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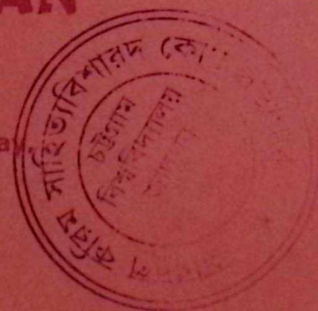
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Cover design: J.R. Brook.



FOREWORD

In response to the growing awareness on the part of the Leeds University students about the Bangladesh movement and a consequent demand for informative material on the issue, the L. U. Bangladesh Association has decided to publish, rather hurriedly, this token as a feature of the Bangladesh Week. University students of Leeds have traditionally been champions of revolutionary causes and we believe that the struggle now in progress in Bangladesh would find even wider sympathetic response in their revolutionary consciousness.

Bangladesh. Baptised in blood, a new nation of 75 million Bengalis has emerged on the green delta of the Ganges. Inheritor of a rich literary culture, the Bengalis, doubtless with a touch of self-indulgence, have been known to consider themselves the Athenians of the subcontinent. Their poet Tagore had sung

My Golden Bengal, I love you

a song which in its theme as well as its popularity in the country is perhaps comparable only to the great Cuban poet Jose Marti's 'Guantanamera'. Bengal had also produce in Nazrul Islam the first and perhaps the only existential anarchist rebel poet who had sung of freedom and equality in an idiom hitherto unknown in Bengali literature and a variety of rhythm which reminds one of Mayakovsky:

I'm an embattled rebel,
I shall rest the day
When the cry of the oppressed will in the air no longer ring
Nor the hatchet of the oppressor in warlike violence swing.

Enthused by the twin values of patriotism and rebellion against injustice and oppression, the Bengalis will inexorably lead the Bangladesh movement towards the creation of a truly egalitarian society.

However, the *sine qua non* of any rational society is the cultural solidarity of its people. Prof Trevor Ling, with a brief and cogent review of the history of Eastern Bengal brings out the cultural homogeneity of the area and validates the arguments for 'an independent, secular, democratic state' of Bangladesh.

More recent political history is one of endless machinations by the feudal-military-bureaucratic oligarchy of West Pakistan to perpetuate an exploitive system. East Bengal was represented, if at all, by the antediluvian death-heads from a decrepit aristocracy who had served as the page-boys of their erstwhile colonial masters or by self-seeking, mindless flunkies from a despicable, under-developed bourgeoisie. A general survey of the political history has been made by Nasir, S.

The mystifications of Islam was meant to camouflage the putrefying cadaver of colonialism. As an analysis of the various aspects of the relationships that existed between the two wings of Pakistan would be beyond the scope of this publication, we are publishing an essay by M.S. Khan, a research student at the Department of Agricultural Economics, dealing with the mechanism of exploitation.

A.R. Khan and K.H. Imam, senior research fellows at the Nuffield College, Oxford, reflect in the likely results on Pakistan economy of the World Banks aid-to-Pakistan Consortium's June decision to postpone all fresh commitments of aid.

Creative writing from Bangladesh is represented by a satirical allegory of Shaukat Osman, a leading writer. The present story, one of many written in exile, bitterly attacks the apathy and bad faith of the world powers to the Bangladesh question.

Shamsur Rahman, in his late thirties, one of the finest Bengali poets, is an author of at least half a dozen volumes of poetry, the quality of whose poetry has not come through in the translation. All the same, we have decided to publish as we have, within the limited time at our disposal, no access to a better alternative in this genre.



১৯৭১ বর্ষে প্রকাশিত। প্রথম দ্রষ্টব্য ১৯৭১ সালের ৩ ডিসেম্বর।

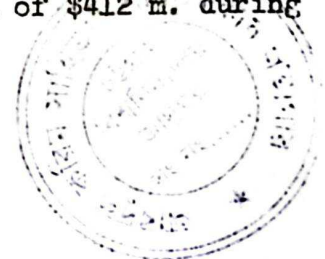
Policy Options for Pakistan's Creditors

by

A.R. Khan and K.H. Imam

The World Bank's aid-to-Pakistan Consortium decided in June 1971 to postpone all fresh commitments of aid to Pakistan. This, however, allowed every individual creditor to keep the flow in the aid pipeline and to agree to the moratorium on debt servicing. The attitude of the British Government, which is often cited as an enlightened one in comparison with that of the Nixon administration, may roughly be described as above. Britain has not made any new commitment but has allowed the aid in the pipeline to be released, notably for Tarbela Dam recently. She has also not raised any objection to Pakistan's postponement of debt repayment last summer. Many believe that even this mild policy will create considerable difficulty for Pakistan's military regime and will help restore its sanity. We estimate below the effect on Pakistan economy of the above policy package. For purposes of comparison, we also estimate the likely results of the following other policy packages: (b) allow the flow in aid pipeline, but reject moratorium; and (c) stop the flow in aid pipeline and reject moratorium.

A total of \$216 million was due to be paid for debt service during 1970-71 fiscal year by Pakistan (all figures in this note are from Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Finance, Pakistan Economic Survey 1970-71 unless otherwise stated). Assuming that the rate of increase over the next year will be no greater than that over the past year, one gets a conservative estimate of such liability during fiscal 1971-72 of \$266 m. To this must be added the amount that was due to be paid in the recent past but was deferred; 27 m. that was deferred in May-June 1970 and an estimated 119 m. which was deferred last summer. Forgetting the interest on deferred payment, we thus get an estimated debt servicing burden of \$412 m. during 1971-72.



The estimated total foreign exchange earning by Pakistan during 1970-71 was \$833 m. Prediction for 1971-72 is not easy in view of too many unknowns, but a figure of \$700 m. seems to be the upper limit. This figure is only about 20 percent below the recent peak of 1969-70 and can be accounted for by just over 35 percent reduction in East Pakistan's earnings from the previous peak, West's earnings assumed unchanged. Even according to the Government sources, jute acreage has declined by 21 percent. The improved inputs programme mounted in recent years has also received a setback leading to a reduction in yield per acre. Adding to this then calculable effects of the disruption in transport and trade network, the sabotage by the increasingly more effective guerillas etc., a 35 percent reduction in earnings from jute, be it through the reduction in exports in raw jute or jute textiles, would appear to be a rather conservative estimate. The reduction in the remaining 10 percent of East's exports would quite likely be as high.

