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BESIEGED IN EAST PAKISTAN: Some of the 30,000 Biharis—Moslems originally from India—who are under virtual state of siege in a huge jute mill complex near the town of Narayanganj. Surrounded by vengeful Bengalis, they are guarded by Indian soldiers.

Bengalis Encircle 30,000 Biharis in Mill

NARAYANGANJ, Pakistan, Dec. 29 (AP)—Thirty thousand Biharis — workers and their families — are under virtual siege within the walls of the world's largest jute mill, near here surrounded by a vengeful Bengali populace.

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

The Biharis, Moslems who emigrated to East Pakistan from India when the subcontinent was partitioned in 1947, constitute a hated minority of two million among the 75 million people of what was East Pakistan.

It was among the Biharis that the Pakistani Army found most of its collaborators. Now the Biharis fear the people of Bengal will wreak blood revenge for real, or imagined Bihari atrocities.

For fear of sabotage, most Bengali workers at the huge Adamjee Mill were dismissed soon after Pakistan moved against Bengali separatists in March.

They were replaced by Bi-

haris, who moved into the rows of workers' quarters and shanties within the factory walls and kept the mill going until electrical power gave out at the beginning of December.

Jute, a leading export of this area, is a plant fiber that goes into the making of sacking, burlap and twine.

Few Venture Beyond Walls

Since the surrender of the Pakistan Army on Dec. 16, few Bihari workers have ventured beyond the grime-stained yellow walls of the factory compound. They say those who have 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.

Big white flags flutter from the factory gates and the eight-foot boundary wall. Local Bengalis apparently believe the Biharis inside are heavily armed and there has been no attempt to storm the compound. 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 70-year-old Mohammed Abdullah, a \$36-a-month clerk. "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 has yielded 18 suspects but no weapons.

Would Return to India

Major Kanwar did his best to temper the search with mercy. When evidence of guilt appeared flimsy, he ordered suspects released. He said he hoped the search would dispel local suspicions that the Biharis were armed and would help to build mutual trust.

Like many who clustered around him at the mill, Mr. Abdullah said he would like to return to India. "There is no future for us here any more."

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