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Dr. Md. Rajaul Karim

Assistant Professor,
Bangladesh Studies, Khwaja
Yunus Ali University,
Bangladesh

MM Iftekhairun Nisa Yusufi

Senior Lecturer, Department
of English Khwaja Yunus Ali
University, Bangladesh

Farah Atif

Lecturer, Department of
English, Khwaja Yunus Ali
University, University,
Bangladesh

Corresponding Author:

Dr. Md. Rajaul Karim

Assistant Professor,
Bangladesh Studies, Khwaja
Yunus Ali University,
Bangladesh

The torture of women by the Pakistan army in the liberation war of Bangladesh (1971): A historical analysis

Dr. Md. Rajaul Karim, MM Iftekhairun Nisa Yusufi and Farah Atif

Abstract

The independence movement of Bangladesh is an unforgettable chapter in the history of the Bengali nation. The movement for the emancipation of Bengalis which started in 1947 was finalized in 1971. As a result of the War of Independence in 1971, independent Bangladesh emerged on the world map. Women, like men, participate in this Great War in different ways. They are also freedom fighters. Their number is innumerable. The contribution of these women fighters is underestimated. The contribution of women in our liberation war is valued as the mother, sister and wife of the martyrs. Yet in this war millions of women are raped, tortured and proletarian. So in this article I have tried to discuss the nature and impact of oppression of women by the Pak army.

Keywords: Torture of women, Pakistan Army, War of Bangladesh

Introduction

In 1947, an independent state called Pakistan was born with a majority Muslim territory in India. Immediately after the establishment of Pakistan, the exploitation of West Pakistan began on the Bengalis. As a result, the Bengalis started the liberation movement after the establishment of Pakistan. This liberation movement was finalized in 1971. Bengali women also participated in the war along with men. But women's participation in the war was multidimensional. In the city, in the village, all the educated and uneducated women took on various responsibilities on their own shoulders according to their ability. Many fight for lives at the risk of their lives. If they were caught by the Pak army, they would have given shelter to the freedom fighters knowing that death was certain. At risk, they exchanged letters. They used to collect information from the camp of the Pak army in the guise of beggars and give it to the freedom fighters. They worked as nurses in the hospital to treat the freedom fighters. Many received weapons training and guerrilla training. Many women worked as cooks in the freedom fighters' camps. Some worked in the formation of public opinion. Many raise money by singing in the bazaars. Again, many participate in the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra to keep the refugees and freedom fighters alive. The importance of the courage, zeal, enthusiasm and inspiration of these women to snatch the desired freedom in just nine months of war is undeniable. But after doing so, about 14 lakh women were captured by the Pak army. The Pak army kept the prisoners in different camps and tortured them indiscriminately. Therefore, in this article, different aspects of the oppression of women by the Pakistani forces in the liberation war of Bangladesh have been highlighted.

The rationale for research

Although various books have been written on the liberation war of Bangladesh as a whole, no book has been written so far on the oppression of women by the Pakistani forces in the liberation war. Moreover, all the books written on the contribution of women in the liberation war did not find a place for research analysis. In other words, the books and articles published on the liberation war of Bangladesh have discussed some issues from a general point of view. None of these discussed the issue of women's oppression in the liberation war. Therefore, I have written this article realizing the need for research on the nature and impact of violence against women by the Pakistani forces in the liberation war of Bangladesh.

Research methods and data collection

Research data has been collected mainly from primary sources. Newspapers and periodicals are important components of Liberation War research. I have collected information from various newspapers published during the period 1971-1996. Besides, we have also collected information from various programs based on the liberation war broadcast on Bangladesh Radio BTV and BBC. If necessary, I have collected information by attending the meetings and conventions of various women's organizations. I have interviewed the women freedom fighters who participated in the liberation war for the purpose of knowing the authentic information of women in the liberation war. However, when I went to take the interview, I had various problems. Not getting satisfactory information about the oppression of women in the liberation war in various papers, I collected the addresses of about 100 women freedom fighters for the purpose of interview. But on the eve of the interview, it was seen that many people did not want to give details of the torture on him, some of them answered hundreds of questions. So I have had to spend a lot of time and effort gathering information to compose this article.

Limitations of research

This study has many limitations. During the nine months of the war of liberation, about fourteen lakh women were subjected to various atrocities by the Pak army. So it is difficult to get a real picture of this subject with only 100 women interviewed. It was necessary to interview more women for research on such a big issue. In addition, various complications were created during the interview. For example, I had to spend time and money traveling because the respondents' homes were far apart. Again, many of the respondents could not be found at home on time, so I had to go there again and again. Moreover, many respondents did not want to be interviewed for fear of public embarrassment and many respondents did not answer all the questions for fear of family and social insecurity. Despite such limitations, the study is logical to understand the nature and impact of the torture of women by the Pak army in the liberation war of Bangladesh. Moreover, for future research on this subject, help will be available from current research.

Historical context of the war of liberation of Bangladesh

Hindus and Muslims are the two main religious communities in India. During the British rule, these two communities developed unequally in different areas. When the East India Company came to this country for the purpose of trade, many members of the Hindu community came in contact with it and some of them started joint trade with the company. Thus one of the newly earning Hindus later bought a zamindari and became a zamindar.¹ In addition, many Hindus who used to collect land revenue became the real owners of the land due to the permanent settlement. On the other hand, among the Muslims who had previously established land rights, most of them lost that right in the aftermath of the Palashi war under British law. The Hindus were able to take advantage of the various facilities introduced by the British, but the Muslims were not able to do so. As a result, unequal development took place between Hindus and Muslims. Hindu-Muslim tensions escalated when the British government divided Bengal in 1905 and formed a new province with East Bengal and

Assam. The Muslim community saw the new province as a bright prospect for progress. But the Hindu community started a movement to cancel the partition of Bengal^[2]. Eventually, in the face of the Hindu community movement, the British government was forced to cancel the Partition of Bengal. Mahatma Gandhi's leadership in the Congress in 1915, the implementation of the Hindu-Muslim Lucknow Agreement in 1916, the Hindu-Muslim Joint Khilafat-Non-Cooperation Movement in 1919-1922, the drafting of the Bengal Agreement in 1923, etc., played a positive role in developing relations between the Hindu and Muslim communities. However, this relationship was transient^[3]. The Nehru Report in 1928, Jinnah's 14 points in 1929 and the British government's communal award in 1932 deteriorated Hindu-Muslim relations. In such a situation, the Muslim League leader declared the Muslims of India as a separate nation. The Hindu-Muslim conflict intensified during 1937-1947. In the wake of which the Calcutta riots of 16 August 1946 made the partition of India inevitable. Finally, on 14 August 1947, the British government forced the Muslims of India to take over an independent state called Pakistan^[4].

