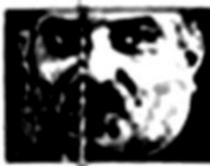


# GENOCIDE

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by ANTHONY MASCARENHAS  
(the background to the writing and publication of this remarkable report is told on Page One)

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...the government of Pakistan has let the world know about that first horror. What it has suppressed is the second and worse horror which followed when its own army took over the killing. West Pakistani officials privately calculate that altogether both sides have killed 250,000 people -- not counting those who have died of famine and disease.



# GENOCIDE

On June 13, 1971, *The Sunday Times* of London ran a 16 column (2-page) story, titled GENOCIDE, on the atrocities that were being carried out in Bangladesh, then East Pakistan. The world was stunned by this revelatory piece by a Pakistani journalist -- Anthony Mascarenhas -- invited by its military to see the operations conducted by them. Overcome by revulsion of what he saw, he published the following report after moving first his family, and then himself, to UK. The *Morning News* Assistant Editor, Karachi. Given the ongoing War Crimes trial and the death penalty meted out to one of the perpetrators, and to mark the Martyred Intellectuals Day, we reprint report to remind our readers how this report completely shattered the Pakistani propoganda effort and helped to turn world public opinion in favour of our Liberation War.

## ANTHONY MASCARENHAS

### Abdul Bari had run out of luck

LIKE thousands of other people in East Bengal, he had made the mistake, the fatal mistake of running within sight of a Pakistani army patrol. He was 24 years old, a slight man surrounded by soldiers. He was trembling, because he was about to be shot.

"Normally we would have killed him as he ran," I was informed chattily by Major Rathore, the G-2 Ops. of the 9th Division, as we stood on the outskirts of a tiny village near Mudafarganj, about 20 miles south of Comilla. "But we are checking him out for your sake. You are new here and I see you have a squeamish stomach."

"Why kill him?" I asked with mounting concern. "Because he might be a Hindu or he might be a rebel, perhaps a student or an Awami Leaguer. They know we are sorting them out and they betray themselves by running."

"But why are you killing them? And why pick on the Hindus?" I persisted. "Must I remind you," Rathore said severely, "how they have tried to destroy Pakistan? Now under the cover of the fighting we have an excellent opportunity of finishing them off."

### First glimpse of blood stains

"Of course," he added hastily, "we are only killing the Hindu men. We are soldiers, not cowards like the rebels. They kill our women and children."

I was getting my first glimpse of the stain of blood which has spread over the otherwise verdant land of East Bengal. First it was the massacre of the non-Bengalis in a savage outburst of Bengali hatred. Now it was massacre, deliberately carried out by the West Pakistan army.

The pogrom's victims are not only the Hindus of East Bengal -- who constitute about 10% of the 75 million population -- but also many thousands of Bengali Muslims. These include university and college students, teachers, Awami League and Left-Wing political cadres and every one the army can catch of the 176,000 Bengali military men and police who mutinied on March 26 in a spectacular, though untimely and ill-starred bid, to create an independent Republic of Bangla Desh.

What I saw and heard with unbelieving eyes and ears during my 10 days in East Bengal in late April made it terribly clear that the killings are not the isolated acts of military commanders in the field.

The West Pakistani soldiers are not the only ones who have been killing in East Bengal, of course. On the night of March 25 -- and this I was allowed to report by the Pakistani censor -- the Bengali troops and paramilitary units stationed in East Pakistan mutinied and attacked non-Bengalis with atrocious savagery.

Thousands of families of unfortunate Muslims, many of them refugees from Bihar who chose Pakistan at the time of the partition riots in 1947, were mercilessly wiped out. Women were raped, or had their breasts torn out with specially fashioned knives. Children did not escape the horror: the lucky ones were killed with their parents; but many thousands of others must go through what life remains for them with eyes gouged out and limbs roughly amputated. More than 20,000 bodies of non-Bengalis have been found in the main towns, such as Chittagong, Khulna and Jessore. The real toll, I was told everywhere in East Bengal, may have been as high as 100,000; for thousands of non-Bengalis have vanished without a trace.

The government of Pakistan has let the world know about that first horror. What it has suppressed is the second and worse horror which followed when its own army took over the killing. West Pakistani officials privately calculate that altogether both sides have killed 250,000 people -- not counting those who have died of famine and disease.

Reacting to the almost successful breakaway of the province, which has more than half the country's population, General Yahya Khan's military government is pushing through its own "final solution" of the East Bengal problem.

"We are determined to cleanse East Pakistan once and for all of the threat of secession, even if it means killing of two million people and ruling the province as a colony for 30 years," I was repeatedly told by senior military and civil officers in Dacca and Comilla.

The West Pakistan army in East Bengal is doing exactly that with a terrifying thoroughness.

We had been racing against the setting sun after a visit to Chandpur (the West Pakistan army prudently stays indoors at night in East Bengal) when one of the jawans (privates) crouched in the back of the Toyota Land Cruiser called out sharply: "There's a man running, Sahib."

Major Rathore brought the vehicle to an abrupt halt, simultaneously reaching for the Chinese made light machine-gun propped against the door. Less than 200 yards away a man could be seen loping through the knee-high paddy.

"For God's sake don't shoot," I cried. "He's unarmed. He's only a villager." Rathore gave me a dirty look and fired a warning burst.

As the man sank to a crouch in the lush carpet of green, two jawans were already on

their way to drag him in.

The thud of a rifle butt across the shoulders preceded the questioning.

"Who are you?"

"Mercy, Sahib! My name is Abdul Bari. I'm a tailor from the New Market in Dacca."

"Don't lie to me. You're a Hindu. Why were you running?"

"It's almost curfew time, Sahib, and I was going to my village."

"Tell me the truth. Why were you running?"

Before the man could answer he was quickly frisked for weapons by a jawan while another quickly snatched away his lungi. The skinny body that was bared revealed the distinctive traces of circumcision, which is obligatory for Muslims.

### The truckloads of human targets

At least it could be plainly seen that Bari was not a Hindu.

The interrogation proceeded.

"Tell me, why were you running?" By this time Bari, wild eyed and trembling violently, could not answer. He buckled at the knees. "He looks like a fauji, sir," volunteered one jawan as Bari was hauled to his feet, (Fauji is the Urdu word for soldier: the army uses it for the Bengali rebels it is hounding.) "Could be," I heard Rathore mutter grimly.

Abdul Bari was clouted several times with the butt end of a rifle, then ominously pushed against a wall. Mercifully his screams brought a young head peeping from the shadows of a nearby hut. Bari shouted something in Bengali. The head vanished.

Moments later a bearded old man came haltingly from the hut.