CHAPTER – IV
Chaman Nahal’s Azadi : Pain of Partition

Chaman Nahal born in 1927 in Sialkot, India (now in Pakistan) educated at Delhi University and the University of Nottingham, England. He was a professor of English. Nahal’s fictions include My True Faces (1973), Azadi (1975), Into Awha Dawn (1977), The English Queens (1979), The Crown and Lion Cloth (1981), Sunrise in Fiji (1988). The Salt of life (1991). Azadi won the Sahitya Akademi Award and the Federation of Indian Publisher’s Award for excellence in 1977. Azadi was published many years after partition. When Partition was declared Nahal was in college and everybody was in surprise with the declaration of dividing the country into two separate states. Chaman Nahal while writing this novel feels that he should find a justification for the event that happened. The sufferings that the people faced during and after the declaration of partition had to be taken into account. It had to be studied and understood. The Human suffering had greater significance. Chaman Nahal had a sister who was assassinated during partition was very dear and near to him. In ‘Azadi’ we find that partition of India in 1947 destroyed the communal harmony of this Nation. This harmony prevailed for centuries. Both the Nations were destroyed, many lives were lost in riots, murders, rapes and looting took place. Almost 15 million people
were displaced from their homes. Azadi portrays the realistic historical documentation of the atrocities done. Chaman Nahal was a witness and also a refugee therefore he has written his own experience. India had to pay a big price for Independence i.e. Partition. Partition was a betrayal and millions were affected by it. Thousands had been raped looted. In all millions of people were involved in the horror. Chaman Nahal pays a tribute to his sister who was killed on her way to Sialkot and also to all those women whom he considered his sisters of other religion both in India and Pakistan had suffered. ‘Azadi’ is based on the horrors of the partition created by the communal frenzy. Partition had left an effect on the life and minds of the people till date. ‘Azadi’ begins with the announcement of partition in 1947. It deals with the human tragedy caused by partition. The partition of India was unfortunate. Partition was politically motivated.

Azadi comprises of three parts The Lull, the Strom and the Aftermath, that represent respectively the beginning, the middle and the end of the great event of partition. The first part of the noval is the Lull. Chaman Nahal had suffered during partition as refugee and had faced bitter experiences throughout the journey across the border. He has written his own experience through the character of Lala Kanshi Ram and his family. Lala Kanshi Ram and his family who stayed in Sialkot. The
Protagonist who was wholesale gain merchant in Sialkot was a hard working person who had earned name and fame also good fortune. His son Arun was a college student and Prabha Rani, wife of Kanshi Ram a happy family. ‘The Lull’ deals with Lala Kanshi Ram, his attitude, his idol Mahatma Gandhi. He stays in a Muslim majority though a nationalist Hindu. He loved his Sialkot because his forefathers stayed there. According to Kanshi Ram the Britishers have ruled for a long time now it was time for them to quit India and give ‘Azadi to the Indians.’

The Novel begins with the discussion of the important announcement which would be made by the viceroy this was told to Prabha Rani by her husband Lala Kanshi Ram who was not highly qualified but life had taught him a lot. He was a member of the district Arya Samaj. He was very proud of his motherland its language and he respected both. Lala Kanshi Ram was a great patriot. He was against the ideas of the British and he always spoke of freedom. He also admired the British because of them they enjoyed safety. He spoke the wars in old times with the Mahabharata, the II World War, he spoke of Ghandhiji and many other things relating the freedom of India. Lala Kanshi Ram informs his wife :

‘Tonight Lord Mountbatten is to make an announcement from the All India Radio.’

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The new viceroy was going to making an announcement what it could be was a great surprise. Every one spoke about whatever they thought some thought of partition. When Lala Kanshi told Prabhadevi about the announcement he was in a reflective mood. The description of Prabha Rani and the love of Lala Kanshi Ram is made, the declaration of the viceroy what would happen? What would be the Fate of the family and their property was discussed. Lala Kanshi Ram is tensed and he expenses his fear to his wife Prabha Rani.

‘If Pakistan is created, we’ll have to leave. That is, if the Muslim spare our lives!’

Lala Kanshi Ram use to read the newspaper daily and he knew if Pakistan was created then the Muslims will do atrocities on them and in that case they would have to leave Sialkot if they are saved. There was fear and insecurity in his voice. His wife Prabha Rani a matured lady who made him understand things. Their daughter Madhu Bala was happily married and their son Arun was taking his college education so they had nothing to worry. She urged Lalaji not to worry and that things will be all right. Prabha Rani finishes her working before Lala comes homes and also because they have to listen to the most important announcement that the Viceroy has to make. Their neighbor Isher Kaur stays with her husband Sardar Niranjan Singh, her father Sardar Teja Singh, and her
grandfather. They are family friends for years together. They have love and affection for each other and also care for each other. Prabha Rani and Isher Kaur are like mother daughter with a age difference of twenty five years. Even the women in the house discuss about the broadcast and the consequences that would follow.

‘Your Chaha thinks there will be much killing’.³

Prabha Rani tells Isher Kaur that Lala Kanshi Ram is worried and after partition if it takes place then many people will be killed. Each house, street, corner, shops, lanes the only subject that was discussed was ‘Partition’. The young and the old, men, women, irrespective of any community were worried about the announcement of the Viceroy. Just then Arun comes home.

