

ANATOMY OF THE CRISIS

THE BIRTH OF PAKISTAN

The creation of Pakistan on 15 August 1947, was a personal triumph for Mohammed Ali Jinnah and a tribute to his political jugglery, which enabled him to carve out an independent Muslim State without any struggle or sacrifice. The Muslim League, of which Jinnah was the undisputed leader, was set up in December, 1906, with the blessings of the then Viceroy of India, Lord Minto, and at the initiative of "nobles, ministers of various states, great landowners, lawyers, merchants, and many others of His Majesty's Mohammedan subjects"(1). Its main objective was "To foster a sense of loyalty to the British government among the Muslims of India"(2). Thus, from the very beginning, the Muslim League was dominated by the feudal landlords, who were interested in maintaining their power and prestige by placating the British rulers.

The protagonists of Pakistan were never in the fore-front of India's struggle for freedom. Jinnah himself had never been jailed for defying the British authority in India (3). It was only after the provincial elections of 1937 (held under the Government of India Act, 1935), when Muslim League fared badly even in predominantly Muslim provinces, that Jinnah declared that the Muslims could expect neither justice nor fairplay under Congress government. Therefore, in the Lahore session of the Muslim League held in March, 1940, Jinnah announced that Muslims were not a minority community in India, but constituted a separate nation. He demanded a separate homeland for them with an independent state, i.e. 'Pakistan'.

The two-nation theory propounded by Jinnah was most gratifying to the British authorities, as it was so much in conformity with their well-established policy of 'divide and rule'. They boosted Jinnah to counter-balance the Congress demands, "...they pampered to his pride, put up with his rudeness, inflated his prestige, and encouraged him to persist in his Congress-baiting, which made him a hero to the unsophisticated Muslim masses, who were ever ready to respond to the call of 'Islam in danger'(4).

The British Prime Minister, C.R. Attlee, made a statement in the House of Commons on 20 February 1947, which inter alia suggested that "His Majesty's Government will have to consider to whom the powers of the Central Government in British India should be handed over on the due date, whether as a whole to

some form of Central Government for British India, or in some areas to the existing provincial Governments, or in such other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interests of the Indian people"(5). It certainly had the effect of making Jinnah more obdurate. He refused to join hands with the Congress in the negotiations for the transfer of power by the British Government, as he could see that "The Statement of 20 February 1947, in the context of Indian politics was thus an open licence for Pakistan in some form or other"(6). However, till the end Jinnah was not sure that his bluff would really work. This will be evident from one of his significant remarks on the creation of Pakistan : "I never thought it would happen. I never expected to see Pakistan in my life-time"(7).

INHERENT WEAKNESSES OF THE PAKISTAN POLITY

Thus Jinnah succeeded in carving out an independent Muslim state through political machinations, and also as a result of favour shown by the foreign rulers. But little did he realise the in-built weaknesses of the nascent state. He had been able to secure the following of the Muslim masses in India by creating a sort of 'religious hysteria'. But the millions of Indian Muslims, who had cast their lot for Pakistan, expected the new state to give them a happy and prosperous life also, to be a virtual heaven on earth or a modern Utopia.

In order to fulfil at least some of these high expectations and aspirations of the people, the new state of Pakistan needed a broad-based political structure, a thriving and expanding economy, an equitable distribution of national resources and a liberal and benevolent social system. Unfortunately, Pakistan did not possess any of these. Jinnah himself was an autocrat by temperament, and had no love for democracy. As early as 1940, he had declared that "democracy was unsuited to India"(8). And Pakistan inherited the extremely narrow-based pre-partition structure of power in the Muslim League, which was dominated by the feudal class. That Muslim leadership even in undivided India was confined mostly to the feudal class became evident from the results of the provincial elections of 1937. In U.P., which was the bastion of the Muslim League, out of 66 Muslim members returned to the Council, 21 were Rajas, Nawabs and Zamindars, 12 Khan Bahadurs, 23 Advocates (mainly from Zamindar families) and 10 others.

After the creation of Pakistan, the Urdu speaking elite which had migrated from U.P., and Bihar, and some Muslim leaders from Maharashtra, enjoyed a lion's

share in the political power of the country. But they had only limited experience of political life, and few of them were really of the front rank. So the "alien" elite from U.P., Bihar and certain parts of Maharashtra was soon thrown into the background, and the landed aristocracy of Punjab gained ascendancy, in the political set up of the country after Jinnah's death, and especially after the assassination of the first Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, in 1951. Due to local affinity, these feudal landlords from Punjab received whole-hearted support in their actions from the top-brass of the army as well as bureaucracy, both of which were dominated by Punjabis.

This alliance between feudal landlords, military commanders and senior bureaucrats ruled the country unhindered and unopposed. Pakistan's political system during this period has been aptly summarised in the following words : "Pakistan politics is made up of a large number of leading persons who, with their political dependents, form loose agreements to achieve power and to maintain it"(9).

