

Tikka Khan is shot, Mujib promises victory in day or two DACCA CITY IS BOMBED

AGARTALA, March 27.

AS many as 100,000 people are feared to have been killed in Bangla Desh since the Pakistani armed forces launched their massive military operations, a liberation force source said tonight.

The source said Dacca University was completely destroyed under heavy shelling by the Pakistani army tanks.

Heavy fighting was continuing in East Pakistani towns north of Tripura, with Pakistani troops using mortars, the source added.

Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan, martial law administrator of East Pakistan, died in a nursing home today at 3.15 p.m. Bangla Desh time, after being seriously injured when freedom-fighters stormed his Dacca residence, reports reaching here from across the border said.

The BBC, quoting Dacca reports, said Gen. Tikka Khan

*Bhashani men
join
liberation force*

KRISHNAGAR, March 27: Maulana Abdul Hamid Bhashani, leader of the left-wing National Awami Party, today directed members of his peasant organisation, estimated to number 50,000, to join the liberation force in Bangla Desh, reports reaching here said.

The Maulana, a long-time advocate of an independent East Bengal, had kept his party out of the December 7 elections in which Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League secured an absolute majority in the stillborn National Assembly. He had fully endorsed Mr. Rahman's civil disobedience movement.—U.N.I.

had been shot at and wounded.

Radio Pakistan tonight said, "The authorities in Dacca have denied BBC reports that the martial law administrator, Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan, was wounded when a mob attacked his residence." The radio did not make any reference to other radios which had broadcast the report that the General had been killed.

Reports from inside the troubled land, broadcast by the free Bangla radio stations and corroborated by other sources across the border, said bombs were dropped over Dacca and Khulna. In the bombing of Dacca a large hospital was destroyed and most of its in-patients were killed.

The free Bangla Radio said today that men of the Punjab Regiment of the Pakistani Army had started surrendering to the liberation forces. A broadcast monitored here said some Ansars had also surrendered. It said Dacca Radio had been surrounded by freedom fighters and the station was virtually under seizure.

Men of the Baluchi regiment deployed in Bangla Desh defied the orders of their West wing commanders, the free Bangla Radio said.

The Sheikh promising victory in a day "or two" to his followers asked the West Pakistani troops to surren-

der. Otherwise we will avenge the blood of the Bengalis you have killed."

Major Zia Khan, chief of the Bangla Desh liberation army, declared over the free Bangla Radio tonight that Bangla Desh would be rid of the Pakistani military administration in two or three days.

The West Punjabi soldiers "will be annihilated" if they did not surrender, he said.

Mr. Rahman told the West Pakistani soldiers that they would be allowed to leave Bangla Desh if they handed over their arms to men of the East Pakistan Rifles and the East Bengal police.

He said, "For 23 years the warlords of West Pakistan drained the blood of the people of Bangla Desh. The people of Bangla Desh will take blood for blood."

War of attrition

The use of tanks and aircraft, suggesting the beginning of a war of attrition, followed successful immobilisation of troops by the freedom-fighters by raising wood-and-brick barricades across streets in almost all towns, by blowing up bridges over the rivers and streams criss-crossing the land and by dismantling railway tracks and destroying railway stations.

The Pakistani authorities claimed the army had established effective control over the whole of East Pakistan and conditions were fast returning to normal, but unwittingly confirmed the impediments in their way when they broadcast a new martial law order calling for removal of all barricades on pain of destruction of all buildings within 100 yards of such obstructions.

Live broadcast

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Live broadcast

The army authorities claimed that the father of the new-born republic, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, whom President Yahya Khan had yesterday charged with treason, had been arrested, but the free Bangla radio stations—at least three of them were on the air at different times during the day—asserted he was safe and free, one of them carrying a live broadcast by him assuring the people he was in full command of the affairs and exhorting them to carry on the fight.

Mr. Mujibur Rahman, in a proclamation broadcast over a free Bangla radio, promised to permit the West Pakistani troops to return home safely if they surrendered to the liberation forces with their arms.

In another proclamation, he declared that anyone in Bangla Desh who helped the "foreign" West Pakistani army would be tried by people's courts.

Reports from inside Bangla Desh said units of the liberation force had repulsed Pakistani troops' attempt to seize control of the towns of Chittagong, Comilla, Dinajpur and Sylhat from the freedom-fighters.

