

# Lecture 5

- **Language Movement and Emergence of Bangladesh**

# Language Movement

- The **Bengali Language Movement** (Bengali: ভাষা আন্দোলন *Bhasha Andolôn*) was a political movement in former East Bengal (renamed East Pakistan in 1956 and Bangladesh in 1971) advocating the recognition of the Bengali language as an official language.
- Dominion of Pakistan in order to allow its use in government affairs, the continuation of its use as a medium of education, its use in media, currency and stamps, and to maintain its writing in the Bengali script.

# Background

- The current nations, Pakistan and Bangladesh, were part of an undivided India during the British colonial rule.
- From the mid-19th century, the Urdu language had been promoted as the lingua franca of Indian Muslims by political and religious leaders, such as Sir Khwaja Salimullah, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk and Maulvi Abdul Haq.
- Urdu is an Indo-Aryan language of the Indo-Iranian branch, closely related to Hindi and belonging to the Indo-European family of languages.
- It developed under Persian, Arabic and Turkic influence on apabhramshas (last linguistic stage of the medieval Indian Aryan language Pali-Prakrit) in South Asia during the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire.
- With its Perso-Arabic script, the language was considered a vital element of the Islamic culture for Indian Muslims;

# Early Stages of the Movement

- After the partition of India in 1947, Bengali-speaking people in [East Bengal](#), the non-contiguous eastern part of the [Dominion of Pakistan](#), made up 44 million of the newly formed Dominion of Pakistan's 69 million people.
- In November 1947, a key resolution at a national education summit in [Karachi](#) advocated Urdu and English as the sole state languages.
- Opposition protests immediately.
- Students from Dhaka rallied under the leadership of [Abul Kashem](#), the secretary of [Tamaddun Majlish](#), a Bengali Islamic cultural organisation.
- The meeting stipulated Bengali as an official language of the Dominion of Pakistan and as a medium of education in East Bengal.
- **Leading Bengali scholars argued why Urdu should not be the only state language. The writer [Abul Mansur Ahmed](#) said if Urdu became the state language, the educated society of East Bengal would become 'illiterate' and 'ineligible' for government positions.**
- The first [Rastrabhasa Sangram Parishad](#) (National Language Action Committee), an organisation in favour of Bengali as a state language was formed towards the end of December 1947.

# Agitations (Andolon) of 1948

- Students of the [University of Dhaka](#) and other colleges of the city organised a general strike on 11 March 1948 to protest the omission of Bengali language from official use, including coins, stamps and recruitment tests for the navy.
- In the afternoon of 11 March, a meeting was held to protest police brutality and arrests.
- A group of students marching towards the chief minister [Khawaja Nazimuddin](#)'s house was stopped in front of the [Dhaka High Court](#).
- The rally changed its direction and moved in the direction of the Secretariat building. Police attacked the procession injuring several students and leaders, including [A. K. Fazlul Huq](#).
- In the height of civic unrest, [Governor-General of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah](#) arrived in Dhaka on 19 March 1948. On 21 March, Jinnah declared that "Urdu, and only Urdu" embodied the spirit of Muslim nations and would remain as the state language,

# Events of 1952

- The Urdu-Bengali controversy was held when Jinnah's successor, governor-general [Khawaja Nazimuddin](#), staunchly defended the "Urdu-only" policy in a speech on 27 January 1952.
- On 31 January, the [Shorbodolio Kendrio Rashtrobhasha Kormi Porishod](#) (All-Party Central Language Action Committee) was formed in a meeting at the Bar Library Hall of the University of Dhaka, chaired by [Maulana Bhashani](#).
- The action committee called for an all out protest on 21 February, including strikes and rallies.
- In an attempt to prevent the demonstration, the government imposed [Section 144](#) in Dhaka, thereby banning any gathering.

# Events of 1952 (21 February)

- At nine o'clock in the morning, students began gathering on the University of Dhaka premises in defiance of Section 144.
- The university vice-chancellor and other officials were present as armed police surrounded the campus. Police fired tear gas shells towards the gate to warn the students.
- A section of students ran into the Dhaka Medical College while others rallied towards the university premises cordoned by the police.
- However, the police arrested several students for violating section 144 as they attempted to leave.
- When a group of students sought to storm into the building, police opened fire and killed a number of students, including Abdus Salam, Rafiq Uddin Ahmed, Sofiur Rahman, Abul Barkat and Abdul Jabbar.

