

[Sandip Roy/PNS, Attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh Raise Fears of Talibanization, Asian Week \(San Francisco\), Nov. 23 - Nov. 28, 2001](#)

Hindu Genocide in East Pakistan

By Shrinandan Vyas

This article deals with slaughter of about 2.5 million Hindus in East Pakistan in 1971.

This article refers to information provided by Dept. of Planning of Government of Bangla Desh, Encyclopedia Britannica, Senator Edward Kennedy's report to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Newsweek, New York Times, etc. This information and elementary math are used to show that indeed millions of Hindus were killed in East Pakistan in 1971.

ABSTRACT

It is well known that the 1971 army repression in Bangla Desh (former East Pakistan) resulted in an influx of 10 million refugees into India. Most world renowned relief and news agencies put the number of dead at 3 million. However the fact that is glossed over in these statistics is that THE ENTIRE HINDU POPULATION OF EAST PAKISTAN WAS THE PRIMARY TARGET OF PAKISTANI ARMY DURING THE 9 MONTHS OF REPRESSION IN 1971. Using the population statistics from Bangla Desh Government and US Government publications this article PROVES that 80 percent of the refugees from Bangla Desh were Hindus and that 80 percent of the 3 million killed were Hindus. THUS IT WAS A HINDU REFUGEE PROBLEM and IT WAS A HINDU GENOCIDE THAT TOOK PLACE IN EAST PAKISTAN IN 1971.

10 References - Encyclopedia Britannica, Bangla Desh Government - Ministry of Planning (for statistics), Newsweek, New York Times, Senator Edward Kennedy's report to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee.

INTRODUCTION

In the December 1970 general election in Pakistan, Awami League won 167 of 169 seats and over 80 % of popular votes in East Pakistan. Numerically Awami League had an absolute majority of seats in the Pakistan National Assembly (167 of the total 313 seats)(1). Historically, East Pakistan was allocated only 36 % of the total resources and East Pakistanis occupied only 20 % of the positions in the federal government in the United Pakistan (2). The Pakistani government's apathy towards East Pakistan after a terrible cyclone in November 1970 in which over 250,000 people died, had alienated East

Pakistani people. The solid outcome of the 1970 elections for Awami League created an alternative power center for an already alienated people. The differences between the East and West Pakistani politicians snowballed into a major international crisis. On March 25, 1971 Pakistani army on President Yahya Khan's orders initiated a campaign of terror which was to last till its final surrender to the Indian army on December 17, 1971. This terror campaign by Pak army resulted in 10 million Bangla Deshi refugees crossing over to India (per Senator Edward Kennedy's report to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee (3)) and 3 million killed (4,5) based on reports from most relief agencies and official Bangla Desh government estimate. However the religious mix of both the refugees and the dead is nowhere emphasized anywhere. This significant information has particularly been absent in the reports from Indian News Media. This selective news dissemination has kept a more sinister truth of Hindu genocide in East Pakistan hidden from the world in general and Indians in particular.

HINDUS IN EAST PAKISTAN WERE SPECIAL TARGET OF PAK ARMY

In the summary of his report dated November 1, 1971 Senator Edward Kennedy writes (6):

'Field reports to the U.S. Government, countless eye-witness journalistic accounts, reports of International agencies such as World Bank and additional information available to the subcommittee document the reign of terror which grips East Bengal (East Pakistan). HARDEST HIT HAVE BEEN MEMBERS OF THE HINDU COMMUNITY WHO HAVE BEEN ROBBED OF THEIR LANDS AND SHOPS, SYSTEMATICALLY SLAUGHTERED, AND IN SOME PLACES, PAINTED WITH YELLOW PATCHES MARKED "H". All of this has been officially sanctioned, ordered and implemented under martial law from Islamabad. ..' (emphasis added by author of this article).

