CHAPTER – 1
PARTITION OF INDIA AND ITS IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS

1.1 INDIA’S PARTITION

The poverty of the Indian sub-continent and its deep-rooted social backwardness inevitably encourages the growth of separatist tendencies. The Indian sub-continent gained independence after century old struggle against colonialism. When the sub-continent gained independence, it was expected that newly emerged nations India and Pakistan would embark on sustainable development programme in order to achieve better life for their respective population. Unfortunately, India and Pakistan have developed a somewhat adversarial relationship since the partition of the sub-continent. The relations have been a hostage to history, dating back to pre-partition days when Hindu-Muslim relations were politicised to the extent that partition seemed to be a logical outcome. The origin of India-Pakistan mistrust lies in the ideological differences between the Congress and the Muslim League. The diametrically opposite social manifestations of their ideology provided the basis for the post independence conflicts. The role played by the British, ever since 1857, had strained the relations between the opposing political ideologies. The failure of 1857 mutiny left Indian Muslims with two opposite reactions. Those who had taken part in the mutiny, set up the “Darul ulum” at the Deoband in 1867. It was designed to teach Islamic laws and their heritage to counter the threat to Western civilisation penetrating the minds of Indian Muslims. On the other hand, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan set up a society at Aligarh in 1862 to exert Muslim to change their religious approach to learning and reconcile themselves to Western education and culture.

The Deoband and Aligarh Movements were seen as two diagonally opposite views of the Muslim reaction. Deoband movement was seen as one for saving the Muslim culture and heritage. It was totally nationalist and absolutely anti-British. On the other hand, Aligarh movement was seen as
imparting a new image to Islam and totally subjugated and utterly loyal to the British. Deoband movement was afraid of domination by the British while the Aligarh movement dreaded the domination by the Hindus. The former joined their forces with the Indian National Congress while the later with Muslim League. Thus, the conflict between the philosophy of secularism and Islam in India was fundamentally started by the different approaches of Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. Their differences can be historically traced back to 1906 when there was a demand that Muslims should vote separately from Hindus to elect their own representative. The Muslims felt that the larger community in India would ‘totally override the interests of the smaller community’. Later under Muslim pressure, the Indian Council’s Act of 1909 gave definite recognition to the claim of the Muslim community that it formed a political entity, distinct from the Hindus. Muslims were given separate constituencies and their representatives were to be elected by purely Muslim voters. This principle of ‘communal representation’ henceforth became a necessary part of all constitutional enactments and culminated in the recognition of the Muslims as a separate nation. The Congress felt that since it represented all the minorities, as also the majority community, system of the “separate electorates”, based on religion, was not required. The Muslim League was of the view that the Congress party was opposed to separate electorates because it would imply a formal recognition of Muslims as a separate political entity.

After the first world war the demand for the transfer of greater power to Indians became increasingly insistent and with it the rivalry between the Hindus and Muslims for larger participation in the politics also sharpened, leading to Hindu-Muslim rioting all over India. As the Simon Commission said, ‘it was a manifestation of the anxieties and ambitions aroused in both communities by the prospect of India’s political future’. After detailing the communal violence between the years 1920-40, Ambedkar labelled it ‘twenty years of civil war between the Hindus and Muslims of India, interrupted by brief intervals of armed peace’.
Like the earlier partition of Bengal, the establishment of communal governments in Muslim-majority provinces of Punjab and Bengal gave the two-nation theory a new movementum. The taste of power promoted the feudal and other Muslim “Zamindars” to make further demands such as the separation of Sindh, the conversion of the NWFP into a full-fledged province, introduction of ‘reforms’ in Baluchistan and statutory communal majorities in Punjab and Bengal. In 1928, they also demanded that the British government should transfer power directly to the provinces. Some of them gave an open call for the formation of a ‘federation’ of Muslim provinces in North-West India. Taken together the demand for a Muslim federation and direct transfer of power to the provinces amounted to demanding partition of the country into Hindu India and Muslim India.

On the other hand, the Indian National Congress steadily expanded its base and became the meeting ground of all nationalist Indians. In 1906, the Congress had declared self-government within the British Empire as its immediate goal. However, the character of the organisation quickly changed with the increasing role of the lower middle class, small peasants and industrial workers. The Home Rule agitation and the appearance of Mahatma Gandhi on the political scene brought about a decisive change in the Congress. It attained full stature as an organisation of the masses, representing all section of the society. In 1920, the new constitution of the Congress declared as its objective “the attainment of Swaraj by the people of India”. Gandhi also felt that the programme of non-cooperation was necessary if we wished to achieve Swaraj and solve the Khilafat problem in a satisfactory manner.

The growing moral and political influence of the Congress was viewed with great disquiet by the British rulers. Encouragement was given to individuals and organisations that opposed the claims of the Indian National Congress, particularly to those Muslims who obliged them by opposing the
Congress. Despite this, however, Congress continued getting popular support from the progressive Muslims. The progressive elements among Muslims, which constituted a very large number, subscribed to Congress ideology of secular nationalism.

By 1930, the Muslim youths in the country had caught up with the advanced and educated communities. Since the Muslim community lacked entrepreneurial tradition and, most of the Muslim “Zamindars” were in heavy debts due to their lavish living, the British trained Muslim youth found that they had no future except in government service. As they lacked confidence to compete with the non-Muslims in competitive examination, therefore, they pinned their hopes on politician to increase the weightage for Muslims in various branches of administration. This is how these educated Muslim youth and the Muslim government servant developed a vested interest in communal politics, and a large number of them were attracted towards separatist ideology. The first open demand for the establishment of a separate nation for the Muslim was raised by a group of Punjabi students studying in London. Thereafter, the movement for a separate Pakistan became increasingly popular amongst the Muslim youth and Muslim government servants. They were also influenced by the writings of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, founder of Aligarh Muslim University. He felt that the only way for the Muslims to achieve parity with the Hindus and make up for the lost time was to cooperate with the British and openly show loyalty to them. He also felt that the Muslims had to disassociate themselves from anti-British nationalist activities. He thought it impossible that Hindus and Muslims could peacefully share power in the event of transfer of sovereignty to Indian hands.

