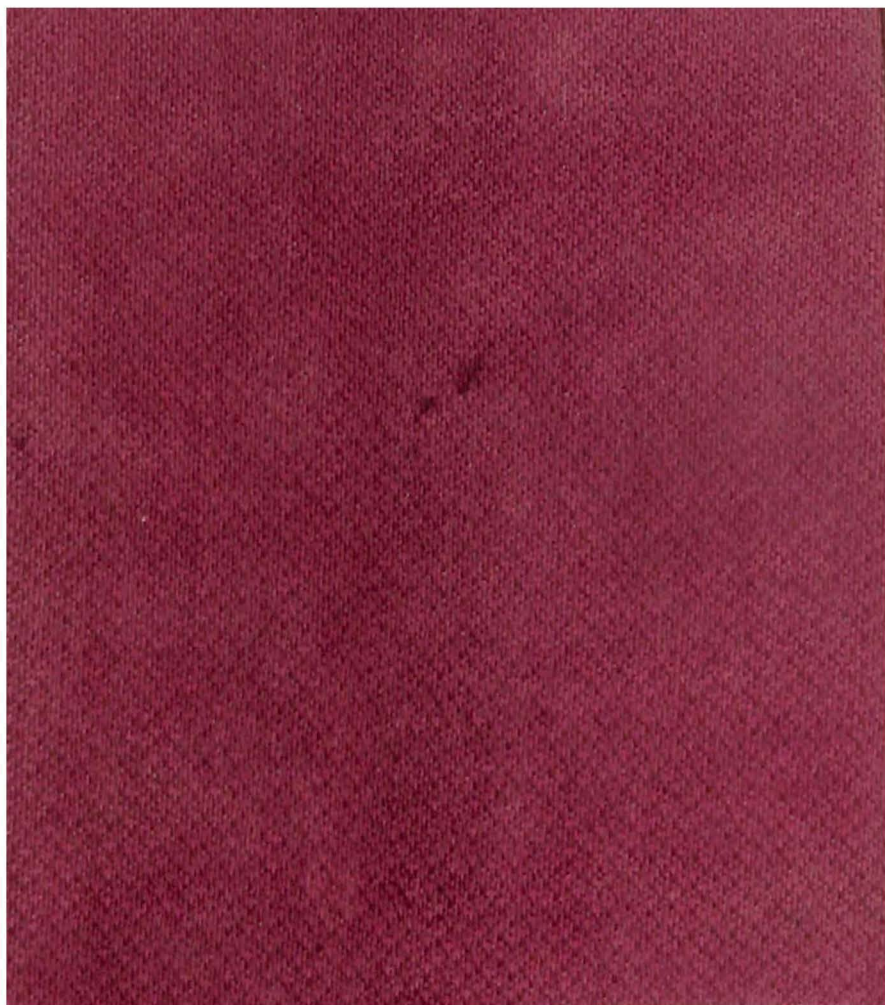


India Partitioned And Minorities In Pakistan

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**India Partitioned
And
Minorities In Pakistan**

**INDIA PARTITIONED
AND
MINORITIES IN PAKISTAN**

India Partitioned And Minorities In Pakistan

PRAVASH CHANDRA LAHIRY



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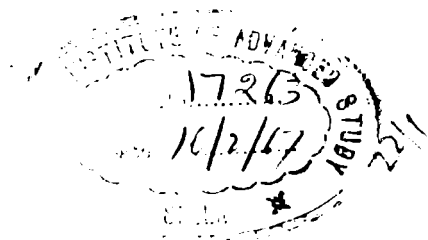
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Foreword

The author of this book Shri Pravash Chandra Lahiry has been known to me most intimately since his early years of life. He was one of those patriotic sons of Bengal who dreamt of independence of India from the British yoke of thralldom and dedicated their life to win it without and care for their personal welfare and worldly happiness.

In his early days he became a member of the "Anushilan Samiti"—a revolutionary political party of Bengal, nay of India and during the First Great War he had the courage and tenacity to fight against a huge horde of the-then police of the British Raj at Gauhati in Assam and received a rifle-shot wound on his thigh in course of the battle royal along with a few others of his comrades who were then hiding themselves as declared political absconders.

He along with four others were subsequently apprehended and produced before a Special Tribunal for trial at Gauhati. I had the privilege to appear before the trying Tribunal as one of the defence lawyers. I had therefore the privilege to know many unknown chapters of his life and activities for the cause of liberation of this Indo-Pak-Subcontinent of to-day.

After his release from jail, he joined the rejuvenated All India National Congress under the dynamic leadership of Gandhiji and played a prominent role in all phases of the struggle for independence.

Since then my acquaintance with him grew thicker and thicker. He passed about 22 years of his precious life in jails. During the last days of the British Raj, he became a member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly in the general election of 1946 and after partition of Bengal and achievement of independence of Indo-Pak-Subcontinent he remained as such a member of the

Provincial Legislature of East Pakistan till the Pakistan Constitution was abrogated by President Iskandar Mirza when a military regime came into being under General Ayub Khan.

Shri Lahiry was also a Minister of Finance in East Pakistan for sometime and therefore he can claim to know the secrets of the Government of Pakistan.

I believe this book would give many inside tales of his experience and illuminate the peoples of Indo-Pak-Subcontinent over the dark chapter of the Pak regime.

I myself was the leader of opposition in the Pakistan Parliament and I, therefore, welcome Shri Lahiry's daring attempt to throw lurid light on dark confusions created in the public mind.

I am to-day 91 years in age and perhaps the oldest living Congressman in the Indo-Pak-Subcontinent. I bless the author with all my heart and pray he may live long to fulfil his mission of life.

SRI CHANDRA CHATTOPADHYAY

P r e f a c e

This book, dealing as it does with the problems of the minorities in East Pakistan, has been the outcome of my personal experience for fourteen years in Pakistan, both as a member of the East Pakistan Legislative Assembly and a political worker. I was a political worker in my native district of Rajshahi, now in East Pakistan and as such I was closely associated with the people in general and as a member of the Legislature I had to be intimately connected with the non-Muslims who elected me as their representative in the Legislative Assembly. There was no joint electorate in Pakistan under the constitution, even though we, the minorities of East Pakistan, demanded it with all vehemence and force we could command. Joint electorate was not conceded by the Pak-government and the majority community (Muslims). Rather, the non-Muslim electorate was further bifurcated into four groups of (1) Caste-Hindus, (2) Scheduled Caste-Hindus, (3) Buddhists and (4) Christians. Such was the reactionary mind of the ruling race and rulers of Pakistan !

This division of the electorate gave me ample opportunity to know the actual grievances and complaints of the minority communities of East Pakistan. Thus I have come to know problems of their social, economic and cultural day-to-day life. In this volume, I have dealt with some of the problems only, leaving aside individual cases for the sake of brevity.

I have tried to give an impartial view of the whole situation concerning the minorities and keep my mind free from any communal passion. I am ready to take entire responsibility for whatever I have written in this book. I can substantiate them with invincible proofs. I have not got any personal bias against any of the *old* Muslim League leaders who had the opportunity to rule

over East Bengal (the province of East Pakistan was then known as East Bengal) on achievement of independence. I admit that I was personally very friendly with all of them, and they too treated me with respect and dignity, though we were fundamentally opposed to one another on political views and matters, concerning the complaints and grievances of the minority communities. The political viewpoints as between the Congress and the Muslim League differed on vital issues. The Congress believed in nationalism and unity of India, and the Muslim League, on the other hand, believed in an absurd theory that the Muslims were a separate nation and therefore they demanded division of India. How can, therefore, the followers of those two organisations see eye to eye with one another on political issues ?

We could not ; nevertheless we were not inimical in our personal approach. I have therefore no personal grudge against any one of them, and therefore, this book does not reflect personal animosity against any individual person. Rather I have got high regards for Mr. Nurul Amin, Mr. Fazlul Huq, Mr. Abu Hossain Sarkar and Mr. Aatur Rahaman Khan, all successive Chief Minister of East Pakistan, both as individual man and administrator. Among all these successive Chief Ministers Mr. Abu Hossain Sarkar was a Congress leader in pre-independence days and I was his colleague in his Cabinet of Ministers. Mr. Aatur Rahaman Khan, the last of the successive Chief Ministers, was perhaps the best both as a man and as an administrator. I bear, therefore, no ill feeling against any individual man and this book, I expect, also does not reflect communal passion against any ruling politician of pre-martial regime.

If I am encouraged by the reading public in this edition of the book, I hope to enlarge the next edition with more facts about men and matters of East Pakistan.

I must take here the opportunity of expressing my heartfelt gratitude to Shri A. T. Sinha and Shri A. K. Datta, but for whose active help and support this book could not have been written and published. My debt of

gratitude is also due to Sriman Satyendra Mohan Maitreya and Sriman Dibyes Chandra Lahiri for their help in innumerable ways. Nor should I fail to mention in this connection the names of Shri Sisir Chowdhury and Shri Narayan Chowdhury, Directors of the Writers' Forum Private Limited, who have been chiefly instrumental in the publication of this volume.

20. 6. 64,

P.O. Khagra,
Dt. Murshidabad,
(West Bengal).

PRAVASH CHANDRA LAHIRY

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D e d i c a t i o n

To the memory of those hapless minorities who had to sacrifice their life, property and everything and had to quit their hearth and home as victims of independence on partition of India.

AUTHOR

CHAPTER I

Pakistan and Its Background

Fourteenth of August, Nineteen Forty Seven. The day dawns with mirth and hilarity on all sides. Every face of the vast population shows signs of radiant glow of fulfilment of a long cherished desire of winning freedom from foreign rule. Groups of persons—young and old, boys and girls—parade the streets with hilarious shouts of “Pakistan Zindabad”, “Quade-e-Azam Zindabad.” Pakistani national flags, newly designed with white and green pieces of cloth joined together with crescent and stars on the green, representing the minority and the majority communities respectively, flutter on every house-top with the morning breeze. As the day advances, the rural people in their hundreds and thousands begin to pour in the town with the same spirit of mirth and festivity—nobody cares to get himself booked for the trains—the authorities concerned allow free journey for this august day. The District and the Divisional headquarter town of Rajshahi wears a gala look with newly improvised decorated gates on the roads and the streets and flags and festoons running across them. The whole day passes on in gaiety. The beggars and the poorest sections of the people are also brought in to take part in the national festivity and they are sumptuously fed. In the evening all sorts and sections of people gather in the college-ground in the Rajshahi town to hold a public meeting, and the national flag of Pakistan is ceremoniously hoisted jointly by the-then presidents of the two premier political organisations of the District Muslim League and the District Congress Committee. The president of the District Congress Committee is, so to say, rather roped in to hoist the flag with

the president of the Muslim League, it seems, only to humiliate the organisation which stood for the independence of United India as a whole in its relentless struggles for it. This certainly grieves the fighters for freedom who actually suffered for the cause. Shri Jitesh Chandra Lahiry, Shri Sudhangsu Mohan Choudhury, alias Cheru, Shri Bireswar Chakravarty, Shri Birendra Nath Sarkar and the writer of this book and a few others who were the actual fighters and who had the scars of their struggles on their foreheads, are seen to sit in a corner of the huge gathering—far, far away from the flag-staff, in a moody and dejected manner. They all took up the mission of winning independence of India as their life's goal but when that independence has come, why they are to-day moody and dejected? This is a question which can only be answered by correct appreciation of their sentiments and sufferings for the cause of winning independence of India. The writer in his early boyhood entered into the political arena on the partition of Bengal by the-then Viceroy and Governor-General—Lord Curzon—and became a member of a revolutionary party named the "Anushilan Samiti" for annulment of the Bengal-partition and achievement of Indian independence, and in course of his struggle for the purpose he not only suffered incarcerations for more than two decades, he was shot at and injured in a gun-fight with the-then military police under the British Raj at Gauhati in Assam during the first Great War (World War I) while he had been a political absconder. His other comrades who are seen seated in a corner of the gathering with him, were all revolutionary workers of by-gone days but subsequently joined the Congress when it became a mass revolutionary organisation under the dynamic leadership of Mahatma Gandhi who stood for independence of India as a whole. All of them had the stamp of sufferings and incarcerations on them. The independence which they fought for has, no doubt, come but not in the shape they desired it should

come. India has been partitioned into two sovereign states—(1) India, (2) Pakistan—and the Britishers quit and relinquish their fraudulent occupation of India to the two states. To-day—the Fourteenth of August, Nineteen Forty-Seven (14th August, 1947) is the day when Pakistan is born out of India after a major diplomatic operation by the Britishers. India bleeds and the nationalist fighters for Indian independence weep in their heart of hearts. Many of them came into the political arena after the partition of Bengal in 1905 and fought for its annulment but to-day they are powerless—they are mere silent spectators of the gruesome operation, as their leaders accepted and submitted to it, and the rank and file also accepted it with all humility and dignity. The Bengal revolutionaries who had the bright record and reputation of playing with the bombs and revolvers had not fired a shot or burst a bomb on this heinous operation of mother-India but could hardly become hilarious over this achievement of freedom; hence they kept away far from the flag-staff in a moody and dejected state of mind. Yes, freedom has come but not the freedom they fought for. They ask within themselves and search their hearts to know why India was partitioned and they arrive at the background.

Background

Pakistan is born out of deep-seated Hindu-hatred and antipathy for India which, according to the Muslims, was termed as Hindusthan—a land for the Hindus. This idea was pushed into and fomented by the imperialist Britishers who were the occupiers and rulers of India, for the purpose of holding on permanent subjugation of India for their nefarious imperialist designs. They tried to find out some

powerful exponents of this design among the Muslims of India and at last, found out in Mr. Mohammad Ali Zinnah a true exponent and vehicle of this narrow reactionary communal ideology. The Britishers followed the policy of 'divide and rule' and played the Muslim League as a powerful instrument for thwarting the struggle for freedom, launched and carried on by the Indian National Congress and other revolutionary organisations. On the eve of the Bengal-partition by Lord Curzon—the-then Viceroy and Governor-General of India, the Muslim League was founded at Dacca by the Nawab of Dacca under the inspiration of the ruling caucus, only to thwart the rising national movements and put a wedge between the two major communities—the Muslims and the non-Muslims—of India. This Muslim League gradually grew in stature on the fantastic propaganda of aggressive Hindu-domination over the Muslims from the press and platform alike and inspired the co-religionists with aggressive Muslim nationalism, apart from Indian nationalism, and thrived on the distorted fanatical concept of Islam which, according to the propagandists, was irreconcilable to the Hindu religion and culture and all that it stands for. Hate-campaign against the Hindus was the order of the day from the highest leader of the Muslim League Mr. Mohammad Ali Zinnah and a chauvinistic aggressive Moslem nationalism was intensively and extensively preached from the press and platform. A host of Mullas (supposed to be divine religious preachers but with little learning and crude concept of Islam) was set in motion to carry on the virulent hate-campaign against the Hindus and the unsophisticated Muslim masses were fed in with communal hatred days in and days out, as a consequence of which the political atmosphere of the country became extremely surcharged with potential danger of communal riots. Riots actually begin to break out here and there. The Indian National Congress—the only national organisation—tries hard to prevent this

fratricidal wars among themselves and in its attempt, Shri Ganesh Sankar Vidyarthi, Shri Smritish Bandyopadhyaya, Shri Sachindranath Mitra, Shri Susil Dasgupta and some others sacrificed their precious lives in the mad orgy of communal hatred leading to strife and killings. Mahatma Gandhi—the soul of India and the Indian National Congress—risked his most valuable life also several times by resorting to fast unto death to rouse the finer humane sentiment of the people for prevention of the anti-national mad orgy ; but the great leader of the Muslim League—Mr. M. A. Zinnah, whose forefathers were Gujrati Hindus of India—perhaps laughed a satanic laugh in his sleeves to see the mental torment and anguish of the Mahatma—another Gujrati Hindu—and trotted on the fantastic theory of two nations in India, the Muslims being a completely separate entity, irreconcilable to the non-Muslims. Appeal to communal passions has always been a greater force among the illiterate masses and Mr. Zinnah was clever enough to wield this handy weapon to divide the country and carve out the sovereign state of Pakistan out of India. The Muslims of India were, no doubt, Indians but the bulk of them had hardly any love for India. There were a handful of Muslims who were as good Indians and patriots as the most ardent Indians and patriots of other communities but their number was small and they were in the Indian National Congress and therefore, they were termed as the show-boys of the Hindus and the Congress by the Muslim Leaguers. The Muslim League was, in fact, the hand-maid of the British imperialists and its strength came from their back-parlour. The Muslim League never fought against the British rulers to wrest power from them—rather, it always danced to the tunes played by them. It is a unique political organisation in the whole of the world in the sense that it wrested power and carved out a sovereign state from the foreign yoke without any struggle and fight against them and without any of its members having ever crossed the gates

of the jails. Their strategy was that, let the Congress fight out the battle of independence against the-then rulers of India and suffer the worst consequences, and they should stand against deliverance and transference of power till their demand of partition of India and formation of a new state of Pakistan was conceded by the Congress. The Congress, of course as the only national political organisation of India, declared in no uncertain terms that India would never be partitioned. Mahatma Gandhi—the heart and soul of India and the Congress—made a solemn declaration at one time that India could only be partitioned over his dead body alone. The general election of the country was fought over this issue of division or otherwise of India by the Muslim League and the Congress and the Muslims and the non-Muslims, almost in their entirety, voted for the Muslim League and the Congress. The Muslim League has always got the support and encouragement of the rulers from its very inception for their own purpose of safeguarding their own imperialistic designs. Thus encouraged and supported by the ruling caucus, the Muslim League had the audacity to declare a direct-action-day in 1946. The action of the Muslim League was directed against the Hindus and not against the rulers. As a result, Calcutta—the city of palaces—became the scene of mad fury of the Muslims and the Hindus alike, the former aggressively attacking the Hindus and the latter, beginning with defensive measures but subsequently giving themselves up to aggressiveness as well. The city of palaces became a hell to live in—the city was in flames and the dead bodies scattered all around as if to remind one of the war-battered city of Stalingrad of Russia during the Second World War. There was a huge killing of human beings of both the major communities. The well-thought-out plan of the Muslim League to frighten and terrorise the Congress and the Hindus to submit to the demand of the League for a separate sovereign state of Pakistan was frustrated in Calcutta, because

the Hindus also did not lag behind the Muslims in aggressiveness and killings. A large number of Muslims also died.

