**The 1st war of independence // Sipahi movement**

The Revolt of 1857, also known as the First War of Independence, began with the discontent of Indian sepoys against British rule. The initial spark was provided at Barrackpore, where Mangal Pandey attempted to kill a British officer. Jemadar Ishwari Prasad refused to arrest him, leading to their execution and the disbandment of their regiment.

The rebellion escalated on 10 May 1857, when sepoys at Meerut revolted and massacred British officials. The revolt spread to major regions like Delhi, Agra, Kanpur, Jhansi, Lucknow, and parts of Bengal, including Dhaka and Sylhet. Dhaka witnessed an uprising near Lalbagh Fort on 22 November, which was suppressed, leaving dozens dead and many hanged. In Sylhet, zamindars aided fleeing sepoys, but the British defeated them in the Latu battle by 23 December.

The Indian army, comprising 250,000 Indian soldiers and 45,000 British officers, was divided. While the Bhojpuris, Marathas, Rohillas, Oudhis, and Bengalis fought, the Sikhs and Pathans remained loyal to t he British. Lack of coordination, a reluctant leader in Bahadur Shah Zafar, and regional passivity, especially in South India, weakened the revolt.

The sepoys displayed brutality in their initial victories, but the British retaliated with severe force. Prominent leaders like Rani Lakshmi Bai, Nana Sahib, and Bakht Khan were killed or disappeared. By June 1858, the revolt ended with a peace treaty signed on 8 July. This rebellion marked a significant, though unsuccessful, attempt to challenge British colonial rule.

**The partition of india and cabinet mission**

In July 1945, the Labour government under Earl Attlee came to power in the UK, signaling a shift in Britain's approach to Indian independence. Key developments during this period included:

1. **Political and Military Unrest**: The INA trials in November 1945 and the naval revolt in Bombay in February 1946 created widespread agitation in India.
2. **Formation of the Cabinet Mission**: In response, the Labour government dispatched a Cabinet Mission on 23 March 1946, comprising Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps, and Albert Alexander, to devise a plan for Indian independence.
3. **The Cabinet Mission Plan**: Announced on 16 May 1946, the plan proposed:
   * A Confederation of India with three groups of provinces (Group A: Rest of India, Group B: NWFP, Baluchistan, Sind, Punjab, Group C: Assam, Bengal).
   * Confederal powers including foreign affairs, defense, communications, and taxation.
   * Provincial assemblies electing a constitution-making body and framing group constitutions.
   * An interim government with representatives from Congress, the Muslim League, and minorities.
4. **Initial Acceptance and Challenges**: While both Congress and the Muslim League initially accepted the plan, disagreements emerged. Lord Wavell tried to implement the plan for an undivided India but faced resistance from Congress and a lack of support from the Labour government in the UK.

The Cabinet Mission Plan was a significant step towards India's independence but failed due to conflicting political interests and inadequate support, setting the stage for partition.

**The 1954 Election**

The 1954 election in East Bengal marked a significant shift in political dynamics, with the Bengali electorate rejecting the "national" elite in favor of the vernacular counterelite. Key aspects include:

1. **Formation of the United Front**: To challenge the ruling Muslim League, opposition parties such as the Awami League, Krishak Sramik Party (KSP), Nizam-i-Islam, and Ganatantri Dal formed a coalition in 1953, united against the Muslim League.
2. **The 21-Point Manifesto**: The coalition’s common manifesto reflected the interests of the vernacular elite, with key demands including:
   * **Regional Autonomy**: Full autonomy for East Bengal, with the central government retaining control over defense, foreign affairs, and currency, subject to safeguards.
   * **Language and Education**: Recognition of Bengali as a national language and the use of vernaculars as the medium of instruction.
   * **Political Reforms**: Free elections, separation of executive and judiciary functions, and repeal of repressive laws.
   * **Cultural Memorials**: February 21 as a memorial day and a monument for language movement martyrs.
3. **Electoral Success and Dismissal**: The United Front's resounding victory signified the rejection of the central elite. However, the coalition's demand for autonomy and other reforms were unacceptable to the central government. Within six weeks of assuming power, the United Front ministry was dismissed, citing threats to national integration.

