Chapter I

Introduction

Emergence of Bangladesh in 1971 was an epoch making event of post-colonial Asian subcontinent. It altered the geography of Pakistan disproving Jinnah’s two nation theory, based on which Pakistan was born. Brutality of ‘Operation Searchlight’ which commenced from 25th March 1971 resulted in civil war in East Pakistan. Mass rape and killings created such terror that huge number of people entered India leaving their home and hearth. Magnitude of refugee problem, President Yayha Khan’s government’s disallowance of any political space to Mujib’s Awami League, and cold response of international bodies pushed India to become a partner in 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.

The lightning campaign of Bangladesh still has many areas which are less explored. The campaign still provokes thoughts because of its uniqueness. One such thought provoking area is politico-military strategy formulation in stages, its finalization and execution. Accordingly, I chose my research topic Politico-Military Strategy of Bangladesh Liberation War 1971.

Unlike science, a research topic of such enormity and discipline will have parameters having interplay of diverse beliefs. Fundamental problem which confronts the student of military history, geopolitics and international relations is the conceptual problem of analysis. Existing historiography on the creation of Bangladesh are often biased by the nationality of the writers. In this context I too echo the comments of Ms. Sarmila Bose who states:

There was little dispassionate scholarly work on the 1971 conflict in the thirty five years that followed. Most of the published material on the war – in English and Bengali –consists of personal account and views of those directly involved in the conflict, or commentary by those with strong partisan leanings one way or other. They are not systematic attempts to unearth and present facts and
perspectives from all sides, or to address research questions. On the other hand
many of the key players have not published personal accounts.¹

This thesis seeks answer to some of the relevant questions after scanning the historical
panorama. After critically reviewing the situations that led to the crisis in East Pakistan, it
examines how the politico-military strategy was evolved in the backdrop of cold war
politics in South Asia, what was the stated political aim of the war, how did the military
higher command translated political aim of the war to military strategy? And how did the
theatre commands execute the operational art and tactics? The thesis also cursorily
examines operational plans and their execution by the lower formations linking it with
the evolved military strategy.

**Statement of Aim and Objectives**
Bangladesh campaign; a ‘two-week swift war’ culminated with unconditional surrender
of Pakistani armed forces and capture of 93000 prisoners of war (PWO). Post World
War-II, it was a resounding military victory and obviously, strategy, planning and
conduct of this campaign has been a matter of professional inquiry. Though many
books, articles, and dissertations have been written on Bangladesh Liberation War; but
hardly there has been any attempt to inquire politico-military strategy of Bangladesh
Liberation War 1971 in totality keeping grand strategy or ‘total strategy’, and it’s
formulation in stages and its execution as the main theme. Aim of my thesis is to bridge
this gap by carrying out systematic studies of the situation of events, cold war politics,
international reactions and influence, their impact on the formulation of national grand
strategy and India’s sequential response. Objectives of this dissertation is to examine
stages of evolution of the politico-military strategy, its finalization and execution
resulting in liberation of Bangladesh. Four cornerstones of a nation’s grand strategy or
total strategy are ‘political strategy’, ‘foreign policy strategy’ ‘military strategy’ and
‘economic strategy’. All are interlinked, only their degree of importance may vary from
situation to situation. In this thesis, first three corner stones of grand strategy will be
discussed in detail.
Scope
The general focus of this study has been kept confined to matters and events related to formulation of strategy and its execution. Emphasis has been given to trace the turns and twists of the history which left India (as claimed by her) with no other choice but to resort to war as an instrument of achieving national objective. The study after having examined various options has been rounded off with the best available options. It will also examined diplomatic offensives by India and Pakistan. Finally military strategy and its execution including role and modus operandi of Mukti Bahini have been taken into the ambit of research to get an all encompassing view of politico-military strategy of this landmark historical episode.

Research Methodology
Unlike science, a research topic of such enormity and discipline will have parameters having interplay of diverse beliefs. Existing historiography on the creation of Bangladesh are often biased by the nationality of the writers. This thesis, after scanning the historical panorama and the situations that led to the crisis in East Pakistan, examines how the politico-military strategy was evolved in the backdrop of cold war politics in South Asia, what was the stated political aim of the war, how did the military higher command translated political aim of the war to military strategy? And how did the theatre commands execute the operational art and tactics? The thesis also briefly examines execution of operational plans by the lower formations with a view to validating the strategy. While doing so, the dissertation carries out similar enquiry for all the major stakeholders i.e. India, Pakistan, and the Provisional Bangladesh Government in Exile functioning from Calcutta. In addition, the thesis takes stock of the role of foreign nations and international institutions during the Liberation War, with special emphasis on U.S.A, U.S.S.R, China, United Nations and their cumulative effect on formulation of politico-military strategy. Historical Analyses method was used to provide basic frame work of the study and to understand the historical process of creation of Pakistan and its cessation in less than a quarter of a century. Content Analysis method was used to examine and ascertain the role of super powers in cold war politics in South Asia, discussions in the UN General Assembly and Security Council and role of UN during the Bangladesh crisis, in addition, I also used Quantitative and Qualitative approaches by gathering data.
on manpower, training, types, vintage and number of weapons, equipments, ships and aircrafts to carry out comparative parity or disparity of the armed forces to arrive at a logical inference to their ability to translate strategy into action. Lastly, I also used Case Study methodology was used in finding strategic and tactical strengths and weaknesses of the opposing forces.

