A Nation Divided
East Pakistan is Seen Gaining Independence, But It Will Take Years

Bengalis Increasingly View The U.S. as Their Enemy; Learning to Be Guerrillas

Well-Fed Army, Ill-Fed People

By Peter R. Kann
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Dacca, East Pakistan — An independent East Pakistan seems to be one of those ideas whose time is coming.

Travels across the ravaged land and talks with military participants in the civil conflict, its innocent sufferers and its diplomatic observers leave the distinct impression that someday East Pakistan and West Pakistan will be separate legally as well as ideologically.

How soon Bengali Desh, or Bengal nation, comes to pass — and the diplomatic assessment

This is the second of two articles on the situation in East Pakistan.

Business and Finance

Big Board Members will be assessed 0.375% on certain commission income to reimburse Merrill Lynch for costs of its rescue-acquisition of Coldogh & Co. The New York exchange also proposed to enlarge the customer-assistance trust fund to $110 million from $50 million, mainly due to costs of the Blair liquidation.

Postal rates won’t be increased again until mid-1972, the Postal Service promised, if mailers agree to the full $1.45 billion increase currently being considered. The proposition was the strongest bid yet to cut lengthy rate hearings with a settlement. Mailers’ reaction was mixed.

Ford Motor’s profit rose 19% to $191.7 million in the second quarter despite the effects of a strike in Britain.

Rail labor talks collapsed as the United Transportation Union continued its strike against four carriers. In another move of the Federal mediator said the Nixon administration is studying ways to resolve the impasse, including a legislative settlement.

Margin requirements would be applied to borrowers as well as lenders under rules proposed by the Federal Reserve Board. The plan implements new legislation.

U.S. gold reserves dropped $61 million in June to $108.8 billion, bringing international reserves to the lowest level since before World War II. The drop was the eighth in a row.

Zinc prices were raised a cent to 17 cents a pound by the Amac Lead unit of American Metal Climax and the New Jersey Zinc unit of Gulf-Western.

Newspaper prices are being raised $8 a ton by MacMillan Bloedel, effective Nov. 1. The new price is $18 a ton west of the Rockies.

A South African newspaper editor said support for the U.S. is rising.

APOLLO 13 has been rescued from deep space.

Today’s space shuttle is the first to dock with the space station. The spaceship returns to earth.

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Liberation forces still talk of massing offensives that will “liberate” the land as early as this fall, or of the Indian army coming to their aid, or of the Pakistan army simply firing and going away. But the Pakistan army, tough and tenacious, seems determined to hold on to all its positions. The Indians, while adding the Bengali resistance, seem anxious to avoid full-scale war. Many Bengalis don’t seem to comprehend that guerrilla war, which are being waged with some effectiveness, is their only hope and that it requires much time and patience.

The fighting began March 26 with attacks by the Pakistani army on civilians in Dacca. The amount of blood that has been spilled in East Pakistan since then appears to rule out any sort of political compromise. Diplomats say that a minimum of 300,000 and perhaps as many as a million people have been killed in four months, most of them Bengali civilians slain by the Pakistani army. Six million refugees have fled to India, and millions more displaced persons still hiding within East Pakistan.

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say that a minimum of 200,000 and perhaps as many as a million people have been killed in four months, during which time the Bengali civilians have fled to Pakistan. Six million refugees have fled to India, and millions more are displaced persons still hiding within East Pakistan.

In the view of nearly all observers here, much more blood will flow, many more villages will be destroyed and many more people will be uprooted before the conflict ends.

If the war does result in Bangla Desh, America may be in trouble. By continuing to supply aid—and particularly arms—to the central government of Pakistan, the U.S. is increasing the President’s risk to be viewed as an enemy by the Bengali people. Moreover, the longer the Pakistan army is able to maintain its hold on East Pakistan, the more likely it is that the independence movement will slip under Communist influence.

A Problem for India

This is one of the worries that lead some Indian policy makers to favor war with Pakistan. India’s allies are still against a full-scale war, but artillery exchanges erupt daily along the border. President adviser Henry Kissinger, during recent meetings with American official in Islamabad, said the national Pakistan capital, located in the West, is said to have called the odds for an Indo-Pakistani war better than one in three.