In this background, unfortunately, communalisation of politics was given a new thrust both by Hindu and Muslim communalists. Jawaharlal Nehru was not very happy and he wrote to Syed Mahmud on October 5, 1936:
“It is our fate that always the reactionary Muslims should take the lead in everything and the nationalists should follow in their wake dump driven cattle. That has been the case often enough in the past. It is going to continue, I hope not. It is about time on this issue as on others a little aggressive spirit should be displayed by those who call themselves nationalists and advanced”.  

Till 1937, the year, which marked the parting of the ways between the Hindus and the Muslims in India, Congress had perhaps more Muslims on its rolls than the League. The gap in this agreement widen when the same subject was discussed at the round table conference in London, held prior to the passage of the Government of India Act of 1935 by the British Parliament. This Act created a federal structure, with some powers being decentralised to the provincial governments. Under this Act the elections were held in 1937 for the provincial legislatures. League took part in this election under the stewardship of Jinnah. The Congress won a clear majority in Madras, the United Provinces, Bihar, the Central Provinces and Orissa. In other parts of India, in contrast to the Congress success, the performance of the Muslim League was very disappointing. It won only 109 of the 482 Muslim seats, securing barely 4.8 percent of the total Muslim votes. The Congress candidates had won most of the remaining Muslim seats. When Jinnah was approached by the Congress about the possible Congress-League coalition in the provinces, he did not accept the proposal. The main reason for such a stand was that the Congress was determined to introduce land reforms and democratise the entire political system in the Princely State which was not acceptable to not only the Britishers but also to Muslim League.

One of the most important consequences of Congress rule in the Provinces was its impact upon the League’s campaign to redefine the Constitutional position of Indian Muslims. The League demanded that “Indian Muslims be recognised as a ‘Constituent factor’ in all further constitutional
negotiations; that they be allowed to play ‘an equal part’ with the majority community and that it be deemed the only organisation to speak on behalf of ‘Muslim India’.11 The governments on position wavered dangerously between its commitment to give full weight to minority views and interests and its determination not to allow a minority, whatever its size, to interrupt the course of reforms towards full responsible government.12

During this period, Jinnah raised the bogey of “Hindu Raj” and “Islam in Danger” to whip up communal hysteria among the Muslim masses. He made allegations against the Congress that it was trying to divide the Muslim in order to create a Hindu majority India. This was the turning point when the politics in India became openly communal.

These developments left no other alternative for Jinnah than to come forward with his pernicious two-nation theory — divide India on communal lines. All provinces were claimed for the proposed Pakistan because they had a Muslim majority. Some reasons were claimed because they had Muslim rulers. Regions like Berar and Carnatic were claimed because they had been seized from Muslim ruler by the East India Company. The Pakistan resolution was passed by the Muslim League at its Lahore session of 1940. In this session they had demanded a separate and sovereign State for the Muslims. When Gandhiji and Rajagopalachari made offers to the League to form a ministry at the Centre, Jinnah repeatedly turned it down on the ground that no League ministry at the Centre would ever be responsible to a legislature in which the Hindus had a majority. Throughout the 1940, Jinnah repeatedly and categorically dismissed the suitability of applying the principles of arithmetic to the problem of representation.13 He flatly rejected the Cripps Mission proposals of 1942 as the thrust of Mission’s Draft Declaration did not so much recognise a minority’s right to a constitutional veto as its right to opt out of any future constitutional arrangement and evolve a wholly new constitution.14 While rejecting the proposal Jinnah emphasised that the Mission had seriously overlooked the question of the integrity of the Muslim community and had
failed to recognise that India’s problem was primarily ‘international in character’.15

Nevertheless, the League’s claim to parity was to receive a substantial boost in the summer of 1945, when renewed efforts were made to create a representative Interim Government. To achieve this, plans were announced for a reconstruction of Viceroy’s Executive Council on the basis of a balanced representation of the main Indian communities and “an equal proportion of Muslims and caste Hindus”.16 But the government’s understanding of communal parity was not acceptable to the League. Jinnah denied that parity between Muslims and caste Hindus could ever be meaningful, and explained that in the event of coalition Indian Muslims would immediately be reduced to a third on the proposed council, thereby destroying any semblance of parity.17

The League’s impressive electoral victory at the provincial and central levels in 1946 hardened its resolve to push “once for all” for recognition of parity between Muslims and non-Muslims based on the League’s exclusive claim to represent Indian Muslims.18 A convention of League legislators resolved to press for the equal recognition of ‘two separate constitution making bodies… of Pakistan and Hindustan’ representing the interests of Muslims and non-Muslims respectively.19 Influenced with this approach, Jinnah also rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946 and also refused to nominate his members for the interim government under the Presidentship of Lord Wavell. The Congress had also strongly resisted the Mission’s proposal of a constitutional organisation of permanent groups of provinces and parity of representation between groups of provinces.

