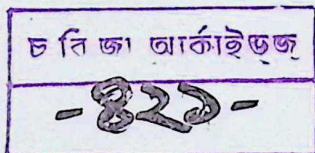


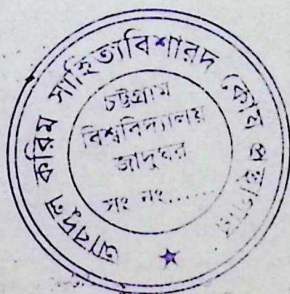
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GENOCIDE IN BANGLADESH

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People from all over the world have come to accept the fact that genocide has been perpetrated in Bangladesh by Pakistan army. This is not only the view of lay men but also of completely neutral and responsible people like University professors, legislators, judges, and heads of religious organisations. But still a few squeamish purists would prefer to describe the happenings in Bangladesh as murder, massacre or atrocity on a massive scale, rather than genocide. There are more than one reason for probing into the nature of these tragic happenings. 'Genocide' is a crime according to the provisions of the Convention approved by the U.N. General Assembly in 1948. But it is in the interest of mankind as a whole, particularly if we take the future of human civilisation into consideration, that we must ascertain the nature of the crime committed in the name of national integrity by the armed forces of Pakistan. It is also necessary to consider the sufferings of the people of Bangladesh in their proper perspective.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines 'Genocide' as 'extermination of a race'; the Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary has it as 'deliberate extermination of a race or people'; the Columbia Encyclopedia edited at Columbia University has it as 'attempt to destroy a national, ethnic, racial, religious or political group'.

A US scholar of Polish origin, Mr. Raphael Lemkin is credited with the coining of the term 'Genocide'. The word, he explained, is a hybrid consisting of the Greek word 'Genos' meaning race, nation or tribe and the Latin suffix 'Cide' meaning 'killing'. According to Lemkin the realities of European life in the years 1933 to 1945 called for the formulation of a legal concept of the destruction of human groups.

It will be generally appreciated that the happenings in Bangladesh after President Yahya Khan unleashed his massive military forces on and after 26 March widely cover the common connotation of the expression 'genocide'. But liberal London weekly, The Economist (14th August, 1971), whose softness for the Yahya regime it hardly cares to conceal, is reluctant to call it 'genocide'. Quoting the shorter Oxford Dictionary the esteemed weekly shows that etymologically 'genocide' means the annihilation of a

race or the destruction of a whole people and since this has not happened or, according to it, was not even attempted, what happened in Bangladesh is not 'genocide'.

Understandably it will be going too far to drag the meaning or definition of 'genocide' to the literal and numerical fineness while judging if particular happenings, and in the present case those in Bangladesh, come under the category of genocide. It will be, then, giving occasion to a Halaku, Nadir Shah or Hitler to come out of his grave and argue that since some survived his premeditated carnage, whether by fleeing the country or by an accidental escape or by hiding himself or by abject surrender, his act was anything but genocide and history should, therefore, be re-written.

The writer in the Economist who has modestly hidden his light under the cover of anonymity also speaks with so much glib assurance about the myth that the army massacre was in retaliation of the prior killing of Beharis by Bengalis. Apparently he has swallowed President Yahya's canard—an afterthought as can be easily proved—hook, line and sinker. Those who made on the spot enquiries do not, however, support this contention. Michael Hornsby, writing from Rajshahi (The Times, July 12, 1971) discounts the theory of the prior killing of Beharis by Bengalis and says that while substantial numbers of Beharis were killed, both the timing and the scale were very much open to question. On information supplied by reliable and independent sources he was convinced that at Santahar, where the trouble started, it was the Beharis, armed with rifles supplied by the Punjabi officers, who first killed sixty Bengalis after which the latter took severe reprisals. Similarly, Martin Woollacott writes (The Weekly Guardian, 17 July, 1971) that all the evidence is against the assertion that the Awami Leaguers terrorised and killed non-Bengalis even before March 25, 1971. It may not be out of place to mention here that although the Pakistan Government's White Paper which came out in early August, 1971 mentioned the so-called killing of Beharis by Bengalis, President Yahya is significantly silent about it in his broadcast to the 'nation' on March 26, 1971. Indeed, what the White Paper contains on the point can stand on no firm ground, falls to pieces on a scrutiny by the most superficial observer and clearly emerges as an afterthought to serve as a veneer.

