Bangladesh’s Victory in 1971 could never be achieved without the help of India

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Bangladesh did not win the liberation war alone by herself rather, with the help of neighboring country India she paved her way to victory. On 25th July 2011, the highest Bangladeshi Award, the Bangladesh Swadhinata Sammanona was conferred on former Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi (“Former PM Indira Gandhi honored with Bangladesh’s highest award”, 2011). The prime minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina awarded the honor for her contributions to the liberation war of Bangladesh. Bangladesh is an independent country but the story behind her independence is filled with sacrifice, emotion and bravery. Since the partition of 1947, West Pakistan had dominated the people of East Pakistan in every possible way. However, after 24 years of oppression when Bangladesh was left alone by the global community in the war of independence, India showed her the light of hope by extending its helping hand. Therefore, in the Liberation war of 1971, the victory of Bangladesh could not be gained without the help of India as their prime minister introduced our nationalism to the world, supported us with weapons, provided us with shelter and manpower. (Tanjim)

To begin with, India helped Bangladesh to promote our nationalism to the outer world. To cut down East Pakistan’s communication to the outer world, West Pakistan had forcibly restricted all international reporters to the Hotel Intercontinental. At that time, India reached out to the world and represented the genocidal situation of Bangladesh which helped Bangladesh in getting global aid and attention. The first detailed eyewitness story on the genocide of Bangladesh was published on SundayTimes, a United Kingdom based renowned media. Moreover, US president Nixon sent the world’s largest nuclear-powered aircraft U.S.S Enterprise Carrier to the Bay of Bengal to support their broker West Pakistan. Consequently, India sought help from The Soviet Union and neutralized the situation both by sending cautionary messages and their nuclear-armed flotilla (Mahfuz, 2013). Additionally, India was the first country to recognize Bangladesh as an independent country. As a country fighting for independence, it is the most crucial and needed thing to be recognized. Also, India’s close tie with the Soviet Union played a vital role. The Soviet Union was the first great power to officially recognize Bangladesh as an independent country. Despite West Pakistan’s declaration of suspending diplomatic relations with nations who declared Bangladesh an independent country, getting recognized by India, the Soviet Union, and many more was crucial for Bangladesh. In brief, Bangladesh’s promotion of nationalism and global recognition in the world was achieved through India’s help.(Tanjim)

Secondly, during the war, India supported Bangladesh with many equipment by supplying them with modern firearms to the freedom fighters and training the strategic Guerrilla Force. The freedom fighters of Bangladesh were mostly general people, whereas the West Pakistani army were trained and fully loaded with modern weaponry. The freedom fighters had no modern firearms to defend with, let alone attacking. At that time, India supplied Bangladesh with Chinese Rifle, Indian SLR Rifle, Chinese SMG, Type 53 Machine Gun, Heavy Mortar, and ammunition (Mahmud, 2019). It immensely helped the freedom fighters to fight back for their motherland. Furthermore, India trained thousands of Bangladeshi fighters and taught them to operate modern weapons. India also prepared the Guerilla Force, which was one of the most successful irregular forces in the liberation war of Bangladesh. By adopting the Guerilla tactics, other forces all over the country, such as Afsar Battalion, Halim Bahini, and Akbar Bahini became a major threat for the West Pakistani military. Thus, trained forces along with Indian supplies played a significant role in defeating west Pakistani forces. (Tanjim)

Lastly, India had provided shelter to East Pakistani refugees and helped them in war with extra manpower during the liberation war. To begin with, the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) opened India-Bangladesh borders to accept tortured, frightened Bangladeshi refugees. Consequently, they provided the refugees with the necessary things to survive (BS Web team, 2018). In every case, especially in a war-ravaged country, women and children are most vulnerable and oppressed. The west Pakistani army was actively exploiting the vulnerability, and they had killed thousands of children. To add, Pakistani Military and Rajakars killed somewhere between 2,00,000 and 4,00,000 women and girls after raping them (Das, 2011). The death, rape, and insecurity of family members were the greatest concern of the freedom fighters. They could not protect their family members while in a war. At that much needed time, India showed massive generosity by taking in the refugees. They gave shelter to the women and children, gave them food, and provided them healthcare. In total, 10 million people took shelter in different states of India. This gesture inspired the Bengali soldiers to fight for their motherland, knowing that their mother and family are safe in India. Additionally, India spent seven thousand crore rupees for the war and sent soldiers to East Pakistan to fight by the side of Bengali freedom fighters. In the war, 3640 Indian soldiers and officers died, about 9856 were wounded, and more than 210 of the soldiers are still missing to this day (Drong, 2016). In the end, Pakistan’s Lieutenant A. A. K. Niazi signed the Instrument of Surrender and surrendered to Indian Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aurora with 93,000 armed soldiers. Thus, India’s support with shelter and manpower led Bangladesh to the ultimate victory.(Tanjim)

Some people may argue that India had joined the war at the very last moment when the Bengali Forces almost defeated Pakistan. However, there was no confirmation of Bangladesh winning at that point. Firstly, Pakistan still had 93,000 soldiers available to fight anytime, and they could bring more platoons from the western part within a short time. Also, they had no shortage of resources or food to continue the war for another year or two easily. On the other hand, Bangladesh had very few well-trained armies of her own. Without Guerrilla Forces, Modern Arms, and manpower from India, there was no guarantee that Bangladesh could corner the West Pakistani armies alone, let alone defeating them. Moreover, Bangladesh was at the peak, with millions of refugees in another country along with tired, unfed soldiers. At that time, if Bangladesh could not get the Indian army’s help, the chances of winning were slim. Indian forces, mutual forces, and Bangladeshi freedom fighters strategically attacking from every corner frightened the Pakistan army, leaving them with no way but to surrender. Secondly, the West Pakistan army was killing innocent people of Bangladesh without showing any mercy. Their heavy tanks, mortars were actively being used to destroy buildings and places all over Bangladesh. Their genocide had no bound. In the last moments, their killing reached its peak. They started killing the intellectual, brilliant, renowned, and precious people of Bangladesh. They planned to handicap Bangladesh by destroying her backbone. At that time, there were no chances of Bangladesh winning alone but it was sure that Pakistan would not stop destruction at any cost. As a result, it would have led to continuation of the war and more destruction. Considering all these, there was no chance that Bangladesh would have defeated Pakistan before the Indian army had joined the liberation war of Bangladesh. (Tanjim)

To conclude, If India had not cooperated in the liberation war of Bangladesh by introducing our nationalism, supporting us with weapons, providing the refugees' shelter, and sending manpower, Bangladesh would be in serious trouble, and the victory would not be gained. Hence, the freedom fighters and the general public who fought for the liberation of this country and sacrificed the lives of their precious ones as well as themselves, should always be remembered. Also, keeping good relations with India, the country that supported us from the very beginning till the end of our liberation war, is a must. When Bangladesh was alone in the war, India contributed and together, we won the war. Thus, if worked together as united for anything to achieve, it becomes easier to succeed. For this reason, Bangladesh must work to establish its foreign relations with other countries. Something remarkable like this is what India had done in 1971 for the People’s Republic of Bangladesh. (Tanjim)

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