The differences between the Congress and the Muslim League approach was essentially in their perceptions about religion and politics: whereas the League believed ‘it was the sole representative of Indian Muslim’, the Congress believed ‘it was medievalism to think of communal groups functioning as political groups’.20 The great dilemma that the two-nation theorists faced was that “it was difficult for a minority to battle with a majority; democracy would ensure the victory of a larger group”.21
The argument in favour of Pakistan as a separate state was best summarised by an ideologue: “Muslims having ruled India before the advent of the British were entitled to rule at least the Muslim majority areas”. It was thus, essentially a power game, and rests were mere justifications and the urge to rule was in the back of the whole movement. With this urge to rule, Jinnah stubbornly resisted Gandhi’s repeated suggestion that they should jointly strive for winning India’s freedom and then settle her future.

On 16 August 1946 Jinnah gave the call for “direct action” that unleashed the reign of communal holocaust. Muslims were commanded to do or die at the call of “Islam in Danger”. The League units took out massive procession all over the country, raised provocative slogans and resorted to mass scale killing. The atrocities thus committed surpassed medieval barbarity. There were unprecedented scenes of communal orgy. Situation went on worsening more and more that forced the realistic leaders of the Congress to accept the plan of country’s partition as a very bitter pill so as to save the whole body from contamination. It was the worst communal riot in the 120 years during which records have been compiled on the informal man-to-man war between Hindus and Muslims and Sikhs. Although Jinnah, like other Congress leaders, deplored the violence in Calcutta, it had reinforced his contention that the establishment of Pakistan was the only alternative to civil war. The pressures for partition, which Jinnah was leading and had helped to create, had been powerful but not irresistible up to that point. After the Calcutta explosion, there was no turning back and partition became inevitable. In March 1947, Lord Louis Mountbatten was appointed Viceroy to succeed Lord Wavell. Dynamic, persuasive and bold, Mountbatten plunged into a new effort to settle the constitutional crisis. He first proposed an alternative that would transfer power to the provincial governments, which, if they chose, could later from a central government. The Princely States would be free to conclude any
arrangements they could make. The Indian leaders immediately rejected it with heat and finality. The ebullient Mountbatten was temporarily defeated. He then turned to a solution prepared by his senior Indian advisor, V.P. Menon, and which had been ignored earlier. He proposed partition of the country, including the disputed States of Punjab, Bengal and Assam, and the establishment of two separate governments as the only means of assuring a peaceful transfer of power. Mountbatten obtained general approval of partition, in writing from Hindu and Sikh leaders, and from Jinnah by his usual curt nod. The date for independence, originally set for June 1, 1948 was preponed to August 15, 1947.

Thus, the irreparable tragedy took place. India was divided and, on the corpse of a million people, Pakistan entered the family of nations on August 14, 1947. Although, the Congress party agreed to accept the partition of India, thereby indirectly accepting the two-nation theory sponsored by Jinnah. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad and many other nationalist leaders of the Congress considered this to be defeat of the main objective of their struggle under the banner of Indian National Congress. This is clearly expressed by Nehru in his speech on the night of 15 August 1947 he said:

“Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure but very substantially”.
1.2 NEHRU’S APPROACH TO INDIA’S PARTITION

As it is clear from the above that India’s partition was accepted as a compulsion by great Indian leaders of Congress. Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel, the two big congressmen in the Interim Government, accepted partition on the understanding that by conceding Pakistan to Jinnah they will hear no more of him and eliminate his nuisance value, or, as Nehru put it privately—‘by cutting of the head we will get rid of the headache’.  

Later both the leaders realised that they had committed a blunder. Nehru confessed: “when we decided on partition I do not think any of us ever thought that there would be this terror of mutual killing after partition. It was in a sense to avoid that we decided on partition. So we paid a double price for it. First, you might say politically, ideologically; second, the actual thing happened what we tried to avoid”. This was further expressed by Nehru in his writing to the Nawab of Bhopal on 9 July 1948, “partition came and we accepted it because we thought that perhaps that way, however, painful it was, we might have some peace to work along our own lines. Perhaps we acted wrongly. It is difficult to judge now, and yet the consequences of that partition have been so terrible that one is inclined to think that anything else would have been preferable. That partition has come, and it brought in its train other vast changes. There is no going back now to India as it was before the partition”.

Thus, the biggest political blunder that had ever been committed by Nehru was his acceptance of India’s partition. But Nehru alone should not be blamed by the critics. As far as his own ideas and perception regarding secularism and communalism are concerned, he was very clear. Critics of Nehru’s policy regarding India’s partition should always keep in mind his own ideas and perception regarding Muslims and other communities and his efforts to maintain peace and communal harmony in the country.

Nehru’s own perspective was influenced by his cosmopolitan family background, his education in England, his social and cultural ambience in
Allahabad, and his long-standing friendship and political camaraderie with influential Congress Muslims, including Ansari, Azad, Syed Mahmud, Khaliquzzaman, Tassaduq Ahmad Khan Sherwani and Abdul Majeed Khwaja. He was a product of the cultural norms and intellectual background of the Urdu-speaking elites of the Indo-Gangetic belt and his sensibilities were influenced by them. He went to Harrow School and Trinity College, Cambridge, and interacted with Fabian socialists in London. Such interactions widened his intellectual horizon and enriched his appreciation of political and social transformative processes around the globe. He could thus locate in perspective the rapid changes, some of a revolutionary nature, taking place in countries like Egypt, Turkey and Iran. Discussions with Azad and other Muslim scholars gave him a better understanding of Indian Islam and medieval Indian history. In the Discovery of India he analysed late nineteenth century reformist currents, commended Syed Ahmad Khan’s bold initiatives, commented on the nationalist stir among the young Muslim intelligentsia of north India, noted the ‘sensation’ created by Azad, ‘this very youthful writer and journalist’, and assessed Iqbal’s impact on the younger generation of Muslim.32

