

Unit: 01, Lesson: 01

Read the following passage and answer the following questions :

My brothers,

I stand before you today with a heart overflowing with grief. You are fully aware of the events that are going on and understand their import. We have been trying to do our best to cope with the situation. And yet, unfortunately, the streets of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi and Rangpur are awash with the blood of our brothers. The people of Bengal now want to be free, the people of Bengal now want to live and the people of Bengal now want their rights. What have we done that was wrong? After the elections, the people of Bangladesh voted as one for me, for the Awami League. We were to sit in the National Assembly, draft a constitution for ourselves there and build our country; the people of this land would thereby get economic, political and cultural freedom. But it is with regret that I have to report to you today that we

have passed through twenty-three tragic years; Bengal's history of those years is full of stories of torture inflicted on our people, of blood-shed by them repeatedly. Twenty-three years of a history of men and women in agony!

The history of Bengal is the history of a people who have repeatedly made their highways crimson with their blood. We shed blood in 1952; even though we were the victors in the elections of 1954 we could not form a government then. In 1958 Ayub Khan declared Martial Law to enslave us for the next ten years. In 1966 when we launched the six point movement our boys were shot dead on 7 June. When after the movement of 1969 Ayub Khan fell from power and Yahya Khan assumed the reins of the government he declared that he would give us a constitution and restore democracy; we listened to him then.

A lot has happened since and elections have taken place. I've met President Yahya Khan. I've made a request to him not only on behalf of Bengal but also as the leader of the party which has the majority in Pakistan; I said to him: You must hold the session of the National Assembly on 15 January. But he did not listen to me. He listened to Mr. Bhutto instead. At first he said that the meeting would take place in the first week of March. We said, "Fine, we will be taking our seats in the Assembly then." I said we will carry out our discussions in the Assembly. I went so far as to say that if anyone came up with an offer that was just, even though we were in the majority we would agree to that offer.

Question

- a. Who is Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman?
- b. With what were the roads of Dhaka stained?
- c. Why did people vote for Awami League in 1970?
- d. What did Yahya Khan promise?
- e. Who was Mr. Bhutto?

Answer

- a. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is the father of the nation of Bangladesh. He declared the independence of Bangladesh on the 7th March, 1971.
- b. The roads of Dhaka were stained with the bloods of the Bengali people. The oppressive rulers of Pakistan killed the people of Bengal.
- c. People voted for Awami League in 1970 to sit in the National Assembly, draft a constitution and build the country. They voted for Sheikh Mujib to establish their
- d. Yahya Khan promised that he would give a constitution and restore democracy. But he didn't keep his promise.

e. Mr. Bhutto was the Pakistani leader who was defeated in the election of 1970. He plotted against the Bangalees to subjugate them.