



MUSLIMS DISILLUSIONMENT, PARTITION AND ITS PRESENT IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This pragmatic research oriented document attempts to explore the Muslim estrangement in Indian polity paving the way for the partition of India. This paper also glances on the aftermath of division. In order to diagnose the theme logically and expansively, private papers of the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow, Government of India's Home Department' Fortnightly Reports, constitutional documents, reminisces and biographies of renowned personalities of the time and standard research works related to the theme have been exhausted.

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INTRODUCTION

Colonial strategy to engender cleavage in the Indian polity, religious narrow-mindedness between Hindus and Muslims, Illiteracy among the Muslims and shortsighted policies of Muslim league brought disillusionment among the Muslims. Chain of reactions in one community and the other made the political and communal atmosphere catastrophic culminating in Partition with disgusting results on the subcontinent.

Objective of Study: The main purpose of the study is to spot that how disillusionment crept in the Muslim community paving the way for the vivisection of India with the ghastly repercussions for the future.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Contemporary Government of India Home Department's Fortnightly Reports, Private papers of the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow, related documents and contemporary periodicals available at National Archives of India, New Delhi, were utilized to get ready this research oriented monograph. Historical research methodology has been practiced in order to furnish the theme an objective look. Original and secondary documents have been consulted to have a fair and wide-ranging picture of the subject.

DISCUSSION

Colonial India remained subject to the British rule from 1857 to 1947. British rulers adopted every licit and illicit means to perpetuate their rule over India and exploited it mercilessly in every possible way. Reform, repression and division in society were their major plank of the British guiding principle in India. Resentment against the colonial rule manifested in different ways. British constitutional doses enunciated in the form of Indian Councils Act of 1892, Indian Councils Act of 1909, Government of India Act of 1919 and Government of India Act of 1935 were failed to placate the Indians. Unfortunately almost all these constitutional Acts included the provisions of separate electorates or reservation of seats for the Muslim community which induced them to make an echo for more and more concessions and finally turned to make reverberation for a separate homeland for them. It was their endeavour not only to divide Indian polity but Indian nation as well. All the constitutional commissions of enquiries, i.e. Simon Commission, Cripps Mission and Cabinet Mission manifested the space for communal and separate reservation for the Muslim population. Even other minorities were also given an inducement. Disillusionment and estrangement with the political developments made Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, finally uncompromising both towards the Government and Congress and he finally refused to accept any settlement that would not provide the Pakistan of his own conception. India became a victim to the nefarious designs of Jinnah and Muslim League, wrong doings of Congress and crafty British policy of divide and rule which

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culminated in the form of melancholy partition. Millions of people were slaughtered and property worth of millions of rupees was damaged. Aftermath of the partition was disgusting. People paid heavily for no fault. Partition affected the bilateral relations not only between these two countries but the whole of Asia and its far reaching repercussions are being faced even today in the form of volatility of borders.

Prior to the dawn of British rule in India, Muslims were the rulers in this country. Permanent-settlement of Bengal of Lord Cornwallis (1793) elevated the Hindu collectors who up to that time had held inconsequential posts, to the position of landholders, gave them propriety rights in the soil and allowed them to mount up wealth which would have moved out otherwise to the Muslims. Between 1852 and 1862, 240 natives were admitted as pleaders of the High Court but there was only one Muslim which caused a lot of estrangement. Muslims were also punched badly in the spheres of education, military, employment and economy. The result of these policies was the cataclysm of 1857 in which the British saw the hand of the Muslim-community as the primary movers. The British took the Mutiny a plot on the part of the Muslims to turn them out of their country. Therefore the authorities fell sternly on Muslims and they were denied from all opportunities for progress and were gradually excluded from official posts as well. In 1871, out of total of 2141 persons engaged by the Bengal Government, there were only 92 Muslims. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, an ardent backer of British rule, then turned out to be the messiah for his own community and resolute to regain the confidence of the British which his community had imprudently forfeited. To extend the facilities of higher education to the members of his community, he established the Mohammedan Anglo- Oriental College at Aligarh in 1875 with the help of Lord Northbrook. It was finally turned up as Aligarh movement. Under the influence of its English Principals, he however criticized the Congress and the Hindus and summed up that an Anglo Muslim alliance would ameliorate the condition of the Muslim community and finally enabled them to win their favor. He rallied together the Indian Muslims and became the first prophet of Muslim nationalism. He succeeded in bringing the Muslims nearer the British and the Government then turned against the Congress and Hindus for their nationalist activities. In history he is dubbed as the first person who sowed the seeds of separatism in the Indian polity which finally culminated in the form of a big tree in the silhouette of Pakistan.¹