Having thus failed in Calcutta, the Muslim League selected another venue in the district of Noakhali where the Hindus were only 18 percent of the total population for the nefarious deeds of arson, loot, abduction and rape of the Hindu women, mass-conversion of faith and killings. The atrocities committed there were so much staggering that Mahatma Gandhi rushed to the place and trekked his journey from village to village to bring about communal peace and harmony. This had its effects. The forcibly converted Hindus again came under the fold of their own original faith and again the prayer-bells and conchs began to ring and emit sound in the Hindu houses. But the action of the Muslim League in Noakhali had its reaction in Bihar in all its fury and ferocity. The innocent Muslims of Bihar were ruthlessly murdered, rather butchered, and pitiful cries of their surviving relations rent the sky. This had its effect on the Congress leaders—their iron determination of non-partition of India began to melt away. They were scared by this fratricidal civil war among the major communities and submitted to the demand of partition in expectation of communal peace and tranquility. The lone voices of Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Azad against this suicidal decision of committing a political 'Harikiri' were hardly heeded by other members of the Congress Working Committee and India was agreed to be partitioned into two sovereign states of India and Pakistan. Out of the tripartite agreement among the Congress, the Muslim League and the then ruling authorities, Pakistan has come into being and this day of the Fourteenth of August, Nineteen Forty Seven, has been the day of transference of power from the British Raj, through the Viceroy—hence this mirth and hilarity and the public meeting with all its pomp and grandeur, on the occasion of its first celebration.

Sitting at a corner at the huge gathering of the meeting with the few comrades of the freedom-fighters, I mused and mused and the above thoughts—the background of Pakistan—crossed over my mind in succession, as the pictures on films pass over the eyes of the spectators in a cinema show.

Independence, for which I suffered so much, was no doubt very dear to my heart but I was not prepared to welcome this sort of independence after division of India into two sovereign states. I began my political career in protest against the partition of Bengal and I accept the partition of Bengal and India as a whole, on the achievement of independence! I was no more an Indian! This was the irony of fate. At this distant date after sixteen years of independence, I have no hesitation to admit that the first reaction to this independence was not a happy one to me but as a follower of the Congress, I had no other alternative but to follow the decision of the Congress leaders. I followed, perhaps with some mental reservation at the first stage. With the passing on of time, I begin to calm down and accept Pakistan as a settled fact and devote my whole energy, money and time in the uplift of the country (Pakistan)—both socially and economically—and formation of a Pakistani 'Nation' with all the communities and citizens of Pakistan.

But that was not to be. The Muslim League—the ruling party in Pakistan—still pursued their original policy of 'two-nation' theory even after the achievement of Pakistan and they set forth and directed their volunteers known as the 'National Guards', composed of the Muslims alone, to go ahead with terrorising the Hindus and reduce them to second-class citizenship. The Muslim League itself was a fascist organisation founded upon racial hatred and their volunteer-organisation was conducted on the principles and models of the 'storm-troopers' of Hitler. On the first flush of independence, the Muslims in general in Pakistan began to think that they were a superior class—a ruling race (no

longer a community) and the Hindus were their subjects. Even a hackney-carriage-driver also had the audacity or goodness to tell a Hindu of position in the society that he should not worry and run away out of fear ; now that the Moslems have become the rulers, it is their duty to protect their subjects, *i.e.*, the Hindus ! Such was the mental metamorphosis of the Muslims.

The Hindus also suffered from mental changes in the opposite direction and a sense of inferiority complex seized them outright. They were crestfallen and suffered from defeatism. They are not to be blamed for this mental metamorphosis. They believed in the solemn declaration of the Congress High Command and thought that India would never be partitioned and with this belief they voted for the Congress *en-masse* in the 1946-general election but their belief was belied. The Muslims, on the other hand, also voted *en-masse* for the Muslim League which stood for partition of India and achievement of Pakistan, and the fact that they got it made a sense of victory in them which again, aided and encouraged by the Muslim League party and their volunteer-force of the 'National Guards' by their acts of propaganda and hooliganism at large, brought forth complete disorder and lawlessness in the country, the Hindus having no moral and physical powers to resist it. The government was also powerless to enforce law and order due to interference of top politicians on the one hand, and sympathy and encouragement of many of its cardres with the lawless elements in their anti-Hindu zeal on the other. The non-communal well-meaning officials also got support neither from the ministry nor from the ruling Muslim League party and their volunteer force who became the supreme authority in practice.

This was the first outcome of independence in Pakistan. When things were running thus, news reached me at Rajshahi town that the house of a 'Kalwar'—a sect of the

Hindu society—had been looted at Gadagari in broad daylight at about 10 A. M. by some members of the majority community (Muslims). The looted house stood hardly a furlong off from the Godagari police-station and the looting continued for hours together and yet no police-staff made any attempt to give the victims any protection, nor they could or did arrest the culprits in three days after the occurrence. I hastened to the place with a band of both the Hindu and the Muslim political workers and called the local leaders of the Muslim community who also responded to my call. When we sat in conference and consultation. I made an earnest appeal to their good sense to trace out the culprits and exert their utmost influence over them for return of the goods looted, with a solemn assurance on my part that I would also spare no pains to get the offenders scotfree. This made a tremendous effect on the gathering, even beyond my expectation. It was indeed a sight to see by men on earth and gods overhead. The offenders were called in one after another by the leaders and were made to return the goods or the prices for them at the-then market-value, if they have been perished or finished any way, there being some food-grains as well in the looted articles. Thus about Rs. 1,500 in cash as prices and all the other articles were returned with individually signed statements admitting their guilt. These were the people of my country who were made to debase themselves as anti-social criminals by the machination of the politicians. I give details of this incident only to show how the simple and unsophisticated people could be made to become a cat's-paw in the hands of the designing politicians. Any one studying and analysing the gradual transformation of the people's mind may easily come to the conclusion that basically the people are good in nature but their goodness may be evaporated yielding place to animality by the designing persons. The Muslim League and their leaders were clever enough to catch hold of this human frailty and strike

on the people's susceptible chord by constantly dinning communal hatred into their ears, and thus communal frenzy came to reign supreme over finer sentiments of amity, peace and harmony among all classes and communities of Indian people.

Under the pressure of such communal orgy, leading to fratricidal civil wars of loot, arson and huge killings of men, women and children, as have been seen in Calcutta, Noakhali and Bihar, the Indian National Congress which stood for independence of united India as a whole was made to submit to the demand of Mr. Zinnah and his Muslim League party for partition and acceptance of Pakistan. The Congress by accepting partition of India thus sacrificed its fundamental principle of nationalism, only to save the people from fratricidal wars and hoped that this would bring about communal peace and tranquility in the newly born states of India and Pakistan but it was totally mistaken in visualizing the future in its true perspective. Wily Mr. Zinnah, supported and strenthened by the British rulers in their diplomatic game, accepted the 'truncated and moth-eaten' Pakistan, which fell far short of his demand, perhaps in the hope that once he sits tight over an independent and sovereign state, however 'truncated and moth-eaten', he would pursue the same policy of anti-India and communal hate in the administration with more vigour and thus make the goody-goody Indian leaders of the Congress further submit to his demands. The Quade-e-Azam—the supreme leader—had two sets of teeth in his mouth like that of a rogue elephant—one set was for show of beauty, and the other was for the real purpose of mastication. His first declaration from the throne of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan as its President was that 'the Hindus would cease to be Hindus and the Muslims would cease to be Muslims in matters of administration' henceforward and thus form into a Pakistani Nation. This elated the hearts of the politically conscious

and nationalist leaders of the minority community in Pakistan, *i.e.*, the non-Muslims on the one hand and the people of the world at large on the other. This was the set of his outer teeth for show of beauty but the real teeth for mastication lay covered elsewhere within the mouth—nobody could see that; only the victims could feel and appreciate the monstrosity of them. The Great Leader Mr. Zinnah had his real teeth for mastication in his policy of internal administration which stood for chauvinistic aggressive Moslem nationalism.

The Policy of Administration

The fundamental policy of internal administration was to create a homogenous state of one community alone. The whole administrative machinery was run with this end in view. It is, therefore, with the first flush of independent Pakistan that a chauvinistic aggressive Moslem nationalism began to rise its ugly head and preach the tenets of two-nation theory both from the press and platform, and manifest itself in militant fashion, thus making the lives of the Hindus most miserable from the very start. A planned programme of Moslemisation if possible, and if not, elimination, was pursued. The Muslim League and its allies of Muslim religious parties openly preached that the Hindus could not be regarded as an integral part of the Pakistani Nation and that their status would be like that of 'Zimmy' in an Islamic state. The word 'Zimmy' had a peculiar meaning with the Muslims in general, whatever might have been the real meaning of the term. The common people of the Muslim community took it to mean as 'hostages' for their co-religionists elsewhere in India. The responsible Muslim leaders who were in charge of running the administration also began to prate from the public platform that Pakistan was the homeland for the Muslims. This heightened the sense of superiority-

complex in the minds of the Muslims in general on the one hand, and depressed the Hindus on the other, so much so that they also began to think that they were only aliens, having no right of their own to live in the country except on the mercy of the Muslims. The leaders did not stop short in mere propagating this fantastic ideology—they went so far as to put down discriminatory provisions between the Muslims and the non-Muslims in the Constitution of Pakistan. The Constitution that was framed in 1956 and subsequently abrogated by Martial Law and the Constitution, now presented by President Ayub, contain the obnoxious discriminatory provision that a non-Muslim could not be the Head of the State of Pakistan on the ground that a non-Muslim who does not subscribe to the tenets of Islam cannot be entrusted with the sovereign responsibility of running the state. The preamble of the Constitution clearly lays down the object of the state being establishment of democracy and social justice as envisaged in Islam according to which the sovereignty lies with God and not with the people. The non-Muslims again, according to the so-called devout Muslims, are all heathens and therefore cannot be regarded as sons of God—'Allah', the Almighty. The non-Muslims, therefore, cannot have their share in administration on their own rights as citizens—a part of the people. The Islamic provisions of the constitutions give directions for moulding the character and the life of the people and therefore it may fairly be presumed that there should be no heterogenous elements of different faiths in the state of Pakistan. The constitution also lays down that the laws of Pakistan must not be repugnant to Sunnah and Quoran. This means virtual recognition of Islam as the state-religion. How far the fanatic zeal for religion can go without any care for the sentiments of the non-Muslims has been exhibited in the Pakistan National Assembly and the provincial assemblies as well. Those 'assemblies' open their sittings with recitation from the holy Quoran and the

minority members find themselves in awkward and embarrassing position when prayers are made there in Islamic form. Schools, colleges and government offices are provided with mosques for the Muslims. In the month of Ramzan (holy fast) all eating houses and establishments, even though run by the non-Muslims, are ordered to remain either closed or covered from outside from dawn to dusk so that the Muslims may not be tempted for the food and drink. Even smoking in the public in day-time is prohibited by anyone during that 'holy' month—any body contravening that order becomes liable for penalty. To add to the method of these crude observances for moulding the lives of the non-Muslims to the so-called Islamic code of life, the educational policy of the government and the text books would unmistakably establish the fact that the rulers of Pakistan are bent upon Moslemisation and cultural conquest of the minorities. Hundred and one such formalities and constant pin-pricks in day-to-day-life of the minorities lead to the one and only one conclusion that it is the main task of the Muslim rulers to squeeze out the politically conscious, resourceful and intelligent section of the minority community so that the docile, less intelligent and the weaker section of the community may be proselytized or at least made to adopt the Islamic pattern of life and way of thinking. The Moulanas and the Moulavis have been set to carry on a systematic preaching in religious gatherings, denouncing the Hindu religion and extolling Islam as the best religion and invite the non-Moslems to embrace Islam. Economic strangulation of the minorities is also proceeding according to a plan. During the British rule a section of the Hindus took devotedly to educational line as their professions in life and most of the teachers in the schools, colleges and universities were Hindus but after establishment of Pakistan they have been deliberately squeezed out—some by arrests on flimsy and fantastic charges and others on this or that ground—

yielding place to less qualified and less efficient Muslim teachers, as the authorities did not like to entrust education to the non-Muslims. Dr. P. C. Chakraverty of the Dacca University was arrested on a fantastic charge of espionage and anti-state activities. Coming out of jail, he left Pakistan for good. His arrest scared others of the profession as well and some of them also left for India. Dr. Zuberi—one of the foremost educationists of Pakistan—once told this writer of the book that the University of Dacca which had at once time been beset with a galaxy of foremost educationists of India and was a pride to her, was now reduced to a caricature of a university only because of the bigoted policy of the rulers. He deplored introduction of politics in the educational institutions and the policies emanating from the government for governing such institutions.

However, monolithic unity in a homogeneous state was the aim of the leaders of Pakistan and they spared no pains to achieve it at all costs, even at the expense of eliminating the undesirable segregated minority from the national life of Pakistan by a planned process of visible and invisible oppressions and persecutions. The logic of the situation is that in such a hostile atmosphere and uncongenial environment, surcharged with intense racial and communal hatred, a minority community by virtue of their religion only, who have been economically crippled, socially disorganised and politically impotent without any opportunity and freedom for self-development and self-expression, can hardly exist, nay, survive as an active element in the country. As a consequence of these policies, pursued by the rulers of Pakistan from the very outset till this day, the minorities have become completely demoralised and have lost the vitality of resisting the onslaughts of the rulers on their education, culture, spirit and patriotism. They are now suffering from a colossal sense of defeatism. The East Bengal people in undivided India fought their heroic battle relentlessly and unremittingly for

independence of India as a whole from the British yoke and their contribution was no less than anybody's in the present-day India, but when independence came after partition of India, they became immediately crest-fallen and dispirited. This has been the outcome of partition of India—it has both physically and psychologically told upon the people. To add to their psychological sense of defeatism, the Muslim leaders of Pakistan have systematically manifested their supposed superiority in all walks of life through their aggressive communal nationalism.

This has been my bitter experience of all these years of my fourteen years' stay in East Pakistan as a responsible man in the then democratic machinery of the administration.

The very birth of Pakistan gave a big jolt to Indian nationalism because of its sacrifice of the fundamental creed and principles, and at the same time thrilled the Muslims of Pakistan with the hilarity of a tremendous victory. This first flush of joy again manifested itself in all its ugliness of lawlessness among the 'Muslim National Guards' and their allies of all the lawless elements and hooligans in the country. Lawlessness prevailed everywhere and the Hindus were shaken to their backbone due to forcible occupation of their lands and properties, crime against their women here and there, and a host of other acts of hooliganism in words and deeds. The government's policy in seizure of all the fire-arms from the Hindus alone and granting of licenses for holding fire-arms to the Muslims in general and to the lawless elements, including the 'National Guards' in particular, added to the sense of insecurity and utter helplessness of the Hindus. There was none to raise them from the morass of this state of mind on the official sides who alone could do that by enforcing law and order in all its strictness, or even if there have been any well-meaning and non-communal officers on district level—their number was very thin, though

they were totally ineffective due to the policy of the government emanating from the top.

I have seen this in my district of Rajshahi. The first District Magistrate in Rajshahi after independence had been Khondker Ali Tyeb—a very non-communal and well-meaning official—but he, too, could give hardly any protection to the minority non-Muslims; he was too helpless to protect himself even from the insults and humiliations hurled against him from the rowdy elements of the majority community. He was nick-named as “Kali” (a Hindu-goddess) Tyeb by his co-religionists for his non-communal approach in the matter of administration. Not only this, he was filthily abused in a public meeting in Rajshahi town while he and Mr. Hassenali, a minister of the Muslim League government in East Bengal, were present in the meeting; yet neither he nor the Minister himself could have the courage or capacity to bring the offender to book! This was the-then condition and shape of things in the country. When the District Magistrate fails to protect himself and a Minister could hardly give any protection to him, how could it be expected that the self same District Magistrate would be in a position to give any protection to the minorities! With all his sincere wishes and desires, he also could not; nay, he was transferred to the Secretariate table in Dacca, from the executive office of a District Magistrate to the position of a dignified clerk!

Then came Mr. A. Majid, a non-Bengalee Muslim, in the place of Mr. K. A. Tyeb as the District Magistrate. This gentleman requires special mention, only for a contrast between his and his predecessor's executive actions and subsequent official careers. This may give an insight into the policy of the government.

One day I met Mr. Majid at his residence and as a member of the East Bengal Legislature I offered my fullest co-operation to him. When leaving his residence, two prominent local leaders of the Muslim League Party, who were

waiting for interview with the D. M. in his bungalow, told me that there had been a serious communal disturbance at Santipur in the district of Nadia in West Bengal (India), as a result of which there had been influx of refugees in the town and the local Muslims had been very much agitated over the issue and decided to ask me to go over to West Bengal for inducing the government there for remedy and immediate action. On this, my answer to the friends was that I was as good a Pakistani citizen as any of them. If a combined deputation of the Hindus and the Muslims was sent there to approach the Government of West Bengal, I was ready to accompany but if I was only asked to move in the matter because of my Hindu faith, I would be the last man to go. I was not here in Pakistan as a hostage for India; nor the government of India was a non-secular Hindu one. My answer was straight and cut and the friends were not satisfied and they threatened that there would be serious repercussions over the Hindus in the district.

These talks give an inkling of the Muslim mind prevailing since partition of India and achievement of independence. The idea of hostage system was in the mind of the Muslim leaders from the very start of Pakistan and this has been worked up to fever-heat by the Ayub regime, which is nothing but a very aggressive edition of the old Muslim League one. This will be seen when we come to the chapter of communal riots in this volume.

The above talks were held in the month of Ramzan—the holy fast—which was coming to the close. There was a persistent rumour in the town of Rajshahi that there would be a communal attack on the Hindus on the 'Id' day. As a member of the legislature who assured the District Magistrate of his fullest co-operation, I informed him by a letter of my talks with the Muslim leaders and the rumour current in the town and the panic caused thereby among the minority community. Mr. Majid sent me a very insulting

letter in reply which only showed the trend of his mind and his sympathy with the Muslim leaders. At the outset of his letter he condemned me for not uttering any reproach on the Government of West Bengal and had the audacity to advise me and all other Hindus with the following words: "The Hindus are living here with divided loyalties for their personal ends. As a friend I advise you and others to drop this idea and do for the good of Pakistan with the wishes of the people" In reply I sent him another letter and I told him outright that no amount of threat (he threatened in his letter as well) from him would cause me to deviate from the path of service to the people and as long as there would remain any opportunity to serve the people, I should be there in Pakistan. In conclusion I said, "I value your friendship, not because that I desire any material gain from you but because that you happen to be the servant of an independent state of which I am a citizen." This reply was too much for him and he expressed that he was nobody's servant save and except that of "Allah". He was not even the servant of the state !