# Events of 1952(Cont..)

- **22 February**

- Disorder spread across the province as large processions ignored [section 144](#) and condemned the actions of the police.
- More than 30,000 people congregated at Curzon Hall in Dhaka. During the continued protests, police actions led to the death of four more people. This prompted officers and clerks from different organisations, including colleges, banks and the radio station, to boycott offices and join the procession.

- **Continued unrest**

- 22 February rally after [janaja](#) at Dhaka Medical College on the University Dhaka road, Dhaka.
- Through the night of 23 February, students of Dhaka Medical College worked on the construction of a *Shaheed Smritistombho*, or Monument of Martyrs.
- Completed at dawn on 24 February, the monument had a handwritten note attached to it with the words "*Shaheed Smritistombho*".
- Inaugurated by the father of the slain activist Sofiur Rahman, the monument was destroyed on 26 February by police.



# Reaction in West Pakistan

- Although the Language Movement is considered to have laid the foundations for ethnic nationalism in many of the Bengalis of East Bengal and later East Pakistan, it also heightened the cultural animosity between the authorities of the two wings of Pakistan.
- In the western wing of the Dominion of Pakistan, the movement was seen as a sectional uprising against Pakistani national interests.
- Some of the most powerful politicians from the western wing of Pakistan considered Urdu a product of Indian Islamic culture, but saw Bengali as a part of "Hinduized" Bengali culture.
- Most stood by the "Urdu only" policy because they believed that only a single language, one that was not indigenous to Pakistan, should serve as the national language.

# Events after 1952

- The *Shorbodolio Kendrio Rashtrobhasha Kormi Porishod*, with support from the [Awami Muslim League](#), decided to commemorate 21 February as *Shohid Dibosh* .
- On the first anniversary of the protests, people across East Bengal wore black badges in solidarity with the victims.
- Most offices, banks and educational institutions were closed to observe the occasion.
- More than 1,00,000 people assembled at a public meeting held in Dhaka, where community leaders called for the immediate release of Maulana Bhashani and other political prisoners.
- However, West Pakistani politicians such as Fazlur Rahman aggravated sectional tensions by declaring that anyone who wanted Bengali to become an official language would be considered an "enemy of the state".
- Demonstrations broke out on the night of 21 February 1954 with various halls of the University of Dhaka raising **black flags** in mourning.

# United Front in 1954

- Political tensions came to a head as elections to the provincial assembly of East Bengal were held in 1954.
- The ruling Muslim League denounced the opposition [United Front](#) coalition, which—led by [A. K. Fazlul Huq](#) and the Awami League—wanted greater provincial autonomy.
- Several United Front leaders and activists were arrested.
- This decision was followed by a major wave of unrest as other ethnic groups sought recognition of other regional languages.
- Consequently, the implementation failed and the United Front won a vast majority of seats in the legislative assembly, while the representation of the Muslim League was reduced to a historic low.

# Constitutional Status as a State Language

- On 7 May 1954, the constituent assembly resolved, with the Muslim League's support, to grant official status to Bengali.
- Bengali was adopted as an official language of Pakistan along with Urdu in the article 214(1) when the first constitution of Pakistan was enacted on 29 February 1956.
- However, the military government formed by Ayub Khan made attempts to re-establish Urdu as the sole national language.
- On 6 January 1959, the military regime issued an official statement and reinstated the official stance of supporting the 1956 constitution's policy of two state languages.

# Bengali Language in Assam

- Outside East Bengal, movement for equal status of Bengali also took place in the Indian state of [Assam](#). On 19 May 1961, 11 Bengalis were killed in police firing in [Silchar](#) Railway Station, Assam, while demanding state recognition of Bengali language.
- Subsequently, Bengali was given co-official status in the three Bengali-majority districts of Assam.

