Chapter – I

Ethnic Violence, Communal Frenzy and Partition of India

The chapter starts with the religious history of India, prior to the establishment of British colonial rule. It explores how the Indian responses to the colonial impact laid the basis for the construction of communal and ethnic as well as of national identities. It also discusses the articulation of community and national identities to wider sections of society. It examines how these ideas were institutionalised by socio-religious movements in the Hindu, Muslim societies. It discusses the political as well as religious struggle of communities which ultimately resulted in partition.

The liberation of India from the British regime in 1947 was the result of a long drawn struggle carried on by different sections of the Indian people irrespective of caste, creed or regional affiliations by forging a united front against the colonial rule. This magnificent moment, however, was marred by the colossal tragedy of Partition. At the root of partition lay distinct antagonism between the two principal communities of the sub-continent, Hindus and Muslims. From the point of view of Pakistan, their nation state was formed in opposition to a Hindu-majority India. The reason for the formation of Pakistan was that the Muslims, as a minority, would be forever at the mercy of the Hindu majority in a democratic polity. This seemed a fate they could not abide and, therefore, Muslims needed a country of their own, specially as they came to view themselves as a nation different from the Hindus. Thus, for Pakistan, the partition of India represented a division of the sub-continent between a Muslim Pakistan and a Hindu India, a division between those parts of India which were predominantly Muslim and those which were predominantly Hindu.¹

India came in contact with the Islamic civilization long before it was actually invaded by the Muslims. The Arabs who last became

followers of Islam had been carrying on a brisk trade with South India for a centuries before the origin of Islam.²

In 660 A.D, the second caliph,³ Umar sent the first Arab expedition to Sindh, and in 712 the province was conquered by Mohammad Ibn Qasim.⁴ Along with advanced military power came missionaries and traders, and the process of conversion to Islam began. After its conquest by the Arabs in the eighteenth century, Sindh did become a conduit of scientific and cultural links between India and the Arab world.⁵ South Indian Hindu kingdoms began their exploration and domination over large parts of South Asia.⁶

In the early 11th century Muslim invaders arrived in India’s North-West, with the Mongols following in the thirteenth century. By then Indo-Islamic states had been established in north and north-West India. Some invaders were seasonal based in present day Afghanistan and were influenced by Persian political and military models. These Central Asians came to loot and convert but eventually stayed on to rule.⁷

By 1290, nearly all of India was under the loose domination of Muslim rulers. Two and a half centuries of internecine war among various Indo-Islamic Hindu states followed, after which the Mughals established an Empire in the early 16th century that stretched from

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³ The term derived from the Arabic term Khalifah. It was the title used by Islamic Empire. It can also mean representative or Deputy. Matthew S. Gorden, Islam: Encyclopeadia of World Religions, Vol. VII, Crest Publishing, New Delhi, 2004, p.124.
⁴ S.M. Ikram, Indian Muslims and Partition of India, Atlantic Publishers, New Delhi, 1967, p.2
⁷ Ibid., p.18; See also, S.M. Ikram, Indian Muslims and Partition of India, op. cit., p.2.
the North-West Frontier Province to Bengal and down to the Deccan. The attempts of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb to extend his control to South India coupled with his brutal treatment of his subjects led to a crisis of empire. The Empire lasted until 1858, when it was finally eliminated by the British.

There is a great difference between the Hindus and Muslims in tradition, in history and in their attitude towards life political, social and economic. The Muslims derive their inspiration from the Quran and Hadis, and the Hindus from the Vedas. The Muslims have got their traditions from the Prophet, the Caliph and Imams, while the Hindus have inherited them from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and the Gita.

The construction of fearful Hindu beliefs about Muslims and in opposition the emergence of Muslims ethno-religious idiom and practices, religiously justify social segregation and theories of Hindu Nationalism in India. The division of humans into mutually exclusive group identities of tribe, nation, caste, religion and class seems to serve two important psychological functions. The first is to increase the feeling of well being in the narcissistic realm by locating one's own group at the centre of the universe, superior to others. The shared grandiose itself, maintained by legends, myths and rituals, seems to demand a conviction that other groups are inferior.

Every social group in its tales, rituals and other literature portrays itself nearer to a purer, divine state while denigrating and banishing others to the periphery. It is also undeniable that sharing a common ego-ideal and giving one's own group a super individual

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9 Hadis - the collection of reports or a single report relating the words and deeds of the prophet Mohammed. The words and deeds themselves are known as the Sunnah or way of acting. Mathew S. Gorden, Islam: Encyclopaedia of World Religions, op. cit., p.124.
10 Imam - used by Muslims to refer to the leader of a session a prayer or a religious teacher. The Shiite use the term for special individuals viewed as the religious and political leaders of the community. Ibid.
significance can inspire valued human attributes of loyalty and heroic self sacrifice. For the psychoanalyst it is the second function of division into ethnic groups, namely the need to have other groups as contains for one’s disavowed aspects\textsuperscript{11} which is of greater significance. The term ‘ethnic’ and ‘ethnicity’\textsuperscript{12} are used here to include religious, racial, linguistic, tribal and similar divides which have been activated in socio-political conflict in the present and past age. The use of a single generic term is justified by the palpable fact that the common features of these conflicts greatly overshadow the specificity of their religious, racial etc. character. A religious conflict in one area may have more in common with, say, a linguistic problem in another place, than with another religious conflict.\textsuperscript{13} The power of \textit{language} is always greater than that of \textit{parole}.\textsuperscript{14}

To make matters more complicated the communal divisions of Indian society in many respects overlapping the class divisions. Muslim community, having lost political power, was reduced to general state of impoverishment, whereas the Hindu retained their hold on trade and commerce. The Indian bourgeoisie was predominantly Hindus, and although there were millions of poor


\textsuperscript{12} “Ethnicity”, derived from the Greek word ‘Ethnic’ the term ethnic referred to a group, the component of which were race, descent and culture. In the modern usage, while the earlier attributes of this term have survived, there has been an increasing emphasis on its cultural components as they have evolved from time to time. Thus, an ethnic group is defined as a social collectivity which possesses, and is aware of, certain shared historical experience as well as certain objective attributes such as race, descent, tribe, language, region, dress, diet etc. – a combination of which endows it with a differentiated character vis-à-vis other group as they perceived it and perceives them. David Taylor and Malcolm Yapp, \textit{Language, Religion and Political Identity in South Asia}, Curzon Press, London, 1979, pp.11-15; See also, Ganganath Jha, \textit{Ethnic Politics in South East Asia and Quest for Identity}, National Books, New Delhi, 1997 p.1.


\textsuperscript{14} Ira Pandey, \textit{The Great Divide}; India and Pakistan, \textit{op. cit.}, p.276.
Hindus, the Muslim community remained economically backward. It was only too easy to transform an economic resentment into a communal issue. In the conversion of class antagonism into communal struggle, capitalism, both Indian and foreign, naturally played a very decisive role. Just as the Anglo-Indian political conflict was basically cultural, the Hindu Muslim communal antagonism was mainly economic. If Indian nationalism had taken positive steps to remove social stratification and economic inequalities instead of heaping denunciations on the British disruptive attitudes, communal differences could have had less disastrous results.15

The rise of Muslim separatism was rooted both in the north Indian Muslim responses to the loss of political power and Hindu resurgence. Its standard bearer was the Aligarh movement of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.16 Sir Syed linked the strengthening of the consciousness and corporate will of the Indian Muslims with the wider advancement of Islam. If Indian Muslims were degraded, Islam itself would be weakened. In order to build up the community, Sir Syed exhorted its members to educate and economically advance themselves. Material impoverishment threatened Islamic culture.17 It may be pointed out here that in plural societies, prevalence of a dominant group, politically and economically, regulate other smaller ethnic groups into a secondary position. It results in discontent in the society in a large or small number because policies of the state become beneficial to few and harmful to others.18

From the formation of the Congress in 1885,\textsuperscript{19} Sir Syed resolutely warned Muslims of its dangers.\textsuperscript{20} Further steps towards political community were provided both by the short lived Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association which, significantly, was set up immediately following the rash of cow protection riots in 1893, and Syed Ameer Ali’s Central National Mohammadan Association. The latter became moribund when its founder departed for England in 1904, but at its peak in 1888 it boasted 53 branches throughout India.\textsuperscript{21}

Syed Ahmed Khan’s Mohammadan Educational Conference advanced still nearer to the threshold of politics.\textsuperscript{22} It provided Muslims with an opportunity where educated Muslims belonging to different areas of the country could assembled at one place and put their heads together to think, plan and work in cohesion for the betterment of their community. This was a clear symptom of their awakening to their ethnic identity.

In the movement to create greater internal cohesion and to press more effectively ethnic demands against rival groups, ethnic

\textsuperscript{19} Indian National Congress, which had been floated in 1885 began to play a vital role in mitigating the grievances of the Indian people through press and platform. A branch of the Indian National Congress was also formed in the Punjab but its activities did not amount to anything more than annual gathering in which a few interested in the movement participated, the organisation had no contact with the people and could strike roots in the province throughout the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century because the Hindus and Muslims felt that more could be gained by promoting the interests of their communities than by joining the Congress. Satya M. Rai, \textit{Legislative Politics and the Freedom Struggle in the Punjab 1897-1947}, Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi, 1989, p.2; See also, Harminder Singh, “The Congress in the Punjab”, \textit{Punjab History Conference Proceeding}, Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1979, p.272.

