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### **TOPIC**

## **Separation of East Pakistan in the context of Modern History of Islamic Republic of Pakistan (1969-71)**

### **AUTHORS**

1. Shazia jaffar, Assistant Professor, Pakistan Study Center, university of Balochistan, Quetta, Pakistan. Email: [shazia.jaffar@yahoo.com](mailto:shazia.jaffar@yahoo.com)

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## Separation of East Pakistan in the context of Modern History of Islamic Republic of Pakistan (1969-71)

<sup>1</sup> Shazia Jaffar

### ABSTRACT:

The present research sought to determine the "Separation of East Pakistan in the Context of Modern History of Pakistan" (1969-71). Historical research was conducted, along with the qualitative study design and secondary data used to achieve the study's objectives. The findings revealed that, since its inception, Pakistan has faced Socio-political, geographical and Economic uncertainty. East Pakistan, as a constituent part of Pakistan was deprived of its legal rights. In fact, eastern wing was separated from the west Pakistan due to numerous causes, which are called responsible segregating and unstable relationship between these two states. Hence, based on the outcomes of this study, the following recommendations are suggested. The present research opens up new avenues for researchers and historians to explore the historical prospect of the separation the Eastern wing from the West Pakistan, major factors of separation of east Pakistan, Indian involvement in eastern part and establishment of independent state of Bangladesh.

**Keywords:** Pakistan, Eastern wing, Awami League, sheikh Mujib, Interference, separation, Bangladesh, India.

### Research Questions

1. What were the causes of East Pakistan separation?
2. What role significantly played by the stakeholder of the state in the partition of Pakistan?

### Research Methodology

Under the pressure of public perception, Ayub Khan relinquished from president ship and transfer powers to General Yahya Khan on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1969, commander-in-chief of the military. Yahya Khan assumed the office of president and Chief of Martial-Law Administrator of Pakistan. Yahya Khan abrogated the 1962 constitution, banned entire administrative actions, dissolved the Assemblies both (National and Provincial), dismissed the federal as well as provincial cabinets and declared Military rule in the State. Yahya assumed the supreme command of the Army on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1969, as well as deduced himself being the Head of the State. Yahya Khan addressed the people desired, his exclusive aim protecting the all spheres of the State, pulling the State back to stability as well as putting the organization back on the tracks. Different books and articles examined to get questions answered. Qualitative study design with the combination of analytical type of research is used in this research paper.

### Literature Review

<sup>1</sup>The Pakistan Freedom Movement stood as a beacon of Islam, with its underlying principles based on solidarity, faith, unity and discipline. In this same vein, the Muslim League was established in 1906. The prominent leadership of the All-India Muslim League highlighted the word 'Pakistan' and associated it with a 'New Medina

state' for all Indian Muslims. Maulana Mohani arranged a meeting to identify the distinct circumstances of Muslims and Hindus. Rehmat Ali then built on the idea, showing extraordinary astuteness by implementing substantial measures as part of a plan that would ultimately lead to the formation of Pakistan.

<sup>2</sup>It was Allama Mohammad Iqbal who made the most remarkable commitment. The belief system he proposed originated from a clear articulation of his faith based on metaphysical, pedantic and beautiful work. Mr. Jinnah proclaimed the distinguished piece of land for Muslims and put forward his idea of creating a separate nation for the Muslims. The belief system was created from the desire to be Pakistani Muslims. There, the tradition, culture and religion would be ultimately different compared to Hindu society. The Hindus and Muslims were distinct nations in term of religions. The Muslims requested that territories in which they were in the majority ought to be made into an independent state, wherein the Muslims could live their lives as per the teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) Sunnah and of the Holy Quran.

### **Introduction**

In 1969, a mass movement combining a mixture of a class and regional discontents succeeded in destabilizing Ayub's regime. The movement was spearheaded by the People's party in the west Pakistan and Awami League in East Pakistan, and both the political parties tried to revolt against the dictator Ayub Khan. The basic target of the mass protest was wrong economic policies, presidential constitution, one unit and bureaucracy. The economic planning of Ayub Khan had caused great unrest and resentment because of planning wealth and economic strength had accumulated in a few hands. The incomes had not increased with the ratio of price increase. On political front demand was being raised for abrogation of constitution 1962 and restoration of parliamentary system of government. The smaller provinces were also demanding for abolishing the one unit. All these factors created political crisis in the country.

