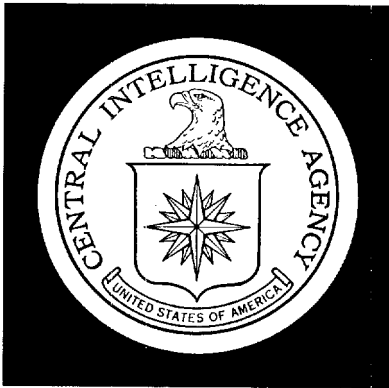


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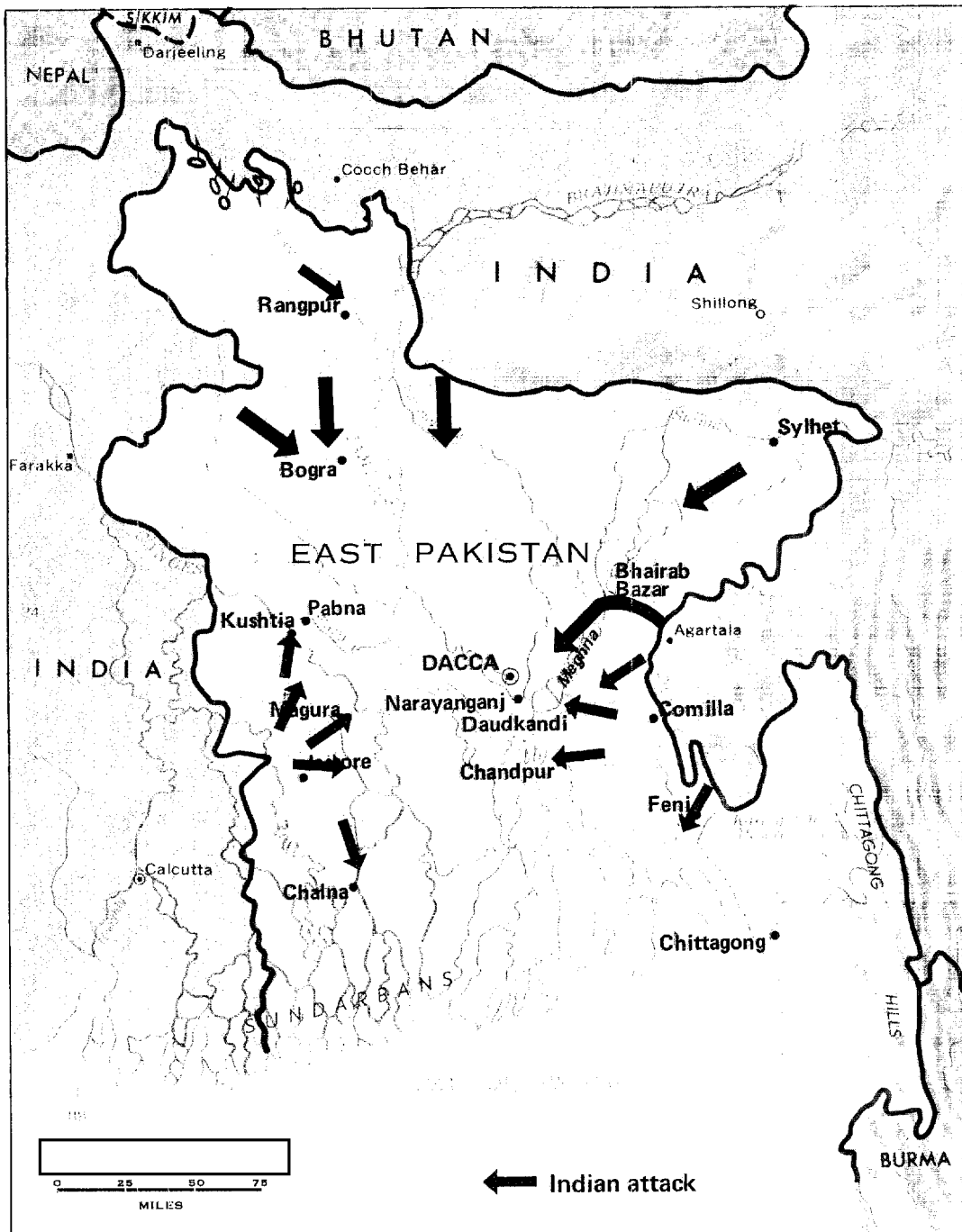
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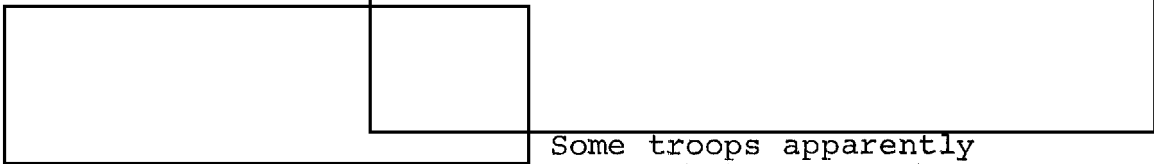
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INDIA-PAKISTAN: Indian forces should begin to gain the upper hand on the western front once East Pakistan has fallen.

