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CIVIL WAR FLARES IN E. PAKISTAN

Sheikh 'a traitor,' says President

By **DAVID LOSHAK** in New Delhi

CIVIL war broke out in East Pakistan yesterday. There was bitter fighting, with heavy casualties, throughout the province in the clash between the East and West wings of the Moslem State.

Last night, the Eastern wing was cut off from the outside world. It is separated from West Pakistan, from which it declared independence, by more than 1,000 miles of Indian territory.

The fate of the East's rebel leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was unknown as troops of the 70,000-strong force sent from the West province fought with Bengalis of the East Pakistan Rifles and the police.

STUDENTS IN

the police.

Unconfirmed reports from Dacca said the Sheikh and five of his closest associates had been arrested.

A curfew has been imposed in Dacca and other cities and Government troops claimed to have occupied Dacca radio station.

Reports filtering across the border with India speak of many civilians being killed in Dacca and of severe clashes and

*Unity Dream Dissolved and
Picture—P5;*

Map—Back Page;

Editorial Comment—P14

hundreds of arrests in Chittagong and other centres.

President Yahya Khan broadcast to the nation last night from West Pakistan. He declared that Sheikh Mujib was a traitor who wanted East Pakistan to break away.

"This crime will not go unpunished. I will not allow this power-hungry and unpatriotic despot to play with the destiny of 120 million people."

Troops loyal to Sheikh Mujib claimed to have captured the Chittagong station of Radio Pakistan, forcing Government troops to retreat after fierce fighting.

Last night, on a clandestine radio calling itself "The Voice of Bangla Desh" (Free Bengal), the Sheikh proclaimed the province "the Sovereign Independent People's Republic of Bangla Desh."

Troops "surrounded"

The radio which seemed to be located in the northern part of the province, said men of the East Bengal Regiment, the East Pakistan Rifles and the entire police force had surrounded West Pakistan troops in Chittagong, Comilla, Sylhet, Jessore, Barisal and Khulna. All East Pakistan forces rallied behind the Sheikh.

Earlier the Sheikh broadcast a message saying that the Army under the martial law governor, Gen. Tikka Khan, made a sudden attack on the East Pakistan Rifles' base and on a Dacca police station, killing many people.

The Rifles have a base at Rajabag, a Dacca suburb.

Sheikh Mujib said: "People are fighting gallantly for the cause of freedom. May Allah bless you and help in your struggle for freedom."

In a series of martial law declarations, Gen. Tikka, known as one of the sternest "hardliners" in the Yahya regime, declared that he would crush the independence movement.

Jail penalty

The declarations provide penalties of up to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment.

They ban all political meetings, processions and speeches. All publications, including reports sent abroad, are to be censored.

Government and "semi-government" employees who have stayed away from work since early in the month on Sheikh Mujib's orders were ordered to return.

Firearms must be surrendered. Any weapons, including the favourite local lathis (bamboo rods) are banned.

The regulations prohibit the continuance of any strike or lock-out. The Army was given authority to search any premises. All duplicating machines are to be deposited with the martial law authorities.

Gen. Tikka said: "Discipline is now so rife that the only way to safeguard Pakistan's continued integrity and unity is to curb the destructive

Continued on Page 7, Col. 5

PAKISTAN

By DAVID LOSHAK

Continued from Page 1

tendencies shown in the East wing."

In Dacca last night newspaper correspondents, including Simon Dring of *The Daily Telegraph*, were not allowed to leave their hotel.

There was also violence in West Pakistan. Supporters of Mr Bhutto attacked shops and houses belonging to Bengalis. In the industrial town of Lyallpur, near Lahore, a curfew was imposed after an outbreak of looting and arson.

Talks break down

The Pakistan situation flared into violence after President Yahya's sudden departure from Dacca. This marked the breakdown of 11 days of talks which vainly sought to find a way out of the constitutional impasse.

But despite carefully-calculated "leaks" in the past few days, designed to give the impression that a compromise was near, there never was any real chance of a lasting or meaningful agreement.

The two wings of Pakistan were too deeply divided. President Yahya's drawn-out discussions with the political leaders enabled the Army to "buy time" for a showdown with the East wing.

In a broadcast on March 6, President Yahya gave warning that he was pledged to maintain the nation's unity by extreme force if necessary.

Prospect of bloodshed

The prospect now is of great bloodshed in East Pakistan. It is hard to see how the Army, however tough and well-armed, can permanently hold down a totally hostile population.

It is cut off from its bases and supply sources in West Pakistan. India has banned all Pakistan overflights so supply planes must make the six-hour journey by way of Ceylon. The sea journey takes a week.

Even if the Army succeeds for the time being in quelling East Pakistan's independence movement by sheer force, the prospects of keeping Pakistan united are dead.

Unity-dream dissolved—P5

Editorial comment—P14