**Final Assessment**

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**Ans to the Question No 1**

**Introduction:**

The colonial rule by the British East India Company on India finally ended with the partition of the Indian subcontinent into two countries, India and Pakistan in 1947 based on religious nationalism. At the time of the partition, Bengali Muslims supported the two-nation theory of the presiding leader of the All India Muslim league Mohammad Ali Jinnah happily as they were scared of the Hindu oppression and wanted to break out of the colonial rule as well. Subsequently, Jinnah was given the administrative powers to control the two wings of Pakistan. Regardless of the fact that the motive behind creating Pakistan was to have a separate dreamland for the Muslims, the main purpose of West Pakistan was evident to the people of East Pakistan soon after they started dominating them in various ways. They brutally dictated West Pakistan in social, cultural, religious, economic, and political factors by exploiting and dominating them over decades until West Pakistan could finally attain independence and create the Republic of Bangladesh in 1971.

**Cultural Domination Using Religion:**

After the partition of 1947, Pakistan's two wings were separated by a thousand miles of enemy territory which could jeopardize its integrity. There was almost nothing in common between the two sides of the country except religion and a common desire for independence. However, the disintegration between the two wings of Pakistan began with the domination of East Pakistan by West Pakistan as they tried to deprive them of their cultural rights on the basis of religious aspects. They wanted to restrict them from speaking in their mother language which deprived the Bangalis of their cultural rights as well as economic opportunities. According to Schendel (2009), the prime minister of Pakistan, Liyakot Ali Khan, stated that Urdu was the language of a hundred million Muslims and that it had to be the one language of the country, which was an unexpected statement given that Urdu was spoken by only 3% of the population, whereas Bengali was clearly the primary language of the country, spoken by 56% of all Pakistanis. The Urdu-speaking intellectuals known as Mujahirs and the Muslims from Panjab in the armed forces took control of the administration and influenced the political community to use Islam as the political idiom to justify their actions. They claimed that the Bengali language would destroy their Islamic ideology as some of its vocabularies evolved from Sanskrit which to them was a sign of Hinduism. Additionally, they feared that having two different state languages might divide Pakistan.

Later on, In 1948 Jinnah came to Dhaka to state that Urdu will be the only state language of Pakistan. This not only created social and cultural dominance but also kept the Bengalis behind in economic sectors as only the Urdu-speaking population were preferred for jobs in the state bureaucracy as well as in the defense (Schendel, 2009). As a result, the society of Bengal broke out into the historical language movement giving rise to Bengali nationalism.

**Economic Exploitation:**

West Pakistan had a huge impact on the economy of East Pakistan by exploiting it throughout the whole Pakistani period. From the beginning, the Pakistani government concentrated on creating a strong capitalist development model, which resulted in the massive economic exploitation of East Pakistan. The overwhelming agricultural and rural economy of East Pakistan also faced a huge crisis. This model only focused on the economic development of private entrepreneurs for which East Bengalis were often deprived of opportunities. According to Schendel (2009), Only twenty-two non-Bengali families controlled 66 percent of Pakistan's industrial wealth and 87% of the banking and insurance industries' assets. Again, the economic power in West Pakistan created a disproportionate nature of economic imbalance between the eastern and western wings of the country. According to Schendel (2009), although two-thirds of the export revenue was generated by the country's eastern state, most of it was taken by the western wing to develop its own economy. Accordingly, the per capita income of West Pakistan increased three times higher than that of the East every year (Rao, 1972). Subsequently, The government of Pakistan always spent more money on the development of the western wing than on the East. From 1950 to 1970, Pakistan spent only 33% of its wealth in East Pakistan whereas the rest was spent in the western state. On top of that, 62% of the ones receiving it were non-Bengalis (Sobhan, 2015). The economic disparity created more differences between the two wings of Pakistan and also accelerated the movements of oppressed East Bengalis. The Bengalis asked for economic rights in four of the points of the six-point programme in 1966.

