Lucknow Pact 1916

The Congress-Muslim League Lucknow Pact of 1916 can easily be considered an important landmark during the nationalist movement in India. The Congress leaders agreed to the pact in the expectation that the executive-legislature relationship in the package of constitutional reforms would essentially be a continuation of the Morley-Minto reforms. But the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, when announced, revealed that the nature of this relationship would be significantly different, leading the Congress leaders to oppose the pact and to the acceptance of communal electorates for the Muslims that it entailed, before the Southborough Committee. The pact also contained significant omissions and ambiguities which led to divergent interpretations on crucial provisions.

**Factor’s behind the Pact**

The relations between the British government and Muslims were tensed due to aggressive and unilateral policies of the British. The annulment of the partition of Bengal in 1911 was a jolt for the Muslims of India; consequently it shattered their confidence in British and brought Muslims closer to Hindus against the British. Similarly the Kanpur mosque incident and the British policies in the international system had caused deep anguish among the Muslims. Thus the Muslims leaderships decided to change the strategy of the Muslim league after the annulment of Bengal in 1911. In December 1912, Muslim league change its aim from loyalty to form self-government suitable to India. However, the league retained the right to modify self-rule in accordance with their needs and requirements.