This election and its aftermath highlighted the growing rift between East Bengal and the central government, foreshadowing future tensions in Pakistan's political landscape.

**The Six-Point Movement**

The Six-Point Movement, introduced by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1966, marked a turning point in Bengali politics, emphasizing regional autonomy and economic independence for East Pakistan.

1. **Objectives of the Six-Point Movement**:

**Point-1: Federalism**: Establish a federal structure based on the Lahore Resolution, with a parliamentary system and an elected legislature.

**Point-2: Limited Federal Authority**: Restrict the federal government to defense and foreign affairs, delegating all other powers to federating states.

**Point-3: Separate Currencies**: Introduce either separate currencies or a single currency with safeguards to prevent capital flight from East to West Pakistan .

**Point-4: Taxation Rights**: Vest taxation powers in federating states, allocating a fixed share to the center .

**Point-5: Foreign Trade Control**: Allow each wing to control its foreign exchange earnings, establish separate trade accounts, and regulate trade relations .

**Point-6: Regional Defense**: Create a militia or paramilitary force for East Pakistan .

1. **How the Six Points Differed from Earlier Autonomy Demands**:
   * Unlike earlier movements in 1950 and 1954, the Six Points advocated confederation rather than federalism, with minimal central authority.
   * It denied the center taxation rights and gave federating units control over foreign trade and relations.
   * The movement emphasized economic independence, addressing grievances like the flight of capital and unequal development.
   * It incorporated militant linguistic nationalism, symbolized by campaigns promoting Bengali in public spaces.
2. **Impact**:  
   The Six-Point Movement radicalized Bengali politics, shifting focus from seeking central concessions to demanding self-reliance. It inspired subsequent movements, particularly the popular uprising in 1969, and laid the groundwork for East Pakistan's push for independence.

The Six Points redefined autonomy demands by proposing a confederal structure and focusing on economic and linguistic nationalism, making it a cornerstone of East Pakistan's quest for sovereignty.

**1970 Elections and it’s results**

The 1970 general elections in Pakistan, the first conducted on the basis of universal adult franchise, were a significant milestone in the nation's political history. Nine political parties participated, including religiopolitical parties like Jama'at-i-Islami and Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Islam, and democratic and leftist groups such as the Awami League and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). During the campaign, it became evident that "national" parties like the Muslim League factions had little grassroots support compared to regional parties like the Awami League in East Pakistan and the PPP in West Pakistan. This divide reflected the growing polarization between the two wings of Pakistan.

The election results highlighted this polarization. The Awami League, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won 160 out of 300 National Assembly seats, including 160 of East Pakistan's 162 seats, securing an absolute majority. The PPP, led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, won 81 seats, primarily in Punjab and Sind, with no presence in East Pakistan. The so-called national parties fared poorly, with minimal seats across both wings. The Awami League's overwhelming mandate for autonomy in East Pakistan and the PPP's dominance in West Pakistan deepened the East-West confrontation. This polarization, combined with the Awami League's demand for regional autonomy, set the stage for political tensions that would culminate in the eventual secession of East Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh.

**The national liberation movement // Discuss the 3 phrases of liberation movement**

The national liberation movement in Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan) can be divided into three distinct phases, each characterized by evolving leadership, strategies, and outcomes.

**First Phase (March 25 – Mid-May 1971): Spontaneous Resistance**

The liberation movement began with spontaneous and uncoordinated resistance following the Pakistani army’s brutal crackdown on March 25, 1971, known as "Operation Searchlight." The army attacked Dacca, targeting the East Pakistan Rifles (EPR), police, and civilians. Bengali members of the EPR and police retaliated defensively to facilitate escapes and regrouping.

* **Declaration of Independence**: On March 26, independence was declared via Chittagong radio, followed by a formal declaration on March 27 by an officer of the East Bengal Regiment (EBR). On April 10, a provisional government led by the Awami League was sworn in at Mujibnagar.
* **Nature of Resistance**: The movement was largely spontaneous, with mass participation. Bengali civilians and freedom fighters destroyed communication lines, including roads, bridges, and railways, to hinder the Pakistani army’s advance. Despite limited arms and trained personnel, small garrisons were overrun, and weapons were distributed among the populace.
* **Pakistani Army's Strategy**: The army used heavy firepower to occupy major cities, causing massive civilian casualties, destruction, and the displacement of nearly 10 million refugees to India. This brutality strengthened Bengali nationalism and internationalized the crisis.