Under the emphasis of public perspective, Ayub Khan resigned from president ship and transfer powers to General Yahya Khan on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1969, commander-in-chief of the military. Yahya Khan assumed the office of president and Chief of Martial-Law Administrator of Pakistan. Yahya Khan abrogated the 1962 constitution, banned entire administrative actions, dissolved the Assemblies both (National and Provincial) dismissed the federal as well as provincial cabinets and declared Military rule in the State. Yahya assumed the supreme command of the Army on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1969, as well as deduced himself being the Head of the State. Yahya Khan addressed the people desired, his exclusive aim protecting the all spheres of the State, pulling the State back to stability as well as putting the organization back on the tracks.

Yahya Khan sustained to his promise of holding free and fair elections which have held in 1970, but unfortunately, instead of paving the way for the smooth transfer of power, these elections first and, last in the undivided Pakistan, sowed the seeds of country's disintegration to give way to the establishment of Bangladesh.

Yahya Khan inherited disastrous conditions. The explosive and vital problem on the economic front was that of regional distribution between east and west Pak. An

antagonistic movement in East Pak was going on stipulating absolute civil rights for the Bengalis in the political and economic set up. The movement was manifesting the signs of separation as the people of East Pakistan were not prepared to wait for progression to eliminate economic inequalities step by step reductions. The political climate in East Pak in 1969 did not show the signs of compromise or hoping for any happy change to emerge. Yet there was not magic lamp to remove disparity by simply launching one or two developmental plans. Yahya's martial law regime, being aware of the impiety of bureaucratic autocracy, decided to purge the administration of the vices of nepotism, misuse of official authority martial law regulations were issued to effectively check the growing trends of nepotism, favouritism and corruption in the civil administration by these regulations severe punitive actions were recommended against those who were involved in corruption, nepotism, hoarding and misuse of official authority. Public was induced to lodge complaints against government official and private entrepreneur who indulged in the above said malpractices, under the ML regulation no 58, 303 civil officers were suspended on charges of corruption, misuse of official position and accumulation of illegal wealth and assets.<sup>3</sup>

### **Steps for transfer of power**

Yahya Khan, in order to fulfil his promise of smooth transfer of power, appointed a chief election commissioner in July 1970, the CEC was diverted to proceed with the preparation of elections and demarcation of constituencies. The princely state of Dir, Swat and Chitral were merged in the province of west Pak. One-unit scheme was dissolved and the four provinces of Punjab, NWFP, Sindh and Balochistan were re-constituted. The principle of one man one vote was accepted for the general elections. It was done with the objective eliminating the principle of parity and providing representation based on population thus acknowledging the numerical superiority of East Pak.

### **Legal Framework Order**

The next step towards the transfer of power was the issuance of legal framework order on March 1970. The Legal framework order arranged 313 seats for National Assembly. Three hundred seats were to be filled by general elections while 13 seats were reserved for the women candidates. The 313 seats of the National Assembly were distributed among the five province and the centrally administered tribal areas. LFO contained the fundamental principle of the constitution to be framed by the elected National Assembly it contained.

1. Parliamentary and federal form of government.
2. Islamic nature of the constitution to sanctuary the ideology based on which Pakistan was created.
3. Direct and free elections to the federal and provincial legislative based on population and adult franchise.
4. To guarantee fundamental rights to all citizens and their enforcement by the court of law, and independence of the judiciary in the matter dispensation of justice and enforcement of the fundamental rights.

### **General Elections of 1970**

Even though few concerns on the Legal framework order the political parties welcomed the decisions of the military regime to hold Elections. All political parties jumped into the election arena with their programmes and manifestoes to test their political power. The prominent political leaders were anxious to get support for their candidates.

### **Political Parties**

The Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Mujeeb-ur-Rehman issued its election manifesto based on Mujib's six-point formula which was aimed at drastically curtailing the federal authority and converting Pakistan into a loose confederation.

### **Mujib's six points**

Six points formula comprising the following.

1. Central type of rule over the base of Lahore Resolution.
2. Federal administration dealing with simply security as well as foreign policy
3. Single financial as well as monetary strategies for the federating units.
4. Federal administration having no tax laying control.
5. To have two distinct external accounts for the foreign exchanges of the two wings.
6. The state should be given legal control maintaining paramilitary or regional forces to contribute effectively toward national security.

