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The Liberation War and the Socialist Camp

In the 20th century, the world broadly became divided into capitalist and socialist and communist camps [used the socialist in a broader sense]. Outside of this division, many countries in Asia and Africa were under colonial rule. Among those that had achieved independence, some declared themselves ‘non-aligned,’ but in reality, either ideologically or out of necessity, they supported one of the two camps. Although Mao Zedong came to power in China, the Soviet Union initially supported China. However, later, the relationship between the two countries deteriorated. Eventually, China itself emerged as a superpower there was a rift between these two super power.

In socialist camp, there were difference in ideology, but in a broader sense, a country or group which has not followed capitalism are included in socialist camps. For an example, China and Soviet Union had different interpretation of Marxism, [Marxist-Leninist or Thoughts of Mao ze dong] but they were in socialist camps because they were against pure capitalism or USA.

The United States could never ideologically accept the Soviet Union. However, during the Second World War, it was compelled to form an alliance with the Soviets. After the war, they essentially divided Europe among themselves. The countries in the Soviet sphere of influence adopted socialist ideologies and were required to operate under Soviet control. Anyone who tried to deviate from this was brutally suppressed. In the 1960s, the Soviet Union harshly crushed reformists in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. That said, there were a few

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socialist countries outside the Soviet bloc as well—such as Yugoslavia and Albania.

The Soviet Union [or Russia] has always had an interest in India. In the nineteenth century, this often led to hostile relations with Britain. The Russian Revolution of 1917 inspired and influenced progressive people all over the world. From 1920 onward, many Indian revolutionaries, influenced by communist ideology, traveled to the Soviet Union. In fact, in 1920, the Communist Party of India was first formed in Tashkent. M.N. Roy even met Lenin. From that time, many parties across India were formed based on the ideals of socialism. Communist parties were also formed in Europe — in countries like Italy and Germany, these parties became strong, and similarly in India as well. Because of this, the Communist Party was involved in ideological struggles in various countries. Their actions may have had flaws, but they sought the liberation of the oppressed and provided support and assistance. No such example can be found in the case of the United States.

As mentioned earlier, the Soviet Union had always been interested in India, and they were not pleased with the partition of India in 1947. Soviet intellectuals believed that a division based on religion was a mistake. Their argument was that British imperialism instigated religious riots and killings as part of a plan to divide India. In the 1950s, they stated that Pakistan was an artificial state and, geographically, an “absurdity.” Stalin had remarked that the very idea of Pakistan was prehistoric. Khrushchev believed that Western imperialism had created two states in Hindustan to foster mutual hostility. During his visit to India in 1955, he said in Srinagar that people would regret the partition of India once emotions subsided.¹

Although Mao Zedong’s thought also influenced various countries, it was not as strong as that of the Soviets. In the context of India and Pakistan, a few points are worth mentioning. After China’s victory in the Sino-Indian war of 1962, the Soviet Union tried to improve relations with China, but received little response. In the 1965 India–Pakistan war, Moscow mediated

through the “Tashkent Agreement.” This helped the Soviet Union establish influence in the subcontinent. In 1969, Moscow aimed to create a regional economic cooperation zone with India, Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan, and although Yahya Khan initially agreed, he later withdrew from the plan. At that time, China was trying to build relations with the United States, with Pakistan acting as a mediator. Although the Soviets were unaware of this plan at that time, they showed greater sympathy toward India than Pakistan.

China did not want to improve relations with Moscow because it believed that 'Soviet 'social imperialism' was more dangerous than American imperialism. Therefore, it leaned towards the United States. Since neither the United States nor China supported Moscow, an alliance between the two was inevitable.² Although China believed in leftist ideology, it formed an alliance with the right wing.

Maybe this is known as 'diplomacy', 'geo-political strategy', 'politics' etc. but ideology doesn't have a role here.

The United States had also evaluated Indo-Soviet relation. After the Tashkent Agreement, Moscow was providing India with weapons and other assistance. However, to prove that it was neutral and only desired peace, it also maintained a somewhat cold attitude toward India. In 1968, Moscow began supplying arms to Pakistan as well. Needless to say, Delhi did not take this positively. However, India did not voice strong criticism either. The reason was that it needed Moscow's support on the Kashmir issue in the United Nations. Not only that, Delhi remained silent even when the Soviets suppressed the reformists in Czechoslovakia in 1969 and faced a border conflict with China.

In 1970, India grew increasingly concerned over the Soviet Union's continued arms support to Pakistan. Although since 1960, Moscow had already supplied India with weapons worth 1.1 billion dollars. By around 1969, Moscow realized that Pakistan would not align with them. India then extended its hand toward the Soviets. In 1969, Moscow had proposed a bilateral

cooperation agreement to Delhi, but India declined at the time. That very agreement was finally signed by India in 1971.³

Syed Anwar Hossain wrote that in 1970, four Russian academics authored a book analyzing how underdeveloped countries might view Russia and how the Soviet Union regarded those countries. The authors were Y. Zhukov, L. Deleshiya, E. Inkanderov, and A. A. Stepanov. The book was titled *The Third World: Problems and Prospects* (Moscow, 1970). Syed Anwar Hossain commented, the book is controversial and primarily praises the Soviet Union as the main sympathizer and supporter of the national liberation movements of the Third World. However, it also criticizes China for its so-called reactionary role. The book considers national liberation struggles and the political instability in small, independent Third World countries in the context of class struggle. It suggests that these countries should follow the socialist model to establish economic self-reliance, thereby completing their political independence. And to achieve this goal, the Third World should receive comprehensive support from Moscow. In contrast, accepting aid from the neo-colonial West would not eliminate financial dependence or ensure genuine independence.⁴

Why the book is controversial is not explained by him, and that is not relevant to our discussion. What is relevant is how the Soviet perspective on the Third World should be viewed in 1971. The Soviet Union wanted these countries to adopt a socialist economy. This would be the ideological foundation. And the Soviet Union would assist such countries.

We see a similar repetition of this idea in the preface to the collection of Soviet documents concerning Bangladesh. It states, “Peace, justice, and the liberation of the people—these were the ideals that guided the Soviet Union’s policies regarding the struggle of the people of Bangladesh and the crisis that engulfed the Indian subcontinent.”⁵

Whatever may be on paper, the Soviet Union’s role in the Liberation War of 1971 was not strong until June, even though

Podgorny initially issued a statement. The Soviet became active after June 1971. Yugoslavia also played an active role.

2

With the declaration of independence and the onset of the Liberation War, Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny was the first to express concern over the genocide, sending a letter on April 2. Among the left-leaning world leaders, Marshal Tito and Allende also voiced their protests. However, Podgorny was the first head of state to write a letter directly to Yahya Khan. It can thus be assumed that he was the first foreign head of state to support Bangladesh's Liberation War.

The topics that Podgorny mentioned in the letter are...

1. The Soviet Union is deeply concerned about the use of force against East Pakistan.
2. The enormous loss of life resulting from this cannot but deeply disturb the Soviet people.
3. The Soviet Union is troubled by the imprisonment and torture of Sheikh Mujib and other politicians, as they were elected by an overwhelming majority.
4. The issue can and must be resolved politically rather than through the use of force.
5. "We earnestly urge you to take immediate and essential measures to stop the bloodshed in East Pakistan, to end the oppression of its people, and to find a peaceful political solution to the problem."
6. "In making this appeal to you, we are guided by universally recognized humanitarian principles as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and by our concern for the well-being of the friendly people of Pakistan. Mr. President, we hope you will correctly understand the principles that have guided us in making this request. It is our sincere wish that peace and justice be established in East Pakistan."⁶

The letter of protest was not well received by the government of Islamabad. The response can be found in the government's Press Trust's newspaper, Pakistan Times. According to the newspaper—

“...described it as a ‘flagrant example of double standards’, for the Russian had failed to extend to Pakistan the principle of ‘recognition of existing frontiers’ so cogently enunciated by Mr. Brezhnev.”⁷

Just as Pakistan did not accept Soviet concerns, China also protested, stating that the Soviet Union was meddling in Pakistan's internal affairs. Not only that. “They posed themselves as ‘friends’ and hypocritically expressed concern for the interests of the.....people of Pakistan.”⁸

The Soviet Union took a step back after observing such a reaction. Moscow stated that there was nothing unfriendly in Podgorny's letter. It was later revealed that on April 25, Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin sent a letter to Yahya to clarify his position. However, the content of Kosygin's statement remains unknown.⁹

Among the left leaning heads of state, after Podgorny's protest, the President of Yugoslavia, Marshal Tito, also expressed his support. He had played a leading role in Yugoslavia's liberation war, so it was natural for him to support Bangladesh. In early May, he sent a letter to Syed Nazrul Islam, the Acting President of Bangladesh. In the letter, he stated that “he had naturally developed a sense of respect for the people of Bangladesh for waging a war for independence.” Therefore, he wholeheartedly expressed his support for the freedom-seeking Bangalis.¹⁰ Significantly, Tito did not send his letter of sympathy or support to Yahya; he sent it to Syed Nazrul Islam. This could imply that after Podgorny's letter, he felt it was better not to write directly to Yahya.

Chile's socialist President Salvador Allende did not write to Yahya or Syed Nazrul, but instead addressed his letter to U Thant, the Secretary-General of the United Nations. On June 26,

he sent a letter to U Thant through the Chilean ambassador. In the letter, he emphasized the plight of the refugees. The horrific and tragic events in East Pakistan had created a dramatic situation for India. The United Nations was providing appropriate assistance to the refugees. Allende expressed his hope that the refugees would once again regain safety and peace so they could return home. However, he also acknowledged the possibility of a worsening situation and the threat to regional peace. He ended with a statement that is particularly important. “Chilean people are very sensitive regarding human suffering and express their solidarity with all people, especially those of the third world affected by misery and helplessness. Distance is no excuse to face unconcerned.”¹¹

It appears that since April, three presidents have spoken in favor of the Bangalis in such diplomatic language that there was no way to understand they were actually supporting the Bangalis. Podgorny directly told Yahya. The other two did not. They were not sure how long the Bangalis could fight or whether India would help. But there was still some sense of idealism; otherwise, they wouldn't have expressed any protest. And as no other president did so.

3

In this context, China's position can be briefly discussed, as China was also a socialist [communist] country. At that time, China's emergence as a power complicated what was otherwise a straightforward matter. China could not accept Soviet dominance; it viewed the Soviet Union as “imperialist” and considered its neighboring friend, India, as an enemy. On the other hand, it was surprising that the truly imperialist United States became China's ally. Many, including Syed Anwar Hossain, tried to support China's position in various ways, even though he attempted to analyze everything from a ‘neutral’ perspective. Overall, China's stance created confusion, especially among the pro-China political parties in Bangladesh.

Because of China's policy in 1971, the Bangali generation of that time still finds it difficult to fully embrace China.

Syed Anwar Hossain attempted to explore the reasons, based on various writings, as to why China supported the genocide.

China is a multi-ethnic country.

"Therefore, it would not have been wise for China to support a separatist movement in another multi-ethnic country." That is, there was a risk that supporting such a movement might embolden separatist tendencies within China itself. However, if this logic holds, then India and the Soviet Union should also not have supported Bangladesh.

China did not view the Liberation War as a "spontaneous movement."

"Therefore, Pakistan's actions against this so-called separatist and treasonous attempt were justified."¹²

This reasoning is misleading. The Bengali people followed every democratic step from the 1970 election onward in a spontaneous and orderly manner. To deny its spontaneity is to willfully ignore what was clearly visible.

They claimed it was not a people's war, and that peasants and workers did not participate. Instead, it was seen as a bourgeois struggle aimed at "undermining the unity of Pakistan for class interests."¹³ In truth, the Liberation War was a people's war, widely known and accepted. The participation of peasants, workers, and the masses was predominant; the role of the bourgeoisie was minimal.

The Liberation War was not inspired by Mao Zedong's 'Red Book'. This is an irrelevant argument. To suggest that every revolution must quote from the "Red Book" to be legitimate is absurd. Moreover, even China's current leadership no longer follows Mao's Red Book.

The fifth argument seems rather acceptable: China seemed to believe that since Russia and India supported the Liberation War, any resulting state would be a 'servant' of India. It was due to this

hatred towards India and the Soviet Union that China supported Pakistan's genocide — not for any other reason. Syed Anwar rightly said, "It was not ideology, but national interest that inevitably dictated China's role."¹⁴

Zhou Enlai had conveyed roughly these same ideas in a letter to Yahya Khan, which was published in Karachi's Dawn newspaper on July 13.

Earlier, on April 19, People's Daily in Beijing had condemned the interference of India, the United States, and Russia in Pakistan's internal affairs. In continuation of this, Zhou remarked—

1. "The unification of Pakistan and the unity of the people of East and West Pakistan were the basic guarantees for Pakistan to attain prosperity and strength." "This movement by a small group is not supported by the majority of Bangalis. India, the United States, and the Soviet Union are interfering in Pakistan's internal affairs."

