

Underground bazaar attracts crowd

If the fruit and vegetable bazaars were a sight to see and an exciting experience so too were the larger bazaars. Many times I wished I had been carrying a movie camera. For me the fabric stores were the most interesting. The method of shopping for fabrics is so unique. Bolts of fabrics are piled high one above the other all up the walls. The customers and the owner sit on low benches or on cushions on the floor while the owner directs his employees to bring down countless bolts of cloth for a closer inspection. Nothing is too much trouble and in no time at all he will have you surrounded by beautiful silks and cottons, even if you tell him you are only looking. They have such beautiful fabrics it's really hard to resist and there are so many fabric stores to choose from.

Having a garment sewn for you in India is so cheap you might as well travel with an empty suitcase and have new clothes made there. One shop in Connaught Circus specializes in hand woven raw fabrics, both silk and cotton. The Indian Kurta - pajama outfits made from these fabrics and worn mostly by the men are visible

Indo Canadian

Joan Mayo



everywhere and the store is so busy you must line up to get to the counter.

If you would like a piece of fabric or head scarf dyed to match your outfit just take something in the color you want with you and you will find young boys working over huge cauldrons of boiling water on the roadside or in the parking area and they will dye the cloth for you while you wait. Then two of them flap the fabric up and down in the warm sun 'til it's partially dry and for only pennies you have a piece of cloth a perfect match to your outfit.

The beautiful silk and cotton sari's made of fine delicate cloth and the hand embroidered wool shawls are a little more expensive but such fine quality and in so many colors it is very difficult to choose only one.

For the men, western style

clothes are readily available also many colors of turbans, bush shirts and safari shirts.

As nearly everyone in Delhi cooks with and eats off stainless steel utensils there are fabulous displays of these items in the bazaars and it is fun to go from shop to shop to find where you can obtain the best deal.

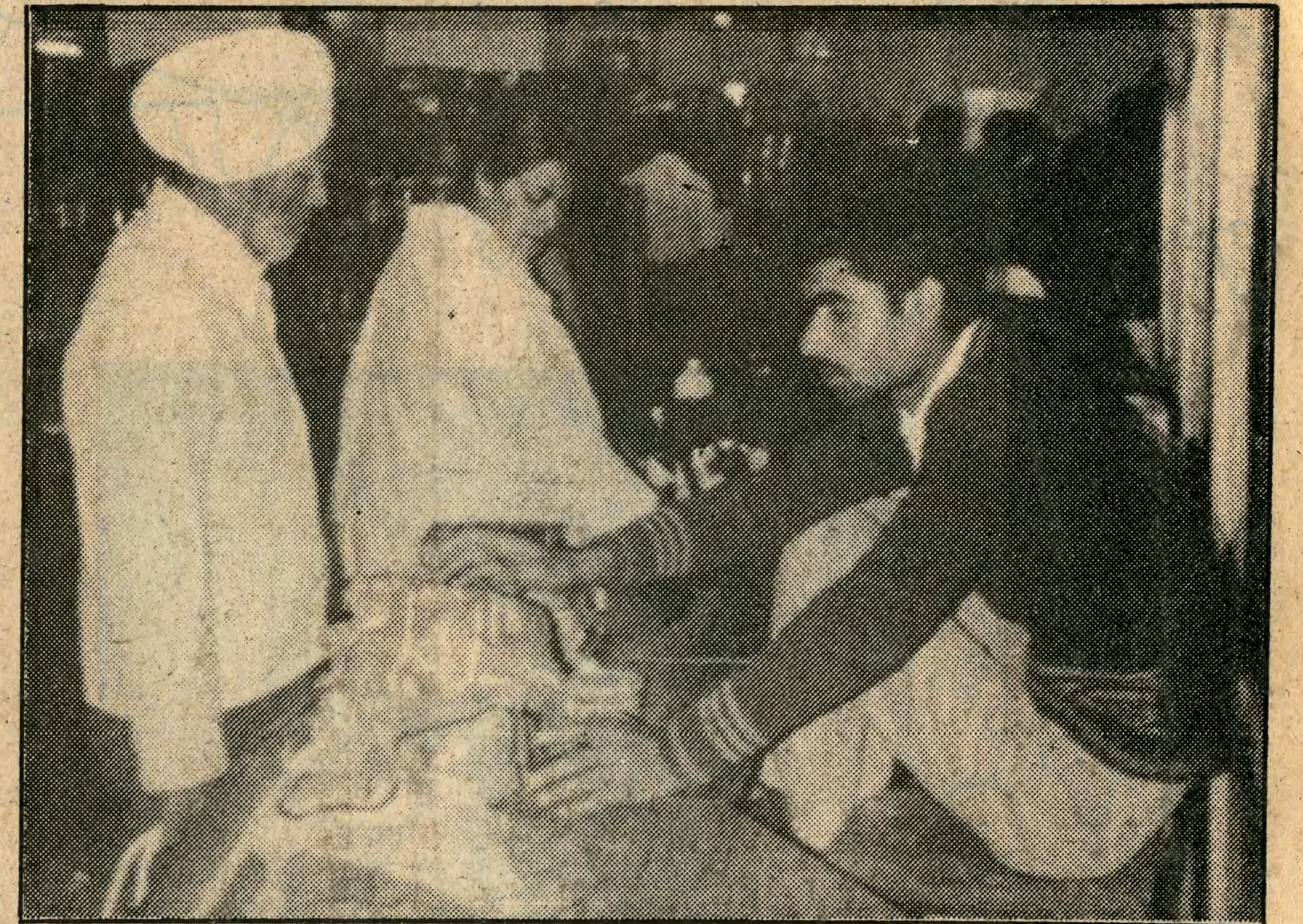
One day when my host family took me along on their shopping trip the car bogged down in traffic near an intersection and as we could hear loud yelling we climbed out to take a closer look and found two scooter drivers slugging it out in the middle of the intersection to cheers of the onlookers. A hefty policeman walked up with his nightstick, gave each one a good rap with the stick and ordered them into their scooters and on their way.

There is no end to the excitement in an Indian bazaar.

New Delhi has a large modern underground bazaar that advertises air conditioning but it is so crowded down there that if it was air conditioned I would hate to be there when the system breaks down. There was a feeling of insecurity down there because of the huge crowds and lack of exits. Also security guards were checking purses and briefcases for bombs so I didn't spend much time in that bazaar.

The Indian supermarket was also great fun. A huge grocery store with primitive shelves and bins full of all the ingredients used in Indian cooking and dozens of varieties of tea and cookies. The nicest feature was the youngsters who follow you with cardboard boxes or baskets and carry all your purchases then follow you through the check out counter and carry everything to your car. Human shopping cars. Everyone finds a job of somekind and no one refuses the offer of their services.

There are no hawkers in the bazaars as it is not the usual haunt of tourists but there are a few pathetic beggars who depend on your generosity, but Delhi is not as bothered with beggars as it was in the past.



CHECKING OUT . . . Customers line up to purchase their wares at the check-out of a supermarket in Delhi.