The scope of the Pakistan army’s military problem here can be seen in a comparison with Vietnam. There, a million-man South Vietnamese army plus American troops and massive firepower must try to control a population of 17 million. India, basically sympathetic to the government. Here, only 60,000 West Pakistani troops are trying to control a thoroughly hostile population of 75 million. East Pakistan, moreover, is surrounded on three sides by India, which is giving sanctuary and supplies to the guerrillas. And the Pakistan army’s supply routes from West Pakistan to the East must circumvent, by sea and air, 1,200 miles of India.

Of course, the Mukti Bahani, or liberation army, isn’t the Vietcong. For one thing, the guerrillas aren’t Communist. For another, they are not, or are not yet, very effective fighters. They have been at it for less than four months, and organization and discipline don’t come naturally to most Bengalis.

Learning to Be Guerrillas

But they are learning. In recent weeks they have been discovering how to disrupt the Pakistan army’s lines of communication: bridges are being dynamited and railroad tracks sabotaged. The key railroad line from Chittagong, East Pakistan’s major port, to Dacca, its capital, has been put out of operation, and almost all supplies must move inland by riverboat. Electric power facilities in Dacca and elsewhere have been blasted. The guerrillas also are concentrating on assassinations of local people who collaborate with the army.

The Mukti Bahani enjoys some big advantages, though it is far from ready to benefit fully from them. Much of the land, the towns and off the main roads, is a vacuum that 60,000 soldiers can never hope to fill. At night the Pakistan army withdraws into military camps, but even when the guerrillas learn how to use mortars and rockets, these camps could become traps rather than refuges.

The Pakistan army’s crude and bloody tactics, while cowing most Bengalis, have been so frightening public support behind the independence movement and have left the Mukti Bahani with a sea of sympathizers in which it is able to swim. A severe failure of this fall or winter, which

Today's Index

Newsprint prices are being raised $8 a ton by MacMillan Bloedel, effective Nov. 1. The new price is $165 a ton west of the Rockies.

International Telephone said second quarter earnings rose 12% to a record $104.3 million.

Anaconda’s net plunged 65% in the second quarter because of Chilean extraction problems and lower copper prices. The company also dropped plans to participate in an Australian aluminum mining project.

Boeing’s earnings rose slightly in the second quarter, but the big aerospace concern warned it expects depressed profit for several years.

Grumman’s cost problems with the new F-14 fighter plane will be studied by a 40-man team of Navy procurement experts. Grumman is seeking contract revisions.

Lockheed-aid debate will continue in the Senate, as proponents of the legislation fell 18 votes short in their bid to cut off the debate.

Union Oil reported a 10% drop in second quarter earnings, while Continental Oil and Marathon Oil posted small increases.

Nuclear power plants using breeder reactors seem further from reality than ever, as a prototype plant in Michigan has been largely unsuccessful after eight years of operation.

National Steel reported a 44% spurt in second quarter earnings because of customers’ strike-hedge purchases.

RCA’s computer unit announced its first major effort to sell computers abroad with the formation of a marketing and services company in Britain.

Markets

Stocks—Volume 8,970,000 shares. Dow Jones Industrials 885.57, up 1.09; transportation 213.35, off 0.80; utilities 117.05, up 0.19.

Bonds—Dow Jones 40 bonds 70.40, up 0.06. Commodities—Dow Jones futures index 142.56, off 0.47; spot index 141.46, off 0.46.
A Nation Divided: East Pakistanis Likely to Win Independence—in Time

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Western economists consider likely, could possibly produce from the eastern sympathizers, great waves of desperate and angry activists. "A nation with a well-fed army and an ill-fed army cannot survive," a British professor says.

A clandestine meeting with a Muktibahini unit leader at a Muslim village deep inside East Pakistan has caught into guerrilla operations. It is early morning, and the leader is sitting in front of a peasant but where he has been sleeping the past several nights.

He said he had not been able to escape the summary execution of his companions and had fled India. He was a former commissioned officer in the Pakistan army who, like almost all Bengali soldiers and policemen, joined the revolutionary movement late in April. (Some were subsequently killed, others fled to India.)

The rebel leader claims the army is supplied with old Lee-Enfield rifles. But they also have one or more light machine guns, grenades, and dynamite. Some of the arms are as well as the ammunition are supplied by India, to which this unit fled for several weeks in April. The unit is short of weapons or bullets, the leader says.

It doesn't receive any direct orders but reports on its operations by runner to higher Muktibahini headquarters near, or across, the Indian border. The unit depends for food, fuel, and other necessities on local villagers, some of whom are paid and others of whom make "voluntary contributions."

