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## COMMUNALISM AND PARTITION OF INDIA

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### ABSTRACT:

*In this paper I tried to show how the communalism causes to the partition of India. The communalism implies the politics of conflict between communities. The communalism as posing a problem in bringing about national unity in the country. It has led to divide the country into the two nation's i.e. India and Pakistan.*

**KEYWORDS:** Communalism, Partition, Community and Nation etc.

### INTRODUCTION

Communalism implies the politics of conflict between communities. Communalism as posing a problem in bringing about national unity in the country. Communalists misuse their religion to achieve political goals. They consider their religion to be superior and adopt an intolerant attitude towards people of other religions. Communalism today has increased in politics. Its roots can be traced disharmony between people of different communities. So that Indians remained divided and unable to challenge British Colonial rule. But even after Independence communal forces are still active, creating problems for the government and the society.

India is a land of multiple faiths and religions leading often to violence and hatred among the people. These who fan two religions violence do not consider as a moral order but use it as a means and weapon to pursue their politics ambitions communalism essentially leads to violence as it is based on mutual religious hatred. This phenomenon leads to distinction between a communal organization and a religious organization communalism essentially has following many features.

- It is based on orthodoxy.
- It is based on intolerance.
- It also propagates intense dislike of other religious.
- It stands for elimination other religion and its values.

Before we get to division of the country, we must first understand why communalism feelings arose during the British Rule.

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### The origin of the communalism

The origin of the problem of communalism can be traced back to the British Rule. During the revolt of 1857 which is described as the first attempt at resisting the British, Hindu and Muslim fought side by side united in their purpose of defeating a common enemy.

In the Indian subcontinent, the term "Communalism" has taken on a very different meaning, namely that of a religion and more specifically, ethnicity-based sectarianism promoting communal violence, espoused by many political and socio-religious movements.

Communalism was also fostered through the writing of the Indian History e.g. the division of India History into Hindu period and Muslim period as Ancient and Medieval India.

Different Communal Heroes and communal myths were propagated to glorify the past communal traditions and struggle. e.g. Prithvi Raj Chauhan, Maharana Pratap, Shivaji, Guru Gobind Singh among Hindus and Mahmud Ghazni, Mohammad, Akbar, Aurangzeb etc. among the Muslims.

British Patronage in higher and subordinate services was used to promote discord and rivalry among different communities.

The British noticed the unity and realized that their survival rested on being able to keep the people divided for they had managed to establish their rule because politically India had been a divided country at the time of their entry. The British followed their famous policy "divide-and-rule" to prevent these two communities from uniting against them. The British considered the Sepoy Mutiny as the creation of the Muslims and particularly from 1858 they began to adopt an antagonistic attitude towards them by denying government jobs to the Muslims. The colonial authorities also followed other policies that caused disharmony among the Hindus and the Muslims. The British also initiated policies to appease the Hindu, at the cost of the Muslims. But over the years, when the Hindus benefited from education and modernization the British began to fear the Hindus as well through manipulative skills they then developed friendship with a section of Muslims to gain their support.

In 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1885 when the Indian National Congress was formed in Bombay, by A.O. Hume, its main object to establish the Indian National Congress was to control those who were unsatisfactory Indians and followed the "safety valve theory". It was branded as a Hindu Organization to keep the Muslim away from it.<sup>1</sup>

1857 marked a discontinuity the revolt did not spring from the impulse generated by Ram Mohan Roy. Nor did it modify the later course of the work of social reform initiated by the Brahma Samaj and similar movements like Arya Samaj, Sanatan Dharam movements, Aligarh movement, Wahabi movement and some other fringe movements contributed towards communalism which arose in various parts of the country. Then, in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, came the formation of associations that were more explicitly political, expressing the aspirations of the growing English-educated middle-class for measures which would lead to self government.

Country wide social resurgence witnessed, for example from South India, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is reform movement initiated by Narayan Guru. He fought against the forces of orthodoxy. One of the earliest social reformers in Maharashtra was Jotirao Govindrao Phule also took steps towards women education. In Punjab and neighboring areas many nationalists were drawn to 'Arya Samaj' founded by Dayanand Saraswati. The 19<sup>th</sup> century combination of social reforms and national self-respect is best exemplified by Swami Vivekananda who established the Ramakrishna Mission.<sup>2</sup> Till about 1870 The British oppressed the Muslims greatly for they held them responsible for the revolt.