Sydney Schanberg, pulitzer prize winning journalist (of 'Killing Fields') was New York Times correspondent in Dhaka in 1971 at the time of army repression and during the 1971 Bangla Desh war. In his syndicated column 'The Pakistani Slaughter That Nixon Ignored' Mr.Schanberg writes:

"I covered the war and witnessed first the population's joyous welcome of the Indian soldiers as liberators .. Later I toured the country by road to see the Pakistani legacy firsthand. In town after town there was an execution area where people had been killed by bayonet, bullet and bludgeon. In some towns, executions were held on a daily basis."

This was a month after the war's end (i.e. January 1972), ... human bones were still scattered along many roadsides. Blood stained clothing and tufts of human hair clung to the brush at these killing grounds. Children too young to understand were playing grotesque games with skulls. OTHER REMINDERS WERE THE

YELLOW "H"s THE PAKISTANIS HAD PAINTED ON THE HOMES OF HINDUS, PARTICULAR TARGETS OF THE MUSLIM ARMY." (7) (emphasis added by the author of this article).

Thus two independent observations one dated prior to November 1, 1971 and other in January 1972 confirm that Hindu houses in East Pakistan were marked with yellow "H"s and that Hindus were particular targets of the Pakistani army. The situation thus bears an uncanny resemblance to the predicament of Jews targeted by Nazis from 1939 to 1944, with similar outcome.

MOST OF THE REFUGEES FROM BANGLA DESH WERE HINDUS

Senator Edward Kennedy in his report gives following details about the the refugees from Bangla Desh in 1971. As of October 25, 1971, 9.54 million refugees from East Pakistan had crossed over to India. The average influx as of October 1971 was 10,645 refugees a day (3). Hence the total refugee population at the start of Bangla Desh war on December 3, 1971 was about 10 million (5).

Sen. Kennedy further mentions that Government of India had set up separate refugee camps for Hindus and Muslims where possible, i.e. refugee camps of Hindus were located in Hindu majority areas and similarly Muslim camps were located in Muslim majority areas. THE COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION OF REFUGEES WAS 80 PERCENT HINDU, 15 PERCENT MUSLIM AND 5 PERCENT CHRISTIAN AND OTHER (8).

This means that 8 MILLION OF THE 10 MILLION REFUGEES WERE HINDUS (8). Other fact that corroborates this is that when Sen. Kennedy had asked several Chief Relief officers in charge of refugee camps what was needed most urgently, their reply was "crematoriums".

THE MISSING 2.5 MILLION HINDUS

Several agencies indicate that the brutal Pakistani army repression killed 3 million Bengalis. This estimate is even given by the Government of Bangla Desh (5). However no religious mix of the dead is easily available.

Let us therefore look at the population demographics for Bangla Desh which is given in Table I.

TABLE I

Source : Based on Information from Bangladesh Ministry of planning, Bureau of Statistics (9)

YEAR	Total Population in Millions	Hindu Population as % of Total	Hindu Population in Millions
1941	42.00	28.0	11.76
1961	50.84	18.5	9.41
1974	71.48	13.5*	9.655
1981	87.13	12.2	10.633

** Encyclopedia Britannica (10) gives 13.5% figure for 1974, where as Government of Bangla Desh gives 13.5% for 1971 and total population of 71.48 million for 1974 (9).*

Since Hindus and Muslims in Bangladesh have similar socio- economic and educational backgrounds, the birth and death rates for these two groups must be very similar. This means that the Hindu population must grow at the same pace as the total population growth rate. Hence any unusual drop must be accounted for by influx of Hindu refugees and mortality rate from non natural causes. The expected Hindu population, the emigration to India from E. Pakistan and actual populations are listed in Table II.

Table II

YEAR	Hindu Population of East Pak/BD Actual (9) (millions)	Expected Hindu Population in Absence of Strife (millions)	Refugees from E. Pakistan to India(8) (millions)	Hindus Missing (millions)
1941	11.766	-	-	-
1961	9.41	14.24	4.12(1947-58)	0.711
1974	9.65	13.23	1.11(1964-70)	2.477

Thus if 1947 partition had not resulted, the Hindu population of East Pakistan area should by 1961 have increased proportionally from 11.76 millions in 1941, to 14.24 millions ($11.76 * 50.84 / 42 = 14.24$). The official Indian Government records indicate that between 1947 and 1958, 4.12 million (Hindu) refugees crossed into India from East Bengal(3). This means the Hindu population in East Pakistan in 1961 should have been 10.12 million ($14.24 - 4.12$) compared to the actual 9.41 million. The missing 0.7 million Hindu population can be accounted by several hundred thousands killed in the riots in 1947 on the Bengal border, plus the refugee influx from 1958 to 1961. 1961.