The idea of an independent Muslim state was floating, in the mind of Lord Curzon, for some time. Lord Curzon, an apostle of imperialism, told Muslims boastfully after partitioning Bengal in 1905: "*I am giving you a Muslim province*". By setting up a separate Muslim Province of Eastern Bengal in 1906, the Government of India wanted to reward the communal Muslims for their loyalty and punish the Hindus for their defiance of British authority. The inducement given by Lord Curzon to the Muslims was further augmented in a fast pace even in the period of Lord Minto. However under the pressure of nationalists the partition was annulled in 1911. No Muslim organization actually disliked partition, and the great nationalist leader, Muhammad Ali, in his speech as Congress President in 1923, referred to the reversal of the Partition of Bengal as an important cause for the disillusionment of the Muslims with the British Government².

In fact the British Indian Government, through Principal Archibald instigated the Muslim leaders like Nawab Mohin-ul-Mulak and Haji Mohammad Ismail to send a petition to the Viceroy, Lord Minto, stressing that Muslims in India could benefit only from the system of nomination only, not from the principle of election as representative reforms were to be introduced shortly. The Viceroy met the delegation as arranged on 1st October, 1906 and intentionally committed himself to give separate electorates to the Muslims to lift them in the polity of India. It was an unfortunate development in Indian politics and an inducement to separatism. The country did not have at that time any political, social or communal organization other than the Indian National Congress. Under the circumstances, the anxiety of the British rulers was also to see the formation of a purely Muslim all-India organization to accommodate the Muslim communalists and their wishes which could also counter Congress. Hindi – Urdu controversy had done the spade work as Muslims resented the order of the Government of lowering the status and prestige of Urdu as official language in the Courts. Alienation of the Muslim community was to the brim. Thus came into existence All India Muslim League on 30th December, 1906, which played a significant role in the political field during the next forty years and was, in no small measure, responsible for India's partition. It was a communal body from its very inception. Its substance differed from those of Congress. As regards the separate electorates, the Muslims stressed the vital differences between the Hindus and the Muslims in religion, social customs, and historical traditions and held that their interests were entirely different from those of Hindus. The Muslim minority therefore suspected that it would not be dealt with fairly by the majority Hindu community in India. This type of sensitivity was tantamount to what afterwards came to be known as two nation's theory.³

The British Government in order to make its hold over the communal Muslims, granted the Muslims, through the reform scheme of 1909, 1919 and 1935, some special concessions with regard to franchise and representation. On the ground of alleged political importance they were ensured proportionate representation through communal electorates. It meant that a certain number of seats in the Legislative Councils were to be filled exclusively by Mohammadans, and for the purpose of filling such seats, special Mohammadan electorates were to be constituted. The Muslims were also allowed to retain their right to vote in general electorates. In 1916 for the sake of getting the help of the Muslim community in India's struggle for freedom, Congress gambled by signing Lucknow Pact conceding Muslims' right of separate electorates, to which demand it had hitherto been opposing. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the future creator of Pakistan, was reported to have remarked, later on: "*How can the Hindus oppose Pakistan when they had recognized the separate identity of Muslims in 1916?*"

