer & ex-officio Circle<br>Officer, Harishchandrapur – II<br>and ex-officio Chief Executive<br>Officer, Anchalik Parishad. |
| 35 | Shri Sudhangshu Kumar<br>Das, Sub-Dy.Magistrate &<br>Sub-Dy.Collector.        | 1. Block Development<br>Officer & ex-officio Circle<br>Officer, Bamongola and ex-<br>officio Chief Executive Officer,<br>Anchalik Parishad.            |
| 36 | Shri. Bhaskar Chandra   | 1. Block Development Officer   |

Layek, Sub-Dy.Magistrate & ex-officio Circle Officer,  
& Sub-Dy.Collector Habibpur and ex-officio Chief  
Executive Officer, Anchalik  
Parishad.

Sd/- S. P. De.  
District Magistrate, Malda.

Memo No. 579(50)- G/ dated, Malda, the 10 – 2 – 1972.  
Copy forwarded to the Gazetted Officers concerned for information.

A.R.Samajdar  
For District Magistrate, Malda

Appendix II

**ENQUIRY REPORTS**

To:  
The District Magistrate,  
Malda.

From:  
Pradip Bhattacharya,  
Assistant Magistrate, Malda.

23<sup>rd</sup> January, 1972

**Re: Theft from Evacuee Stores, N. O. 5. F. R. dt.3/1/72.**

Sir,

In compliance with your order, dated 15/1/72 received by me on 17/1/72, I held spot enquiries into the case on 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1972 and interrogated the following persons:-

1. Nandadulal Sarkar..... Store-keeper, Evacuee Relief.
2. Sunil Mitra .....L.D.C.
3. D.Banerjee.....M.V.I. ( Tech.)
4. Harendra Nath Chowdhury.....Night-guard, Collectorate
5. Monoranjan Bhattacharjee..... Court S.I.
6. Sachindra Lal Dey.....Office Peon
7. Kuldip Mondal..... Coolie Sardar

The information gathered from them is as follows:-

The Evacuee-stores are usually stored in some of the collectorate garages, but the particular stores in question were kept in a room inside the Court-compound, opposite the office of the M.V.I.(Tech.), so that Sl.2, who was working in the garage premises, would not be disturbed. These stores were received from Gayesbari and Sujapur Evacuee Camps in Kaliachak, on 25/9/71 according to the stock-register, and these were the only stores kept in this room, with the exception of a number of bags full of milk-powder. There is no official record whatsoever in the stock-register of any such bags of milk-powder. Still Sl.1 claims that 3 bags were stolen. His statement is confirmed by Sl.s. 6 and 7 according to whom the fact that 3 bags had been removed was quite apparent from the way in which the bags had been stacked in vertical rows. I was unable to verify this physically as the room has been cleared of all stores since then, and the bags of milk-powder seem to have vanished. It is questionable, therefore, whether any such bags were stolen.

The other stores mentioned in the F.I.R. are on record in the stock-register. The only witnesses who were present when the theft was discovered and the stock was verified are sls. 2, 6 and 7. Sl. 3, though included among the witnesses in the F.I.R., firmly asserts that he was not present during the verification of the stock. The evidence of Sl.2 can be discounted since his timing of the discovery of the theft varies totally from that given by all the others by a good 4 hours.

On 24/12/71 the Court-room had been broken into and there had been an attempt to force open the lock of the store-room as well. Curiously enough, Sl.1 never informed or queried the night-guard about this, and never asked him to exercise more vigilance. Instead, he casually mentioned it to the N.V.F. personnel posted outside the Collectorate to guard the garages. Sl.1 could not produce anyone to corroborate his having informed the N.V.F., nor could he explain his omission to inform and warn the night-guard.

The night-guard was told about this incident of 24/12/71 by the Court Police, and he claims that, in his own job-interest, he intensified his patrolling with regard to the Court-room and the store-room. His duty is from 5 p.m. to 10 a.m. daily and he admits to taking "a little rest" after 2 a.m. in the early morning. Considering the size of the compound, one guard is

surely not enough to effectively keep watch over the entire area. The guard also admits to feeling afraid patrolling all alone, which again reduces the efficacy of the patrolling. When he was at one end of the compound, it would be quite easy to commit theft at the other end by the time he completed one round of patrolling. This, along with the store-keeper's failure to take an active interest in having his stores properly guarded after a theft attempt, can be considered in the nature of extenuating circumstances while fixing the responsibility on the night-guard.

However, till I told him, the night-guard was totally unaware that a theft had occurred on 3/1/72. This is inexplicable considering that the lock had been taken away, and that obviously the theft had occurred before the expiry of the guard's duty-hours at 10 a.m.

Considering all the facts, therefore, it can be concluded that there was dereliction of duty on part of the night-guard, while keeping in mind the extenuating circumstances mentioned above.

Orders may kindly be passed as deemed proper.

Yours faithfully,  
Pradip Bhattacharya  
Assistant Magistrate, Malda.

To:  
The Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Malda.

From:  
Pradip Bhattacharya,  
Asstt. Magistrate & Collector, Malda.

10 February, 1972

Ref: **Case No.- 616 P/71 u/s/144 Cr.P.C.**

Petitioners – Salimuddin Mondol s/o Late Natu Mondol,  
Village Ulsipara, P.S. Bamangola.  
Opposite Party – Piyar Mohammad & others.

Sir,

In compliance with your order dated 19/1/72 & 7/2/72, I held a spot enquiry into the case on 9/2/72, in the course of which I interrogated the following witnesses:-

Rabitulla Mondol, Village Durgapur |  
Mohiruddin, Village Satulipara | for the petitioner  
Kasimuddin Sarkar, Village Ulsipara |

Khus Mohammad, Village Ulsipara |  
Bilat Ali, ----do----- | for the opposite party  
Khoka Mondol, ----do----- |

Lalu Sarkar, Village Bintara --- independent witness found by me, nephew of the original

owner of the Land, Charan Mondol.

S.R.Dhar, OC Bamangola Thana

The facts which came to light are as follows:-

The petitioner was unable to produce any other witness besides Kasimuddin Sarkar from the village Ulsipara where the land in question is situated, to support his plaint. On the other hand, the opposite party was able to produce a large number of local villagers, besides the ones mentioned above, to support his claim, which was further bolstered up by land records.

I also found overwhelming majority of witnesses who testified that the land in question was at present in actual physical possession of Piyar Mod. the opposite party. These are reliable witnesses since they cultivate "Pan Baraj" in plots adjacent to the land in question. Further, Lalu Sarkar, nephew of the original owner of the land, Charan Mondal, also testified to the fact of the opposite party's actual physical possession of the land.

Further, the petitioner stated that the dispute had been set at rest on 14/1/72 in the presence of the O.C., Bamangola Thana, by his receiving Rupees Four Hundred (Rs.400/- only) from the opposite party towards satisfying whatever claims he (the petitioner) had concerning the said land. Both the O.C. and the opposite party confirmed this. The opposite party, for reasons of his own, admitted this to me in private, but denied it in the presence of the O.C. and others. His reasons are not relevant to the scope of the enquiry as ordered by you, though they throw important light on the merits of the case, hence I refrain from reproducing them.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the enquiry, therefore, is that:-

- a) Actual physical possession of the Land in question is in the hands of Piyar Mod. the opposite party;

b) The dispute itself no longer exists as compromise out of court has been effected by the O.C. Bamangola P.S.

Orders may please be passed as deemed proper.

Yours faithfully,  
Pradip Bhattacharya  
Asstt. Magistrate & Collector

To:  
The District Magistrate,  
Malda.

From:  
Pradip Bhattacharya,  
Asstt. Magistrate.  
S.N.Roy Chowdhury,  
Dy. Magistrate.

10<sup>th</sup> February, 1972

Subject: Report on Possibilities of Sending Relief Materials to the Porsha P.S. Area via Agra-Harishchandrapur.

Sir,

Today, after meeting the B.D.O. Habibpur who had got back this morning from Porsha, we proceeded to Nitpur (Porsha P.S.) where we talked with:-

Sri. Abul Hasnat Chowdhury, Chairman of the local Awami League unit;  
Sri Ikram-ul Haque, Secretary of the local A.L. unit  
Sri Akhtur-ul Islam, Local Family Planning Officer  
And many other local people.

Sri Basir Ahmed Chowdhury was away in Rajsahi & so could not be met.

As a result of our tour and these discussions, the following conclusions can be reached:-

1. Trucks can proceed along the Bulbulchandi-Kenpur-Agra-Harishchandrapur route. A little T.R. work here, in the Agra-Harishchandrapur portion of the road, will certainly facilitate the operation and cut-down time taken for the trips.
2. The ferry across the Punarbhaba cannot possibly take across any diesel truck, not even the small ISUZU trucks, unless bigger boats are found. In the alternative, a small petrol truck can be ferried across. The materials can be unloaded on the western side of the river, ferried across it on boats, and be carried by this truck to the required spots inside Porsha. Two such trucks would be ideal, if not three, so that the people can receive the materials as fast as possible.
3. Some 30,000 evacuees, according to them, have returned to Porsha, and nearly an equal amount are also homeless (these had fled to other areas of Bangla Desh). The badly needed materials are: bamboo poles and mats, and some sort of roofing since no tin sheets or hay or tarpaulin are to be found there. 80% of the residences it was claimed have been razed to the ground. People are at present either living in schools, or packing into whatever houses are still standing.
4. Diesel is acutely required for powering the 106 irrigation pumps that have been set-up. If this is not supplied immediately, the possibility of a decent "boro" crop will disappear. This area produces rice by and large, and this year only about 50% of the land has produced a good crop, with the result that price of rice has shot up from Rs. 15 or 16 to Rs 26 or 28 a md. To avoid food scarcity, therefore, immediate supply of diesel is essential.

I was further told that if the fuel is brought via Agra-Harishchandrapur, the cost comes to about Rs 100 (Rupees one hundred) less than if it is routed through Rajsahi. This factor may also be kept in mind when deciding the supply-route.

5. Food-grains are the other major problem in this area. Earnest requests were made to arrange for supplies of food-grains direct through the Agra-Harishchandrapur route. Sri. H.Chowdhury & Sri I. Haque will be coming to meet you on 13<sup>th</sup> evening or 14<sup>th</sup> morning before 11 a.m.

Orders may kindly be passed as deemed necessary.



Yours faithfully,

(S.N. Roy Chowdhury)  
Dy. Magistrate 10/02/72

(Pradip Bhattacharya)  
Asstt. Magistrate 10/2/72

**DM's Orders**

*We had a meeting at Rajshahi on 10/2/72. P.O.L. & food-grains are being sent to Rajshahi, Nawabganj and Natore. They may obtain quota from there.*

*BDO Habibpur may be advised to draw up programme for despatch of shelter materials up to the river ghat. SDO Nawabganj will send an officer who will receive the materials from us, transport be provided from our end.*

*Sri Rupendra Roy Chowdhury alias Bhuto Babu of Nawabganj will do the liaison with us as arranged with SDO Nawabganj and D.C. Rajshahi, and Dr. Mishbabul Haque, Secy. Awami League, Nawabganj and Chairman of the Subdivisional Relief Committee.*

*S.P.De*  
11/2/72

**Proceedings of the meeting between the District Magistrate, Malda and Deputy Commissioner, Rajshahi**

**held at Circuit House Malda on 14.2.72 at 6.30 P.M.**

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**Officers present:**

**Rajshahi Side**

1. Shri E.T.Bhuiyan, Dy. Commissioner, Rajshahi
2. Shri J.K.Bhattacharya, IAS, Civil Liaison Officer. Malda
3. Shri T.K.Das, IAS,C.A.L.O.( R ), Rajshahi Commander,BSF
4. M.A.Sallam Khan, R & R.O, Porsha
5. Md. Mofizuddin Mondal, C.O ( Dev.& Rev.), Porsha.