The only force which could have prevented the entire power being concentrated into the hands of a group of privileged persons was an enlightened and politically conscious middle class, which forms the back-bone of every democratic society or country. But, unfortunately such a class was conspicuous by its absence in Pakistan. The politically conscious Muslims who had fought for the creation of Pakistan before 1947, were concentrated in U.P., Bihar and Maharashtra, and mostly remained in India after the partition of the country. The Muslim majority areas which, according to the Radcliffe Award, were grouped together to form the new state of Pakistan, were mostly populated by poor illiterate peasants dominated by feudal aristocracy, both in the Eastern as well as the Western wing of the country.

Pakistan had been predominantly an agricultural country and had inherited the old feudal system prevalent during the British rule in undivided India. There was hardly any big industry in the country, and the minor industrial units which did exist, were mostly engaged in processing the raw materials produced in the country. Most of the trade and commerce of Pakistan was controlled by big business houses in England, and the local people were mostly petty traders, shop-keepers, artisans, craftsmen or middlemen. "Ninety per cent of the banking capital of Pakistan was in the hands of British banks, such as Lloyds and Grindlay's Bank. Roberts, Gill & Co., Imperial Tobacco and other British firms controlled over eighty per cent of Pakistan's import.....The

insurance business was also dominated by British capital"(10).

The level of education in Pakistan was also appallingly low. Even after twelve years of independence, i.e., in 1959-60, the number of school-going children in the age group 6-11 constituted 42 per cent, and those in the age group 11-16 only 12 per cent. The whole country (including East Pakistan and West Pakistan) could boast of only 6 (six) Universities and 4 (four) engineering colleges. There were only 75 primary teacher training institutes and 23 teacher training colleges. The number of school health clinics was only 19, while not a single rural health centre existed in the country"(11).

The above facts bring out the social, economic and educational backwardness of Pakistan. It is, therefore, no wonder that it did not have (and, in fact, it could not have) an enlightened and politically conscious middle class, which could fight for its democratic rights and resist the autocratic tendencies of the ruling class. The country was bound to slip from democracy to dictatorship, as it soon did.

The Pakistani dictators, through systematic exploitation, alienated the Eastern Wing, which eventually led to the dismemberment of the country and the emergence of Bangladesh. It was not so much the Cultural antagonism which created a chasm between the Eastern and Western Wings of Pakistan. "The more important cleavage, and one which finally broke Pakistan, was not between east and west, but between the top and the bottom. Above this horizontal cleavage were those, mostly drawn from West Pakistan's feudal and aristocratic elite, whether bureaucratic, military or purely political, who were anti-democratic in their outlook, and in their policies bitterly anti-Indian...Below the cleavage stood the great majority of East Bengalis, with probably the majority of West Pakistanis, who would have preferred a democratic system, would have benefitted from it more than they did from the oligarchic rule of a military-bureaucratic junta, and because of the predominance of the Bengalis among them would have tilted Pakistan away from a confrontation with India"(12).

RISE OF DICTATORSHIP

Having realised his ambition of establishing the independent Muslim State of Pakistan, Jinnah not only occupied the exalted office of the Governor General of the new state, but assumed "dictatorial powers unknown

to any constitutional Governor-General representing the King"(13). His lust for power goaded him to make the Constituent Assembly pass the Pakistan Provisional Constitution Order, 1947, which conferred enormous powers on the new Governor General. "He was not only authorised to choose and appoint ministers who held office during his pleasure, he could allocate portfolios among ministers. There was no provision that the Governor General was to act on the advice of ministers. He could even bring a minister under his direct control. He could declare an emergency by proclamation and under it make laws for a province or any of its parts"(14). He was also formally honoured with the title of Quaid-e-Azam (the supreme leader) by the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, of which he himself was the President. His authority over the new state rose to its pinnacle when his name was read in Khutba in a mosque at Karachi, in keeping with the Muslim tradition of including the names of kings or Caliphs in Khutbas during prayers. A contemporary historian, A. Campbell-Johnson, has aptly described the unchallenged authority enjoyed by Jinnah in the following words: "He makes only the most superficial attempt to disguise himself as a constitutional Governor-General....Here indeed is Pakistan's King Emperor, Archbishop of Canterbury, Speaker and Prime Minister concentrated into one formidable Quaid-e-Azam"(15).

In contrast Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the equally charismatic leader in India, who had spent the major portion of his life in the struggle for freedom and had spent years in prison cells, preferred to become the Prime Minister (and not the Governor General) of India, so that he could serve the masses and not rule over them.