Nehru Report (1928) outlined that there would be no special representation in Parliament for communal groups except for Muslims in Bengal and for non Muslims in the North West Frontier Province where they are in minority.⁴ There was reservation of seats for Muslims and non Muslims along with the right to contest from additional seats. The committee rejected communal representation for the majority community in any Province and they pointed out that the majority in Bengal and in the Punjab, namely, the Muslims did not require

at all special communal representation. While discarding communal representation for the majority community, the Committee, however, as a temporary measure, agreed to give communal representation in proportion to their population of the Muslims in Provinces other than Bengal and Punjab. Thus in the UP, CP, Bihar, Bombay, and Madras, the Muslim minorities were to have communal representation on the basis of their respective populations in these Provinces.⁵ The Muslims being in a minority in India as a whole feared that the majority might harass them, and to meet this difficulty they made a novel suggestion—they should at least dominate in some parts of India. Their indication was towards Punjab and Bengal. The Hindus on the other hand although in a great majority all over were in a minority in Bengal and the Punjab and Sind, Baluchistan and NWFP. In spite of their all India majority they are afraid of the Muslims in these provinces.⁶ The reactions of Muslims to the Nehru Report, however, were mixed. Shaukat Ali demanded the reservation of seats to the Muslims in Punjab and Bengal while Muhammad Yakub, the President of the Jinnah League in 1928, complained against the treatment of Muslim claims. The report was denounced by almost all Muslim leaders, except the 'Nationalist Muslims' such as Abul Kalam Azad, MA Ansari, the Raja of Mahmudabad, and Dr Saif-din-Kichlu ready to accept the report, who stood for unqualified support to its recommendations, the old Khilafatists such as Maulana Mahammad Ali, were divided but most hostile. Followers of Mohammad Shafi (Punjab) refused to accept it outright and another group of Muslim League led by Agha Khan felt that the Nehru Report had repudiated the Lucknow Pact (1916) regarding the separate electorates and weightage.⁷ Shaukat Ali and Maulana Muhammad Ali, on his return from Europe denounced it in typically tough language. Jinnah was in London when Nehru Report was finalized. When he landed in Bombay, his colleague MC Chagla told him that he had committed the League to the acceptance of the Nehru Report in the Lucknow Conference. Jinnah lost his temper. He rebuked Chagla and told him that he had no right to do so and he would consult the League Council first. In fact he had made up his mind to go with the majority Muslim opinion. Motilal Nehru felt let down and his friends in the Congress chided him for having trusted Jinnah who, they said, was a "*a communal wolf in the shape of a nationalist sheep*" Jinnah though discouraged, did not give up his hope and was to give a conditional acceptance and suggested some amendments.⁸

All Parties Convention, to whom Muslims allegedly termed overwhelming Hindu in composition conducted at Calcutta on 22th December 1928 and continued its sittings till January 1, 1929.⁹ The convention failed to ratify the report, and also disregarded the plea of Jinnah of three new demands of Muslim League that the Punjab and Bengal should have seats reserved for the Muslims on population basis, the reservation of one third of the seats in the Central Assembly for Muslims and for a federal, rather than unitary, constitution, with the provinces holding residuary powers.¹⁰ Jinnah lost, agonized and left in protest and joined the more reactionary section of the Muslims led by Agha Khan and Muhammad Shafi of Punjab. He left Calcutta broken-hearted, and with tears in his eyes he said to a friend, *'This is the parting of the ways.'*¹¹ This conference marked the turning point in the life of Jinnah and in the history of the sub-continent. An angry Muhammad Ali formally left the Congress, asking Muslims to stay away from

it.¹² In December 1928 at their annual meeting Jinnah and Shafi branches or the Muslim League reunited against the Nehru Report though Jinnah was still refusing to endorse separate electorates. Jinnah thereafter carved out fourteen points demanding special privileges and safeguards as prerequisite for any communal settlement. The response of Jawaharlal Nehru was absurd to Jinnah's fourteen points as it was contained in his letter to Gandhi of 27th September 1931, "*....If I had to listen to my dear friend Mohammad Ali Jinnah talking the most unmitigated nonsense about his 14 points for any length of time, I would have to consider the desirability of retiring to the South Sea islands.....*".¹³ Thereafter Jinnah drifted towards sectarian instinct and finally towards communalism.