More than anything else, Nehru attributed the social, educational and economic backwardness of most Muslims—not, like his political comrades, to any innate failing but to concrete historical and sociological factors.33 He new, so he said more about their hunger and poverty than those who talked in terms of percentages and seats in Councils. He claimed to be in closer touch with them than most of their self-styled leaders. He had vast Muslim audiences in different parts of the country. They did not ask him about the communal problem or percentages or separate electorates. They were more interested in land revenue or rent, water rates, unemployment, and their many other burdens. How, then, could he accept the Muslim League’s pretentious claims, and recognise him as the ‘sole spokesmen’? The League leadership deliberately exploited religion in order to avoid discussing problems of the common man.
A simple fact that eluded most of Nehru’s comrades was that India was not at any stage structured around religious solidarities or polarized along ‘communal’ lines. Nehru’s exceptionally eclectic mind grasped this reality. He believed that inter-community conflicts, as and when they occurred, were counter posed to the quiet, common place routines in which communities intermingled. Cross-community linkages rather than religious ties influenced the direction in which patronage, authority and economic relations flowed into everyday life. Consequently it was both possible and desirable to reinforce traditional linkages through ‘mass contact’ and a radical socio-economic blueprint. Moreover, it was feasible to blunt the impact of communal slogans by reducing class disparities, creating opportunities for upward mobility, and making the masses aware of their mutual interdependence, their shared historical experiences and their common concerns, interests and destiny.

This was the impulse behind Nehru’s brainchild, the Muslim Mass Contact Campaign, launched in March 1937. The idea was to approach the Muslims not as a collective fraternity but as a segment of an impoverished population. The principal motivation was to convince them that they did not constitute a nation, and that their fortunes were not tied to their Muslim brethren per se but to fellow-artisans, peasants and workers in other communities. Nehru conducted dialogue with Jinnah on these lines, questioned the rationale of Muslim nationalism in a society traditionally anchored in cultural and religious pluralism, and criticised the creation of a Muslim identity in the garb of Islam. He tried in vain to delink issues of proportion and percentages of seats from the more basic contradictions between nationalism and colonialism. He expected Jinnah to draw his constituency into this just and legitimate struggle as co-citizens and not as a preferential religio-political collectivity.

To Nehru the two-nation idea was anathema and no more than a reversion to some medieval theory. ‘Why only two I do not know, for if nationality was based on religion, then there were many nations in India. Of
two brothers one may be a Hindu, another a Muslim; they would belong to two different nations. These two nations existed in varying proportions in most of the villages in India. They were nations which has no boundaries; they overlapped. A Bengali Muslim and a Bengali Hindu, living together, speaking the same language and having much the same traditions and customs, belong to different nations.35

There was much ambiguity and fuzziness in nationalist thinking about the corporate identity of Muslims. Nehru removed some of it: ‘there can be and should be religious or cultural solidarity. But when enter the political plane, the solidarity is national, not communal; when we enter the economic plane, the solidarity is economic’.36 In what way, he asked, were the interests of the Muslim peasant different from those of the Hindu peasant, or those of a Muslim labourer, artisan, merchant, landlord or manufacturer different from those of his Hindu counterparts? The ties that bound people were common economic interests and in the case of a subject country especially, a common national interest.37 If the country began to think and act on these lines, the ‘myth’ of communalism would disappear along with pseudo-religious mentality.38 Communalism was not, after all, the power it was made out to be; it was a creation of educated classes in search of office and employment. The problem was essentially one of protection of interests, and religion was merely a useful staking-horse for this purpose.39 The ‘real conflict had nothing to do with religion, though religion often marked the issue, but was essentially between those who stood for a nationalist / democratic / socially revolutionary policy and those concerned with preserving the relics of a feudal regime. In a crisis the latter depended on foreign support which is interested in preserving the status quo’.40

The basic premise of Nehru’s argument was valid. There was nothing wrong in arguing that religious solidarity should not be the basis for political activism, or that religious symbols of disunity be shunned in public life. The alternative strategy, worked out by Tilak in Maharashtra or the swadeshi
leaders in Bengal, had created fissures in the liberation struggle, offended Muslims in those regions, and enfeebled the intellectual underpinnings of secular goals set by the Congress.

Nehru was not the sole champion of secular nationalism; yet he, more than anyone else, enriched its content. He provided depth to debates on secularism within the Congress, as also in left circles, by introducing complex but relevant historical and contemporary themes drawn from India and other societies. He did so not on the basis of abstract principles of Western democracy — a charge commonly levelled against him by his detractors — but because of his own acute understanding of the wider social and political processes in history. There is no reason to believe that his perceptions were flawed, or to doubt his motives or intentions. In sum, Nehru’s ideas ran contrary to Jinnah’s two-nation theory and to the thinking of some of his own Congress colleagues who decried his ‘pro-Muslim’ proclivities.

