

# History of Bangladesh (from 1947 to 1971)

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## EMERGENCE OF BANGLADESH: A BRIEF HISTORY

Bangladesh emerged as an independent country on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1971 from the brutal rulings of Pakistan (the then West Pakistan) from 1947 to 1971.



### **Genocide-1971:**

#### *The Price of Independence of Bangladesh*

The Pakistan's brutal army started their dirty war, "**Operation Searchlight**" in the mid-night (around 11 P.M) of 25<sup>th</sup> March 1971 to stop the legal demands of Bengali nation to be allowed to form central government of Pakistan since the Awami League (the political party of the east Pakistan) under Sheikh Mujib's leadership had won the 1970's general election and got the fresh majority to form the government.



#### *The raping of the country, 1971*



Raping the country in the name to protect "Islam", 1971

Thus the “worst genocide” of the history of world began in Bangladesh. The brutal (West) Pakistan army’s death squads roamed the streets of Dhaka, killed some 7,000 people (most of them were civilians, university students and partly were un-armed police and EPR soldiers) in a single night, and within a week, half the population of Dhaka had fled, and at least 30,000 people had been killed by those hyenas in Dhaka city alone. ([Genocidebangladesh.org](http://Genocidebangladesh.org)).

According to the decision of the generals of Pakistan which had been taken in the conference on 22 February, 1971, General Yahya Khan ordered the Pakistan army to kill three million of Bengalis, “and the rest will eat out of our hands.” (Robert Payne, Massacre [1972], p.50) ([Genocidebangladesh.org](http://Genocidebangladesh.org)).

After a nine months’ fierce fighting against that brutal army, with the help of Indian Army the Bengali Freedom Fighters (in Bangla – Mukti Joddha / Mukti Bahini) had won the independence on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1971, the Pakistan army surrendered unconditionally to the “Joint Command of the forces” of India-Bangladesh.



*Surrender of a Butcher: General Niazi*

In that worst genocide, the Bengali nation lost a huge population as well as huge wealth in the hands of those hyenas and their collaborators (the so-called, self-declared **“PROTECTOR OF ISLAM”**) in Bangladesh. Those brutes killed around 3.0 million civilians, raped around 200,000-400,000 women, set

ablaze the villages after villages, and stormed towns after towns in that time of nine months' period. Thus 10 million civilians of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) had to take refuge in neighboring India. The Pakistan army and their collaborators(Rajakar, Al-Bador, Al-Shams, etc.) looted everything and torched the houses of the supporters of Awami League and the Hindus and killed the Bengali people indiscriminately just like the hunting the birds in the open air.



**Rao Farman Ali**

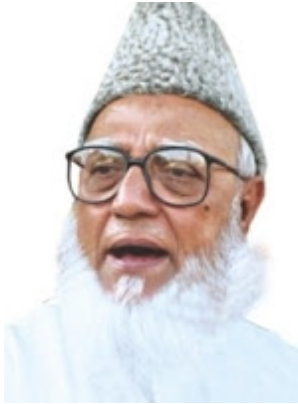
The butcher of Bengali intellectuals, 1971  
(More than 1,000 intellectuals had been  
killed under his direct supervision)



**Gen. Tikka Khan**

*(A Butcher of 1971)*

The brutal Pakistan army and their collaborators (Rajakar, Al-Bador, Al-Shams) also killed more than 1,000 intellectuals and professionals just 3-2 days prior to their surrender. The death squads of Jamat-e-Islami, Al-Bador and Al-Shams, kidnapped the Bengali intellectuals, doctors, university & college teachers and other professionals (who were mainly progressive in their activities) from their houses and killed them brutally just 3-2 days prior to their surrender in December, 1971 to make the Bengali nation intellectual-less in the coming period.

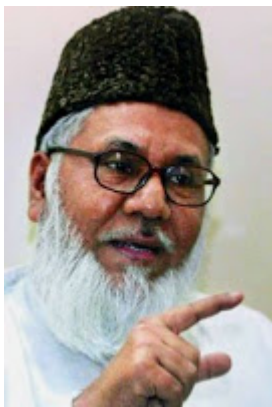


Gulam Azam: Head of  
the Collaborators, 1971



Maulana Mannan: One of the top  
War-criminals

Two key Officers of Pakistan army, Brigadier Kashem and Captain Kayum, coordinated the killings of the intellectuals under the supervision of General Rao Farman Ali ([Genocidebangladesh.org](http://Genocidebangladesh.org)). The main notorious members of those death squads were as below:



Maulana Motiur Rahman  
Nizamee: Head of Al-Bador,  
Pakistan, 1971



Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujaheed:  
Head of Al-Bador, East Pakistan, 1971

- 1) Moulana Motiur Rahman Nizamee (Amir, Jamat-e-Islam)
- 2) Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujaheed (General Secretary, Jamat-e-Islam)
- 3) Abdul Quader Mollah (Jamat-e-Islam)
- 4) Khaleque Mozumdar (Jamat-e-Islam, currently living in Europe)
- 5) Kamaruzzaman (Jamat-e-Islam)
- 6) Ashrafuzzaman Khan (Jamat-e-Islam, currently living in New York, USA)
- 7) Maulana Abdul Mannan (dead, ex-owner of the Daily Inqilab).