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The rise of Nationalism had threatened the British power in India and their efforts obviously were directed to suppress it. An important feature of the national movement comprising of Hindu, Parsis, Sikhs and Christians was that it took longer to spread amongst the Muslim Community. Now British ensured that they must not join it and thus started the policy of Divide and Imperia.<sup>3</sup>

Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan, an earlier nationalist drifted towards communalism. He sedulously fostered the differences between the Hindus and the Mohammadans cautioning the latter that if they did not learn the English Language they would be left behind by the Hindus inspired by these ideas. Sir Syad Ahmad Khan established the Aligarh Muslim College. He expressed the view that the aim of the congress was to establish the rule of the majority. Its success meant Hindu Raj in the country which would be ruinous for the Indian Mohammadans. Therefore, instead of opposing the British Government the Mohammadans should follow a policy of co-operation with them there by arresting the growing power of the congress.

Apart from the Muslim Communalism, the Hindu and the Sikh Communalism also created an atmosphere of divisiveness. Hindu Nationalists like Sarvarkar, M.M. Malviviya and S.P.Mukherjee along with the Sikh leaders Master Tara Singh took opposite position vis. a vis. Muslims.

### The partition of Bengal and communalism

The partition of Bengal, according to British was meant to improve the administration of an oversized and under administered province. Its real objective, however, was to create a Hindu Muslim divide and to rupture the growing solidarity of the Political Community in Bengal. Which had become the nerve center of Indian Nationalism?

In the words of Lord Curzon, the Viceroy, the intention of partitioning Bengal was to "Dethrone Calcutta" from its position as the 'Centre from which the Congress Party is manipulated throughout the whole of Bengal and indeed the whole of India and divide Bengali speaking population.

Partition of Bengal took place under 'Lord Curzon'. On 20<sup>th</sup> July 1905 he issued an order dividing the province of Bengal into Two parts, one part comprising Eastern Bengal and Assam (population 31 Million) and the other making up the rest of Bengal (population 54 million). The population of latter comprised 18 million Bengalis and 36 million Biharis and Oriyas. Bengal was finally partitioned on 16<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1905.<sup>4</sup>

Muslim League established in Dec. 1906 under the leadership of 'Agakhan' in 'Dhaka'. All India Muslim League as a political party to safeguard their interests. The League had the following objectives.

- To protect and advance the political rights and interests of Mussalmans of India and respectively represent their need and aspiration to Government.
- To prevent the rise among the Mussalmans of any feelings of hostility towards other community without prejudice to the other objects of League.<sup>5</sup>

The League was a small elite institution controlled by feudal Muslim elements. It received full encouragement and protection from British Raj right from the beginning because they wanted that the new generation of the Muslims should be alienated from the congress.

The Moreley-Minto Reforms was the creation of separate or Communal system of election providing for representation and reservation of seats in the councils for special interests like Muslims, Chamber of Commerce, Zamindars etc. While providing for separate representation for Muslims, due consideration was to be given to the proportion of their population. The communal

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system of representation initiated by the act poisoned the future public life of India, increased separatist tendencies and ultimately paved the way for demand for partition of the country.

The problem of communal representation had been discussed at the first and the second round table conferences but no decision could be arrived at thereon. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Mohammed Ali Jinnah and other leaders without bothering about the fate of the country looked at the question from their own narrow communal angles. The congress and some other organizations tried their best to somehow solve the communal problem of the country with the co-operation of different communities but the biggest obstacle in the way of success was the British Government.

The Indians were not able to come to any agreement among them. Mean while, before convening the 3<sup>rd</sup> Round Table conference, Ramsay Macdonald announced on August 16, 1932 the Communal Award which he had promised in his closing speech at the second conference. The award was based on the British theory that India was not a nation but congeries of racial, religious and cultural group, caste and interests. It not only kept intact the system of separate electorates for the Muslims but also extended its application to the depressed classes. The Award recognized the following as minorities, Mohammadans, Depressed classes, Backward classes, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians, Europeans, Commercial and Industrial classes, Landholders, Labours, Universities, Sikhs and even Women. To each one of them a fixed number of seats were allocated and special electorates were to elect the member. But Gandhi did not oppose any community to have separate electorate but he opposed only depressed classes not to give separate electorate. Lastly it ended with Poona Pact. It shows the symbol towards the partition of India.<sup>6</sup>

