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032 Roosevelt, Eleanor
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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

Amconsul Calcutta, India (USIS)
THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

496
ESP. NO.

March 27, 1952.
DATE

AIR POUCH

PRIORITY

12 enclosures

17

For Dept.
Use Only

REF : Department's circular telegram No. 712, Feb. 12, 1952

SUBJECT: Press Coverage Mrs. Roosevelt's Calcutta Visit

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The recent visit of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt to Calcutta evoked considerable interest; the press gave her extensive publicity despite the fact that newspaper columns were crowded with reports of the All-India Congress party meetings at Calcutta which coincided with Mrs. Roosevelt's visit.

All Calcutta dailies in English, Bengali, Hindi and Urdu languages, prominently displayed reports of Mrs. Roosevelt's arrival, often on front page, frequently with pictures.

The tone of press coverage of her four-day visit was generally friendly as elsewhere in India, the only discordant note being struck by Swadhinata, the Bengali language Communist daily of Calcutta. Swadhinata prominently displayed Mrs. Roosevelt's arrival story but misrepresented her reception by Women's organizations March 21 and her press conference March 23. In a front-page staff reporter story March 22 Swadhinata said Mrs. Roosevelt's Government House reception by Women's organizations was not well-attended, at the same time admitting "400 women representing 29 women's organizations" attended the ceremonies. Twisting Mrs. Roosevelt's statements at the press conference March 23 the communist organ charged her with "arrogantly advising Indians to check population growth".

Several papers commented editorially on Mrs. Roosevelt's visit. We enclose clippings of editorials from two leading Calcutta English dailies, Amrita Bazar Patrika, generally friendly, most influential, oldest nationalist newspaper (circulation: 65,000) and Hindusthan Standard, often critical of U.S. but non-communist (circulation: 45,000).

Welcoming Mrs. Roosevelt Amrita Bazar Patrika called her "one of the greatest living Americans and one of the world's greatest women". According to the paper, "The thing which has impressed Indians most is her sympathetic approach to Indian problems, with a genuine desire to understand them, more than to teach, far less to criticise the shortcomings which are undoubtedly here."

Hindusthan Standard, commenting on the conferment of Doctorate degree on Mrs. Roosevelt by Visva-bharati, Shantiniketan, the University founded by poet Tagore, said "occasions like these help to forge new bonds of friendship between the East and the West and emphasize the essential unity of mankind."

The most influential Bengali daily Ananda Bazar Patrika (circulation: 100,000) also made favorable editorial comments, while Bengali communist

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organ Swadhinata and pro-communist Bengali daily Satvaing of "Times of India" group wrote critical comments on Mrs. Roosevelt's visit.

A special press opinion summary covering over-all Calcutta area editorial comments on Mrs. Roosevelt is being prepared and will be forwarded to the Department.

Below is given a more detailed description of the press coverage of Mrs. Roosevelt's 4-day stay in and around Calcutta:

- (1) Mrs. Roosevelt's arrival in Calcutta March 20
 - (a) reported and editorialised in Amrita Bazar Patrika of March 21 (Enclosure 1);
 - (b) reported in the Statesman, influential British-owned English daily (circulation: 65,000), of March 21 (Enclosure 2);
 - (c) reported in Hindusthan Standard (English daily); Ananda Bazar Patrika, Jugantar, Basumati, Swadhinata, Loka-Sevak, Janasevak, Satvaing (Bengali dailies); Viswamitra, Samarg, Viswabandhu, Lokmanya (Hindi dailies); Rozana Hind, Asre-Zadid (Urdu dailies) -- all of March 21.
- (2) Reception to Mrs. Roosevelt by Women's organizations March 21.
 - (a) reported in Amrita Bazar Patrika, Hindusthan Standard, The Statesman March 22 (Enclosures: 3, 4 & 5);
 - (b) reported in Ananda Bazar Patrika, Jugantar, Basumati, Swadhinata, Loka-Sevak, Janasevak, Satvaing (Bengali dailies); Viswamitra, Samarg, Viswabandhu, Lokmanya (Hindi dailies); Rozana Hind, Asre-Zadid (Urdu dailies) -- all of March 22.
- (3) Conferment of Visva-bharati degree on Mrs. Roosevelt March 22
 - (a) reported in Hindusthan Standard of March 23 followed by an editorial comment in its issue of March 24 (Enclosures 6 & 7);
 - (b) reported in Jugantar, critical Bengali daily of Amrita Bazar Patrika group (circulation 75,000) and The Statesman of March 23 (Enclosures 8 & 9);
 - (c) reported in Amrita Bazar Patrika (English daily); Ananda Bazar Patrika, Basumati, Satvaing, Loka-Sevak, Janasevak, Swadhinata (Bengali dailies); Rozana Hind (Urdu daily) -- all of March 23.

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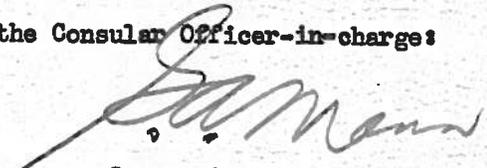
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From _____(4) Mrs. Roosevelt's press conference March 23(a) reported in The Statesman and Amrita Bazar Patrika (Enclosures 10 & 11);(b) reported in Hindusthan Standard (English daily); Ananda Bazar Patrika, Jugantar, Satyajug, Basumati, Swadhinata, Ganavarta, Janasevak, Loka-Sevak (Bengali dailies); Viswamitra, Viswabandhu, Sammarg, Lokmanya, Jagruti (Hindi dailies); Razana Hind, Asre-Azdid (Urdu dailies).(5) In addition Hindusthan Standard published on March 24 an article entitled "Farewell to Mrs. Roosevelt" by India's former Ambassador to America, Mrs. Pandit (Enclosure 12).

Photographs relating to Mrs. Roosevelt's Calcutta visit obtained from West Bengal Government's Publicity Department, K.L.M., and our own staff will be pouched attention IPS-OIB as per referenced instruction.

During her visit, Mrs. Roosevelt participated in the formal dedication March 23 of the new quarters of Calcutta USIS. A despatch covering this event will be pouched to the Department within a few days.

Please pass copies of this despatch to the other posts in India.

For the Consular Officer-in-charge:


George A. Mann
Consul and Public Affairs Officer.

✓ Enclosures: (in quintuplicate)

1. Clipping from Amrita Bazar Patrika March 21.
2. Clipping from The Statesman March 21.
3. Clipping from Amrita Bazar Patrika March 22
4. Clipping from Hindusthan Standard March 22
5. Clipping from The Statesman March 22
6. Clipping from Hindusthan Standard March 23
7. Clipping from Hindusthan Standard March 24.
8. Clipping from Jugantar March 23
9. Clipping from The Statesman March 23
10. Clipping from The Statesman March 24
11. Clipping from Amrita Bazar Patrika March 24
12. Clipping from Hindusthan Standard March 24.

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