

# Historic March

March 23, 1971

## Resistance Day Observed, Bangladesh Flag Hoisted

# Pakistani Flag, Once Burnt, Will Never be Seen in Bangladesh, Student Leaders Declare

**R**ESISTANCE Day (Pratirodh Dibash) was observed throughout Bangladesh on Tuesday in response to a call given by the Central Students Action Committee. The day was being observed as holiday as per the direction of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The day began in the city with the hoisting of the flags of Bangladesh (a battle green sketch of a map of Bangladesh on it) atop Government and semi-Government buildings including Secretariat High Court and private houses. The flags were seen on the trucks, buses, private cars and rickshaws. The flags were on sale at different parts of the city.

The Pakistan flags were seen flying at President House, Governor House, Cantonment area and in the offices of the Iranian and the Indonesian Consulate General. The British High Commission and Soviet Consulate General hoisted the Bangladesh flag.

The US Consulate General did not hoist any flag. The Pakistan flag was earlier seen at the Chinese Consulate was replaced by Bangladesh flag by a crowd at noon.

In the morning the flag at Bangladesh was ceremonially hoisted at Sheikh Mujib's residence by the Sramik League leaders. Sheikh Mujib observed the ceremony from the balcony of his house. Another flag of Bangladesh was seen flying atop his residence.

Thousands of men, women and children in processions thronged the Dhanmondi residence of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from early morning.

Streams of processions continued till late in the evening. Many of the processionists carried sticks, rods and other indigenous weapons besides the flag of Bangladesh.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman appeared before the processionists at least 50 times during the day and addressed them. He also raised slogans "Amader Sangram-Swadhinatar Sangram" (Our struggle is the struggle for independence), "Amader Sangram-Muktir Sangram" (our struggle is the struggle for emancipation), and Joy Bangla.

Different political, students and cultural organisations in the city observed the day by holding meetings, rallies, processions, parade and peoples' songs.

The Cultural Students Action Committee held a big rally at Baitul Mukarram and march-past by Joy Bangla Bahini at Paltan Maidan in the morning. They later presented a guard of honour to SMR at his residence. The rally which was earlier scheduled to be held at 11 a.m. was held at 5 p.m. under the joint auspices of Central Students Action Committee and Bangladesh Sramik Sangram Parishad. The meeting was presided over by Syed Shahjahan, Vice-President of Jatiya Sramik League.

The meeting declared that the only objective of the seven and a half crore people of Bangladesh was to establish independent and sovereign Bangladesh and thus to create a Bangalee nation, culture and literature and to introduce socialist economy for a society

free from exploitation. The meeting in a resolution demanded withdrawal of the non-Bangalee Armymen from the soil of Bangladesh immediately. The meeting cautioned that if the Army men were not withdrawn, they would be driven out by force and for this the meeting called to have armed preparation.

The meeting urged upon the people of Bangladesh to boycott the West Pakistani commodities and to observe the "Boycott West Pakistani Commodities Week" from today (Wednesday) to March 30. The meeting called upon people to use the commodities produced in Bangladesh. It appealed to the working people throughout the world and to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to extend their active co-operation to the struggle of the people of Bangladesh for an independent and sovereign country.

The meeting in a resolution decided that if any industrialist declared lockout, lay off or closed down the factory, the workers would run the factory and in that case the State Bank must arrange running capital as loan.

The meeting in another resolution appealed to USA, Russia, China, U.K, India, Ceylon, Burma, Tibet and Iran to refrain from supplying any arms to Pakistan Armed Forces and not to allow the movement of Pakistani Army either by land or by water route.

