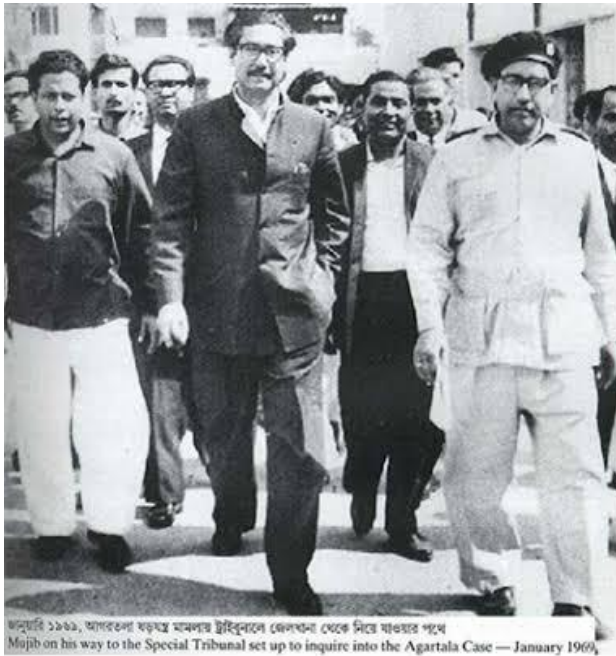


❖ Agartala Conspiracy :

The Agartala Conspiracy Case was a sedition case in Pakistan during the rule of Ayub Khan against Awami League, brought by the government of Pakistan in 1968 against Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the leader of the Awami League and East Pakistan, and 34 other people.

In 1963 Bangabandhu visited Tripura secretly. In Agartala - the capital of Tripura - he met Shachindralal Singha, the then Congress leader who became the Chief Minister of Tripura later. In that meeting, Bangabandhu sent a message to the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru seeking his support for the armed movement through Shachindralal Singha. But the matter was uncovered by Inter-Services Intelligence of Pakistani government. 1500 Bangalees were arrested in Pakistan. Bangabandhu was implicated as the main accused of this conspiracy. Bangabandhu was in jail then. A case was filed in January 1968. The Government framed the charged saying Bangabandhu led a secret meeting with Indian government officials in Agartala, the capital of Indian State Tripura. In the meeting a plan was designed to liberate East Pakistan through armed movement with the assistance from the Government of India. This is why it became known as Agartala Case. But officially the case was termed “the State vs. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and others”.

The case is officially called State vs. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and others, but are popularly known as Agartala Shorojontro Mamla (Agartala conspiracy case) as the main conspiracy was purported to have taken place in the Indian city of Agartala in Tripura state, where Sheikh Mujib's associates met Indian military officials.



ডিসেম্বর ১৯৬৬, আগরতলা হত্যায় মামলার ট্রাইব্যুনালে হেলেনানা থেকে নিয়ে যাওয়ার পথে
Mujib on his way to the Special Tribunal set up to inquire into the Agartala Case — January 1969.



❖ Background of the Agartala Conspiracy :

Since the creation of Pakistan, there has been a huge disparity between East and West Pakistan. The people of East Pakistan have raised their demands against the West Pakistan.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced the six points program in 1966. The main reason for proposing the six point programme was to end Master-slave rule in Pakistan. To get rid of the colonial rule and exploitation of Pakistanis.

When Sheikh Mujibur Rahman demanded the six-point, Ayub Khan became very upset . So he called Sheikh Mujib as a separatist and rejected the six-point demand. On the other hand, under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a strong mass movement was formed in East Pakistan demanding autonomy. Later, the government engaged in

various conspiracies to thwart this movement and the Agartala conspiracy case was its practical implementation. On January 18, 1968, Sheikh Mujib was made the number one accused and a case was filed against a total of 35 people.

The Pakistan Govt.during the period 1967-68, announced the names of the following persons who were accused of a military coup in order to free the eastern wing of Pakistan with the help of India.

1. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
2. Commander Moazzem Hussain,
3. Manik Chiudhury,
4. Bidhankrishna Sen,
5. Dr.Saidur Rahman,
6. Lft.Commander Rauf
7. Ahmed Fazlur Rahman,
8. Ruhul Quddus.
9. Mujibur Rahman,
10. Kamaluddin Ahmed,
- 11.Sultanuddin Ahmed.
12. Mirza M.Ramiz,
13. Amir Hossain
14. A.B.M.A.Samad

15. Khurshid Alam,
16. Mahmud Ali
17. A.B.M.Yusuf
18. Tazul Islam
19. Khurshid Mia
20. Dalil Uddin
21. Masud R.Choudhury
22. Anwar Hossain
23. Matiur Rahman,
24. Captain Khurshid Uddin,
25. Subedar Abdur Razzak,
26. Sergeant A.M.F.Huq,
27. Sergeant Shamsuddin,
28. Havildar Insaf Ali,
29. Khan Shamsur Rahman,
30. Capt. Shaukat Ali,
31. Maj.Nurul Islam
32. Captain Sadekur Rahman Choudhury,
33. Captain Shahabuddin
34. Lft. Colonel Shamsul Alam,

35. Lft. Colonel Mustafizur Rahman.

A special tribunal was formed for the disposal of the Agartala Case. The hearing of the case started at 11 a.m. on 19 June 1968 in a chamber inside Dhaka Cantonment. There were 227 witnesses including 11 approvers. A defense team of the lawyers of the accused persons was formed under the leadership of prominent lawyer Abdus Salam Khan. Sir Thomas William filed a writ petition in Dhaka High Court on behalf of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman challenging the legality of the formation of the tribunal.

❖ Reaction of Agartala Conspiracy :

Anti-Ayub agitation was getting momentum in both the wings of Pakistan during the trial. In East Pakistan people's voice became stronger to realize the demand for the release of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the withdrawal of the case. Gradually the mass movement in East Pakistan turned to mass upsurge in 1969. Some political parties including Awami League, National Awami Party formed a Democratic Action Committee (DAC). At a point of turmoil, Sergeant Zahurul Haq, one of the vital accused in the case, was shot to death in Dhaka Cantonment on 15 February 1969. The news of his death led a furious mob in Dhaka on 16 February 1969.

Strikes, processions, meetings and rallies were held all over the country. **On 17 February 1969, Maulana Bhasani made an announcement at Paltan Maidan. He said, "Mujib is better than my**

three children. If anything happens to Mujib Mia, say Pakistan, or whatever you say, there will be nothing.”

At last in the face of the mass movement, the Ayub government was ultimately compelled to withdraw the Agartala Conspiracy Case. All the accused including Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were released on 22 February 1969. On the occasion of the release of Bangabandhu grand public reception rally was organized at the Race Course Ground on 23 February 1969. In that mammoth rally Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was vested with the appellation of 'Bangabandhu'.

❖ Impact/Significance of Agartala Case/Conspiracy :

- **This case played a vital role to ignite nationalist consciousness among Bangalees.**
- **The purpose that inspired Ayub Government to lodge the case did not gain any success; rather it acted as a boomerang against Ayub Government.**
- **Sheikh Mujib became an unrivaled leader.**
- **The withdrawal of the case exposed the weakness of the Pakistani government.**
- **In the minds of the Bengalis intense hatred, anger and mistrust were created against the Pak rulers.**
- **On March 25, 1969, Ayub Khan was forced to step down.**
- **The direct effect of this case can be seen in the election of 1970. In the 1970 elections, the Awami League won 167 out of 169 seats.**

❖ Mass Uprising of 1969 :

The 1969 uprising in East Pakistan was a democratic political movement in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The mass uprising in 1969 is that the entire people of East Pakistan staged against the dictator Ayub Khan on the basis of six points and 11 points in 1969 with the aim of implementing democracy and establishing autonomy and ending all anti-people forces and military rule is known as the 1969 uprising. The uprising consisted of a series of mass demonstrations and sporadic conflicts between government armed forces and the demonstrators. Although the unrest began in 1966 with the Six point movement of Awami League, it got momentum at the beginning of 1969 and culminated in the resignation of Field Marshal Ayub Khan, the first military ruler of Pakistan. The uprising also led to the withdrawal of Agartala Conspiracy Case and acquittal of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his colleagues from the case.

The mass uprising of 1969 brought down the oppressive and dictatorial ruler Ayub Khan.

