

## Smash and Grasp Part 3

Two further decisions made it clear that Sikkim was being thrown to the mob. Bajpai ordered the Si

This encouragement of anarchy synchronized with mounting psychological pressure on the palace. I

Kewal Singh, India's foreign secretary, had arrived that morning and had to make his way through t

India House propaganda also constantly stressed that the true representatives of Sikkimese opinion v

The claim that 20,000 people, or a tenth of the entire population, had assembled in the stadium was

There was chaos in the bungalow. No one knew how they had got there, who was in command, wha

But there was no trace of hesitation or indecision as Bajpai briefed the press on the JAC's ultimatum

No one talked as yet of merger. In explanation of the last clause, that "unlawful activities resorted to

Kewal Singh received this charter on 11 April with every appearance of graciousness. He was the s

Manipulation of information was revealed as an essential feature of the strategy. Though foreign cor

The external affairs ministry also emerged as a major source of stories that newspapers were asked t

The Chogyal's complaints about biased coverage predictably had no effect. He cabled Mrs Gandhi o

The JAC announced on 9 April that the agitation was being called off. On 13 April the Chogyal pro

An unnoticed consequence of the turbulent birthday party was the political debut of a young Nepale

He had been born in Malwasi bustee near Soreong in the west on 5 October 1940, studied locally up

The injustice rankled all through the young teacher's early career in modest schools in Soreong, Cha

Bhandari's illusions lasted a bare four weeks. On 5 May he advised a sizable crowd in Namche to ta

## Smash and Gras part 4

### Foot in the Door

These people are intolerable apathetic, and prefer being tyrannized over to the trouble of shaking of

The real power in the kingdom [or is it chiefdom now?] is exercised by the Indian Chief Executive v

B.S. Das was an odd fish in bureaucratic waters. Technically, he was still a member of the Uttar Pradesh Civil Service. He had been something more than just an ambassador. For he was the only one in Bhutan, representing India. This was the man that Kewal Singh sent to Gangtok on 10 April to relieve the PO of the additional duties. The new administrator's initial reception at the palace may not have been exactly warm, for the Chogyal was a man of few words. Three young Indian civil servants were inducted at the same time to serve as officers on special duty. There was a reaction too. A young Gangtok kazi, Kunga Topden, no relation of Karma's, had grouped the kazes. The administrator's first attempt to reconcile all these strands was shot down by India House. Conditions were not favorable. The council died a natural death before even New Delhi struck the next blow at a late-night ceremony. The agreement reiterated Sikkim's dependent status, and Indian responsibility for defense, territorial integrity, and foreign relations. The tripartite pact was a considerable gain from India's point of view. The disputable claims of Hari Singh were dropped. In contrast, the chief executive, Das's new designation, was exalted far above the original understanding. Since the chief executive was highly unlikely ever to take decisions without consulting India House, the JAC was empowered. More perspicacious members of the JAC pointed out that though all three parties had demanded respect for the throne, the Chogyal alone seemed to be content in those weeks after the signing ceremony. The palace had a certain air of mystery. The euphoria seemed unreal until the mystery was cleared after lunch one afternoon. "You haven't seen the document?" In it was a four-part typed document titled "Agreement between the Chogyal and the Government of India." But the durbar was relieved because it rightly believed that Sikkim could not be absorbed while its throne remained. Your Highness had also raised the question of the treaty of 1950 and the exchange of letters in 1951. But the foreign secretary adamantly refused to match this solemn private pledge with any kind of public document. There were other worrying signs too. Das's stewardship was not continuing as well as it had started. No one in Gangtok paid any attention to Kazi's allegations. Nor did they believe him when he accused the government of breaking the agreement. Even Das appeared to be abandoning initial attempts at objectivity: he seemed powerless to control the situation.

They were partly responsible for disgraceful displays when the Chogyal toured the south and west. I

But Das had his orders, which became clear when he wrote to Tarachand Hariomal, judge of the Ce

He was not prepared to yield to bureaucratic pressure. The judge politely explained to the chief execu

The 1974 elections, arbitrary because they were not due, were held against this background of mute

Convinced that the Bhutiya-Lepcha heritage was doomed, the National Party said, why bother? It fi

The Sikkim Congress put up 64 men from the 30 constituencies, this curious duplication being expl

But the manner of his victory brought enemies in its wake: "Roop Narain Dahal, Nar Bahadur Khati

In spite of internal quarrels, the Sikkim Congress captured 31 out of 32 seats [16 Nepalese, nine Bh

Sitting in the drawing-room at Mintokgang five years later, by when he was chief minister, Nar Bah

It took five years and Mrs Gandhi's defeat for anyone to publicly admit what everyone in Sikkim wa

But however sceptical people may have been of the results, they did not expect Kazi to erase Sikkim

The Sikkim Congress will seek to strengthen the bonds that already exist with the government and t  
At no time did it seek a mandate to abolish the throne and incorporate Sikkim in India.

