

TOLL CALLED HIGH

Deaths Put at 10,000 —Radio Says Army Is in Control

Special to The New York Times

NEW DELHI, March 27—Pakistani Government troops supported by artillery and air force jets were reported battling on many fronts today with the forces of Sheik Mujibur Rahman, the nationalist leader of East Pakistan.

According to one Indian press report, the Pakistani Army has killed more than 10,000 people, most of them by artillery and tank fire. The air force was reported to have bombed Comilla, a town of 50,000 people, which is said to be under the control of Sheik Mujib's forces.

Another Indian press report quoted Sheik Mujib's clandestine radio as having said that Lieut. Gen. Tikka Khan, the martial-law administrator of East Pakistan, had been assassinated. Other reports said that the general had been seriously injured, but not killed, by a shot.

Attacked at House

He was reportedly attacked at his house in Dacca this afternoon by members of Sheik Mujib's Awami League.

[The official Pakistan radio was reported by United Press International to have said that the army was in full control in East Pakistan and that reports of fighting by some foreign news agencies were without foundation.]

The Awami League volunteers were reported to have been joined in the over-all fighting by the East Pakistan Rifles, the provincial militia, and East Pakistani policemen. They were reported to be battling central Government troops in many towns and cities, including

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The New York Times

Published: March 28, 1971

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In Dacca, Troops Use Artillery to Halt Revolt

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area and the barracks of the East Pakistan Rifles, a paramilitary force made up of Bengalis, the predominant people of East Pakistan.

Some fires were still burning and sporadic shooting was continuing early this morning when the 35 foreign newsmen were expelled from Dacca.

"My God, my God," said a Pakistani student watching from a hotel window, trying to keep back tears, "they're killing them. They're slaughtering them."

Homes Set Afire

On the ride to the airport in a guarded convoy of military trucks, the newsmen saw troops setting fire to the thatched-roof houses of poor Bengalis who live along the road and who are some of the staunchest supporters of the self-rule movement.

"Bangla Desh is finished, many people are killed," a West Pakistani soldier at the airport said in a matter-of-fact tone. Bangla Desh, or Bengal Nation, was the name adopted by leaders of the autonomy movement in East Pakistan.

When the military action began on Thursday night, soldiers, shouting victory slogans, set ablaze large areas in many parts of Dacca after first shooting into the buildings with automatic rifles, machine guns and recoilless rifles.

The firing started at about 11 P.M., but at first it was intermittent and it was not clear that a full-scale military operation had started.

When the foreign newsmen, all of whom were staying at the Intercontinental Hotel, tried to go outside to find out what was happening, they were forced back in by a heavily reinforced army guard and told they would be shot if they tried to step out of the building.

Telephone calls to friends and news sources in the city, brought reports of scattered shooting and civilians' putting up barricades in the streets. At 12:20 A.M., a call to the home of Sheik Mujibur Rahman, leader of the independent movement, was answered by a man who said he was an official of the Awami League, Sheik Mujib's political party.

"The situation is very bad," he said, and he added that Sheik Mujib was in his bedroom. The Pakistan radio reported later that Sheik Mujib was arrested at 1:30 A.M. The report said that five of his colleagues were also arrested.

The firing began to increase in the vicinity of the hotel and at 1 A.M. it seemed to become very heavy all over the city. Artillery opened up, but it was difficult to tell where the shells were landing. Some, however, seemed to be falling in the areas of the university and the East Pakistan Rifles headquarters.

At 1:25 A.M. the phones at the hotel went dead, shut down by order of the military guard outside. The lights on the telegraph office tower went out at about the same time. Heavy automatic-weapons fire could be heard in the university area and other districts.

Occasionally there would be an answering report, perhaps from one of the old rifles that some of the militant students were reported to have been collecting. But at no time was there any significant answering fire.

Attack at Shopping Bazaar

At about 2:15 A.M. a jeep with a mounted machine gun drove by the front of the hotel, turned left on Mymensingh Road and stopped in front of a shopping bazaar, with its gun trained on the second floor windows. A dozen soldiers on foot joined those on the jeep, one group carrying some kind of rocket piece.

From the second floor suddenly came cries of "Bengalis, unite!" and the soldiers opened fire with the machine gun, spraying the building indiscriminately. The soldiers then started moving down an alley adjacent to the bazaar, firing into, and then overturning cars that were blocking the alley. The scene was lit by the soldiers' flashlights, and to the newsmen watching from the 10th floor of the Intercontinental, it was an incredible drama.

As the soldiers were firing down the alley, a group of about 15 or 20 young Bengalis started along the road toward them, from about 200 yards off. They were shouting in defiance at the soldiers, but they seemed unarmed and their hands appeared empty.

The machine gun on the jeep swung around toward them and opened fire. Soldiers with automatic rifles joined in. The Bengali youths scattered into the shadows on both sides of the road. It was impossible to tell whether any had been wounded or killed.

The soldiers then turned their



Frederic Ohringer
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who is blamed by the Bengalis for much of the trouble, was flown back to West Pakistan from Dacca.

attention back to the alley. They set a spare-parts garage on fire and then moved on to what was apparently their main objective, the office and press of The People, an English-language daily paper that had strongly supported Sheik Mujib and ridiculed the army.

