

Lecture 12:

Emergence of Pakistan as a Sovereign State

I. The Dawn of Independence: August 14, 1947

The Creation of Pakistan:

- Formal declaration of independence under the Indian Independence Act 1947.
- Establishment of the Dominion of Pakistan, partitioned into East and West Pakistan.
- Initial administrative setup: Lord Mountbatten oversaw the transfer of power, with Muhammad Ali Jinnah as Governor-General.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah (Quaid-e-Azam):

His role as the first Governor-General, crucial in establishing the nascent state.

His address to the Constituent Assembly on August 11, 1947, emphasizing religious freedom and equality:

"You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing¹ to do with the business of the State."

"We are starting in the days when there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State."

Initial debate on the nature of state: Secular or Islamic?

II. The Immediate Aftermath: Challenges of a Nascent Nation

The Refugee Crisis:

- Estimated 10-15 million people displaced during partition, with millions crossing the newly formed borders.
- Massive humanitarian crisis: Lack of shelter, food, and medical supplies.
- Resettlement and rehabilitation: Immense logistical challenges, with limited resources.

The Radcliffe Line and its Consequences:

- Arbitrary division of Punjab and Bengal, leading to immediate chaos and violence.
- Disruption of communities and infrastructure, creating long-lasting border disputes.
- The line was published on the 17th of August, 3 days after the independence, which increased the chaos.

Economic Hardships:

- Division of assets: Pakistan received a disproportionately small share of India's assets.
- Limited industrial base: Pakistan lacked the infrastructure and skilled labor necessary for economic development.
- Disruption of trade and commerce: Partition disconnected established trade routes.
- Irrigation systems: Unequal distribution of water resources, impacting agriculture.

Political Instability:

- Establishment of a functional government: Setting up administrative structures and institutions from scratch.
- Integration of princely states: Challenges in incorporating states like Kalat and others.
- Lack of a constitution: Debates over the role of Islam and the structure of government, leading to delays.
- The death of Jinnah in September 1948: A significant blow to the nascent nation.
- The assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan in 1951, further destabilized the country.

Security Threats:

- The Kashmir conflict: Immediate outbreak of hostilities with India over the disputed territory.
- Border security: Challenges in defending newly established borders against incursions.
- Internal security: Managing communal tensions and maintaining law and order amidst widespread violence.

Social Challenges:

- Integration of refugees: Rebuilding communities and providing social services to millions.
- Illiteracy and lack of education: Urgent need for educational development to build a skilled workforce.
- Healthcare and social welfare: Addressing poverty and inequality, with limited resources.
- East and West Pakistan: Geographical separation and cultural differences created future issues.