As a servant of 'Allah' and in His name he did create a havoc among the minorities in the district. He got the octogenarian manager of the Taherpur-Raj, Shri Rasiklal Roy, arrested under the Security Act (detention without trial) for his offence that he fed the coffin-bearers of his dead daughter-in-law (wife of his son) and some other guests and relatives on the eleventh day of the death according to the Hindu shastras, as previously arranged, but accidentally, the morning radio-news of the day (Pakistan-news) announced the death of the Quade-e-Azam Mr. Zinnah. Certain disgruntled Muslim tenants under the Taherpur-Raj seized this opportunity and complained to the District Magistrate that the manager of the estate was so much elated with the news of the Quade-e-Azam's death that he had arranged a feast on the sad occasion, and the D. M. at once

ordered for his arrest. He was so much over-zealous to uphold the safety and security of the state that he did not spare an illiterate milk-maid from the clutches of the Security Act for her offence of selling whey and butter on the day of the Quade's death !

Nay, these were not all. Arrests were made from all quarters of the district. Shri Birendra Nath Sarkar, a young lawyer of the town who had been a fighter for freedom of India from the British yoke from his very early days, was also arrested under the self-same Security Act on a very fantastic charge of causing communal disturbance in the district of Murshidabad in West Bengal (India), even though he had never been in Murshidabad district for several years and there had been no communal riot there at the time of his arrest ! Thus fair and impartial justice for the Hindus came to be the first casualty in Pakistan on her achievement of independence. At the connivance of the District Magistrate himself the palace of the Puthia-Charani-Raj was forcibly occupied by one Kamar Begum having been aided by a posse of National Guards under the captaincy of Jonab (now, deceased) Shamsul Huq. A day earlier to this forcible occupation, all the licensed guns and fire-arms of the Charani-Raj were taken away to Rajshahi Collectorate by the order of the D. M. on the pretext of examining them. This Begum did not stop short at occupying the palace only. She expropriated the entire movable and immovable properties of late Kumar N. N. Roy of Charani-Raj on the plea of her being the legal wife of the Kumar after his so called conversion of faith from Hinduism to Islam, even though her case in the Calcutta High Court could not stand on evidences. Puthia, which had once been a seat of Hindu culture and education and which grew up to be a semi-urban township due to accumulation of the Hindu employees for generations together, became denuded of her glory of the past due to the atrocities of the Begum and her allies and the Hindus began

to move helter-skelter to other places for safety and security. No law of the land could give them any protection whatsoever. Furthermore, during the 'Te-bhaga' movement (claiming two-third share of the crop by the actual tillers of the soil) under the leadership of the Communist Party and its leader, Smt. Ila Mitra, a tremendous havoc was created among the Sontals and the other Adibasi communities by the district authorities in their acts of molestation of the girls and women including the leader, Mrs. Mitra, and burning of their huts and putting them to abnormal physical torture after their arrests at random on mass scale. A graphic description of the acts of violence was given in the report prepared by the Father of a Roman Catholic Church at Andharkotha and I believe that report is still kept in the archives of the India Government in Delhi. In short, the D. M. acted as a little nabab of the olden days and there was no remedy for the acts of oppression on the Hindus and fomenting of bitter communalism in the administration as well as in the minds of the Muslims.

I brought all his misdeeds to the notice of Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, Sir Nazimuddin, Mr. Nurul Amin, the then Prime Minister, Governor General and Chief Minister respectively, but to no effect. On the contrary, he was subsequently transferred, though after a long time when the Hindus were totally crippled in mind and spirit in the district of Rajshahi, to Mymensingh, the biggest district of undivided Bengal, predominated by the Hindu zemindars and landlords, perhaps to try his ruthless hand of oppression there as well.

He went to Mymensingh and his first act was to requisition 700 Hindu houses at one stroke of pen. He became a cent percent success wherever he did go, in breaking and elevating the morale of the Hindus and the Muslims respectively, and he has been rewarded with promotion after promotion in his official career by the Government of Pakistan. The official careers of late Mr. Ali Tyeb and Mr. Majid

would amply show and prove the anti-Hindu desires and designs behind the policy of the government. The desires and designs of the Government of Pakistan were, at first, in a nebulous condition under the determined but shaky rule of the original Muslim League Party, weakened by internal quarrels for power after the death of Mr. Zinnah and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan ; but as time rolled on with political vicissitudes, Mr. Ayub Khan—the Chief of the Army—seized power for his military ‘junta’ on abrogation of the constitution by Mr. Iskandar Mirza—the-then President of Pakistan—and subsequently formed a new Muslim League Party of his own which was only an aggressive edition of the original Muslim League and ruthlessly carried on his aggressive designs to make the miserable lives of the Hindus more miserable, so that they may be either totally eliminated or annihilated from the social life of Pakistan. The rot in the Hindu mind had started with the partition of India—it became more and more aggravated due to the unsocial activities of the Muslim League Party and the discriminatory treatment of the government, and at last the Ayub’s Government completely crushed and crumbled the Hindus by its diabolical measures in legislations and physical annihilation as well. The rot is now complete and the eagerness of the Hindus of Pakistan to migrate has increased cent percent only for upholding honour, safety and security.

Exodus and Migration

At the time of partition in 1947, the population of the minority community in East Pakistan stood at little over thirteen millions. The number dwindled to nine millions according to the Census Report of 1961. Making allowance for increase of population during the period, migration of four

and a half millions can fairly be accepted as correct. There has been some unauthorised infiltration of the Muslims in the border areas of India—West Bengal, Assam and Tripura—on economic and political reasons and their number is now estimated to be in the region of half a million, and therefore, the actual figure of exodus and migration of the minorities from East Pakistan stands at four millions since partition of Bengal. The President of India, Dr. Radhakrishnan, also gave this figure in his recent letter to Mr. Ayub Khan, President of Pakistan, after the communal killings of the minorities in Khulna and Jessore.

The process of migration, as I have already said, started from the very beginning of Pakistan due to various causes, such as inhuman communal disturbances accompanied with ruthless killing and destruction of property. Social, economic and psychological factors also played an important part in driving out the Hindus from the land of their birth. Pressed under the hostile and aggressive attitude of the Muslim League, the ruling party, the minorities naturally apprehended that in an Islamic state the minorities would not have equal right of citizenship and that their safety and security, honour and prestige, progress and development would always depend on the whims and caprices of the Muslims. That their apprehension was not altogether baseless has been proved by subsequent events since achievement of Pakistan, said to be a holy land for the faithfuls to Islam. The process of migration has been continuing without any break with intermittent rise and fall in its stream. West Pakistan has already been stripped of her minorities through blood and tears, just upon partition of India into two sovereign states. East Pakistan still holds the minorities as hostages who are paying for the political game of the Pakistan politicians with their honour and life, at intervals. Violent push on wide scale at a time may produce adverse reaction in India, followed by corresponding traffic of the

Muslims from India to Pakistan—so the plan is worked out cleverly in phases.

This has been the history of Pakistan since her birth in regard to her minorities. Whenever the Hindus have begun to settle down and live a life of peace even without any political right after a push, another violent push with more gigantic force and ferocity has come over them only to unsettle and remind them that they were undesirables in Pakistan. Again they were put in the melting pot and fresh exodus of the panic stricken minorities started. That after the terrible havoc has been over the leaders of the Government of Pakistan would come forward with a solemn assurance that the minorities are a sacred trust is nothing but a diplomatic move at windowdressing only to hoodwink India and the rest of the world. It has been my bitter experience for the last fourteen years of my stay in East Pakistan that there has always been a hidden hand of the Administration behind all the tragic happenings of communal disturbances. Whatever has been done at the official level to quell the disturbances after the miscreants could finish their job with all thoroughness, was only to apply palliative on the wounds suffered by the minorities. I do not expect, nor any sane and sober politicians and impartial observers should ever expect, that Great Britain and America—the two powerful partners of the UNO and allies of Pakistan—would ever see the truth in the game of Pakistan politicians in the right perspective and do fair justice to the suffering minorities of Pakistan. They have always blinked at the misdeeds perpetrated by the Muslims of Pakistan on the Hindus at the connivance of the Islamic Administration of Pakistan for their own national purposes of putting political pressure on India trying to go forward with progressive political outlook. The British Government which had been reigning over India for about two centuries had always tried to put a wedge between the two major communities—the Hindus and

the Muslims—of India and has been still pursuing the same old policy, even though they quitted India under force of their national and international circumstances after the Second World War. The war has ended but the world has been divided into two power blocks of Communist and non-Communist countries, and Pakistan has entered into an alliance with the non-Communist Anglo-America by her treaties and pacts, while India has been pursuing a policy of non-alignment with any of the power blocks. This has given a very suitable handle to Pakistan to ride roughshod against India in the world-politics of the Western Powers. Taking full advantage of this situation Pakistan has been sparing no pains to injure India in every way and has therefore let loose the Frankenstein of communalism and hate-India campaign in and around her territory. I have always seen that this hate-India campaign has at last taken the shape of ferocious campaign against the Hindus of Pakistan. The mental make-up of the Muslims of Pakistan has been trained by persistent propaganda to hold the Hindus as hostages and therefore the Hindus of Pakistan have been the worst sufferers all the time and have been living a life of precarious uncertainty. In such a political atmosphere surcharged with uncertainty and smashed morale on the part of the Hindus, any act of violence or a crime against women by members of the majority community on the minority Hindus with no immediate and effective steps to enforce law and order by the government has often accelerated the tempo of exodus and migration of the Hindus. During the period of uncertainty from the date of birth of Pakistan in 1947 to 1950, the communal disturbances of February 1950 in East Pakistan climaxed all its previous records in both intensity and extensity. Hundreds and thousands of men, women and children of the minority communities were killed on the streets and in the houses of Dacca, Barisal and almost every other district of East Pakistan. Even the passen-

gers of the minority community running by train were not spared. The moving trains were stopped on the Bhairab Bridge in the district of Mymensingh and near Santahar in the district of Rajshahi and all Hindus were picked up and stabbed and thrown into the river or on the fields. This riot was a pre-planned and pre-arranged affair—most of the Muslims knew about it previously. The riot started from Dacca, the capital of East Bengal now known as East Pakistan, on the 10th of February, 1950 and one of our old friends, Shri Atulananda Guha of Dacca who was a freedom-fighter of the bygone days, had given us the information that he had come to know from a Muslim friend of his that a communal riot would start at Dacca on the 10th of February after the Jumma prayer of the Muslims, and this information proved correct. Such instances of giving information by the Muslims to their Hindu friends were not solitary ones. These facts prove unmistakably that the riot was pre-planned. The incidences of killing of men, women and children, burning and looting of houses and abduction of women and girls of the minority community must have been the result of a master-plan, hatched in secret among the high-ups of the Muslim community and carried out in extenso.

This incident was so gigantic in magnitude that it acted as the proverbial last straw on the back of the camel to break the very faintly lingering morale of the minority community of East Pakistan, and a huge exodus of them started. The monstrosity of the disturbances was so shocking and outrageous that the Prime Minister of India, who was known to be a man of peace, was made to declare that he would take to "other method"—meaning, perhaps, 'police-action'—if Pakistan fails to mend her way and save the life and property of the minorities in her state. This statement of his proved a miracle and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, late Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, flew to Delhi and entered into an

agreement, known as the Nehru-Liaquat Pact, on the 8th of April, 1950.

The intensity of the riot was so shocking and outrageous that Shri Jogendra Chandra Mondal, Law Minister in the Central Government of Pakistan, who was a staunch and enthusiastic supporter of Pakistan and an active associate-member of the Muslim League, felt horrified and completely bewildered to see his friends, relations and other members of his own 'Namasudra' class (scheduled caste) of the Hindu community in the district of Barisal, either brutally murdered or maimed and their houses and properties pillaged and ravaged. The sight was too much for him and he migrated to India in disgust, shame and sorrow.

The Hindus of the Barisal district were the worst sufferers in this communal riot. Mr. Farruqui was the District Magistrate of Barisal. He was openly charged by Shri Satin Sen (now deceased as a prisoner in Pakistan Jail), the valiant fighter of Bengal for freedom of India and a Congress leader of the district of Barisal, that he (the D. M.) actively supported and encouraged the rioters to break the law merrily by his policy of non-interference. Satin Babu and his comrade of the Congress, Shri Pran Kumar Sen of Barisal who could defend the hopeless minorities, were arrested and put behind the prison bars. This Mr. Farruqui was subsequently promoted to become the Commissioner of the Rajshahi Division. As I have said earlier, this had always been the policy of the Government of Pakistan to reward those officers who could excel in hard-hitting the minorities. There lies the difference between the attitude of the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan. In India also there are some communal political organisations and they, too, have got their adherents among the people who seem prone and susceptible to communal sentiments but the government always takes a deterrent

view and acts accordingly. But Pakistan takes altogether a different view and always apports the blame on the Hindus for all of its acts of omission and commission; nay, the Government of Pakistan sometimes connives at the flare up of communal disturbances. The Hindus therefore feel utterly helpless to stand against such disturbances and they, therefore, begin to migrate or flee the country on a large-scale exodus, after every incidence of communal outbreaks. This has been the history of exodus and migration of the Hindus from East Pakistan. They have totally lost their faith in the 'bonafides' of the government.

The communal riot of 1950 accelerated the rate of exodus which has been continuing since the birth of Pakistan but the Nehru-Liaquat Pact soothed the minorities for sometime only and thus averted both-ways traffic of them from Pakistan and India, the latter also becoming venue of communal disturbances as repercussion of happenings in her counterpart—Pakistan. The minorities in East Pakistan got a breathing time only to trek to India once again in large scale in 1952. The Government of Pakistan declared that Urdu would be the national language of Pakistan which was resented by the Bengalee Muslims of East Pakistan and the Muslim students of the province started the language movement for incorporation of the Bengali as well in the constitution of Pakistan as one of the national languages. The East Pakistan authorities replied to this demand of the students with bullets. Some students accepted the challenge of the government with their precious lives and the movement gathered an unexpected momentum of a mass movement throughout the province of East Pakistan and the government, as is their wont, discerned the secret hands of the Pakistan National Congress and the Hindus in it. Shri Monoranjan Dhar, Shri Govinda Lal Banerjee and Shri Satin Sen—all members of the East Pakistan Legislative Assembly—were arrested and put behind the prison bars. Mr. Nurul Amin, the-then Chief Minis-

ter of the province, came forward with a statement in the Assembly that the Hindus, attired in 'Lungis' and 'Pyjamas' had mixed up with the Muslims and led the movement! Not only that, according to him, the communists from West Bengal slipped into the province and played a prominent role in the movement!

As a consequence and check on the movements of the peoples of India and Pakistan, the system of passports and visas was introduced. The novelty of procedure in the movements of the peoples between the two Bengals—the East (Pakistan) and the West (India)—frightened the Hindus of East Pakistan. They apprehended that this was a measure to confine them in the Pak territory for harassing and ultimately killing them without notice and knowledge of the outside world. This time the exodus swelled in huge proportions, unprecedented in its previous treks. The first big spurt of the Hindus coming from East Pakistan was by the latter half of 1952. Economic conditions, increase in crimes and above all, the apprehension that the border would be closed to the unauthorised entrants were the main reasons for this huge exodus of about 200,000 people. In the next two years between 6,000 and 10,000 Hindus left Pakistan every month. The figure of migrants shot up to 30,000 at a time and Sir Nazimuddin, the-then Prime Minister of Pakistan, rushed to Dacca from Karachi, the capital of Pakistan, and requested us—the members of the Congress Assembly Party—to exert our influence in checking this flow. He gave us the assurance that passports were nothing but mere documents of nationality and that they would never be denied to the citizens of Pakistan on their applications for the same. But this assurance of his when interpreted to the intending migrants, they could hardly put their faith in the 'bona fide' of his government and the exodus continued unabated for some time. The latter events have shewn that they were right in their assessment. At last, however, the flow trickled

down for some time, only to rise again on adoption of the 'Islamic Constitution' by Pakistan. This time the migration figures set a record at 55,000 a month. The exodus and migration of the Hindus have thus become a perennial stream in the body-politic of Pakistan with only rise and fall at times at intervals.

Thus ended the first phase of the Muslim League rule in East Pakistan by the top politicians of the party after the general election had been held in 1954 since the birth of Pakistan.

CHAPTER II

General Election in 1954

The general election in 1954 in East Pakistan resulted in complete route of the Muslim League. About 75 members belonging to the minority communities were elected to East Pakistan Assembly on the basis of adult suffrage and separate electorates among the non-Moslems. Non-Moslem constituencies which were biturcated into (1) Scheduled Castes and (2) the rest, under the British rule, were further divided into (1) Caste-Hindus, (2) Scheduled Castes, (3) Buddhists and (4) Christians, under the Muslim League rule, only to weaken the parliamentary solidarity of the non-Moslems. The Muslim League politicians took the cue from their erstwhile British masters in dividing the non-Moslems in small groups so that they may not stand together to resist the legislative or otherwise onslaughts on them but they were foiled in their base designs. The Congressmen gained most of the seats in their fold and there was not a single black-sheep to fall into their trap—nay, the Muslim Leaguers could not save themselves from complete route. That was a unique election in the history of the world—a ruling party gaining only 9 seats in a house of 310! As under the constitutional rules, the members of the East Pakistan Assembly elected their representatives proportionate to their strength to Central Parliament through single transferable votes and the minorities got their share.

The phenomenal victory in election was brought into being under the combined leadership of late Mr. Fazlul Huq, late Mr. Surhwardy and Maulana Bhashani, who submerged their own political parties into a new one under the name of

the 'United Front', and Mr. Fazlul Huq became the Chief Minister as the leader of the newly formed parliamentary party. His non-communal policy in the administration and approach to the problems of both the partitioned Bengals of the East and the West, ushered in a new short-lived era of confidence and security in the mind of the minorities. The Muslim League Party was still then the ruling party in the Central Government of Pakistan and Mr. Huq's policies and approaches were too much for them to tolerate. They therefore took the aid of Article 93 of the Constitution and suspended the East Pakistan Legislature and dissolved the Ministry. Late Mr. Mahammad Ali of Bogra, the-then Prime Minister of Pakistan, had the unabashed audacity to declare from the seat of Prime Minister before the world that Mr. Huq was a traitor and an enemy to the state of Pakistan and he became, therefore, virtually interned in his own house in Dacca. A reign of terror then followed—many non-political members of the minority communities, even lawyers, doctors, businessmen and teachers, were put behind the prison bars. This undemocratic and reactionary step of the Muslim League Central Government again worsened the situation and exodus remarkably increased.