After Jinnah's death in 1948, Khwaja Nazimuddin took over as Governor General of Pakistan and, with Liaquat Ali Khan continuing as Prime Minister, the 'parliamentary facade' was kept up for some time. But after the assassination of Liaquat Ali at Rawalpindi in 1951, the Punjabi dominated bureaucratic-military clique came into prominence and virtually ruled the country. The politicians became mere pawns in its hands. Ghulam Mohammad, a senior bureaucrat, became the Governor General of Pakistan and dismissed the Prime Minister, Khwaja Nazimuddin, in April, 1953, although the latter commanded a clear majority in the National Assembly. In his place, the Governor General appointed a man of his choice, one Mohammad Ali of Bogra, as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Surprisingly, this dictatorial action of dismissing the Prime Minister of the country without any plausible cause did not produce any commotion, either

among the legislators or among the public, perhaps because it was fully supported by the army under its Commander-in-Chief, Gen. Ayub Khan. However, this flagrant violation of all parliamentary norms was another major step towards the rise of dictatorship in Pakistan.

Emboldened by the lack of opposition to his autocratic action, Governor General Ghulam Mohammad proceeded to tighten his hold on Pakistan. In the provincial elections held in East Bengal in March, 1954, the United Front emerged victorious under the leadership of Fazlul Haq and H.S. Suhrawardy, while the Muslim league was completely routed. Alarmed at this show of unity and strength by the people of East Bengal, Ghulam Mohammad took the most undemocratic step of negating the will of the people expressed through ballot, and dismissed the duly elected United Front Ministry only a few weeks after it was installed. One of the trusted lieutenants of the Governor General, Iskandar Mirza, the then Defence Secretary, who had the reputation of being a strong man, was sent as Governor and virtual dictator of East Pakistan.

The process of ushering in dictatorship in Pakistan appeared to be complete when, in October, 1954, Ghulam Mohammad took the bold step of dissolving the Constituent-cum-National Assembly and declared a state of emergency in the country. He was afraid that the members of the National Assembly representing East Pakistan, Baluchistan and NWFP might challenge his authority. Some of these members intended to introduce in the House a bill for curtailing the discretionary powers of the Governor General. The Central Cabinet was also dismissed, and Mohammad Ali Bogra was directed to constitute a new Cabinet so as to include "all talents". The "talents" taken in the new Cabinet included, Major General Iskandar Mirza and General Ayub Khan, the Commander-in-Chief of the army. They were given charge of two key ministries. Iskandar Mirza was given Interior Ministry, while General Ayub Khan was the obvious choice for the Defence Ministry.

Hardly any one in Pakistan dared to oppose or challenge these dictatorial actions of the Governor General. The lone voice raised against this constitutional outrage was that of Tamizuddin Khan, the erstwhile Speaker of the dissolved National Assembly. He filed an appeal in the highest court of justice in Pakistan, but the only 'justice' he could extract from the court was a directive to the Governor General that a new Constituent Assembly should be convened to frame a constitution for the country. In

pursuance of the above directive from the court, a new Constituent Assembly was convened in August, 1955. It passed the constitution of 1956, but the only important innovation introduced by the new Constitution was to change the designation of the Governor General to that of President.

Another important step taken by the Punjabi dominated bureaucratic-military ruling clique to consolidate its power was to merge the four provinces of West Pakistan, viz., Punjab, Sind, NWFP and Baluchistan, into one unit in 1955. This clever move was intended to serve a dual purpose. In the first place, it would enable the ruling clique to put up a 'united front' to any challenge to its authority from the Eastern Wing of the country. Secondly, it was expected that a single unit would smother any possible unrest or discontent in some parts of the Western Wing itself.

During this period, and for three succeeding years, the outward show of parliamentary democracy was maintained in Pakistan, although the real power was vested in the military-bureaucratic clique which ruled the country. Its dictates were carried out in the name of the President, Iskandar Mirza, who had replaced Ghulam Mohammad in 1955. Several Prime Ministers (both from the Eastern as well as the Western Wing) were appointed, but they were summarily dismissed as soon as they appeared to become too powerful. The President was a mere tool in the hands of the ruling clique. And, when it appeared that Iskandar Mirza himself was trying to build an independent power-base, by forming a separate Republican party, the President was, in a way, forced to declare martial law, on 7 October 1958, abrogate the Constitution and appoint the Commander-in-Chief of the army, General Ayub Khan, as the Chief Martial Law Administrator. Within a few weeks, Iskandar Mirza was persuaded to leave Pakistan and settle abroad, thus leaving the stage clear for an indefinite period of army rule in the country.

With the declaration of martial law in Pakistan, even the mask of democratic government was thrown aside, and military dictatorship in its naked form stood revealed. However, the process of concentration of power in the hands of the Governor General or President, and the gradual rise of dictatorship in the country, was in operation from the very beginning. This will be evident from the fact that "during the period 1947 to 1958... the national legislature was in session for a total of 338 days, or for an annual average of 30 days only. During the same period, the National Assembly passed 160 laws while the Governor

General/President issued 376 major ordinances"(16).

