

CONTENTS

- 1946 election
- Delhi Resolution
- 1946 Hindu Muslim Riot
- United Bengal Movement
- India Act 1947
- Partition of Bengal in 1947

World War II and Indian Independence

- Indian Mutiny/Sepoy Mutiny, a rebellion against the injustices of British East India Company. In India it is often called the First War of Independence and other similar names.
- Direct rule was intended to increase Indian representation while preserving British imperial interests, but continued aggravations and injustices in the following decades created an **increasingly adamant independence movement**.
- □ WWII (1939 to 1945) fueled India's independence struggle.

World War II and Indian Independence

- ☐ Following the war, people all over the world began to support voices **opposing** the British occupation of its colonies.
- ☐ The **Bengal Famine in 1943** was devastating and caused approximately **3.5 million deaths**. It was a **man-made disaster** because it was not a scarcity of food that caused so many to die but a collapse of the **grain-marketing system**.
- ☐ When the Labour Party took power in Britain in 1945, it was committed to internationalism and racial equality, among other liberal principles.
- ☐ Prime Minister Clement Attlee (Labour Party) began the process of granting India independence.

Political condition of Britain

- As the Indian independence movement gained momentum, Britain also lost her will to govern India.
- Clement Attlee's new Labor administration came to power in July 1945.
- Lord Mountbatten was quickly appointed Governor-General of India with instructions to end colonial rule as soon as possible.

1946 Election

- □ Provincial elections were held in British India in January 1946 to elect members of the legislative councils of British Indian provinces.
- ☐ The consummation of British rule in India were the 1945/1946 elections.
- As minor political parties were eliminated, the political scene became restricted to the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League.

1946 Election

- The elections were contested primarily between the then-Indian National Congress (Congress) and the now-defunct All India Muslim League (Muslim League).
- □The elections of 1946 were significant for both Muslim League and Congress parties.
- Because in this election, the Muslim League aimed to prove the legitimacy of the demand for a separate state of Pakistan for Muslims; and the Congress, on the other hand, aimed to prove the legitimacy of establishing an integral India.

Significance of the 1946 elections

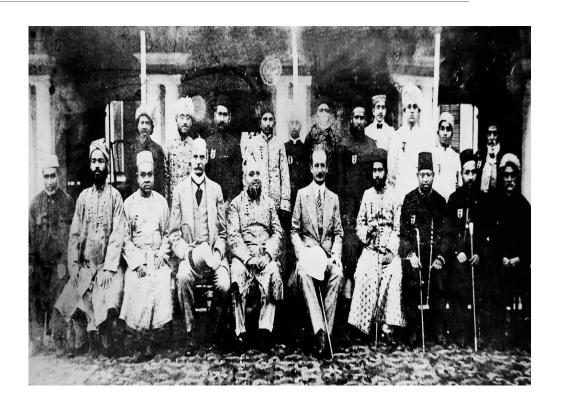
- ☐ The elections confirmed **Congress** as the national representative of India. In Central Legislative Assembly it won 56% of seats and in provinces it won about 58% of total seats. It emerged in majority in 8 out of 11 provinces.
- □ The elections gave Muslim League and M.A. Jinnah strategic edge. Muslim League emerged as the **sole representative of Muslims**. In Central Legislative Assembly it won 29% of seats and in provinces it won about 27% of total seats. However, it won 90% of seats reserved for Muslims. This gave weightage to the two-nation theory or demand for Pakistan made by M.A. Jinnah.
- ☐ It was also an eye opener for Congress which saw rise of communalism and foresaw problems in the united India in future.
- ☐ The Muslim League won 423 seats out of a total of 482 seats in the provinces. But in the 1937 elections, the party got only 104 seats. The success of the Muslim League in the Bengal Council was unprecedented.

1946 Hindu Muslim Riots

Background

Formation of Muslim League:

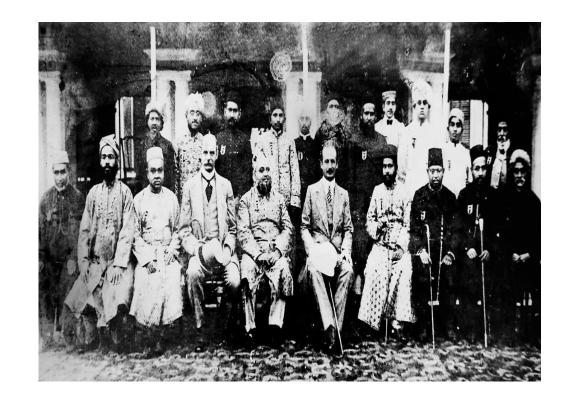
On 30 December 1906, the All-India Muslim League (AIML) was founded in Dhaka, British India (now in Bangladesh).