‘Ma, I think they are going to have Pakistan.’⁴

He said, Arun further creates seriousness, ‘It’s a betrayal, ma! It’s a betrayal!’⁵

He knew that now the vicerory would make an announcement and it would be definitely partition which they never wanted. On the other hand the merchants had gathered and were discussing and the Hindus were sure that Ghandhiji would never let partition happen. Lala Kanshi Ram said:
‘Mahatmaji is going to save us.’

The Hindus and the Sikhs had great faith in Gandhiji they knew that all the time Ghandhiji spoke of one nation. The Muslim shopkeepers remained silent and contemptuous of them because they knew Pakistan was a certainty. In the evening everybody gather in Bibi Amar Vati’s house who had a radio and she was generous enough to open her doors for all the tenants of the building. Lala Kanshi Ram had great respect in the house and all the tenants respected him. Bibi Amar Vati has a son who was adopted by her and good for nothing named Suraj Prakash. Since he had the radio he would deliberately change buttons and irritate the others. Bibi Amar Vati’s husband Gangu Mull had adopted Suraj but people were not sure whether they were married properly or not. The entire living room was full of people and everybody was eager to listen to the Viceroy’s announcement and Suraj was playing with the radio. Lala Kanshi Ram was getting irritated

‘why don’t you leave the damn thing alone?’

It was seven o’clock and the Viceroy’s speech which was in English language. The Viceroy spoke and even the non-English speaking people could understand what he had to announce. His announcement was over everybody looked at Suraj Singh who knew some English but he failed to understand then everybody looked at Arun and he understood
it and in Shaken voice he said ‘Partition’, while uttering that word Arun made gestures with his hands of chopping a thing in Two ‘Partition’. Everybody was surprised and everyone shouted ‘Partition’ their mouths remained open to them once again Arun announced ‘Yes Partition!’ Lala Kanshi Ram ordered Suraj to switch off the radio, but Suraj once again switched the radio on again and it was Jinnah Finishing his speech and his last words,

‘Pakistan Zindabad ! Long live Pakistan!’

while Jinnah spoke people could realize Pride in his voice finally partition was declared. Everyone in the room was shocked and there was fear in their voice Sardar Tejasingh asked the consequences to Lela Kanshi Ram and all waited for his answer because he was a very well read, experienced and respectable person was Lala Kanshi Ram, he answered

‘I suppose we’ll continue here. Why can’t Hindus and Sikhs live in Pakistan ? Why should they wish us harm ?’

All the people who were gathered in the hall to listen to the announcement left the room without saying anything to anybody for their own homes. All confused, shocked, hopeless and full of curiosity for their future security for the present unaware of things to comes, what they had
to face and what would be the outcome of this partition. Who would benefit? Why partition? There were the questions that announce the minds of millions after the announcement by the viceroy when all of them were quietly leaving the hall Arun thinks of Nur his beloved who was a Muslim.

Muslims were celebrating ‘Pakistan’ and ‘Partition’. From all directions fire-crackers were shot up into the sky and exploded. All the Muslim populated areas were full of joy and happiness. There was a huge procession with drum beats and the streets were calm and quiet nobody on the streets. Suddenly Suraj Prakash and Arun realize that the gates of the street were open. Arun rushes down to close the gate or otherwise they would have to face the problem. Suraj Prakash, Arun and Niranjan Singh all rushed downstairs to close the gates. Niranjan Singh was worried about what would happened and what should be done.

*I suggest we stay here and we fight the bastards if they try to enter the street, we should be able to kill a few before we get killed.*

All of them were ready to kill the others this was due to the fear that they spoke they had anticipated the riots as well but they also realized that they were in large numbers and so it would be difficult to face them together, so they decided a strategy.
That’s right facing them this time would be suicidal. I suggest we go up into our homes and wait and see. But if they attack a single house, we all come out regardless.¹¹

Said Arun. Sialkot was a Muslim majority area with a few Hindu mohallas so they installed gates to protect themselves from the muslims and they also formed a youth club to face the Muslims. Which means that the Hindus had anticipated that something like this would happen even a year before. The procession had reached the Trunk Bazar and stopped at the entrance of the street. It was dangerous sight, never seen before. There were many people in the procession and they were all out of control giving slogans joining hands and they were also dancing to the tune of drums which the Sikhs played Bhangara they were also awake of the fact that the Hindu families were observing them from roof top. Some of them had also put garlands in happiness. They never wanted to harm anybody only they wanted to celebrate. They wanted to take their procession from the Mohallas and so they, shouted to open these gates which were closed by Arun and others,

‘Listen, Ohai, Lalas! we don’t wish to harm you. We only want to take the procession through this street. So come on down and open the gate.¹²
But these people did not open the gates of the street. There was police headquarters nearby police was there is procession and still these who were in the procession shouted and created problems. Everybody on the roof was shocked and was in fear. They also shouted in the names of Arun and Niranjan but the gates were not opened. The Hindus never wanted to open the gates and the muslims deliberately wanted to go through the same street. This created tension. Somebody from the procession shouted,

‘We’re not moving from here until we pass through the street.’

Slogans of ‘Pakistan Zindabad’, Allah-O-Akbar was loudly heard. Police had arrived on the scene to control the mob and it was a police officer Inayat Ullah Khan along with his arms and his men. All these years he was in police and on the orders of the British had done lathi charge on his muslim brothers. He had also heard the announcement of the Viceroy so he was happy and warned the Lala to open the gates and everybody on the roof was silent and didn’t knew what to do. He wanted to support the Muslims. Just then the wife of the Lawyers Shrikant Bahadur, she asked them not to do anything and that she had called the Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police.

‘I have called the Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police on the phone. They should be here any minute.’

