

1947 to 1971

Collected by

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1948 March 21: The founder of Pakistan,

Mohammad Ali Jinnah declared in a civic reception in Dhaka

that “Urdu and only Urdu will remain as the state language of Pakistan”.

The students of Dhaka University

instantly protested this declaration in front of Jinnah.

1952 February 21: Language Movement –

International Mother Language Day.

Pakistan

government forcibly tried to stop the demand of the Bengali people to establish

“Bangla” as one of the state’s language of Pakistan.

As a result, some protesters had been killed, huge number of people took the

streets to protests unanimously and thus “seeds of Bangladeshi nationalism” was

sown during that movement.

1954 March: The United Front of Awami

League and the Krishak Sramik Party won the most of the seats in the East

Bengal Legislative Assembly. Sheikh Mujib was elected in this assembly and serving briefly as the minister for agriculture. Muslim League got only 9 seats out of 310.

1954 May 30: The Bengali dominated United Front Government had been deposed by the Governor General of Pakistan,

Ghulam Mohammad. The Governor General imposed his direct rule in East

Pakistan.**1955 October 14:** The 'East Bengal' been

renamed as 'East Pakistan'. The 'West Pakistan Bill' had

been passed and according to this bill, the provinces of the west wing, the Punjab,

Baluchistan, Sindh and North Western Frontier of

Pakistan (NWFP) were regrouped into one unit called 'West Pakistan'.**1956 February 29:** A constitution had been adopted to make Pakistan

as an 'Islamic Republic'; "Bengali" became a state language along with "Urdu".

Awami League leaders demanded that the subject of provincial autonomy would be

included in the draft constitution of Pakistan.**1956 September:** The seasoned politician of East

Pakistan, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy replaced Chaudhry Mohammad Ali

as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman joined the coalition

government as the Minister of Industries, Commerce, Labor, Anti-corruption and

Village-Aid.**1957 March:** Governor General Gurmani declared Presidential

rule in the West Pakistan.

1957 October: After losing support in the

National Assembly, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy was forced to resign; Chundrigar

became the new Prime Minister of Pakistan.**1957 December:** Malik Feroz Khan Noon became the Prime Minister

by replacing Chundrigar. **1958 September:** Shahid Ali, Deputy Speaker of East Pakistan Assembly succumbed to death from the injuries which he received 2 days ago from the disorder inside the assembly.

1958 October 7: Field Marshal Ayub Khan

captured the power, sent President Iskander Mirza in exile and abrogated the constitution of Pakistan.

Ayub Khan declared his cabinet, in which he included 3 military officials, including Lt. General Azam Khan and eight civilians including Zulfikar Ali Bhutto from Sindh.

All political parties and their activities had been banned, meetings and demonstrations became forbidden. Popular politicians were either imprisoned — including Sheikh Mujib, Maulana Bhashani of East Pakistan, and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan (NWFP) — or their activities were restricted. Sheikh

Mujib had been continuously harassed through one false case after another. **1959 October:** President Ayub Khan promulgated an ordinance for

setting up “Basic Democracies” in Pakistan

to confine the state power permanently in the hands of the Army and the West

Pakistan’s establishment. **1960 February:** Ayub Khan was elected as President for a

five-year term by his so called 80,000 elected ‘Basic Democrats’ (BD). **1960 April:** Lt. General Azam Khan had been appointed as

governor of East Pakistan.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman **1962 February:** Sheikh Mujib had been arrested again under the

Public Security Act. **1962 June:** Ayub Khan lifted the martial law. The BDs elected

the National Assembly according to Ayub Khan’s directives. He lifted the ban

from political parties, Sheikh Mujib was freed. Pakistan Muslim League had been split in to two groups – Council and Convention. Ayub Khan backed the Convention Muslim League. **1964:** Combined Opposition Parties (COP) of Pakistan had been formed and nominated Miss Fatima Jinnah (sister of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, popularly called her “the Mother of the Nation”) as the candidate in Presidential Election against Ayub Khan for the forthcoming election of January 1965. COP raised their 9 points demands including ‘restoration of direct elections’, ‘adult franchise’, ‘democratization the Constitution of 1962’. **1965:** Sheikh Mujib had been charged by the government with sedition and making objectionable statements, he got one year jail term by the court, he was released later on an order of the High Court.