But there was no hint of disloyalty when protesting that the palace had not felicitated him on his ele  
Buddhist lamas, a Brahmin priest, and a Christian pastor invoked heaven's blessings on the new asse

The bomb burst the next day when Kazi rose to propose thanks "for the inaugural speech of the con

Kazi gave notice that the 8 May agreement could not limit aspirations. "Yet society is a growing thi

The actual motion of thanks was in three parts with three clauses in the first and six each in the othe  
The role and functions of the Chogyal cannot be more than those of the constitutional head of the go

The presiding officer should at once have ruled out of order this flagrant violation of the stipulated '

The motion's second part asked for Sikkim to be included in the Indian Planning Commission's amb

The cat was out of the bag. A separate country, however limited the exercise of its independence, do

Kazini was beginning to be suspicious of events that had passed out of her control. She was jealous

"Khatiawara can do what he likes," retorted Krishna Chandra Pradhan. "He's only an independent m

Each actor was trapped in the part created by his dreams. Perhaps the most optimistic then was Chat

## Smash and Grasp part 5

### Death Warrant

Perhaps our leaders have fooled us. Perhaps they themselves have been fooled. Khara Nanda Uprety

We had certainly not asked for merger with India which was imposed on us as a political trickery and

Not a single taxi at Bagdogra was prepared to undertake the journey to Gangtok on 20 June 1974. The

But we were abruptly halted at Topkhani, just beyond Singtam, where the road drives through a dark

Instead of sticking to the doctor, I made the mistake of driving back to telephone Gangtok from the

I drove back to Topkhani to discover that the tunnel had indeed been cleared to let the doctor through

Back to Singtam to make several more futile calls under the glowering eye of the young Bhutiya po

But a third trip to Topkhani revealed that everything was exactly as before. Shadows were closing in

The next 40 minutes were spent trying to enlist help from anyone I could think of in Gangtok. Chhe

Govind Ram, head constable of A Company, 5 CRPF, who was attached to the police-station, had a

Remembering what the soldiers at Topkhani had said about orders, I thought it would be a good idea

I went back to the Marwari's house to make more telephone calls. Das had again gone out; the palac

There seemed to be no alternative to spending the night in the police-station with its single table, tw

The tunnel had been cleared. No trace remained of the truck or of the soldiers on the verge. The road

A momentous step in Sikkimese history had been taken while I was delayed. The kingdom had mov

But, the impression created was that there was nothing left to discuss. All details had already been th

Being MLAs of the present Sikkim assembly and having worked as close associates of Kazi, the con

He further stated:

On June 20, 1974 when the bill was to have been passed by the assembly at ten o'clock in the morni

Khatiawara finally observed:

It was only after the demonstrators left that around 9.30 p.m., under heavily armed Indian army pers

The act was in English and over 20 members were not at all conversant with the language. Even the

His confusion was understandable since agreed procedures were changed from minute to minute. Th

A new constitution had been in the air ever since 8 May 1973. The Chogyal told Bajpai and Sardar S

At this stage, the PO invited him to go again to New Delhi to continue discussions with Mrs Gandhi

A blindfolded monarch was, in fact, being hustled into signing his country's death warrant. For even  
But the Chogyal was not to be flattered, wined, and dined into surrendering. When New Delhi reali

The Chogyal stayed back in Delhi to continue his pleadings. Reminding Mrs Gandhi of the three po

This was before Gangtok exploded in anger. As the bill's contents leaked out, people realized that ex  
into a trap. Poudyal and Subeidi announced their opposition to the bill. The United Independents he

The administration was paralysed. Led by a militant clerk, Mrs. Kalavati Subba, about 2,700 junior

Das coaxed and scolded, reminding officials that they were transgressing bureaucratic codes. He ass

"The chief executive, Mr B.S. Das, has attempted to defuse the dangerous potential of such demonst

Bajpai was more openly partisan. "Unless this nonsense stops, the government of India will take not

Gangtok was tense on 19 June. The kingdom's red and white flag fluttered defiantly from every roof

The anti-bill processions began at eight o'clock in the morning of 20 June. The assembly gates were

Though, the army did not intervene, its presence on the sidelines ókneeling with rifles at the ready, p

He was not the only legislator to misunderstand what exactly was accomplished at that hasty and su

The demonstrations that followed increasingly took on a sadly despairing quality. Sober men who h

Whenever the Chogyal passed through Dum Dum, the STC representative was there with a band of

New Delhi's purpose drove some Sikkimese to extreme demands. The Prajatantra Party called for u

But the Press Trust of India announced that Poudyal and Subeidi objected to the Chogyal being give

The world was beginning to wonder what exactly was happening; so, to lend credence to New Delh  
For being so outspoken, Uprety was deprived of his Sikkim government scholarship to study in a Ca

The Chogyal received copies of the 20 June proceedings on 22 June with Das's assurance that the a  
until the bill had become law and the Chogyal had agreed to the application. But this attempt at setti  
As you are aware, the members of the Sikkim assembly have taken the strongest exception to the ef

