

## EAST PAKISTAN

...erupting on March 25, 1971, takes an estimated 200,000 lives. Ten million flee for India—as many more are displaced within East Pakistan. International community provides food, medicine, shelter to prevent starvation and disease.

### Civil Strife

#### Period Covered

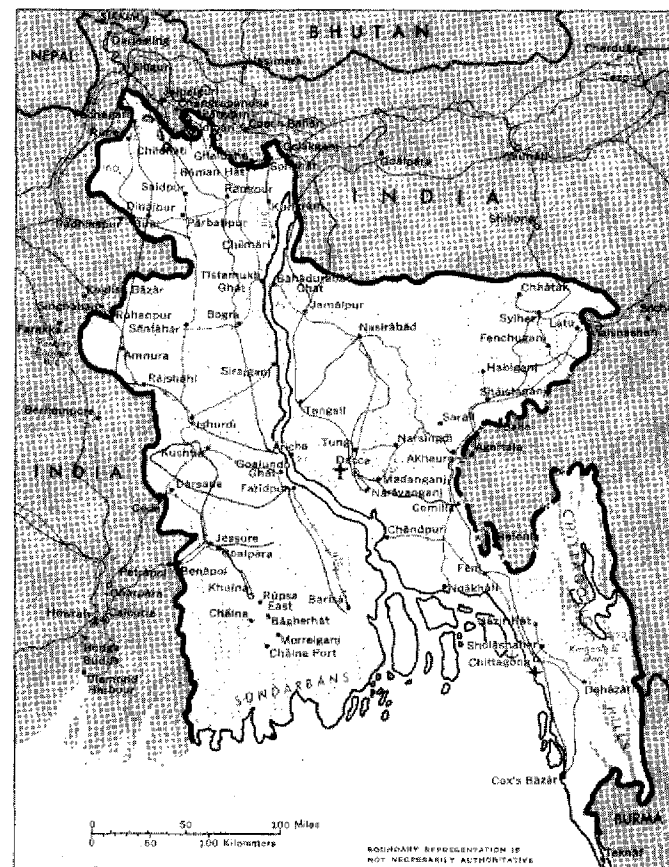
3/25 to 12/3/71

Value of U. S. Assistance .....	\$34.1 million
Value of Other Nations Assistance .....	25.2 million
	<hr/> \$59.3 million

### BACKGROUND AND DETAILS:

Pakistan was carved out of India to provide a homeland for Indian Moslems when India won its independence from Britain in 1947. This was prompted by the historical conflict between the Hindu majority in India and the Moslem minority. It was anticipated that peace would come when each religious majority had its own country. Clashes occurred during the cross-migration in which millions of Hindus fled from the new country of Pakistan to India and Indian Moslems sought new homes in Pakistan.

But the country of Pakistan was a dichotomous state divided by almost a thousand miles of Indian territory. They were two separate people—in the West Punjabis and in the East Bengalis. Differing in both custom and language, they held only their Moslem religion in common. Of an estimated population of 78 million in East Pakistan, 70 million were Moslems, and the balance mainly Hindus.



East Pakistan had its own provincial government, but was subject to central government authority in West Pakistan. In 1969 there was a country-wide revolt against the head of the Pakistan Government, Ayub Khan. As a result Yahya Khan, General of the Pakistan Army ascended to the presidency. Free elections were promised by the new military government.

A politically active group called the Awami League began pressing for more self-government in the East. The promised free elections were held in December 1971. The Awami League won 167 of the 169 seats at stake in East Pakistan, which would have given it an absolute majority in the national assembly. The President of the Awami League, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, demanded that in the new constitution which was to emerge from the convening of the national assembly, East Pakistan be given virtual autonomy, with only its defense and foreign affairs matters being the concern of the central government.

President Yahya Khan, concerned that granting autonomy to East Pakistan would lead to the fragmentation of Pakistan, delayed convening of the national assembly. Finally he broke off negotiations with Mujibur and the elected officials in East Pakistan were never allowed to be seated.