Soon after the declaration of martial law in Pakistan, General Ayub Khan gave up the command of the army and assumed the office of the President. He appointed one of his most trusted officers, General Mohammad Musa as the Commander-in-Chief. A senior Civil Servant, Aziz Ahmed, was appointed as Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator to ensure smooth functioning of the government. In matters relating to the army, he himself used to take decisions instead of depending upon the General Headquarters. His intimate and personal knowledge of the army and its problems enabled him to handle this task without any difficulty. Barring three army officers, viz., Lt. Generals W.A. Burki, K.M. Sheikh and Azam Khan, his Cabinet consisted mostly of civilians. In fact, Ayub Khan proved to be a more astute politician than his predecessors. He did not allow any overlapping of functions or authority between his army commanders and civilian advisers, and managed to keep both these groups happy and contented.

Ayub also introduced the new concept of "Basic Democracies", which envisaged a five-tier system of councils. Under this system, the village councils and town committees, which were to be elected on the basis of adult franchise, were to serve as units. The 'Basic Democrats' representing the units, were to form the electoral college for the election of the President, the National Assembly as well as the Provincial Assemblies. Ayub's main intention in introducing the new system was to win over the 'rural elite', from amongst whom the Basic Democrats were mostly drawn, and who benefited most from the developmental grants which were distributed through them. The scheme worked well and made Ayub popular among the electorate, which is evident from his election as President in 1965.

However, the result of the Presidential election from East Pakistan was not very flattering to Ayub, as he managed to win there with only a narrow margin over his rival, Fatimah Jinnah. In fact, the East Bengalees felt alienated right from the beginning, when an effort was made to impose Urdu as their national language. Systematic exploitation in various fields in subsequent years further antagonised them. They were also not happy with the system of Basic Democracies, as it deprived them of the edge they expected to have over West Pakistan due to their numerical superiority. The lifting of the martial law and removal of ban on political activities in 1962, gave the emerging educated middle class of East Pakistan, especially the student community, an

opportunity to launch a movement for autonomy for the Eastern Wing. Even in the Western Wing people were feeling res i ve under the autocratic rule. The spread of education, rapid industrialisation of the country and the technological advancement in various fields over the years, had brought into existence an enlightened middle class - still small - which clamoured for restoration of its civil rights and demanded political freedom. "Popular revulsion against the regime was so great that even the Basic Democrats, pampered as they were by the ruling clique, could not remain totally immune to it"(17).

Things had come to such a pass that Ayub was forced to adopt some means of diverting people's attention. In sheer desperation, he first despatched infiltrators into Kashmir and then forced a war on India by attacking Chhamb on 1 September 1965. But the step actually boomeranged on him. Pakistan's poor performance in the war, which lasted for just twenty-two days, exploded the widely propagated myth that the Pakistani Army was 'the finest fighting force in Asia' and that Pakistan's Air Force could destroy the Indian Air Force without much effort. It also brought home the truth that East Pakistan, completely cut off from the Western Wing during the war, was utterly helpless in defending itself. This made the East Bengalees more vociferous in their demand for autonomy. Their leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (who was also President of the Awami League party), put forth the people's demands in the form of a pamphlet entitled "our Right to Live", which was issued on 23 March 1966, and contained a six-point programme of grant of autonomy to East Pakistan.

However, the "political arrogance of the Military junta was incompatible with the popular demand for the restoration of democratic institutions"(18). President Ayub Khan adopted repressive measures to smother the legitimate demands of the people of East Pakistan. But the situation went from bad to worse. The students, who had spearheaded the resistance movement in East Pakistan right from the beginning, again formed the vanguard of the opposition against the reign of terror unleashed by President Ayub. As early as 1948, the students of Dhaka University (including Mujibur Rahman who was then a student leader) had the courage to hoot down even Jinnah on the imposition of Urdu as the official language of the whole of Pakistan. Manzur Quadir, a Central Minister, narrowly escaped death at the hands of the students of Dhaka University when he went there to speak in favour of the Constitution propounded by Ayub. And now they organised massive demonstrations at Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Bogra and several other places, demanding

restoration of parliamentary democracy. Hundreds of students were arrested along with most of the Awami League leaders, including Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Mujib was also implicated in a trumped up case, known as the 'Agartala Conspiracy Case'. There was a wave of resentment among the people, and strikes and 'bandhs' were organised against military oppression. Over one thousand persons were "arrested throughout East Bengal on December 14, 1968"(19). The police resorted to firing in Dhaka, Narayanganj and some other places in which many people were killed.

Ayub could not withstand the popular agitation and was compelled to yield to the people's demands. He had to free Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and the Agartala Conspiracy Case against him was dropped. In an effort to control the situation, Ayub convened a meeting of political parties in Dhaka in March, 1969. But no agreed solution could be arrived at, and ultimately Ayub was forced to hand over the reins of the Government to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, General Mohammad Yahya Khan. However, Yahya Khan also found himself helpless in stemming the tide of opposition and had to declare post-haste that he had assumed power only as a temporary measure for "creation of conditions conducive to the establishment of a constitutional government"(20).