To a student of International Law 'Genocide' is a grave crime against mankind contrary to the spirit and aims of the United Nations. As per the Convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide approved in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly 'Genocide'

means any of the following acts or in part, a national, ethnical

- (a) Killing members of
- (b) Causing serious bodily
- (c) Deliberately inflicting
- (d) Imposing measures
- (e) Forcibly transferring

The Convention made genocide a crime, same, direct and public incitement to commit genocide punishable.

It provided that persons who committed or allied acts made punishable shall be held internationally responsible rulers, public officials, further been provided that persons who committed other allied acts shall be tried in the territory of which the act was committed or as may have jurisdiction.

As a result of the U.N. Convention on genocide, even if perpetrated by a State, it is not an internal matter of the State. It is of international concern. Any contracting State has the right of intervention to intervene and take such action as they consider appropriate for the prevention of genocide.

Let us see whether the genocide in Bangladesh being labelled 'genocide' as indicated by the etymological meaning of the word. And I am inclined to take most of the blame on those who have no axe to grind.

What happened in Dacca on March '71 is common knowledge. It is clear that the talks between Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from Dacca and President Yahya were a facade for disarming suspicion. President Yahya secretly to bring the army and ammunition for the pre-planned genocide movement 'within forty

committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, any racial or religious group, as such:

(a) the group;

(b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

(c) imposing on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

(d) intending to prevent births within the group;

(e) transferring all or part of the children of the group to another group.

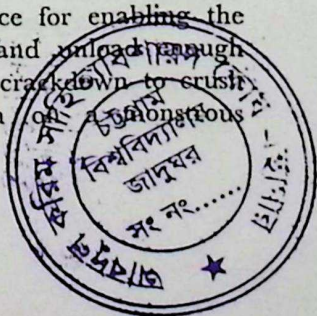
Genocide as well as conspiracy to commit the same, attempt to commit it and complicity in genocide shall be punished, whether they are constituted by acts of public officials or private individuals. It has been charged with genocide or any of the other crimes by a competent tribunal of the State in the territory in which it was committed or by such international tribunal as may be constituted.

Persons committing genocide or any of the other crimes shall be punished, whether they are constituted by acts of public officials or private individuals. It has been charged with genocide or any of the other crimes by a competent tribunal of the State in the territory in which it was committed or by such international tribunal as may be constituted.

At the Convention the signatories have affirmed that the act of genocide is a crime against the human race and that it is a government within its own territory, is a crime against the human race and that it is a crime against the human race. The Convention can call upon the United Nations Organization to take action under the Charter of the U.N. as to the prevention and suppression of the act of genocide.

Undoubted facts justify the happenings in Bangladesh as 'genocide' in accordance with the criteria of the Convention as well as the definition of the U.N. The facts are taken from statements of foreign observers.

For a fortnight from the small hours of 26th March 1971. With the hindsight of subsequent events in Bangladesh, President Yahya and the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in the middle of March to 25th, was merely a breathing space for enabling the armed forces and unloading enough massive military crackdown to crush the '16 hours'. Action on a monstrous



scale was taken for effecting the intended quick transformation. In a lightning attack the intelligentsia, the students of Schools, Colleges and Universities, selected Bengali Civil Servants, the Awami Leaguers and their sympathisers and the Hindus (the army was told by their officers without the votes of the Hindus the sweeping victory the Awami League had in the elections would not be possible) were slaughtered regardless of age or sex. When the killing was so general, selected descriptions are quoted to underline the horror and tragedy. East Bengal's military Governor and Martial Law Administrator Lt. General Tikka Khan reportedly gave the sweeping order to his trigger-happy West Pakistani gunmen: 'Kill the Bengalis, burn their houses, loot their shops, rape their women.' He reportedly told an army group that they were interested in the land of Bangladesh and not men. In the nights of 25th and 26th March the army killed about a dozen University Professors, including some of the most erudite and respected, and bespattered the walls of Iqbal Hall, Jagannath Hall and Rokeya Hall with the mangled flesh of the students who were living there. Thirtysix Bengali District Magistrates and Sub-Divisional Officers from all over the province were either killed or fled to India (The Sunday Times, 20 June, 1971). Part of Sankhari Bazar, a large, rich, old and exclusively Hindu area, was strafed and reduced to rubble, and the other part denuded of inhabitants who either fled or were shot dead, their houses being given over to non-Bengali collaborators.