1965 January: Ayub Khan became the President again for the second term by defeating Fatima Jinnah. By observing the election system under ‘Basic Democracy’, Miss Jinnah told: “The system under which these elections were fought was initially devised to perpetuate the... incumbent of the Presidential Office. Neither does it provide room for the free expression of the popular will, nor does it conform to the known and established principles of democracy in the civilized world... There is no doubt that the elections have been rigged” (Genocide Bangladesh). **1965 August-September:** India-Pakistan fought the 2nd war over the border issue of Kashmir. But firstly it was the hidden conflict and the Pakistan authority hid away it from the people. In September, Ayub Khan revealed it publicly by declaring that, “We are at war”. **1965 December:** Ayub Khan offered Nurul Amin to be the Vice

President of Pakistan. Nurul Amin then raised the demands to form regional autonomy for East Pakistan, extended franchise, and to end the disparity between 2 provinces, including fair shares of foreign exchange. **1966 February:** Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was elected the party President. The Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Mujib, formulated the “Six Points” demand (please see below too) in front of the people. **1966 March 23:** 6-Point Formula – Bengalis’ Right to Live by

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman:

“I know of no nobler battle than to fight for the rights of the exploited millions. We believe that this feeling of absolute equality, sense of inter-wing justice and impar-tiality is the very basis of Pakistani patriotism.

Only he is fit to be a leader of Pakistan

who is imbued with and consumed by such patriotism, a leader who zealously holds that anyone who deliberately or knowingly weakens any limb of Pakistan is an enemy of the country.” (GenocideBangladesh).

The Awami League demanded that changes would be made in regard to East Pakistan. These changes were embodied in Mujib's Six Points Plan, which he presented at a meeting of opposition parties in Lahore in 1966. Those **Six Points** were as below (source:

wikipedia.org):

1. The constitution should provide for a Federation of Pakistan in its true sense based on the Lahore Resolution and the parliamentary form of government with supremacy of a Legislature directly elected on the basis of universal adult franchise.
2. The federal government should deal with only two subjects: Defence and

Foreign Affairs, and all other residual subjects should be vested in the federating states.

3. Two separate, but freely convertible currencies for two wings should be introduced; or if this is not feasible, there should be one currency for the whole country, but effective constitutional provisions should be introduced to stop the flight of capital from East to West Pakistan.

Furthermore, a separate Banking Reserve should be established and separate fiscal and monetary policy be adopted for East Pakistan.

4. The power of taxation and revenue collection should be vested in the federating units and the federal centre would have no such power. The federation would be entitled to a share in the state taxes to meet its expenditures.

5. There should be two separate accounts for the foreign exchange earnings of the two wings; the foreign exchange requirements of the federal government should be met by the two wings equally or in a ratio to be fixed; indigenous products should move free of duty between the two wings, and the constitution should empower the units to establish trade links with foreign countries.

6. East Pakistan should have a separate militia or paramilitary force.

These 6-points program was for the greater autonomy of East Pakistan and would reduce the supremacy of West Pakistanis over the East Pakistan. But West Pakistanis, specifically saying, the then military regime and the establishment of West Pakistan, meant those 6-points program as the declaration of de facto independence for East Pakistan and took

drastic reaction to it.

Many observers saw the point# 6, regarding a separate militia, as the point of most unacceptable to the central government, but they were not correct. The Indo-Pakistan War of 1965 had demonstrated the lack of local defense forces in East Pakistan, which left the province defenseless and in-secured, would make East Pakistan as an easy prey of Indian attack.

In fact, it was point# 4, regarding taxation, that proved to be the problem, because the enactment of this point would make it all but impossible for a central government to operate. **1966 March 24:** President Ayub Khan burst out on those ‘six points demands’, they believed them as secessionist demands – the West Pakistani establishment and their military regime could not receive those as the demands of justice and honor of the East Pakistanis. Rather they evaluated it as the conspiracy of India

and the Hindus of East Pakistan. Ayub Khan termed it as the below:

"His attacks on the Opposition became more 'virulent' and he referred openly to the possibility of Pakistan breaking apart. The Awami League, he claimed, nurtured the “horrid dream” of a greater sovereign Bengal. It could only spell disaster for the country, the people of East Pakistan would be turned into slaves, and he reminded them how they had been dominated by Hindus during British days. Islamic countries flourished in history at times when a strong central authority existed and fell into decadence at times of weak central authority.

He said that the Nation should be prepared to face even a civil war if thrust upon it 'by disruptionists'. The Government would not tolerate any attempt to tamper with the unity and solidarity of the Nation and expressed his concern at the activities of Opposition parties. If necessary, we would have to use 'the language of weapons'." (GenocideBangladesh).

But the East Pakistanis could not receive his talk of resorting to weapons and civil war, they judged it badly and almost all East Pakistanis resented his talks.