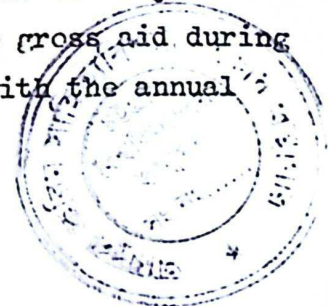
The other source of foreign exchange would be the disbursement of aid in pipeline. Total aid in pipeline on 1 January 1971 was \$1281 m. Making plausible assumptions regarding commitment and disbursement during the first half of 1971 on the basis of supplementary information we arrived at a pipeline figure of \$856 m. for 1 July 1971, the beginning date of fiscal 1971-72. To get a realistic estimate of the addition to foreign exchange resources available to Pakistan (which for all practical purposes would mean West Pakistan) we make a deduction for all public and private sector project aid in pipeline for East Pakistan. This gave us a 1 July 1971 pipeline residual of \$633 m. We obtained the classification of this total into commodity and project aid and of the latter into that for central government, West Pakistan government and private sector. We also estimated disbursement rate for each on the basis of such rate obtaining in the past and allowing for the differences in circumstances. The pipeline aid disbursed during 1971-72 thus amounts to \$308 m. leaving an additional \$325 in the pipeline much of which will be available during fiscal 1972-73.

The implications of the three alternative sets of policies by the donors may now be delineated as follows:

(a) If they merely stop new aid but allow pipeline flow and agree to moratorium, gross aid inflow into Pakistan would amount to around \$720 m. (308 in pipeline flow and 412 in deferred debt service) during fiscal 1971-72. This would be 50 percent higher than the actual receipt of gross aid during the most recent normal year, 1969-70 (when it was \$506 m. See table below). Given the accumulation of deferred loan repayment liabilities and assuming that the whole of the remainder in the pipeline would be disbursed, this figure would be still higher in 1972-73. Thus in spite of the apparent "stopping of aid", actual aid inflow will increase in the next two years and Pakistan will easily be able to sustain its import level and increased military purchase abroad to fight its war in Bengal.

It might be argued that in two years it will begin to bite. But two years are a long time, and a great deal of damage will be done during this period if Pakistan army can keep fighting unrestrained. Also, the generals are unlikely to have a time horizon longer than two years. They will argue that the donors, who are being so reasonable so soon after the massacre of last March as not to take any more drastic action than merely to negotiate new aid, will be more helpful in two years' time when these events will become distant memory. It is in this context, and not as an outburst of militant nationalism, that one can properly understand the kind of feelers that are being mentioned in the official Pakistan press. Thus the Dawn of 13 October refers to the opinion of an informed source that Pakistan should unilaterally repudiate all debt if it can be sure that the creditors will do nothing more serious than stopping the aid in the pipeline. The arithmetic is simple: debt-servicing is already higher than pipeline and is likely to be higher than gross aid in a few years even if new agreements are forthcoming.

(b) If the donors allow the aid flow in the pipeline but reject the moratorium on debt service, Pakistan would still receive gross aid during the next two years of \$308 or more annually which compares with the annual



average inflow of about \$455 m. during the Third Plan (1965-70). But debt service alone would claim over 40 percent of available foreign exchange. Imports will have to be cut back to less than 60 percent of the average level in recent years. This will put the Generals in considerable difficulty. But still their situation will not be desperate since they will be able to transfer much of the burden on East Pakistan. The Central Statistical Office's Monthly Bulletin of August 1971 shows that East Pakistan's share of Pakistan's total imports have declined in recent months to 9 percent from about 33 percent during the period before last March. West Pakistan's imports (excluding arms) then need not be reduced by more than one-third during the next two years. Since the army seems reconciled to little new development projects, this would not result in unfulfilled expectations. But compared to the package (a), the army will be in a much tighter situation: while they can keep fighting the war today, they will know that the crunch is not too far away and that even today West Pakistan's industries would have to be squeezed considerably.

(c) If the donors reject the moratorium on debt servicing and stop the pipeline simultaneously, Pakistan will receive no gross aid. Debt servicing would claim 60 percent of foreign exchange available during 1971-72 and more in 1972-73. Imports in West Pakistan would have to be reduced to less than 30 percent of the average level in recent years even if East is squeezed to the maximum. Given the rocketing need for military supplies and the likelihood that the shortage of maintenance import would reduce the production of exports, the situation may be worse; West Pakistan's non-military imports may have to be curtailed to a fifth of the required minimum leading to widespread unemployment, runaway inflation and lack of essential supplies. It is hardly conceivable that the Generals can keep fighting the war in such a situation.

We can conclude by briefly considering two spectres that must be haunting the minds of the reader. The first is the ability of the donors to stop Pakistan's Generals from repudiating debt unilaterally. Given th

extreme dependence of Pakistan army on the donors for the supply of equipment and the dependence on the markets of these countries for commercial imports and exports, it is improbable that the Generals can risk a serious threat of economic boycott. And this is the least that donors are entitled to without being reasonably accused of using aid for their own political ends. The second is the possibility that China may make good what is being withdrawn by the donors. One only needs to mention that the total Chinese aid disbursed until 30 June 1970 was 49 million dollars - an annual average of \$5 m. or just about 1 percent of what Pakistan received over the last decade. Is it conceivable that China will increase its aid a hundredfold to aid a military regime which is as far from the type of government that China wants to see ideally as is possible just to cause India some minor annoyance?

TABLE

Foreign Exchange Availability to Pakistan, 1969-'70/1971-'72

	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Disbursement from Pipeline</u>	<u>Deferred Loan Repayment</u>	<u>Gross Aid</u>
1969-1970	901	479	27	506
1970-1971	833	515	146	661
1971-1972	700	308	412	720



THE CULTURAL SOLIDARITY OF BANGLADESH

Trevor Ling

The arguments for the existence of an independent, secular, democratic state in East Bengal are many and cogent, given the situation which has now developed. Some of the reasons, however, have their roots far back in history, for East Bengal has been a culturally distinct area for many centuries. Admittedly, in the years immediately prior to 1947 (the present writer was in Bengal at the time), the proposed dismemberment of India seemed stupendously tragic. But now, in the light of the past twenty five years' history, what can be seen is the deeper tragedy within the tragedy - the subordination of East Bengal to the interests of the elite in Karachi and Rawalpindi. The cynically un-Islamic attitudes of the rulers of Pakistan have steadily undermined the only reason that could ever have been adduced for the existence of a two-wing Pakistan, the so-called bond of Islamic religion.

The overriding need of the present time is an internal recovery of lift and confidence in East Bengal. Without this recovery the whole region will be a liability to whatever government assumes responsibility for it. An East Bengal retained by military force within the state Pakistan - and there appears to be no other way now, so thorough has been the alienation - would be a permanent running sore in the body politic. And not only in the body politic of Pakistan, but in that of the international community also. Such sores are contagious, and the whole international community has an interest in East Bengal's health. The liberation of healing forces which could result from the establishment of an independent secular democracy would more than offset any disadvantages which the region may possess in terms of economic viability. The re-absorption of the area and its people into India would certainly not have the same health-giving effect; the history of the whole modern period cannot be undone.

