

# **PARTITION OF INDIA AND AFTERMATH**

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## **Preface**

This paper is a result of my continued interaction, over the years, with colleagues, political analysts and friends who are uniformly enthusiastic to unravel the dynamics of political affairs of India. The initiative of publishing a paper on Indian political affairs dawned in our regular evening meetings. I affectionately memorize Professor W. H. Morris Jones, Professor Tom Nossiter, Professor Meghnad Desai and Dr David Taylor for making my work easy by their collection of data in their respective books and also persistent my concentration in the area under discussion.

## **Introduction**

The partition of 1947 put the viewpoint in which India rose as a free state. The structure that was adopted in 1950 was the result of two differing cultures: one signifying the national leaders' normative apprehension for India's multicultural characters, shaped by her exceptional history and geography; and the other underlining their apprehension for unanimity, protection and governmental effectiveness. The first one led to the expression of secularism and federalism in the 1950's Constitution and the latter emphasized in the maintenance of the very state mechanism that had consolidated the colonial decree in India. The final outcome was the emergence of a semi-hegemonic state that drew mainly upon the Government of India Act of 1935. If the fresh Indian political leaders received a bequest of administration from their ancestors, they confidently passed over also, argued W. H. Morris-Jones, 'a legacy from their own immediate past, from the experience of the nationalist movement'. Autonomous Indian political affairs, at least in the early years, carried on these two legacies. The nationalist principles, which were barely plagiaristic, remained the motivating force in framing out future of India. Therefore political structures, in spite of their imperial basis, acted in a behaviour that was significant of an independent state, filled with passion for a new foundation. However the significance of the prevailing societal order, the separated social constitution and the predictable social differences in determining the political development cannot be ignored. There were also affluent civilizational customs that heralded the British decree and continued as a compulsory force, regardless of the accomplishment of disruptive political principles with the appearance of 1947's Pakistan as a requirement for sovereignty from the rule of British. Thus there is no doubt that the politics of India cannot be understood without understanding the chronological processes that remained largely crucial even after freedom, for reasons linked with the strange conditions in which India appeared in the comity of liberated states. It would consequently be erroneous to advocate that the politics of India yet after decolonization remained as it was in the earlier period basically because the historical background undergoes enormous changes. It would also not be exclusively proper to argue that politics of India was completely ground-breaking in its post-colonial stage as the colonial past, although much ridiculed, has, in fact, left behind a extensive political hollow. The intend of this study is thus bi-fold:

firstly, to briefly examine the nature of division and its conclusion and, secondly, by dealing with the ideological origin of the post-colonial political management in India that had basis in the nationalist struggle, to illustrate out the political connotation of those ideologies and values that put the institutional base of a decolonized India. Partition of the sub-continent Partition is the moment of the constitutional establishment of two dominions with accompanying blood-bath. Pressing for a separate Muslim country, the Lahore resolution of 1940 was the primary official declaration of the Pakistan or division by the Muslim League. however the name Pakistan was nowhere stated, by demanding an autonomous state for the Muslims. The declaration explained the purpose of an independent Muslim state into real terms. Seeking to classify the Muslims of India around the Pakistan demand, the declaration was thus historically important for at least two essential reasons:

first, that the declaration was projected by Fazlul Haq, the most admired Muslim leader in Bengal, suggests the mounting supremacy of the League in the Muslim-majority provinces<sup>1</sup>; and

second, for the first time an undeniable claim was officially articulated insisting that the areas in India in which Muslims composed a popular should be made into an autonomous state containing independent and sovereign units. In addition, it argued that Indian Muslims constituted a majority population in the north-west and the east of India and should to be treated on a par with the Hindu majority in all upcoming constitutional discussions. Although uncertainties of Pakistan's feasibility, the colonial powers became progressively more perceptive to the claims superior by the Muslim League. By 1945, not only did the League persist on the division of India as the only way out to the complex constitutional dilemma of India, its election campaign was also based on the question of Pakistan. If the Muslims voted in support of the League in the elections of 1946, the League will be permitted to raise for Pakistan without any extra survey or plebiscite. Throughout the election campaign, Jinnah also recognized the areas comprising Pakistan. According to his will, those areas with a apparent Muslim majority naturally belonged to Pakistan. Therefore, Baluchistan, Sind, the North West Frontier Province and Punjab in the north-west, and Bengal and Assam in the north-east of India were allocated for Pakistan. The approaching elections, he affirmed, 'will decide the matter once for all and when they are over, Pakistan will develop into an immediate reality. In Punjab, Jinnah and his League-men were reported to have pinched on the pious sentiments of the Muslim voters by emphasizing that the question a voter is called on to answer is – are you a true