Gone was the reasonableness of Bajpai's letter after the abortive morning session only three days ea

This was a blunt enough threat of violence: India House would help Kazi's abortive "mass movemen  
His ultimatum reached the palace at about half past three in the afternoon of 24 June. Earlier in the c  
The journey had been planned for 26 June, but the Tsuk-la-khang monks, without whose advice the

The mission to New Delhi was doomed from the outset. The external affairs ministry let it be known

Mrs Gandhi was no more straightforward. She pleaded with the Chogyal during a long conversation

It was never Mrs Gandhi's style to face unpleasant truths or attempt an honest answer. The son of Kazi  
Before leaving New Delhi, he sent her another anguished appeal begging for "a final and frank talk.  
A time has now come to decide whether I really have any useful role to fulfill in the service of my people.  
The more I think of the events in the last 14 months, it seems there is no role for upright, frank and honest leadership.  
I may sound bitter and depressed but I am still writing to you in all frankness as a friend and from a sense of duty.  
Again, the prime minister did no reply. Foreigners in New Delhi who saw the Chogyal at the end of

Nor was there much sign of yielding as he faced a battery of reporters at Dum Dum. That day's news

It was a dismal home-coming made worse by nature's hazards. Because of bad weather, the Chogyal

Das had called the 28 June session ostensibly in deference to Kazi's demand, citing "the urgency of

Central to Kazi's verbal pyrotechnics was the supposition that the bill had been drafted in consultation

Kazi's fulminations may have been overlooked as political hyperbole, but a duty lay on the presiding

Clause 8 [iv] of the 8 May agreement permitted the chief executive to report to the PO differences of  
But neither these oratorical flourishes nor the speed at which Das rushed through individual clauses  
These amendments were read out. The amendments you would like are in your resolution; copies of  
In other words, though the 20 June proceedings had been used to bludgeon the Chogyal, they were

During the debate of the Sikkim assembly on the Government of Sikkim Bill 1974 some of the members  
As persons who were comparatively young in age and inexperienced in constitutional processes, we  
[But] with the hasty step taken to introduce the Government of Sikkim Act 1974, it led to the total

It should have been perfectly clear why the chief executive so strictly controlled, channellized, and

To mark its achievement, the administration declared 28 June Janata Raj day. Sikkim Nationalized

But in spite of the pressure and the pontification, India could not legally validate the bill. Mrs Gandhi

The 2 July session too fell through. It was to be convened the next day, and Bajpai had 30 Sikkim  
Chogyal had not spoken. The PO then considerably informed the Chogyal that his appearance in the

Kalzang Gyatso and Tasa Tengay were still missing when the chief executive initiated the proceedings

They were spelt out in fuller, if cumbersome, detail in a 28-page annexure titled "Detailed Comments

To take one example, ministers could advise the throne only through the chief executive. But he was

"This is tantamount to reducing the council [of ministers] to less than that of an advisory body", wrote

But true to the instructions he had been given, Kazi rose to say that there was no need to bother with

So Chatur Singh Roy, dreaming of his deputy speakership, rose to give the Chogyal "another three h

The assembly voted for its constitution amidst this puerile jeering. Having discharged that duty, men

The last scene was enacted in the palace shortly after one o'clock in the afternoon of 4 July. Kewal S

The events of the recent weeks have been disastrous to all of us.

After much agony the Government of Sikkim Bill 1974 has received my assent since your Excellen

I still have fears over clause 30 of the act which I pray, under your protection, will never be invoke

It was a vain prayer. The ink was not dry on the Chogyal's signature before New Delhi began creatin

Instead, India's campaign continued with flattering overtures to build up Kazi and company. Mrs Ga

They did not care. For many it was their first visit to the Indian capital. Just eating, drinking, and sle

Even Kazi, resting in Kalimpong after the ordeals of his triumph, claimed that "a constituent body w

The portent was lost on him for Kazi did not-could not-read newspapers. Nor did he look beyond th

The anomaly of a chief executive supervising the chief minister worried Kazi as little as did prophet

But if the new chief minister was naively bemused, Crown Prince Tenzing in London was not. At or

## Smash and Grasp Part 5

### Against the Law

Elsewhere, protectorates are graduating to independence and colonies are marching to freedom. In S

Sikkim is not a part of India, and the Indian constitution cannot be twisted to give its people represe

Armed with an Indian permit to reside permanently within the inner line, Kazini bustled into Gangto

With Hope gone, she was looking forward to being the sole purveyor of Western wisdom in a rustic

She was soon to be disillusioned. Gangtok boasted none of Kalimpong's raffish cosmopolitanism. T

It was a disappointing home-coming. Worse was the discovery of the narrow field of her husband's

Alert to undercurrents, she suspected that bigger plans were in the air. Khatiawara talked of repealin

Neither did Kazini. She first learnt of the move for closer ties with India when Swaran Singh told th

Apparently at their very first meeting, the day after they were sworn in, Sikkim five ministers, with

It was a clandestine move, also an illegal one, as Justice Hidayatullah commented. Under clause 29

It was not until the afternoon of 27 August that Das at last sent a peon to the palace with a letter from

This belated action seemed fishy to the Chogyal because even if the chief executive had been indisposed

There was another surprise in store for the Chogyal. Just after noon the following day, Bajpai sent him a letter. The role that you can play at the present juncture is an important one and the recognition of it by the Government of India. We will do everything in our power to ensure that Sikkim's cultural heritage, rich traditions, and distinctive

This was the first intimation the Chogyal had of a letter from Kazi being surreptitiously sent to New Delhi.