GLARING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO WINGS

The creation of Pakistan has been described as a "geographical and cultural monstrosity"(21). The two erstwhile wings of Pakistan, separated by over 1,600 km of intervening Indian territory, were so fundamentally different that they really were two different countries. The glaring and irremediable differences between the two wings of Pakistan were highlighted by a jurist in the following words : "Pakistan is not a nation and hardly a state. It has no justification in history, ethnic origin, language, civilization, or the consciousness of those who make up its population. They have no interest in common save one : fear of Hindu domination"(22). The physical features, climate, agricultural produce, economic conditions, language and literature, history and culture, of the two wings were entirely different and had conditioned their inhabitants differently - both physically and mentally. The only common link between these two different and far flung regions was that of religion. But, as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad pointed out, it was "one of the greatest frauds on the people to suggest that religious affinity can unite areas which are geographically, economically, linguistically and culturally different"(23).

The two erstwhile wings of Pakistan were situated at the opposite ends of the vast northern Indian plains, without any direct overland line of communication. The physical or geographical differences between these two wings have been summed up in the following words : "There is a popular belief that where West Pakistan ends, the Middle East begins, but where East Pakistan ends, South-East Asia begins. The West is mountainous, arid and desolate; but the East, with its lush green fields and luxuriant vegetation, is a deltaic land traversed by mighty rivers and innumerable streams...Geography, climate and the difference in fertility of soil not only account for the difference in density of population...but also explain the temperamental difference - the West is pragmatic, the East is emotional"(24).

Resembling a rectangle in shape, West Pakistan covered an area of 798,425 sq km, and had a total population of 42.9 million, or 54 persons per sq km on an average, according to 1961 Census figures. On the other hand, the eastern wing or East Pakistan had a population of 50.84 million with an area of only 139,795 sq km(25). This gave East Pakistan an over-all numerical superiority over the western wing.

Due to the difference in location, physical features, weather conditions etc., the people of the two wings of Pakistan also looked different in their outward appearance. Whereas the people of the western wing were tall, fair and hardy, the people of the eastern wing were generally short, and dark complexioned. The main crops of the western wing were wheat, sugar-cane, cotton and tobacco, while the eastern wing produced mainly rice, mustard, jute and tea.

One of the most glaring difference between the two wings of Pakistan and which eventually became a serious bone of contention between them, was their language. While there was only one language, viz., Bengali in the whole of eastern wing, four different languages were used in the four provinces of the western wing, i.e. Punjabi, Sindhi, Baluchi and Pushtu. None of these languages had anything in common with Bengali. The situation was that "The man in the street in West Pakistan speaks any one of four languages - none of which enables him to communicate with the Bengali-speaking inhabitants of East Bengal. A politician in Karachi who is able to address an East Bengal audience in its own tongue has a rare political asset..."(26).