The unit has launched attacks in this area in the past weeks. For a week, one and a few weeks, one and a few weeks before the police station, in which 11 weapons were captured. It also blew up a bridge along the road. When Pakistan army troops reached the site, they were ambushed by another unit of Muktibahini. The Pakistani soldiers suffered at least a dozen casualties. This 27-man unit has had any casualties to date, nor have any of the men quit the unit.

The leader thinks the Muktibahini will soon win the war because the people are behind it and because, he says, 300,000 Bengalis are getting military training in India. The information about public support is apparently accurate. But the claim about military training, according to more reliable sources, is probably a tenfold exaggeration. And believing in quick victory is both naive and dangerous.

Little Realism on the Other Side

The Pakistan army, however, is hardly more realistic. A Pakistan general in Dacca flatly states that guerrillas in the area where the Muktibahini leader and his unit are operating have been eliminated. The general says army casualties in all East Pakistan are averaging only five a day; diplomats estimate them at no more than 50.

Army morale still seems to be generally high. But the conflict's initial stage, in which the army ruthlessly recaptured rebel-held towns in a series of major operations, has been over for three months, and the new stage of guerrilla warfare will be much more grueling. Many Pakistan soldiers came to East Pakistan thinking they would be here for only a month or two of combat, not a semi-permanent occupation army. The flat, marshy rice-land of East Pakistan is misery to soldiers from the hills of West Pakistan. Scattered reports say that the distribution of Pakistan military officers — including a senior navy commander and an air force general — are opposing the army's brutal tactics and slaughter of the civilian population.

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The Pakistan army, however, doesn't appear to be capable of containing the present threat. To most of the military men, this is a holy war for the preservation of Pakistan and the maintenance of its secular religion. And if Paki- stan's President Yahya Khan under political pressure in West Pakistan, it is likely to come from hawks calling for even tougher measures than from doves. "West Pakistan will not be treated as we think it should be treated," a European diplomat in Dacca says.

To help control the Bengali population, the army has been setting up a network of peace committees composed of local officials and officers of the civil administration, which the army cannot fully rely on. Peace-committee members are drawn from East Pakistan's non-Bengali minority and are joined by members of the membership of small, conservative, anti-Bengali political parties like the Moslem League and the Jam- maat-islami. The peace committees serve as agents for the army, informing on the civil administration as well as on the general populace. They are also in charge of confiscating and distributing shops and lands from "enemies of the people," like Hindus and pro-inde- pendence Bengalis. The peace committees also recruit and arm vigilantes. Many of them are common criminals who have thrown their lot with the army. "Bihar, Bengal opposition, louts and thugs"—that's the capsule definition offered by one diplomat.

Terrors for Collaborators, Too

While the general Bengali population is terri- torized—and terrorized—by these local army collaborators, the collaborators also live in fear.

Dozens of peace committee members have been assassinated by Mukti Bahani or by Bengali neighbors. In one town a peace-committee official was shot on the floor of his house with three rifle slugs by men beside him. In another town the peace-committee chairman has paid $200 protection money to the Mukti Bahani to prevent, or postpone, assassination.

In one roadblock in a peace committee member who two days before had turned several Bengalis over to the army was routed out of his bed at night by Mukti Bahani. He was given an hour's notice to be in line. The "people's court" was convened in his front yard with neighbors summoned as jurymen. He was convicted and executed, and his body was hanged in the road as a warning to other col- laborators.

Then there was this encounter by two re- porters with a small-town peace committee. The Mukti Bahani was in charge of the committee, the chairman, an elderly Bihari, said. A half hour later the tale had escalated into an attack by 100 Mukti Bahani men carrying ma- me, a large Bombay, and batons, who asked, "Do you know the war?" The "Rakhar" has only four rifle, the army does not have even 10 miles away, maybe there will be more attacks." The committee members know that they themselves are targets. Death shrouds the doorsteps as a sign that they are marked men.

Like the army, the people's committee blames some of the blame on minorities and good people (criminals). Indian police are also being held responsible for some abuses. Individuals—most of whom are lumped together under the term "antijealousies"—All townpeople support the army and the peace committee, these committee members say. As they talk to the

French Auto Output Rises

French auto production rose in the first half to 1,000,120 vehicles from 1,069,781 in the like period a year earlier, the Automobile Producers Federation reported. Exports rose to 484,431 from 508,611.