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Liberation War in Cartoons

Almost two decades ago, I made an effort to collect and preserve the documents of the Liberation War. There were multiple reasons for this. Although a lot of research on the Liberation War was going on, it had a problem of repetition and imitation. On the one hand, there was inadequate information; on the other hand, BNP-Jamaat, holding state power, was distorting the documents of the Liberation War. Jamaat-e-Islami was destroying newspapers of 1971 in different libraries and trying to prove that Ziaur Rahman played a significant role in the Liberation War of Bangladesh. I was released from prison then. It seems that as a student of History, such malpractices need to be stopped. So, I formed a research center, 'Bangladesh Charcha', which initiated publishing the *Media and Liberation War Series*.

The Liberation War of Bangladesh was an event that shook the world's conscience after the horrific times of World War II. Almost every newspaper in the world [especially in India] has published various news of the nine months of the Liberation War. These details were unknown to us then. So, we took the project of publishing the news or reports from international media in various volumes. On the one hand, the initiative shows that the name of Ziaur Rahman was not mentioned anywhere,

rather the presence of Bangabandhu was colossal; on the other hand, the valuable documents of the War will be preserved. We have already published 27 volumes in the last 19 years. Undoubtedly, the documents helped and will help a lot of researchers.

The first volume of that book was about cartoons. During the Liberation War, various cartoons were published in the newspapers of home and abroad. The volume was a compilation of almost 350 cartoons collected by Riaz Ahmed after working for two long years.

Six years ago, we established '1971: Genocide-Torture Archive and Museum' in Khulna. Four years ago, a 'Centre for Genocide-Torture and Liberation War Studies' was set up in the museum. In the last four years, we have published 150 research books from this center, which have enriched the Liberation War research and played a pioneering role in many fields. We have millions of pages of documents in our archives. Reports, videos, photographs, portraits of artists, cartoons of the Liberation War are stored in the electronic Archive.

We want to diversify the research on Liberation War. The Liberation War and its history are not linear; instead, it is multidimensional. Although, at the outset, victory and War was the central issue of the historiography of the Liberation War, emphasis has been given to genocide for the last decade. However, there are other issues, such as regional forces, enemies, and civil society. If we study all these issues, we will understand the extent of the Liberation War; and the research will be multidimensional. With this intention, we again take the initiative to publish a collection of cartoons. Besides taking the cartoons from Riaz Ahmed's compilation, we have also used our Archive materials rigorously. Almost 150 cartoons are added from our Archive. Some cartoons were also published in the Assignment: Bangladesh' 71, a compilation by Moudud Elahi published almost two decades earlier. So, our current

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compilation pays its tribute to the predecessors. We are publishing 'Liberation War in cartoons' in two volumes: the first volume will contain the cartoon from Bangla Newspapers, and the second volume will contain the cartoons from English Newspapers. This is the first volume. It is to be noted that, while editing, I found some mistakes in Riaz's text. Every effort has been made to correct and revise these.

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While visiting the Victoria and Albert Museum in London about three decades ago, I found cartoons of High Renaissance painter Raphael. Although I have seen many drawings and paintings of Raphael, I have never seen any cartoons. Nowadays, cartoons mean some particular work of art, but it used to indicate the draft of the paintings drawn by the artists. Of course, cartoon remains no longer a 'draft' or 'layout'; instead, that's a particular type of 'final'.

Cartoon or caricature is a particular type of illustration and is a powerful medium of conveying opinions nowadays. Initially, a cartoon was a drawing, a full-size pattern for execution in painting, tapestry, mosaic, or other forms. From the 1840s onwards, it started acquiring a new meaning: a pictorial parody that sharpens the public opinion of contemporary social and political events or trends by using different caricatures. In the modern world, the cartoon's primary function is to convey political commentary and editorial opinion in newspapers and represent social and political comedy. There is a slight difference between a cartoon and a caricature. A caricature is the distorted presentation of a person, type, or action, which generally illustrates a salient feature of any subject exaggeratedly by making an analogy with animals, birds, etc. For instance, representing a villain by making an analogy with the actions of a crocodile or ferocious animal. Caricature deals with individuals,

whereas cartoons deal with groups and corporate characteristics. However, the subtle difference between cartoons and caricatures is not maintained by the ordinary reader or viewer; instead, both are regarded as 'cartoons'. This text also refers to both cartoon and caricature as 'cartoon'.

Cartoon, as an individual and social satire, was a product of the European Renaissance. It was a protest against the Renaissance belief in order, symmetry, and fixed canons of beauty, which also reacted to the existing hierarchy. Encyclopedia Britannica writes, cartoons are created not only in response to artistic tendencies but also to the trends that have shaped the modern state, its society, science, and religion. *Britannica* started the history cartoon, as a political satire, from the 18th century. Nowadays, political cartoons are the featured part of editorial opinion, social mobilization, and transformation. The political cartoon is the mainstream cartoon of current times and our book also.

As an important tool for creating a dialogue between society and the state, political cartoons are the social reflection of any political event. The purpose of the political cartoon is to criticize any political event, political actions, or political figures satirically. It questions various government and state policies and underscores the inconsistencies of popular culture. The news, collected and published by the journalists, is conveyed more powerfully [satirically or humorously] to the readers by the cartoonists. Political cartoons also play a significant role in creating public opinion and manufacturing consent. Some call cartoons as 'educator and editorialist, seller and seducer.' So, the cartoons generally regarded as something 'satirical' become an intense phenomenon in the end. However, political cartoons are not only used to express an opinion and challenge the government policy or hegemonic discourse; instead, it is also used to spread hate speech. The events of World War II and Nazi

propaganda that used to propagate antisemitic cartoons testify to the role of cartoons in spreading hate speech.

However, the debate over political cartoons that emerged in the first decade of the 21st century is unprecedented in the history of cartoons. On the one hand, the states- be they democratic or authoritarian or fascist- are cracking down on the dissident cartoonists. On the other hand, the publication of a cartoon of the Prophet Mohammad, founder of Islam, in a Danish newspaper in 2005 caused a great deal of controversy. The Muslim world erupted in rage. Similar disputes erupted after *Charlie Hebdo*, a French satirical weekly magazine, published cartoons about the Prophet Muhammad and Islam; Islamic terrorists attacked *Charlie Hebdo* and killed almost 17 people in response to the publication. The world, including the Muslim states, protested against the attack and expressed solidarity with the cartoonists. At the same time, a heated debate exploded in the East and West over the political cartoons and the limits of freedom of speech and expression. The controversy started centering the cartoons is still going on.

The cartoons we have collected are based on the Liberation War in 1971. Without any doubt, the cartoons illustrated in the context of a significant political-historical event have been categorized as 'political cartoons'. Understanding political cartoons requires a thorough understanding of the cartoon's content, pretext, and social and historical conditions, and audience. Although to some researchers, captions of the cartoons are necessary for understanding the cartoons, some argue, captions are not always required to understand the cartoons.

Social and political cartoons are sketched on the context of a specific social, political and historical event and realities. It is impossible to comprehend cartoons alienating it from the context. However, cartoons never provide a detailed account of

any event; instead, they offer a specific event narrative. While discussing the cartoons of 1971, we have to remember that these will offer some narratives of that event.

3

The advent of the cartoon in the Indian subcontinent, associated with the beginning of the newspapers and media, is deeply linked with the colonial process. Although the Portuguese carried printing press in 1550 for the first time in the continent, the British published newspapers for the first time. James Augustus Hicky, an Irishman, launched the first printed newspaper titled *Bengal Gazette* in India in 1780, which eventually ceased publication within two years due to publishing news inconsistent with the colonial rulers. But within in few years lot of newspapers began to emerge. The Bangali, a Bangali-owned newspaper, started its publication in 1789; *Amrita Bazar Patrika* was published in 1868.

Although the satirical representation through cartoons or caricatures began in the colonial era, there was no shortage of various means of satire or humorous presentation in the social life of Bengal. Critical attitudes towards prevailing customs, traditions, institutions, and contemporary issues were evident in multiple folk songs, Gambhira, poems, etc. There was also a strong tradition of criticizing satirically through written prose. *Nabababu Bilash*, *Hutum Panachar Naksha* are examples of this form. This continuation is found in the Calcutta-based caricatures initiated in the nineteenth century.