Mohammad Kamaruzzaman (Butcher of Sherpur), Al-Bador Commander, 1971



Abdul Quader Mollah (Butcher of Mirpur), Al-Bador Commander, 1971

## There are many reasons behind the conflict between Bengalese and Pakistanis:

[To see the data information on this issue, [please click here.](#)]

### 1. Socially and Politically Bengalese are neglected by the Pakistanis.

Bengalis were treated as second class citizens in the then Pakistan. Pakistanis never believed Bengalis and they always tried to suppress them in every sector of the state. Not only that, they (Pakistanis) never believed the Bengalis as true Muslim, though the majority of them were Muslim.

### 2. Language and cultures are totally different.

The West Pakistan establishment tried to impose Urdu (their main language) on Bengalis forcibly at its very initial stage. They hatred Bengali culture and pointed it as “anti-Islamic”. Like, they imposed ban on Rabindranath Tagor’s songs in national broadcasting centers (Radio & TV) of Pakistan.

### 3. From the very beginning, Pakistanis exploited the Bengalese economically.

Although East Pakistan had a larger population, West Pakistan dominated the divided country politically and received more money from the common budget.

Year	Spending on West Pakistan (in crores of Pakistani rupees)	Spending on East Pakistan (in crores of Pakistani rupees)	Amount spent on East as percentage of West
1950–55	1,129	524	46.4
1955–60	1,655	524	31.7
1960–65	3,355	1,404	41.8
1965–70	5,195	2,141	41.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,334</b>	<b>4,593</b>	<b>40.5</b>

*Source: Reports of the Advisory Panels for the Fourth Five Year Plan 1970–75, Vol. I, published by the planning commission of Pakistan*

(Quick reference: crore =  $10^7$ , or 10 million)

Like, an unequal rate of growth between the two wings of the country seemed to have been an important feature of economic development since the independence: only one-fifth of large-scale manufacturing was located in East Pakistan after ten years.

*"During the last fifteen years (1947-1962), East Pakistan has been drained out of one thousand crores of rupees of its solid assets by way of less imports, and more exports. Today is the sixteenth year we have been reduced to paupers to build West Pakistan; we are told 'get out boys', we have nothing for you, we do not require you."* — Mahbubul Haq, a member of the National Assembly ([genocidebangladesh.org](http://genocidebangladesh.org)).

On the contrary the economy was booming in the West with industrialization over during the first five years (1947-52). GNP grew by 30 percent during the second five year plan period (1960 – 65), industrial production grew by 61 per cent and forex earnings at 7 per cent per annum.

#### 4. In administrative and security sectors, they exploited the Bengalese too.

Bengalis were under-represented in the Pakistan military. Officers of Bengali origin in the different wings of the armed forces made up just 5% of overall force by 1965; of these, only a few were in command positions, with the majority in technical or administrative posts. West Pakistanis believed that Bengalis were not "martially inclined" unlike Pashtuns and Punjabis; the "martial races" notion was dismissed as ridiculous and humiliating by Bengalis. Moreover, despite huge defence spending, East Pakistan received none of the benefits, such as contracts, purchasing and military support jobs. The Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 over Kashmir also highlighted the sense of military insecurity among Bengalis as only an under-strength infantry division and 15 combat aircraft without tank support were in East Pakistan to thwart any Indian retaliations during the conflict.

#### 5. Political discontent, especially in the much neglected East Pakistan, resurfaces in the aftermath of the war of 1965 with India.

Although East Pakistan accounted for a majority of the country's population (56.40% in 1951), political power remained firmly in the hands of West Pakistanis. Since a straightforward system of representation based on population would have concentrated political power in East Pakistan, the West Pakistani establishment came up with the "One Unit" scheme, where all of West Pakistan was considered one province. This was solely to counterbalance the East wing's votes.

East Pakistanis noticed that whenever one of them, such as Khawaja Nazimuddin, Muhammad Ali Bogra, or Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy was elected as Prime Minister of Pakistan, he were swiftly deposed by the largely West Pakistani establishment. The military dictatorships of Ayub Khan (27 October 1958 – 25 March 1969) and Yahya Khan (25 March 1969 – 20 December 1971), both West Pakistanis, only heightened this type of fear-feelings among the Bengalis (wikipedia.org).