It is evident from the above discussion that Nehru had no feeling of discrimination with respect to caste or religion. For him all people residing in India were the members of the same family, whatever be their caste or religion. It was because of this reason that when Jinnah demanded that Muslim League should be recognised as the most representative body of the Muslims, Nehru replied on April 6, 1938: “Obviously the Muslim League is an important communal organisation and we deal with it as such. But we have to deal with all organisations and individuals that come within our ken. We do not determine the measure of importance or distinction they possess”. He also added, “...This importance does not come from outside recognition but from inherent strength”.41

Several rounds of invain talks between Nehru and Jinnah and Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan were held but finally Jinnah succeeded in his propaganda of making a separate Islamic nation. And there was no option left for Indian leaders but to accept India’s partition. It was Nehru’s vacillation that let him down at the crucial moment in his life. How else can his behaviour be explained? Lincoln along with Gandhi had been his inspiration. As Shashi
Tharoor has revealed in his weekly column in the Indian Express, “On his desk, Jawaharlal Nehru kept two totems — a gold statuette of Mahatma Gandhi and a bronze cast of the hand of Abraham Lincoln which he would occasionally touch for comfort. The two objects reflected the range of his sources of inspiration: he often spoke of his wish to confront problems with the heart of the Mahatma and the hand of Lincoln”. In accepting partition, he let down both his mentors.

Thus, everybody living in India irrespective of the age, profession, caste, and religion swallowed up the bitter fact that India was divided; ‘the fact that territory and people that historically, geographically and economically were for centuries one country and one nation, was partitioned somewhat arbitrarily into two sovereign nation-states, and the circumstances of that partition and its consequences made inevitable a certain amount of disharmony between the two new States’.

The partition had the violence which accompanied it, led to nearly six million refugees pouring into India having lost their all. India was in the midst of a communal holocaust. There was senseless communal slaughter and a fratricidal war of unprecedented proportions. Unspeakable atrocities were perpetrated on the minorities in both India and Pakistan. In the span of a few months, nearly 500,000 people were killed and property worth thousands of millions of rupees was looted and destroyed. Communal violence threatened the very fabric of society. Even in Delhi, under the very nose of the central government, the looting and killing of Muslims lasted several days. In writing to Dr. Rajender Prashad, Nehru mentioned, “I must confess to you that recent happenings in the Punjab and in Delhi have shaken me greatly, ... shaking my faith in my own people. I could not conceive of the gross brutality and sadistic cruelty that people have indulged in.... There is a limit to killing and brutality and that limit has been passed during these days in North India.... Little children are butchered in the streets. The houses in many parts of Delhi are still full of corpses.... I am fairly thick-skinned, but I find these kinds of thing more than I can bear ... 50,000 or 100,000 people have been murdered”. Despite
the fierce pressure of communal sentiment, which affected even some of the important Congress leaders, both at the Centre and in the States, it is to the credit of the national leadership and the people that they managed to maintain India’s secular polity. This was no easy task and Nehru, particular, had to use the full force of his personality, including threats of resignation, to make this possible. The situation was brought under control within a few months through decisive political and administrative measures.

Nehru always kept the window of friendship and cooperation opened to all nations of the world, especially to the neighbouring countries. This is evident from his message on August 15, 1947, “I want to say to all nation of the world, including our neighbour country that we stand for peace and friendship with them”. This has been the main thrust of India’s foreign policy for 50 years. In fact, Pakistan’s Governor-General, and creator, M.A. Jinnah had also said, “we want to live peacefully and maintain cordial friendly relations with our immediate neighbour and with the world at large”. But, what actually happened between India and Pakistan was conflict, discord and even wars.

India has consistently sought peaceful, cordial and friendly relations with Pakistan, as with all other countries in the world. However, Pakistan leadership has been harping on threats from India, and the alleged Indian desire to swallow her. India has repeatedly said that it wishes to respect Pakistan’s sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. India has made it clear time and again that it does not have any intention whatsoever to undo the partition, and that it sincerely desires to settle all outstanding problems and disputes between the two countries by peaceful means, without resort to force. In the past, India has made several offers of “no war pact” to Pakistan, but the latter has never responded favourably to Indian offer. Pakistan’s policy towards India has been one of persistent hostility. Nehru had once described Pakistan’s policy as that of “India-baiting”. The leadership of Pakistan has persistently accused India of not having reconciled to India’s partition, and planning to undo it. Thus, the basic problem between India and Pakistan is that while India wants
friendship with its neighbour, that country has nothing but hatred for and hostility towards India.

In fact, in spite of many errors and weaknesses, the Government of India’s record, and in particular Nehru’s personal record, in dealing with the post-partition riots was exemplary. The government also succeeded in protecting the Muslim minority in the country, so that in the end forty-five million Muslims chose to remain in India. Communalism was thereby contained and weakened but not eliminated, for conditions were still favourable for its growth. For communalism to be eclipsed a consistent struggle against it would be needed for a prolonged period. More than anyone else, Nehru was aware of this. And so he never tired of stressing that communalism was a fundamental issue of Indian politics and that it posed the main threat to India’s integrity. ‘If allowed free play’, he wrote in 1951, ‘communalism would break up India’.47 Portraying communalism as the Indian version of fascism, he said in October 1947, ‘the wave of fascism which is gripping India now is the direct outcome of hatred for the non-Muslims which the Muslim League preached among its followers for years. The League accepted the ideology of fascism from the Nazis of Germany … the ideas and methods of fascist organisation are now gaining popularity among the Hindu’s also and the demand for the establishment of a Hindu State is its clear manifestation’.48