"it can only be steeled by the Pakistani people themselves and which brooks no foreign interference whatsoever." If Indian expansionists attacked Pakistan, China would stand by Pakistan. To prove this, China provided \$20 million in aid to Pakistan in May.¹⁵ There was another reason to support the genocide in Bangladesh. Although People's Daily condemned the United States, China was seeking a special relationship with the U.S. — and the U.S. also desired the same. Yahya Khan was acting as an intermediary on behalf of the United States. Kissinger himself acknowledged this in his autobiography.

"We faced a dilemma. The United States couldn't condone a brutal military repression in which thousands of civilians were killed and from which millions fled to India for safety. There was no doubt about the strong-arm tactics of the Pakistan military. But Pakistan was our sole channel to China; once it was closed off it would take months to make alternative arrangements."

Since Pakistan was close to China, it had to be supported. Therefore, it was not possible to support Bangladesh by taking India's side.¹⁶

The socialist governments, while making thoughtful statements, have been criticized by various organizations or left-wing institutions in those countries, which have condemned the genocide and expressed concerns about refugees. In April, when the Bangladesh government had not yet been formed, the 'Yugoslav League for Peace, Independence, and Equality' issued a statement protesting the genocide in Bangladesh. The statement highlighted that the Pakistan government had expelled journalists from the country and imposed censorship. It then mentioned that, although the Pakistani government claimed everything was normal, international media and other sources indicated "The mass killing of East Pakistan people has not stopped." The situation in East Pakistan is causing worldwide concern. In their statement, they further mentioned that "Military force has never succeeded in solving difficult economic, political and social problems but has always made them worse," and incited new hatred, deepened conflicts, and blocked the path to a peaceful resolution.

The Yugoslav League believes that what the people of East Pakistan have achieved through voting must be returned to them. Based on this, if the issues of the people are not resolved, the military will not be able to provide any permanent solution to the problem but will instead create deeper complexities. As a result, peace in that part of the world will be disturbed. "Military force cannot lead to a lasting and stable settlement, but embodies a danger of graver complication which may jeopardize peace in that part of the world." They also said- "Violence in East Pakistan Provoked new hatred, deepens the chasm and makes impossible a peaceful solution....."¹⁷

This is the first statement from a socialist organization, and no other organization had spoken so firmly before this. At that time, the news of the genocide was not widely known outside the country. People only knew that the genocide had begun. In early April, the Pakistan Students Socialist Society in London [49

Avnomore Road, London W14] stood up in support for the Bangalis. The chairman of the society, M. Arif, and members M. I. Bayat and Ali Ahmed wrote a letter to the newspapers. I assume they sent the letter to many newspapers, but the mainstream papers did not publish it; it was published only in a periodical called The Red Mole.

In the letter, the three of them stated, “We, like many other West Pakistanis, are deeply shocked by the brutal and inhuman actions of the Pakistan Army in East Bengal. We want to inform our friends in East Bengal that we stand with them in their struggle for independence. We also want to inform that what the army is doing in East Bengal is not with the consent or support of the people of West Pakistan. The military rulers have imposed strict censorship, due to which the people of West Pakistan are unaware of their criminal activities.”

In the same periodical, West Pakistani socialists informed that, a committee has been formed under the name- ‘West Pakistani Socialists’ Solidarity with Bengal’. They issued a statement— saying that those who agree with the committee’s proposals are requested to contact them. Their four-point proposal was as follows:

Unconditionally and fully support the national independence struggle of East Bengal and assist all the “action groups” of Bangalis abroad.

The real picture of aggression in East Bengal should be highlighted. For this, an ‘intensive education’ program should be implemented as much as possible, bringing the West Pakistanis under the scope of this committee.

Using all possible mediums to deliver the truth to the people of West Pakistan, as strict censorship has been imposed there.

This activity should continue until the invaders retreat and the Bangalis are liberated.

This was signed by the founding members of the committee. They were Hamza Alavi, M. K. Janjua, Nasim Bajwa, Raja Ali,

Mohammad Akhtar, Tariq Ali, Mohammad Suja, and Ali U Khan. Their office address was 182 Pantoneville Road, London, N. 1.¹⁸

Left-wing people were in favor of the helpless and suffering people of Bangladesh in 1971. The extreme or aggressive left-wing was opposed to them. The moderate left, however, took to the streets in various countries with their limited power, even in capitalist countries. This narrative has been lost or hasn't made it into mainstream history. But without these narratives, history remains incomplete.

Have we heard the name of the Socialist Labour League? Most of us haven't. It was a small left-wing party in Britain. However, in 1971, it was the most vocal in support of Bangladesh among the political parties in Britain. They held regular meetings and rallies in favor of Bangladesh, but mainstream newspapers didn't cover this news.

On April 14, the League placed a small advertisement in their publication, Workers Press-

Socialist Labour League

PUBLIC MEETING

Long live Bangla Desh!

Down with Imperialism!

Make the Tory Govt. resign!

Friday April 18, 8 p.m.

TOYNBEE HALL

COMMERCIAL ST. EI.

Speaker.

M. Banda

The Socialist Labour League organized a meeting on April 18 at 8 PM at Toynee Hall in East London. The speaker was M. Banda of the Workers Press. Their slogans were—

Long live Bangladesh! Down with imperialism! Force the Tories to resign!

The meeting began at 8 PM on April 18. The hall was packed to capacity. 500 Bangali workers had come to express their support for the Bangali independence struggle. Several hundred more people waited outside, unable to get in.

Calling for complete support from the British labour movement for the Bangladesh movement, Mr. Banda said that the struggle in Bangladesh is a major blow against imperialists. He stated that the shaky structure imposed on India by imperialism would be broken by the struggles of workers and peasants. Mr. Banda further said that it would be unwise to trust big powers and the United Nations. Targeting the Tory government, he remarked: “Anyone who thinks anything can be expected from the Tory government is either a fool or a liar.”

Mr. Banda said that British and Bangali workers face the same kind of enemy. Despite the issue of racism, the British working class should support Bangladesh.

“China has betrayed this revolution,” Banda declared. He said that anyone who supports Yahya Khan is an enemy of the working class.

The meeting called for a large turnout at the May Day rally, which would show support for Bangladesh. Several resolutions were then passed. These resolutions condemned imperialists, Chinese Stalinists, Yahya Khan, and the Tory government, and demanded the release of Sheikh Mujib. The resolutions declared: “The only true friends of the Bangalis are the workers of the world. The Indian capitalists and landlords under the leadership of Mrs. Gandhi are just as much enemies of the Bangalis as Yahya Khan. Imperialists, Stalinists, Hindu and Muslim capitalists—all desire to maintain the partition of India.”

In its issue dated the 22nd, Workers Press published an editorial titled ‘Stalinism, Maoism, and Bangladesh’. The editorial

contains a great deal of theoretical rhetoric, though a few points within it have later been proven to be more than mere rhetoric.

At the beginning of the editorial, it was stated that if Bangladesh gains independence, two monuments should be built — one in memory of the heroism of Bangali workers and peasants, and the other to commemorate the betrayal committed by international Stalinism towards Bangladesh. In the words of the paper—

“One of them will symbolise the pathos and heroism of the Bengali workers and peasants while the other will remind posterity of the cynicism, hypocrisy and treachery of international Stalinism and its attempts to betray the struggle for Bangladesh.”

The editorial further stated that democratic unity meant deceiving the working people of Bangladesh. Because it meant sacrificing the interests of the working class to the interests of the weak and corrupt Bangali bourgeoisie. These bourgeoisie consider their Bangali working-class comrades more dangerous than the Pakistani enemies.¹⁹

People from the leftist spectrum have always shown sympathy toward Bangladesh's Liberation War. However, the ultra-leftists, especially those who followed the Chinese Communist Party, had some reservations. The communists or leftists in Pakistan did whatever they could in support of Bangladesh, but due to our intense hatred for Pakistan, these events often remain overlooked.

In the last week of March [1971], the Sindh Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of Pakistan issued a manifesto in Urdu. It was widely distributed in Karachi, Quetta, Sukkur, Hyderabad, and Lahore. The manifesto strongly condemned the Yahya regime. It stated:

“The cowardly clique of army generals has launched an offensive to murder the people of Bangladesh. The weapons they are using in this massacre were purchased with the hard-earned money of the people. This clique had previously carried out brutal and barbaric campaigns against the people of Balochistan... These

army generals, with the support of imperialists, monopolists, and feudal lords, have come out openly to deprive the people of their democratic rights. They are amassing troops in East Bengal and Balochistan to suppress the people with bayonets... The people's movement for their demands and for the restoration of democracy is being countered with bullets. In Dhaka, Noakhali, Chittagong, Sylhet, and other cities of East Bengal, machine guns have been used against unarmed and peaceful demonstrators. A warfront has been opened against the 130 million people of the country. The defeat of the military junta is inevitable. Bullets, jails, conspiracies, oppression, and barbarism have never been able to stop the people's progress before—and they won't be able to this time either."

At the end of the manifesto, the slogans were: "Down with military rule! Long live people's rule!"²⁰

Indian Communist leader S.A. Dange was the General Secretary of the AITUC, a trade union affiliated with the Communist Party. At that time, a meeting of Asian trade unions was being held in Tashkent. Dange proposed that a conference should soon be convened in New Delhi to discuss the issue of Bangladesh, involving trade unions from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East that were affiliated with socialist or communist parties.

Dange stated that all trade unions should come forward to protect the working people of Bangladesh.

"The struggle is one between the people on military dictatorship and one of freedom and democracy versus slavery and military rule."²¹

5

On May 16, a conference of the World Peace Council was held in Budapest, the capital of Hungary. Bangabandhu was also a member of the Peace Council (East Pakistan) in the 1950s and had visited Beijing at the invitation of the council. He wrote about this experience in his book *Naya Chin* (New China). At that time, Ramesh Chandra was the assistant Secretary, and in

1971, he became the Secretary. The main patron of the Peace Council was the Soviet Union. It was decided that the Government of Bangladesh would send a three-member delegation to the conference. Abdus Samad was the leader, with Dr. Sarwar Ali and Dewan Mahbub Ali as members. They traveled under assumed names. Abdus Samad's name became Abdus Samad Azad. Since then, he never changed it back. Sarwar Ali's name was Golam Sarwar, and Dewan Mahbub's name became Mahbubul Alam.²² Around 700 delegates from 80 countries participated. The issue of Bangladesh was discussed in various ways during the event.

The Council awarded Bangladesh the Lambrakis Medal, given in recognition of bravery. It was named after Lambrakis, a martyr who stood up against the military junta in Greece. This award had previously been given to Palestinian guerrillas, the Black Panther Party in the United States, the oppressed people under apartheid in South Africa, and to imprisoned activist Angela Davis. The Parliamentary Group of the Council expressed unconditional support for the people of Bangladesh. The proposal was brought forward by Bhupesh Gupta of India.

“Cessation of brutal repression in East Bengal and restoration of parliamentary institutions in keeping with the wishes of the people of Bangladesh.”²³ Syria, Lebanon, Finland, and Lesotho supported this proposal. The representatives of these countries expressed concern about the genocide. “Expressed grave concern and anxiety over the genocide being perpetrated upon the people of Bangladesh by the military dictatorship of Pakistan.”²⁴

While speaking before the Indo-China Commission, Bhupesh Gupta also extensively raised the issue of Bangladesh, stating that these events are happening at the instigation of the United States. Referring to the matters of Bangladesh and Indo-China, Ramesh Chandra said—

“The waters of the Padma are heavy with the bodies of women and children in the same way as have been again and again the waters of the Mekong. The bodies in the Padma as bodies in the

Mekong bear the marks of weapons of death made in one and the same country—the United States.”²⁵ V. K. Krishna Menon also spoke in favor of Bangladesh.

The Bangladeshi delegation took with them a booklet about the events in Bangladesh and distributed it. Sarwar Ali wrote, “Since the conference was dominated by leftists and the United States had sided with Pakistan, there was noticeable interest in Bangladesh. Representatives from socialist countries listened to us attentively, but did not take any clear stance. On the other hand, since the Western media had widely reported the genocide in Bangladesh, nearly all representatives from Western Europe accepted our argument that there could be no solution to the crisis other than the independence of Bangladesh.”

It may not be entirely accurate to say that the socialist countries did not take a clear position.²⁶ The Council had awarded the Lambrakis Medal to Bangladesh. Moreover, as a gesture of solidarity with the people of Bangladesh, the Council elected the leader of the Bangladeshi delegation, Abdus Samad Azad, as the president of one of its six commissions. Azad chaired the ‘Commission Against Colonialism and Racial Repression.’ There, he called upon Muslim-majority countries not to consider Bangladesh’s Liberation War as an internal matter of Pakistan.²⁷

However, there was a reason the socialist countries were not more vocal. They were uncertain whether the Communist Party of Bangladesh clearly supported the Liberation War.