In the East, the Indians continue to close in on the capital city of Dacca. The Indian forces closest to the capital, those east of the city, control most of the Pakistani territory up to the Meghna River. The Indians say they have crossed the Meghna at Bhairab Bazar upstream from Dacca and have advanced to within 22 miles of the city. They are apparently meeting little enemy resistance and claim that only the many small rivers in the area are blocking their way; the retreating Pakistanis have reportedly destroyed many bridges. The Indian radio has retracted an earlier report that Indian units had crossed the Meghna further south and reached the key port town of Narayanganj just six miles from the capital. Meanwhile, the Indians claim they have Pakistani units bottled up at various other locations and are making air strikes against the remaining pockets of resistance.

So far the Pakistani Army in the Dacca area has not shown much inclination to prepare for a last-ditch stand.

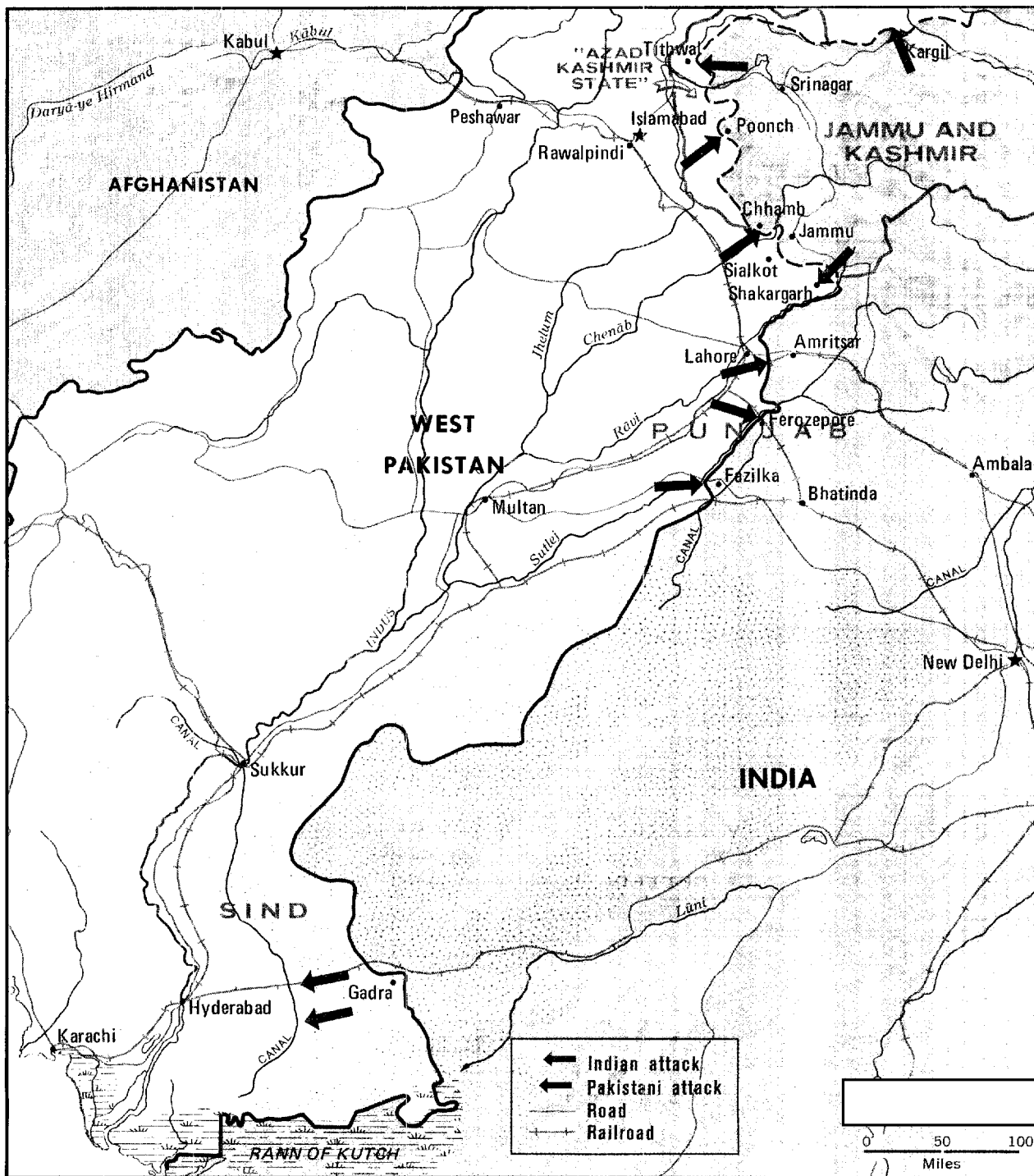


Some troops apparently have made their way to port towns below Dacca but have found that Indian domination of the Bay of Bengal and the main river routes has closed off the possibility of escape by sea.

Both sides continue to claim successes on the western front. In northern Kashmir, the Pakistanis say they have beaten back Indian counterattacks in the Kargil and Tithwal areas. They also claim to be gaining some ground amid heavy fighting in Indian territory near Chhamb. In the Sialkot sector

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[the Indians reportedly have the initiative. Neither side appears to have made any major gains yet in any of these areas. Farther south, the Indians claim they have captured over 1,200 square miles in the Sind area, but this territory is sparsely populated. New Delhi can be expected to move additional troops to the western front after East Pakistan falls; [redacted]

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[redacted] The Indians reportedly have already shifted some aircraft from the eastern to the western theater.

