

OPERATIONAL ORDER FOR CRACKDOWN ON 25TH MARCH NIGHT—OPERATION SEARCHLIGHT

Basis for Planning

1. A. L. (Awami League) actions and reactions to be treated a rebellion and those who support or defy M. L. (Marial Law) actions be dealt with as hostile elements.

2. As A. L. has widespread support even amongst the E. P. (East Pakistani) elements in the Army the operation has to be launched with great cunningness, surprise, deception and speed combined with shock action.

Basic Requirements for Success

3. The operation to be launched all over the Province simultaneously.

4. Maximum number of political and student leaders and extremists amongst teaching staffs, cultural organisations to be arrested. In the initial phase top political leaders and top student leaders must be arrested.

5. Operation must achieve a hundred percent success in Dacca. For that Dacca University will have to be occupied and searched.

6. Security of cantonments must be ensured. Greater and freer use of fire against those who dare attack the cantonment.

7. All means of internal and international communications to be cut off. Telephone exchanges, Radio, TV, Teleprinter services, transmitters with foreign consulates to be closed down.

8. EP tps (troops) to be neutralized by controlling and guarding kotes and ammunition by WP (West Pakistani) tps. Same for P.A.F. and E. P. R.

Surprise and Deception

9. At higher plane, it is requested that the President may consider the desirability of continuing the dialogue—even of

deceiving Mujib that even though Mr. Bhutto may not agree he will make an announcement on 25 March conceding to the demands of A. L. etc.

10. At Tactical Level.

- (a) As secrecy is of paramount importance, preliminary operations given below should be carried out by tps already located in the city :
 - i. Breaking into Mujib's house and arresting all present. The house is well-guarded and well-defended.
 - ii. Surrounding the important halls of the Universities— Iqbal Hall DU (Dacca University), Liaquat Hall Engineering University.
 - iii. Switching off telephone exchange.
 - iv. Isolating known houses where weapons etc. have been collected.
- (b) No activity by tps in the cantonment area till telephone exchange has been switched off.
- (c) Nobody should be allowed to go out of the cantonment after 2200 hrs on the night of operation.
- (d) On one excuse or the other tps in the city should be reinforced in the area of the President's House, Governor's House, MNA Hostel, Radio, TV and Telephone exchange premises.
- (e) Civilian cars may have to be used for operation against Mujib's house.

Sequence of Actions

- 11. (a) H Hr-0100 hrs.
 - (b) Timings for Move Out.
 - i. Commando (one Platoon)—Mujib's house—0100 hrs.
 - ii. Telephone exchange switched off—2455 hrs.
 - iii. Tps. earmarked for cordon University—0105 hrs.
 - iv. Tps. from the city to Rajarbagh Police HQ and other PS (Police Station) nearby—0105 hrs.

v. Following places surrounded—0105 hrs. Mrs. Amina Begum's House, Rd. No. 29 & House No. 148.

vi. Curfew imposed —0110 hrs. by Siren (arrange) by loud-speaker. Duration 30 hrs. initially. No passes for the initial phase. Due consideration to be given only to cases of delivery and serious heart attack etc. Evac by Army on request. Also announce that there will be no newspapers brought out till further orders.

vii. Tps. move out to respective sectors with specific missions 0110 hrs. (For tp alert a drill to be evolved). Halls occupied and searched.

viii. Tps move to University area—0500 hrs.

ix. Rd blocks and riverine block estb—0200 hrs.

(c) Operations during the Day Time.

i. House to house search of Dhanmondi suspected houses, also Hindu houses in old city (into collect data).

ii. All printing presses to be closed down. All cyclostyling machines in the University, Colleges (T&T) and Physiscal Training Institute and Technical Institute to be confiscated.

iii. Curfew imposed with severity.

iv. Other leaders arrested.

12. Allotment of Tps to Tasks Details to be worked out by B (riga) de Com (Man) d (er) (Sec 231-4) but the following must be done :

(a) Kotes of EP units taken over, including Sig (nal)s and other administrative units, Arms to be given only to WP personnel.

Explanation: We did not wish to embarrass the EP tps and did not want them to be used in tasks which may not be pleasant to them.

(b) Police stations to be disarmed.

(c) DG (Director General) EPR (East Pakistan Rifles) to ensure security of his kotes.

(d) All Ansar Rifles to be got hold of.

13. Info Required.

(a) Whereabouts of the following :

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| i) Mujib | ix) Oli Ahad |
| ii) Nazrul Islam | x) Mrs. Motia Chaudhury |
| iii) Tajuddin | xi) Barrister Maudud |
| iv) Osmani | xii) Faizul Haq |
| v) Sirajul Alam | xiii) Tofail |
| vi) Mannan | xiv) N.A. Siddiqi |
| vii) Ataur Rahman | xv) Rab |
| viii) Professor Muzaffar | xvi) Makhan |

and other student leaders.

(b) Location of all police stations and of Rifles.

(c) Location of strong points and arsenal houses in the city.

(d) Location of training camps and areas etc.

(e) Location of Cultural Centres which are being used for imparting military trg.

(f) Names of ex-service officers who are actively helping insurrectional movement.

