Few Stories of the Genocide perpetrated by Pakistani army in Bangladesh during 1971.

The following are the few stories from the family members of the martyrs of Bangladesh’s liberation war. These stories are collected for the December 9th Genocide seminar of New Jersey’s Kean University. These very brief stories are collected from the family members who live within the tri-state area. There are many stories which can be collected from Bangladeshi Americans all over the United States.

Pakistani army killed my father.

It was a dark day in the history of genocide, March 25th 1971. A deathly hush had fallen over the bustling capital city of Dhaka, as Pakistani soldiers, armed to the teeth began their systematic and brutal blood bath of the Bengali army, navy and air force personnel, followed by mass executions of civilians; professors, doctors, lawyers and other professionals and university students were targeted. The city was terrorized as squads of Pakistani soldiers forced their way into homes in the middle of the night, dragged their targets out, before their screaming families and shot them in cold blood, checking them off their death list.

The Pakistani terror squad quickly spread to the neighboring cities, burning villages to the ground on the way, shooting escaping civilians; men, women and children, as they ran out of their burning homes. By that time all news of the genocide operation was controlled by the Pakistani army and the propaganda machine was in full force, along with a complete curfew. Electricity and water was turned off along with all communications.

Major M.A. Hasib stationed in Comilla cantonment, a city approximately 60 miles from Dhaka, was making arrangements and looking forward to a civilian life, after devoting a 21 year career to the Pakistan army. He had opted for an early retirement, because he had been superseded for promotion to Colonel twice. He was disgusted with the treatment of Bengali officers by the
Pakistani army, who routinely and deliberately, used the concept of the glass ceiling and kept the Bengali officers in their midst at lower ranks. Hearing of the atrocities committed by the Pakistani soldiers, from the news on BBC radio, his wife feared that he was imminent danger. But he comforted her. Believing that since his early retirement was approved and came into effect only ten days earlier and that he had been a loyal army officer all his life, they had nothing to fear from him, thus no harm would come to him and his family. But the Pakistani death squads were taking no chances.

They came for him on the morning of March 29th 2007, as he sat down to breakfast with his family and huddled together to listen to BBC news on the transistor radio. He was my father, Major M.A. Hasib. Four armed soldiers escorted into a jeep at gunpoint. That was the last time he was seen alive.

My mother and two small sisters were later thrown into prison camp, where they witnessed and suffered the atrocities committed by the Pakistani soldiers.

My father's brutal end came to light after Bangladesh became independent. An eye witness, a barber whose life had been spared, because his services were needed by the Pakistani soldiers, told authorities a brutal tale of torture and murder and led authorities to seven mass graves, only a short distance from our house, with 500 bodies, all blind folded, their hands tied behind their backs, shot by firing squad.

He was my father, Major M.A. Hasib. He was forty two years old.

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They killed my Two brothers

My brother Shaidullah Kaiser was a famous journalist, novelist and also an associate editor of a daily news paper. He was very respected for his relentless work and activism for Bengali language movement and other cultural activities to inspire the nation. At the end the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, the Pakistan Army and its local collaborators initiated a plan for killing the leading Bengali intellectuals. As a part of it, Mr. Kaisar was rounded up on 14 December 1971 only 2 days prior to the liberation of Bangladesh. He never returned, nor was his body found. It is assumed that he was executed along with other intellectuals. My other brother, Zahir Raihan, a notable film-maker, writer, novelist and cultural activist who was in India helping the liberation war and returned immediately after the liberation on 16th December. He was a man of enormous courage and integrity. When he heard the news about Mr. Kaiser, he unknowingly entered to an enclave of Pakistani army and its collaborator who had not surrendered their arms despite the official surrender of Pakistani army. Zahir Raihan could not come back and is body also was never found. He disappeared on December 30, 1971 trying to locate his beloved brother. The wives of my brothers went through so much hardship and pain in raising their mostly minor children. My family waited many years hoping that they might come back as prisoners of war, but our tears were dried up pain remain the same. Shaheen Shah, New York.

They killed my father inside the hospital

My father Dr. Shamsuddin Ahmed was chief and Professor of Surgery at Sylhet Medical College in 1971. He was always involved in many humanitarian activities and organizing medical profession through out his life. When the Pakistani army started the Genocide on 25th march of 1971 the whole city was overwhelmed. The main medical college hospital was filled with people with bullet injuries. Panic stricken people including all the doctors of medical college started evacuating the town. My father decided to stay in the hospital with the wounded but sent his family including his old mother away to the village. My mother principal of the Women’s College decided to stay at home, so if needed can go to the hospital incase of any help needed for the hospitalized patients. One young physician, an ambulance driver and a male nurse also stayed
with him in the hospital to take care of the causalities. The genocide and killing intensified in the city and more injured people started filling the hospital. My father and his team had to remain inside the hospital for continuous 3 days due to curfew. On April 9th the Pakistani army entered the hospital and shot my father point blank including the other members of the team and some patients inside the hospital. Next 3 days due to curfew no body knew what had happened. During few hours of curfew break, my father’s uncle went in search of him and found him and others dead inside the hospital compound. He with the help of some family members and friends hurriedly buried them inside the hospital compound. The life changed suddenly to my mother, my grand mother and five of my siblings. My father was the only son and my grief stricken grand mother died within a year. My mother became very sad and kept herself very busy with her college and raising us single handedly. She never talked about those days until very recently. My brother and sisters still find very painful to reminisce any memory.

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Pakistani Army killed my dad  
My father Mr. Golam Kibria Pathen was working in Bata Shoe factory at Tongi, adjacent to Dhaka City in 1971. We are from Brahman Baria of greater Comilla area. From the beginning of our freedom fight my father actively involved himself in our march towards freedom. He helped the freedom fighters and allied force, sheltered them in our house and later he turned to freedom fighter and fought against Pakistani army. At the fag end of our freedom fight on 4th December around noon a Pakistani Army Major came to the Bata Shoe factory and in front of the British Manager the Major shoot my father point blank and thus killed my beloved father. I was only 7 years old at that time and I was the eldest son of the family. Wink of an eye we turned orphan! Later, one of the freedom Fighters Mr. Masud, who was known to us, found my father’s dead body at the bank of the Bhirab River. Without having our father we had to struggle all through our life to survive. We could not recover from that loss.

Salam Reza Pathen, New York. Email: nightingale30@juno.com

My brother was an innocent victim of genocide in 1971 in Bangladesh  
Like any family in Bangladesh, when we grow up and take the charge of our life we always look forward to come to assistance to our parents. My brother Shahid Mansurur Rahman laid his life in the same way. Being a graduate in Agricultural Science he was planning to pursue further studies. But for the sake of the family he took a job in a Tea Garden—which was owned by West Pakistani group. During the Month of March/1971 he was having a family vacation with us away from his job. But when he learned that the Pakistani manager left the garden, he decided to go back to the garden to help the poor laborers. We could not stop his allegiance to the duties. Once the Pakistani Army took over the control of the Chittagong (the port city of Bangladesh)—they arrested him. Took him to their custody without our knowledge. They tortured him. For days and nights he was without food or water. They tried to get some information about the whereabouts of freedom fighters, which he had no idea. The Ruthless Pakistani Army finally shot him to death. My father tried in vain to rescue his body.
All we know like all other Shahids (Martyrs of our Independence Struggle) -- his soul, his body and his blood is a part of this new nation--who wants to thrive on its own culture, history and dignity.

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