Equally dismal and dark is the story of the destruction by arson by the army of another part of the city—Chawkbazar, the oldest and exclusively Muslim commercial area with one of the ancient and biggest mosques of Dacca standing on it.

What happened at Jessore and Khulna will be clear from the report of the World Bank Mission member, Mr. Hendrik Van der Heijden, Economist, Pakistan Division, IBRD which leaked out in the New York Times in spite of the attempt of Mr. Robert Macnamara, President of the World Bank to suppress it. Mr. Heijden visited Jessore, Khulna and Kushtia between June 3 and June 6 and this is what he reports: "Approaching Jessore it became soon clear that this was the area where the army punitive action has been very severe: from the air tens of totally destroyed villages were clearly visible, a building was still in fire, and to the eastern side of the runway a good many houses had been destroyed... some 20,000 people were killed in Jessore town. The City's centre has been destroyed; commerce, obviously, has come to a stand-still. More than 50% of the shops have been destroyed... Half a million people have fled to India. Khulna City has been substantially damaged in the centre town, the approaches to

it... The bulk of the population has fled, reducing the number from 400,000 to 1,50,000... At Phultala thana in Khulna, a predominantly Hindu area, 50% (i.e. 20,000 out of 42,000) have fled leaving behind land, houses, livestock, everything. The Livestock Officer was killed and the administration was in chaos... The army moved into Kushtia from Jhenidah on April 15 and met with strong resistance. When the insurgents withdrew, the army punitive action started. It lasted 12 days and left Kushtia virtually deserted and destroyed. The population was down from 40,000 to 5,000. Ninety percent of the houses, shops, banks and other buildings were totally destroyed. The city looked like a Second World War German town having undergone strategic bombing attack. Kushtia was the MyLai of the West Pakistan Army... The D.C. had been killed, as had so many other Govt. officials. The schools are open, but nobody is attending. Even the hospital was practically deserted... The farmers are not coming to the cities, and nobody goes out. Thousands of farmers have fled. Everything is abnormal there, and it was a shattering experience." (The Times, July 14, 1971)

Summing up his impression about the places visited by the member he says: "An awesome panorama of destruction and damage with people looking terrified, shocked and dazed—it was like morning after a nuclear attack."

About Comilla, Sylhet, Mymensingh and Chittagong the story is equally tragic and staggering with slight variations.

In Chittagong the attack was launched before zero hour in the small hours of 26 March. It had to face strong resistance from the local labour, students, and the civilian population. In the melee Bengalees as well as some non-Bengalees who had treacherously sided with the West Pakistani army lost their lives. When after some fighting the Pak army got a foothold, they resorted to massive and merciless killing in the town and in the interior. The religious institutions like Prabartak Sangha and Kaibalya Dham were demolished and their inmates killed. On both sides of the Chittagong-Dacca pucca road entire villages were burnt and their population killed. Martin Woollacott in the weekly Guardian (10 July, 1971) says: 'Army reaction is savage' and quotes an army officer saying "These villagers would have seen who placed the mine. If they did not tell me, I would have to threaten to shoot them, wouldn't I? May be, I would have to shoot some in the end." In Noakhali the army went to a bazar in search of 'miscreants' and blew it up and killed fifty men without warning. The reporter went through a dozen burnt and deserted villages and towns and saw the ashes only.

'The town has been complete rows of shops burnt out, houses bl
rently fired with incendiary gren
Guardian, July 3, 1971) about Bra
Comilla.

Tony Clifton of Newsweek a
regions of India reports:

"Any one who goes to the cam
with Pakistan comes away believin
atrocities. I have seen babies who hav
back whipped raw. I have seen peop
of seeing their children murdered
dragged off in to sexual slavery. I hav
a hundred MyLais and Lidices in Ea
more.... 'I am certain that troops h
caught them on their bayonets', says
Missionary who have lived in Bengal
troops have raped girls repeatedly,
bayonets up between their legs'.

"All the savagery suggests that th
blood lust or, more likely, is carrying
amounting to genocide against the w
week, 28 June, 1971).