GOP (Government of Pakistan) lost its patience with Mujibur Rahman. GOP arrested him on 18 April, released on bail, re-arrested on another charge and finally again released on bail

1966 April 28: The left wing National Awami

Party (NAP – Bhasani) gave considerable support, they admitted that Sheikh

Mujib's Six Points Program for further autonomy for East Pakistan.**1967 December:** The allegation of abortive coup-assassination

plot against Ayub Khan.

The Ayub government invented a strange allegation against a comparatively small number of Bengali civil servants, ex-military officers, military officers and politicians, who jointly planned to assassinate President Ayub Khan during his recent visit to East Pakistan. Not only that they also demanded that after the assassination, they would depose the Government with a coup d'etat aimed at establishing an independent state in East Pakistan. According to their invention, they foiled the conspiracy

and subsequently arrested between 50 and 60 Bengalis. **1968 January:** Sheikh Mujibur Rahman arrested again on the

charge of the Agartala Conspiracy Case.

1968 August: The trial of the alleged

Conspirators in East Pakistan ruined the image of the

GOP. The GOP produced the accused 36 politicians, Bengali CSP Officers, army /

ex-army Offices in the Trial, but it became farce when the prosecution witness broke

down in the court and asserted that he had been tortured and threatened with

death by military officers who wished him to testify falsely against the

alleged conspirators. **1968 November:** The economic report which published in that

time exposed the disparity between two provinces that widens, not lessen. So,

the “Six Points” demands of AL

got deep rooted status among the East Pakistanis again. **1969 January - February:** In the whole Pakistan,

violence had been broken out between people demonstrating against Ayub Khan’s

martial law regime and the police.

To restoring peace, the ‘Agartala Conspiracy Case’ had been dismissed and

Sheikh Mujib had been released by the GOP.

In Dhaka, police opened fire on a procession against the

rule of Ayub Khan, Asad (a student leader) and a high-school student Matiur

Rahman had been killed. It created resentments among the Bengali, gave rise to

the Mass Uprising of 1969 (gono-abhyuththaan) in East Pakistan. **1969 February 15:** The Army killed Sergeant Zahurul Haq, one of

the 35 accused in the Agartala Conspiracy Case, while he was in the military

custody at the Dhaka Cantonment. This incident ignited in the mass uprising in East

Pakistan too.**1969 February 20:** According to the CIA's report, the popularity of Ayub Khan was almost 'zero'. His political party, the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) - never became an effective organization, it appeared to have the virtually collapsed and they (CIA) started to believe that Pakistan stood on the brink.**1969 March 13:** Sheikh Mujib raised his demands again to establish the full regional Autonomy in the round table conference to make the Federation successful in the East Pakistan.

1969 March 25: General Yahya Khan captured the power by a hidden coup d'état in which Yahya forced Ayub Khan to hand over his powers and resign. **1969 March 31:** General Yahya Khan immediately imposed the martial law in Pakistan.

On the 31st of March, he declared himself as the President of Pakistan.**1969 April 11:** Roy Fox's talked with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on

the issue of autonomy of East Pakistan. Mujib urged to realize the demand of the Bengali by the West Pakistani establishment and military regime to make the justifications between the two wings. He insisted that he would still want to stay in one Pakistan, but the West Pakistani establishment and military regime could not realize it.

Even they tried to spoil the situation by making false propaganda against the

Bengali leaders of East Pakistan.**1969 November 7:** The Bengali accused the GOP that it did do nothing

to try to narrow the disparity between the two provinces, which were increasingly countered by privately expressed West Pakistan views that the deficiencies on the East Pakistani side played the greater role in hampering

development -the chronically unfavorable weather, inefficiencies in the public sector, absence of an adequate entrepreneurial class, lack of investors interest, etc. Thus, the resentment of the Bengalis over allegedly insufficient GOP interest clashed with West Pakistan feelings that Bengali demands were unreasonable.**1969 November 28:** Yahya declared through his address to the nation that general election would be held in 1970.**1969 December 5:** At a discussion meeting, Sheikh Mujib declared that from now on the East Pakistan would be called Bangla Desh. He added:

“There was a time when all efforts were made to erase the word ‘Bangla’ from this land and its map. The existence of the word ‘Bangla’ was found nowhere except in the term ‘Bay of Bengal’. I, on behalf of Pakistan, announce today that this land will be called ‘Bangla Desh’ instead of ‘East Pakistan’.” (GenocideBangladesh).**1969 December 8:** From every corner of the East Pakistan, Sheikh Mujib’s demand to rename East Wing as Bangla Desh had been hailed. Among them, Chief of NAP, Maulana Abdul hamid Khan Bhasani supported this demand as genuine. He termed that the name of East Pakistan was forcibly imposed on the Bengali nation.**1970 December 7:** Awami League won the election, PPP refused to allow Sheikh Mujib as Prime Minister.