With the restoration of the parliamentary government again after almost a year, under the chief-ministership of Mr. Abu Hossain Sarkar, an erstwhile Congressman of undivided Bengal and a faithful follower of Mr. Fazlul Huq in his 'Krishak-Sramik Party' of pre-independence days, the flow of exodus was checked. With the advent of the 'United Front' coming into power, the Congressmen were also brought into the picture to play their legitimate role and take share in the administration of the country. Late Mr. Kamini Kumar Dutt of hallowed memory, a prominent Congress leader of undivided Bengal, and Shri Basanta Kumar Dass, the leader of the Congress Assembly Party of East Pakistan, found places in the Central and the Provincial Cabinet as

the Law Minister and the Finance Minister respectively. When Mr. B. K. Dass was subsequently shifted to the Central Cabinet, the writer of this book was taken in the Cabinet of Mr. Abu Hossain Sarkar as the minister-in-charge of Finance and Jails (Home), and there were two other Hindus of the scheduled caste in the Cabinet.

The funniest portion of the Pakistan politics was that Mr. Fazlul Huq, the once-declared traitor and enemy to the state by no less a person than the Prime Minister himself from his seat, was taken in the Central Cabinet as the Minister of Home Affairs (Interior)—the pivot of the administration! The leaders of Pakistan, excepting a few, follow no logic. They are apt to do whatever suits their nefarious purpose of serving themselves and their sinister motive and design of hate-India and communalism. This is the only philosophy they have been following till now. Mr. Fazlul Huq and his two successors, Mr. Abu Hossain Sarkar and Mr. Ataur Rehman Khan, did not subscribe to this philosophy of the Muslim League and therefore they were either branded as traitors and enemies to the state or were sought to be discredited in the public eye.

However, with the restoration of the parliamentary government in East Pakistan, the United Front party disintegrated into three political parties of non-communal character under the leadership of the three stalwarts, *viz.*, Messrs Fazlul Huq, Surhwardy and Maulana Bhashani under the names of 'Krishak-Samik Party', 'Awami League' and the 'National Awami Party'. The 'Awami League' formed the last ministry under the parliamentary constitution with Mr. Ataur Rehman Khan as the Chief Minister and continued for some time. There were three Hindus in his Cabinet of which two, in Shri Dharendra Nath Datta and Shri Monoranjan Dhar, were prominent Congress leaders.

Since the birth of Pakistan till today there was only a very short period covering only a little over three years or so,

during which the minorities could breath a sigh of relief under the chief-ministership of Mr. Fazlul Huq and his two successors but this was not allowed to go on for long. When Mr. Ataur Rehman Khan was in charge of the Government of East Pakistan, Mr. Iskandar Mirza, the President of Pakistan, unwittingly abrogated the constitution under pressure from the military generals headed by Mr. Ayub Khan, the Chief of the Army, only to be driven out of Pakistan in a few days and seek shelter in England ! Mr. Ayub Khan and his military 'junta' came into power and Martial Law was proclaimed in Pakistan. According to the-then authorities of Pakistan, martial law was said to be proclaimed on the ground of a disturbance in the East Pakistan Assembly culminating in the death of the Deputy Speaker but the general impression is otherwise. It would, of course, be a matter for the future historians to find out the real truth. If the-then legislators were unworthy of their duties and responsibilities, the people ought to have been given the opportunity to elect their representatives in the next general election which was about to come within three months but that was not done. The politicals in East Pakistan think that the real intention behind this move lay elsewhere—they see the secret sinister hands of the interested foreign powers behind the scene. The left-wing swing of the people was a foregone conclusion—they denounced the military pacts with the Western Powers under the SEATO and the CENTO unhesitatingly, and the general election, if allowed to be held, would have thrown the Pacts like pieces of waste-paper in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. The major parties of the Pact know this fact of the people's mind and they therefore found a very competent and convenient tool in Mr. Ayub Khan for withholding the election by capturing power by a *coup*, and that was faithfully done to their utter satisfaction.

I know it for certain that the reason of disturbance in the East Pakistan Assembly as given out by the authorities is

only a cover to hide the real truth behind the move of proclamation of the Martial Law. Even before the Assembly sat for its last session when the disturbances took place, the military generals had visited the Central Jails of East Pakistan only to ascertain the extent of accommodation there and instructed the jail authorities to prepare a list of short-term non-political prisoners for release to make room for the politicals to be brought in. The military authorities prepared and finalised their plan of 'coup' in all its thoroughness.

The 'coup' came and Martial Law was proclaimed in October, 1958. With the proclamation of the martial law, the short-lived halcyon days for the minorities also disappeared.

Mr. Ayub Khan came into power through the back-door and he is still holding power under the guise of a fake democracy known as 'Basic Democracy' and depriving the people of their fundamental rights of a democratic government. The politically conscious section of people of Pakistan believe that the Ayub regime was only a creation of the Pentagon of the U. S. and they are therefore trying hard to get rid of the foreign stooge by all means.

CHAPTER III

Martial Law—Period of Dictatorship followed by Constitutional Regime

In the foregoing pages I have given a brief history of the first phase of the Muslim League Rule under the politicians, followed by the rule of the United Front in relation to the condition of the minorities in East Pakistan. The third chapter of history of Pakistan now began with the ushering in of the Martial Law—a period of Dictatorship followed by the constitutional regime.

Martial Law regime was a black era in the history of Pakistan. The entire country was terrorised to its backbone with indiscriminate arrests, ruthless and inhuman tortures on the people, and shooting them down or putting them to death who had the courage and temerity to oppose, under the very barbarous methods of the Stone Age. Men like Khan Abdul Gaffur Khan and Abdus Samad Khan of North West Frontier and Baluchistan—known as the Frontier Gandhi and the Baluch-Gandhi respectively—and a host of their followers in West Pakistan were arrested and put behind the prison bars. In East Pakistan, Maulana Bhashani, Sheik Muzibar Rehman, Mr. Hamidul Huq, Mr. Tafazzal Hossain, editor of 'Ithifaq', Mr. Abdul Mansur, the ex-Deputy Prime-Minister of Pakistan in the cabinet of late Mr. Suhrawardy and a host of other political workers and leaders also found their places in the Pakistan jail on this or that plea. Even Mr. Suhrawardy, on whose death subsequently the Pakistan National Flag was to be flown at half-mast, had to pass his days for some months in the Karachi Jail. How the barbarous methods were applied in the Kalat Division, Baluchistan and the Frontier provinces of West Pakistan were sub-

sequently disclosed in the Pakistan Parliament by an honourable member of the same and he had to pay for the disclosure in his arrest. Shri Monoranjan Dhar, an ex-minister of Finance and Minority Affairs, was also arrested, hand-cuffed and made to walk to the jail in Mymensingh, his home-district-town, only to be humiliated before the public eye. Several cases were started against some political leaders but they were all acquitted honourably by the judiciary. These procedures were followed only to strike terror in the minds of the people and the government was no doubt successful in its first attempt. To make the way smooth for the subsequent so-called constitutional regime, all the prominent Hindu and the Muslim leaders were debarred to contest any election for six years under a mock trial and all the political parties were banned, to revive the Muslim League subsequently from its ashes under the hegemony of Mr. Ayub Khan, the military dictator of Pakistan, himself.

Under the military 'junta', the condition of the minorities remarkably deteriorated. Every Hindu became a political suspect to the government. The houses of the prominent Hindu leaders, especially the houses of the Hindu politicians, began to be watched and surrounded by the plain-clothed I. B. watcher's and any outsiders coming to those houses, as they used to do previously to put their grievances before their leaders for remedy, began to be put under a heavy barrage of interrogations and thus terrorised. The movement of the Hindu politicians began to be watched and followed at every step by the watch-dogs of the I. B. department. The politicians, though not formally interned in their houses, were in all practical sense segregated from the outsiders in their own houses. This had a tremendous effect on the commoners of the Hindu society to further deteriorate their already depleted morale, and their condition began to gradually worsen. The Hindu commoners had so long believed that their only elected leaders in the Assembly

would focuss their legitimate grievances and move the government for remedy but now having seen and realised the pitiable condition of their spokesmen they began to shake in their marrow and thus lost all hopes of sustaining themselves in their determination to stay on in the land of their birth.

This was the first effect of the Martial Law regime on the Hindus. Their miserable plight further deteriorated under the so-called constitutional regime, following the lifting of the Martial Law. In a house of 156 members in the Pakistan National Assembly (Parliament), minority representation has been *nil* under the innovated system of 'Basic Democracy' and in the East Pakistan Provincial Assembly, out of 150 members there have been only three members—one, representing Chittagong Hill Tracts and two, representing the Scheduled Castes, who have hardly any gut to stand erect against the political onslaughts of the government and their henchmen on the Hindus. This has been amply proved in the subsequent events of pillage, carnage and incendiarism perpetrated on the Hindus at the connivance of the government. I shall deal with them later on under the head of 'Communal Riots'.

In the administrative sphere also, the Government of Pakistan have consistently and persistently followed a policy of individious distinction between the Hindus and the Muslims, excepting for a brief period of the United Front regime in East Pakistan. There is no minority member in the Foreign Diplomatic Services, excepting one career diplomat for Burma. There are seventeen districts in East Pakistan and there was only one District Executive Head in Shri Ajit Dutt-Chowdhury, C. S. P. for a very brief period under the United Front regime, and he, too, had to flee the country during the Martial Law regime. There has been none else till now since the inception of Pakistan to head the district administration in the province of East Pakistan. Representa-

tion of the minority community in the Civil Service of Pakistan and the Junior Civil Service and Police Service is almost nil. Employment in other grades of services is most unsatisfactory. The ratio of minority representation in service is observed more in breaches than in observances. The doors of non-government and semi-government offices are practically closed to the minorities.

In the matter of granting licences and import-permits, the minorities are being steadily and speedily weeded out. Secret circulars have been issued not to grant fresh licences to the minorities and drastically reduce the amount of the existing ones. The industries managed by the minorities are denied facilities for expansion and development.

In schools and colleges, the minorities are given appointments only where the Muslims are not available and as soon as Muslims become available the minorities are removed on some plea or other. Onslaughts on the cultural institutions of the Hindus have been rampant. The houses of the B. B. Hindu Academy and the Sanskrit College of Rajshahi are still remaining requisitioned by the government since 1948 and the Iswar Pathsala (a secondary high school) and the Nivedita Girls School of Comilla have recently been forcibly occupied by the Muslims under the patronage of the Government of Mr. Ayub Khan, the all-powerful Dictator, and his henchmen in East Pakistan.

A good number of the minority students come out with distinction in university examinations every year but finding no future prospect many of them migrate to India.

This is not all. In every sphere of life, the minorities are hounded out to take the penalty of following a 'Faith' other than 'Islam'. The Muslim League leaders have been seeing every thing through their coloured glasses of communalism and enacting laws even, either to reduce them to the status of second-class citizenship or to squeeze them

out to India, only to make Pakistan a homogeneous state of the Muslims alone.

Restrictions on Alienations of Land

To transfer lands where private ownership of property is recognised is a fundamental right and an essential incident of ownership of property but this inalienable right is drastically restricted in case of the minorities in East Pakistan. A legislation was passed during the first phase of the Muslim League rule in the teeth of opposition from the minority members of the legislature that no one could transfer more than 10 bighas of lands except with the permission of the District Magistrates, and the District Magistrates, again, were instructed not to give effect to their discretion in the case of the minorities as far as possible, by secret circulars. Now, the Government of Ayub Khan and his henchmen have gone a step further. A member of a minority community cannot even make 'bona fide' transfer of his property with or without consideration without a nationality certificate to be obtained from the chairmen of the union councils, officers-in-charge of the police stations and other agencies, and registration of instruments of transfer is not allowed unless and until a nationality certificate is produced. Nationality certificate, again, as a matter of fact, is not granted if a member of the family of transferor is an Indian national. According to the definition of a family, son, daughter, brother and sister are considered as members of the family. So if a son, a daughter, a brother or a sister of the transferor happens to be an Indian national, he is not entitled to the nationality certificate, even if he is a permanent resident of Pakistan and there is bonafide need for transfer. Even a case of pressing bonafide necessity such as medical treatment, marriage of members of the family, Sradh ceremony, educational need or clearance of debt,

nationality certificate is not granted and the minority member concerned cannot transfer his lands. By secret circular Sub-Registrars have been instructed and authorised to refuse registration of deeds executed by the minorities on mere suspicion. These restrictions have given ample opportunity to the authorities concerned to thrive on corrupt practices of accepting illegal gratification. The transferor has to pay heavy amount varying between one fourth and one third of the consideration money to the authorities granting certificates as illegal gratification for a nationality certificate. To avoid international criticism on any descriminatory law on restrictions on alienation of lands, which is recognised to be repugnant to the fundamental right in all civilised countries, the Government of Pakistan have not gone the way for parliamentary legislation but resorted to secret circulars to the Registering Authorities and have thus put an obnoxious ban on transfer of properties by the members of the minority community.

The present-day Government of Pakistan have not stopped here also. India and the Indian nationals are to them their Enemy No. 1 and they have not hesitated to elaborately plan for grabbing the properties of the Indian nationals in East Pakistan without paying any compensation for them by means of secret circulars or otherwise.

Properties of Indian Nationals

In undivided India the middle class Hindus of East Bengal (now known as East Pakistan), impelled by economic necessity and adventurous spirit, spread over different parts of India, specially West Bengal, in quest of their avocations of life. East Bengal was the agricultural zone. West Bengal being the industrial zone and Calcutta being the capital city provided great opportunity for service, trade, commerce and industry, and many East Bengal Hindus were there in their respective avocations. Partition of the pro-

vince of Bengal on independence into two sovereign regions of India and Pakistan led to the bifurcation of almost every Hindu middle class family. Most of the families were joint ones with their family headquarters in East Bengal. As a result of division some members of the joint family of necessity became Indian nationals, while others who resided in East Bengal and used to manage and preserve the joint properties became Pakistan nationals. Thus the members of a joint family became divided into two separate entities of Indian and Pakistan nationals.

Now, secret circulars have been issued to the chairmen of the union councils to treat the properties in respect of the shares of the Indian co-sharers as abandoned foreigners' properties and take charge of them. The activities of the chairmen in mufasil areas have made the living and existence of the Pakistani co-sharers intolerable. Muslims are rather thrust on the Hindu co-sharers and allowed to take possession of even the undivided dwelling houses. Minority members are not allowed to sell their huts, fish from their tanks, and movables on the plea that there are Indian co-sharers. The government have also issued circulars to deposit the income in respect of the shares of the Indian co-sharers to non-resident and blocked account in banks. It has caused incalculable hardship to the Pakistani members of the undivided joint family who perform worship of the family deities and other traditional religious functions and customary rites. Even Indian co-sharers are not allowed to make free gift of their interest in joint property in favour of their near and dear ones of the Pakistani relatives ; nor they are allowed to pay for their rent, other dues and obligations to the government even, out of the income of their property which is deposited in the non-resident blocked account in the banks, and as a result of such non-payment of their dues the properties are sold to the utter disadvantage of the Pakistani co-sharers of the joint properties.

The Evacuee Property Management Committee set up in pursuance of the Evacuee Property Administration Act has become another handy weapon for persecution of the minorities. Originally the law was that on the application of an evacuee the Evacuee Property Management Committee was competent to take charge of the management of his property but now the law has been amended enabling the committee to take charge of property of anybody who happens to be an Indian national of its own accord. This committee with the obvious object of ousting the minorities has been taking over management of the property of Indian nationals by a notification in the Gazette, contrary to the aims and objects of the Act, even when the properties were being well-managed by Pakistani co-sharers, and leasing out the properties usually to the anti-social elements of the Muslim community who become the agents of the committee. The Muslim lessees occupy the undivided dwelling houses and other joint properties with the Hindu co-sharers to the great annoyance, inconvenience, disadvantage and hardship of them.

In fact, in many cases the Pak Hindu co-sharers are coerced by pressure and intimidation to leave their ancestral homes and properties, to be illegally enjoyed by the Muslims. The minority members in the Evacuee Management Committee are generally selected from among those who are often seen to be worthless and backboneless to stand against the wishes and dictates of the chairman (an official) of the committee.

The Government of Pakistan have left no stone unturned to avail of the opportunities of squeezing out the Hindus by contriving all possible devices of their own. They did not even fail to take advantage of the passport system for their sinister purposes. As I have earlier said that when the passport system was first introduced in 1952, there was a great rush of the minority communities to cross over to India. Sir Nazimuddin, the-then Prime Minister of Pakistan, came

to Dacca and requested us to exert our influence to stop that exodus by his giving a solemn assurance to us that there would be no restriction to granting of passports to the applicants and there was no apprehension for the minority communities to be confined within the borders of the country. But the Government of Mr. Ayub Khan have conveniently belied the assurance and practically stopped granting of passports to the members of the minority communities alone, by putting all sorts of restrictions. This has proved that the earlier apprehension of the minorities was true to the point and has, therefore, caused a fresh shock of nervousness in them. This is another example of a gross discrimination between the Hindus and the Muslims. Discrimination has always been the ruling principle of the Pak administration and it has now come to the fore with all its nakedness under the Government of Mr. Ayub Khan.

Communal Riots and Political Strategy

Pakistan has been consistently and persistently following a policy of hatred and discrimination among its own people. Why this? This seems to be a wonder to every student of political history. Countries and states all over the world move in the direction of integration of their peoples to form into 'Nations' but Pakistan moves in the opposite direction. The State of Pakistan was brought into being on hatred of India and the Hindus and it is, therefore, the sheet-anchor of its policy of administration to continue the same policy for its preservation. The leaders of Pakistan know it well that the people of Pakistan and India are ethnically, culturally and emotionally the same, coming out of the same stock, and any failure on their part to continue the cleavage between the communities of the Muslims and the Hindus would again re-unite the state of Pakistan and India into one united whole of the pre-independence days.

The British masters of olden India have constantly fanned the fire of communalism into the body-politic of Indian nationhood in the past, only to maintain their hold on India and they found a handy weapon in their design in late Mr. Zinnah and his Muslim League Party. Mr. Zinnah is no more but his party of the Muslim League is there, though it was eclipsed for some time by the United Front party. The party of the Muslim League again revives under the leadership of Mr. Ayub Khan, the military dictator of Pakistan, backed by the Western Imperialist Powers for their interests alone. Communal riots in India have been the legacy left by the Britishers and Pakistan has been following the same policy with an intention to keep up the spirit of animosity between Pakistan and India so that the people of Pakistan may not be carried away by India's high idealism of secularism. Pakistan has therefore been proclaimed to be an Islamic State and has been being fed with communal hatred and anti-India campaign. The Pakistani ideal and activities act and re-act on Indian masses as well, especially on the people of West Bengal. The peoples of these two border-states are not only ethnically and culturally connected to one another, they are also connected by blood and relationship in their own communities. Any act of communal riot in one part of this divided Bengal is likely to re-act on the other. It is therefore becoming very difficult for secular India to bring about emotional integration of the two communities into one Indian nationhood. It is the design of Pakistan to keep asunder the two major communities of India so that an integrated 'nation' may not come out of them. It forms a part of their future war-strategy as well, which I shall discuss later on. At the moment they are only carrying on a part of their master-plan for 'Greater Pakistan'.