There followed a series of civil disturbances and strikes in East Pakistan, which paralyzed transportation, communications, business and economic operations. President Yahya Khan, faced with two choices, to grant virtual independence to the East or attempt to crush the growing Bengali nationalism, chose the latter. The Awami League was banned.

Civil strife began in East Pakistan with the arrival of the Pakistan Army sent from West Pakistan to suppress the rebellion. Sheikh Mujib was arrested and taken to West Pakistan. By the end of April 1971, the Pakistan Army succeeded in temporarily crushing the independence movement, but in the process several thousand Bengalis, many of them intellectuals, administrators and students were reportedly slain. The Pakistan Army remained in the East to enforce martial law and was faced with the intense hatred of the majority of the people, and a growth

of guerrilla-type resistance mostly from students and young people who became known as the Mukti Bahini. Retaliation killings of members of the Pakistan Army and civilians who cooperated with the Central Government, especially Biharis, occurred. Reprisals by the Pakistan Army followed, which in turn generated more violence from the Mukti Bahini. Numerous villages were burned by the Pakistan Army; communications, railroad lines, bridges and roads were destroyed by the guerrilla forces.

Soon after March 25 and for more than six months thereafter, thousands of Bengalis daily left East Pakistan for India. (The relief program for the refugees in India has been covered in a separate report.) Millions of others were displaced within East Pakistan, which were additional to the victims of the 1970 cyclone who were still in need. This report of international aid covers only the disaster situation within East Bengal from March 25 to December 3, 1971.

A new situation developed late in 1971 involving not only accelerated internal conflict but open conflict between India and the West Pakistan Government.

Indian troops entered East Pakistan in support of the Mukti Bahini guerrillas on December 3, 1971, and moved on the city of Dacca. On December 16, after 14 days of war, West Pakistan forces capitulated to the Indian Army. The Awami League and Mukti Bahini declared East Pakistan a separate country to be known as Bangladesh. As of December 31, 1971, India and Bhutan had recognized the new government. President Yahya Khan, blamed for the loss of the East, was succeeded in West Pakistan by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

President Bhutto ordered Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who had been confined for nearly 10 months, released from prison, and after a brief period of house arrest, he was given his freedom, at which time he returned to East Bengal to head the new government.

Post civil strife relief requirements were, at the time of closing this report, being assessed.

## RELIEF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF EAST PAKISTAN AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

On May 22, 1971, the Government of Pakistan requested the United Nations to coordinate international relief in East Pakistan. In a June 28, 1971 speech, President Yahya Khan reviewed steps his government had planned to end the refugee flow into India and to encourage Pakistanis to return from India. Plans included amnesty; establishment of reception centers; guarantees for restitution of property; assurances of protection for returning Hindus, who make up the vast majority of the refugees; agreement to UN presence in East Pakistan; and appointment of senior civilian officials for refugee and relief programs. These assurances, however, had little effect either in stimulating the return of the refugees or in ending guerrilla actions in East Pakistan.

On June 23 the Chief Secretary of the Government of East Pakistan announced the establishment of a Relief Committee as a counterpart to the United Nations East Pakistan Relief Organization (UNEPRO).

West and East Pakistan Government officials cooperated with the UN and the USAID Mission in Dacca in surveying the Eastern province to determine relief needs. The effects of the civil strife, especially the continuing sabotage of bridges, roads, railroads and water transport by the Mukti Bahini and other dissident groups made the delivery of supplies to all the people in need most difficult and in some areas impossible. In an attempt to reach the majority of the victims, the Government of Pakistan signed an agreement with the U.S. Government to arrange for the U.S. funded leasing of foreign coastal vessels and minibulkers. These vessels were utilized under UN auspices and in cooperation with the East Pakistan Food Department which assisted in scheduling and loading operations. The Government of Pakistan sent some of its own food grains from West to East Pakistan and entered into agreement with the U.S. Government for both grant and sale of PL 480 Food for Peace wheat, rice and oil for East Pakistan.