believer or an infidel and a traitor. As the poll result publicized, the 1946 election was a referendum for the League. Although in the first regional election in 1937 the League failed to create an impact even in the Muslim-majority provinces, within nine years, in 1946, it became the only representative of the Muslims by polling in most, if not all, cases close to its utmost normal potency. This was an amazing success in terms of both leadership and administration. An explicit decision in support of the Muslim League in the Muslim-majority provinces in the 1946 elections fundamentally distorted India's political background in which the League emerged as a stronger party in its negotiations with the British in the last stage of the shift of power. The conflicting nature of the certainty of 15 August 1947 continues to plot the historian even after more than half a century since India was partitioned. Freedom was gained but was accompanied by the shock of partition and disorder that followed straight away before the relocate of power was formally articulated. So the independence of India represents a great inconsistency of history. The autonomist movement led to freedom, but failed to evade partition. The victory of the nationalist movement was therefore also its collapse. Why did it happen? The answer lies in another paradox, namely the victory and collapse of the anti-imperialist movement, led by Gandhi and his Congress colleagues. In its struggle against the colonial power, the Congress had a two-fold task: moulding diverse classes, communities and groups into a nation and winning sovereignty for this rising nation. The Congress had thrived in assembling the nation against the British that accounted for the final extraction of the British rule in India; it was nevertheless almost unsuccessful 'in welding the variety into a nation and particularly failed to amalgamate the Muslims into this nation'. Underlying this puzzle – the victory and collapse of the nationalist movement – lies the roots of the inconsistency of sovereignty that came along with the vast Divide of the subcontinent of India. Sovereignty and division were, as an analyst argues, 'but the expression of the success and failure of the approach of the [Congress-led] nationalist movement. The 1947 division was therefore not simply a physical division of the subcontinent; it also fundamentally altered its nature by seeking to define its members in conventionality with the constructed political boundary in the aftermath of the relocate of power. For the Muslims, 1947 was not just about division; it was also about freedom from both the British and the Hindu ruling power. For the Hindus in Bengal, for example, it shaped a sense of home – where they were protected and sheltered<sup>2</sup>. Though it was certainly a division in many respects, not the whole thing in India distorted irreversibly as a result of these two linked actions – sovereignty and division. Sovereign India remained, at least in the early decades of her sovereignty, a detainee of her colonial past.

#### **Political economy of India as a nation-state**

India's post-colonial political financial system is neither purely capitalist nor feudal but an irregular admixture of the two. Therefore, just like India's growth as a state in the repercussion of decolonization in 1947, the path of progress that India adopted can never be conceptualized in a simple manner. The preface to the Constitution of India laid the basis of the socialistic outline of society in which the state remained the most significant player. Accordingly, (Part IV of the Constitution) the Directive Principles of State Policy highlight that the objective of the Indian political development is not unrestrained laissez faire but a welfare state where the state has an optimistic responsibility to certify to its citizens social, economic, political justice with solemnity of the individual reliable with the harmony and reliability of the nation. By making them basic in authority, and making the laws of the nation and duty of the state to apply these principles, the framing fathers made it the responsibility of future governments to find a middle way between individual freedom and the civic good, between preserving the belongings and opportunity of the few and bestowing benefits on the many in order to unfetter the powers of individuals uniformly for contributions to the mutual good. This innovative institutional environment consisted of 'a regulatory regime' comprising

- (a) public sector growth,
- (b) unrestricted controls over markets and private financial activities and
- (c) harsh overseas exchange and trade in controls<sup>3</sup>.