Muslim League

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, a philosopher and Muslim reformist, saw that the Muslims are a separate nation.

(127) Sir Syed Beliefs - YouTube



Muslim League

- He wanted Muslims to get educated and he suggested aligning with the British rather than rebel against them, as most beneficial for the community.
- ☐ He had founded the Muhammadan Educational Conference in 1886, but this organisation stayed away from politics.

Aligarh Movement

- ☐ Sir Syed also established a college at Aligarh.
- ☐ Many other Muslim leaders believed that the Muslims as a downtrodden nation could get more benefit from the loyalty to the British rather than from any opposition to them.
- Sir Syed called upon his followers to devote their energy and attention to **popularising English education** among the Muslims. This perception and consequent activism has been known as the **Aligarh Movement**.

Muslim League

- On 30 December 1906, around 3000 delegates attended a conference of the Muhammadan Educational Conference at Dhaka in which the ban on politics was removed.
- ■AIML was formed.
- The first Honorary President of the League was Aga Khan III.
- The AIML was essentially a party of educated elite Muslims, at least in the beginning.

Objectives of Muslim League

☐ The objectives of the AIML were to look after the interests of the Muslims.

- □ Promote their loyalty towards the British government.
- Cultivate harmonious relations of the Muslims with other Indian communities, particularly the Hindus.

Delhi Resolution 1946

Under the Delhi Resolution, Jinnah demanded Pakistan. This was for a single Pakistan sovereign state and not multiple Muslim states. This was so Muslims can **focus** on developing for the Muslims.

- Areas where Muslims are in a dominant majority be constituted into a sovereign independent state and implementing the establishment of Pakistan without delay.
- ☐ The two separate constitution-making bodies be set up by the people of Pakistan and Hindustan to frame their respective **Constitutions**.
- □ That any attempt to impose a Constitution on a united-India basis or to force any interim arrangement contrary to the Muslim League demand will leave the Muslims **no alternative but to resist** any such imposition by all possible means for their survival and national existence.

Direct Action Day [August 16, 1946]

- □ In 1946, then British Prime Minister Clement Attlee had sent a three-member Cabinet mission to India in a bid to finalise plans for the transfer of power to the Indian leadership.
- □ The commission, while rejecting the Muslim League's demand for a separate state, proposed a three-tier structure -- a centre, groups of provinces, and separate provinces. The commission recommended that these "groups of provinces" would accommodate the Muslim League's demand of independent states in Muslim-majority regions.
- ☐ Both the Muslim League and Congress accepted the suggestions initially.
- □ However, things took a turn after then Congress president Jawaharlal Nehru, in a press conference on July 10, 1946, said the party had the right to **modify the plan** of the Cabinet mission plan.
- □ Jinnah rejected the British Cabinet mission's plan for transfer of power to a caretaker government and decided to boycott the Constituent Assembly. Days later, Jinnah announced that his Muslim League would take "direct action" if a separate state of Pakistan was not allowed to be created.

Hindu-Muslim Riot

- □On July 29, 1946, the Muslim League passed a resolution declaring August 16 as "Direct Action Day" and announced a nationwide protest against the Congress' stand and called for suspension of all business.
- □ Known as 'Direct Action Day' or 'The Great Calcutta Killings/Calcutta Riot', violence erupted between Hindu and Muslim communities after the Muslim League, under Muhammad Ali Jinnah, held a mass rally demanding a separate country, which later became Pakistan.
- □ Official estimate put the casualties at 4,000 dead and 100,000 injured in the riot.
- □The violence, which continued for nearly a week, came to be known as the "Week of the Long Knives". The cycle of riots finally came to an end when Bengal was put under Governor's rule on August 21.
- ☐The unprecedented violence finally resulted in Congress under Nehru accepting the Partition of the country.

Hindu-Muslim Riot

- On August 16, 1946, the Muslim League's national leader, Muhammad Jinnah called a Direct Action Day after the INC had **rejected the two-nation proposal**.
- ☐ In Calcutta, this turned into a frenzy of Hindu-Muslim riot.
- ☐ Starting with August 1946, India began to witness a wave of communal violence, particularly in Bihar, Punjab and Bengal.
- ☐ A riot in Noakhali followed on 10th October 1946.