## Chronological History: Bangladesh Chapter



Map of Pakistan before 1971  
Source: en.wikipedia.org

From the early historic period, Bangladesh (Banga, Bengal, East Bengal) was the part of India. In 1947, it became the part of Pakistan as East Bengal (*later in October 1955, it been renamed as East Pakistan*). The distance of these 2 parts of Pakistan was more than 1,500 km and separated by Indian territory. Not only that those two parts of Pakistan had no common border and culturally and socially those were totally different from each other, except the religion, Islam. Although the population of the two wings was close to equal, political and military power were concentrated in West Pakistan and it was widely perceived that East Pakistan was being exploited economically and politically, leading to many grievances.

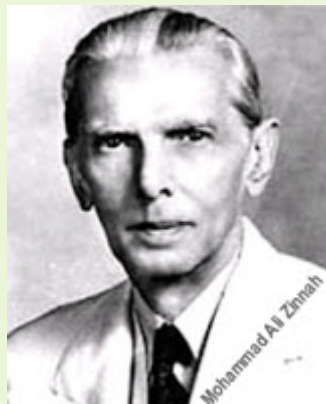
**August 14, 1947:** The Partition of British India gave birth to two new states; a secular state named "**India**" and an Islamic state named "**Pakistan**". But Pakistan comprised two geographically and culturally separated areas to the east and the west of India. In the new state, the "East Bengal" (afterward, it was renamed as "East Pakistan" on 14 October, 1955) became the part of Islamic Pakistan.

## 1947-1971: Pakistan Regime

Major events happened in that period like as below:



**1947:** A key resolution at a national education summit in Karachi had been adopted that ‘Urdu’ would be the sole state language of Pakistan and the Government would ensure its exclusive use in the media and in schools. But the Bengalis in East Bengal started to protest and later it was transformed into a movement ([GenocideBangladesh](#)).



**1948 March 21:** The founder of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah declared in a civic reception in Dhaka that “*Urdu and only Urdu will remain as the state language of Pakistan*”. The students of Dhaka University instantly protested this declaration in front of Jinnah.

**1952 February 21:** Language Movement – International Mother Language Day.

Pakistan government forcibly tried to stop the demand of the Bengali people to establish “Bangla” as one of the state’s language of Pakistan. As a result, some protesters had been killed, huge number of people took the streets to protests unanimously and thus “seeds of Bangladeshi nationalism” was sown during that movement.



**1954 March:** The United Front of Awami League and the Krishak Sramik Party won the most of the seats in the East Bengal Legislative Assembly. Sheikh Mujib was elected in this assembly and serving briefly as the minister for agriculture. Muslim League got only 9 seats out of 310.

**1954 May 30:** The Bengali dominated United Front Government had been deposed by the Governor General of Pakistan, Ghulam Mohammad. The Governor General imposed his direct rule in East Pakistan.

**1955 October 14:** The 'East Bengal' been renamed as 'East Pakistan'. The 'West Pakistan Bill' had been passed and according to this bill, the provinces of the west wing, the Punjab, Baluchistan, Sindh and North Western Frontier of Pakistan (NWFP) were regrouped into one unit called 'West Pakistan'.

**1956 February 29:** A constitution had been adopted to make Pakistan as an 'Islamic Republic'; "Bengali" became a state language along with "Urdu". Awami League leaders demanded that the subject of provincial autonomy would be included in the draft constitution of Pakistan.

**1956 September:** The seasoned politician of East Pakistan, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy replaced Chaudhry Mohammad Ali as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman joined the coalition government as the Minister of Industries, Commerce, Labor, Anti-corruption and Village-Aid.

**1957 March:** Governor General Gurmani declared Presidential rule in the West Pakistan.



**1957 October:** After losing support in the National Assembly, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy was forced to resign; Chundrigar became the new Prime Minister of Pakistan.

**1957 December:** Malik Feroz Khan Noon became the Prime Minister by replacing Chundrigar.

**1958 September:** Shahid Ali, Deputy Speaker of East Pakistan Assembly succumbed to death from the injuries which he received 2 days ago from the disorder inside the assembly.

**1958 October 7:** Field Marshal Ayub Khan captured the power, sent President Iskander Mirza in exile and abrogated the constitution of Pakistan.



*Field Marshal Ayub Khan*

The introducer of so-called  
*"Basic Democracy"*  
in Pakistan

Ayub Khan declared his cabinet, in which he included 3 military officials, including Lt. General Azam Khan and eight civilians including Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto from Sindh.