Addressing the Rally Mr Nur-e-Alam Siddiki, President of Chhatra League emphatically declared that Sheikh Mujib could not betray the people of

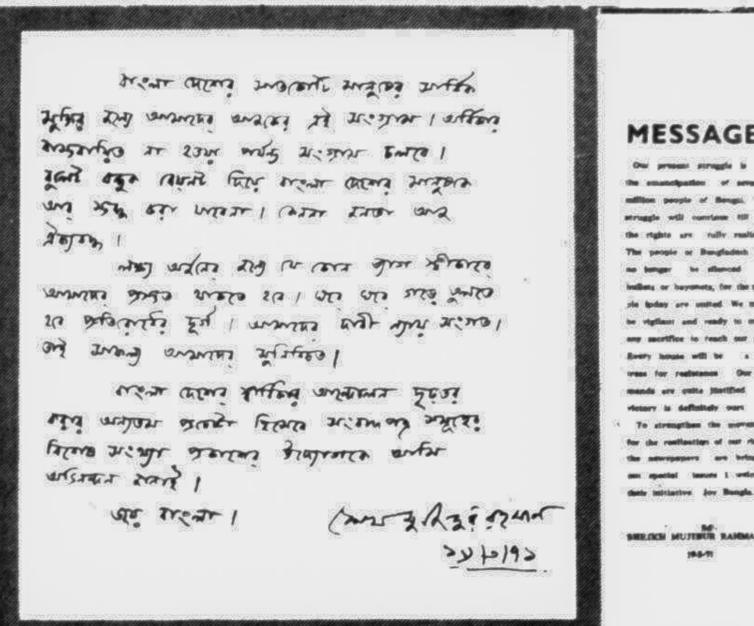


Compiled by Ekram Kabir, Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and Dipak Kumar Karmakar

Bangladesh and he (Sheikh) would be in favour of independent Bengal even at the cost of his life. He said the people hoisted the flag of Bangladesh as a mark of the independent Bengal and the Pakistan flag which was once burnt would never be seen in Bangladesh.

Mr. A.S.M. Abdur Rab, V.P DUCSU and a member of the Bangladesh Central Students Action Committee said that they did not want Pakistan. He reminded the people that independence was never achieved through compromise and for this struggle was inevitable and bloodshed was necessary. He called upon the people to have fortress of resistance in every house and to resist the enemy attack.

Mr. Tofael Ahmed, an Awami League, MNA, addressing the gathering said that the whole of Bangladesh was obeying directives of Mujib today. He observed that the days were not far off when all the nations throughout the world would give legal recognition to the sovereignty of Bangladesh. He reminded those who were attempting to obstruct the independence movement in Bangladesh that the liberation



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's handwritten message to people on March 19, 1971. Taken from The Pakistan Observer.

### MESSAGE

The present struggle is for the emancipation of our people. The struggle will continue till all the rights are fully realized. The people of Bangladesh can no longer be allowed to be led by leaders or bayonets, for the people have the right to be the rulers and ready to make any sacrifice to reach our goal. Every house will be a fortress for resistance. Our demands are fully justified in history is definitely ours. To strengthen the movement for the realization of our rights the newspapers are forbidden to report on any issue. I welcome this initiative for Bangladesh.



from the President Bhawan and started pushing them off. According to the press release of the committee in Dacca Tuesday the matter was brought to the notice of an Army officer. The officer immediately shouted, "You push off from here. Don't tell me what I should do."

The newsmen pointed out that they were also there on professional duty and refused to leave the place. The officer then threatened action and several soldiers took up position. The newsmen took a firm stand and the officer left the place. After sometime he came back and asked a senior reporter, who had lodged the complaint against the soldiers to follow him. The reporter refused to go with him. The Army officer again appeared with a police officer and four soldiers. He ordered the police officer to take the reporter into custody and remove him. The newsmen present there resisted this move.

The Pakistan Observer, March 24, 1971.

### Harrassment of Journalists Condemned

A MEETING of the Standing Committee of the Photographers, reporters and correspondents of the East Pakistan Union of Journalists held Tuesday considered the situation arising out of continued harassment of journalists on duty by Army personnel at different places, reports PPI.

The meeting adopted a resolution which strongly condemned the unwarranted and uncalled for misbehaviour and harassment meted out by Army personnel to the reporters and photographers on duty during last three weeks.

The meeting took serious note of the incident which took place on Monday evening at the Hotel Inter Continental. Some soldiers used offensive language against a group of reporters who were waiting at the hotel portico for the arrival of the leader of the Pakistan People's Party, Mr. Z.A. Bhutto

### Army Order: Remove Shops from Kachukhet

ABOUT one hundred shopkeepers in Kachukhet Market, in the cantonment area, have been asked by the military authority to remove their structures immediately.

