



India

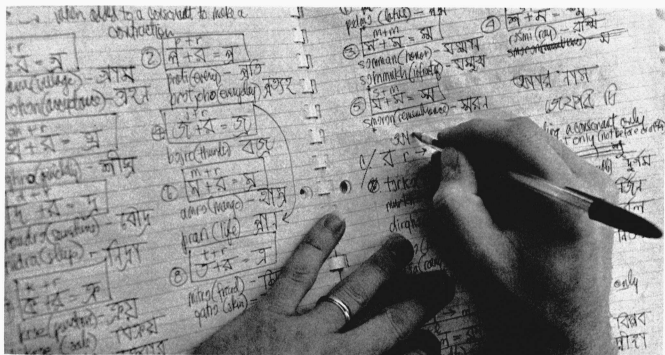
PROJECT 37

INDIA'S MOSAIC OF CULTURE is now reality to 85 Peace Corps trainees who completed 12 weeks of intensive training on the Columbia campus December 2, enjoyed a brief pre-holiday visit with their families and departed December 13 from New York for West Bengal. Fortified with the pebbles of learning with which to piece together a pattern of living in a new and different country, they are the 37th Peace Corps group to extend a helping hand to India, bringing the total number of volunteers there to nearly 1500, and the first to be involved strictly with agricultural extension.

Their 300 hours of Bengali language drill and 300 hours of agricultural pursuit, coupled with 100 hours of cultural and cross-cultural training and an additional 100 hours of health and physical education—to say nothing of the cycling and hiking that have been their modes of transportation while in Columbia—have produced stalwart young men and women. Equipped to be salesmen of new and unfamiliar techniques, teachers of methods and persuasive ambassadors, they must now transmit their skills to people. What they have to give must be accomplished with sensitivity to the situation, with awareness of their own images as citizens of the United States, with self-discipline and self-reliance.

THAT THEY are adequately prepared and motivated in the brief training time allotted has been the concern of the University, its Peace Corps staff, government of-

PHOTOS BY TED FUNK



Bengali is one of India's major languages. Mrs. Rina Das, at left, was one of 13 Indian instructors on the language staff.

ficials, specialized Indian teachers and an experienced group of Peace Corps returnees whose talents have been meshed to provide a practical, quality program. Of the original 94 enrolled in August, the 85 certified include four married couples, one single girl who has since married a Peace Corps volunteer returning for his second two-year term in India, and the remainder, all men.

The University joined the Peace Corps people-to-people quest in 1964, subsequently becoming one of the major training centers in the mid-west and graduating 341 volunteers. Two rural community development programs for Ecuador were conducted on campus in 1964; similar programs for Bolivia and Thailand and a government development program for Nepal were programmed in 1965; and last summer began phase one of an on-going program for Thailand which will culminate in the summer of 1967.

RIGOROUS TRAINING and screening are common to all programs to enable students to "walk in the shoes" of the people with whom they will live. Empathy, leadership, and creativity are just as important to success as specific studies. The ability to fail and begin again must be made tolerable.

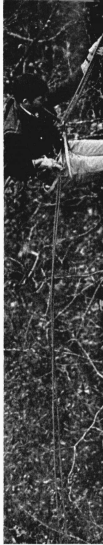
India trainees embarked on a nine-mile hike to the Rocheford Farm, University turkey research farm, three days after their arrival last fall. There they spent one week clearing 2.5 acres of land to plant rice, made their

own iron and wooden tools, and used a native Indian scythe. Thereafter, the production of the paddy became a primary concern, with special emphasis given to irrigation systems in order to produce more than one seasonal crop now related to the *Karif*, the monsoon planting-growing season in India.

Skills were developed as a "package of practices" to be put into operation in West Bengal, where the ratio is 300 farmers to 250 acres of land. Techniques learned for rice production—cultivating, seeding, fertilizing, plant protecting, weeding, irrigating, harvesting and drying—can also be applied to a second important Indian crop, jute, the fibre used for sacking, burlap and twine. Secondary was poultry husbandry (of 125 experimental chickens raised, 9 died, and the 116 others were killed and barbecued), and vegetable horticulture.