Sarwar Ali wrote that he decided to draft a proposal and launch a signature campaign. The core message of the proposal was—“Rejecting the election verdict, genocide, and that there is no alternative to the release of Bangabandhu and independence.” The proposal was shown to the Indian delegates. Young members from the CPI and Congress objected to it, saying their parties had not taken any official stance on the matter. He then went to Bhupesh Gupta. “He asked only one question—Are you sure that the CPB (Communist Party of Bangladesh) has taken this position in favor of independence and will not show any

flexibility on this issue?" I showed Bhupesh Gupta the booklet of the central committee's resolution on the matter. He repeated the same question—"Are you sure that is CPB's position?" I gave the same answer again. After that, he clearly told the young CPI and Congress activists that there is no alternative to independence in Bangladesh. This is the official stance of their party. In this case, we have no authority to object. 'Let us all sign it together.' We collected around 70 signatures from various countries and organizations, and the statement was published in newspapers in socialist countries as well as Western Europe. ...A significant task was thus accomplished."²⁸

From the writings of Sarwar Ali, it is evident that they had no clear understanding of the Bangladesh Liberation War. Although they were making speeches and statements in favor of Bangladesh, the most important aspect was that they were unaware of the position of the Communist Party of Bangladesh. This ambiguity was created by the party's general secretary, Anil Mukherjee, who was in Moscow at the time. He had issued a statement that did not mention independence. Therefore, when Sarwar Ali and others went to Moscow and spoke to Soviet party officials about independence, they were asked, "Are you sure?" After they confirmed it, they said they would inform the party leaders about the matter. Ramesh Chandra and the Indian Ambassador D. P. Dhar helped clear up this confusion. Dhar hosted a reception at the Indian Embassy for those participating in the Budapest Conference. There, he introduced them as representatives of Bangladesh's freedom struggle, emphasizing that the Communist Party of Bangladesh and the victorious Awami League in the elections believed that the solution to the East Pakistan issue was only possible with independence. He also assured the Soviet Union's leaders that they would take a firm stance in favor of Bangladesh's independence, as a condition tied to the Indo-Soviet Treaty. This speech by D. P. Dhar played a crucial role in dispelling their doubts.²⁹ Later, after the Budapest conference, they visited Moscow, Berlin, and Warsaw, where they gained a clearer understanding of the

Liberation War. From June onwards, countries within the socialist bloc, as well as left-wing organizations across the globe, became increasingly active in supporting Bangladesh, particularly in advocating for refugees and opposing the genocide. Public opinion started to shift in favor of Bangladesh.

The conference of the Peace Council began on May 13 and ended on May 16, followed by the Socialist International conference. The annual session of the Socialist International Council was held on May 27 in Helsinki, Finland. There, they passed a resolution against Pakistan. Their main argument was that Pakistan should immediately cease hostilities and that a settlement should be reached based on the recent election results. Those who joined the Socialist International were urged to put pressure on Pakistan.

This conflict was also putting pressure on India. Economically, India was heading towards a crisis. A request should be made at the United Nations for international action to assist India. The council also expressed concern for political prisoners, including Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The conference was attended by the Chancellor of West Germany, the Prime Ministers of Sweden, Norway, and Israel, as well as prominent socialist leaders from Western Europe, the United States, Canada, Africa, and Asia. Harold Wilson, leader of the British Labour Party, and Denis Healey also attended the conference.³⁰

6

The Budapest conference and the visit of Bangladeshi representatives to Moscow had some limited outcomes. Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh visited Moscow from June 6 to June 8. Although there were no indications of their discussions in the joint statement, it can be assumed that Swaran Singh's visit was primarily to discuss the situation in Bangladesh and the aforementioned Indo-Soviet treaty. On June 8, both sides issued a joint statement in which they stated that India and the Soviet

Union would maintain communication on all matters and continue their friendly relations. They also agreed on various international issues. The 10-paragraph statement included references to Bangladesh, particularly concerning the refugee issue, in paragraphs 7, 8, and 9. The increasing refugee burden was putting India under pressure. Therefore, it was emphasized that measures should be taken in East Pakistan to prevent the influx of refugees. “to ensure that peace is restored and all conditions of security are created for the return of the refugees to their homes in East Pakistan.”³¹

The next day [June 9], Kosygin raised the issue in using almost the same language during a meeting. He emphasized the importance of the return of refugees. Notably, after Podgorny’s speech, the Soviet government and various organizations used caution in their wording. The term Bangladesh was never used. There was no mention of resolving the issue through negotiations. The difference here with the Indian side was evident.

Kosygin stated- The creation of condition for the return of refugees to their homes. The granting guarantees of their personal safety and a possibility to live calmly and work in East Pakistan. On 9th October, while he was in Algeria for a state visit, stated that- “To these two countries to find for the problems confronting them a peaceful solution according with the principles of non-interference, mutual respect good neighborly relation and the spirit of Tashkent meeting.”³²

At the same time, the Soviet Union supplied two Antonov 12 aircraft for the relocation of refugees. From March, it stopped supplying arms to Pakistan. Furthermore, when Swaran Singh visited Moscow, he proposed halting economic aid to Pakistan. The Soviet government did not agree to this, although many Western governments had already cut off their aid. While the term Bangladesh was never officially used, the Soviet state newspaper *Izvestia* referred to it as the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.³³ In the same newspaper, commentator D. Vasin

wrote that both India and Pakistan should be mindful of avoiding further escalation of the situation.³⁴

On June 17, the Yugoslav government issued a statement expressing concern over the situation created by the refugees. The statement highlighted India's concerns and noted that a political settlement could normalize the situation and address the refugee crisis. The international community should step forward to resolve this complex issue. The Yugoslav Red Cross had already been assisting the refugees and urged the public to offer further support.³⁵

On June 20th, after visiting refugee camps in West Bengal, Yugoslavian Ambassador Dr. Slavka Komar made a statement, saying that if the Indian government and other organizations had not properly cared for the refugees, half of them would have died. He expressed his amazement at how India managed to set up such a support system in such a short time. Despite the difficult circumstances, the refugees were safe.

Many of the refugees were asked by Dr. Komar why they had fled their country. They responded that thousands of people around them had been killed, and they were forced to leave in order to save their lives.

Dr. Komar further mentioned that, in addition to supporting the refugees, his government had repeatedly stated that the political situation in Bangladesh needed to be restored so that the refugees could return. He said that his government would call on people across the country to come forward to help the refugees.³⁶

It is noteworthy that Dr. Komar has used the term 'Bangladesh. Yugoslavia, unlike the Soviet Union, had made a very clear statement. The relationship between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia was not like the other countries in the Soviet bloc. Marshal Tito was building socialism in his own way and maintained an idealistic stance. It is also possible that, just as the Soviet Union had an interest in maintaining relationships with India and Pakistan due to border and China-related issues, Marshal Tito did not have such concerns.

The Russian newspaper *Za Rubezhos* reflects the Russian government's perspective as previously mentioned. The newspaper has elaborated that currently; the number of refugees is over six million. In the next six months, three billion rupees will be needed for this cause, which will strain India's budget and create a significant pressure on the economy.

Many provocateurs have urged India to go to war so that the refugees can return. However, India has not responded to this, instead seeking assistance to resolve the problem. In response to this call, the Soviet Union sent 50,000 tons of rice to help the refugees from East Pakistan. Pakistan has stated that this situation is helping to change the perspectives of many countries. According to the newspaper, many countries in South Asia are observing this dramatic event.

“With anxiety and sympathy are waiting for a very quick settlement of the problems and creation of necessary condition for the normal return of the refugees to their homes.”³⁷

In the Arab countries, where the majority are Muslims, it should have been their responsibility in 1971 to come forward to protect the Bangali Muslims. However, they were supporting the Muslims of West Pakistan, who were killing the Bangali Muslims. In this context, the support of some Arab youths for Bangladesh was a significant event. However, it is important to note that those who supported were left-leaning.

East Germany, or the German Democratic Republic (GDR), every year arranged an international youth conference in Berlin. GDR arranged that international conference in June 1971. During are session, Yoginder Singh Dayal, the president of the All India Youth Federation, and Janardan Singh Ghalot, the General Secretary of the Indian Youth Congress, raised the issue of Bangladesh in discussions with the Arab youth organizations. They agreed to issue a statement at that time.

The statement first mentioned that Pakistan's President Yahya Khan was carrying out a genocide. It noted that under the slogan Islamabad is under threat, the Arab public would no

longer be deceived by the heinous acts being carried out against Bangladesh.

The statement pointed out that despite the overwhelming victory of the Awami League, Islamabad refused to accept the people's mandate. Supported by the monopolistic business syndicates of West Pakistan, Yahya Khan was committing genocide. The brutality and massacre carried out by Yahya and his soldiers had severely damaged the unity of the country.

Addressing the 'youth of the Arab world' the statement called for supporting the young fighters in East Pakistan, spreading awareness, and highlighting the images of the genocide carried out by the military rulers. The international powers were also urged to put pressure on Pakistan to transfer power to the elected representatives. The statement was signed by the leaders of the Syrian Democratic Youth Union, the Iraqi Democratic Youth Union, the Yemeni Asalafi Youth Movement, the Sudanese Youth Union, and the Lebanese Democratic Youth Union.

This was the first such statement from any Arab organization.³⁸

The Fourth International was formed by international socialists. Tariq Ali, a former left-wing student leader from Pakistan, was one of its leaders. As soon as the genocide started, the leaders of the Fourth International, from London, immediately opposed the genocide. Later, Tariq Ali came to West Bengal and stayed there for a few weeks.

India's Socialist Workers Party was affiliated with the Fourth International. They published a pamphlet in support of Bangladesh. The party had a publication series called the 'Che Series,' and the responsibility for publishing this was with "Che Publishers." The first book in the series was *In Defence of United Red Bengal*.

The first article in the pamphlet was titled "Declaration of the Fourth International on the Liberation Struggle in Bangladesh."

The Fourth International supported Bangladesh's liberation struggle, but they were critical of Sheikh Mujib's leadership.

This was because, publicly, he had opposed communism. The Fourth International believed that the leadership of the liberation struggle would eventually go to the peasants and workers, and they would free Bangladesh and build a socialist state.

They were not in favor of Indira Gandhi's support for Bangladesh. According to their thesis, Indira Gandhi represented the Indian bourgeoisie.

“...intervention by Indian bourgeoisie which would be designed to hinder the development of the Bengali struggle rather than to help it.”

At the same time, they also strongly criticized China's policies. The Fourth International had described China's policies as a betrayal of the world. They had stated vehemently—

“Condemns the treachery of the Maoist Government is publicly supporting the Yahyah dictatorship, and thus helping it to maintain its ruthless exploitation and repression of the Bengali people. Under excuse of combating Indira Gandhi's interference, this Mao regime stands as a direct accomplice in the massacres.”

The Fourth International had called on the people of West Pakistan to stand against Yahya Khan. They hoped that, in time, Bengal would become a socialist state and eventually, the subcontinent would be freed from the hands of landlords and capitalists.

The second essay of the pamphlet was by Tariq Ali, titled *The Future of Bangladesh and West Bengal*. Naturally, his views were aligned with those of the Fourth International.

According to Tariq Ali, it was crucial for Bangladesh to wage a prolonged people's war against the people of West Pakistan. This could be achieved by forming guerrilla forces. Not only that, he believed that politicians who were aiding the Pakistani military junta needed to be killed, especially those like Fazlul Kader Chowdhury and Ghulam Azam, 'two scoundrels' whose deaths would bring joy to every Bangali.

“Fajlul Quader Chowdhury and Ghulam Azam are the two scoundrels whose death at the hands of the liberation forces would be welcomed by the Bengali masses as a whole.”

Among the leftists in Bangladesh, Toha was sharply criticized by him because Toha was a supporter of China. In his view, Toha not only committed political suicide but also brought disgrace to the leftist movement as a whole. He could not support Bhashani or Mozaffar either, as they were aligned with the Awami League. The only person in whom he saw potential was Abdul Matin.

Although he made mild criticisms of the CPI in West Bengal, he was sharply critical of the CPM. Supporting Charu Mazumdar was out of the question, according to him.

“...both the C.P.s are a complete and utter disgrace to Leninism.”

Like other leaders of the International, Tariq also believed that if the two Bengals united and went to war, it would be possible to establish a socialist Bengal. Therefore, all revolutionary parties should now come together to determine a course of action to achieve this goal. He wrote—

“We see the struggle in Bangladesh and the struggle in west Bengal linking up in a bid to unite the Bengali nation and unless we want further defeats and the loss of unlimited number of lives of Bengali peasant, workers and students. We have to prepare for this struggle. We have to create one revolutionary front of revolutionaries in both East and west Bengal and pave the way for a united socialist Bengal.”³⁹

No matter how unrealistic and romantic Tariq Ali and his companions’ ideas were, the fact that they supported Bangladesh’s Liberation War, were against genocide was enough at that time. Because, like various other groups, their stance later turned into a strong public opinion in favor of Bangladesh.