My dissertation is based on my professional studies and experience over three decades as an officer of the Indian army, and last four years of focused research after I was enrolled as a PhD scholar in Visva-Bharati, Department of History. Notwithstanding various constraints, I have endeavored to make use of maximum possible relevant primary and secondary sources available in India, Bangladesh, UK and USA. Though, much I wanted to visit Pakistan but I could not get visa. I had to make up this void by other means like perusing through Hamdoor Rahman Commission Report on 1971 War, archived newspapers of Pakistan, books written by some participants and reading other non participants authors. In assessing the overall scenario with objectivity, some of the important primary and secondary sources that call for mentioning like Sisson and Rose who had an extensive access to Pakistan’s available materials and did undertake oral interview of some of the top decision makers including Yahya Khan. I was fortunate to hear Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw Army Chief Of India during the 1971 War, the architect of military victory of 1971 speaking on 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. In the year 2000, I was in charge of a study team researching on ‘Unconventional Methodology in Offensive Operation’. In this context, I interviewed Lt Gen Sagat Singh who as GOC 4 Corps adopted unconventional innovative tactics in Bangladesh war. His plans took Pakistan army by surprise and also ensured quick capture of Dacca, the gravitas center of East Pakistan. Last year I took oral interview of Lt Gen J F R Jacob, who was Chief of Staff Eastern Command during the Bangladesh Liberation War and in that capacity he was involved in formulation of strategy and coordination of this operation. I also took oral interview of Brigadier H.S.Sodhi, the octogenarian Brigadier who commanded a Brigade in Bangladesh Operation and wrote a good account of it named Operation Windfall. I was lucky to get a copy of ‘after action report’ on capture of Dacca prepared by Major General Gandharv Nagra, GOC 101 Communication Zone who first entered Dacca on 15th December 1971. It is an invaluable primary source whose access I got courtesy his son Brig H.S. Nagra.
Military historian Maj Gen D.K Palit states, “War can be studied from various perspectives. From the functional point of view, it can be classified into three main aspects, planning, execution, and logistics...broadly.....purpose of war planning is too place the army forces of the nation at maximum possible advantage over those of the enemy before the commencement of operations and at each subsequent step thereafter.”

Chapter Divisions

My dissertation incorporates a total of twelve chapters as stated below including the introduction and conclusion:

1) Introduction
2) Idea of Pakistan and Road to Bangladesh
3) Art of War: Nuances of Strategy, Operational Art and Tactics
4) Military Geography of East Pakistan: Its implications on Formulation of War Strategy and Conduct of Battles
6) Politico-Military Strategy of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh Government in Exile
7) Planning and Conduct of Operation:
   a. Eastern Theatre (Bangladesh Campaign)
   b. Western Theatre
9) Air & Naval Operations: Strategy and its Execution
10) Role of United Nations during 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War
11) Analysis of the War Strategy and its Execution through the Prisms of, Operational Art, and Principles of War
12) Conclusion

Contents of the chapters in brief have been explained in the next page.
Chapter-I: Introduction. The opening chapter introduces the thesis, and gives out research scope, methodologies, review of literature, salient aspects highlighting various primary and secondary sources and also some details of the persons who were orally interviewed. A few of these details have been mentioned in page 4 and the full details have been mentioned in the bibliography section. The chapter also covers a short account of the research problems and a small note on the style of the dissertation operation. I have visited Bangladesh many a times during the last four years and spent a good amount of time in Bangladesh in search of primary and secondary sources. In Dhaka, I interacted with many *MuktiJoddhas* (freedom fighters) and perused primary sources kept in the Liberation War Museum, and at National Museum Dhaka. I have also presented a few relevant papers in various seminars in Dhaka during the last couple of years and there my interactions with people like Prof. Anisuzzaman, Inamul Haq Inu, a Mukti Joddha Minister of Information, government of Bangladesh, Prof. and historian Delwar Hossain of Dhaka University and many more whose name have been separately mentioned enriched my perspective from the Bangladeshi point of view.

Chapter-II: Idea of Pakistan and Road to Bangladesh

This chapter traces the defining moments of history that led to the construction of Pakistan, reasons for Bengali Muslims joining the fray and in less than a quarter of a century its dismemberment. I tried to get answer to the moot question why did a nation state named Pakistan constructed on the foundation of religion succumb in its very nascent stage? While analyzing the genesis of formation of Pakistan, one finds that the idea of a separate homeland for Hindus and Muslims was hovering around in some form or other since the inception of Muslim League in 1906. Lahore Resolution of 1940 (also known as Pakistan Resolution) moved by Mr. A K Fazlul Haq was aimed at formation of autonomous states for Muslim majority areas of India but not amalgamation of these areas to form a separate country. Political whirlpool changed the essence of Lahore Resolution and Pakistan was born on 14th August 1947 on the premise that uniformity of religion will one day overcome the impediments created by culture. After independence, several factors
contributed to the gradual widening of the two wings. The fundamental factor was the difficulty of West Pakistani elite to accept Bengalis as equal partners because of racial prejudice against Bengali Muslims. Leaders of Pakistan basically belonging to West Pakistan made every attempt to destroy culture of East Bengal. The martyrs of *Bhasha Andolon* (language movement-21 February 1952) gave impetus to Bengali nationalism which started a chain reaction.

