

# Emergence of Bangladesh (1971)



**BENGAL & SUBCONTINENTAL  
POLITICS (1905 – 1945)**

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics during the First World War (1914 – 1918)



- PARTITION OF BENGAL IS REVERSED (1911)
- CAPITAL OF BRITISH INDIA IS MOVED TO DELHI
- BENGAL LOSES ITS PREEMINENCE IN SUBCONTINENTAL AFFAIRS; AS CURZON HAD HOPED
- BENGALI MUSLIMS UNHAPPY AT LOSS OF MAJORITY PROVINCE; COMMUNAL DIFFERENCES SUBSIDE; MEMORIES OF POLITICAL MOBILIZATION REMAIN
- 1909: SEPARATE ELECTORATES ARE CREATED FOR HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics during the First World War (1914 – 1918)



- AUGUST 1914: OUTBREAK OF FIRST WORLD WAR IN EUROPE
- THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE SUBCONTINENT PLEDGE LOYALTY TO THE RAJ IN RETURN FOR VAGUE PROMISES OF 'SELF-RULE' AT END OF CONFLICT
- OVER £ 1 BILLION POUNDS FORCED FROM SUBCONTINENT
- FOOD AND GRAIN SEIZED FOR TRANSPORT TO BRITISH TROOPS & HER ALLIES
  - FAMINE CONDITIONS RETURN TO SUBCONTINENT

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics during the First World War (1914 – 1918)



- BENGALI 'NEW ERA' GROUPS REFORM
- 1912: BENGAL REVOLUTIONARIES CARRY OUT  
ATTACK ON IMPERIAL VICEROY
- RASH BEHARI BOSE & BASANTA KUMAR BISWAS
  - BENGAL & PUNJAB 'GHADAR'  
REVOLUTIONARIES PLAN A MAJOR UPRISING
  - TRY TO PROCURE ARMS AND OTHER  
ASSISTANCE FROM IMPERIAL GERMANY
- 19 FEBRUARY 1915; THE RISING FAILS DUE  
TO TREACHERY
- COMPLETE COLLAPSE OF REVOLUTIONARY  
NETWORKS IN THE SHORT-TERM

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics during the First World War (1914 – 1918)



- 1916: UNDERSTANDING OF COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE
- HOLD MEETINGS IN SAME TOWN ONE AFTER THE OTHER SO THAT PEOPLE WITH MEMBERSHIP IN BOTH PARTIES CAN PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY
- THIS AMICABLE POLICY LASTS UNTIL EARLY NINETEEN TWENTIES

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics during the First World War (1914 – 1918)



- END OF FIRST WORLD WAR
- BRITISH EMPIRE REFUSES TO HONOUR PROMISES MADE FOR COLLABORATION DURING WAR
- MAINSTREAM POLITICAL PARTIES ARE DISCREDITED
- RAJ INSTITUTES 'GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT OF 1919' WITH MINOR CONCESSIONS

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1917 – 1927)



- CHITTARANJAN DAS; WRITER, POET & LAWYER
- PART OF THE SECULAR HUMANITARIAN TREND  
IN THE 'RENAISSANCE' / REFORM PERIOD OF  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY
- DEFENDS THE 'NEW ERA' REVOLUTIONARIES  
IN 1910
- JOINS BENGAL & SUBCONTINENTAL POLITICS  
IN 1917
  - AFFECTIONATELY BECOMES KNOWN AS  
'DESHBANDHU'
  - HUMANIST & SECULARIST
- EXTREMELY POPULAR AMONGST BOTH HINDUS  
AND MUSLIMS
- CONSTITUTIONAL MASS POLITICIAN – ALSO  
WANTS TO BROADEN SUPPORT FROM  
COUNTRYSIDE BEYOND TOWNS



Chittaranjan Das came of age during the Bengal/Indian Renaissance. Poet, writer and lawyer, he became involved in anti-colonial politics in 1910 when he represented New Era defendants. Tremendously popular mass Indian leader, held the respect of Hindu and Muslim alike. His death in 1925 was a shattering blow for inter-religious harmony.



**Chittaranjan Das ( 1870 – 1925)**



# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1917 – 1927)



- ❖ GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT OF 1919
  - ❖ ELECTIONS TO PROVINCIAL RAJ  
LEGISLATURES
- ❖ 'DYARCHY' – SOME MINOR PORTFOLIOS  
WILL BE RELINQUISHED TO  
SUBCONTINENTALS
  - ❖ SUBCONTINENTALS CAN ALSO  
PARTICIPATE IN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS
- ❖ CHITTARANJAN DAS BECOMES MAYOR OF  
CALCUTTA
- ❖ H.S. SUHRAWARDY IS APPOINTED DEPUTY  
MAYOR

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1917 – 1927)