Culturally also, the two wings of Pakistan were

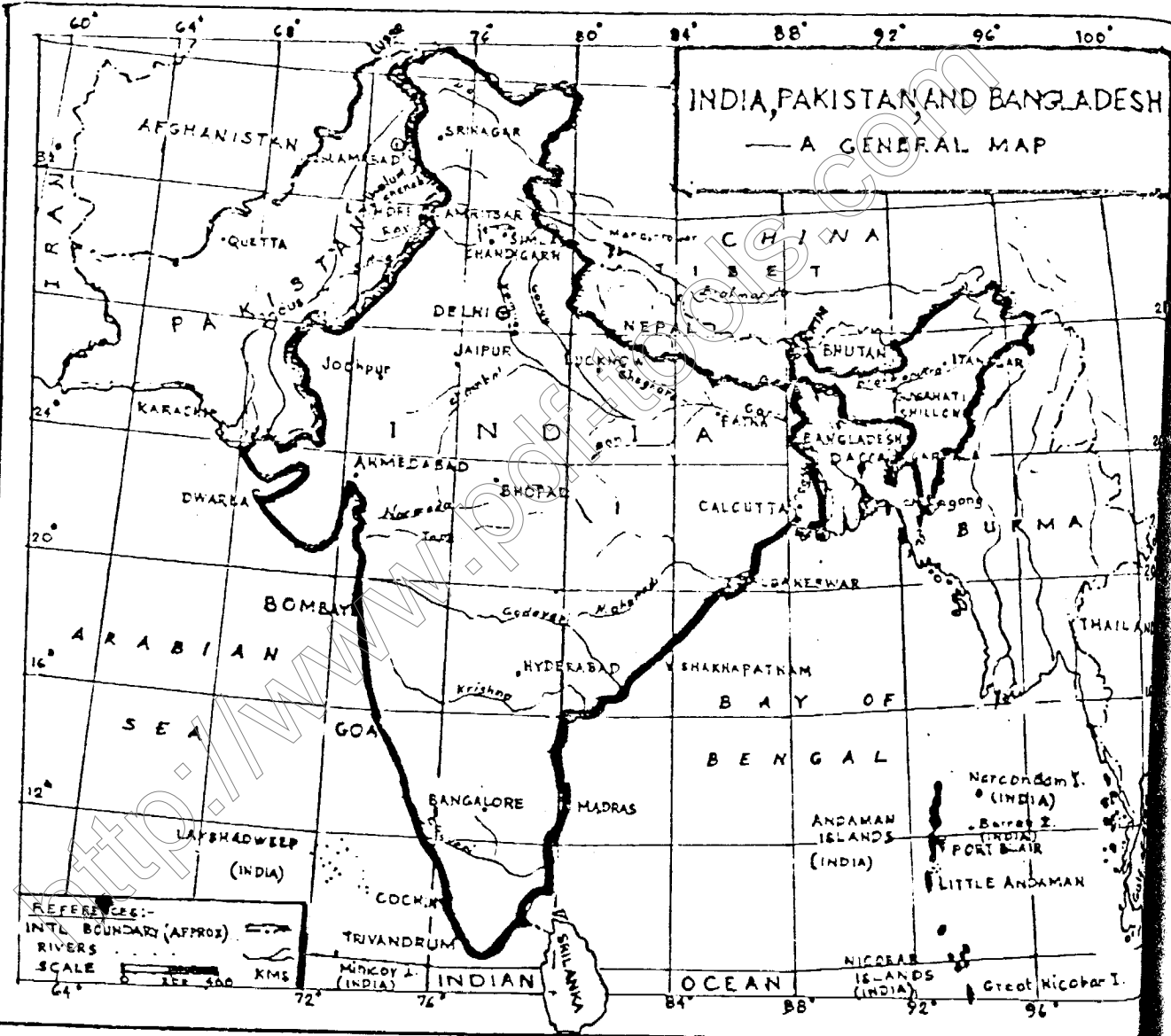
quite different. As mentioned earlier, West Pakistan was more akin to West Asia and Central Asia. "In history and literature, in customs, manners, and even in prejudices, the influence of Arabia and Iran on the peoples of this unit is apparent"(27). East Pakistan, on the other hand, had many things in common with the countries of South East Asia. Like East Pakistan, most of these countries had dense population with marked degree of poverty and were conservative in their outlook. However, though politically divided, East Bengal formed a part and parcel of the composite culture of pre-independence undivided Bengal. In customs, manners, dress, food habits, language and dialect, an East Pakistani was very close to the people of West Bengal, and had hardly anything in common with the people of the Western Wing of Pakistan.

East Pakistanis were proud of their culture and looked down upon the people of the Western Wing who could not appreciate the poetical compositions of litterateurs like Rabindra Nath Tagore and Nazrul Islam. On the other hand, the West Pakistanis had nothing but contempt for East Bengalees. Even Pakistani leaders like Mohammad Ayub Khan considered them very backward and thought that they "belong to the very original Indian races.....they have been and still are under considerable Hindu cultural and linguistic influence. As such they have all the inhibitions of downtrodden races and have not yet found it possible to adjust psychologically to the requirements of the new-born freedom"(28). The cultural difference between the two wings of Pakistan was indeed so pronounced that a Muslim writer with marked pro-Pakistani bias, had to concede that Pakistan was "bi-cultural state"(29).

The oft-repeated and much publicised common bond of religion between the two wings of Pakistan was actually not so common as harped upon from the very beginning by protagonists of Pakistan. Due to affinity of language, customs and manners, as well as physical proximity with the neighbouring Hindus, the religion of East Bengalee Muslims had, over the years, absorbed many of the Hindu traditions, rituals and ceremonies. It was, therefore, more flexible than the rigid cult of Islam prevailing in the Western Wing of Pakistan. It was not uncommon for East Pakistani Muslims to visit Hindu places of worship and even to make offerings, and vice versa. So, the religion of the people in the Eastern Wing was branded as "East Pakistani type of Islam....mixed with Hindu, Buddhist and animistic practices...."(30). This was against the accepted norms of "pure" Islam preached by the 'Mullahs' of the Western Wing.

INDIA, PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH

— A GENERAL MAP



REFERENCES:-
 INTL BOUNDARY (APPROX)
 RIVERS
 SCALE 500 KMS

Thus, the two wings of Pakistan were fundamentally different from each other in all respects. No wonder that the union of the two wings, aptly described as a marriage de raison, broke down under various strains that started developing soon after the birth of the new State.

The glaring differences between the erstwhile Eastern and Western Wings of Pakistan enumerated above were due to natural or historical reasons. But the resultant effect of these differences could have been minimised to a great extent by mutual good-will, cooperatin and a broad-minded approach to various problems. But from the very beginning the Punjabi dominated ruling elite of Pakistan systematically and consistently followed a policy of discrimination against the eastern wing.