❖ Background of the Mass Uprising in 1969 :

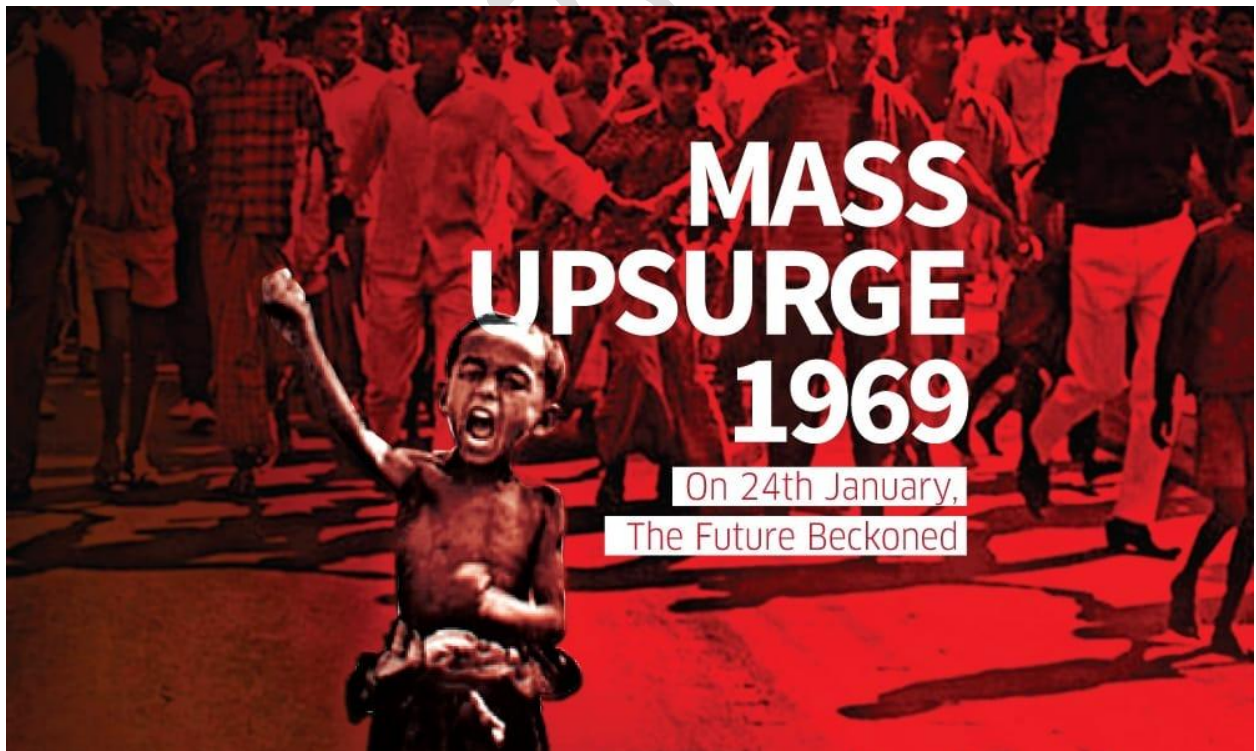
- **Reluctance to grant autonomy to East Pakistan.**
- **An unreasonable decision to make Urdu the state language.**
- **The election of 1954.**
- **Military rule which was imposed in 1958.**

- **Boundless inequality between East and West Pakistan.**
- **Students movement of 1962 and 1964**
- **Six point movement and reluctance to grant autonomy.**
- **Agartala conspiracy case of 1968.**

❖ **Movements of Mass Uprising :**

The mass uprising of 1969 was divided into three stages.

- 1. From 4th January to 19th January 1969.**
- 2. January 20, 1969 to February 22.**
- 3. From February 23 to March 25, 1969.**



