



Vijay Diwas and Indo Bangladesh Relations

For Prelims: Indo-Pak War 1971, Vijay Diwas, Operation Jackpot, India-Bangladesh Relations

For Mains: India's role in Bangladesh Liberation War, India-Bangladesh Ties and major irritants in it

Why in News?

Every year **16th December** is observed by **Indian Armed Forces and Bangladesh** as [Vijay Diwas \(Bijoy Dibos\)](#) to mark **India's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war** and the birth of Bangladesh as an independent nation.



What are the Key Points about the Indo-Pak War for Bangladesh Liberation?

▪ Background:

- Pakistan right after India's independence consisted of East and West Pak where a **major problem was the geographical disconnect** between the two regions.
 - **Cultural conflicts and negligence of East Pak's administration** were also challenges.
- In the mid-1960s, leaders such as [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) (the founding father of Bangladesh), actively began protesting against the policies of West Pak which was followed by a brutal crackdown by the Pakistani military.

▪ India's Role:

- On 15 May 1971, **India launched Operation Jackpot** to recruit, train, arm, equip, supply

and advise **Mukti Bahini fighters** engaged in guerrilla warfare against the Pakistan military.

- On 3rd December 1971, **India decided to go on a war with Pakistan** to save Bengali Muslims and Hindus in East Pakistan. The war lasted for 13 days.
- After that, a **written agreement** between India, Pakistan and the provisional government of Bangladesh came into effect bringing an end to the **Bangladesh Liberation War**.

▪ **Significance:**

- 51 years ago, on 16th December, the **largest surrender of military personnel took place since the end of World War II**.
 - The chief of the Pakistani forces surrendered unconditionally to the Indian Army and Mukti Bahini in Dhaka.
- Victory Day celebrations are of importance to not only Bangladesh but also marks a special occasion celebrated across India which **bears testimony to the pivotal role of the Indian military and its contribution** to the war.

How are India's Relations with Bangladesh since Its Independence?

▪ **India's Immediate Recognition:**

- India was **one of the first countries to recognize Bangladesh and establish diplomatic relations immediately** after its independence in December 1971.
- The **UN member nations** were also quick to recognise Bangladesh's independent identity.

▪ **Defence Cooperation:**

- India and Bangladesh share 4096.7 km. of border; the **longest land boundary that India shares with any of its neighbours**.
 - Assam, West Bengal, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and Tripura share borders with Bangladesh.
- The two also conduct joint exercises - **Army (Exercise Sampriti)** and **Navy (Exercise Milan)**.

▪ **Economic Relations:**

- In 2021-22, **Bangladesh has emerged as the largest trade partner for India in South Asia** and the **fourth largest destination for Indian exports** worldwide.
- **Exports to Bangladesh grew more than 66%** from USD 9.69 billion in FY 2020-21 to USD 16.15 billion in FY 2021-22.
- Recently, the **Prime Minister of Bangladesh visited India** and held talks with Indian Prime Minister where India and Bangladesh signed 7 agreements for cooperation in various areas.

▪ **Key Challenges in Relations:**

- Despite the remarkable progress, the **unresolved Teesta water sharing issue** looms large.
- The problem of **Bangladeshi civilians being shot at the border** has also dented relations; these shootings occur as many **Bangladeshi people try to illegally migrate into India**.
- Despite its **'Neighbourhood First Policy'**, India has been losing its influence in the region to China; **Bangladesh is an active partner of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**.

Way Forward

- Bangladesh is South-Asian region's fastest growing economy, with social indicators that other countries, including India, can learn. This is the vital link with which India can realise the full potential of either the economic or strategic underpinnings of its Neighbourhood First policy.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. With reference to river Teesta, consider the following statements: (2017)

1. The source of river Teesta is the same as that of Brahmaputra but it flows through Sikkim.
2. River Rangeet originates in Sikkim and it is a tributary of river Teesta.
3. River Teesta flows into Bay of Bengal on the border of India and Bangladesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

Mains

Q. Critically examine the compulsions which prompted India to play a decisive role in the emergence of Bangladesh. **(2013)**

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