All political parties and their activities had been banned, *meetings and demonstrations became forbidden. Popular politicians were either imprisoned — including Sheikh Mujib, Maulana Bhashani of East Pakistan, and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan (NWFP) — or their activities were restricted.* Sheikh Mujib had been continuously harassed through one false case after another.

**1959 October:** President Ayub Khan promulgated an ordinance for setting up “**Basic Democracies**” in Pakistan to confine the state power permanently in the hands of the Army and the West Pakistan’s establishment.

**1960 February:** Ayub Khan was elected as President for a five-year term by his so called 80,000 elected ‘Basic Democrats’ (BD).

**1960 April:** Lt. General Azam Khan had been appointed as governor of East Pakistan.



*Sheikh Mujibur Rahman*

**1962 February:** Sheikh Mujib had been arrested again under the Public Security Act.

**1962 June:** Ayub Khan lifted the martial law. The BDs elected the National Assembly according to Ayub Khan's directives. He lifted the ban from political parties, Sheikh Mujib was freed. Pakistan Muslim League had been split in to two groups – Council and Convention. Ayub Khan backed the Convention Muslim League.

**1964:** Combined Opposition Parties (COP) of Pakistan had been formed and nominated Miss Fatima Jinnah (sister of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, popularly called her “the Mother of the Nation”) as the candidate in Presidential Election against Ayub Khan for the forthcoming election of January 1965. COP raised their 9 points demands including ‘restoration of direct elections’, ‘adult franchise’, ‘democratization the Constitution of 1962’.

**1965:** Sheikh Mujib had been charged by the government with sedition and making objectionable statements, he got one year jail term by the court, He was released later on an order of the High Court.



*Fatima Jinnah*

**1965 January:** Ayub Khan became the President again for the second term by defeating Fatima Jinnah. By observing the election system under 'Basic Democracy', Miss Jinnah told: *"The system under which these elections were fought was initially devised to perpetuate the... incumbent of the Presidential Office. Neither does it provide room for the free expression of the popular will, nor does it conform to the known and established principles of democracy in the civilized world... There is no doubt that the elections have been rigged"* (**Genocide Bangladesh**).

**1965 August-September:** India-Pakistan fought the 2<sup>nd</sup> war over the border issue of Kashmir. But firstly it was the hidden conflict and the Pakistan authority hid away it from the people. In September, Ayub Khan revealed it publicly by declaring that, "We are at war".

**1965 December:** Ayub Khan offered Nurul Amin to be the Vice President of Pakistan. Nurul Amin then raised the demands to form regional autonomy for East Pakistan, extended franchise, and to end the disparity between 2 provinces, including fair shares of foreign exchange.

**1966 February:** Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was elected the party President. The Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Mujib, formulated the "**Six Points**" demand (please see below too) in front of the people.

**1966 March 23:** 6-Point Formula – Bengalis's Right to Live by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman:

*"I know of no nobler battle than to fight for the rights of the exploited millions. We believe that this feeling of absolute equality, sense of inter-wing justice and impartiality is the very basis of Pakistani patriotism. Only he is fit to be a leader of Pakistan who is imbued with and consumed by such patriotism, a leader who zealously holds that anyone who deliberately or knowingly weakens any limb of Pakistan is an enemy of the country."* (**Genocide Bangladesh**).

The Awami League demanded that changes would be made in regard to East Pakistan. These changes were embodied in Mujib's Six Points Plan, which he presented at a meeting of opposition parties in Lahore in 1966. Those Six Points were as below (source: [wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six_Point_Movement)):

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.

4. The power of taxation and revenue collection should be vested in the federating units and the federal centre would have no such power. 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 militia or paramilitary force.

These 6-points program was for the greater autonomy of East Pakistan and would reduce the supremacy of West Pakistanis over the East Pakistan. But West Pakistanis, specifically saying, the then military regime and the establishment of West Pakistan, meant those 6-points program as the declaration of de facto independence for East Pakistan and took drastic reaction to it.

Many observers saw the point# 6, regarding a separate militia, as the point of most unacceptable to the central government, but they were not correct. The Indo-Pakistan War of 1965 had demonstrated the lack of local defense forces in East Pakistan, which left the province defenseless and in-secured, would make East Pakistan as an easy prey of Indian attack.

In fact, it was point# 4, regarding taxation, that proved to be the problem, because the enactment of this point would make it all but impossible for a central government to operate.