The first printed cartoon of the Indian subcontinent, *Delhi Sketch Book*, was published before the Great Rebellion of 1857. Indian Punch was published in 1859; *Indian Charivari* was also published in the same year in Calcutta. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, famous for publishing cartoons and caricatures, published a cartoon in 1872 for the first time. *Horbola Bhar* was the first

Bangla Cartoon Magazine, which started its journey in 1874; Prannath Datta published *Basantak* in 1874. The contents intensely followed *Punch*, an English Comic Magazine, - be the owners Indian or British. British-owned periodicals followed the narratives of London and recreated this in India also. These cartoons contained traditional colonial representations: representing colonial rule as ‘mission of civilizing’ or ‘White Man’s Burden’, or representing Bangali or Indian as ignorant. However, despite mocking Anglo-Indian lifestyles, Bangali cartoonists used to criticize and mock their society. So, they were reluctant to attack or criticize the colonial rule while exposing the hypocrisy of the English-educated Bangalis. Colonial censorship was one of the factors behind this.



Kolijugher Brahmin, Gaganendranath Tagore

Basantak, second Bangali cartoon magazine, was one of the pioneers of cartoons in this region. They dared to criticize the British rule without any hesitation. However, *Basantak* has not always shown progressive attitudes in terms of content selection or attitude. Instead, on the question of women’s education, personal attacks, and racial attacks also became its subject.

However, researchers claimed that the cartoons published during the colonial period were more social than political cartoons.

Among the early cartoonists of the region are: Gaganendranath Tagore, Dineshranjan Das, Charu Roy, Upendrakishore Ray Chowdhury Sukumar Ray, Prafulla Chandra Lahiri. Gaganendranath’s cartoons revealed the inconsistencies in the political and social life of the first three decades of the twentieth century. On the other hand, Prafulla Chandra Lahiri, known as PCL, greatly influenced India. Indian cartoonists Abu Abraham, Kutty, Shankar, and Laxman are famous. When cartoonists from Bangladesh started drawing political cartoons in the sixties, they were enormously influenced by the cartoonists mentioned above. Many have spoken about the contribution of cartoons and cartoonists in the Indian National Movement.



*Haraf Khedao Andolon [Movement to remove Bangla words],
Dopeaja, Sainik*

Bangladeshi cartoonists started to blossom after the Partition when Dhaka-centric art and culture began in full swing. The practice of cartoons was widely begun in the fifties. Zainul Abedin, Kazi Abul Kashem, Kamrul Hasan alias ‘Vimrul’, Rafiqun Nabi ‘Ranbi’, Jamir, Mizan, Kalam Mahmud, Azizur Rahman, Mostafa Monwar, Hashem Khan, Sirajul Haque Sarada, Shahtab, Saleh Chowdhury, and many others joined in the activities. Among them, Ranabi became the most influential.

Some brilliant cartoons were illustrated on Language Movement in the fifties. *Sainik* published a cartoon captioned 'Haraf Khedao Andolon', illustrated by the Kazi Abul Kasem. Cartoonists also took part actively in the Liberation and democratic movement of the Pakistan era. But due to military rule, illustrating political cartoons was not an easy task.

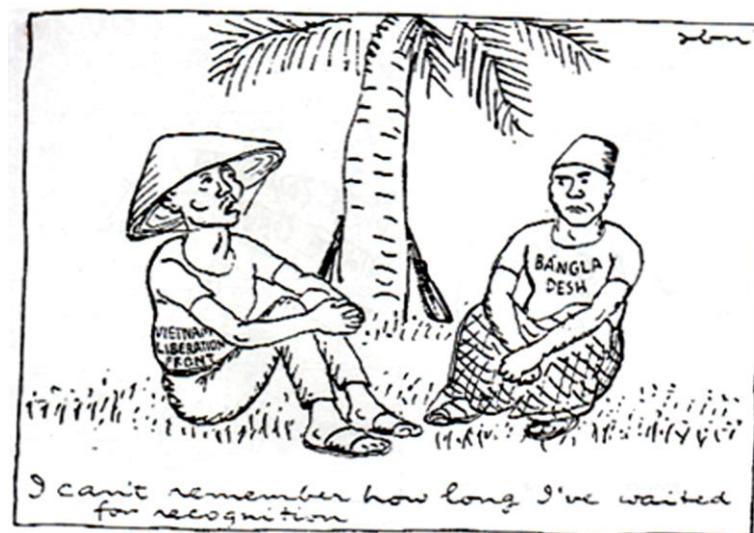
However, describing the history of cartoons is not the primary purpose here. Cartoons have been illustrated in Bengal since the nineteenth century. Around the forties of the last century, artists of our country started drawing one or two cartoons. Among them, Abul Kashem and Kamrul Hasan became well known. Kamrul used the pseudonym Bhimrul, and Kashem used Dopeyaja in their drawings. Many have painted after independence, such as Rafiqun Nabi or Ranbi, Nazrul, Quddus, Shishir, Shahriar, Ahsan Habib, etc. Among them, Ranbi is unique. His *Tokai* series has increased and strengthened his reputation in Bangladesh. So, we have a tradition of drawing and watching cartoons. However, political cartoons are no longer seen in newspapers or newspapers lately due to political intolerance. Tolerance towards the cartoon might indicate the scale of the democratic environment of a country: if politicians can tolerate political cartoons, democracy could be considered tolerant.

4

Most of the cartoons compiled in this article are from 1971; however, some cartoons, drawn by Ahmed, focused on 1969-70. The reason behind selecting these cartoons is that these 20 cartoons show the background of the Liberation War. Riaz Ahmed collected the cartoons at first for his compilation mentioned above.

Maximum cartoons on the Liberation War were published in newspapers/magazines from West Bengal or other parts of India.

The daily *Jugantar* from Kolkata and the *Times of India* from Delhi published many political cartoons. Besides, *Daily Anandabazar*, *Kalantar*, *Desh*, *Darpan*, *Amrit Bazar*, *Statesman*, *Hindustan Standard* published cartoons regularly. Some magazines had a reservation on the front page for 'pocket cartoons.' Their main titles were 'Obarrtho', 'Third Eye View', 'Smile a Day', etc. These cartoons were drawn by Amal, Chai, Sufi, Kutti, Laxman, Rebati Bhushan, Abu, Sudhir Dar, and others. Many of their cartoons were published in various newspapers of the country and abroad, especially Abu. Amal Chakraborty [Amal] and Abu Abraham have drawn the most about the war of liberation. An album containing the cartoons of Abu on the issue of the Liberation War was published, but unfortunately, we could not collect the album.



*I can't remember how long I've waited for recognition,
15 April 1971, The Indian Express/ Abu Abraham*

There are some newspapers, such as *Banglar Bani*, *People*, published from Mujibnagar. Cartoonists like Nayan, Satun used to draw there; however, we could not recover their real identities.

Ranbi used to draw in the *Forum* in 1970. The cover he used to draw for the *Forum* was mainly cartoon-based. Mohammed Yunus published Bangladesh News Letter from the USA. He drew some cartoons in his News Letter. It is to be mentioned that cartoonists, whose cartoons are compiled in this book, from India had no contact with any art School or College, whereas cartoonists from Bangladesh had close contact with art school or college.

Some cartoons were published in Western newspapers also, though the number is relatively few. We have compiled what we were able to collect. Still, we are trying to collect cartoons from different sources. I hope we can add cartoons in the next edition. Cartoons published in English Newspapers are compiled in this volume only.

The contents of the cartoons vary, but editorial cartoons are mainly political or social. Caricature or figure distortion does not amount to cartoon only. The content and its theme are significant for a successful cartoon. The different cartoonists use different methods, sketches, and lines to draw their cartoons, distinguishing their works. The lines of Abu and Chandi are not the same. The person who draws cartoons, primarily political or social, has to be politically conscious or motivated. Knowledge about International politics gave different dimensions in political cartoons. Abu Abraham is a good example. It is also essential for a cartoonist to have a political ideology to draw a successful cartoon.

Cartoonists of this compilation are highly politically conscious and motivated, as well as humanists. Abraham draws a cartoon that depicts a Vietnamese farmer and a Bangali farmer parallelly. While he was working in *Guardian*, he opposed or disliked the US military invasion in Vietnam. For this, he drew cartoons linking the farmers of Vietnam and Bangladesh, which gave a different dimension to the cartoon. The contents of most of the cartoons were: the refugee crisis, genocide, administration,

international relations, history, etc. Figures such as Indira Gandhi, Yahya, Bhutto, Sheik Mujib, Nixon, Mao repeatedly appeared in their cartoons. Everyone portrayed Yahya as a monster or compared him with Hitler except a very few cases. To me, the most vital cartoon (published in Poster) of this genre is ‘Annihilate the Demons,’ drawn by Kamrul Hasan. This is also best a poster. Some cartoons do not have any caption or title, but the theme or content is inferable. In most cases, Bhutto had been portrayed as a villain or obedient to the military.