*Modern and efficient grain bagging operation at the Government silo in Naranganj near Dacca.*

Food delivered to Chittagong and Chalna ports was unloaded by local labor, stored in government warehouses, released and distributed by water or truck transport under direction of East Pakistan and UN officials.

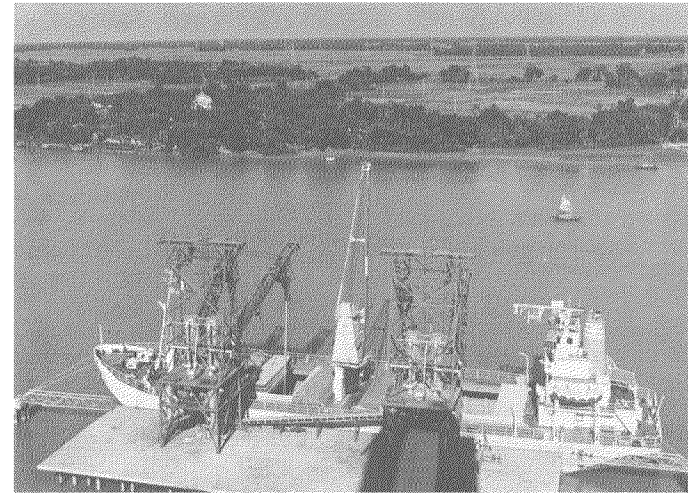
The East Pakistan Red Cross Society joined with the League of Red Cross Societies in its efforts to establish a food distribution program in the cyclone areas and thanas under control of the guerrilla forces.

#### UNITED NATIONS RELIEF OPERATION IN EAST PAKISTAN (UNEPRO)

By letter dated April 22, 1971, addressed to President Yahya Khan, U Thant, Secretary General of the United Nations, offered all possible assistance to the Government of Pakistan in providing urgently needed relief to the population of East Pakistan. On May 3, 1971, President Yahya Khan accepted the Secretary General's offer. The Secretary General then sent a special envoy, Ismat Kittani, to Pakistan to work out, in cooperation with the Pakistan Government, a framework for an international relief effort.

On June 16, 1971, the Secretary General appealed to all governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and private institutions and donors to assist in alleviating the suffering of the people of East Pakistan by making contributions to the UN in cash and kind. On July 15 he reiterated his appeal, calling for an initial contribution of \$28.2 million in assistance through the UN system. Later estimates, based on surveys, clarified the dimensions of the problem and indicated an even greater need for outside help. These estimates predicted that the people of East Pakistan would be faced with a food gap of up to 200,000 metric tons a month starting in September 1971 and continuing through the spring of 1972.

During the month of June, the UN selected a small relief planning staff. Mr. Behgat El-Tawil was appointed as the Secretary General's representative in charge of relief coordination in Dacca. He was assisted in surveying relief requirements for a



*US-financed chartered mili-bulker grain ship discharges cargo at Naranganj for transfer to a grain silo in the Dacca area*

period of several weeks by Mr. Glen Haydon, a private U.S. Citizen.

Mr. Stephen R. Tripp was appointed as a special UN New York headquarters assistant for the relief program. Special teams from the World Health Organization (WHO) and World Food Program (WFP) proceeded to survey health and food requirements while at the same time, UNICEF formulated a special feeding program for mothers and children in cooperation with Pakistan authorities, WFP, WHO, and CARE.

It is important to note that this was the first time the UN had undertaken a major operational role for an international humanitarian relief effort. This involved breaking new ground in recruiting a large international staff—possessing a variety of skills and experience. The plan evolved was to recruit this staff in three phases. Phase I covered people to survey assistance needs and plan the relief program. Phase II covered logistical and transport specialists to guide and assist the Government of