



THE GOENKA MUN' 23

SUSTAINING IDEAS | CREATING CHANGE



JOINT CRISIS COMMITTEE - WAR CABINET

1971 INDIA - PAKISTAN WAR

BACKGROUND GUIDE

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Greetings Members!

It gives us immense pleasure to welcome you to this simulation of the Indian and Pakistani War Cabinets at The Goenka MUN 2023. We look forward to an enriching and rewarding experience. The theme for the Joint Crisis Committee being the “1971 India – Pakistan War”

This study guide is by no means the end of research, we would very much appreciate if the delegates are able to find new realms in the agenda and bring it forth in the committee. Such research combined with good argumentation and a solid representation of facts is what makes much as possible, as fluency, diction or oratory skills have very little importance as opposed to the content you deliver.

So just research and speak, and you are bound to make a lot of sense. We are certain that we will be learning from you immensely and we also hope that you all will have an equally enriching experience. In case of any queries feel free to contact us. We will try our best to answer the questions to the best of our abilities.

We look forward to an exciting and interesting committee, which should certainly be helped by the all-pervasive nature of the issue. Hopefully we, as members of the Executive Board, do also have a chance to gain from being a part of this committee. Please do not hesitate to contact us regarding any doubts that you may have.

Please note that the **Freeze Date for the committee is 23rd November, 2023**. Any context provided after that is only to give you a sense of what events transpired post the freeze date and the

Godspeed

Vansh Tevatia (Chairperson- Indian War Cabinet)

Khush Vardhan Dembla (Chairperson- Pakistan War Cabinet)

Garv Tevatia (Vice Chairperson- Indian War Cabinet)

Nandini Pandey (Vice Chairperson- Pakistan War Cabinet)

ABOUT THE WAR (REAL LIFE EVENTS)

Prelude to the War

Differences between the East and the West

The political tensions between East Bengal and West Pakistan had its origin in the creation of Pakistan as a result of the Partition of India. The geographical distance between West and East Pakistan lay over 1,600 km away, which greatly hampered any attempt to integrate the Bengali and the Pakistani cultures. In 1948,

Muhammad Ali Jinnah declared that "Urdu and only Urdu" would be the federal language of Pakistan but in East Bengal, the native language was Bengali. The government stand was widely viewed as an attempt to suppress the culture of the eastern wing. This led to the Language Movement began beginning in 1948.

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

The capital of the country was also situated in West Pakistan. 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.

ABOUT THE WAR (REAL LIFE EVENTS)

In 1970, the Bangladesh Awami League, the largest East Pakistani political party, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won a landslide victory in the national elections. This gave the Awami League the constitutional right to form a government. However, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the leader of the Pakistan People's Party, refused to allow Rahman 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.

Operation Searchlight and the Genocide

A planned military pacification carried out by the Pakistan Army (codenamed Operation Searchlight) started on 25 March 1971 to curb the Bengali independence movement by taking control of the major cities on 26 March, and then eliminating all opposition, political or military, within one month.

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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 main phase of Operation Searchlight ended with the fall of the last major town in Bengali hands in mid-May. The operation also began the 1971 Bangladesh genocide.

These systematic killings served only to enrage the Bengalis, which ultimately resulted in the secession of East Pakistan later in the same year. During the nine-month long Bangladesh War for Liberation, members of the Pakistani military and supporting Islamist militias from Jamaat-e-Islami killed between 3,00,000 and 30,00,000 people and raped between 2,00,000 and 4,00,000 Bangladeshi women, according to Bangladeshi and Indian sources, in a systematic campaign of genocidal rape.

ABOUT THE WAR (REAL LIFE EVENTS)

The actions against women were supported by Jamaat-e-Islami religious leaders, who declared that Bengali women were “gonimoter maal” (Bengali for "public property"). During the war, the Pakistani Army and its local collaborators, mainly Jamaat e Islami carried out a systematic execution of the leading Bengali intellectuals. As a result of the conflict, a further 80 Lac to 1 Crore people, mostly Hindus, fled the country to seek refuge in neighbouring India. It is estimated that up to 3 Crore civilians were internally displaced out of 7 Crore.