**The Impact of Electoral Politics and Military Rule:**

***Consequences of the Elections of 1954:***

The strong foundation of Bengali nationalism created in the language movement gave rise to a political sense for the Bengalis leading up to the creation of the United Front, a collation of parties against the Muslim League. United Front achieved a landslide victory in the elections of 1954 in East Pakistan by winning 228 seats in a House of 309 whereas the Muslim League only had 7 seats (*Elections 1954 - Banglapedia*, 2021). However, within a few months, the United Front ministry was dismissed by Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad. This was the beginning of political domination by West Pakistan which also created a huge social impact on the Bengal community as the Bengalis were expecting to form the government.

***Iskander Mirza’s Political Iniquity :***

In 1955, Iskandar Mirza became the new Governor-General and declared the first constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in 1956 where both wings of Pakistan were given equal seats in the parliament even though East Pakistan’s population was in the majority. According to Schendel (2009), Pakistan had a population of 78 million people, 44 million of whom lived in East Pakistan. The political injustice towards East Pakistan was clearly visible in this constitution.

***Military Bureaucracy of the Ayub Era (1958-1962):***

In 1958, Iskandar Mirza imposed martial law, assigning Ayub Khan as the chief administrator. However, In a few days, Ayub Khan removed Iskandar Mirza from power and became the president of Pakistan (*Khan, Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub - Banglapedia*, 2021). To no surprise, He declared martial law to halt the election of 1959, fearing that the Bengalis would win despite having equal seats. Again, Ayub declared the second constitution of Pakistan in 1962, and by winning the election of Basic democrats in 1964, he was successful in making his presidency last longer. The Ayub era was full of political domination and military bureaucracy which created a huge disintegration between the two wings of Pakistan.

***Impact of the Education Movement (1962):***

In 1962, Aiyub’s assigned committee headed by SM Sharif introduced a new education policy (Ahmed, 2009). The features of this policy only focused on capitalist aspects leaving the rights of education for everyone out of consideration. It only covered private education for urban residents, while the poor were denied the right to even a primary education because it was no longer free. As a result, primary education was underdeveloped, particularly in rural areas, where four out of five villages had no primary school (Schenldel, 2009). The disparity in education prompted the East Pakistani students to launch an education movement, which was alarming to Pakistan's elite rulers creating more detachments of East Pakistan from the West.

***Revival of Awami League:***

Political parties and activities were banned throughout Pakistan during the first period of military rule, which lasted from 1958 to May 1962. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took the initiative in reviving the Awami League in early 1964 after martial law was lifted in June 1962 (Maniruzzaman, 1988). Oppressed by the military rules and dominance, he along with some senior Bangali civil servants started preparing a programme of autonomy to secure the self-governing rights of East Pakistan which we, later on, see as the historical six-point programme.

***Effect of the India-Pakistan War of 1965 on East Pakistan :***

The making of the six-point programme was accelerated by the India- Pakistan conflict over Kashmir and Jammu in 1965. Although the elites of Pakistan developed a myth that the defense of East Bengal lay in West Pakistan, this war of 65 proved that the Pakistani armed forces did not care about the Bengali population at all (Maniruzzaman, 1988). East Pakistan was completely cut off from West Pakistan during that war and India could’ve easily taken over this state if it wanted to. As a result, This brutal act by West Pakistan triggered the social safety of the Bangalis which created more dissolution among the two wings of Pakistan. Moreover, it gave rise to a deep sense of insecurity among the Bengalis and they were convinced that they needed to develop their own defense system.

***The Six-Point Programme Aftermath:***

Awami League proposed the six-point programme At a national conference of opposition political parties in 1966 (Maniruzzaman, 1988). The Six Points kickstarted a radical movement that drew strength from Bengali nationalism as well as post-war economic hardship. The government, unsurprisingly, decided to respond with violence and oppression, which were effective at the time in putting an end to the movement.