The Hindu-Muslim hostility that developed during the British rule had an adverse effect on Indian politics. Muslim politicians realized that if the British government gave India independence in this situation, the Muslim community would not be able to establish political rights in any way. In the face of such fears, Muslim League leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah declared the Muslims of India as a separate nation and on 23 March 1940, at the annual council session of the Muslim League in Lahore, Punjab, presided over by Jinnah, Bengal Chief Minister Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq made a proposal for the welfare of Muslims^[5]. The resolution called for the establishment of multiple Muslim states in the north-western and eastern regions of India and the granting of autonomy to the established independent states. But the Muslim Legislative Convention held in Delhi in 1946 declared the establishment of a state called Pakistan for the Muslims of India instead of establishing more than one Muslim state^[6]. Finally, on 14 August 1947, an independent Muslim state called Pakistan was established. After the establishment of Pakistan, Urdu was declared the state language of Pakistan by the West Pakistani ruling class. The Bengali-speaking Muslim population of East Bengal province claimed Bengal as the state of Pakistan along with Udu but the West Pakistani ruling class ignored the demands of the people of East Bengal province and established internal colonies. The movement for the establishment of the Bengali state language began. In the midst of the language movement, the election of the East Bengal Provincial Council was held in 1954. In that election, the East Bengal Electoral Alliance United Front won by defeating the ruling Muslim League^[7].

Finally, in 1956, the first constitution of Pakistan was drafted. The establishment of the Constitution paved the way for the establishment of democracy in Pakistan. But in 1958, first Iskander Miza and later Ayub Khan imposed martial law and repealed the Constitution. After the repeal of the constitution, the anti-Ayub movement started in East Pakistan. 1966 Awami League leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman raises a six-point demand for autonomy. When Sheikh Mujibur Rahman started campaigning for the 6-point demand, Ayub Khan filed a conspiracy case in Agartala in 1968 and Mujibur was imprisoned. The movement for his

release started after the arrest of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman^[8]. The movement gradually took the form of mass movement. Eventually Ayub Khan was forced to hand over power to Yahya Khan. After Yahya Khan came to power, he called for general elections in Pakistan. In the elections, the Awami League won a single majority. Although the Awami League won a single majority, Yahya Khan started making excuses to hand over power. Finally, as the leader of the majority party, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman indirectly declared the independence of Bangladesh in a speech addressed to the nation on 7 March 1971^[9]. With the announcement of Bangabandhu, a mass movement was started. Yahya Khan decided to use the language of arms to stop the movement. In the wake of which, in the early hours of March 26, 1971, the Pak army launched an operation called Operation Sachlight in Dhaka city. The liberation movement of Bengalis started. After nine months of bloody war, Bangladesh was able to emerge as an independent state^[10].

Torture of women in 1971

In the early hours of March 26, 1971, the Pakistani army ambushed unarmed Bengalis. They carried out massacres of women, men and children, as well as torture of women. It is not possible to get accurate statistics on how horribly and perversely Bengali women have been tortured, how many women have lost their dignity, honor and life in the war of independence.

The persecution took place all over the country. The persecution was not only perpetrated by the Pak army, but also by the Bengali Razakars, allies of the Pak army, and the non-Bengali Bihari community. The girls of the city have been tortured as well as the girls of the villages. The girls of all classes of rich-poor, upper and lower classes have been tortured. For the convenience of discussion, we have divided the history of torture into the following sub-headings:

1. Torture: Dhaka Division
2. Torture: Chittagong Division
3. Torture: Rajshahi Division
4. Torture: Rangpur Division
5. Torture: Khulna Division
6. Torture: Barisal Division

Dhaka Division

Women torture in Rajarbagh police line camp

The Pakistani army carried out a massacre of unarmed Bengalis in Dhaka city in the early hours of March 26, 1971. That night, along with the genocide, the persecution of Bengali women began. During the attack on the Rajarbagh police line, the Pak army tortured a sweeper woman named Rabia Khatun. They brutally tortured Rabia Khatun in public^[11]. The soldiers raped her one after the other and left her on the ground in a bloody state^[12]. Ever since the Punjabi army took control of Dhaka city, many young women and beautiful girls from schools, colleges, universities and expedited areas of the city have been captured by the military and gathered in their barracks in the police line. The girls who were tied up were raped by the soldiers and after the rape they were brutally killed^[13]. Not only ordinary soldiers but also military officers drank alcohol and raped young Bengali women like wild tigers^[14]. As a result of incessant rape and torture, many women died in bloody bodies. Women who died in torture were usually

thrown out of the camp in sacks. Seeing this, the other girls in the camp became frightened and voluntarily surrendered to the Pak beasts. Women who voluntarily surrendered were often killed after being raped^[15]. The girls who survived the rape were detained on the second, third and fourth floors of the camp headquarters at the Rajarbagh police line. Soldiers enjoyed raping them night after night^[16]. Rape victims who tried to defend themselves were tied upside down with iron rods and subjected to inhumane torture until they died^[17]. As a result of such torture, many of the women protesters are left naked and tortured day after day and night after night^[18]. Many women die by hanging while being raped and tortured. Later, members of the army cut the dead women with knives and threw them into the river. Every day, army members tied the bodies of many raped women to ropes and threw them into the river from the floor above the police line barracks and headquarters office^[19]. Officers and later soldiers inhumanely tortured the girls on the fourth floor of the Rajarbagh police line headquarters to satisfy their perverted sexual desires throughout the night^[20]. For a long period of 9 months till December 16, 1971, the Pak army brutally tortured and killed all these innocent Bengali women with bayonets^[21].

Torture of women in the Mitford camp

Like the Rajarbagh camp, the Mitford camp was also tortured by the Pakistan Army. They tortured beautiful women from different houses in Swamibagh, Shakhari Patti and Armanitola. On March 29, 1971, Mr. Ali, the sweeper inspector of Dhaka Municipality, said that they had removed a large number of bodies from the Mitford camp and dumped them at the Swamibagh audit hall. About fifty percent of the bodies were women. All the women were naked. Their bodies were mutilated. On that day, he found the body of a beautiful young girl with naked wounds from a house in Shankhari Patti. Her breasts were removed from her chest. Blood clots were tied on her genitals, mouth, arms, thighs etc. There were signs of torture all over her body. He found the body of a beautiful ten or eleven year old girl in a house in Armanitola. The whole body of the girl was bruised. The Pak army in turn raped and killed him, leaving him behind^[22].

Torture of women in Dhaka University area

On the night of 25 March 1971, Rokeya Hall of Dhaka University became a target of the Pak army. Forty-six people were killed in the attack on the Seven Quarters. On that day, the Pak army forcibly took away the wife of the employee Ali Akkas naked. The provost of the hall, Mrs. Akhtar, raided the Imam's house and wanted to know the location of the girls in the hall^[23]. However, the troops failed in the operation as the hall was closed. However, they picked up a beautiful woman from the university area and killed her on the roof of Rokeya Hall^[24]. The Pak army tore the girl's hair and killed her by hitting her chest, abdomen, cheeks, face and vagina. He was raped in such a way that his private parts swelled up from his stomach^[25].

Torture of women in Shankhari market area

Pak army tortured women in almost every house in Shankhari Bazar area. March 29, 1971 numerous bodies were found lying dead. About 70 percent of the dead bodies were women. There was no cloth on the body of these dying women. Basically, they are stripped naked and kept naked.

Eyewitnesses saw the young women's breasts removed. Some have had a stick inserted into their vagina. Such brutal killings are very rare in the history of women's oppression in the world. The cleanest people of Dhaka Municipality saw the mutilated naked bodies of 6 young women at the ghat of Komi Mill Barracks. The eyes, hands and legs of the corpses were tied. All these young girls were brutally killed by the Pak army at the end of the abduction ^[26].