Let us now look at Hindu population in East Pakistan from 1961 to 1974. With proportional increase the Hindu population of 9.41 million in 1961 should have increased to 13.23 million ($9.41 * 71.48 / 50.84 = 13.23$) by 1974. However the actual Hindu population as per Bangla Desh Census data for 1974 was 9.65 million. Of the 3.58 million shortfall only 1.11 million can be accounted for since Government of India's record indicate that 1.11 million (Hindu) refugees crossed into India between 1964 and 1970 (3) i.e.PRIOR to the 1971 crisis.

THUS 2.47 MILLION (13.23 - 9.65 - 1.11 = 2.47) HINDUS FROM EAST PAKISTAN ARE UNACCOUNTED FOR FROM THE 1971 PAK ARMY REPRESSION.

OTHER PROOF FOR 2.4 MILLION HINDUS KILLED IN EAST PAKISTAN

Since the 80 percent of the refugees in 1971 were Hindus, a similar proportion of the dead are likely to be Hindus also. The official Bangla Desh government estimate puts the number of Bengalis killed at 3 million. 80 percent of 3 million put THE NUMBER OF HINDUS KILLED AT 2.4 MILLION which is close to the number of Hindus missing calculated comes above.

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

1. Independent accounts indicate that Hindus from East Pakistan were special target during the 1971 army repression. **HINDU HOUSES WERE PAINTED WITH YELLOW "H"s, THEY WERE ROBBED OF THEIR LANDS AND SHOPS, AND THEY WERE SYSTEMATICALLY SLAUGHTERED.**
2. 80 percent of the refugees to India in 1971 were Hindus, **THUS IT WAS A HINDU REFUGEE PROBLEM.**
3. **NEARLY 2.5 MILLION HINDUS WERE KILLED DURING THE 9 MONTHS OF PAKISTANI ARMY REPRESSION OF EAST PAKISTAN IN 1971. THUS IT WAS A HINDU SLAUGHTER IN 1971.**
4. **ALL THE ABOVE BEAR AN UNCANNY RESEMBLANCE TO THE PERSECUTION & HOLOCAUST OF JEWS BY THE NAZIS.**
5. **INDIAN GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED 'SECULAR' MEDIA DELIBERATELY HID THE SINISTER TRUTH OF HINDU GENOCIDE IN EAST PAKISTAN.**
6. In any internal political problem of an Islamic country, Hindus (or minorities of other religions) become the scapegoats and will be liquidated at the first chance the Islamic Government gets.

7. **WE HAVE LEARNT NOTHING FROM THE HISTORY AND WITH THE 'PSECULAR' MEDIA WE WILL LEARN NOTHING.**

COMMENTS & FUTURE WORK

This is just the tip of the iceberg. The ethnic cleansing of Hindus in Bangla Desh did not end in 1971. Since 1974 to 1981 the Hindu population as a percent of total Bangla Deshi population decreased from 13.5 % to 12.2 %. This slide has continued over the last decade. Same is true about Hindus in Pakistan and in Kashmir valley.

There is a genuine need for systematic record keeping and documentation of the history of Hindu genocides & Hindu ethnic cleansing, so that we don't repeat it again (and again and again..) There is also a need to build a memorial of this Hindu holocaust similar to the Jewish Holocaust memorial in Washington DC.

This topic is extensively dealt in a book 'Genocide in East Pakistan/ Bangla Desh' by S.K.Bhattacharya. However the present author has verified the findings of S.K. Bhattacharya based on completely independent sources. For detailed descriptions and news reports of 1971, reader should refer to the original book.