**Malda Side**

1. Sri S.P.De, IAS, D.M., Malda
2. Sri S.C.Chowdhury, SDO,
3. Col.B.K.Sen, Sector
4. Sri B.C.Layek, BDO,Habibpur
5. Shri P.Bhattacharyya, Asstt. Magistrate & Collector, Malda.

Discussed the position of dispatch of relief materials to Rajshahi from Malda. It was decided that the relief materials be sent as quickly as possible in view of the distress prevailing in certain areas in person and Nematpur P.S. It was further decided that one-sixth of the relief materials earmarked for Nawabganj Sub-division may be dispatched to Relief Officer, Porsha by trucks from Malda and that the some be carried up to Harishchandrapur ghat where from the Relief Officer, Porsha would make necessary arrangement for dispatch thereof to different destination points

2. It was further decided that all relief materials from Murshidabad would be channelised through Malda. District Magistrate, Malda was requested to render necessary assistance to the Liaison Officer posted at Malda to which D.M., Malda also agreed. It was also decided that Liaison Officer from Rajshahi posted at Malda would make liaison in regard to dispatch of all relief materials from and through Malda. For the convenience of work, it was also decided that Block Development Officer, Habibpur and Bamongola and C.O.( Dev. & Rev.), Porsha and R.O., Porsha and Neamatpur will be in close touch to facilitate the movement of relief materials under intimation to the respective S.D.O.s and D.M. and D.C.

sd/-  
(K.T.Bhuiyan)  
Deputy Commissioner, Rajshahi,  
14.2.72.

sd/-  
(S.P.De)  
District Magistrate, Malda  
14.2.72.

To:  
The District Magistrate,  
Malda.

From: Pradip Bhattacharya,  
Asstt. Magistrate,  
Malda.

3<sup>rd</sup>

March, 1972.

**Subject: Enquiry into Prayer for further Grants by Nandinadaha G.S.**

Sir,

In pursuance of your orders, dated 17/2/72, I went on 2/3/72 to Nandinadaha Gram Sabha, Chandpur Anchal, Bamongola Block, and enquired into the basis for of their petition for further H.B. grants, Cattle-buying grants, G.R., and setting up of river-pumps. What I could gather is as follows:-

1. Haripal village is utterly devastated by the floods, and nothing less than Rs 100 per family will be of any use as H.B. grant. In the other villages, like Rangamati and Nandinadaha, the devastation has been less as they are comparatively on higher ground though situated right on the banks of the Punarbhava. Here Rs.50 per family should be enough.

I would like to emphasize that on no account should blanket cent-per-cent grants be given, as this only results in cutting down the amount of the grant to ridiculous extents and this does not help in any way to rebuild houses, but only makes people more anxious for further relief.

Another consideration is that this area is extremely vulnerable to floods, being just on the bank of the river. Hence, loans in cash form to build houses of mud/brick are of purely temporary efficiency. Instead, they should be encouraged to build houses of bamboo. This should not be difficult, since they admitted that they built mud walls in order to get protection from the shooting by Pakistanis prior to the liberation of Bangla Desh. With that danger gone, they should not be encouraged to re-build mud structures.

2. Another round of G.R. distribution seems quite necessary in view of the fact that all crops they have sown have been ruined by pests. Strangely enough, none of them has so far thought of approaching the AEO for help. I also learnt that the AEO has never visited this place, and that the VLW is also hardly visible, though their absence is no excuse for lack of local initiative. My impression is that sufficient extension work has not been done in this place to make the people more conscious of modern scientific methods of cultivation and combating pests.

3. The prospects for R.L.I. schemes are excellent, with the Purnarbhava just bordering the village. It would be extremely useful if schemes could be set up at: KHUTADAHA, TALTOLA, NANDINADAHA, and SONGHAT. H.B. Loans might be distributed, and these would be most welcome. However, as proposed to the Agricultural Commissioner during his visit to Malda, provision should be made for waiving the complicated technical requirements involved in disbursing these loans.

4. The most practical means of affording immediate relief is to begin T.R. schemes in this area forthwith. I requested the B.D.O. concerned to take steps in this direction as soon as possible.

5. In the same area, and surrounding regions, excellent crops can be ensured if we can start a few more R.L.I. schemes from the river Hariya in ADADANGA, ASHRAFPUR,

DOMDANGA, and HANSPUKUR. Wherever people have managed to secure pumps, everything is green for quite some distance.

Unfortunately, I found that instead of going in for pumps on a loan basis (deep and shallow tube-wells do not work here due to lack of underground water sources), the people are more anxious for cash loans.

In conclusion, I would like to submit that in terms of a long-term prospective, we should vigorously extend the extension services, and emphasize on providing tractors, seeds and pumps on hire/loan basis. This will result in good crops, which will obviate necessity of G.R. and H.B. grants in future.

For the present, this Gram Sabha might be supplied bamboo structure from, say, Kutubsahar, instead of being given cash-loans which they will expend in buying good-grains.

The AEO should visit this area and take steps to control the pest-menace.

R.L.I. schemes may be sanctioned as soon as feasible.

Orders may please be passed as deemed proper.

Yours faithfully,  
(Pradip Bhattacharya)

**N.B.** BDO submitted the above schemes through me to DM on 16/3/72

**Office of the District Magistrate, Malda.**

**Dated, Malda, the 15<sup>th</sup> March, 1972.**

O/C. Evacuee.

The surplus stock of rice is now lying at different camps. This could not be disposed of either by sale or by distribution of among the indigent families as because these were the gift rice for rendering relief to the Bangladesh evacuees. I have, therefore, suggested as follows to R.R. Commissioner and Divisional Commissioner:-

1. To permit distribution of the stock among the indigent local people.
2. To permit sale of the stock by public auction,
3. To arrange for return of the stock to the FCI from which organization we had received the stock.
4. To permit handing over the stock to the D.C, Rajshahi for distribution among the returning evacuees.

We have no storing facility here. I have repeatedly contacted the Regional Manager, F.C.I. and D.M., F.C.I. for taking back the stock on F.C.I.'s account or to arrange for separate storage in their godown, but FCI is not willing to do so. On the other hand, the stock is daily deteriorating and if something is not done immediately, the entire stock may become unfit for human consumption.

Divisional Commissioner has, therefore, ordered dispatch of four hundred fifty quintals of Russian gift rice now lying in the different camp sites to Deputy Commissioners, Rajshahi, Bangladesh if in the meantime, we have not received any instruction to the contrary from the Govt. I have not yet received any instruction from the Govt. to the contrary. You are, therefore, requested to arrange for immediate despatch of this stock of gift rice to Rajshahi and delivery to D.C., there. The drivers of the Evacuee Relief trucks are reluctant to go to Bangladesh in spite of all kinds of persuasion and appeal. As such, required numbers of trucks may be hired for the above purpose.

We have not yet dispatched the entire stock of woollen blankets received as gift for distribution among the Bangladesh evacuees. This could not be done for want of transport. Now that the election is over, it will not be difficult to hire private trucks for this purposes.

The services of Shri Pradeep Bhattacharjee, Asstt. Magistrate, who has been in charge of arranging despatch of relief materials including shelter materials to Rajshahi and of other officers, may be utilised so that the relief materials may be dispatched to D.C. Rajshahi by 16.3.72 at the latest.

*S.P. De*

District Magistrate, Malda.

Memo. No. 476/(2)-E.R. dated 15.3.72

Office of the District Magistrate, Malda.

Copy forwarded to:-

1. The Commissioner, Jalpaiguri Division, Jalpaiguri for favour of information. This has reference to his radiogram No.456-V.M. dated 13.3.72.
2. The R.R. Commissioner, West Bengal, Writers' Building, Calcutta for information. This is in continuation of my previous radiograms.

*S.P. De*

District Magistrate, Malda.

Memo. No. 476(2)/1 E.R. dated 15.3.72

Copy forwarded to Shri Pradip Bhattacharya, IAS, Assistant Magistrate & Collector, Malda for information and necessary action.

District Magistrate, Malda.

Government of West Bengal.  
Office of the District Magistrate, Malda.  
Dated, Malda, the 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1972.

No. 419 C

From : Shri S.P.De, I.A.S.,  
District Magistrate, Malda.

To : The Deputy Commissioner  
Rajshahi (Bangla Desh).

Subject : Delivery of UNICEF vehicles.

Sir,

I am dispatching nineteen trucks and one ambulance in charge of Shri Pradip Bhattacharya, I.A.S., Assistant Magistrate who will hand them over to you. Delay in delivering the vehicles to you is sincerely regretted.

It is requested that separate receipt for each vehicle along with its duplicate keys and tools may kindly be acknowledged.

Fifty quintals of rice have been delivered to the Subdivisional officer, Nawabganj on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1972. Another batch of rice of equal amount is being sent to the same destination today by hired truck.

Yours faithfully,  
Sd/- (S.P. De)  
District Magistrate, Malda.

No. 419/1(2) C.  
Office of the District Magistrate, Malda.

Dated, Malda, the 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1972.

Copy forwarded to:

1. Shri P. Bhattacharya, I.A.S., Assistant Magistrate, Malda for information and necessary action.
2. The Subdivisional Officer, Nawabganj Dist. Rajshahi – for information.

*S. P. De*  
District Magistrate, Malda.

From : Pradip Bhattacharya,  
Assistant Magistrate & Collector,

To : The Additional District Magistrate,  
E.A.Dett.  
Malda

25<sup>th</sup> April, 1972

Subject: Enquiry Report Regarding Settlement of Vested Land of Atgama Mouza  
Ref. : Your Memo. No. 318 E. A., dated 21.02.1972

Sir,

In pursuance of your orders, I carried out a spot enquiry into the matter today, 25<sup>th</sup> April 1972, from 7.30 a.m. to 11 a.m., The B.D.O. English Bazar, J.L.R.O. (Sadar), Amin, and Tehsildar, were all present at the spot. Wide publicity had been given well in advance by the B.D.O., so that local villagers, including many of the petitioners, the Anchal Pradhan, the Grama-Adhyaksha, VLW, and representatives from all three political parties [Congress (R), CPI, and CPI(M)] were present. The enquiry was carried out at the actual plot numbers mentioned in the petition, and the following findings and decisions were arrived at with the consent of all who were present:-

1. In the list recommended by the English Bazar B.L.L.R. Advisory Committee for ryotwari settlement of 21.25 acres of land, on 25.10.71 and approved by the proper authorities, the following mistakes were discovered:-
  - (a) Against Sl.27, the person mentioned as "SK. Aijul a/o Jalil, Plot no. 197/1359, area 0.39", is non-existent. However, it appears that the bond etc. have been signed in the name of such a person, which is a serious irregularity.  
This land, with the written consent of all present, was allotted to a genuinely landless labourer, JARIPH SK. S/o Warishali SK, of Nutantola Village (Milki).  
How the bond came to be signed in the name of Sk. Aijul needs to be investigated,
  - (b) Against Sl.20 the name of the allottee has wrongly been entered as "SK. Ashak, s/o Esak Khan". It was rectified as "Ajur Khan s/o Meher Khan, plot No. 197, area 0.35".
2. In the second list, covering 29.33 acres, allotted to 80 per sons by the B.L.L.R. Advisory Committee on 27.11.71, the following changes were made in order to serve the interests of genuine deserving cases of landless people, with the written consent of all present:-
  - (a) in sl.57, instead of " Niamuddin Sk., s/o Borak Sk.", who admitted to possessing already 6 bighas of land, the plot no. 197/1376, area 0.40, was allotted to SAKTU SK. S/o Ataru SK. This Saktu SK is one of the signatories to the petition made to the A.D.M. for reconsideration of the enquiry.
  - (b) In sl.59, instead of Lutfar SK., plot no. 197/1376, area 0.36, was allotted to LAKIM SK. S/o Late Jumda SK.
  - (c) In sl.67, instead of Radhika Ghosh, s/o Jharu Ghosh, plot no. 420, area 0.37, was allotted to BENOY GHOSH s/o Kashi Ghosh.