# Independence of Bangladesh

- Although the question of official languages was settled by 1956, the military regime of Ayub Khan promoted the interests of [West Pakistan](#) at the expense of [East Pakistan](#).
- Despite forming the majority of the national population, the East Pakistani population continued to be under-represented in the civil and military services, and received a minority of state funding and other government help.
- Mainly due to regional economic imbalances sectional divisions grew, and support for the Bengali ethnic nationalist Awami League, which invoked the [6-point movement](#) for greater provincial autonomy.
- One demand was that East Pakistan be called *Bangladesh* (Land/Country of Bengal), which subsequently led to the [Bangladesh Liberation War](#).

Thank You

## Lecture 6

- **Six Point Program of 1966;--  
Lahore Proposal**



# Six Point Program of 1966;--Lahore Proposal

- The **six point movement** was a movement in East Pakistan, spearheaded by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, which called for greater autonomy for East Pakistan.
- The movement's main agenda was to realize the six demands put forward by a coalition of Bengali nationalist political parties in 1966, to end the perceived exploitation of East Pakistan by the West Pakistani rulers.
- It is considered a milestone on the road to Bangladesh's independence.

# Background

- On February 4, [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#), along with some members of [Awami League](#), reached [Lahore](#) to attend the conference.
- The next day on February 5, he placed six points before the meeting of subject committee and urged to include the issue in the agenda of next day conference.
- The proposal was rejected and [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) was identified as separatist.
- On February 6, Bangabandhu boycotted the conference.
- On February 21, six points proposal was placed before the meeting of the working committee of [Awami League](#) and the proposal was accepted unanimously.

# The Reason for Proposing Six Points

- The reason for proposing six points was to end Master-slave rule in Pakistan.
- The inhabitants of East Pakistan (later Bangladesh) made up the majority of its population, and exports from East Pakistan (such as [jute](#)) were a majority of Pakistan's export income.
- However, East Pakistanis did not feel they had a proportional share of political power and economic benefits within Pakistan.
- East Pakistan was facing a critical situation after being subjected to continuous discrimination on a regional basis, year after year.
- As a result, the economists, intelligentsia, and the politicians of East Pakistan started to raise questions about this discrimination, giving rise to the historic six-point movement.
- A booklet titled “Amader Banchar Dabi: Chhoy-dofa Karmashuchi” (Our demand for existence: Six-point Program) was published in the name of Sheikh Mujib and distributed at the Awami League council held on March 18, 1966.

# The six points Demand

The six points are noted as being:

1. The Constitution should provide for a Federation of Pakistan in its true sense based on the [Lahore Resolution](#), and the [parliamentary form of government](#) with supremacy of a Legislature directly elected on the basis of universal adult franchise.
2. The federal government should deal with only two subjects: [Defence and Foreign Affairs](#), and all other residual subjects should be vested in the federating states.
3. [Two separate, but freely convertible currencies for two wings should be introduced](#); or if this is not feasible, there should be one currency for the whole country, but effective constitutional provisions should be introduced to stop the flight of capital from East to West Pakistan. Furthermore, [a separate Banking Reserve should be established and separate fiscal and monetary policy be adopted for East Pakistan](#).

# The Six Points(Continue...)

4. The power of taxation and revenue collection should be vested in the federating units. The federation would be entitled to a share in the state taxes to meet its expenditures.
5. There should be two separate accounts for the foreign exchange earnings of the two wings; the foreign exchange requirements of the federal government should be met by the two wings equally or in a ratio to be fixed; indigenous products should move free of duty between the two wings, and the constitution should empower the units to establish trade links with foreign countries.
6. East Pakistan should have a separate military or paramilitary force, and Navy headquarters should be in East Pakistan.

# Reception

- The proposal was rejected by politicians from West Pakistan and non Awami League politicians from East Pakistan.
- It was rejected by the President of All Pakistan Awami League [Nawabzada Nasarullah Khan](#).
- It was also rejected by [National Awami Party](#), [Jamaat-i-Islami](#), and [Nizam-i-Islam](#).
- The movement had the support of the population of East Pakistan.