I have collated various available statistics proving cultural suppression, economic exploitation, and disproportionate representation in civil and military service and political alienation by not letting political leaders from East Bengal stay in power. Though in December 1970 election, Awami League got the majority mandate but was kept out of power. Mujib-Bhutto-Yahya talk held until 24th March failed. And on the evening of 25th March Yahya left Dacca secretly with instructions to Lt-Gen Tikka Khan to ‘sort them out’. On the night of 25th March Pakistan Army cracked down on the innocent unarmed people with all the might and unspeakable brutality. This led to civil war followed by announcement of independence by Mujibur Rahman.

**Chapter- III: Art of War- Nuances of Strategy, Operational Art, and Tactics**

Nuances of strategy, operational art, and tactics have been elucidated with a view to facilitate the reader with better clarity on their definition, attributes and correlation with other components of state machinery in conduct of war. Strategic planning is an evolving process which needs to take note of various internal and external parameters which will be discussed along with risk calculus model to check risk factor on the evolved strategy. Strategy and tactics have long been studied and described, but the third level of war, the operational level (operational art), in context to 1971 Indo-Pakistan War was hardly studied which I have briefly covered in my thesis. The study found that from the point of view of distributed operations, operational art during 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War was expressed in the use of multiple axes of advance directed against the East Pakistan Army’s center of gravity Dacca.
Chapter-IV: Military Geography of East Pakistan: Its Implications on Formulation of War Strategy and Conduct of Operations

This covers Military Geography of East Pakistan to include, Topography, terrain, habituation, communication system, weather, lay of the ground etc. which have direct impact on formulation of war strategy, military planning and conduct of operation. In this chapter, I have used statistical data like month wise rainfall, temperature, road and rail communication systems, port handling capability, availability of local transport, availability and classification /capability of bridges, airports and seaports etc to arrive at military operational implication of the geography. Most important deduction was best timing to launch campaign and the engineering efforts required to ensure mobility.

Chapter- V:- Geopolitics in South Asia from 1947 to 1971 and the Role of External Powers during 1971 Indo-Pakistan War: it’s Effect on Formulation of Strategy

In this chapter, strategic imperatives of cold war imbroglio and interest of super powers in South Asia, their power equations and their influence have been analysed. In addition, role of China, Islamic and other neighboring countries and their influence during 1971 War have been analysed. Analyses bring out the facts that the US tilted towards Pakistan and when the war ultimately happened, Nixon administration resorted to ‘gun boat diplomacy’ by deploying Naval Task Force USS Enterprise in the Bay of Bengal. Nixon wrongly presumed that liberation war was a resultant episode of cold war .Indo-USSR Friendship Treaty signed in August 1971 that specified mutual strategic cooperation was a game changer which clearly made two super powers getting closer to two regional states of South Asia to maintain balance of power. This treaty came handy during the liberation war particularly during the debate and voting in UN Security Council. China supported Pakistan materially and in the United Nations debate, but much to the disappointment of Pakistan and US, China did not join war with Pakistan. By far the Islamic countries supported Pakistan: they gave more importance to Pakistan’s geographical unity than predicament of Bengali Muslims in East Pakistan as they did not want break up of a big Muslim state.
Chapter-VI: Politico-Military Strategy of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh Government in Exile.

This chapter has been devoted to cover the main theme of the theses. Evolution of national strategy of all the stake holders i.e. India, Pakistan and the Provisional Government of Bangladesh and finalization of politico-military strategy have been discussed in this chapter. To exert pressure on India, Pakistan tried hard to win the sympathy of the Islamic countries, the Western bloc and China. Pakistan perceived that her allies like USA, China etc. may join them in their war militarily and also United Nation will pressurize India to agree to a cease fire halting the war without any conclusive result. Pakistan’s military strategy vision was ‘Defence of the East lies in the West’. Aim was to contain Indian Forces in the East so that they cannot be deployed in the West where they were planning to fight the decisive offensive battle in J&K and Punjab. While pressing for a political solution through international intervention, India simultaneously commenced planning for a military option to be used as a last resort. Militarily it was strategized that main offensive will be launched in East Pakistan while in the Western Front, India will opt for defensive posture with limited offensive actions in selected places. In absence of Mujib, under the leadership of Mr. Tajuddin Ahmed, the Provisional Bangladesh Government functioning from Calcutta sought help of Indian Government for all types of support including arming, equipping and training the Mukti Bahini. It also established and used Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra (Radio Station of Independent Bangladesh) to motivate the freedom fighters. Mukti Bahini acted like their sword arm.

