



The President's Daily Brief

Jan. 28 Nov 1971

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*Sunday cable
(with update)
28 Nov 71*

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HW PDB FOR 28 NOVEMBER:

INDIA-PAKISTAN

SKIRMISHES AND ARTILLERY EXCHANGES ARE CONTINUING AT WIDELY
SCATTERED POINTS ALONG THE INDIA-EAST PAKISTANI BORDER.

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[Redacted]

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[Redacted] THE INDIANS ADMIT TO HAVING CROSSED THE BORDER INTO
DINAJPUR ON 26 NOVEMBER. AT THE SAME TIME, [Redacted]

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[Redacted] THE MUKTI BAHINI, ASSISTED BY THE INDIAN

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ARMY, MANAGED TO STRAIGHTEN ITS MILITARY LINES BY OCCUPYING TWO
GEOGRAPHIC SALIENTS AT THE NORTHWESTERN TIP OF EAST PAKISTAN,
AS WELL AS A SMALL PORTION OF RAJSHAHI DISTRICT SOUTH OF THE WEST
BENGALI TOWN OF ENGLISH BAZAR. THE PRESS REPORTS CONTINUED CROSS-
BORDER SHELLING IN THE VICINITY OF BALURGHAT IN THE WEST DINAJPUR
DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL, THE AREA WHERE THE INDIANS ADMIT LAUNCHING
ANOTHER "DEFENSIVE" STRIKE ON THURSDAY. FIGHTING ALSO CONTINUES
AROUND JESSORE, AND REPORTS INDICATE BOTH SIDES WILL CONTINUE TO
STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF THIS STRATEGIC CENTER. IN THE SOUTHEAST
CORNER OF EAST PAKISTAN, CLASHES PERSIST IN THE BELONIA SALIENT
AND NEAR THE ARMY STRONGHOLD OF FENI.

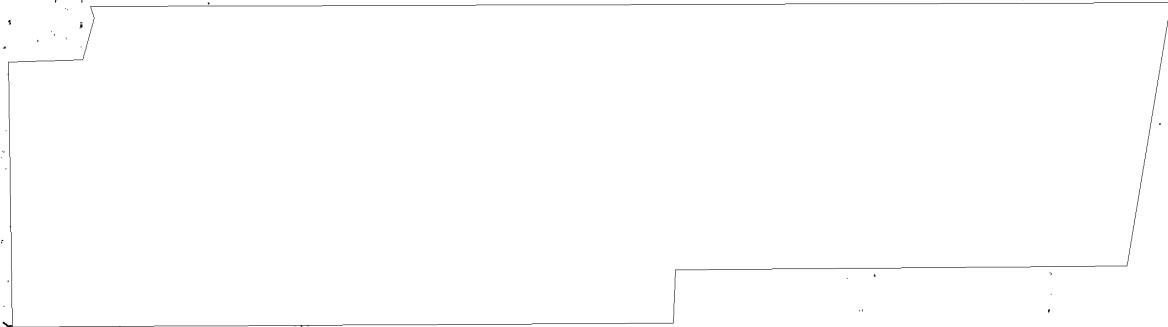
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THE US CONSULATE IN DACCA REPORTS THAT TENSION HAS RISEN NOTICEABLY IN THE CITY AS A RESULT OF THE RECENT BORDER CLASHES. TWO SURPRISE CURFEWS IN SEVEN DAYS--Aimed AT KEEPING THE MUKTI BAHINI OFF BALANCE--AND REPEATED NIGHTLY BOMBINGS BY THE GUERRILLAS HAVE REINFORCED UNCERTAINTY AMONG THE POPULACE. THERE ARE FEWER PEOPLE AND VEHICLES ON THE STREETS AND THERE IS EVIDENCE OF HOARDING.

ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT, AMBASSADOR KEATING AND SENATOR CHURCH MET WITH INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SWARAN SINGH IN NEW DELHI ON FRIDAY. SINGH VOICED OPTIMISM THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION WOULD NOT EVOLVE INTO FULL-SCALE WAR. HE STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT PRESIDENT YAHYA MUST MOVE TOWARD A GENUINE SETTLEMENT WITH THE BENGALIS IN ORDER TO DEFUSE THE CRISIS. HE INFERRED THAT YAHYA HAD NOT BEEN PRESSED WITH SUFFICIENT EARNESTNESS BY FOREIGN POWERS.

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THE LATEST PRESS RELEASE FROM NEW DELHI. ON 23 NOVEMBER, AN OFFICIAL INDIAN SPOKESMAN DISCLOSED THAT MRS. GANDHI HAS SENT AN ORAL MESSAGE TO YAHYA, VIA ATAL, CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF THE IMPRISONED BENGALI LEADER, MUJIBUR RAHMAN, AND DEMANDING THAT YAHYA ALSO TAKE IMMEDIATE "STEPS" TOWARD A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT OF THE EAST PAKISTAN PROBLEM. MRS. GANDHI CONTINUES TO INSIST THAT IT IS UP TO ISLAMABAD TO ^{scale down "oops!"} DE-ESCALATE THE CRISIS.

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