By mid-May, the Pakistani army had captured major cities but controlled only about one-third of the population and territory, as rural areas remained defiant.

**Second Phase (Mid-May – September 1971): Strategic Planning**

This phase marked a transition to organized guerrilla warfare and long-term strategies. Leadership split between the government-in-exile in Calcutta and the Mukti Bahini (liberation army).

* **Leadership**:
  + The **government-in-exile**, led by top Awami League leaders, managed external relations and publicity.
  + The **Mukti Bahini**, including EBR, EPR, and student guerrilla leaders, focused on military operations. Coordination between these groups was limited, with reports of internal conflicts.
* **Guerrilla Warfare**: Mukti Bahini adopted guerrilla tactics, targeting supply lines, communication networks, and economic assets, such as jute and tea exports. This disrupted the Pakistani army's operations and economy.
* **Recruitment and Training**: Over 100,000 young men joined the Mukti Bahini. Training camps were established in both India and liberated areas of Bangladesh.
* **Publicity Efforts**: The government-in-exile mobilized international support and launched Radio Free Bangladesh to boost morale in both occupied and liberated territories.

Meanwhile, the Pakistani regime attempted to counter resistance by forming **peace committees**, arming **razakars** (local collaborators), and proposing a sham political settlement, which was rejected by the liberation movement. Guerrilla activities continued, disrupting the army's normalization efforts and preparing the population for prolonged war.

**Third Phase (October – Mid-December 1971): Liberation**

The final phase saw intensified guerrilla actions and the eventual involvement of the Indian Army, culminating in the liberation of Bangladesh.

* **Urban and Rural Guerrilla Activity**: Trained guerrilla units became active in cities, paralyzing normal life. Communication and power lines were destroyed, leaving major cities like Dacca without electricity for extended periods. In rural areas, guerrilla forces stepped up operations despite the Pakistani army’s retaliatory "search and destroy" missions that razed villages.
* **Shift in Strategy**: By late November, the strategy to liberate border districts for the provisional government was abandoned.
* **Indian Involvement**: On December 3, India formally entered the war after Pakistan launched airstrikes on Indian territory. In a three-week operation, combined forces of the Indian Army and Mukti Bahini decisively defeated the Pakistani army.
* **Victory**: On December 15, 1971, the Pakistani army, with 93,000 troops, surrendered in Dacca, marking the birth of Bangladesh as an independent state.

**Impact and Legacy**

The nine-month liberation movement involved mass participation, unprecedented human suffering, and significant international attention. Over 10 million refugees sought shelter in India, and countless lives were lost. The leadership’s adaptability, guerrilla warfare, and decisive Indian intervention were instrumental in achieving independence. Bangladesh emerged as a sovereign nation, redefining the geopolitical landscape of South Asia.

**Why did Bangladesh movement succeed**

The success of the Bangladesh liberation movement in 1971 was the result of a combination of unique factors, making it a landmark nationalist and democratic struggle. Unlike other movements led by military forces, such as Biafra, the Bangladesh movement was spearheaded by the Awami League, a political party that had secured an overwhelming electoral victory in 1970. This gave the movement a democratic legitimacy, reinforced by widespread mass participation from all sections of society. The brutal actions of the Pakistani army, including mass killings, the burning of villages, and targeted attacks on intellectuals and Hindus, galvanized Bengali unity and turned the struggle into a fight for survival. These atrocities drew global sympathy for the Bengali cause and isolated Pakistan diplomatically, making it difficult for them to secure foreign support.

Geographical factors also played a crucial role, as the physical separation of East and West Pakistan by 1,000 miles of Indian territory created insurmountable logistical challenges for Pakistan. Maintaining an army in East Pakistan for nine months strained Pakistan’s resources, and the Indian naval blockade during the final phase further crippled their supply lines. Moreover, India’s support was decisive. India provided sanctuary for approximately 10 million refugees and supported the Mukti Bahini with military training and resources. The intervention of the Indian military in December 1971, alongside the Mukti Bahini, led to the swift defeat of the Pakistani army. These factors, combined with the unity and resilience of the Bengali people, ensured the success of the movement, culminating in the birth of Bangladesh as an independent nation.

