



VILLAGERS MASSACRED BY PAKISTANI TROOPS: "HOW CAN ANY MAN WORK HIMSELF INTO SUCH A MURDEROUS FRENZY?".

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CHITTAGONG UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

## CHRONOLOGY OF THE CRISIS

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| March 22, 1940              | The Muslim League passes the Pakistan resolution in Lahore, stating, "...that areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the north-west and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be <u>autonomous</u> and <u>sovereign</u> ."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | December 7, 1970           | Election results give the Awami League all but two national assembly seats from East Pakistan and a simple majority nationwide. In West Pakistan, Pakistan People's Party, running on the slogan of "Islamic Socialism," pulls a major surprise by winning 83 of the 138 seats in the region.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| August 14, 1947             | Pakistan emerges as <u>one</u> independent state, with two parts separated by 1000 miles.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | December 17, 1970          | Provincial assembly elections repeat the earlier trend by giving an almost total control of East Pakistan assembly to the AL.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| February 11, 1952           | Several Bengalis killed while protesting against the imposition of Urdu as the sole national language. Bengali finally accepted as a national language.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | January 17, 1971           | Elections held in the cyclone affected areas and by-elections to NA completed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| March 8-12, 1954            | The Jukto Front, with the Awami League as its major component, gives a crushing defeat to Muslim League in East Pakistan elections. Chief Minister, Nurul Amin, and all of his cabinet members, who had been subservient to West Pakistani landlords, lose their seats.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | January 31, 1971           | Two Kashmiri youth hijack an Indian Airlines plane to Lahore and blow it up. War psychosis grips India and Pakistan, and supporters of strong center in West Pakistan exploit the situation to discredit provincial autonomy. The AL gets apprehensive and demands inquiry into the matter.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| March 2, 1956               | The constitution adopted for Pakistan gives equal representation to East and West Pakistan, although the East constitutes 55% of the country's population.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | February 15, 1971          | After a series of talks with Gen. Yahya and Sheikh Mujib, the PPP chief, Mr. Bhutto, announces boycott of the assembly session scheduled for March 3.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| November 1968 to March 1969 | Popular uprising against the dictatorship of General Ayub Khan results in the release of most of the political prisoners and dropping of the infamous Agartala Conspiracy Case against the Awami League chief, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Ayub Khan resigns under the popular pressure and the military chief, Gen. Yahya Khan, takes over the interim government. Ayub's 1962 constitution abrogated.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | February 16-March 14, 1971 | Mr. Bhutto's refusal and Gen. Yahya's decision to postpone the assembly session indefinitely is answered by a general strike in East Pakistan. Yahya sets March 25 as the new date for the assembly but his March 6 tirade against Mujib angers the Bengali people further. As a result of a civil disobedience movement the control of East Pakistan passes into the hands of the Awami League. Several hundred demonstrators are killed by army firing. The AL puts forth four pre-conditions for attending the session, including the transfer of the interim government to the elected representatives. |
| November 28, 1969           | General Yahya Khan announces that elections will be held on October 5, 1970.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | March 15, 1971             | Gen. Yahya rushes to Dacca for talks.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| March 28, 1970              | Yahya Khan issues a 'Legal Framework Ordinance,' envisaging general elections on the basis of population and adult franchise by October 22. The 313 member assembly to be elected must draft a constitution within 120 days after its first session and the constitution must incorporate the guidelines of the ordinance, including preserving the "unity" and "territorial integrity" of Pakistan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | March 16-24, 1971          | While talks between Mujib and Yahya continue, West Pakistani troop build-up in East Pakistan also continues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| August 15, 1970             | Owing to the severe floods in East Pakistan, elections are put off till December, 1970.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | March 25, 1971             | Amidst the reports of army massacre of civilians in Chittagong and Rangpur, talks are deadlocked. Yahya Khan returns to West Pakistan, denounces Mujib as a traitor, bans the Awami League, and orders military take over of the province. The army goes on rampage, killing innocent people and burning homes and offices.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| November 12, 1970           | Coastal areas of East Pakistan are hit by this century's worst natural calamity--a cyclone accompanied by tidal wave--that causes approximately half a million deaths and suffering to another three million people. Inadequate relief measures on part of the West Pakistan based central government enrages the Bengali people. Maulana Bhashani's National Awami Party withdraws from the elections and demands independence for East Pakistan. But Sheikh Mujib's Awami League demands polls on schedule and continues campaigning for regional autonomy for East Pakistan within the union. Bhashani's demand gains widespread support among the masses but the hope for achieving autonomy through the ballot still persists. | March 26, 1971             | East Pakistan declares itself an independent People's Republic of Bangla Desh, and war starts between the army and the people of Bangla Desh.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | March 27-April 15          | Radio Pakistan claims arrest of Mujib and his colleagues and a complete control of Bangla Desh. A clandestine rebel radio denies the army claim and urges the people to resist. At different times, the rebels control Chittagong, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Kushtia, Jessore, Sylhet, Chaudanga etc. The army ruthlessly slaughters the people and regains most of the lost territory. Thousands flee to India or to countryside.                                                                                                                                                                                 |