7

Those in Pakistan who were associated with leftist ideologies were, for the most part, the ones who supported the Liberation

War. A large segment of them was involved with the National Awami Party (NAP) and its student organization. Among the political leaders, Wali Khan was notable. There were many others among the political activists and writers. The detailed account of this support or the names of those who supported the Liberation War have largely remained unspoken. Ahmad Salim, because of his repeated visits to Dhaka after 1972, has become some what known to us here.

While going through old documents related to the Liberation War, a particular news item caught my attention. Dated July 19, 1971, it was published in Bangladesh—a publication from the liberated areas.

The news was as follows—

“Dhaka — For expressing support towards Bangladesh, a military court in Lahore has sentenced the prominent Punjabi poet Mr. Ahmed Salim to six months of imprisonment and a fine of two thousand rupees. In case of non-payment of the fine, an additional three months of rigorous imprisonment has been imposed.”

Mr. Ahmad Salim wrote a poem titled Sada Joy Bangladesh (Forever Victory to Bangladesh), which was published in a weekly magazine called Awami Awaz.

It was alleged that the poem was written with the intention of creating panic among the people of Pakistan and undermining the integrity and unity of the country.

I remembered Ahmad Salim. It was probably around 1995, at the corner of Paltan, in a residential hotel, that I met him. I don't remember who introduced us. But like many others, I also wondered: why is this Punjabi in Bangladesh, and why does he want to communicate with us? After that, Salim visited Dhaka many times. I was deeply moved after learning about his role during our Liberation War. Salim became a close friend of mine and Shahriar's. War When Shahriar and I proposed his name for this honor. no one objected. Mofidul Haque even published several of his books.

Bangladesh government decided to honor those foreigners who supported the Liberation war.

Around 1999, I went to Pakistan to write a book about Pakistanis. There, I interviewed Salim. In that interview, he said that during those turbulent days, many left-leaning Pakistanis had supported us.

Ahmad Salim is a poet and a worker of the National Awami Party (NAP). In 1971, he was among the few Pakistani intellectuals who dared to speak in favor of Bangladesh.

Ahmad Salim has written books on Bangladesh. Still, I said, “Since we’ve met, let me take an interview. There may be many things that didn’t make it into your books.”

No objection, Salim responded.

‘You were an active member of NAP in 1971, I asked. Can you describe what the politicians in your country were thinking in 1970–71?’

The 1971 elections, as you know, generated great enthusiasm, said Salim. “The headlines in newspapers read — ‘Awami League, People’s Party maidan ject lia [conquered the field].’ The ruling clique and the right-wingers were not happy about this. Then Bhutto started demanding that he too should have a share in power. Our belief was that Bhutto, in temperament and mindset, was of a fascist nature.

The irony was that Bhutto thought he was using Yahya Khan, while Yahya believed he was using Bhutto. On the other hand, Sheikh Mujib's role was consistent and clear. His position was that the issue was one of majority versus minority. Therefore, it would not be right to impose anything on the majority.

Some of Mujib’s friends mentioned that they were trying to persuade him to be a bit more flexible, warning that otherwise, anarchy could break out.

‘Can you name a few of them?’ Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, Mian Mumtaz Daultana, Wali Khan, Mufti Mahmud, among others, had gone to Dhaka for discussions. Sheikh Mujib told

Wali Khan, 'They are Muslim Leaguers, and I too fought for Pakistan. So how can anyone question whether I'm being backed by someone else?'

During the Yahya–Bhutto–Mujib talks, multiple shadow games began. Everyone considered themselves the true representative of Pakistan and started making their own moves. Besides, there's a behind-the-scenes story. Mujib wanted to implement some reforms quickly after coming to power. The main power in West Pakistan was held by feudal lords. They were worried that Mujib might introduce land reforms. They were trying to establish contact with him. Their message was: he could come to power if he agreed not to implement land reforms. But they couldn't make contact.'

'Who gave you this information?' I asked. Masud Qader Hoss, he was a member of the Revenue Board at that time—a sincere bureaucrat.

'Did the Pakistanis know what was happening in Dhaka?'

'No. They were being told that Sheikh Mujib was stirring up trouble.'

'What was the role of the political parties?'

'Look', said Salim, 'the right-wing parties were not a problem for Bhutto. The problem was his own party. He had realized that if Mujib came to power, 30 to 40 members of the PPP would side with Mujib. There were secret negotiations and discussions going on about this at the time. During that period, in two provinces of West Pakistan, the Awami League found allies. They were NAP and Mufti Mahmud's Jamiatul Mudassirin. Some MLAs from the People's Party and a few independent representatives were also involved. Some say these two parties had secured a majority in the two provinces. That's not accurate. At least 70 to 80 members were willing to side with the Awami League. That means the Awami League had representation in all five provinces.'

'We didn't know any of this,' I said.

‘These were secret matters, happening in secrecy. They didn’t appear in the newspapers.’

‘Let’s come to the events of March 25,’ I said. ‘What do you know about March 25?’

‘I’ve already given you a copy of my book,’ said Salim. ‘There’s a brief account in the chapter ‘The Generals’ Night.’

‘Still, please tell me something,’ I requested.

‘The situation was rapidly deteriorating,’ said Selim. ‘At that time, Wali Khan and Mufti Mahmud were in Dhaka. They were trying to keep both sides calm. But the Awami League leadership had the impression that it was all a staged drama. I’ve heard from Wali Khan that Sheikh Mujib had said, ‘They have other plans, they’re bringing in weapons. The only way now is to transfer power.’ These facts can be found in the books of Sardar Shaukat and Wali Khan. These are no longer secrets.’

‘Did the politicians know about the events of March 25 and what followed?’ I asked. ‘They knew,’ Selim replied, ‘and they were the ones who came back and informed that mass killings were taking place.’

There are several poems written in Urdu and English. A novel in Sindhi has been written on the Bangladesh movement, though I can't recall the name of the book at the moment. Some short stories have also been written, by writers like Jadin and Nasim Khair. Sheikh Ayaz wrote many poems, including a prison diary. He mentions trying to imagine where Sheikh Mujib might be. There are also many ‘intimate’ narratives about Bangladesh. As you can understand, there is a wealth of writings and books in favor of Bangladesh. There is a captivating two-volume book in Urdu that came out earlier this year. I can also mention another famous Baloch poet—Gutha Nasir. He was imprisoned for supporting Bangladesh. NAP leader Ajmal Khattak also wrote poems in favor of Bangladesh. He too was jailed. Even several people from the military resigned.⁴⁰

Ivan Rajkumar Banerjee was a leader of the Punjab Students Union. Basit Mir was its president, and Asif Shakir was the general secretary. The Punjab Students Union, Baloch Students Organization, Sindh National Students Federation, and Pakistan Students Federation together formed a student coalition named the Pakistan Federation Union of Students (PFUS).

In the month of July, they decided to publish and distribute a booklet on the genocide in Bangladesh. They carried out their plan. Several leftist leaders from nearby cities, such as Comrade Abdus Salam (Okara), Rana Qasim (Sahiwal), Hamid Asi (Pakpattan), and Rafiq Sharaf of the National Awami Party (Chichawatni), actively supported this initiative.

In this context, Rajkumar was arrested and placed in Shahiwal Jail. After trial, he was sentenced to three months of imprisonment. In jail, he was subjected to cruel torture. He was asked to confess his deeds and seek forgiveness, but since he believed in Marxism, he did not change his position. He was released two days before Bhutto recognized Bangladesh.⁴¹

A location within Bangladesh was chosen, which contained a camp for freedom fighters. The name of the place was not mentioned. It was July. Mahendra Sen, one of the secretaries of the World Trade Union Federation, went there. The Communist Party of India (CPI) may have organized this meeting. In his speech, Mahendra Sen said:

Your beloved leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, has been captured by the Pakistani military forces. As soon as we received this news, the World Trade Union Federation strongly protested this arrest. We have been vocal in condemning the genocide taking place in your country. The unfortunate refugees who have been tortured and have fled to India, we have instructed our members across the world to come forward to assist them. We have sent 20,000 dollars from the World Trade Union Federation's worldwide membership of 150 million. I want to assure you—in the days to come, we will strengthen our voice in support of your cause.

According to the newspaper report, after Mahendra Sen finished his speech, a young freedom fighter asked a question.

‘Today marks 120 days of our struggle for liberation, but it is very painful that so far the world has not responded to our appeal. We are very happy to have you here. But once you go abroad, will you forget us?’

In response, Mr. Sen said, ‘Not only will I not forget you, but I will also strengthen our solidarity efforts in your support.’

At that moment, a leader of the freedom fighters, who was practicing, stepped forward. With a thick beard on his face, wearing a white Punjabi and lungi, he asked in a low voice, ‘Will the World Trade Union Federation send us new weapons?’

Mr. Sen replied, ‘What you need more than weapons is your support. We promise to raise the voice of the world in your favor even louder.’⁴²

At a weekly press conference on 17 June, Yugoslave government expressed its concern on the plight of the millions of Bangali refugees and stated that- ‘‘We feel that measures should be taken urgently to prevent further exodus and create conditions for the return of refugees to their homes.’’

Yugoslavia government further noted that- ‘‘Finding of political Pakistan would undoubtedly help to normalize the situation in East Pakistan and eliminate difficulties concerning refugees. Similarly we feel it is duty of international community to offer urgent and adequate help for setting this difficult problem.’’⁴³

On June 24, Indian special envoy and Minister DPR Karan Singh visited German Democratic Republic and had talk with the chairman of the council Ministers and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. ‘‘The two sides after a detailed discussion of the various aspects of the problem, expressed their firm belief that the only practical, just and enduring solution lay in urgent measures being taken in East Pakistan to stop the further influx of refugees in to India and in creating conditions to ensure their safe and early return. This is possible only if solution is found to the basic

problem in accordance with the will of the people East Pakistan and in consultation with their elected representatives.’⁴⁴

8

The India-Soviet Friendship Treaty in August brought about a fundamental change in the prevailing situation in the subcontinent. After March 1971, socialist countries and organizations, along with various groups, were making statements about the events in Bangladesh. However, the language and choice of words were being used with great caution. No one wanted to provoke Pakistan, and they were only commenting on humanitarian aid for the refugees and their return. Occasionally, the term 'political solution' was mentioned. China openly supported Pakistan, and until Kissinger's visit to Beijing, America also openly sided with Pakistan. As a result, Yahya Khan considered himself the 'absolute ruler,' because even the Soviet Union did not want to displease Pakistan. Until August, we see that the Soviet Union was reassuring Pakistan. They didn't even use the term 'East Bengal' they always used the term East Pakistan. While they maintained communication with India, there was no significant change in their policy towards the subcontinent.

On the other hand, it can also be said that left-wing groups in various countries were supporting the Liberation War. Among them, the support from the World Peace Council was strong and unconditional. The Communist Parties of various countries, particularly India's CPI and Bangladesh's Communist Party, also strongly supported it and it reminded the Soviet that, apart from self-interest there should be a place for idealism also. The Soviet Union, having worked with Communist Parties from 1917 onwards within the Soviet bloc, did not want to lose their support. This was especially true as China's policies were creating confusion. The United States' preference for China also had an impact on Russia, which would be wrong to ignore. Syed Anwar Hossain wrote about Kissinger's trip to China and the subsequent announcement of Nixon's visit. 'The timing marked a

critical point in Russia's Asian policy. After returning from Beijing, Kissinger told India's Ambassador to Washington, Jha, that if India attacked Pakistan, China would intervene and the US might not come to India's aid."⁴⁵

Before going to China, Kissinger had visited Delhi. He had talks with the Indian Foreign Secretary, T.N. Kaul. During the discussion, he said-

"You know it would be silly for the US to favour a situation in which 800 million Chinese and 600 million people in this subcontinental form a group a class dominated from Peking that would be inconceivable. That would be a price that under no circumstances we would pay. Reproachment with China would be meaningless if that price one has to pay for it. It would be surrender. About this you would never have any doubts."⁴⁶

Afterwards, Kissinger went to Beijing. India became concerned, and this was evident in the speech of Sharan Singh in Parliament. He stated that while he welcomed the meeting between Beijing and Washington, if these two powers sought to dominate this region, India would have to consider its position.⁴⁷

After returning from Beijing, Kissinger informed that if China interfered in the India-Pakistan issue, the United States would remain neutral. This threat was made by Kissinger on July 17. Later, the US Assistant Secretary of State informed India to control the activities of guerrillas at the border and to hand over the responsibility of relief to the United Nations. It was gradually becoming clear that a bloc of China, the United States, and Pakistan was being formed against India in the subcontinent. P.N. Dhar wrote that at that time, Indira Gandhi felt... "Enough was enough."⁴⁸

The context of this background is the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty. However, it wasn't a sudden event. Both sides had been discussing such an agreement since 1968. The background can be partially understood by noting the following details:

Alexei Kosygin came to New Delhi on May 6, 1969. Indira Gandhi's secretary, P. N. Haksar, wrote to her about the

Indo-Soviet treaty. By then, Indira had informed the Soviets that India was in favor of such an agreement. Haksar mentioned that such a treaty would provoke reactions worldwide. It would also lead to a series of questions in the Indian Parliament. These considerations had to be taken into account before signing the agreement. He suggested that it would be best for the Indian ambassador in Moscow to work on the details of the treaty before it was signed.

