

Topic 23

GENERAL ELECTIONS 1945- 1946

After the failure of Simla conference Lord Wavell announced general and provincial elections after which constitutional making body was to be set up. Both parties launched election campaigns. Because they knew that the elections were essential for the future of India, as the results were to play an important role in determining their standing.

The League wanted to sweep the Muslim constituencies so as to prove that they were the sole representatives of the Muslims of India, while on the other hand Congress wanted to prove that they represent all Indians. Both parties raised different slogans during whole election campaign. Congress tried to get support of all those parties who were against the Muslim League.

Elections for central legislature were held on December 1945 with the limited franchise. During these elections Congress won about 80 percent of the general seats and 91.3 percent general votes and Muslim League won all 30 reserved seats for Muslims. Provincial election held on 1946 results was not different. Muslim League won 95 percent seats for Muslims and Congress won all seats for non-Muslims.

CABINET MISSION PLAN 1946

- In March 1946, a three man delegation including Lord Pethic Lawrence (secretary of state for India) sir Stafford Cripps (president of the board of trade) and A.V Alexander (first lord of the admiralty) was sent to India to try to find a settlement acceptable to all.
- They arrived in New Delhi on 24 March 1946.
- The cabinet mission proposed that an interim government should be set up & the government would form an All-India commission from members of the provincial & central legislatures.
- In 1946 the cabinet mission announced its final plan.

Proposals of the cabinet mission plan:

- It rejected the idea of establishing Pakistan.
- Three different parts suggested to a post British India.

(a) The Hindu majority territories.



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- (b) The western Muslim population
- (c) Bengal & Assam

- Each part would have its local autonomy & would be able to draw up its new constitution.
- Foreign affairs, defense & communication would be managed by a central Indian union.
- League stated that it was ready to nominate members to an interim cabinet to oversee the move to independence by this plan.
- Nehru said that congress would not feel bounded by the plan after British left so the plan dropped.

DIRECT ACTION DAY 1946:

Direct Action Day, also known as the **Great Calcutta Riot**, was on 16 August 1946—a day of widespread riot and manslaughter in the city of Calcutta (now known as Kolkata) in the Bengal province of British India. The day also marked the start of what is known as "**The Week of the Long Knives**".

The protest triggered massive riots in Calcutta, instigated by the Muslim League and its Volunteer Corps against Hindus and Sikhs, followed by retaliatory attacks on Muslims by Congress followers and supporters. In Calcutta, within 72 hours, more than **4,000 people** lost their lives and 100,000 residents in the city of Calcutta were left homeless. Violence in Calcutta sparked off further religious riots in the surrounding regions of Noakhali, Bihar, United Province (modern Uttar Pradesh), Punjab, and the North Western Frontier Province. These events sowed the seeds for the eventual Partition of India.

THE 3RD JUNE PLAN 1947

When all of Mountbatten's efforts to keep India united failed, he asked Ismay to chalk out a plan for the transfer of power and the division of the country. It was decided that none of the Indian parties would view it before the plan was finalized.

The plan was finalized in the Governor's Conference in April 1947, and was then sent to Britain in May where the British Government approved it.

However, before the announcement of the plan, Nehru who was staying with Mountbatten as a guest in his residence at Simla, had a look at the plan and rejected it. Mountbatten then asked V. P. Menon, the only Indian in his personal staff, to present a new plan for the transfer of power. Nehru edited **Menon's formula** and then Mountbatten himself took the new plan to London, where he got it approved without any alteration. Attlee and his cabinet gave the approval in a meeting that lasted not more than five minutes. In this way, the plan that was to decide the future



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of the Indo-Pak Sub-continent was actually authored by a Congress-minded Hindu and was approved by Nehru himself.

Mountbatten came back from London on May 31, and on June 2 met seven Indian leaders. These were Nehru, Patel, Kriplalani, Quaid-i-Azam, Liaquat, Nishtar and Baldev Singh. After these leaders approved the plan, Mountbatten discussed it with Gandhi and convinced him that it was the best plan under the circumstances. The plan was made public on June 3, and is thus known as the June 3rd Plan.