- ❖ THE BENGAL CONGRESS IMMEDIATELY TAKES PART IN ELECTIONS AND WINS OVERWHELMINGLY
- ❖ CHITTARANJAN DAS BECOMES MAYOR OF CALCUTTA
- ❖ H. S. SUHRAWARDY IS APPOINTED DEPUTY MAYOR
- ❖ SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE IS APPOINTED AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER – CHITTARANJAN DAS'S RIGHT-HAND MAN
- ❖ CHITTARANJAN DAS WANTS TO WRECK DYARCHY FROM WITHIN TO MAKE BRITISH RULE IMPOSSIBLE

# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



❖ IMMEDIATELY RUNS INTO CONFLICT  
WITH OTHER CONGRESS LEADERS SUCH AS  
THE NOW ASCENDANT PARAMOUNT FIGURE:  
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

❖ PROFOUND CHANGES AND FRACTURES ARE  
UNFOLDING ACROSS THE COLONIAL AND  
ANTI-IMPERIALIST LANDSCAPE IN THE  
SUBCONTINENT

# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



- ❖ THE LEGEND OF MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI
- ❖ THE "MAHATMA" OR "GREAT-SOULED ONE"
  - ❖ FROM THE GUJRAT REGION
  - ❖ BRIEF CAREER IN LAW
- ❖ AWAKENED TO INJUSTICE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA
  - ❖ 'SATYAGRAHA'
  - ❖ 'STRUGGLE IN TRUTH'
- ❖ LEADS MOVEMENT AGAINST ROWLATT ACT (1919) & BECOMES KNOWN ACROSS SUBCONTINENT

# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



- ❖ FASHIONS NON-VIOLENT DISOBEDIENCE AS ANTI-COLONIAL WEAPON
- ❖ BECOMES LEADER OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
- ❖ UNITES HINDUS OF ALL CASTES, AND MUSLIMS AGAINST BRITISH EMPIRE IN THREE MASS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENTS
- ❖ 1921-1922 & 1930-1931 & 1942-1943
- ❖ OPPOSES COMMUNAL RIOTS OF 1946-1947
- ❖ ASSASSINATED BY HINDU EXTREMIST

# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



## ❖ REALITIES & MYTHS:

❖ RELIGIOUS FIGURE; BUT IRONICALLY  
LEARNS ABOUT HINDUISM IN LATE-19<sup>TH</sup>  
CENTURY ENGLAND FROM FRINGE  
ELEMENTS

❖ EDWARD ARNOLD – AUTHOR OF A  
CHRISTIANIZED BIOGRAPHY OF LORD  
GAUTAMA BUDDHA

## ❖ THEOSOPHY

❖ "MADAME" BLAVATSKY – A FRAUDULENT  
SPIRITUAL "MEDIUM"



# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



- ❖ REALITIES & MYTHS:
- ❖ HISTORIANS KATHRYN TIDRICK & PERRY ANDERSON
- ❖ FROM HIS EXPERIENCES IN ENGLAND GANDHI CONCLUDES THAT HIS OBJECTIVE IS:
  - ❖ MOKSHA
  - ❖ KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
  - ❖ 'RAM RAJYA' – KINGDOM OF LORD RAMA
  - ❖ PURITY, SELF-RESTRAINT PATHWAYS TO MOKSHA
  - ❖ THE SAME APPLIES IN POLITICS FOR GANDHI

# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



## ❖ REALITIES & MYTHS:

- ❖ THEOSOPHICAL IMPERATIVE CALLS FOR 'WORLD-MISSION' TO CREATE A *WORLD COMMONWEALTH*
- ❖ DOES NOT WANT THE BRITISH EMPIRE TO LEAVE; WANTS IT TO WORK WITH HIM FOR *WORLD COMMONWEALTH*
- ❖ 1921: ADMITS INDEPENDENCE OF SUBCONTINENT NOT AS *IMPORTANT TO HIM AS WORLD COMMONWEALTH* TO FRENCH PHILOSOPHER PAUL ANTOINE RICHARD!



# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



## ❖ REALITIES & MYTHS :

- ❖ IN SOUTH AFRICA; HE SPOKE UP FOR SUBCONTINENTAL MERCHANTS BUT NOT FOR SUBCONTINENTAL INDENTURED LABOURERS FORCIBLY BROUGHT FROM SUBCONTINENT
- ❖ WAS OPENLY RACIST AGAINST PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT
- ❖ CONTROVERSY WHICH HAS REIGNITED IN THE PRESENT-DAY
- ❖ TENDENCY TO ABANDON STRUGGLE WHEN HE FEELS LIKE IT

# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



- ❖ REALITIES & MYTHS:
- ❖ HISTORIAN JUDITH BROWN
- ❖ GANDHI "PLACES" HIMSELF IN THE MIDDLE OF ONGOING STRUGGLES
- ❖ IN SOUTH AFRICA
- ❖ IN EARLY CAMPAIGNS IN SUBCONTINENT IN BIHAR & GUJARAT
- ❖ CREATES *PERCEPTION* THAT HE SOLELY FASHIONED THE CAMPAIGN
- ❖ AT KHEDA (GUJARAT); GANDHI'S FOLLOWERS OPENLY CLAIM THEIR LEADER'S 'GODLINESS' OR 'SANCTITY'

# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



- ❖ REALITIES & MYTHS:
- ❖ DEFINITION OF 'SWARAJ' ; FOR GANDHI IS DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS
- ❖ APPEAL TO RELIGIOUS IMAGERY
- ❖ PROBLEM WITH 'NATIONALISM' IN THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT, NOT A PROBLEM WITH GANDHI ALONE
- ❖ THE FATE OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AT THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR: THE 'KHILAFAT' ISSUE



***The final departure of Mehmed VI, last Sultan of the Ottoman Empire***

# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



- ❖ REALITIES & MYTHS:
  - ❖ OF ISSUE TO A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF INDIAN MUSLIM OPINION
  - ❖ IN REALITY; IS AN INTERNATIONAL ISSUE AND *RAJ* WILL NOT BE SWAYED TO ACT TO 'SAVE' OTTOMAN EMPIRE
  - ❖ THE 1921-1922 *SATYAGRAHA-KHILAFAT MOVEMENT*

# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities




## ❖ REALITIES & MYTHS:

- ❖ GANDHI CALLS IT OFF AFTER THE COUNTER-VIOLENCE OF FARMERS IN CHAURI CHAURA (UNITED PROVINCES)
- ❖ WAS IT OPPOSITION TO VIOLENCE ON 'PRINCIPLE' ?
- ❖ PEASANT/FARMER MOVEMENTS WERE GAINING TRACTION ON THEIR OWN WITHOUT CONGRESS
- ❖ FEAR THAT THE MOVEMENT WAS BECOMING RADICAL

# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



- ❖ REALITIES & MYTHS:
- ❖ CALLING OFF MOVEMENT ANGERS PEOPLE ACROSS THE COMMUNAL DIVIDE
- ❖ COMMUNAL MUSLIM SENTIMENT; NOW AWOKEN, WILL NOT GO AWAY
- ❖ MOPLAH UPRISING TAKES PLACE IN AFTERMATH OF COLLAPSE OF MOVEMENT
- ❖ STRUGGLE OVER PARTICIPATION IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS



Heir to the secular tradition of the Bengali and/or Subcontinental “Renaissance,” Subhas Chandra Bose epitomized the secular spirit sorely lacking in subcontinental politics by the 1930s. After Chittaranjan Das, Bose was the only mass Indian leader of consequence to command the respect and trust of Hindus and Muslims across the widening communal divide.



*Karamchand Gandhi (left) with Subhas Chandra Bose (right) during a brief period of 'truce', Haripura Congress Session, 1938*



# The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in Subcontinental politics; myths & realities



## ❖ REALITIES & MYTHS:

- ❖ COMMUNAL DIVIDE HAS NEVER BEEN AS BAD SINCE EIGHTEEN-NINETIES
- ❖ CHITTARANJAN DAS AND MOTILAL NEHRU FORM 'SWARAJIST' PARTY
  - ❖ SO SUCCESSFUL THAT GANDHI IS FORCED TO SUE FOR UNITY
  - ❖ IN BENGAL; CHITTARANJAN DAS DECIDES THAT HE HAS TO FACE THE ISSUE OF THE HINDU-MUSLIM DIVIDE HEAD-ON

# The Bengal Pact of 1923



- ✓ HINDUS & MUSLIMS WILL VOTE SEPARATELY FOR ELECTIONS
- ✓ BASED ON POPULATION BREAKDOWN
- ✓ 60% OF SEATS FOR MUSLIMS, 40% FOR HINDUS
- ✓ 55% OF GOVERNMENT POSITIONS FOR MUSLIMS/ BUT 80% UNTIL 55% REACHED
- ✓ NO MUSIC IN FRONT OF MOSQUES/ COW SACRIFICE FOR RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL ALLOWED
- ✓ EQUAL JOINT COMMITTEE TO SUPERVISE AT ALL LEVELS

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1917 – 1927)



- ❖ ANGERS 'RESPECTABLE' OR  
'BHADRALOK' CLASSES
- ❖ STAYS THE COURSE; HIGHPOINT OF  
HINDU – MUSLIM AMITY
- ❖ KAKINADA CONGRESS SESSION: BENGAL  
PACT IS STRUCK DOWN BY GANDHI AND HIS  
ALLIES
- ❖ BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONGRESS: UPHOLDS  
BENGAL PACT
- ❖ GANDHI REALIZES THAT HE CANNOT TAKE  
ON POWERFUL RIVAL SO EASILY