“Such a document should not appear to be an exercise expediency but it should be a declaration of high principles.”⁴⁹

D.P. Dhar, who was the Ambassador of India in Moscow, had been informed by the Ministry of External Affairs to proceed cautiously. Dhar was unsure about what to do. In this regard, what he wrote about diplomacy is noteworthy. India must move forward in its own interest. There should be no hesitation, either ahead or behind. It is also related to India's security. On May 31, 1969, he wrote to Indira Gandhi.

“Diplomacy deals with problems at a given time and a given place. The soviet anxiety, which is so manifest at present, may change overnight. We have, therefore, to calculate our self-interest and not proceed on the assumption that time is on our side and that we can dilly-dally at our pleasure. The assumption is that India is of such vital importance to the Soviet Union that we can sit back and relax and do stone-walling. It would be tragic mistake to work on this assumption...”⁵⁰

On July 9, 1971, Kissinger went to China. The prevailing situation in the subcontinent changed as a result. In February/March of 1968, Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Andrei Grechko had spoken about the Soviet-India cooperation treaty. However, the Soviet Union's supply of arms to Pakistan had angered Indira Gandhi. As previously mentioned, the Soviet-India treaty issue had not completely disappeared. Due to India's slow-moving policy, it had not gained momentum. Around 1970, with the efforts of Dhar, the draft of the treaty was prepared.

After Kissinger's visit to Beijing, Haksar, Dhar, and Foreign Secretary T. N. Kaul made progress on this issue. Dhar met with Kosygin and Grechko. On June 15, 1971, Dhar sent the treaty draft to Haksar.

Indira Gandhi's secretary, P. N. Dhar, wrote that on August 5, 1971, the Pakistan government issued a white paper on the events in Bangladesh. The white paper blamed the Awami League, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and India for all the events.⁵¹

Kosygin had stated that Indira Gandhi would sign the treaty when she felt comfortable doing so. In the aftermath of these events and with the advice of Haksar, Kaul, and Dhar, Indira Gandhi instructed for the signing of the treaty. The agreement was supposed to be signed in Moscow, and later the foreign ministers of both countries would initial it in Delhi. However, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko arrived in Delhi on August 8, and on August 9, the much-awaited 'Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation' was signed.

Such treaties of friendship and cooperation typically include various clauses, and this treaty was no different. However, the third and ninth articles are particularly significant for us. The third article states the condemnation of all forms of racism and colonial rule, and the united efforts for the abolition of such oppression.

“to achieve these aims and to support the just aspirations of the peoples in their struggle against colonialism and racial domination.”⁵²

Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko visited India on this occasion from 8th to 12 August. On 12 the Indian and Soviet Union issued a long joint statement. In this statement it was noted that both the parties had detailed discussion on East Pakistan and they have agreed that, “their firm conviction that there can be no military solution and considered. it necessary that urgent steps be taken in East Pakistan for the achievement of a political solution and for the creation of conditions safety for the refugees to their homes which alone would answer the interest of the active people of Pakistan and the cause of the preservation of peace in the area.”⁵³

The United States and the West had more objections regarding Article Nine. Despite being written in various ways, the core issue was that if one side was attacked, the other would come to its aid.⁵⁴ This agreement benefited India. The United States was unprepared for this. It was only the United States that could have stopped Yahya Khan from his actions. The message India wanted to convey was that refugees must return. To facilitate their return, the environment must be made conducive, and only a political settlement could create that environment. Another ally of Pakistan was China, which was supplying arms to Pakistan. Furthermore, China was also advising Yahya on other political solutions. This statement is from P. N. Dhar. China had received the message too. On August 11, the Indo-Soviet Joint Declaration explicitly mentioned, “There can be no military solution to the discussed problem. Both parties agree that urgent measures should be adopted in East Pakistan to create a secure environment for the return of refugees to their homes, and only such measures will serve the interests of the entire population of Pakistan and the objective of peacekeeping in the region...”⁵⁵

Following this agreement, how the United States reacted was described by the Indian Deputy Ambassador to the U.S., Maharaj Krishna Rasgotra. He wrote that, upon hearing about the agreement, Kissinger was stunned. Nixon said, This is a bombshell.

A few days after the signing of the agreement, Swaran Singh arrived in Washington. He went to meet U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers. Rasgotra accompanied him. In such usual meetings, pleasantries are exchanged first. However, Rogers did not entertain any of these, nor did he even ask for a cup of tea during the twenty-minute meeting. He repeatedly referred to this as an Indian-Soviet military agreement. “ its language about mutual consultation was stronger than the wording in the NATO treaty.” Sardar Swaran Singh listened to Rogers’ tirade like a saint. He said nothing. “Rogers fell silent, exhausted and perhaps feeling a bit foolish about his outbursts. Silence seemed unending....” Rogers said, ‘Why aren’t you saying anything?’

Swaran Singh first thanked Rogers for giving him time and said that the events in Vietnam and East Pakistan must surely be putting him under immense pressure. With a slight smile, he said that he had actually come to talk about the situation in the subcontinent. However, that could be discussed later.

Regarding the treaty, he said, what is there to be so worried about? The NATO treaty allows one country to station troops in another — that is not included in this agreement. This is a friendly treaty. Then, after a pause, he said...

“your excellency, my prime minister has authorized me to sign an identical treaty with your excellency’s government. I am ready to do so at your convenience in the next two days, or any time later if you prefer.’ This again left Rogers speechless and a little bewildered.”⁵⁶

This was not the end of the matter. Ambassador L.K. Jha had anticipated that Kissinger would be upset about the Indo-Soviet treaty. So, he went to California to discuss these issues, as Kissinger was staying there at the time. Rasgotra was then the ambassador to Morocco. Before the end of his tenure, in 1979, Indira Gandhi summoned him and said, ‘Nixon has come to power, and he does not like me. He will create all sorts of trouble. Therefore, to assist Jha, you must go to Washington as Deputy Ambassador.’

Rasgotra wrote that before going to China, Kissinger called Jha and informed him that he had returned from China. Now, at China’s invitation, Nixon would go there. Then, with a tone of warning, he said...

“ I hope, the Indian Government will say some thing nice about this. Any criticism from India will not go down well with us; we will not understand this.” Therefore, Kissinger's reaction to the India–Soviet treaty can be inferred. J.N. Dixit (Jhā Rasgotra) mentioned that even during their meeting on August 25, their interaction was neither warm nor cordial. Kissinger remained skeptical about Indo-American relations. He not only blamed former Indian Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh but also clearly stated that Dinesh Singh had taken bribes from the Soviet Union.

However, Rasgotra wrote that Kissinger's own records present a different narrative, where numerous harsh and critical comments were made.⁵⁷ The key point is that the United States was not only upset but also displayed an aggressive attitude.

Soon after this, Indira Gandhi went on a tour of several Western countries. The primary objective was to inform them about the India–Soviet treaty and to persuade the governments to adopt a positive stance toward Bangladesh.

The India–Soviet treaty also had a significant impact on Pakistan's rulers and their political allies. Their statements reflected that they were preparing for war. Yahya Khan declared that Pakistan was preparing for war. Bhutto said he would fully support efforts to crush Indian aggression.⁵⁸

In Pakistan the Junta opened proceedings in a Martial Law court against Sheikh Mujib for 'Treason and open rebellion.' Immediately GDR government spoke against this trial. They were the first foreign country who protested against this trial. The spokesman of the Foreign Ministry said in a statement they always wanted a political statement in Pakistan for the sake of peace and security. That is why- "The public of the GDR therefore appeal to the Government of Pakistan to show justice and humanity...sentencing the leader of the Awami League undoubtedly would not only further aggravate internal contradiction of Pakistan but would be bound to have a dangerous impact on the evolution of the political situation on the Indian sub-continent. Such an evaluation could endanger peace and international security."⁵⁹

From Helsinki, world peace council also in a statement [20.8.71] condemned Pakistan's attitude towards an elected leader and commented- "The sands of time are running fast, the world peace council appeal to all peace force to act in time to prevent a great catastrophe."⁶⁰

9

It is clear that due to the threat posed by China, and in response to it, the Indo-Soviet treaty was concluded. Of course, the Soviet

Union had shown interest in this matter since 1969. Indira Gandhi had chosen the appropriate time for it. However, she was also concerned that the treaty should not become controversial or isolate India. On August 12, she sent a note to Haksar, inquiring whether a similar treaty could be made with China. But Haksar strongly opposed the idea. He said that the treaty was a sum of mutual interests between two parties, and the world was viewing it in that light. If, on the contrary, it were publicized that we are eager to make treaties with everyone, it would neither be realistic nor taken seriously. In his words—

“.....a Treaty of the kind we have just concluded with the Soviet Union reflects time and space, a particular coincidence of interest. In all the chanceries of the world the treaty has been interpreted in this light and I believe rightly so. For us now to go around saying to all and sundry that we are prepared to sign a similar treaty would appear either unrealistic, or it may so, some thing lacking in seriousness.

As for signing a Treaty with the Chinese, even a talk about it would not bring about a treaty with China and it would certainly attenuate greatly the effect of the Treaty which we have signed with the Soviet Union.”⁶¹

Syed Anwar Hossain wrote that Russia, at that time, still wanted to maintain a conciliatory relationship with Pakistan. However, after the treaty (with India), a shift occurred: “Russia, along with India, became active against any international resolution that was anti-Bangali... Not only that, in October, Russia was pressuring India not to seek international support for the recognition of an independent Bangladesh.”

He further wrote that, after the treaty was signed, Russia followed a policy characterized by three features:

It agreed with India that there was no reason to internationalize the Bangladesh issue. Therefore, the United Nations had no jurisdiction in the matter.

Secondly, efforts were made, through India, to ensure that the government of Bangladesh leaned toward Moscow. Syed

Anwar wrote that pressure was exerted regarding the composition of the UN delegation. Dr. A.R. Mallick, Taheruddin Thakur, and Khondaker Mostaq were excluded from the UN mission, while only Professor Muzaffar Ahmad of the pro-Moscow NAP was included.

“By continuing this opportunistic policy, Russia tried to prevent a full-scale war between India and Pakistan, and in this policy, Russia was supported by the United States.”⁶²

The claim about a Russia-America collusion, as he mentioned, is speculative. Due to China, there was no reason for such a collusion at that time. Moscow may have believed that if Islamabad granted greater autonomy to East Pakistan, a political settlement could be reached. In that case, Mujib would become the Prime Minister of a united Pakistan. Mujib, like Nehru, believed in secularism, socialism, and democracy. Moreover, to Soviet strategists, West Pakistan was more important than East Pakistan from a geopolitical standpoint. And if Mujib, as Prime Minister of a united Pakistan, upheld those ideologies, he would not lean towards the American bloc.

Another perception was that Pakistan was a key country in the Muslim world. If the Soviets did not support Pakistan, the Arab world could become upset. And the Arab world was important for Soviet interests — perhaps even more so.⁶³

Other than the Soviets, various socialist groups had been issuing separate statements in support of Bangladesh since June. In 1971, capitalist country media fully supported the Bangalis. Although their governments were against it, communist-supported newspapers in different countries voiced their support for Bangladesh. Between April 1–22, *The Morning Star* — the official publication of the British Communist Party published from London — ran a long article by Christ Myant. This article thoroughly discussed the background of the struggle. Myant wrote... “Today it is total war in East Pakistan-or Bangla Desh as its people now call it.” Yahya Khan unleashed his soldiers on unarmed civilians.

The writer mentions that since the first day of military rule, the left-wing parties had been warning the Awami League leaders that Yahya Khan would do something in East Bengal similar to what Indonesia did to the communists. However, the Awami League leaders did not take this warning seriously until the very end. Yahya's policy was very simple—anyone who resists must be killed. Teachers, doctors, politicians, or professionals who had the potential to lead had to be eliminated.

At the end of the article, it is stated that the British government should put pressure on Pakistan to withdraw its military forces. The British public should support the Bangali people's struggle for self-determination.

A report by William J. Pomeroy, the London-based correspondent for the U.S. Communist Party's newspaper, *Daily World*, was published on April 30. The report highlights the background of the struggle and gives importance to statements by figures like S. K. Janjua, Farid Zafri, Hamza Alavi, and Tariq Ali. As socialists, they had issued statements in support of the Bangalis.⁶⁴

The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization's Executive Committee meeting took place in Damascus on June 23 and 24. During this meeting, a proposal was adopted on behalf of Bangladesh. The following key points were addressed:

The organization emphasized the importance of the struggle of the Afro-Asian peoples against imperialism and exploitation.

