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Non-Bengali Moslems huddle inside the jute mill in Bangladesh.

30,000 Surrounded Biharis

Fear Slaughter by Bengalis

From News Dispatches
NARAYANGANJ, Bangla-
desh, Dec. 29—Thirty thou-
sand Biharis—workers and
their families—are under
virtual siege within the
walls of the world's largest
jute mill, surrounded by a
vengeful Bengali populace.

They are guarded by a
company of 100 Indian
troops, but Bihari leaders
said food and money are
running out and they fear
they will be slaughtered.

Inside the mill, women,
faces covered with black
veils, were hunched around
the bodies of two babies
who died this morning. Old
men, too weak from hunger
and sickness to brush away
swarms of flies, lay in filthy
alleys.

There were no doctors or
medical supplies, and the In-
ternational Red Cross had
so far been unsuccessful in
getting approval from the
government to start a relief
program.

The Moslem Biharis, who
emigrated to East Pakistan
when the Indian subconti-
nent was partitioned in 1947,
constitute a hated minority
of two million among the 75
million people of what
is now Bangladesh.

It was among the Biharis
that the Pakistan army
found most of its collabora-
tors during the military
crackdown last March. Now
the Biharis fear the people
of Bengal will wreak bloody
revenge for real or imagined
Bihari atrocities.

The mill was owned by
the Adamjee family, one of
the wealthiest in West Paki-
stan. Hundreds of Bengalis
were fired at the start of the
Pakistan army repression of
the local population last
March 25. Their jobs were
given to non-Bengalis, who
moved into the rows of

squalid shanty dwellings
within the factory walls and
kept the mill going until the
electric power gave out at
the beginning of December.

Today, hundreds of Ben-
galis thronged four en-
trances to the mill. Some
said they would kill the
workers trapped inside.

Like many who clustered
around him, Mohammed
Abudullah, a 70-year-old
clerk at the mill, said he

would like to return to
India.

"There is no future for us
here any more," he said.

It seems unlikely that
India will agree to take the
Biharis back.

The Biharis at the
Adamjee Mill said cholera
has broken out and they are
short of medicines. Soon
they will have neither
money nor food, although
some rations are being pro-
vided by the Indian army.

See BIHARIS, A9, Col. 1

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Biharis carry the coffin of a child who died in the besieged jute mill.

30,000 Trapped Biharis Fear Slaughter by Bengalis

BIHARIS, From A1

Since the surrender of the Pakistan army Dec. 16, few Bihari workers have ventured beyond the grime-stained yellow walls of the factory compound. The people inside said those who did were butchered.

What little money they have left is being pooled for food from the market at nearby Narayanganj, a river-port and industrial center 10 miles from Dacca.

Maj. R. Kanwar provides a couple of Indian army trucks and a military escort for trips into town.

The Indian army arrived

soon after the war ended, and has been guarding the place ever since. Sentries stand at the gate outside the silent mill sheds.

"When they go we shall all be slaughtered," said Abdullah. "There is so much hatred now that Bengalis and Biharis will never be able to work together again."

Indian army officers and a unit of Bangladesh police have been searching for arms and Pakistani collaborators among the Biharis. The operation had yielded 18 suspects by today, but no weapons.

At least 60 men, suspected to be former Pakistani mili-

tiamen who police said were wanted for murder, rape and other crimes, were roped together and guarded by Bengali plainclothes policemen holding foot-long daggers.

Kanwar said some Pakistani soldiers were found in the mill in the days immediately following the fall of East Pakistan, and large quantities of weapons have been uncovered.

"There is not much more the army can do here except provide security," he said. "It is a local problem. When we go, that is when there may be the biggest problem . . . What happens then is the big question."