In 1970 the Awami League, the largest East Pakistani political party, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won a landslide victory in the national elections. The party won 167 out of the 169 seats allotted to East Pakistan, and thus a majority of the 313 seats in the National Assembly. This gave the Awami League the constitutional right to form a government.

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1971 February 24: Sheikh Mujib announced

that there was a conspiracy to undermine the election results and the

establishment of Pakistan

would not let to form the government according to the election result. **1971 February 26:** Yahya held a secret meeting with Bhutto,

leader of the Pakistan

People's Party. **1971 February 28:** Bhutto urged that the National Assembly session should be postponed. He said that the people of West Pakistan voted against the 6-points of Awami League.

1971 March 1: GOP announced the

postponement of the session of the National Assembly, which would be seated on 3rd March. After that announcement, hundreds of thousands of the enraged people of East Pakistan took the street. Sheikh Mujib told in a press conference that it was not democracy but dictatorship. He called general strikes on 2nd March in Dhaka and all over the country on 3rd March.

All radical student leaders of East Pakistan started to believe to have the independence with the armed revolution. They, for the first time, demanded the independence of Bangladesh immediately. The Bengali heard the slogans demanding independence for Bangladesh for the first time in Bengali history: "Courageous Bengali, take up arms and free Bangladesh".

The Governor of East Pakistan, Admiral S.M. Ahsan had been replaced by General Sahibzada Yakoob Khan because he refused to open fire on the Bengalis if they went on strike. **1971 March 2:** Curfew had been imposed in Dhaka from 8 am to 7 pm. The indomitable Bengalis took to the streets instead of the curfew, in which many of them were gunned down by the Pakistani army.

The Bengalis reacted severely against this shooting, Mujib denounced the firing

on unarmed men and declared 4 days' hartal (general strike) from 6 am – 2 pm of each day from 3rd March to 6th March, 1971 in all spheres.

After a massive rally under the leadership of ASM Abdur Rab (Vp of the student government), Shahjahan Siraj (GS of the student government), Nur-e-Alam

Siddiqui and Abdul Kuddus Makhan, the Central Students Action Committee in

Dhaka University, raised the 'Flag of independent Bangladesh' at the historic

Bat-tala of Dhaka University for the first time in Bengali history. **1971 March 3:** Despite the declaration to start the arms

revolution in East Pakistan by the students unit in Dhaka, Sheikh Mujib called

for a "non-violent non-cooperation movement" instead. Mujib demanded in a

meeting, "Withdraw forces, transfer power".

The curfew imposed in the main cities of East Pakistan,

angry mob burned Pakistani flag in many areas in the province to show the deep

resentment to the West Pakistani establishment and their brutal military

regime. During 1-3 March 1971, the Pakistani brutal army killed more than 300

agitators in different cities and towns of East Pakistan.

Under the posture for negotiations with Sheikh Mujib, the non-Bengali regiments

of soldiers had been secretly flown into Dhaka from West

Pakistan.

Sheikh Mujib rejected the invitation of President Yahya Khan to attend the

proposed meeting of the leaders of all the parliamentary groups in the national

assembly on March 10, instead he reiterated his previous demand to hand over

the power to the elected government. **1971 March 6:** After the resignation of Shahibzada Yakub Khan, President

Yahya Khan appointed Tikka Khan as the Governor of East Pakistan. He also

announced that the Assembly session would be held on 23rd of March.

1971 March 7: In a massive rally at Race

Course Maidan in Dhaka, Sheikh Mujib announced his decision to participate in the National Assembly session, but he raised his 4-point demands to fulfill before the session. Those are as below: (Genocidebangladesh.org)

- 1) Withdrawal of the martial law
- 2) Return of the troops back to their barracks
- 3) Power handed back to the elected people's representatives, and
- 4) Proper investigation into the killings of unarmed civilians.

In that historic rally, he actually declared the "Independence of Bangladesh" informally, by pronouncing like this:

"Our Struggle this time is a struggle for

FREEDOM, our struggle this time is a struggle for INDEPENDENCE. Joy Bangla."

He also urged the people to be ready to fight. He also asked that every house would be a fort and would attack the enemy wherever they could.

