

UNDERSTANDING PARTITION

Multiple Choice Type Questions

1. Lucknow pact was signed in
(a) Dec. 1929
(b) Jan 1915
(c) Dec. 1916
(d) Jan 1917
2. A separate Electorate was given to the Muslims in
(a) 1892
(b) 1909
(c) 1919
(d) 1935
3. Muslim league was established in
(a) 1906
(b) 1909
(c) 1911
(d) 1916
4. Who was known as Frontier Gandhi?
(a) Maulana Abul Kalam
(b) Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan
(c) Sheikh Abdullah
(d) Nawab Salimmullah
5. Direct Action Day was celebrated on
(a) 16 Aug 1943
(b) 26 Jan 1930
(c) 15 Aug 1947
(d) 16 Aug 1946

Answer

1. (c) 2. (b) 3. (a) 4. (b) 5. (d)

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Under what circumstances, India attained independence?

Answer: India fought a long-drawn war to attain its freedom. After the Second World War, the British Government was so weakened that it was impossible for her to control all the colonies. So in 1946, the British Government declared that it wanted to end its rule in India. It sent a Cabinet Mission to India for this purpose. This Mission proposed to call the Constituent Assembly and constitute an Interim Government.

As soon as the Interim Government was set up, the Muslim League raised its demand for Pakistan. So there were communal riots at many places like Bengal, Bihar, and Bombay. Under these circumstances, Lord Mountbatten placed his proposal for the division or partition of the country. All accepted this proposal. At last, India was partitioned on 15 August 1947. Since then, India is an independent country.

2. Why did the Cabinet Mission visit India? What were its recommendations? Analyze the provisions of the Cabinet Mission of 1946.

Answer: A three-member Cabinet Mission visited India in March 1946. Its purpose was to examine the demand of the Muslim League for the creation of Pakistan. It also wanted to suggest a suitable political framework for independent modern India. It toured the whole country for three months. At last, it made the following recommendations:

1. It suggested a loose three-tier confederation for India.
2. It also suggested a weak central government having control only on foreign affairs, defense, and communications.
3. It retained provincial assemblies but categorized them into three groups for the elections to Constituent Assembly. Group-A was for the Hindu-majority provinces, Group-B had Muslim-majority provinces of the north-west and Group-C also had Muslim-majority provinces of the north-east including Assam.
4. All groups of provinces would also have regional units. They would also be empowered to set up intermediate-level executives and legislatures of their own.

3. How personal letters and autobiographies give us information about any person (author)? How these sources are different from government sources?

Answer: Personal letters and autobiographies of any person only express those facts which the author wants to express in front of the world. Those facts could have been wrong as well. Except for this, we cannot get any type of information that the author does not want to disclose. Even then these personal letters and autobiographies give us information, to a certain extent, about the aspirations and problems of the masses.

1. The language of the letters is generally shaped by the feeling that they might be printed one day. On contrary it, the language of government documents is determined by the government. These documents are secret documents and are out of reach of the general masses.
2. Personal letters generally disclose that how the government is responsible for the problems of the general masses. On the other hand, government documents blame the public and their leaders for any event or riots which took place in the country. The government never takes responsibility for itself for such events.

4. Write a critical note on the Provincial Elections held in 1946.

Answer: After 1937, provincial elections were once again held in 1946. The results of these elections were as given below:

- ✚ The Congress won all the seats in the general constituencies. It captured 91.3% of the non-Muslim votes.
- ✚ The Muslim League also got a spectacular victory in constituencies reserved for the Muslims. It won all the thirty reserved constituencies in the centre. It got 86.6% of the Muslim vote.
- ✚ Out of the total of 509 reserved constituencies in all the provinces, the Muslim League won in 442 constituencies. In other words, the Muslim League was able to prove that it really represented the Muslim community in India. It came up as the dominant party of the Muslims and vindicated its claim that it was the only spokesman of the Muslims of India.
- ✚ In these elections, only a few people enjoyed the right to vote. The voters were just 10 to 12% of the total population. Similarly, only one per cent voters enjoyed the right to vote for the Central Assembly.