\textsuperscript{20} His communitarian approach to political representation was expressed most clearly in a speech in December 1887: \textit{Now let us suppose that we have universal suffrage, as in America, and that all have votes. And let us suppose that all Muslim voters vote for a Muslim member and that all Hindu voters for a Hindu member and now count how many votes the Muslim member will have and how many the Hindu. We can prove by simple arithmetic that there will be four votes for the Hindu to every one vote for the Muslim. Now how can the Muslim guard his interest? It will be like a game of dice in which one man had four dice and other only one.} H. Malik, “Sir Syed Ahmad Khan’s Contribution to the Development of Muslim Nationalism in India”, \textit{Modern Asian Studies}, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1970, p.145.

\textsuperscript{21} Ian Talbot, \textit{Inventing the Nation; India and Pakistan}, \textit{op. cit.}, pp.113-114.

\textsuperscript{22} M.S. Ahmad, \textit{The All India Muslim League: From the Late Nineteenth Century to 1919}, Bahawalpur, 1988, p.60.
and nationalist elites increasingly stress the variety of ways in which the members of the group are similar to each other and collectively different from others. The effort, however, creates its own problems because the selection of additional symbols inevitably involves either the loss of potential adherents or the need to persuade or coerce group members to change their language, religion, behaviour or dress.²³

It also may lead nationalist leaders expansionist military adventures and conflicts with other states when they drive to achieve multisymbol congruence. It is important to recognize that this striving for multisymbol congruence is pursued by ethnic group leaders as much as by state builders. If the process is more or less successful the nationality created out of an ethnic group is sure to be quite a different social formation from the initial group. However, both processes of nationality-formation and state-building may be pushed beyond pluralist accommodations to extreme, to expulsions, the exchange of population groups and even to genocide.²⁴

Nation-building is a “process of political coherence for ethnically divided societies if only they could succeed in transcending traditional group loyalties in favour of an abstract sense of community called nation.”²⁵ Nation-building has to be seen in terms of holistic process. It fosters awareness among the people and creates a legitimate public authority and build upon an integrated national commitment. It obviously involves a change in social, economic, political and psychological sphere, so that a cohesive national society is built up.

The first important religious movement to succeed in creating a sense of a Hindu nation as opposed to Muslims and the British was

the Cow Protection Movement\footnote{Roger D. Congleton, “Ethnic Clubs, Ethnic Conflict, and the Rise of Ethnic Nationalism”, in Albert Breton, Gianluigi Galeottio, Pierre Salmon, Ronald Wintrobe (eds.), \emph{Nationalism and Rationality}, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995, p.74.} in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Large numbers of people were mobilized through the networks of local marketing systems. In the case of Saran district in Bihar, it was the transit of cattle intended for slaughter which led to widespread rioting. Not only cattle was on the move, but Hindu monks travelled the countryside as well as to organise people against the slaughter of the cow-goddess. Circular letters were used to spread the message of the Hindu nation. While the movement to protect mother cow from Muslim butchers and British barbarians concentrated on the Punjab, U.P. and Bihar, riots also took place elsewhere, notably in Calcutta and Bombay. The great success of Bombay Cow Protection riot of 1893 led Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the Maharashtrian Hindu leader, to continue to develop new ritual strategies for mass mobilization. The most striking among those was the reinvention of the festival for \textit{Ganapati}, the elephant-headed Hindu God, and a series of rituals connected to the all but forgotten founder of the Maratha Empire, Shivaji (1627-80).\footnote{Ian Talbot, \textit{Inventing the Nation}; India and Pakistan, \textit{op. cit.}, p.115.}

The first reported riot occurred incidentally, in Ahmedabad in 1730 on a trivial issue of throwing colours by \textit{Holi} revellers on the Muslims. Between 1730 and 1924 – A long period of 134 years only 39 riots are recorded which occurred in 28 cities in Northern India.\footnote{Yogesh Atal, “Violence and the Conner for Communal Harmony”, in D.P. Singh and Manjit Singh (eds.), \textit{Violence: A Concern for Peaceful Coexistence}, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2008, p.3.}

The issue of communal violence is a very grave in the history of any nation. Violence is a part of man’s social activity. It will be appropriate to begin with the view point of social scientists. They maintain that man as individual is seldom hostile. He neither commits murder nor go for war. Social man does both. It is only after men get together as the individual interests when they are organised
into groups. Then group interests collide and conflict follows. Ancient Sages had praised the violence as manifestation of life force and specifically its creativity.

Violence is also defined as the use of great physical forces. It also involves excessive, unrestrained or unjustifiable force, outrage profanation, injury or rape. The threat of use of force that results, or is intended to result, in the injury or forcible restraint or intimidation of persons or the destruction or forcible seizure of property. 29

There are widely differing views on the precise origins of violence but there is at least – one point that is common to all the theories, which is that the conditions of life by their very nature tend to promote violence. Konard Lorenz 30 considered weapons as having overridden the natural inhibitions that exist in nature against killing. The population problem was a contributory factor to violence. 31 Technology also had dehumanizing influences which provoke frustrated individuals to violence. 32

The major focus of cultural approach of ethnic violence has been of the cultural construction of fear with the help of rhetorical processes, symbolic resources and re-presentational forms and demonized, dehumanized or threatening, ethnically defined ‘other’ has been constructed. Culturalist approach specifies the manner in which fears and threats are constructed through, narratives, myth, rituals, commemorations and other cultural representation. 33 Once such ethnically focused fear is constructed, the ethnic violence no longer seems random or meaningless but all too horrifying.

29 The United States National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence. Homer in the Illiad, ponders the meaning of violence, “In a word striving to be civilized”. Hobbes presents a model of man which is essentially brutal and selfish.
An entrenched ethno nationalist movement weaken states common identity, which had controlled the centrifugal action of different identities. Consequently, a cultural conflict is erupted because culture is considered to be the totality of the values, beliefs, traditions and heritage that confer an identity on each individual. In its potential for explosive violence, culture could be compare to a nuclear reactor. A chain reaction would be started when a moderating influence of heavy water (a common project or authority) is removed. When the conflict reaches on certain intensity, a certain temperature, then violence is erupted. Violence can quickly destroy relationship between groups. Violence has generally been conceptualized as a degree of conflict rather than as a form of conflict. It is not a quantitative degree of conflict but a qualitative form with its own dynamics.34

Various inductive, rational action and culturalist approaches applied for describing ethnic violence. Ted Robert Gurr outlined an integrated theory of political violence as the product of the politicization and activation of discontent arising from relative deprivation.35 Some recent theories of ethnic conflicts explained that the ethnic violence is a direct consequence of primordial antipathies among groups.

The ethnic groups are often characterized by relatively dense social networks and low-cost access to information about the past history of individual behaviour. It has an important consequence for intra versus inter group relations. Within groups people who exploit the trust of others can be identified as individuals sanctioned with relative case by the response of ethnic community.

The most terrible feature of ethnic violence is genocide and ethnic cleansing, genocide areas the destruction of nations or ethnic

groups. Ethnic cleansing means the forcible expulsion of masses from their living places. This creates acute problem of refugees and displaced persons in the world.

Violence occurred mostly when some leaders had driven hard to consolidate a particular community or ethnic group into a politically solidary force, as Jinnah did with the Muslim League in the pre-independence period, when politics were more elitist than they are today.

Lord Morley announced in 1905 that the government would consider proposals for reform to solve the tussle within Congress. This was unwelcome news for Muslim leaders in the main centres of Hindu population. They had already seen the very limited powers devolved to Municipal Committees used by Hindu revivalist to their advantage. This process was especially marked in the towns of the Western U.P. Newly elected Hindu leaders introduced municipal regulations to control butchers shops and slaughter houses and to alter procession routes at festival times. In Agra almost immediately after the passage of the 1883 Municipalities Act, Hindu leaders had claimed the right to hold festivals which clashed with the Shia Muslim period of mourning (Muharram). In Moradabad, the new found powers were used to force Muslim butchers to dry their hides outside the city, while in Chandpur a ban on cow slaughter was introduced. For the North India Muslim elite which already felt itself under pressure because of the assertion of Hindi over Urdu, such actions were straws in the wind. \(^{36}\) Muslim leaders were not just concerned with how Hindu representatives used their new found powers; they also feared that the situation at the local level would be reproduced in the provincial and all India arenas of politics. Muslims had been consistently under represented in Municipal Committees because they lacked the educational and property qualifications to vote.

\(^{36}\) Ian Talbot, Inventing the Nation; India and Pakistan, op. cit., pp.114-115.
Actually, the process of modernisation unfolding social change inserts ethnic consciousness and group solidarity among the desperate ethnic groups. This indeed gives rise to conflictual nationalism.

As the conflictual tendencies aggravate further, separate group identity and interests are articulated in the arena of state in the nature of elite competition for power. This deprivation caused due to state policies of discrimination develops self-consciousness among ethnic groups. Thus in plural societies when ethnic groups start competing in the arena of state, it results in a conflict between group interests and the state policy. In this process these groups naturally assert on the basis of their ethnic identity.

The final transition of Muslim political community reflected growing self-consciousness and fears arising from the spread of Hindu revivalism. The ideology of nationalism builds on peoples awareness of a nation or national self-consciousness to give a set of attitudes and a programme of action. These may be cultural, economic or political. The emerging forms of group consciousness were greatly varied within as well as between religious communities. Ethnic groups that use ethnicity to make demands in the political arena for alteration in their status, in their economic well being in their civil rights, or in their educational opportunities are engaged in a form of interest group politics.