14. Comd and Control—Two commands be established :

(a) Dacca Area

Comd-Major-General Farman

Staff—Eastern Comd Staff/or HQ ML

Tps—Loc (ated) in Dacca.

(b) The Rest of the Province

Comd-Major-General K.H. Raja

Staff—HQ 14 Div

Tps—Less those in Dacca.

15. Security of the Cantonment.

Phase I De-escalate. All arms including PAF deposited.

16. Communication

(a) Security.

(b) Layout.

Allocation of Troops to Tasks

DACCA

Command and Control : Maj-Gen. Farman with H.Q. M.L.A.

Zone B.

Troops.

H.Q. 57 Brigade with troops in Dacca, i.e. 18 Punjab, 32 Punjab (C.O. to be replaced by (Lt. Col.) Taj, GSO I (Int), 22 Baluch, 13 Frontiers Force, 31 Field Regt, 13 Light Ack-Ack Regt., company of 3 Commando (from Comilla).

Tasks :

1. Neutralise by disarming 2 and 10 East Bengal, H.Q. East Pakistan Rifles (2500), Reserve Police at Rajar Bagh (2000).
2. Exchange and transmitters, Radio, TV, State Bank.
3. Arrest Awami League leaders—detailed lists and addresses.
4. University Halls, Iqbal, Jagan Nath, Liaqat (Engineering University).
5. Seal off town including road, rail and river. Patrol river.
6. Protect factories at Ghazipur and Ammo Depot at Rajendrapur.

Remainder : Under Maj-Gen. K.H. Raja and H.Q. 14 Div.

JESSORE

Troops :

H.Q. 107 Brigade, 26 Baluch, 27 Baluch Elements of 24 Field Regt, 55 Field Regt.

Tasks :

1. Disarm I East Bengal and Sector H.Q. East Pakistan Rifles and Reserve Police incl. Ansar weapons.
2. Secure Jessore town and arrest Awami League and student leaders.

3. Exchange and telephone communications.

4. Zone of security round cantt., Jessore town and Jessore-Khulna road, airfield.

5. Exchange at Kushtia to be made inoperative.

6. Reinforce Khulna if required.

KHULNA

Troops :

22 FF

Tasks :

1. Security in town.
2. Exchange and Radio Station.
3. Wing H.Q. East Pakistan Rifles, Reserve Companies and Reserve Police to be disarmed.
4. Arrest Awami League students and communist leaders.

RANGPUR-SAIDPUR

Troops :

H.Q. 23 Brigade, 29 Cavalry, 26 Frontier Force, 23 Field Regt.

Tasks :

1. Security of Rangpur-Saidpur.
2. Disarm 3 East Bengal at Saidpur.
3. If possible disarm Sector H.Q. and Reserve Company at Dinajpur or neutralise by dispersal Reserve Company by reinforcing border outposts.
4. Radio Station and telephone exchange at Rangpur.
5. Awami League and student leaders at Rangpur.
6. Ammo dump at Bogra.

RAJSHAHI

Troops :

25 Punjab

Tasks :

1. Despatch C.O.—Shafqat Baluch.
2. Exchange and Radio Station Rajshahi.
3. Disarm Reserve Police and Sector H. Q. East Pakistan Rifle.
4. Rajshahi University and in particular Medical College.
5. Awami League and student leaders.

COMILLA

Troops :

53 Field Regiments, 1½ Mortar Batteries, Station troops, 3 Commando Battalion (less Company).

Tasks :

1. Disarm 4 East Bengal, Wing H. Q. East Pakistan Rifles, Reserve District Police.
2. Secure town and arrest Awami League leaders and students.
3. Exchange.

SYLHET

Troops :

31 Punjab less company.

Tasks :

1. Radio Station, Exchange.
2. Koeno Bridge over Surma.
3. Airfield.
4. Awami League and student leaders.
5. Disarm Sector H. Q. East Pakistan Rifles and Reserve Police.

Liaise with Sikandar :

CHITTAGONG

Troops :

20 Baluch, less advance party ; company 31 Panjab present ex Sylhet ; Iqbal Shafi to lead a mobile column from Comilla by road and reinforce S. T. 0100 hrs (H hrs) on D-Day.

Mobile Column : Brig. Iqbal Shafi with Tac H. Q. and Communications ; 24 Frontier Force ; Troop Heavy Mortars ; Field Company Engineers ; Company in advance to Feni on evening D-Day.

Tasks :

1. Disarm E. B. R. C. 8 East Bengal, Sector H. Q. East Pakistan Rifles, Reserve Police.
2. Seize Central Police Armoury (Twenty thousand).
3. Radio Station and Exchange.
4. Liaise with Pakistan Navy (Commodore Mumtaz)
5. Liaise with Shaigri and Janjua (C. O. 8 East Bengal) who have been instructed to take orders from you till arrival Iqbal Shafi.
6. If Shigri and Janjua feel sure about their outfits then do not disarm. In that case merely put in a road block to town from Cantt. by placing a company in defensive position so that later E. B. R. C. and 8 East Bengal are blocked should they change their loyalties.
7. I am taking Brig. Mozumdar with me. Arrest Chaudhury (C. I. E. B. R. C.) on D-Day night.
8. Arrest of Awami League and student leaders after above accomplished.*

* Siddique Saif, Witness to Surrender.