Pleas were made by Md. Ashraf Ali, and Mansur Ali for reconsideration of the land already settled in list no.1 as ryotwari, on the ground that those who had benefited were already holding land exceeding 6 bighas. As instances, sl.30, Sk. Mozamil, s/o Sk. Ramiz, already had 18 bighas belonging to Sk. Ramiz, while he himself was a minor dependant on and living with his father.

However, these pleas do not bear scrutiny since this list had been unanimously recommended by the B.L.L.R.A. Committee in its meeting on 25.10.1971 for ryoti settlement, and this committee included a representative from the CPI(M) as spokesman of the aggrieved group mentioned in the previous paragraph. Besides, once the ryotwari settlement is complete, there is no provision for revising it under the existing law.

It is submitted that the objections of the petitioners have been met to the farthest extent possible within the limited resources of land available, and that necessary orders may kindly be passed by the A.D.M. as deemed proper.

Yours faithfully,

Pradip Bhattacharya  
Assistant Magistrate & Collector



FROM:

PRADIP BHATTACHARYA, I.A.S.,  
Asstt. Magistrate & Collector, Malda

To :

Sri R.K.Midha, I.A.S.,  
District Magistrate & Collector, Malda21<sup>st</sup> May 1972

Subject: Enquiry into alleged motivated distribution of Agricultural H.B. Loans in Kaliachak Block-I

Sir,

In pursuance of your orders I carried out an enquiry into the above matter in the Kaliachak B.D.O. office on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1972. One of the people who were alleged to have taken loans motivatedly was present with sale deeds of the lands belonging to the people mentioned in the petition. On behalf of the complainant, there was also one representative.

My findings are as follows:-

Between September 1971 and March 1972 a total of Rs. 5,90,000/- was distributed as Agricultural Loans. In view of the fact that all the complaints are made against inmates of Gayeshbari Anchal, I am reproducing the Anchalwise break-up of the loans:-

1.	Silampur Anchal	...	Rs. 78,500
2.	Laliachak Anchal	...	Rs. 70,300
3.	Mozumpur Anchal	...	Rs. 52,000
4.	Alipore Anchal	...	Rs. 22,000
5.	Jalalpur Anchal	...	Rs. 58,000
*6.	Gayeshbari Anchal	...	Rs.440,000
7.	Mashimpore Anchal	...	Rs. 56,500
8.	Silampore Anchal	...	Rs. 77,200
9.	Jaluabadhal	...	Rs. 60,500
10.	Sujapur Anchal	...	Rs. 41,000
11.	Manda-Jadupur	...	Rs. 34,000
			Rs. 5,90,000

In March 1972 the grant of Rs. 65,000 was received as late as 28<sup>th</sup> March. Consequently, only these Anchals could derive benefit who had already submitted lists beforehand for H.B. Loans. The break-up for this month, when the loans were allegedly distributed motivatedly, is:-

1.	Nanda-Jadupur	Rs. 3000	Rs. 1000 per person
2.	Gayeshbari	Rs. 23000	
3.	Sujapur	Rs. 19000	Also group loan Rs.5000
4.	Jalalpur	Rs. 20000	
5.	Alipore	Rs. 2000	
6.	Silampore	Rs. 3000	Also group loan Rs.2000
7.	Jaluabadhal	Rs. 5000	
8.	Mozumpur	Rs. 2000	
		Rs. 58000 plus Rs. 7000	: Rs. 65,000

Coming to the specific cases mentioned in the complaint, I have to state that though it is true that the recipients are relations, they are fully entitled to get these loans since either they possess distinctly separate deeds of ownership of land, or are separated and are not living in a joint family. The details are given below.

1. Azizur Rahaman, s/o Lt. Hazi Ebrahim of Nawada-Jadupur possesses lands amounting to 2.42 acres in P. S. Gajol, mouzas Sankrol and Nandalalpur,
2. His wife Manowara Khatun, possesses land amounting to 1.55 acres in Gajol P.S., mouza Sankrol. The Khatiyani numbers and plot numbers are totally different from those of her husband. As such, both of them are eligible for individual H.B. loans.
3. Arefa Biswas, wife of Sattar Biswas of Gayeshbari possesses land amounting to 3.32 acres in plot no. 7 of Khatiyani number 184/143, Habibpur.
4. Mstt. Nazera Khatun, wife of Lt. Giaul Hossian, and sister of above Sattar Biswas does not live with him in his house and cannot be said to be of his family. Her land amounts to 4.20 acres in Malda P.S., thus in no way connected with that of sl.3 above., and fully eligible for loan.
5. Saifuddin Biswas is the father of Sattar Biswas, but is separated from his son. He possesses 1.52 acres in P.S. Bangsihari, West Dinajpur.
6. Mstt. Kusumbibi, wife of Saifuddin Biswas above, possesses lands also in Bangsihari amounting to 3.32 acres, with Khatiyani and plot nos. totally different from those of her husband's. The distinct sale deeds are also available, and were scrutinized by me. Kusum bibi's is no. 6699 of 1959 while Saifuddin's is no. 11459 of 1959.
7. Abdus Samad of Gayeshbari has 3.10 acres in Habibpur P.S.
8. Hamedabi, wife of Abdus Samad, possesses 3.10 acres in the same plot under the same Khatiyani number. This might give rise to suspicion of irregularities. However, I examined the sale deeds and found that they are quite distinct. Hamedabi's is no. 273 of 1972 while Abdus Samed's is no. 271 of 1972. Distinct pieces of land having been bought, both are eligible for the loan.

The allegations, therefore, are found to be baseless.

However, a fresh source of resentment might soon crop up because those loanees whose papers have been duly registered have yet to get the loan. They informally approached me to ensure that they got the loan which had been sanctioned to them. The D.M. may please consider this case. The B.D.O. has already sent a report on the amount of money required.

Yours faithfully,  
Pradip Bhattacharya

From : Pradip Bhattacharya, I.A.S.,  
Asstt. Magistrate & Collector,  
Malda

To : Sri R. K. Midha, I.A.S.,  
District Magistrate & Collector,  
Malda

Subject : Enquiry into allegations against staff of Ratua Block-II of taking H.B. grant and C.P. loans by giving false statements.

Sir,

In Pursuance of your order No.498 Gt (R) dated 19.04.1972, I carried out enquiries at the spot on 3<sup>rd</sup> and on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1972.

The petitioners, who are all from the Purba-Araidanga Gramsabha, allege that instead of distributing H.B. grant and C.P. loans to flood-affected people on the basis of the lists provided by Grama-Adhyaksha, the B.D.O. and his staff got another list prepared by other persons and distributed the grants and loans to undeserving people. They have specifically brought allegations against eight of the block staff including the cashier and several of the peons.

The particular days on which these irregularities occurred about the H.B. grant are 24/1/72 and 29/1/72. The latter day was the occasion of incidents which are now sub-judice and hence cannot come within the purview of this report.

However, from the seized documents and muster-rolls, it is clear that the allegations of the petitioners is not true about 24/1/72 since the distribution has been strictly according to the list made by the Grama-Adhyaksha. About the 29<sup>th</sup>, no opinion can be given as the matter is sub-judice.

Coming to the particular allegations against certain of the staff:-

1. Sri Shushil Kumar Sen, clerk, is alleged to have taken H.B. grant on behalf of his son Biplab Baran Sen by affixing his own thumb-impression on the muster-roll. Shri Sen denies this. I took his L.T.I. and checked it with the L.T.I. found in the muster-roll against the name "Biplab Sen" in the muster-roll of 29/1/72. The two L.T.I.s are clearly not of the same person and the allegation against Shri Sen does not stand.
2. It is alleged that Anil Kr. Sarkar, cashier, has taken H.B. grant in his wife's name. This is not true. He, or his wife, have not taken any such grant. Their names do not occur anywhere in the muster-rolls.
3. Prafulla Kumar, peon, is alleged to have taken H.B. grant although his house is not flood-damaged. This allegation is not true. He is not found to have taken any such grant.
4. Bibhash Gupta, peon, is alleged to have taken H.B. grant in the name of his son Tapan Gupta. This is not true. He has not taken any H.B. grant.

Now we come to the question of distribution of C.P. Loans. The allegations are that:-

1. The office cashier and his wife have taken C.P. and Fertilizer loans although they have neither their residence nor their land in Ratua-II.
2. 8 of the office staff have taken C.P. loans.

From the seized documents it is proved that the cashier, Anil Kumar Sarkar, and his wife Gita Rani Sarkar, did take C.P. Loans amounting to Rs. 400/- each from the Block, and that their land is situated in Kuriapara mouza, Old Malda Block, while they stay in Araidanga In such cases, where farmers have their residential houses in one block and cultivable lands in another, the D.A.O. Malda has in his Memo No.5614(15) of 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1971, suggested

a procedure: "it is suggested that loan should be advanced by the block where the farmers cultivable land is located. In such cases the farmer shall declare in his applications that he has not applied for the loan in the block where his residential house is located and also get it forwarded by the same B.D.O. to the B.D.O. in whose block his cultivable lands are located." In the present case, pressure of loan-distribution work was so heavy that it was impossible for the cashier to go to Old Malda block and get loan from there.

Accordingly, he got his loan from his present office, to which there is no bar at all as long as his lands are situated within the same district, as is the case. I also personally ascertained from the B.D.O. Old Malda that neither Sarkar nor his wife had received any such loan from the Old Malda block. The sale deeds of husband and wife were checked up and it was found that they are genuine owners of separate areas of land. Furthermore, the C.P. loan they got was not from the amount allotted to Purba-Araidanga, but from the Pukhuria allotment. The Pukhuria GramSabha wanted more Fertilizer loans, and readily agreed to giving these two C.P. loans from their quota in exchange for extra allotment of Fertilizer loans. Consequently, the allegation of the Purba-Araidanga petitioners that they have been deprived does not hold any water.

It is also not true that the cashier and his wife took any fertilizer loan from this block, as has been alleged in the petition.