The committee condemned colonialism, neo-colonialism, and imperialism for the disasters they have caused to the peoples of the Third World. Consequently, the following decisions were made:

A fair and humanitarian solution must be found for refugees so they can return to their countries and unite in the struggle against imperialism and colonialism.

The Secretary-General of the organization was asked to keep all concerned parties informed about the ongoing developments.⁶⁵

Additionally, Kamal Jumblatt, the leader of Lebanon's Progressive Socialist Party and a former Lebanese minister, made a statement in September criticizing Pakistan's actions, which had caused millions of people to flee the country. He expressed anger over this and also demanded the release of Sheikh Mujib, urging the acceptance of the election results.

“Without which Pakistan cannot achieve sound democratic principles and respect for human rights.”

Jumblatt said, The Pakistani government should take steps that would allow the refugees to return to their country. “to establish principles of justice and equality among Pakistanis.”⁶⁶

In August 1971, Abdul Wali Khan, the president of the Pakistan National Awami Party, said in Kabul that Pakistan would not remain intact. His father, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, had also made similar statements earlier. Wali Khan stated in Kabul, “Pakistan's territorial integrity is now on the verge of being fragmented.” He attributed this to the military junta, saying, “The milk jug has been broken, and now they (the military rulers) are crying over the milk spilled on the floor.”

In his interview, Wali Khan mentioned that there were two options before the military junta. The first option was to accept the division of Pakistan and join the subcontinent or return to the pre-1947 boundaries. However, he personally was not in favor of this option. The second option was to accept the separation of East Bengal and join the West Asian region.

According to Wali Khan, the significance of Bangladesh's resistance was that it shattered the myth that religion could bind a country together. He attributed the situation in Bangladesh to the policies of the Muslim League and the military junta. The military junta did not achieve the electoral outcome they had hoped for, and their actions proved that they had no intention of relinquishing power.

Among the few Pakistani politicians who understood what the future of Pakistan could be, Wali Khan was one of them. While their statements were not acceptable to the military junta, they

clearly revealed to the conscientious Pakistanis what was happening in Bangladesh. Supporting the Bangladesh cause from within Pakistan required considerable courage. NAP also on 26 Sept. in a press release urged the government to release Sheikh Mujib.⁶⁷

The King of Afghanistan had gone on an official visit to Moscow. At a dinner held in his honor, President Podgorny spoke (14 sept.) about the events in Pakistan. He stated that the peace of South Asia would depend on resolving the problem of East Pakistan, and that importance must be given to addressing this issue. "...with due consideration for the lawful interests of its population, on the creation there of safe conditions for the return of the refugees and on the readiness of state leaders of that region to prevent their sliding down to a military conflict. The Soviet Union will do everything possible to facilitate a normalisation of the situation in the interests of the people of all countries of that area."⁶⁸

At the invitation of the Indian Peace Council and the Indian Association for Afro-Asian Solidarity, a few prominent peace activists and representatives from peace movements across different countries was to visit India to directly observe the situation regarding the Bangladesh issue.

The first two groups include the famous American Marxist intellectual Herbert Aptekar, leader and member of the Italian Socialist Party and Parliament, Mussa Invaldi Carlo, member of the Italian Communist Party's Foreign Committee and Parliament, Traub Adori Antonello, and well-known Lebanese personality Mahmoud Tembou. Soon, members from France, West Germany, Argentina, Iraq, and several other socialist countries will arrive. They will visit West Bengal, Tripura, Assam, and refugee camps in Lebanon.⁶⁹

10

After the Soviet-India agreement, Soviet organizations began issuing one statement after another. The nature of these

statements was similar. Additionally, some small organizations also issued statements. It is not possible to find the dates when the Soviet organizations issued these statements. In fact, even the compilation of by Kolbetsky there dates are unavailable.

The Soviet Peace Committee expressed concern about the trial and death sentence of Bangabandhu (Sheikh Mujibur Rahman). They mentioned that, due to the oppression by the Pakistani government, people were seeking refuge in India. They said, “In the interest of peace in Asia, it is urgent to take necessary steps to achieve a political solution to the problems that have arisen in East Pakistan, while giving due respect to the will, legitimate rights, and interests of the people of East Pakistan.” The Soviet people, on behalf of millions, appealed to the authorities in East Pakistan to stop the violent measures against Mujibur Rahman and other leaders of East Pakistan, and to create a situation that would strengthen peace in the region.

The Soviet Trade Unions also expressed concern about the trial of Bangabandhu. He was the legally elected leader of the working class. “In the struggle for the important rights of the working people of Pakistan, against the colonialist yoke, for the development of democracy, and for the progress of society, the trade unions of the Soviet Union, loyal to international solidarity in their struggle, have always stood on the side of the working people of Pakistan.” The Soviet working people demanded an end to the widespread retaliatory oppression against the people and leaders of East Pakistan, and the creation of conditions for the refugees to return to their homeland.

The Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, in their statement, demanded, “The world public opinion must be taken into account, and a just political solution to the problem must be sought, considering the will, rights, and aspirations of the people of East Pakistan. This would be in line with the objectives and principles of Afro-Asian solidarity.” Expressing support for Bangladesh's movement, the committee said, “The Soviet people have always been and will always be the loyal friends of the

nations that have thrown off colonial yokes and are struggling for a better life in a peaceful and progressive environment.”⁷⁰

The Soviet Women’s Committee strongly protested the events happening in East Pakistan on October 4, 1971. The committee declared that due to the actions of the Pakistani government, 90 lakh people had been displaced, many of whom died from starvation and epidemics. Many protesters in East Pakistan were being persecuted.

The committee emphasized that attention should be given to what millions of people around the world are saying about the actions of the Pakistani authorities. It urged that Pakistan stop the persecution of Awami League leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and engage in talks to find a resolution, so that millions of people could return to their homes.

Moreover, protests in support of Bangladesh were held in Moscow, Leningrad, Minsk, Riga, and other cities by October 15, demanding the halt of the trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Soviet Red Cross issued a somewhat stern statement, calling for the cessation of persecution and retaliation against progressive individuals, the restoration of human rights and legality as declared by the United Nations, and the alleviation of the suffering of the civilian population in East Pakistan.

The Soviet Youth and Student Organizations also issued similar statements, expressing their anger at the acts of terror and violence against the people and youth of East Pakistan. The Soviet United Nations Association demanded the release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and stated that Pakistan was violating the United Nations Charter. It urged the “adoption of measures to politically resolve the existing issues, taking into account the will, inalienable rights, and lawful interests of the people of East Pakistan, and ensuring conditions for the rapid and safe return of East Pakistani refugees to their homeland.”⁷¹

Apart from China, communist parties around the world gave strong support to the liberation war. Other left-wing groups, besides the communists, also supported the war of independence.

In October 1971, the Ninth Congress of the CPI was held in Ghatenagara, India. Leaders of the Communist Party of Bangladesh attended the Congress and unequivocally congratulated the Bangladesh Liberation War.

Yugoslav representative Mirko Kanad Novik said, “The aspirations of the people of Bangladesh, expressed through the recent general elections, should be addressed in line with the political consequences, and the solution to this problem should be based on the principle of self-determination for every nation and the core values of humanity.”

The Czech representative strongly condemned the “extreme terrorism created against the democratic and progressive forces of Bangladesh, and the brutal repression organized against the people.”

Jordanian representative Nazim Ziad said, “The Pakistan that is supported by U.S. imperialism and Maoists, and is attempting to suppress the freedom-loving and democratic struggle of the people of Bangladesh, is threatening India. He pledged full support for Bangladesh’s struggle.”

Israeli representative Aouna said, “The Communist Party of Israel fully supports the liberation struggle of the people of Bangladesh against reactionary oppression.”

Greek representative Antonios Ambatykmos also expressed support for the “just struggle” of the people of Bangladesh.

Italian representative Amberto Cardia declared, “I assure our dear Bangladesh Communist Party representatives and all the people of Bangladesh that in terms of material aid for Bangladesh, and political support for the just struggle for democracy, national rights, and social progress, we, the Communists of Italy, will make every effort to build a unified popular movement in Italy.”⁷²

In Kabul, Barbak Karmal organized a large public gathering. He was a socialist and a part of the Soviet bloc. The grand event took place in Kabul, where Afghans gathered to express their support for Bangladesh. This event occurred on October 27. However,

the news of this gathering did not appear in the major newspapers around the world.

The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, headed by Barbak Karmal, organized the gathering in favor of Bangladesh. At that time, Karmal was in power as the General Secretary of the party. During the event, there were strong condemnations of the military rule in Pakistan under Yahya Khan, and support for the Bengali liberation movement.

In the House of the People (the parliament), Karmal, as a member of parliament from Kabul, gave a speech. He stated that Pakistan was being ruled by a reactionary circle seeking to strengthen ties with the United States, West Germany, Britain, and Japan. This circle, according to Karmal, was oppressing the Bangalis.

It is worth noting that Karmal, who had Soviet support, was later ousted from power and was executed. Afterward, the Taliban, with the support of Pakistan and America, seized power.⁷³

President Tito visited India from 16th October to 20th October. In a Joint indo-yugoslav communiqué, On 28.10.71 stated, the exodus of the refugees from Bangladesh to India should be stopped. And that could be done only by a political solution acceptable to the representatives. who had been elected by the people.... "Both sides agreed that any postponement of the solution of the problem, which is itself a source of instability and tension, is likely to lead to a session aggravation of the situation." Also both side demanded the unconditional release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.⁷⁴ Willi Stoph, chairman of the council of Ministers of the GDR on 29th November demanded a political situation of the problem in People chamber. He stated- "A further aggravation of the situation would be useful only to the forces of imperialism and neo-colonialism which want to hold the consolidation of national Independence and social progress of the people."⁷⁵

Committee on East Pakistan at 21st Pugwash Conference on Science and World affairs issued statement from Rumania on fist The committee appealed to avoid any steps which might further aggravate the situation and in particular to refrain from supplying arms to Pakistan." They also stated, "... the cause of peace in the

Indian Sub-Continent would be greatly helped if no outside power took any steps that would hinder the political solution of the problem.”⁷⁶

Bureau of Socialist International from London also appealed to the world community and voiced five demands which included-“An immediate end to the military repression in East Pakistan” and the unconditional release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.⁷⁷

Pakistan’s attack on India provided an opportunity to change the existing situation. India had already realized that war was the final tool to normalize the situation. Meetings regarding war strategies had been held earlier, but Army Chief General Manekshaw had raised objections due to the lack of arms and the onset of the monsoon.

After August, the Soviet Union shifted its focus away from Pakistan. It even stopped all kinds of aid to Pakistan. Instead, it began providing military assistance to India. After the 1965 India-Pakistan war, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries of the Soviet bloc had provided India with \$730 million worth of tanks, warplanes, ammunition, surface-to-air missiles, submarines, missile boats, and various heavy weaponry. In November, 12 Soviet planes delivered weapons to Mumbai and Delhi. According to London’s *The Times* newspaper, Soviet trainers also arrived. Russia sent 250 tanks, 40 120 mm rocket systems, several radios, and other weapons, and had promised to supply various types of warplanes. As a result, India was preparing for war.⁷⁸

On December 3rd, Pakistan attacked India. Indira Gandhi was in Kolkata at that time. She immediately set off for Delhi. D. P. Dhar, upon hearing the news of the attack, commented, The fool has done exactly what was expected.⁷⁹

In this context, on December 4th, U.S. representative George Bush raised a proposal for a ceasefire in the Security Council.

11

The United Nations has rarely played a significant role in global security matters. Its structure is designed in such a way that all

countries are members, but in practice, only a few countries hold real power in geopolitical matters. That power rests with the five permanent members of the Security Council: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Soviet Union (now Russia), and China. The General Assembly has no power beyond debating issues. The Security Council is powerful, but it rarely reaches consensus. The United States, the United Kingdom, and France often agree on issues, but Russia or China do not. This was the case with Bangladesh in 1971. If the Soviet Union had not vetoed U.S.-sponsored proposals, or if it had agreed with the West and China, the proposals regarding Bangladesh could have passed, but they would not have been effective. Bangladesh would still have gained independence.

