

# A Resistance Fighter Tells His Story

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Special to The New York Times

CALCUTTA, India, April 2—Santi Kamal was dressed in civilian clothes on Friday, March 26, when he saw several hundred West Pakistani soldiers arriving in trucks at Khulna, a town of about 20,000 in the south of East Pakistan.

The soldiers, trailing a few artillery pieces behind their trucks, came from the north, presumably from Jessore, and camped at about 1 P.M. inside the walled grounds of the Circuit House in Khulna. Patrols immediately moved out of the camp and disarmed the local police and the Bengali members of the East Pakistani Rifles, a regional security force.

Most of the officers of the East Pakistani Rifles were from West Pakistan and they joined the soldiers, Santi Kamal said.

At about 4 P.M., the troops, he said, began patrolling the streets of Khulna and shortly afterwards opened fire on a crowd in front of the local movie theater. Santi said he saw at least 30 bodies.

Santi Kamal arrived in Calcutta this morning to seek aid from the hastily formed underground on this side of the border. He was met by chance at the home of a well-to-do local resident and agreed to talk only if his real name was not used. The reason, he said, was that his wife and five children remained behind in a

village near Khulna.

A thin nervous man, 28 years old, he spoke in Bengali and was closely questioned by an interpreter. He said that he was a platoon leader of the Ansars, a local home guard, in the village of Kalaroa, in Khulna district.

When word spread in Khulna about the disarming of the local forces, said Santi, several hundred persons, mostly youths, began parading through the streets demanding independence for East Pakistan.

He joined one parade and heard shots from near the movie house. About a dozen soldiers, he said, were firing into a group composed of demonstrators and people heading home after seeing the afternoon movie. The soldier, he added, were shooting at adults and using bayonets and rifle butts on children.

During the firing, Santi said, he rushed toward the soldiers at one point and was shot. After that he ran away, but less than an hour later, he said, he saw soldiers shoot down another group of about 10 persons.

Later in the day, about 8 P.M., the soldiers broke up another large demonstration and then began moving from house to house, shooting and setting fires with oil torches, said Santi.

A few hours later he left town on a bicycle and, after

six hours of pedaling, reached Kalaroa, where his Ansar unit was located and where efforts were under way to march on Jessore. The West Pakistani soldiers, he said, maintain a large garrison about three miles from that city.

Two hundred local militiamen set out the next morning in a borrowed bus and several trucks, he said, and once in Jhinkargacha on the outskirts of Jessore were instructed by the noncommissioned officer who commanded them to find the West Pakistani soldiers and fight them.

One patrol of 28 militiamen, including Santi, surrounded a house in which soldiers were billeted and waited until a group of 25 left, he said.

"We waited until they were all outside," he said. "They were walking, they weren't running. They probably thought we had gone."

Santi said he and a friend opened fire, hitting several of the soldiers before they found cover.

"They didn't fire back, they ran, and they didn't run back inside the house," he said. "They ran the other way and we hit some more."

That night, said Santi, he hitchhiked back to Kalaroa and spent the next day there helping to arrange supplies for the men in Jessore. Then on Tuesday, he said, he was told to come to India to seek aid.

The New York Times

Published: April 3, 1971

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