Integrated studies centered around language communication with one Bengali teacher for every seven students, lectures by experts, films of India, extensive reading assignments and discussions, filling a 12- to 14-hour day, five and one-half days a week.

With the schooling now behind, Peace Corps members of Project 37 have arrived at their destination, spent a 10-day in-country indoctrination on a government rice farm, and received individual assignments. They carry the torch lit by President Kennedy, who envisioned young people contributing part of their lives in service to their country to work for freedom. □



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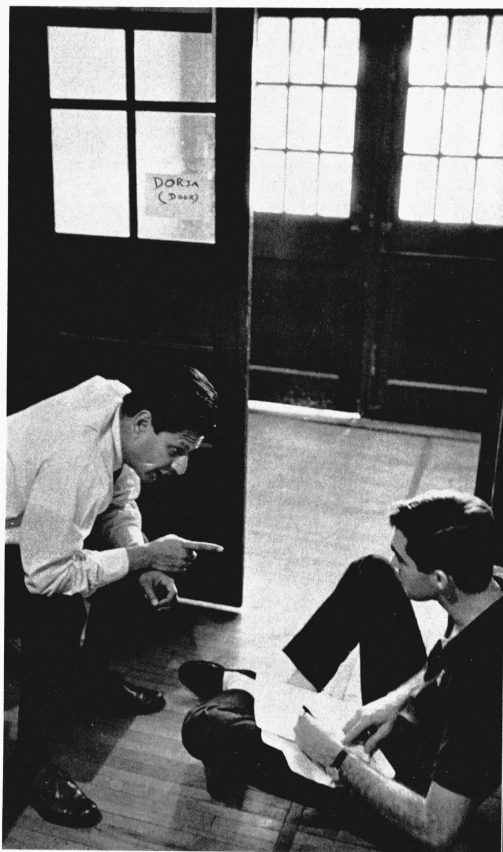
"It helps to build confidence," says Jimmie D. Vermillion, coordinator of physical training. Howard Stob, of Grand Rapids, Mich., prepares to go over the cliff as Bob Adams, Culver-Stockton graduate from Chicago, anchors the rope. At far right, in photo taken from another vantage point, Howard kicks off again during a 120-foot descent. Fastest "repelling" time on this cliff was 6½ seconds. Other trainees were learning climbing techniques.





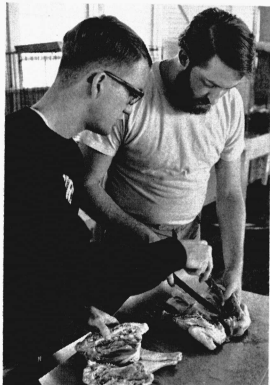
Non-swimmers, left, learned to handle themselves under water with hands and/or feet tied.

Don Gray, right, of Woodland, Calif., gets additional pointers in dormitory hallway from Arun Basu, an agricultural specialist on the teaching staff. Don majored in anthropology at Stanford University. Dr. Basu received his bachelor of science degree from Calcutta University and has his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Missouri.





S. N. Ghosh coordinates Peace Corps programs for the state of West Bengal.



Richard and Virginia Bodner, left and above, Seattle, are Harvard and Radcliffe graduates.



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Trainees learned to cook Indian dishes. Mrs. Sulekha Ghosh, who holds an M.A. in political science from Calcutta University, stirs as Larry Dower, Gratiot, Wis., Sally Dippol, Walworth, N. Y., and Virginia Bodner watch. The trainee-raised chickens were barbecued American style, however. Dave Dinehart, Edwardsburg, Mich., and Greg Rusk, Cincinnati, at left, center, helped to clean and cut up 116 birds.

There was much to talk about as trainees tried to learn to "walk in the shoes" of the people of India. Mrs. Arun Basu, in forefront, discusses Indian traditions with a small group in one of the TD-3 conference rooms.