One of the very recent reports en
August 2, 1971: "Each has his own hor
atrocities committed by the Pakistani
Bengalee Independence Movement. O
their two grown sons outside the house, b
refused to allow anyone to go near the b
Another woman says that when the so
children in her bed; but seeing them
opened fire, killing two and wounding
from the Press Trust of India (P.T.I.) 5
field near the Indian border. When the
approaching suddenly a six-month old
crying;' said the P.T.I. report. 'Failin
apprehending that the refugees might
the infant to death.'... The evidence
Pakistan. Whole sections of cities lie in
attacks. In Khalishpur, the northern su

worked over. Whole streets are gone,
and empty. The shops were appa-
, says the same reporter (Weekly
anbaria, the Sub-Divisional town of

visiting refugee-clogged border

and hospitals along India's border
the Punjabi Army capable of any
been shot, men who have had their
literally struck dumb by the horror
front of them or their daughters
no doubt at all that there have been
Pakistan—and I think there will be
ve thrown babies into the air and
riton, John Hastings, a Methodist
er twenty years. 'I am certain that
en killed them by pushing their

Pakistani Army is either crazed by
out a calculated policy of terror
le Bengalee population" (News-

imates from TIME Magazine of
er story of rape, murder or other
my in its efforts to crush the
couple tells how soldiers took
oneted them in the stomach and
dling boys, who died hours later.
ers came to door, she hid her
neath the blanket, the soldiers
ther. According to one report
fugees recently fled into a jute
eard a Pakistani Army patrol
ld in its mother's lap started
o make the child silent and
ttacked, the woman throttled
e blood bath is all over East
ms from shellings and aerial
of Khulna, naked children

and haggard women scavenge the rubble where their homes and shops
once stood. Stretches of Chittagong's Hazari Lane and Maulana Showkat
Ali Road have been wiped out. The central bazar in Jessore is reduced to
twisted masses of corrugated tin shattered walls. ..In Dacca, where
soldiers set sections of the old city ablaze with flamethrowers and then
machinegunned thousands as they tried to escape the cordon of fire, nearly
twentyfive blocks have been bulldozed clear, leaving open areas set in-
congruously amid jam-packed slums. For the benefit of foreign visitors, the
Army has patched-up many shell holes in the walls of Dacca University,
where hundreds of students were killed. But many signs remain. The tank
blasted Rajarbagh Police Barracks, where nearly 1,000 surrounded Bengali
corps fought to the last, is still in ruins. ..Millions of acres have been
abandoned. ..Fear and deep sullen hatred are everywhere evident among
Bengalees. Few will talk to reporters in public but letters telling of atrocities
and destroyed villages are stuck in journalists' mailboxes at Dacca's Hotel
Inter Continental."

And what is most staggering in the whole scene is that this inhuman
and unheard-of game of the Pakistani military junta is continuing with the
same speed and barbarity for the last seven months. When this lust for
blood shall end? Asks any conscientious man. But no reply comes. By now
more than two million men, women, and children have been butchered, of
the 54,000 villages of Bangladesh more than 20,000 have been completely
wiped out, countless fields with standing jute and paddy crops have been
burnt to spread terror and hunger, most of the religious, semi-religious,
literary, educational and cultural centres have been destroyed and more
than eight million people, irrespective of caste, creed, sex and age have fled
the country. They are being humanly and generously treated and looked
after by the Govt. and the people of India but the rains and the epidemics
are taking their toll. The atrocity inside Bangladesh is continuing with greater
and greater fury and every day at least another 40,000 are crossing over
into India as refugees. History never witnessed similar human misery before.

Is this process of killing and destruction pre-meditated and deliberate?
Does it aim at exterminating the whole race of Bengalees and the Bangla-
desh nation or at least any segment or group in Bangladesh?

The magnitude of the terrible blood bath and the method in which it
was commenced and is being carried out prove beyond any shadow of
doubt that the whole thing is all premeditated and preplanned. The
historic victory in the general elections in December, 1970 giving a clear
majority of 167 seats out of 169 allotted to Bangladesh in the 313-member
National Assembly meant that the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

would be the Prime Minister of all Pakistan. 'It was something that Yahya had simply not anticipated.' He and his fellow generals expected that the Awami League would at most capture 60 per cent of the seats in the East Wing and that smaller parties of Bangladesh and the West Pakistani parties would form a coalition, the real power remaining with Islamabad. When this anticipation did not materialise 'with the constitutional Assembly scheduled to convene in March, Yahya began a covert troop build-up, flying soldiers dressed in civilian clothes to the East at night. Then he postponed the Assembly, explaining that it could not meet until he could determine precisely how much power and autonomy Mujib wanted for the East. . . On March 25, Yahya broke off the meetings he had been holding and flew back to Islamabad. Five hours later, soldiers using howitzers, tanks and rockets launched attacks in half a dozen sections of Dacca. The war was on. Swiftly, Yahya outlawed the Awami League and ordered the Armed forces to do their duty' (Time, Aug. 2, 1971).

