

The Assassination of Intellectuals

English translation:

We have obtained our beloved independence at the cost of thousands of lives. The martyrs of the nine month-long independence war in 1971 include farmers, laborers, students, professors, members of the armed forces, civil servants, men and women from various professions, children, and countless other people whose names are unknown. The people of this country are proud of them. The merciless attack on the innocent people of Dhaka began late at night on the 25th of March, 1971. Pakistani soldiers launched the surprise attack and [consequent] bloodbath at around midnight. At first they killed anybody and everybody, and then carried out the planned and cold-blooded murder of the famous and respected people of this country. They prepared a death-list containing the names of talented people in different professions throughout the country – both within Dhaka and outside of Dhaka. They realized their murderous intentions using great cruelty, using the help of people in the country who opposed independence ... independence.

At midnight on the 25th of March, they attacked the student dorms in Dhaka University and the residences of professors. M. Muniruzzaman was a deeply religious professor of science at Dhaka University. Upon hearing tremendous firing, he [anticipated the worst]. He had sat down to read the Holy Qur'an. The Pakistani soldiers seized him as he was, and dragged him away. The renowned professor of English, Jyotirmoy Guhathakurata lived downstairs in the same building. The raiding party took him away also. After this, the soldiers took them downstairs and shot them. The professor of philosophy, Gobindo Chandra Dev, lived quite close this house. He was a humble, down-to-earth, and highly knowledgeable man who always greeted everyone with a warm smile. He was respected by everybody. He, too, was not spared. His body was riddled by a volley of bullets. Professors Fazlur Rahman Khan and Mohammad Abdul Muktedir were martyred on that same night. Some other professors were also murdered. The Pakistani soldiers and their accomplices knew that journalists also posed a grave threat to them. So they also set fire to a number of newspaper offices that night. The talented writer and journalist Shahid Saber was asleep that night inside the office of a daily newspaper. His body was consumed by the flames. There was [also] the gifted poet Mehrunnesa. She lost her life at the young age of twenty-five. The editor Selina Parveen was martyred [that night]. These killings were carried out not just in Dhaka, but outside of Dhaka as well. There was [the] famous politician and lawyer Dhirendranath Dutta. In 1948, he was the first person in the Pakistani National Assembly to demand that Bengali be recognized as the national language. The 85-year-old Dhirendranath Datta was seized from his home in Comilla and murdered in cold blood. In the same way, Mashiur Rahman, a politician and lawyer from Jessore, and Mamun Mahmud, the Deputy Inspector General of police in Rajshahi, were also martyred.

About CultureTalk: CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use everyday. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

© 2003-2009 Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and Five Colleges, Incorporated