While the Chogyal and Jigdal Densapa were still wondering how to avert the realization of their wishes,

The Chogyal at once telexed Mrs Gandhi objecting that he should have to learn of such vital decisions

These and other messages were handed over to Bajpai for transmission on the India House teleprinter.

Introducing the Bill in the Lok Sabha on 2 September, Swaran Singh almost apologized for it not being

But apart from obedient Congressmen, only the Jana Sangh, dreaming of Hindu control of a greater

Mrs Gandhi's hopes of an all-party consensus were dashed when other politicians realized that the

Probably the most outspoken critic was the Organization Congress's Shyam Nandan Mishra who decried

But he was battling against the ingrained Hindu conviction that not only the entire territory under the

The Chogyal reached Calcutta on 4 September, the day of the second reading. He had planned to go

It was a confused and unhappy wait at Dum Dum where the Chogyal, his children, Jigdal Densapa, and

His presence in New Delhi might not have averted disaster. Mrs Gandhi's control of the Lok Sabha,

So he remained cooped up in the flat while Nar Bahadur Bhandari and Sherab Palden Lepcha left for

But the juggernaut of Mrs Gandhi's imperialism was not to be halted. The Lok Sabha adopted the Bill

The final formalities of ratification by state governments took another six months before India's

An additional anomaly was the exclusion of Sikkimese MPs from voting for India's president and vice

The only real criticism at home came from the Hindustan Times, but it could not have been more de-

Warning that this "thin cover for genteel annexation" would be followed by outright acquisition, the Times said. The country has a right to know whether the "annexation" of Sikkim is part of a larger frontier policy. Far from doing any good, this decision-and the underlying tendency it represents-is going to bring

In addition to laying bare the hypocrisy of New Delhi's shoddy manoeuvre, the Hindustan Times pu-

Other countries sat up in alarm. Bhutto accused India of swallowing up Sikkim. Landlocked, vulner

In China the People's Daily denounced the move as a "flagrant act of colonial expansion," while Hsi  
This is all that has happened. It is a natural and free political evolution of the people of Sikkim in th  
It goes without saying that India has not annexed Sikkim. The plain fact is that Sikkim is still outsi

But Mrs Gandhi thought otherwise. Desperately groping for justification, shedding all sense of histo  
If your excellency's statement of Sikkim is correctly reported, it confirms my worst fears which I p

He need not have worried. For though India might believe it had attained the old of permanent assoc  
In the opinion of counsel the status of Sikkim in international law before and after the constitutiona

Describing the constitutional changes that had been effected, the lawyer continued:  
But the collocation of the [Indian constitutional] articles has no bearing on Sikkim. In any event th

There was more in this vein, Hidayatullah discussing various forms of protectorship and association

International authorities on the rights and responsibilities of associated states, and of protecting and  
To conclude, therefore, Sikkim enjoyed an international personality and still does so, although sov

Hidayatullah did not think Kazi's request had any force because the Chogyal's prior approval had no

The Indo-Sikkim treaty is not being observed in its spirit and letter. India has unilaterally accepted a

It was an authoritative and lucid exposure of an act of brigandage that sought to destroy the treaty w

The Chogyal made this offer when, secure in her parliamentary coup, Mrs Gandhi at last allowed hi  
Menon called the next day, taking with him a stately white-haired Sikh with exceedingly urbane ma

The scenario had changed. India House was about to receive a new tenant, but a new man had alrea

The note admitted that in spite of legal rights, the situation gave "very little choice or maneuverabili

Das did not think the monarchy would, or should, be disturbed. But he predicted that the Indian arm

This was not an encouraging analysis. It explained Das's acquiescence in the motion of thanks, the 2

No one in Gangtok had heard of his successor. Even the Chogyal, with his intimate familiarity with

The new chief executive could not have been more unlike B.S. Das. He was an elderly widower, na

"I should have twigged..." mused the Chogyal, looking back. He was ordinarily extremely sensitive

Smash and Grasp part 5

Winner Takes All

The monarchy being a sacred and binding institution, its protection and continuance should be the

I am proud of my nationality. But does it mean that my Indian nationality should have ever come in

Seven days after Lal moved into Mintokgang, he received a letter from the Chogyal inviting the cabinet

An ominous situation was developing. Since the government was carried out in the Chogyal's name