The policy of discrimination against the East Bengalees perhaps had its origin in the superior attitude adopted by the people of the Western wing. As noticed earlier, even West Pakistani leaders like President Ayub Khan considered that the East Bengalees had "all the inhibitions of down-trodden races....". Another Punjabi leader, Malik Firoz Khan Noon, who was Governor of East Bengal from 1950 to 1953, "once bluntly declared that East Bengal Muslims were converted to Islam from low caste Hindus and they were not real Muslims"(31). This feeling of superiority on the part of the West Pakistanis made them feel that 'they belonged to the race of conquerors', and for all intents and purposes they treated East Pakistan as a colony of the Western Wing.

WIDE DISPARITIES

The exploitation of and the discrimination against the eastern wing were manifest in almost every field of governmental activity right from the creation of Pakistan. With the passage of time, this systematic and continuous policy of discrimination resulted in the development of grave disparities between the two wings. While West Pakistan continued to prosper at the cost of the eastern wing, East Pakistan, which was already poor and under-developed was deprived of its legitimate share of developmental resources, and was thus reduced to still greater poverty and backwardness.

Economic Disparities

The disparities between the erstwhile eastern and western wings of Pakistan were most noticeable in the economic field. The Punjabi dominated ruling elite had so manipulated the economic and financial

policies of the country that "not only should West develop industrially at the expense of the East, but the East should remain a captive market for the industrial products of the West". The effect of these discriminatory economic policies was a phenomenal increase in the difference in per capita income of the two wings. In one decade, i.e., between 1960 to 1970, this difference leaped from Rs.86 to Rs.184. In real terms the difference in the per capita income was much more, as the prices of essential commodities, including main items of food, were much higher in the eastern wing than in the western wing. Thus, while rice and wheat were sold in West Pakistan at about Rs.20 and Rs.15 per maund (about 37.5 kg) respectively, their prices in the eastern wing were about Rs.50 and Rs.35 respectively, or two and a half times as high as the prices prevailing in the western wing(32).

The partisan attitude of Pakistani ruling elite will be evident from a comparative study of developmental expenditure in both the wings of the country, as shown in Table I at page 15(33).

The poster (in Bengali) issued by the Awami League given at page 16 gives a revealing picture of the injustice done to East Pakistan by bringing out the disparity in the Central expenditure on the two wings(34).

The same story was repeated in other estimates of the allocation of foreign aid funds received from various sources. East Pakistan was allocated a mere fraction of these funds, although on the basis of population its share should have been larger than that of the western wing. Thus East Pakistan got only 4% of the total foreign aid (excluding US aid), while West Pakistan was given 96%. Only one third or about 34% of the US Aid Fund was given to the eastern wing, and 66% was allocated to the western wing(35).

The unfair treatment in the allocation of development and other aid funds resulted in phenomenal growth of industries in West Pakistan, while industrial growth in the eastern wing remained almost static or increased marginally.

TABLE 1
DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE IN EAST AND WEST PAKISTAN

East Pakistan				(In Millions of Rupees)				
Period	Development Plan Expenditures			Outside Plan Expenditure		Total Development Expenditure (1+2+3+4+5)	Total Expenditure	Development Expenditure in Regions as Percent of all Pakistan Total
	Total	Public	Private	Works Program				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1950/51-1954/55	1,000	700	300	—	—	1,000	2,710	20%
1955/56-1959/60	2,700	1,970	730	—	—	2,700	5,240	26%
1960/61-1964/65	9,250	6,250	3,000	—	450	9,700	14,040	32%
1965/66-1969/70	16,560	11,060	5,500	—	—	16,560	21,410	36%
West Pakistan								
				Indus Basin Works Program				
1950/51-1954/55	4,000	2,000	2,000	—	—	4,000	11,290	80%
1955/56-1959/60	7,570	4,640	2,930	—	—	7,570	16,550	74%
1960/61-1964/65	18,100	7,200	10,700	2,110	200	20,710	33,550	68%
1965/66-1969/70	26,100	10,100	16,000	3,600	—	29,700	51,950	64%

Note : Public sector development expenditure of the Provincial Govt. plus that of Central Govt. on projects located in the Province, mainly based on Planning Commission estimates. Private development expenditure as estimated by Planning Committee.

Source : Report of Advisory Panels for the Fourth Five-Year Plan, Volume I. Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan, July 1971.

সোনার বাঙলা স্থাপত্য কেন?