Actually from 1st March 1971,

the civil administration, Banks, Industrial activities, etc. of East

Pakistan had been operated according to Mujib's directives. **1971 March 15-24:** During this time, the GOP was showing the

world that they tried to solve the problem by discussing with Sheikh Mujib in East

Pakistan. But they pretended to do so, they actually piled their

strength by intruding the troops into Dhaka from the West

Pakistan to crush the Bengali and their “Nationalism”. At this stage, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was participating in the Drama of GOP.

At the meeting on 24th March, Sheikh Mujib warned Yahya and Bhutto against any bid to impose decision on the Bengali.

“Whatever conspiracy you indulge in you will not succeed in suppressing the demands of the people. We would not bow our heads to any force. We will free the people of Bangla Desh.”

General Secretary of East Pakistan Awami League, Mr.

Tajuddin Ahmed urged the people to be vigilant and to be ready to make any sacrifice to defeat the conspiracy of anti-people forces.

1971 March 25: Pak army crackdown on the civilians in Dhaka

to stop the Bengalis forever. They named their “Dirty War” against the legal demand of Bengalis as “Operation Searchlight”. Thus their systematic slaughtering and ethnic cleansing had been started at that night and continued up to their surrender on 16th

December, 1971 and the whole world could observe that brutality of Pakistan’s hyena-army.

Declaration of Independence:

After the brutal military crackdown of the Pakistan Army in the early hours of March 26, 1971, Bangabandhu Sheikh

Mujibur Rahman was arrested and the political leaders of Awami League either

went into hiding or fleeing to neighboring India, where they organized a provisional government afterwards. Before being held up by the Pakistani Army Sheikh Mujibur Rahman gave a hand note of the declaration of the independence of Bangladesh to his fellow leaders and it was circulated amongst people and transmitted by the East Pakistan Rifles' wireless transmitter in the early hours of 26th March 1971. The then Secretary (Labor) of the Awami League, Mr. Zahur Hossain Chowdhury took the initiative to transmit that declaration throughout the country by the wireless system of Chittagong EPR Headquarters.

On the same day (26th March 1971), the General Secretary of Chittagong Awami League, Mr. M. A. Hannan read that declaration of the independence of Bangladesh (in Bengali) from the Kalurghat Radio Station, Chittagong twice at 2.10 pm and 2.30 pm.

Afterwards from that Kalurghat Radio Station, the Bengali Army Major, Zia-Ur-Rahman read that declaration of independence of Bangladesh in English on 27th March 1971 on behalf of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

The Provisional Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh was formed in Meherpur, (later renamed as Mujibnagar a place adjacent to the Indian border). Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was announced to be the head of the state. Tajuddin Ahmed became the prime minister of the government. There the war plan was sketched with armed forces established named "Muktibahini" (freedom

fighters). M. A. G. Osmani was assigned as the Chief of the force. The whole land divided into 11 sectors under 11 sector commanders. Along with these sectors, on the later part of the war, 3 special-forces were formed namely K Force, S Force and Z Force. These three forces name were derived from the initial letter of the commandar's name. The training and most of the arms and ammunitions were arranged by the Meherpur government (later it was called as Mujib Nagar Government) which was supported by India.

As fighting grew between the Pakistan Army and the Bengali Mukti Bahini, an estimated ten million Bengalis, mainly Hindus, sought refuge in the Indian states of Assam,

Meghalaya, Tripura and West Bengal. The crisis in the East Pakistan produced new strains in Pakistan's troubled relations with India.

The two nations already had fought two wars in 1948 and 1965 over the Kashmir issue, mainly in the west, but the pressure of millions of refugees escaping into India in autumn of 1971 as well as Pakistani aggression reignited hostilities with Pakistan. Indian sympathies lay with East Pakistan during that time, and Pakistan could not tolerate it.

In the evening of 3rd December 1971,

Pakistan Ari Force started their pre-emptive strikes on the 11 forward air bases and radar installations of Indian Air Force of its western border under the code name “Chengiz Khan”. After that attack, India

formally intervened on the side of the Bangladeshis on 4th December 1971 ([Wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org)). Within 13 days,

Pakistan army

had been defeated on the both sides of Indian borders. In Bangladesh

front Pakistan

army surrendered on 16th December,

1971; and the nation of Bangla Desh ("Country of Bengal")

was finally established on the following day. The new country changed its name

to Bangladesh

on January 11, 1972 and

became a parliamentary democratic country (Peoples' Republic) under its

constitution. Shortly thereafter on March 19 Bangladesh

signed a friendship treaty with India.