Eventually in early October the Chogyal wrote to Kewal Singh protesting that he had not once met the

The ministers as well as the Chogyal have constitutional roles and responsibilities to discharge and

Differences there are bound to be, but to avoid any dialogue and display such utter disregard for

Evading the heart of the matter, the foreign secretary went off at tangent to accuse the Chogyal of in

With regard to your warning that if all opposition does not in Sikkim, the government of India would

New Delhi's intimidatory tactics were explained by a combination of circumstances. There was an un

This was the long and the short of it. With Hope gone, many Sikkimese were ready to overlook their

Lal had an irascible temper, made worse because his efforts to woo the Sikkimese were proving cou

The Sikkim Students' Association in Darjeeling, formed by Hem Lal Bhandari, who was studying at

"They were beating the students like anything," recalls Nar Bahadur Bhandari. "When I intervened,

It was beginning to dawn on India that unrest would continue so long as the Chogyal remained on the

The campaign to demolish this growing appeal began in earnest in the autumn of 1974 when a Sikkim

The November visit was for only two days; before its dust had settled, the Chogyal and Tenzing were

The chief executive was meanwhile steadily hacking away at the throne's constitutional foundations

About this time began a systematic campaign to strike out all references to the man who was still he

An opportunity presented itself in March 1975, some weeks before the Chogyal's official birthday. I

An opportunity presented itself in March 1975, some weeks before the Chogyal's official birthday. I

Carrying the war a stage farther, the administration ruled that civil servants "should be directed not to

Still naively looking to New Delhi for justice, the Chogyal telegraphed Mrs Gandhi on 1 April that 'I

A mulish streak in his psyche obviously refused to give in. Even some sympathetic Indians believed

But the Chogyal was first a Sikkimese and then a king. If he seemed less amenable than anyone else

This assertiveness made a temporary, not long-term, difference. If the Chogyal had been content with the status quo, the monarchy would have remained the only serious obstacle to absorption. If a republic with a protectorate was to be established, the monarchy remained the only serious obstacle to absorption.

An excuse for a confrontation had been brewing since January 1975 when Nepal's King Birendra informed the Indian government that he was planning to visit India.

But the palace was hesitant, informing Malla on 16 January that the crown prince might represent him in Kathmandu.

Nor was the local administration kept in the dark. Though not allowed to communicate with ministers, the chief executive was aware of the situation.

No objections were voiced until the morning of 21 February when the chief executive suddenly appeared in Gangtok.

Small knots of half-hearted demonstrators along the way spoke of hasty efforts to organize protests, but they were quickly dispersed.

These irritations were nothing compared to the storm that broke out while the Chogyal was in Kathmandu. He had been told to preserve his country's identity. Convinced that the Chogyal had left Gangtok clandestinely, the Indian government was furious.

That should have set at rest doubts about his seeking redress beyond India. But briefed by the external affairs minister, the government in Gangtok, Kazi displayed ferocious anger. Accusing the Chogyal of slipping away without the government's knowledge, he demanded an apology.

He had planned to return on 3 March but was obliged to stay on an extra day for an appointment with the Indian government.

However, a truck and a jeep still blocked the bridge across the Rangpo river between the two countries. The government of Sikkim and the government of India have been particularly shocked in recent weeks.

The government of Sikkim and the government of India have been particularly shocked in recent weeks. The chief executive had already launched another personal attack. Rasaily being in favour at court, Lal was not surprised.

But none of the guardsmen, and certainly not Captain Yongda, carried kukris when in uniform, when they were on duty.

When the royal party reached Gangtok, there was Khorana, supposedly confined to bed, waiting in the courtyard. He had been told to preserve his country's identity.

India and Sikkim were both in tumult, everybody baying for the Chogyal's head. Kazi and his party were in a state of confusion. The chief executive had already launched another personal attack.

The chief executive had already launched another personal attack. Rasaily being in favour at court, Lal was not surprised. Unfortunately for the chief executive, Yongda's arrest embroiled him in a legal dispute.

Unfortunately for the chief executive, Yongda's arrest embroiled him in a legal dispute. Tarachand had been in a spell of inaction during the long period of about 12 years and non-production of papers, if any, relating to the case. None of these fabricated charges were ever put to the test.

None of these fabricated charges were ever put to the test. Though Yongda was again imprisoned on 10 March, the chief executive had already launched another personal attack.

Hariomal passionately believed in the separation of powers. "It has to be conceded that no nation can survive without a strong judiciary. The chief executive at once tried to circumvent the reforms by conferring magisterial powers on himself.

The chief executive at once tried to circumvent the reforms by conferring magisterial powers on himself. The chief executive had not forgotten that Hariomal had resisted Das's relatively mild probings, granting him a reprieve.

The chief executive had not forgotten that Hariomal had resisted Das's relatively mild probings, granting him a reprieve. Lal suffered another setback when S.K. Prasad, chief judge of the high court, also an Indian on secondment, was appointed.