The publication of the Simon Commission report in May 1930 further estranged the Muslims. The report's biggest bombshell was its refutation of the Muslim demand for majorities by separate electorates in Punjab and Bengal. Fazal Husain, the leader of the Unionist party, wanted separate electorates to be retained, clear majorities for the Punjabis and Bengali Muslims, the separation of Sind from Bombay, provincial status for the NWFP and full autonomy for all the provinces. Chief Khalsa Diwan in its depiction to the Simon Commission demanded that in case communal representation continued, then there should be provision of 40% for Muslims, 30% for Hindus and 30% for Sikhs representation in the Punjab Legislative Council. Almost all the parties worked irresponsibly and contributed knowingly or unknowingly for the sorry state of affairs in India. The colonial masters' shot was to broaden the cleavage among the assorted communities. During Round table conferences of which different sessions were held in London from 12th November 1930 to 24th December 1932 having the object to consider the recommendations of the Simon Commission, but it hammered out proposals which were to form the basis of next political advance in continuous of Montague Chelmsford reforms. In the second Round table conference convened on September 1931 in which Gandhi participated, discussions evoked much hope for a settlement. But the controversial communal issue became once again the stumbling block. The Conference was deadlocked on the minorities' issue, with separate electorate being demanded now not only by the Muslims but other minorities as well. Agha Khan was not only the leader of the Muslim group but was also elected leader of the entire Indian delegation. He kept the Muslim team solidly together, in visible contrast to many and discordant voices, which spoke from the other camp. He tried to come to an understanding with Mahatma Gandhi on the Hindu-Muslim question, but when these talks proved unfruitful, he initiated a Minorities Pact, by which all sections of the Indian political life, except the caste Hindus and the Sikhs, joined hands with the Muslims. This facilitated the task of the British Premier in giving his Communal Award (16th August, 1932) which notwithstanding its deficiencies, improved the Muslim position in majority areas and was a milestone on the road to Pakistan. It is proper to say that in 1906 he presented his demands on behalf of the Muslims and Minto accepted; quarter of a century later Agha Khan again presented a demand and the Communal Award was result.¹⁴ The Communal Award was a clever device of the British Government to give another blow to the Indian national unity. It transformed the Indian electorates into congeries disparate groups. It intensified communal feelings rather than calmed them.

Experience of Congress ministries in British Indian provinces from 1937 to 1939 for the Muslims was sour. Critics pointed out that the Congress was "drunk with victory" and forced Jinnah and Muslim League to think for their salvation in other way. Jinnah considered the terms fixed by the Congress at the time of the constitution of ministry in UP as "a direct rebuff" and declared that "the Muslims can expect neither justice nor fair play under Congress Governments." He attacked the Congress as a Fascist Hindu body which was out to crush all other parties in the country, particularly the Muslim League: When the Congress ministries in different British Indian provinces resigned on the issue of the post war constitutional status to India, (India was declared belligerent country by the Viceroy on 3rd September 1939 by Governor-General of India) declaration of imperial war aims and how these were being applied to India after the termination of war, then on 22nd November 1939 Jinnah asked the Muslims to celebrate day of deliverance from Congress atrocities. Muslim League celebrated Friday, 22nd December and thanks giving "as a mark of relief that Congress at least ceased to function."¹⁵ Young Nehru criticized Jinnah for his role and said he had "become an anachronism in Indian politics", others accused him of having become "a tool of British imperialism"¹⁶.

With the resignation of the Congress ministries in September 1939, was followed by a rapid and revolutionary change in the Muslim League's outlook. When Congress was demanding Independent India, at that time an idea was slowly gaining ground among the Indian Muslims that they were entitled to full and free development of their culture and tradition in their own Indian homeland. In his presidential address at the Allahabad session of the Muslim League (December 1930), Muhammad Iqbal, a native of Punjab, justified the Muslims demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India. He wanted the formation of a single Muslim state comprising Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan. However, he did not envisage a sovereign independent Muslim State but a loose All-India Federation. Indeed, it is reported that he later on shared with Edward Thompson that '*the Pakistan plan be disastrous to the British Government, to the Hindu community and to the Muslim community.*'¹⁷