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The Lawyer was an influential person and had good relations with authorities in the district, but Inayat-ullah Khan paid no heed to what she said. Being a police officer who was supposed to protect the people, he ordered them to open the gate,

‘Listen, ohai, Kanshi Ram. If the gate is not opened in five minutes. I’ll order my men to force it open.’\(^{15}\)

Now he was directly supporting the procession and the Muslims. He ordered his police men to break open the gate, but the Sikh police men were not ready to do but as the authority they had to and they stood near the beam to open the gate. The Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent arrived and the operation of breaking the gates was withheld. The Deputy Commissioner who was a very clever administrator understands the whole situation and enquires everything with the officers on the spot. He also collected information about who stayed in the building and who was the most respected and influential person whom he can talk to. Then addressing to Lalaji, he spoke very softly,

‘Please come down and open the gate. Superintendent Sahib and I both guarantee that no harm will come to anyone living in the Mohalla.’\(^{16}\)
After the assurance given to them Lalaji and a few men of that street come down open the gate and the procession passed by but before that the Deputy Commissioner warms the leaders.

“I’ll let the procession go through the street provided there is no violence and provided you take the procession back to your own mohallas in any orderly fashion, once, you have reached the other end of the street.”

The entire procession passed but the last group of youngster were rowdy and wild and some of them threw stones on the glass panes in a few houses but there was no retaliation from the mohalla. Very cleverly the Deputy Commissioner handled these situation and the procession reached the other end of the street not much harm was done. Once again the gates were closed and all these people in the street went to bed as it was two o’clock in the morning.

Arun and Nur had an affair and all their classmates were aware of their relations but after announcement of partition, he was a Hindu and she was a Muslim. Things had changed but for Arun nothing changed, the city. For Arun if Sialkot becomes the part of Pakistan then also he loves the city and it would continue to be the same place, he loved before the announcement Arun used to go from one place to the other whole day without any problem and fear but things had changed still Arun never
changed his routine, he continued all his activities as before. He attended college, he went to play tennis in the evenings and also went to see the English movies. He met Nur in the college when it was not crowded and told her to meet him. Nur was also eager to meet him Arun and Nur wandered in the areas known to them, loved each other, hugged, kissed, teased each other. Both of them loved intensely and were ready to do anything for the sake of love before the announcement of the viceroy. Both of them were of different religion and so their marriage was impossible due to other reasons also. Both of them were worried of themselves and what would happen to their relation,

'It means nothing to us. How can Pakistan stand in our way?'

Nur without any hesitation enquired to Arun and how could the partition be a hurdle in their relation. They loved each other irrespective of their different castes. But Arun was aware the critical situation he knew how things have changed and what would be the outcome of this declaration. He knew that it was time for them to leave Sialkot,

'we may have to go away from here.'

i.e. he was sure all the Hindus and the Sikhs in Sialkot had to leave and go to India, their new homeland. Nur was very innocent so he was
unaffected and unaware of the seriousness of the announcement. Arun explained her about their shift.

‘To India, we may have to leave Pakistan.’

Now Pakistan was not their homeland it was an foreign land which belonged to Muslims and other communities had to leave and go to India. Many times Arun and Nur used to meet than Arun said he would embrace Islam for her sake or even die for her sake because for him Nur was his life and ritual hardly mattered. For Nur he was ready to do anything but that was before the announcement now it was impossible because Pakistan was not a simple issue and he thought it was an insult. He knew it was the dirty game of the politicians and that now the hormony that prevailed would not last it became more problematic and unbearable for Arun. He was tensed, irritated and also angry due to this declaration of these viceroy. He realized that millions and thousands would be victims like Nur and himself. Nur and Arun entered into an argument of who will embrace the other’s religion and both of them were stunned to know each others view. According to Nur it was Arun who has to embrace Islam,

‘Because I’m a girl and an defenceless and cannot force my will on my family and because you’re a man, more independent than me and I expect you to defend me and make sacrifices for me, that’s why!’
Saying so she kept crying but Arun did not pay any heed to her crying but then he tired to make her understand.

‘You know I love you and will do anything for you. But soon, it will cease to be a question of personal love. My parents are old, and they’ll be hard hit if they are obliged to leave. I’ll have to go with them to help settle them somewhere. But maybe I’ll come back and then we can marry the way you wish.’

In this hot discussions things took different turn and there was contention once again between them it added bitterness. Nur leave hims and goes to the college girls common room. Some Muslim boys were seen so Arun keeps the distance from her and he enters the Canteen and sees Munir sitting in the canteen all alone who keeps watching Arun and Nur. When Arun realizes this he thinks Munir was spying but it was out of concern that Munir was talking and Nur was Munir’s sister

“I didn’t. I was only concerned about your safety. You know what the temper of the college these days is – the muslim boys will Lynch you if they see you with her.”

Munir and Arun were childhood friends and Munir’s father Chaudhri Barket Ali and Arun’s father Lala Kanshi Ram were great friends. Nurul-Nisar had joined the college. Arun had known her too
from early childhood. Munir warned Arun not to meet her because the boys would create problems and things were different now. Munir was concerned of Arun’s safety.

‘Are you so naïve as not to see it is a question of your safety? All right promise one thing: you will see her only in my presence. Preferably at our house. But you must no longer see her in public.”²⁴

After this they start discussing again about the announcement and decide to meet Mr. Davidson their common friend who was a British sergeant. These two often visited him and after the announcement they saw him in his barracks to discuss of what had happened. Bill Davidson was concerned.