Newsweek of August 2, 1971 also gives the story in the following words:

"Weeks before the Yahya-Mujib meeting actually took place, the President and his right-hand man, Lt. Gen. Tikka Khan, were already mapping out plans for Mujib's arrest, the dissolution of the Awami League and the slaughter of Bengalee nationalists.

"Known as the 'bomber of Baluchistan' for his indiscriminate use of air and artillery strikes in crushing a local tribal revolt in 1965, Tikka Khan apparently persuaded Yahya to buy time for the Army to build up its strength in Bengal. Accordingly, Yahya made his bid for discussions with Mujib. And while the two leaders talked—and Bengalis as well as the world at large looked for a compromise that might save Pakistan—the Army pulled off a logistics coup. Flying the long over-water route around Southern India with Boeing 707s commandeered from Pakistan International Airways, the Army doubled its troop strength in Bengal to 60,000 men. When Tikka gave the word that all was ready, Yahya flew out of Dacca. And that very night, the bomber of Baluchistan unleashed his troops. . . Tanks crashed through the streets of East Pakistan Capital Dacca, blasting indiscriminately at men and buildings. With cold ferocity, Punjabi soldiers machine-gunned clusters of citizens while others set fire to slum hutches throughout the city. Soon, the city was littered with bodies and the campus of Dacca University—a hot head of secessionism' was a bloody shamble.

"Throughout the blood-drenched night and in the days and weeks that followed, the carnage continued. And the massacres were not limited to Dacca but were carried on throughout the country-side as well."

There is a clear method pursued by the Pakistan army in the act of their killing and destroying. They started by killing the Awami Leaguers and their supporters. They resorted to the ruthless slaughtering of the Hindus because they actively supported the Awami League in the elections. They caught and shot dead the Government officials because most of them responded to the call of the Bangabandhu for peaceful non-co-operation. They killed the students because without it the political future of Bangladesh cannot be effectively buried. They killed the teachers because it is they who create the future of a nation. They killed the children for, with them vanishes the future of any people. They subjected the women to prostitution to create a hybrid people. In fact, more than 15,000 virgin girls have been deported to West Pakistan, thousands of them have been forcibly married to the army jawans of West Pakistan, and a few thousands killed brutally after detention and continuous rape on them in the army camps and yet some others—a large number—have been sold like cattle to different parts of West Pakistan. The net-work thus planned covers the entire people of Bangladesh. The land and properties of those who have been killed and those who have fled the country are being quickly distributed among the collaborators of the army and the process is progressing still.

All precautions were taken by President Yahya Khan to prevent reports reaching the outside world about the barbarism that was being perpetrated in Bangladesh since the small hours of 26 March in the name of saving Islam and the integrity of Pakistan. 'Most foreign Journalists have been barred from East Pakistan and only those West Pakistani newsmen who might be expected to produce 'friendly' accounts have been invited to tour East Pakistan and tell their countrymen about the rebellion. In at least one instance, however, that policy backfired. Anthony Mascarenhas, a Karachi newsman who also writes in the London Sunday Times, was so horrified by the events he witnessed that he and his family left for London to publish the full story. Last week, in The Times Mascarenhas wrote that he was told repeatedly by Pakistani military and civil authorities in Dacca that the Government intends to cleanse East Pakistan once and for all of the threat of secession, even if it means killing of two million people. And the federal army is doing exactly that with a terrifying thoroughness' (Newsweek, June 28, 1971).

Two million people and more have long been killed but the killing is not yet over. One does not know when it will be over. The Statesman (Calcutta) of September 11, 1971 reported that 'about one thousand people were killed and many others injured during the last two days when

Pakistan army indiscriminately shelled six villages in the Quasba area in Comilla District. ...About six thousand men, women and children crossed over to Tripura last night from the Quasba area.'

The Sunday Times (20th June, 1971) describes how the weeding out of officers was done by a two-pronged attack. First came the screening of all public servants, teachers, writers, and journalists. Those considered by the army potentially dangerous were next eliminated. The officials were classified under three lists—white, grey, black. The white were given clearance, the grey lost their jobs or were detained in military custody and the black were shot dead. In the Gestapo fashion many officials called in the name of interrogation never returned. About one dozen Bengali Army officers who reported to Dacca airport on their way to Karachi under orders of transfer to West Pakistan have not been heard of since. When their relations enquired at the Army Headquarters, they were told that they had deserted.