It is important to realise that East Bengal has a degree of cultural identity which sets it apart not only from West Pakistan, but also from India, and even to some extent from West Bengal. Such regional cultural differences exist, of course, among the peoples of India, and do not in general constitute valid reasons for separation. But in this one uniquely tragic case, in order to remedy the situation which has now developed, it is necessary to acknowledge the cultural solidarity of East Bengal, for it is this which is the most likely source of revival and recovery for the life of the region.

Cultural solidarity, as Martin Orans has observed, is Janus-faced, that is, it has an internal and an external aspect. 'Internally it refers to the degree of social co-operation and mutual accommodation which a society manifests in performing its normal routine. Externally, solidarity refers to the ability of a society to stand as a unit against external encroachment.'¹

The extent to which the people of East Bengal possess internal cultural solidarity is a result of the region's history, both ancient and modern. For convenience, four periods can be distinguished: (1) Pre-Muslim (2) Muslim (3) British and (4) post-British.

So far as the earliest period is concerned, it is important to remember that while Brahmanism, whose original heartland was in the upper Ganges valley, gradually spread south-eastwards into what are now Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and even into the borders of western Bengal, it never spread much beyond the Bhagirati-Hooghly river. Into East Bengal during the early period Aryan culture scarcely penetrated at all; the Ganges delta and the countries beyond 'were always looked down upon by the inhabitants of the favoured region',² that is, by the Brahmanical Aryans.

In this pre-Muslim period, according to R.C.Majumdar, 'Eastern Bengal, or at least the greater part of it, probably remained as an independent kingdom or more properly a confederacy of independent kingdoms till the middle of the fourth century A.D. About this time we hear of a



C

great fight put up by a confederacy of states in Vanga against a hero called Chandra who conquered the whole of Northern India....³ Chandra succeeded in bringing East Bengal under his rule for a time, but after his defeat by Samudragupta his empire fell to pieces, and during the Gupta period the eastern and south-eastern parts of Bengal were again independent states, Samatata and Davaka, although tributaries to the Guptas.⁴

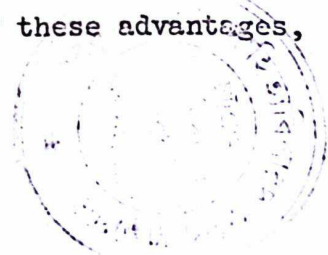
By this time the Brahmanas were beginning to be found in East Bengal but the area of their greatest strength remained in the western part of the delta, around the Bhagirati-Hooghly river. The northern central and eastern parts of Bengal were the stronghold of Vaishnavism, a form of Hindu religious culture which has its roots primarily in popular beliefs and practices rather than in Vedic Brahmanism. Samatata, to the east of the Meghna River, was the stronghold of Buddhism in Bengal during the pre-Muslim period;⁵ it had considerable strength also in central Bengal, to the north of the Ganga river.

In the second period, it was the Afghan invasion and conquest of Bengal which enabled Islamic religion and culture to spread into this area in strength from the 12th century onwards. But, as T.W. Arnold pointed out 'it is not in the ancient centres of the Muhammedan government that the Musalmans of Bengal are found in large numbers, but in the country districts in districts where there are no traces of settlers from the West.'⁶ In other words, the majority of the Muslims of East Bengal are not of foreign origin. They are of Bengali stock, people whose ethnic identity goes back to long before the Afghan invasion. The invaders, like some of the British from the 19th century onwards, regarded themselves as superior beings and kept aloof from the people whose country they had invaded. Such élitism is of course, alien to the original spirit of Islam. It was against the proud pretensions of the Meccan merchant-princes that the Prophet had preached his message of judgment. The earliest Khalifs followed a modest style of life and were genuinely brotherly in spirit. But six centuries later, when the Afghan invaders reached Bengal, Muslim social structure had deviated from the early pattern. The invaders adopted the role of aristocrats and a system of social stratification which in some respects was not

unlike the Hindu caste system began to emerge.

It is important to remember, in connection with the emphasis which is now placed on the low-caste status of the indigenous Muslim population of East Bengal, that men who by Brahmanical standards are low caste are not necessarily lesser mortals by any other yardstick, for the entire population of the world outside the Hindu castes comes into this category. The men of East Bengal, low-caste before they became Muslims, were, by general, non-Brahmanical standards of humanity, in no way inferior human beings; low status in the eyes of Brahmins does not mean that a man is deficient in intelligence, honesty, skill, endurance of courage. What is, in Brahmanical terms, low caste may still, in human terms, be high quality. It suited the Afghan invaders, however, to accept social evaluations made by Brahmin priests, and in this second period, the indigenous Bengali Muslims continued to hold a lowly place, even in the Islamic community, since the Muslim aristocracy consisted almost entirely of invaders and conquerors from the West - that is from North-West India or beyond.

In the third period, however, when the Mughal rulers of Bengal were thrust aside by interloping British traders, the Muslim aristocracy lost their traditional place in Bengal society. They were deprived of the sources of their wealth, namely their professional occupations as tax-officers, police officers, and lawyers. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, before the British seized power in Bengal, it was almost impossible, wrote Hunter, 'for a well-born Muslim in Bengal to become poor,' whereas by the 1870's it had become 'almost impossible for him to continue rich'.⁷ In these circumstances the Muslim aristocracy in Bengal decayed and virtually disappeared, so that the Muslim community consisted almost entirely of the indigenous Bengali Muslim peasants, a community with a high degree of internal cultural solidarity. It had also a degree of external solidarity, for the Muslims of Bengal were, with good reason, highly suspicious of their new political masters, the British, and disinclined to accept the benefits of English education which began slowly to be made available. There were others, however, who did not hesitate to avail themselves of these advantages,



and by the time British rule came to an end in 1947 control of land and wealth had passed to a considerable degree into the hands of non-Muslim Bengali landlords and money-lenders.

When, in the fourth and final period, these fled from the newly created eastern province of Pakistan, the social and cultural structure of the Bengali-Muslim community was still characterised, therefore, by a high degree of internal solidarity; it was 'overwhelmingly dominated by a mass of peasant smallholders, the great majority of whom own less than 5 acres of land'.⁸

The extent to which the events of 1971 have disrupted the economy of East Bengal remains to be seen. It is inconceivable that the effects of the disaster which came to a head on March 25th will be easily or quickly overcome. Recovery will depend on confidence and co-operation among the mass of East Bengal's population. Left to themselves it is at least possible that the people of the region will at last be able to begin to put their house in order. They will do so with a good heart, given the chance, but not if Punjabi troops are occupying the land to ensure the enforcement of the policies of Islamabad. Nor, for reasons which there is not the space to go into here, would they do so anything like so readily if they were to find themselves part of India once again; and nor, in such an event, would India benefit.

