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Bangladesh

COURSE OF THE STRUGGLE

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Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, M.N.A.



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COURSE OF THE STRUGGLE

MAP OF PAKISTAN changed overnight as President Yahya launched his genocide campaign on March 25 last for enslavement of the Bengalis. The extermination bid with a million killed resulted only in the extinction of old Pakistan and the birth of Bangladesh as an independent nation. Yahya's sacrilegious move boomeranged back.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had prophetically realized the prospect. In his historic Ramna address to the nation of March 7 he set the straw in the wind and urged the people to prepare for the impending fight even with sticks and stones. Still for a fortnight more, he parleyed for peace. The result however, was foredoomed, the hawks were hard to control and there was no way to shake hands with a clenched fist.

For all his love for peace, Bangabandhu was not one to be caught napping. As Yahya discharged his first salvo on a sleeping people at dead of night for which the assassin was only preparing under ruse of peace talks, Sheikh Mujib before his death instructed his close associates to take certain steps as a result of which the independent Bangladesh has been born.

Right away the nation stirred up as one man with only sticks and stones. It was pathetic, but it was patriotic, pure and simple. The bravest, yet the most unequal struggle in the whole history of the world started. The Pakistan army swooped down with tanks, planes, artillery on an unarmed but heroic people and killed a million with vengeance. Doubtless like cats and dogs we were killed, but we died with our claws up. The entire

Bengali militia, EPR, Police and Ansars joined the war with whatever arms they had in hand ; the civil Administration threw their lot with the fighters ; people from fields, factories, schools, colleges and every walk of life joined the forces. Through sheer patriotism and force of will, a nearly unarmed people beat a highly sophisticated army back to the barracks in most places, except Dacca and Comilla, at the first attempt. The exploit had to be brief though. Soon the Army brought in the Air Force and Navy and forced the patriots to retreat. The invaders regrouped, took over the towns and some strategic outposts, though forced to live under virtual siege with limited means, as the freedom fighters fell back on the surrounding countryside. The first phase of war with sticks and stones ended.

Well within a fortnight the Independent Republic of Bangladesh Government was inaugurated in April, and the regular army under Colonel Osmani was formed. Youths by lakhs volunteered for joining Mukti Bahini, hundreds of training centres well inside the liberated zones of Bangladesh were set up and recruits on the emergency basis trained. As the war was continued by our veterans from Bengal Battalion EPR, the newly trained youths went on swelling the existing Force. Special guerilla fighters for commando operations were raised, and then began incessant sorties on occupation army posts and protected areas. Throughout the period mounting in the months of monsoon our commandos blew up hundreds of bridges, culverts, uprooted rail tracks, destroyed ferry ghats and jetties disrupting most land and water communications. Monsoon over, growing success of the guerillas and Mukti Bahini reinforced by the newly trained freedom fighters drove away the Pakistan army from vast areas of Sylhet, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Tangail, Kishoregunj, Khulna resulting in armed liberation of over one-third of the occupied land where the Bangladesh Government have now securely established civilian rule. The Pakistan Army has been forced to take shelter in the barracks and fortified bunkers in defence living in a state of seige and constant panic.

By October, the victorious Mukti Bahini built their Navy, modestly starting with some seized gun-boats and also a regular Air Force. Our brave commandos of the Naval unit have hit

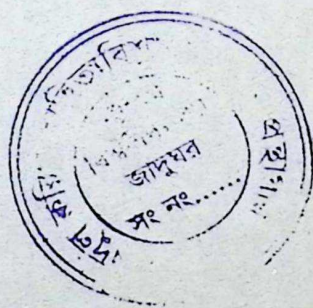
at the heart of Chittagong and Chalna ports and sunk over ships and oil tankers in daring exploits. Our Air Force too is already in a position to strike, waiting for the command of zero hour. Huge quantities of seized arms and military equipment from the defeated occupation Army have largely contributed to the brilliant exploits of Mukti Bahini, supported by the heroic cooperation of the people in the liberated as well as in the occupied territory. At a most modest estimation, over 30,000 Pakistani regulars have so far been killed and a much larger number wounded by the valiant Mukti Bahini. Every night corpses are being conveyed to Dacca from distant Army outposts and planeloads of coffins carried to West Pakistan. These are only common sights which have been confirmed even by foreign journalists. The occupation Army is now seized with fear of total annihilation pitted nearly in their last ditch.

On the political front, President Yahya has tasted worse defeat. Bangladesh Government have successfully carried their diplomatic struggle in every country and in the U.N. to dispel the smoke screen of Pakistani bluff and bluster. The hollow of Pakistani ruse of internal affair and claim to normality have been thoroughly exposed by our high powered diplomatic teams carrying the truth to five continents. Pakistani efforts to conceal the fact of genocide and liberation struggle have completely failed. Most countries are now convinced of the justice of our cause and formality apart, have virtually recognized Bangladesh as a fait accompli. The world pressure on President Yahya Khan to seek political settlement with Bangladesh Government with the elected representatives of the land is a confession of 'defacto' recognition and proof of Yahya's defeat on the political front.

The freedom struggle has now entered the final stage for total rout of the occupation army. Over one-lakh strong Mukti Bahini is now fully prepared to meet the aggressors huddled in barracks and bunkers for frontal war in the open. Detachments of our Army are daily deployed in position deep inside the occupied areas ready for action. Frantically the aggressors have burst out on frontier points, gun barrel to gun barrel with the Indian Army in a posture of aggression on the third country.

Certain to lose at the freedom fighters' hand, the Pakistan Military Junta has perhaps chosen to pass the threat on India to bale out of the disgrace through an enforced Indo-Pakistan war. If the basic idea is to ease out the freedom fighters by that rule of thumb of war on India and subsequent peace parlance under machination of international pressure, Yahya Khan will be doubly fooled. Even in the event of Pakistan's war against India, Bangladesh stands as an independent entity sure enough to hold on its own, to free the country of the aggressors. Should the Pakistani occupation Army choose to attack India across the border, Yahya would have to willingly make a journey of no return and in the path of vanquishment.





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