

THE POLITICAL CONDITION THAT LED TO THE CREATION OF PAKISTAN IN 1947

In 1940, Jinnah called a general session of the Muslim League in Lahore to discuss the situation that had arisen due to the outbreak of World War II and the Government of India joining the war without consulting Indian leaders. The meeting was also aimed at analyzing the reasons that led to the defeat of the Muslim League in the general election of 1937 in the Muslim-majority provinces. In his speech, Jinnah criticized the Indian Congress and the nationalists and espoused the Two-Nation Theory and the reasons for the demand for separate homelands. Sikandar Hayat Khan, the Chief Minister of Punjab, drafted the original resolution but disavowed the final version, that had emerged after protracted redrafting by the Subject Committee of the Muslim League. The final text unambiguously rejected the concept of a United India because of increasing inter-religious violence and recommended the creation of independent states. The resolution was moved in the general session by Shere-Bangla Bengali nationalist, AKF Haq, the Chief Minister of Bengal, supported by Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman and other leaders, and was adopted on 23 March 1940. The Resolution read as follows:

No constitutional plan would be workable or acceptable to the Muslims unless geographical contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary. The areas in which the Muslims are numerically in the majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute independent states in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign ... Adequate, effective, and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in the units and the regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights of the minorities, with their consultation. Arrangements thus should be made for the security of Muslims where they were in the minority.

The final phase of the Pakistan Movement

Important leaders in the Muslim League highlighted that Pakistan would be a 'New Medina', in other words, the second Islamic state established after Muhammad created an Islamic state in Medina. Pakistan was popularly envisaged as an Islamic utopia, a successor to the defunct Turkish Caliphate, and a leader and protector of the entire Islamic world. Islamic scholars debated over whether it was possible for the proposed Pakistan to truly become an Islamic state. While the Congress' top leadership had been in prison following the 1942 Quit India Movement, there was intense debate among Indian Muslims over the creation of a separate homeland. The majority of Bareilvis and Bareilvi ulema supported the creation of Pakistan and pirs and Sunni ulema were mobilized by the Muslim League to demonstrate that India's Muslim masses wanted a separate country. The Bareilvis believed that any cooperation with Hindus would be counterproductive. On the other hand, most Deobandis, who were led by Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, were opposed to the creation of Pakistan and the two-nation theory. According to them Muslims and Hindus could be one nation and Muslims were only a nation of themselves in the religious sense and not in the territorial sense. At the same time, some Deobandi ulema such as Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, Mufti Muhammad Shafi, and Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani were supportive of the Muslim League's demand to create a separate Pakistan.

Muslims who were living in provinces where they were demographically a minority, such as the United Provinces where the Muslim League enjoyed popular support, were assured by Jinnah that they could remain in India, migrate to Pakistan, or continue living in India but as Pakistani citizens.

In the Constituent Assembly elections of 1946, the Muslim League won 425 out of 496 seats reserved for Muslims (polling 89.2% of total votes). The Congress had hitherto refused to

acknowledge the Muslim League's claim of being the representative of Indian Muslims but finally acquiesced to the League's claim after the results of this election. The Muslim League's demand for Pakistan had received overwhelming popular support from India's Muslims, especially those Muslims who were living in provinces such as UP where they were a minority. The British had neither the will nor the financial resources or military power, to hold India any longer but they were also determined to avoid partition and for this purpose, they arranged the Cabinet Mission Plan. According to this plan, India would be kept united but would be heavily decentralized with separate groupings of Hindu and Muslim majority provinces. The Muslim League accepted this plan as it contained the 'essence' of Pakistan but the Congress rejected it. After the failure of the Cabinet Mission Plan, Jinnah called for Muslims to observe Direct Action Day to demand the creation of a separate Pakistan. The Direct Action Day morphed into violent riots between Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta, with the violence displaying elements of ethnic cleansing. The riots in Calcutta were followed by intense communal rioting elsewhere, including in Noakhali (where Hindus were attacked by Muslims) and Bihar (where Hindus attacked Muslims) in October, resulting in large-scale displacement. In March 1947, such violence reached Punjab, where Sikhs and Hindus were massacred and driven out by Muslims in the Rawalpindi Division.

The British Prime Minister Attlee appointed Lord Louis Mountbatten as India's last viceroy, to negotiate the independence of Pakistan and India and immediate British withdrawal. British leaders including Mountbatten did not support the creation of Pakistan but failed to convince Jinnah otherwise. Mountbatten later confessed that he would most probably have sabotaged the creation of Pakistan had he known that Jinnah was dying of tuberculosis.

In early 1947 the British had announced their desire to grant India its independence by June 1948. However, Lord Mountbatten decided to advance the date. In a meeting in June, Nehru and Abul Kalam Azad representing the Congress, Jinnah representing the Muslim League, B. R. Ambedkar representing the Untouchable community, and Master Tara Singh representing the Sikhs, agreed to partition India along religious lines.

Creation of Pakistan

On 14 August 1947 (the 27th of Ramadan in 1366 of the Islamic Calendar) Pakistan gained independence. India gained independence the following day. Two of the provinces of British India, Punjab, and Bengal, were divided along religious lines by the Radcliffe Commission. Lord Mountbatten is alleged to have influenced the Radcliffe Commission to draw the lines in India's favor.^{[40][41][42]} Punjab's mostly Muslim western part went to Pakistan and its mostly Hindu and Sikh eastern part went to India, but there were significant Muslim minorities in Punjab's eastern section and light Hindus and Sikhs minorities living in Punjab's western areas.

There was no conception that population transfers would be necessary because of the partitioning. Religious minorities were expected to stay put in the states they found themselves residing in. However, an exception was made for Punjab which did not apply to other provinces. Intense communal rioting in Punjab forced the governments of India and Pakistan to agree to a forced population exchange of Muslim and Hindu/Sikh minorities living in Punjab. After this population exchange only a few thousand low-caste Hindus remained in Pakistani Punjab and only a tiny Muslim population remained in the town of Malerkotla in India's part of Punjab. Political scientist Ishtiaq Ahmed says that although Muslims started the violence in Punjab, by the end of 1947 more Muslims had been killed by Hindus and Sikhs in East Punjab than the Hindus and Sikhs who had been killed by Muslims in West Punjab. Nehru wrote to Gandhi on 22 August that up to then, twice as many Muslims had been killed in East Punjab than Hindus and Sikhs in West Punjab.

More than ten million people migrated across the new borders and between 200,000 and 2,000,000 people died in the spate of communal violence in the Punjab in what some scholars

have described as a 'retributive genocide' between the religions. The Pakistani government claimed that 50,000 Muslim women were abducted and raped by Hindu and Sikh men and similarly, the Indian government claimed that Muslims abducted and raped 33,000 Hindu and Sikh women. The two governments agreed to repatriate abducted women and thousands of Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim women were repatriated to their families in the 1950s.