When Pakistan was conceded by the Congress leaders, the present shape and size of Pakistan, described to be

'truncated, mutilated and moth-eaten' in the words of Mr. Zinnah himself, could not satisfy him. He accepted this Pakistan under force of circumstances, perhaps with the hope to step in other chunks of India at convenience in future. Late Mr. Zinnah had formulated his master-plan for the purpose and his party and government had been giving effect to it slowly and imperceptibly. They therefore encouraged immigration of the Muslims of East Pakistan in large number in the border districts of India—in Assam, Tripura and West Bengal. This immigration of the Muslims has now become a political and economic problem for India and any measure of her under the international law to get rid of this unlawful influx seriously reacts on the minorities in East Pakistan and culminates in communal incidents and riots, which again react on the Hindus of India and go on in a cyclic order. To add to further difficulties for India in the matter of integration of her people into a nationhood, Pakistan continues to make always a powerful appeal in the name of Islam to the Islamic mind of the Indian Muslims who fought as fanatically as the Muslims of Pakistan for creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims in the early days of agitation, only to keep alive the separatist mind of the Indian Muslims. It is therefore not very unnatural that occasional accidental isolated cases of outburst of communal passion would happen in a vast country like India but whenever such things happened, the Government of India have never hesitated to crush those misguided activities with a very strong hand.

The recent riot of January, 1964 in Calcutta and some other districts of West Bengal, as repercussion to the mass-killings of the Hindus in Khulna and Jessore of East Pakistan manifested a vivid and glaring instance of India's ruthlessness in suppressing such riots. India has often done that in the past and her Prime Minister, the late-lamented Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, moved about the length

and the breadth of the country all throughout and condemning communal parties and activities of the people in unambiguous terms. The Congress Party and their government have gone so far for integration of the communities into the body-politic of India that their actions have been described by many as that of appeasement. Here lies the difference between India and Pakistan in matters of policies in administration. Pakistan is bent on keeping alive the separatist mentality between the Hindus and the Muslims of both the countries as a matter of policy in furtherance and fulfilment of her master-plan formulated and chalked out by the late leader Mr. Zinnah. The Muslim League was the vehicle to carry out that programme in effect but the Muslim League was wiped out by the United Front party. Hence the Martial Law regime was brought into being by advice from the Western Imperialist allies of Pakistan, only to revive the Muslim League in a more aggressive form.

Mr. Ayub Khan, the Head of the Army, was the exponent of this design. He seized power and banned all political parties, debarred the prominent leaders of all the parties excepting those of the Muslim League, and condemned the politicians. But subsequently he took the role of a politician himself to play the game and revived the Muslim League Party from the ashes of the previous one. The newly born Muslim League Party under the presidentship of Mr. Khan was only the more aggressive edition of the previous one. He has now formed his cabinet with most rabid communal elements of former Muslim League. Mr. Sobur Khan of Khulna (East Pakistan) is a type in himself. During the Martial Law regime he was convicted and sentenced to undergo R. I. for six months for dishonesty and now he becomes a minister and the leader of the Parliament! Both Mr. Sobur and Mr. A. Kader Chowdhury (now he has become the Speaker of the Parliament who comes next in official position to the President of Pakistan) of Chittagong, who are known to us

to hold bitter communal and anti-India zeal, have now become 'Honourable Ministers' to foment anti-India and communal hatred in the minds of the people in all its ugliness, culminating in communal riots—to be properly called genocide of the Hindus—in East Pakistan. In order to execute the plan in all its thoroughness Mr. Monayem Khan of Mymensingh (East Pakistan), another very extremely communal Muslim known for his past activities of anti-Hindu and anti-India campaigns during the Muslim League agitation for Pakistan and thereafter, has been selected by the President of Pakistan Mr. Ayub Khan to rule over East Pakistan as the Governor. Now the stage has been completely set to play the political game of putting India into a tight corner through communal incidents and riots of unprecedented magnitude.

The riots of the recent and latest type as perpetrated in East Pakistan can now hardly be called to be ordinary communal riots—they are, in fact, the strategy of master plan to wage war on India. Since Mr. Ayub Khan came into power, he has been executing his master plan in all its thoroughness. He has set up a very powerful propaganda machinery to give wide publicity to every minor and isolated incident of communal nature in India with perverted, distorted, false and exaggerated account of it in the world and at the same time he has spread out an iron-curtain around his own state of Pakistan so that the tales of genocide even may not go out of it and in this strategy of his Mr. Ayub Khan has got the full backing and support of his Anglo-American allies of SEATO and CENTO. This has been abundantly proved in the recent debates of the Security Council on the Kashmir issue in February, 1964. In its master plan, Pakistan has been spoiling for a widespread communal riot in India on the one hand and preparing for a showdown in the Kashmir front, on the other. I shall not be surprised if I hear of invasion of Kashmir from the so-called Azad-Kashmir, a handmade protege of Pakistan, in the very near

future. In that case, the Anglo-American allies of Pakistan would come forward in the Security Council with their plan of taking the Kashmir issue in the UNO *de-novo* for settlement of the so-called dispute between India and Pakistan. This is the master plan and communal incidents and riots are mere off-shoots of it, only to exasperate and weaken India. Pakistan has left no stone unturned to keep India politically, economically and militarily weak and it has therefore joined hands with Red China which invaded India and put pressure on its Anglo-American allies not to supply any war-potentials in the forms of arms and ammunitions to India to fight out the Chinese invaders. This has been the policy systematically pursued by the Government of Pakistan since its very birth and Mr. Ayub Khan has been executing that policy in all its nakedness and thoroughness which the Muslim League politicians could not do during their rule. There was only one major communal riot in East Pakistan in 1950 during the rule of the Muslim League politicians and all were mere communal incidents but since Ayub Khan came into power there have been major communal riots almost every year, apart from the communal incidents of every day. In this connection I quote below only a few lines from the speech of Mr. M. C. Chagla, the head of the Indian delegation to the Security Council in 1964, which will show the difference of policies pursued by India and Pakistan in their administrations and the number of communal incidents in East Pakistan :—

“Between 1950 and 1956 (the period of Muslim League politicians’ rule) there were 8,021 cases of communal incidents in East Pakistan in which members of the minority community were the victims. These had been brought to the notice of East Pakistan Government. Since 1956 there had been several hundred more cases.

“We condemn these riots, whether in Pakistan or in India. We regret the loss of innocent lives. So far as

India is concerned we do our best to prevent them. Here again the attitudes of India and Pakistan are diametrically different. As I have pointed out earlier, the incitement to communal riots has been a part of Pakistan's policy."

This policy of the Government of Pakistan has encouraged riots. I give below some gleanings of reports about the communal disturbances occurring in Pakistan during the last three years from 1961 to 1963 (during the rule of Mr. Ayub Khan), as published in the Calcutta press. Most of these reports have come to this side of the border infiltrating through the 'iron-curtain' imposed by the Ayub-regime in Pakistan. I quote the collection from the columns of the 'Hindusthan Standard', a Calcutta English daily of repute.

"1961

25-2-61—The Indian High Commission in Karachi was attacked by a Muslim mob, a dozen employees of the Commission injured and heavy loss of property to the Commission.

27-2-61—Hindu temple in Karachi attacked by a Muslim mob.

Widespread disturbances in Khulna, Jessore and Saidpur (Rungpur) in East Pakistan.

10-3-61—The Pakistani Deputy High Commissioner told newsmen in Calcutta that 15 persons were killed in Khulna, Jessore and Rungpur. According to the report available in Calcutta, 7 Hindus were killed at Khulna and Daulatpur and seven at Saidpur.

Mr. Ahmad Ali (Pak. Deputy High Commissioner) admitted that some shops and houses were looted and burnt.

March, 1961—The image of Devi Bodeswari at Boda in Rungpur (one of the 'Pitasthams') was broken by

Pakistani policemen and another temple at Chilahati defiled. Three Hindus were killed in Rungpur district as they protested against killing of cows in their houses.

May-June, 1961—Widespread communal disturbances in Gopalgunj subdivision of Faridpur district when Hindu (Namasudra) villages were pillaged, burnt and large number of Hindus either killed or injured.

The Deputy Minister for External Affairs, Mrs. Lakshmi Menon, stated in the Lok Sabha on 14-8-61 that the Indian Deputy High Commissioner at Dacca after an on-the-spot inquiry reported that the number of casualties in the Gopalgunj riots (killed, injured and missing) would be about 500 and a large number of houses burnt. The police acted in a partisan spirit. During the inquiry the Deputy High Commissioner was always accompanied by the Pakistani officers.

1962

January-March—Widespread disturbances in Dacca, Rajshahi, Khulna, Pabna and other places. Nine Hindus were killed in Dacca, nine at Pabna, several killed in Bogra, Mymensingh and also in Khulna.

In Rajshahi disturbances more than 3,500 Hindus were killed, according to Mr. P. C. Lahiri, a former Minister, East Pakistan (the author of this book).

15-6-62—Ten Santals were killed and 105 injured when the Pakistan armed police opened fire on the Santals who were fleeing to India for fear of their lives (from the district of Rajshahi after the disturbances).

1963

1-7-63—Twenty five Hindus were killed and over 50 injured when a Muslim mob made an unprovoked attack on Choumohani Bazar in Noakhali district.

Systematic forcible occupation of Hindu houses, land

and institutions started in Comilla, Noakhali and other districts forcing Hindus to leave their hearth and home. As a result, in the first six months more than 15,000 evicted Hindus entered Tripura and got accommodation in camps.

Muslim mob raided Hindu houses at Dighaldi in Comilla and murdered more than 10 Hindus and burnt the houses."

The above is only a catalogue of the major riots in three years. The incidents of the communal disturbances have been many in every district of East Pakistan. Among the major riots as stated above, I give below some details of the Gopalgunj riot of 1961 and the Rajshahi riot of 1962.

The 'Namasudras' of the scheduled caste sect of the Hindu community lived in a compact area of Gopalgunj subdivision in the district of Faridpur. They were a people of undaunted valour who lived there for generations together, often resisting the onslaughts of the Muslim mobs on them ever since their habitation. The Muslim mobs have attacked them many times during the British rule and every time they have been completely repulsed by the valiant Namasudras. This time also, in 1961-riot, they were attacked by the Muslim mobs over the issue of grazing of crop by stray cattle and they were successfully repulsed by the Namasudras but the E. P. R. police-force immediately came to the help of the attackers and they opened fire on the persons attacked and thus they—the policemen—killed and injured about 500 men, women and children of the Namasudra community and the mob then set fire to their houses. This information I got from a high-ranking police officer of Secret Service in Pakistan. In Gopalgunj riot the police not only acted in a partisan spirit, they acted as a party in the riot.

In the case of the Rajshahi riot in 1962, I would only quote *verbatim* a letter of mine, written to Shri U. N. Dhebar, a prominent Congress member of the Indian Parliament,

which will give details about its intensity and magnitude. I also wrote several letters to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, the late Prime Minister of India, late Dr. Rajendra Prasad, a former President of India, and Shri A. K. Sen, Law Minister of India, giving them also details of the riot.

I now reproduce my letter of 10-12-62 to Shri Dhebar which runs as follows—

“Dear Shri Dhebar Bhai,

This is to remind you of our talk at the Berhampur Circuit House on the issue of the refugees—officially termed as fugitives—coming from Rajshahi (East Pakistan) after the communal holocaust of last April. Looting of and setting fire to Hindu houses and the great killings at a village named Darsa, a suburb of the Rajshahi Town, under P. S. Paba, and in the passenger trains near the Rajshahi Railway Station and in the Nator Station Bazar commenced from the 23rd of April and continued for several days till the military was called in to take over the administration, due to the intervention of the Assistant High Commissioner for India at Rajshahi. The exact figure of the deaths in the holocaust could not be ascertained then, nor can it be ascertained even to-day, due to the iron-curtain set around by the Pakistan Government. Yet whatever scanty news trickled through the curtain, I submitted to the Prime Minister Shri Nehru, Law Minister Shri A. K. Sen and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Ex-President of India, in the month of May last.

There might have been some exaggeration in the figure of deaths in those reports but that was not due to any fault of mine. Our most respected leader and Prime Minister Shri Nehru must have got the figures of loss of Hindu lives and property of them through his own agency—the High Commissioner for India in Pakistan. Shri Rajeswar Dayal, the-then High Commissioner, happened to be in Dacca then

and I have heard from Shri Atulya Ghose, M.P., the-then President of the West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee, that he had heard a detailed report from Shri Dayal. What the High Commissioner could give to Shri Atulya Babu must have been given in detail to the Prime Minister. But our Prime Minister kept mum over the issue, perhaps due to his most judicious and ardent desire that no repercussion of the holocaust may be perpetrated here in this part of the country as a consequence. He only regretted the incidents which happened at Darsa. The latest figure of deaths in this village alone, received from the victims of the holocaust who could anyhow come over here, is more than 1,200 and the figure of total deaths in the district of Rajshahi alone ranges between 3,000 to 5,000. I give only a few instances out of many to show how the people suffered in Darsa and adjacent villages under the P.S. Paba.

- (1) Gazendra Nath Karmakar, P.S. Paba—7 members of his family including wife, sons and parents killed.
- (2) Jatindra Chandra Ghose of Darsa-Dharamhata under P.S. Paba—18 members killed.
- (3) Badal Chandra Ghose of the above address—5 members including wife, 2 sons and 2 daughters killed.
- (4) Satish Chandra Ghose of the above address—19 inmates of his family killed.

“They were all killed brutally—either burned to death or those who could anyhow escape from the blazing fire were killed by strokes of sharp weapons. These instances have been officially recorded in the local Collectorate from the surviving victims of the holocaust who had the fortune or misfortune to come over to the place. They never intended to leave their hearth and home—all the people who have come were either good agriculturists or day-labourers ; they were not politicians, nor did they ever dabble in politics. Their

only business in life was to earn money, either by production from their own lands or by hard labour, to feed and clothe their dependents ; yet they had to leave their hearth and home, certainly not to seek scanty doles from the government or a blanket per family from the Red Cross or the District Congress Committee or a piece of cloth per family from any humanitarian organisation like the Bharat Sevasram Sangha. They had their own homes at least, under the shade of which they could protect themselves from the rains and cold but today the canopy of sky has been their only shelter. The policy of the Pakistan Government has forced them to cross the border. Lt.-General Azam Khan, the-then Governor of East Pakistan, had flown to Rajshahi and delivered a public speech on the 22nd of April, giving fictitious harrowing tales of crime against the Muslim men and women of Maldah and Murshidabad in West Bengal to rouse the baser sentiments of the common Muslims against the Hindus, and the next day the holocaust was set in motion. The Pakistan Radio (absolutely controlled by the government) also prepared the ground by its continued propaganda over the air days in and days out about false stories of rape and abduction of the Muslim women and killings of the Muslim men and women. This surely indicates the connivance of the government behind the holocaust. It is therefore while the Hindu houses were being looted and burnt and inhuman killings were being perpetrated before the very eyes of the Deputy Commissioner (District Magistrate) of Rajshahi, he was sitting idle. Those Hindu leaders who attempted to draw his attention or tried to help the village people rushing to the Rajshahi town for safety and shelter were put behind the prison bars. This is the story of the whole affair.

“Now, Sir, if the government becomes a party to this sort of lawlessness, what guarantee about the safety and security of the minorities can be there ? This lack of sense of security for the minorities has goaded them to leave their

hearths and homes. Mere giving of doles or a piece of blanket and a piece of cloth to such migrants (termed as fugitive) can hardly sustain them to live on—they require rehabilitation in any part of India. Most of them were ready to go to Dandakaranya and under the instruction of Shri P. C. Sen, Chief Minister of West Bengal, I submitted petitions of 450 persons to the District Magistrate of Murshidabad for their prayer of rehabilitation in Dandak and I requested our Prime Minister Shri Nehru to look into the matter but I regret to say that my proposal was negatived by a letter No. 7(93) DNK/62, dated the 2nd November, 1962 from the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply, Government of India”.

Since I wrote this letter to Shri Dhebar who promised that he would personally take the matter to Shri Nehru for his kind attention and necessary action, much water has flown down the river Ganges running between this district of Murshidabad in India and Rajshahi in East Pakistan. The office of the Assistant High Commissioner for India at Rajshahi, who played prominent role in saving the minorities in Rajshahi from total annihilation, has been closed down by order of the Pakistan Government, and influx of the minorities from Rajshahi as fugitives has been increasing very day. In the wake of another carnage in 1964 in East Pakistan with which I shall deal later on, a compact village of Hindus at Mainam in the district of Rajshahi was raided, burnt and at least 17 members of prominent Hindu families were brutally killed and several injured in broad daylight at about 10-11 A.M. This incident again unnerved the already shaky surviving Hindus of 1962-riot and they have begun to flee the country in hordes to all the border districts of West Bengal. In the district of Murshidabad alone there has been an influx of 8,780 heads till 22-1-64 according to the official records. The non-official figure goes much higher

—at least double the figure, and what has been their status here! They are still regarded as fugitives, though most of them have been living here since May-June, 1962 after the holocaust. They are not regarded as refugees and, therefore, deprived of the benefit as sanctioned by the Government of India to the refugees. They are till now a set of stateless people. They are neither citizens of India nor of Pakistan. This has been the outcome of their miserable fate in the hard-earned independent states of India and Pakistan—it was not of their own seeking. The outrageous atrocities committed on the minorities at the connivance of the Government of Pakistan have forced them to take to exodus and this put them to this ugly and uncalled for situation. God alone knows how and when their miseries would end! Till now no ray of hope for the minorities of Pakistan can be seen anywhere in the horizon. As things stand today, their miseries seem to aggravate with the passage of time and pleas never seem to be wanting for the Government of Pakistan under Mr. Ayub Khan to retaliate on the minorities who are held as hostages for any acts of omission and commission on the part of the Government of India.