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1917 – 1927)



- ❖ DAS-GANDHI PACT (1924)
- ❖ THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR DOMINION STATUS
- ❖ THE DEATH OF CHITTARANJAN DAS
- ❖ THE RISE OF COMMUNAL ORGANIZATIONS
  - ❖ HINDU MAHASABHA
  - ❖ RASHTRIYA SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH
- ❖ MOBILIZATION OF LOWER-CASTE HINDUS
  - ❖ BHIMRAO RAMJI AMBEDKHAR
- ❖ THE COMMUNAL RIOTS OF 1926-1927
- ❖ BENGAL POLITICS PARALYZED; SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE IMPRISONED FOR TWO YEARS WITHOUT TRIAL

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



- ❖ THE FAILURE OF THE 1930 CIVIL  
DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT
- ❖ FAR MORE PUBLICIZED BUT IN REALITY  
HAS REDUCED OBJECTIVES
- ❖ APPEARS "SUCCESSFUL" BUT IN REALITY  
IS SMALLER AND KEPT UNDER TIGHT  
CONTROL
- ❖ RAJ INVITES SUBCONTINENTAL  
POLITICAL PARTIES AND LEADERS FOR A  
SERIES OF ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



❖ GANDHI TAKES RESPONSIBILITY TO  
REPRESENT INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS  
AND FAILS COMPLETELY

❖ RENEWED DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT IS  
CRUSHED

❖ THE BRITISH RAJ NOW ANNOUNCES THE  
PROMULGATION OF THE 'MACDONALD AWARD'

❖ BRITISH PRIME MINISTER JAMES RAMSAY  
MACDONALD

❖ 'COMMUNAL AWARD'

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



- ❖ FRAGMENTS COLONIAL LANDSCAPE ON A FAR GREATER SCALE
- ❖ ANGERS UPPER CLASS & UPPER-CASTE HINDUS; NOT AGAINST BRITISH RAJ BUT AGAINST PERCEIVED BENEFICIARIES OF AWARD; BENGALI MUSLIMS
- ❖ TURNS MANY UPPER-CASTE HINDUS AWAY FROM NATIONALISM TO A PRO-RAJ VIEWPOINT

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



- ❖ BATTLE OF PLASSEY (1757); NO LONGER SEEN AS FALL OF BENGAL AND START OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM
- ❖ INSTEAD: PLASSEY AS "LIBERATION" FROM MUSLIM RULE
- ❖ ONE MAJOR PROBLEM WAS THERE WAS NO COMPOSITE/ MONOLITHIC "HINDU" BENGAL THAT THE UPPER-CASTE/UPPER-CLASS HINDU ELITES ENVISIONED; EVEN LEAVING BENGALI MUSLIMS OUT OF THE PICTURE



# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



❖ APART FROM BENGALI MUSLIMS THERE ARE OTHER TRIBES AND LOWER-CASTE HINDUS WHO ARE NOT CONSIDERED PART OF UPPER-CAST ORBIT; THEREFORE OF "BENGAL"

❖ TRIBAL NATIONS IN BENGAL: SANTALS, BAGDIS, BAURIS

❖ LOWER-CASTE & INTERMEDIATE CASTE HINDUS: NAMASUDRAS, RAJBANGSHIS, MAHISHYAS, SAHAS, SADGOPS, KAIBARTAS

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



❖ UPPER-CASTE BENGALI HINDUS:  
BRAHMINS & KAYASTHAS MAKE UP ONLY A  
SMALL PERCENTAGE OF BENGAL POPULATION  
(13.5%)

❖ WHAT IS BENGALI MUSLIM RESPONSE?

❖ RUNS THE ENTIRE RANGE OF REACTION

❖ ALSO OF INTEREST; MANY BENGALI  
MUSLIM LEADERS FEEL MANY OF THE  
SAFEGUARDS NO LONGER NECESSARY

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



- ❖ CONFIDENT CAN WIN IN JOINT ELECTORATES
- ❖ ABLE TO HOLD GROUND IN LOCAL BOARDS
- ❖ PREFER FULL MALE SUFFRAGE ( RIGHT TO VOTE) TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN BENGALI MUSLIM POLITICAL POSITION
- ❖ EDUCATION AND ACCESS TO JOBS NOW MEANS THAT MUSLIM BENGALIS ARE CONFIDENT OF BEING ABLE TO HAVE SAY IN BENGAL AFFAIRS

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



❖ MUSLIMS HAVE BEEN LEAVING THE  
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS BUT THERE IS  
NO BENGALI MUSLIM PARTY IN BENGAL

❖ THE POONA PACT (1932); FURTHER  
WORSENS THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN  
THE SUBCONTINENT

❖ KARAMCHAND GANDHI'S CIVIL  
DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT DESCENDED TO  
OPPOSING LOWER CASTE HINDUS, PROMISED  
SEPARATE ELECTORATES BY THE RAJ



One of the foremost defenders of the *Dalit* (Oppressed Castes) community during his lifetime.

