

## History of South Asia

He forced the army to be built. He reorganized the military's transportation system and equipped the army with new ammunition and guns. He deployed Indian soldiers to fight against various countries abroad and to suppress rebellions.

Curzon's military policy began with his disagreement with the then Commander-in-Chief, Lord Kitchener. From 1861, a military officer was a member of the Executive Council of the British Army. Through these military members, the government controlled and supervised the Indian Army. On the other hand, the Chief of Army Staff was also an additional member of the Executive Council of the British Army. As a result, dual authority was created in the military department. Lord Kitchener proposed to the government to end the dual authority of the military administration and appoint the Army Chief as the sole advisor to the government in military matters and entrust the entire army to the Commander-in-Chief. Lord Curzon rejected Kitchener's proposal. Because he feared that if Kitchener's proposal was accepted, the government's authority over the military department would be reduced. Curzon also expressed his opinion that Kitchener's proposal was unconstitutional. However, Curzon resigned in 1905 when the Secretary for India accepted Lord Kitchener's proposal.

## Partition of Bengal (1905)

In the history of British rulers in India, the reign of the great Lord Curzon (1898-1905 AD) is particularly significant in many ways. Among the various reforms of his reign, the partition of Bengal in 1905 was the most notable event. The reaction that arose between Hindus and Muslims as a result of this event created a huge and far-reaching stir in the political life of India. The partition of Bengal did not only touch the political life of Bengal, but its impact was felt in Bengali literature, newspapers, military newspapers, education, science, music, art - in a word, in every sphere of life. The partition of Bengal brought a new vitality and excitement to the lives of Bengalis. Therefore, the importance of the partition of Bengal in the political and social history of Bengal and India is undeniable.

## Reasons for partition of Bengal

The partition of Bengal was carried out for various reasons. The reasons for the partition of Bengal are discussed below:

administrative reasons

and

Lord Ravi Rick Tan. Lord Ravi Rick on the throne

8-What is the meaning of R?

The partition of Bengal was done for administrative reasons. During Lord Curzon's time, the Bengal Presidency consisted of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and parts of Assam. Its area was 179,000 square miles and the population was 79,000,000. The administration of this vast province was entrusted to a Lieutenant-Governor or Chotalat. It was quite difficult to govern this vast province with a population of about 80 million people well from one center, i.e. Calcutta. Therefore, for administrative reasons, the Governor-General Lord Curzon adopted a plan to divide the province of Bengal. But although Lord Curzon implemented the partition of Bengal, this plan did not come out of his head at first. In 1851, Sir Charles Grant and in 1854, the great Lord Dalhousie recommended the division of the province of Bengal. The vastness of the province is blamed as one of the reasons for the terrible famine that occurred in Orissa in 1866. In view of this, the then Secretary of State for India, Lord Northcote, made a proposal to reduce the size of this vast province. At that time, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, Sir William Gray, proposed the formation of a separate and self-sufficient province of Bengal alone. But no effective action was taken in this regard. For administrative convenience, Assam was separated from Bengal in 1874 and a separate administrative unit was formed under a commissioner. In 1896, it was decided that the Chittagong Division and the Dhaka and Mymensingh districts would be attached to Assam. But in the face of strong protests, this proposal was finally canceled. In 1901, the Chief Commissioner of Madhya Pradesh, Sir Andrew Frazer, proposed to separate

Orissa from Bengal and attach it to Madhya Pradesh. Within a few days, Lord Curzon appointed Fraser as the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. He was Curzon's main supporter and advisor on the partition of Bengal. Bengal Presidency

Shortly after assuming office, Fraser presented a plan for the division of Bengal to Curzon. Curzon accepted the plan.

### Social and economic factors

Lord Curzon's social and economic reasons were also sufficient behind the formation of the new province. At that time, Calcutta was the heart of the economic and social life of the British rulers. All the industries, trade, offices, courts, and educational institutions of Bengal were developed around Calcutta. As a result, there was no improvement in the trade, industry, factories, and communication system of East Bengal. East Bengal only supplied raw materials. As a result of the development of the Kolkata-based economy, the economic condition of East Bengal gradually deteriorated. Unemployment among Muslim youth increased. At that time, theft, robbery, and anti-social activities became a daily occurrence due to the underdeveloped communication system and administrative weakness of East Bengal. There was no security in people's lives. In such a situation, Lord Curzon hoped that if East Bengal and Assam were formed into an independent province, the path to progress in the fields of education, health, agriculture, business, and commerce would be smooth for the residents of this region.

Not only for the socio-economic development of the people of Assam and East Bengal, but the government also had some economic interests behind the partition of Bengal. Since 1870, the trade in jute and rice, the main exports of East Bengal, had been significantly carried out through the Chittagong port. Moreover, the export of tea from Assam and Sylhet was easier through the Chittagong port. The government had considerable doubts about the navigability of the Calcutta port. In this context, the British actively thought about establishing industrial establishments in East Bengal with the help of the abundant raw materials produced by the geography, flowing rivers and fertile soil of East Bengal, keeping the Chittagong port in front. Therefore, in 1908, immediately

after the partition of Bengal, a report on the industrialization of East Bengal and Assam was published for the first time.