“If you must ask me, I think is the most stupid, most damaging, most negative development in the history of the freedom struggle here. And this time it is we who are pushing things. The Cabinet Mission Plan of the last year was the best plan that could have been devised for the future of India. Indian leaders unfortunately did not see its merit and foolishly threw it away. But we the British should have stood by that plan. Six months more of negotiations and the political parties would have come round…..”²⁵
They were not aware of how the Hindus would treat the Muslims and vice-versa. Thing had taken a different turn altogether and made human relations difficult to understand each other. Family relations of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for generations had changed overnight and they stared at each other as enemies for ages this was the outcome of the announcement. It was on June 3rd 1947 that the announcement of partition was made by the viceroy Lord Mountbatten and on twenty-fourth of June riot took place in Sialkot. Many villages were burning for months and there was a large scale killings and looting in Lahore, Gujarat, Amritsar, Ambala, Rawalpindi and many other places in north. It was because of the Deputy Commissioner that Sialkot was calm for a long time and he had kept the situation under control for a long time small incidences such as stabbing, one or two killings were going, there was not a massive attack on the masses of one group on the others. Suddenly one day late in the evening through the Trunk Bazar which was the main lane of the town tongas rushed in when the Amritsar Train came in. Tongas full of people rushed in and they cried loudly,

"Hai, they have killed us! Oh, Allah, may your wrath fall on these sikhs – they have ruined us, ‘Hai-Hai!’ ‘Allah-Allah’. "

There were the cries of the Muslims who had arrived from Amritsar and they were tortured by Hindus and Sikhs and were made
homeless so they had to rush towards Sialkot. This news spread like fire and tension was mounted. Each community blamed the other for the riots and it was that night that the massive riots took place. Streams of people started pouring through Trunk Bazar on their way out from Mohalla Dharowd and Police was trying to hurry the crowds along out of the Mohalla slowly the position was unmanageable. A large number of people were wounded and were heading towards the ‘Refugee Camp’. There was no refugee camp in Sialkot. Every night there was curfew and so even came out was shot by police. While Lala Kanshi Ram was observing all this he enquired and was informed that they all were heading towards the refugee camp not knowing what refugee camp was he asked to Arun what a refugee camp was and what it meant.

‘It means a camp for people seeking shelter.’

Said Arun. It was terrible to think that people who were born, there, grew up there yet they had to go. Lala Kanshi ram was disturbed when he got the meaning of the word and what the Government was doing.

‘I was born around here, this is my home – how can I be a refugee in my own home?’
Prabha Rani, Arun and Lala Kanshi Ram all were discussing about the whole situation. Lalaji’s family was advised to leave Sialkot but he was very emotional he never wanted to live this place because for him it was difficult to make things happen as they wanted how could they move? Where would they go? And what would they do? Looking at his own age he felt and realized that things were difficult,

‘Arun’s mother, I’m an old man and I cannot begin all over again!’

For all those who left their homes, it was very difficult to settled down afresh with so many problems. Millions of people were homeless, uprooted from their origin. The Hindu Mohallas were burnt down. The earliest memories of his remote childhood his youth, his friends his neighbors all he would miss. One day Lala Kanshi Ram’s shop was looted along without Hindu shops. While the family was discussing about the shops and how they were looted Chaudhari Barkat Ali arrives to console and also to give a piece of information. To Lalaji’s family.

‘Well, that’s what I have come to tell you, brother Kanshi Ram. This street is going to be looted and burned tonight. You must leave at once.’
This information given by Chaudhari Barkat Ali shocked everybody. During the riots the streets were burnt and houses, shops were looted and the young girls and women were raped. Chaudhari was their family friend he wanted to save his friend Lala Kanshi Ram and his family. The Deputy Commissioner was killed the previous night now it was the turn of Lalaji’s street,

“I wish to Allah it was my house to be looted. All my arguments for peace have failed with my brother Muslims, they have ceased to be Muslims and have become shaitans. Tonight is the turn of your street. I have it from the most reliable source. You’d better pack and leave.”

This was the concern of a Muslim for a hindu family even in times of riots against one another. This news spread like fire and all the tenants gathered in Lalaji’s house. According to Lalaji, English were responsible of this situation.

“It was their job, their obligation, to see that freedom came smoothly. If today the man in the street feels insecure and if the government is powerless to protect his life and property, I hold the English responsible for that crime.”

Now the question arose where to go? Because they had few hours left and they started thinking of various options which would be fastest
and safest in short time. Munir arrives with the news of the two army trucks that would arrive at seven and was helped by Davidson. All of them left the room and started to pack their necessary things, they would need. Bill Davidson arrives with the trucks. Lala Kanshi Ram considered that the English were responsible for this situation and Lalaji also spoke this to Davidson,

“You were our Sirkar, our masters and I and millions like me gave you our complete loyalty. While striking a deal with these ‘leaders’, did you ever think of us? Did you for one moment consider what might befall us? Freedom to be sure, we welcome it. But why the violence? It is a denial of what the English stood for during two hundred years in this country! And it is the English who have the biggest hand in this butchery.”

They all hurried and reached the trucks in the street. All were sad to leave their homes and belongings yet they had no option finally the two trucks moved in the direction of the refugee camp. The first part of the novel thus describes the beginning of partition. It describes the friendly relations of all communities for which were trusted for generations, it describes the love story of Arun and Nur i.e. a Hindu and Muslim couple which was possible before partition but after partition it was impossible to continue as these communities became enemies of one
another for no reasons. The co-existences of the Muslims and Hindu is disrupted due to the announcement of partition which has done great harm to the unity of the nation and the people. For Lala Kanshi Ram and many like him found difficult to be called as ‘Refugee’ and that too in their own homeland with this ‘Lull’ is over and the ‘strom’ begins.