Lal suffered another setback when S.K. Prasad, chief judge of the high court, also an Indian on secondment, was appointed. It had become clear that the judiciary would never acquiesce in lawless rule. Lal, therefore, set out to reform the judiciary.

Clearly and neatly, therefore, the judicial set-up was contemplated to continue as already in existence. Designated as the chief executive was, he could not have under the Act any control, much less over the judiciary.

Designated as the chief executive was, he could not have under the Act any control, much less over the judiciary. The chief executive had already launched another personal attack.

The Chogyal had never interfered with his department. Nor had he placed any strains on the judiciary.

But the judge's understanding of civilized norms was not shared by Lal who wrote to the Chogyal on

The Chogyal explained to Gurbachan Singh on 9 March 1975 why the judiciary and executive should

There were many reasons for the chief executive to act quickly. Judges who refused to support trum

The first hearing of these two cases was on 29 March. Hariomal had not had time to study the consti

This was the last straw. On 1 April the PO told the Chogyal—who had that day appealed to Mrs Gand

The Chogyal objected that such ex parte judgments did not allow an opposing point of view to be ev

Lal sent a clerk round to Hariomal's office late on 2 April with a copy of the order. He himself telep

The lighthouse was damaged and demolished with contempt which it never deserved. About two d

Lal had changed only his tactics, not intention. Two days later he sent K. V. Natarajan, the develop

A similar case was pending in Delhi high court where a local lawyer, Som Dutt Sharma, had filed a

## Smash and Grasp part-6

### Last-Ditch Stand

The people of Sikkim, however, remain calm and undisturbed but proudly determined to fight any in

We the people of Sikkim declare that the Sikkimese people do not recognize the right of any externa

If the revolt was delayed, it was mainly because many people still believed in New Delhi's professio

The only satisfied Sikkimese were in the tight circle that directly benefited from subservience, the le

The unfrocked Lama, nursing his hatred of the Namgyals, whom she had groomed and goaded to pl

But there were murmurs all the same, echoes of tokens of resistance. Two Sikkimese men, Dilkuma

The spirit of resistance found expression in the Sikkim Students' Association's Declaration of Indepe

"Would the people of India have foregone their independence for two seats in the British Parliamen

The palace could not hope to escape being penalized for such flashes of resistance. Gurbachan Sing

Good-looking, clean-limbed, and fresh from Cambridge, combining the English public schoolboy's

At home the chief executive hunted for excuses to further insult and humiliate the King. No charge

Tenzing would not hear of it, for he was the crown prince and Sikkim and the throne would one day

Tenzing had heard from his friends of an abortive attempt to annex Sikkim, made on 4 March, the day

He had listened to public grievances, noted the complaints of officials, heard of Kazini's bitter tirade

The visit must have been reported. For Gurbachan Singh sent for the chief minister on 11 March, and

That was how Tenzing found the bungalow when he drove up in his Austrian half liner, three guards

The trivial loss was soon forgotten for Gangtok was buzzing with rumours of fierce and acrimonious

But it was not enough to put down Kazi and Kazini. The palace had also to be warned. Gurbachan Singh

It has been brought to my notice that, as Maharajkumar Tenzing was leaving the chief minister's residence

This incident, especially following upon the earlier two, is indeed most serious, and I cannot express

Public opinion in the state is incensed enough, particularly over the Rangpo incident last week. No

He then added:

A further very disturbing report came to me last night which, again, concerns a visit to the chief minister

The path you appear to have chosen to follow is a path which, I fear, will surely lead to a collision.

I regret to have to write this letter but developments over the last several days leave me no option

It was an outrageous letter by any reckoning. That the PO was actively intervening in the kingdom's

I presume all the necessary tests have been made and the political officer has no doubt informed you

He never did get it back. It would have been far too humiliating for India to return a felt-tipped pen

But Tenzing did not give up. He was looking for some other means of reopening negotiations, when

Dated 12 March, it was in the form of a letter to Mrs Gandhi, routed through the chief minister, chief

We, the undersigned cabinet ministers of the government of Sikkim, and members of the Sikkim assembly

Resolution Number One: That the three portfolios, viz., home, finance and establishment, that are at

Resolution Number Two: That the chief executive, in the interests of the smooth running of the administration

Resolution Number Three: That this meeting demands the immediate removal of the three OSDs who

Resolution Number Four: Those officers who are at present on deputation to the government of Sikkim

The text went on:

Resolution Number Five: That the high court judge and the central court judge should be sent on deputation

Resolution Number Six: That the Sikkim Congress welcomes the Chogyal's reported statement for

A number of Congress members trickled in as word spread of what was going on and soon there were

But 18 politicians could not gather under Kazi's roof without word reaching India House and Mintola

He realized how explosive it could be. The men who were constantly being lauded in India as Sikkim

But it was first necessary to compel the authors to repudiate their handiwork. Kazi was summoned

Three new resolutions declared the 12 March meeting illegal and unauthorized, denounced its organs and its actions, and demanded the Chogyal to open a parley and negotiations with the Chogyal, whose anti-democratic and anti-people policies were being exposed.