Bitterly opposed caste prejudice, single-handedly took on Karamchand Gandhi in the 1920s, 1930s & 1940s, who was forced to clarify his support the Caste System.

Ambedkhar was pressured to sign the Poona Act in 1932, a decision he regretted to the end of his life.

Converted to Buddhism before his death.



**Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkhar**  
**(1891 – 1956)**

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



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OPPOSING LOWER CASTE HINDUS, PROMISED  
SEPARATE ELECTORATES BY THE RAJ

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



❖ AT THE SAME TIME THERE IS A  
REALIZATION THAT BENGALIS MUST  
SAFEGUARD THEIR INTERESTS FROM NON-  
BENGALI INTERVENTION

❖ IN THE NINETEEN THIRTIES,  
PROGRESSIVE HINDUS AND MUSLIMS FORM  
AN ALLIANCE TO DEFEND THESE INTERESTS  
IN THE FACE OF A NUMBER OF FORCES;  
INCLUDING COMMUNALISM

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



❖ THE PROGRESSIVE LEFT-WING OF THE  
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

❖ THE 'BOSE GROUP'

❖ SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE & SARAT CHANDRA  
BOSE

❖ KRISHAK PRAJA PARTY

❖ PROGRESSIVE HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

❖ ANTI-COMMUNAL ORGANIZATIONS

❖ CREATE AN ALLIANCE

❖ TRY TO RESOLVE ISSUES IN BENGAL  
USING A SECULAR, SOCIAL APPROACH



# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



❖ COMMUNAL NON-BENGALI BUSINESS  
INTERESTS ARE OPPOSED TO ANY UNITY  
BETWEEN BENGALI HINDUS AND BENGALI  
MUSLIMS

❖ G.D. BIRLA – COMMUNAL HINDU  
BUSINESSMAN; FINANCIAL SUPPORTER OF  
GANDHI

❖ KARAMCHAND GANDHI AND CONGRESS HIGH  
COMMAND OPPOSE EFFORTS AT HINDU-  
MUSLIM UNITY IN BENGAL

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



- ❖ SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE INCREASINGLY REPRESENTS THE RADICAL, REVOLUTIONARY, SOCIALIST, ANTI-IMPERIALIST FRONT
- ❖ A DANGER TO EVERYONE WHO WISH AN ACCOMMODATION WITH THE BRITISH EMPIRE
- ❖ SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE'S OPPOSITION TO GANDHI IS TWO-FOLD
- ❖ AT PROVINCIAL/SUBCONTINENT LEVEL BUT ALSO ON THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST PLATFORM

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



- ❖ THE RESIGNATION OF SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE AS PRESIDENT OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (1939)
- ❖ EXPULSION IN 1940 FROM CONGRESS ALONG WITH FOLLOWERS & SUPPORTERS
- ❖ INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS EVEN EXPELS BENGALI MUSLIMS WHO WERE WORKING WITH SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE AND SARAT CHANDRA BOSE
- ❖ BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONGRESS IS NOW COMPOSED OF COMMUNAL BENGALI HINDUS
- ❖ SARAT CHANDRA BOSE REMAINS BUT HE REALLY ISOLATED

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



❖ GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT OF 1935

❖ SLIGHT BROADENING OF FRANCHISE

❖ IN BENGAL; MORE EDUCATED BENGALI  
MUSLIMS CAN PARTICIPATE

❖ ELECTIONS OF 1937

❖ INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS WINS IN 8  
OUT OF 11 PROVINCES; BUT THERE IS A  
PROBLEM

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



❖ CONGRESS'S VICTORY HAD BEEN  
OVERWHELMINGLY COMMUNAL, HAD NOT BEEN  
ABLE TO FIND MUSLIM CANDIDATES IN  
MANY PLACES

❖ THERE HAD BEEN A PROMISE TO JOIN  
THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE IN  
COALITION PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

❖ THAT IS NOW REJECTED

❖ RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INC & AIML  
BEGINS TO DETERIORATE RAPIDLY

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



- ❖ UNABLE TO LINK UP IN COALITION WITH CONGRESS, AK FAZLUL HUQ NOW DECIDES THAT THE KPP WILL JOIN AIML
- ❖ FATEFUL DECISION; THIS ALLOWS AIML TO EXTEND ITS POPULARITY IN BENGAL; FROM A PARTY FOR THE ELITES TO A PARTY ABLE TO REACH THE MUSLIM CONSTITUENTS OF THE KPP

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



❖ 1939 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF THE  
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