‘Strom’ highlights the atrocities done on the borders. One Indian Community did atrocities with the other Indian Communities surprisingly there were friends and neighbours for generations and now overnight had become enemies. As K.R. Srinivas Iyengar writes,

_The ‘Leaders’ had sowed the wind of communal suspicious and partition was the results; like a whirlwind, the mad act of partition was unrooting masses of humanity, managing them and throwing them across the border heap after heap._

The refugees had tough time in the camp because it was monsoon and as a result they had to face all sorts of problems. Dr. Chandra Bhan and his wife come to Lalaji’s tent with a sad new i.e. Madhu the only daughter of Lela Kanshi. Ram alongwith her husband were killed. They were coming from Wazirabad to Sialkot by train, on the way the train was attacked and killed many Sikhs and Hindus. Madhu had been brutally murdered. Suraj Prakash accompanied Aurn to Choudhari Barkat Ali’s house to take help from him and find the dead body of Madhu. Times
were different and they see lot of tension in the town. Madhu’s death and the massacre killing, the train episode all was known by the refugee’s in the camp and they all realized staying in Sialkot was dangerous and they all should leave this place and move to India, the partitioned one. Chaudhari, Munir, Nur and family are shocked to hear the news of Madhu’s death, the women in Munir family weep and cry loudly because Madhu was like their own daughter. The Choudhari along with his servant and son go to the railway station to find the dead body of Madhu while passing by Arun sees the tragedy and destruction around the place. They reach the railway station and collect the information.

"Yes, a train with many dead had come in from Wazirabad last night. No, there was no way of identifying the dead. They had been cremating them since morning. They had very nearly finished. The last batch was being cremated now."

Arun was taken by the officer to show the burnt dead bodies due to the influence of Chaudhari Barkat Ali.

The Officer walked and behind him Arun and other what they saw was horrifying,

\textit{dismembered limbs, dozen of them – legs and arms and hands, and thighs and feet. The fire had consumed other parts of the bodies, it}
was the parts which hat not fully burned that stood out. And there were
the skulls. Again dozens of them many lay face down, the others faced
the sky, or looked sideways. Bare jaws, scooped out eye-sockets,
gnashing noise, its bones disintegrating into the heap around. Since it
was a quiet night, the sound came like the crack of a rifle; it was an
unnerving sound.  

The dead bodies were removed from the train and without
sentiment were removed and stored. This was the most horrifying thing
one could imagine but it was a part of our history in reality they all faced
this because of partition. Chaudhari Barkat Ali along with his men and
Arun walk back home. Chaudhari known this tragedy of Madhu must
have shattered Lala Kanshi Ram and now facing him was difficult so
Barkat Ali tells Arun:

“Arun, Son, I don’t think I will be able to face your parents
tonight. Munir and Khalil will see you safely to the camp. I’ll come
tomorrow morning.”

He takes Arun in his arms, The relations of Hindus and Muslims
has an impact on the minds of the reader. Where muslim families helped
the Hindu in difficult times and also protected their lives. Arun was very
fond of Madhu, his sister he remembers all those childhood days, they
spent together, the quarrels the teasing all. For him she was very beautiful
he loved her and was very much concerned about her. She and her husband Raju were going to stay with them and on the way both of them were brutally killed. This incidence changed the psychology of Lala Kanshi Ram. The one who insisted to stay in Sialkot after Madhu’s murder now wants to leave for India as early as possible. It was almost a month they had lived in the refugee camp. Each day they had a horrifying experience which made their mind sets ready to leave their homeland. The sufferers had lost faith in humanity, Police Administration, Government and also the Congress Leaders thus,

They should have devised means of mass migration to begin with, before rushing to partition. Now they should at least keep their mouths shut and not mislead the poor, credulous people. Jinnah and Nehru were Villains enough. This President of the Indian National Congress – Kripalani, was the worst offender. More than the others, it was he who was so loud about the minorities staying where they were.58

Thus, the Lala blames and also he considers these leaders responsible of this situation. The boundary commission play a vital role and it was after that the people realized what they have lost and what they had to sacrifice. This made them frustrated and angry. Lala Kanshi Ram lost hope when General Rees failed to maintain law and order and
situation was out of control. He heard innumerable incidents that took place with the minorities in East Punjab and West Punjab.

*Eventually the two Governments made arrangements to transport the minorities from one side to the other. People concerned in way out areas like Peshawar or other parts of the North West Frontier province were airlifted to cities in East Punjab. The rest were moved by train. Or they were moved in convoys on foot.*

One evening Rahmat-ullah, an old classmate of Arun who had become a captain meets Run. Next morning Rahmat Ullah told Arun that they will have to wait till the Indian troops come to escort them. Arun got an assurance from Rahat Ullah that Aruns family and the other members of the group would be included in the foot convey to Dera Baba Nanak. Rahamat Ullah had an eye on Sunanda he had seen her one afternoon when he had gone for inspection. He had an eye on her no wonder the very same day Arun was called by the captain. He had sent a jeep for Arun. He was welcomed by him and he enquires about Sunanda. Arun who had little idea recognizes that Rahmat-Ullah was interested in her. Rahmat-ullah tries to tell Arun to bring Sunanda to him and he will do favours to Aruns family,

“All right, we’ll let that pass. But as I was saying, if you promise to bring her here of an evening. I’ll personally take you and your
parents to Jammu border in my Jeep. You people will reach safety in less than half an hour."