5. Enumerate the causes that led to the partition of India. Was this partition essential or could it be postponed?

Or

Partition of the country was the result of intricate problems which crept up because of communal tensions and policies of the British. Explain this statement.

Answer: The communal tensions and the British policy of Divide and Rule led to the partition of India in 1947. The British Policy of Divide and Rule had strengthened communal politics in the country. If Hindu Mahasabha stood for the cause of the Hindus, the Muslim League vindicated the cause of the Muslims. The British spread the venom of hatred in different communities and played them against each other. As such they prepared a ground for the partition of the country.

LONG ANSWER QUESTION

1. Discuss the growth of Communalism between 1930 to 1940. Also, evaluate the attempts made by nationalist movement to stop it.

Or

“The communal politics that started during the early decades of the 20th century was largely responsible for the partition of the country”? Examine the statement. (C.B.S.E. 2018)

Answer: The communal factor was quite rampant in the Indian politics between 1930 and 1940. It was due to the Divide and Rule policy adopted by the colonial rulers. This communal element threatened the national movement for independence. Though all the important leaders of various political parties tried to suppress the communal feelings, yet they failed to control it. Communalism ruled the roost during the British rule in India.

The spread of Communalism: The following reasons were responsible for the spread of communalism in the country:

1. There was a limited franchise. Only 10 to 12% of people enjoyed the right to vote.
2. There were separate electorates for the Hindus and the Muslims. It generated communal feelings.
3. The Congress failed to win those seats in the provincial elections which were reserved for the minorities. Four hundred and eighty-two seats were reserved for the Muslims. Out of these, Congress was able to win only 26 seats. 15 out of these 26 seats existed in Northwest Frontier Province. The Hindu Mahasabha also lost most of the seats. The same was the case with the political parties under the control of Zamindar and moneylenders.

4. The Congress had adopted a basic agricultural programmer which resulted in various Peasants' 'Movements.

Because of these factors, the Zamindar and the moneylenders had started supporting the communal political parties. They had realized that their interest could be best served by strengthening communal parties. They did not see any future for those parties which sought wide political participation of the people. Under these circumstances, Mohammad Ali Jinnah started opposing the Congress everywhere. He started preaching that there was a danger of majority Hindus swallowing the minority Muslims. He also preached that both Hindus and the Muslims were distinct nations, different from each other. They cannot exist together.

Demand for Pakistan: In 1940, the Muslim League passed a Resolution that demanded the partition of India at the time of its independence. It demanded a separate state of Pakistan for the Muslims. As there were many Hindu communal organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha, the communal demand of the Muslim League drew the attention of all. A few Hindu fundamentalists also preached that Hindu was a separate nation and India was for the Hindus. It strengthened the cause of the Muslim League.

The Hindu fundamentalism was in fact not fully justified. In this country the religious, linguistic and caste minorities never felt that their interests were endangered because of the Hindu dominance. The majority of the Hindus also convinced them that they need not worry owing to their large number in the country. But when a few of the majority community voiced communal feelings, it naturally created a sense of insecurity among the minorities. In such a situation, communal feelings gained ground.

For example, during 1940s, the Muslim League had won seats only in those constituencies where most of the minority community people lived. But the party remained weak in those areas like NWFP, Punjab, Sindh, and Bengal where the Muslims were in majority.

Activities of Communal Organisations: The interesting thing is that sometimes the communal forces joined hands against the Congress. For example, the communal organizations in NWFP, Punjab, Sindh and Bengal supported the Muslim League in the formation of its governments. They were more opposed to Congress than to the Muslim League. They also adopted a pro-government attitude. It can be termed as their unique characteristic that the communal forces of NWFP, Punjab, Sindh, and Bengal were pro-Muslim League and pro-British. They were only inimical towards Congress. So they failed to raise any social and economic demands of the people. They represented the cause of the rich.