The Pakistani Government is submitting a proposal to UN Secretary General Thant calling for an immediate cease-fire in the East and guarantees for the safety of Pakistani armed forces and other non-Bengalis in the province. The message to Thant makes it clear that Pakistan is not proposing a surrender by its armed forces. According to Pakistani Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan, Islamabad would also accept a cease-fire on the western front on the basis of the recently passed UN General Assembly resolution, or under the general terms of a cease-fire and a stand-fast to be observed by UN representatives. Negotiations for settlement of the war, troop withdrawal, and "satisfaction of Bengali aspirations" would follow. There has been no Indian response as yet to the Pakistani proposal, but at this juncture, with the Indians so close to a complete victory in the East, they are unlikely to respond affirmatively to a proposition that does not include a surrender and an immediate turnover of power to the Bengalis.

The Soviets have not reacted thus far to the West Pakistani cease-fire proposal, but Moscow will probably support whatever tack New Delhi takes. In an authoritative article in Pravda yesterday]

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the Soviets expressed discomfiture about the results of the UN General Assembly debate and concern about the fact that the crisis has brought Peking and Washington together on a major international issue. The author attributed the defeat of the Soviet General Assembly resolution on the crisis to the fact that some countries--i.e., China and the US--hope to gain from the conflict while others were duped by "artificially whipped-up hysteria" and did not understand the true nature of the situation.

New Delhi yesterday demanded that the UN withdraw all of its personnel from East Pakistan and close its operations there. Assistant UN Secretary General Henry in Dacca believes that India is making this demand to force the UN to deal with Bangla Desh authorities by breaking UN ties with Islamabad's officials in the province. India's demand may also stem from the fact that many of the Bengali rebels have felt that the UN's presence was helping to perpetuate West Pakistani control over the province. The Indian Army's eastern command itself charged yesterday that UN food relief ships were carrying ammunition and other war materiel to Pakistani troops in the East. Henry hopes to be able to start evacuating UN personnel from the area in British planes expected to arrive in Dacca today. India had already promised to stop bombing the Dacca airfield for a 24-hour period starting at 1800 local time on 10 December.