But Arun did not agree for him Sunanda was like his sister and he could not do such an evil thing. On almost everyday. Rahmat Ullah visited the tents just to have a glance at Sunanda. After Arun rejected his proposal Rahmat-ullah had become furious and in any case he wanted Sunanda.

There was only one wish his taught body seemed to proclaim. And it was to go and burn himself in the fire of Sunanda.

Sunanda had realized that Rahamat-ullah used to come deliberately for her and she told Arun to give a message to Rahamat-ullah,

"Tell him I “Kill him if he ever tries to touch me.”"

Even in such a situation women were very careful of themselves because during riots many women were raped but Rahmat-ullah was the protector yet he had bad intentions to hook Sunanda and enjoy. A Muslim then could have a Hindu lady in bed. Caste was no objection in these activities. Arun understood the ill intention of Rahamat – ullah. Chandani who lived in the same tent along with her mother Padmini, was young, graceful but illiterate. On the other hand life in the refugee camp has become a routine. Arun followed Chandani to the tap and every were
she went and was always in search of an opportunity to hold her kiss her and love her. One day Arun assures her that he was going to marry her but though uneducated she could understand that caste was the main hurdle. One afternoon Arun tells his mother that he wants to marry Chandani. Prabha Rani was surprised to see his young boy grown up to a man who needs a wife but she does not assure him and tells him that let time decide and his father to agree and respect his wishes. Arun who is in love realizes that his father should also learn to respect the wishes of their children,

‘He must respect ours. I see nothing wrong in marrying Chandni. She may be poor, but I don’t need anybody’s money. And as far as caste is concerned, I don’t subscribe to it. My whole being revolts against it.’

Arun was madly in love with Chandani and she too was engrossed in him. In the camp new children were born and old people who were sick died, they were cremated quietly and their ashes were immersed in the same stream.

It was being widely reported the only way for a Sikh to get safely through Pakistan was by shaving off his hair. The Sikh faith enjoyed strictly against it. It was one of the tenets of the faith the hair of the head and the beared be not cut. It was a kind of badge of courage,
which in olden days distinguished you as a warrior. In these times it was like shouting your identity from the housetop – which meant speedy death for you at the hands of the Muslims.\textsuperscript{44}

The Sikhs were rather reluctant to cut their hair but time was horrible to save it cutting, the hair was one important solution and everybody was thinking of it in all directions. Lala Kanshi Ram was convencing Niranjan to cut his hair because of wife who was pregnant and needed safety of life.

‘Listen, Son, I admire your faith. Only don’t forget for a moment the religious of man are the inventions of man himself.’\textsuperscript{45}

Lala also told and made him understand that religion was made by human beings and for their purpose as a result for one’s security if you go against nothing will happen even God will forgive, he further continues.

‘These religions are meant to be practiced only where human life exists. You can’t practice them when beastly times prevail. And even among humans, they must be accepted with a pinch of salt.’\textsuperscript{46}

He kept on explaining Niranjan, the importance of religion and when and how to use religion.

‘It is making religion a matter of convenience.’\textsuperscript{47}
On the other hand the date for the foot convey to Dera Baba Nanak was fixed and the preparations were started. A large number of Gurkha Troops had arrived for India to escort it. They had come with trucks, arms and ammunciation. At their arrival everybody in the camp was cheerful and gave slogans of ‘Jai Hind.’ The Gurkha Officer assured everyone that they will take all of them to safety. Convoys either on foot or of trains were passing through two main check points.

*Dere Baba Nanak, the border town on the Indian side, was forty seven miles from Sialkot. It was decided the convey would do atleast six miles a day, more if possible. They could not move faster because of the large number of women and children. Room was made available in one truck per unit for those who were extremely old or those who couldn’t walk for some other reason. The convoy was to avoid all towns, they were to camp only in open fields.*

After the date was fixed preparations in detail was worked out. Lala Kanshi Ram spent much time with Major Jang Bahadur Singh to help him. The convoy was to leave on the twenty fourth of September and everybody was waiting eagerly to go to their new homeland, unknown to them yet it guaranted security and safety in future. Sardar Teja Singh, Lala Kanshi Ram and others everyday kept him explaining about his hair cut. His wife also kept on telling him the same for the sake of security.
and safety till they reached India but unfortunately he burnt himself instead of cutting his hair. This was very shocking for his family and others in the camp Niranjan set fire to himself and was proclaiming.

‘My life I may lose, my Sikh dharma I won’t.’

After this unnatural death the day of the march came. Everybody repeatedly stopped and looked at their city, Sialkot where they were born, brought up and now they were leaving that same place and were not aware when they would return. Their friends had come to see them off. Chaudhari Barkat Ali and Munir had reached the camp to see Lala Kanshi Ram and his family. Munir carried a letter for Arun from Nur she wrote

‘I’m weeping when I write this to you.’

She loved Arun and they were unable to understand why things changed? What would be the fate of their relation? She was quiet apprehensive and further wrote.

‘Will I ever see you again? God alone knows why people and so full of hate. I wish they were not to part souls that love each other. But I’ll think of you till the day of my death. May Allah protect you. Khuda hafiz.’