As for the allegation against the other eight office-staff, it is true that they have got C.P. loans, but there is absolutely no legal bar to this since everyone of them has got land situated inside Ratua-II, except Bibhash Kr. Gupta whose land is situated in Naghoria Mouza, Ratua-I, even in which case he may draw C.P. loan from Ratua-II

During the spot-enquiry the petitioners alleged that all H.B. grant distribution to all anchals on 29/1/72 had been haphazard and irregular. Prima-facie from the muster-rolls, however, their allegations do not seem to have any basis. Moreover, in their written petition they have not made any such specific allegation and hence no enquiry into this was possible unless a fresh petition is presented, clearly specifying the grievances.

The rest of the petition concerns alleged a harassment by the BDO of those who protested against the irregular distribution of loans. This is part of the incidents on 29/1/72 and cannot be gone into by the enquiring officer.

It can be concluded, therefore, that the allegations of office-staff having taken G.B. grants is totally false; that it is true that some of them took C.P. loans, but there is no legal bar to this since they have lands inside the block area. Three of the C.P. loanees have lands outside but since it is within the same district, they are entitled to the same.

Orders may be passed as deemed necessary.

Yours faithfully,  
P. Bhattacharya

From: Pradip Bhattacharya, I.A.S.,  
Assistant Magistrate & Collector, Malda

To: Sri R. K. Midha, I.A.S.  
District Magistrate & Collector, Malda

3<sup>rd</sup> August 1972

Subject: D.O. No. 9201 PS dt. 11/18-7-72 from Governor of W.B. regarding enquiry into  
Cases of disabled / killed ex-servicemen in Malda District.

Sir,

On enquiry it is found that there are two such cases of families of ex-servicemen killed/ disabled in the recent Indo-Pak conflict viz.:-

- a. No. 1438598 Spr – CHAPAL K. BAGCHI (killed in action) of Aiho, P.O. Muchia, P.S. Habibpur vide No. C/3402-A/117/R dt. 6.1.72 from chief Record officer, Bengal Engr. Group Roorkee ( Sl.96 of VIII-5/7
- b. No.2951919 L/Hav.-Biswanath Saha (wounded) of Nazirpur, P.O.Mathurapur, P.S. Manikchak, vide No. A/139/Gen/40/Casdt. 14.1.72 from Sr. Record officer, Rajput Regt., Fatehgarh, ( Sls. 105 and 140 of Viii-5/72).

The next of kin of case (b) is his wife, Premika Rani Saha, and this has been proved beyond doubt as true through spot enquiries by the undersigned.

However, in the case of (a), an objection has been raised by one Kamala Bagchi, alias Sandhya Bagchi, against the Defence Deptt.'s decision that Smt. Kalyani Debi, mother of deceased Chapal Bagchi, as his next of kin. The objector is residing in Cooch Behar with her brother Sri Keshab Majumdar. The report from the D.C. Cooch Behar states that she was married to Chapal Bagchi in 1970, but the report does not state whether any documentary or other evidence to this fact was produced by her. Further clarification in this regard has been sought from the D.C. Cooch Behar.

It is also found that one Sandhya Bagchi is registered as a family member of the family of Smt. Kalyani Bagchi in the Kaluadighi Lualuadighi Evacuee Camp from 22.9.71 to 16.1.72. On enquiry Smt. Kalyani Bagchi stated that her son Chapal had introduced Sandhya as his adopted sister; that Sandhya had stayed with them for only a week and then suddenly left; that at no time had she any knowledge that her son had got married. The marriage, if made, appears to have been an inter-caste one and this might account for the reluctance of his relations to accept it. For finally reaching a decision, the D.C. Cooch Behar's report may be awaited.

On enquiry it is also found that Chapal Bagchi migrated to W.B. in 1961 from his native district of Rajshahi in Bangla Desh. He was recruited in 1963 in the army. There is no evidence of his having an Indian Citizenship Certificate, as nothing of his personal belongings have been recovered.

Chapal Bagchi's parents were residents of village Balubhara, P.S. Badalgachi, Rajshahi, Bangladesh and migrated to India in 1956 and since then were living at Madhyam Kendua, P.S. Habibpur, Malda. In 1971 their other children joined them. Neither the parents, not any of the children, except Utpal Bagchi the elder son, have registered themselves as Indian citizens, although they are permanently resident here. This disposes of the D.C. Cooch Behar's radiogram no.G-17261(2) dt. 10.7.72, as also letter regarding family pension of Chapal Bagchi from O.C. Records Bengal Engr. Group, Roorkee, No. N2/F-1669/59/R dt. 20<sup>th</sup> June 1972.

The pro-forma questionnaire enclosed with the letter from the Governor is attached herewith duly filled in.

Yours faithfully,  
Pradip Bhattacharya

Particulars of Rehabilitation Scheme and financial assistance required for families of deceased and disabled servicemen.

1. Army Number : 1438598
2. Rank of Name : Spr. CHAPAL KUMAR BAGCHI
3. Regiment/Corps : Bengal Engineering Group
4. Permanent Home Address : ATHO, P.O. Muchia, P.S. Habibpur, Dist. Malda
5. (a) Date killed in action : 15 Dec. 1971
6. Family pension being drawn : Pending Enquiry Award from January-June: Rs.395/-  
or due and how much Relief Grant : Rs. 200/- ( Grp. Benevolent Fund)  
Family Gratuity : Rs. 450/-  
Spl. Fly. Allowance : Rs. 27/-  
Final Settlement of Accounts : Rs. 233.02
7. Amount of Cash Relief/Grant: As above. Besides this a monthly grant of Rs. 100/-  
from the Received or due W.B. Citizens' Council has been received but is not being  
handed over due to dispute over next of kin
8. No. of dependants : Kalyani Debi (Mother) : 46 years of age  
Utpal Bagchi ( brother ) : 19  
Avash Bagchi ( brother ) : 16  
Bakul bagchi ( sister ) : 12  
Gandha Bagchi ( sister ) : 10  
Chanda bagchi ( sister ) : 8  
Jharna Bagchi ( sister ) : 6  
Saradindu Bagchi (father): 58
9. None of the dependants is employed. The only source of livelihood is the grants received from time to time.
10. They have no landed property, neither homestead nor agricultural.
11. Due to monetary disability none of the children are going to school. Previously, Bokul was reading in class 6, Gandha in class 3, Avash in class 9 and Utpal in Final I.A.
12. Living in rented house, paying Rs. 12/- per month.
13. Present total income of family from all sources: see sl. 6.
14. Nature & mode of rehabilitation & financial assistance required: Payment of tuition fees; job for the two sons.
15. No assistance is being received from State Govt. by way of land grant, Educational concessions etc., but these are urgently required.

Date : 29.7.72

sd/- Kalyani Devi (Bagchi)

16. recommendation of the District Magistrate .....

Date :

Signature of the D.M.

Particulars of Rehabilitation Scheme and financial assistance required for families of deceased and disabled servicemen.

1. Army Number : 2951919
2. Rank of Name : L/Hav. BISWA NATH SAHA
3. Permanent Home Address : Village Nazirpur, P.O. Mathurapur, P.S. Manikchak
4. Regiment/Corps : Rajput Regiment
5. (b); Date wounded in action : 9 Dec. 1971
6. Family pension/disability pension being drawn or due & how much : Nothing being drawn. Due not known.
7. Amount of cash relief/grant received or due: Rs. 100/- p.m. from W.B. Citizens' council from February to April received till now.
8. No. of dependants : Premika Rani Saha (Wife) : 35  
Arati Saha (daughter) : 6  
Swapan Saha (son) : 3  
Naresh Ch. Saha (Father) : 60  
Parbati Saha (mother) : 50  
Pashupati Saha (brother) : 28  
Subhash Saha (brother) : 20
9. None of above are employed.
10. Homestead land of 12 cottahs with house (mud) on it. No encumbrances.
11. Details of school-going children Arati Saha class 1, Nazirpur primary School. Tution fees are not charged. Only examination fees of 0.75 paise is to be paid at end of year.
12. Own dwelling house. Fairly good condition. No repairs needed.
13. Present total income of family : Salary of Biswanath Saha, of which he sends home Rs. 40/- per month. Expected to be released from hospital in October.
14. Nature & mode of Rehabilitation and financial assistance required : agricultural land 6 bighas demanded by the wife.
15. No assistance is being received from the State Govt. by way of land grant, educational concessions etc. beyond the Citizens' Council grant.

Date : 1.8.72

L.T.I. of Premika Rani Saha

16. Recommendation of the District Magistrate .....

Date:

Signature of the D.M.

From : Pradip Bhattacharya, I.A.S.  
Assistant Magistrate & Collector, Malda

To : R. K. Midha, I.A.S.  
District Magistrate & Collector, Malda

4<sup>th</sup> August, 1972

Subject: Allegation of corruption against Sri Sunil Kumar Bose Bhagchash, clerk,  
Habibpur L.R.Circle office

Sir,

In pursuance of your order U.O. No.2262-G dated 1.7.1972, I held enquiries into the allegation on 27<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> July, 1972, at the J.L.R.O. Habibpur office, the home of the petitioners in village Dharendra-Boldanga, and at the Habibpur Block office.

A preliminary enquiry at the Habibpur L.R. Circle office revealed that the Bhagchash cases are in a lamentable state of neglect and irregular practices. The statutory provision laid down in the L.R. Act that these cases be tried and decided within 21 days of filing is, of course, simply impossible in view of the fact that litigation is especially high in this particular L.R. Circle. However, it was found that:-

1. A series of orders giving ever-fresh dates for bearing of cases had not been signed by the Bhagchash Officer (the J.L.R.O.), so that the succeeding orders giving fresh-dates have no validity. For instance, in case 271-D, orders dated 25.12.71, 19.1.72, 10.5.72 have not been signed. Further, on each of these three dates the B.C.O. is stated to have been out on tour. Hence a by-date ought to have been given. He cannot, obviously, sign an order on 25.12.71 when he was out on tour that day, and not present for the hazira. There are several such other cases.
2. In many cases no order has been passed for over two to three months after the last date on which hearing was supposed to take place. There is no way of finding out whether or not the hearing did take place. Thus, again in case 271-D, on 10.5.72 the unsigned order gives 14.6.72 as a fresh date, But after 10.5.72 there is no entry in the order sheet at all. This is but one of the many such cases.
3. The pending-list of Bhagchash cases was found to be incorrect as it did not include many of the pending cases. Thus false or wrong returns are being sent to the Board of Revenue. To take two instances, case nos. 270-D and 272-D are pending but not included in the list. It was found that the clerk does not check his list with the register of Bhagchash cases.
4. It was found that the B.C.O. never sees the register, nor inspects the condition of the cases. There is no system of a monthly compilation of pending cases. The whole system at present is such that the clerk concerned is the be-all and the end-all regarding disposal of the cases since the officer does not even carry out routine inspection.
5. The Bhagchash case register, being never seen by the B.C.O. though he can easily have a system of at least initialling each entry in the "Remarks" column, is open to tempering. It was found that entry sl. no. 279, case 279-D had been completely blocked-out by pasting white paper over the portion. No satisfactory explanation for this could be given by the clerk except that the entry contained numerous deletions and crossings-out. In that case it should have been re-entered lower down after being duly brought to the notice of the B.C.O., and having been signed with appropriate remarks by him in the "Remarks" column.