Notes

1. Martin Orans, The Santal: A Tribe in Search of a Great Tradition, Detroit 1965, p.3.
2. B.C. Law, The Geography of Early Buddhism, 1932, p.xx
3. R.C. Majumdar, The Early History of Bengal (Dacca University Bulletin No. 3) 1925, pl3.
4. Majumdar, op.cit. p.14
5. See Barrie M. Morrison, Political Centres and Cultural Regions in Early Bengal, Arizona, 1970, pp. 152-155, and passim.

6. T.W. Arnold, The Preaching of Islam, 2nd Edition 1913 (repr. Lahore 1916) p.282
7. W.W. Hunter, The Indian Musulmans, 1876 repr. 1969) p.150
8. Richard Nations, 'The Economic Structure of Pakistan: Class and Colony', in New Left Review, No.68 (July August 1971) p.6.



East/West Disparity in Pakistan's Economic Development

M. S. KHAN

At Independence (1947), the two parts of Pakistan had almost equal income per capita.* By 1959/60 West Pakistan had gained 50 per cent more income than East Pakistan. This gain occurred in spite of East Pakistan's greater potential for rapid agricultural growth, "almost equal stock of investment in medium and large-scale industry; a higher literacy rate and better political organisation" (1, 19). By 1969/70 the lead of West Pakistan reached a new height and her income per capita became double that of East Pakistan (2,236). This increase was attained in spite of the much publicised planned objective of narrowing down regional disparity in the second and third national development plans of Pakistan (1960-70) and the constitutional provision of removing disparity in regional incomes in the constitution of 1962. Little wonder that the East Pakistanis grew impatient for a right to manage their own economy and became insistent on the issue of provincial autonomy for East Pakistan to the extent of risking a breakaway from the framework of Pakistan.

The present paper is an attempt to relate how the utter neglect of agriculture (which was more important to East than to West Pakistan's economy) and an import replacement type of industrial growth contributed to the stagnation of East Pakistan while the West forged ahead with government patronage.

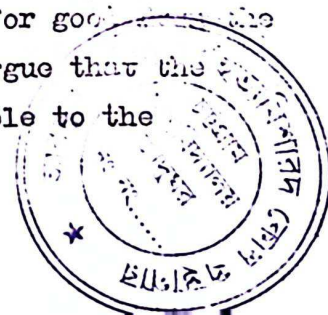
Development policy in Pakistan started with an assumption that agricultural production would remain sufficiently high so that development of industry should receive all the attention in economic policy decisions. In fact, agriculture was the strong aspect of the economy; not only did it contribute 60 per cent of the national income but it also provided almost the entire volume of foreign exchange earnings. It was in its latter role that agriculture, especially of the East, came to be subjected to heavier exactions

* Date available for 1949/50 showed that West Pakistan had an income per capita which was only 8 per cent higher than that of East Pakistan. Even this difference, it can be argued, was the creation of the discriminatory policies of the central government in commercial, fiscal and monetary fields which confined growth activities mostly in West Pakistan.

as, in an atmosphere of uncertainty of yield of other sources of revenue, export duties were determined mainly by the consideration of their revenue yields. The chief export crop jute, which was grown in East Pakistan, was almost entirely exported. Of other exports East Pakistan's tea came third as an earner of foreign exchange for the national exchequer.

When the commercial crop sector was thus squeezed the food crop sector was also feeling the pinch of a stringent government food regulation policy. It included procurement of rice from surplus areas at prices lower than market prices and rationing of rice through licensed retail shops. The system had been developed as a means of obtaining from the farming community, especially in seasons of poor harvest, the maximum surpluses of foodgrain in order to meet the needs of the deficit areas, and more importantly, the urban population. The farmers usually received even less than the procurement price owing to deceitful practices of the procuring agents. Also, the regulations were variable in their application from year to year and, in a good crop year when the market price sank low, procurement prices might not be set.

The foodgrain regulations proved to be a disincentive to the cultivation of rice. Farmers in such a situation would try to turn to alternative crops, the chief of which was jute (which was still relatively profitable). This, however, could not be allowed at a time when the government was committed to a policy of curtailing the jute supply in a bid to maintain its international price which was falling sharply after the Korean Boon (1950-52). The government policy indicated a negative approach to increase the value of Pakistan's chief export. Jute export had suffered the real disaster (from which it never recovered) when India, the chief customer of Pakistan's raw jute, following Britain's suit, devalued in 1949 and Pakistan did not. This led to a trade deadlock with India as the latter refused to accept the higher exchange value of Pakistan's currency. This had serious implications for the jute trade of Pakistan which became apparent in 1952/53, when the Korean War, which created a great demand for jute, was over. The high external value of Pakistan's jute encouraged production in other countries thus ousting Pakistan for good from the position of an almost monopoly supplier of jute. No one can argue that the implications of a non-devaluation decision were not understandable to the



financial administrators of Pakistan many of whom were in the top financial services of undivided India nor can one argue that a patriotic Finance Department, and for that reason, a patriotic government could take a decision which had such disastrous implications for the nation's most important export commodity (contributing 65 per cent of the total export earnings in 1948/49). This was clearly a case where a lack of representation in the Central Government doomed East Pakistan's chief export crop. It, however, had the effect of keeping the prices low for imports and thus served accumulation of capital in West Pakistan. She was granted up to 90 per cent of the import licences by the Central Government in the early 1950's.

As a measure to check the downward trend of the international price of jute Pakistan now resorted to direct control of the acreage planted to jute in order to reduce its supply. This left the farmers in the East without an alternative and made them captive of the government decision which in the food front was essentially favouring the urban consumer and in the commercial crop front failed to guarantee the farmers' and no less the national interest. The First Five-year Plan (1955-60) which was produced in 1956 recognised that extreme neglect was done to agriculture. But it also failed to provide a better deal for this sector.

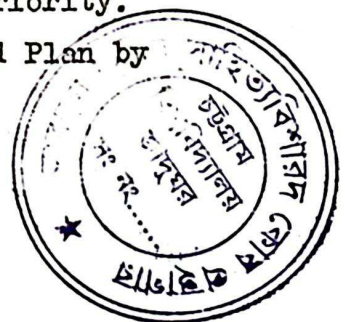
While agriculture was the victim of government regulations industry was emerging as the favoured child under protection. The sharp fall in foreign exchange earnings after the Korean Boom in jute exports had ended and exposed the country's inability to finance the necessary imports which consisted almost entirely of manufactured goods. To maintain the balance of international payments direct control was imposed on imports. This favoured the domestic manufactured in the lines of import substitution. West Pakistan took full advantage of the situation. She had already accumulated a large investible fund from the windfall income that accrued by virtue of its lion's share in the country's imports. In the earlier years, through a sheer lack of representation in the higher echelons of the civil service which was the sole distributor of favours and patronage in the country, the major exporting partner East Pakistan had failed to claim any significant share in imports. Now the import control

policy further discriminated against her and licensing of foreign exchange became more stringent in the case of East Pakistan than in the case of West Pakistan which had already had a large class of importers. East Pakistan remained surplus in her trade with the rest of the world and her surplus was devoted to financing West Pakistan's deficit in international trade. The transfer of resources to West Pakistan was even larger than this because the domestic currency was over-valued in its foreign exchange rate.

