

The Partition of Bengal

- The Partition of Bengal in 1905 was made on October 16 by **Viceroy Curzon**.
- The former province of Bengal was divided into two new provinces.
- Partition was promoted for administrative reasons:
 - Bengal was as large as France but with a significantly larger population.
 - **Curzon** stated the eastern region was neglected and under-governed.
 - By splitting the province, an improved administration could be established in the east.
 - Subsequently, the population would benefit from new schools and employment opportunities.

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- The partition was greatly supported by the Muslims of East Bengal under misplaced logic.
- The prime reason behind their support was:
 - their poor economic situation and
 - the perceived dominance of the Hindu businessmen and landlords of West Bengal.
- Bengal was severely centralized in the capital **Calcutta**.
- Most of the factories and mills in Bengal were established in and around **Calcutta**.

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- After the partition, **Dacca** began to transform into a major city.
- Construction of some important administrative buildings like the **Curzon Hall**, **High Court** took place in the city.
- A number of educational institutions were established.

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- However, the educated middle class in western Bengal found other motives behind the partition plan.
- Hindus tended to oppose partition, which was more popular among Muslims.
- This partition provided an impetus to the religious divide and, as a result of that,
 - All India Muslim League and
 - All India Hindu Mahasabha were formed.

Political Crisis

- Partition sparked a major political crisis along religious lines.
- Hindu resistance began the Swadeshi movement that included:
 - boycotting British goods and public institutions, meetings and processions,
 - forming committees, propaganda through press, and diplomatic pressure.

Political Crisis

- The Muslims in East Bengal hoped that
 - a separate region would give them more control over education and employment, hence,
 - they opposed those movements.
- Rabindranath Tagore wrote *Banglar Mati Banglar Jol* as a rallying cry for proponents of annulment of Partition.

Re-unification

- Due to these political protests, the two parts of Bengal were reunited in 1911.
- A new partition which divided the province on linguistic, rather than religious grounds.

Significance

- The partition left a significant impact on the people of Bengal as well as the political scene of the Indian Subcontinent.
- After the annulment of the partition, the people of East Bengal were immersed into disappointment and anger.
- This event also created a sense of political awareness among the Muslims of East Bengal.

Significance

- To mollify the people of East Bengal, Lord Curzon took the following steps:
 - Established a university, as a center of excellence, in Dacca and
 - Formed a committee in this regard
- The decision was severely criticized by some Hindu leaders in West Bengal.
- The most significant impact of this event was greater communal dissonance between the Hindus and Muslims of Bengal.

All-India Muslim League

- The formation of a Muslim political party on national level was seen as essential by 1901.
- It was formally proposed by **Nawab Salimullah Khan**.
- **In 1906**, the party was officially found at the educational conference held in Dhaka
- The name "**All India Muslim League**" was proposed by **Sir Agha Khan III** who was appointed its first president.

All-India Muslim League

- Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah(Aga Khan III) was appointed the first Honorary President of the Muslim League.
- The headquarters were established at Lucknow.
- Aga Khan III's (1877–1957) played a leading role in founding AIML.
- His goal was the advancement of Muslim agendas and protection of Muslim rights in India.

All-India Muslim League

- Its goals at this stage did not include establishing an independent Muslim state, but rather concentrated on
 - Protecting Muslim liberties and rights,
 - Promoting understanding between the Muslim community and other Indians,
 - Educating the Muslim and Indian community at large on the actions of the government, and
 - Discouraging violence.