In the United Nations, the battle for Bangladesh was fought by the Soviet Union and India's permanent representative, Samar Sen. Malik played a significant role in this regard. His speeches and arguments could not be countered by the opposition. The UN Secretary-General, U Thant of Myanmar (Burma), was practically ineffective and showed no interest in taking action. According to him, "At no stage during this crisis was the UN able to take any effective action. My appeals to the Security Council were ignored. The Security Council became completely ineffective for two reasons: the rejection by the two countries at the center of the crisis, India and Pakistan, and the inability of the permanent members of the Security Council to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to them under the UN Charter."⁸⁰

At the United Nations, the United States and its new ally China adopted a similar strategy. Pakistan launched an attack on India on December 3. On the 4th, a session of the Security Council was called. Between December 4 and 21, 35 statements were made by the permanent representatives, including those of Pakistan and India. Between December 4 and 7, 13 draft proposals were introduced in the Security Council, and between December 12 and 21, another 13. The General Assembly had 4. Eventually, the draft proposal put forward by Poland was adopted.⁸¹

The diplomats who fought the battle at the UN during that time were some of the best diplomats, many of whom later rose to high positions in their respective countries. The United States representative, George Bush, later became the President of the United States. France's Kosciusko Morizet became the Secretary General of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. China's Huang Hua became the Foreign Minister of China. Pakistan's Aga Shahi was appointed as the Foreign Minister of Pakistan. India's Samar Sen served as India's second Ambassador to Bangladesh. Britain's Sir Colin Crowe and Russia's Yakov Malik,⁸² although not appointed to high positions, were renowned diplomats in their own right.

The goal of America and its allies was to achieve a ceasefire, discussions, and the return of refugees. India and the Soviet Union also aimed for a ceasefire and a political settlement that would allow the return of refugees. India's and the Soviet Union's goal was to avoid a ceasefire until Bangladesh is freed from occupying Pakistani occupation forces. America and its allies were outspoken on this issue, while socialist states remained silent as Russia controlled their opinions.⁸³

The United States had delegated the responsibility of presenting [their preferred] proposals to countries in Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Proposals sponsored by the United States were put forward by Belgium, Italy, Britain, and France. The United States itself was, of course, included. From Asia, Japan participated, and from Latin America, Argentina and Nicaragua were involved. From Africa, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Burundi, and Tunisia joined in. During this time, the delegation from Bangladesh distributed a document on the matter and requested the opportunity to make a statement. The right to distribute the document was granted, but the request to speak was denied. The UN's minutes of proceedings are not relevant here. The role of the countries supporting socialism is more pertinent for discussion.

Each time the countries mentioned above proposed drafts in favor of Pakistan, the Soviet Union presented counter-proposals

on behalf of India [and Bangladesh]. Apart from slight variations in wording, the U.S. proposals called for an end to the war, threatening that international repercussions would follow if it did not happen. Discussions were also proposed to ensure the return of refugees. The Soviet Union's stance was that the war must end, but the return of refugees was only possible with a political settlement, thus emphasizing the need for a focus on that aspect. While these discussions were taking place, Indian forces were advancing in West Pakistan, and the joint forces of India and Bangladesh were advancing in Bangladesh. Pakistan became increasingly impatient, hoping that China and the United States would join the war on its side.

On December 5, China also presented a draft proposal, which blamed India for the war and condemned it. The language they used was harsher than that of any other country.

“STRONGLY CONDEMNING The Indian Government act of creating a so-called ‘Bangladesh’ and of subverting, dismembering and committing aggression against Pakistan”

“Calls upon all states to support Pakistan People in their just struggle to resist Indian aggression.”⁸⁴

The Soviet Union, without agreeing to such drafts, continued to present their own draft proposals. For example, on December 6, the Soviet proposal explicitly mentioned...

“Calls upon the Government of Pakistan simultaneously to take effective action towards a political settlement in East Pakistan, giving immediate recognition to the will of East Pakistan population as expressed in the elections of December 1971.”⁸⁵

GDR released a press statement on the same day, declaring, “A political settlement of the problems of East Pakistan in doubtlessly only possible on the basis of the interest and justified demands of the 75 million inhabitant of East Pakistan and by negotiations with their elective representatives.”⁸⁶

Polish representatives kulgn on the same day also expressed the same sentiment blaming Pakistan and said “[grew into a military

confrontation opposing Pakistani armed forces to the population of East Pakistan. It grew into a civil war.”⁸⁷

The General Assembly’s resolution adopted on December 7 was similar in essence to the Soviet proposal put forward in the Security Council. It can be inferred that other states were no longer able to support genocide and Yahya’s repressive policies. In particular, European countries, where there was popular pressure in favor of Bangladesh, were in alignment with this.

Jakab Malik’s speeches from start to finish could form a small booklet. He had dismissed Huang Hua’s statements with logic and satire. At one point, Malik said—

“Huang Hua said that Malik does not understand history, fine, I will remind him of two things, he has distorted history [in his remarks]; he is pretending as if he does not understand history. So, what does this mean? Is it his failure to understand, or his shamelessness?”

At another point, he said, “As for the statement of Mr. Huang, in my first statement I called him ‘comrade’, and in the plenary general Assembly also I called him ‘comrade’. I called him the head of the Chinese Delegation. But, if he wishes to call me ‘Mr’ I am quite prepared to call him ‘Mr’, if he prefers to be a ‘Mr’.”⁸⁸

On December 5, Jakab Malik reiterated his previous statements in a statement, saying that the United States and China were taking a stance in favor of Pakistan.

“It is equally clear that United States is being led in the wake of Pakistan and in ignoring the genuine cause of the conflict in Hindustan Peninsula, trying at all costs to support the Pakistani version to the effect that it is India that bears the responsibility for the conflict in this region.”

“The same course in being followed by China.”

This back-and-forth continue. On the Eastern and Western fronts, Pakistan was retreating. A ceasefire was becoming crucial for Pakistan. On the other hand, India, following Soviet strategy, aimed to prolong the debate so that a ceasefire wouldn’t happen

until India's objectives were met. At that time, India was bolstered by Soviet weaponry.

Here's an example. Sardar Swaran Singh arrived in New York on December 10 to deliver a speech at the United Nations. The responsibility of preparing the speech was assigned to JL Dikshit and CV Ranganathan of India's permanent mission in New York. They prepared a short speech, but Swaran Singh rejected it and asked for a longer one so he could speak for two days.⁸⁹

Yahya was still hoping that he would receive assistance from his allies. There was a reason for this hope. On December 10, the US Seventh Fleet set sail towards the Indian Ocean. Huang Hua was informed of this. Three Soviet naval ships were already patrolling the Indian Ocean.⁹⁰ Now the number increased to 16, signaling that if the Americans took action, they would retaliate. There were two implications of this: If the US attacked and Russia responded, a nuclear war would ensue. Therefore, the Americans kept their fleet in place but refrained from any plans for an attack.

Yahya was hoping that China, if no one else, would come to his aid. We also heard this rumor and became anxious. But China did not intervene. The rumor had spread to the point where it almost seemed true. On the front, a Pakistani brigadier seeing Indian soldiers, thought, they were Chinese soldiers. He went to greet them and was wrested.⁹¹ Rao Farman Ali went to meet the Chinese Consul General in Dhaka to inquire about the arrival of Chinese troops. The Consul General knew nothing about it. He hadn't received any messages from Peking... "Over and over, he told me, 'Win over the people to your side.' I could not tell him that this was the main problem, because the people were against us."⁹²

China did not consider it wise to attack India, which was equipped with Soviet weaponry. Not only that, Soviet aggressive attitude in Bay of Bengal also forced China to remain inactive. Pakistan did not realize this. Zubaida has cited an analyst's quote that can help understand the situation.

“Arms aid, a treaty of alliance and Russian vetoes in the United Nations during the war with Pakistan have raised Moscow’s influence to an all-time high in India.”⁹³

The joint forces reached Dhaka on the Eastern Front, and on December 16, Gen. Niazi surrendered. On the Western Front, India was also advancing. After Bangladesh became independent, India itself declared a ceasefire on December 17.

12

The Bangladesh movement was the struggle for freedom by the oppressed and marginalized. Hence, this struggle is referred to as the 'Liberation War.' Moreover, since winning the election in 1970, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman followed democratic processes in all stage. When the Pakistani military started widespread genocide on March 25, he declared independence on March 26. This war was an attack by the minority on the majority. Many researchers have not considered this aspect. A large number of them have referred to this war as a 'civil war'. Even a professor from the Department of Arts at Dhaka University referred to the Liberation War as a 'civil war' in the university's journal. In some places, it has even been termed a 'separatist war'. What happened in Bangladesh from March 1971 to December 1971, if described as a civil war or a separatist war, would lead to a particular conclusion. However, if we call it a war of independence [Liberation War], it leads to a different conclusion. We have always regarded the Liberation War as a war of independence. On March 26, Bangabandhu declared Bangladesh as an independent country. From then on, this war was no longer a civil war; it became an attack of one state on another. This change was reflected in international organizations as well. It is noteworthy that in 1971, most countries of the world referred to Bangladesh as 'East Pakistan' or 'Pakistan,' except for India. Even the countries in the Soviet or socialist bloc did not want to refer to it as 'Bangladesh' until the outcome was certain.

It is no longer a matter of debate that Bangladesh's Liberation War did not receive support from most of the world's countries. At that time, the Soviet Union and the United States were considered the major global powers. The United States sphere of influence included many countries in Asia and the West, while the Middle Eastern and African countries were mostly influenced by the United States. China, though not yet a superpower, was beginning to be acknowledged by both the U.S. and the Soviet Union as an emerging power. These powers did not take Bangladesh's declaration of independence seriously. China viewed it as a separatist movement and a conspiracy by India to break Pakistan and achieve its own interests. The Soviet Union consistently stated that all people have the right to self-determination and that refugees should be repatriated, and that political solutions would make this possible. India, on the other hand, supported Bangladesh from the very beginning. This support, however, was seen by some as an Indian conspiracy to break Pakistan. Yet, the security concerns of India, related to what was happening at the border, were not considered. Moreover, the arrival of nearly one crore (10 million) refugees into India due to genocide was also not taken into account. The United Nations and international and domestic relief agencies' bureaucracy seemed to prefer to keep the refugee problem alive in underdeveloped countries. This is a kind of syndicate, as seen in the case of the Rohingyas in Bangladesh. However, no other country has taken in one crore refugees altogether. The Indian public did not express dissatisfaction with this, because it was linked to emotional concerns, something that researchers have overlooked.

The roles of three countries were significant in the Bangladesh question and they each were trying to enlarge their own sphere of influence globally. Among them, the United States was not only openly committed to the capitalist ideology but also strongly believed in suppressing the socialists or communist at any cost. The US government in 1971 did not favor India; they preferred Pakistan, a preference they held since 1948. Nixon personally disliked Indira Gandhi and did not hesitate to refer to her as a 'bitch.' However, he

had a great liking for General Yahya. Traditionally, America has always supported dictatorships and genocides. They had also eradicated their own indigenous population. For this reason, they did not sign the International Criminal Court Charter later. In the case of Bangladesh, India supported the country, and leftists were also influential there. If India won, the power balance in the subcontinent could shift. Additionally, the vast Chinese market could be captured if China could be brought into the capitalist fold, which was another goal. To achieve this objective, the US was secretly communicating with China, with Yahya being their intermediary. The Chinese market was considered more important than the genocide in Bangladesh. Therefore, the United States openly supported Pakistan. However, civil society in the US did not support this. Neither did the Senate. As a result, the US government had to often keep itself in check.

Another significant point about the United States is that Syed Anwar Hossain, in his book, has quoted a list of Russia and America's interventions in other countries. It shows that from 1960 to 1976, the United States intervened in 42 countries, which Hossain refers to as "Pirates diplomacy." No other superpower has such a record.

The United States has always supported diplomacy in the Western sphere of influence. There have been exceptions in certain cases, but it has generally followed this approach. On the other hand, the liberal segment of civil society in the United States, since the 1960s, has often protested against this diplomatic approach, particularly in the case of Vietnam. The protests began in the 1960s and persisted until the fall of Vietnam. Later, civil society in the United States raised its voice over the situation in Bangladesh. A similar occurrence took place in Europe, which was within the sphere of the United States. Therefore, these countries supported refugees and, in many cases, ceased to support Pakistan. All of this was due to the active and vibrant role of civil society.

In international relations, theorists emphasize a point: large powers or any country will primarily act in its own interest. This

is quite natural and can be ignored in theoretical frameworks. As Syed Anwar has repeatedly tried to demonstrate in his book. The question is whether the state's ideals are in conflict with these interests. In the cases of the United States, the West, or the Middle East, this is not an issue. The ideal is the development of the market and its own interests. But how applicable is this principle in the case of socialist countries? What if their geographical and ideological positioning contradicts geopolitical strategies? That is the real question.

Let's consider the role of China. From 1947 to 1970, China consistently took a stand against imperialism, and its domestic policy reflected that as well. The fundamental ideology of Marx, Lenin, and even Mao Zedong was the support for the self-determination and liberation struggles of the oppressed. There is no need for much debate or theory on this. Just by supporting the struggle of the oppressed and their liberation, they stood apart from the imperialist states. In the 1960s, Maoist ideology influenced leftist movements in several South Asian countries, leading to the rise of pro-China politics in those regions. However, Communist or socialist parties became fragmented in these countries, which weakened the socialist movement. In India, the large Communist Party split into factions. Even anti-Soviet groups split up. For example, the Naxalite movement had the slogan 'Chairman Mao is our Chairman.' The groups under China's influence had opposed the Liberation War.