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The new terror in Bangladesh: tortured Hindus flee to India

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First it began in Pakistan. Even before partition formally took place, several million Hindus and Sikhs left territory that had been formally marked out as Pakistan for safety in India. How many millions were killed, injured and mutilated has never been accurately accounted. Numberless women were raped or converted into Islam. Today there are hardly any Hindus in Pakistan. Those who preferred to stay on are mostly from the Scheduled Castes; a few families may have continued to live to take care of family assets but they are few and far between.

When the fundamentalists took charge of the Vale of Kashmir the same story was repeated ad nauseam. Several lakh Pundits were forced to leave their homes behind and either settle down in miserable shacks in Jammu or leave the state for securer places in other parts of India. No attention is given to them. The displacement of Hindu from Muslim-majority areas is presumed to be inevitable and par for the course. Hindus are not allowed to stay on in Muslim majority areas to worship their gods and live in peace with their neighbours. When the British Cabinet Mission came to India in March 1946 as far as possible to save the unity of India, it was faced with Opposition from that Devil Incarnate, Mohammad Ali Jinnahbhai. The Mission asked Jinnah: "Do you realise that the Pakistan you are demanding will leave substantial Hindus under Muslim domination?" Jinnah replied: "that will be so, but, I will leave many more Muslims under Hindu domination in Hindustan". Surprised, the Mission asked Jinnah: "Then how does it resolve Hindu-Muslim discord? It will only perpetuate hostilities". Jinnah persisted in his muddled thinking. He said: "I will free at least two-thirds Muslims from Hindu domination". The Mission told him: "And you will put more than that number of Hindus under Muslim domination. That is no solution".

Jinnah replied that "their best protection will be the establishment of two strong states, neither of which will dare misbehave towards each other's minorities". The Mission asked: "You mean to say that these minorities will be hostages?" To that Jinnah said: "Exactly, If one state mistreats its minorities the other state will retaliate against its minorities. It will be tit for tat. Fear is the most potent weapon; I am sure the ruler in either state will be wise enough to conduct themselves properly.

They will be afraid of retaliation against their co-religionists". This never happened. True, immediately after and just prior to partition there were massacres on both sides. But when the Pundits were driven out of Kashmir, there has been no retaliation against Muslims in other parts of India. And now something more terrible is happening. Hindus in their thousands are being pushed out of Bangla Desh and there is not a word of protest - let alone retaliation - against Muslims in India. The Bangladeshis may be barbaric.

Indeed they are, but Hindus in India are more civilised. But how long has India to suffer from religious terrorism and exclusivism in Bangladesh?

Trouble started soon after Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh Nationalist Party came into power. The BNP scored a landslide victory in the recently concluded elections, capturing 182 seats on its own and 201 seats along with its fundamentalist Muslim allies like the Jamaat-i-Islami. Once nominations are made for the 30 reserved women's seats, which is the prerogative of the winning party, the BNP-Jammat-Islam Oikiya Jote coalition will command two-thirds majority in the Bangladesh Parliament and then God save the Hindus. It is suggested by the Kolkata-based *The Statesman* (26 October) that Begum Zia's landslide victory 'is not an honest reflection of the popular will as various forms of electoral and administrative manipulations and fraud were resorted to in at least 50 seats'. But that is no consolation. In any event while the Awami League's share of votes steadily rose from 33.67 per cent in 1991 to 37.44 per cent in 1996 to 40.02 in 2001, what is not stated is that this percentage included the solid Hindu and other minority vote bank. The Awami League made some mistakes too. It decided to fight the elections alone. It disgraced and severed links with some of its allies like Kader Siddiqi. It also made no attempt to woo the Leftists. The result is that while the Awami League garnered as much as 40.02 per cent of the votes, the BNP which on its own got only 37 per cent managed, with its fundamentalist allies to get 46.52 per cent-of the votes. That sounded the death knell of the Begum Hasina brand of liberalism and secularism. Today it is not the founder of Bangladesh Mujibhur Rehman who is remembered and adored, but Osama bin Laden. The Mukti juddho is forgotten; so are the Awami League's Mukti joddahs (freedom fighters). A Muslim backlash has taken place in Bangladesh. Maulana Fazlul Haq Amini, founder of Razakars who had lost his deposit in 1996, this time defeated his Awami League rival by 44,000 votes! And other despicable victor was the Jamaat candidate Matiur Rahman Nizami who was chief of the Pakistan Army-sponsored killer squad Al Badr! The refrain of the BNP-led coalition was "Muslims must vote it to power as Sheikh Hasina of the Awami League is an agent of Hindustan and can't support Osama bin Laden and our Islamic cause". The result is there for all to see.