Tone and tenor of Jinnah in Indian polity was being changed and he had become aggressive. In 1938, Jinnah in his presidential address of the League announced: "*the High Command of the Congress is determined, absolutely determined to crush all other communities and cultures in this country and establish Hindu Raj in this country*". But at Ramgarh (Bihar) session of Congress, held in March 1940, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the President emphasized the heritage of a common nationality between Hindus and Muslims in India and significantly remarked: "*Whether we like or not, we have now become an Indian nation, united and indivisible*". Various factors fanned communal bitterness. On March 23, 1940 Muslim League passed the momentous Pakistan resolution demanding that 'geographically contiguous units be demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial adjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute independent State in which these constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.' Muslim League enunciated the theory that the Muslims are not a minority but a nation and they must have their homeland,

their territory and their state. Little did those who rejected Jinnah's three amendments in the National Convention of December 1928, and in 1937 treated the Muslims in an offensive dictatorial manner, realize that they were sowing the wind and that would reap a whirlwind. But Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan was gravely embarrassed by the resolution. His own dislike of Pakistan or *Jinnistan* (land of demons) as he irreverently called it was well known. He had publicly stated that if Pakistan meant 'Muslim Raj here and Hindu Raj elsewhere', he would have nothing to do with it." The Viceroy himself was disposed to regard Jinnah's partition scheme as very largely in the nature of bargaining.¹⁸ Through 8th August offer 1940, in one of its passages, the statement reassured the Muslims and other minorities that Britain would not sanction—a constitutional settlement for India to which they were firmly opposed. His Majesty's Government now concerned that full weight would be given to the views of the minorities in any revision and they would not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority was directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life, nor would they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government.¹⁹ This declaration gave an indirect encouragement to the Muslim League. Mohammed Ali Jinnah through whose leadership the Muslims had observed the 'Day of Deliverance and had also made a demand for Pakistan, became bolder in his designs. He adopted an uncompromising attitude towards the Congress. He refused to pay heed to the nationalist appeal for co-operation. He did not even hesitate to tell the Viceroy that, if the Congress ministries returned to office without forming coalition with the League, there would be civil war in India.

Hindu communalism also raised its head in India and also appeared to be dangerous for integrity of India resulting in complicating the matters further. Lala Lajpat Rai at one time suggested in 1924, a scheme of Punjab to be divided into Provinces known as West Punjab for dominating Muslim community and East Punjab for dominating Hindus and Sikhs which some scholars alleged an inducement for separatism. The utterances of some of the Hindu Mahasabha leaders in India also gave the Muslim Leaguers a handle. Hindu Mahasabha, representing extreme Hinduism, held its first significant session at Banaras in August, 1923 and Swami Sharddhanand embarked on the *Shuddhi* or reconversion movement. *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* movement were the symbols of intense Hinduism. V.D. Savarkar preached the gospel of Hindu *Rashtra* in 1937 and described the Congress as anti Hindu and pro-Muslim. He wrote his ideologue treatise: *Hindutva: who is a Hindu?* He fathered *Hindutva* espousing the cause of Hindu nationalism. He described Hindus as those whose holy places were in India which in a meant Muslims and Christians were out of the pale of *Hindutva*. In fact he pioneered two nations theory. Side by side with Muslim communalism, Hindu communalism also began by demanding that Hindi language was the language of the Hindus and it should be protected. Earlier in 1896, they had started a movement for banning cow slaughter. They also demanded due share to the Hindus in Legislatures and in government jobs. In 1937, VD Savarkar stated: "*Muslims want to brand the forehead of the Hindu down.....with a stamp of self humiliation and Muslim domination*". In 1938 he reiterated and affirmed: "*We Hindus are (already) reduced to a veritable helots throughout our land*". Vir Savarkar, later on in