Shouting in Urdu, the language of West Pakistan, the soldiers warned any persons inside that unless they surrendered they would be shot. There was no answer and no one emerged. The troops then fired a rocket into the building and followed this with small-arms fire and machine-gun bursts. Then they set fire to the building and began smashing the press and other equipment.

Moving farther along, they set ablaze all the shops and shacks behind the bazaar and soon the flames were climbing high above the two-story building. Then they came back down the alley toward the street, waving their hands in the air and shouting war cries.

They were shouting "Narai Takbir," a Moslem cry meaning "victory for God," and "Pakistan Zindabad!" — "Long Live Pakistan!"

Fire Lights Sky

In the distance, fire that looked as though it extended over at least an acre lighted the sky. Pakistani journalists in the hotel said two dormitories at the university appeared to be on fire.

Shortly after 4 A.M. the shouting eased somewhat, but artillery rounds and machine-gun bursts could be heard occasionally. Tracer bullets from a long way off flew by the hotel.

At 4:45 A.M., another big fire blazed, in the direction of the East Pakistan Rifles headquarters.

At 5:45, in the hazy light of dawn, six Chinese-made T-54 light tanks with soldiers riding on them rumbled into the city and began patrolling main thoroughfares.

The intermittent firing and occasional artillery bursts continued through yesterday and early today, right up to the time the newsmen were expelled.

Helicopter flew overhead yesterday morning, apparently on reconnaissance. Four helicopters given to Pakistan by Saudi Arabia for relief work after last November's cyclone and tidal wave in East Pakistan were reported being used for the military operation in the province.

At 7 A.M. the Dacca radio, which had been taken over by the army, announced that President Agha Mahammad Yahya Khan had arrived back in West Pakistan and would address the nation at 8 P.M.

A West Pakistan brigadier who came into the hotel was asked by newsmen what the military operation was all about. "We've taken over, it's as simple as that," he said.

A military vehicle with a loudspeaker went through the streets issuing a warning. People immediately went to their roofs to remove the black flags that had been one of the symbols of the noncooperation movement.

Shortly after 8 A.M., a black

1959 Chevrolet with an armed escort of troops in jeeps and trucks pulled up in front of the hotel. This convoy was to take Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his party to the airport to fly back to West Pakistan.

Mr. Bhutto, the dominant political leader of West Pakistan, opposed Sheik Mujib's demands for East Pakistan autonomy.

It is generally accepted that his opposition, supported or engineered by the army and business establishment in West Pakistan, was what forced the crisis. Mr. Bhutto, who is aware that the Bengalis largely blame him for their present troubles, came into the lobby flanked by civilian and army bodyguards with automatic weapons. He looked frightened and brushed off all newsmen's questions with, "I have no comment to make."

Hotel Clerk Sobs

Just before he left the hotel, the Dacca radio said that anyone who violated the curfew would be shot. It then went off the air for an hour and a half, signing off with the Pakistan national anthem sung in Urdu. One of the clerks at the hotel desk leaned on the counter, his hands clasped and shaking in front of him, his eyes brimming with tears.

At 10 A.M. the radio announced the new martial orders that were said to be necessary because "unbridled political activity had assumed an alarming proportion beyond the normal control of the civil administration."

Every time newsmen in the hotel asked officers for information, they were rebuffed. All attempts to reach diplomatic missions failed. In one confrontation, a captain grew enraged at a group of newsmen who had walked out the front door to talk to him. He ordered them back into the building and, to their retreating backs, he shouted, "I can handle you. If I can kill my own people, I can kill you."

No information was available on what role was played by the East Pakistan Rifles, the Bengali paramilitary force, and

the East Bengal Regiment, a heavily Bengali army unit stationed 25 miles north of Dacca.

The Bengali population considered these units potentially sympathetic but the army insisted that they were loyal to the Government.

Crisis Reported Controlled

Shortly after noon, as artillery bursts and automatic fire could be heard in the city, the Dacca radio announced: "The general situation in the province has been brought under control."

The British Broadcasting Corporation reported at 5 P.M. Friday that Calcutta had monitored a clandestine broadcast saying that Sheik Mujib was calling on his people to carry on the fight against the "enemy forces."

Shortly afterward, the military Government sent word to the hotel that foreign newsmen must be ready to leave by 6:15 P.M. The newsmen packed and paid their bills, but it was 8:20, just after President Yahya's speech, before their convoy of five trucks with soldiers in front and in back, left for the airport.

Just before leaving, the lieutenant colonel in charge was asked by a newsmen why the foreign press had to leave. "We want you to leave because it would be too dangerous for you," he said. "It will be too bloody." All the hotel employees and other foreigners in the hotel believed that once the newsmen left, carnage would begin.

"This isn't going to be a hotel," said a hotel official, "it's going to be a bloody hospital."

At the airport, with firing going on in the distance, the newsmen's luggage was rigidly checked and some television film, particularly that of the British Broadcasting Corporation, was confiscated.