These cartoons were published 50 years ago. We have collected these from various books, the internet, and our archives. The issue of copyright is not mentioned anywhere.

5

The collection of Bangla cartoons drawn by Amal Chakrabarty, Noren Roy, Chandi Lahiri, Kutti, and Reboti Bhushan. It also includes the cartoon of other cartoonists, but they have the maximum.

Amal Chakraborty (1936) is one of the prominent cartoonists in West Bengal in the seventies. He mainly worked for The Jugantar. Most of his cartoons related to 1971 have been published there. Although some cartoons were published in *The Statesman*, *The Times of India*, *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, and *The Hindustan Standard*, Amal Chakraborty was more regular with *Jugantar*. Some cartoons, published in *Jugantar*, were published in the English *Amrita Bazar Patrika* later. He used to write ‘Amal’ in the cartoons as his signature.

As we have selected the cartoons from March 1971 for our collection, the first cartoons of Amal appeared on March 3 in *Jugantar*. Bangabandhu won the election, but Pakistani rulers and elite, especially Bhutto and Yahya, tried to deceive him and Bangalis. They aimed to prevent him from coming to power. The Assembly was scheduled on March 3, but Bhutto warned that

there would be a blood flood if the Assembly held as per schedule. Yahya adjourned the Assembly session at the persuasion of Bhutto. Amal presented the whole situation brilliantly in his cartoon: Mujib is the hero, but he is not disturbed or agitated. However, he is a little worried because Bhutto and Yahya's joint action started on March 1.

The cartoon of March 3 showed that the discussion was going on between the two sides. It portrayed Mujib as a tall figure, which represents his firm determination towards the demands. Yahya represents the military, which was a threat then. As the main concern for Bhutto was any settlement between Yahya and Mujib, he was warning Yahya not to compromise or say anything improper.

As the war had begun, the resistance across the country also started. Yahya was portrayed as a prehistoric dinosaur whose head is comparatively less than his figure. On April 9 in *Jugantar*, a cartoon showed that Muktifouj would strike on his head with a weapon (in this case, a stick).

Darpan also published a cartoon on the same day, which showed that Yahya started the turmoil situation, but he will lose in the end. So, a grave is reserved in the graveyard for Yahya, which captioned 'The grave is reserved for Yahya.'

On the one hand, China supported Pakistan in the War, and the Naxalite movement was getting stronger in West Bengal. Naxalites did not like our Liberation War. Their slogan was-China's Chairman is our chairman. Ironically, the cartoon portrayed Yahya, who was writing, 'China's Chairman is our Chairman', on the wall. Amal criticized two critical political phenomena in the cartoon.

British parliamentary team visited Pakistan during Liberation War. On June 16 in *Jugantar*, a cartoon showed Yahya 'apologetically informing the team that harsh measures were

taken against Bangalis. But this type of recognition is nothing but crocodile tears.

Jugantar published a cartoon on June 19 that addresses the refugee crisis of that time. India, represented by Foreign Minister Sharan Sing, tries to explain the situation to the world leaders, but the leaders are not interested. There were just ignoring him.



3 July 1971, *Jugantar*/ Amal

Another cartoon, published in *Jugantar* on July 3, presented a situation of the competition of war-weapon. It focuses on the politics of providing a weapon to the Pakistani military who were committing genocide with these weapons. It seems that, regarding selling the weapons to Pakistan, Mao and Nixon competed with each other. Here Mao and Nixon are the representatives of the Chinese and USA Policy, respectively.

It is not easy to draw cartoons if you are not aware of politics. Not only this, A cartoonist can often be biased. Like Abu Abraham, Amal is also conscious of politics. He may not be as sharp as Abu Abraham, but his sense of humor about India was very keen. He admitted that the drawing of the Shaila Chakravarti influenced him. But I did not think so. I found his drawing is strong, and the lines are remarkably sharp.

Chandi Lahiri was born in 1931 in Nabadwip. He came to Calcutta in 1950 and did his MA in Bangali from Calcutta University. He used to sign his cartoons only under the name Chandi. He lost a hand in a truck accident in Kolkata. However, this accident did not deter him. He started his journalistic career in 1951 by joining *The Daily Lok Sebok*.

Chandi never went to any art college. However, he started drawing cartoons in 1962. At that time, he joined *The Anandabazar* group, and used to draw on *The Hindustan Standard*. *The Anandabazar* and *The Hindustan Standard* had two reservations in the first column called 'Third Eye View' for cartoons. Those cartoons were also known as 'pocket cartoons.' He worked in this group continuously for 30 years.

Chandi did not confine himself to the world of cartoons. For various charitable works, he made many free pictures/cartoons. Besides bringing the concept of animation to West Bengal, he has also written for children. He is also the author of *History of Bangali Cartoons*. He passed away in 2018 at the age of 96.

Chandi drew a lot of cartoons on the Liberation War in 1971, especially in the 'Tirjak' section of *Anandabazar*, and *Desh*. The cartoon published on April 10 focused on a crisis that arises from the curiosity of the masses. Masses of West Bengal were visiting border areas out of their curiosity, which agitated the border guards. The guards were yelling, 'there are a lot of picnic spots around Calcutta; why here?' Chandi was attacking and criticizing the mentality of some people from West Bengal in the cartoon by questioning them: Is genocide a matter of enjoyment? Though he usually used thick brushstrokes, he used nib in this cartoon.

Another cartoon published on April 12 in 'tirjak' portrayed Yahya Khan. The previous day [April 11] was Easter Sunday. The cartoon showed that Yahya was celebrating the day by shopping. But what was in his shopping bag? It was full of

human skulls. The caption of the cartoon was 'Shopping of Easter'. He portrayed the brutality of the genocide and Yahya in a tiny sphere.

The cartoon published on April 20 also focused on the propaganda of Yahya Khan. Pakistan Radio Station used to propagate false news and rumors throughout the whole nine months of the War. Hossain Ali was the Deputy High Commissioner in Pakistan High Commission in Kolkata. While transferring him to West Pakistan during Liberation War, Hossain Ali, instead of complying with the transfer order, declared his allegiance to the Government of Bangladesh on 18 April 1971 along with sixty-five of his colleagues. The cartoon showed that, at that time, Pakistan Radio Station was propagating that, 'it's a lie, we have no High Commission in Calcutta.'



20 April 1971, *Anandabazar Patrika*, Chandi

Puthukkody Kottuthody Sankaran Kutty Nair is mostly known as Kutty, in short, P K S Kutty. He was born in 1921 in Kerala. He has no academic education in art. At the age of 19, he started drawing cartoons in Malayalam magazines. In 1942, he joined Nehru's, *National Herald*. He joined the Anandabazar Group in 1951 after working for six years in Madras and Mumbai newspapers. He worked for 35 years in three magazines of this group – *The Hindustan Standard*, *The Anandabazar*, and *Desh*. Then he joined *The Aajkal* in 1986. After retirement, he moved to America after a decade, where he died in 2011. Kutty was a disciple of Shankara. But he was associated with Bangla Magazine for almost 50 years of his life. He used to write the

title in English; later, they were translated. Kutty was also a writer; he wrote the autobiography titled *Years of Laughter: Reminiscences of a Cartoonist*.

Kutty was mainly a political cartoonist; he has drawn cartoons about the political events in West Bengal, especially about Siddhartha Shankar Roy, whom he named 'Bangeshwar 2'. While writing about the history of cartoons, Sumit Ghosh remarked, 'No one except Kafi Khan stimulates the emotions of Bangali like Kutty. He could easily get into the complexities of Bangali politics and create a humorous picture with the help of allegorical metaphors, satire, ridicule, allusions, and dialogues so that the readers could understand the subject of the cartoon.' His cartoons on Liberation War can be analyzed in this context. Here I collected 16 cartoons on Bangladesh published in English paper in 1971.

On 6th March, *Desh* published a cartoon of Kutty titled 'Challenge.' This was when the Non-Cooperation Movement was at its peak. Mujib became the ultimate leader then. Mujib was portrayed as a tall and strong man, whereas Bhutto, who challenged him, was portrayed as a sick, powerless older man. The caricature of Bhutto was much different from the Mujib. He ridiculed Bhutto several times during these nine months.