The concept of 'Pakistan' given by 'Mohammed Iqbal' who was a philosopher and poet. Early in the thirties, an Indian youth studying in Cambridge University, London, 'Chaudhry Rahmal Ali' by name, was seriously thinking of a political state for the Indian Muslims, adjoining the cluster of Muslim states across India's North-Western frontiers. It is said that one fine morning while Ali was taking a ride in a London omnibus, he suddenly hit upon a suitable nomenclature for the Northern Independent Muslim State of his imagination. By taking the letter 'P' from the 'Punjab', 'A' from 'Afghanistan' i.e. the North-West frontier province, 'K' from 'Kashmir', 'S' from 'Sindh' and 'Tan' from 'Baluchistan', he coined the word 'Pakistan', which wonderfully enough, meant 'The Land of the Pure'.<sup>7</sup>

### **The two nation theory and Muslim league**

The Two Nation Theory 'Moulana Abdul Kalam Azad' who was a President of Congress, and said that Muslims were not minorities they are majorities. This statement given in the 'Ramghar' Congress session in 1940. The two nation theory proposed by 'Mohammad Ali Jinnah' was also defined same thing as Azad's statement. The Muslim League announced the Declaration of Pakistan in Lahore session on 23.03.1940.

The Muslim League adopted the Pakistan resolution on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1940 for the constitute of Independent states the seeds of communalism which had been sown in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century of flourished as a poison-tree in the shape of the demand for Pakistan. All the separatist demands made by the Muslim League since its birth had been accepted and the only alternative now to keep up its influence over the people was to demand a separate state. Apart from the separatist policy of Muslim League, some other elements were also responsible for the demand for Pakistan.<sup>8</sup>

It is remarkable that till the passing of the Government of India Act, 1935 or till the 1937 elections nobody seriously talked about the Pakistan. When the joint parliamentary select

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committee was considering the white paper, the leader of the Muslim delegation, Yusuf Ali had described it as a student, Rahmat Ali's scheme and it was considered by them as 'chimerical' and impracticable'.<sup>9</sup>

Mohammed Zafarullah Khan also said the something. In this situation it becomes important to find out why and how demand for Pakistan gathers momentum. All this happened after the elections of 1937.

The Hindu Communal Organization like the 'Hindu Mahasabha' had also their contribution in the origin and development of the idea of Pakistan. In the earlier stages, the leadership of the Mahasabha was in the hands of national leaders like Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and Lala Lajpat Rai. But gradually, reactionary elements established their hegemony over it. There is no doubt that the Hindu Communalism was a reaction of the Muslim Communalism. But the attitude and behavior of the extreme communalists among the Hindus justified some of the fears of the Muslims. Their chauvinistic, utterances, revivalist concepts adulation of Hindu customs and institutions good, bad or indifferent, their declaration of Muslim thought, history and ways of life and their suspicious against Muslim leaders nationalist and others justly irritated the Muslims in general and antagonized the Muslim Leaguers in particular.<sup>10</sup>

More than the Hindu Communal Organizations the British bureaucracy played a significant role in influencing the separatist feelings. The Muslim League's demand for Pakistan was based on the "Two-Nation Theory" which was proposed by 'Mohammad Ali Jinnah'.

It's clear that the religion was considered to be the base of the 'Two-Nation Theory' and since the Hindu and Muslims professed different religions; they could not be built into a united nation. The Pakistan demanded for the Mussulmen's by the Muslim League was to comprise in the north, the North-West Frontier Province, Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan and in the East, Assam and Bengal. Besides the Congress, many other Muslims organizations also voiced their opposition on the Pakistan idea. For example: Jamait-al-ulema-i-Hind, Mazlis-e-Ahrar-e-Hind, the Khudai Khidmatgars of North West Frontier Province.<sup>11</sup>

In Nov. 1939 the Congress working Committee passed a resolution reiterating the demand for acceptance of the right of Indians to frame their constitution through a constituent assembly. In July 1940, the Congress working Committee again demanded complete Independence of India and a Provisional National Government would be constituted at the centre.