# The Impact of the Six-Point Movement

- The imprisonment of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other top Awami Leaguers in 1966 could not diminish the mass support for the six-point demand, even though the intensity of the movement could be suppressed.
- The six-point movement had also far-reaching effects on the subsequent political developments in the then Pakistan.
- In fact, the success of the six-point movement had prompted the arrogant and debased Ayub Khan's dictatorial regime to falsely implicate him in the Agartala Conspiracy case.
- However, an anti-Ayub mass movement in late 1968 and early 1969 led to the withdrawal of the so-called case and unconditional release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

## The Impact of the Six-Point Movement(Cont..)

- Indeed, it was Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the undisputed leader of his people, who had spearheaded Bangladesh's struggle for full-blown independence.
- The economic and political demands, as stipulated and enumerated in the historic six-point formula.
- Doubtless, these events were milestones in the history of Bangladesh's struggle for freedom and independence of Bangladesh.
- About the impact of the six-point program on the 11-point charter of the 1969 student-mass movement.



Thank You

# Lecture 7

- **1969 Mass Uprising in East Pakistan;**

# 1969 Mass Uprising in East Pakistan;

- The 1969 uprising in East Pakistan (উনসত্তরের গণঅভ্যুত্থান) was a democratic political movement in [East Pakistan](#) (now [Bangladesh](#)).
- The uprising consisted of a series of mass demonstrations and sporadic conflicts between government armed forces and the demonstrators.
- Although the unrest began in 1966 with the [Six point movement](#) of [Awami League](#), it got momentum at the beginning of 1969 and culminated in the resignation of [Field Marshal Ayub Khan](#), the first military ruler of [Pakistan](#).
- The uprising also led to the withdrawal of [Agartala Conspiracy Case](#) and acquittal of [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) and his colleagues from the case.

# Timeline of Events in 1969

- 5 January: *Shorbodolio Chatro Shongram Porishad* (The All Party Student Action Committee) puts forth its 11-points agenda.
- 20 January: Student activist Asaduzzaman dies as the police opens fire on demonstrators.
- 24 January: Matiur, a teenager activist, is gunned down by the police.
- 18 February: Dr. Shamsuzzoha of Rajshahi University is killed as the police open fire on a silent procession in Rajshahi.
- 22 February: Withdrawal of Agartala Conspiracy Case.
- 23 February: Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is accorded a grand reception, where he is given the title Bangabandhu (friend of Bengal).
- 10–13 March: Ayub Khan calls for a round-table meeting with the opposition.
- 25 March: Ayub Khan handed over power to General Yahya Khan, the army Chief of Staff.

# Background

- **Mass Upsurge, 1969'** started with the student unrest of 1968 against the tyrannical rule of AYUB KHAN, President of Pakistan.
- The movement soon spreaded the whole of the then East Pakistan, peasants, artisans, workers joined the movement.
- Due to continuous exaction of undue demands the labouring class of the industrial belts and low and medium income groups soon turned the movement into a struggle for economic emancipation.
- The racial repression and the deprivation of the Bangalis within the frame work of Pakistan and, to the contrary, starting from the LANGUAGE MOVEMENT the feeling of separate identity together with struggle for autonomy had direct influence on the mass upsurge of 1969.
- **Indeed, this mass upsurge was the greatest mass awakening ever since the creation of Pakistan.**

# 1968 Gherao Program

- The student agitation of 1968 turned into a mass upsurge when Maulana [ABDUL HAMID KHAN BHASANI](#) asked his followers to **besiege Governors House**, and formulated and declared his other programmes.
- As a part of joint programmes the National Awami Party (NAP) of Maulana Bhasani, East Pakistan Workers' Federation of Toaha and East Pakistan Peasants' Association led by Abdul Huq arranged a public meeting at Paltan Maidan to observe the Repression Resistance Day on 6 December 1968.
- **After the meeting was over, a huge procession 'gheraoed' the Governor's House.**
- Repression Resistance Day was very successfully observed throughout the province on 10 December at the call of Awami League (pro-six point).
- On the 14th the gherao programme was declared by the NAP (Bhasani).

# The 11-Point Programme

- On 4 January 1969 leaders of the East Pakistan Students Union (Menon Group), East Pakistan Students League, East Pakistan Students' Union (Matia Group.) and a section of the National Students' Federation formed the Students' Action Committee (SAC) and declared their 11-point Programme.
- The 11 Points included the Six Points of Awami League as declared by [SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN](#) including provincial autonomy
- Moreover the demand for Sheikh Mujib's release and withdrawal of the [AGARTALA CONSPIRACY CASE](#) began to get the utmost priority.
- Together with the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) the student leaders of SAC holding different positions throughout East Bengal played a very important role in the 1969 mass upsurge.