In October 1905, Bengal was partitioned at the behest of Lord Curzon, who had statutorily formulated and established the dormant official connivance to forge and legitimize regional identity of the Muslim community. Soon after the partition of Bengal, Nawab Mohsin-ul-mulk persuaded the British Government, to create a separate political party for the Muslims of India as a parallel organization to the Congress. On December 30, 1906, the All India
Muslim League was formed at Dhaka.\textsuperscript{37} Though, the Muslim League formally adopted the two-nation theory as its political ideology in the 1940’s, it was born to foster the religio-communal approach for seeking concessions and privilege for the Muslim minority.\textsuperscript{38}

Right at the beginning the League repeated Mohammedan allegiance to the government and their differences with the Congress. Their purpose was very clear viz. to advance the political rights of the Muslims and register their opposition to the possible political unity in the country. This led to the isolation of the Muslim community from the mainstream of the Indian National Movement.\textsuperscript{39}

Up to the annulment of the partition of Bengal 1911, Muslim League leadership was confined to the landed aristocracy, and the Aligarh Muslim College was the Centre for shaping the League’s policies and programmes. Extending Syed Ahmad Khan’s approach, Syed Ali Imam, in his presidential address at the Amritsar session of the Muslim League (1908) put forward the demand for separate electorates identifying and magnifying beyond recognition, religio-cultural differences between the Hindus and Muslims. The Muslim League’s demand for separate electorate was conceded by the British Government under the Act of 1909.\textsuperscript{40}

Religious nationalism had received official validation through the linking of religion with political representation, power and patronage. In reality the Muslim community was not monolithic.


\textsuperscript{38} V.V. Nagarkar, \textit{Genesis of Pakistan}, Allied, New Delhi, 1975, p.82.


\textsuperscript{40} Under the Act of 1909, the Panjab Legislative Council was to consist of three classes of members – the officials, the nominated non-officials and the elected. The strength of the council was raised to a maximum of 30 with an ordinary strength of 25, of whom fourteen were non-officials and five elected and the rest were official members. \textit{Punjab Administrative Report, 1909-10}, Lahore, 1912, p.82; See also, Pawan Kumar Singla, \textit{British Administration in Punjab and Its Reaction 1887-1919}, National Book Organisation, New Delhi, 2003, p.237.
Separatism was of far more interest to those Muslims living in Hindu dominated areas than in the main centres of Muslim population, in which support for the Muslim League was muted. Much was to depend on whether separate electorates were seen as the answer to the demand for Muslim safeguards in an increasingly democratic India, or merely as the beginning of a much wider quest.

Once communalism was discovered as an instrument to achieve power, it snow-balled by itself. The enfranchised Muslims and members of other sections were made to “vote communally, think communally, listen only to communal election speeches judge the delegates communally, look for constitutional and other reforms only in terms of more relative communal power and express their grievances communally.” The separate electorates became a political barrier in a society already beset by social and economic differences and prepared a fertile ground for rivalries and antagonism between the two communities.

During the period 1914-18, there appeared in India a potentially convulsive situation, World War I injected a new and disturbing influences into it. In Punjab there occurred a series of revolutionary activities during the war. These activities were significant in two ways. First they showed that there was discontentment among the Punjabi’s as was prevalent in other parts of India and secondly, they were responsible in creating political consciousness among the Punjabi’s. In this way, it can be assumed that during the war years Indian Nationalism nurtured.

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43 Punjab is a Persian compound word meaning ‘five waters’ and strictly speaking the word denoted the country between the valley of Jhelum and that of Satluj. The intermediate rivers from the West to East were the Chenab, the Ravi and the Beas. Sir James Dovie, “The Punjab, North-West Frontier Province and Kashmir”, in T.H. Holland (ed.), * Provincial Geographies of India*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1916, p.1.
In the first half of the World War I, two movements namely the Ghadar Movement and the Pan-Islamic Movement were born which aroused the suspicion of the British administrator. The Ghadar Movement was secular in character and militant in its views. Jawala Singh, Sohan Singh Bhakna and Lala Hardyal took the initiative in organising the emigrants and set up the *Hindustan Association of the Pacific Coast* in the summer of 1913.\(^{45}\)

The party leaders urged the Punjabis to remove the foreign yoke and to start a mutiny. The discriminatory immigration orders and the act passed by the Canadian Government in 1910, the unsympathetic attitude of the natives towards immigrant Indians to the harsh treatment meted out to the Indian travelling by the Kamagatamaru further complicated matters.

The Pan-Islamic Movement had not only become a radical movement with a great appeal to Muslim youth all over the world but also had become anti-British. The First World War saw Turkey and the British in opposite camps. Muslims had helped the British and had sent soldiers to fight Turkey on the promise that the British would not impair Turkey’s unity. But with the collapse of Turkey all kind of rumours of her probable dismemberment exercised the Muslim mind in the Punjab as well as all over India.

While the circumstances were forcing the Government to see things from a new angle, a way was shown by the Lucknow Pact which was materialized between the congress and the Muslim League in December 1916.\(^{46}\) According to it Muslims were conceded separate electorates in seven states in which they were in a minority, given half the elected seats in the Punjab and one third of the elected seats in the central legislature (elected by a purely Muslim electorate).\(^{47}\)

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\(^{45}\) The party released a weekly paper namely *Ghadar*. Therefore, the organisation came to be known as Ghadar Party. Gurcharan Singh Shensara, *Ghadar Party Da Itihas* (Punjabi), Desh Bhagat Yadgar Committee, Jullundur, 1963, pp.90-91; See also, Bipan Chander, Amales Tripathi and Barun De, *Freedom Struggle*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1972, pp.115-116.


Although, the Congress-League entente was held as a significant step towards national solidarity, it had a dark side too. The submission to league communalism and a compromise on the fundamental issue of Indian nationality proved disastrous for the country. The communal demands once conceded continued to figure in all later constitutional schemes like the act of 1919, the Communal Award (1932) and the act of 1935. Perhaps the Lucknow Pact was made without the slightest thought for its fatal consequences. All the same, the Lucknow Pact was regarded a landmark in Indian political history.

A great deal of awareness had come among the Muslims of India on the Turkish question. The tension among the Muslims of India soon manifested in the Khilafat Movement. Khilafat movement was essentially a movement to express the Muslim support for the Caliph of Turkey against the allied powers particularly Britain. However the Khilafat meetings in Malabar incited so much of communal feelings among the Muslim peasants (the Moplahs) that it took an anti Hindu turn in July 1921. The Muslim peasants, excruciatingly poor, had set up a Khilafat of their own, attacking the police and the military, the landlords and money-lenders (almost all Hindu), attacking everyone in sight, for they were

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49 The Act of 1919 recommended the continuation of separate electorates. It recognized the Sikhs as a separate community but did not give them the weightage as a minority which the Muslims were given where they were in minority. The division of the provincial subjects into transferred and reserved parts came to be known as Dyrachy. Law and order, land revenue, irrigation, development of mineral resources etc. were reserved subjects which were under the direct charge of the Governor and his Executive Council; while education, agriculture, public health, local government etc. were called transferred subjects and were to be controlled by minister responsible to the legislatures. The Governor of the province headed both. The Civil and Military Gazette, August 7, 1919; See also, Harinder Singh Dilgeer, Shiromani Akali Dal, 1920-2000, Punjab Book Co., Amritsar, 2000, p.47; R. Coupland, The Constitutional Problem of India (1833-35), Clarendon Press, London, 1968, p.62.
“bitter, bitter against the world which give them misery” and combined the ardour of an oppressed class and of religious fanaticism. The British rejoiced that on this occasion Muslims and Hindus had not fraternized and defended a terrible enormity, the despatch of a hundred Moplah prisoners in a goods van where sixty-six of them died of thirst and suffocation, a diabolic instance of imperialist inhumanity beside which the so-called “Black Hole” tragedy, touted all over the globe, pales away.

The Congress working committee, while condemning Moplah excesses, asserted that, “provocation beyond endurance” rated had been given to them and official reports of violence were exaggerated. A jolt had been given, however, to Hindu-Muslim solidarity, which was an evil portent for the future.

A spectacle of Hindu-Muslim unity was also witnessed during the non-cooperation movement. Congress proclaimed its goal of Swaraj and non-cooperation with the Government as a sequel to the Rowlatt Act, Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the Khilafat movement. On February 5, 1922, an agitated crowd gheraoed the police station at chaura-chauri in U.P. and set fire to it. Seeing it turning violent Mahatma Gandhi announced the suspension of the movement. The Muslim felt betrayed by the Hindu Congress at a critical juncture. The communal amity which was restored to an appreciable extent broke, and communal tension and ill-will took place.

54 Jallianwala Bagh Massacre occurred in April 13, 1919, on Baisakhi day at Amritsar on the instance of General Dyer. In it 379 persons were killed and over 2,000 wounded. *Disorders Inquiry Committee Report*, Calcutta, 1920, p.48; See also, Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle*, Atlantic Publication, New Delhi, 1988, p.4.
The British perception that Hindus and Muslims were two mutually antagonistic monoliths, a notion that rooted in facts, became an important basis for their conflicts. In 1926, Lord Irwin referred that, "Hindus and Muslims are two distinct and highly organized societies."\(^{56}\)

In 1930, the Report of Simon Commission\(^{57}\) referred to the basic opposition between the two communities. At the Round Table Conference\(^{58}\) where the Report was presented the entire discussion was organized within the ambit of communal digits thereby making any solution of the basic problem of political advance impossible. The joint select committee on Indian Constitution (1934) went even further, "Hindus and Muslims may be said indeed to represent two distinct separate civilizations." British officials also constantly egged on the Muslim community to stick to the track and ran the full course.\(^{59}\)

Between the First and Second Round Table meetings in London, there was an interlude when memorable things happened,

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\(^{56}\) The Tribune, September 13, 1926.

