

DATE: ___/___/___

Q. The Separation of East-Pakistan was the result of deep rooted issues that had been brewing for decades. Discuss ~~and~~ this and also explain the major challenges West Pakistan has faced after the Separation.

"From today, Bangladesh is independent. I call upon the people of Bangladesh... to resist the army of occupation to the last. Your fight must go on until the last soldier of Pakistan army is expelled from the soil of Bangladesh and final victory is achieved."

~ Sheikh Mujibur Rehman
(25-Mar-1971)

The separation of East Pakistan from West Pakistan, in 1971, was the result of deep rooted issues that had been brewing for decades. The people of West Pakistan were feeling a sense of alienation. They were facing linguistic, political, economic, and cultural challenges. The role of West Pakistan in aggravating these issues has played a pivotal role in the separation of East Pakistan.

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LINGUISTIC
DISCRIMINATION

ECONOMIC EXPLOITA-
TION & UNEQUAL
DEVELOPMENT

CHALLENGES
BEING FACED BY
EAST PAKISTANIS

POLITICAL
MARGINALIZATION

MILITARY
SUPPRESSION

1. LINGUISTIC DISCRIMINATION:

One of the reasons of formation of Bangladesh was linguistic discrimination. In fact, it can be said that language was the issue that had planted the seed for birth of Bangladesh. People in East Pakistan were Bengali speaking and they want "Bengali" to be national language of Pakistan, but in West Pakistan, people do not understand this language. In 1948, the Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan declared Urdu as the national language of Pakistan, ignoring the majority Bengali-speaking population of East Pakistan. In 1952, this was the reason that

led to "The Language movement". Due to this movement, there were protests all around the Dhaka, where many students were killed who were protesting for the recognition of Bengali language. This fueled hate in the people of East Pakistan for West Pakistan.

2. ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION AND UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT:

Although, the area of East Pakistan was only 15% of total Pakistan, but still it was contributing significantly to the economy of Pakistan. East Pakistan was the world's largest exporter of

Jute. While contributing significantly, it received less than 50% of the revenue it generated. All the profits were sent to West Pakistan for development and East Pakistan saw minimal investment.

On one hand, West Pakistan was expanding its industries while on the other hand, East Pakistan remained an agrarian economy. This economic exploitation and unequal development was another cause of separation.

3. POLITICAL MARGINALIZATION:

After independence of Pakistan, more than 50% of population

was of East Pakistan. Despite having such a large population, there were only three Prime Ministers that belonged to East Pakistan. There was under-representation of East Pakistanis in politics of Pakistan. The political power remained concentrated in the hands of West Pakistan. Moreover, when, in 1970, Awami League won elections by a crystal clear margin but central government in West Pakistan refused to recognize their mandate. This political marginalization of East Pakistanis contributed toward forging an autonomous and sovereign country - Bangladesh.

4. MILITARY SUPPRESSION:

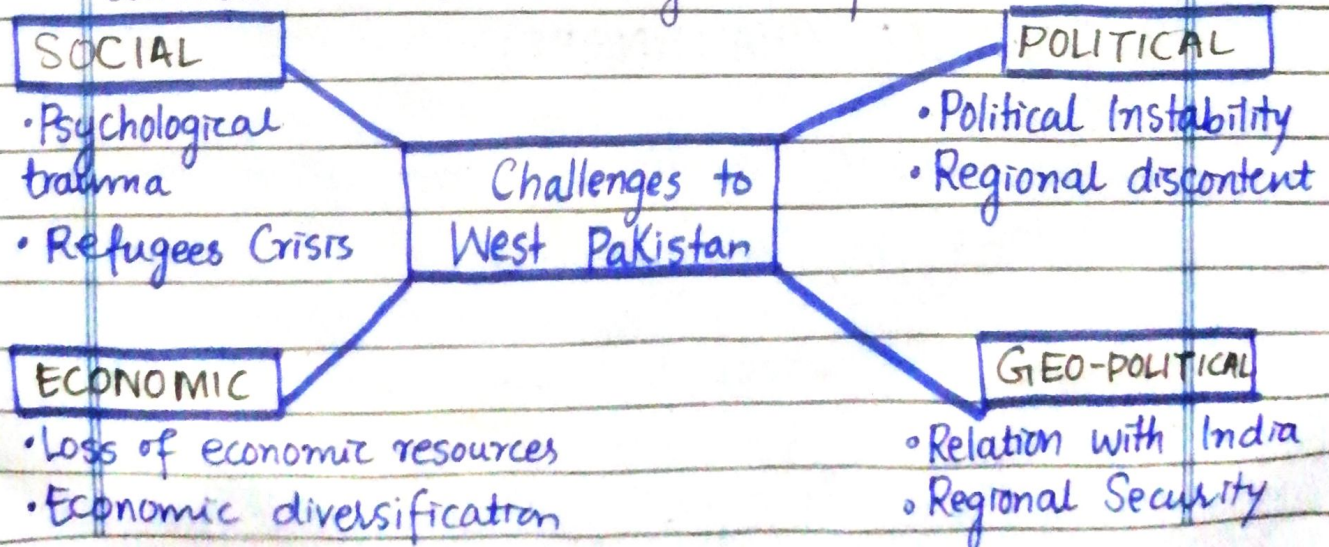
After the 1970s election, when central government refused to transfer power to Awami League, people in East Pakistan started protests to attain autonomy and self-rule. To suppress this protest, military started an Operation Searchlight. During this operation, many of protestors were killed. Hussain Haqqani in his book, "Pakistan Between Mosque and Military" discussed in detail how Bhutto threatened to boycott the National Assembly's session created a vacuum for military intervention. The military