Nehru carried on a massive campaign against communalism to instill a sense of security in the minorities, through public speeches, radio broadcasts, speeches in parliament, private letters and epistles to chief ministers. He repeatedly declared: ‘No State can be civilised except a secular State’.49 On Gandhiji’s birthday in 1951, he told a Delhi audience: ‘if any person raises his hand to strike down another on the ground of religion, I shall fight him till the last breath of my life, both as the head of the government and from outside’.50 Democratic though he was, he even advocated a ban on political organisations based on religion and got the Constitution amended to enable the government to impose ‘reasonable restrictions’ on the right to free speech and expression in order to curb communal speeches and writings.
Though on almost all issues he believed in consensus and compromise, communalism was the exception, for as he said in 1950, any compromise on communalism ‘can only mean a surrender of our principles and a betrayal of the cause of India’s freedom’.* Keeping in view India’s specific situation, Nehru defined secularism in the dual sense of keeping the State, politics and education separate from religion, making religion a private matter for the individual, and of showing equal respect for all faiths and providing equal opportunities for their followers. He defined communalism as the ideology which treated Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs or Christians as homogenous group in regard to political and economic matters, as ‘politics under some religious grab, one religious group being incited to hate another religious group’.* Nehru was one of the first to try to understand the socio-economic roots of communalism, and he came to believe that it was primarily a weapon of reaction, even though its social base was formed by the middle classes. Nehru also argued most convincingly that secularism had to be the sole basis for national unity in a multi-religious society and that communalism was, therefore, clearly a danger to national unity and was anti-national.

There was, however, a major lacuna in Nehru’s approach to the problem of communalism, which can be seen as a certain economistic, deterministic and reductionist bias. Believing that planning and economic development and the spread of education, science and technology would automatically weaken communal thinking and help from a secular consciousness, he ignored the need for struggle against communalism as an ideology. As a result he paid little attention to the content of education or to the spread of science and scientific approach among the people. While very active himself, he failed to use the Congress as an organisation to take his own brilliant understanding of communalism to the people. He also compromised with his own stand when he permitted the Congress in Kerela to enter into an alliance with the Muslim League and Christian communal group in 1960. Further, he was unable to persuade the State governments to take strong administrative steps against the
instigators or perpetrators of communal violence. Sadly, sorrow over the large-scale communal violence marked the last years of his life.\textsuperscript{53}

1.3 PROBLEMS BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN RESULTING FROM THE PARTITION

The two States of India and Pakistan were born in August 1947, when India was partitioned at the end of British colonial rule. The country was divided, partitioned, and rather vivisected on the basis of the two-nation theory, theory on the basis of religion. The people who were supporters of partition belonged to hinterland. After partition most of such people appear to have reconciled with secular India and have stayed back. During the exchange of population, that is Hindus to India and Muslims to Pakistan most of the Muslims stayed back in India and their population, who left Pakistan for India, were primarily not received as Hindus but as Pakistani refugees. Similarly, the Muslims from India to Pakistan were, basically and primarily not received as Muslims but as Indian refugees (Mohajir), though the country was partitioned on the basis of two-nation theory Hindus and Muslims.

When India was partitioned it was expected that the relations between India and Pakistan would be normal and cordial because the partition was affected with the consent of the leaders of the two areas. The people of the two areas had shared a common history for centuries and the economies of the two countries were complimentary to each other but unfortunately that did not happen. Two major reasons for constant conflict between the two States were identified as follows—\textsuperscript{54}

1. Partition was affected in haste without formulating suitable and detailed rules for the game. The result was mass exodus of population for each country, large-scale killings, abduction of women, forced conversions,
problem of recovery of evacuee property and many such other problems. This caused bad blood between the two countries and things could not be forgotten for long.

2. Basis for the partition was not laid down in unambiguous terms. Pakistan’s leader advocated and accepted partition on the basis of ‘two-nation’ theory. In contrast, while Indian leaders accepted partition, they never approved of two-nation theory. They accepted partition on the basis of some type of territorial self-determination and more on account of compulsions created by the prevailing situation of widespread riots and the unhealthy intentions of our British rulers.

Our relations with Pakistan have been particularly unhappy. There have been constant threats of war. Between the two countries there are some major problems and disputes from partition. The following major issues and problems determined the nature of Indo-Pak relations:-

1.3.1 Transfer of population and problem of religious minorities

1.3.2 Problem of recovery or compensation for abandoned property of refugees in India and Pakistan

1.3.3 Division of State assets at the time of partition

1.3.4 Canal-Water Disputes

1.3.5 Boundary Disputes

1.3.6 Issue of Integration of Princely States
1.3.1 Transfer of population and problem of religious minorities

The price for Indian independence was very heavy in the form of mass killings, uprooting of lakhs of families and other brutalities. Following the decision to accept the partition, both India and Pakistan should have prepared a well articulated plan for the transfer of population. Regretfully, this aspect was completely ignored both by India and Pakistan. The communal madness which took place in forcing the Hindus and Sikhs out of Pakistan had an equal reaction in Punjab, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh in India. The communal frenzy reached such a State that it seemed that India and Pakistan were going to plunge into a civil war. An estimated twelve million people crossed the new international border from both the sides and moved to different destinations. It is also reported that approximately one million lives were lost.55

Large transfer of population between India and Pakistan as a consequence of India’s partition led to the worsening of internal situation in both the countries. The major problems faced by the Government of India were the restoration of normalcy in country and the creation of a social climate of secular existence. In addition, it had to make arrangements to house and feed millions of refugees, who had come from Pakistan, make long term plans for their rehabilitation, and their eventual absorption in the mainstream of Indian social life.