As the seat of the Central Government Karachi, and West Pakistan at large, enjoyed whatever construction, transport and other urban facilities were created in the initial years of Independence. These provided the physical infrastructure which proved to be an important locational factor in industrialisation apart from the favours which nearness to capital would bring to the manufacturer in West Pakistan.

Besides her role in providing initial capital to the West, East Pakistan's contribution to the rapid industrial growth in the West was foremost as a captive market of the latter's import substituting manufactures. In fact, East Pakistani consumers paid higher prices for West Pakistan's manufactures than did the West Pakistanis. This was possible because of greater stringency in import licensing to East Pakistan. The industrial development that took place during this period resulted in making East Pakistan a net importer from West Pakistan. The deficit was largely in terms of manufactured goods, particularly cotton textiles, which East Pakistan could have bought more cheaply on world markets.

The overthrow of the civilian government in 1958 brought in some changes in the economic policies. The fact of economic disparity between the two parts of Pakistan was by then an extensively talked-about issue. The Second Five-Year Plan (1960-65) which was produced under the new regime adopted the reduction of disparity as an important overall objective of development. It reiterated "high priority" to agriculture which the First Plan accorded to it. However, in its implementation of agricultural programmes the First Plan failed more miserably than in allocation to agriculture to justify this priority. The failure was more acute in the East than in the West. The Second Plan by



contrast improved both allocation and implementation of agricultural programmes. However, the East/West ratio on both accounts deteriorated rather than improved contrary to the planners' promise. Consequently, the Third Five-Year Plan (1965-70) had to be louder than its predecessors in announcing the objective of parity in per capita incomes between East and West Pakistan. In agriculture, the plan proposed to accelerate the transformation "by placing highest priority on measures to increase crop-yields and by maintaining strong farm incentives." In actual distribution of resources far from improving the relative allocations to imports of crop production over the Second Plan it failed to ensure even a greater share to East Pakistan. In implementation the Third Plan failed, as usual, more miserably in East Pakistan.

While Plan allocation and implementation were favouring the West an outside-the-Plan allocation to the Indus Basin Project was at work to widen the agricultural disparity between the two wings. The Project was designed to protect land from water-logging and salinity. Though East Pakistan's low lands needed protection from flooding no parallel project was visualized. It was, however, argued that owing to its bearing on the Indo-Pak dispute over the use of Indus waters foreign exchange was readily available for it on a special basis and that this assistance would not have been available otherwise. The acceptance of this Project, however, amply demonstrated the Central Government's partisan behaviour (in favour of West Pakistan) as, instead of considering the issue of water use between India and Pakistan in its entirety, it preferred to make an agreement to secure West Pakistan's water supply leaving East Pakistan at the mercy of India with which country the Westerners had preferred to maintain a policy of enmity. This enmity prompted the decision of non-devaluation in 1949 (to inflict high cost on India for jute) at the peril of East Pakistan's agriculture. But in a decade's time it was forgotten as the price now was to be paid in terms of West Pakistan's agriculture.

The period (1947-58) of governmental control caused stagnation in agriculture and squeezed agriculture for the growth of industry. East Pakistan's agriculture suffered worse impoverishment than West Pakistan's. The discriminatory treatment in later years in the development plans and neglect of the need of flood control prevented the expected results of the relaxation of control and price incentives. Pakistan's amazing progress in agriculture in the 1960s which was termed as the Green Revolution was confined to West Pakistan.

The success story in the East was merely a feat of statistical jugglery.(3)

The 1960s brought no better results in the industrialisation of East Pakistan. An Industrial Investment Schedule was published with the Second Five-Year Plan indicating distribution of investment in the private sector between the regions. However, the Schedule was honoured more in the breach than in the observance. There was a wide variation of sanctions* and allocations between the two provinces, since East Pakistan had only 88.5 per cent** of its allocations sanctioned during the Second Plan period, while West Pakistan had 137 per cent of its allocation sanctioned. (4, 103). The Final Evaluation of the Second Five-Year Plan by the Planning Commission placed the total investment sanctioned in the private sector of industry in East Pakistan at Rs. 1,615 million as against the national total of Rs. 7,548 million. As against this discrepancy in the private sector, the public sector investment has been Rs. 227 million higher in favour of East Pakistan as she received Rs. 927 million out of the total of Rs. 1627 million. This is indeed a fair reflection of the concern of the Pakistani government for the eastern wing's development while West Pakistan's industries were booming; provided with incentives in the form of Export Bonus and special incentive licences!

The Export Bonus Scheme was conceived of as an instrument to boost up Pakistan's export earnings. Under the scheme exporters of certain specific commodities - mostly industrial - received negotiable bonus vouchers for specified percentages of the F.O.B. value of items exported by them. Furthermore, import control system was used to grant them special incentive licences in addition to their regular licensing entitlements. Investors in new import substituting industries also received high levels of protection as high tariffs

* Sanctioning of investment proposals merely means permission of the government to set up proposed industries. Only part of these are actually implemented.

** Only 50 per cent of such allocations were sanctioned in the Third Plan(5,58).



on imports and tight control of licensing still continued. These provided windfall incomes to industries. West Pakistan being an early starter had already possessed a strong industrial base which helped her to respond to these incentives. East Pakistan found herself more alienated as her major exports were left out of the list of export bonus items and import licensing was more strict in her case.

A situation of multiple pricing (that these policies created) of foreign exchange favoured the industries; their foreign imports (bought at the official rate) cost less as did their domestic raw materials (these were not included in the bonus scheme) and their output brought higher returns (through bonus vouchers in foreign and through high protection in domestic markets). Industries continued to receive substantial subsidies from the rest of the economy. As was natural, the costs of these subsidies came largely from the agricultural producers and the consumers in the East and their benefit went largely to the industrialists of the West. Encouragement to export resulted in a diversification of the export structure of West Pakistan mainly through her increased ability to break into exports with new industries. Under a system of import control in the 1950s she had built up a gigantic industrial capacity at the expense of the East. Now in the Export Bonus Scheme she was provided with a more subtle device to foster her industrial growth.