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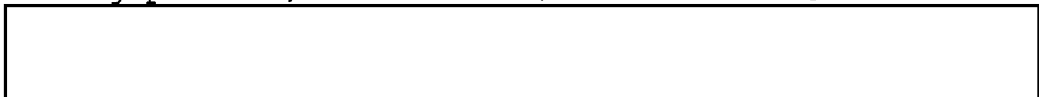
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PANAMA: The government is cracking down hard on the efforts by the business community to organize itself politically. At the same time, it is showing increasing toleration of the left.

General Torrijos has promised legislative elections next year, but he has been concerned that the oligarchy-dominated parties which he displaced might attempt to reassert their influence and challenge his position. The government, therefore, reacted sharply last week when a group of about 60 businessmen and former political leaders met to plan electoral strategy and to protest government policy, which has led to increases in the minimum wage and payment of one extra month salary to all workers.

A government-controlled newspaper immediately published photographs of persons attending the meeting and denounced the group as "enemies of the people." When a member of the group subsequently criticized the government attack on radio, he was arrested and the radio station was suspended from broadcasting for 90 days.

The regime has been permitting the Communist Party to operate and to consolidate its position among peasant, urban labor, and student groups.



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These students plan to demonstrate on 14 December in front of the Foreign Ministry in order to support the government's hard line on canal negotiations.

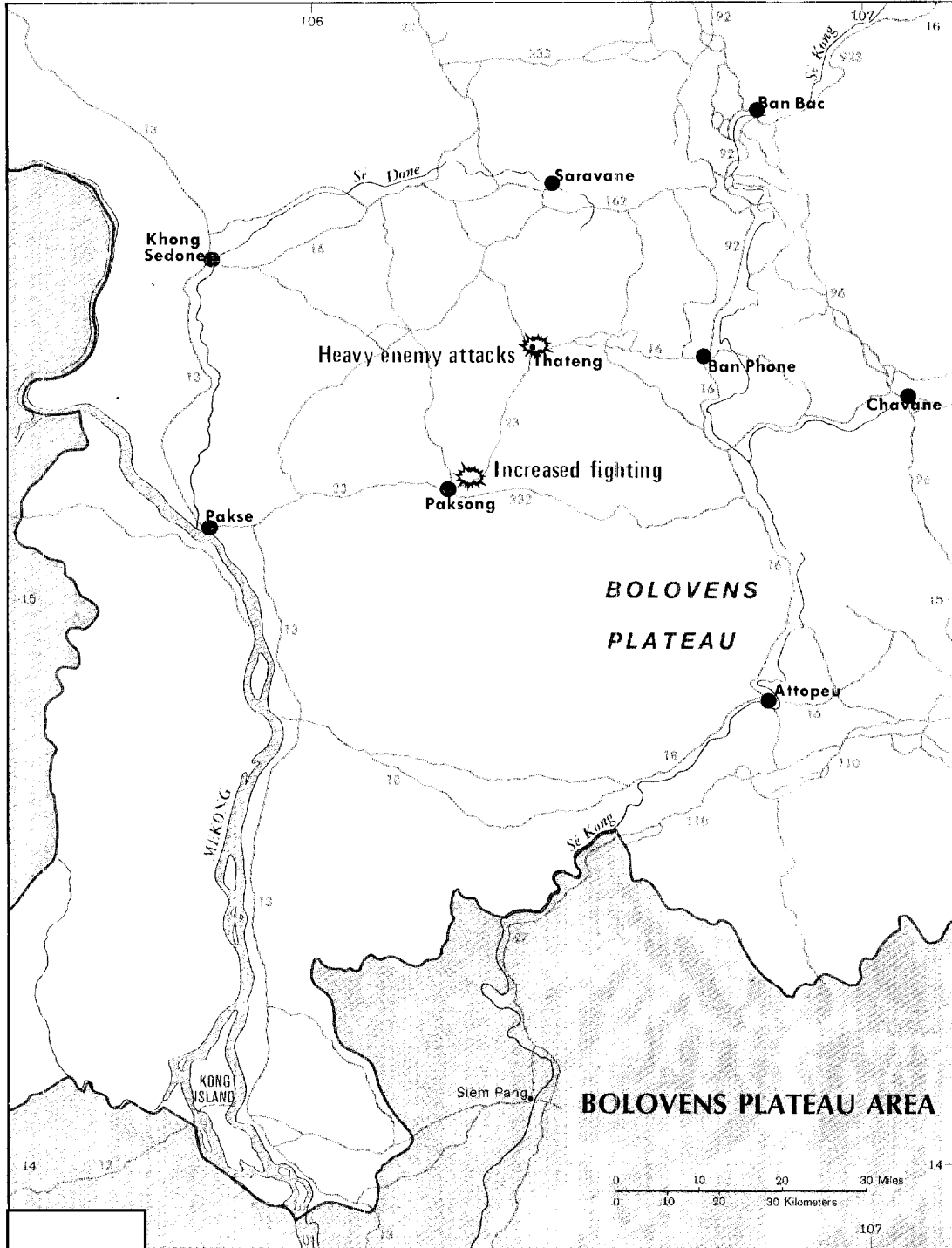
There is no evidence that this demonstration will be allowed to get out of hand or that Torrijos wishes to provoke a confrontation with the US at this juncture. Torrijos is not adverse to maintaining pressure on the US, however, and having boasted often of student support, undoubtedly welcomes an opportunity to demonstrate to the US that such backing actually exists.