It can be concluded, on the basis of the above findings, that the situation existing in the Habibpur L.R. Circle is such as to encourage and facilitate corruption. Even exclusive of the veracity of the petition filed by Gobin and Jalpa Hasda against the Bhagachash Clerk,



sufficient evidence of procedural irregularities, some quite serious in nature, have been detected as above, warranting the conclusion that a prima-facie case exists against the Bhagchash clerk, if not against the Bhagchash Officer for failing to carry-out routine inspection and leaving the entire department in the hands of his clerk without any supervisory checks on his performance and observance of statutory procedure.

Spot-enquiry at the residence of the petitioners revealed the following facts:-

1. They categorically asserted that there was no hazira whatsoever as shown on 25.12.71 in the order sheet (unsigned by the B.C.O.). They repeated this when confronted by the clerk in my presence in the Habibpur Block Office. The clerk claimed that as he resided in the office precincts, it was usual for him to take haziras even on holidays as in the present case. It is difficult to understand why the B.C.O. would, however, fix Christmas Day as the date for hearing. No explanation of this was forthcoming, though the order fixing this date is in the B.C.O.'s own handwriting.
2. Both petitioners firmly asserted after repeated questioning that only two haziras had been filed by them in the current year's Jaishtha month, i.e. between 15<sup>th</sup> May and 14<sup>th</sup> June. The order-sheet, however, does not show even one hazira in this month. The only haziras mentioned are on 19.1.72, and 10.5.72, both unsigned by the B.C.O. As stated earlier, there is no record in the order-sheet of what happened on 14.6.72, the date fixed for hearing on 10.5.72. The clerk claimed that the dates indicated in the order-sheet are correct and genuine. However, the total condition of his dept., and the numerous unsigned orders in the cases, raise serious doubts about the genuineness of the dates. By way of excuse, the clerk stated that the B.C.O. never had any time for signing the orders even when they were put up. The B.C.O., in turn, claims that pending cases are rarely put up to him by the clerk, though admitting that the pressure of work hardly allows much time for Bhagchash cases.
3. The petitioners stated that after the first hearing in the month of Jaishtha, 1379, the clerk Sunil Kr. Bose told them that they would have to pay him around Rs.20 to 25 for bringing about a meeting with Prema Devi, the opposite party, and settling a compromise,. They, being poverty-stricken, could only give him Rs.17/- (as stated in the petition). One of the so-called muharirs at the L.R. Circle office, Sachindralal Sarkar, heard of it and wrote out the petition in his own hand and on this paper they affixed their signature (Gobin Hasda) and L.T.I. (Jalpa Hasda). They categorically affirmed after repeated questioning that THE SIGNATURE AND THE LTI OF THE TYPED PETITION WERE NOT THEIRS, and that THEY HAD NOT SIGNED ON OR AFFIXED ANY L.T.I. ON SUCH TYPED PETITION. The frank admission of such a fact which goes against their own case goes to prove the lack of any mala-fide animus in their plea against the clerk. The petitioners are uneducated and poverty-stricken Santhals living purely by doing bhagchash and have no reason for instituting a baseless allegation against the clerk.

On 29.7.72 I held a formal hearing of both the parties in the Habibpur Block Office. Here the petitioners once again restated their case as they had told me on 27.7.72. The clerk, Sri Sunil Kumar Bose, son of Lt. Kunja Behari Bose, has been in the Habibpur L.R. circle since 4<sup>th</sup> July 1961, with a break of about a year in 1968 when he was posted to the Judicial Munsikhana. He denied, at first, the allegations of taking the money, of demanding any money from the petitioners, and stated that the allegations were false. He admitted that due to his mistake there were a large number of cases in which the order-sheets were not up-to-date. The orders could not be signed since the B.C.O. was away on tour on those particular days, he stated.

He admitted that it is true that there is delay in sending settled cases to the copying-section due to his mistake/neglect/ pressure of work. It should be remembered that such delay is highly conducive to corruption.

The petitioners stated that Sri Bose had gone to their house on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July, 1972 (the day previous to this formal enquiry) and had returned the Rs. 17/-. On being questioned, Sri Bose admitted that this was true and that he had returned the Rs.17/- to Gobin and Jalpa Hasda on 23/7/72.

Sri Bose stated that on or around 9/5/72 Gobin Hasda gave him the Rs.17/- with the request to look after his case, and that Gobin insisted that he keep the money. Sri Bose stated that he had advised the Hasdas to reach a compromise with the opposite party Prema Devi, and that the O.P. was agreeable to this and even remitted 2 years due of paddy. But, he stated, the Hasdas would not agree to a compromise. Sri Bose told them that some expenditure would be necessary on the witnesses for reaching a compromise, and thereupon the Hasdas gave him Rs.17/- despite his refusal, and insisted that he keep it for looking after the case.

Sri Bose stated that on being told by a local inhabitant of Bulbulchandi about the enquiry against him on 27<sup>th</sup> evening, he went to the house of the Hasdas around 4 p.m. on 28<sup>th</sup>. Here he felt full of remorse for having kept the money, seeing the pitiable condition of the Hasdas. He returned the money and came away.

Sri Bose stated: "WHAT I SAID AT FIRST ABOUT NOT HAVING ACCEPTED THE MONEY IS NOT TRUE. WHAT I HAVE SAID NOW IS TRUE." The petitioners produced the money he had returned, consisting of three notes of Rs.5/- denomination (C31 847169; B58 952281; E77 455017) and two notes of Rs1/- denomination (U56 676664; T24 221073). Sri Bose admitted that these were the notes he had made over to the Hasdas.

The statement made by him before me was read over to him, admitted by him to be a correct record of what he had deposed, and signed by him in my presence.

Orders may be passed as deemed proper in light of the above findings.

Encl.: Case 271-D

Yours faithfully,  
Pradip Bhattacharya

From: Pradip Bhattacharya, I.A.S.  
Assistant Magistrate & Collector, Malda

To: The District Magistrate and Collector, Malda

Subject : Enquiry regarding allegations in respect of payment of G.P. Loans  
in Kaliachak-I Block, under order No. 164 dt. 29/7/72.

22<sup>nd</sup> Sept. 72

Sir,

In pursuance of your orders I held spot enquiries at the Block Office where the petitioner and his witnesses were heard in great detail, on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> August, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> September, and finally on 21<sup>st</sup> Sept. 1972. The findings arrived at are as follows:-

1. The entire case of the petitioner rests on a list of C.P. loanees he had obtained from Sri Kalimuddin Ahmed, Pradhan of Nauda-Jadupur Anchal, through Sri Belal Hossain the Local Congress Committee Secretary. This list, which is one of the attached documents, contains 93 names among which is one "Salam SK. s/o Tinkari Mondal of Sukdebpur" (sl.82). The petitioner, Shah Alam Sk. s/o Tinkari Mondal of Sukdebpur, not having received any loan nor having applied for any, applied in writing to the B.D.O. three times in July 1972 for causing enquiry to be made into the loans.

On investigation it was found that no loan case in the name of Salam Sk. or Shah Alam Sk. has been sanctioned, nor does any application exist.

Now, the Gram Sewak, Sri Anil Baran Sen, states that the BDO asked him to enquire into the proper receipt of C. P. loan money by 4 persons, namely: Salam Sk., Helu Sk. (sl.85), Hafizuddin (sl.79) s/o Abdul Latif of Jadupur, and Safiruddin Sk. s/o Chakku Sk. of Dariyapur or Khikirboma. Sri Sen repeatedly affirmed that he had been given these 4 cases, the applications & forms complete, and had returned them to the office after finding out that no such persons as Salam Sk. and Safiruddin Sk. exist, that Hafizuddin is not a resident of Jadupur village and has no land there, and that Helu Sk. had not received any C.P. loan money though the application and the forms showed otherwise.

Now the question arises where did the applications & completed forms of Helu Sk., Salam Sk., and Hafizuddin go? The Head Clerk explained that he did not ever check the names on the applications he gave to the G.S. for enquiry, so he could not be sure whether the G.S. had returned the originals to him or any freshly made-out cases of the same amount. The BDO disclaimed any knowledge of any fresh bonds, or any bonds in these names.

The petitioner produced several witnesses, of whom Md. Soleman Haji and Md. Yunus Salim of Jadupur, asserted solemnly that when the enquiry was made by the G.S. some 2/3 months back, Helu Sk. had not got any loan. They were sure of this since Helu Sk. was their neighbour. And yet on the application there was an LTI shown as Helu's. The identifier, Neajuddin, was called and shown the application, and he denied that the signature of the identifier was his. The G.S. also asserted that the application he then had for enquiry purposes had an LTI of the loanee, and that the application available at present in the office with Helu's signature was not the original one. Helu Sk. stated that he was paid the loan only a few months back after he had lodged a complaint with the BDO on hearing that he was supposed to have applied for and got the loan, though he had actually not even applied. Md. Habibuddin, the identifier in Helu Sk's present available application, stated that the money was given to Helu Sk. only in the last week of July, and that the date was falsely shown at 6/1/72.

It was also alleged by the petitioners that to cover up the fiasco regarding the "Salam Sk" application, a fresh one was made out in favour of one Nazir Hossain. Nazir Hossain said that he applied for CP loan only 1<sup>1/2</sup> months back from now, i.e. July, on being asked by Sisir

Bhaduri, the then G.S. of Jadupur anchal, if he wanted any loan. The identifier in this case, Md. Habibuddin, confirms that the money was paid only in July by the Head Clerk. Both Bhaduri and the H.C. deny this. The G.S., Bhaduri, stated that he had completed the case as per the date in the application (January 1972). The AEO and BDO also state that they did not sanction or sign on any application after March 1972. The date given in the form by the identifier, Habibuddin, is also 6/1/72, though he claims that this was done under advice of the H.C. so as to keep things straight. The H.C. pointed out that he never disburses any C.P. loans. This was done wholly by the BDO in person, assisted by the AEO.

It is found that no such person as Safiruddin, s/o Chakku Sk exists in either Dariyapur or Khikirbona, though payment has been made to him. However, one "Safab Sk." alias Hafizuddin, does exist, whose father's name is Nasir Sk. and whose grandfather's name is Chakku Sk. in Khikirbona. However, he is not known as "Safiruddin" and only very rarely as "Safa". Bhaduri, the G.S., explained that this person, represented as a notorious bad character, had furnished particulars about himself as given in the application. However, a paid application in the name of Hafizuddin, s/o Nasir Sk. of Khikirbona is also found. So there is a clear case of mispayment or double payment to the same person. Further, the application of Hafizuddin shows clear signs of erasure and over-writing of the name and address which raises doubts about the genuineness of the payment. Here the petitioner's claim that payment had been made to one Hafizuddin, s/o of Abdul Latif, who is not a resident of the place but of Bangla Desh, has to be considered. Experts may be called in to opine as to what was erased in the application. Further enquiries by the police are required to ascertain the bona fides of this Safiruddin alias Hafizuddin.

Here it should be recorded that the identifier in both cases, Neajuddin, claims he did not identify anyone called "Safiruddin" though he admits that the signature is his. He claims that the BDO made him sign a number of applications beforehand as identifier in the rush of applicants for taking the loans. This is denied by the BDO.

