



EAST WEST UNIVERSITY

TERM PAPER

TITLE

‘Operation Searchlight: Did It Save Pakistan or Destroy’

Course Title: Emergence of Bangladesh

Course code: GEN-226

Submitted To:

Dr. Sudhangshu Sekhar Roy

Professor & Chairman Department of Printing and Publication Studies,

University of Dhaka

Faculty of Social Sciences

Submitted By:

Rubiatis Sadia Nera

Student Id: 2020-2-60-155

Section: 11

Submission Date: 20.05.2021

Abstract

Operation Search-light is one of the most scandalous and horrific events in the history of Bengal. The result of this Operation Searchlight was the beginning of the War of Liberation in 1971 and the destruction of the Pakistani entity in Bengal. Through this term paper I would like to discuss how Operation Searchlight started and its context and its consequences.

Introduction

In the middle of the night on March 25, 1971, the Pakistani military killed innocent Bengalis; they shot and killed thousands of Bengalis that night. This planned destruction of the Pakistani military is called Operation Search-Light. Through which the Pakistanis wanted to suppress the Bengali nationalist movement that took place in March 1971 and earlier. When the Pakistanis realized that Bangladesh was going to form a separate independent state, they had to wipe out the Bengali nation and to make the Bengalis incompetent, they carry out this murder, taking away the dignity of thousands of girls. Dr. Govindra Chandra Dev, Jyotirmoy Guhathakurata, A.N.M Muniruzzaman , md abdul muktadir ,ataur rahman khan khadim , Abdul Muktedir including many more teachers were killed from the hall of Dhaka University. Many countries directly and indirectly support Bangladesh when the March 25 incident was later published in various media. Criticism has risen for such a heinous incident in Pakistan. It is in the context of this operation search light that the Bengali nation sowed the seeds of independence vigorously. The proposal to observe Genocide Day on March 25 was passed in the Jatiya Sangsad on March 11, and since then the day has been observed as National Genocide Day.

Objective

In 1971, the Bengali nation achieved independence through 9 months of bloody struggle. This liberation struggle started on March 25, 1971. The purpose of this term paper is to paint a grim picture of Operation Searchlight and to show how the Pakistanis were trapped in the Pakistani trap. The night of 25th March is termed as a black night in the life of Bengalis. What happened to Pakistan in various international circles after Operation Searchlight will also be known from this term paper. The genocide that Pakistanis witnessed on the night of March 25 is one of the reasons for their destruction and the main purpose of the term paper is to find out how the operation liberated the Bengalis by focusing on Operation Searchlight. After Operation Search Light, various countries of the world, international journalists, poets, teachers and writers stood by Bangladesh. In this term paper it will be known that no evil power could stop the Bengali heroic race.

Background

Since the partition of 1947, Pakistanis have been torturing and discriminating against Bengalis in various ways. Bengalis were being deprived of various administrative, political and economic opportunities. In the meantime, when Yahya Khan becomes the Governor General of Pakistan, he promises to give Bengalis a chance to participate in the system of governance by electing a parliament. But in 1970's election the Awami League won an absolute majority in favor of the Bengalis but the government of Pakistan did not hand over power to the winning party. Because then Pakistanis realize that at some point East Pakistan can be a separate state. Extreme dissatisfaction was seen among the Bengalis about this, non-cooperation movement started. Bangabandhu calls for closure of mill factory, stops paying all taxes and calls for 2-day strike. When the situation became dire, the country became paralyzed after the movement spread all round and at a time when the Bengalis could not be stopped by Yahya's false hopes, then Yahya and butto planned to bring the whole country under their control by implementing Operation Searchlight. The main objective of the operation was to capture all the major cities of the then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) by March 26 and wipe out the political and military opposition within a month. The Bengalis then put up counter-resistance, which was beyond the imagination of the Pakistani planners. Major General Khadim Hossain Raja wrote in his book 'A Stranger in My Own Country' that after the election of '70, General Yahya came to Dhaka on 12 January 1971 and had a meeting with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib. They could not agree on any issue. The angry president returned to West Pakistan and moved to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's garden house in Larkana. General Abdul Hamid Khan also joined the garden house. [Raja: 1971]. Dasgupta, in his book "Midnight Massacre in Dhaka", says that Tajuddin Ahmed cited him as the reason for Operation Searchlight after independence. Neil. According to the plan, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will not want to be in the cabinet. Syed Nazrul (Syed Nazrul Islam will be the Prime Minister, Tajuddin will be the Minister of Home Affairs, Khandaker (Mushtaq Ahmed) will be the Speaker of Parliament, then Syed Nazrul as the Prime Minister will order the withdrawal of Pakistani troops from East Pakistan and Tajuddin will carry out the order. Later, as the father of the nation, Sheikh Mujib will convene a session of the National Parliament in Dhaka, where he will propose the creation of an independent Bangladesh. On March 25, Pakistani forces launched Operation Searchlight under Bhutto's direction. [p:89] . The final decision to start an all-out genocide in East Pakistan was made on February 22, 1971, writes Bert Payne. Five top army officers sat in a meeting at the army headquarters that day. On March 23, Pakistanis celebrate Pakistan Day and Bengalis observe Resistance Day. Since then, Pakistanis have been preparing for Operation Search Light, and the deep night of March 25 marks one of the deadliest nights in world history.