From the above discussion it must not be thought that religious conflicts were settled by the transfer of population between the two countries. The problem of religious minorities remained unsolved in both the States. About 40 million Muslims remained in India and 10 million Hindus in East Pakistan.56 The fever of religious communalism was heightened by the unfortunate happenings of 1947. The legacy of the communalism of partition still sometimes leads to the occasional outbreak of communal riots.
After independence, while India sought to solve its minority problems by establishing a secular State, Pakistan decided to be an Islamic republic. The reports of maltreatment of minorities in either side started causing serious strains on bilateral relations of India and Pakistan. It was to arrive at a consensus regarding the treatment of minorities in the two States that Prime Minister Nehru and Pakistani Prime Minister Liquat Ali Khan held talks in April, 1950 and Nehru-Liquat pact was concluded. This pact gave constitutional guarantees for minorities and promised the return transfer of refugees and recovery of abducted women. It also assured freedom of movement and protection in travel to the migrants. It provided for the setting up of minorities commission in East Bengal and West Bengal for carrying out the arrangements made in respect of the migrants. After the conclusion of this pact the refugee’s migration suddenly dropped. However, it erupted again in 1951 in particular, the influx of Hindus from East Pakistan to West Bengal registered a big increase. The migration problem become very acute but both the countries, having adopted different and opposed position on many international issues, failed to implement even the Nehru-Liaquat pact fully. Throughout the late fifties and early sixties the influx of refugees from Pakistan to India continued to be a source of trouble for Indo-Pak relations. Even in 1971, a large number of Hindus and Muslim refugees crossed over to India after a military crackdown and massacre was let loose in East Pakistan by the government of Pakistan. The influxes of refugees become an important reason for the outbreak of war between India and Pakistan in December 1971. Thus, after partition the refugee problem came to be a source of big strain on Indo-Pak relations. Even after sixty years of partition the problem of illegal migration of refugees from Sindh (Pakistan) into India continues to be there.
1.3.2 Problem of recovery or compensation for abandoned property of refugees in India and Pakistan

Another irritant which arose out of the partition was that of evacuee property. The non-Muslims left properties worth Rs.5000 million in Pakistan while Muslims left property worth Rs.1000 million in India. To solve the evacuee immovable property several meetings between the representatives of Indian and Pakistani Governments took place between 1947-1950 and 1953 but nothing came out of it. In 1958 a ministerial level meeting took place but it was also not very fruitful. Again in 1964, the attempts by the Government of India to solve the problem were turned down by Pakistan. No further serious attempt were made in this direction.

1.3.3 Division of State assets at the time of partition

As regards the distribution of assets and liabilities of British India, it was decided in December 1947 that the Government of Pakistan would receive Rs 750 millions from India as its share of the balances. As an interim measure Rs 200 million was paid to Pakistan as an interim installment. In the meantime a clash between India and Pakistan took place over Kashmir. Sardar Patel threatened that the implementation of the agreement would depend upon the settlement of the Kashmir issue. But owing to Mahatma Gandhi’s fast against the delay the payment was made to Pakistan promptly.

Also, at the time of partition, it was decided that India would take the entire responsibility of paying the foreign debts and Pakistan would pay its share to India in three equal installments. But the refusal of Pakistan to pay its share led the development of bad blood between the two countries. Similarly, the problem of division of military stores and delinking of banking services too
acted as irritants in Indo-Pak relations. The problem of establishing trade and economic relations also caused tensions.

Areas that formed part of Pakistan were rich in wheat and cotton production which used to supply these commodities to other parts of India. Likewise, India after partition came to be the inheritor of rich sugarcane, coal and iron ore producing areas. The partition upset the complementarily of economic and trade relations. In 1947, both the countries signed a Standstill Agreement which permitted free flow of goods between the two countries. However, this arrangement failed to work smoothly because there arose disputes over the issue of sharing the export duty on jute and other taxes levied and collected on such goods. Consequently, a new trade agreement was signed in May 1948. But this agreement too failed to resolve the trade tangle. The third agreement was signed on 24 June 1949, but the devaluation of Indian rupee and Pakistan’s refusal to do the same made the implementation of this agreement impossible. Thus, the differences over trade relations to kept the Indo-Pak relations tense and strained during the period under review.

1.3.4 Canal-Water Disputes

Another matter which became a source of irritation between the two countries was the distribution of river waters. It became actually manifest after the partition. Pakistan’s economy was mostly agricultural and its development was dependent on India’s generosity to allow water into Pakistan. Five of the six rivers rise and flow through India. After partition, it became imperative that river waters should be distributed between the two countries in an equitable manner. ‘No army with bombs and shellfire could be devastated by the simple expedient of India’s permanently shutting off the sources of water that keep the fields and the people of Pakistan alive’. After extensive negotiations,
Pt. Nehru and Field Marshal Ayub Khan signed the Indus-Water treaty at Karachi on September 19, 1960. The treaty divided the six rivers between India and Pakistan according to a formula. The water of Sutlej, Ravi, Beas were to go to India and the other three Indus, Jhelum and Chenab to Pakistan. The treaty which was supposed to solve the water dispute between the two countries, however, did not do so and occasionally differences on the subject did erupt.

1.3.5 Boundary Disputes

After partition both the countries started in the right earnest the process of demarcating, on the basis of Radcliffe Award, the boundaries between them. Through rational compromises reached through mutual negotiations, both the countries accomplished the gigantic task in approximately 25 years. The demarcation of East Punjab-Pakistan boundary was completed in June 1960 and the Rajasthan-Pakistan boundary in 1963.