The primary two had their roots in the principles of socialism while the third one had its roots in financial nationalism. Taken mutually, they expressed 'activism of the recently established nation state'. In this sculpt of state-directed progress, the generally noteworthy mechanism was the Planning Commission that came into being in January 1950 regardless of severe resistance of the Gandhians within the Congress Working Committee. Nevertheless, the cabinet declaration that ultimately led to the formation of the Commission underlined three chief principles as unique terms of reference in the grounding of the plans, which basically defused opposition. These principles were:

- (a) that the citizens, both men and women uniformly, have the right to an sufficient means of livelihood;
- (b) that the possession and control of the material resources of the state are so distributed as best to subserve the universal good; and
- (c) that the action of the financial system does not result in the meditation of assets and means of production to the common detriment. emphasizing the ideological obligation of the nation, the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948 therefore begins by stating that the country has now set itself to set up a social order where impartiality and equality of opportunity shall be protected to all the people. For this reason, cautious planning and incorporated efforts over the entire field of national movement are necessary; and the Indian Government proposes to set up a National Planning Commission to plan programmes of development and to protect its execution. Therefore, the Industrial Policy

Resolution of 1948 insisted that the state should play an increasingly energetic role in the development of significant industries, such as

(a) industries mechanized arms and ammunition, manufacture and control of atomic energy and the ownership and supervision of railway transport and

(b) primary industries, namely iron, coal, steel, aircraft manufacture, ship-building and oil.<sup>4</sup> This declaration was repeated in the 1955 Avadi session of the Congress by underlining that, in outlook of the affirmed objective being a socialist model of society, the country shall play an imperative role in planning and development. The next landmark experience confirming the aim of an activist country was the industrial policy resolution of 1956, which was adopted after parliament had acknowledged in December 1954 a socialist pattern of society as the objective of social and economic policy and the Second Five-Year Plan expressed this ideological goal in strict terms. In seeking to accomplish the purpose of a socialist pattern of society, the Nehru-led government predicted an extended task of public sector and the significance of scheduling in all-round development of the state.

#### Public administration in India

Bearing the obvious impression of British colonial administration, system of government in India, its organization, responsibility, performances and inter-relationships has evolved over an extensive period in history since the scheming of the structure about the middle of the nineteenth century. The 1854, Macaulay Committee Report, is a break point in the development of system of government in India. By recommending a civil service based on the merit structure, the Committee required to reinstate the age-old investment system of the East India Company. Protecting the idea of a generalist bureaucrat 'all rounder' the Committee 'depicted the perfect supervisor as a talented layman who, moving from post to post irrespective of its subject matter, on the source of his acquaintance and knowledge in the government'<sup>5</sup>. The competence of the members of the Indian civil service (ICS) as administrators may have been excellent, but it is liable that they were enthused largely by imperial interests and therefore 'the interests of the state were also frequently deferred to the interests of the Crown'<sup>6</sup>. Additionally, there was a Weberian facet to the ICS. Drawn from the prominent sections of society, the public servants came from some of the top universities and were selected on the basis of a competitive test. Those within the ICS were consequently secluded from the rest given their special class, caste and educational backgrounds. In other words, they had the exceptional position within the society that Weber felt was vital to a true system of government. Given their weird characteristics, the British officials in India twisted a most strange type of society with no organic links with the society they were to serve. However, the Indian civil service assumed an essential position in the system of government that flourished during the colonial rule. Recognizing its gigantic significance in nourishing the empire, Lloyd George affirmed in the House of Commons in 1922 that 'they are the brace frame of the whole structure. I do not care what you build it of – if you take the brace frame out, the fabric will collapse'<sup>7</sup>. In independent India, the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) succeeded the ICS. Regardless of its imperial roots, the political leaders of India choose to maintain the make-up of the ICS apparently because of its competent role in conducting Indian management in accordance with agreed rules and regulations supporting a particular system. Thus the pre-1947 experience satisfactorily inclined them towards its extension, although during the debate in the Constituent Assembly, the house was not agreed on this matter. The argument contrasting its extension was based on its position as a supporter of imperialism. Vallabhbhai Patel was most likely vocal in defending the ICS and its brace frame. He knew that lacking the ICS Pax Britannica would purely have been unthinkable. And he also realized that sovereign India needed a dedicated civil service even more just because of the diverse responsibilities that the state had to carry. Since they were 'nationalistic, faithful, honest and able'<sup>8</sup>. Patel was convinced to support the continuity of the British system of government particularly when the country was reeling under disorder towards the close of the colonial rule. In early 1946, he summoned the regional Premier's Conference to advance consent on the future of what was then All India Services (AIS). In observation of their long association with public management, officers belonging to the AIS 'are largely well-equipped to pact with innovative and multifaceted tasks. Not only are they constructive instruments, they will also serve as a link connecting the Provinces and the management of India and initiate a sure amount of insolence and energy in the government both of the Centre and the Provinces. Later, while speaking in the Constituent Assembly, he positively stated that you will not have an integrated India if you do not have an excellent all India service' that had the sovereignty to converse out its intellect and enjoyed a wisdom of security. He also accredited the achievement of the Constitution to the continuation of an all India service by saying, 'if you do not accept this itinerary, then do not follow this Constitution . . . This Constitution is intended to be carried by a ring of service which will keep the country unbroken. . . . If you eliminate them'<sup>9</sup>, Patel thus apprehended, 'I see zilch but an image of disorder all over the country.'