**1966 March 24:** President Ayub Khan burst out on those 'six points demands', they believed them as secessionist demands – the West Pakistani establishment and their military regime could not receive those as the demands of justice and honor of the East Pakistanis. Rather they evaluated it as the conspiracy of India and the Hindus of East Pakistan. Ayub Khan termed it as the below:

*"His attacks on the Opposition became more 'virulent' and he referred openly to the possibility of Pakistan breaking apart. The Awami League, he claimed, nurtured the "horrid dream" of a greater sovereign Bengal. It could only spell disaster for the country, the people of East Pakistan would be turned into slaves, and he reminded them how they had been dominated by Hindus during British days. Islamic countries flourished in history at times when a strong central authority existed and fell into decadence at times of weak central authority.*

*He said that the Nation should be prepared to face even a civil war if thrust upon it 'by disruptionists'. The Government would not tolerate any attempt to tamper with the unity and solidarity of the Nation and expressed his concern at the activities of Opposition parties. If necessary, we would have to use 'the language of weapons'." (Genocide Bangladesh).*

But the East Pakistanis could not receive his talk of resorting to weapons and civil war, they judged it badly and almost all East Pakistanis resented his talks.

GOP (Government of Pakistan) lost its patience with Mujibur Rahman. GOP arrested him on 18 April, released on bail, re-arrested on another charge and finally again released on bail.



***Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani***

**1966 April 28:** The left wing National Awami Party (NAP – Bhasani) gave considerable support, they admitted that Sheikh Mujib's Six Points Program for further autonomy for East Pakistan.

**1967 December:** The allegation of abortive coup-assassination plot against Ayub Khan.

The Ayub government invented a strange allegation against a comparatively small number of Bengali civil servants, ex-military officers, military officers and politicians, who jointly planned to assassinate President Ayub Khan during his recent visit to East Pakistan. Not only that they also demanded that after the assassination, they would depose the Government with a coup d'état aimed at establishing an independent state in East Pakistan. According to their invention, they foiled the conspiracy and subsequently arrested between 50 and 60 Bengalis.

**1968 January:** Sheikh Mujibur Rahman arrested again on the charge of the Agartala Conspiracy Case.



This case turned the sentiments of the Bengalis of the East Pakistan against discrimination of the ruler class, they started to believe that the establishment of West Pakistan and their military regime would keep continuing the exploitation of the East Pakistanis in all fronts, they did not pay any honor to the Bengalis and by hook or crook, the West Pakistanis would dominated and kept the state power in their hand to suck East Pakistanis as usual.

*“...it evoked a totally unexpected Bengali reaction. While the prosecution wanted to dub Mujib a traitor, Bengalis made a hero out of him. The trial conferred such popularity on Mujib that would otherwise have taken him a lifetime to acquire.”* — Siddiq Salik, in his book: ‘A Witness to Surrender’ ([Genocide Bangladesh](#)).

**1968 August:** The trial of the alleged Conspirators in East Pakistan ruined the image of the GOP. The GOP produced the accused 36 politicians, Bengali CSP Officers, army / ex-army Offices in the Trial, but it became farce when the prosecution witness broke down in the court and asserted that he had been tortured and threatened with death by military officers who wished him to testify falsely against the alleged conspirators.

**1968 November:** The economic report which published in that time exposed the disparity between two provinces that widens, not lessen. So, the “Six Points” demands of AL got deep rooted status among the East Pakistanis again.

**1969 January - February:** In the whole Pakistan, violence had been broken out between people demonstrating against Ayub Khan’s martial law regime and the police.

To restoring peace, the ‘Agartala Conspiracy Case’ had been dismissed and Sheikh Mujib had been released by the GOP.

In Dhaka, police opened fire on a procession against the rule of Ayub Khan, Asad (a student leader) and a high-school student Matiur Rahman had been killed. It created resentments among the Bengali, gave rise to the Mass Uprising of 1969 (gono-abhyuththaan) in East Pakistan.

**1969 February 15:** The Army killed Sergeant Zahurul Haq, one of the 35 accused in the Agartala Conspiracy Case, while he was in the military custody at the Dhaka Cantonment. This incident ignited in the mass uprising in East Pakistan too.

**1969 February 20:** According to the CIA's report, the popularity of Ayub Khan was almost 'zero'. His political party, the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) - never became an effective organization, it appeared to have the virtually collapsed and they (CIA) started to believe that Pakistan stood on the brink.

**1969 March 13:** Sheikh Mujib raised his demands again to establish the full regional Autonomy in the round table conference to make the Federation successful in the East Pakistan.



*General Yahya Khan*

**1969 March 25:** General Yahya Khan captured the power by a hidden coup d'etat in which Yahya forced Ayub Khan to hand over his powers and resign.

**1969 March 31:** General Yahya Khan immediately imposed the martial law in Pakistan. On the 31st of March, he declared himself as the President of Pakistan.

**1969 April 11:** Roy Fox's talked with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on the issue of autonomy of East Pakistan. Mujib urged to realize the demand of the Bengali by the West Pakistani establishment and military regime to make the justifications between the two wings. He insisted that he would still want to stay in one Pakistan, but the West Pakistani establishment and military regime could not realize it. Even they tried to spoil the situation by making false propaganda against the Bengali leaders of East Pakistan.