Nur wondered whether they will meet again or not? But she assures him that she will not forget him till she dies. Her love was true
and also prays to Allah to protect a hindu boy Arun her love. A large crowd of spectators from the city had gathered to see the refugees leaving the camp. But the Pakistan and the Indian Army was vigilant and things went on smoothly. Lela Kanshi Ram was apprehensive of the whole situation. The refugees started departing from the camp. All men, women, children with their luggage on their backs, few of them had bullock carts and slowly the convoy marched towards India. In the spectators Lala Kanshi Ram saw a known figure it was Gangu Mull. He had converted himself. Everybody considered him dead but he was alive and in the same town. Gangu Mull had converted and changed his name Ghulam Muhammad. Gangu was Bibi Amar Vati’s husband. She insisted that he should accompany them be but he was rather reluctant. The convoy was slowly marching a head. Mukanda who was in the city prison. Lalaji was concerned about him.

‘None, may be killed. I hear a mass killing of Hindu prisoners did take place inside of the city prison.’

The prison had police and guards yet the Hindu and Sikh prisoners were killed may be these Pakistani Officers did that. After walking for Six miles the foot convoy halted at Gunna Kalan near Sialkot. This was the mass migration and such incidence was not found in any period in history. Chaudhri Barkat Ali and Munir walked these six miles with Lala
Kanshi Ram and his family. The relations showed that partition could do no harm to the psyche of these two families and they maintained the friendly and human relations till they left for India. This was not the only case of these families but also many families witnessed the same love and affection towards each other. While parting with each other looking at Lala Kanshi Ram, Chaudhri Barkat Ali said,

‘we are one people and religion cannot separate us from each other.’

The convey moved very slowly at Pasrur and spent four days there due to some arrangements that were yet to make. In Pasrur the camp was located in a large school building, the convey was attached and everyone was surprised even Lala Kanshi Ram. The soldiers told not to run but be seated where they were. People could hear sounds of guns and firing but nobody could realize from where the sounds of ‘Allah-O-Akbar came. The attackers rushed into the mob and disappeared on the horses they also carried with them a number of young refugee girls. After the Muslim marauders disappeared the spot where the incidence took place the road was full of shoes, articles, turbans female headgears, umbrellas, sticks and cans of food and dead bodies were lying all over. The convoy wanted to reach a safe place so hurriedly they walked and even on the dead bodies. The convoy kept moving from Qila Sobha Singh to Narowal and they
were attacked again in the same manner. Many Hindus and Sikhs were killed, many women abducted and a large number of people were wounded. This happened near Alipur Saiyidian a prominently Muslim area. Narowal was a sub-district headquarters. Major Jang Bahadur Singh decided to halt for a week so that the convoy could rest properly and then move on.

The Dera Baba Nanak which was the border of India was only eight miles from Narowal. Next day the camp refugees were busy in their daily routine. Suraj Prakash said to Arun later in the day:

‘You know they are going to Parade naked women in the town this afternoon. We couldn’t you like to go and see?’

This was the most human act that took place in the partition tragedy. Women who had done no harm had to face this for no fault of theirs.

‘The Muslims in Narowal will be parading naked Hindu Women.’

The parade of the Hindu women were to humiliate the Hindus and Sikh Refugees.

A number of abducted Hindu and Sikh Women were in their custody. Many of the kidnapped women disappeared into private homes.
A lone Muslim dragged a woman away and kept her for his own exclusive use, or he took her with the consent of other Muslims, converted her to Islam, and got married to her. The rest were subjected to mass rape, at times in public places and in the presence of large gatherings. The rape was followed by other atrocities, chopping off these breasts, and even death. Many of the pregnant women had their womb torn open. The survivors were retained for repeated rapes and humiliations, until they were parceled out to decrepit wrecks. The aged, the left-overs who couldn’t find a wife or those Muslims who wanted an additional wife. In the mean time more women were abducted and the cycle was repeated all over again.  

We find that women had to suffer a lot of atrocities done to them, raped publicly and many were killed after used and the one’s who lived were humiliated, converted to Islam, married by anybody or raped again and again.

It was learnt that, the local authorities, the police or the military did not interfere with such incidences. One precaution was taken that the procession does not reach the refugee camp or again there would be clashes or riots. Suraj Prakash and Arun arrived to see the procession.

There were forty women, marching two abreast. Their ages varied from sixteen to thirty, although, to add to the grotesqueness of
the display, there were two women, marching right at the end of the column, who must have been over sixty. They were all stark naked. Their heads were completely shaven; so were the armpits. So were the public regions. Shorne of their body hair and clothes, they looked like baby girls, or like the bald embryos one sees preserved in methylated spirit. Only the breast and the hips gave away the age. The women walked awkwardly, looking only at the ground. They were all crying, though their eyes shed no tears. Their faces were formed into grimaces and they were sobbing. Their arms were free, but so badly had they been used, so wholly their spirits crushed, their morale shattered, none of them made any attempt to cover themselves with their hands.\(^57\)

The hindu woman were humiliated to greatest extent poor women were helpless.

*The procession moved through the bazaar, and along with the procession moved a river of obscenities – foul abuses, crude personal gestures, spurts of sputum, odd articles like small coins, faded flowers, cigarette buds and bidis that were thrown at the women. As soon as the women came near, that section of the crowd became hysterical.*\(^58\)

Everybody except Arun were enjoying the procession. Suraj Prakash also one of them to enjoy Arun was unable to see these women but was finding himself helpless. The Hakim was very much concerned
about the women, he covered him face with his hands, knelt on his knees, reused his arms and prayed in Punjabi for the women in the procession.

‘Rabbul-Alamin, forgive these cruel men. And oh, my Allah, oh Rabbah, protect these women.’