In the towns and the villages the army requisitioned the healthy Bengali young men for extorting their blood for the Army Blood Bank and once the operation started it continued till life oozed out with the last drop of blood leaving a whitened and shruken corpse. It reminds one of Hitler's gas chambers. Churchill wrote on July 11, 1944 about the persecution of Jews in Hungary that it was probably the greatest and most horrible crime ever committed in the whole history of the world and that it had been done by scientific machinery by civilised men and in the name of a great state. He felt that all concerned in the crime including those who only obeyed orders by carrying out the butchery deserved to be put to death. Put the words 'Bengali' and 'Bangladesh' in places of 'Jews' and 'Hungary' and the cap will very much fit President Yahya and his assistants.

Entering Comilla, Noakhali, Faridpur, Serajganj, Rangpur and Kushtia the army shot out of hand local Magistrates and Police Superintendents. Abu Awal, S.D.O. of Bhola who had protected the non-Bengalis went to receive the incoming army in May. He was asked to resume his post. He had hardly turned his back when he was shot dead by a sepoy.

In Jessore the Pak soldiers surrounded the house of Mr. Mashiur Rahman, an Awami League MNA and an ex-central Minister. A boy of ten years jumped through the window of the first floor and was shot dead in mid-air. On May 15 a large number of E.P.R. men surrendered at Dacca and were driven away in open trucks, blind-folded, and their hands tied behind the back. A few days later hundreds of naked corpses were found floating down the Buriganga and the Shitalakshya with eyes

covered and hands tied. Out of a number of eye-witness accounts of Comilla incidents one stands out as illustrating the casual brutality of the primitive type. A teen-ager boy climbed a tree to get coconuts because food was scarce. Before he could get down, the curfew hour arrived. He was getting down. The soldiers humorously drew lots as to who was to shoot him. One raised his rifle and fired. With a bullet in his back the boy fell twenty feet on the concrete pavement (Weekly Guardian, 3 July, 1971).

The army, guided by an informer arrived by boats and road in village Induri a few miles from Dacca but most of its 700 or so inhabitants had heard the alarm and fled. Not all were so lucky. Radha Benode Karmaker, a goldsmith and seven other men and one old woman were shot down and four girls were raped before the soldiers systematically destroyed every dwelling house and sacked a Hindu temple (The Times, 1 July, 1971).

The army put to fire the dwelling house of the Bangabandhu in his native village in Gopalgonj, Faridpur district. His aged parents, too old to move out to seek shelter elsewhere, were found present. They were insulted in the filthiest language. But that was not all, the young maid-servant was dragged out of the kitchen and raped by the soldiers under open sky with a vengeance in the presence of these two most respected people. It was worse than death for them.

A Pakistan army officer said to an American Engineer who was later interviewed by one of the biggest T.V. Companies of the United States: "When this is over, no Bengali will drive a car—only foreigners and West Pakistanis, and then they have this club—Chittagong Club. No dogs or Bengalis will be allowed into the club." Giving his eye-witness account the Engineer said: At the Police Lines there was some resistance. They lined-up the survivors against the wall and shot them and fed the dogs, 'because the dogs had not eaten for a month', the Major had told him. The Major had also told the Engineer: 'I am going to have a Bengali mistress in Chittagong. And I want my troops to have one each.' The famous Bombay Weekly, Blitz published a letter of one Mr. Sanders and below is the summary of the eye-witness account given by the gentleman—a British businessman who left Bangladesh on April 2, 1971 en route to the UK:

"It was around 5 p.m. when about 350 to 400 Pakistani troops attacked the Rockey Hall (Rokeya Hall). They entered all the rooms lodging the girls and dragged them out, tearing their clothing one by one as they were being pulled and manhandled. There was panic and shrieks to be heard.