\(^{57}\) The Commission was appointed in 1927 under Section 84 of the India Act of 1919. It was appointed by the conservative Government two years ahead of time. It was presided over by Sir John Simon. Its all seven members were Englishmen. The Commission was boycotted by the nationalists on the ground that it had no Indian member. R.C. Majumdar (ed.), The History and Culture of the Indian People: Struggle for Freedom, Vol. X, Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay, 1988, p.454.

\(^{58}\) On May 12, 1930, Lord Irwin announced November 12, 1930, as the date for the Round Table Conference. Without the Congress, 89 distinguished statesman represented the British political parties, Indian Labour Federation, Muslim League, Hindu Maha Sabha, Depressed classes and Indian states gathered in London from November 12, 1930 to January 19, 1931, for the conference. It held for the constitutional reforms. Congress participated in the second round table conference which held from September 7, 1931 to December 1, 1931. Mahatma Gandhi went London. The main issues for discussion were the future constitutional structure for India and representation of minorities. On November 17, 1932, the third session of RTC was held lasting till December 24, 1932. This time only 46 delegates mostly comprising communalists and liberals were invited. First Round Table Conference, November 12, 1930 –January 19, 1931, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1931, pp.3-4; See also, Third Round Table Conference, November 17 – December 24, 1932, London, 1933, pp.99-102.

\(^{59}\) The results of the Round Table Conference were published in the form of 'white paper' in March 1933. A joint select committee on the two houses of the British Parliament was set up under Lord Linlithgow (Later Viceroy of India) to work out the details of the future administration of India. Third Round Table Conference, op. cit., pp.99-102.
like the martyrdom of Bhagat Singh (1931) which electrified Hindu and Muslim alike, the martyrdom also of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi in the communal riots which had broken out in Kanpur. It is clear that renunciation of struggle in the name of non-violence drove the people into despair which often found vent in communal violence. However, Gandhi never saw this link (which Jawaharlal Nehru and Abul Kalam Azad could discern) between political frustration and communal distemper. Gandhi’s pact with viceroy, Lord Irwin involved suspension of the movement and his journey, as sole spokesman of the Congress to the Second Round Table Conference in London.60

The British policy of communal divide became more visible when Ramsay Macdonald (PM of England) announced Communal Award. In this award separate electorates were allowed not only to Muslims but extended to Sikhs, Indian Christians, Anglo Indians and Europeans. Besides Labour, Commerce, Industry, Landlords and Universities were given separate constituencies and fixed seats. It also averted a threat to a permanent split in the Hindu community.61

The Poet-Philosopher Mohammed Iqbal62 (1873-1938) also highlighted the communal issue. In his presidential address at the Allahabad session of the Muslim League in 1930, he presented a concrete scheme of autonomous Muslim state in the north-western region of the Indian Subcontinent,

*I would like to see the Punjab, NWFP, Sindh and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. Self Government within the British empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated

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60 Hiren Mukerjee, Recalling India’s Struggle for Freedom, *op. cit.*, p.122.
62 Born in 1877 at Sialkot in a poor family, but with the help of the scholarships which he won at school and college, he was able to receive very good education. After preliminary studies at Sialkot, he joined the Government College, Lahore. He graduated in 1897, winning a scholarship and two gold medals for proficiency in English and Arabic and finally took M.A. degree in Philosophy in 1899. S.M. Ikram, Indian Muslims and Partition of India, *op. cit.*, pp.166-167.
Northwest Indian Muslim state appears to me the final destiny of the Muslims at least of North-West India.\textsuperscript{63}

Iqbal further strengthened the notion of two-nations\textsuperscript{64} in the subcontinent. In his opinion the crux of the problem of India was that the Hindu-Muslim conflict was a much deeper ideological cleavage Islam versus nationalism. For him, the formulation of a polity on national lines meant a displacement of Islamic principle of solidarity, and hence was unthinkable. In lending support to the ‘two-nation’ theory, Iqbal was chiefly concerned with the consolidation of the Muslims in the North-West of India where they were a predominant majority. Iqbal projected the view that Muslims were not prepared to accept the notion of the congress in respect of nationality as it could only mean submerging them under Hindu majority. In the later phase of his life, Iqbal rejected the territorial concept of nationalism as projected by the western thinkers. In his opinion, Muslim nationalism was based on religion and not on territorial nationality and racial prejudices. Until 1930, Iqbal was still labouring under the vague hope that a formula for Hindu-Muslim conciliation could be found to establish the status of Hindustan as a subcontinent, where in different nations could live together and yet maintain their separate entities.\textsuperscript{65}

On May 28, 1937, Iqbal wrote to Jinnah that there could be no enforcement and development of the \textit{Shariat} of Islam which was the only way to solve the problem of bread for Muslims as well as to


\textsuperscript{64} Rehmat Ali in 1933, advocated the total separation of ‘Muslim India’ from the rest of India and the creation of new Muslim State (Pakistan). Kamlesh Sharma, \textit{Role of Muslim in Indian Politics}, Inter-India Publishers, Delhi, 1985, p.219; See also, Gwyer and Appadorai, \textit{Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution, Vol. II}, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1957, p.435.

secure a peaceful India. The only other alternative is a civil war which as a matter of fact has been going on for sometime in the shape of Hindu Muslim riots, in certain parts of country, e.g. North-Western India.66

Proceedings of Round Table Conference and the writings of the Rehmat Ali two nation theory provided Iqbal food for thought. The Iqbal-Jinnah correspondence during 1936-37 bring out the kind of ideological feedback that Iqbal had been constantly providing to Jinnah impelling him to strike an independent course of political action for the Muslim League. In his letter of June 21, 1937, Iqbal wrote to Jinnah,

“In these circumstances it is obvious that the only way to a peaceful India is a redistribution of the country on the lines of racial, religious and linguistic affinities... To my mind the new constitution with its idea of a single Indian federation is completely hopeless. A separate federation of Muslim provinces, reformed on the lines, I have suggested above is the only course by which we can secure a peaceful India and save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims.”67

While the rest of the Muslim-leaders fought for seats, weightage and concessions. Iqbal came out with an ideology which became the basis for the future political struggle of the Muslims.

The 1935 Act had for the first time opened up the prospect of the British giving Indians substantial power at the centre on the basis of electoral success in the province.68 The Government of India Act, 1935, provided two alternate constitutions for the central Government. One contemplated the establishment of a federal union

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66 Letters of Iqbal (Compiled and ed. by Bakshi Ahmed Das), Lahore, 1987, pp.253-55; See also, P.N. Chopra, Towards Freedom, New Delhi, 1985, Document No. 282.
consisting of the whole of India, the British Indian provinces, and the Indian states. The second alternative was the Government of India Act, 1919, with some minor amendments would remain in force. The first alternative of the Act of 1935 never came into force as the requisite number of states did not accede.

This act provided for the establishment of full responsible Government subject to ‘safeguards’ in the eleven provinces of British India; It provided also for a federation of India, comprising both provinces and states, with a federal central Government and legislature for the management of all subjects except foreign affairs and defence. Nehru had described the act as a charter of bondage; and a congress resolution of 1936 stated that the future constitution of India could only be framed by a Constituent Assembly based on adult franchise. The league had criticized the Federal part of the act as most reactionary but decided to work the provincial part for what it is worth.

Unlike most of the other provinces, the act gave a unicameral legislature to Punjab, although with a changed destination: the Punjab Legislative Council was now styled as the Punjab Legislative Assembly. Its strength was increased to 175 elected members from different communities.

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70 It gave electorates to 36 million, as compared to an electorate of 7 million in 1920, and representing 30 percent of the adult population, would elect 1585 representatives to the provincial legislatures. *Government of India Act*, New Delhi, 1936; See also, Tara Chand, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. IV, Publication Division, New Delhi, 1972, p.204; *Indian Franchise Committee Report*, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1932, p.33.
71 C.H. Philips (ed.), *The Partition of India; Policies and Perspective 1935-1947*, op. cit., p.188.
Under the Government of India Act, 1935, the elections in the Punjab were held in the beginning of 1937. The Unionists, Congress and Akalis were the major political parties contesting elections. The Unionist party had put up candidates in 112 out of the total of 175 constituencies of the Punjab Legislative Assembly. In these elections unionist party secured great victory.

Party wise position was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unionist</td>
<td>95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ittihad-i-Millat</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khalsa National Party</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ahrars</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hindu Election Board</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socialist</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shiromani Akali Dal</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress – Nationalist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Labour Board</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim League</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

75 The Unionist Party was formed by Fazl-i-Hussain and Chaudhri Chhotu Ram in 1923. The main aim of the Unionist party was to free the peasants from the laws of the money lending classes and improve the lot of the agriculturists. Azim Hussain, *Fazl-i-Hussain: A Political Biography*, Longman, London, 1946, p.9.

76 Shiromani Akali Dal was formed in 1920. In these elections Akalis joined hands with congress. The main leaders of Akali Dal were Master Tara Singh, Giani Kartar Singh, Giani Dhanwant Singh, Ganga Singh, Harnam Singh Advocate, Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafir, Ishar Singh Majhail, Gopal Singh Quami, Darshan Singh Pheruman and Sohan Singh Jalalusman. The main Akali contestants were Giani Kartar Singh, Sardar Joginder Singh, Sardar Avtar Singh Barister, Sardar Sarwan Singh Wakeel, Sardar Harnam Singh Wakeel, Raghbeer Kaur etc.