Mujib erected his election campaign prompting the privileges of the East Pakistanis. The Awami league focused to Eastern part of the State, contesting the election upon Mujeeb's six-point programme as well as severely performed the protests of the east of the State. Mujeeb secessionist to the pivotal, acquire wide scale campaign for his support of the privileges of the Bengalis. He wisely performed the hurt pride of the east Pakistani masses as well as frequently tells them the western side of the State has deviated their privileges plus that there was no substitute apart from voting for the six-point agenda of Awami league. He assured the authorities that the six-point programme was open to negotiations and that once he is elected, he will deal firmly with the separatists in the Awami league. In private mujib gave assurance to the government that he believed in the united Pakistan and that the six points programme was negotiable, that he had flexible approach and that after election his hands would be strengthened to deal firmly with those hard-liners with in the Awami league who wanted to secede from Pakistan.

Z.A Bhutto had established his PPP in west Pakiatan which desired contesting the polls only upon economic matters. He issues the platform of his PPP that promises the economic lift of the common people. Bhutto exploits the economic weaknesses of the illiterate people through rising wrong mantras. The PPP's mantra '*Roati, Capra or Makaan*' remained an impractical assurance which touches the emotions as well as sympathies of the less advanced people then presents Bhutto as the champion of the deprived people. Bhutto exploits the Tashkent accord as well as the usual hate for military. In the West Pakistan Bhutto's charismatic and demagogic bearing immensely lured the people to vote for the PPP in large number. The PPP emerges as main party in the western wing with 82 chairs which put Bhutto in the bargaining position. The election results showed how much powerful the regional forces in the

both wings were. The Awami league secured 75 percent entire polls cast in Eastern part of State however it doesn't get a single seat in Western part of State's four provinces. The PPP did not combat election in East Pakistan.<sup>4</sup>

### **Elections 1970's Result**

The election of 1970 is generally taken as to have been held in a fair and transparent manner with no interference from the establishment. However, there were at least twelve parties which could not secure even a single seat in any of the five provinces. The Awami League swept the polls with 160 out of 162 seats with 75% of the valid votes. such a victory was unlikely to tone down sheikh Mujib's demands for autonomy similarly, in the other four provinces (West Pak) PPP of Zulfikar as the major political party got 81 seats from Punjab and Sindh. It got success in West Pakistan despite its patent defeat in Balochistan and NWFP, two provinces where Islamic and ethnic parties triumphed, a sign of growing regionalism of Pakistan politics. <sup>5</sup>Particularly, the Jamaat-e-Islami the two blocs of the Muslim League and NAP (wali) had to face undignified defeat for them the elections of 1970 were a nightmare.

Conversing to the LFO, the constituent Parliament remained framing the constitution within 4 months after the elections there were three forces in the field who had authority and importance with reverence to transfer of power. The poll effects showed clearly that the prospect of the State had perilously rests by three powers like the army, the PPP and the Awami League. It was now left to Mujib and Bhutto to reach an agreement, acceptable to Yahya, for the transfer to power in view of the highly ambitious design to Yahya, Mujib and Bhutto. The future of political cause of Pakistan looks bleak and danger of falling a prey to acute polarization of society.

Mujib's attitude not surprising after the Awami League's decisive victory in elections became stiffened. He argued, justifiably in the light of the vast public mandate, that the Bengalis gave their decision in the support of Awami league's six points programme and so he or nobody else in Awami league remained not in a situation to alter or amend the six-point programme. He announced that, no one would be able to interrupt in framing a constitution upon the base of six points programme. Mujib's rigid behaviour had double edge motive. On the side he wanted to keep the ongoing rebellious movement in East Pakistan alive, while on the other hand he exerted pressure to compel the west Pakistani political leaders and the military rulers to accept silently the constitution Awami league wanted to impose. Mujib's uncompromising and rigid attitude created deep political dilemmas.<sup>6</sup>

Situation in the West Pakistan was no less perplexing. Bhutto, PPP's Head demands fair credit for his party in the country's authority structure. He declares that majority alone does not count in national politics. No constitution be framed, nor could any government in the centre be run without my party's collaboration. He says that both PPP and Awami league remained the mainstream groups in the two wings as the people of West Pakistan and East Pakistan have voted in great majority for them. Bhutto had developed close contacts with Yahya and his military circle. There was a personal deal between Bhutto and LT Gen, Perrzada, Yahya's main team. That

contract plays a significant role in National development at that period as well as he (Bhutto) was even said to have organized Yahya's several proclamations comprising the judgment postponing the Parliament.

Mujib's stubborn attitude worried both Yahya and Bhutto. Mujib had developed close contacts with Indian authority. He was separatist from the day first he stepped into practical politics. He performed a dynamic part in Agartala plot that was hatched to separate Pakistan much before the 1971 devastation.