1937 presiding over the session of Hindu Mahasabha declared: "India cannot, be assumed today to be a Unitarian and homogeneous nation, but on the contrary there are two nations in the main: the Hindus and the Muslims. These two antagonistic nations are living side by side in India". VD Savarkar, declared at Nagpur: "When we will be in position to retaliate and do retaliate, the Muslims will come to their senses in a day..... react for the worse on Muslim interests in all India- the Muslims will learn to behave as good boys."²⁰ MS Golwalkar in 1939, second sarsanghchak declared that if minorities demands were accepted, Hindu national life ran the risk of being shattered. In such volatile atmosphere, the Muslims began to feel that they were doomed to live under the superior authority of the Hindus who formed an overwhelming majority in the population of the country. Muslims were further disillusioned. Earlier in contrast to *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* movements of Hindus, Muslims started *Tabligh* and *Tanzim* movements. In 1940, Jinnah told the students of the Aligarh "Mr. Gandhi's hope is to subjugate and vassalage the Muslims under a Hindu Raj". By 1941 he announced that "Pakistan is not only a practical goal but the only goal if you want to save Islam from complete annihilation in this country". History of the Muslim League after the return of the Cripps's Mission was one of ever-increasing demand and cry of Pakistan. It was declared that "any scheme which seeks to torpedo the Pakistan demand of Muslim India will be resisted by the Muslim League and as such any political party which stands for the establishment of a democratic State in India can have no agreement with the Muslim League." Quit India movement gave Jinnah a golden opportunity to strengthen his position among the Indian Muslims. When the Congressmen were in jails he carried on his campaign of his consolidation among his co-religionists without any serious challenge or opposition and became a challenge both for the Government and the Congress.

By the end of July 1946, the elections to the Constituent Assembly were over. Muslim League's attitude towards it remained negative and it remained firm in its boycott. Its mood was defiant. To it nothing less than Pakistan was acceptable.²¹ While the elections were proceeding, the Viceroy formed a new caretaker Government of officials which was to be sworn in on July 4. But in view of the worsening communal situation he realized the immediate need of installing a popular government consisting of leaders of the political parties. He wrote letters to Nehru and Jinnah explaining his plan for the new interim government, as per the recommendation of Cabinet Mission Plan, consisting of 14 members—six to be nominated by the Congress, five by Muslim League and three representatives of minorities to be nominated by the Viceroy. Jinnah was not prepared to join the interim government unless two of his conditions were fulfilled: one, parity with the Congress at the centre and two, the League to have the sole right to nominate Muslim members. He could not allow his Leaguers to sit with the "Muslim quislings;" Wavell expressed his inability to accept his intransigent demand.²² Jinnah on 31st July declined the invitation. Congress Working Committee appealed Jinnah for cooperation but in vain. As a result certain difficulties cropped up with regard to the formation of the Interim Government. The Congress demanded the right to include one nationalist Muslim in its list of six members. As its claim was rejected, the Congress refused to join the Interim Government. The Muslim League demanded that it should be allowed to form the Government even without the Congress.

This view was not accepted by Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy and Governor-General of India. Jinnah thereafter castigated the British Government and on 29th July 1946, the Muslim League withdrew its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Scheme. It decided to prepare a programme for "Direct Action" to achieve Pakistan. The Muslim League fixed 16th August, 1946 as the Direct Action Day. On that day there was a lot of bloodshed in Calcutta and Sylhet. The great Calcutta Killing was followed by bloodshed in Noakhali and Tipperah²³. There were abductions, forced marriages, rapes, compulsory conversions to Islam and destitution of families.²⁴ Nehru reported to the Central Assembly that there appeared competition in murder and brutality²⁵.

On 6th August 1946 Lord Wavell invited the Congress to form the Interim Government at the Centre and the latter accepted the invitation. On 2nd September 1946, Wavell administered the oath of allegiance to the members of the Interim Government.²⁶ Muslim League reluctantly joined the Government only to create troubles in the working of the Government.²⁷ Liaquat Ali Khan, being Finance member created difficulties in its smooth functioning. It was in that atmosphere of lawlessness that the Prime Minister of England, Clement Attlee declared on 20th February 1947 that the British Government would transfer power into the hands of the Indians by a date not later than June 1948. Attlee's statement of February 20, definitely fixed the date for British abdication, but it was ambiguous concerning the succession. HV Hodson drew the logical conclusion, "The statement of 20 the February 1947, in the context of Indian politics was thus an open license for Pakistan in some form or other."²⁸