79 The Ahirar’s a religious body of orthodox Sunnis, formed their organisation during the First World War with the avowed purpose of restoring the original purity of the Quran and working for ‘Muslim revival’, against the Ahmadias and Shias. Until 1930, the Ahirars constituted an independent Congress group led by Punjab intellectually closely connected with minor Zamindars and small scale manufacturers (owners of Khadi workshops etc.). Y.V. Gankovsky and L.R. Gordon Polonskaya, *A History of Pakistan*, Nauka Publication, Moscow, 1964, p.62.
The new ministry in Punjab took over on April 1, 1937. Sir Sikander Hayat Khan\textsuperscript{80} became the Premier of Punjab.\textsuperscript{81} The Punjab Muslim League was an even weaker position than the Congress to challenge the Unionist party’s predominance.\textsuperscript{82} The Punjab Muslim League thus remained a small clique of Lahore lawyers rather than being a political party. Moreover, its parent body was almost entirely dependent on the unionist party’s support in all India politics. From Oct. 1937 onwards, Sikander exacted a high price for this support – the complete subordination of the Punjab Muslim League to his party.\textsuperscript{83}

However, there was a strong communal tension in the province at that time. In Punjab the new Government, after taking office found itself confronted with an outburst of subversive activity. Forces of communal fanaticism and of violence were openly or secretly set in motion by some of those who, for one reason or another, wanted to embarrass the new Government. Consequently, there was a series of eight communal riots – most of them traceable to political no less than to communal motives – at Kot Fateh Khan, Ala and Amritsar during the first four months of the Unionist Government’s regime. These riots resulted in seven deaths.\textsuperscript{84} Communal issues like music before the mosque, religious processions, \textit{Jhatka} and \textit{Halal} and the slaughter of cows were being exploited by those who wanted to serve their vested interests. All this fanned communal fire in the province.

Inspite of Sikander Hayat Khan’s efforts, communal violence, could not be contained and together with other circumstances,
started posing a challenge to the stability of his Government. The most serious threat came from Jinnah’s anger due to Muslim League’s very poor performance in the Punjab and other Muslim majority provinces like United Provinces, Sind and Bengal in the election of 1937. The party was not in a position to install a Government in any of these provinces. Uncertainty also prevailed in the Muslim League ranks in U.P. after the elections, when Congress refused to make it a partner in the Government, for it (Muslim League) declined to accept certain humiliating conditions laid down by the Congress. As a result, the claim of the Muslim League as the sole representative of the Indian Muslims, and Jinnah’s standing in all India politics suffered a rude setback. So Jinnah was both in panic and despair and he was watching for an opportunity to retrieve his own lost honour as well as of the League at the earliest.

The year of 1937 was a turning point in the history of the Muslim League. It saw not only the beginning of a definite rupture between it and the congress but also witnessed the foundation of a new demand. The new demand was for a separate nation – Pakistan. Pakistan and the two-nation theory on which it was based germinated and developed between 1937 and 1940.

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85 Born in Karachi on December 23, 1876, Jinnah belonged to the small Khoja community. After matriculation he proceeded to England for higher studies, and returned to India as a barrister at the age of 20. He was a close colleague of Pheroze Mehta and a protégé of Gokhle, he regarded as a great political ‘rishis’. He joined the Indian National Congress in 1906 and worked as private secretary to Dadabhai Naorji. He had won great admiration when he defended B.G. Tilak in the sedition cases against him in 1908 and 1916. In 1910, he was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council by the Muslim electorates of Bombay, which was repeated in 1916. But between 1917 to 1920 many of the developments in Indian politics went against Jinnah’s brain, such as Gandhi’s capture of the Congress in 1920 with the help of pro-Khilafat Muslims. His ideology got changed with the passage of time. Shakir Moin, Khilaafaat to Partition, Kalamkar Parkashan, New Delhi, 1970, pp.14, 15, 182, 208, 203; See also, S.M. Ikram, Indian Muslims and Partition of India, op. cit., p.354.


87 Satya M. Rai, Legislative Politics and the Freedom Struggle in the Punjab, op. cit., p.239.
While the Muslim community was getting away from the mainstream of Indian nationalism, some sections of the Hindu populace under the leadership of Hindu Mahasabha and other Hindu wings (RSS) were becoming more and more chauvinistic and militant. For instance, in December 1937, V.D. Savarkar, the President of Hindu Mahasabha declared that “the aim of his organization was maintenance, protection and promotion of the Hindu race, Hindu culture and Hindu civilization and advancement of the glory of the Hindu Rashtra. India cannot be assumed today to be a homogenous nation; there are two nations in India in the main the Hindu and Muslim”.\(^8\) In a similar vein, Guru Golwalkar of the RSS wrote in his book, ‘We – Our Nation Defined’ (1939), “Hindustan is the land of the Hindus and is the terra firma for the Hindu nation alone to flourish upon... the foreign races in Hindustan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no idea but the glorification of the Hindu race and culture; i.e. of the Hindu nation and must lose their separate existence to merge in the Hindu race, or may stay in the country, wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deriving no privileges, facilities or any preferential treatment not even citizen’s right”.\(^9\) The utterances and other activities of Hindu communalists thrust more and more of Muslims into League fold and led to Hindu-Muslim tension during 1938-39, and several communal riots took place. Consequently, the fear of Hindu domination, real or imaginary, gave an added appeal to the idea of partition.

However by 1937 the League was not a party with mass base nor its leader, Mr. Jinnah was considered a popular leader. But in the meantime the Muslim League secured the support of Fazlul Haq

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of Bengal and Sikander Hayat Khan of Punjab. Thus, the idea of partition began to develop and take shape in the minds of Muslim League politicians after the disillusionment in 1937 when the Congress, “flushed with success” ignored the Muslim demand for composite cabinets in U.P. This “tactical error of first magnitude” on the part of the congress greatly contributed to the adoption of the Pakistan Resolution three year after. The League leadership began to feel that separate electorate, statutory safeguards and even autonomous provinces had proved unsatisfactory, and they began to realize that these artifices would not protect them from the rule of the “Hindu Majority” at the centre in an All-India federation. They, therefore, began to assert that the Muslims were a separate nation and only as a nation they could develop their spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life to the fullest extent in accordance with their own ideals and according to the genius of their people and enjoy the right of self-domination.

By 1939 the idea of partition began to acquire a concrete shape. In the summer of 1939, Sir Sikander Hayat Khan published a scheme for the loosest of federation with regional or zonal legislatures to deal with common subjects. In January 1940, Dr. Abdul Latif of Hyderabad outlined a plan for a minimal federation of homogenous cultural zones.

In March 1939, Chaudhary Khaliquazzaman had discussed the possibility of partition with Lord Zetland. In September 1939,

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90 KPP President in 1936; joined Muslim League in 1937; Prime Minister of Bengal, 1937-43.
91 IAR, 1938, Vol. I, p.386; See also, Penderal Moon, Divide and Quit, Chattos and Windus, New Delhi, 1985, p.17.
94 Secretary of State for India, 1935-40.
Jinnah had suggested the same to Lord Linlithgow\(^{95}\) as a political alternative to federation.\(^{96}\) In February 1940, Aurangzeb Khan\(^{97}\) told Cunningham\(^{98}\) that the league proposed to press for a Muslim homeland in the North-West and North-East.\(^{99}\) On 4 March 1940, Jinnah told Edward Benthall (Finance Member) that “Muslims would not be safe without partition” and twelve days later he told the viceroy that, “If the British could not resolve the political deadlock, the league would have no option but to fall back on some form of Partition.”\(^{100}\)

The Congress leadership was getting disappointed over the political climate. They felt that the goal of complete independence could be attained only if all the people presented a united front. Hence efforts were made to this effect by Subhash\(^{101}\), Nehru and Gandhi. But Jinnah’s demand was that congress should recognize the league as the one and only authoritative representative organisation of the India Muslims.\(^{102}\) After the declaration of the war, different political parties exhibited different attitudes towards it. With the outbreak of war, Sir Sikander, the Punjab Premier and the leader of the Unionist Party, forgot all other pursuits and devoted himself completely to an all out effort to win the war. He extended to Great Britain, as the representative of the martial classes of the Punjab, his hand of cooperation and friendship. With the outbreak of World War II on September 3, 1939,\(^{103}\) the situation radically changed, and the

\(^{95}\) Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1936-43.
\(^{97}\) Prime Minister of N.W.F.P. 1943-45.
\(^{98}\) Governor of N.W.F.P.
\(^{100}\) Viceroy to Secretary of State (T), March 16, 1940, *Linlithgow Correspondence*, Vol. 19; See also, Anita Inder Singh, The Origins of the Partition of India, *op. cit.*, p.57.
\(^{101}\) Congress President 1938-1939; Organised Indian National Army, 1942.
empire needed the help of the rulers and British India for men, money and material. When India was declared a belligerent country by the British Government, the Indian Nationalist leaders were indignant at the declaration being made without any consultation with them and the provincial ministries headed by the congress party resigned from office in protest. Since the nationalist leaders and the British Government could not reach on any agreement where by the Indian leaders could play an honourable part in the war effort. The Congress party decided to pursue a policy of non-cooperation with the British.104

Meanwhile, Sir Sikander Hayat Khan’s ardent war efforts in the Punjab suffered a rude setback due to the serious collision of the Khaksars with the police in Lahore city on the March 19.105 In this clash thirty two Khakars106 lost their lives and fifty six were injured in firing. The incident had excited the feelings of the Punjab Muslims and had driven them to frenzy. The position of Sir Sikander Hayat Khan had become rather awkward. Muslim opinion from which he drew most of his support had been excited against him. The Khaksars and their sympathisers insisted that the League must take up the matter and deal with the Punjab premier in a befitting manner. The lieutenants of Jinnah suggested that he should interview some of the Khaksar leaders. Jinnah condemned the incident in strong words and expressed sympathy with the families of the deceased persons.107