Crackdown led to Killing of thousands and displacement of millions. The Dhaka massacre and genocidal operations led to widespread brutality, and reports suggested 300,000 to 3 million deaths.

MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR WEST PAKISTAN AFTER SEPARATION

After the separation of East Pakistan, West Pakistan had faced array of challenges. The loss of East Pakistan not only reduced country's territorial but also created long-lasting consequences that shaped its future trajectory. West Pakistan has faced significant social, political, economic, and geopolitical challenges.

These challenges required critical attention and strategic response.



1. SOCIAL CHALLENGES:

The Separation of East Pakistan has caused significant social upheaval, as the nation has to cope up with the loss of significant portion of its population and territory. This separation has caused the national identity crisis. The basic ideology behind the creation of Pakistan was "Two Nations Theory" but now it seems that this ideology has failed because both were Muslims - East and West Pakistan - but they cannot live together too. This created a lasting scar and division between Bengalis and West Pakistanis.

Another major social challenge was integration of Bengali refugees. During 1971 war, many people left East Pakistan and there was influx of refugees from East Pakistan. Integrating these refugees posed a significant challenge to West Pakistan.

2. POLITICAL CHALLENGES:

Apart from social challenges, there were political challenges too, that required to be catered. The Government had to shift from binational to unified national state. The central government led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was facing opposition from

religious groups, the military, and elite class that led to political instability.

Another major political challenge was regional discontent and ethnic tensions. At that time, in politics, there was majority of Punjabis. The people of Sindh, Baluchistan, and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa expressed their growing concerns regarding being dominated by Punjabis. The Sindh Movement and unrest in Baluchistan gained momentum, highlighting the political challenges of maintaining cohesion in a diverse ethnic grouped country.

3. ECONOMIC CHALLENGES:

The loss of East Pakistan has significantly affected the economy of Pakistan, as it was majorly contributing to the GDP. East Pakistan was the world's largest jute exporter. The loss of jute production severely impacted country's economy and industrial growth. This led to economic contraction in the short-term.

Now, Pakistan needed to diversify its economy rapidly to overcome the loss caused due to separation. The country also had to shift from agriculture-based economy to industrial

exports and foreign exchange earnings.

4. GEOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES:

The geopolitical landscape ~~has~~ for Pakistan has ~~faced~~ changed dramatically after the separation of East Pakistan. The war of 1971 has left a deep and long-lasting impact on Pakistan-India relationship. The creation of Bangladesh created a permanent sense of hostility and mistrust between the two countries. Pakistan now had a weakened position and now it led to search for strong regional alliance and arms race.

Moreover, after 1971, Pakistan felt being isolated in South Asia, as there was now no buffer state. Pakistan had to re-evaluate its alliances, particularly with USA and China to counterbalance India. Apart from this, now Pakistan had to allocate more resources to defense sector from already shrinking economy.

CONCLUSION:

All in all, Bengalis were being exploited socially, politically, and economically that led them to demand a sovereign state where they get their rights. Ultimately, in 1971, Pakistan lost its

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Eastern wings, leaving scars and much drastic effects. After separation, Pakistan had to face immense social upheaval, political instability, economic challenges, and strategic alliances to counter-balance its rival-India.