Chapter-VII: Planning and Conduct of Operation

This chapter presents the planning and conduct of the operation entailing military execution of war strategy by the opposing forces. Bulk of the Pakistan army was deployed in West as their strategy was to fight main battles in the west. In East Pakistan, Niazi with about five divisions at his disposal had adopted forward defence posture and a series of defence lines based on fortress concept of defence occupying the important communication centres and towns. Strategic mission given to Eastern Command of India entrusted with the liberation of Bangladesh was, ' destroy the bulk of Pakistani Forces in
the Eastern theatre and occupy the major portion of East Pakistan. Multi prong land operations were launched from all four sides to divide reaction capability of Pakistan army. Conduct of operations in each sector by various formations of India and Pakistan has been discussed in brief to prove efficacy of the strategic directions and to validate operational art. The war came to an end with the signing of the Instrument of Surrender on 16th December at the Dacca race course. War strategy had a symbiotic relationship between the two fronts. To get the holistic view of the overall strategy, plans; conduct and progress of holding operations have been discussed briefly covering the Western front where bulk of the Indian as well as Pakistan armed forces were deployed. Discussion in this chapter aimed at validating military strategy of the opposing forces.

Chapter-VIII: Mukti Bahini: Its Strategy, Modus Operandi and Contribution: An Appraisal

In this chapter, an effort has been made to find answer to questions like organisationl structure of the liberation force, their strategy, operational tactics and their contribution in the liberation war. Mukti Bahini comprised of different categories of freedom fighters. Formation of Mukti Bahini went through various stages since the brutal attack of Pakistan Army on 25th March 1971 and grew into a large and complex organization with different kind of capability. While analyzing its transformation and action, I found similarity with the French concept of civil war that entails three stages. Crystallization involves psychological rallying of the people. Edification mainly includes organization of the revolutionary structure. Militarization is the simultaneous creation of and operation of a military machine. Teliapara document prepared under the supervision of Col M.A.G. Osmani, Commander-in-Chief of Mukti Bahini and ratified by the Bangladesh Government in exile gave out the outline strategy of the liberation war which has been quoted. India’s involvement in training, arming, organizing and guiding operations has also been highlighted in this chapter.

Chapter –IX: Air & Naval Operations: Strategy and its Execution

This chapter presents Air and Naval Operations of the opposing forces including their organizations, state of inventory, strategy, tasks and executions. Statistical data have been used to compare the combat potential of the opposing forces. Eastern Naval Command at
Visakhapatnam supported the Bangladesh campaign. In East Pakistan, Pakistan had a miniscule navy and there was obvious mismatch between the combat potentials of the opposing forces. They had additional constraints of manpower since 3,000 Bengali officers and men out of a total 8,000 were rendered ineffective after military action began in East Pakistan in March 71, thus reducing the effective strength by nearly 38% at the time of going to war. Naval strategy of the opposing forces and their execution has been examined. This chapter also covers how the rival air forces played an important strategic role and influenced the tactical situation on several occasions.

Chapter- X: Role of United Nations during 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War
The drama and climaxes at the United Nations during the Bangladesh campaign have been retold and its inactions have been highlighted. Security Council is the principle UN organ responsible for ensuring peace, and it is the only body whose decisions are binding on all the member states. Throughout the liberation struggle, Pakistan army committed all forms of human rights violations. Yet the United Nation could not stop the sufferings of millions of people of Bangladesh because the United Nations can be effective only if the five permanent members of the Security Council act together. The Security Council was a divided house and was reflective of the cold war politics. UN handling of Refugee problem, persecution of minorities, racial discrimination, genocide and preventive diplomacy have been covered in this chapter. Salient UN deliberations from 4 to 23 December have also been included and resultant strategic imperatives for India have also been discussed.

Chapter -XI: Analysis of the War Strategy and its Execution through the Prisms of, Operational Art, and Principles of War.
This chapter makes a scrutiny of the liberation war seen through the prisms of ‘operational art’ and ‘principles of war’. From the point of view of established norms of military history, a campaign study is not complete without putting it through the prisms of ‘principles of war’ through which reasons for success or failure is found. Sequencing of war and simultaneity in advance towards Dacca with a Corps each, launching a helicopter landing behind Pakistan’s main defence and para dropping of a battalion at
Tangail bear testimony of thoughtful application of operational art. Principles of War provide an appropriate foundation for all military activities and guide commanders and their staffs in the planning and conduct of warfare. The chapter cites various examples to bring out ample proof that Indian forces in particular mostly adhered to these enduring tenets of warfare, whereas Pakistan armed forces many a times violated.

Chapter - XII: Conclusion. This chapter presents the summary of conclusions drawn based on the discussions in the previous chapters. It also offers some observations. 1971 was a year of national and international crisis in South Asia. Based on examination and interpretation of various primary sources, sorting of newspaper editorials, and journals of various countries and oral interview of persons involved in the liberation war and last but not the least secondary sources like books of many authors across the globe; construction of various chapters were made. In the context of Politico-Military Strategy of the Liberation War, the salient findings have been mentioned in this chapter along with brief explanation.

This chapter also brings out the aspect of wartime leadership. About leadership in war, French strategist General Beauford wrote, “Napoleon, when discussing the common sense rules of strategy, said that ‘there was nothing difficult about the art; the problem was to practice it’. This underlines the importance of the implementation of strategy. It is clear that the following are essential: firm resolve, a cool head to ensure that the decisions are always calculated ones and grim determination to ensure that effort is always bent towards attainment of the objective selected. These are qualities not often found in one man; hence the fact that true leaders in war are few; they must be both thinkers and men of actions.”