Grinning sheepishly at Kazini as he lounged at her dining table, Subeidi claimed he had signed the same document.

Krishna Chandra signed this document with the rest. But instead of waiting for the axe to fall, he upped the ante by resigning from the cabinet and leaving the palace. Ceremonially addressing the ruler as Mewang Chogyal Chempo, he wrote:

I wish to inform you that in view of the aspirations of the Sikkimese people, I have time and again urged you to open a parley and negotiations with the Chogyal, whose anti-democratic and anti-people policies were being exposed.

However, there has been no such progress or any sign towards this direction, and the condition in the country is becoming increasingly difficult.

In the circumstances, it is with the greatest regret that I am constrained to submit my resignation to you.

It was a mischievous move, for Krishna Chandra knew that Lal was pressurizing the Chogyal to discontinue the negotiations.

Having gone to all this trouble, Lal was beside himself with anger when the palace sent him the resignation letter.

The Indians too were taken in by this strategy because the 12 March manifesto was rigorously suppressed.

And so the strategy that was born in Tenzing's mind failed. But the support it drew, even if fleeting, was a sign of the people's growing awareness.

## Smash and Grasp part-7

### Thumb Impression

I think you know that there was no referendum in Sikkim either to decide its international status or to decide whether it should merge with India.

We have always said and still say that the manner of Sikkim's merger with India was not legal and constitutional.

It was tea time in the English village of Tanyard, near Frittenden. John Eric Clarke, an elderly solicitor, was sitting at his table.

The signal was weak but quite intelligible, and he identified the speaker as AC3PT, the code name for the Chogyal's SOS.

The Chogyal's SOS was also picked up by several stations in Sweden and in Japan by Naoki Akiyama.

This was on 9 April. It was late evening in Gangtok, the Chogyal and Tenzing discussing the day's session.

The Chogyal was an experienced amateur broadcaster. His transcontinental conversations were regular.

But communication was not good that night. The invasion noticed by Clarke was from Khorana's wireless station.

His isolation was now complete. The palace was under heavy guard; visitors were turned away without admission.

"On April 9, 1975, the Indian army was deployed to annex Sikkim" wrote Khatiawara, "All the assets of the Chogyal were seized."

The chief executive inaugurated the session with a measured condemnation of Hariomal's 29 March resolution.

The service of notices by the court on the president and members of the house amounts to service of process.

If this were so, the Sikkim assembly would have been a sovereign parliament. Lal fostered that misconception.

But in a political speech that appealed to emotion with half-truths and misleading analogies, Lal suggested that the court had oversteered. Only Krishna Chandra Pradhan acknowledged that far from questioning the Act, the court had underwritten it. Krishna Chandra again tried to intervene. The government already exercised all the Chogyal's powers. It was an astounding exhibition of servility, compounded by the chief minister's claim that the proposed amendments were necessary. Rinzing's two motions naturally obtained unanimous support. But this did not make them any more palatable. Gurbachan Singh only shrugged in grand seigneurial dismissal when these crippling drawbacks were pointed out. No revolution could have been more phoney. The violence and bloodshed of 9 April was still fresh in the minds of the people. Manuel, in his rusty black, was occasionally glimpsed, the only stirring of life within the sealed-off city. There were plenty of other reasons for disquiet. Shops that did not close in time were looted. Private homes were searched. Others stormed into Martam House, determined to lynch Karma Topden's father; they withdrew only when the police intervened. The mob held the country to ransom. In spite of Khorana's 450 constables, the 2,000 CRP men under his command were unable to control the situation. The implied accusation seemed to be confirmed when Kazi told reporters that India would withdraw its troops from Sikkim. Meticulous as ever with his paper work, the Chogyal wrote to the PO after a second visit urging him to reconsider. This morning when you came to the palace at 11.00 a.m. you had suggested that I should move out of the palace. I had informed you on both occasions that I cannot, leave my ancestral residence, and since you had not accepted my reasons, it is strange that the chief executive has not met me for the past few weeks despite the fact that I am still in the palace. Coo Coo la, meanwhile, faced almost as much harassment in New Delhi where she occupied a suite in the Connaught Place Hotel. Returning to Chanakypuri, Coo Coo la found that truck-loads of CRP men had pitched tents in the palace grounds. But the princess was nothing if not resourceful: she managed to smuggle her trusted steward out of the palace. Sikkim thus voted for constitutional suicide in an atmosphere of mounting terror. Even so, the chief minister's speech was widely regarded as a masterpiece of political oratory. The morning of 14 April dawned crisp and clear. Two battalions of armed CRP troops, as well as Kazi's 450 constables, were deployed in the palace grounds. Inevitably, people objected that the same colour had deliberately been chosen to mislead the simple-minded. If anything has discredited Sikkim's demand for merger with India, it is the so-called referendum which was held on 14 April. The paper went on to argue that the "fait accompli casts a good deal of doubt on just how popular the merger was. The conduct of the operation fully justified these strictures. There was no secrecy about this ballot. Sikkim was not a democracy. Yet, Lal announced an unbelievable 63 per cent turn-out. Even less credible was the gazette proclamation that the referendum was held in accordance with the provisions of the Indian Constitution.