A notice served by the Military Estates Officer (East Pakistan Circle) on Tuesday afternoon said: "Licences expired since long, shopkeepers being trespassers are hereby directed to remove structures from military lands in Kachukhet and vacate sites within 24 hours. Failing which structures will be forfeited and sites cleared at their risk and cost."

Ghazi Akram Hussain, Secretary of Kachukhet Bazar Committee told a newsmen on Tuesday evening that the shopkeepers had been continuing their business in the area undisturbed since 1967.

The Pakistan Observer, March 24, 1971.



Teachers of the Engineering University marching through Dhaka on March 5, 1971.

স্বাধিকারের আওয়াজ  
শুক্লাবারের ঢাকা

## I Shall Determine the Programme of Movement, Declares Mujib

**W**HEN the movement for complete freedom was spreading on all sides of Bengal, the unforgettable March 23 passed in a significant way. Long processions of Bangalee people went to the residence of Bangabandhu like sea-waves and the hero of "Swadhikar Andolan," Sheikh Mujibur Rahman again declared, "this time, the movement is for independence, for freedom. As long as the total freedom of seven and half crore of Bangalee People is not attained, even a single Bangalee soul lives, our movement must continue. Remember, he who can achieve the final object by least blood-shed, is the best 'Shipahshalar'. So, I instruct my people: Go on with the movement, maintain discipline and leave to me the responsibility of making policies."

Sheikh Mujib further said in his address: "There can be no compromise about the demands of Bengal. We have sacrificed much blood and can do more if need be, but we must reach the goal of freedom. People of Bengal can no more be kept enslaved. We want a peaceful solution to the problems, but if it is not possible, the struggle for existence of the seven and half crore of people will go on and on. I myself shall determine the programmes of the movement. I know how to defeat the selfish

autocrats." "People of Bengal," he continued, "have demonstrated the truth by showing unprecedented unity, revolutionary consciousness and praiseworthy sense of discipline that they can no more be kept down by force."

On the day, from the small hours of the morning, myriad of people from towns and downtowns flooded the paths and footpaths, and they advanced towards Bangabandhu's residence. One procession of women, 5 small and large processions greeted the great leader of the great nation, Sheikh Mujib and they took firm oath to carry on the movement. In that sea of processions, people were carrying 'Lathi', 'Ballam', guns; their eyes were dazzling with the light of freedom; they were chanting the victory-song, song of the crores of people, "Joy Bangla." Although the last 23 years, beauty of Bengal was marred by Pakistan flag, every year, Pakistan national day was observed; meetings and processions were held in favour of Pakistan nationalism, in which Bangalee people, in vain, desperately searched for freedom

flag, the crownless emperor of Bengal, roared, "People of Bengal are pitiable to none. They will obtain freedom on their own. Joy Bangla — the victory of Bengal is sure and certain."

Among the people who went to Bangabandhu, there were Joy Bangla Bahini of Chhatra League, truck and cycle procession, girls-students, labours of factories, office-employees, and citizens of various classes and professions. Joy Bangla Bahini congratulated the leader in a disciplined manner.

—The Ittefaq, Wednesday, March 24, 1971

### Anti-British Agitation in Dhaka

BRITISH government has given permission to the Pakistan air and naval forces to use British outposts at Maldives Island. This news has given rise to great resentment among the people in Dhaka. According to the newspapers, different quarters have termed these activities of the British government as antagonistic to the movement for self-determination of Bengal and the freedom-loving people.

The teachers-staff, Lekhak Sangram Shibir and Sangskriti Sangsad of Dhaka University have fulminated against such activities of the British government. Last Monday, the professors of the Dhaka University brought out a procession of protest. They went to the office of the British Deputy Commissioners in Dhaka, and showed intense agitation.

The Secretary of Dhaka University teachers association, Professor Ahsanul Haq said in a newspaper that India and Ceylon refused to allow Pakistan aeroplanes and ships to pass through their countries in order to reach East Bengal.

