



Lt. Gen A. A. K. Niazi, Commanding Officer of Pakistan Army forces in East Pakistan signing the instrument of surrender on December 16, 1971 in the presence of Lt. Gen. Aurora.

PHOTO: STAR

## Pakistani Viewpoint: Killing of Bengali Intellectuals

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FROM December 10, 1971 with active support of the Pakistan Army the young members of Al-Badr, the secret killing squad of Jamaat-e-Islami, started its operation to pick up the leading intellectuals of the country and confine them in their camp at the Physical Training Centre, Mohammadpur. The intellectuals were tortured and brutally killed in the early hours of December 14, their dead bodies dumped at the riverside brickfield of Rayer Bazar. Major General A.A.K. Niazi was the Commander of Eastern Command and Lt. General Rao Farman Ali was in charge of civil administration, the Al-Badar operations being under his wings. The blame for the killing of intellectuals lie on Rao Farman Ali while Lt. Gen. A.K. Niazi cannot evade responsibility as he was in charge of military operations.

We have reproduced here three versions of the intellectual killing as produced by them in their memoirs and report. While Niazi has mentioned in passing Farman's role in the killing of intellectuals, the latter gave an elaborate account in trying to save

his skin. Hamoodur Rahman Commission report has not done any substantial inquiry, on the other hand was eager to drop charges against both Farman and Niazi. The versions are reproduced below:

### 1. General A K Niazi's account: DISMEMBERMENT OF PAKISTAN

On the night of 15/16 December, I ordered our helicopters to Burma. Some interested persons started a controversy about General Rahim Khan's evacuation by helicopter to Burma. He did very well during the insurgency operations as GOC 14 Division and was awarded Hilal-e-Jur'at. During the war he was commanding an ad hoc Division at Chandpur when the enemy broke through nearby and threatened his HQ. He was ordered to fall back on his designated positions for the defence of Dhaka. During evacuation of his HQ some of the ferries got stuck in the chars and were delayed. As a result, on their way back to Narayanganj they were attacked by the Indian Air Force. His HQ boat was sunk and we lost many brave soldiers and officers. General Rahim was wounded and was evacuated to CMH Dhaka. He was evacuated under my personal orders with some

When questioned on this point, Lt. Gen. A. A. K. Niazi stated that the local Commanders had, on the 9th of December 1971, brought a list to him that included the names of miscreants, heads of Mukti Bahini etc.,

important papers to be delivered to GHQ. These papers reached Bhutto's house and were never made available when required. Separate helicopters were allotted for the nurses. In the darkness, however, the nurses reached the wrong helipad and could not get to the designated one. Their

seats remained empty and the helicopters were flown to Burma without them.

Maj. Gen. Farman insisted that he should also be evacuated to Burma or West Pakistan on the night 15/16 December because the Mukti Bahini would kill him for his alleged massacre of the Bengalis and intellectuals. It was pathetic to see him pale and almost on the verge of a breakdown. I gave him my solemn assurance that I would protect him from the Mukti Bahini and the Indians even at the cost of my life. I only hope that he would acknowledge that, in spite of persistent demands from the Indians and the Mukti Bahini, I emphatically refused to let anybody touch him.

### 2. Major General Rao Farman Ali HOW PAKISTAN GOT DIVIDED 189

On 10 December at about sunset I was asked by Maj. Gen Jamshed, Commander Dacca, to come over to his office at Pheel Khana, Dhanmandi. On getting closer to his command post I saw a number of vehicles. He was coming out of his bunker and asked me to get in with him in his car.

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