Starting from the Language Movement various nationalistic movements ensued during the decade of 1960. These movements were against the racial repressions, deprivation and disparity done to East Pakistan since the inception of Pakistan. Those factors had their impact on the mass upsurge in 1969. The student agitation turned into a vigorous mass movement under the leadership of Maulana Bhashani. As a part of joint program, the National Awami Party, East Pakistan Workers' Federation and East Pakistan Peasants' Association arranged a public meeting at Paltan Maidan to observe the Repression Resistance Day on 6 December 1968. Maulana Bhashani declared a hartal the next day, following the violent clash between the police and the demonstrators. Awami League observed Repression Resistance Day on 10 December. A 'gherao' program was staged on 29 December. The leaders of Chhatra League, Chhatra Union (Matia and Menon group) and Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU) sat together on 4 January 1969 and formed a united front known as Sarbadaliya Chhatra Sangram Parishad (All Parties Student Resistance Council). Chhatra Sangram Parishad presented 11 points program which was, by and large, a combination of the six points of Bangabandhu and few other demands. 11 points got support of the Bangalees from all strata of life very soon. During the time of turmoil in 1969, students' 11 point program was a very timely manifestation of the demands of the opposition parties in East Pakistan. This brought the opposition parties together to be united quite rapidly. On 8 January eight parties formed an alliance known as 'Gonotantrik Sangram Parishad' (Democratic Action Committee/DAC) and placed forward 8 points demand. On 20 January students observed hartal in East Pakistan to protest that

brutality. During hartal police fired open in front of Dhaka Medical College and a student leader Asaduzzaman was killed. In protest of killing Asad, students undertook extensive program on 22, 23 and 24 January. Sergeant Zahurul Haque, an under-trial prisoner in the Agartala Conspiracy Case, was killed brutally by gun shot in Dhaka Cantonment on 15 February. The movement triggered off in protest of the killing of Zahurul Haque on 16 February. Finding no other alternative, the Government imposed curfew in Dhaka. On 18 February the army bayoneted Dr. Mohammad Shamsuzzoha, the then Proctor of Rajshahi University and killed him. Ayub Khan could realize that the situation would go beyond control unless the Agartala Case was withdrawn and the accused people were released. All the accused including Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were released on 22 February 1969. Yielding to the Martyred student leader Asad murdered by firing of Police pressure of the mass uprising Ayub Khan declared that he would not contest in the next presidential election.

❖ Importance/Significance of the Mass Uprising :

- **On March 25, 1969, Ayub Khan was forced to resign.**
- **The Agartala conspiracy case was withdrawn on 22 February.**
- **Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was conferred the title of Bangabandhu.**
- **Awareness of rights of Bengalis increased.**
- **Democratic aspirations are awakened.**
- **Inequality between East and West Pakistan came to an end.**
- **The political prisoners were released from prison.**
- **Bengali nationalism was created.**

- **The mass uprising of 1969 played a vital role in 1970 elections.**
- **The mass uprising of 1969 inspired the war of independence.**

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❖ The Election of 1970 :

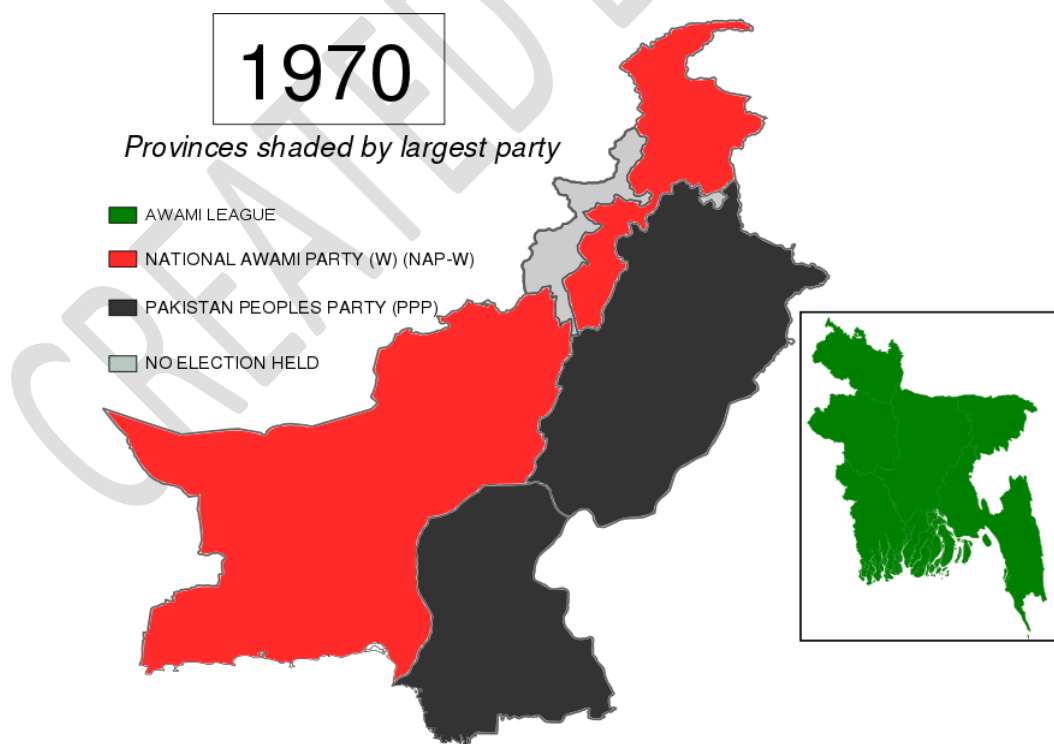
The election of 1970 has a great significance in the history of the liberation movement of Bangladesh. General elections were held in Pakistan on December 7, 1970 – 50 years ago today – to elect members of the National Assembly. This was the first general elections since the independence of Pakistan and ultimately the only ones held prior to the independence of Bangladesh. Voting took place in 300 constituencies, of which 162 were in East Pakistan and 138 in West Pakistan. The elections were a fierce contest between two social democratic parties – the west-based Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the east-based Awami League of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.