Pakistan's economic policies were harmful to East Pakistan. The West-dominated central government had functioned as a machinery to exploit the East to the extent of reducing its status to that of a colony providing foreign exchange for West Pakistan's development and a market for its products. It is a strong centre of this type that the East Pakistanis hoped to get rid of when they voted for Awami League, the chief exponents of provincial autonomy, so overwhelmingly in the elections of 1970.

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THE WOLF FOREST

by

Shaukat Osman

Translated by

Osman Jamal and Roger White

Apart from international expressions of concern, there would be no reason for telling this story. In its early stages the affair developed slowly, but as time passed an acceleration set in.

Now the story:

The forest was a very small one, not exceeding six or seven square miles in area. It was completely inconceivable that wolves should be able to live there. When a few kids and cows from the villages around the forest disappeared, an investigation led to the discovery of these animals. It wasn't only that the wolves lived in this tiny forest, they were also discovered to belong to a rare species.

The zoologists observed that a long time ago there were innumerable wolves of this particular species, but that they were gradually disappearing. So it was the duty of the whole humanity to protect this species. Of course, all nations were not possessed of equally strong sense of responsibility. Some only voiced their support and forgot about it. But those who were in the front rank set about the task. They sent scientists and appointed distinguished specialists to make an elaborate plan to protect this species of wild life.

Although it looked like an ordinary wolf, this beast had certain special features. It had green stripes and spots on its grey coat some of which were crescent shaped and some as round as the full moon. Then there were tiny spots which looked like stars. As soon as they heard of moon and stars, many pious souls felt a strong urge to sacrifice themselves to these wolves, not to speak of wanting to see them.

Strange wolves! Strange species!

The whole world should see to it that this glorious creation did not disappear from the earth. A thousand and one such remarks could be heard from scientists' delegations of various countries.

The villagers who lived near the forest discovered a few more habits of the species. It was not only that the wolves killed out of hunger. When they were possessed by the killer instinct, they went on killing, and never touched the flesh of the dead. Perhaps they lacked courage, the forest being much too small. At times these beasts chased people even in daylight. The villagers had experience of this kind.

However, the main conclusion arrived at was that all possible arrangements be made to protect this species of wolves.

Some countries became almost hysterical. Besides scientists, they also sent men and material for necessary arrangements. All this created certain problems.

The international specialists had reached a definite decision on one point: that it was necessary to increase the population of the species and that the area of the forest had to be extended for that to happen. Originally, the area of the forest was about six or seven square miles. It was considered essential to extend it to at least twenty square miles.

So the proliferation of the species and that of the forest were directly linked. There were various reasons for it. Such as, if the wolves failed to move freely and lived in constant fear, they would lose their gaiety, and if they lost their gaiety, they would naturally lack the urge of procreation. Therefore... etc. etc.

If the forest had to be extended, the land around the present area of six or seven square miles had to be declared as reserved forest area. So the question of requisition arose. Had these areas been wooded, there wouldn't have been much of a problem. It was found that the whole area was not only inhabited; it was thickly populated. Thousands of people

lived there.

The problem would have been serious for a government to solve at a base level. The administrators would have had grey hair worrying over rehabilitation, compensation and the rest of it. Quite serious thinking would have been required to find out what degree of force and how much persuasion would be necessary to get the job done. But attempts made at international level were very powerful indeed; even the devil would feel harrassed. So there was no reason for headache.

Headache was for the local population. They received notice: Leave home.

They cried alas. Where would they go leaving the hearths and homes of their forefathers? Of course, some aid was received in the name of compensation. As if one could compensate with money the loss of the trees and the rivers and the marshes and the sky and age old human relationships. Some attempted to demonstrate in protest and were shot. Such attempts were futile. But they were desperate. And the rest of them left their villages in large groups.

There was the talk of establishing a rehabilitation settlement. But no one had known the taste of it. The matter remained limited to a plan. People considered it easier to float with the tide of uncertainty. That was what most people did, or ran in search of a never never land they had heard of. Some collapsed and died in hunger, disease and sorrow. Easy and natural death shunned the refugees. If one's shoulders cracked under the weight of the death demon, unnatural death, which had become the fate of the refugees, crushed the whole body.

However, one had to accept such small sacrifices for greater good. The world would be poorer if these wolves disappeared. After all, it wasn't man that was threatened with extinction as a species, was it? One should not complain if a few people suffered or fell into death-holes. Mankind would survive. Even if a nation was destroyed, other nations would still survive. If the Bengalis disappeared, the Punjabis would be there. So

it was no use bothering about man. But if these wolves disappeared, who could produce them? It was much easier to produce men. No, one could not be expected to do great things if one worried much about small issues. The world was large enough. If a particular habitation or a thousand people were wiped out, it would not be much of a loss to the world.

The international specialists were busy wolf-tending. There were various arrangements in the reserved forest. They saw to it that there was drinking water for the wolves when they got thirsty and animals to feed upon when they were hungry. There were sufficient arrangements for 'aid' of this kind. The results were only natural.

The present area of the forest was about twenty square miles. These few wolves did not have enough room to dance around within the limited area of the forest in the past. There was also a chronic shortage of food. Now there was as much room to yawn about as there was sufficient food. The race of wolves started proliferating without limit.

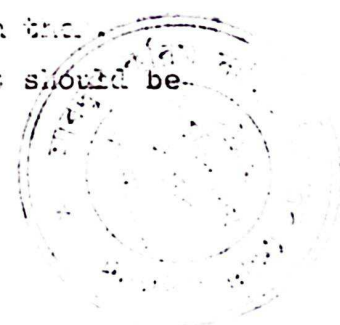
Even when the international specialists had returned home their representatives were there to watch over the job.

The species was thriving satisfactorily, they reported.

The staggering increase in the population of wolves, however, frightened some. Their fear was not unreasonable.

It was found that even twenty square miles were not enough. The wolves left the reserved area and intruded into human habitation and created panic. The villagers got together and started killing them by setting traps and with the help of a few clandestine guns.

The news reached the ears of the international specialists. 'It's wrong,' they declared. 'It's wrong for the villagers to betray such impatience. Of course, it would be a fair proposition to kill the wolves when they had greatly increased their population. But not before then. When that stage comes, we will ourselves take measures to contain them. But that stage has not yet been reached. The area of the forest should be further extended.'



For the people, it was the next thunder bolt.

Again there were derelict human habitations.

This time an elderly man, in lungi, a longish shirt and bare feet, with a crowd following him shouted in protest, 'You drove us out of our land twenty three years ago. Once again you have made a similar move. Why?'

'If this species of wolves disappeared from the earth, there would never be any more,' said the international representatives.

'Do you not care for thousands of people who are being destroyed?' the angry old man cried, tauntingly.

To put down the impertinent old man, a snub nosed, short international specialist said with some force, 'The wolves must be preserved to satisfy scientific curiosity.'

'Even if thousands of people died?' the old man shouted back.