Preceding to Attlee's proclamation the situation was not very rosy; Sind and Bengal were complimentary to Pakistan because their governments were in the hands of the Muslim Leaguers. But three provinces the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, and Assam were outside the power of the Muslim League. The linchpin of the Pakistan demand was the Punjab, the largest, most populous and wealthiest province in northern India. On communal grounds the claim was valid, for the Muslims comprised about 56 per cent, of the total population of 29 million. On political grounds the League claim was less credible but powerful none the less. It had swept the polls in the 1946 elections and was the leading party in the Punjab legislature. But it lacked a clear majority and was excluded from office intentionally. In the Punjab although the League held 79 seats in an Assembly of 175, Khizr Hayat Khan, the leader of the Unionist Party, headed a coalition government depriving League's first right to constitute the government as the largest party in the Assembly resulting in complete disillusionment of the League.²⁹ It became, therefore, a matter of both prestige and self-esteem for the League and administration was virtually at a standstill because the coalition of Unionists, Congress and Sikhs was uneasy and had a majority of only three; the legislature met only when it was essential to pass the budget. Muslim League started agitation against Khizr. Khizr Hayat Khan tried first to suppress the movement. Indeed the Punjab Government had depended upon the support of the Provincial Governor and the Central Government ever since 1935. The Government wanted the Punjab to remain outside the control of Jinnah, for during the war and the Punjab was one of the main recruiting grounds for the army. British Indian Government was to benefit imperial war machine by exploiting the resources from Punjab. But in

the general politics of the country the Government favoured Jinnah as a make-weight against the Congress. When the war ended, the need to keep the Punjab outside the influence of the League disappeared. Wavell was anxious to bring the League into the interim government and he had induced Jinnah to accept five justifications for the League to oust Khizr Hayat Khan and establish a Muslim League government. Constitutional government ministerial posts by giving him various other promises as well. He was to enhance the popularity of Jinnah. Actually in October 1946 the five League members joined with the avowed purpose to ensure the establishment of Pakistan. Naturally their main target was the Punjab. They tried threats but Khizr Hayat Khan was not intimidated. But when as members of the Government of India they exerted their influence on the Punjab affairs and encouraged the officials to make difficulties for the Government, he found his position untenable. Thus thwarted by the League organization, opposed by the League ministers in the Government of India, abandoned by the provincial officials, no alternative was left for him but to relinquish office. According to Alan Campbell-Johnson, 'The Muslim Coalition Prime Minister had for the past five months been compelled to move from house to house each night to avoid the threat of assassination at the hands of the Moslem League.' The League had succeeded in ousting Khizr Hayat (resigned on March 3) and his anti-League Government, but the province even then had not come under Muslim League rule. Other political parties did not allow the League to constitute the Government in Punjab. This infuriated the League and exacerbated communal bitterness. The agitation continued for more than a month. The Governor, Sir Evan Jenkins, finally called on the League leader in the Punjab legislature to form a ministry. The Sikhs responded with a mass rally at which their fiery leader, Master Tara Singh, added fuel to the flames: 'O Hindus and Sikhs! Disperse from here on the solemn affirmation that we shall not allow the League to exist... I have sounded the bugle. Finish the Muslim League.' It was an idle threat, for the National Guard of the League was much better organized at the time. On 4 March, the struggle for the Punjab shifted to the streets; and Jenkins was compelled to take over direct administration of the province.³⁰

The result was the prevalence of widespread lawlessness and rioting all over the Punjab and the North-west Frontier Provinces. Nehru visited the riot-affected areas and saw ghastly scenes. He said shockingly, "I have heard of behavior by human beings which would degrade brutes." Lahore, Amritsar, Multan, Rawalpindi, and other towns suffered grievously from the ravages of the rioters. In the North-West Frontier Province the existence of the Congress Government with Dr. Khan Sahib as the Chief Minister was an eyesore to the League. The Muslim League started a vigorous propaganda against the Ministry. Its leaders used the reports of the riots and massacre of Muslims in Bihar and raised the slogan of 'Islam in danger'. They appealed to the tribes of the frontiers and beyond the boundary of India who were largely under the influence of the Mullahs. This led to serious outbreaks of violence in the province and the border districts. Dera Ismail Khan, Hazara and Bannu districts were seriously affected. How far there was actually collusion between the Muslim League leaders and the British and Muslim officials in fanning the communal frenzy it is not possible to judge. Nehru had affirmed as early as November 21, 1946, at the Lucknow session of the Congress that "there is a mental alliance