An attempt by the troops to capture Patanga airport near Chittagong was also foiled. The liberation force unit there was said to have been led by a brigadier, named Karim.

Freedom-fighters reported a major success in the capture of Mangla port. The chief of the East, Pakistan Rifles in Khulna, with his entire battalion, was pitted against the troops in this action.

They also said naval units at Chittagong and Khulna had joined the liberation forces.

A fierce battle raged in Dacca for the second successive day for control of Dacca radio, seized by the army when it started the intensive military operations on Thursday night.

The Voice of America said unarmed people in Dacca had been met by tanks. It also said the Awami League headquarters had been destroyed in the fighting.

One indication of the heavy casualties suffered by the freedom-fighters was a free Bangla radio appeal for blood donations to save the lives of injured liberation force members. Young men were urged to go to the blood bank at the Dacca medical col-

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MANY BRIDGES BLOWN UP

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lege, which was in the hands of the liberation forces.

Another highly reliable report from across the border said the West Pakistani army had been using the strategy of starving the East Pakistanis to secure their surrender even as the President was holding talks with the Sheikh in Dacca last week. Food supplies had been completely stopped and only arms and troops were being unloaded at the ports.

Ceylonese official sources in Colombo said there had been no "major" movement of troops through the island though some Pakistani military planes had stopped over for refuelling.

"GENOCIDE" QUESTION

The Sheikh speaking in English also asked the world at large to bring the question of "genocide" committed by West Pakistani troops before the United Nations.

The free Bengla Radio which claimed that most parts of East Pakistan were under the hold of Sheikh's men also said that a number of major road and rail bridges had been blown up in Chittagong, Sylhet, Mymensingh, Rajshahi and Rangpur areas, paralysing the movement of troops to the interior.

Heavy movement of troops has been observed on the Pakistani side along the Tripura, Assam and Meghalaya borders.

Bangla Desh freedom fighters today captured the Comilla police armoury from the control of the military after a day-long fight with troops, highly reliable reports said.

East Pakistan Riflemen today successfully repulsed an attack by West Pakistani troops on an EPR centre in Khulna district, authoritative reports received here said.

Pakistan Air Force planes bombed East Pakistani town of Comilla today, according to reliable reports.

Men of the East Pakistan Rifles guarding border areas along Nadia district have handed over arms and ammunition to the people of Bangla Desh, authoritative reports said.

Washington: A U.S. State Department spokesman said today that its latest reports "indicate that all is quiet in Dacca."

The spokesman said, "We are not contemplating any evacuation at the moment" of the 1,100 Americans in East Pakistan.—A.P.

A steamer carrying arms and ammunition was seized by about 1,000 Bangla Desh freedom-fighters at Nawabganj, a sub-divisional town on the bank of the Ganga, reports reaching Krishnagar said tonight.

The steamer was about to leave for the army-controlled Rujshahi town when it was captured, the reports added.

Radio Pakistan sought to black out Mr. Rahman's proclamation of an independent Bangla Desh. But in denying a BBC report on East Bengal it said that an official spokesman "expressed surprise at the BBC quoting Radio Pakistan as having said that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was arrested after he had declared independence."

Nearly 35,000 Indian nationals who

gathered near the Tripura border, prepared to cross into Bangla Desh to fight alongside of the liberation force, were told by liberation force leaders that they were hopeful of meeting the Pakistani army challenge on their own.

Addressing the gathering from the Bangla Desh side of the border, the liberation force leaders said they were grateful to the people of Tripura for the offer of help.

The Rangoon daily, "Guadian," reported that troops had been flown in daily from Karachi to Dacca.

Reports said that under cover of "refugee flights" to carry non-Bengalis from Bangla Desh to the western wing, Pakistan International Airways operated two flights a day and these were used to transport military personnel and equipment from the west wing.

Vultures are picking up corpses which have been deliberately left lying in the streets by the western wing's military authorities to strike terror among the people.

Government offices in Bangla Desh remained deserted today also despite yesterday's order by the martial law administrator.

Retreating West Pakistani troops today resorted to scorched earth action in several areas in East Pakistan, according to highly reliable reports from across the border.