Review of the Literature
For this dissertation, I had to peruse classics on warfare and strategy and literature covering pre-partition and post partition history of unified Pakistan which will briefly get mentioned in my concluding remarks of this chapter. At this juncture I shall deal with my brief observations on the available literature on Bangladesh Liberation War, which is no exception to the philosophical conclusion of E H Carr that 'facts of history never exists
in pure form’. It has been found that mostly the secondary sources are beset with the nationality of the writers, views expressed or facts mentioned in their work do not necessarily carry an objective neutral view. Also, as generally happens, victors and the vanquished tell the same tales differently, and the victor is more believed. The existing literature and scholarly works on the 1971 Liberation War could be classified in categories as under which will be discussed in some detail:

(a) Official Records or Government Documents.
(b) Books/articles written by the various categories of participants of the 1971 War.
(c) Non–participants accounts.

**Official Records or Government Documents**

**India.** Most important official documents in India have been found in:

- The Nehru Memorial Museum & Library (NMML), New Delhi. They are practically treasure troves in finding foreign policy strategy and also politico-military strategy. J P Narayan Papers, BK Nehru Papers, P.N. Haskar Papers, T.N. Kaul Papers, D P Dhar Papers, Minutes of Meetings of Prime Minister, Foreign Ministers etc. bring out thought process of Government of India. File wise details have been mentioned in the bibliography.

- Archive of Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi. Here, though one could peruse some general correspondence, but access to classified materials where many important minutes of meetings and decisions are recorded is almost impossible because of government of India’s great hesitancy in declassifying the official documents.

- Records of proceedings of Rajyasabha (Upper House) and Loksabha (Lower House) kept in the parliament library give out political mood of the country and opinions of various political parties and their viewpoints related to refugee problems, foreign relations, budgetary provisions for defence and management of refugees etc. Quotes from most of these are also found in various secondary sources.
• Historical Division, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, New Delhi. The documents mainly the war digest and war dispatches that are available serve some purpose. But as the originators are mostly the participant units, hence facts mentioned here may not always be factual. My army service of three decades helped me to filter the inputs to a reasonable degree.

• Documents with HQ Eastern Command, Fort William. Not much of original documents of the war period have been found here. Few maps and some information of importance were available in Command Museum.

• Prasad, S.N., ed., *Official History of 1971 War.* (New Delhi: Ministry of Defence, Government of India, unpublished but placed on the net by *The Times of India*, September, 1992). For reasons best known to the government, this document has not yet been officially published, though the preface is signed by the defence secretary Mr. N.N. Vohra. That notwithstanding, researchers view it as an official document. Good amount of data related to inventory of armed forces find mention in this paper, have been sourced from this document. Though, the editor has tried his best to cite source, but still some authors have challenged some of the comments mentioned in this document. Minor flaws apart, this document serve a very useful purpose.

• After Action Report on Capture of Dacca prepared by Maj Gen G. S. Nagra, GOC 101 Communication Zone who first entered Dacca with his troops. A personal copy of this document was kept by Maj Gen G S Nagra which was shown to me by his son Brig. H.S. Nagra (Retd).

**Bangladesh.**

• *History of the War of Independence.* Fifteen volumes of Bangaldesh documents edited by Hasan Hafizur Rahman and prepared by the Government of Bangladesh. This document traces out the history of construction of Pakistan and covers up to liberation of Bangladesh. This document is useful to a researcher, though bias against Pakistan can not be ruled out as clippings of various news reports cited heavily lean towards Bangladeshis.


• Rashid Haider edited Smriti and Bhayabaha Abhignta are some good collections where one can scan the social and political panorama.

Pakistan

• Very few official records of government of Pakistan was available. One such government document is, White Papers on the Crisis in East Pakistan published in August 1971., Views expressed here are not without bias as the purpose of the White Paper on the Crisis was to defend action of Government of Pakistan. The reasons for the crisis in Pakistan were ascribed to Awami League led by Mujibur Rahman for their anti-Pakistan activities and India for abetting the Bangladeshi freedom fighters. The document pass on the blame of army brutalities on others reflecting perpetual denial of the establishment in Islamabad.

• Hamdoor Rahaman Commission Reports, is also considered as official document. Hamdoor Rahman Commission was ordered by Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Analyses of the terms of reference itself will lead to the conclusion that Bhutto wanted to exonerate him and find scapegoats in military people to pass the blame of dismemberment of Pakistan. However, the commission establishes persecution of minorities and glaring violation of human rights by the Pakistan Army during Operation Searchlight. To some extent, this report is useful.

• Maj Gen Shaukat Riza was appointed to write an official history of the Pakistan Army (1966-1971). He has incorporated many inputs like military deployment and details of the inventories of the Pakistan armed forces etc. which were useful for my theses the scope being such. But, as the account was written under official patronage, the author has made an endeavour to protect the image of the army; to
that extent the document cannot be considered without prejudice, though much useful.

USA

- The US State Department has declassified documents related to the South Asian Crisis in 1971. Exhaustive communication are found in volume XI of Foreign Relations of the United States(FRUS) Collection, Available online at http://www.state.gov./r/ca/ho/frus/ . This document has been of great help to me to establish US role in South Asia during the cold war period.

UK

- Official documents related to Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and British High Commission Files have been accessed in National Archives, Kew(UK) available on line at http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/

Books/Articles Written by the Various Categories of Participants of the 1971 War.
There are various categories of participants, politicians, civil and military official of many nationalities have written various accounts covering various aspects of the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. A few relevant ones are discussed here.