Attempts to contain communalism by nationalist movement: The national movement strongly opposed the communal forces. Even then, it was unable to face the challenge put by communal forces. At last, communalism resulted in the partition of the country. Some scholars feel that communal forces won at last because the nationalist leaders did not like to talk to them. They never tried to win their confidence. But the reality is otherwise. From the very start, the nationalist leaders tried to have a dialogue with the communal forces.

But it was not possible to satisfy and convince the communal bigots. If one communal group was satisfied, the other raised its own different demands. Between 1937 and 1939, the Congress leaders met Jinnah time and again and tried to assuage his feelings. But Jinnah was not serious and did not put forward any concrete demand. Rather he implored on the Congress to accept the fact that it was a party of the nationalist Hindus and represented only the Hindus. He was ready to talk to Congress only if this condition was met. It was not easy for the Congress to accept this demand of Jinnah. By doing so, it would have left its basic secular nationalist philosophy.

The truth is that communalism spread more when attempts to contain it increased. In fact, there was no need to satisfy the communal forces. A strong struggle was needed to uproot communalism from the country. But the nationalists could not do it. However, we should not underestimate the role played by nationalist forces. In spite of the communal riots of 1946-47, India formed its secular constitution. The principle of secularism is still the soul of the Indian Constitution.

2. Discuss the provincial elections held in 1937. What were its results and influences?

Or

how did the provincial elections of 1937 prepare ground for the partition of the country?

Or

examine the outcomes of the provincial elections of 1937 and also examine the role of congress ministries and the Muslim League in it.

Answer: To constitute provincial parliaments, elections were held for the first time in 1937. These elections provided a limited franchise. Only 10 to 12% of people enjoyed the right to vote.

Results: During these elections, the results were favorable for the Congress. Out of the eleven provinces, it got an absolute majority in five provinces. It formed governments in seven provinces. But in the reserved constituencies, the Muslim League did not show good results. It got only 4.4% of the Muslim votes. It did not win even a single seat in Northwest Frontier Province. There were 84 reserved seats in Punjab. But the Muslim League won only two seats. Similarly, it won three seats in Sindh out of the total of 33 reserved seats.

❖ **Impact:**

1. In United Provinces, the Muslim League wanted to form a joint government along with Congress. But Congress had got an absolute majority there. So it did not accept the demand of the Muslim League. Some scholars feel that it was here that the Muslim League realised that if India remained united, it is possible that the Muslims might not remain in a dominating position. In other words, the Muslims who were in minority would not be able to attain any political power. So it wanted to strengthen its position as a political party and told its members that the interests of the Muslims could best be served only by a Muslim Party.
The Congress cannot do it as it was a Hindu party according to the propagandist of the Muslim League. But at that time there were a few takers for the insistence of Jinnah that Muslim League should be considered as the sole representative of the Muslims. However the Muslim League was popular in the United Provinces, Bombay and Madras but it had a weak social base in Bengal. It had a negligible role in N.W.F.P and Punjab. It could not even form its government in Sindh. It is strange that within ten years, it was able to get its demand for Pakistan accepted. It also started strengthening its social base.
2. The Congress ministries also increased the hiatus between the Congress and the Muslim League. In United Provinces, the Congress had rejected the offer of the Muslim League to form a joint government because Muslim League supported the Zamindari System whereas Congress wanted to abolish it though it had so far not done anything in this regard. The Congress could also not succeed in increasing its base among the Muslims. It however remained a secular party.
3. In the last years of the 1930s, the leaders of Congress had started emphasizing secularism more than before. But all the ministers and leaders were not unanimous about it. In 1937, Maulana Azad raised the issue that if the Congress members were not free to join the Muslim League then why were they being stopped having links with Hindu Mahasabha.