Desh published another cartoon of Kutty on May 22, which was quite different in form from the contemporary cartoonists. India was depicted as a Camel that bears a lot of crises on its back: West Bengal, unemployment, Naxal, etc. But, the major problem of that time was the Bangladesh refugee crisis. The crisis was upsetting the balance, which created a huge fuss for Indira Gandhi.

A cartoon titled 'Smile, please' was published on September 11 in *Desh*. It showed that Bhutto was taking a picture of Mao and Yahya; Yahya was standing behind Mao. But they were not

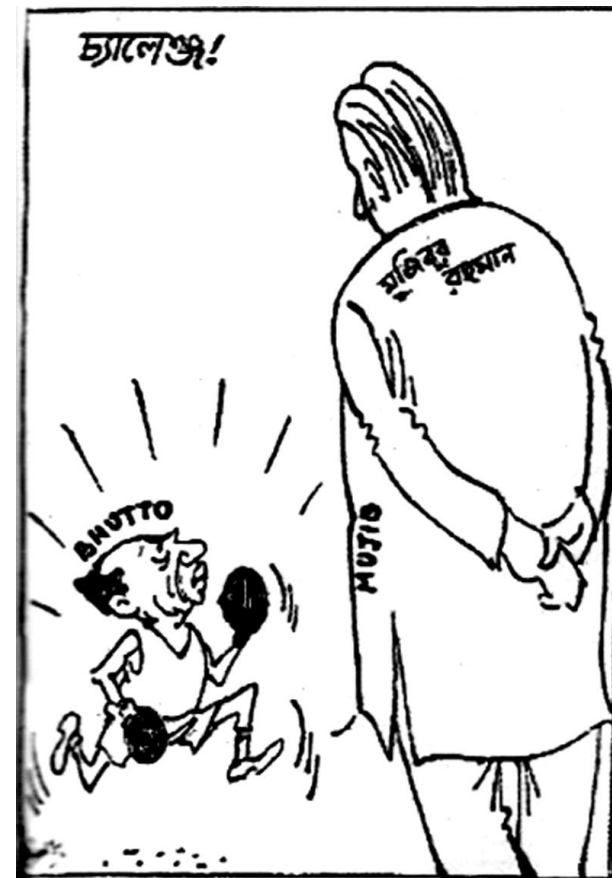
laughing because the situation was getting out of their hand. Kutty depicted the situation comically.

Another cartoon, published in *Anandabazar* on December 25 and 30, depicted the situation of Bhutto and Yahya after the defeat in the War. First, the cartoon showed a circus stage, where Yahya was performing. Nixon and Mao, representatives of two superpowers, were standing on the other side of the stage. As Bangladesh became independent, they had no sympathy for losers like Yahya. Yahya's foot slipped from the trope. He sought help from Yahya and Mao, but they uttered, 'Yahya, very sorry'.

The content of the second cartoon is very similar. The war was over, Bangladesh became independent. Bhutto took over power in West Pakistan. The cartoon portrayed Bhutto as a weak person doing his physical exercise in the gym and trying to convince China and the US that his [Bhutto] power is not debilitated yet.

The *Manorama* published an article about Kutty. Sumit Ghosh quoted a few lines from it, 'Bangali still remember three Malayali Shankara: Shankara from Advaita, a school of Vedanta philosophy; Politician Sankaran Namboodiripad; and Sankaran Kutty.'

Reboti Bhushan Gosh [1921-2007] was one of the most famous cartoonists. He has illustrated in almost all the newspapers, little magazines of his time in West Bengal. His cartoons on the political situation of the Indian subcontinent were full of humor. His drawing lettering, sign, style, everything was unique and artistic. His cartoons were comprehensible and enjoyable even without captions, which proves his excellence in drawing. During Liberation War, he illustrated the international situation and position regarding the war. The contents of his cartoons included China-US relations, the standpoint of superpowers, the silence of UN, etc.



6 March 1971, Weekly Desh/Kutty

Regarding Liberation War, we found that the first cartoon of Reboti was published on March 11 in Jugantar. The cartoon portrayed Mujib, Yahya, and Bhutto. It was the time of the non-cooperation movement, and Yahya came to Dhaka to meet and discuss with Mujib. It showed that Mujib was adamant, whereas Yahya, after meeting with Bhutto in Larkana and following his advice, got stuck in the situation. The cartoon portrayed Bhutto as a cunning monkey.



10 March 1971, *Jugantar*/ Reboti

Jugantar published another great cartoon on April 24 titled 'Associate'. It illustrated that Pakistan or Yahya was perpetrating a genocide, whereas China or Mao is pouring a drink to the glass of Yahya, indicating China's policy regarding Pakistan. Reboti was proficient in drawing animal figures and used these figures in almost all cartoons. It is also evident in the caricature of Mao in this cartoon.

Another cartoon captioned 'Large dog of Busy man' was published on *Jugantar*. It illustrated almost all the major parties of the Liberation War. It showed that a child [indicating Bangladesh] is walking with Indira [India], where busy men [US and Western countries] are also gossiping. They had a chained dog [Pakistan]. While chatting, the shackles fell off their hands, and the dog attacked the child. The concerned and tensed mother [India] was trying to seek the attention of the busy men; they were ignoring her.

Another cartoon was published on this issue on June 6 [*Jugantar*]. The title was 'Aronne Ropon' instead of 'aronne

Rodon'. It depicted a forest, where Nixon, Mao, and Western politicians were the trees and standing will silently. Indian humanist leader Jayaprakash Narayan visited them to gain their support regarding Bangladesh. But No one is paying attention to him. He illustrated the character brilliantly.

Another cartoon titled 'speak up' [kotha ko, kotha ko], was published on June 13 in *Jugantar*. The world consciousness, figured as an animal, was standing still like a statue. Sharan was trying to gain support but ignored it. Instead, the world consciousness was silenced. The cartoon represented the international relations and crisis of this time.



speak up; 13 June 1971, *Jugantar*/ Reboti

Sumit Gosh remarked on Reboti in his book titled 'Bharoter Rajnoitik Cartoon Charcha': 'Even the biggest arduous critics will not able to notice a fault with his paintings. His compositions are an expression of the effervescent emotion of his soul. If we look at Reboti's technique, we can observe some characteristics: one, the rhythmic motion of his lines. He is more comfortable with a brushstroke than a pen. Two, in his thorough description of the content of the cartoon, he used to portray the

genuine scene. Three, He was an expert in illustrating the pictorial language of the characters' facial expressions, glimpses, or displeasure. Four, He had a great taste in music. We also find rhythm in the drawing. Finally, his cartoons are full of satire and humor. Bitterness, hatred, or anger were never expressed in any cartoon.'

Finally, I will mention Naren Roy [1936-2003]. He used 'Sufi' as a pen name. He was not as known as the aforementioned cartoonists, but he was a tireless fighter during the Liberation War. Almost every week, he drew cartoons under the title "Obartho" in Jugantar.

On March 7, I saw him presenting Bhutto as a genocider. We reckon the genocide started unofficially on March 1. Genocide from March 25 is identified officially. Identifying Bhutto as a genocider before March 25 proves the foresight of Sufi.

Another cartoon titled "Listen to eyewitness accounts" was published on April 20. Pakistani military already had started perpetrating genocide. But from Pakistan Radio, constant propaganda was propagated, saying that Dhaka's situation is normal.' The cartoon showed that people are being forced to say this by holding a pistol in his back.

Probably, his best cartoon was 'Refugee.' He illustrated the condition of the people of East Bengal and West Bengal simultaneously. In one part, Pakistani was perpetrating genocide; in the other, Naxalites created an unstable situation. Another cartoon on the International crisis was published on April 30 in Jugantar. The title was 'Who will save us.' It depicted that conflicts were going on in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos. Bangladesh also becomes a conflict zone. Everything was happening due to the interest of the Superpowers. In this context, the question of the people of Bangladesh is 'who will save us?'.



30 April 1971, Jugantar/Sufi

A large part of the cartoons drawn by Sufi in 1971 was about Yahya. Like Kamrul Hasan, Yahya's face is stylized in his case. Sufi delivered a simple description of the impact of everyday events.

Overall, all the cartoonists have chosen Yahya at the center of the cartoon. He is portrayed formally.

However, the best of these is the drawing of Kamrul Hasan. He is the one who has captured the proper form of Yahya.



