

The bangladesh liberation war, 1971



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

“ India Pakistan War 1971” also known as “ Bangladesh Liberation War” was as armed conflict between India and East Pakistan against West Pakistan. The war resulted in massive defeat of West Pakistan and secession of East Pakistan which is now known as Bangladesh. The war broke out on November 14 1971, initially engaging East Pakistan and West Pakistan, and later joined by India after attack of West Pakistan on the Indian Air Bases on December 3rd 1971. The war lasted until December 17th 1971. The cultural difference, economic exploitation, and language controversy between East Pakistan and West Pakistan led to separatist movement in East Pakistan. The army of West Pakistan launched “ Operation Searchlight” to crush the movement. The massacre of thousands of civilians in East Pakistan was the main cause of the war. This research paper examines the study of the major combats and tactics used by both militaries.

India and Pakistan got freedom from British rule and became separate nations in August 1947. Since then they fought many wars. In the year of 1971, East Pakistan which was the part of Pakistan earlier started protesting against the policy of the Pakistani Government. Pakistani failure to accommodate demands for autonomy in East Pakistan led to a separatist movement. West Pakistani Government launched fierce campaign called “ Operation Searchlight” to crush the separatist movement. In 1971 West Pakistani Army carried out genocide in East Pakistan. Millions were killed and about ten millions refugees fled to India during the genocide. India already suffering from humanitarian and economic crisis was not able to carry burden of 10 million refugees. India started aiding to the Liberation Army of East Pakistan also called as “ Mukti Bahini” to make East Pakistan an

independent state and restore those refugees back to their homeland. This way the war in Eastern Theater started engaging Indian Military, West Pakistani Military and Liberation Army. To release the pressure from the soldiers fighting in the East Pakistan and, to draw world's attention away from the Genocide, West Pakistani Air Force attacked Indian Air Bases on December 3rd 1971. After the attack, India officially entered into war with West Pakistan.

December 3rd 1971, 5. 45 pm in evening, Pakistan launched massive attack against India by bombing Indian Airfields at Amritsar, Pathankot, Srinagar, Avantipur, Uttarlai, Faridpur, Chandigarh, Ambala and Agra. Pakistan's main intention was to carry out massive air attack like the one that Israel carried out against Egypt in 1967 destroying Egyptian Air force completely.

It was pre-emptive strike to destroy the Indian Air Force (IAF) completely before launching massive ground attack. The Pakistani Air Force (PAF) plane came in formation of 2, 3 and 6 and could not cause any irreparable damage to Indian planes or to Runway. Pakistan Air Force didn't succeed because of the simple reason that the Israeli plan that was studied and rehearsed by PAF was also studied by IAF. So the Pakistani attack on Indian Air bases was partially known to IAF that's why IAF took necessary caution for such kind of attack. The Indian command had dispersed most of its war planes from the forward air field to the interior areas which were away from the normal range of Pakistani Bombers. IAF took the precaution of hiding their planes inside the concrete pens so that only direct hit can destroy the plane. Almost all the Indian airfields were protected by the ack-ack anti aircraft guns hidden under the camouflaged netting.

In response to Pakistani attack, Indian Air Force planes took off for Pakistan at the midnight 12. 30 Am on December 4th 1971. Indian bombers attacked almost all Pakistani air fields in the West within 5 hour of taking to the air. IAF flew 500 sorties on the first night of attack. IAF flew equal amount of sorties in east and west but did more damage in East Pakistan. IAF destroyed half of the strength of PAF in east and PAF was left with only 9 Sabre Jets in the east. On 6th December 1971 IAF carried out 120 sorties for ground attack only. The IAF airman went to Attock to bomb Pakistani Refinery. Along with that, they destroyed eight railway station carrying military supplies and ammunitions and 22 wagons of goods train. IAF destroyed Pakistani target such as Bridges, Petrol Pumps, tanks, armored vehicles etc. IAF pilots carried out attacks on the PAF airbases at Mianwali, Murid, Sargodha, Sharkot, Chander and Risawala. During the 14 Day war period, IAF flew some 4000 stories in the west and 2000 in the East. IAF also helped ground troops in many ground battles.

In the Western Theater of war, the Indian Navy under the command of Vice Admiral Kohli achieved success by attacking Karachi's port in the code named Operation Trident on the night of 4-5 December. Pakistani Naval headquarters was based at the historic and strategic port of Karachi here almost their entire fleet was concentrated. Pakistan attacked on Indian Airbases on December 3rd so it wasn't possible to carry out attack on the same night for Indian Navy. The attack was planned for the night of 4-5th December which was to be coordinated by continuous aerial bombardment from the IAF. The first attack on Karachi was to be undertaken by the " Killer" squadron which had these three missile boats; INS Nipat, INS Nirghat and INS

Veer later accompanied by INS Kiltan and INS Vidyut. The fleet moved closer to the Pakistani land in the darkness of night. When the fleet was 70 miles away from Karachi, the squadron commander (K-25) B. B Yadav detected a contact at a distance of about 45 miles and a second contact about 42 miles northeast. That was the Pakistani destroyer Khaibar which failed to receive orders on investigation possible contact south of Karachi. K-25 ordered INS Nirghst to handle the contact in northwest. When INS Nirghat saw destroyer coming straight at the force, it launched a missile. When Khaibar saw a bright light approaching her they open fir anti aircraft gun mistaking it to be an aircraft. The missile struck Khaibar and exploded below the aft galley about 22. 45hrs Pakistani time.