FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

The Department of State, Washington.

A. Consul Calcutta, India (USIS)

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

Press Coverage Mrs. Roosevelt's Calcutta Visit

March 27, 1952

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 Samachar, the Bengali language Communist daily of Calcutta. Samachar 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 Samachar 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 25 the communist organ charged her with "arrogantly advising Indians to check population growth".

Several newspapers commented editorially on Mrs. Roosevelt's visit. We enclose clipping of editorials from two leading Calcutta English dailies, Ananda 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).

Welcome Mrs. Roosevelt Ananda 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 Vivek-bharati, Shantiniketan, the University founded by post Tagore, said "occasions like these help to forge new bonds of friendship between the East and the West and emphasise the essential unity of mankind."

The most influential Bengali daily Ananda Bazar Patrika (circulation: 100,000) also made favorable editorial comments, while Bengali communist
organ Swadhinata and pro-communist Bengali daily Satyajit 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-Sayak, Janasevak, Satyaing (Bengali dailies); Viswamitra, Samprat, Visravandhu, Lokamaya (Hindi dailies); Rosana Hind, Asha-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-Sayak, Janasevak, Satyaing (Bengali dailies); Viswamitra, Samprat, Visravandhu, Lokamaya (Hindi dailies); Rosana Hind, Asha-Zadid (Urdu dailies) -- all of March 22.

(3) Conferment of Vyas-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, Satyaing, Loka-Sayak, Janasevak, Swadhinata (Bengali dailies); Rosana Hind (Urdu daily) -- all of March 23.
(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),
Amrita Bazar Patrika, Jugantar, Satyagra, Bagmati,
Samachar, Ganayatra, Janasivak, Loka-Sivak (Bengali
dailies); Jugantar, Vishashakti, Samaj, Lokrajya,
Jagriti (Hindi dailies); Rasana Hind, Agra-Ardid
(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.H., and our own staff
will be pouching attention IPS-OIB as per referenced instruction.

During her visit, Mrs. Roosevelt participated in the formal dedication
March 25 of the new quarters of Calcutta USIS. A despatch covering this
event will be pouching 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)

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
8. Clipping from Jugantar March 23
9. Clipping from The Statesman March 25
10. Clipping from The Statesman March 24
11. Clipping from Amrita Bazar Patrika March 24