Torture of women in Dhaka airport area

Like other places in Dhaka city, the Pak army also tortured women in the airport area. On the night of 25 March 1971, the Pak army took hundreds of men and women from this area to the camp in jeeps. The Pak army detained these women in the camps and raped them day after day. He would throw women who fell ill or died as a result of rape on the side of the road. Eyewitness Aftab Hossain said he saw thousands of women lying on the side of the airport shark in a state of death. I see signs of brutal torture on the bodies of almost all of these women. Most of the corpses had their eyes, arms and legs tied tightly with ropes ^[27].

Torture of women in Jagannath College area

College Student Center on March 25 raid Around 14 men and women were killed by the Pakistani army. Evidence of infernal killings by the Pak army in this area was found from various specimens including skeletons dug from different places on the college premises. On 12 and 13 January 1972, 9 skeletons, 6 gold bangles, saris, blouses, petticoats and braided hair were found in 3 excavations at the college premises. On 13 January, 2 skeletons of 2 women were found in the last excavation. Eight gold bangles were recovered from the spot. Analysis of the recovered items clearly shows that the Pak army captured men and women from the surrounding area and killed the men and after brutalizing the women, killed them and buried them in different places of the premises ^[28].

Torture of women in Dhaka Cantonment area

When the war broke out, the Bengali army officers left the Dhaka Cantonment, but Major Nurul Islam's wife Naima Islam could not leave because she had a daughter just seventeen days ago. Major Nurul Islam left for Mymensingh on government business. When the war started, he joined the war to defend the country. Meanwhile, the Pak army raided his bus and tortured his wife to find out about her. In the name of curiosity, a thousand-powered electric bulb is caught above the eye, inserting a needle into the head of the finger and carrying out various inhuman tortures. They abducted a number of women in the cantonment area and held them captive in the barracks for nine months ^[29].

Torture of women in slum areas

The Pak army conducted an operation in the slum area of Dhaka city at night between 25 March 1971. All the slums were set on fire during the operation. Many women and children died in this fire. Many were taken to the camp by the Pak army. Among those taken to the camp were many young girls. The soldiers raped these young girls day after day. If a girl fell ill due to rape, the soldiers would kill her and leave her in a pond or river at night ^[30]. Mr. Nazimuddin Malik, a prominent journalist of the then daily Purbadesh, while describing the torture of women, said that at around 11 am on March 26, the Pak army raided the slum in front

of his Ray Bazar house and took away two young women from a rickshaw puller's house. He also took two more housewives out of the house and raped them in front of their parents ^[31].

Torture of women in Shibalaya police station area

The Pak army set up camp in the Shibalaya police station area. Every day, the Pak army raided the surrounding villages on foot or by car, capturing the young women and bringing them to the camp ^[32]. These women were raped and killed in the dark of night. Thirteen miles north of Dhaka city, the most brutal evidence of violence against women is found in the village of Shialbari. The Pak army picked up a beautiful girl named Farida Parveen from this village and raped her. When the villagers resisted, all the villages were set on fire ^[33].

Torture of women in Mirpur area

The Pak army picked up the young girls from different houses in Mirpur and raped them in the empty space behind the Bangla College. In the aftermath of the war, sari, blouse, burqa, bangles and hair ribbons were found in the area. Journalist Ershad Majumder said thousands of men and women were found dead on the outskirts of Mirpur ^[34]. Most of these bodies were handcuffed. Seeing this scene, it is possible to clearly understand the torture of women in the Pak army.

Torture of women in Tangail Goran Satiyachara village

During the war of liberation, the invading forces broke the resistance of the freedom fighters at Goran Satia Chara in Tangail and entered the village and continued the attack Syeda Meherun Nesha, Mili Chowdhury, Nurjahan Begum, Karimon Nesha, Kahinur Akhter, Amena Khatun, Mojiron Nesha, Nashiran Bewa, Joygan Begum, Lalban, Fulmati, Sufia Begum and many others were shot dead ^[35]. Besides, Halimun Nesha, Fulmati Begum and Mahmuda Khatun were seriously injured ^[36]. On 3 April 1971, the Pak army captured two women from the village of Shatiachara and brutally tortured them, raping another woman in front of her husband and two children ^[37].

Torture of women at Pakundia police station in Kishoreganj

At Pakundia police station in Kishoreganj, the Pak army killed a Hindu doctor and his son and took away his three daughters. They were not found later ^[38]. It is not possible to get an accurate account of how many women have lost their dignity due to the torture of Pakundia police station in Kishoreganj. Because women from different villages of Pakundia were captured and sent to different camps. These women were not found in Parbati. The local government at the time thought the girls had been raped and then killed. The local newspapers published at that time published a lot of information about the torture of women by the Pak aggressors ^[39].

Torture of women in Manikganj Char Satoria

A Hindu woman named Avarani was raped and killed by the Pak army at Char Satoria in Manikganj ^[40]. In May 1971, Major Iftekhar, a Pak army officer, captured about 150 women from Bajitpur and Nikli police stations in Bhairab and brutally tortured 35 of them and shot dead the remaining women in Ashuganj. There is no precedent in the

history of the world that during the nine months from April 15 to December 16 during the War of Liberation, the Pakistani forces carried out a reign of terror in Bhairab, one of the river port municipal cities of Bangladesh ^[41].

Torture of women in Narsingdi

Like other places in Dhaka division, Pak army also tortured women in Narsingdi. While explaining the torture of Pak army women in Narsingdi, a social worker said that Pak army brutally tortured women at Narsingdi telephone exchange by capturing young women from different areas. Women who did not voluntarily surrender to the Pak army were tortured and killed. He further said that the torture cell of Pak army was opened in this telephone exchange. From here, the Pak army, with the help of brokers, raided various villages, forcibly abducted Bengali women and tortured them. At the end of the torture, they were brought to Taraba Road near Narsingdi town near Khatra Pool and killed ^[42].

Chittagong Division

Torture of women in Chittagong city

In the nine months from March 25 to December 1971, the Pak army captured about two hundred Muslim, Hindu and Mugh young women from Kilnija, Kusharganj, Maheshkhali and Dulahajra in Chittagong city. In the beginning, many of them were brutally tortured to death and the rest were held captive and raped day after day ^[43]. Witness Mohammad Shamsul Haque, accountant of Chittagong Pahartali railway station, said that in the early hours of November 10, the Pak army took men and women of all ages from the colony including Wireless Colony, Railway Colony, and Punjabi Line etc. to the top of the hill. Here the girls are separated and everyone else is killed on the hillside with the help of machine guns. The women were taken to the prison camp. The Pak army brutally tortured this captive woman day after day. If they became seriously ill as a result of torture, they would be thrown on the streets, rivers or ponds ^[44].

Torture of women in Comilla Cantonment

The Minister of Health and Labor of the Government of Bangladesh, Mr. Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury, in an interview with Norwegian Television Journalists on 6 January 1972, said that the Allies and the Liberation Army had entered the Comilla Cantonment area and found about 700 naked women in captivity. It is known that after 25th March, the Pak army used to pick up women from different parts of Comilla and keep them in cantonments and brutally torture them. At first, many captive girls committed suicide by wrapping their clothes around their necks for fear of brutal torture. As a result, women prisoners were kept naked later ^[45].