কোনো বিষয়	বাংলাদেশ	পশ্চিম পাকিস্তান
রাজস্ব খরচ	১০০০ কোটি টাকা	৫০০০ কোটি টাকা
উন্নয়ন খরচ	২০০০ কোটি টাকা	৩০০০ কোটি টাকা
মৌলিক পাসাখ	শতকরা ২০ ভাগ	শতকরা ৮০ ভাগ
সেমির দ্রব্য প্রদান	শতকরা ২৫ ভাগ	শতকরা ৭৫ ভাগ
কেন্দ্রীয় সরকার চাকুরী	শতকরা ১০ জন	শতকরা ৮৫ জন
সামরিক বিভাগে চাকুরী	শতকরা ১০ জন	শতকরা ২০ জন
চাউল মণ প্রতি	৫০ টাকা	২৫ টাকা
আটা মণ প্রতি	৩০ টাকা	১৫ টাকা
নরিয়ার তৈল সের প্রতি	৫ টাকা	২.৫০ পয়সা
স্বর্ণ প্রতি ভরি	১৭০ টাকা	১৩৫ টাকা

An Awami League poster shows the disparity in central expenditure on the two wings of Pakistan.

(Courtesy: The Statesman, Calcutta.)

WHY IS GOLDEN BANGLA A CREMATION GROUND?

Items of disparity	Bangladesh	West Pakistan
Revenue Expenditure	1,500 crore Takas	5,000 crore Takas
Development Expenditure	3,000 " "	6,000 " "
Foreign Aid	20%	80%
Import of Foreign Goods	25%	75%
Central Government jobs	15%	85%
Defence Department jobs	10%	90%
Rice per maund	50 Takas	25 Takas
Wheat per maund	30 Takas	15 Takas
Mustard oil per seer	5 Takas	2.50 Takas
Gold per 'Bhari' (A 'Bhari' is approx 10 gm)	170 Takas	135 Takas

The following Table II(36) will illustrate this Point.

TABLE II

Established industries in both wings	West Pakistan		East Pakistan	
	1947-48	1966-67	1947-48	1966-67
Cotton Textile production in million yards	350 1,853% increase	6,836	508 8.26% increase	550
Sugar production in thousand tons	10 2,940% increase	304	25 348% increase	112
Cement production in thousand tons	305 534% increase	1,934	46 63% increase	75

The eastern wing of Pakistan was also deprived of its legitimate share in the country's foreign trade earnings. Although East Pakistan's share of the country's foreign export was about 50% (sometimes rising to as high as 70%), its share in foreign imports seldom exceeded 33%, as shown in the Table III(37):

Not only did West Pakistan prosper at the cost of the eastern wing, it also utilised East Pakistan as an almost inexhaustible market for its finished products. Its exports to the eastern wing from 1957-58 onwards amounted to about half of its total exports, as evident from the Table IV(38).

Disparities in Agriculture and Irrigation

Pakistan has been a predominantly agricultural country. In 1966, eighty per cent of its population earned its livelihood from agriculture. The yield from agriculture constituted 60% of the total national income of Pakistan, and it earned about 71% of its foreign exchange through agricultural produce. Agriculture also provided employment to about 75% of Pakistani labourers(39). Thus agriculture was the mainstay of the country's economy.

* Tables III to IX - See pp.21-25.

In view of the importance of agriculture for the country's economy, the Planning Commission of Pakistan drew up elaborate plans for improvement of irrigation and power generation for agricultural purposes. But these plans were all heavily weighed in favour of the western wing, as will be clear from the Table V(40).

In the matter of distribution of agricultural inputs between the two wings, the same partisan attitude is reflected. In the allotment of tractors, improved seeds, fertilizers etc., the policy of the government was to give priority to West Pakistan, while the needs of the eastern wing were ignored. This is amply illustrated by the Table VI(41).

This preferential treatment brought about a virtual "Green Revolution" in West Pakistan, especially Punjab, while agricultural production in East Pakistan remained almost static.

Disparities in Education and Social Welfare

In the field of education, the ruling elite of Pakistan followed a systematic policy of keeping the eastern wing lagging behind, perhaps with the deliberate design of "giving the West Pakistani children a better academic start so that their future career was firmly assured"(42). The comparative figures relating to the progress of education from primary to university level, in both the wings of Pakistan during two decades since the birth of the country, speak volumes regarding this policy of discrimination against the eastern wing.

These are reproduced in the Table VII(43).

An analysis of the above figures brings out the startling fact that the number of primary schools in the eastern wing actually decreased during twenty years commencing from 1947-48, although the number of children in the school going age increased during the same period. In contrast, the number of primary schools in the western wing during the corresponding twenty-year period increased by 450%. This had a direct repercussion on the "end product" or the number of university students. Whereas the number of students in West Pakistani universities increased thirty times during twenty years (1947-48 to 1968-69), the corresponding number in the universities in East Pakistan increased only five times. It can be safely presumed that this utter neglect of education in the eastern wing was a deliberate attempt on the part of the Punjabi dominated ruling elite of Pakistan to keep the people of the eastern wing educationally backward and thus deprive them of their legitimate share in the