#### Concluding observations

In spite of more or less the identical colonial inheritance, sovereign states in South Asia have adopted entirely different forms of authority<sup>10</sup>. India, for instance, has been systematic with democratic system, while neither Pakistan nor Bangladesh has succeeded, except momentarily, in this regard. What is confusing to a political analyst is the virtual potency of democratic system in India and its collapse to strike roots either in Bangladesh or Pakistan or elsewhere in the region. The enquiry is consequently why democratic system is so burly in India and not elsewhere in South Asia despite approximately the same values inherited by them from British colonialism. Elections have been supposed in both Pakistan and Bangladesh of late, but the ritual of voting cannot be puzzled with the accomplishment of substantive

democratic system resting on social and financial rights of citizenship. Political processes in Bangladesh and Pakistan remain hostage to extremely unfair state structures. The reasons are not tricky to seek. Historically, India was better-placed than her neighbours at least in two major ways:

(a) India's change to democracy owed a enormous transaction to the Congress Party and its management, which appreciated the nationalist legacy, and

(b) Religious divisions were cross-cut by frequent provincial, language and caste cleavages and also the noticeable decline of Muslims as a significant factor in political decisions.

There is no uncertainty that the strength of the Congress organization and its electoral accomplishment after independence gave the party's management an outstanding political resource. Its leaders enjoyed great authority in the course of drawing up the constitution of sovereign India, and its parliamentary majority gave it 'the liberty to make "hard decisions" in the instant aftermath of decolonization'<sup>11</sup>.

### References

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3. S. S. Pirzada (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan: All India Muslim League documents*, Vol. 2, Karachi: National Publishing House, no date, p. 337.
4. IOR, L/PJ/8/787, Telegram, the Viceroy to the Secretary of State, 19 April 1940.
5. Jinnah's statement in the Dawn, 21 September 1945. According to Jinnah, 'no attempt will succeed except on the basis of Pakistan and that is the major issue to be decided by all those who are well-wishers of India and who are really in earnest to achieve real freedom and independence of India, and the sooner it is fully realised, the better.'
6. IOR, R/3/1/105, V. P. Menon to Even Jenkins, the Governor of Punjab, 20 October 1945.
7. IOR, R/3/1/105, Wavell to Pethick-Lawrence, 25 October 1945. Reporting on Jinnah's election campaign to the Secretary of State, Pethick-Lawrence, Wavell had expressed his 'uneasiness' about the confidence the Muslims had shown in securing Pakistan in the aftermath of the 1946 elections.
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