In 1971, China deviated from its ideology. Even though Mao Zedong was in power, China drifted from his core principles. Perhaps due to the failure of the Cultural Revolution and the negative aspects of it, Mao himself did not oppose this shift. Ideologically and practically, China declared that it was opposing "social imperialism" [Soviet Union]. Who did they seek help from? The imperialists? This is quite ironic. China, which was once seen as a wast enemy than Russia and the West, had no qualms accepting this deviation gladly. In 1971, they openly stated that they supported Pakistan. Communist

sympathizers worldwide found this policy confusing. China's stance on Pakistan was so strong that, even while Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was alive, they refused to recognize Bangladesh, and not only did it face a challenge in terms of UN principles, but its influence also declined. As a result of China's ideological deviation, pro-China parties in South Asia and other countries almost disappeared.

Historically, China has always considered itself to be the center and the greatest state in the world, prioritizing its own state over internationalism. In that regard, China is right. Due to its friendship with the United States, it is investing globally, just as the U.S. does, using capital investments and loans as tools of influence.

China has shown a kind of disdain at socialist camp that neither the Soviet Union nor Russia ever did. From Lenin to Brezhnev, Russia moved forward through many internal conflicts and crises to make itself stronger. In foreign policy, it certainly pursued its own interests, but it also supported liberation struggles against oppression. The "Pirate diplomacy" that Syed Anwar referred to involves the Soviet Union in 13 incidents over 16 years. These include, for example, supporting allied state Guinea and a dispute with Ghana in 1969 over a detained fishing vessel. Therefore, in the context of bombastic politics, it is not entirely justified.

After the revolutionary transformation of China, it was the Soviet Union that initially helped China. In the 1970s, the Soviets described China's policies as a "social struggle." Soviet policymakers believed that the ideological and political crisis that had emerged at that time was intensifying. A large number of people came to realize through experience that China was not following the correct path in terms of the international communist movement.

"That is an important objective pre-condition for the revival of the revolutionary movement in Southeast Asia on a genuinely Marxist-Leninist foundation."

Zharv and Tuireen believe that in the 1950s and 60s, the United States adopted a policy to suppress the liberation movements in Southeast Asia. In 1969, U.S. President Nixon adopted the Guam Doctrine, the main idea of which was to create conflicts and various types of alliances among different Asian countries.

“The United States is particularly concerned with knocking together a block of Asian countries as an instrument for crushing the national liberation movement.”

The main point is...

“To find such ways and forms of US policy which would make it possible to cut US moral and material lever and at the same time it is intended to camouflage the imperialist policy of the United States.”⁹⁴

In the case of Bangladesh, the United States followed this very policy. Hoping to establish a friendship with the United States, China had to adopt the same policy. Due to this policy, China’s ideological dominance in Asia declined. China itself deviated ideologically, causing ideological harm to pro-China socialists.

According to the theory of international scholars, it can be said that the Soviet Union also acted in its own interest. Maintaining good relations with India offered geopolitical advantages. The same applies to Pakistan. It should be remembered that after the India-Pakistan war, it was the Soviet Union that mediated between the two. Since then, it did not want to disrupt its relations with either country.

Anwar Hossain stated that, like other states, Russia also adopted a highly opportunistic policy. However, this theory does not fully applicable here—otherwise, from the beginning, the Soviet Union’s policy would have been similar to that of other countries or China.

It is true that until August 1971, the Soviets wanted to maintain their alliance with Pakistan. Perhaps they hoped that Pakistan would remain intact, Sheikh Mujib would come to power, and the bloodshed would stop, thereby increasing Soviet influence in

the subcontinent. Soviet allies shared this same thinking. But at the same time, out of a sense of duty, it was Podgorny, as a head of state, who first proposed a political solution to Yahya and wrote to him directly. Others who believed in the same ideology did not write to Yahya directly. The Soviet tradition has been to help the oppressed. With that in mind, they proceeded accordingly.

China also wanted to observe the U.S. perspective. When both China and the United States took a clearly anti-Bangladesh stance, the Soviets, due to strategic interests and ideological principles, supported India. In the context of the Cold War at that time, there was no room for any other position.

Syed Anwar Hossain wrote- From beginning to end, the Soviet policy was opportunistic, and at the final stage—especially in December—a pro-Bangladesh tendency was observed. Overall, in formulating Soviet policy, national interest played a greater role than ideology.⁹⁵

This analysis is not entirely acceptable. Rather, Hasan Ferdous's view is more convincing. The Soviets issued speeches and statements until August and always spoke from an ideological standpoint, which aligned with India and Bangladesh. Gradually, they halted arms supplies and other assistance to Pakistan, and instead, strengthened India with new weaponry. As a result, India was able to enter the war with confidence.

On the other hand, when the Seventh Fleet arrived in the Bay of Bengal to pose a threat, the Soviets also sent a fleet. As a result, both China and the United States refrained from becoming directly involved in the war.

In contrast, the United States vocally supported Pakistan while simultaneously providing aid to India for the refugees. Toward the end, it sent a fleet either as a symbolic gesture or, even if genuine, only to show friendship. China supported Pakistan but did not provide any assistance—not even an attempt to send troops or a fleet. They didn't offer even a handful of rice for the refugees.

In persuading the Soviet Union to take a positive stance in favor of Bangladesh, socialist parties and groups from various countries played a significant role. They consistently supported Bangladesh, which helped unite socialist forces worldwide. The Communist Party of Bangladesh and the National Awami Party (NAP) supported the Liberation War. India's major socialist parties also supported the war, with the Communist Party of India (CPI) playing a particularly important role. The Soviets had to maintain ties with this fraternal political circle, which solidified their position in various countries.

At the United Nations, the final role played by the Soviet Union was unparalleled. From the beginning, the West, the United States, and China tried to enforce a ceasefire. If that had happened, Pakistan would have remained undefeated, and the issue of Bangladesh would have remained unresolved. On the other hand, India and the Soviet Union wanted to prevent the ceasefire proposal from being passed at the UN. Because India was advancing at the time, it would remain undefeated in the war, and Bangladesh would emerge as a new nation. That is indeed what happened. However, the role played by Jakab Malik deserves attention. None of the arguments he presented could be refuted by Britain, France, the United States, or China. After victory on the Eastern front, India itself declared a ceasefire on the 17th. Therefore, the Soviet-aligned socialist parties and groups, as well as the Soviet Union, played a positive role in favor of Bangladesh. Hasan Ferdous rightly wrote, "By exercising one veto after another at the United Nations, the Soviet Union kept Bangladesh's Liberation War alive. Even when victory was within reach, China and the United States were still trying to impose a ceasefire through the UN. Despite compromising its own national interests, the Soviet Union fought on our behalf in the global forum. Still, if the Soviet role is weighed on the same scale as that of the United States and China, it would be a distortion of the truth."⁹⁶

As a result of the Soviet Union's ideological policy, its influence in South Asia increased. A perception grew among the people

that the Soviets valued friendship—unlike China or the United States.⁹⁷ A proverb even developed: “He who has the United States as a friend needs no enemies.” No such proverb was ever coined for the Soviet Union. It is worth remembering that among the three powers, the Soviet Union was the first to recognize Bangladesh. It was also the first to extend a helping hand. The United States followed suit later. China, on the other hand, turned its back until after the assassination of Bangabandhu.

Over the past 50 years, all countries have shifted their perspectives. Ideologically, socialist states have deviated from their original paths. Most have adopted capitalist attitude. Socialist parties have weakened in nearly every country. Still, when it comes to questions of national liberation, many believe the Soviet Union might have stepped forward, but China or the United States—hardly ever.

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41. Ivan Raj Kumar Banerjee, 'Condemning the Genocide of Bangladesh: My Ordeal' *Condemnation of Genocide' 71 in Pakistan*, Dhaka, 2017.
42. *Dainik Kalantar*, 27.07.1971.
43. *Bangladesh Documents*, Vol.I, P. 520.
44. *Bangladesh Documents*, Vol.II, P. 156.
45. Syed Anwar Hossain, *op.cit*, p. 41.
46. For detail, P.N. Dhar, *Indira Gandhi, the 'Emergency' and Indian Democracy*, Delhi, 2021.
47. Swaran Singh had said it right in the Parliament—
 "While we welcome the rapprochement between Peking and Washington we cannot look upon it with equanimity if it means the domination of the two powers over this region or a tacit understanding between them to this effect." *Ibid*.
48. *Ibid*, p.172.
49. Jairam Ramesh, *Interwined Lives: P.N. Haksar and Indira Gandhi*, Delhi, 2019, P.135.
50. On May 31, 1969, Haksar told Indira Gandhi—
 "Diplomacy...is a function of power operating in a concrete place and time. Ideological considerations are meant for the neophytes. Situated as we are in South Asia, with our entire Northern border covered by China and USSR, we have to live with this geographical constitution. America can give us little comfort in such a situation." *Ibid*, P.136.

51. In the first stanza, there was—
“Guided by their loyalty to the lofty ideal of equality of all peoples and Nations, irrespective of race or creed, the High Contracting Parties condemn colonialism and reclaims in all form and manifestation, and real firm. Their determination to strive for their final and complete elimination.” *XPD Division, Ministry of External Affairs, India*; 9.8.1971.
52. *Bangladesh Documents*, Vol.II, P. 157-159.
53. “Each High contracting Party undertakes to abstain from providing any assistance to any third party that engages in armed conflict with other party. In the event of either party being subjected to and attach or threat there of, the High contracting parties shall immediately enter into mutual consultations in order to remove such threat and to take appropriate effective measures to ensure peace and security of their countries.” *Ibid*.
54. *Bangladesh Documents*, Vol.II, P. 157-159.
55. V. T. Kolbetsky, *op. cit*, p. 19.
56. In detail, Maharajakrishna Rasgotra, *A Life in Diplomacy*, Delhi, 2016.
57. “Dr. Kissinger said he did not really know what India wanted. If India wanted to become an extension of Soviet foreign policy, then inevitably the American in India was bound to decline and India would have to look to the Soviet Union for the greater part of it’s economic and other existence. He could not understand why India would want to be drawn into the Sino-Soviet rivalry, or why it would deliberately antagonise the one country that had no national interest in the subcontinental except an independent and healthy India and an independent subcontinent.
Ambassador Jha replied that the situation in India was very difficult. First of all, Madame Gandhi was not at all pro-Soviet. She had for a long time resisted the proposal that had first been thought up by Dinesh Singh, the former foreign minister-of this treaty of friendship. In fact, Jha said on a personal basis, he wouldn’t be a bit surprised if Dinesh Singh actually received payment from the communists. At the same time he also thought that Kaul and Haksar were very much under Soviet

influence... still in order to score temporary points to, India was running a tremendous risk of permanently alienating the United States.” Rasgotra, *op.cit*, pp 253-254.

58. Jairam Ramesh, *op. cit*, pp. 222–223.
59. *Bangladesh Documents*, Vol II, PP. 29.
60. *Ibid*, P. 30.
61. Jairam Ramesh, *op. cit*.
62. For details, see Syed Anwar Hossain, *op. cit*.
63. Budhraj’s *mentioned article*, pp. 489–490.
64. *The New Age*, 16.5.1971.
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66. *Bangladesh Documents*, Vol II, PP 160-161.
67. *Ibid*, India News, 8-8-1971.
68. *Bangladesh Documents*, Vol. II.
69. *New Age*, 22-8. 1971.
70. For detail, Kolbetsky, *op.cit*.
71. Hasan Hafizur Rahman, *op.cit*.
72. *Dainik Kalantar*, 08.10. 1971.
73. *Morning Star*, 28.10.1971.
74. *Bangladesh Documents*, Vol. II, P. 165-168.
75. *Ibid*, PP 175-176.
76. *Ibid*, PP 180-181.
77. *Ibid*, PP 181.
78. Zubeida Mustafa, *op. cit*, p. 46.
79. Hasan Ferdous, *Muktijuddhe Soviet Bondhura [Soviet Friends in the Liberation War]*, Dhaka, 2013.
80. Hasan Ferdous, *op. cit*, p. 138.
81. Quoted, *ibid*, [Ferdous’s translation], p. 129.
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86. *ibid*, P. 45.
87. *ibid*, P. 187.
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93. Zubeida Mustafa's *aforementioned article*, p. 48.
94. V.A. Zharov V. V. A. Tyurin, 'Introduction', *Southeast Asia: History Economy Policy* Moscow, 1972.
95. For detail of Syed Anwar Hossain, *op.cit*.
96. Hasan Ferdous, *op.cit*, p. 253.
97. Zharov and Tyurin wrote—
 “The Soviet Union build its relations with the Southeast Asian countries on the basis of the fraternal assistance and solidarity with national liberation movement. The people of Southeast Asia regard the world’s first socialist country as their true ally in the struggle against imperialism and new-colonialism and as reliable defender of their national sovereignty.” *Op.cit*. P.27.