❖ Background of the 1970's Election :

Since the creation of Pakistan, the people of East Pakistan have been the victims of exploitation in West Pakistan. The boundless inequality between East and West Pakistan, the language movement of 1952, the movement against the military rule of 1958 started in East Pakistan. Autonomy was demanded in 1966 through the six points. But the Pakistani ruling class did not listen, instead they filed Agartala conspiracy case to suppress the movement. As a result, the movement became more widespread.

When the military rulers of Pakistan enforced oppressive measures on the leaders of East Pakistan including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the people of this country organized a movements against them. This was resulted in the mass uprising of 1969. As Ayub Khan



stepped down following this uprising of 25 March, his successor General Yahya Khan promised re-establishment of democracy in Pakistan. He declared that the military government would relegate power to the elected public representatives. Following this route, a general election was held in 1970.

By government order, elections to the National Assembly were announced on 5 October 1970 and to the Provincial Assembly on 22 October. But the election was not held for several reasons. Subsequently, elections to the National Assembly were held on 6 December 1970 and to the Provincial Assembly on 16 December. But on 12 November, a severe cyclone and tidal wave in some parts of East Pakistan destroyed property worth crores of rupees and houses. As a result, elections were held on 17 January 1971 in those areas. There were 17 political parties participating in this election.

❖ The Legal framework order :

On 28 March, 1970, Yahya Khan announced the basic principles of the legal framework order relating to election.

- National Assembly of Pakistan will consist of 313 seats with 13 seats reserved for women.
- 169 seats were to be for East Pakistan, 85 for Punjab, 28 for Sindh, 19 for NWFP, 5 for Baluchistan and 7 seats were allotted to the tribal areas.

- Legislatures shall be elected through direct elections on the basis of population and adult franchise.
- Within a specified period, economic and all other disparities between different provinces and areas shall be removed.
- The independence of the judiciary shall be secured.

❖ Results of the 1970's Election :

- In the National Assembly elections, the Awami League won 167 seats, including 7 reserved seats for women, and the Pakistan People's Party got only 88 seats.
- On the other hand, in the East Pakistan Provincial Assembly, Awami League held absolute majority by bagging 298 out of a total of 310 seats.
- An analysis of the election results shows that, in National Assembly, Awami League won 75.10% of the total vote whereas in Provincial Assembly, they got a 70.48% of the total vote.

❖ Importance/Significance of the election:

- The election of 1970 had enormous significance for the emergence of an independent and sovereign Bangladesh and Bangalee nationalism.

- The popularity of Awami League increased.
- Democratic aspirations are awakened.
- The political awareness of Bengalis increased.
- Sheikh Mujib's status was increased.
- Regional dominance increases.
- Played an important role to the Liberation War.

❖ Reasons for the victory of Awami League in the election of 1970:

- Reluctance to provide Elections
- Boundless inequality between East and West Pakistan.
- Agartala conspiracy case
- Impact of Pak-India war
- leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
- The isolation of the Muslim League
- Influence of Bengali nationalism