According to him, such a situation prevailed in Madhya Pradesh. Only then in 1938, the Congress working committee declared that the members of the Congress could not be the members of Hindu Mahasabha. It was the time when the strength of the Hindu Mahasabha and R.S.S. was on the increase. In the 1930s, the R.S.S. had increased its influence from Nagpur to the United Provinces, Punjab and other parts of the country. By 1940s, the R.S.S. had about one lakh volunteers. They believed that India, was the land of the Hindus. Such a communal situation was a signal towards the future partition of the country.

3. Explain the development since March, 1946 that led to the partition of India.

Answer: The major events that led towards the partition of India since March, 1946 were as under:

1. **Arrival of the Cabinet Mission:** After the Second World War, the Labour Party came to power in England. Clement Attlee became the Prime Minister of England. He was in favor of making India a free and independent country. In accordance with his declaration, a mission of ministers came to India on 23

March, 1946 to resolve the problems of India. This Mission held meetings with different political leaders of India. It recommended that a federal government might be set up in India.

2. **Communal Riots:** Elections to the Constituent Assembly were held in 1946. The Indian National Congress won these elections with a thumping majority. Because of jealousy, the Muslim League refused to join the Interim Government and again raised its demand for Pakistan and gave a clarion- call for Direct Action. It resulted in communal riots at various places. At last, the Interim Government was formed in September 1946. The Muslim League agreed to participate in this government but did not extend any cooperation to the Prime Minister.
3. **Failure of the Interim Government:** When an Interim Government was formed in 1946; the Congress and the Muslim League got an opportunity to work hand in hand. But the Muslim League always put some obstacles in every work initiated by the Congress. As a result, the Interim Government remained a failure. It became quite evident that the Hindus and the Muslims could not rule together.
4. **The British Declaration to Free and Leave India.** On 20 February, 1947, Clement Attlee, the British Prime Minister declared to leave India in June 1948. This Declaration also classified that the British would leave India only if the Muslim League and the Congress agreed to govern the country unitedly. However, the Muslim League was not ready for it. It wanted to attain a separate Pakistan for the Muslims. Consequently, the British Government started planning for the partition of the country.
5. **The Partition of the Country:** With the aim of dividing India into two parts, Lord Mountbatten was sent as the Viceroy of India. With his sagacious wisdom, he brought round both, Nehru and Patel for the partition of the country. At last, India was partitioned in 1947.

1. Critically examine the impact of Cabinet Mission proposals on Indian polity.

Or

Explain the reasons why the plan, suggested by the Cabinet Mission was finally not accepted by the Congress and the Muslim League.

Or

what were the proposals of the Cabinet Mission in 1946? Why did the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League ultimately reject them? (CJB.S.E. Sample Paper 2011)

Answer: The main recommendations of the Cabinet Mission (1946) are as under:

1. India will be accepted as a federation. It will include all the provinces and princely states of the country.
2. The Union will have? its Legislature and executive. The legislature will have representatives from all the provinces and the princely states.
3. The princely states will have those subjects which have not been given to the Union.
4. The provinces will have the right to form joint groups so that they may determine collective subjects.
5. A Constituent Assembly will be established to frame a Constitution for India. The total number of members of the Constituent Assembly will be 389 who will be elected from the provinces on the basis of the population of the state.
6. The minorities will be allotted seats in proportion to the percentage of their population in the country.
7. An Interim Government will be established in the country till the new Constitution is framed.

Critical Evaluation. Almost all the political parties had accepted free recommendations in the beginning. But later on, they started interpreting these recommendations in their own way. The Muslim League

demanding that there "must be a federation and in the future, there must also be a right to secede. The Congress wanted 'that the provinces must have the right, to choose a group of their choice.

In this way, the resolution of Cabinet Mission Plan was disapproved. It paved a way for the partition of India.

1. Examine the outcome of the provincial elections of 1937 and explain the role of Congress ministries and the Muslim League on it.

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