Sufi



Chandi



Qamrul Hasan



Garland



Pir Ali



Reboti



Sanjay



Abu Abraham



Amal



Kutty



Keith



Yunus

The period of the cartoons collected in this collection is from February-March 1971 to the very end of 1971. Only cartoons published in Bangla newspapers have been discussed in this section. Most of the periodicals were published by Kolkata. The cartoons were taken from the *Jugantar*, *Anandabazar*, *Desh*,

Swaraj, *Saptahik Darpan*, *Bangladesh Sangbad Parikrama*, *Joybangla*, *Saptahik Biplobi Bangla*, *Saptahik Sangrami Bangla*, *Saptahik Ranangan*. Most of the cartoons are mainly from three newspapers/periodicals: *Jugantar*, *Anandabazar*, and *Desh*. Sometimes, similar cartoons were published in *Jugantar*, *Anandabazar*, and *Amritbazar*. In that case, only the name of *Jugantar* is given. The prominent cartoonists were Sufi, Chandi, Amal, Reboti, Pir Ali, Kutty, Shail Chakraborty. Generally, Sufi, Amal, and Reboti were published in *Jugantar*, cartoons of Kutty in *Desh*, and cartoons of Chandi in *Anandabazar*.

6

Of all the cartoons that we have collected, I found the cartoons of Anwar Ahmed [Enver Ahmed in English spelling] significant elements of history. The way Enver has portrayed the history of Bangladesh in 19 cartoons is impeccable.

Enver was born in 1909 in Rawalpindi. He graduated from Lahore Government College and took a job as a chemist in a sugar mill. He was a self-taught person. Before the partition of India, he changed his job and took a job in the advertising department of *The Daily Pioneer*. Then he changed his mind again and joined *The Dawn*. The paper, used to get published from Lucknow, shifted to Karachi after 1947. *Dawn* was a staunch supporter of the Muslim League, which was the reason for not continuing the job here. Afterward, he joined the *Hindustan Times* in 1945.

Enver was not a believer in Two-Nation Theory. While working at the *Dawn*, he got to know much about the Muslim League. Though he was born in Rawalpindi and a Muslim, he did not go to Pakistan.

Although not much is known about Enver, I guess he started his career as a cartoonist in the *Hindustan Times*, and since then, he started to be popular. Usually, contemporary events stimulate a

cartoonist to draw cartoons. But Enver was unique in his work as he has a profound knowledge about the politics of the subcontinent, and he used to draw cartoons based on historical context. He portrayed the country, its history, and its nature through his cartoons. Sumit Ghosh commented on the cartoons Envar drew during the Indo-Pakistani conflict of 1945-47, 'The novelty of the idea, creation of dramatic moments and the reflection of the metaphors fascinated the readers of the era and made the supporters of Muslim League angry. Such logical cartoons are rare in the cartoon collection of India.'



A Change of Zoo Keeper, Ahmed

This comment also applies to the cartoons about Bangladesh. There are no dates or sources mentioned in the cartoons. Maybe those cartoons are collected from Ahmed's Political Pot-pouri, a compilation of cartoons. Did Ahmed draw these at different times? Or did he want to illustrate the situation of East

Bengal/East Pakistan with 19 cartoons during the Liberation War of Bangladesh? There is a succession in 19 cartoons. East Bengal and West Pakistan together form a country. Note that the name of the eastern part of Pakistan was East Bengal (old name) [until 1956]. But Sindh, Baluchistan, Northwest Frontier Province, and Punjab combined to form a single West Pakistan (New name). The Punjabis used to dominate there, so Punjab became the symbol of the domination of West Pakistan. The metaphor was evident: Punjabis used to dominate East Bengal just as the men dominated their wives.

He presented every milestone or historical event in the history of Bangladesh, like 1947, 1954, 1957, 1969, 1970, and 1971. Through the thick brushstroke, he includes every feature of a cartoon.



AFTER THE HONEYMOON

After The Honeymoon, Ahmed

In the cartoons, anyone can identify Yahya or Indira's appearance very quickly. It is not easy to bring the past into the present. A specialty of the cartoon is its title, and Enver is unique here too. His cartoons (19) represent the entire journey of the history of Bangladesh. Enver died in 1992.

Abu Ahmed has created about 50 cartoons, which were all published in the *Indian Express*. His work is full of the true essence of a humorous cartoon. Attupuran Mathew Abraham was born in 1924 in Thiruvilla, Kerala. At the age of three, he started showing his talent in drawing cartoons. It might sound exaggerated that he began to draw early without receiving any institutional training from any art school.

He came to Mumbai in 1945 and joined *The Bombay Chronicle* as a journalist. He also used to draw cartoons for *The Blitz* and *The Sentinel*. The cartoonist Shankar used to publish The Shankar's Weekly from Delhi. After observing Abraham's cartoons, he called him to Delhi, and Abu joined The Shankar's Weekly. In 1953 he met Fred Cross of The Star in London. Fred Cross advised him to move to London, and he moved to London in 1953, where he started drawing cartoons in various magazines/newspapers. He used his 'Abraham' title that time.

After joining *The Sunday Observer* in 1956 as a political cartoonist, editor David Actor advised him to drop the 'Abraham'. Then he started using 'Abu', later becoming Abu Abraham.

He was in London for a while, and he felt the creative excitement in the sixties. He was a Syrian Christian and an atheist, yet British in appearance and Indian in mind. The Observer was a bit conservative. So, he took a job at the progressive magazine *The Guardian* in 1966. He became famous for his cartoons on Vietnam. *The Guardian* wrote after his death, 'His strongest theme as India sank faster into factional and religious politics, had remained adherence to the original version

of Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru for a wholly secular state: Abu was rationalist and atheist.'



MAN AND WIFE ARE ONE IN THE EYES OF THE LAW

Man and wife are one in the eyes of the Law/Ahmed

The Guardian also mentioned that his cartoons were: 'The conscience the left and the pen under the princes Matters.' He was with *The Guardian* until 1969. He then returned to India and joined *The Indian Express*, and worked there till 1981.

When returning to India, Indira Gandhi was the then Prime Minister. When his political cartoons were drawing the people's attention, the Pakistan crisis started. Due to his political views, he was naturally sympathetic to the aspirations of the people of Bangladesh, and he did not like Pakistan.

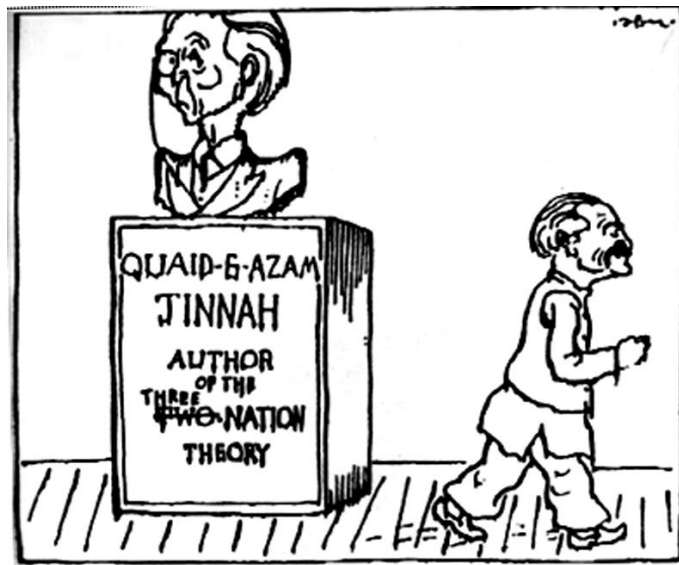
His first cartoon about Bangladesh, titled 'Writing of the Constitution', was published on October 10, 1970. In this cartoon, the two main rivals of Pakistan, Mujib, and Bhutto, were distinguished as politicians. Mujib, Bhutto, and Yahya

were the main characters of Abu's cartoon in 1970-71. Here Bhutto and Yahya were presented as satirical characters. The latter appears in the cartoon on December 8, 1970, the day before the vote. The cartoon comically showed Yahya's face at the polling station, who was warning Bangalis about voting. But the Bangali is hiding their verdict from Yahya's red blood eyes. We all know that Bangabandhu won the election. And then Abu draws a cartoon which depicts Yahya as the main character, and his words were: 'See you give them the adult franchise, and before you know where you are, they start behaving like adults.' The cartoon meant, by winning elections, Bangalis had achieved their free choice to build friendship with India, which was utterly disturbing to Pakistani rulers. So, it depicts Bangabandhu holding a placard, 'Friendship with India.' Abu wanted to point out that Bangalis would need India at the last moment.