Torture of women in Brakshanbaria

On the way to Brakshanbaria, the Pak aggressors carried out violence in the villages. In the first week of May, the Pak forces attacked the village of Shahbazpur under Sarail police station. Arrested 9 civilians from the village and took them to the camp and killed them. At the same time, they brutally tortured 5 women named Maheshwar Dasi, Tarinidas, Kaushalyadasi, Muktamayi and Bidhumukhi Devi ^[46].

Torture of women in Feni

On 23 April 1971, the Pak army entered Feni subdivision

and started committing the most brutal incident. At this time, the Pak army entered a house and brutally tortured a girl. The girl committed suicide in order to protect her honor ^[47]. On 25 April, the Pak army brutally tortured a young girl in front of her father while she was studying in Begumganj College. Later the father committed suicide out of pride ^[48]. In the first week of May, the level of torture by the Pak army increased in Feni. Many young girls from Chandina, Dayanathpur, etc. were abducted and brutally tortured and Aklima, the pregnant wife of Ahsan Ullah of Dayanathpur village, was raped and killed ^[49].

Torture of women in Noakhali

Aziza, a girl from Dakshin Khan Village in Noakhali district, was abducted by the Pak army in November 1971. Instead, they kept her in the camp and tortured her day after day ^[50]. In this way the Pak army brutally tortured women in Sonagazi, Pashuram, Chagalnaiya, Sudharam, Raipur, Begumganj etc. areas of Noakhali district ^[51]. About three hundred women in this area were brutally tortured by the Pak army. More than 500 Bengali women were held captive in three prison camps in Chittagong and Noakhali districts. Many of them were shot dead. Some were brutally tortured to death for a long time ^[52]. The hairs, costumes and skeletons of these girls were found in the slaughterhouses at various places in the district. From which there are indications of the horrific torture of women by the Pak army on the mothers and sisters of this country during the war ^[53].

Rajshahi Division

Torture of women in Rajshahi city

During the war, the Pak army set a rare example of widespread genocide, torture and destruction of women in Rajshahi. During the war, the Pak army set a rare example of widespread genocide, torture and destruction of women in Rajshahi. 17 May 1971, a house in the suburbs of Rajshahi was attacked by a group of five Pak soldiers and the girl was raped in front of her father. Unable to bear the girl's screams, her father committed suicide. On the same day, another army group entered another house and picked up a 30-year-old woman while she was praying and detained her in the camp. Her husband, Jobayer Hasan, went to the camp and begged his wife to return. But his appeal was not answered but tortured. Eventually, both husband and wife died at the hands of the soldiers ^[54].

Torture of women in Charghat

During the war of liberation in Rajshahi, Miss Manjila, a fourth year student of Rajshahi Medical College, went to her village home Charghat with her father Mujibur Rahman in search of safe haven. But in mid-December 1971, at midnight, the Pak army raided the house and picked up Manjila and her sister Dilruba in a jeep. When Mujibur Rahman protested against the abduction of the girls, he was hit with a rifle and taken to another jeep. Later the country became independent but they never came back. It is believed that Manjila, her sister Dilruba and her father were also tortured to death. Like Mujibur Rahman's family, there are many heartbreaking incidents in Charghat area. In this area about 5 hundred women were brutally tortured by the Pak army ^[55].

Torture of women in Rajshahi University area

The Pak army converted the Rajshahi University campus

into their barracks. Massacres were carried out there every day. Massacres were carried out there every day. Brutal torture was carried out by capturing beautiful young girls from the residential areas of the university campus and the surrounding villages. These young girls are picked up from different villages and kept in barracks. Every night, the officers would choose the woman of their choice and force her to have sex. Girls who prevented sex were killed. Many girls were detained for 9 months. They are rescued when the country is independent.⁵⁶ According to an eyewitness at Rajshahi University, the wife and daughter of a third-grade employee of the university were brutally tortured by the Pak army in the camp and a professor was killed and his young daughter was taken to the barracks and raped by army officers day after day^[57].

At the end of the War of Liberation, a mass grave was discovered just half a mile away from the Shaheed Shamsuzzaha Hall of the University. There are about 23 female skeletons found which clearly prove that women were killed after the rape here. It is learned from the village next to this mass grave that on 5th May, after the Pak army took control of Rajshahi city, they entered their village, set fire to houses, killed men and kept women in camps and carried out brutal torture^[58]. Almost every day, the Pak army would enter the village and carry out massacres. In fact, every day the Pak army would spread to the villages in groups. They brutally killed men and took beautiful women to camps^[59]. According to a report from the Department of Sociology, University of Rajshahi, in May 1971, the Pak army raped about 14 women in the village of Jugisho and took 55 of them to camps. In Banshbaria village, about one and a half hundred women were publicly humiliated and 10 people were killed^[60]. Moreover, evidence of the rape of a Bengali woman was found in Gopalpur village with the help of a Punjabi woman^[61].

Torture of women in Bagmara area

The Pak army carried out looting, arson and homicide in different villages of Bagmara police station in Rajshahi district. In May, the Pak army entered the village of Bhabaniganj, set fire to houses and markets and brutally tortured women^[62]. Eyewitness Diljan Bibi said that during the month of Ramadan, a group of Pak soldiers suddenly entered the village and started forcibly torturing him. When he shouted for help, the soldiers threatened to kill him^[63]. Another woman, Sonavan from the same village, said that on the afternoon of Ramadan, two Pak soldiers brutally tortured her at the Bagmara camp, threatening to kill her on the street. The next day when I got very sick they left me on the village street^[64].

Torture of women in Durgapur area

In June 1971, the Pak army indiscriminately tortured women in Durgapur. The daughter of a Bengali officer of Durgapur police station was killed by the Pak army^[65]. On the 1st of Ramadan, the Pak army set fire to Durgapur. The helpless girls fled for their lives, but the soldiers arrested the fleeing girls, took them to camps, raped them, and brutally raped them^[66].

Torture of women in Natore area

The Pak army occupying Natore killed thousands of Bengalis and deprived many women of their sanctity. The Pak army entered the houses of Natore and killed men as

well as women. Sometimes they rape beautiful women in camps. The army turned the empty house of the Natore magistrate into a cell for the oppression of women. Every night, beautiful women from different villages were picked up and brutally tortured in that cell. In June, soldiers entered the home of a Bengali officer and raped his 16-year-old daughter in front of the officer. And killed the husband of another daughter of the officer in front of the whole family^[67].

Torture of women in Pabna city

On 28 March 1971, the Pak army killed the husband and two sons of a woman named Hasina at Sadhupara in Pabna. After killing her husband and sons, Hasina started spreading the news to the freedom fighters' camps. As a result, the Pak army became angry with him and arrested him and took him to the camp. When he fell ill as a result of torture, he was thrown under the Shaikupa Bridge^[68]. In Nazirpur village of Pabna Sadar police station, Pak army inflicted mental torture on women. Virgin newlyweds, even older women, have not escaped their persecution. These girls were kept captive in the camp and tortured day after day^[69].