**1969 November 7:** The Bengali accused the GOP that it did do nothing to try to narrow the disparity between the two provinces, which were increasingly countered by privately expressed West Pakistan views that the deficiencies on the East Pakistani side played the greater role in hampering development -the chronically unfavorable weather, inefficiencies in the public sector, absence of an adequate entrepreneurial class, lack of investors interest, etc. Thus, the resentment of the Bengalis over allegedly insufficient GOP interest clashed with West Pakistan feelings that Bengali demands were unreasonable.

**1969 November 28:** Yahya declared through his address to the nation that general election would be held in 1970.

**1969 December 5:** At a discussion meeting, Sheikh Mujib declared that from now on the East Pakistan would be called Bangla Desh. He added:

“There was a time when all efforts were made to erase the word ‘Bangla’ from this land and its map. The existence of the word ‘Bangla’ was found nowhere except in the term ‘Bay of Bengal’. I, on behalf of Pakistan, announce today that this land will be called ‘Bangla Desh’ instead of ‘East Pakistan’.” ([GenocideBangladesh](#)).

**1969 December 8:** From every corner of the East Pakistan, Sheikh Mujib’s demand to rename East Wing as Bangla Desh had been hailed. Among them, Chief of NAP, Maulana Abdul hamid Khan Bhasani supported this demand as genuine. He termed that the name of East Pakistan was forcibly imposed on the Bengali nation.

**1970 December 7:** Awami League won the election, PPP refused to allow Sheikh Mujib as Prime Minister.

In 1970 the Awami League, the largest East Pakistani political party, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won a landslide victory in the national elections. The party won 167 out of the 169 seats allotted to East Pakistan, and thus a majority of the 313 seats in the National Assembly. This gave the Awami League the constitutional right to form a government.

The nearest contender was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of PPP, with a total of 81 seats in the National Assembly, and with a two-thirds majority from Sind.

## National Council Election, 1970

The election was held on 7 December 1970. The total voters were 29,479,386 and the casting votes were 17,005,163 (57.68%), the valid casting votes were 16,454,278.

### The summary of the National Council Election, 1970 ([Wikipedia.org](#))

Sl. No.	Political Party	Total candidates	Seats captured	Percentage of total casting
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				vote
1	Awami League	162	160	74.9%
2	PDP	79	1	2.9%
3	Niajm-e-Islami	49	0	0%
4	Jamaat-e-Islami	70	0	6%
5	Pakistan Muslim League (Convention)	93	0	2.8%
6	Pakistan Muslim League (Kou)	50	0	1.6%
7	Pakistan Muslim League (Kayum)	65	0	1%
8	National Awami Party (Wali)	39	0	1.8%
9	Independent (politician)	114	1	3.4%

### Provincial Council Election, 1970

The election was held on 17 December 1970. The percentage of casting votes was (57.69%), and the number of reserved women seat was 10.

### The summary of the Provincial Council Election, 1970 ([Wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1970_Pakistani_general_election))

Sl. No.	Political Party	Total Candidates	Seats Captured	Percentage	Symbol
1	Awami League	300	288	89%	Boat
2	PDP	-	2	1%	
3	Niajm-e-Islami	-	1	-	
4	Jamaat-e-Islami	-	1	3%	
5	Pakistan Muslim League (Convention)	-	0	1%	
6	Pakistan Muslim League (Kou)	-	0	0.05%	
7	Pakistan Muslim League (Kayum)	-	0	0.05%	
8	National Awami Party (Wali)	-	1	0.9%	
9	Independent (politician)	-	7	5%	

After these elections, Sheikh Mujib emerged as an undisputed leader of the Bengalis with 268 of the 279 seats in the East Pakistan Provincial Assembly going to the Awami League.

However, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of the Pakistan Peoples' Party, refused to allow Mujib to become the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Instead, he proposed the idea of having two Prime Ministers, one for each wing. The proposal elicited outrage in the east wing, already chafing under the other constitutional innovation, the "one unit scheme".

**1971 January:** Sheikh Mujib declared the 'Six Points' that it would be the base for a new constitution and autonomy for East Pakistan. Hence, on 21 January 1971, Mujib called a meeting of all political leaders of Pakistan to discuss on this issue.

**1971 February 22:** In a conference, the generals in West Pakistan took a decision to crush the Awami League and its supporters.

Yahya Khan ordered at that conference, "Kill three million of them, and the rest will eat out of our hands." (Robert Payne, Massacre [1972], p. 50.).



*Paki-Demon: the portrait of  
Gen. Yahya Khan*

**1971 February 24:** Sheikh Mujib announced that there was a conspiracy to undermine the election results and the establishment of Pakistan would not let to form the government according to the election result.