❖ SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE WINS RE-  
ELECTION, DESPITE KARAMCHAND GANDHI'S  
OPEN OPPOSITION AND BY THE USE OF  
BRIBES AND RANGING THE ENTIRE  
MACHINERY OF CONGRESS AGAINST SUBHAS  
CHANDRA BOSE

❖ IN A SERIES OF EVENTS, KARAMCHAND  
GANDHI FORCES SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE TO  
RESIGN FROM THE PRESIDENCY

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



- ❖ THIS HAS CONSEQUENCES FOR HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY IN BENGAL
- ❖ 1939 – 1941: SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE'S SUPPORTERS, INCLUDING PROGRESSIVE BENGALI MUSLIMS IN CONGRESS ARE EXPELLED
- ❖ CONGRESS IN BENGAL IS NOW A COMMUNAL ORGANIZATION
- ❖ SARAT CHANDRA BOSE IS COMPLETELY ISOLATED
- ❖ FORWARD BLOC







# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



- ❖ 3 JULY 1940: HOLWELL MONUMENT  
REMOVAL AGITATION
- ❖ SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE IS ARRESTED BY  
THE BRITISH RAJ
- ❖ 16/17 JANUARY, 1941: SUBHAS CHANDRA  
BOSE WILL DRAMATICALLY ESCAPE FROM  
IMPRISONMENT TO REACH WARTIME EUROPE  
TO SEEK AN ALLIANCE WITH THE ENEMIES  
OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1928 – 1940)



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IMPRISONMENT TO REACH WARTIME EUROPE  
TO SEEK AN ALLIANCE WITH THE ENEMIES  
OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE
- ❖ 1943-1944: SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE WILL  
ARRIVE AT THE BORDERS OF THE INDIAN  
SUBCONTINENT WITH AN ARMY OF  
LIBERATION

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



❖ 3 SEPTEMBER, 1939: THE BRITISH &  
FRENCH EMPIRES DECLARE WAR ON  
NATIONAL-SOCIALIST GERMANY

❖ WHY?

❖ SYSTEMS THEORY ANALYSIS

❖ THE SOVIET UNION IN THE  
CALCULATIONS OF THE BRITISH, FRENCH  
EMPIRES & THE UNITED STATES OF  
AMERICA

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



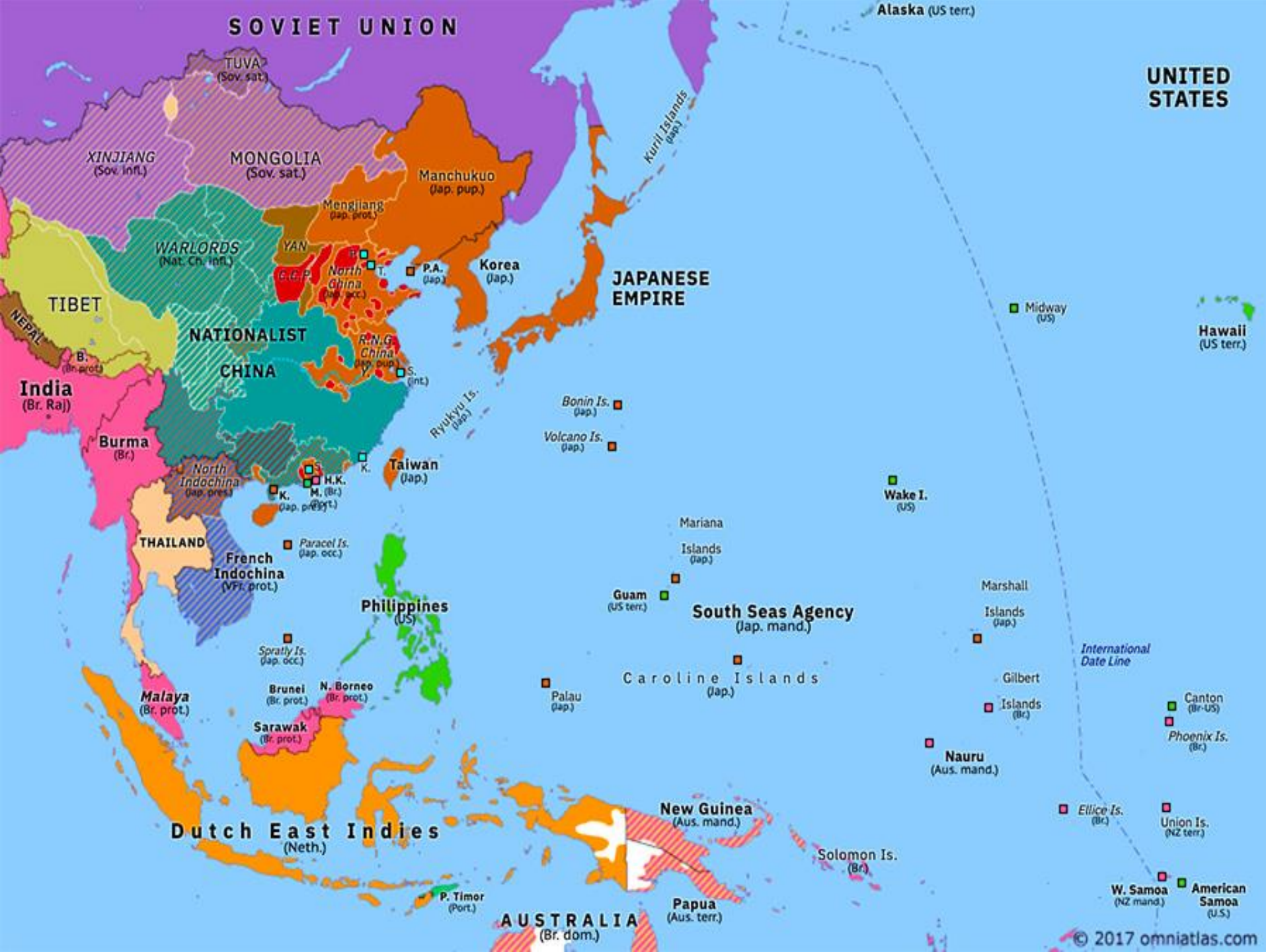
- ❖ LINLITHGOW, IMPERIAL VICEROY OF BRITISH-OCCUPIED INDIAN SUBCONTINENT
- ❖ DECLARES THE SUBCONTINENT AT WAR WITH GERMANY WITHOUT CONSULTING A SINGLE INDIAN!
- ❖ SHOWS THAT THE ENTIRE SYSTEM OF SO-CALLED 'DEVOLUTION' OF POWER TO THE SUBCONTINENT IS FALSE!