Torture of women in Raiganj police station

When the war of liberation started, the Pak army raided Madhyapara village of Raiganj police station in Pabna district and abducted a woman named Monowara Begum. On 15th May, 25 soldiers entered Salanga Bazaar from Lahiri Mohanpur and started a riot and set fire to all the shops. On their way back to Lahiri Mohanpur camp from Salanga Bazar, the army forcibly picked up a young girl, raped her at Haru Kabiraj's house and proceeded to pick up a Hindu girl from a nearby village. The Hindu girl was not found after the independence of the country^[70]. In April, a woman named Razia Khatun was arrested from Sahapur village and taken to a camp near Hadings Bridge, where she was tortured day after day in search of the freedom fighters. At one point in the torture, he lost his mental balance. As a result, he was released. After the independence of the country, he died in a state of mental imbalance. Thus those who helped the freedom fighters during the war had to suffer horrible torture by the Pak army^[71].

Torture of women in Demra market area

In June 1971, on the advice of the chairman of the peace committee, Abdul Gafur, the Pak army launched an operation in the Demra Bazar area to arrest members of the freedom fighters. Several civilians were killed in the operation and took a housewife to the camp and brutally tortured her to death^[72].

Torture of women in Sirajgonj

When the city of Sirajgonj came under the control of the Pak army on 26 April 1971, there was an unbearable scene of torture and death. The Pak aggressors set up camp at C&B and Wapdar Rest House. From this camp, young girls were abducted and brutally tortured in the surrounding villages. An eyewitness said that about 60 members of the Pak army raided her house in July 1971. During the operation, she was captured and brutally tortured in the camp. She saw that about 15 beautiful young girls were kept in separate cells in the camp. As soon as it got dark, the army officers started brutal torture on the captive girls. This brutal torture continued till the country became independent^[73]. In

August 1971, the Pak army raided another village called Azampur and abducted a woman named Rahima Khatun. The Pak army took him to the camp and brutally tortured him. It is known that he was kept as a prisoner for a long time. He could not be found after the independence of the country ^[74]. According to the information, in the nine months of 1971, the Pak army killed about seven hundred women in Sirajgonj alone and dumped them in the river Jamuna ^[75].

Torture of women in Bogura

Like other parts of Bangladesh, the Pak army tortured women in Bogura. They set up camp at Bogura Socket House. Beautiful girls from different towns and villages of the district were picked up and brutally tortured in this camp. Even the girls of Rajshahi University are tortured in this camp.⁷⁶ The representative of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha mentioned at the end of his visit to Bogra that in the nine months of the war, about two and a half thousand women were raped by the Pak army in Bogura ^[77]. An SSC examinee named Salma was picked up by the Pak army from the streets of Bogra city. Brutally tortured in the camp. When he fell ill due to torture, he was left on the street. At the same time, another woman named Marina was taken to the camp by the Pak army with the help of a broker named Liaquat Ali and brutally tortured by keeping her captive for 9 months. When the country became independent, Marina narrated the incident of torture on her own face ^[78]. The Pak army picked up thousands of men and women from the Talora port area of Bogra and its surrounding villages and killed them indiscriminately. But before killing beautiful girls, he used to rape. They even rape beautiful women who are mentally unbalanced. Many mentally unbalanced women become pregnant as a result of rape ^[79].

Torture of women in Naogaon

The Pak army killed about ten thousand people in Naogaon town. About fifty thousand houses were set on fire and about five thousand women were brutally tortured ^[80]. After the formation of the Naogaon Peace Committee, the Pak army, with the help of Razakars and Biharis, raided the villages, captured beautiful women and brought them to the camps. Sometimes Bihari brokers also used to harass Bengali women along with Pak soldiers ^[81]. In the last week of March, the Pak army attacked Saindra village of Adamdighi police station. Everyone, men and women, wants to know about the liberation forces. At the end of the interrogation, the beautiful women were taken to the camp and brutally tortured.⁸² On 1 April 1971, the Pak army set up camp at the Christian Mission in Chakrampur village along Shantahar Road. Later, the Pak army raided the nearby villages and killed men and women indiscriminately. With the help of Biharis and Razakars, they kept the beautiful girls of the village captive in the camps and raped them for months. Many women died in such brutal torture. After some people become mentally unbalanced ^[83].

On 3 April 1971, the Pak army stormed the village of Ataikula and sexually assaulted 50 women after a massacre^[84]. The village was then set on fire. The Pak army also attacked Mohanpur in Pasbati of Ataikula and killed all the family members of Professor Md. Fazlul Huq ^[85]. Many villages along the Belurghat border in Naogaon were destroyed by the Pak army. And the inhabitants of these villages who could not take refuge in India across the border

were captured by the Pak army. Adolescents were brutally tortured among the captives. A beautiful housewife named Masuma from Hara village in Balur was raped and killed and hung from a tree ^[86]. When the country became independent, a massacre site was discovered near the city of Naogaon. Countless women's bodies were found in this slaughterhouse. There was a water well in the school of Naogaon. The Pak army used to capture women from different villages and torture them in the school. After the murder, the bodies would be thrown into the well. In this way, the Pak army brutally tortured and killed Bengali women in the war of liberation and wrote a tragic story.

Rangpur Division

Torture of women in Rangpur city

After the city of Rangpur came under the control of the Pak army, the torture of women started. On 2 June 1971, a Brahmin family from Burirhat in Rangpur Sadar Police Station was captured by Pak soldiers on the banks of the Ghaghat River while fleeing to a safe haven in fear of the Pak army. After the soldiers raped the Brahmin's wife, the Brahmin killed his wife and infant daughter and threw them under the Jafarganj Bridge over the Ghaghat River ^[87]. During the war of liberation, Jalsa was held every night at 11 pm at the residence of an officer adjacent to the army headquarters in Rangpur city. Beautiful women from different villages were forced to dance at this festival. All these women were raped for entertainment. The raped women were given dry bread during the day and a little rice at night. Rangpur Cantonment Army Major Bashir was the mastermind of Nari Niyatan. He used to rape beautiful Bengali women every night. In this cantonment, students from Dhaka and Rajshahi universities were kept captive and raped day after day ^[88].

Ronesh Mitra, a journalist with Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, said at the end of his visit to Rangpur that the Pak army used the Ats Council building in Rangpur Cantonment and the city center to harass women. Hundreds of women were almost stripped naked. Those who fell ill were killed. After the independence of the country, a large number of women's skeletons, blouses and saris were found near the eight council halls. According to eyewitnesses, the Razakars sent about 400 women from Rangpur to various camps in Dhaka to entertain the Pak army. Later they were not found ^[89].

Torture of women in Nageshwari police station

Three days after the capture of Rangpur Nageshwari police station, the Pak army attacked the village Jagatpur on the north-eastern side of Nageshwari Bazar and killed the daughter-in-law of Dinmuzur Achmat Ali ^[90]. In the first week of June, the Pak army raided Anshar Hat in Bamandanga Union, looted shops and forcibly removed about 40 women from the villages surrounding the Hat and held them captive in the camp. The soldiers used to rape these Bengali women at night. The cries of women could be heard every night from this camp ^[91].

Torture of women in Bhurungamari police station

Two months after the capture of Bhurungamari police station by the Pak army, on 3 July 1971, they attacked the village of Gachidanga and took Asiya Khatun and Mojiron Nisha to the camp and brutally tortured them ^[92]. According to a man named Mohammad Akhtaruzjan Mandal, on 14

December 1971, the Pak army was forced to leave the Bhurangmari camp by a joint force. Shortly after leaving the Pak army camp, we entered the camp and saw 4 women prisoners in a locked room on the second floor of the CO office. Signs of torture all over their bodies. One of them was a college student and she was 5 months pregnant^[93]. At the same time, 16 women were rescued by breaking down the doors of Bhurangmari High School. These women were tied with ropes. After their release, these women described the persecution of the Pak army on them. The Pak army has mainly used these women as sex slaves^[94].