According to *The Statesman* "several thousand persecuted Bangladeshi Hindus, Santhal adivasis, Buddhist and Christians have sought refuge in West Bengal and Tripura in recent weeks". Said the paper editorially (2 November): "New Delhi's concern is not misplaced since for over a decade Tripura was home to about 60,000 Bangladesh chakma refugees ... the extent of persecution which includes loot, arson and even rape, has rendered lakhs homeless". Lakhs, let it be remembered, Not hundreds or even thousands.

The Indian Prime Minister's National Security Adviser, Brijesh Mishra called on Begum Khaleda Zia on 27 October and was promised that 'protection would be given to the Hindu and other minorities. No one believes her. According to *The Statesman* (26 October) Begum Zia "allowed the entry of staunch Islamists into her party who besides being known for their pro-Pakistan leaning, were committed to bury the liberation war and secularism for good'. The nature of Begum Zia's surrender to the fundamentalists can be gauged from the fact that she surrendered 37 BNP seats to them, including one from where her sitting party MP had been elected in four successive elections". That is Begum Zia. Within minutes of taking charge of the government the BNP-led coalition replaced 13 Secretaries of different Ministries and transferred 1,500 officials, including

District Magistrates, Superintendents of Police and officers in charge of thanas. Those who replaced them were mostly BNP and Jamaat men who have made no secret of their political affiliations. The result is a massive attack on Hindus. According to The Hindu (5 November), “scores of men and women have left their homes in Bangladesh and bundled up their belongings, to sneak into the border districts of Malda, Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshshin Dinajpur of West Bengal”. On 6 November The Times of India quoted a refugee as saying: “The situation (in Bangladesh) is frightening. In some of the areas of Bangladesh where the Hindus are a minority and poor, the oppression is maximum. If you pay them (the fundamentalists) you can buy peace. But if you do not, then conversion of one’s religion is the only way out”. The Kolkata-based The Telegraph (1 November) reported that “the nightmare actually began on 13 October when two college-going girls of Balapukur were picked up, raped and left to die ... Exactly a week later Kashidanga (a village of 20 Hindus families) erupted in flames. The twenty Hindu families’ homes were looted and three women sought to be abducted”. That is Begum Khaleda Zia’s Bangladesh. Reports Kuldip Nayar in The Hitavada (24 October): “Khaleda played the religious card ... Her equivocal stand on the Taliban too paid her dividends in the election. But her poll alliance with the Jamaat-I-Islami made it clear that she wanted to look more Islamic than her opponents in a country which is predominantly Muslim. She may change the constitution to facilitate the introduction of Islamic shariat as the basis for legislation”.

Some of our leftist intellectuals have already begun to make excuses for Begum Khaleda saying that the BNP is not basically anti-Indian that as one writer, Udayan Namboodiri, writing in The Hindustan Times put it, “the economic backwardness of Bangladesh is as much a security threat to India as is the flourishing jihad factory in Pakistan.” What is “basically friendly?” Is killing, looting setting fires to Hindu homes and raping their womenfolk a sign of “basic friendliness”? The Free Press Journal quoted a refugee as saying: “The ruling party (BNP) cadres have formed ‘assault groups’ who intrude into residences” minorities in the late hours, torture women, loot valuable and slash tongues of the livestock”. Another refugee has’ been quoted as saying: “Hindus are not allowed to withdraw money from banks or sell property. You need permission front a BNP Minister to sell your land. Any Muslim who buys a Hindu’s land is punished. Hindus have to compulsorily take part in rallies brought out in support of Osama bin Laden.” It may suit our government to turn a blind eye to all this. But some day this misty explode in its face. It is warned.