between the League and senior British officials."³¹ With the spurt in Hindu Muslim violence, the parting of ways was the only solution to an intractable problem. The obstructive attitude of the Leaguers in the interim Government made the confusion more confounded. Both the British and the Indian politicians then realized that partition was inevitable. Lord Mountbatten, the new Viceroy of India arrived in India in March 1947, soon held discussions with Indian leaders and then prepared his scheme for partition. In his conversation with Mountbatten, Jinnah stated that India had gone beyond the stage at which a compromise solution was possible. He also declared that there was only one solution, a speedy "surgical operation" in the form of partition. Otherwise he warned, "India would perish". Jinnah must have known by then that his lungs were incurable through simple medication.³² After Mountbatten plan had been accepted by the League and the Congress; the British Government took immediate steps to accomplish the work of partition. The partition plan offered a way out and they took it. Jinnah told Muslim journalists in Bombay on March 12, 1947: "*Insha Allah (God willing), we shall have Pakistan*". Thereafter Lord Mountbatten's plan of June 3, 1947 provided for the establishment of two separate dominions of India and Pakistan and the British Government was to withdraw from India on 15th August, 1947. The provinces of Bengal and Punjab were to be partitioned and the boundaries were demarcated by Radcliffe Boundary Commission. The Indian Independence Act was passed by the British Parliament in July 1947 and on 14th August M.A. Jinnah was declared the Governor-General of Pakistan and thus Pakistan became a reality with the partition of India³³ and an unfortunate chapter of history has been unfolded leaving deep repercussions for the years to come. Indeed ecstasy and agony went side by side. Ecstasy of independence was the harbinger of new dawn and agony of partition resulted in setting the sun of unified India.

CONCLUSION

Partition of India left many shades on the bilateral relations of two countries. Even today pain of division is being realized in one way or the other. For partition, British, Muslim League and Congress were responsible. There is no natural border between India and Pakistan and volatility on the borders always discernible. British demarcation of borders was faulty. Their game was to play one against the other and they were successful in this crafty. Religion based partition caused loss to both countries. Apart of experiencing and suffering colossal loss of property and livelihood, about ten lacs of people lost their lives at the times of swapping of innocent people from one country to another. Thousands of women were dishonored and faced the psychological stigma throughout their lives for having no fault. On account of volatility of borders between the two countries, required development pace have not taken place in the border areas. Residents of border belt are facing innumerable hardships and major problems can be addressed through dialogue and fraternal fervor by both the countries. People in the border areas are down trodden and the governments must play a pioneering role to uplift them. Unnatural border line is still disputed. Pakistan, after its separation from India could not make its imprint in the world politics and in the economic development and its democratic notion is also lopsided. Meanwhile India has become a world's largest democratic reckoning power and being recognized and respected in the every corner of world. Since partition,

Pakistan is hell-bent to create strife in India and had suffered defeats in three open battles and in fourth Kargil intrusion. The relations between the two countries are far from cordiality and volatility on the borders is always in existence. If there would have been no partition, there would have been no borders, and no tension as happened to be today between the two countries. It is even difficult for a person to see his native place where he was born in case it is on the other side of the border. If the tension between the two subsides then the economic development of the entire region can take place at a faster pace. Pakistan factor also bearing in our smooth relations with China, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. With the partition, Pakistan faced many economic, political and structural impediments. Western and Eastern wings of Pakistan were separated in two formations by not only language and ethnicity but also physical geographical distance at either ends of India without a direct land route between them. The succession of Bangladesh was a challenge to two nation theory out of which Pakistan was born. This succession demanded a separate state for South Asian Muslims. A Bangle linguistic identity overshadowed the religious identity of the East Pakistanis; they fought and achieved their own state of Bangladesh.

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