Proposals of the 3rd June plan;

- Two states should be set up India & Pakistan.
 - The interim government of both states was the 1935 government of India act.
 - Each state was to have dominion status & have an executive responsible to a constituent assembly.
 - Muslim majority provinces would vote either to stay in India or join Pakistan. In Sindh & Baluchistan, provincial Legislatures voted to join Pakistan. Bengal & Punjab decided that they should join Pakistan but their Muslim – minority areas will remain in India. NWFP also joined Pakistan after holding a referendum. The Muslim-majority district of Sylhet in Assam joined the eastern wing of Pakistan.
- (a)** Day after a 3rd June plan, Mountbatten said that final transfer of Power might be brought forward from June 1948 to 15 August 1947.
- (b)** On 15 July 1947 the independence Act was passed.
- (c)** From 15 august British India would be partitioned into two Dominion states.

THE RADCLIFFE BOUNDARY AWARD 1947.

- SIR Cyril Radcliff was appointed to head a Boundary Commission to establish new borders.
- Radcliff had four assistants, two nominated by the league & two by the congress.
- The decision of the Boundary Commission known as “the Boundary Award or Radcliff Award” was announced on 16 August 1947.
- Calcutta, Gurdaspur, Ferozpur were awarded to India though they were Muslim majority areas.
- Jinnah told people of Pakistan that the awards were wrong, unjust & perverse.

SECTION III

ACHIEVEMENT OF QUAID-E-AZAM

As a leader:

- He was the 1st governor general of Pakistan.
- He was an inspiration for the nation.
- He took the role of Chief Executive in the new government & chaired the cabinet meetings.
- He was the president of the constituent assembly.

Building a Nation:

- Jinnah dealt with the problems faced by Pakistan at the time of partition.
- Country was divided into east & West Pakistan & he coped with the geographical problems as well.
- Jinnah stressed everyone to work together to create nation.
- He said: "every one of us should think, feel & act as Pakistani & we all should be proud on being Pakistanis alone.
- Jinnah was opposed to religious intolerance, provincialism & racialism.
- He called himself as the protector general of religious minorities.
- He was determined to see Pakistan a land of tolerance.
- He said that Islamic ideas about justice & equality demanded that any non Muslim who was to remain in Pakistan should be treated fairly.
- Jinnah helped refugees by setting up a relief fund to rehabilitate them.
- He secured the membership of the country to UNO in September 1947.

Building a government:

- Quaid knew that no problem could be solved until the country had an administration that could take decision about the problems.
- Liaqat ali khan was made the prime minister & a cabinet was formed. A constituent assembly was also set up.
- Karachi became the capital of Pakistan.
- Central secretariat was setup to run the country.
- Civil service was reorganized & civil rules were drafted.
- Quaid was determined that government officials should have right attitude to their work.
- He informed the officials that they were the servants of people & not the rulers of the country. He wanted them to work with national spirit.

Building an economy:

- Pakistan was denied its full share of wealth.

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- It was difficult to convert Pakistan from an agricultural country to one with a degree of industrial development.
- On 1st July 1948, Quaid established State bank of Pakistan to help develop the economy.
- Quaid reached a compromise with India in the canal water dispute, which ensured that Pakistan's Agriculture would not be denied precious water supplies.
- He also urged to set up industries in Pakistan.

Establishing national security:

- Pakistan had been given poor military equipment & it lacked senior cadre officers for army.
- Army needed more officers.
- Quaid didn't want Pakistan become a military oligarchy.

Conclusion:

- Quaid died on 11 September 1948.
- Times news paper wrote. "No succeeding GG can quite fill his place as the Father of the Nation".
- Stanley Walport said, "**Few individuals significantly alter the course of history, still very few change the map of the world, hardly anyone can be credited with creating a nation state, Mohammad Ali Jinnah did three.**"

Expected questions:

Question No. 1: which of the following contributed the most to the establishment of a separate homeland for Muslims.

- (i) Gandhi Jinnah talks 1944
- (ii) Simla conference 1945
- (iii) Cabinet mission plan 1946

Explain your answer with reference to all three of the above.
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Question No. 2: How important was Mohammad Ali Jinnah to the Pakistan movement?

Explain your answer.

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Question No. 3: what was the Direct Action Day?

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