Khatiawara was to impugn on the proceedings still further.

The events of the 1973 uprising were fresh in the minds of the people when elections to the Sikkim  
It is an open secret that in a difficult and hilly terrain like ours, it would be next to impossible to ev  
All polling booths were managed by Indian personnel assisted by the CRP. The polling for the few

He went on to add:

The "special poll" took place under the auspices of the Sikkim election commission which had not  
At the time of the "special poll" the authorities informed the people that the poll was being held to

Nevertheless, Kazi, that ideal ventriloquist's dummy, issued an impressively vigorous statement on  
I must say in frankness that in the past there have been occasions when the government of India, w  
I would like to mention that I have already proposed to the Prime Minister that some of us should i

Strong words from a man with little thought and no language. But New Delhi avidly sustained this t

Gangtok was crawling with journalists. Foreign correspondents had not been allowed in, but the Ind

The Chogyal seemed to have retreated into hermetic seclusion. Gurbachan Singh had been warmly v

There the matter stood until I bumped into Gupta around five one evening coming cut of Green's ho

It was a dismal abode that we entered. The first person I saw was black-garbed Manuel, dark and so

The press conference was a fiasco. Movie and television lights suddenly blazed in the drawing-room

Our army escort at once produced notebook and pencil [which is more than most of the reporters dic

But the meeting served a propaganda purpose. It was pointed out next morning that the monarch ob

What did, however, emerge from that last public appearance of the twelfth consecrated Denzong Ch

Later that night and to my considerable surprise, Gurbachan Singh allowed me to leave his party and

In the absence of conditions for fair and free polling, the result of such referendum in any case was

Such a referendum should be held under neutral authority, and all parties given a fair opportunity f

Regret even Indian election commission not competent to conduct such referendum as its outcome

In view of this unconstitutional and undemocratic and illegal action by those who have assumed al

There was no meeting. If India House forwarded the message, Mrs Gandhi chose not to reply.

Gurbachan Singh allowed me to call at the palace once more to say goodbye. He did so making plai

An Indian air force helicopter waited at Libing helipad on 16 April to take the chief minister to Bag

For I had witnessed an unedifying domestic upheaval late the previous night when Kazi and Kazini

The chief minister did not seriously defend himself. He was desperately afraid that the CRP, loungin

Kazi did not refer to that unnerving scene. But its memory obviously impelled him to explain his he

And with that fond prophecy, the chief minister of Sikkim, resplendent in silken kho, climbed into his

The Sikkimese delegates were received in New Delhi like conquering heroes, Mrs Gandhi promising

Kazi returned from New Delhi on 17 April. Four days later, Chavan introduced the Constitution [The

Lal obviously enjoyed being the master of ceremonies at a gathering in his drawing-room the morning

Huddled in a bay window the triumphant ministers might have been a bunch of very raw actors never

None of this worried Lal as he moved forward to take full advantage of his now unbridled powers. He

S. K. Prasad of the Sikkim high court was served with a similar peremptory order of dismissal the same

My only regret has been that such an esteemed institution, built after years of labour and based on

Society could and would, when it served the government's political interests to do so and more.

For having made this culmination possible, B. B. Lal was made governor of Sikkim the very day that

But it was a sadly denuded mansion. Since the property had been taken over by the Home Ministry,

"There are about 27 sentry boxes around the palace, and it looks as if the Chogyal is going to stay per

Apart from the faithful Mrs Targain, the Chogyal also had the services of Roland Chhetri, the Guard

And what was Sikkim left with? The strict legal answer would be the status quo ante. If the resolution

India tried to evade problems arising out of this de jure return to the past through carefully worded l

Neither the Supreme Court nor any other court shall have jurisdiction in respect of any dispute or

Som Dutt Sharma's petition in the Delhi high court, Rasaily's in the Gangtok Central Court, and Har

It was neither here nor there that an official statement from Beijing vehemently denounced this clim

This was contrary to the letter and spirit of the thirty-eighth amendment, but New Delhi raised no ob

It will be noticed that the expression "treaty" is sedulously avoided. The only intention can be that

Anticipating changes, India's lawyer-vice-president advised that no enactment in New Delhi could c

Nar Bahadur Khatiawara was not aware of these legal implications. Nor did any great concern for m

Sikkim is a small country and its people, regardless of their origin, are gentle and peace-loving. W

We regret that under pretext of ushering in democracy to fulfil "the wishes of the people", India's a

The letter further added:

In this regard, it is our party's considered belief that the people of Sikkim always treated every India

The methods used by them were the age-old methods of the imperialistic and expansionist nations

The people's majesty could be as gullible as any anointed sovereign.

[End]