Sharis, skirts, salwars were ripped open and flung aside. Next blouses, kameezes and brassiers were torn off and the girls were physically lifted off by their breasts or hair—some held upside down. The girls cried, shrieked and struggled but the beastly soldiers went on raping. . . . It was at this juncture that 50 brave girls jumped to their death from the Hall instead of falling in to the hands of the barbarians. . . . The worst came when some of the soldiers resorted to sodomy with the grown-up girls. They simply swooned due to pain. Most of them were bleeding profusely. Still the devils did not leave them. The assault upon the Hall happens to be one of a dozen similar brutalities known to have been committed on women and the children by the Pakistani troops in Dacca.' (Ref. Bangladesh—Birth of a Nation, pages 121-140, of Mr. Yatindra Bhatnagar)

It is a mockery indeed that President Yahya Khan claims Bangladesh as a part of his 'Pakistan' and yet prides on the killing of the innocent and unarmed civilian population of Bangladesh. It is a mockery, again, that President Yahya also uses the name of Islam to justify his act of liquidation of a whole people with the utmost savagery. Islam enjoins liberal and generous treatment to the people of other faiths and guarantees safety and security to their lives and property and their places of worship. These principles of Islam have been trampled under foot by Yahya's forces. Muslims and their mosques, the Christians and their churches, the Hindus and their temples and the Budhists and their Viharas—all fell equal prey to the atrocities of the Pak army for the common 'sin' of belonging to Bangladesh. Thousands of Budhists who have crossed over into India for fear of life and honour from Chittagong, Khulna and Dinajpur gave the story that the Viharas of Sasan, Dinajpur and Lumbini in the Chittagong District have been destroyed and another, Sudarshana Vihara in the same district has been looted and desecrated. The ninety-year old political leader of Bangladesh, Maulana Bhasani in his address to the people of the world was constrained to say: "Yahya who is a Muslim himself, in the name of religion, is mercilessly killing lacs of Muslims, Hindus, Christians and Budhists. His soldiers, who say they are Muslims, are raping women. . . . Though Muslims themselves, they are destroying mosques, they killed Muslims who were offering prayers. What will the Muslim world do about this ? Will they support the un-Islamic, anti-humanity, abominable policy of Yahya ? Or will they support the cause of truth, justice and love as preached by Islam ?" The Maulana posed the question to the Muslim world.

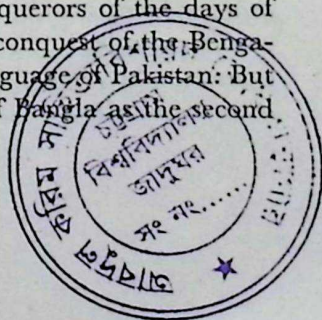
The British newspaper 'Observer' rightly said: 'Make no mistake about it. Pakistan is not putting down a political party advocating cessa-

tion. It is subjugating a whole people who are demanding no more than that they rule themselves.'

And the mockery of all mockeries is that President Yahya literally presiding over the liquidation of the destruction of Pakistan—already a foregone conclusion—still goes on saying that he does not like to be known as the destroyer of Pakistan. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman wanted to ensure a sound and solid foundation for Pakistan by giving the maximum of autonomy to the provinces on the basis of the six-point programme and removing thereby all growing causes of discontent and resentment between the different regions and putting an end to the exploitation of the have-nots by the Punjabi vested interests. But the idea was too much for President Yahya and his fellow generals to face and so he resorted to his act of silencing the voice of the people by guns. The attempt has borne its natural fruit. It does not become him now any more to lay any claim to the preservation of Pakistan as it was. 'You cannot eat the cake and have it too' is true not only of men but of monsters also.

War has its rules and biological and chemical warfare has its international convention. The World Press cited an example to show how these rules and conventions have been deliberately violated by Pakistan in their offensive in Bangladesh. In the name of inoculating people, specially children the Pakistani Army doctors are practising the dirtiest fraud and barbarity. Authoritative sources confirmed that the injections have severe effect on those injected. The children are becoming idiots and the grown-ups impotent. The report also said that young intellectuals are being forcibly sterilised in army hospitals.

Since cultural death always has its part in the ultimate liquidation of a people the Punjabis started imposing their culture on Bangladesh ever since the emergence of Pakistan on the map of the world on the basis of a forced so-called wedding between the East and West regions. In fact, nothing but Islam ever existed as the common bond between them and history has shown time and again that nothing but national interests, not even religion, can bind together people with distinct national existence. The people of Bangladesh, geographically separated by 1,100 miles of Indian territory, having Bengalee as their language as against Urdu in West Pakistan, having a different economy and distinct culture have always felt that they are a different nation even if they had accepted Pakistan for political reasons. The Punjabi rulers, like the conquerors of the days of feudalism, made their first experiment at cultural conquest of the Bengalees in 1952 by imposing Urdu as the only state language of Pakistan. But this was resisted by the Bengalees and the place of Bangla as the second



