Army take over after night of shelling

EAST PAKISTAN fell to the army of President Yahya Khan on Friday after a night of indiscriminate, cold-blooded shelling by Dacca and the Bangladesh army in other towns in the province, at least temporarily under army control.

Central Government troops seized certain places before midnight and then in three hours of unprovoked shelling, proceeded to encircle and attack all areas of the city.

By morning several buildings were burning. The streets were deserted, political activities had ceased and the army had completed its occupation. Scattered outposts of small arms fire shelled the city throughout the day as tanks and lorries loaded with troops moved to and from the city.

There was no immediate word on the number of dead and wounded, but, judging by the intensity of the shelling in the dormitory area of Dacca, University civilian casualties will prove to be high. Army losses must be high, if any, as there was no sign of armed resistance in the city.

With communications between Dacca and the rest of the province cut off, as well as reports from the world completely severed, it was impossible to tell how the occupation was proceeding.

The takeover by the army came only after hours, and it became clear that the talks between the army's political leaders to resolve the country's constitutional crisis had collapsed.

Army commanders refused to explain what happened or to take control. A haphazard curfew was clamped on the city around 6 am and all houses were locked and guests at the Intercontinental Hotel were warned that they would be shot if they tried to leave the building.

It was not clear whether there had been widespread arrests in the wake of the fighting. The first targets of a military clampdown would be Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, political leader of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, and the Bengali nationalist leader, Mr. Shahid Islam, who was kept under close surveillance at the airport and hotel as well.

The West Pakistani army, under the leadership of Mr. Ziaur Rahman, is expected to move into Dacca in the next few hours.

The first official word on the move came on Friday morning, when Dacca Radio broadcast an announcement by General Ziaur Rahman, the army's chief of staff, that his forces would enter the city.

The announcement read on the radio in English, Bengali and Urdu, said: "A grave situation has arisen in East Pakistan in which the security of the country and the safety of the people are endangered. The administration has assumed full responsibility for the control of the civil police and soldiers."

GREAT BARRIER REEF

Aid for the Great Barrier Reef

The Great Barrier Reef has been identified as an area of international importance and fast disappearing. The Australian government is now considering a plan to protect the reef by setting aside a large area as a marine park.

The plan would ban fishing and all other commercial activities. It is estimated that the cost of setting up the park would be approximately $50 million. The money would come from a combination of government funds and private donations.

The Great Barrier Reef is one of the world's most valuable natural resources. It is an area of outstanding beauty and scientific importance. It is home to a vast array of marine life, including many species that are found nowhere else in the world.

The Australian government has been considering the plan for several years. It was first proposed in 1972 and has been debated ever since. The plan has been supported by many environmentalists, scientists, and conservation groups.

However, there has been strong opposition from the fishing industry and some local residents. They argue that the plan would cause economic hardship and that the reef can be protected without it.

The Australian government is now expected to make a decision on the plan in the coming months. It is hoped that the reef can be protected in time to prevent its destruction.

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