***Reverse Effect of Agartala Conspiracy Case (1968):***

In 1968, Ayub Khan accused Sheik Mujib and others of conspiring with India to divide Pakistan, an accusation known as the 'Agartala conspiracy case' (Schendel, 2009). As a result, the Awami League's leaders were apprehended and imprisoned. Despite the fact that the plan was intended to defame Sheik Mujib's reputation in Bengali society, it only served to increase his popularity. Following that, mass movements in Bengal in support of Sheik Mujib forced the authorities to drop the case in the middle of it and release the accused. The movement for the six-point along with the frustration of the Agartala conspiracy case led to a mass uprising movement in East Bengal which forced General Ayub Khan to back out from power. On March 25, 1969, martial law was declared throughout Pakistan by Ayub’s successor, General Yahya Khan (Maniruzzaman, 1988). The six-point programme and its revolutionary movement brought a massive change in the social and political situation of East Bengal as the people of Bengal started to become politically active and socially conscious about their rights. This generated massive aggression among Bengalis towards West Pakistan.

***Stratagic Rule of Yahya Khan (1969-1971):***

Yahya Khan declared that the national assembly would be held under Martial Law Order yet he chose the path of conciliation for the election. Accordingly, he allowed political activities from early 1970. However, According to Schendel (2009), he had extensive powers as president, which he could use to ensure their continued control of the state, regardless of the outcome of the elections. Although it represents political and social injustice against the people of East Bengal, it was the only hope for the Bangalis to form a government.

***Results of 1970 Election:***

Yahya Khan introduced the Legal Frame Order (LFO) including equity seats for East Pakistan as they are the majority in the population. According to Maniruzzaman (1988), this had been agreed to under the LFO, which stipulated that East Bengal would have 169 seats in the National Assembly out of a total of 313. This benefited Sheikh Mujib because he was confident of securing a majority of seats for his party in the assembly due to his massive popularity. Unsurprisingly, Awami League had won 167 seats out of the 169 seats in the parliament. This massive win gave them the authority to form the new government of Pakistan. However, Bhutto, leader of the second-largest party of Pakistan along with Yahia Khan postponed the first session of the National Assembly which was supposed to be held on 3 March 1971 (Schendel, 2009). This surprising move impacted negatively on East Bengal society, prompting a two-day strike on March 2nd and 3rd. (Haque, 2013). As a result, this created the ultimate disintegration between the two states which led the Bengali population to seek their independence. Although the people of East Bengal were hoping for Bangabandhu to declare independence, he made a tactical move by launching a non-violent movement of non-cooperation on 7th March which made him in control of East Pakistan.

***The Ultimate breakdown by 25th March Genocide:***

Yahia flew to Dhaka on March 15 in a last attempt to reach a negotiated settlement. Bhutto joined him there, but none of the proposed power-transfer arrangements received approval from all three parties (Schendel, 2009). However, It was just a scheme planned by Yahia Khan to prepare for the pre-planned military solution to the crisis on March 25 decided by The Yahya government, while keeping the Awami League busy in discussions. Accordingly, Yahya left Dhaka on the night of 25th March ordering the genocide in East Pakistan. As a result, The Bangladesh Liberation War began when the Pakistani soldiers began carrying out extrajudicial assassinations in Dhaka and throughout East Pakistan on that night. They had always tortured the non-muslims of East Pakistan in the name of the Islamic ideology. Ultimately, they decided to erase Hindus from Bangladesh on that night as one of their major targets was the Hindus. Various portions of old Dhaka were hit by mortar shells, including Hindu majority Mahallas such Shankhari Patti and Tantibazar (*Genocide, 1971 - Banglapedia*, 2021). Pakistani outrage against the non-muslims evoked religious scarcity in East Bengal society. Again, Bangabandhu declared the independence of Bangladesh right before getting arrested that night which led millions of Bangalies to break out into the 1971 liberation war and ultimately establish the republic of Bangladesh.

**Conclusion:**

The oppression and exploitation by West Pakistan triggered a demand for the cultural, political, economic, and social rights of the East Pakistan population, which began with the use of religion. After years of repression, the enraged Bengalis gained independence in December 1971, forming Bangladesh as a newly independent country.

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