# Death of Asad

- To voice the protest against government repression the students arranged a meeting at the Dhaka University campus and resolved to bring out a procession.
- In the procession police opened fire and Asaduzzaman, a leader of the Students Union was killed.
- The death of Asad stirred the entire nation and the movement took the shape of a national upsurge.
- The situation of Dhaka went beyond control of the police when Matiur, a student of class IX, died of police firing on 24 January and Rustam was stabbed to death.
- Army was deployed in the city and curfew was imposed for an indefinite period.
- Sergeant Zahrul Huq, an under-trial prisoner in the Agartala Conspiracy Case, died of bullet injury in the Dhaka Cantonment on 15 February 1969.



# Shaikh Mujib Released From Agartala

- The Shaheed Day of 1969 imbued the people with a new spirit of opposing tyranny.
- Amidst strong popular demand Ayub had to give way and declare that he would not contest the next Presidential Election.
- The same day Sheikh Mujib and the other accused in the Agartala Conspiracy Case and 34 political detainees were released.
- In this struggle for democracy and endeavour to get rid of tyranny the toiling masses of the rural areas.

# RTC (Round Table Conference)

- In these circumstances Sheikh Mujib came out of jail and declared his intention to join the Round Table Conference (RTC) summoned by Ayub.
- He asked the people to maintain peace and order.
- Maulana Bhasani, on the other hand, refused to join the RTC.
- In the long run the strongman of Pakistan, General Ayub Khan, had to hand over power to General Yahya Khan, chief of Pakistan Army.
- Martial Law was re-imposed, but simultaneously it was agreed that elections would be arranged soon and parliamentary democracy would be introduced.

## Lead to Liberation War/Emergence of Bangladesh

- Fear of police and civil and military bureaucrats minimized to a very great extent from the minds of the people, and in the estimation of the people the bureaucrats lost much of their image and importance especially in the rural areas.
- The demand for a separate state became stronger than ever before among the people of Eastern Bengal.
- Bangali nationalism became sufficiently strong to sustain during the WAR OF LIBERATION in 1971.

Thank You

# Lecture 8

- **The Liberation War of 1971 and Emergence of Bangladesh**

# The Liberation War of 1971

- The **Bangladesh Liberation War** also known as the **Bangladesh War of Independence**, or simply the **Liberation War** in Bangladesh, was a revolution and armed conflict sparked by the rise of the Bengali nationalist and self-determination movement in what was then East Pakistan during the 1971 Bangladesh genocide.
- It resulted in the independence of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.
- The war began after the Pakistani military junta based in West Pakistan launched Operation Searchlight against the people of East Pakistan on the night of 25 March 1971.
- It pursued the systematic elimination of nationalist Bengali civilians, students, intelligent, religious minorities and armed personnel.
- The war ended on 16 December 1971 after West Pakistan surrendered.

# Background

- Prior to the [Partition of British India](#), the [Lahore Resolution](#) initially envisaged separate [Muslim](#)-majority states in the eastern and northwestern zones of British India.
- Eventually, political negotiations led, in August 1947, to the official birth of two states, [Pakistan](#) and [India](#), giving presumably permanent homes for Muslims and Hindus respectively following the departure of the British.
- The [Dominion of Pakistan](#) comprised two geographically and culturally separate areas to the east and the west with India in between.
- On 25 March 1971, after an election won by an East Pakistani political party (the [Awami League](#)) was ignored by the ruling (West Pakistani) establishment, rising political discontent and [cultural nationalism](#) in East Pakistan was met by brutal and suppressive force from the ruling elite of the West Pakistan establishment, in what came to be termed as [Operation Searchlight](#).
- The violent crackdown by the Pakistan Army led to Awami League leader [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) declaring East Pakistan's independence as the state of [Bangladesh](#) on 26 March 1971.