However, the two sides failed to demarcate the Kutch-Sindh boundary. India was of the view that the Government of Bombay's resolution of February, 1914 had settled the matter finally. Pakistan did not accept the view and asserted that the issue was still in dispute and that Kutch-Sindh boundary had never been demarcated. In early 1964, Pakistan sent some of its troops to occupy Chhad Bet area of North Runn of Kutch. But these troops withdrew when Indian troops moved into the area. However, in April 1965, there developed a war between India and Pakistan over the issue of ownership of Runn of Kutch. In June 1965 both India and Pakistan agreed to a cease-fire which was to be effective with effect from 1st July 1965. Afterwards, it was agreed to refer the dispute to a three Judge Arbitration Tribunal. Tribunal gave its award in February 1968 and decided against the Pakistani case that the International boundary of the Runn passed through its middle. Nevertheless, it
awarded to Pakistan some 350 sq. miles of the disputed area. India, though did not regard the decision as just, decided to accept it unconditionally because of the terms of the June 1965 agreement. The Pakistani invasion of Kutch was, however, really designed to test its army and guns for the future aggression against India, which came in September 1965.69

1.3.6 Issue of Integration of Princely States

The immediate problem faced by the Indian Government was the consolidation of Indian Princely States. In the British Act of Independence, the Princely States were given the option of either acceding to one of the two newly created countries or declaring themselves independent. The constitutional position of the States, upon the transfer of power to Indian hands, was clearly mentioned in paragraph 14 of Cabinet Mission Plan statement dated 16 May 1946: ‘Paramountcy can neither be retained by the British crown nor transferred to the new government’. Section 7 of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 declared that ‘the suzerainty of His Majesty over the Indian States lapses’. The legal position, therefore, was that the States became completely independent, and were under no obligation to join India or Pakistan.70

By 15 August 1947 almost every one of the 56571 Princely States, with three exceptions had acceded to either India or Pakistan, on the same basis as the principle underlying the partition of British India. The three, which stood out, were Junagadh, Hyderabad and Kashmir. Sardar Patel enabled India to consolidate and merge into India these States of varying size, socio-economic environment and at varying degree of feudal administration and an equally different degree of importance to this country. The determined effort of Sardar Patel to unite India as a nation-state has been the greatest contribution of any single person in making Indians think of themselves as belonging to one nation.
The issue of accession of these three States led to the development of tensions and strains in Indo-Pak relations.

(i). Junagadh

The Princely State of Junagadh was a Hindu majority State (more than 80%) ruled by a Muslim ruler Sir Mahabat Khan Hussain. On 15 August 1947 the Government of Junagadh announced that the State had acceded to Pakistan and subsequently after a month Pakistan accepted the accession. But this accession of Junagadh was not acceptable to Indian Government. The Governor-General of India, Lord Mountbatten, under the pressure of Indian leaders, telegraphed to Jinnah that Pakistan’s acceptance of Junagadh’s accession was ‘in utter violation of principles on which partition of India was agreed upon and effected’. On 17 September the Indian Cabinet decided to deploy troops around Junagadh ‘with a view to insuring the security of the country and to maintaining law and order in Kathiawar’. After the administration of the State had been taken over by India, a plebiscite was held on 20 February 1948 in Junagadh for setting its future. Majority of people came in favour of India. Only 91 persons voted in favour of Pakistan. After this verdict, Junagadh became a part of India. Nevertheless, Pakistan took the complain to the Security Council where it still stands buried.

(ii). Hyderabad

The large-sized native State of Hyderabad presented a different problem. This State in South India was surrounded on all sides by Indian Territory—the then Provinces of Bombay, Madras, Central Provinces and the State of Mysore which had already merged with India. The ruler of Hyderabad, the Nizam, was one of the wealthiest individuals in the world. He was given the title of His
Exalted Highness by the British Government. The Nizam was dreaming of an independent Kingdom, though he had given the impression of his being in favour of Pakistan. The Nizam had given a loan of two crore rupees to Pakistan. Jinnah knew the Nizam too well. He told Indian Governor-General Lord Mountbatten that Hyderabad was the concern of the Nizam. Like Junagadh, vast majority of the people in Hyderabad were Hindus, though the ruler was Muslim. The Nizam was planning to make his State a sovereign country, yet he was negotiating merger with India. Pakistan gave an indication that the Nizam could rely on that country in case of difficulty.

Meanwhile, the Nizam’s aide Qasim Rizvi established an organisation of Muslim fundamentalists. Its members, known as Razakars, were given training to fight for their community. The Razakars let loose a reign of terror in the State, killing and looting people, and in the process entire law and order machinery collapsed. People all over the country became restless and demanded use of force to settle the problem of Hyderabad and restore peace. Earlier, on four occasions, police action was planned but could not be taken. Finally, the fifth attempt or ‘Operation Polo’ was drafted and implemented under the direct control of Home Minister Sardar Patel. Even Prime Minister Nehru was not taken into confidence for fear of his disapproval. Indian army brought the situation under control within 24 hours, but the task was completed in five days. Accepting Nizam’s formal request for accession, India agreed to pay Rs. 50 lakhs per year as privy purse to the Nizam. Pakistan termed Indian action as aggression, and raised the issue thrice (October, November and December 1948) in the United Nations. But, it could not muster much support except that of the United States.
(iii). Kashmir Issue

The most vexed issue between India and Pakistan which has brought a horrendous condition in Indo-Pak relations, the protracted nature of which has brought grave ramifications to the parties involved and adversely accentuated tensions in South Asia bringing momentous influence on global politics at large is the Kashmir issue. No other bilateral dispute has posed such alarming implications for the disputing parties as well as international politics as the dispute over Kashmir. All attempts to resolve the issue have failed. The problem further got aggravated with the rise of militancy in the valley. As rightly pointed out by Ratnesh Kishore Verma and Manju Mishra. “For past fifty years Kashmir is the major bone of contention between the two strange brothers, viz., India and Pakistan. Both India and Pakistan have own versions of looking at Kashmir issue, where there is no place for convergence; result is the derailment of peace process for past five decades. The major losers are the citizens of India and Pakistan because of lack of political, social and economic development in both these countries”. The whole Kashmir issue arising out of India’s partition shall be discussed in detail in Chapter-2.
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