

Bengali declaration

By Reuter

Baidya Nathala, Pakistan

The independence of Bangla Desh (Bengali Nation) was formally proclaimed April 17 in a mango-tree grove at this East Pakistan village one mile from the Indian border.

Vice-President Nazrul Islam introduced his seven-member inner cabinet, including Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed and Foreign Minister K. M. Ahmed.

Mr. Islam told a group of Indian and foreign journalists who had driven in a convoy from Calcutta, 90 miles away: "We want justice from the people of the world and the governments of foreign countries."

"We call on the countries of the world to come to our help and do something to relieve the misery of the people of Bangla Desh," he said.

About 5,000 East Bengalis had gathered under the trees for the ceremony, with uniformed men of the Mukti Fouz (liberation army) standing guard with rifles.

Other Bengla Deh fighters carried Chinese- and Pakistan-manufactured submachineguns, which they said they had captured from Pakistan army troops.