# Language Controversy

- In 1948, [Governor-General Muhammad Ali Jinnah](#) declared that "[Urdu](#), and only Urdu" would be the federal language of Pakistan.
- However, Urdu was historically prevalent only in the north, central, and western region of the [subcontinent](#); whereas in East Bengal, the native language was [Bengali](#),
- The people of East Bengal demanded that their language be given federal status alongside Urdu and English.
- The movement reached its climax in 1952, when on [21 February](#), the police fired on protesting students and civilians, causing several deaths.
- Later, in memory of the deaths in 1952, [UNESCO](#) declared 21 February as [International Mother Language Day](#) in November 1999.



# Ideological and Cultural Differences

- In 1947 the Bengali Muslims had identified themselves with Pakistan's Islamic project but by the 1970s the people of East Pakistan had given priority to their Bengali ethnicity over their religious identity, desiring a society in accordance with Western principles such as [secularism](#), democracy and socialism.
- West Pakistanis were substantially more supportive than East Pakistanis of an Islamic state, a tendency which persisted after 1971.
- Cultural and linguistic differences between the two wings outweighed any religious unity.
- The Bengalis took great pride in their culture and language which, with its [Bengali script](#) and [vocabulary](#), was unacceptable to the West Pakistani elite, who believed that it possessed considerable Hindu cultural influences.
- West Pakistanis, in an attempt to "Islamise" the East, wanted the Bengalis to adopt Urdu.

# Political Differences

- Although East Pakistan accounted for a slight majority of the country's population, political power remained in the hands of West Pakistanis.
- After the assassination of [Liaquat Ali Khan](#), Pakistan's first prime minister, in 1951, political power began to devolve to the new [President of Pakistan](#), which replaced the office of [Governor General](#) when Pakistan became a republic, and, eventually, the military.
- The East Pakistanis observed that the West Pakistani establishment would swiftly depose any East Pakistanis elected Prime Minister of Pakistan, such as [Khawaja Nazimuddin](#), or [Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy](#).
- Their suspicions were further aggravated by the military dictatorships of [Ayub Khan](#) (27 October 1958 – 25 March 1969) and [Yahya Khan](#) (25 March 1969 – 20 December 1971), both West Pakistanis.
- The situation reached a climax in 1970, when the [Bangladesh Awami League](#), the largest East Pakistani political party, led by [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#), won a landslide victory in the national elections.

# Historical 7<sup>th</sup> March 1971

- On 7 March 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (soon to be the prime minister) delivered a speech at the Racecourse Ground (now called the [Suhrawardy Udyan](#)).
- In this speech he mentioned a further four-point condition to consider at the National Assembly Meeting on 25 March:
  1. The immediate lifting of [martial law](#).
  2. Immediate withdrawal of all military personnel to their barracks.
  3. An inquiry into the loss of life.
  4. Immediate transfer of power to the elected representative of the people before the assembly meeting 25 March.
- He urged his people to turn every house into a fort of resistance. He closed his speech saying, "Our struggle is for our freedom. Our struggle is for our independence." This speech is considered the main event that inspired the nation to fight for its independence.
- General [Tikka Khan](#) was flown into Dacca to become Governor of East Bengal. East-Pakistani judges, including Justice Siddique, refused to swear him in.

# Operation Searchlight

- A planned military pacification carried out by the [Pakistan Army](#)—code named *Operation Searchlight*—started on 25 March 1971 to curb the [Bengali](#) independence movement by taking control of the major cities on 26 March.
- The Pakistani state claimed to justify starting Operation Searchlight on the basis of [anti-Bihari violence](#) by Bengalis in early March.
- Before the beginning of the operation, all foreign journalists were systematically deported from East Pakistan.
- The operation also began the [1971 Bangladesh genocide](#).
- American [political scientist Rudolph Rummel](#) puts total deaths at 1.5 million. The atrocities have been referred to as acts of [genocide](#).

# Declaration of Independence

- The violence unleashed by the Pakistani forces on 25 March 1971 proved the last straw to the efforts to negotiate a settlement. Following these incidents, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman signed an official declaration that read:

“[Today Bangladesh is a sovereign and independent country. On Thursday night, West Pakistani armed forces suddenly attacked the police barracks at Razarbagh and the EPR headquarters at Pilkhana in Dacca. Many innocent and unarmed have been killed in Dhaka city and other places of Bangladesh. Violent clashes between E.P.R. The Bengalis are fighting the enemy with great courage for an independent Bangladesh. May Allah aid us in our fight for freedom. Joy Bangla [May Bangladesh be victorious]”.
- Sheikh Mujib also called upon the people to resist the occupation forces through a radio message. Rahman was arrested on the night of 25–26 March 1971 at about 1:30 am (as per Radio Pakistan's news on 29 March 1971).

