

# Fighting wanes in East Pakistan as army tightens grip

United Press International

NEW DELHI —

The Pakistan government said today it had restored order in most of rebellious East Pakistan and announced a partial lifting of the curfew in Dacca. The rebels said they controlled three cities and were continuing the battle.

Radio Pakistan said in an early morning news broad-

cast monitored in New Delhi that conditions were normal in Dacca, Jessore, Comilla, Rangpur and Saidpur. It said there were some disturbances in the coastal district of Khulna and that conditions in Chittagong, the main port city in East Pakistan, are improving.

The rebel "Free Bengal Radio" said the forces of East Pakistan political leader Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman controlled Chittagong, Rangpur and Jessore.

The radio announced formation of a rebel government under army Maj. Gen. Zia Khan in Chittagong yesterday and said his forces were marching toward Dacca, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said.

Free Bengal Radio said last night that Pakistani navy ships shelled Chit-

tagong as government soldiers landed. It said soldiers of the "liberation army" battled the Pakistan troops as they were disembarking and captured three army captains.

In Washington, the Pakistan embassy said: "Life is returning to normal in Dacca. Reports from New Delhi of continued fighting in the cities and districts of East Pakistan are without foundation." It said

workers were returning to government and private jobs and that normal broadcast programming was being resumed.

The embassy discounted reports that Rahman was in hiding and that Lt. Gen. Tikka Khan, the federal government's martial law administrator, was injured or assassinated.

PTI, quoting reports reaching the border point of Gauhati city, said martial law authorities arrested the deputy commissioner of Rangpur city yester-

day on charges of following Rahman's orders.

PTI said East Pakistani forces, armed with swords and spears, seized Rangpur shortly after the deputy commissioner's arrest but took heavy casualties in the process.

In the Indian town of Petrapole on the East Pakistan border, UPI correspondent Ajit K. Das saw East Pakistanis across the border in Benapole haul

down a Pakistani flag at a border checkpoint and raise a rebel flag.

Pakistani customs officials made no attempt to stop the crowd, who shouted across the border to the Indians, "We need aid. Give us aid of all forms. Give us arms."

In reply, the small-Indian crowd shouted "Jai Bangla" (Victory to Bengal) in a show of support for the rebels.

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