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



- ❖ LINLITHGOW, IMPERIAL VICEROY OF BRITISH-OCCUPIED INDIAN SUBCONTINENT
- ❖ DECLARES THE SUBCONTINENT AT WAR WITH GERMANY WITHOUT CONSULTING A SINGLE INDIAN!
- ❖ SHOWS THAT THE ENTIRE SYSTEM OF SO-CALLED 'DEVOLUTION' OF POWER TO THE SUBCONTINENT IS FALSE
- ❖ SUBCONTINENT WAS TO BE TURNED INTO MAJOR 'INDUSTRIAL PLANT' FOR BRITAIN AND THE ALLIED POWERS







# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



❖ WHAT IS THE RESPONSE OF  
SUBCONTINENTAL PARTIES TO BRITISH  
DECLARATION OF WAR ON BEHALF OF THE  
SUBCONTINENT?

❖ INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS; IN TWO  
MINDS

❖ ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE; SUPPORT  
THE RAJ

❖ HINDU MAHASABHA/RASHTRIYA  
SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH (RSS); SUPPORT THE  
RAJ

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



- ❖ COMMUNIST PARTIES/NATIONAL FRONT;  
NEUTRAL UNTIL JUNE 1941; THEN SUPPORT  
RAJ
- ❖ ALL-INDIA FORWARD BLOC; OPPOSES ANY  
COLLABORATION WITH RAJ
- ❖ LAHORE RESOLUTION OF MARCH 1940: AK  
FAZLUL HUQ
- ❖ APPEAL TO RAJ TO MAKE DISPENSATION  
FOR MUSLIM MAJORITY PROVINCES; NO  
REFERENCE TO 'PAKISTAN'

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



- ❖ MUSLIM LEAGUE IS GAINING GROUND IN BENGAL
- ❖ FAZLUL HUQ'S KPP IS SLOWLY BEING SUBSUMED BOTH INTO MUSLIM LEAGUE & DESTROYED BY IT
- ❖ PROVINCIAL LEGISLATIVE GOVERNMENTS IN BENGAL DURING 1941 – 1945
- ❖ 1941 – 1943: A UNIQUE LEGISLATIVE GOVERNMENT;
- ❖ A KPP-FORWARD BLOC-HINDU MAHASABHA ALLIANCE

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



❖ 1943: HOWEVER BOTH BRITISH RAJ AND  
MUSLIM LEAGUE ARE AGAINST THIS  
ALLIANCE

❖ CYCLONE OF 1942

❖ DESTRUCTION AND SEIZURE OF  
FOODSTUFFS IN EASTERN BENGAL BY RAJ

❖ CONDITIONS BEING CREATED FOR BENGAL  
FAMINE OF 1943

❖ BRITISH RAJ, MUSLIM LEAGUE CONSPIRE  
TO TRICK HUQ INTO RESIGNING

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



- ❖ 1943: THE BENGAL FAMINE
  - ❖ THE ROLE OF THE RAJ
- ❖ THE ROLE OF SUBCONTINENTAL AND BENGALI FIGURES AND POLITICIANS
  - ❖ OVER 3 MILLION LIVES LOST
- ❖ THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