2. Another case of double payment, admitted by the loanee, is that of Abdu Bakar Siddique s/o L. Abdul Latif of Jadupur. He took another CP loan in the name of MD. Siddique Hossain, s/o Abdul Latif of Jadupur. Cleverly, the identifiers were different in each case. The loanee admitted to taking this double loan under different names as a single loan of Rs.300 was not enough to buy a pair of bullocks. Under the G.O., loan up to Rs.600 can be sanctioned at a time, hence it is not clear why another bond in another name was given to the loanee. The A.E.O., Sri Monomohan Biswas, and the Gram Sewak, Sri Sisir Bhaduri, admit to knowing this and concurring in it. The BDO disclaims all knowledge. It should be noted that both the identifiers do not belong to the loanee's village but to Bhagalpur and Uttar Dariyapur, so that immediate checking by a local man would not be possible.
3. In the case of Emazuddin s/o Soleman Munshi, it was found that he does not possess any land and is not a cultivator. His father states that verbally he made over his land to his son Emazuddin who cultivates it. It should be noted that both Soleman Munshi and Emazuddin have taken CP loan. It is found from the JLRO's records that the details of land shown in the application of Emaziddin are not correct and that none of the land shown is in his name. He made an obviously false declaration.
4. The following persons admitted to not having any land and yet having taken CP loan on the basis of false declaration:-

Nesh Md. s/o Raisuddin, Vill. Khikirbona

Habibuddin - do - do -

Ujaluddin s/o Khabiruddin Sk of Khikirbona: he studies in school and does not cultivate at all. Also the particulars of land shown in his application are totally false.

Anil Choudhuri s/o L.Bhupesh Choudhuri of Jadupur and Sunil Singha s/o L.Bhupesh Singha of Jadupur do not possess agricultural land in Jadupur which they have wrongly shown in the application as agricultural. They are bargadars and do "adhi" in the land of Hanif Biswas in Gajol, of which they produced papers from Hanif Biswas. Total land shown by them in the applications is not correct and they could not produce any khatiyans or other papers to prove ownership of these lands.

Saukat Ali s/o Tetlu Sk. of Khikirbona never appeared for the enquiry though asked to. From records it was found that his declaration concerning the land is false.

Md. Taleb Ali Ansari s/o L.Sikandar Ali of Bhagalpur is now under MISA. His declaration is also false.

From these enquiries the following conclusions can be drawn :-

1. The enquiring officer for CP loans is the A.E.O., Monomohan Biswas, who does not seem to have done any enquiries into the CP cases of Nauda-Jadupur anchal at all. The responsibility of double payments, and payment to non-eligible persons rests on the enquiring officer. He admitted not to have made enquiries and to have acquiesced to the double payment of loan to Abu Bakar Siddique under another name. The G.S., Sisir Bhaduri was also in the know of this but neither seem to have asked the BDO before indulging in such illegal activities.
2. Rigorous enquiries into the declaration of land in the application by loanees is necessary since many cases have come out to be patently false, and the enquiring officer not to have discharged his functions at all.
3. The persons who deliberately gave false declaration (see 4 & 5 above) should be proceeded against strictly under the I.P.C. section 199 in order to stop the defrauding of public money. These people claimed they had given Rs.50 each to the G.S. in order to get these loans on basis of the false declarations. They could not produce any evidence to prove this statement which was denied by the G.S. who has been given a sterling character by the B.D.O. as he previously worked under (Harishchandrapur-I).
4. Rigorous enquiries are required into the case of the non-existent Safiruddin (see 2 above) and payment to Hafizuddin.
5. Further enquiry is needed to find out what happened to the original applications in names of Salam Sk., Halu Sk. & Hafizuddin s/o Abdul Latif, which were obviously in existence as per G.S. Anil Baran Sen's and numerous other people's testimony. The entire office procedure needs to be checked to find out if these bonds could be destroyed without knowledge of the Head Clerk and whether fresh bonds were made later and money disbursed by the H.C. or anyone else.
6. The BDO seems just to have signed blindly wherever the AEO had recommended a case without ever making any sample check. He should be brought alive to his duties. He can not escape responsibility simply by pleading that he is not enquiring officer but disbursing authority only.

Submitted for orders,

Yours faithfully,  
Pradip Bhattacharya

Encl: Petition  
Proceedings of enquiry  
JLRO's information  
4 reports of G.S. A.B. Sen, Safiruddin, Hafizuddin, Salam & Halu  
17 CP loan cases  
Pradhan's List

## APPENDIX-III

### BANGLADESH FREE — A VIEW FROM MALDA<sup>3</sup>

7 P.M., 4<sup>th</sup> April 1972, at Nawabganj Police Station, Nawabganj Sub-division, Rajshahi District, Bangladesh. Clustered round a table are: Hafizur Rahman the young deputy magistrate holding charge of the sub-division; Gorachand Chakravarti and P.K. Samaddar, West Bengal Junior Civil Service probationers of Malda, and myself. Our objective: to hand-over 19 UNICEF trucks to the Deputy Commissioner, Rajshahi District, on 5<sup>th</sup> April, thus rounding off Malda's responsibility for reaching relief materials into the heart of the district.

As we wait for the trucks to be ferried across the Mahananda, my thoughts wing back to 4<sup>th</sup> April 1961. That day, Lt. Col. G.L. Bhattacharya of the Indian Army had been shot and kidnapped from the Bongaon border by the East Pakistan Rifles. A few months later I had found my father sentenced to solitary imprisonment for eight years in Dacca Central Jail. Now, exactly eleven years later, the police and the magistracy of the same country are pressing chicken curry and rice on me; the officiating Sub-divisional Officer has been waiting to receive me without having gone home after office hours; and orders have been sent to Rajshahi Circuit House to reserve the best rooms for the "the I.C.S. (*sic*) officer from Malda".

Dinner over, Rahman takes leave with old-world Muslim courtesy and we re-cross to the Sibganj side of the river where the trucks are lined up to be ferried across. After 9 of them have been taken across to the Nawabganj side I find to my total consternation that the boatmen are walking away from the ferry. Peremptorily they refuse to work any more, deaf to all arguments and pleas that these vehicles are sorely needed by their administration for speeding urgently required food-grains to scarcity areas. Some of them remark cynically, "This India, which is pretending to be so very helpful now, will stick a knife into our back at the slightest opportunity." It is a comment that I have heard repeatedly in the course of my relief work in Bangladesh. It no longer arouses anger and disgust. I send Chakravarty and Samaddar across to the Police Station to see if anything can be done. The drivers have already left for dinner in the town. So there I am around midnight, sitting on the cool, moist, sandy banks of the Mahananda, whistling to keep up my courage and my fast-sinking hopes, and 'guarding' the precious trucks. Armed Razakars are said to be roaming around the countryside. Much good I would be if a gang of miscreants turned up! Suddenly, I hear voices raised in argument: Yes, it is the resourceful Rahman, successfully tongue-lashing and cajoling the ferrymen back to work. Finally, at 2 A.M. on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1972, all the trucks have been ferried across and we speed through the stygian darkness to Rajshahi. Half asleep, I recall how it all began a couple of months back.

I had first met my District Magistrate, Sri S.P. De, on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1972, the day after I arrived in Malda. Coached in proper procedure by the National Academy of Administration, I had written in advance from Mussoorie intimating my arrival and requesting arrangements. Arriving after midnight at Malda railway station, I peered around in the dim light for some government vehicle and drew a blank. Clambering into a rickshaw, I asked to be taken to the Circuit House. There the chowkidar peremptorily turned me away, annoyed at being woken up so late, as there was no reservation in my name. Possibly taking pity at my dazed look, he directed to me the Dak-Bungalow nearby. Shaking up the sleeping chowkidar there, I was ushered into a room where the only two beds were occupied by portly snoring FCI auditors. I

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<sup>3</sup> Slightly revised from "120 Hours in Bangla Desh" published in *The Administrator*, 1972, quarterly journal of the National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie.

had brought along my father's camp-bed and rigged it up—mosquito net and all—and went to sleep. Next morning I found a young man stretching himself on the verandah. He was the sole occupant of the largest room and introduced himself as the local probationer from the West Bengal Civil Service, S.N. Roy Chowdhury. Noticing my obvious bewilderment at the state of affairs, he kindly offered to take me along to meet the District Magistrate. Attiring myself in the proper formal dress of 'bund gala' (buttoned-up) black coat and trousers, I walked with him to the DM's bungalow. Not a word from him about the lack of transport at the station and accommodation at the Circuit House, as I had hoped. Instead, he promptly prostrated me with the casual announcement that I was to "take over charge" of Kutubsahar Camp and repatriate 30,000 evacuees to Bangladesh. This I managed to achieve satisfactorily thanks largely to his unobtrusively affectionate guidance. As a 'bonus' he gave me permission to proceed to Rajshahi with 5 truck-loads of blankets on 31<sup>st</sup> January, the day on which the last evacuees left Malda. That is how I got linked-up with Bangladesh Relief work.

In Rajshahi our Liaison Officer, Sri T.K. Das, IAS, showed me the notorious Goalia Club, which had been the Officers' Mess for the Tikka Khan Army. Prisoners used to be brought here and, after the officers had had their 'fun', the bodies used to be dumped into pits dug in the adjoining banks of the Padma. I saw one of these mass graves with pieces of rope, torn clothes, skulls and bones still lying in it. Sri Das told me that for tackling the crucial problem of raped and pregnant women, our government had arranged facilities for abortions as this was still illegal in Bangladesh. Unfortunately, only a few women had come forward. What was required was a dedicated band of social workers who would help these women to overcome their natural reluctance to come out into the open. Luckily, it seemed that so far no social stigma had been attached to their condition.

The Indian Army was being used extensively in cordoning operations involving the Bihari population who had been isolated and squeezed into tiny pockets. At times as many as 3000 had been packed into a small primary school without any sanitary facilities whatsoever. In one cordoning operation the Indian Army officer had to rush out of one such school, unable to endure the stench and the filth. Sri Das told me that there was practically an inch-thick layer of flies over the whole area. It was a miracle how the Biharis survived in such conditions.

This situation was further aggravated in February. I gathered that after liberating Dinajpur, the Mukti Fouj had killed off around 4000 Biharis who had sided with the Khan Army and summarily forced some 75000 into trains leaving the district. These people had got off at Nawabganj utterly destitute and starving. In Nawabganj I was frankly told that they saw no reason why the new government should feed people who had sided against it, and so no relief doles were given to these refugees. The situation assumed such proportions that people began to go up to the hitherto sacrosanct chamber of the SDO with corpses, begging for money to cover burial expenses. He would fling some coins to them—this much was not refused.

The two major needs of Rajshahi District were shelters for returning evacuees and food grains. Initially the evacuees were being housed in schools, but on one of my visits to Sibganj I came across the unbelievable phenomenon of boys gherao-ing the local Relief Committee with the demand that the schools reopen immediately. To meet this crisis, we began dismantling the camps we had set up for the evacuees and sent these bamboo structures by trucks to the afflicted areas. These areas were on two broad fronts: Sibganj and Bholahat police-stations to the south of Malda; Porsha and Niamatpur police-stations due east of Malda. My first assignment, after returning from the 31<sup>st</sup> January trip to Rajshahi, had been to investigate the possibilities of sending relief materials to the eastern border of Malda, the river Punarbhaba demarcating the international border.

On 10<sup>th</sup> February 1972, after meeting the BDO Habibpur, Shri B.C. Layek, who had got back that morning from Porsha, we proceeded to Nitpur (Porsha P.S.) where we talked with Abul Hasnat Chowdhury, Chairman of the local Awami League Unit; Ikram-ul Haque, Secretary of the unit; Akhtur-ul Islam, local family Planning Officer, and many other local people. Sri Basir Ahmed Chowdhury, the local MCA, was away in Rajshahi and could not be met. The welcome they gave was wonderfully warm, and they repeatedly expressed gratitude to Malda and India and pressed us to stay overnight so that they could take us more into the interior & show us the state of affairs.