# Declaration of Independence(Cont...)

“This is Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra. I, Major Ziaur Rahman, at the direction of Bangobondhu Mujibur Rahman, hereby declare that Independent People's Republic of Bangladesh has been established. At his direction, I have taken the command as the temporary Head of the Republic. In the name of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, I call upon all Bengalees to rise against the attack by the West Pakistani Army. We shall fight to the last to free our motherland. Victory is, by the Grace of Allah, ours. Joy Bangla”.

- [M. A. Hannan](#), an Awami League leader from Chittagong, is said to have made the first announcement of the declaration of independence over the radio on 26 March 1971.
- 26 March 1971 is considered the official [Independence Day of Bangladesh](#), and the name Bangladesh was in effect henceforth.
- In July 1971, Indian Prime Minister [Indira Gandhi](#) openly referred to the former East Pakistan as Bangladesh.
- Some Pakistani and Indian officials continued to use the name "East Pakistan" until 16 December 1971.

# Liberation War

- **March–June**

- At first, resistance was spontaneous and disorganised, and was not expected to be prolonged.
- However, when the Pakistani Army cracked down upon the population, resistance grew.
- The [Mukti Bahini](#) became increasingly active.
- These Bengali units slowly merged into the Mukti Bahini and bolstered their weaponry with supplies from India.
- They also raised paramilitary forces of [Razakars](#), [Al-Badrs](#) and [Al-Shams](#) (who were mostly members of the Muslim League and other Islamist groups), as well as other Bengalis who opposed independence, and [Bihari](#) Muslims who had settled during the time of [partition](#).

# Mujibnagar Govt.

- On 17 April 1971, a provisional government was formed in [Meherpur District](#) in western Bangladesh bordering India with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who was in prison in Pakistan, as president, [Syed Nazrul Islam](#) as acting president, [Tajuddin Ahmad](#) as prime minister, and General [Muhammad Ataul Ghani Osmani](#) as Commander-in-Chief, Bangladesh Forces.
- As fighting grew between the occupation army and the Bengali Mukti Bahini, an estimated 10 million Bengalis sought refuge in the Indian states of Assam and West Bengal.



# June–September

- Bangladesh forces command was set up on 11 July, with Col. [M. A. G. Osmani](#) as commander-in-chief (C-in-C) with the status of Cabinet Minister, Lt. Col., Abdur Rabb as chief of Staff (COS), Group Captain A K Khandker as Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS) and Major A R Chowdhury as Assistant Chief of Staff (ACOS).
- Indian leadership initially envisioned Bengali forces to be trained into a small elite guerrilla force of 8,000 members, but with the Bangladesh government in exile, General Osmani favoured a different strategy:
- Bengali conventional forces would occupy lodgment areas inside Bangladesh and then the Bangladesh government would request international [diplomatic recognition](#) and intervention.
- Sending the maximum number to guerrillas inside Bangladesh as soon as possible with the following objectives:
  - Cripple economic activity by hitting power stations, railway lines, storage depots and communication networks.
  - Destroy Pakistan army mobility by blowing up bridges/culverts, fuel depots, trains and river crafts.

# October–December

- Bangladeshi conventional forces attacked border outposts.
- Kamalpur, Belonia and the [Battle of Boyra](#) are a few examples. 90 out of 370 BOPs fell to Bengali forces. Guerrilla attacks intensified, as did Pakistani and Razakar reprisals on civilian populations.
- The Bangladeshi independence fighters even managed to temporarily capture [airstrips](#) at [Lalmonirhat](#) and [Shalutikar](#).
- Both of these were used for flying in supplies and arms from India.
- 16 Dec, 1971 Bangladesh got Victory.

