

Bengla Desh Republic Proclaimed

Arrest of Mujibur Denied

General Tikka Khan Killed?

Tanks rumbled through the streets of Dacca, East Pakistan capital Saturday, as the civil population continued their resistance to the army takeover.

According to reports reaching Calcutta from across the Pakistani border at least 10,000 persons were killed in Friday's fighting.

The ruling East Pakistani Awami League party under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is seeking autonomy from West Pakistan and the Sheikh defied President Yahya Khan Friday by declaring the province independent as Bangla Desh (Bengal Nation) Republic.

According to reports there are now 70,000 Pakistani troops in the Eastern province and more are being brought in "to punish the enemies of Pakistan."

Observers believe the Pakistani central government will see all its military power to crush the uprising and maintain the territorial integrity of the country.

East Pakistan is difficult territory for troops, criss-crossed with rivers and the President is understood to be under pressure from armed forces chiefs to use air cover for what "hawks" call "sacred killing for integrity."

In a message to East Pakistani Sheikh Mujibur said: "We shall not die like cats and dogs but shall die as worthy children of Mother Bengal."

There were conflicting reports about the fate of the "Sheikh, who had been

ship of West Pakistanis". The East Pakistan rifles regiment was reported to be fighting troops from West Pakistan in support of the "Liberation Army" men.

The army was reported using armoured vehicles and tanks in Dacca, Narainganj, Comilla, Rangpur, Khulna and Jessore where resistance was stiff.

General Tikka Khan shot dead

The Press Trust of India news agency reported the governor of East Pakistan, Lieutenant-General Tikka Khan, was shot dead in Dacca Saturday.

It said the General, also martial law administrator in East Pakistan, was killed while directing army operations against the secessionist forces of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The agency said its report of General Tikka's death was based on a broadcast from the clandestine "Voice of Independent Bengal" radio station somewhere in East Pakistan.

Arrest of Mujibur denied

Supporters of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the East Pakistan break-way movement, Saturday denied a government radio report that he had been arrested.

The denial came in a broadcast from a secret radio station somewhere in East

According to reliable reports received by the Trust of India News Agency (PTI) Pakistan Air Force planes Saturday bombed East Pakistan town of Comilla.

Dacca Radio taken over

Earlier Friday the Army took over Dacca radio and cut off all contact with the outside world. But in Chittagong, where the fighting was reported to be the heaviest, "freedom fighters" succeeded in seizing control of the local radio station and continued broadcasting.

Jessore Airfield, near the Indian border, was said to have been the scene of a bloodbath as unarmed villagers tried to storm it.

Troops posted at the airport reportedly machine-gunned the 1,000 strong crowd. The Jessore jail was also attacked by crowds in an attempt to free prisoners arrested after the promulgation of the martial law.

President Yahya recalled that "a number of murders" had been committed in East Pakistan "in the name of the (Awami) movement."

"Millions of our Bengali brothers and those who have settled in East Pakistan were living in a state of panic, and a very large number had to leave that wing (of the country) out of fear for their lives", he said.

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There were conflicting reports about the fate of the "Sheikh, who had been arrested according to Pakistan Radio".

Other sources denied this.

Police were reported in mutiny and thousands of women demonstrating in the streets in defiance of the existing martial law banning all demonstrations.

From the Indian State of Tripura, across the border from Pakistan, automatic weapon fire could be heard and in one area about 200 East Pakistani freedom fighters, pursued the West Pakistani troops, crossed into India.

East Pakistan has appealed to the United Nations, Afro-Asian countries and "freedom loving nations" for support against the "colonial domination and the ruthless dictator-

-rested. The denial came in a broadcast from a secret radio station somewhere in East Pakistan — which Sheikh Mujib has declared independent as the state of Bangla Desh.

The earlier report over the official Radio Pakistan said the Sheikh was arrested at his home in Dacca early Friday morning.

The secret radio also said Saturday that the Sheikh's Awami League had captured the town of Comilla, about 100 kilometres (60 miles) south-east of Dacca and close to the Indian territory of Tripura.

A message from the United News of India News Agency quoted reports from across the border that Sheikh Mujib had himself been heard on the air long after the time he was said to have been arrested.

Pakistan

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The President said he should have taken action against Sheikh Mujibur and his followers several weeks ago, but he did not want to jeopardize the peaceful transfer of power.

He reproached the Awami League leader with having failed to respond in a constructive manner.

Mrs. Gandhi's statement

In New Delhi Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi Saturday described the military action in East Pakistan as "not merely suppression of a movement, but meeting unarmed people with tanks".

A wonderful opportunity had been lost in East Pakistan for Pakistan to strengthen itself, she told cheering members of Parliament. — AFP and Reuter.