Eviction of Infiltrators and the Riot of 1964

Hardly could the scars caused by loot, arson, devastation of properties and killings as stated above be healed up, another dreadful situation of menacing character arose out of the expulsion of the Muslim infiltrators from Assam and Tripura states of India. I have said earlier that at least half-a-million Muslims of East Pakistan had infiltrated into the border states of India—Assam, Tripura and West Bengal—stealthily, after division of the country into two sovereign and independent states and now realising the political and the economic difficulties caused by such unauthorised infiltration, the Indian states of Assam and Tripura began to

evict such infiltrators to the chagrin of the Government of Pakistan which, in return, set the controlled press and the public in motion to vilify India and her people as a matter of retaliation and thereby rouse the anti-India sentiment of the Pakistan people. Truth has always been the first casualty in the campaign of Pakistan against India and this incident of eviction of the Muslim infiltrators was also avidly seized by the Government of Pakistan and the press started publishing baseless accounts of oppression of the exterminated Indian Muslims permanently residing in India but now were being deliberately pushed out by the Government of India only to put pressure on the economy of Pakistan ! In the circumstances the Government of Pakistan lost no time to formulate their own plan of squeezing out the minorities from their hearth and home by creating a situation for the minorities incompatible with their safety and security to live in. The government and the press as usual started campaign of hatred and vilification against the Government of India. It has been my bitter experience for all these fourteen years of my stay in Pakistan that whenever any campaign of hatred and vilification has been started in Pakistan against India through the press, platform and radio, at the instigation and connivance of the Government of Pakistan, that has ultimately taken the shape of dire consequences on the minorities of Pakistan and has made their life miserable. The malicious campaign of this time also, on the issue of eviction of the unauthorised infiltrators, was no exception. The press and the radio gave horrible news of oppression of the Indian Muslims and surcharged the atmosphere with potential danger for the minorities. Big public meetings were held throughout the length and breadth of East Pakistan and very inciting speeches were delivered by some of the Central Ministers as well. It will not be out of place to mention here once again that the Central Government was formed under Mr. Ayub Khan with ministers of the most reactionary

character who had been known for their anti-India bias in the days of the bygone Muslim League rule. These ministers by their violent speeches created tension among the communities and feelings ran high against the minorities. The Ayub Government had the ulterior motive of diverting the seething discontent of the Bengalee Muslims of East Pakistan against systematic and ruthless exploitation of her by West Pakistan and her people. Since the birth of Pakistan the Central Government controlled by the non-Bengalees had always most cruelly exploited East Pakistan and treated her as a colony of Pakistan. The major portion of the foreign exchanges, earned by East Pakistan herself and the foreign aids received from abroad, was utilised for all-round development of West Pakistan and East Pakistan remained the same as she had been under the foreign rule of Britishers and was thus starving and agonising.

The politically conscious Bengalees of East Pakistan took this wide economic disparity between the two wings of Pakistan into their heart and the political leaders were seizing every opportunity to widen the gulf between East and West Pakistan. No amount of theorising, often preached by the central leaders and the hired Muslim Divines, could bind the people of the East and West (Pakistan) by the ties of Islam and the gulf widened between them more and more leading to the demand of complete autonomy for East Pakistan. The Bengalee Muslims are altogether different from their co-religionists of West Pakistan in matters of language, culture and ethnology as well. So it was found to be a very difficult task for the rulers to unite these people of two different cultures into one 'Nation'. Moreover, the policy pursued by the rulers widened the gulf all the more. The Ayub Government therefore lost no time to seize this opportunity of turning the political movement of East Pakistan into a communal and anti-India movement over the issue of the evicted Muslims. In order to divert the attention of the

Bengalee Muslims from their separatist national movement for preservation of their language and culture, development of the country (East Pakistan) and restoration of democracy, the dictator ruler of Pakistan, Mr. Ayub Khan, has often brought forward the issues of Kashmir, refugee problem, border-shootings, hatred against India and threat for war from Indian side, and has let loose his henchmen to assiduously propagate the issues at convenience. The government has practically made no arrangement for the rehabilitation of the refugees and hardly spent anything from the government coffer, though it has been systematically collecting a refugee-tax from the people. It has always pointed its fore-finger to the minorities and tacitly directed the refugees to make their own arrangements out of the minorities. But this time when the evictees were thrown in East Pakistan in good number, the government made a plan to place them in the houses of the minorities. The *modus operandi* is this—the chairmen of the union councils have been instructed to indent the evictees in the houses of the minorities. Hundreds of such evictee-refugees have forcibly and illegally entered into the Hindu houses where they had been living with the Hindu owners. These refugees are oppressing and annoying the Hindu residents in all possible ways, their only aim and object being ejection of the Hindus from the houses and taking full and complete possession of the entire houses. A section of the local Muslims of the villages have entered into unholy alliances with the refugees to exact and extort heavy tolls in cash and kind from the Hindus. They are reaping away the paddy and jute crops from the fields, cutting valuable trees, taking away stock of paddy and rice, interfering with the religious rites and insulting and molesting the Hindu girls and women. After the financial resources of a Hindu family are completely exhausted and there is no scope for further exaction, the anti-social elements in collaboration with the police take out

the refugees from the house under their occupation and push them into another, the owners of which are again subjected to the same process of persecution and extortion. Thus a good money-making business is being carried on in the rural areas, causing ruination of the minorities without any interference by the government. The Rule of Law has been replaced by the Rule of the Jungle.

This continuous process of oppression and extortion has made the life of the minorities miserable to the extreme and in course of a very short time in the year 1963 alone, 25 to 30 thousand Hindus from the districts of Comilla and Noakhali in East Pakistan have been forced to seek refuge in Tripura-State of India. This figure of exodus of the Hindus was announced in the Indian Parliament (Lok Sabha) by a Minister of the Union Government of India.

Even the educational institutions of the Hindus could not escape the notice of this section of people's covetous eyes. Iswar Pathsala of Comilla, one of the premier secondary high schools in undivided India, was established by late Shri Mahesh Chandra Bhattacharyya, a well-known philanthropist, for the education of the Hindu boys and girls in 1914. Rammala Boarding for the Hindu poor students, Rammala Library containing valuable books, Nivedita Girls' School for the poor Hindu girls were also started by him. Religious education is imparted in these institutions, which form one complete scheme. The school premises are located in the compound of the residential house of late Shri Bhattacharyya where there is a temple in which daily worship is performed. A few years back the first onslaught was made on the Rammala boarding house where one hundred poor Hindu boys were being maintained on self-supporting scheme for their education. The Rammala boarding premises with the Rammala library premises were requisitioned by the government and the Boarding and the

Library were shifted to the residential house. The government then made acquisition of the Rammala Boarding illegally. On a writ-petition made by Shri Heramba Chandra Bhattacharyya, son of late Shri Mahesh Chandra Bhattacharyya, who had been maintaining the above institutions in keeping with the spirit of his late lamented father, the Hon'ble High Court set aside the order of requisition but the government did not give up the possession, and now the refugees have been placed in the premises. On the 8th July, 1963, a batch of about 100 refugees forcibly entered the Iswar Pathsala compound and occupied the southern part of the school premises.

Gradually the evictee-refugees occupied the Iswar Pathsala boarding house, the gymnasium, the 'Natmandir' in front of the temple and their number has now swelled to about five hundred. On the 11th September, 1963, about one hundred refugees, armed with deadly weapons, made an organised attempt to enter the Rammala Chhatrabash and the Rammala Chhatrinibash, and in the act of resisting such unlawful attempt at occupation the Hindu boarders and some leading Hindu gentlemen were mercilessly beaten and assaulted. Sri Manindra Deb, Vice-Principal of Comilla Victoria College and President of the Managing Committee of Iswar Pathsala, received fractured injuries. In spite of repeated calls over the telephone the police came when the incident was over. Petitions and deputations to the Deputy Commissioner, Commissioner, Education Minister and the Governor were of no avail. The government, it seems, is determined to stop this Hindu institution, as it has done in the case of the B. B. Hindu Academy of Rajshahi. There are other school and college premises in the town of Comilla but this Hindu institution alone could be the selected place for accommodation of the refugees! This school has been closed as a result. This is a glaring instance of discriminating treatment and a firm determination on the part of the Islamic

government of Pakistan to stop all the institutions exclusively meant for the Hindus.

Then again, the undivided shares belonging to the Indian nationals in the joint dwelling houses, occupied by the Pakistani Hindu co-sharers, are also being requisitioned in large numbers for accommodation of the Muslim refugees. Houses owned by Indian nationals but occupied by Pakistani Hindus are being requisitioned by the government ousting the Pakistani Hindu occupants and the Muslim refugees are being put there to live in the same house—a Hindu family living in one room and the Muslim in the other. This has been the condition in the rural areas, as a result of which constant frictions among the occupants of these two communities with customary different dietary restrictions and different religious observations and formalities often lead to intimidation from the evictee Muslim refugees who are backed by their co-religionists in power and position. Individual complaints to the S. D. O.'s and the police have often brought greater troubles to the complainants and their lives have become more miserable. Instances are there, it has been seen, where good Muslims resisted the illegal occupation of Hindu houses by the so-called refugees but they have been prosecuted for their justifiable and lawful actions on the plea that these were anti-state activities! Yes, these are surely anti-state activities, when the state-policy has been eviction of the Hindus—any one going against this policy of the government must have been deemed to be an outlaw or an enemy of the state! This has been the fate of those Muslims who had the good sense of doing justice. Similarly, the Hindu house-owners who had the courage to oppose the unlawful and forcible entry of the refugees in their houses were also prosecuted and put into the 'Hajat'.

Hindu leaders are being forced under executive pressure to issue statement condemning the Government of India

for expulsion of the Muslims (infiltrators) and eulogising the Government of Pakistan for generously(!) dealing with the minorities.

Representations to the Governor and other officials by the minority leaders for the redress of the grievances of the minorities have been of no avail. Their grievances are not even published in the controlled press. They have no forum for ventilating their grievances. As there is no democratic political setup under the Ayub Government in Pakistan, there is no scope for influencing public opinion by any democratic approach. Terror reigns supreme in the State of Pakistan under the military dictatorship of Mr. Ayub Khan, which is functioning today with a sham setup of 'Basic Democracy'. Stillness of death prevails among the minorities. They have resigned to their fate with the idea that what cannot be ended must be endured silently. The minorities were therefore silently enduring all humiliations, though they were smarting under inhuman treatment and injustices. But this was not to be—they must either flee the country or live in it at peril of their lives and properties. There was no respite for them.

Dighaldi, a compact village of the Hindus under P. S. Ramchandrapur in Comilla district of East Pakistan, was suddenly attacked by the Muslims by the end of 1963. Loot, arson, murder and abduction of women again became the order of the day. I have already referred to this incident in the foregoing pages of this book and therefore it is needless to recapitulate on it any further. I may mention here only about some aspects of the riots. From the riots of Gopalganj in Faridpur in 1961, at Darsa in Rajshahi in 1962 and at Dighaldi in Comilla in 1963, it is seen that the nature of the riot has been the same with loot, arson, murder and abduction of women, and those have been done in the compact Hindu areas where they had been living in a concentrated manner. It is a matter for the future historians to

find out whether these attacks were pre-planned, pre-meditated and calculated ones to disperse the Hindus helter-skelter from the concentrated areas to completely break down their morale.

Things were going on in this way till 1963, but still more darker days of unprecedented gloom and ferocity were waiting for the minorities in 1964.

Sacred hair of Hazrat Mahammed was kept in the Hazratbal mosque in Kashmir for more than 300 years but suddenly that sacred relic was found missing from the mosque by the end of 1963 and there was a great row and commotion over the issue in Kashmir. The sacred relic was, however, subsequently recovered and a criminal case was started soon. Some of the names of the alleged culprits have already been announced by the Government of India which recovered the relic. When all facts will be known, it will be seen whether the secret hands of Pakistan were behind the theft. But in the meantime just after the theft, the President of Pakistan, Mr. Ayub Khan, declared that the theft must have been done by non-Muslims, meaning thereby his sinister desire to incite a communal riot, presumably in Kashmir. But the people of Kashmir were too tough and sturdy to fall into the trap of Mr. Ayub Khan and oblige him with his desired scheme of a communal riot in their state. The Hindus, the Muslim and the Sikhs—all religious communities of the state—joined together in their demonstrations to mourn the loss. Having thus failed in his sinister motive, the undaunted dictator of Pakistan planned to shift the venue of communal disturbances in East Pakistan. He sent his show-boy ministers in East Pakistan for the purpose but this time the politically conscious Bengalee Muslims refused to oblige Mr. Ayub Khan and his ministers by their acquiescence and therefore a venue dominated by non-Bengalee Muslims was selected in Jessore and Khulna. Mr.

A. Sabur, a man of Khulna but now a minister in Ayub's Government organised the non-Bengalee Muslim mill-hands and the port-workers of about 20,000 strong with the aid of the district officials and made them parade the streets with deadly weapons and materials for arson, loot, murder and abduction. The frenzy started. Dr. Radhakrishnan, President of India, in his letter to Mr. Ayub Khan, President of Pakistan, said that 200 persons in men, women and children were killed in Jessore and Khulna. The brutalities knew no bounds. The wails of the minorities rent the sky of Khulna and Jessore. The people of Calcutta and West Bengal who had got their friends and relations in the affected areas were horrified and exasperated to hear of the disaster. The students of Calcutta with a view to demonstrate and present a memorandum to the Deputy High Commissioner for Pakistan in Calcutta went out in a peaceful procession but they were attacked by a group of Muslims on their way. Some of the unwily or exasperated non-Muslims also fell easy prey to the masterly plan of Mr. Ayub Khan and began to retaliate on the Muslims. Thus a much desired communal riot of Mr. Ayub's making started.

Mr. Ayub is a military general of no mean repute. He made an all-thorough master plan to fight out the issue of Kashmir against India on different fronts. Starting a widespread communal riot of gigantic proportion in India was a part of the war on one front. He had his 'fifth column' army in this front in India to fight out the battle when required in the unlawful infiltrators and pro-Pakistani elements. He thought that the communal riots in India would surely affect the Muslims of Kashmir and they would shift their loyalty to Pakistan from India. On the other front, he plans to create annoyances to India by constantly keeping up skirmishes of nuisance value in either seizing some chunks of Indian territory or intercepting the cattle and the men, including the police and the military personnel from

India, or in decoying military aeroplanes to Pakistan by giving out ghost signals.

The motive behind all these acts, in contradiction to all international laws, seems to provoke and exasperate India to take to a full-scale invasion of Pakistan, so that Pakistan may invoke the participation of her Western allies, under the obligation of the Treaty-Organisations such as SEATO and CENTO. Pakistan has got neither the capacity nor the courage to declare a war on India. At best she can send out hordes of tribal or Azad Kashmir brigands in Kashmir and encourage the rebel Nagas to create disturbances in India. These are all of nuisance value but yet they have got their strategic importance hardly to be ignored.

Mr. Ayub is moving with this master plan of his. I have said earlier that the creation of communal riots in India is only a part of his master plan. But the secular government of India under the premiership of Shri Nehru and the leadership of the Congress organisation was wide awake to this strategy of Pakistan and crushed all communal disturbances with strong hands. All other progressive political parties of India also strengthened the hands of the government in this matter. It is therefore when communal riot broke out in some parts of Calcutta as a repercussion to the tragic incidents of Jessore and Khulna, Mr. G. L. Nanda, Home Minister of India, immediately rushed to Calcutta and deployed the military to assist the civil administrative machinery of West Bengal in maintaining law and order and stop the riot. The riot petered out within 48 hours. But the Government of Pakistan was determined to carry on the execution of the plan, and therefore a section of the press, platform and the radio were used and set in motion to spread false and fantastic stories of murder of the Muslims, irrespective of men, women and children, and abduction and criminal assault on the Muslim girls and women.

Such false and malicious propaganda under the inspira-

tion of the government had its desired effect. Riot of unprecedented havoc and ferocity started in Dacca and Narayangunj in the month of January, 1964. Atrocities committed in this riot surpassed all others of the past in this part of Pakistan. Innumerable men, women and children were most brutally killed, not only in the city and the town of Dacca and Narayangunj but also in the rural areas of the district. Looting and burning of the houses of the minorities accompanied the ghastly killings. Girls and women of the minority communities were also abducted. There being put an iron curtain all around entire East Pakistan, no exact amount of loss in life and property of the minorities could be ascertained. A Western correspondent of the 'Reuter' from Dacca said in his dispatch that at least one thousand people of the minority communities were killed in Dacca and Narayangunj alone. Shri Arun Guha, M. P. (India), a prominent member of the Congress ruling party, said in the Indian Parliament that 20,000 persons of the minority communities were killed in the district of Dacca alone. Shri N. C. Chatterjee, M. P. (India), an independent member of the Parliament and a jurist of repute, said in his speech in the Parliament that 30,000 people had been killed in East Pakistan.

The riot was not confined in Dacca alone—like wild fire it spread to many parts of East Pakistan and engulfed all categories of the minority community including the Christians and the Buddhists as well, in its ravenous maw. It is reported that more than 51,000 Christians from the district of Mymensing alone have fled the country of their birth and have entered into the Garo Hills of Assam in India and more are further expected to cross the borders. Refugees have started to move and trek down to India by rails and roads from all quarters of East Pakistan. All the districts of East Pakistan have been affected. The district of Rajshahi, which became the venue of riot in 1962, has been the victim of

1964-riot as well. Mainam, under P. S. Manda, and Shailgachi, under P. S. Raninagar of the Naogaon subdivision, have fallen victim to the dastardly crimes of loot, arson and murder. Seventeen persons of prominent Hindu families of Mainam have been killed. My information goes that about 30,000 people have all told been killed. Even the Hindu passengers of the trains were sorted out and killed or maimed by the hooligans. Ayub Khan today ranks with Chenghiz, Nadir and Tughlak of the black chapter of history in his acts of dastardly outrages against humanity for political reasons. This is only the beginning of his war-strategy on India. In this beginning alone, 30,000 people have been killed, more than 2,000 villages of the minorities have completely been gutted to rubbles and ashes. The whole of East Pakistan has become a veritable hell for the minorities to live in. Dark cloud enveloped the entire sky of East Pakistan during days of the holocaust, with only a few exceptions of silver linings here and there. There have been some instances this time that some of the Bengalee Muslims gave shelter to the minorities in their own houses at the peril to their lives, and some have actually lost their lives in their acts of human benevolence from beastly attacks from their gangster-co-religionists. Humanity in all ages should and must salute these martyrs of the 'Faith'. I, too, bend down my head in reverence to them.