**Short questions**

**Masterda Surja Sen**

Suna Sen (1894-1934) was a Congress leader in Chittagong and he organised armed rebel units called Jugantor in Chittagong. In 1930 they surrounded and looted the Armoury in Chittagong and fought a battle with the British forces. Suja Sen along with his chief lieutenants Kalpana Datta, Tarakeshwar Dastidar and Pritilata Weddadar managed to escape but were arrested in 1933. He was tried and hanged in 1934.

**The Bengal Famine**

One of the major challenges faced by Lord Wavell as Viceroy of India was the Bengal Famine of 1943, which resulted in approximately 5 million deaths. The famine was primarily caused by the British government's anti-people policies and mismanagement. The Japanese occupation of Burma disrupted traditional food supplies, and the denial policy further reduced Bengal's food production and dislocated internal trade, leading to a slump in food grain distribution. Despite warnings, food grains were reserved for soldiers, and no substantial efforts were made to tackle the famine. The Bengal government, preoccupied with suppressing the Quit India Movement, also neglected relief efforts after a devastating cyclone in 1942, leaving people vulnerable and hungry. The gravity of the famine became evident only when starving populations flooded cities like Kolkata, highlighting the tragic consequences of policy failure.

**The Foundation of awami league**

The Awami League, founded in 1949, was the first Muslim opposition party in East Bengal, uniting various dissatisfied factions. It emerged as the primary representative of the budding vernacular elite. The leadership reflected the characteristics of the Bengali counterelite, with Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, a peasant leader and former president of the Assam Muslim League, serving as president. The vice-presidents, Abul Mansur Ahmad, Ataur Rahman Khan, and Abdus Salam Khan, were small-town lawyers, while the general secretary, Shamsul Huq, and assistant general secretary, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, were prominent young leaders from the 1948 language movement. The party's leadership was dominated by mofussil lawyers and student activists.

**Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani**

Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani was a prominent political figure and the first president of the Awami League, founded in 1949. A peasant leader with limited formal education, Bhasani was known for his long history of political imprisonment and his association with the Assam Muslim League. He played a key role in uniting various dissatisfied factions of East Bengal, particularly the vernacular elite, and became the chief spokesperson for the Bengali counterelite. His leadership in the Awami League marked a significant shift, as the party began to represent the interests of the emerging Bengali middle class and rural populace.

**Language Movement**

The language movement played a crucial role in the development of the vernacular elite in East Pakistan. It began soon after independence when Congress members of the Constituent Assembly demanded equal recognition of Bengali and Urdu as state languages in February 1948. The first wave of protests occurred when Dacca University students went on strike, demanding Bengali be recognized as a state language. Though short-lived, this movement demonstrated the political strength of students, who represented the vernacular elite. The most significant event took place in 1952, when massive student protests in Dacca, defying a government ban, led to the deaths of several students under police fire. This tragic incident galvanized widespread strikes and protests, deepening the sense of linguistic nationalism and uniting the Bengali population. The movement created a powerful alliance between students, intellectuals, and professionals, setting the stage for future political struggles in East Pakistan.

**The Agartala Conspiracy**

The Agartala conspiracy cuse, in brief, charged thirty-three East Pakistani politicians, vil servants, and army wen with conspiring nspiring to bring about East Pakistan's secession from the center in collusion with India. The list of alleged conspirators included three high- ranking East Pakistani civil servants and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The open trial evoked unprecedented nationalist feeling in East Pakistan. The defendants allegation of police torture, and the fumbling of some of the prosecution's witnesses, left most Bengalis with grave druits about the credibility of the cuve. Instead of believing the regime's allegation of a xevessionist plot, they lookud upon the case itself as a plot against Bengali autonomists. The defense was excellently handled by Abdus Salam Khan, himself an Awami Leaguer, was to champion the cause of astunomy.