Torture of women in Kulia police station

In July 1971, the Pak army attacked a village under Kulia police station in Rangpur district. At first the villagers were defeated by trying to build resistance. When the village was captured by the Pak army, a beautiful Bengali woman was taken to the camp as a sex slave. 10 months later the woman gave birth to a son in the camp. When the country became independent, the son was sent to a government orphanage^[95]. From 26 March 1971 to 14 December 1971, the Pak army brutally tortured a number of Bengali women in Rangpur district. Many women commit suicide out of shame. Many give birth to children. But giving birth to these illegitimate children creates a volatile situation in the society. Later, the government was forced to send these children to different countries with the help of the United Nations^[96].

Torture of women in Dinajpur city

On 14 April 1971 the Pak army attacked the city of Dinajpur and by 16 April occupied various parts of the city and started steamrollers of inhumane torture such as arson, looting, torture, murder and rape of women. Beautiful young girls from different villages in and around the city were forcibly brought to the camps and subjected to brutal torture. After the surrender of the Pak army, many decomposed bodies of women were found in that camp^[97].

Torture of women at Parbatipur railway station camp

About five hundred mass graves were found at Parbatipur after the war. Most of the female skeletons were found in these mass graves. The locals believe that the Pak army brutally killed the girls in the railway station barracks and gave them mass graves^[98]. Bangladesh Constituent Assembly member Sardar Mosharraf Hossain told reporters in Parbatipur that local brokers forcibly picked up beautiful women from different parts of the district and took them to the Pak army's railway camp. The Pak army raped and killed these women and secretly buried them^[99]. A local journalist said he had witnessed the plight of women in Pakistani camps. He mentioned that the middlemen used to take young women from different towns and villages of the district to the Pak camps and the soldiers used to enjoy the hellish pleasures by stripping them naked^[100].

Torture of women in Chiribandar police station camp

The Pak army set up a camp at Chiribandar police station in Dinajpur district and started torturing women. They raided various villages on the pretext of arresting the freedom fighters, captured beautiful women in camps and carried out public torture^[101]. A search on 10 July 1972 revealed that the Pak army had set up two camps at Ghughudanga School Para and Khanpur School as recreation centers. Here young

women were forcibly taken from different places and brutally tortured and raped. The mass graves discovered behind these two schools contained the mutilated bodies of about two hundred women^[102].

Torture of women in Birganj police station

In November 1971, the Pak army raided the house of Mr. Badruddin Ahmed, a school teacher in Ghorabandh village of Birganj police station and brutally tortured his daughter-in-law. On December 9, 1971, a beautiful woman with four children was brutally tortured to death in a six-hour raid in the village^[103]. Similarly, more than 7,000 men and women were killed by the Pak army at Setabganj in Dinajpur^[104]. At the last moment of December, the Pak army captured the beautiful girls from the village of Pranakrishnapur in Hakimpur, raped them and dumped them on the streets, bridges and culverts. Later, the locals rescued them when they fell ill^[105].

Torture of women in Gaibandha city

After 17 April, the Pak army entered the town of Gaibandha and started killing, looting, arson and torturing women. The local collaborators of the Pak army established a reign of terror in the town of Gaibandha. In a short period of time, members of the Razakar forces would capture beautiful women from different parts of the city and take them to the Pak army camps, even forcibly raping them themselves^[106]. A man went to Gaibandha to describe the torture of women and said that one night he woke up to a sudden noise. I saw the soldiers forcibly picking up two girls and brutally torturing them in the next room. They started screaming at the brutal torture of the soldiers. Then I heard the sound of two shots and with that I heard the last cry of the women^[107]. Safayet Khandaker, a correspondent for the daily Azad, said the number of cases of violence against women in Gaibandha has gone beyond all records. After entering Gaibandha, the Pak army raped the women wherever they found them. Hindu women were abducted and hanged at the end of the rape^[108]. In the Helal Park camp of the city, young girls from Palashbari, Sadullapur, Kamarjani, Fulchhari, Bharatkhal, Sundarganj villages were captured and brutally tortured^[109]. Along with the Pak army, the Razakar forces inflicted indescribable torture on the women of Gaibandha. These Razakar forces were responsible for the loss of dignity of many women^[110]. Pak Major Sher Khan and Bahadur Miza were responsible for all the murders and rapes of women in Gaibandha. With their direct cooperation, the Pak army and the Razakar forces turned Gaibandha into a women's torture cell^[111].

Torture of women in Thakurgaon

On 22 April 1971, the Pak army set up camp at Garia Union in Thakurgaon and raped about 60 women from the villages of Bogulagachhi, Pisamat and Sukanpukur. Out of the 60 women victims, the next 4 died^[112]. Wapda Rest House, C&B, Inspection Bungalow, Kismat and Palashbari military camps on the banks of Tiran River in Thakurgaon subdivision became the main centers of women's oppression. At the end of the war many women's saris and other garments were found in these places^[113]. Regarding the torture of women in Thakurgaon, Mr. Talukder, WAPDA's employee, said that the Pak army did not return the women who were taken to the camp by truck in front of their eyes. These women were brutally tortured at night. As

a result of their persecution, many women became pregnant. Some of the women who became pregnant committed suicide ^[114].

Khulna Division

Torture of women in Khulna city

April 1971 set up camp in Khulna city. In the second week of April, the Pak army stopped passenger Bhati launches coming from Daulatpur, snatched money and jewelry, lined up about 400 passengers and shot them dead. After that, the Pak army forcibly brought beautiful women from different houses of Khulna city to the camp almost every day and carried out brutal torture. Many women die in this tragedy. Many become pregnant. Many pregnant women are forced to commit suicide ^[115]. At the end of June, many people were going to India through Patharghata. At that time 4 vehicles of Bhati Pak army came and randomly shot and killed many people and in that vehicle about 60 beautiful young girls were taken to the camp and brutally tortured. Among them was Reba Rani Nath of Dumuria. Reba Rani Nath was brutally tortured overnight. Reba Rani said in an interview after the country's independence that she had seen about 60 women captives in the camp. Among the women prisoners were school-college girls. Pak soldiers used to entertain these women and forcibly raped and killed those who disobeyed them. The Pak army often handed over the women to the Razakars after brutal torture. Members of the Razakar forces used to torture women just like the Pak army. Reba Rani was also raped by the Pak army and handed over to the Razakar forces. The members of the Razakar force held her captive and raped her for a long time. She later escaped and took refuge in Golpur, India ^[116].