**1971 February 26:** Yahya held a secret meeting with Bhutto, leader of the Pakistan People's Party.

**1971 February 28:** Bhutto urged that the National Assembly session should be postponed. He said that the people of West Pakistan voted against the 6-points of Awami League.



*Zulfikar Ali Bhutto: The Villain of the dirty war of Pakistan, 1971*

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto said: "We cannot go there only to endorse a constitution already prepared by a party, and return humiliated... We have a duty to those millions who elected us." ([GenocideBangladesh](#)).

Instead, he raised a peculiar formula that the PPP should control West Pakistan while the Awami League could rule over East Pakistan. Not only that he threatened his newly elected delegates to the National Assembly that he would break the legs of any party member who would dare to attend the March 3 session.

**1971 March 1:** GOP announced the postponement of the session of the National Assembly, which would be seated on 3<sup>rd</sup> March. After that announcement, hundreds of thousands of the enraged people of East Pakistan took the street.

Sheikh Mujib told in a press conference that it was not democracy but dictatorship. He called general strikes on 2<sup>nd</sup> March in Dhaka and all over the country on 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

All radical student leaders of East Pakistan started to believe to have the independence with the armed revolution. They, for the first time, demanded the independence of Bangladesh immediately. The Bengali heard the slogans demanding independence for Bangladesh for the first time in Bengali history: "Courageous Bengali, take up arms and free Bangladesh".

The Governor of East Pakistan, Admiral S.M. Ahsan had been replaced by General Sahibzada Yakoob Khan because he refused to open fire on the Bengalis if they went on strike.

**1971 March 2:** Curfew had been imposed in Dhaka from 8 am to 7 pm. The indomitable Bengalis took to the streets instead of the curfew, in which many of them were gunned down by the Pakistani army.

The Bengalis reacted severely against this shooting, Mujib denounced the firing on unarmed men and declared 4 days' hartal (general strike) from 6 am – 2 pm of each day from 3<sup>rd</sup> March to 6<sup>th</sup> March, 1971 in all spheres.

After a massive rally under the leadership of ASM Abdur Rab (Vp of the student government), Shahjahan Siraj (GS of the student government), Nur-e-Alam Siddiqui and Abdul Kuddus Makhani, the Central Students Action Committee in Dhaka University, raised the 'Flag of independent Bangladesh' at the historic Bat-tala of Dhaka University for the first time in Bengali history.

**1971 March 3:** Despite the declaration to start the arms revolution in East Pakistan by the students unit in Dhaka, Sheikh Mujib called for a "non-violent non-cooperation movement" instead. Mujib demanded in a meeting, "Withdraw forces, transfer power".

The curfew imposed in the main cities of East Pakistan, angry mob burned Pakistani flag in many areas in the province to show the deep resentment to the West Pakistani establishment and their brutal military regime. During 1-3 March 1971, the Pakistani brutal army killed more than 300 agitators in different cities and towns of East Pakistan.

Under the posture for negotiations with Sheikh Mujib, the non-Bengali regiments of soldiers had been secretly flown into Dhaka from West Pakistan.



Sheikh Mujib rejected the invitation of President Yahya Khan to attend the proposed meeting of the leaders of all the parliamentary groups in the national assembly on March 10, instead he reiterated his previous demand to hand over the power to the elected government.

**1971 March 6:** After the resign of Shahibzada Yakub Khan, President Yahya Khan appointed Tikka Khan as the Governor of East Pakistan. He also announced that the Assembly session would be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> of March.



*Sheikh Mujib: addressing in the mass rally of March 7, 1971*

**1971 March 7:** In a massive rally at Race Course Maidan in Dhaka, Sheikh Mujib announced his decision to participate in the National Assembly session, but he raised his 4-point demands to fulfill before the session. Those are as below: ([Genocidebangladesh.org](http://Genocidebangladesh.org))

- 1) Withdrawal of the martial law
- 2) Return of the troops back to their barracks
- 3) Power handed back to the elected people's representatives, and
- 4) Proper investigation into the killings of unarmed civilians.

In that historic rally, he actually declared the “Independence of Bangladesh” informally, by pronouncing like this:

*“Our Struggle this time is a struggle for FREEDOM, our struggle this time is a struggle for INDEPENDENCE. Joy Bangla.”*

He also urged the people to be ready to fight. He also asked that every house would be a fort and would attack the enemy wherever they could.

Actually from 1<sup>st</sup> March 1971, the civil administration, Banks, Industrial activities, etc. of East Pakistan had been operated according to Mujib’s directives.

