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Heavy fighting as Shaikh Mujibur declares E Pakistan independent

Civil war raged in the eastern region of Pakistan last night after a radio broadcast announced that Shaikh Mujibur Rahman had proclaimed it an independent republic. President Yahya Khan outlawed the Shaikh's Awami League and denounced the Shaikh himself as a traitor whose crime "would not go unpunished".

Political activity throughout Pakistan has been banned and an indefinite curfew has been imposed on the eastern wing.

Official communications between East Pakistan and the rest of the world have been cut. The only news about the day's dramatic developments came in clandestine radio bulletins broadcast

from Dacca and from reports by travellers crossing into India.

The Press Trust of India, quoting reports from the East Pakistan-India border, said that Dacca, the capital of the eastern wing, had become a "battlefield". It also quoted Shaikh Mujibur's claim that West Pakistan troops had been surrounded in six cities