Torture of women in Jessore cantonment

When the war of liberation started, the Pak army set up a cell for torture of women in Jessore cantonment. On March 30, 1971, Haresh Uddin, an employee of the Military Engineering Service, said that 295 women were held captive and brutally tortured every night in the family quarters of the 55th Field Regiment Atelier. He added that every night there would be cries from the cell. Every afternoon a subedar would come to the cell and make a list of where the girls would go. Then the girls were sent to different places according to the list. Sometimes the Pak army would bring out the girls and kill them ^[117]. One day fourteen Pak soldiers raped a woman and knocked her unconscious. Another eyewitness said that the FF No. 12 captured the beautiful girls from outside the cantonment. They were detained in room 10 of the regiment, and every night these women were brutally tortured and their screams could be heard from the room. He added that women prisoners were divided into three groups. Among these girls, the beauties were sent to various Pak army camps including Dhaka ^[118]. After the fall of Jessore, hundreds of women were rescued from different rooms of the cantonment, who were brutally tortured by the Pak army from the beginning to the end of the war. Pak Army officers Connell Sams and Major Belayet were notable. Inspired by them, the sepoy's killed the wife in front of the husband. Every day, they raided the villages around the cantonment and captured beautiful women ^[119]. Speaking about the torture of women by the Pak army in Jessore, eyewitness Rafiq Uddin said that seven Pak army members, with the help of razakars, raided Ismail

Sardar's house in Monirampur, took his beautiful wife to the camp and brutally tortured her ^[120].

Torture of women in Jhenaidah

During the war of liberation the Pak army took up position at the hospital near Maheshpur police station on the border of Jhenaidah. Local leaders of the Muslim League and Jamaat-e-Islami set fire to houses in the area to seize Hindu property. Tactically, they picked up the Hindu girls and sent them to the Pak army camp. The Pak army members kept these women captive and brutally tortured them day after day. The Pak army raided a Hindu neighborhood in the area and forcibly arrested about twenty young women and forced them to walk naked in the streets. The Pak army brutally tortured them till the last day of the war ^[121]. On 10 December 1971, the Ghona-Alipur area of Jessore was liberated from the control of the Pak army. Eleven naked women were rescued from the mosque in the village. For seven months of the war, these women were raped on the premises of this mosque. In the case of the killing of women, the Pak army set an example that they did not even bother to desecrate the mosque. Thus, during the war of liberation, the Pak army, with the help of the local Razakars and Al-Badr forces, created a disgusting history of women abuse in Jessore city, cantonment and surrounding villages ^[122].

Torture of women in Kushtia

In April 1971, the Kushtia district came under the control of the Pak army and the persecution of women began. Masuda Khatun, wife of Mofiz Uddin of Hasimpur village in Kumarkhali, Elizan Nesha, wife of Akbar Ali of the same village and Duljan Nesha, wife of Teshar Ali Mandal of nearby Dayarampur village were brutally tortured by Pak forces for 7 months ^[123]. The Pak army set up camp at Hashimpur Bazar and School. From this camp, with the help of razakars, Pak army members raided various villages and brutally tortured young Bengali women. Even the Pak army tied up the husband and raped the wife in front of the husband. In May 1971, Duljan, the wife of Teshar Ali of Dayarampur, was sitting at the door of the house. Suddenly Razakar Mozam enters the house with Pak army members and forcibly rapes Duljan in front of his husband ^[124]. Fuljan, 15, of Matirhat village in Kushtia Kumarkhali was brutally tortured by the Pak army while he was 8 months pregnant. This is how the Pak army tortured women in Kushtia during the war of liberation ^[125].

Barisal Division

During the war of liberation, the Pak army set up camps in various educational institutions in large areas of greater Barisal including Bhola, Patuakhali, Pirojpur and Jhalokati and carried out massacre, destruction and genocide of women.

Torture of women in Pirojpur

At the beginning of the war, the Pak army tortured women in Pirojpur. Eyewitness Khadija Begum said in an interview that the Pak army brutally tortured many women. The Pak army abducted three daughters of a Hindu named Radharman and brutally tortured them in their camp for three nights. At one stage of Nitan's illness they were released from the camp. The family later fled and took refuge in India. On 14 June 1971, the Pak army, with the

help of the Razakars, picked up a beautiful Hindu girl from a village called Maheshpur and brutally tortured her in the barracks. When Niyatne fell ill, he was sent back to his home. But the next day the young girl committed suicide. In this way, the Pak army used to capture beautiful women from different places and take them to Pirojpur cantonment and carry out unspeakable torture.^[126] Innumerable women were raped in the camp of the Pak army in the bungalow of SDO in Pirojpur. In this camp, a college student named Fulurani Biswas was brutally killed ^[127].

Torture of women in Bagmara Kadmati village

On May 10, 1971, the Pak army suddenly attacked the village of Kadmati in Bagmara. About 130 men and women were killed in the attack. During the massacre, the beautiful widow of the village took Bhagarathi to the camp. Bhagarathi continues to entertain the Pak army by trivializing death. At one point he developed close ties with Pak army officers and on this occasion he conveyed all the news of the camp to the freedom fighters. As a result, the freedom fighters fought with the Pak army in the middle of June. About 45 Pak soldiers were killed in the battle. The next time the Pak bests understood Bhagarathi's strategy, they tied him to a car and dragged him on the city streets. The people of the city panicked and fled into the forest. After circling all the streets of the city, he was killed at the intersection of the city. Later the masses buried Bhagarathi. Today, the eyewitnesses of that village are shocked when they think of the torture on Bhagarathi ^[128].

Torture of women in Swarupkathi

The Pak army started torturing women in early 1971 in Julughat village of Swarupkathi police station in Barisal district. Usharani Mallick, an eyewitness to the village, said that in mid-April, the Razakars and the Pak army launched a joint operation in the village. During the raid, two women were raped and several others were taken to the barracks. Although the war ended, these women did not return ^[129]. Bharati Rani Basu of Swarupkathi village said that on May 6, the Pak army first entered Swarupkathi and brutally tortured girls between the ages of 14 and 16. Many of these girls were killed by cutting their bodies with blades for three days because they did not agree with the soldiers ^[130]. He also said that a beautiful Hindu pregnant woman he knew was taken to the camp and raped four times. Later, when he fell ill, he was released ^[131]. The Pak army raped about a thousand women in different villages of this police station. The soldiers brutally killed the women. A woman named Khirda Sundari was found and killed by the Pak army with a bayonet ^[132].

Torture of women in Jhalokati

Like other places in Barisal, the Pak army tortured women in Jhalokati. Sanjeev, the chief of the Mujib forces in Jhalokati, killed eighteen members of Bess's family. Sanjeev saw only the body of his younger sister Rama floating in the river. The Pak army picked up Rama from his house and dumped him in the river of murder. The Pak army did not find Sanjeev and picked up his mother and tortured her for three months. Even today, Sanjeev's mother lives with that distant memory ^[133].

Torture of women in North Talgachhi village

From the beginning of April 1971, the Pak army started torturing women in the village of Uttar Talgachhi in Barisal.

Eyewitness Md. Meswar Ali said that the Pak army raided the village at different times and took the young girls to the camp. It was there that the officers carried out a concerted torture. The cries of these tortured girls would have been heavy in the air ^[134].

Torture of women in Gournadi police station

On 25th April 1971, about twenty five lorries of Pak army entered Gournadi police station and at around three o'clock in the afternoon started mass destruction and killing. On that day, they searched various houses on the side of the road and picked up 6 young women. These young women were not found in Parbati. After that, for a long period of eight months, the Pak army carried out massive violence in all the Gournadi police stations ^[135]. The Pak army would leave the camp at 7 am and attack different villages with the help of razakars. They divided into different groups and carried out riots in the villages. The house on the south side of Gournadi College was an army dance hall. The Pak army raided the villages, picked up beautiful women and detained them in this house ^[136]. For nine long months, the Pak army has been torturing women in different parts of Barisal and writing the most brutal history.