The snub-nosed, a representative of the world, was naturally a powerful man. 'What can we do,' he said, making face, 'if some people die.'

'Nothing at all? Thousands, hundreds of thousands... and yet nothing?'

A representative of the Middle East came forward as an arbitrator.

'There is nothing greater than the glory of Allah,' he declared. 'If the people of the whole world dies to preserve that glory, so be it. Thousands or hundreds of thousands do not matter. It is not just a wolf. It is the glory of Allah. They must be protected whatever the loss.'

Once again the eviction notices were served. The whold area started moving.

The extension of the wolf forest seemed inevitable.

A POEM

by

Shamsur Rahman.



Engrossed in her humble domestic chores
 in her quiet remote village
 she had never noticed the sun throbbing in the sky
 or rafts of cloud sailing by.

She did not notice how time flew.
 It was all an intimate familiar scene;
 the pot of rice boiling on the fire,
 a fish or two, some spinach,
 for the poor pedagogue her husband.

Now and then she looked up to see
 the gourd creepers creeping up the fence
 or a yellow bird ceaselessly wagging its tail
 on a branch of the jackfruit tree.
 And hours rolled by.

After her bath, she drew water from the well,
 combed her hair streaked with grey
 and thought of her son at the local school

Then the entire country reared its head like an angry God.
 News poured in from all quarters
 of sacrifices that soaked the land with blood.
 The blood-spattered clothes of her son
 shattered the idyll of the village mother.

The green gourds, the river and the meadow,
the field of beans,
and her familiar pond were left far behind.

Today you'd find her footprints on wide city roads
and narrow side streets,
on highways and byways,
where the sonless mother has transmuted
the bright tears of her stricken heart
into resonant, rebellious cries.

THE STRUGGLE FOR BANGLA DESH: A SURVEY

by

Nasir. S.

The current events in Bangla Desh are well known. Pakistan achieved independence in 1947. The political power elite that ruled Pakistan did not hold a general election during 1947 to 1969. In 1969, the people of Pakistan forced ex-President Ayub out of power and got a solemn promise from his successor Yahya Khan of a general election in 1970. Contrary to Yahya's expectation, Shaikh Mujibur Rahman secured overwhelming majority in Bangla Desh as well as an absolute majority in the country as a whole. Yahya postponed the session of the National Assembly scheduled to be held on 3rd January, 1971 and thus prevented Mujib from coming to power. This was feared by the Bengalis. There was sharp reaction and civil disobedience in Bangla Desh. On the 25th March, the Pakistani army started its 'genocide' programme to eliminate all disloyal Bengalis. More than a million Bengalis have been killed; more than ten millions have been made refugees in India. The genocide mission is still in progress: more Bengalis are being shot at more refugees are pouring in India every day.

Yahya blames India for this crisis. India is accused to have conspired with Mujib to make Bangla Desh independent. To the Bengalis, the crisis is deeply rooted in the very creation of Pakistan in which its majority population the Bengalis, were asked to play a minority role. The present Bengali liberation movement is the spontaneous reaction to the failure of correcting this 'inverted' situation through constitutional means. India has no hand in this.

Yahya admits that the Bengalis pioneered the Pakistan movement. It is well documented¹ that the North West Frontier province was against

1 See Sayeed K.B. The Political System of Pakistan, Oxford and Pakistan: The Formative Phase Oxford University Press.



the Pakistan movement. In Punjab, the support was at best lukewarm. In Sind, Politics was a game of musical chairs among a few landlords. Jinnah used the mass support and organisation of the Bengali muslims skill fully to include west Pakistan in the Pakistan movement.

However, the Pakistan for which the Bengali muslims had struggled envisaged Bangla Desh as an 'independent and sovereign state' as embodied in the Lahore Resolution of 1940. The idea of having one Pakistan with two geographically and culturally separated regions was as ridiculous then as it is now. In 1971 what Bengalis are demanding is the implementation of this Lahore Resolution.¹

The Resolution reads:

Resolved, that it is the considered view of this Sesson of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, viz. that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in majority as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute "Independent States" in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

Immediately after partition, Jinnah interpreted the 'Lahore resolution' as a typographical error, and assuming dictatorial powers at his own initiative, he established Pakistan as One State.

Why the Bengalis did not revolt at the time? Jinnah promised that Pakistan would be a democracy and the Bengalis, with a 56 percent majority of population had nothing to fear. India, for example framed her constitution within two years and held four general elections since then.

1 K.B. Sayeed, The Political System of Pakistan. op cit, p 40.

But West Pakistani power elite led by Jinnah went for depoliticizing the Bengalis. The first step was to impose Urdu as the state Language on the Bengalis. Perhaps it was understood that the primary base for Bengali national consciousness was the Bengali language and so by preventing Bengalis from learning Bengali, this national spirit would be considerably undermined. Bengali was the mother tongue of 56 percent people; Urdu of only 7 percent.¹ The Bengalis asked Jinnah, why he was imposing his dictatorial decision on them rather than leaving the issue to be decided by a freely elected National Assembly? Jinnah had no answer.² For a compromise, the Bengalis demanded that both Urdu and Bengali be made state languages. Instead of praise for this accommodation of minority demand, the Bengali received bullets. Several students who demonstrated for the recognition of Bengali as one of the two National languages were shot dead on the "1st February, 1952.

In 1953, the Bengali Prime Minister, Nazimuddin was dismissed by the west Pakistani dictator - Governor General, Ghulam Muhammad. Pakistan at that time was supposed to be a Parliamentary form of Government and Nazimuddin still enjoyed the confidence of the National Assembly. The apparent reason for this dismissal was a Punjabi crime: two sects of Punjabi muslims massacred each other as infedals.³ The real reason behind this unconstitutional action was that even a weak Bengali like Nazimuddin did not like to accept a permanent minority role for the Bengalis.

During this period of 1947-53, West Pakistan power elite also (i) diverted the trade of Bangla Desh away from India so as to sell Bengali jute abroad and import machineries with the foreign exchange earned for industrialization of West Pakistan and (ii) turn Bangla Desh into a colonial

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- 1 1951 Census, Govt. of Pakistan
 - 2 Kamruddin Ahmed, Social History of East Pakistan, Dacca
 - 3 See Munir Report , Government of Pakistan



market¹ for West Pakistan inefficient industries which enjoyed a protective wall of about 100 to 600 percent relative to the international prices of comparable commodities in most cases.

The Bengali intelligentsia, students and peasants reacted sharply. In 1950, the Bengalis demanded the implementation of Lahore resolution in the resolution passed on the issue of Bengali language in a Grand Convention. In 1952, when the Bengali youths gave their lives for Bengali language they took the solemn oath:²

The one we have lost
Will never disappear from our hearts,
For they have stolen all our peace,
They have enlarged us, these lost ones,
Spreading the spark of their lives
From one corner of our land to another.