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LAOS: Government forces in the Bolovens Plateau area are coming under heavy enemy pressure.

An irregular task force was attacked near the town of Thateng on 9-10 December by two North Vietnamese battalions closely supported by tanks and mortars. Two of the irregular battalions were dispersed with heavy losses and are regrouping with a third battalion just south of the town. Another irregular task force that had been operating east of Thateng is moving to relieve these units, and air strikes are under way.

A third irregular force also has been engaged in sharp fighting on the Plateau itself for the last several days. Two battalions northeast of Paksong have been hit particularly hard, and heavy enemy ground fire has severely restricted resupply and medical evacuation. Additional irregular units are moving to relieve these forces.

The North Vietnamese are reacting to recent government efforts to disrupt logistic centers and supply routes north of the Plateau. Their attacks during the last week--the capture of Saravane as well as the attacks near Thateng and Paksong--are clearly part of a closely coordinated effort to reverse as quickly as possible the gains the government made during the rainy season. The broad scale of the fighting and the size of the units apparently committed suggests that they have assigned a high priority to the effort to regain this area.

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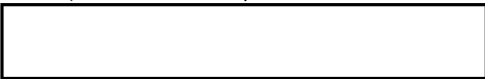
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SOUTH KOREA: President Pak is claiming extensive public support for his recent declaration of a "state of national emergency." At the same time, he has demonstrated that he will not tolerate opposition to this move.

Since the announcement on 6 December, government propaganda has stated that veterans, business and religious organizations are all supporting the call for greater vigilance and military preparedness. In addition, all daily papers reportedly have acknowledged the necessity for restraint in press reporting of security matters. As if to emphasize the importance of such restraint, security authorities "interrogated" the editor of Seoul's most prestigious newspaper on 8 December after it criticized the emergency decree. Since then, newspaper coverage of adverse public comment has almost vanished.

The government is also pushing the new security theme in its own institutions. Prime Minister Kim Chong-pil has called upon civil servants to establish a new "security posture" and the education ministry has been ordered to give priority to "anti-Communist education, military training and air defense training," and to institute strict discipline among teachers and students. The Ministry of Culture and Information has been instructed to "uproot decadent tendencies" in the society. The government also will seek legislation from the National Assembly next week for additional authority over military, and possibly press and economic affairs. The tough attitude projected thus far should go a long way toward cowing the opposition into supporting the new legislation.

Pak's declaration of an "emergency" was designed to strengthen his grip on domestic affairs rather than respond to any real threat from the north. Such strong measures against so many segments of Korean society could, however, nurture public opposition to him.



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