THE 1945/46 UPHEAVAL FOLLOWING THE  
ATTEMPTED TRIAL OF INA OFFICERS

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



❖ SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

❖ ARMED STRUGGLE & REVOLUTION; ONLY  
WAY FOR COLONIZED PEOPLES TO GAIN  
FREEDOM

❖ NO COMPROMISE WITH IMPERIALIST  
POWER

❖ MUST SEEK ALLIANCE WITH ENEMIES OF  
THE BRITISH EMPIRE

❖ GREAT DISTURBANCE IN WORLD-SYSTEM  
(WORLD WAR) IS A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

❖ 'ENEMY OF MY ENEMY IS MY FRIEND'

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



❖ SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

❖ 1941-1943: CREATION OF FREE INDIA  
LEGION; FIRST TIME SINCE 1857 THAT A  
SUBCONTINENTAL LEADER HAS  
SUCCESSFULLY CREATED A MILITARY UNIT  
LOYAL TO SUBCONTINENT NOT THE BRITISH  
RAJ

❖ 1943-1945: CREATION OF INDIAN  
NATIONAL ARMY

❖ PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF FREE  
INDIA

❖ FIGHTS ALONGSIDE JAPANESE EMPIRE ON  
BORDER OF BRITISH INDIA

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



- ❖ AUGUST 1945: SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE  
DIES IN PLANE CRASH
- ❖ NOVEMBER 1945: BRITISH RAJ DECIDES  
TO TRY AND PUT OFFICERS OF THE INA ON  
TRIAL FOR "TREASON" AGAINST THE  
BRITISH EMPIRE
- ❖ EVERY POLITICAL PARTY (CONGRESS,  
MUSLIM LEAGUE, COMMUNIST PARTY,  
COMMUNAL) SUPPORT TRIALS UNTIL  
ORDINARY PEOPLE ACROSS SUBCONTINENT  
RISE UP SPONTANEOUSLY IN SUPPORT OF  
INA



# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



❖ RAJ FOOLISHLY CHOSE THREE OFFICERS;  
MUSLIM, HINDU AND SIKH TO PUT ON  
TRIAL



❖ LEADS TO THE JOINING OF HANDS OF  
HINDUS, MUSLIMS AND SIKHS ACROSS THE  
SUBCONTINENT IN PROTEST

❖ FAMILIES OF OTHER OFFICERS AND  
SOLDIERS ARE NOW INTERESTED IN FATE  
OF THE INA

❖ NOT INTERESTED IN CONGRESS AND  
LEAGUE UNLESS THEY TALK ABOUT INA

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



- ❖ RAJ RAPIDLY BACKTRACKS ON TRIALS
- ❖ THE SOLDIERS OF THE MERCENARY ARMY  
HAVE ALSO BEEN INFLUENCED BY THE  
IDEAS OF THE INA
- ❖ CONGRESS, LEAGUE NOW HURRIEDLY  
CLAIM THEY ARE 'FOR' INA; BUT IT IS A  
LIE
- ❖ THEY WANT TO MAKE SURE THE  
SITUATION DOES NOT BECOME  
'REVOLUTIONARY'
- ❖ CHANNEL SUPPORT FOR THEMSELVES IN  
ELECTIONS OF 1945

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



- ❖ FEBRUARY 1946: 'ROYAL INDIAN NAVY' (RIN) UPRISING
- ❖ MERCENARY SAILORS REVOLT ALONG THE LINES OF THE INA
- ❖ FOR WEEKS, PORTS AND WARSHIPS ARE CONTROLLED BY THOUSANDS OF SAILORS
- ❖ HINDUS & MUSLIMS TOGETHER FIGHT IN THE STREETS AGAINST BRITISH TROOPS
- ❖ GANDHI, CONGRESS AND THE LEAGUE OPPOSE THIS ANTI-BRITISH ACTION FEROCIOUSLY

# Bengal & Subcontinental Politics (1941 – 1945)



- ❖ EVENTUALLY THE SAILORS AND CIVILIAN FIGHTERS LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS
- ❖ THE RAJ REGAINS CONTROL BUT HAS BEEN SEVERELY SHAKEN
- ❖ DESPITE BEING ON WINNING SIDE IN SECOND WORLD WAR, THE EMPIRE HAS BEEN WOUNDED AND EXHAUSTED
- ❖ CANNOT CONTEMPLATE SENDING MORE BRITISH TROOPS TO HOLD SUBCONTINENT;  
CANNOT TRUST MERCENARIES
- ❖ DECIDES TO ABANDON RAJ
- ❖ THE BRITISH CABINET MISSION (1946)