**1971 March 15-24:** During this time, the GOP was showing the world that they tried to solve the problem by discussing with Sheikh Mujib in East Pakistan. But they pretended to do so, they actually piled their strength by intruding the troops into Dhaka from the West Pakistan to crush the Bengali and their “Nationalism”. At this stage, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was participating in the Drama of GOP.

At the meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March, Sheikh Mujib warned Yahya and Bhutto against any bid to impose decision on the Bengali.

*“Whatever conspiracy you indulge in you will not succeed in suppressing the demands of the people. We would not bow our heads to any force. We will free the people of Bangla Desh.”*



Tajuddin Ahmed

General Secretary of East Pakistan Awami League, Mr. Tajuddin Ahmed urged the people to be vigilant and to be ready to make any sacrifice to defeat the conspiracy of anti-people forces.

**1971 March 25:** Pak army crackdown on the civilians in Dhaka to stop the Bengalis forever. They named their “Dirty War” against the legal demand of Bengalis as “*Operation Searchlight*”. Thus their systematic slaughtering and ethnic cleansing had been started at that night and continued up to their surrender on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1971 and the whole world could observe that brutality of Pakistan’s hyena-army.



*Genocide Bangladesh: The victims of  
Pakistan's Dirty-war, 1971.*

## **Declaration of Independence:**

After the brutal military crackdown of the Pakistan Army in the early hours of March 26, 1971, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was arrested and the political leaders of Awami League either went into hiding or fleeing to neighboring India, where they organized a provisional government afterwards. Before being held up by the Pakistani Army Sheikh Mujibur Rahman gave a hand note of the declaration of the independence of Bangladesh to his fellow leaders and it was circulated amongst people and transmitted by the East Pakistan Rifles' wireless transmitter in the early hours of 26<sup>th</sup> March 1971. The then Secretary (Labor) of the Awami League, Mr. Zahur Hossain Chowdhury took the initiative to transmit that declaration throughout the country by the wireless system of Chittagong EPR Headquarters.

On the same day (26<sup>th</sup> March 1971), the General Secretary of Chittagong Awami League, Mr. M. A. Hannan read that declaration of the independence of Bangladesh (in Bengali) from the Kalurghat Radio Station, Chittagong twice at 2.10 pm and 2.30 pm.

Afterwards from that Kalurghat Radio Station, the Bengali Army Major, Zia-Ur-Rahman read that declaration of independence of Bangladesh in English on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1971 on behalf of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman:

*"I, Major Zia-ur-Rahman, on behalf of our great national leader and supreme commander Sheikh Mujibur Rahman do hereby proclaim the independence of Bangladesh. ...."*

The Provisional Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh was formed in Meherpur, (later renamed as Mujibnagar a place adjacent to the Indian border). Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was announced to be the head of the state. Tajuddin Ahmed became the prime minister of the government.



A refugee Camp in India, 1971

There the war plan was sketched with armed forces established named "Muktibahini" (freedom fighters). M. A. G. Osmani was assigned as the Chief of the force. The whole land divided into 11 sectors under 11 sector commanders. Along with these sectors, on the later part of the war, 3 special-forces were formed namely K Force, S Force and Z Force. These three forces name were derived from the initial letter of the commandar's name. The training and most of the arms and ammunitions were arranged by the Meherpur government (later it was called as Mujib Nagar Government) which was supported by India. As fighting grew between the Pakistan Army and the Bengali Mukti Bahini, an estimated ten million Bengalis, mainly Hindus, sought refuge in the Indian states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and West Bengal.



A flood of refugees to India, 1971

The crisis in the East Pakistan produced new strains in Pakistan's troubled relations with India. The two nations already had fought two wars in 1948 and 1965 over the Kashmir issue, mainly in the west, but the pressure of millions of refugees escaping into India in autumn of 1971 as well as Pakistani aggression reignited hostilities with Pakistan. Indian sympathies lay with East Pakistan during that time, and Pakistan could not tolerate it.

In the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1971, Pakistan Air Force started their pre-emptive strikes on the 11 forward air bases and radar installations of Indian Air Force of its western border under the code name “**Chengiz Khan**”. After that attack, India formally intervened on the side of the Bangladeshis on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1971 (*Wikipedia.org*).

Within 13 days, Pakistan army had been defeated on the both sides of Indian borders. In Bangladesh front Pakistan army surrendered on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1971; and the nation of Bangladesh ("Country of Bengal") was finally established on the following day. The new country changed its name to Bangladesh on January 11, 1972 and became a parliamentary democratic country (Peoples' Republic) under its constitution. Shortly thereafter on March 19 Bangladesh signed a friendship treaty with India.



(Sources: *Wikipedia, Genocide Bangladesh, Liberation War Museum*)

এখন আমরা **লাল সবুজ** পতার মালিক ।