Bhutto in a desperate attempt to convince Mujib went to Dhaka in Jan 1971. He had talks with and other Awami League leaders and tried to bring them around his point of view upon the framing of the upcoming composition of State. The Awami League Leadership as was expected came out with a resolute stand upon the six-point agenda as well as refuses budging from their earlier place. Bhutto in oppress meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1971, declares that "Mujib wanted to establish an independent, fascist and racist regime in East Pakistan. He did not really believe in country's integrity". Bhutto demands the adjournment of the Parliament meeting as well as waiving of the 120 days perimeter to frame structure. In a threatening tone he proclaimed that he would launch a great movement if the National Assembly held its session without his party. He warned that if the new government at the centre was formed without the PPP, they would never forgive, issuing a note of warning Bhutto declared *Idhar hum Udher tum* which implied that in west Pakistan PPP held the mandate and the Awami league represented the people of East Pakistan. He argued that in the view of the mandate of the people of the west Pakistan, it was not possible to ignore his PPP, in the framing of the constitution and the power set up of the country.<sup>7</sup> Bhutto threatening rhetoric instantaneously worked, Yahya Khan postponed the assembly session on the plea that because the largest party from west Pakistan not willing to attend the session. He said that the postponement would enable the politicians to arrive at some agreement. Mujib tried to convince the Military rulers that the postponement of session would be disastrous as the people were already raging with passions. He said that the cancellation would be an invitation to disaster, he would be unable to control the situation, he suggested that the session might be postponed, provided a fresh date was announced by the government.

On March 1971, Mujib launched "**civil disobedience movement**" and asked Bengali including the government employees not to co-operate with the anti-people forces. He issues directive to the masses not to be paying duties to the government. The administration was paralyzed by the show of street power by the Awami League stalwarts. "The province was cut off with the rest of the country for all practical purposes. The Pakistan's banner and depiction of Quaid-e-Azam were burnt in public and slogans for independent Bangladesh were raised". Yahya announced that Parliament session will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> march, 1971 in Dhaka. In a public meeting, Mujib put forward his demands for acceptance by the government before Awami league could consider the question of attending the NA session. The demands were as following:

1 Immediate withdrawal of the Martial law. 2. Immediate recall of all military personnel to their barracks. 3. An inquiry into the loss of life. 4. Immediate transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people. 5. Instant termination of army builds up also the substantial invasion of army in western part of State.<sup>8</sup>

After making these claims Mujeeb doesn't wait for the regime's reaction as well as allowed his personnel going on the mutiny in the province. There were wide-spread homicides in East Pakistan. The Awami League personnel kill arbitrarily all individuals who doesn't agree with six points. The Urdu speaking, non-Bungalis and pro-Pakistanis were crushed the armed forces were made to bear the insulting behaviours by the people of East Pakistan. Sheikh Mujib seems to have declared the independence of East Pakistan, thinly disguised in demand" The Awami League having established its de facto government planned an armed rebellion in the early hours of March, 1971. There were unmentioned brutalities committed on the west Pakistan personnel and their families by Awami league workers.<sup>9</sup>

Reacting to Mujib's claim of transfer of power. Bhutto emphasised the handover of powers to two Parliaments, one consisting of the representative from East Pakistan and the other from west Pakistan. He demands the handover of control to Awami league in the east Pakistan and PPP in the west Pakistan, if power was to be transferred before reaching a constitutional settlement. While demanding the power, Bhutto declared that sheikh mujib could become the P.M of Eastern part of the State and he will be the P.M of Western part of the State in a confederation.<sup>10</sup>

On March Yahya Khan banned all the activities of the Awami League, which further infuriated the masses on the side of Mujib. the local Militants- called "Mukti Bahni" or the freedom Army, had already started Fights with Pakistan army, with Indian help, which fact was not even thought to be kept secret. The Indian parliament had openly discussed the matters of the internal situation of Pakistan and their prime Minister, Indra Ghandi had declared that India would not keep quite on the progression of such events in East Pakistan. Due to the fast-deteriorating conditions are Tikka Khan was appointed in East Pakistan in April 1971, His appeal to population of the province to help restore peace had no effect on the fast-deteriorating situation. In the meanwhile, India signed a pact of friendship with USSR on august 1971 there by receiving arms, which could be used in East Pakistan. It was not long after than on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1971, India regular army moved into the territory of Pakistan and started an advance in the borders of Noakhali district, and war had started on their western front, though here they were not only contained but repulsed in most of sectors. Bhutto was appointed as foreign minister by Yahya Khan and was detailed to present Pakistan case in United Nations. Bhutto made an appeal to conscience of the world regarding the tragic event in East Pakistan that was the direct result of armed clashes between Indian Army and not forgetting Indian Air force and Mukti-Bahni on one side and the patriotic Pakistani, and the Pakistan army on the other. However, USSR blocked all efforts on the settlements with its security council veto power, which it used for three times.