Analysis

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the protagonist of everything from Operation Search Light Plan to implementation on March 25, 1971. Tikka Khan was given the responsibility of the operation on March 25, 1971; under him were two divisional coordinators. One of them is Maj. Gen. Rao Farman Ali who was in charge of Dhaka Division; under him were Major General Usman Mithya and Brigadier Abrar. The other was Major General Khadim Hossain Raja who was in charge of all the divisions outside Dhaka. Mohiuddin Ahmed, in his book "Awami League War Day" says that "After nine o'clock at night, Signs of a military strike have been evident ever since, but leaders have not been able to predict how dire it could be." [p:63] On March 25, at around 11:30, all the military forces came out of the cantonment at once and carried out a massacre of the Bengalis at Farmgate. The military then fired machine guns and tank cannons at the insurgents, killing some of them. At 12:05 minutes after this incident, a record of Bangabandhu's declaration of independence was broadcast on Bangladesh Betar. Salik said in his book "Witness to Surrenders" that "When the first shot was fired, "Sheikh Mujibur's voice was heard very softly on the wavelength near the official Pakistan Radio - so it must have been Rahman's voice." [p:99]. Later on 26 March Ziaur Rahman declared independence on behalf of Bangabandhu. Then a group of them attacked Rajarbagh and another Dhaka University. When he came to Dhaka University, he first attacked Jagannath Hall and killed 100 people, including student leaders Swapna Chowdhury and Mrinal Boss. Then they attacked Iqbal Hall and killed 400 students there. The military then attacked Rokeya Hall, killing, raping and abducting scores of students. University teachers were not spared from the black clutches of the junta. Dr. Govindachandra Dev, Dr. Jyotirmoy Guhathakurata, Professor Santosh Bhattacharya, also nine teachers of different departments including Moniruzzaman was brutally killed. Rafiq, in his book "A Tale of Millions" said that "A large number of university teachers of repute were killed brutally without any discrimination of age, sex or religion. Soldiers were not told to discriminate. Every Bengali was their enemy. Within the first 24 hours, many professors and departmental heads of the University were slaughtered" [p: 76]. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was sitting on the 10th floor of the Intercontinental Hotel in Dhaka enjoying the injustice, oppression, oppression and murder of Bengalis.



Meanwhile, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was arrested from his house No. 32 in Dhanmondi that night. On March 26, the Pakistanis issued a two-day curfew, killing, looting and setting fire to the houses of Awami League leaders and Hindu houses with the help of Biharis. Militants carry out massacres in Sakari Bazar, Lakshi Bazar, Sadar Ghat, Farajganj Hindu areas of old Dhaka. In addition, Ittefaq, Sangbad and T Petplace offices were set on fire for supporting the Bengali liberation movement. In one night, the military killed 2500 Bengalis. The Pakistani military thought that within 24 hours they would be able to bring the whole of Bangladesh under their control. But they managed to control Dhaka in 12 hours but it took till May to bring the whole of Bangladesh under their control. Salik said in his book "Witness to Surrenders" that "The university building was occupied by four in the morning, but it would take much longer to suppress the ideology of Bengali nationalism propagated there year after year. Maybe these ideals are indomitable" [p:101]. After this incident, the Pakistani military was suffering from complacency. On the morning of March 26, the military said in their talks that Bengalis are always cold. From the night of March 25, the journalists' telecommunication exchange and