104 Baldev Raj Nayyar, Minority Politics in Punjab, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1968, p.80; See also, The Tribune, March 18, 1940.
105 On February 28, 1940, the Unionist Ministry had banned the carrying of arms under the Defence of India Act, and the police had fired on the Khaksars, a semi-military organization of Muslims, who had defined the ban orders.
106 The Khaksar is a compound Persian word, made up of Khak and Sar. Khak is dust and Sar is like, that is to say one who is a Khaksar must be humble as dust. So in 1930, Mashriqi, the founder of the movement named it after the word Khaksar and devoted all his energies to its propagation. Y.B. Mathur, Muslims and Changing India, Trimurti Publications, New Delhi, 1972, pp.116-119; See also, Ikram Ali Malik, The History of Punjab (1799-1947), Neeraj Publications, New Delhi, 1970, p.562.
When the Congress Governments resigned, Jinnah was so relieved that he declared October 22, 1939, as the ‘Deliverance Day’ a relief from congress rule meaning thereby Hindu rule. During the months of 1940 the league whipped up its campaign for Pakistan. Finally on March 24, 1940 its Annual Session was held at Lahore, which resolved, “The Hindus and Moslems have different religious philosophies, social customs, literature, they neither intermarry nor dine together and indeed they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions; their views on life and of life are different”. It is quite clear that Hindus and Moslems derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, their heroes are different and they have different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the Government of such a state.”

Muslim League emphatically reiterated that the scheme of federation in the Government of India Act, 1935 is totally unsuited and it is altogether unacceptable to Muslim India.

This came as a shock to the political parties in India. The Lahore resolution made no mention of ‘Pakistan’ but many newspapers started referring to it as the ‘Pakistan Resolution’.

However the League Resolution was unpalatable to the Hindu and Sikh Unionists of the Punjab as well as the Akalis and others. The Indian National Congress opposed to the idea of Pakistan.

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109 Ibid., p.341.
111 Ibid., p.312.
112 Khalsa Smachar, March 28, 1940.
Rajagopalachari\textsuperscript{113} described the ‘two-nation theory’ as ‘a mischievous concept that threatens to lead India into destruction.’\textsuperscript{114} Hindu Mahasabha leaders conjured up-prophetically-vision of civil-war.\textsuperscript{115} Nehru\textsuperscript{116} declared that the congress would not have anything to do with the scheme of the Muslim League and ruled out the possibility of any settlement or negotiations.\textsuperscript{117} Gandhi\textsuperscript{118} expressed the emotion of Indian nationalism with an idealism which was denied by his understanding of his religion: \textit{I am proud of being a Hindu, but I have never gone to anybody as a Hindu to secure Hindu-Muslim unity. My Hinduism demands no pact.}\textsuperscript{119} Even Muslims outside the League opposed it.\textsuperscript{120}

Sikander Hayat Khan denounced it and denied that the ‘two-nation theory’ was his doing. He wanted to tell the rest of India, ‘we in Punjab stand united and will not appreciate any interference and to tell busybodies from outside to keep their “hand off the Punjab.”\textsuperscript{121} However the demand for Pakistan began to become firmer as the days passed. On 10 January, 1941, Jinnah declared that if the country were partitioned between them, Hindus and Muslims could regard each other as friendly neighbours and say to the world, “hands off India”. In April 1941, at the Madras Session, the League made Pakistan its creed. Jinnah called it a matter of “Life and death”. He declared, “Either we achieve Pakistan or we Perish”.\textsuperscript{122} So nation (as a group of people who feel to be a community bound

\textsuperscript{113} Congress Prime Minister of Madras, 1937-39.\textsuperscript{114} The Bombay Chronicle, March 27, 1940.\textsuperscript{115} The Tribune, March 25, 1940.\textsuperscript{116} Congress President 1936-37; Member CWC 1936-47; played leading role in negotiations for transfer of power in 1946-47.\textsuperscript{117} The Tribune, April 14, 1940.\textsuperscript{118} The father of Indian Nation; made personal efforts to promote communal harmony in 1946-47 and only reluctantly accepted partition.\textsuperscript{119} The Harijan, March 30, 1940.\textsuperscript{120} Punjab Unionist Party, Bengal’s Krishak Praja Party or the dominant Muslim Party led by Allah Bure in Sindh described it harmful and fanatic. Despite its emotive appeal the two nations idea made no sense to the rank and file of other Muslim parties. The Scheme was opposed by the Jamait-Ul-Ulema-I-Hind, the Majlis-I-Ahrar, the All India Shia Conference, The Tribune, April 28 and 29, 1940.\textsuperscript{121} The Times of India, February 4, March 5, 1941.\textsuperscript{122} Home Political, File no. 4/8/41.
together by common history, religion, common descent and citizenship) can be defined in ethnic, social or official sense. Nationalism can also take these forms also. The use of word ethnonationalism\textsuperscript{123} suggests that there was a distinction between an ethnic group and a nation.\textsuperscript{124}

In 1941, Sikander Hayat Khan resigned from the National Defence council to which he had been nominated as member of the Muslim League without Jinnah’s approval.\textsuperscript{125} Sikander’s resignation raised Jinnah’s prestige as the sole-spokesman of Muslims, including of Punjabi Muslims. On 6\textsuperscript{th} February 1943, Jinnah asserted that the North Western states of Pakistan would be connected by a corridor running along the borders of U.P and Bihar.

Meanwhile the proposals brought from the British Government by Sir Stafford Cripps\textsuperscript{126} in 1942 had been found inadequate and unacceptable to both Congress and the League.\textsuperscript{127} These proposals were in brief promise of the dominion status of India, protecting of minorities and setting up of a constituent Assembly etc.\textsuperscript{128} During the negotiations regarding the proposals, Jinnah was satisfied with the modest tactical gains that the League

\textsuperscript{123} Ethno-nationalism is defined as a form of parlicularism and exclusively. It is a mean for certain group to gain political power and control over resources and to create ethnically homogeneous states alien to pluralistic democracy and civil society. It is found in two varieties, one the national self-awareness of ethnic groups concentrated in compact geographical areas, and two territorially scattered ethnic minorities, which nevertheless claim to possess “National identity”. Adeel Khan, \textit{Politics of Identity; Ethnic Nationalism and the State of Pakistan}, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2005, pp.29-30.


\textsuperscript{125} Linglithgow to Amery, September 1, 1941, \textit{LC}. Vol. 10

\textsuperscript{126} Member of War Cabinet and deputed by it to India in 1942.

\textsuperscript{127} All India Congress Committee met in Bombay on August 7-8, 1942 and rejected the Cripps after mainly because there was no responsibility of the executive to the legislature. The resolution of the Muslim League, too rejecting Cripps proposals was released to the press on April 10, 1942. It rejected the proposals because they did not explicitly recognise the Pakistan scheme. R. Coupland, \textit{The Cripps Mission}, Longmans, London, 1942, p.11; See also, Manzoor Ahmed, \textit{Indian Response to the Second World War}, Intellectual Publication House, New Delhi, 1987, p.7.

\textsuperscript{128} \textit{TOP}, 1942-47, Vol. 1, Document No. 396, p.496.
had achieved in the sense that the possibility of Pakistan was recognized by implication in the proposals that the Muslim League had emerged as a principle political party. But a greater triumph was achieved during the Gandhi-Jinnah talks in 1944 when the two leaders met to reach a settlement on the issue of Pakistan.

Between 9 and 27 September, 1944, both met daily and in all, 14 interviews took place between them. Jinnah insisted that Pakistan must include the whole of six Muslim majority provinces. He was opposed to giving non-Muslims the right of participation in the plebiscite. Further he wanted only province-wise plebiscite. He was also opposed to joint control of the suggested subjects. In addition, he demanded a corridor to connect the two distant parts of Pakistan. These talks established Jinnah as the only spokesman of Muslim League and ‘Pakistan’ became an important issue of onward discussions.

In the Simla Conference which was held during June-July 1945 Jinnah took a strong position even though the viceroy’s proposals had conceded parity of representation in the Executive Council between the Muslim and Hindu members. The Simla conference failed because Jinnah would not agree to a non-League Muslim being included in the Executive Council. He made it clear to the Congress Government of India only Muslim League has the right to nominate ‘Muslim’ in the Executive Council. Jinnah wanted to impress upon all the Muslim leaders that they were not likely to get any prize offices by remaining outside the Muslim League.

129 U.P. for the first half of April 1942, Home Political, 18/4/42.
130 These talks were held on the basis of the formula of C. Rajagopalacharia. Rajaji’s formula envisaged a plebiscite in contiguous Muslim majority district in North-West and East India to decide on separation from India. This would be after the war and would allow League participation in an Interim Government and support to independence. Rajaji believe that an understanding with Jinnah was necessary before the establishment of a National Government at the Centre. He was confident that Jinnah could be defeated within his own organisation, but British support to him made this difficult. Anita Inder Singh, The Origins of the Partition of India, op. cit., pp.109-110; See also, AICC Papers, vide File No. 6/1947; I.A.R., Vol. II, 1944, pp.51-52, 129-130, 130, 132.
131 Wavell to King George VI, 19 July 1945, Top, Vol. V, p.279.
It was in this atmosphere that the elections of 1946 were held. In these elections Muslim League won on 73 seats while the Unionist party won only eleven seats (All rural), Panthic Sikhs won 21 seats. The League got 66.4 percent of the votes. The unionists secured only 26%. Although the Muslim League was the single largest party in the Punjab Assembly, but it was not in a position to form the ministry. In the end the Governor, Glancy, invited Khizar-Hayat Khan to form the ministry and he managed to do so with the help of the Congress and the Panthic Sikhs. The Muslim League now declared its determination to establish undiluted Muslim rule in Punjab and directed all its energies towards overthrowing the new Coalition.

