

Introduction: Mass Upsurge 1969

The mass upsurge of 1969 was the **greatest mass awakening** ever since the creation of Pakistan. This **democratic political movement** consisted of a series of **mass demonstrations** between government armed forces and the people.

Although the **unrest began in 1966** with the six-point movement of Awami League, it got **momentum at the beginning of 1969**.

This movement 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.

Causes of the Mass Upsurge

The **Agartala conspiracy case** was considered as the **main reason** for the mass uprising and its main aim was to establish autonomy of East Bengal.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was made the number one accused in the Agartala conspiracy case and the students took to the streets to vigorous protest against this fabled and fake case.

So, **the mass upsurge started with the student unrest of 1968** against the tyrannical rule of Ayub Khan, President of Pakistan.

The **6 points of 1966**, known as the charter of liberation of Bengalis and the **11 points of All Student Action Committee** simultaneously paved the way for a mass uprising.

Goals and objectives

The main goals and objectives of the student community & politicians in this historic mass uprising were:

- Full implementation of democracy
- Establishment of autonomy in East Bengal
- Ensuring good governance

- Eradication of anti-people forces,
- Abolition of military and civilian bureaucracy
- Elimination of existing inequalities

Timeline of events in 1969

5 January: Shorbodolio Chatro Shongram Porishad (The All Party Student Action Committee) put forth its 11-point agenda.

7–8 January: Formation of a political coalition named Democratic Action Committee (DAC).

20 January: Student activist Amanullah Asaduzzaman died as the police opened fire.

24 January: Matiur Rahman Mallik, a teenager activist, was gunned down by the police.

15 February: Sergeant Zahurul Haq, one of the convicts of Agartala Conspiracy Case, was assassinated in the prison of Kurmitola Cantonment.

18 February: Professor Shamsuzzoha of the University of Rajshahi was killed by the police.

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).

25 March: Ayub Khan hands over power to General Yahya Khan, the army Chief of Staff.

Results of the uprising

Martial Law was re-imposed, but simultaneously it was **agreed** that **elections** would be arranged soon on the basis of **universal adult franchise**, and **parliamentary democracy** would be introduced.

The **demand for a separate state** became stronger than ever before among the people of Eastern Bengal.

Action Committee proposed to change few places' name, these are;

- Ayub Nagar to Sher-e-Bangla Nagar
- Ayub Gate to Asad Gate
- Ayub children's park to Matiur children's Park etc.

Also, Sergeant Zahurul Haq were honoured by the naming of a students' residential hall of the University of Dhaka after him.

Along the path of this mass uprising, the Bengali nation achieved great independence through a bloody armed liberation war.

Conclusion

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.