In 1954, the Bengali peasants, in the first provincial election, overthrew the Muslim league leaders the puppet political party of West Pakistan power elite. Of the 309 seats, the Muslim League secured only 10. In the General Election of 1970-71, Mujib's Awami League secured 167 out of 169 seats of the National Assembly. In 1954, the trend of 1970-71 could be foreseen.

The Bengali peasants in 1954 were united by the three formidable Bengali leaders Fazlul Haq, Suhrawardy and Bhasani. Their election manifesto demanded progressive social legislation in favour of the peasants as well as the implementation of Lahore resolution. The resolution of 1950 was reasserted in 1954.

As in 1971, the central Government blamed India and the communist for this defeat of the Muslim league. Fazlul Haq was soon denounced as a traitor and the elected Bengali assembly was dismissed by the centre in

1. See Lewis S.R. Jr. Industrialization and Trade policies

2 Rahman S. , The Immortal 21st 1952.

1955 in favour of direct rule by the centre.

In 1955, therefore, the situation in Bangla Desh was explosive. The Bengalis were economically exploited. Politically, their desire to even control their own province was frustrated. There was anger and frustration all around. Foreign observers who understood the mood could predict eventual civil war.¹

To avoid a civil war, a compromise solution was worked out. If the Bengalis would sacrifice their majority in the National Assembly, they would get equal representation in the civil and military services where Bengali representation was only between 5 to 10 percent. It was also agreed that the General election would be held in 1958. Some Bengalis agreed to cooperate. These provisions were incorporated in Pakistan's first Constitution in 1956. Other Bengalis disassociated themselves from the compromise suspecting foul play. In 1957 West Pakistan power elite realized that in the event of a General Election, the Bengalis under Suhrawardy were likely to capture central government. The effort to unite West Pakistan and divide the Bengalis into various opposing groups largely failed. Suhrawardy, the Bengali Prime Minister was therefore, made to resign by the West Pakistan President. Next year, the West Pakistani army captured political power, abrogated the Constitution of 1956, cancelled the scheduled general election and set up an agonizing dictatorship under Ayub for the next eleven years.

West Pakistan accepted and praised Ayub's benvolent dictatorship. In East Pakistan, Suhrawardy was arrested; students smashed Ayub's pictures all over the streets of Dacca. More students were killed, more languages of weapons were used, more people were arrested and tortured. More determination was visible among the Bengali faces: they would free their country from this ruthless dictator:

1 Stanley Maron: The Problems of East Pakistan: Pacific Affairs, June 1955.

They renewed their pledge:¹

Here I bestow my dreams on you
 Oh my holy beautiful - bodied sentinel
 My country, to you I give my pledges
 Let them be your invincible bayonets;
 Your unconquerable strength.

By 1969, Ayub's misrule began to have its effect even in West Pakistan. His bureaucracy, his basic democrats, his industrialists and even his family were accused of unashamed and widespread corruption. In 1969, therefore, there were some middle class protests in West Pakistan. Taking advantage of this, Bangla Desh started a revolution.² The West Pakistani army killed Bengalis in hundreds but the Bengalis were determined to put an end to the exploitation of Bangla Desh. They forced Ayub to free Mujibur Rahman who was arrested in 1968 and kept in the cantonment. They demanded that Ayub should accept Mujib's six point programme. Mujib had realized that the West Pakistani dominated central government had been exploiting Bangla Desh through its control over foreign trade, foreign aid allocation and taxation by which resources were transferred from Bangla Desh and abroad (foreign assistance) for the development of West Pakistan. Mujib's six point was designed to establish the control of Bangla Desh over these policies so that Bangla Desh might not be exploited through disproportionate control of central government over resource allocations. This frightened the West Pakistani bourgeoisie. They and some Bengali conservatives withdrew from the common fight against the dictator. A round table conference followed for a negotiated settlement. The conference ended in disagreement. Ayub, however, had to quit and the Bengalis got a promise from his successor Yahya Khan of an early general election on the basis of adult suffrage. But Yahya promulgated his legal framework order which stipulated that the new Constitution that would be framed by the newly elected representative would have to be accepted to him: otherwise power would not be transferred.

1 Rahman S. Oppressed words, Dacca 1968

2 Shabbir Hussain: The Lengthening Shadows

There, was, therefore, no relation with the election and transfer of power.

The Bengalis were left with two choices: Either they were to continue their revolution against the regime or they were to participate in the election in search for a peaceful solution. Mujib decided to participate in the election. Maulan Bhasani suspected foul play by Yahya and refused to participate in the election. He maintained that Yahya's military regime would not transfer power to the Bengalis. It has to be overthrown by armed struggle. Bhasani wanted independence on the basis of Lahore resolution once again.

Mujib was a constitutionalist. His six point programme was far less than total independence. He hoped that Yahya would appreciate the Bengali mood and the Bengali revolution of 1969. He wanted Bengalis to express their demand once again in a constitutional and democratic manner.

Mujib's Awami League, however, warned that the Bengali revolution of 1969 was betrayed: the Bengalis would not tolerate another betrayal:¹

A profound lesson for the future lies in the experience of those memorable days. We failed to realize our goals because the people's forces within East Pakistan fell apart at the threshold of victory. A united leadership commanding a united movement of the people, marching towards the interdependent goals of autonomy and social change would have been irresistible at that moment. Coherent direction and organization of an aroused people would have claimed power for the people a full year ago. Instead we faced a long arduous and uncertain journey, where the people's goals seem remote in the face of deep cleavages within the ranks of their leaders. If any lessons are to be learnt from the agonising failures of yesteryear it calls for people to demand of their leaders with one voice that they resolve their personal antipathies and lead them towards the universally cherished goal of autonomy and social change. Let them and their mutual mudslinging and join hands to capture an overwhelming majority of seats to the national

1 The Lessonse of RTC Editorial Forum, Vol.1, No.17, 14th March, 1970.

assembly. Let 168 voices speak as one for East Pakistan in the assembly. If this voice goes unheard and unanswered then let them return to the streets and take up the struggle where they abandoned it one year ago.

The Bengalis did unit and gave Mujib a mandate for making Pakistan a confederation in which no one province would be able to exploit the other. By ignoring this mandate, Yahya has made an independent Bangla Desh inevitable. By blaming India for what was his own failure and by pushing 10 million Bengali refugees to India, Yahya has also made an Indo-West Pakistan conflict inevitable.

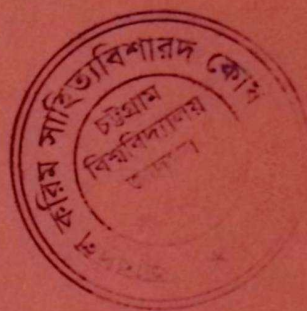


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