In Nov, 1971 Indian forces starts to cross the boundary of Eastern part of the State and helped Mukhti-Bahni (militants) to launched assaults over Pakistani Military. These invasions of Indian forces concluded into a full-fledged assault over Eastern part of the State by Indian Military. In December 1971 full span battle breaks out over the Western part of the State, India border and Kashmir valley. The Pakistani forces could not face the Indian on slough, on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1971 East Pakistan fell to Indian aggression.

In Western part of the State the execution of the military remained desperate. The nine months civil war in East Pakistan had discouraged the armed forces. A main cause in Pakistan's Military downfall remained the guerrilla war efficiently battled through the Mukti Bahini. The downfall of Pakistan in Eastern part of the State battle of 1971 and the dismemberment of the country disgraced the Pakistani Army. The Army rule could not continue and Yayha had to quit by handing over power to Z.A Bhutto.<sup>11</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Under the emphasis of public perspective, Ayub khan resigned from office and transfer powers to General yahya Khan on 25<sup>th</sup> march 1969, commander-in-chief of the military. General Yahya khan assumed the office of president and Chief of Martial-Law Administrator of Pakistan. Yahya Khan abrogated the 1962 constitution, banned entire administrative actions, dissolved the Assemblies both (National and Provincial), dismissed the Federal as well as Provincial cabinets and declared Military rule in the State. Yahya khan sustained to his promise of holding free and fair elections which have held in 1970, but unfortunately, instead of paving the way for the smooth transfer of power, these elections first and, last in the undivided Pakistan, sowed the seeds of country's disintegration to give way to the establishment of Bangladesh. Yahya Khan inherited disastrous conditions. The explosive and vital problem on the economic front was that of regional distribution between east and west Pakistan. An antagonistic movement in East Pak was going on stipulating absolute civil rights for the Bengalis in the political and economic set up. The movement was manifesting the signs of separation as the people of East Pakistan were not prepared to wait for progression to eliminate economic inequalities step by step reductions. The political climate in East Pak in 1969 did not show the signs of compromise or hoping for any happy change to emerge. Yet there was not magic lamp to remove disparity by simply launching one or two developmental plans. Yahya's martial law regime, being aware of the impiety of bureaucratic autocracy, decided to purge the administration of the vices of nepotism, misuse of official authority martial law regulations were issued to effectively check the growing trends of nepotism, favouritism and corruption in the civil administration by these regulations severe punitive actions were recommended against those who were involved in corruption, nepotism, hoarding and misuse of official authority.

Political development in Pakistan has been generally characterised by constitutional activism as well as constitutional breakdown, public debate generally focused on such

petty issues as the role of Islam in shaping the life of people in legal and moral terms, appropriate form of government for the country, role of minorities, provincial autonomy and country's ideological base, on the other hand, there has been a lot of activity outside the framework of parliament, where extra parliamentary forces led by army, played a decisive role in setting the national agenda. Pakistan suffered from a crisis of confidence in December 1971. The disastrous end of East Pakistan was nothing astonishing in view of existing administrative condition and the politician's lust for authority. It was not surprising in the light of the politicians and the military rulers that half of the State was divided. The political climate of the State was dominated by Yahya Khan, Mujeeb-ur-Rehman as well as Bhutto after the elections who by their ambition pushed the country in to the verge of disintegration. None of them ever thought in the interest of the country. Particularly unwise policies of Yahya Khan never allowed the situation to improve. Conspiracy theories have been seen Indian engineering behind the breakup of Pakistan. While India sought international support for its action by highlighting the refugee crisis in the west Bengal and Tripura arising from Pakistan army's terror, the action was not taken under duress. Despite her many policy failings, Indira Ghandi's response to the East Pakistani crisis was sagacious. It contrasts dramatically with Pakistani blundering into armed conflict. The crisis was homemade. Pakistani rigidity compounded folly in the dangerous denial of Bengali democratic requisites. This episode, although it showed the Pakistani military in its worst light, was not particularly, flattering for Bhutto, either as he rejected the law of numbers and preferred repression at the risk of civil war and ultimately secession to respect for the verdict of the polls. In fact, Bhutto soon turned out to be a rather mediocre democrat, the zealous incarnation of the vice-regal political culture that Jinnah had initiated.

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