There was a massive attack on the camp at Narowal, this attack was a complete surprise and nobody had heard about it. Everybody started running to save one’s life. This attack went for several hours. The people from the camp were scattered all over and in all directions. Arun was worried about his parents and Chandani. Sunanda was raped by captain. Rahamat Allah Khan and Arun, in a frenzy, kills him Arun and Sunanda reach the tent and find the family safe in the tent. Nobody knows that Rahamat – Ullah had raped her and Arun also did not disclose it to her family. Everybody was in the tent except Suraj Prakash, he was killed. During these attack Chandani was kidnapped by the muslims and no one knows where she was. Padmini and Chandani had gone to the tap to fetch water when three men caught hold of Chandani and dragged her. To save her daughter Padmini was ready to offer herself.

*She offered herself to them if they would spare her daughter. But they hit her with a stick and left her unconscious. She also thinks she was dishonoured while she lay unconscious.*
Refugee Camps were the Refugee took shelter to save their lives

Slowly the convey moved and it was eight miles away from the border. The convey reached Jassur a Muslim Village.

*The most Pathetic sight was of the very old weeping hysterically.*

*Instead of attacking the convey, some of the inhabitants of Jassur ran inside their homes and brought water for the thirsty. Some waved and said, ‘Kudha Hafiz’. Most only looked on.*

The convoy crossed the bridge over the Ravi and was out of danger. Many people in the convoy kissed the soil, some of them took bath in the Ravi. Lala Kanshi Ram saluted his motherland by shouting ‘Vande Matram’ and finally, they arrived in India. They were all very happy. Lala Kanshi Ram along with his family went to Amritsar and then to Delhi. Amritsar looked as if it has been bombed from the air. There
was total destruction of the Muslim houses and property. Lala Kanshi Ram asked one of the Passersby,

‘They are taking out a procession of Muslim women through the bazaar.’

All of them suddenly remembered the procession in Narowal. At the railway station Lala Kanshi Ram and family were travelling towards Delhi.

A Train with hundreds of slaughtered Muslims had pulled in and they were cleaning up the platform. It was a train carrying muslim refugees to Pakistan, it had been stopped at the signal outside of Amritsar, when the Muslims were massacred.

In Amritsar Lala gets terribly shocked to learn that there is a Hindu retaliation for the Muslim atrocities committed in Pakistan. What was being done to the Hindus in West Punjab was being done to the Muslims in East Punjab. Lala Kanshi Ram and his family took the train from Amritsar to Delhi actually in eight hours the train should reach Delhi but it took twenty eight hours. Isher Kaur who was pregnant told Prabha Rani about her pains and finally space was made in the train and Isher delivered a female child. Lala is deeply moved by the plight of the Muslims in India. On their way to Delhi he shows the legendary
Kurukshetra to his wife. When he observes the atrocities done by the Hindus to the Muslims in India he is shocked and he stops hating the Muslims. This was the transformation of the protagonist Lala Kanshi Ram. While leaving Pakistan Lala was full of anger and hatred for the Muslims but when he saw the atrocities done to them in India, he was a changed man.

‘What I mean is, whatever the Muslims did to us in Pakistan, we’re doing it to them here!’

They got down at Delhi and stayed on the platform then to the Kingsway Camp on Alipur Road. It was not a tent but in brick hutments. He was also shocked when the rehabilitation Officer in Delhi demanded money. This corruption made him unhappy

Never before in his life had he felt so exposed, so naked, so defenceless.

The Aftermath is the third part of the novel. The assassination of Mahatma Ghandhi comes as a jolt and he feels as if everything is over. He joins one group to collect the information of Ghandhi’s assassination.

They were playing devotional songs over the All India Radio. A news bulletin came on and it confirmed what the man had told him. It said Ghandhi that evening had died at the hands of an assassin. He
was walking to the prayer meeting from his room in Birla House, when a man approached him and fired three shots. Ghandhijis last words were ‘Hey Rama’ before he fell. The assasin, the announcement said was a Hindu. To remove any misgivings, it was repeated the assasin was not a member of a minority community.66

The death of Mahatma was confirmed and India was shocked. Lala and his family were hurt. Few of them believed that it was Ghandhiji who had sanctioned partition so they were neutral. Lala Kanshi Ram starts a small grocery shop to earn his livelihood Arun takes admission in a college and even Sunanda starts working. Partition makes Lala feel that he has lost his dignity and also his respect. Lala is in distress, unhappy and in pain for they had to pay the price of ‘Azadi’ at the cost of enormous sufferings and human loss.

‘Azadi’ is not only a story of Lala Kanshiram but millions of people like him. Partition ruined lifes of millions of people both the sides and it also imbalanced the human relations. It is a realistic record of the horrible incidents which were caused by Partition. Chaman Nahal in Azadi did not criticize any one community but tried to highlight the human nature during times like Partition. Azadi is a very important novel which deals with traumatic experience of partition of the country into India and Pakistan. Nahal Azadi seems to be different from other,
Partition novels as it makes an effort to encompass all the evils that partition has brought forth. It deals with love, violence, bloodshed, sex and romance are also used as a relief from the tension of the readers. Lala Kanshiram the one who suffers symbolizes the sorrows of the millions of Muslim, Sikh and Hindus. The novelist tries to highlight the human nature in times of crisis. To sum up in the words of Iyengar.

“There is a controlled tension in Nahal’s narrative and his own envenomed memories as a victim of the partition have not, however, warped his sensibilities.”

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