9 December 1970, *The Indian Express*/ Abu Abraham

On March 7, while Bangabandhu was delivering the historical speech, Abu's cartoon showed that Bhutto was advising Yahya to attack Bangladesh, which eventually occurred on March 25. The most notable cartoon of this series was published on March 11. The cartoon depicts that 'Author of the Two-Nation Theory' is written on the base of the sculpture of Jinnah. After winning the election, Bangabandhu went to achieve independence [surprisingly Abu was sure about this, not others] and wrote 'Three Nation Theory' instead of 'Two Nation Theory' in the base. It meant Quaid-e-Azam did not speak of two nations but three nations. Notably, Abu was one of the few cartoonists ahead of his time and was prophetic in some sense due to his vast knowledge of history.



11 March 1971, *The Indian Express*/ Abu Abraham

Another cartoon of Abu was published on April 6, depicting two Chinese leaders, Mao Zedong and Chu Yin Lai, reviewing Bangladesh's situation. Yahya said openly, 'Kill a few thousand, and you will see the Bangalis eating from the hands like pigeons.' However, the Bangalis did not give up; instead, they

resisted. Mao once said that the barrel of the gun is the source of power. But now, the two leaders of the Chinese revolution have concluded that the Pakistani gun is the source of the power of the Bangalis. That means Bangalis will not be suppressed; instead, they get strong.

The same could be about the cartoon published on May 23. The title of the cartoon is 'Till Her Death Do Us Apart.' The cartoon depicts a Christian wedding event as a metaphor, where the priest proclaims to the future husband and wife that they will be together forever. Bhutto, playing the priest role in this cartoon, is advising Yahya not to leave Bangladesh.

Abu's cartoon on July 25 is also significant, where Yahya and Bhutto are singing, my golden dollar. They did not need Golden Bengal; instead, they required golden dollar.

7

Amal Chakraborty (1936) is one of the prominent cartoonists in West Bengal in the seventies. He mainly worked for *The Jugantar*. Most of his cartoons related to 1971 have been published there. Although some cartoons were published in *The Statesman*, *The Times of India*, *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, and *The Hindustan Standard*, Amal Chakraborty was more regular with *Jugantar*. Some cartoons, published in *Jugantar*, were published in the English *Amrita Bazar Patrika* later. In this collection, 27 cartoons of Amal have been compiled. Let me mention some of the famous cartoons.

The Times of India published cartoons of Amal's titled 'Internal Affair'; in April. At that time, genocide in Bangladesh has just started. But Amal felt restless about his country and fellow citizens because Pakistan is announcing genocide as an internal matter. Yahya is holding a hammer in his hand like a primitive man. He is holding a woman [Bangladesh] by her hair to rape

and kill. Whereas Nixon, Podgorny, and the leaders of the West are watching indifferently, even Indira Gandhi.

On April 8, another cartoon of Amal was published in the reservation called 'Smile a Day' in *The Amrita Bazar*; the content was about the Pakistan Army headquarters. The duty chart mentioned a soldier holding a stain in his hand to kill. On the other hand, a civilian is a thief. It was reported in the newspaper that Islamabad was taking gold, money, and resources from Bangladesh. There is no similarity between the two figures drawn by Amal and the figures drawn by him later. His cartoon presented the form of true satire.



Thoughts of Yahya, 10 December 1971, The Times of India/ Amal

'East is Red' was published on April 11 in *The Amritbazar*. After the success of the Chinese communists, 'East is Red' was widely used. Now China and Pakistan are like bosom friends. When Yahya committed genocide in Bangladesh, Mao said 'good.'

Here, Mao praises the genocide, not socialism. What a decline of socialism!

The Statesman published 'You've Got a Promotion.' The Pakistani soldiers got promotion for killing. Their medal is drawn satirically as a skull. The soldiers are competing among themselves for killing. Killing people was used as an incentive for their strenuous efforts. Through these metaphors, Amal indicated this message.

The Hindustan Standard published a cartoon on December 10, which showed Yahya and Bhutto are watching a distance through binoculars. The only thought in their minds is that India has acknowledged Bangladesh. They are looking at Bangladesh from afar through binoculars; it seems that the Indian spies have taken another base. They used to believe this for a lifetime. Bangladesh was not free then, and that is why Indians are being considered infiltrators.

The Times of India also published a cartoon of Amal; the impending victory of the Liberation War inspired him so much that he made three cartoons in one day. This cartoon shows Mao Zedong is reading 'Thoughts of Yahya.' People have read 'Thoughts of Mao Zedong' where he speaks of communism, but Yahya's only concern is genocide in Bangladesh. The reason for drawing this cartoon is that on December 9 in Beijing, the Chinese Foreign Minister, the Prime Minister, and even the Ambassador of Pakistan gave anti-India speeches. Zhou Enlai told the reporters, 'The Indian invaders will be soon defeated.' However, the joint forces have liberated many regions in Bangladesh.

Amal showed the consequences of Bhutto through his cartoon of *The Amrita Bazar* on December 20. The cartoon mimics Bhutto's heroic entrance into the UN, where he tore the paper in his hand and left the hall because no one listened to his argument. The cartoon beautifully reflected the situation.

Bangladesh became independent. What is going to happen with Bhutto? What is he going to do now? So, he was just repeating like a talking parrot: federation, Confederation, two provinces, United Pakistan, One Pakistan, meeting with Sheikh Mujib. He was speaking like a talking parrot, whose legs are chained but only mimics. That means Bhutto was perplexed, although he did not come into power then.

His last cartoon was published on January 11, 1972. However, it is kind of trivial. At the same time, Amal also drew cartoons about Indian politics.

It is not easy to draw cartoons if you are not aware of politics. Not only this, A cartoonist can often be biased. Like Abu Abraham, Amal is also conscious of politics. He may not be as sharp as Abu Abraham, but his sense of humor about India was very keen.

Third eye view



Hindustan Standard/ Chandi

Next came Chandi Lahiri. There is a possibility that he might draw many cartoons on the Liberation War, but we cannot collect all of them. We found his first cartoon [about Bangladesh] on April 12. After a long hiatus, *The Hindustan Standard* published on September 18 the story of Governor Malek, then known in Bangladesh as 'Theta Maleikka.' Chandi Lahiri was the only one who drew on Governor Malek. His drawing style is also worth seeing. Dr. Malek was placed on one's shoulder without filling the space, and he is wearing black glasses. The subject of the cartoon is the ongoing genocide in 'East Pakistan,' but the governor is not watching because he is blind.

The cartoon published on December 1 is also significant and hilarious. Everyone is expected the war on December 3. But Yahya is still thinking about Indira Gandhi. The cartoon depicts Indira as a heroine who carries a broom in one hand and grabs Yahya's hair with another hand.

Pakistan and its allies were getting advantages while the debating a ceasefire between India and Pakistan in the UN. But Yahya is thinking of threatening UN Secretary-General to confiscate his passport. The cartoon showed the absurdity and stupidity of the speeches of Yahya at that time.

On January 1, 1972, the cartoon depicted a rising sun which metaphorically represented Sheikh Mujib. It symbolizes the rise of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib in the east, even though he was still a prisoner, but his Bangladesh is free. Most probably, the last cartoon of Chandi was drawn after Bhutto took power. The exact date was is not known. It is about how Yahya is drowning in his dug well (or pond).

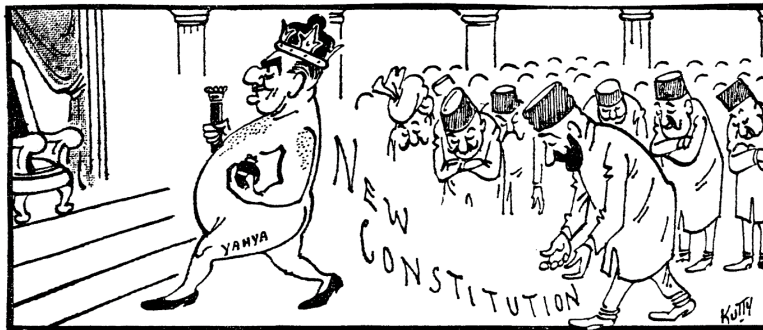
8

The cartoons of Kutty on Liberation War can be analyzed in this context. Here I collected 16 cartoons on Bangladesh published in English paper in 1971.

Kutty's cartoon about Bhutto was published on June 7, where Bhutto's facial features are different from those of other cartoonists. The cartoon showed Bhutto talking on the phone with Yahya Khan. Tikka Khan is standing in front of him as a guard dog. His eyes are burning red. Yahya sent Tikka to eliminate the Bangalis, and he was brought back soon. And everything was regulated by Bhutto. Tikka was represented as a faithful dog of Bhutto. When Bhutto came to power, he made Tikka the army chief.