Many believe that the partition of Bengal was an ambitious plan by the government to abolish the permanent settlement system in East Bengal. The permanent settlement introduced in 1793 was initially beneficial to the company, but in the long run it was counterproductive. Because as a result of this settlement, the new zamindars

Although the Company and later the British government received a lot of profit from the cultivation of forests and pastures, they did not receive any of this increased share. Therefore, in order to strengthen their economic position, the British government wanted to remove permanent settlements from East Bengal and relieve the colonial state of its revenue collection.

#### Political reasons

Lord Curzon planned the partition of Bengal for the convenience of governance. But his excuse was not reasonable. If it had been difficult to govern as a large province, then it would have been possible to separate Bihar and Orissa, which were inhabited by non-Bengalis, from the Bengal Presidency. In fact, Curzon's main motive behind the partition of Bengal was political. He deeply observed that Calcutta was the main center of the Indian awakening and nationalist movement. At that time, the anti-British movement in Bengal took an extreme form under the influence of extremist leaders. The spread of this radical nationalism among Indians was not at all safe for British imperialism. Curzon understood this well. Therefore, he was eager to deal a severe blow to Bengali and Indian nationalism by dividing Bengal. Many believe that the partition of Bengal was an expression of Lord Curzon's well-planned policy of division (Divide and Rule). If the Muslims of East Bengal became a majority and got more opportunities, on the one hand they would become a class loyal to the British, on the other hand the national movement in India would be weakened. Thus, it can be seen that Curzon's main motive for the partition of Bengal was political and communal, while administrative convenience was an afterthought. Lord Curzon's successor, Lord Minto, also admitted that the partition plan was necessary for political purposes.

On 5 February 1906, he wrote in clear language to Lord Morley, the Secretary to India - "From a political point of view alone, putting aside the administrative difficulties of the old province, I believe partition to have been very necessary."

### Declaration of partition of Bengal

In fact, the plan for the partition of Bengal was adopted in 1903. In 1904, the Secretary of State for India, Broderick, approved it. The plan for the partition of Bengal was published on 10 July 1905. It stated that a new province called 'East Bengal and Assam' would be formed from the divisions of Assam, Dhaka, Chittagong and Rajshahi, excluding Darjeeling, but including Jalpaiguri, the hilly Tripura and Malda. The administration of the new province would be vested in a Lieutenant Governor or Chota Lat. Dhaka was designated as the capital of the new province and Chittagong as the alternate capital. However, the judiciary of the new province would be placed under the Calcutta High Court. The area of the new province was 1 lakh 6 thousand square miles and the population was 3 crore 10 lakh. Among the inhabitants, 1 crore 8 million Muslims, 1 crore 2 million Hindus and the rest were followers of other religions. Another province called Bangladesh was formed by combining West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The partition of Bengal came into official effect on 16 October 1905.

### Results and reactions of the Partition of Bengal

The Bengali division was a blessing for the people of East Bengal. Most of the Muslim leaders of Bengal, especially the Nawab of Dhaka, Sir Salimullah, welcomed the Bengali division. Muslim newspapers also expressed joy at the formation of the new province. Because as a result of the Bengali division, Dhaka became the administrative center of East Bengal. Immediately after the partition of Bengal, the Secretariat, High Court, Legislative Council building, new beautiful buildings and roads were built in the new capital Dhaka. Dhaka regained its old glory. With the development of Chittagong port, the trade and commerce of the region expanded. Earlier, Muslim children could not get suitable jobs even after passing the degree. But in the new province, they got new job opportunities. The farmers of Bengal also benefited from the partition of Bengal. Because after the partition of Bengal, the demand and price of jute increased. As a result, the farmers got extra money. As a result, the peasant class was happy. So

It can be seen that the partition of Bengal resulted in an unprecedented enthusiasm and excitement among the Muslims in the educational, administrative, economic and cultural fields in this new province with a Muslim majority.

But the partition of Bengal created great anger and adverse reactions among the Hindus of Bengal. Hindu landlords, journalists, merchant associations, and political leaders strongly opposed the partition of Bengal. Because the partition of Bengal was against their interests. The proposed partition of Bengal became a cause of concern for the landlords who had landholdings in both Bengals. Because the cost of running the zamindari in both Bengals was inevitable. The legal community of Calcutta feared that as a result of the partition of Bengal, they would lose their clients in East Bengal and as a result, they would suffer financially. Politicians feared that if the proposed new province was formed, the politicians of East Bengal would be particularly affected. Because they would be deprived of the opportunity to participate in the legislature. The merchant class feared that if the new province was formed, their business would suffer. For these reasons, many historians have wanted to say that there was no noble ideal or motivation behind the anti-partition movement. This movement was formed because the interests of the lower classes of society were affected. However, there is no doubt that the Hindu communities of both Bengals, whether for their own interests or inspired by the great ideal of national unity, had a deep sense of unity against the partition of Bengal. It was because of this sense of national unity that Hindu leaders termed the decision to partition Bengal as 'anti-Bengali', 'anti-nationalist' and 'dismemberment of Mother Bengal'. Sundrenath Bandopadhyay described the partition of Bengal as 'a national disaster and a critical moment for Bengali nationalism'. The Sandhya Patrika said that it was done for political purposes, i.e. to destroy the Bengali nation.

