

# Role of Muslim League in the Partition of India

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**Abstract:** *The fact is that The Shimla Deputation by the Britishers on Oct. 1, 1906 paved a way to the principle of communal electorates. Actually, the British Administrators right from the Secretary of England to District Officer in India, all were convinced that an adequate counterpoise to the growing strength of the Indian National Congress must be found if, the British Rule in India was to be stabilized and secured. That is why; the official acceptance of the principle of separate Muslim electorates or reservation of seats for Muslim Community in elections founded a corner stone of the formation of a separate political party named Muslim League in 1906 in India, which played a crucial role in the partition of India.*

**Keywords:** Shimla Deputation, Communal Electorates, British Administrator, Muslim Community, Muslim League, Partition of India.

**Introduction:** All of us know it very well that Indian National Congress was the only political party to secure the political interests of the Indians in the British era or before the Independence of India. Moreover, from 1892 to 1909, only 6.59 percent of the Congress delegates were Muslims leaders like Sayyid Ahmed Khan who clearly considered it to be the representative of the majority Hindus. However, he was not an Anti-Nationalist leader; but he favoured a different conception of nation. For him the nation was a federation of community having entitlement to different kinds of

political rights depending on their ancestry and political importance. Most of the scholars assume that his only aim was to provide a special place to Muslim community in the framework of new cosmopolitan British Empire in India. Therefore, it was a sharp contrast to the Congress vision of nation consisting of Individual citizens. The prospect of the Introduction of representative government created the political threat of a majority domination, which led to the formation of the All India Muslim League in 1906. Thus, this was the beginning of a search for distinctive political identity with a demand for the protection of Muslim political rights as a minority community in India through the creation of a separate electoral system in the country.

Here it is noteworthy that inspired by the Aga Khan a deputation on Lord Minto at Shimla on Oct. 1, 1906 was sent which described by M.

Ali as a command performance. However, Mr. Archbold (Principal of M.A.O. College, Aligarh) prepared the draft of Muslim address which acted as a liaison between the Government and the Muslim Leaders. All the deputationists expressed their sentiments of loyalty to the British Crown and also showed a grateful appreciation of the British Governments' policy of introducing further reforms; but they expressed the apprehension that if the principle of the election was introduced without considering reservation of seats for the Muslim community not only on the basis of their population but also on the basis of their political importance. This was appreciated by all Muslim Leaders and it paved a way to the formation of the Muslim league.

**Formation of Muslim League:** Keeping the view of Shimla deputation on priority basis, in the wake of the 30<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1906 the All India Muslim League

was formerly inaugurated with the following objectives and aims:

- To promote the political interests of Muslim Community and show a loyalty towards the British Government.
- To remove any misconception regarding the Muslim Community towards the British Crown.
- To protect the political and some other rights of Indian Muslims and to place their needs and aspirations before the British Crown.
- To promote friendly relations between Muslims and other community of India without any prejudices.

Thus the formation of Muslim League cleared all misconceptions about the Muslim Community and as a new political party. It indicated its differences with the Indian National Congress in the consequent years. This character of the Muslim League remained till the freedom of India in 1947 and it resulted in the partition of

India. Nawab Waqar ul Mulk in his speech remarked: *“if the British rule disappears from India, the Hindu will Lord over it; and we will be in constant danger of our life, property and honour. The only way for the Muslims to escape this danger is to help in the continuance of the British rule. Let us sacrifice their lives for the British Crown.”*

Consequently after a decade Muslim League came under the influence of progressive Muslim Leaders like Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Mazhar-ul-Huq, Sayed Wazir Hussain, Hasain Imam and M.A. Jinnah. Moreover, from 1920 to 1923 the activities of the Muslim League remained suspended. However, the appointment of the Simon Commission and the Round Table Conferences at London that followed again brought the Muslim League in to activity. By 1934 Mr. Jinnah now a communalist became its leader and he played a vital role to bring it in to main stream with

the British Loyalty and a separate identity from the Congress Party. Likewise the Communal Award in 1932 by the British Government widened the gap between the Hindu and Muslim Community in the Country. The first elections for the Provincial Legislative Council under the Act of 1935 were held in 1937. The Muslim league also contested the elections to achieve the moderate success and out of 485 reserved Muslim seats, the party could only capture 110 seats in these elections. Even in the Muslim majority area of the Punjab, the league was trounced by many other rival Muslim parties and the Congress Party gained an absolute majority. This political scenario irritated the Muslim League's Leaders.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah interpreted this move as a calculated policy against the Muslim League and he leveled many sweeping and fantastic allegations against the Congress leaders. He came to the

conclusion that the Muslim could expect neither justice nor fair play from the Congress. Therefore, in 1938, Muslim League appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of the Raja of Pirpur to report on the Operations of the Muslims in what it called '*Hindu Congress Provinces*'. This report fabricated all cases of alleged hostile atrocities perpetrated on the Muslims by the Hindus. Now Muslim League's general attitude towards the Congress was that there is no tyranny as great as the tyranny of a majority of Hindus in India. The Muslim League also observed a bay of deliverance and thanking giving when the congress Ministers resigned in October 1939 over the Second World War Issue.

**Two Nations Theory:** A well-known political thinker and the poet Mohammad Iqbal is thought to be the originator of the idea of a separate Muslim State for the Indian Muslims. It is believed that he gave an emotional content to the Muslim League's

movement against Hindu Mahasabha. He declared: *"I have no hesitation in declaration if the principle that the Muslim Community is entitled to the full and free development on the lines of his own culture and tradition in his own Indian home land is recognized as the basis of a permanent communal settlement. Therefore, Muslim state appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India."*

Furthermore, the idea of separate homeland for Muslims to be called Pakistan took a definite shape in the mind of a young Muslim, Rehmat Ali. Who visualized the Punjab, Kashmir, Sindh, Afghan province and Bluchistan as the national home for the Indian Muslims and he further coined the word '*Pakistan*' in 1933. The most unequivocal declaration of the Hindus and Muslims as separate nationalities was made by Mr. Jinnah at the Lahore session of the League in March 1940. Demanding the partition

of India, the Muslim League passed the resolution for a separate state named as Pakistan. However, this resolution did not specify the areas in the proposed state of Pakistan. In 1942 Mr. Jinnah explained his resolution and decision prepared for the future of India as two nation states. However, he did not mention Bluchistan and Assam, nor did he claim Kashmir and Hyderabad; nevertheless, he gave a memorandum to the Cabinet Mission on May 12, 1946 demanding the six Muslim provinces to be grouped together as one group. Thus the Lahore session of Muslim League gave a full support to the ambition of Mr. Jinnah' demand for a separate state.

**Conclusion:** To conclude we can say that Muslim League's Lahore resolution played a crucial role in the partition of India. In other words it signaled the transformation of Indian Muslim from a minority to a nation state so that no future constitutional arrangements for India could any more

is negotiated without their participation and consent. Actually, Mr. Jinnah's key concern was to negotiate with the Congress leader and vibrate his demand of Pakistan under the theory of two nation states in the consequent years. Thus the road from this declaration of nationhood was a realization of a separate sovereign state in 1947 named Pakistan.

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