Another silver line in the dark cloud of those days was that a section of the press condemned those acts of hooliganism and murderous assaults on the minorities and gave publicity, as far as it was possible for them under the circumstances of government control, to the heinous and barbarous atrocities. These were almost unknown to the Muslims of East Pakistan in the past riots. These facts tend to indicate the direction of the political wind blowing in. This political indication unnerves and irritates the 'Dictator-Ruler' of Pakistan all the more and leads him to take to

more and more virulent hate-India-campaign and anti-Hindu ravage. The ravage of 1964-riot surpassed all its previous records in devastation and the non-Muslims of all categories and denominations began to flee the country to India for safety, security and honour. A clear picture of the entire episode may be had from an appeal by thirty-one members of the Indian Parliament to the world-community and statesmen in the name of humanity and in the interest of peace, to urge the Pakistan Government to desist from its persistent persecution of and deliberate discriminatory policies against its own citizens—the minorities. In course of the statement the M. P.s said—

“The outburst of communal frenzy from time to time is natural and inevitable consequence of the unceasing hatred-campaign against the minorities in that country. This outrage on humanity has been instigated and fanned by the present rulers. The Pakistan Government will not control this, as the policy of that government and its agencies seem to kill, convert or compel the minorities to quit that country.

“Recent mass-exodus of minority communities from Pakistan directly stemming from the atrocities perpetrated on them is fresh in our mind. The latest wave of this exodus includes not only several thousands of Hindus but 35,000 Christians of all denominations and also Buddhists fleeing from Pakistan and seeking refuge in Indian territory. Killings, loot, arson, dispossession of property, revolting crimes against women result in stupefying terror and leave no choice for the persecuted and uprooted but to escape from Pakistan and seek refuge in India.

“Reports have been received that even refugees crossing the borders have been fired upon wantonly by Pakistan armed personnel causing casualties even among women and children. All this results from policies pursued by the present totalitarian military regime of Pakistan. The voice of

reason is silenced, freedom of press destroyed and public opinion strangled.

"Human feeling and compassion naturally flow to the innocent sufferers—victims of beastly cruelty—whose only fault is professing a faith other than that of the rulers.

"This is a human problem of great consequence and raises grave issues. The problem affects not only the actual sufferers but it concerns the whole mankind. How long will humanity suffer in this way and civilization continue to be crucified? Are human rights and fundamental freedom empty words and idle phrases, meant only to adorn the Charter of the United Nations and the Great Declaration of Human Rights?

"What is the distinction in principle between racial and religious persecution? It is time that world conscience rises in the name of humanity to cure the sufferings and injustices inflicted on innocent persons by the maltreatment of the minorities in Pakistan. How long will world public opinion tolerate this genocide and allow the present conditions to continue?

"The situation is so serious that it has become necessary for world public opinion to focuss its attention on the cruel treatment and incitement to such treatment on religious minorities residing in Pakistan. We firmly believe that the future of mankind lies in the co-existence of the peoples of the world, living peacefully in common brotherhood and without discrimination on the basis of race or religion. In the name of humanity and in the interest of peace, we appeal to the world-community and world-statesmen to urge the Pakistan Government to desist from its persistent persecution of and deliberate discriminatory policies against its own citizens."

The above statement, which was signed by 25 prominent Congress, 2 Praja-Socialist and 4 Independent members of the Indian Parliament, gives a complete picture of policies

and practices of the Pakistan Government in a nut-shell and leaves nothing to dilate on ; yet for the sake of brevity let us once more enumerate the mode and method of oppressions inflicted on the minorities in the prevailing condition of lawlessness reigning supreme in East Pakistan.

Lawlessness

The minority community can exist only with the goodwill of the majority community. The Hindus enjoyed this goodwill to some extent from a section of the majority community despite anti-Hindu attitude of the government and its officials in general. But under the present regime due to the determined efforts of the government officials and the re-orientated Muslim League, a deep feeling of hatred has been inculcated in the mind of the Muslims to treat the minorities as unwanted and undesirable elements in Pakistan. The goodwill is now completely lost. Social security is denied to the minority community in general. Theft, robbery, dacoity, murder, forcible disposessions from lands, catching of fish from tanks, cutting of trees and bamboos, lifting of cattle, insult, humiliation and molestation including outraging modesty of women, abduction of minor girls and women, prohibition of sale of movable and immovable properties of persons in utter distress, discrimination in the offices with dark and dismal future, submission to inhuman and uncivilised methods of oppression in silence behind an iron-curtain with no liberty to ventilate and denial of freedom of speech and association, are the normal features of minority life in East Pakistan.

The fallen and degenerated Hindus of today in East Pakistan had their own records of a glorious past in the history of Bengal, nay, in the history of undivided India as well.

Contribution of the East Bengal Hindus

The Hindus of East Bengal (pre-partition and pre-independence) occupied a prominent position in the society by virtue of their education, liberal and generous donation and charity for development of educational institutions and hospitals, public spirit and glorious contribution to the freedom struggle. They played a conspicuous role in social, economic and political activities of the province of undivided Bengal. Partition has ruined this virile, dynamic and creative community. Partition of Bengal in the olden days in 1905 under the-then British Raj for the annulment of which the brave sons of Bengal fought and succeeded was not so serious and devastating in effect as the partition of Bengal in 1947 into two independent and sovereign states. In the previous one, there was no cause to migrate from one country to another, the country being one undivided India as a whole. The-then 'East Bengal and Assam' was only a province of India; yet the brave Bengalees fought for its annulment because of the sinister motive of the Imperialist British Raj to divide the Bengalee community into two contending communities of the Hindus and the Muslims for upholding their reign. But the latter division of Bengal in 1947 made the Bengalees of the two parts of Bengal into two separate 'Nations' with two contradictory national aims and aspirations. The Hindus under the leadership of the Indian National Congress were nationalists in their political outlook and therefore they fought for national deliverance of India as a whole, while the Muslims, under the leadership of the Muslim League, were separatists in their political outlook and wanted a separate homeland for the Muslims. In the struggle for fulfilment of these contradictions in ideas and ideologies of the communities the Muslims triumphed and Pakistan was carved out of India and East Bengal formed a part or a province of Pakistan. The struggle of the Mus-

lims for Pakistan—a homeland for them alone—was based on communal hatred. The intelligent, educated and wealthier section of the Hindu community saw through the game of this political division a dark, dismal and blighted future for them and began to migrate. After seventeen years' experience of the situation it can now be safely concluded that their apprehension was not at all baseless. Nine millions of the minorities in East Pakistan who stuck to their hearths and homes in good faith on the solemn assurances of the Congress leaders of the highest status like Shri Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel find themselves to-day in a hopeless and hapless situation. They are dehumanised, demoralised and degenerated human beings, having been denied the rights of citizenship and elementary human rights to live a peaceful social life. Day in and day out they live in constant fear and terror. Worries are writ large on their faces. Thousands of the terror-stricken people are trekking their way through the unauthorised routes to India without any travel documents in a penniless condition leaving their hearths and homes and properties behind, in the hope that they would enjoy liberty and freedom from fear. These poor people have no other alternative but either to be killed and dishonoured in Pakistan or to be faced with starvation and homelessness in India. They are put between the Scylla and the Charybdis.

Why after 17 years they are leaving their hearths and homes and seeking shelter in India? Nobody leaves his hearth and home out of mere fun. The Hindus have got a sentimental and emotional tie with the land of their birth, especially with their homestead-land, but that tie has cruelly been torn asunder! Verily they are the victims of independence by compromise and partition of India. East Pakistan has become a dungeon hell—a vast prison house for the minorities.

CHAPTER IV

Amputation of India

India was amputated for the sake of achievement of independence—it has been so said by the leaders of the Indian National Congress who were originally opposed to any sort of partition from the very start of their struggle for independence. The question that for whose benefit India was partitioned has now cropped up in the public mind. Is it for the benefit of the people or for the benefit of the struggle-worn leaders who wanted to enjoy the fruits of their struggle in the last days of their lives? Whatever might have been the reason and intention, it is a fact that India was amputated and partitioned. Blood oozing out of that amputation has not yet stopped within these long seventeen years after independence. It is doubtful whether it will stop at all, until the minorities in Pakistan are completely eliminated either by exodus, conversion of faith or total annihilation. It has been seen from the foregoing pages that the process of elimination has been steadily going on under the neo-Fascist leadership of Mr. Ayub Khan. All solemn assurances and pacts between India and Pakistan promising just and fair deal to the minorities have been thrown to the wind by the Government of Pakistan.

At the time of partition, both the Congress and the Muslim League undertook to give fair and equitable treatment to the minorities after the transference of power. The future governments re-affirmed these assurances that it was their intention to safeguard the legitimate interests of all citizens irrespective of religion, caste or sex. They further asserted that in the exercise of their normal civic rights all citizens would be regarded as equal and both the governments would assure to all people within their territories the

exercise of liberties, such as freedom of speech, the right to form association, the right to worship in their own way and the protection of language and culture.

How far these assurances were implemented in actual practices can be seen through the fourteen years' rule of Pakistan (minus 3 years' rule under the United Front Party and its constituents out of all-told 17 years of Pakistan) under the old and the new Muslim League party. Apart from the minor disturbances and constant pin-pricks on the minority communities of Pakistan in their day-to-day life, a gigantic communal riot took place in East Pakistan under the old Muslim League rule in 1950. On a threat from Shri Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, the-then Prime Minister of Pakistan, immediately flew to New Delhi and entered into an agreement known as 'Nehru-Liaquat Pact.' This 'Pact' had directions in detail in respect of treatment to be meted out to the minority community under each government but this pact has also been thrown in the basket as waste-paper by the regime of the Ayub-Government. All pacts and agreements are fulfilled more in breaches than in faithful implementations by the Government of Pakistan. Therefore the history of the last 14 years of Pakistan (excluding 3 years out of 17 years of rule) has been the blood-stained history of the unfortunate minorities.

The craze for blood of the minorities commenced with the partition of India and it has been continuing till to-day. Mr. Lenoard Mosely in his book *The Last Days of the British Raj* writes. "In the nine months between August, 1947 (time of independence) and the spring of the following year, between fourteen and sixteen million Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims were forced to leave their homes and flee to safety from the blood-crazed mobs. In that same period over 60,000 of them were killed. But no, not just killed. If they were children, they were picked up by the feet and their heads smashed against the wall. If they were female children,

they were raped. If they were girls, they were raped and then their breasts were chopped off. And if they were pregnant, they were disembowelled." The brutalities in man surpassed that in the beast. The figures of persons killed and the persons who left their hearth and home, as stated above, were of only 9 months since partition and those, too, were mostly of north-western India comprising West Pakistan and East Punjab. In the words of Lord Mountbatten 'One-man-Boundary-Force' in Mahatma Gandhi paved the way for peaceful transference of power in eastern India and there was no unpleasant or gruesome killing in this side of India—there was only some exodus of men, women and children, mostly from East Bengal—eastern province of Pakistan. The exodus is still continuing at a greater pace, not for mere emotional reasons but for valid grounds of safety and security, endangered there in East Pakistan for the minorities.

How far the life of the minorities there has become miserable and unbearable by frequent riot and atrocities perpetrated on them has already been stated in the foregoing pages and therefore needs no elaboration. More than 3½ millions of Hindus have come over to India from East Pakistan by this time since partition and thousands of them have been killed—most brutally killed in a way, as described by Mr. Mosley and quoted above. According to Leonard Mosley, 100,000 young girls, presumably of western India, were kidnapped by both sides and forcibly converted within nine months since partition in the month of August, 1947. Thousands more must be added to the figure from East Pakistan. Loss of property of the minorities in East Pakistan alone must have exceeded ten hundred crores in term of rupees. History does not perhaps furnish another instance where at the expense of such huge wealth and sacrifice of such large numbers of human lives any other country attained its freedom. Thirteen million of minorities left in East

Pakistan at the time of transference of power should be taken as morally dead—some of them having actually died a death of martyrs for being killed by the assassins of the communal frenzy. They were the scapegoat of partition and independence. They have suffered, they have been suffering. Some have died—some are counting their days in constant fear to lose their lives at the hand of the assassins, and some are fleeing for safety in India. Those who are fleeing or migrating are encountering endless troubles in the way. According to Shri G. L. Nanda, Home Minister of India, about 100,000 men, women and children of the minority communities of all denominations including the Christians and the Buddhists have fled or migrated to India for safety and security till the first week of March, 1964 since the holocaust of January, 1964. More are daily coming without any break.

The Government of India have never encouraged migration of the minorities from East Pakistan—rather they have put various restrictions on the issue of migration certificates to the intending migrants. Rehabilitation of the migrants is not only a stupendous economic problem for the Government of India, it is a political problem as well. Migrants who are forced to leave their hearth and home at the cost of tremendous sufferings in loss of the lives of their near and dear ones and of their property out of communal jealousy, are not naturally well-disposed to the co-religionists of their aggressors in the new land of their abode and therefore a communal tension is likely to generate. This is the political part of the problem. The leaders of the Congress Party who are running the government in India want to avoid this ugly situation. Once they committed a huge blunder in dividing the country on communal basis (it is a fact, even though they may not agree to admit the truth) but now they try their utmost for emotional integration of India of to-day as a whole among the communities. In

apprehension of communal dissension they never encourage migration. It is reported in the press that while thousands of intending migrants are daily crowding at the gate of the Indian Deputy High Commissioner's Office at Dacca for migration certificates after the latest holocaust of 1964, they are not only being persuaded to go back to their own houses—though most of them have got no houses to-day, they being all burnt down in the communal frezy—, they are reported to have been roughly handled by the staff of the Indian Deputy High Commission. Whatever the leaders of the India Government may say and however they may coax or cajole the minorities, it is certainly not their intention that the minorities of East Pakistan should migrate to India. They are therefore imposing various handicaps on the intending migrants, but even then Mr. Ayub Khan, the unabashed propagandist dictator of Pakistan, and his henchmen in the government are proclaiming before the world that the Government of India have been encouraging migration of the minorities and thus interfering in the matter of their internal administration! It is nothing but adding insult to injuries. It is an unashamed act of perjury on the part of the Government of Pakistan which itself became a party to drive the minorities by his covert or overt acts of sympathy with the aggressors who indulged in committing beastly violence on the minorities.

Whatever the Government of Pakistan may say and interpret about the exodus of the minorities from East Pakistan and whatever restrictions or handicaps are put on them to control the exodus by the Government of India they (the minorities) are crossing the borders and coming over to India in their thousands—some, stealthily without any travel documents and some, through proper channel. The very urge to live has led the people to leave their hearth and home. They remained in the land of their birth for about seventeen years with all sorts of humiliations and they never

intended to leave and leap in the dark uncertainty, yet they could not stay on. This is the tragedy of partition of the country to achieve independence by compromise with a party holding a different concept and ideology of 'two-nation' theory.

The minorities of East Pakistan are paying heavily for the independence thus achieved. Exodus of them has been the inevitable consequence of it. During the Noakhali riot in pre-independence days, Mahatmaji was reported to have sent a wire to Shri Satish Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratisthan and Shri Haran Chandra Ghose Chowdhury of Noakhali that "case seems to be for exodus or perishing in flames of madmen and fanaticism". What was a case of exodus or perishing in flames of madness and fanaticism then, according to the Mahatma, is now a far more alarming case in view of the fact of the recent arson, loot and murder in a much bigger scale than the Noakhali riot. The exodus has started—the minorities have been coming to India in good number. On the 16th of August, 1963 Shri Nehru was reported to have said in the Parliament that adverse economic situation in Pakistan was the main cause of exodus. According to him there were other reasons also and lack of a sense of security was one of these.

I do not know wherefrom Shri Nehru got the information that adverse economic situation led the minorities to leave their country. The fact is rather otherwise. The lawyers, the medical practitioners and the teachers of the Hindu community are earning much more than what they were earning previously and it is the lure of that fabulous earning beyond their expectation that had only tied them to Pakistan till now. This is the economic position of the educated middle class people of the minority community in East Pakistan. The agriculturists and the labourers are also earning much more than what they were earning in pre-independence days. It is therefore a gross

mistake to think that adverse economic situation has been the main reason for the minority exodus from East Pakistan. The urge to live and to uphold the honour of their women-folk have only led the minorities of East Pakistan to leave their country. The Hindus of East Pakistan have always defended themselves bravely against all sorts of onslaughts from the Muslims in pre-independence days and never thought of leaving their hearth and home but to-day they have not got that moral stamina to resist. In old days they had the courage to defend themselves in the expectation of impartial dispensation of fair and equitable justice both from the executive and the judicial authorities under the-then government, but to-day that expectation has been completely belied by circumstances. The government machinery seems to be vitiated by communal partisanship. Whenever any communal clash or riot breaks out the police take the side of the Muslims ; they did it in the riot at Gopalgunj between the 'Namasudras' and the Muslims in 1961 and they are playing the same performance everywhere. Justice also seems to be vitiated and it has been witnessed in many cases of abduction of the Hindu girls of minor age. In fact the government has become a party in itself. It has become a fundamental policy with the Government of Pakistan to keep the minorities in custody and instigate the Muslims at times against them in communal frenzy, only to put pressure on India for fulfilment of their demands of this or that sort. The Muslim League Party applied this tactics of communal riots for achievement of Pakistan and it has been persistently following that old tactics. The Muslims under the influence of the Muslim League never fought against the-then ruling British authorities—they fought against the Hindus in communal riots, only to thwart the Congress to submit to their demand of partition of the country into India and Pakistan. The Muslim League got the support of the British imperialists in the matter and the Congress was

disgusted and horrified to see bloodshed all around the country. The Muslim League, under the leadership of late Mr. M. A. Zinnah, declared that all bloodshed would cease and communal peace and harmony would return to the sub-continent if Pakistan was conceded to the Muslims. The Congress then submitted to the anti-national demand of the Muslim League and thus sacrificed its fundamental principle of Indian nationhood. India was partitioned under tripartite agreement among the Congress, the Muslim League and the British Government. The British imperialists then laughed in their sleeves at the success of their diplomacy and they hoped to get back to India at opportune time through this vulnerable zone of partitioned India. Division of India was accepted by the nationalist Congress to avoid the problem of bloodshed but the problem still remains—rather, manifests itself in manifold ways.

Background of Indian Independence and Pakistan

The Second World War put both the victors and the vanquished in Europe in a very tight corner. Germany was dismembered and England was battered to necessitate immediate mobilisation of all her forces in men and money for reconstruction. While England was thus hard pressed in her home affairs, the yearnings and eagerness for independence grew more and more resolute in all sections of Indian people including the army, the navy and the police as well. The people who had been struggling hard to win independence did not want the British rule to exist any more in India. The army, the navy and the police, who were the main stay of the foreign rule, also did not want to be ruled over by the foreigners. The spirit of the I. N. A. (Indian National Army) under the leadership of Netaji Shri Subhas Chandra Bose pervaded the entire cadres of the three forces. Some of their units actually revolted and fought. Under the

circumstances the Britishers had no other alternative but to concede independence to India. But the imperialism in the Britishers could hardly die. They began to devise ways and means to concede independence on the one hand and keep a back-door ajar on the other, so that they may get back into India through it when fortune would favour them once again.

