

Name: Anik Aich

ID: 1821829042

Section: 38

**Assignment Topic: Role of students in the emergence of Bangladesh.**

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**Introduction**

Student**s** are the backbone and the future of a nation. Student’s role in the emergence of the Bangladesh is significance. They are the builder of the nation. It starts from the language movement which was leaded by the students of Dhaka University in 1952. After the division West Pakistan always trying to take the power and control over East Pakistan. Students and Bengali language activists and the progressive political forces remained vigilant against anti-Bengali political elite of the central government and pro-Urdu provincial government. Students plays a vital role in every movement against the West Pakistan.

**Creation of Pakistan**

Dhaka University was not always a contentious place, nor were the students known to be particularly troublesome to the ruling regime. In fact, the University was established during the colonial period as a reward for Muslim elites in East Bengal who remained loyal to and supported the British during the attempted Bengal Partition of 1905–1911. While resistance to the administrative partition of Bengal had been fierce in Kolkata, in East Bengal the Muslim population saw the split as a potentially positive change that would increase economic and political representation for Muslims. When the political mobilization of West Bengal successfully pressured the British to annul the Partition, many Muslims in East Bengal felt betrayed. The British appeased the bitter East Bengalis by promising to build an educational institution to rival that of the great universities of Kolkata, and to base it in Dhaka. The university was actually not built until 1920, but even at this point of the height of nationalist agitation in West Bengal (and throughout much of the subcontinent), Dhaka, and the Muslim intelligentsia in particular, remained largely supportive of the British colonial regime and even, at times, agitated for the need to be more explicit in the Muslim League’s loyalty to the British. As the Nationalist movement gained steam across the subcontinent, and following the Lahore Resolution in 1940, in which the Muslim League argued for independent Muslim states, the faculty and students of Dhaka University shifted and in turn were highly supportive of the independent Pakistan+ project. The campus population became vocal supporters of the Muslim League and the leadership of Mohammad Jinnah as the “father of Pakistan.” At independence in 1947, the new nation of Pakistan was created into two wings (East and West Pakistan). Dhaka became the provincial capital of the Eastern wing and Dhaka University became the leading institution of higher education for East Pakistanis. Almost immediately after independence, however, the relationship between the two wings of East and West Pakistan deteriorated. Despite a larger proportion of the total population residing in the Eastern wing, power was heavily concentrated in the western wing, with most of the political posts were held by individuals from the western portion. In addition, in 1947 East Pakistan was verging on a severe food crisis, and memories of the 1943 Bengal Famine were still fresh. The population was anxious to avert another calamity on the scale of the disaster just four years before, and panic and hoarding became increasingly widespread. The new government’s response was inconsistent and vacillated between utter disinterest and ineffective implementation of policies in addressing the inflated prices of food in East Pakistan and in addressing the rumors of impending disaster

**Language movement**

The rights of the language took place immediately after the establishment of Pakistan. The movement was a brave struggle against the discriminatory role of the central ruling class of Pakistan against Bengalis. The students and youth were the main actors and artisan of all progressive movement. Therefore, the language movement was identified as the movement of the students. However, it is called the 'student movement'.

Bengali-speaking people of East Bengal made up about 56% of the total population (69 million according to one estimate) of the newly formed independent country of Pakistan. In 1947, a key resolution at a national education summit in Karachi proposed Urdu to be the only state language of Pakistan. This was followed by immediate wide spread opposition and protests especially in East Bengal. Students especially of the University of Dhaka in a meeting demanded Bengali to be a state language of Pakistan. Public outrage spread, and many students met on the University of Dhaka campus on 8 December 1947 to formally demand that Bengali be made an official language of the state. To promote their cause, the students organized protest rallies and processions in the streets of Dhaka. Mr. Dhirendranath Datta a member of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly proposed legislation in the Assembly to allow members to speak in Bengali and be allowed to be used for official purposes. The ruling party, the Muslim League, rejected the proposal terming it as an attempt to divide the people of Pakistan. In the height of civic movements, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Governor General of Pakistan arrived in East Bengal and declared that "Urdu, and only Urdu" shall be the only state language. He delivered a similar speech at the University of Dhaka on 24 March. However, Jinnah encountered protests by a large number of students present there as audience. The language movement continued unabated. On 31 January, the all-Party Central Language Action Committee was formed. The action committee called for an all out protest on 21 February, 1952 including strikes and rallies. In an attempt to prevent the demonstration, the government imposed Section 144 in Dhaka, thereby banning any rallies and meetings. At nine o'clock in the morning, students began gathering at the University of Dhaka premises in defiance of Section 144. By a quarter past eleven, students gathered at the university gate and attempted to break the police cordon. 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. Enraged by the arrests, the students met around the Legislative Assembly and asked the legislators to present their demand at the assembly. It is alleged that at this point, police opened fire and killed a number of students, including Salam, Rafiq, Barkat and Jabbar. (hussain, 2018).

**Creation of all party student action committee & Mass uprising 1969**

All party student action committee was formed on 5 January 1969. It was formed through the joining of East Pakistan Student Union (Matia), East Pakistan Chhatra League, East Pakistan Student Union (Menon), and student leaders of Dhaka University Student Union. The Parishad created an Eleven Points Programme that was based on the 1965 [Six Point program](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six_Point_Program) of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League. The Parishad was based in the University of Dhaka and it became the principal political entity of East Pakistan. (rahman, 2018)

The mass upsurge of 1969 played a vital role in preparing the nation for the Liberation War in 1971.

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