As a result, the British government, in reply to Pakistan's appeal, allowed Pakistan forces to use the British outpost at Maldives. As this news came out, the University teachers went to the office of the British High Commissioner with a note. British government was severely criticized by Bengali people in the note. The note said, "We shall hope that all the progressive powers of the world including Britain, will support our movement for justice, and remove the colonial relationship between West Pakistan and Bangladesh."

In reply to a question of the University teachers, the First Secretary of the High Commission said that according to the agreement between Britain and Maldives, British government alone can use the outposts, there can be no question of their use by others.

—Sangbad, March 24.

## China Sends Message of Support to Yahya Khan

**P**EKING, March 23 : The prime minister of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Chou En-Lai, has reiterated China's resolute support to the Pakistan government and people in their struggle to safeguard national independence, and oppose foreign aggression and interference, reports Hsinhua.

The Chinese premier expressed the support in a message of warm congratulation to President Yahya Khan on the occasion of Pakistan Day. "The Pakistan government pursues an independent foreign policy, which is effective in international affairs, the

## Women Must Continue Movement for the Country's Independence, Says Sufia Kamal

**C**HITTAGONG, March 23: "We are carrying on the liberation movement, we shall continue it and independent Bangladesh will be established without fail."

This declaration was given by the chairman of East Pakistan Mahila Parishad, Begum Sufia Kamal, while she was addressing a very large meeting of women in the local J. M. Sen Hall, March 21. She said in her address, "By the side of men, women also should be prepared to face any situation for the present movement. Meetings and processions above are not enough for the attainment of object, but courage, mental preparation and motivation are also necessary for that."

She called upon women to plunge into the movement tearing their age-old veil, and have training. The Secretary of East Pakistan Mahila Parishad, Maleka Begum said in her speech, "Now, Bengalee people are struggling to attain their rights, freedom and democracy." She urged the women to take active role in the movement. The meeting was also addressed by Hannana Begum, Kunta Pravae Sen, Seema Chakrabarti, Mustari Shafi, Shirin Sharfatullah and so on. Five processions came from different places to join the meeting. —Sangbad, March 24, 1971

## People Won't Accept Compromise — Students Union

"BENGALEE people will never take the path of compromise on the question of independence."

These words of threat were uttered by the Chairman of East Pakistan Students Union (EPSU) central committee, Kendrya Sangsad, Nurul Islam, while he was addressing a large meeting at central Shaheed Minar last Tuesday. The meeting was also addressed by the general secretary of the organization Mujahidul Islam Selim.

In his address, Mr Nurul Islam depicted the history of torture on the Bengalee people in the last 23 years, and said that the rich capitalistic class who nourished imperialism, feudalism and capitalism, battered upon the peasants and labours.

This started just from after the birth of Pakistan. Whenever demands were made, the administrative community would set their lackeys loose on the helpless people. Innumerable men, women and children were killed by bullets and bayonets. Democracy of people had been killed by treachery. He said, "So, the people of Bengal are today struggling for peace, freedom from oppression and existence."

"No force," he continued, "can resist the liberation movement. People of Bangladesh will agree to no compromise as far as freedom is concerned. We are ready to continue the liberation movement and we shall establish the independent Bengal by annihilating the autocratic rulers."

Attracting the attention of Sheikh Mujib, Mr Nurul Islam said, "On the one hand, discussion is going on, and on the other, the soldiers are killing Bengalee people by order of the administrators. He said, "Discussion cannot go on for indefinite period. Army must be taken back to the barracks. Revoking the martial law,

power must be handed over to the elected members. Power has to be transferred on to the elected representative of people in a purely parliamentary system. No military personnel or one identified as the enemy to people, shall be allowed to take part in the interim government." He demanded the release of all the State prisoners including Moni Singh. —Sangbad — March 24

## Kachi-Kancher Mela Supports Movement

THE KACHI-KANCHER MELA brought out a procession in Dacca on March 22 to express solidarity with the present movement.

In the evening at 4:30pm a large number of its members including ex-members, workers, organisers etc. assembled in the outer-stadium and brought out the procession. The



Young warriors on the March: Make Bangladesh Independent.