telephone line were shut down and at the Hotel Intercontinental, 35 foreign journalists were shut down from all networks so that foreigners could not hear about the killings. M. Rafiq, in his book "A-Tale-of-Millions" said that "By 12:30 that night the telephones went dead and the whole city was aflame with fire"[p:73]. But Simon Dring, a journalist who risked his life, wrote a report in the Daily Telegraph of England describing the persecution of Bengalis. It is said that the world first began to know the story of Operation Searchlight. Later, Pakistani journalist Anthony Maskeren Harz published a full-fledged series report in the Sunday Times of London with the headline "Genocide". After that, the people of the whole of Europe, especially England, became well aware that what was happening in Bangladesh was just genocide. In this way, the image of Pakistan's demoncity is being projected to the whole world through various media. Many countries around the world protested against their brutality and supported Bangladesh, which paved the way for the victory of the Pakistanis. Then India, the Soviet Union, Bhutan, and Mishor directly helped Bangladesh. In particular, India provides arms, shelters refugees and helps the Indian Army. Also some prominent people came forward to help Bangladesh among them, Although the United States was against Bangladesh in the war of liberation, the then US Consul General in Dhaka, Archer K. Blood, worked for Bangladesh and on behalf of the teachers, Professor Chakraborty played a significant role in building public opinion in the liberation war in Bangladesh and in the relief work for the victims. Also, the expatriate government formed by Tajuddin Ahmed abroad gets diplomatic help in various ways. Later, in a joint operation of the Indian Army and the Liberation War of Bangladesh, the victory of Bangladesh was achieved through 9 months of bloody liberation struggle. By carrying out these barbaric killings and destructions, the Pakistanis thought that they would snatch the victory but they were defeated by the patriotism, courage and honesty of the Bengalis. This searchlight operation may have taken away thousands of children in Bangladesh but because of this maybe today's independent Bangladesh. If the Pak aggressors had not attacked like this, the Bengalis might not have been so aware; they would not have had the courage to participate in the liberation war through training. If the Pakistani's had not shown their true colors through operation searchlight, Then the world would not know that Pakistanis are such an inferior nation, maybe Bangladesh would not get so much foreign support. It was an advantage for Bangladesh due to the increase in morale of Pakistanis because after March 25, and the Bengalis who did not give up, and suppressed the enemy with a strong hand so that the Pakistanis became terrified.

Concluding reflections

The Pakistanis wanted to bring down the whole of Bangladesh through Operation Searchlight. But after that operation; the Bengali nation started fighting for its own liberation and after the liberation struggle and snatched the crown of victory, the red-green flag flew in the sky of Bengal. If the Pakistani aggressors had not carried out that demonic torture on the night of March 25, 1971, then perhaps the Bengali nation could not show the courage of freedom in exchange for the blood of its own chest. The ugliness they have shown through this Operation Searchlight will go down in history. Finally it can be said that Operation Searchlight was the beginning of the destruction of Pakistan and on the other hand it was the beginning of the creation of Bangladesh as a new nation.

Suggestions

Operation Searchlight to subdue the Bengalis or take over the whole of East Pakistan was the biggest foolishness of the Pakistanis. Through this operation, they could see a procession of only 25,000 corpses, but they did not realize that the procession of corpses was the morale of the Bengalis to achieve independence. The Pakistanis were convinced that if thousands of Bengalis' bodies were dumped, the Bengalis would run away, this over confidence of theirs pushed them to the brink of destruction. It is good to be self-confident in all things, but it is never good to be overconfident. And the victory of truth is inevitable, the Bengalis protested against justice and truth so they succeeded.

Reference

- 1.** siddiq salik(1974).witness to surrender
- 2.** Major M.Rafiqul islam,B.U(1974). A- tale -of -millions. Adeyubros & co
Dacca
- 3.** Mahiuddin ahammed(2017). awamileague juddho diner kotha.prothoma
prokashoni.
- 4.** Major general khgadim hossen raja (1971). “A Stranger in my own Country”.
- 5.** Sukhranjan Dasgupta ,(1978),Midnight Massacre in Dhaka