A conspiracy was hatched. However, the protest movement against the partition of Bengal gradually culminated in a Swadeshi movement. Boycotts of foreign goods began everywhere and foreign goods were openly set on fire. Students protested in schools, colleges and

## History of South Asia

The university was boycotted. Along with the Swadeshi movement, terrorist activities also started in the entire country at the instigation of extremist leaders. Various secret societies were formed in Dhaka and Calcutta. Among these, Jugantar and Anushilan Samiti were particularly famous. Numerous murders took place in different places. The revolutionaries made an unsuccessful attempt to kill Governor Fraser of Bengal and Governor Fuller of East Bengal and Assam provinces. Revolutionary Khudiram was hanged for his involvement in these incidents. He was identified as a martyr throughout the country.

### Revocation of the Partition of Bengal, 1911

Despite the Swadeshi and terrorist movements in the country, the British government remained steadfast in its decision. But in the meantime, the British merchant class in England put immense pressure on the British government to protect their market in India. Congress leaders also strongly demanded that the British government cancel the partition of Bengal. Finally, the British government had to give in. On December 12, 1911, during the rule of Lord Hardinge, the cancellation of the partition of Bengal was announced at a ceremony organized at the royal court in Delhi on the occasion of the coronation of Emperor George V. The two Bengals were united again.

### Results and reactions of the cancellation of the Partition of Bengal

Hindus were naturally happy when the partition of Bengal was revoked. Although the Congress leadership did not devote their heart and soul to this movement, they were happy with this success. They praised the judgment and good sense of the British rulers for this. They thought that the revocation of the partition of Bengal was a symbol of the victory of their policy. After the revocation of the partition of Bengal, the capital of India was shifted from Calcutta to Delhi. The Congress leaders were not sad about this, because Delhi was the capital of India in the past. However, the result of the change of capital was not good for Bengal. In this regard, historian Leonard Garden said, "The shift of the capital did mark a turning point in the history of Bengali role in

He demanded from Baralat to establish a university in Dhaka for the better education of the people. Baralat accepted his demand and formed an organization to draft a plan for this purpose.

After the partition of Bengal, Hindu-Muslim relations deteriorated. Mutual bitterness and distrust increased between them. Shri Niradchandra Chowdhury has described this bitterness and distrust in his book "The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian". He observed that as a result of the withdrawal of the partition of Bengal, Hindu-Muslim relations were permanently riven. Communal riots and riots began in different parts of Bengal from 1906. From 1906, the Muslim League was formed with the interest and initiative of the Nawab of Dhaka Salimullah. As the Indian National Congress participated in the anti-partition movement of Bengal, many Muslim members of the Congress left the Congress and joined the Muslim League.

Indian history," Bengal was the heart of the British rulers since the establishment of British rule in Bengal. But due to the change of capital, Bengal lost its status.

But the announcement of the revocation of the partition of Bengal caused a strong reaction among the Muslims of Bengal. This announcement was a great blow to them. The Muslim community benefited considerably from the partition of Bengal. As a result, they got the opportunity to become confident and self-reliant. The partition of Bengal prepared the ground for their economic and social progress. There was a possibility of spreading education among the Muslims. In a word, the improvement that had begun in the lifestyle of the Muslims of Bengal due to the partition of Bengal was stopped again due to the revocation of the partition of Bengal. Due to this, the Muslims became disappointed and lost faith in the British government. Muslim leaders such as Nawab Vikar ul Mulk, Maulana Muhammad Ali and others commented on the revocation of the partition of Bengal as a heinous example of the betrayal of the British government. Nawab Salimullah of Dhaka expressed deep sorrow and disappointment in a public meeting in December 1911 and accepted a resolution. Despite being loyal to the government, he could not accept this injustice of the British government towards the Muslim community. The failure of the partition of Bengal was also not



accepted easily by the non-Bengali Muslims. It can be said that the cancellation of the Partition of Bengal disappointed all Muslims.

Congress took a stand against the partition of Bengal. As a result, the trust of Muslims in Congress was lost. Gradually, the belief arose in the minds of Indian Muslims that the interests of Muslims were not safe in the hands of Congress. From this belief, separate communal thoughts arose in the minds of Muslims. Therefore, it can be said that Muslim nationalism in India began with the partition of Bengal.

In this situation, the great Lord Hardinge arrived in Dhaka in 1912 to pacify the Muslims of East Bengal. At that time, Nawab Salimullah of East Bengal