

LETTER FROM NEW DELHI

Very little authentic reportage has emerged from Iran since the nation's Shia clergy led a mass revolt against the Shah in early 1979. Strategically and economically, Iran has become very important for India since then. One-third of our oil imports come from there, while our exports to Iran have boomed after the US hostage capture led to western trade sanctions that were exacerbated by the Iran-Iraq war.

Which was why NEW DELHI was keen to ensure that correspondent Chaitanya Kalbag was aboard the first Bombay-Teheran flight (in late December) after the war began. This was Kalbag's first foreign assignment. His ex-

tensive northeast reportage for NEW DELHI had prepared him for the possibility of post-revolution Iran being a tough job. But the chaos and demoralisation he encountered as he travelled across Iran dismayed him.

Equally disappointing was evidence that Iran's Shia clergy, while stamping on its allies in the revolution, have taken the low road to regressive Islamisation. Midway through his stay, when he had to get his visa extended, letters from the Iranian Foreign and Information Ministries proved worthless as far as the national police were concerned. When Kalbag expressed surprise at this, the police captain told him:

"Stay a while longer in Iran. You will learn a lot."

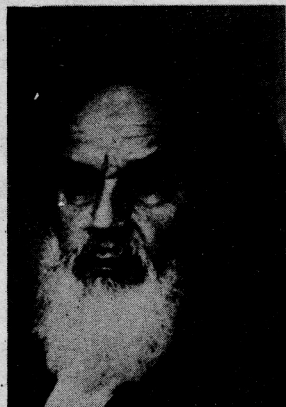
It was a searing "learning experience", as the Americans who have departed Iran would say. From the voluminous material he collected during a three-week stay that took in Teheran, Esfahan, Tabriz and Shiraz, Kalbag prepared this fortnight's cover story, whose facts point to an inescapable conclusion: Iran is headed towards an anti-clergy revolt.

"The best definition of 'anarchy' is Iran today," says Kalbag, whose last memory of Iran—an uncommonly vicious customs check at Teheran's Mehrabad airport—did not help any. His notes escaped confiscation, fortunately, be-

cause no one knew English.

Even as Kalbag was boarding his flight home, Business Editor TN Ninan was in Pune, at the Rajneesh Ashram—discovering to his amazement that this 'Buddhafield' is a flourishing multinational business enterprise run by an efficient Gujarati lady, Ma Yoga Laxmi. The Rajneesh foundation, Ninan discovered, has some 50 production units with an annual income running to many crores of rupees. The profits are going to be invested in a new complex in Gujarat that will cost Rs 35 to Rs 40 crores. Ninan's report, elsewhere in this issue, focuses on this little known aspect of the Rajneesh phenomenon.

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Inside Khomeini's Iran: An eyewitness report by Chaitanya Kalbag on the Islamic authoritarianism that has taken root in Iran, plunging the country into chaos and anarchy, plus a description of the revolt that is brewing against the mullahs who rule Iran today. **Page 10**



Samastipur Jail Firing: For two days and two nights a hundred odd mutinous prisoners defied authorities until on the third day the police resorted to firing. There were more than two dozen deaths. An investigation revealing the corruption which led to the mass killing. **Page 21**



One Year of Gundu Rao: The controversial Karnataka Chief Minister completed one year on January 12. How has he fared? An assessment, plus interviews with Gundu Rao and Bangarappa, the agriculture minister, recently dropped from the cabinet. **Page 25**



The Rajneesh Industry: They say the Roman Catholic Church runs the world's most efficient bureaucracy. But when it comes to rapid growth as a business organisation, even the Vatican pales before the record of the Rajneesh foundation. **Page 40**

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