On March 15, 1946, Lord Attlee made a historic announcement in the House of People, where the Indian’s right to self-determination and training of a constitution were conceded.

Consequently, three members of British Cabinet; Sir Pathick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander were sent to India. It came to be known as Cabinet Mission, as per this plan first a provision was made for three groups of provinces to possess their separate constitutions, which it was hoped would retain the political unity of India, comprising both the British India and the princely states, which would remain in charge only foreign affairs, defence and communications leaving the residuary powers to be vested in the provinces. Secondly, Till the new constitution was framed

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132 Return showing the results of the elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the provincial Legislatures 1945-46, New Delhi, 1948, p.73.
133 Results of the Provincial Elections, 1946.
134 The Tribune, March 9, 1946.
136 First Baron, Secretary of State for India, 1945-47.
138 Paper relating to the Cabinet Mission Plan in India, p.16; See also, Kirpal Singh, The Partition of India, op. cit., p.18; The Tribune, June, 11, 1946.
adopted, there would be an interim Government of all major political parties.\textsuperscript{139}

It appeared to the Muslim League that the basis and foundation of Pakistan as all the Muslim provinces were grouped in one group had been conceded and at a later stage the Muslim League would demand secession of provinces or groups from the union. It seemed that Jinnah was again bargaining very shrewdly. The Cabinet Mission probably felt that since they had rejected the League’s Pakistan scheme, the League should be placated by providing for the compulsory grouping of provinces.\textsuperscript{140} They made another major concession to the League in their proposal regarding the formation of In term Government In the statement issued by the Cabinet Mission and Viceroy on June, 16, 1946 regarding the formation of the Interim Government the names of those leaders who were being invited to join the govt. were also announced. From this announcement, it was clear that all Muslim members were from the Muslim League.\textsuperscript{141}

On June 6, Muslim League and on June 25, 1946 the Congress accepted the plan.\textsuperscript{142} Jinnah accepted the proposals in the hope that they would ultimately result in the establishment of an independent Muslim state. The Sikh however rejected the proposals outrightly and refused to be persuaded that with dexterous manoeuvring they could hold the balance of power in the Punjab.\textsuperscript{143}

In the meantime, Nehru took over the presidency of the Congress from Azad\textsuperscript{144}. The Congress was under the leadership of Nehru and Patel. Although they were consulting Gandhi on every

\textsuperscript{139} Penderal Moon, Divide and Quit, \textit{op. cit.}, p.46; See also, \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{140} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{141} Meeting between Cabinet Delegation and Wavell on June 13, 1946, \textit{Top}, Vol. 7, pp.913-914.
\textsuperscript{142} \textit{Ibid.} pp.1044-1045.
\textsuperscript{144} Congress President 1940-46.
point, but they were responsible directly for their negotiation. At the Press Conference in Bombay in July, Nehru declared that the Congress would not be bound by any British imposed settlement and claimed that his party would change the plan at will by virtue of its majority in the Constituent Assembly. Nehru’s remark and the Congress victory in forming the Constituent Assembly stirred Jinnah’s anger. Jinnah frequently mentioned the said statement to prove that the Congress cared little for the Muslim rights. Many historians interpret Nehru’s remark as unwise, and it was perhaps the worst of all indiscreet statements that was ever made by any politicians.\textsuperscript{145}

On July 29, 1946 in Bombay the Muslim League passed a resolution revoked its decision to support the Cabinet Mission Plan.\textsuperscript{146} On this day, Jinnah announced that the League should bid goodbye to constitutional methods and take ‘direct action’.\textsuperscript{147} The sixteenth day of August 1946 was earmarked as, “Direct Action Day.”

The Council of League called on Muslims to resort to ‘Direct Action to achieve Pakistan... to get rid of the present British slavery and the contemplated future caste – Hindu domination’. As a protest against ‘their deep resentment of the attitude of the British’, the League called upon Muslims to renounce the titles ‘conferred upon them by the alien Government’.\textsuperscript{148}

What the League intended by ‘Direct Action’ is unclear – Jinnah himself refused to comment – ‘I am not going to discuss

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\textsuperscript{146} S.S. Pirzada [ed.], \textit{Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah’s Correspondence}, op. cit., p.558; See also, \textit{The Statesman}, August 1, 1946.


\textsuperscript{148} League Resolution of July 29, \textit{Top}, Vol. 8, pp.138-139.
ethics’. Liaquat Ali Khan described it as ‘action against the law’. Most provincial league leaders called for peaceful demonstrations, and on August 16, itself, Jinnah enjoined upon Muslims ‘to carry out the instructions and abide by them strictly and conduct themselves peacefully and in a disciplined manner’. An advertisement in Muslim League papers on 16 August read:

“Today is Direct Action Day. Today Muslims of India dedicate themselves to the cause of freedom. Today let every Muslim swear in the name of Allah to resist aggression. Direct Action is now their only course because they offered peace but peace was spurned. They honoured their word but were betrayed. They claimed liberty but are offered Thraldom. Now might alone can secure their right”.

In Calcutta, it resulted in about 10,000 deaths. Hindus were massacred on a very large scale and about 7,000 persons were done to death with the police observing the holocaust passively. The Calcutta happening had a spinoff effect. Thousands left their towns to seek refuge in Bihar. The news about these ghastly events aroused among Hindus of Bihar, a spirit of revenge and retaliation and the Muslims of Bihar had to meet the same fate. The province of Bihar produced the largest butchers bath.” Some 20,000 Muslims were estimated to have lost their lives, soon after, trouble spread to other parts of the country. The Mahatma left on November 6, 1946 for Bengal to restore communal harmony and Nehru visited Bihar to put

149 Morning News, August 2, 1946.
150 General Secretary Muslim League, 1937-47.
151 Ibid.
152 The Dawn, August 16, 1946; See also Anita Inder Singh, The Origins of the Partition of India, op. cit., p.181.
an end to week-long horrors apart from similar appeals from different quarters.\textsuperscript{154}

The communal riots made it necessary to seek by negotiation a solution satisfying Jinnah. The compromise suggested by the three ministers had fallen through; Jinnah’s proposal for partition was being pushed forward. The British Government was against it. If a partition was to come they did not want to be called upon to execute it.

Meanwhile the Congress working committee, presided over by Nehru on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August, had accepted the invitation extended by the viceroy to form an Interim Government.\textsuperscript{155} It also appealed to the Sikhs to reconsider their decision of boycotting the Constituent Assembly. On Pandit Nehru’s appeal, the Pratinidhi Panthic Board at their meeting on the August 14, while reiterating that the cabinet Mission scheme was unjust to the Sikhs, retracted their boycott to it.\textsuperscript{156} But the Congress failed to win over the Muslim League. Its Committee of Action concluded its deliberations by passing a formal resolution assuming the All India Muslim League’s determination not to recognize the interim Government.\textsuperscript{157} After the decision of the League not to join the interim Government. Nehru assumed the charge of it on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} September, Sardar Baldev Singh, Minister for development in the coalition Government of the Punjab, took over the portfolio of defence.\textsuperscript{158}

\textsuperscript{154} The Bihar Killings resulted in reaction in places as far away as Attock in the Punjab. The Hazara border of NWFP too became the lamentable pattern of communal slaughter of India, of this killing, highest was in the Punjab, 3024 dead and 1200 injured. File no. 18/12/1946, *Home Political* (I); See also, File No. 27/2/1947. Pol.I; B.R. Nanda, *The Making of a Nation: India’s Road to Independence*, Harper Collins, New Delhi, 1998, p.306.

\textsuperscript{155} Baldev Raj Nayyar, Minority Politics in the Punjab, *op. cit.*, p.93; See also, Tushar A. Gandhi, *Let’s Kill Gandhi*, *op. cit.*, p.255.


\textsuperscript{157} *Fortnightly Report for Punjab for the First Half of September, 1946*, Home Political, File No. 18/9/46 poll (1); See also, Tushar A. Gandhi, *Let’s Kill Gandhi*, *op. cit.*, p.256.

\textsuperscript{158} Baldev Raj Nayyar, Minority Politics in the Punjab, *op. cit.*, p.93.
However, on October 26th, League joined the Interim Government. Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, League Member of the interim Government at a press conference at New Delhi explained the League’s intention of joining it in the wider interests of the subcontinent.\(^{159}\)

Liaqat Ali Khan, Ismail Ibrahim Chundrigar, Mr. Abdur Rab Nishtar\(^{160}\), Ghazanfar Ali Khan\(^{161}\) and Mr. Joginder Nath Mandal were inducted into the Government at Jinnah’s proposal and were given the portfolios of finance, commerce, post, air and health respectively.\(^{162}\)

However, the arrangement of an Interim Government proved unworkable. The nationalist leaders became convinced that no Government, which included the Muslim League could function and thought that the partition of India alone would be the solution. Outside the Government with the Hindu and Muslim communities poised against each other, the country stood on the verge of civil War.