India

- Maj Gen Sukhwant Singh who was Deputy Director General of Military Operation in Army HQ, New Delhi in 1971 , in his three volume books; Indian Wars Since Independence has written a good account on the evolution of military strategy, planning , preparation and conduct of military operations covering both Eastern as well as Western Fronts. This book has been made good use of while citing certain historical facts.
• Maj Gen Lachhman Singh who was one of the divisional commanders in the East wrote a fair account on the operational aspects of the Bangladesh campaign in his book titled, *Victory in Bangladesh*.

• Gen KV Krishna Rao who was also one of the divisional commanders under 4 Corps during the Bangladesh campaign and later rose to become Indian Army Chief wrote a book named, *Prepare or Perish*. Couple of chapters in this book have been devoted on the Indo-Pak War 1971. A fairly good book with balanced views written in simple style.

• Lt Gen J.F.R. Jacob wrote, *Surrender at Dacca* where good account on planning, preparation and details of operational execution are covered. In 1971, Jacob in the rank of Maj Gen as a COS (Chief of Staff) Eastern Command was deeply involved in the planning, preparatory and conduct stage of the war. He was also involved with the drafting of Instrument of Surrender and the connected ceremony at Dacca on 16 December 1971. The book suffers from one major lacunae: Jacob gave full credit to himself for the successful military victory in Bangladesh war but made harsh and uncharitable comments against his boss Lt Gen J.S. Aurora, GOC-in C Eastern Command. He even did not spare Gen Manekshaw and was critical of him for not including Dacca as the final objective in the operational instructions issued by the Army Headquarters. Some of his off the cuff remarks like, he 'at times bypassed Army Commander’s and Army Chief’s direction' do not sound credible in a hierarchical organization like army. During a long oral interview, this aspect was discussed with him, much to his disliking. However, overall, there are many useful reference materials.

• In addition, I have also read Brig. H.S Sodhi’s Operation *Windfall*: a reasonably good account of Bangladesh war was found here. In Maj Gen Rajendra Nath’s book titled, *Military Leadership in India*, about 100 pages have been devoted to discuss 1971 war.

• Naval and Air aspects of the operations have been covered by the previous writers. In addition, I have perused Air Commodore Jasjit Singh’s account given in *War in the Sky*, and ACM P.C.Lal’s memoir, *My Years With the Air Force* have been good reading and was much useful. *Transition to Triumph* by Vice
Admiral G.M. Hiranadani, *War in Indian Ocean* by Vice Admiral M.K. Roy and 
*No way But surrender, an Account of the Indo-Pakistan War in the Bay of Bengal* 
by Vice Admiral M. Krishnan, FOC-in C Eastern Naval Command during the 
1971 War and Navy Chief of that era, Admiral SM Nanda,’s book *The Man Who 
Bombed Karachi* and We Dared : Maritme Operations in the 1971 Indo-Pak War, 
by Admiral S.N. Kohli make reasonably good historical reference books.

  the untold story of a secret force controlled directly by the Government of India, 
  Cabinet Secretariat.

- An article on *India’s Grand Strategy for the 1971* by AVM KapilKak, published 
  in the Journal of Centre for Land and Air Warfare (June 2012), made an 
  insightful reading.

- Lt Gen K.P Candeth wrote *The Western Front: Indo-Pakistan War 1971*. 
  Candeth was the army commander in the west. It is a good firsthand account, but 
  not fully devoid of bias.

- Mr. J. N. Dixit, a Director level IFS Officer during 1971, who was deeply 
  involved with many areas of foreign policies and was coordinating with the 
  Provisional Government of Bangladesh in Calcutta wrote, *Liberation and Beyond. 
  And Across Borders Fifty Years of India’s Foreign Policy* are good books where, 
  one got foreign policy insights. TN Kaul, Foreign Secretary, during 1971 War 
  wrote, *Ambassadors Need Not Lie: Some Aspects of India’s Foreign Policy* is 
  another book where Foreign Policy Philosophy and Strategy get surfaced.

### Bangladesh

Amongst many books that I went through both in Bengali as well as in English written by 
the Bangladeshi nationals; some important ones are highlighted below:

- G.W. Chowdhury wrote *The Last Days of United Pakistan*, an widely read 
  historical book with fairly neutral approach. The author gives credit to Yahya for 
  holding election in a fair manner first time in the history of Pakistan. The book 
  also brings out colonial treatment of the West. Political history point of view, it 
  served a good reference material.

A.K. Khondakar, Air Vice Marshall and other Mukti Bahini Commanders, *Bangladesh Liberation War-1971: The Strategy and Organization of the Fighting Forces*, A paper prepared by the Commanders of Mukti Bahini, signed on 15 May. 2008. The aim of this paper was to bring out historical facts about the Mukti Bahini by the commanders who led Mukti Bahini. This paper has historical value and give an insight of organization and strategy of Mukti Bahini which has been used in my study, specially in Chapter VIII.

Lt Gen ASM Naseem, *Bangladesh Fights For Independence*. Another chronicle by a liberation warrior, narratives is a mix of facts and sentiments. However an useful book that gives a panoramic view.

Dr. Nurun Nabi wrote a personal account of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh. His book *Bullets of ’71: A Freedom Fighter’s Story*, like many other freedom fighters give details of Mukti Bahini activities.