Conclusion

When the war of liberation started, people from all walks of life started resisting the oppression and torture of the Pak army. Millions of Bengali women who jumped into the war of liberation have endured indescribable torture at the hands of the Pak army. In the nine months of the war of liberation, about fourteen lakh women were oppressed in various ways by the Pak army. All these oppressed women lost their husbands, sons, daughters or guardians and became destitute. According to the news magazine Pisk published from Australia, about three lakh women were raped by the Pak army in the nine months of the liberation war. A British doctor Malcolm Potts said that in just three districts of Bangladesh, twelve thousand women are victims of rape. According to the data released by the War Crimes Investigation Agency on November 2, 1972, in the nine months of the war, more than two lakh Bangladeshi women were raped by the Pakistani army. Humanitarian researcher at the time. Geoffrey Davis said that as a result of rape in Bangladesh, out of two lakh pregnant women, one lakh seventy thousand abortions took place and the majority of the remaining thirty thousand were forced to commit suicide. On the eve of the war of liberation, the people of all walks of life were incensed at the Pak army and its allies for witnessing the brutal persecution of the innocent Bengali women of this country. They then united to form a resistance struggle against the Pak army and joined the war by forming the Mukti Bahini. In this case, the Bengali women did not sit idly by. They also participated in the war directly and indirectly, preferring to die fighting like heroes rather than dying voluntarily.

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8. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: Mujib was Born on 17th March, 1920 in Tungipara a village in Gopalganj district. Father: Sheikh Lutfor Rahman, Mother: Mst. Shaira Khatun. He was born into a Bengali Muslim family as the third child in a family of four daughters and two sons. He passed his matriculation (SSC) from Gopalganj Missionary school in 1942, Intermediate of Arts from Kolkata Islamia College (now Maulana Azad College) in 1944 and BA from the same college in 1947. After the partition of India, in 1948 he was admitted into the University of Dhaka to study law but did not complete the course. He was arrested on 11 March, 1948 on the charge of participating in Bengali language movement. During his imprisonment he was elected as the joint secretary of newly formed political party Awami Muslim League on 23rd June, 1949. During his imprisonment in Faridpur jail He started fasting to death claiming Bangla as the state language of Pakistan. Consequently he was freed from jail on 26th February, 1952. In 1953 he was elected as the general secretary of Awami Muslim League. In 1954 he was selected as a member of East Bengal legislative assembly, second Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and also assigned as the minister of trade, industry and anti-corruption bureau of east Bengal cabinet. In 1958 Mujib was arrested again by General Ayub Khan's Martial law and was imprisoned till 1961. He was arrested again in 1966 by Pakistani security law while demonstrating six-point movement for the freedom of Bengali people. But Pakistani Military Government was forced to free him in front of the incessant protest of students. In the national and provincial election of 1970 Awami league clinched victory in majority of seats under sheikh Mujib's leadership. But the Pakistani Military Government denied to hand over power to the elected Awami league. At last finding no path of negotiation in first night of 26th March, 1971 Bangabandhu declared independence of Bangladesh. Thus started the Bengali defensive struggle. Bangabandhu was arrested and sent to west Pakistan jail. On 16th Decedmber, 1971 Bangladesh clinched much awaited victory and gain independence. On 10th February of 1972 after the event of victory of 16th December, 1971 Bangabandhu returned home being freed from west Pakistan and undertook state responsibility. But on 15th August of 1975 a group of distracted army officers assassinated Bangabandhu along with his family. For details - Safar A. Akand, (1970) 'East Pakistan and Politics of Regionalism,' *Unpublished Ph.D Thesis*, University of Denver; Ahmed. Moudud, (1990), *Era of Sheikh Mujbur Rahman*, Dhaka: University Press Limited.
9. 9.7th March of 1971 is a memorable day of Bengali national history. In this day, Bangabandhu delivered an important speech at the Ramna Race Course maidan in Dhaka to a large gathering of spontaneous Bengali people. This speech of bangabandhu in history is known as 7 March Speech. In this 18 minutes long speech Bangabandhu focused and gave direction on 23 year long history of deprivation and oppression of Pakistani government, the shape of conflict between east and west Pakistan, background analysis of Non-cooperation movement and program declaration, country wide defense against the Pakistani government, indication of transforming this defense movement in to armed freedom war, strategic move of guerilla war against enemy, and maintaining communal harmony in case of any stimulation of conflict. *Source*: Rahman, Mofizur (1995), 'Speeches at Dhaka Race Course and Gettysburg', *The Financial Express*, Dhaka., p.9; 'Poet of Politics' *Newsweek*, 5 April, 1971.
10. On 16th December 1971 Commander of Pakistani Military Force General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi, along with 93,000 troops, surrendered to General Jagjit Singh Aurora- Joint Commander of Indian and Bangladeshi Forces. Air Commodore A. K. Khandker, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Bangladesh Forces, represented the Provisional Government of Bangladesh at the surrender. This surrender resulted in the end of nine-month long liberation war and the emergence of a new independent state Bangladesh. *Source*: Salik, Siddiq (1978), *Witness to Surrender*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 122-123, 139-180.
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13. Rahman, Hasan Hafizur, (ed.), *Bangladesh War of Independence Documents*, Volume VIII, op, cit., p.54.
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16. Rahman, Hasan Hafizur, (ed.), *Bangladesh War of Independence Documents*, Volume VIII, op, cit., p.55.
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- Bangladesh, Delhi: Geeta Book Centre, 1971, 77.
20. Rahman, Hasan Hafizur, (ed.), Bangladesh War of Independence Documents, Volume VIII, op, cit., 56.
 21. Islam, Major Rofiqul, Psc, Retd, Genocide in Bangladesh: Harrowing Accounts of Some Eye-Witness and Extracts From the Press, (Dhaka: Upoma Prokashani, 1991, 67.
 22. Ibid, 19.
 23. Rahman, Hasan Hafizur, (ed.), op, cit., p.37
 24. The Dainika Purbadesa, 16 January, 1972.
 25. Ashrafuzzaman (ed.), History of Violence against Women in Bengal, Dhaka: Ujjal Publications, 1986, 116-118.
 26. Rahman, Hasan Hafizur, (ed.), op, cit., p.37
 27. Ibid., 50-52.
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 31. Shahnaz Parveen, Contributions of Women to the Liberation War of Bangladesh, Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 2010, p.172.
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 35. The Dainika Purbadesa, 7 January, 1972.
 36. Ibid.
 37. Kader Siddiqui, Sbadhinata `71, Dhaka: Bangabandhu Publications, 1985, p.43.
 38. Rahman, Hasan Hafizur, (ed.), op, cit., p.408.
 39. The Daily Bangla, February 30, 1972.
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 44. Asad, Asaduzzaman, op, cit., 56.
 45. The Daily Bangla, February 19, 1972.
 46. Asad, Asaduzzaman, op, cit., p. 39; Rahman, Hasan Hafizur, (ed.), op, cit., p.355.
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 48. Ibid., June 12, 1972.
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