A few curious facts that I came across during my visits to Porsha were that the local M.C.A., Basir Ahmed Chowdhury, was so unpopular in his own constituency that he was rarely to be found there. I also met a Mukti Fauj officer who was arranging for stocking the arms that they were surrendering, consisting of rifles, sten-guns, anti-personal mines etc. He told us how they had been trained in India, commanded by Indians, and how retreating Pakistanis themselves had shot down Razakars who wished to accompany them. We learnt that the Pakistani Army did not kill local people within their locality, but always took them elsewhere for 'disposal', so that tracing the victims later became an impossible task. The total absence of the usually prolific palm trees was rather striking. On enquiry I was told that the Pakistani soldiers had destroyed all of them because the explosive sound made by the ripe *taal* fruit falling set-off false alarms to their guards who thought that they were under attack! Throughout my visits to this area, the sumptuous and eager hospitality shown was so effusive as to become painfully embarrassing. We were shown a very large number of bunkers of the Pakistani Army and earth-covered pits where mass graves are suspected because of the stench there when they entered the area on 19 December. The Pakistanis had torn down all tin roofs & brick buildings to build their bunkers. We saw the crater made by a mortar which landed in the hospital compound just 2 days before the surrender. As for Razakars, they are arrested, enquires conducted into their activities and if found heinous, they are finished off. In this area Pakistanis had shot less people but their harassment of the local people was no less. Arms captured were mostly Chinese. The M.F. person expressed his amazement at the way the Pak Army kept on attacking though their men were being shot down (Chinese human wave" tactics).

We had taken along lunch in a tiffin carrier [30 luchi, tarkari and 12 chumchum worth Rs. 6]. They insisted on our having tea, sweets, samosa, nimki & 2 fried eggs each! I was made to sit all in solitary splendour in a cushioned chair, facing all the others as if I were the chairman of a meeting. It was most embarrassing.

I reported the following conclusions to the DM:

1. Trucks can proceed along the Bubulchandi-Kendpur-Agra-Harishchandrapur route. A little dressing of the last part of the road will certainly facilitate the operation by cutting-down time taken for the trips.
2. The ferry across the Punarbhava cannot possibly take across any diesel truck unless bigger boats are found. In the alternative, some small petrol trucks can be ferried across. The materials can be unloaded on one side and reloaded after crossing. The price of rice has shot up from Rs. 15-16 to Rs. 26-28 per maund. These trucks can carry the rice to the required spots inside Porsha.
3. Some 30000 evacuees, according to the people we met, have returned to Porsha. Nearly an equal number is homeless (these had fled to other areas of Bangladesh). The badly needed materials are: bamboo poles, mats and some sort of roofing since no tin sheets, straw or tarpaulins are available. 80% of the residences, it was claimed, have been razed to the ground. People are at present either living in schools, or packing into whatever houses still stand.



4. Diesel is acutely required for powering the 106 irrigation pumps; otherwise the prospect of a decent 'boro' rice crop is bleak. This year only about 50% of the land has produced a good crop, so that the western side of the river, ferried across on boats, and be carried by Further, if the fuel is brought via Agra-Harishchandrapur, the cost comes to about Rs. 100 less than if it is routed via Rajshahi.
5. Food-grains are the other major problem in this area. This may also be supplied, if possible, through the Agra-Harishchandrapur route.

The D.M. told me that they had a meeting at Rajshahi on 10-02-72. P.O.L and food grains were being sent to Rajshahi, Nawabganj and Natore from where Porsha could obtain quota. BDO Habibpur was to be advised to draw up programme for despatch of shelter materials up to the river ghat. SDO Nawabganj would send an officer to receive the materials from us. Transport was to be provided from our end. Sri Rupendra Roy Chowdhury, alias Bhutu Babu of Nawabganj, would do the liaison with us, as arranged with SDO Nawabganj and D.C Rajshahi and Dr. Mishbabul Hak, Secretary Awami League, Nawabganj and Chairman of the sub-divisional Relief Committee.

Bhutu Babu, to whom the D.M. referred, was an amazing man whose exploits read like extracts from Ripley's 'Believe it or Not'. He was a Hindu lawyer of Nawabganj in his early thirties, holding post-graduate degrees in Islamic and Modern history from the University of Calcutta and was possibly the most popular Awami League worker in the area. I was struck by his totally selfless devotion to his country and his people, and the super-human energy and organising ability he displayed. Single-handed, without any help from official quarters, he set up a camp of 580 families of evacuees at Baraghoria in the Sibganj police station with whatever shelter materials we could supply. When ration supplies did not arrive on time, and repeated requests to the SDO Nawabganj had no effect, he simply threatened to prevent the next convoy of food-grain trucks from Malda from proceeding to Nawabganj, and he promptly received his quota!

Fazlur Rahman, who had been deputed by the Nawabganj Sub-divisional committee to receive all relief materials from us on their behalf, related a similar incident. He was an inhabitant of the village Harinagar in Sibganj P.S. which used to be a very prosperous community of about 500 weavers. All that is left of it now is a mass of rubble. Every building has been systematically destroyed, including the temples. Miraculously, the straw effigy of the goddess Lakshmi has emerged unscathed, though the temple itself has been broken down. We used to urge the villagers not to lose hope, but to set about rebuilding their homes and look forward to a prosperous future, for the goddess had not deserted them. Rahman had been the officer-in-charge of Dacca Airport till he had been forced to tender his resignation through the persistent harassment of the West Pakistani Civil Aviation Regional Manager who had undertaken a systematic campaign to weed out all Bengalis from the staff. Rahman's entire family played a major role in organising the relief work in the Harinagar area. Though a devoted and indefatigable worker, he lacked Bhutu Babu's broader vision, and always wanted me to send everything we had to this area first. I was interested to see how this gentleman, who was at least ten to fifteen years Bhutu's senior and a retired officer, used to take orders from him unhesitatingly and always sought his advice when in any difficulty.

If only I had had similar workers in the Porsha area! Here I found the attitudes very disappointing. During one of my visits, I found the ex-secretary of the Awami League unit virulently attacking the Circle Officer (Development) for failing to obtain enough food-grains for the people. 1300 maunds were lying at Rajshahi, but lack of transport (even bullock-carts were not available) and controversy over who would bear the transport costs were holding up everything. There was no effort or willingness to organise funds from local resources, though

they proudly told me that not a single farmer in Porsha owned less than 100 acres of cultivable land. Not a single mud house was without tin roofing, and there was a massive 3-storey mosque to boot. When I asked them why they did not circumvent this transport problem by going to Rajshahi through Malda (a regular bus service was running between Malda and Nawabganj, beyond which local buses were available), they gravely explained that it was because of the 6 mile stretch between Nitpur (Porsha) and Kendpur (in Malda) which would have to be covered on foot! The look on Rahman's face (he had come with me on this visit to synchronise the allocation of relief materials between Sibganj and Porsha) was eloquent beyond words, but it had no effect. I offered to remove this problem by taking the Awami League Chairman, Abdul Hasnat Chowdhury, in my jeep to Malda, from where he could proceed to Rajshahi. There was no response, beyond pressing innumerable sweets, poached eggs and thick milky tea on us. I found them more eager to feed us and show us around than to organise themselves so as to use most profitably and in the least possible time whatever relief material they got. At first, they were not even sending any representative to see to it that the truckloads of material we sent were unloaded forthwith, so that a larger number of trips could be made and they could get more material within less time. Where our trucks could have made five trips daily, they were not making more than two! They pleaded lack of manpower; and yet 30000 evacuees had returned to Porsha and were waiting for shelter materials! It was left to an outsider, Bhutu Babu, to suggest that the Awami League unit should call the headmen of all the Santhals (who composed 90 per cent, of the evacuees) and ask them to organise teams for lifting the material. Finally, an officer was sent from Porsha who camped at the riverside and began distributing the materials on the spot.

The attitude of the people we were trying to help was another curious amalgam of gratitude, distrust and apathy. Wherever I went, however devastated the area might be, sweets of magnum sizes would appear from nowhere and I would be forced to polish them off on pain of wounding feelings (it is a measure of the pressure of the work that despite these massive doses of sugar and starch I actually lost 5 kg. between January and April!). Whenever I went to Rajshahi I was given VIP treatment and, much to my embarrassment, referred to as "A.D.C. Malda" despite all my efforts to set them right as to my designation. Of course, they have no such post as Assistant Magistrate & Collector, hence my designation never registered in their minds. Resigning myself to it, I used to strut around in borrowed plumes feeling very self-important and thankful for this confusion because it helped me immensely in getting things done fast in Bangladesh. I will never forget the generous hospitality offered to me and other officers from Malda when we visited Dacca on 17 March—just as the meeting addressed jointly by Mrs. Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was to start—by the District Judge of Dacca Sri Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, affectionately known as "judge-saheb" in Malda. The *pranhara sandesh* and the sweet curd (*mishti doi*) of the famous confectioners Maranchand-Kalachand, which he loaded us with were nothing but nectareous ambrosia (we were rather lucky of course as they had supplied the very same day the *Pranhara Sandesh* which had been served to Mrs. Gandhi!).

But there was the other side of the coin too. Such as, ferrymen refusing to work at night to ferry across our trucks, or that incident at the Nagarbari Ghat of Padma River, en route Dacca. Reaching there around 6.30 A.M., 17 March, we found a huge queue of relief-carrying trucks and private cars which had been lining up since last evening. It seems that there had been a big quarrel over giving priority to Indian trucks carrying relief in boarding the ferry-steamer, resulting in the stopping of the ferry service. There had originally been about eight such steamers plying between Nagarbari and Aricha ghats, connecting Dacca and Pabna districts, but we had successfully bombed and destroyed all but two of them, so that there was the inevitable long delay in services. Luckily for us, we managed to squeeze ourselves on to the very first ferry-steamer (each can carry about 6 large trucks and 8 cars)

due to some vigorous ad-hoc priority system set-up by an ex-Mukti Fauj officer to whom I had discretely disclosed my identity. At both the ghats no arrangements had been made by the Government to impose any sort of order. There was total confusion and a general free-for-all, with the solitary policeman (who just had a pair of khaki trousers to establish his identity) quietly effacing himself. And at these ghats I frequently heard irate Bangladeshis attacking India in no uncertain terms because the relief trucks insisted on being given priority (some had been waiting at the ghat for the last 3 days). Their reaction sounded curiously similar to what one hears from Indians about countries that are pumping aid generously into India. However, these unpleasant experiences were more than compensated for by the magnificent reception we got at Dacca and at Rajshahi, where the local journalists' association feted us, presented us with souvenirs and invited us to functions organised on the occasion of Martyr's Day (21<sup>st</sup> February). The number of ardent and fiery young poets and writers, mostly in their twenties, was really astonishing, their bold experiments with literary forms and styles and the quality of journalism itself were most impressive.