Meanwhile there had been a marked deterioration in the situation in Punjab. The responsibility for this rested largely on the communal disturbances in the other parts of the country. In this surcharged atmosphere both the Muslim League Guards and the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, a Hindu organization, had became more popular with their respective communities, stronger more active and more belligerent.\(^{163}\)

Jinnah, sensing the sentiments of the Muslims of the province, declared at New Delhi on the November 14, that the only solution of the Indian problem was a division of British India into Pakistan and Hindustan whose constitutions should be drawn up by two

\(^{159}\) IAR, Vol. II., 1946, p.270.
\(^{160}\) Minister of Finance in N.W.F.P. 1943-45.
\(^{161}\) Member Punjab Legislative Assembly 1937-45.
\(^{163}\) Fortnightly Report for Punjab for the First Half of November, 1946, Home Political, File No. 18/11/46. poll (II).
constituent Assemblies. He further said that as soon as this was achieved, this tension would cease.\(^{164}\) His declaration caused communal Strife and the situation in the province rapidly worsened.

Therefore, it decided to promulgate the Punjab Public Safety ordinance, under Section 89 of the Government of India Act, for a period of six months. The order prohibited drilling, processions, demonstrations public meetings and carrying of lethal weapons.\(^{165}\)

The announcement of British Prime Minister Lord Attlee\(^{166}\) declared on February 20, 1947 of his intention to transfer power to responsible Indian hands by June 1948, emboldened the Muslim League to intensify the struggle in an all out bid to get its demands of Pakistan conceded.\(^{167}\)

On the 24\(^{th}\) February, the demonstrations of the League in the Punjab were marked by clashes between the police and demonstrators at Amritsar and jullundur.\(^{168}\) However, Sir Evan Jenkins\(^{169}\), the Governor of the Punjab, who did not want the fall of Khizar’s Ministry, made strenuous efforts to bring about a settlement between the League and the coalition Government ultimately, negotiations between the Punjab Government and the Muslim League resulted in the conclusion of a compromise on the February 26. The Khan of Mamdot President of the Provincial Muslim League


\(^{165}\) Fortnightly Report for Punjab for the Second Half of November, 1946, Home Political, File No. 15/11/46- poll I.

\(^{166}\) First Earl, Opposition leader 1935-40; Lord Privy Seal 1940-42; Deputy Prime Minister 1942-45; Prime Minister of England 1945-51.

\(^{167}\) On February 29, 1947, he stated on the floor of the House of Commons that, “Britain intended to transfer power to responsible Indian hands not later than June 1948, that if an Indian Constitution had not by that time been worked but by a fully representative Indian Constituent Assembly, His Majesty’s Government would consider handing over the powers of the Central Government either to some form of Central Government for British India or to existing provincial Governments or in some other way as may seem reasonable and in the best interests of Indian people”. Ayesha Jalal, The Sole Spokesman Jinnah, op. cit., pp.243-244; See also, Harbans Singh, The Heritage of the Sikhs, op. cit. p.190; Tushar A. Gandhi, Lets Kill Gandhi, op. cit., p.308; Anita Inder Singh, The Origins of the Partition of India, op. cit., p.212; Anders Bjorn Hansen, Partition and Genocide; Manifestation of Violence in Punjab, 1937-47, India Research Press, New Delhi, 2002, p.107.


\(^{169}\) Private Secretary to Viceroy 1943-45.
called off the Muslim League agitation following the compromise.\textsuperscript{170} In the terms of the settlement the Government agreed to remove the ban on public meetings in all places where they were prohibited.\textsuperscript{171}

But compromise failed to service its purpose. Communal clashes continued unabated and the law and order situation went out of control in the Punjab due to the mounting anger of the Muslim masses. So Khizar could no longer withstand, he resigned from the premiership on the March 2, without even consulting his non Muslim colleagues.\textsuperscript{172} On the same day, he announced that he was taking this step because he felt that His Majesty’s Government pronouncement of the February 20, made it incumbent on him to leave the field clear for the Muslim League to come to some arrangement with other parties.

The Nawab of Mamdot expressed his desire before the Governor to permit him for the formation of a Muslim League Ministry in the Punjab. He added that he had the support of 90 members in the Assembly including Muslim League 80, other Muslim 3, scheduled castes 4, Indian Christian 2 and European.

On the March 3, the Governor invited the leader of the League to explore the possibilities of installing a Government either on his own or in collaboration with any other party.\textsuperscript{173}

However, this move of the Governor sent a wave of resentment among the Sikhs and Hindus who felt their interests would get jeopardized.

When the Governor found that the League could not form a ministry without the backing of the Hindus and Sikhs, a proclamation was issued on the March 5, under the Section 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935, transferring all responsibility to the Governor.

\textsuperscript{170} Ibid.; See also, Fortnightly Report for Punjab of the Second Half of February, 1947, \textit{Home Political}, File No. 18/2/47-poll. (1).
\textsuperscript{171} \textit{The Tribune}, February 27, 1947.
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., March 3, 1947.
\textsuperscript{173} Ibid., March 4, 1947.
Thus the state of Punjab was in utter chaos and confusion. It lead to murders and arsonage. According to an official statement, it was claimed that 1,036 got killed and 1,110 were seriously injured.\textsuperscript{174} Nehru himself visited the riot affected areas of Rawalpindi, Multan, Amritsar and Lahore during March 14-17. He assured help to the families of riot victims and promised that a solution would be found soon.\textsuperscript{175}

But the situation in the Punjab became worse with communal virus. By March 20, according to an official announcement the number of killed increased to 2,049 persons and 1,103 seriously injured in the disturbances in the Punjab.\textsuperscript{176} Undoubtedly, it was this alarming situation in the Punjab that convinced Lord Mountbatten\textsuperscript{177} for speedy action.\textsuperscript{178} These massacres forced Mountbatten to think of immediate transfer of power.

Accordingly, the Viceroy and Mr. V.P. Menon left New Delhi for England on May 18, and reached London on May 19.\textsuperscript{179} Staying for ten days in London, Lord Mountbatten came back to India on the May 29, after securing the approval of the British Government to his plan of transfer of power.\textsuperscript{180} On the June 2, the Indian leaders, who held the power to decide the destiny of the sub-continent, gathered at the Viceroy’s House in New Delhi. In this conference with the Viceroy, Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar represented the Muslim League, While Jawaharlal Nehru,

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\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{177} First Earl, Chief of Combined Operations 1942-43; Supreme Allied Commander South-East Asia 1943-46; Viceroy of India March-August 1947.
\textsuperscript{178} Penderal Moon, \textit{Divide and Quit}, \textit{op. cit.}, p.81.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid.
\end{flushright}
Vallabhbhai Patel\textsuperscript{181} and Acharya Kripalani\textsuperscript{182} represented the Congress. The Sikhs were represented by Sardar Baldev Singh\textsuperscript{183}.

The viceroy placed his plan of partition before them. As the conference continued till next day, these leaders assembled at viceroy’s House on June 3, and the representatives of the Congress, League and the Sikhs intimated the Viceroy of the acceptance of the proposals\textsuperscript{184}.

As a result of these fruitful negotiations with the Indian leaders, Lord Mountbatten announced His Majesty’s Government’s plan of June 3, and its salient features were:

1. The British would transfer the power on the 15\textsuperscript{th} August, 1947 to one or two successor authorities as the case might be:

2. There would be two constituent Assemblies and

3. Bengal and Punjab would be divided provided there legislative Assemblies so decided and a referendum would be taken in N.W.F.P. to decide whether it would participate in the existing constituent of representatives of area\textsuperscript{185}.

In pursuance of the procedure laid down in the British plan of partition, the Punjab Legislative Assembly met on June 23, to vote whether to join the constituent Assembly at Delhi or a new one; the Muslim majority, as expected it turned the scales in favour of the later course\textsuperscript{186}. The two sections of the Punjab Assembly—western and Eastern—met separately. Members from the Muslim majority area of western Punjab voted against the partition of the province by 69 to 27 votes. But the members from the non-Muslim majority areas of East Punjab voted in favour of the partition of the Punjab by 50 to 22

\textsuperscript{181} Leading Congressman and member of Interim Government, 1946-47.
\textsuperscript{182} General-Secretary of Congress 1934-46 and President in 1946.
\textsuperscript{185} Ibid., pp.249-250.
votes. Consequently, the Western Sections decided to join the existing constituent Assembly for India.

The liberation of the Indian subcontinent was accompanied by a holocaust of unconscionable horror that bit deeply into the memories of its inhabitants. ‘The Psychological Legacy of Partition’, wrote Ayesha Jalal, ‘has left a much deeper impact on people’s minds than the social, economic and political dynamics that led to the division’. That was the irony of Jinnah’s dream of a Muslim homeland: its consequences were far worse than its causes. As the historian Mushirul Hasan has suggested, the carve up of India was not inevitable, but was ‘a man-made catastrophe brought about by cynical and hot-headed politicians who lacked the imagination to resolve their disputes and the foresight to grasp the implications of dividing their country along religious lines.

However, neither Mountbatten’s plan nor Punjab Assembly’s decisions to divide the province put an end to the ongoing communalorgy; the period from June to August was full of murders, arson and looting. The communal virus tore apart the century old cultural and social ties of the Punjabi-society. On both the Indian and Pakistan Sides horrible atrocities were committed. Foot weary caravans of refugees were attacked till the roads were clogged with corpses trains were attacked and sent across the borders with bogies packed with slaughtered passengers. Even the sick or the aged or infants were not spared by the brutal murders. Young women were occasionally spared only to be ravished. The fear of death persisted in the mind of every migrating person. Never in the history of the world was there bigger exchange of populations attended with so much bloodshed.

187 Ibid.
The Congress did not accept the logic of the two-nation theory but, nonetheless, accepted partition as a lesser evil to delayed independence and prolonged and bitter communal strife. The hope was that once the two countries gained independence they would come together as good neighbours and live side by side in a spirit of peace, amity and co-operation. That hope was regrettably belied, though it remains a cherished goal.