state language was secured by the blood of the youth of Bangladesh. To-day attempts are again being made to play the old game of imposing the Punjabi culture on the people of Bangladesh and this time it is being done on threat of dire consequences in the hands of the martial law authorities of Pakistan. The road and street names, the Railway station signboards and the number plates of the public and private transports which were in Bengali have since been rewritten in Urdu. The shopkeepers and the hotel and restaurant owners have been compelled at gun point to put up Urdu signboards and play Urdu songs on the radios and gramophones. 'New Pakistan has emerged, wipe out Bengali language and speak in Urdu'—the army officers and the sepoys are insisting with guns in hand. The terrorised Bengalees, both men and women, are being forced to discard their traditional dress and take to salwar and kameez.

Who will hesitate to call all these happenings in Bangladesh genocide ? What the conservative British weekly, *The Spectator* (19 June, 1971) says in this connexion is worth considering: "There is no reason to refrain from declaring on evidence which is brave and strong that the Government and the army of Pakistan, which is to say the establishment of West Pakistan, is and has been for some weeks engaged upon the most extensive and barbarous exercise of genocide that the world has known about since the end of the Second World War....

"If what is now happening in East Pakistan were happening anywhere in the world outside Asia, not only the demonstration but the Governments of the rest of the world would literally be up in arms to prevent it. We in this country like to think that among the reasons why we fought the Germans in the last War was to rid the world of Hitler and his gang and their genocidal 'final solution'. It is easier to imagine Germany's gas chambers than Pakistan's choleric slaughter in the Bengal plains; but it remains the case and it ought to be declared that the Pakistan crime now matches the Hitlerian in dimension and horror and threatens monstrously to exceed it. Difficult and unpleasant though it may be, each one of us ought to endeavour to imagine the enormity of Pakistan's crime.

"It is not likely that a general declaration of war upon West Pakistan would lessen the bloodshed, otherwise such might be the proper course to advocate. It is or should be quite clear that every course short of war, ought now to be taken against the Commonwealth Republic of Pakistan in order to bring it to its senses and to bring it to its knees.... Pakistan, under its present rule, is not fit to be a member of the Commonwealth. It is not even fit to be a member of the United Nations. It is not fit to receive aid of any kind whatever. It is not a fit state with which to exchange Embassies

or High Commissions. West Pakistan is not fit to rule East Pakistan. The eventual independence of East Pakistan ought clearly to be recognized by the world at large...and the genocidal regime utterly removed from power."

What the Spectator has observed above has also found expression with many right thinking groups and individuals. Two hundred M.P.s in England, including eleven Privy Councillors and thirty former Ministers sponsored a resolution categorically saying that 'the widespread murder of civilians and the atrocities on a massive scale by the Pakistan army in East Bengal' was contrary to the U.N. convention on genocide in which Pakistan was a signatory and that 'the military Government of Pakistan has forfeited all rights to rule East Bengal'. The resolution called upon the U.N. Security Council urgently to consider the situation both as a threat to international peace and as a contravention of the genocide convention. The resolution was published in The Times (30 June, 1971).

If the United Nations is to survive as anything more than an international debating society, it must immediately take cognizance of the tragic happenings inside Bangladesh. The dead and the dying, the women sold into slavery and the orphans lost in the wilderness of unsympathetic crowd cannot be treated as a mere mistake on the part of the Army junta of Pakistan. The responsibility for this must be placed squarely on those who had planned the genocide, the like of which the world has never seen. We believe that the United Nations must prove what it claims to be—the keeper of world conscience and the only organization which can ensure the Rule of Law for the human race as a whole. If the people of Bangladesh are to be treated merely as pawns on the chessboard of international power game so that they may be sacrificed at will, the United Nations will miserably fail in its duty as the upholder of the rights and dignity of mankind. It will then be guilty of giving indulgence to the dictators and the autocrats to go ahead in total disregard of anything that stands for the human values and civilised conduct. We hope that the United Nations will never condone the terrible tragedy which has been enacted by President Yaha's forces by calling it an 'internal affair' of Pakistan. If the officials of the United Nations have any doubt about the nature of the crime committed in the name of Islam and national integrity, they should send a body of international jurists to Bangladesh to collect available evidence. They should also arrange to give safe conduct to all those who are still alive to give evidence before such a commission.