Winston Churchill knows it only too well that it was impossible to secure the much-needed Indian Co-operation in the war efforts in full measure without Congress support. On Aug. 8<sup>th</sup> 1940, the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow, therefore, announced the outlines of a new British Policy towards India. The announcement which later came to be known as the 'August offer' repeated that Dominion status was the objective of British policy in India. It conceded the demand for a Constituent Assembly and proposed and the appointment of a war advisory council and expansion of the Viceroy's Council.<sup>12</sup>

On March 11, 1942 only three days after the fall of Rangoon and under pressure from president 'Roosevelt' of the U.S.A. and Marchal Chiang Kaishek of China, Churchill announced the dispatch of 'Sir Stafford Cripps' a prominent member of the war cabinet for negotiations with the Indian Leaders. Cripps was a socialist and was considered to be well wishers of India. This name evoked many hopes. He reached Indian on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1942. The Cripps Mission however was a failure.

It proposal were turned down by all the prominent parties. The proposal made by Cripps and conceded Dominion status and right of Indians to Frame a constitution on their constituent

Assembly after the war. However, the provinces were to have an option to accept or walk out of the new constitution. The Muslim League rejected them because its demand for partition of the country or communal grounds was not conceded, while the congress found them unacceptable because they opened up possibilities of dividing India into many small bits and did not to seek to transfer any really effective power to representative India hands during the war Gandhi, condemned the proposal as a 'Post-dated cheque'.

Lord Wavell came to India for the settlement of constitutional crises. On 14<sup>th</sup> June, 1945 this plan was failed due to the Jinnah's opposition. After few days' 'Shimla Conference' held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1945, this also failed; it became clear that the demand for India's Independence could not be postponed further.

The British Prime Minister 'Attlee's sent the cabinet mission which first went to Karachi on March 23 and arrived in Delhi on March 24, 1946 and started discussions immediately with the various political party leaders and other individuals. To study the condition of India and to set up a constitution making body and to establish full self-government in India.

The cabinet mission failed in making unity between Congress and Muslim League. Finally the cabinet mission submitted report on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1946 and the demand for Pakistan had been rejected.

The Muslim League council meeting on July 27-29, 1946, resolved to withdraw its acceptance of the cabinet mission plan and to start "direct action" for the achievement of its objective of a fully sovereign state of Pakistan.

The Direction Action programme was explained and elaborated further by several leaders of the league both in the council meeting and in their public speeches which were all of a very extremist nature.

August 16, 1946 was observed by the Muslim League as the 'Direct Action Day'. The whole purpose was to start communal riots and spread an atmosphere of terror all over the country. Thereby to establish that the Hindus and the Muslims could never live together and that the only safe course was to partition the country. In Bengal and Sind where Muslim League was in power, August 16<sup>th</sup> was declared an official holiday and the Government machinery was fully used to instigate communal frenzy. There was widespread bloodshed in Calcutta and elsewhere, shootings and stabbings of innocent men and women became common place. Therefore the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1946 was a "black day" in the history of India.<sup>13</sup>

In March 1947, Lord Louis Mountbatten was sent as the new Viceroy to arrange for a smooth transfer of power. He reached India on March 22, 1947. He had been started to discuss with political parties and very soon he came to the conclusion that it would not be possible. Therefore, he prepared a plan for partition. The Mountbatten plan was declared in Britain Parliament on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1947.

#### **Features of whole scheme:**

- Division of India into two Independent dominions of India and Pakistan.
- Partition of the Provinces of Bengal and Punjab and referendum in the Muslim majority Province of NWFP and the Sylthat District of Assam.

Based on the Mountbatten plan, the British Parliament passed the Indian Independence Bill, 1947.

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According to this act the date of 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947 fixed for setting up the two Dominions and there would be separate Legislature for each Dominion with full authority for making Law unhindered by the British Parliament.

### The Partition of India

The Partition of India was the partition of British India on the basis of religious demographics that led to the creation. On the midnight of 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1947 and 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947 in terms of the Indian Independence Act respectively of the sovereign states of two dominions of the Pakistan (later Islamic Republic of Pakistan and People's Republic of Bangladesh) and the Union of India (later Republic of India) were constituted power was transferred to Indian hands. British rule came to an end, India became free. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru became the First Prime Minister of Independence of India and Lord Mountbatten became the First Governor-General of the Dominion of India.

### CONCLUSION

To conclude, that the communalism is one of the strong weapon. It divided to the Hindu and Muslims in India. British known very well that, if Indians become unity we can't survive in the country. Therefore, they had used 'divide and rule policy'. Finally, India divided into two nations i.e. India and Pakistan in 1947.

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