The Cabinet Mission came from England with a new plan for transference of power. The late-lamented Maulana Azad, the-then Congress President, and other Congress leaders including Mahatma Gandhi, had theadbare discussions with the Mission over the plan. Mahatma Gandhi wrote to the Chief Minister of Assam that even if he ever supports the Mission-plan and urges for its acceptance, the Chief Minister of Assam should defy to accept it in the best interest of his people. This was Mahatmaji's reaction to the plan. Sardar Patel was against it from the very start. Maulana Azad writes in his book *India Wins Freedom* that Shri Nehru supported the plan at first but subsequently he, too, changed his mind and went against it. The Maulana as a nationalist of unimpeachable honesty and sincerity was all along against partition of India and he alone supported the plan and went so far as to say that the plan was practically amended and adopted to cover his views under the circumstances of apprehending partition of India. Mr. V. P. Menon, a notable figure in the Government of India at the time of transference of power, writes in his book entitled *Transference of Power* : "The Cabinet Mission attempted to preserve a united India, but it was no more than a facade of unity. If their plan had worked, it would have resulted in the Muslim League securing in substance a province-wise Pakistan".

The Cabinet Mission, therefore, failed to sell their plan to the leaders of the Congress. Then came the plan of partition of India. Only Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Abul

Kalam Azad among the Congress leaders opposed this plan but other leaders of the Congress Working Committee accepted the plan of partition without, however, caring to visualize the consequence of hazarding the unity of the country.

Mr. Zinnah was not satisfied at the shape of Pakistan to come out of partition. He declared that the Pakistan offered was 'truncated, mutilated and moth-eaten' but he was made to accept it under force of circumstances.

Both the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the plan of partition. Only Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Azad became sullen over the future apprehension of constant quarrel and falling out in battle array among the newly born two sovereign countries. Gandhiji alone could have averted the situation by continuing his struggle for Indian independence but he also preferred to keep himself aside—he knew that 'India' was with him in his struggle for independence, though the Congress (meaning, of course, the Congress Working Committee alone) had been with Lord Mountbatten, the then Viceroy and Governor General of India. Perhaps India's destiny was ordained otherwise. Human blood began to spill in the Punjab and Western India at the very prospect of partition and more blood was to be spilt in the eastern section as well!

Partition of India came to be a settled fact. Different leaders of the Congress interpreted the reason behind this partition in different ways. Shri J. B. Kripalaini, the then President of the Indian National Congress, when questioned by a reporter in a press conference as to whether the Congress accepted partition out of fear was reported to have said—"I must admit the truth of this charge, but not in the sense in which it is made. The fear is not for the lives lost, or of the widows' wail, or the orphans' cry, or of the many houses burned. The fear is that if we go on like this, retaliating and heaping indignities on each other, we shall

progressively reduce ourselves to a stage of cannibalism and worse”.

He was not afraid of the killings of human beings and burning of houses but he was only afraid of the emotional degeneration of Indian people. A lofty idea indeed ! Now after seventeen years of partition and independence, may I humbly ask whether his hope of elevating the peoples of India and Pakistan to a noble human standard has been fulfilled or belied ? As a statesman it was expected of him to foresee the future shape of things to come out of the partition but he either miserably failed to foresee it or he only deceived himself and his countrymen with words of high sentiments.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, however, came nearer the truth when he said the following words in course of a conversation with Mr. Leonard Mosley in 1960 :—“The truth is that we were tired men, and we were getting on in years too. Few of us could stand the prospect of going to prison again—and if we had stood out for a united India as we wished it, prison obviously awaited us. We saw the fires burning in the Punjab and heard every day of the killings. The plan for partition offered a way out and we took it. But if Gandhi had told us not to, we would have gone on fighting and waiting. But we accepted. We expected that partition would be temporary, that Pakistan was bound to come back to us. None of us guessed how much the killings and the crisis in Kashmir would embitter relations”.

If the above is analysed, the following truths come out of it :—

- (1) That the ageing leaders of the Congress were struggle-worn, that they were not prepared to stand the sufferings of the prison-life again by resumption of their struggle for independence of United India,
- (2) That the fires burning in the Punjab and killings

of human beings told seriously on their mind and they thought that the plan of partition offered a way out and they accepted it.

- (3) That Gandhiji had not told them not to accept it —if he had, they would have gone on fighting,
- (4) That they expected that the partition was only a temporary phase and Pakistan would once again come back to India, and
- (5) That none of the Congress leaders guessed at the moment of partition the amount of bitterness to be caused thereafter between the newly born two sovereign states of India and Pakistan over the killings and the issue of Kashmir.

Let us now cogitate over the issues just brought out of the statement of Nehruji and find the truth behind them.

The struggle-worn ageing Congress leaders were enamoured of the prospect of holding themselves in power to rule over India, though divided at the moment, and expected that partition would ultimately go and there would be a United India again. This might have been so, if they had only worked for it after the transference of power from the British Government. But they did not. Perhaps only Sardar Patel tried to economically strangle Pakistan on its very birth but he was not allowed to do so by no less a person than Gandhiji himself. Truth was a fundamental principle of his life and he once declared that he was ready to sacrifice independence of India even, for the sake of truth. The leaders of the Congress entered into a solemn agreement with the leaders of the Muslim League over the issue of partition. How can Gandhiji go against the principle of his life and allow his followers, though the followers were not following their Master over the issue of partition, to break their words of honour and agreement? There ended Patel's plan of strangulation and since then the Government of India under the premiership of Shri Nehru has always helped

Pakistan in money and materials to run its administration but as days go on the hostility of Pakistan grows more in volume. India was divided and partitioned on the campaign of communal hatred by the Muslim League and Pakistan must keep that very weapon always sharp to preserve its separate entity in tact and gain fulfilment of its demands. Before partition of India the late Mr. Zinnah said that peace and amity among the Hindus and the Muslims would prevail, if Pakistan was only conceded by the Indian leaders. The Congress leaders conceded Pakistan with their belief in the words of Mr. Zinnah but the relationship between India and Pakistan has worsened to-day. Now, Pakistan's cry has been for concession of Kashmir to it. President Ayub's Foreign Minister Mr. Z. A. Bhutto has said on 11th March, 1964 that there would be no peace between India and Pakistan unless the issue of Kashmir was solved. Of course, the solution means *solution in favour of Pakistan*. Even if the issue of Kashmir is solved, there will be no permanent peace in the sub-continent. Another issue must again crop up. Maybe the next issue would be, I think, re-opening of the accession of Tripura State to India. East Pakistan has a covetous eye on the Tripura State from the very beginning. If the Ruler's accession is once allowed to be re-opened and nullified in Kashmir, there would be re-opening of the flood-gate of protests from all sides.

The Congress leaders most erroneously expected to get out of the communal strifes by partition of India and therefore, either they lacked in vision of statesmen or they were blinded by the dazzle of independence of divided India and prospect of ruling over her in their old age. It is no good to ascribe the responsibility to Gandhiji. He might not have said in so many words not to accept partition but everybody knew his mind and knew that he was not in favour of accepting partition of India. But Gandhiji showed some weakness for his followers—he did not revolt against the

decision of his so-called followers. If he had, the whole of India would have gone with him and he knew this truth in his heart of hearts and had therefore the bluntness to throw this retort to Lord Mountbatten when the latter had the audacity to say to the Mahatma that the Congress was with him. Gandhiji—if he had failed at all—failed to give lead to the country at this final phase of independence in opposition to his followers. The leaders of the Congress failed, because they expected that partition of India would give them their much desired peace and amity among the communities and they were foiled.

Again, it is no good to apportion the entire blame on the Congress leaders alone. All the political parties, including the erstwhile revolutionary parties who had taken up arms to drive the Britishers from India, everybody who was anybody in the country failed and failed miserably. Nobody raised a finger of protest even against this partition. All are suffering now—we are all reaping the fruits of our heinous crime and sin of sacrificing our fundamental principle of United India.

Way Out

Shri Nehruji was reported to have said, "We saw the fires burning in the Punjab and we heard everyday of the killings. The plan for partition offered a way out and we took it." Even after long seventeen years of partition since 1947, one might be tempted to ask Nehruji whether the plan of partition was at all a way cut or only a sop to the anti-national elements of the Muslim League to appease them and thereby get a chance to rule over India of to-day at the sacrifice of the fundamental principle for which the Congress had so long fought and fought relentlessly since Mahatma Gandhi took the leadership of it. Has he (Shri Nehru) not been seeing the fires burning in East Pakistan and hearing of killings of men, women and

children? Presumably the fires in the Punjab and news of killings weighed on his mind so heavily that he had to sacrifice his principle of Indian nationalism but what did he do for the fires and killings of to-day? He stood as a mere helpless observer. Pakistan is an independent sovereign state—Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, got no control over her. In this scientific age the world has become a small and compact area. Any local war may not be confined in the locality alone—it may conflagrate the entire world and atomic weapons may reduce the world into unprecedented devastation.

Any thought of waging of a shooting war on this issue of inhuman atrocities on the minorities in East Pakistan seemed repugnant to the very pacifist idea and ideology of Shri Nehru who had all along played a prominent role in maintaining and resorting peace among the contending countries and nations of the world. But the military dictator of Pakistan Mr. Ayub Khan, having been armed with military pacts of mutual assistance with the big Western Powers under the SEATO and CENTO and recent undeclared pact with the People's Republic of China, is wooing for a showdown with India and provoking India consistently to go into war. Looting and burning of Hindu houses, kidnapping and raping of Hindu women and girls and killing of them in thousands to squeeze them out to India to tell their tales of woes, lifting of men and cattle from Indian soil, and forcible occupation of lands here and there form parts of provocations. These are all parts of Pakistan's war-strategy. India is avoiding to fall into the trap of Pakistan but the question is : how long she would be able to tolerate and resist? Consistent with her national pride and prestige India may not avoid meeting force by force for long. The plan of partition was certainly not a way out. Acquiescence to and acceptance of the plan of partition was a colossal mistake and that mistake must be undone and rectified.

How that can be done—that is the question. Some political thinkers in India say that India should go to the Human Rights Sub-committee of the United Nations Organisation to expose the atrocities committed by Pakistan on her minorities, in clear contravention of the bilateral agreement and pledge between India and Pakistan to behave well with their minorities at the time of transference of power. But the Prime Minister of India negatived the proposal in the Indian Parliament on the 17th of March, 1964, on the ground that his experience about fair and equitable justice in the UNO had not been very happy and inspiring. England and America are still dominating factors in the UNO but these two Powers have got a pro-Pakistan bias for their own national and imperialist purposes. It is for this reason that India has failed to get fair justice on the Kashmir issue till now. The character of the UNO must change with the emergence of independent states in Afro-Asian hemisphere and it is gradually changing. These newly born states are against imperialism and its protagonists. By her association with British Commonwealth and American dollar-imperialism, India has failed to give a clear image of her before the newly born independent states in her true perspective of anti-imperialism in recent years due to lack of proper propaganda in those countries and of a strong policy in the Ministry of External Affairs. If India does not like to go to the UNO Sub-committee of Human Rights, she should immediately send a powerful non-official delegation to visit the independent states of Asia and Africa for exposition of imperialist designs in the world affairs *vis-a-vis* Indo-Pak-Subcontinent and thus mobilise public opinion in her favour. Pakistan has already taken the field in this direction. Many leaders of the Congress—the ruling party of India—have been, of late, after the recent holocaust on the minorities in East Pakistan, suggesting to mobilise world opinion against the atrocities committed by Pakistan

on her own citizens of the minority community, but no tangible work in this respect has yet been taken up in right earnest. India's diplomatic missions everywhere in the world have miserably failed to expose the truth about Pakistan's misdeeds, perhaps due to a soft policy pursued by the External Affairs Ministry of the Government of India. With change of this policy, the diplomatic missions should be geared up to give out the truth before the world. Our softness in policy-making against the imperialism and its designs on the economically backward countries of Asia and Africa has failed to give out true image of India in recent years. Independent India started with the good will and support of the newly born independent states of Asia and Africa whose cause for independence and sovereignty she had taken forcefully in the field of world-forum, but to-day due to a shift of her (India's) policy to softness she has lost that most valued support. Softness of policy has neither been appreciated and rewarded in the international field nor has it been successful in Pakistan. India has been particularly very soft to Pakistan since the death of Sardar Patel and this softness of India has been interpreted by Pakistan as India's weakness. This policy towards the Government of Pakistan should and must change. Not only the minorities but also the majority community in East Pakistan have been groaning under the heavy weight of military dictatorship of Mr. Ayub Khan and the people of the majority community have been trying hard to get rid of him and his undemocratic rule. The Government of India should espouse their cause and give all sorts of encouragement, as is permissible under the international laws, to them. The Government of Pakistan have been not only giving encouragement to the rebel Nagas and Mizos, they are also giving military training and supplying modern arms and weapons to those rebels of India. Why then India should hesitate to give encouragement to the fighters for democratic rule in East

Pakistan and espouse their cause diplomatically in the international field? Democratic rule at par with India in Pakistan can only give safety and security to the minorities.

The plan of partition of the country was certainly not the way out—rather it has created more and more complications. The way out from these complications lies in two phases of programmes—one, a short term and the other, a long term.

After the communal disturbances of 1963-64, the minorities of East Pakistan have begun to flee to India in their thousands. They are not fleeing because of any economic distress—the natural urge to live in human mind has led them to flee the country. They wanted to live in their hearth and home but they could not, due to the policy of the Government of Pakistan to squeeze them out on any plea and massacre those who insisted on remaining. This policy has been persistently followed since the very birth of Pakistan. Pakistan came into being on the 14th August, 1947 and Sir Francis Mudie, the-then British Governor of West Punjab (Pakistan) wrote to Mr. Zinnah, the Governor General, in the following words on the 5th September, 1947 :—"I am telling every one that I don't care *how* the Sikhs get across the border ; the *great thing* is to get rid of them as soon as possible." This has been the policy of the Government of Pakistan and it is being persistently followed till to-day. What was said about the Sikhs of the West Punjab by the British Governor is also holding true about all other minorities of East Pakistan as well, even though it remains unsaid in so many words. The outcome of this policy manifested in looting and burning of houses and massacre of the minorities on a gigantic scale in 1963-64 in East Pakistan. The minorities of all denominations and categories are coming to India in a semi-nude and penniless condition at the risk to their lives in their transit. The short-term programme for India should be the relaxation of the migration rules and reception of such refugees and making proper arrangement

for their rehabilitation on war-footing. The Government of India should and must take it into account that these refugees are the victims of an undeclared war on India by the Government of Pakistan, and therefore, the problem of their rehabilitation must also be solved on a war-footing. Any bungling on this issue is likely to create more troubles for India and complicate the whole affairs of emergency when war comes on her from the Pakistan side, even though India may not like it at all. The Western Powers, more especially the Tory Government of Great Britain, would always encourage the Government of Pakistan to shoot up crises in India for their own national interests. The Government of India should take note of this fact and prepare itself for the worst. It should gear up its propaganda machinery to the fullest swing all over the world—more especially in the countries of Asia and Africa. This is what I mean by short-term programme.

Now, to speak about the long-term programme, I like to make it known to the Government of India and the people thereof that the present-day Government of Pakistan does not represent the voice of its people—more especially the people of East Pakistan. The people of East Pakistan want a democratic constitution at par with the Constitution of India with adult suffrage and restoration of democracy. The people of East Pakistan are fighting and fighting relentlessly for the fulfilment of their aspiration. The Government of India should give them all encouragement in every possible way and give vent to their suppressed voice in the outside world through their diplomatic channels and other propaganda machineries. India must divert all her attention to bring forth a democratic rule in Pakistan for which the people of Pakistan—especially all sections of people in East Pakistan—are fighting and fighting hard with their life-blood. Anyway the democratic rule must be helped to usher in, in East Pakistan at least, for the continued stay of

the minorities there with honour and safety. Pakistan may not come back and merge into India, as Shri Nehru expected at the time of partition, but surely ushering in of the democratic rule would once again make East Pakistan—she may again be renamed as East Bengal—the happy abode of the people including the minorities as well. The sting behind Pakistan in her hate-India and hate-Hindus campaign would then be blunted—then and then alone the agonies of partition would become things of the past. Here lies the way out.

The Government of India should and must be very tough in its deals with the Government of Pakistan which now stands aloof from its own people, and at the same time should show all possible sympathy and encouragement to the struggling democratic forces of Pakistan. The Government of India has, in the past, paid heavily for its policy of softness—even at the sacrifice of its fundamentals at times, to purchase peace and amity between the two countries but it has failed and failed miserably. Peace and amity have not come nearer but receded far away. Let India now show toughness, consistent with international justice and fair play, to the Government of Pakistan and softness to the people of Pakistan in their struggle for emergence of democratic rule. I believe, this dual policy, if pursued at a time, may succeed at last.

It is a good augury that the policy of the India Government is gradually but very slowly veering towards that end at long last and if the Government can stick to it and progressively hasten its full implementation without caring for the pressures put on it from the interested big Powers of the West, it will undoubtedly succeed in the happiness of all concerned.

The people of India have also got their share of duties and responsibilities in the matter. They must keep communal harmony in India steady at all costs, even inspite of the provocations coming from across the border and the nefa-

rious attempts of the agent provocateurs residing in India. The people of India should and must not do anything which may hurt the sentiments of a highly susceptible people, as we ourselves are. If the people of India and their government can go hand in hand with this policy, the sting behind the partition of India would be blunted and the halcyon days would once again return. The 'Way Out' lies in it and nowhere else. Let India and her people decide their course of action.

SHRI PRAVASH CHANDRA LAHIRY, the author of this volume, was a Minister of Finance in the East Pakistan Government for sometime. In his youth he had been an ardent revolutionary who fought for his country and suffered at the hands of the British rulers. During the First great war, he, a member of the Anushilan party, along with a few others of his comrades who had been hiding themselves as political absconders, had the courage and tenacity to fight against a huge horde of the police of the British Raj at Gauhati and received a rifle-shot wound on his thigh in course of the battle royal with them. He was subsequently apprehended and put to jail. Altogether he spent 22 years of his precious life in jail for the nation's cause.

An inhabitant of the district of Rajshahi now in East Pakistan, Shri Lahiry continued to serve his home district even after partition and stayed there during the last 17 years against heavy odds. As a political leader and public man he is thoroughly acquainted with conditions in East Pakistan and has direct experience of many a gruesome event happening there during the Muslim League rule and the later Ayub regime. His experiences of all these years are set forth in this book in vivid details, which will give the readers a taste of how it feels to live in East Pakistan these days under the Ayub dictatorship.