Musa Sadik wrote a voluminous account named *Bangladesh Wins Freedom*. Some inputs of this book could be used, but the book gives out one sided emotional views and therefore from historical sense not free from bias.

A.M.A. Muhit’s account titled *Bangladesh Emergence of a Nation*, published in 1978, is a reasonably written book with supporting references. But the book is somehow dated Inclusion of many historical documents now available would have made a rounded off history.

Rabindra Nath Trivedi edited compilation and collection of documents named *Bangladesher Oitihasik Sangram O Muktijuddho: Prasangik Dalil Patra (The Historical Struggle of Bangladesh and The war of Liberation: Relevant Documents)*, is an useful collection of historical documents which are of relevance to researcher.

Sukumar Biswas, collected, compiled and edited, *Bangladesh Liberation War: Mujibnagar Government Documents 1971*. This is a good collection of documents
related to various communications of the provisional government and is of historical value.

- Muntasir Mamoon, *Muktijuddher Chinno Dalilpatra* was also viewed during my visit to Bangladesh. A few inputs were of relevance.

**Pakistan**


- Lt Gen A.A.K Niazi the Commander in Chief of Pakistan Forces in East Pakistan wrote, *The Betrayal of East Pakistan*. It is a must for a researcher dealing with military history of the war. The book is not without flaw though. All through the author has justified his defeat and tried to explain that he did his best. He has condemned Yahya, Tikka Khan, Bhutto and many in the establishments of Pakistan; Tikka Khan’s brutality has also been criticized. However, to exonerate himself he has put the blame to Yahya and Bhutto and few other military officials based in West Pakistan. A typical defensive approach of a vanquished General.

- Salik, Siddiq, *Witness to Surrender* is another widely read eye witness account of an army Public Relation Officer. The book brings out many historical truths about the treatment meted by army officers to the innocent Bengalis. It also puts blame on Niazi.

- Maj Gen Qureshi, Hakem Arshad wrote an account titled *The Ind-Pak War : A Soldiers Narrative*. Lt Gen Kamal Matinuddin penned, *Tragedy of Errors East Pakistan and Shuja Nawaz, Crossed swords Pakistan Army, and The Wars* and a few other books by Pakistani writers have been passionately perused. None of these books maintain full neutrality though their reading helps to get various pictures about the Pakistan’s politics and army.

- Raja Tridiv Roy wrote Departed *Melody*. Many issues related to Chakma tribes have been described. He changed his loyalty to Pakistan and settled there.
However, its reading helped to get the other side of the story and a different perspective.

**USA**

- Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* and Richard Nixon’s *Memoirs* are a must and interesting read. Gun Bota diplomacy finds mention here. These accounts should be read with the official foreign relations files.
- Archer Blood wrote *The Cruel Birth of Bangladesh*: is another book which gives out gory stories of operation Searchlight and speaks of US apathy. Archer was US Consul general in Dacca in 1971 who protested against his own government’s inaction.

**Non-Participants Accounts**

There are many books and articles by journalists and other authors who were not involved directly in any capacity that I have gone through. A few of them are being highlighted below.

- Anthony Mascarehans, a Pakistani journalists wrote *Rape of Bangladesh* after fleeing to England which was first published in *Sunday Times*. Many were awakened through his reports. His book arouses passion but some of his statements are without documentary support. The book covers only first few months of the civil war. He wrote another book named *Bangladesh: A Legacy of Blood*. Here his narration gives a different perspective blaming leadership of both East and West Pakistan. Historical research point of view, both these books are of value but cannot be termed as scholarly work because at places, instead of historical evidences, hearsay have been quoted.
- Subrata Roy Chowdhury, a legal expert of Calcutta wrote an well researched book named *The Genesis of Bangladesh* in 1972. The author examines the UN inactions to impose legal norms on Pakistan for violating human rights, committing genocide and racialism and persecution on minorities and quotes international rules and laws. It acts as good reference on UN activities during the said period.
Maj Gen D.K. Palit wrote The Lightning Campaign in 1972, possibly the first book on 1971 war by a military historian of repute. The book furnishes some good data on deployment of troops, strength and tactics. However, it does not come out with any shortcomings of Indian Armed Forces. Possibly, as the book was written after the overwhelming military victory, it had some psychological effect on the writer.

Richard Sisson and Leo Rose wrote War and Secession: Pakistan, India and The Creation of Bangladesh. This is the best scholarly work on matters related to political process, foreign relations and cold war politics in south Asia. In fact study of creation of Bangladesh can not be completed without reading it a few times. The book is adequately supported by historical evidences. Only shortcoming is that it was written before declassification of US Government Foreign Policy documents. The authors have taken slight lenient views on US tilt towards Pakistan, which the recently declassified documents give ample proof.

Rounaq Jahan, a Bangladeshi wrote another scholarly account named Pakistan: Failure in National Integration. Willcox’s The Emergence of Bangladesh and South Asia Crisis by Robert Jackson are fairly good scholarly work.

A H Amin. Strategic Concept of 1971 War. Amin an ex Major of Pakistan army became a journalist and columnist and editor of Defence Journal of Pakistan. His article is incisive and brings out some harsh truth. He has neither spared Pakistani Generals nor Indian Generals wherever they went wrong. He has pointed out blunder of Pakistan Army by not attacking India in October-early November instead of December 1971. His observations make strategic sense.