The scale of the atrocities was first made clear in the West when Anthony Mascarenhas, a Pakistani journalist who had been sent to the province by the military authorities to write a story favourable to Pakistan's actions, instead fled to the United Kingdom and published an article describing the systematic killings by the military.

The BBC wrote: "There is little doubt that Mascarenhas' reportage played its part in ending the war. It helped turn world opinion against Pakistan and encouraged India to play a decisive role", with Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi herself stating that Mascarenhas' article has led her "to prepare the ground for India's armed intervention".

Mukti Bahini and the Civil War

Amidst the deadlock after the 1970 Pakistani General Elections Rahman met with Bhutto and both agreed to form a coalition government with Rahman as Premier and Bhutto as President. However, the military was unaware of these developments. On 7 March 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (soon to be the prime minister) delivered a speech at the Racecourse Ground In this speech he mentioned a further four-point condition to consider at the National Assembly Meeting on 25 March 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.

ABOUT THE WAR (REAL LIFE EVENTS)

The violence unleashed by the Pakistani forces on 25 March led Rahman to declare independence on 26th March 1971. 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. The Pakistani military sought to quell them, but increasing numbers of Bengali soldiers defected to this underground "Bangladesh army".

These Bengali units slowly merged into the Mukti Bahini and bolstered their weaponry with supplies from India. Pakistan responded by airlifting in two infantry divisions and reorganising their forces. They also raised paramilitary forces of Razakars, Al-Badr 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. 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 Osman 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. Mukti Bahini led the armed struggle which was now the Bangladesh Liberation War. It fought key battles with the Pakistani forces namely Battle of Gazipur, Battle of Goalhati, Battle of Garibpur, Battle of Dhalai, Battle of Rangamati, Battle of Kushtia, Battle of Daruin, Operation Barisal and Operation Jackpot.

ABOUT THE WAR (REAL LIFE EVENTS)

India Enters the War

After the Pakistani military's widespread genocide against their Bengali citizens, particularly aimed at the minority Bengali Hindu population approximately 1 Crore people sought refuge in the neighbouring states of Eastern India.

The Indian government opened the East Pakistan–India border to allow the Bengali refugees to find safe shelter; the governments of West Bengal Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura established refugee camps along the border. The Research & Analysis Wing (RAW) was already training, providing arms and assistance to the Mukti Bahini. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi concluded that instead of taking in millions of refugees, it was economical to go to war against Pakistan.

On 28 April 1971, the Indira cabinet had ordered the Chief of the Army Staff General Sam Manekshaw to 'Go into East Pakistan'. According to Manekshaw's own personal account, he refused, citing the onset of monsoon season in East Pakistan and also the fact that the army tanks were being refitted. He offered his resignation, which Indira declined. He then said he could guarantee victory if she would allow him to prepare for the conflict on his terms, and set a date for it; Indira accepted his conditions.

By November 1971, an Indian-Pakistani war seemed inevitable. The Soviet Union warned Pakistan against the war. Indian army waited until December, when the drier ground in the East would have made for easier operations and the Himalayan passes would have been closed by snow, preventing any Chinese intervention.

On 23rd November, President Yahya Khan declared a state of emergency in all of Pakistan and told his people to prepare for war.

ABOUT THE WAR (REAL LIFE EVENTS)

The Eastern Front

On 23 November 1971, the Indian Army conventionally penetrated to the eastern fronts and crossed East Pakistan's borders to join their Bengali nationalist allies. Contrary to the 1965 war, which had emphasised set-piece battles and slow advances, this time the strategy adopted was a swift, three-pronged assault of nine infantry divisions with attached armoured units and close air support that rapidly converged on Dacca, the capital of East Pakistan.