# Indian Involvement

- All unprejudiced persons objectively surveying the grim events in Bangladesh since March 25 have recognised the revolt of 75 million people.
- [Indira Gandhi](#), Letter to [Richard Nixon](#), 15 December 1971
- Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had concluded that instead of taking in millions of refugees, India would be economically better off going to war against Pakistan.
- As early as 28 April 1971, the Indian Cabinet had asked General [Manekshaw](#) ([Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee](#)) to "Go into East Pakistan".
- As a result, the Indian government decided to support the creation of a separate state for ethnic Bengalis by supporting the [Mukti Bahini](#).
- [RAW](#) helped to organise, train and arm these insurgents. Consequently, the Mukti Bahini succeeded in harassing Pakistani military in East Pakistan, thus creating conditions conducive for a full-scale Indian military intervention in early December.

# Surrender and Aftermath

- On 16 December 1971, Lt. Gen [Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi](#), [Chief Martial Law Administrator](#) of [East Pakistan](#) and Commander of Pakistan Army forces located in East Pakistan signed the [Instrument of Surrender](#).
- At the time of surrender only a few countries had provided [diplomatic recognition](#) to the new nation.
- Over 93,000 Pakistani troops surrendered to the Indian forces and Bangladesh Liberation forces, making it the largest surrender since [World War II](#).
- The United States, also a key ally of Pakistan, was one of the last nations to accord Bangladesh recognition.
- The treaty ensured that Pakistan recognised the independence of Bangladesh in exchange for the return of the Pakistani.
- The accord also gave back 13,000 km<sup>2</sup> (5,019 sq mi) of land that Indian troops had seized in West Pakistan during the war, though India retained a few strategic areas; most notably [Kargil](#) (which would in turn again be the focal point for [a war](#) between the two nations in 1999).
- However, some in India felt that the treaty had been too lenient to Bhutto, who had pleaded for leniency, arguing that the fragile democracy in Pakistan would crumble if the accord was perceived as being overly harsh by Pakistanis.

# Reaction in West Pakistan to the War

- Reaction to the defeat and dismemberment of half the nation was a shocking loss to top military and civilians alike.
- [Yahya Khan](#)'s dictatorship collapsed and gave way to Bhutto, who took the opportunity to rise to power.
- [General Niazi](#), who surrendered along with 93,000 troops, was viewed with suspicion and contempt upon his return to Pakistan.
- He was shunned and branded a [traitor](#).
- The war also exposed the shortcomings of Pakistan's declared strategic doctrine that the "defense of East Pakistan lay in West Pakistan".

# Atrocities

- During the war there were widespread killings and other atrocities—including the displacement of civilians in Bangladesh (East Pakistan at the time) and widespread violations of human rights began with the start of [Operation Searchlight](#) on 25 March 1971.
- Members of the [Pakistani military](#) and supporting Islamist [militias](#) from Jamaat e Islami killed an estimated 300,000 people and raped between 200,000 and 400,000 [Bangladeshi](#) women in a systematic campaign of [genocidal rape](#).
- During the war, a [fatwa](#) in Pakistan declared that the Bengali freedom fighters were Hindus and that their women could be taken as "the booty of war".
- A large section of the intellectual community of Bangladesh were murdered, mostly by the [Al-Shams](#) and [Al-Badr](#) forces, at the instruction of the Pakistani Army.
- Just two days before the surrender, on 14 December 1971, Pakistan Army and Razakar militia (local collaborators) picked up at least 100 physicians, professors, writers and engineers in Dacca, and murdered them, leaving the dead bodies in a mass grave.

# International Reactions

- Following Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's declaration of independence in March 1971, a worldwide campaign was undertaken by the [Provisional Government of Bangladesh](#) to drum up political support for the independence of East Pakistan as well as humanitarian support for the Bengali people.
- Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi provided extensive diplomatic and political support to the Bangladesh movement.
- She toured many countries in a bid to create awareness of the Pakistani atrocities against Bengalis.

- **United Nations**

- Though the United Nations condemned the human rights violations during and following Operation Searchlight, it failed to defuse the situation politically before the start of the war.

- **Bhutan**

- As the Bangladesh Liberation War approached the defeat of the Pakistan Army, the Himalayan kingdom of [Bhutan](#) became the first state in the world to recognise the newly independent country on 6 December 1971.
- [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#), the first [President of Bangladesh](#) visited Bhutan to attend the coronation of [Jigme Singye Wangchuck](#), the fourth King of Bhutan in June 1974.

Thank You