The cartoon of August 21 is a hilarious one. It mimics Nikolai Podgorny of Russia and Mao Zedong of China. Below them are two quarrelsome 'teenagers': Yahya and Sharan Singh. Yahya is threatening, 'My uncle will see your uncle.'

Kutty had ridiculed Bhutto in *The Hindustan Standard* on September 18, where Bhutto is portrayed as a boot polisher or an army servant. Yahya is ordering him to clean his boots.



THE EMPEROR'S NEW ROBE

19 October 1971, *The Statesman*/ Kutty

Similarly, we can mention another cartoon titled 'The Emperor's New Clothes,' published on October 19 in *The Statesman*. Hans Andersen's story "The Emperor's New Clothes" is used metaphorically here. In the story, once a swindler agreed to make a lovely dress for the king. For a month, the sound of his loom was heard, though there was no thread. When someone came, the scammer said that he was working hard to make this fantastic

dress. On the appointed day the king came, the swindler pretends to wear the new clothing to the naked king. When the king goes to the street, people see him naked, but they pretend to be amused to see such a gorgeous dress.

Meanwhile, the swindler took the money vanished. Here Yahya is mocked by comparing him with that king. Everyone knows that the constitution, announced by Yahya, is like the new dress of the king. But everyone looks pretty amused. He represents Yahya's sycophant wonderfully. Very few cartoons depicting the sycophant of the military are drawn.

To Yahya or the Pakistani military, Nixon was the Jinni of Aladdin's lamp. As the Jinni, Nixon follows their demands. The war is going on between India and Pakistan on the western border. Now Pakistan is in danger, so Yahya is asking for help from Nixon, the Jinni. But this is the first time Nixon is in a dilemma because he would not succeed because of the Russian veto. This phenomenon is represented in the cartoon of December 9.

A cartoon about Bhutto was published on December 22. The Pakistani forces used to portray themselves as tigers. By the birth of independent Bangladesh, the tiger also died on December 16. However, Bhutto cannot give the tiger live but wants to stuff it. So, the tired Bhutto is holding the tiger's tail and dragging it to the taxidermist. These taxidermists are China and Pakistan. Kutty has drawn some more cartoons about Bhutto. His last cartoon about Bangladesh was published on January 7, 1972.

Rashipuram Krishnaswamy Ayar Lakshman is known to us only as RK Lakshman. He was the most famous cartoonist in India. He was not only a cartoonist, he was a novelist and essayist. He has about 40 published books, including a cartoon album. His elder brother RK Narayan is also an internationally renowned writer. The two brothers have received India's highest medals

and international awards. RK Lakshman has received the Magpisai Award.

Lakshman was born in 1921 in Tamil Nadu. He started drawing from his youth. Then he came to Mumbai and joined The Times of India. He was not allowed to draw cartoons there. So, he worked there as an Illustrator. But cartoon was his passion. At the same time, he was aware of politics. In his autobiography, he wrote, 'I felt that my intellectual capacity was getting atrophied, and that was losing the sharp satirical perspective and eye for absurdity which form the son of a political cartoon.' This comment testifies to his attitude towards the cartoon. We had collected only seven cartoons of him from 1971.

Indira's confidence was increasing after the Indo-Russian pact, so the West became restless. But Indira also needs the West to reach her goal. That is why she visited different western countries. The cartoon showed Indira with the Russian bear getting on the plane and muttering, 'I want to make everyone believe how innocent you are.'



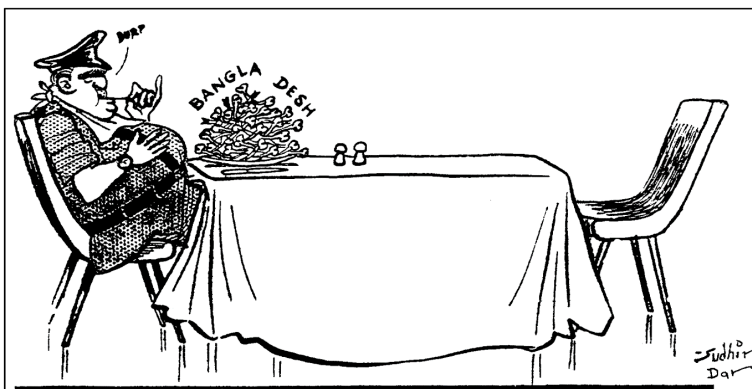
6 December 1971, *Hindustan Standard*/ R K Laxman

In December, he drew a cartoon mocking the UN, published in *The Hindustan Standard* on December 6. On that day, Bangladesh was recognized. A ceasefire is being negotiated at the United Nations, China and America were accepting Pakistan's lies. Nixon wanted to suppress the truth, thinking that if 'the truth' is concealed without intrusion, then everything would be fine. The point is that there is no place for 'The Truth' in the UN.

He made a simple cartoon on 'East is East, West is West' on December 20. Yahya caused the flood of blood. So East and West cannot be matched. Because East is East, West is West, and Never the Twin Shall Meet.

The last cartoon about Bangladesh was published on December 24. Nixon or the United States were utterly defeated in Bangladesh. The US has never gone through this type of reality before. So Laxman captioned the cartoon; Nixon said, 'didn't you say it was not real.'

Kashmiri Sudhir Dar was born in 1931 in Allahabad. After trying many different professions then he joined newspapers. He had a dream to work in *The Statesman* as a cartoonist but did not get the chance. Once, the editor of *The Statesman* gave him the opportunity. He joined the magazine in 1961 as a cartoonist. Then he joined *The Hindustan Times* in 1967. He drew cartoons without captions called Out of My Mind. He did not criticize any individual; rather, he criticizes bureaucracy and corruption. His contemporary cartoonist Rajendra Puri wrote that Dar is not a political cartoonist because he is not a political animal; Humor is key to him. 'Pure humor of the many kinds.'



12 December 1971, *Hindustan Standard*/ Sudhir Dar

This compilation collected about ten cartoons of Sudhir Dar. The cartoonist died in 2019. His cartoons about Bangladesh are exceptional than others. We can take the cartoon of December 12 as an example. Yahya is sitting alone at the dining table, a pile of bones of the Bangali in front of him. The war is coming to an end. The title of the cartoon is 'Ready for discussion with India.' Another cartoon of December is about the independent Bangladesh, which costs 3 million lives. Yahya is sitting on a pile of dead people and saying, 'Bangladesh is free, everyone is welcome.' The subject of his cartoon was always Yahya and genocide. His cartoons are a bit satiric. In addition, *The Blitz* and *The Himmat* have published several cartoons of Vince and Barindran.

9

The number of Bangladeshi cartoonists working in English newspapers or magazines was a few. Nayan and Satun, although their real identities remain unknown to us, drew cartoons in *The People*. Rafiqunnabi regularly draws in *The Forum*, edited by Rehman Sobhan and others. Ten cartoons of Rafiqunnabi were published from November 14, 1970, to March 20, 1971.



BURYING
THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

29 December 1970, *Weekly Forum*/Rafiqunnabi

Rafiqunnabi is not only one of the greatest artists of Bangladesh; he is also a novelist, cover artist, illustrator, and cartoonist. Before the independence of Bangladesh, he has practiced cartoons irregularly. But he drew 'Tokai' regularly after the independence. He is widely known as Ranbi. Ranbi writes, 'The main aim of the cartoon is to take into account the perceptions and feelings of the eventful life of the people. Without the perceptions, a cartoon is incomplete. The cartoon aims to present the perceptions of the society humorously.'

Ranbir's cartoons published in the *Forum* are different: those were illustrative because they were published as the cover. Besides, although the figures are cartonized, his institutional training was evident. He used to draw cartoons based on the main events of each week—for example, the cartoon published on November 14, 1970. There was a lot of tension around the upcoming election at that time. Different teams are waiting in the bank, and the boat (electoral symbol of Awami League) is advancing; opponents' goal is to defeat/stop the boat. Another cartoon was published on December 29, which showed that

Awami League had achieved a landslide victory over all other parties. The phenomenon of the defeat of the Muslim League by a huge margin is portrayed with a graveyard. Metaphorically, or literally, Muslim League is buried in East Pakistan. The last cartoon was published on March 20. The cartoon represents Yahya Khan as a symbol of the military, on the one hand, and the agitating masses led by Sheikh Mujib, on the other hand. Bangalis were still hoping, until that period, that everything could be settled through negotiations.