Srinath Raghavan’s 1971 A Global History of The Creation of Bangladesh is another scholarly work from a different perspective. Backed by historical evidences, the author has brought out role and influence of the global players in South Asia prior to and during the liberation war.

**Journals & News Papers**

I have also scanned through the journals and news papers of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, USA, UK etc available on net and in the National Library Archives. Editors column in
Statesman, Hindusthan Times, Ananada Bazar, Hindu, Dawn, The Times etc. were of immense value. Time magazine, Illustrated Weekly, USI journal, and CLAWS Journal have been perused where relevant topics were published. Articles published in Ithias Academy Dhaka and Bangladesh Ithias Samiti were also scanned. In addition, I have used magazines published by military academies of India, Pakistan, U.S.A and U.K to have better insight on strategic theory and thoughts.

**Classics on Warfare and Strategy**

Strategy of 1971 war being my main theme, I read quite a few classics on strategy and warfare to refresh my memory. They are Arthashashtra by Kautilya, Art of War by Sun Tzu, Machavelli, *The Art of War, On War* by Clausewitz, *An Introductions to Strategy* by Gen Beufort, *Instructions to Generals* by Freidrick The Great, *Strategy of Indirect Approach* by Liddell Hart and Mao Tse –tung’s *On The Protracted War*. These books were like polestars to me which guided me to ponder and write on a topic like politico-military strategy.

**Style of Dissertation Format**

The format of this thesis is mainly based on the widely used MLA Documentation Style” and the mechanics of writing recommended by the Modern Lang Association of America for the writing of Research Papers. The chapters are divided into numbered sections and subsections. Chapter wise end notes have been given at the end of each chapter for ready reference of source or amplification of any matter indicated with superscript.

**Conclusion**

The study largely covers war history. Accordingly, maps and data to support weapon or warlike inventory and various military plans and execution have been incorporated. A few historical photographs have been inserted to recall the landmark historical events more vividly. As would be seen from the division of Chapters, in Chapter II, I have traced the history of the creation of Pakistan and road to Bangladesh. As mentioned before, I used various kind of literature dealing with, Indian Freedom Movement, and
history of partition and period till civil war. To get an insightful view, a few of the many books that I perused are, Ayesha Jalal’s *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and The Demand For Pakistan*, Nitish Sengupta’s *The Land of Two Rivers*, Dominique Lapierre and Larry Collins authored *Freedom at Midnight*, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad’s *India Wins Freedom*, Chaudhuri, Muhammad Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan* etc. Benazir Bhutto’s *Daughter of the East*, Ayub Khan’s *Friends Not Masters*. Stephen Cohen’s *The Idea of Pakistan* and *Pakistan Army*, Ian Talbot’s book *Pakistan a Modern History*, While writing Chapter IV dealing with military geography of East Pakistan, I carefully perused Harun Rashid’s *Geography of Bangladesh*, and account of other authors of Bangladesh Liberation War who dealt with topography of Bangladesh and its impact on war. The canvas of research area being large, I had to scan through wide range of books and primary sources to do justice to the topic which required input from political history of undivided India to partition, history of Pakistan till its secession, evolution of strategy, planning, preparation and actual conduct of the war and role played by external powers and United Nations.

It is said, the facts of history never exists in a pure form: they are refracted through the mind of the recorder. It is in this light, EH Carr concluded:” No documents can tell us more than what the author of the document thought- what he thought had happened, what he thought ought to happen or would happen or perhaps only what he wanted others to think he thought or even only what he himself thought he thought.”

It has been my endeavour to find historical truth keeping the research ethics in mind. While reviewing evolution and adoption of politico-military strategy of Bangladesh Liberation War 1971, and examining why a country lost or won the war, one aspect that stood out is that human spirit is more powerful than sword. Acknowledgement, Table of Contents, Glossary, list of Abbreviations, lists of Maps, Photographs and Tables have been placed at the beginning preceding Chapter 1. Appendices and Bibliography have been added after the last chapter, to complete the dissertation paper. I have used spelling of places like Dacca, Calcutta etc. as was prevalent then in 1971. While reviewing evolution and adoption of politico-military strategy of Bangladesh Liberation War 1971, one aspect that stood out is the leadership that steered the country during this period of crisis. The study also highlights exemplary synergy between the political, military and
diplomatic leaderships managing the national crisis. This group of politico-military leaders steered India to achieve the desired politico-military strategic goal have been highlighted.

Journalist Shekhar Gupta while carrying out a book review of Lt Gen Harbaksh Singh’s account of 1965 Indo-Pak War titled War Despatches mentioned, “When war breaks out; Hemingway said, the first casualty is truth. Logic is overwhelmed by the euphoria of war. Reason surrenders to patriotic fervour. Journalists often fail to penetrate the fog of fighting. The "experts" are too far from the frontline to know what actually happened and history, for a long time, remains fiction, until someone who was there speaks out.”

I have critically examined all accounts of who were there and have given due importance to the primary documents, and took oral interview of a few of those who were there and also examined some of the scholarly accounts of those who were not there to find out what and how things happened.
End Notes: Chapter-I


