

## The Lahore Resolution, 1940

The experience of Congress Rule compelled the Muslims to launch the movement for separate homeland. The Hindus made them realize that Hindu government would mean an anti-Muslim rule in India. The Muslims' disappointment from the Congress leadership decided to open a new phase of history. Quaid-i-Azam's article in *Time and Tide* concluded that Muslims are a nation. No Constitution can be enforced by ignoring Muslims. His comments on March 13, 1940 are remarkable: "If some satisfactory settlement cannot be found for Muslims in united India, the Muslim will have to demand for division of the country."

### The Lahore Resolution:

The Muslim League held its annual session at Lahore on 22-24 March 1940. The Lahore Resolution was moved by Maulvi Fazlul Haq and seconded by Ch. Khaliquzzaman that finally approved on March 24, 1940. Jinnah rightly expressed his valuable remarks about the political circumstances of India and the Muslims stand. He said:

"Indian problem is not communal but international. No Constitution can work without recognizing this reality. Muslims of India will not accept a constitution that establishes a government of the Hindu majority on them. If Hindus and Muslims are placed under one democratic system, this would mean Hindu Raj."

### Text of the Resolution:

- They decided that the Federal system under Government of India Act, 1935 was not acceptable for the Muslims.
- No revised constitutional plan would be acceptable unless it was framed with their approval and consent.
- Adjacent units where Muslims are in a majority, as in Northwest and East, should be constituted as **Independent States** where the constituent units will be autonomous and sovereign.
- Protection of minorities would be given priority.

### Significance:

This Resolution did not specify any demarcation of the territory but it defined the future plan of struggle for the establishment of the Muslims states (later the word 'states' was replaced by 'state' in 1946) in the Northwestern and Eastern areas where the Muslims were in overwhelming majority. It also intended to give importance to the autonomy of the states. There was no use of the word Pakistan but Pakistan was kernel of the Resolution.

### Later Developments:

The World War II started in 1939 that required heavily men powered battlefield. The British who always believe in bargaining announced an offer in August 1940:

1. Expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council and the setting up of National Defence Council
2. Special importance to the views of minorities in the revision of the constitution.

3. Power could not be transferred under a system that will not be acceptable to large and powerful minorities in India.
4. Dominion Status: the ultimate goal
5. Cooperation of Indians for the war

Congress rejected it and started Non-Cooperation movement 1940-41. Lahore Resolution remained the ultimate goal for the Muslim Leagues.

### **The Cripps Mission, March 1942**

The constitutional proposals for seeking Indian cooperation for war efforts:

1. Dominion status
2. Indian constitutional body to frame constitution
3. Princely states would be represented.

The Cripps Mission negotiated with Indian leaders and issued the proposals. The Congress rejected the proposals and demanded that a responsible government would be set up immediately after the war. The defense affairs should be under the Indian control. The Muslim League also rejected the proposals and repeated its stand that the Muslims could not live in Indian Union.

The Hindus started **Quit India Movement** in August 1942 seeing British in trouble. The Muslim League stayed aloof and responded by saying that divide and quit India.

### **Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, September 1944**

MK Gandhi did not accept the Hindus and Muslims as Two Nations and emphasized on the freedom of united India. Jinnah told him that the Muslims could never budge even a single inch from their ideological and constitutional demand.