Who was responsible?

- Colonial rulers blamed both the community.
- Congress blamed Muslim league especially the Chief Minister of Bengal, Suhrawardy.
- Muslim league blamed Congress.

United Bengal Movement

UNITED BENGAL MOVEMENT

- United Bengal was a proposal to transform Bengal Province into an undivided, sovereign state at the time of the Partition of India in 1947.
- It sought to prevent the division of Bengal on religious grounds. The proposed state was to be called the Free State of Bengal.
- However, the national Congress Party demanded Bengal's partition. Factors that
 motivated this could have been the fear of loss of substantial power and concern
 over the security of the Hindu community in the Muslim majority state of the
 united Bengal.
- Though the Muslim League leaders initially supported the united Bengal movement, later they started demanding to make united Bengal a part of Pakistan.

United Bengal

On April 27, 1947, the then Prime Minister of Bengal, H S Suhrawardy, addressed a press conference in New Delhi in which he put forward an idea.

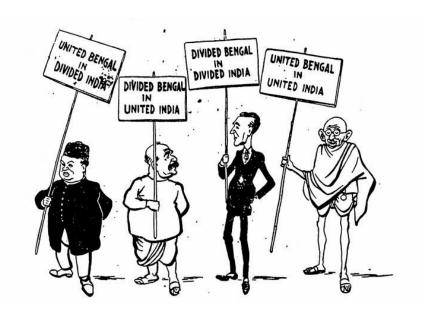
Suhrawardy pleaded for an 'independent, sovereign, undivided Bengal in a divided India'.

Bengal leaders Sarat Bose and K. S. Roy worked for united Bengal. Sarat Bose wanted a secular Bengal.

Supporters and opposes

Suharawardi supported undivided Bengal because of the location of jute mills, industries and coal mines would go to the western part.

Hindu Mahasabha leaders thought it would force Hindus to live under Muslim domination.



Vote for Partition

- On June 20, 1947,
- □ East Bengal legislators voted by 106 votes to 35 against partition
- while the legislators of West Bengal voted by 58 votes to 21 in favor of partition.

Vote for Partition

Since the Mountbatten plan had provided for partition if any one side wanted it, the decision was ratified.



Partition

Aftermath

The Radcliffe decision on the partition lines was not announced until August 17.

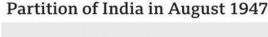
Nearly two million people were killed in horrific violence while at least fourteen million refugees fearfully crossed the newly demarcated borders.

Bengal Partition in 1947

Bengal was divided into the two separate entities of West Bengal belonging to India, and East Bengal belonging to Pakistan.

This was part of the Partition of India and Pakistan during August 14-15, 1947.

(127) India and Pakistan: What was partition? | Al Jazeera Newsfeed - YouTube





INDIA ACT 1947

- In July 1947, Britain's Parliament passed the Indian Independence Act. The Indian Independence Act, 1947, enabled the transfer of power from the Crown and British Parliament to India.
- Lord Mountbatten (served March-August 1947) was sent to replace Wavell as viceroy as Britain prepared to transfer its power over India to some "responsible" hands by no later than June 1948.
- Shortly after reaching Delhi, where he conferred with the leaders of all parties and with his own officials, Mountbatten decided that the situation was too dangerous to wait even that brief period.

INDIA ACT 1947

- Fearing a forced evacuation of British troops still stationed in India,
 Mountbatten resolved to opt for partition, one that would divide Punjab and
 Bengal, rather than risk further political negotiations while civil war raged.
- Large-scale religious violence and riots took place in the aftermath of the Partition of India in 1947. Mass migration was also a reason for havoc.
- Partition meant that millions of people found themselves on the 'wrong' side of the borders. Ten million became refugees in what was the largest population movement in history.

CREATION OF WEST & EAST PAKISTAN

- The transfer of power took effect as proposed at midnight of August 14–15.
 Lord Mountbatten marked the transfer of power in ceremonies in Karachi,
 Pakistan, on August 14 and in New Delhi, India, on August 15.
- Independence Day in either country is celebrated on the dates of those respective ceremonies.
- The Bengal delta becomes part of the new state of Pakistan under the name 'East Pakistan'.
- Dhaka was the provincial capital.

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