Another aspect of the situation came out in the course of my visit with Bhutu Babu to Boalia village in Bholahat P.S. In this village 500 inmates had been massacred and it was one of Bhutu's pet projects of reconstruction, besides the four villages he had 'adopted' in Nawabganj. Some Viennese institution had also selected Boalia for reconstruction as a model village. Here I was frequently mistaken for a local official and villagers would approach me complaining that they were getting just 125 grams of cereals on alternate days, and that they would like to go back to 'Hindustan' where they had been much better looked after. The more upsetting disclosure, however, came from Moinul Haque, the local Awami League leader and a very fine worker. He begged me not to send the food-grains to the M.C.A.s, who were actually selling it in the black-market instead of distributing it to the people. He was very bitter against the display of arrogance and power by them and told me that the P.M. was constantly being approached by all genuine Awami League workers not to give these people re-nomination in the elections, This was also the situation in Sibganj where Rahman told me that the elected representatives were more interested in smuggling and in organising Razakar witch-hunts than in planning out the bringing of shelter materials from Malda before the returning homeless evacuees became a problem. Again, when rations were running out, they were busy deciding who should be in charge of the relief operations. Finally, at Rahman's behest, the people *gheraoed* (they have picked up this phenomenon from West Bengal and use it to great effect I found) the M.P.A. and forced him to get them rations from Nawabganj. Even Bhutu Babu used to deplore the lack of character-building among the youth despite the bloody freedom struggle, and contrasted the single-minded dedication of Naxalites to the instability of Awami League and NAP workers. He was disgusted with the general passivity of waiting for the administration to send relief. In Harinagar, for instance, I found, when I revisited it after a month, that no attempt had been made to clear up the debris, and use the bricks to re-build the houses. The villagers were, instead, using the devastated ruins as a showpiece for drawing sympathy and material help. Thereupon I made it clear that I would divert my supplies to other areas. From the reports I received subsequently, this had a salutary effect.

It was in Boalia that I came to know of an unfortunate incident involving a Hindu and the local M.C.A. Sri Khaled. This Hindu, Benoy Roy, had been driven out from his house in Boalia during riots several years back, and had settled in Malda. After the liberation, Moinul Haque had invited him to return and re-occupy his property. Haque had also made the Muslims who had forcibly occupied Roy's house vacate it. They, in turn, had gone to Khaled who instructed the Mukti Fauj militia to drive out Roy. In the process, even Roy's wife and daughter had been manhandled. Roy had been hospitalised in Malda, and there had been quite

a lot of vehement opposition against sending any more relief to Bangladesh from a section of Malda's society.

Another insight into the plight of Hindus in the newly liberated nation was provided by a slim girl of about 18 named Bulbul, who used to be one of the leaders of the women's wing of the Mukti Foj operating from Malda under Sri Abdul Hannan Chowdhury (ex-district judge, Dinajpur), and an expert with the 3-inch mortar. She told me that one Mujib could not change an attitude which had been drilled into a whole people over generations, and that even in Rajshahi, her home-town, Hindus were still in the darkness in which they had been earlier. She also pointed out that the M.C.A.s and M.P.A.s had forfeited the confidence of the people by fleeing the country during the crackdown, unlike the NAP leaders, and indulging in lining their own nests by dubious means during their stay in India.

What of the administration? On one of my visits to Nawabganj, the SDO, a state civil service officer, had taken me to his residence. The furnishings here, as in his office-chamber, took my breath away. The repast which followed, and he assured me that this was his normal fare and nothing had been arranged specially, had to be seen to be believed in a scarcity-hit area where most of the people were going without two square meals a day. How shabby and drab seemed the chambers and residences and living standards of our SDOs! What Bhutu Babu and others told me only confirmed my impression about the totally feudal and paternalistic character of the administration which was out of touch with the needs of the people and not geared at all to the speed and efficacy required of them in the emergency conditions prevailing. Such simple things as ensuring that their only link with India, the Malda-Sibganj earthwork road, was not snapped by rains, thus stopping all convoys of relief materials, was not snapped by rains, thus stopping all convoys of relief materials, just did not seem to register. The only alternative was to repair the Singabad-Rohanpur railway link with Malda. Even this was not receiving the top-priority attention it called for. When I met the Bangladesh Food Minister, Sri Phanibhushan Majumdar, at the Rajshahi Circuit House during my last visit, he was highly agitated over the food grains crisis facing the district, and what India could do to solve it. I mentioned that the only way out was to restore the rail-link, as bringing the food grains by trucks over the bad roads and ferries took far too much time and was also insufficient quantity-wise. The response was a vague acquiescence, without any positive reaction to show that the importance of the rail-link had even registered!

Actually, the minister had arrived to discuss the food situation in Rajshahi. His arrival itself was a fiasco. Somehow, correct information about the time of his arrival at the airport had not been received, so that there was no one to receive him! After his arrival, he and his entourage proceeded to attack the District Controller of Food violently for having failed to keep Dacca apprised about the deteriorating condition of food-stocks. The amusing factor was that the A.D.C. and other officers kept asking me, in guarded asides, whether I knew who the officers with the Minister were. They had no idea as to who the gentleman was to whom the Minister kept referring as "Secretary-saheb"—whether he was the Food Secretary, or his private secretary, or something else! And after the meeting the ADC did not hesitate to criticise the Minister and his entourage to me for their 'arrogant and rude behaviour'. What surprised me was that telegrams sent by them to Dacca about the food situation had reached the capital only after several days, as the condition of the telegraph service was very bad. I asked them why they had not thought of having the message relayed by police wireless. The ADC was quite thunderstruck by this 'brilliant idea'. He had not heard of this despite his 20 years of service. All of which shows how unsuited the entire set-up was to tackling emergencies. The administrator's dislike of the politician had come out in very naked terms during a meeting which the D.C. Rajshahi had with the D.M. Malda to discuss the relief programme. After the formal meeting was over, the D.C. proceeded to condemn roundly the

Awami League politicians as selfish, greedy and corrupt. One of them, who had been based in Malda during the war, had been a Mukhtiyar's clerk in the district where the D.C. was then a Deputy Magistrate. This politician had never been able to forget this, and kept trying to assert his self-styled 'superior' position at all times. It seems when Lt. Gen. Arora had met the authorities, civil and political, at Rajshahi, the D.C had casually referred to "My Government's orders," whereupon this politician had heatedly remarked, "What do you mean by YOUR government? It is OUR government, WE are the Government," and so on *ad nauseam!*

What remains to be recorded is my general impressions about the country and the people as such. To a driver whose nerves and patience have been stretched to the limit by the inexorable decision of Malda's bullock-cart drivers not to leave the metalled road to motor vehicles, Bangladesh was truly a paradise. Here, at the faintest, honking of the horn, every bullock-cart magically left the metalled portion of the road and kept a respectful distance from us. This was so during my first few visits. But when I went as far as Dacca in March, I found quite a few carts refusing to give way. Acting on a hunch, I stopped my jeep and asked them—and sure enough they were evacuees who had got back from India with Indian Customs of road hogging jealously preserved in their hearts a signs of democratic rights and status! However, Bangladesh roads were a pleasure to drive on: I do not recall having coming across a single pothole throughout my drive from Nawabganj to Dacca and back [about 860 KM]. Possibly this was due to the lack of heavy traffic of grossly over laden trucks.

Another of the greatest pleasures of travelling in Bangladesh is a steamer-ride over the Padma as we had from Nagarbari to Aricha. It is an unforgettable sight, the blue Jamuna and the muddy Padma running in the same riverbed for miles, without the slightest mixing of the waters. And the Padma itself, with shores that cannot be sighted, dotted with specks of numerous sailing boats, bobbing up and down far away near the horizon like sea-gulls, how can I describe its majesty, serenity and beauty?

I passed through Natore, immortalised in Jibanananda Das in his poem "Banalata Sen" and Rani Bhabani, that great independent queen. I saw her Kali temple, with the idols all ruthlessly smashed by the Pakistani Army. It had been turned into a mosque, but now it is a temple once again, and the famous *kanchagolla sandesh* is as delicious as ever. In Pabna we had the rather sad experience of searching for our SDO's father-in-law's residence, only to find a massive crater and totally demolished buildings at the site. Ironically, it was the work of one of our own bombs! Then there was the massive Hardinge ('SARA') Bridge, with the central span blown-up by the Pakistanis- a truly magnificent sight, unrivalled even by our own Farakka Barrage Bridge.

But loveliest of all was Dacca. Beautifully laid out and planned, much in the manner of New Delhi, I did not come across a single beggar in the city. Kamalbari Railway Station remains an unfinished marvel. Land has been acquired all around it for a considerable distance, so that no residential buildings can come up to spoil the effect. It has soaring pillars, going up to 60-70 feet, and completely 'mod' architecture. On 25<sup>th</sup> March 1971 all who were present at this station had been gunned down. Now it is a favourite spot for evening promenade. There are no trains. Even more 'mod' is the Second Capital which was being built near the city, where the architect seems to have insisted that all buildings should have a spherical shape. It is a curious sight.

But Dacca cannot be divorced from the Steamer/Terminal bustling with people at all hours, and shops eagerly offering 'foreign' toiletries. We asked to see some, and were disappointed! They were all Indian! And the Rickshaws of Dacca—40, 000 of them! The day we were there was unfortunately the day of the two Prime Ministers were addressing the people, and we were caught in the resultant jam for hours. The cycle-rickshaws merrily

disregarded all traffic rules, brushed aside the police constable's desperately waving hands, and went their way. The District Judge told us that it was always better to keep out of their way. Once a rickshaw had bumped into this car in its anxiety to go ahead, and its driver had promptly demanded Rs. 5/- from His Honour as compensation for damage (?) to the rickshaw, and had got the money! Prices of all household utensils and cloth were very high. Ladies lamented the non-availability of Karachi nylons which used to sell at Rs.15-20, and very cheap stainless steel utensils. Lack of supply of yarn had resulted in a shortage of ordinary saris too. But whatever the scarcity situation, there was never any shortage of writing, both creative and journalistic. The Bengali brain seemed to thrive on scarcity and work at white-hot intensity all through.

I left Dacca on a rather sad note. In 1962-63, going to meet my father in prison, I had seen the famous ancient Kali-temple at Ramna Maidan. A decade later I went there again, full of expectation. There was nothing left, not even a single stone. The Pakistanis had obliterated it, as they had the Shahid Pillars, And before I left, the District Judge told me, with great anguish, how the P.O.L. they needed so very badly from India was being systematically black-marketed by some Indian businessmen who had taken up residence in Dacca and were somehow managing to divert part of the consignments for Bangladesh to their own benefit. But he urged me to come back a year later, and see that his country had really become "Sonar Bangla." Even in this very year one could see the seeds of the golden future in the lush green countryside, the busy reconstruction of bridges and roads, and the vibrant faith and resilient hope of the people of Bangladesh.

My visit to Rajshahi to hand-over the 19 UNICEF trucks was the last of my nine trips to Bangladesh. Thenceforth we stopped sending relief through our own vehicles. Relationships also underwent some inevitable changes. Letters to the D.C. and the A.D.C. Rajshahi, asking for various accounts never got replies. We shrugged and tried to forget the past. But I have not been able to erase memories of such wonderful human beings as Bhutu Babu, "judge-saheb", Rahman, and the unforgettable taste of the massive *Kanshat* chum-chums of Sibganj the delectable *kanchagolla* from the shop adjoining Rani Bhabani's Kali temple, and the nectareous *pranhara sandesh* of Dacca's Maranchand-Kalachand!