Mohammad Yunus used to publish *The Bangladesh NewsLetter* from America then. He occasionally drew cartoons here. The influence of contemporary cartoonists was evident in his cartoons, especially in terms of contents. No doubt, he used to draw to inspire the Liberation War.

10

It is conceivable that the number of cartoons published from countries other than India is comparatively limited. The Liberation War in Bangladesh affected India greatly, whereas the effect was more negligible in the Western world. Western newspapers, especially US newspapers, reflected the general policy of their respective country towards the Liberation War and India. Most of them had a minimal idea about Bangladesh, although they had profound knowledge about Pakistan. This attitude was reflected in most of the cartoons published in December. Let me give you a few examples.

Corky drew a cartoon in *The Los Angeles Times*, which depicted a miserable couple (Yahya and Indira) holding a malnourished child. It meant the malnourished child is 'Bangladesh.' The same newspaper published another cartoon by Grant, which portrayed Gandhi as a symbol of non-violence, to indicate that India attacked Pakistan, ignoring the principle of its Father of the Nation. Similarly, Jeff Maloney showed that India and the

Soviets forcibly gave birth to Bangladesh. To cartoonists, the Indo-Pakistani war created new crises, whereas the global situation was not in a good mood at that time.



18 December 1971, Battle Creek Enquirer/ Corky

The cartoon, by Mawline, published in *The Chicago Sun-Times*, is an exception. His drawing is more similar to paintings. One of his cartoons shows Yahya giving the My Lie Medal to his soldiers for perpetrating genocide. My Lai genocide is one of the notable genocides in Vietnam, which US Lieutenant Kelly led. This famous cartoonist draws Yahya with the symbol Swastika dress, referring to Hitler.

The cartoons published in the West at that time were drawn by Gibbard, Horner, Scarf, Garland, Lury, Trog, Mawline, Pat Aliphant, Pissersen, and others. The cartoons were published in *The Guardian*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Observer*, *The Telegraph*, and others. Some cartoons may have been published in Asian newspapers [except India], but we could not collect them except *The Far Eastern Economic Weekly*.

Let me give a brief introduction of the cartoonists (of whom we were able to collect).

Nicholas Withycombe Garland, a British political cartoonist, left the theatre to devote himself to a career as a cartoonist. In 1966, he was appointed the first political cartoonist of *The Daily Telegraph* where he remained until 2011, with a break from 1986 to 1990 when he was one of the founding journalists of *The Independent*. He was political cartoonist on the *New Statesman* during the 1970s and worked for *The Spectator* for many years. In 2012, he was appointed Cartoonist of the 2012 London Olympics by the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson. His work is represented in the British Museum, the Museum of London, and the Ashmolean Museum.



Mauldin, *Chicago Sun-Times*
 "You've all won the My Lai medal
 with clusters."

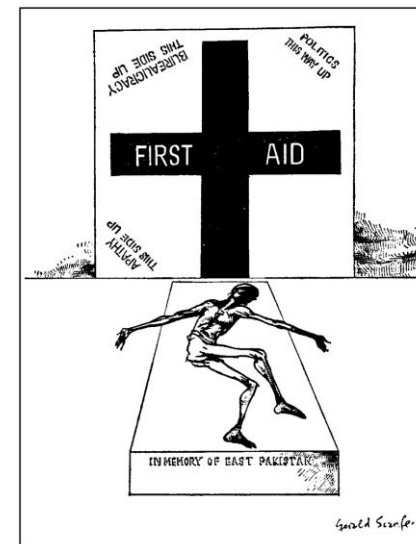
28 November 1971, *The Loss Angels Times/ Mauldin*

Walter Ernest 'Wally' Fawkes, a British-Canadian jazz clarinetist and satirical cartoonist, used to draw under the name 'Trog'. Failing eyesight forced him to retire in 2005 at the age of 81. Les Gibbard was a New Zealand-British political cartoonist, journalist, illustrator and animator, who worked at *The Guardian* newspaper for 25 year as a political cartoonist. He became the longest-serving artist of his type in the publication's history. He

also featured in the *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Sketch*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Sunday Mirror*, *The London Evening Standard*, *Time Out* and *Melody Maker*.

Vijay Narain Seth, pen name Vins, was an Indian cartoonist and illustrator. He started freelancing as a cartoonist for *Caravan* and *Himmat* magazines while a student. Hugh Smith Haynie was an American political cartoonist. He started illustrating at Louisville Courier-Journal. Haynie regularly penned his wife's name, Lois, into his drawings.

Gerald Anthony Scarfe is a British cartoonist. His cartoons and drawings were published in *Sunday Times*, *The New Yorker*. Cecil Jensen is an American editorial cartoonist. Jensen worked at the Los Angeles Illustrated *Daily News*. He did editorial cartoons since 1928 before beginning the comic strip. Patrick Bruce "Pat" Oliphant is an Australian-born American artist. He used to draw cartoons in the American newspapers regularly.



19 December 1971, *The Times/ Gerald Scarfe*

First, in general, the cartoon presents a narrative of a specific event more than the description of that event. In the case of 1971, four types of narratives are available. For us, 1971 is the year of the Liberation War, genocide, and independence. For India, there exists a 'humanitarian' point of view which includes sheltering refugees, training freedom fighters, building support for Bangladesh, and finally, the military intervention. For Pakistan, it is a year of 'dismembering.' They think East Pakistan had become isolated due to the Conspiracy of India, local Hindus, and the nationalist political parties. And, the international media, especially the US media, sees it firstly as a 'civil war' between East Pakistan and West Pakistan and secondly as a war between India and Pakistan. Since most of the cartoons collected for this collection have been published in Indian newspapers, the Indian narrative has become evident.



14 May 1971, Jugantar/Amal

From March to December, it is clear that the content of the cartoon was changing with the events. During March-April, the main issues were the non-cooperation movement, mass uprising in Bengal, Yahya's cruelty, the genocide, Bhutto's conspiracy, the silence of world conscience, etc. Moreover, cartoons criticizing international politics, especially the US and Chinese policies, were published. In May-June, cartoonists began to criticize Indian policy, especially to create a consensus in favor of recognizing Bangladesh. Even India was criticized for not taking any action against Pakistan while Pakistan was inciting. Cartoons in July, August, and September focused on the refugee crisis and the efforts of Indian authorities to resolve the situation. However, in October, November, and December, cartoons sharply criticized the US and Chinese policies and anticipated Yahya's imminent defeat. Many cartoons focusing on the Victory were published in December. Besides, the newspapers published various cartoons in puja festivals, relating the festive events with the Liberation War and crisis.

There are some familiar characters in the representation of cartoons. For example, the people of Bangladesh have been portrayed through the caricature of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Indira Gandhi and Sharan Singh's Caricature have come up to illustrate Indian authorities and government. Similarly, Bhutto and Yahya represented Pakistan and its military and civil authorities. Cartoonists often depicted Yahya Khan as some terrifying beast and Bhutto as a conspirator. The caricatures of Nixon represent the USA government and its policies, whereas Chou en Lai and Mao Zedong represent Chinese policies.



Comrade chairman after Bangladesh, shall we skip the chapters on people's liberation in the next edition of your esteemed thought/24 December 1971, Weekly Himmat/ Vins

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Cartoons criticize as well as give pleasure. However, the success of political cartoons and the magnitude of expression often depend on the political-democratic culture of a state. Moreover, some differences might appear between the study of contemporary political cartoons and the cartoons that were drawn almost half a century earlier. When we look at the cartoons of 1971, we get an idea of the situation and the social and political repercussions created by that situation. In that sense, the cartoons show the nature of the representation of 1971 in the public sphere.

Cartoonist Chandi Lahiri remarked, "Very few cartoons create public opinion. When a public opinion is built on an issue, or a cartoon is drawn in keeping with the public interest, that cartoon becomes very popular overnight." If a cartoon is drawn on an issue or an event that generates a strong reaction in the people's perceptions, it will elicit a response. From this point of view, it seems possible to study and examine both the public opinion and public perceptions of that time [especially in Calcutta] with the cartoons published in 1971.

From all parts of the world, civil society's role in the Liberation War was unprecedented. Ordinary people and activists marched, rallied for Bangladesh. Writers and journalists repeatedly highlighted the genocide, Pakistan's brutality, and the plight of refugees. Artists, musicians, and poets contributed from their standpoints. The cartoonist also played their role by depicting the realities in a satirical way. We've seen some of the cartoons already.