Facts & Figures

Date:	3 rd – 16 th December 1971	
Location:	Eastern Front: Bay of Bengal, Pasha Enclaves Western Front: Line of Control, Zero Point, Arabian Sea	
Result:	Decisive Indian Victory Western Front: Unilateral Ceasefire Eastern Front: Surrender of East Pakistan Military Command	
Territorial Changes:	Independence of East Pakistan as Bangladesh Indian Forces captured around 15,000 km ² land in the West but returned it in the 1972 Simla Agreement as a gesture of goodwill	
Strength:	Indian Armed Forces: 500000 Mukti Bahini: 175000 Total: 6,75,000	Pakistan Armed Forces: 3,65,000
Casualties and Losses:	India	Pakistan
	2500 – 3843 killed 9851 – 12000 injured 1 Naval Aircraft 1 Frigate Okha Harbour Damaged / Fuel Tanks Destroyed Damage to several Indian Western Airfields Pakistani Claims: 130 IAF Aircraft Indian Claims: 45 IAF Aircraft Neutral Claims: 45 IAF Aircraft	9000 killed 25000 injured 93000 captured 2 Destroyers, 1 Submarine, 7 Gunboats, 3 Patrol Vehicles, 1 Minesweeper Karachi Port Damaged / Fuel Tanks Destroyed Pakistani Airfields damaged Pakistani Claims: 42 PAF Aircraft Indian Claims: 94 PAF Aircraft Neutral Claims: 75 PAF Aircraft

ABOUT THE WAR (REAL LIFE EVENTS)

The Simla Agreement

The Simla Agreement was signed between India and Pakistan on 2 July 1972 in Shimla, the capital city of the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. The agreement was ratified by the Parliaments of both the nations in the same year. The agreement was the result of resolve of both the countries to "put an end to the conflict and confrontation that have hitherto marred their relations".

It conceived the steps to be taken for further normalisation of mutual relations and it also laid down the principles that should govern their future relations. The treaty was signed in Shimla in India by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the President of Pakistan, and Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India. The agreement also paved the way for diplomatic recognition of Bangladesh by Pakistan.

Technically the document was signed at 0040 hours in the night of 3 July; despite this, official documents are dated 2 July 1972. Some of the major outcomes of the Simla Agreement are: Both countries will "settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations".

India has, many a times, maintained that Kashmir dispute is a bilateral issue and must be settled through bilateral negotiations as per Simla Agreement, 1972 and thus, had denied any third-party intervention even that of United Nations.

The agreement converted the cease-fire line of 17 December 1971 into the Line of Control (LOC) between India and Pakistan and it was agreed that "neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations".

ABOUT THE WAR (REAL LIFE EVENTS)

This Agreement also paved the path for the release of the 93,000 Pakistani Prisoners of War. Several Political Commentators have criticised Indira Gandhi's approach towards reaching an Agreement with Pakistan. They state that India could have asserted a treaty which was more in their favour as they had a big weapon of POWs in their hands. This agreement gave away all the 15,000 sq. kilometres of land they had won in the War.

This clause is highly criticised and critics say that India won the war but could not reap the benefits of it due to this Agreement. It is alleged that Indian Army Chief Gen. Sam Manekshaw (Later conferred with the designation of Field Marshall, India's Highest Military Rank) said to Indira Gandhi "Bhutto has made a monkey out of you" in light of this Agreement.

SOURCES

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<https://www.orfonline.org/research/how-1971-war-fought-won/>

2) Kuldeep Nayar's Article for the Indian Express (03/02/98)

<https://web.archive.org/web/20090823045047/http://www.indianexpress.com/res/web/pIe/ie/daily/19980203/03450744.html>

3) Journal of Asian and African Studies – ResearchGate

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254109897_A_Revisit_to_the_Indian_Role_in_the_Bangladesh_Liberation_War

4) Time Magazine

<http://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,910155,00.html>

Books:

1) India Since Independence by Bipan Chandra

ISBN: 9780143104094

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Try to keep your speeches as solution-oriented as possible. Collect data, information, opinions, and narratives from multiple sources as it is a very diverse and multi-faceted issue in nature. After analysing the information from all sources and viewpoints, use your own creativity and out-of-the-box thinking to frame your speeches and propose solutions. The points you mention in your speeches must be backed by your conviction and firm belief, as you are the one who will have to defend your arguments against conflicting points of view.

Wishing you the best of luck. We can't wait to see you in action!