

---

# **The Study of Boundary Line Issue in the Punjab During the last two Decades of the British Raj until the Declaration of 3 June 1947**

\_\_\_\_\_ Zulfiqar Ali  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Punjab partition did not take place abruptly, rather it evolved through the decades. The debate extended over decades helped in clearing the knowledge lines of Punjab at the time of its partition. The negotiations for the formation of the partition plan further crystallized the boundary lines for Punjab partition. Therefore, there was absolutely no need of constituting any boundary commission. Nevertheless, it was formed as an act of diplomacy just to avoid the immanent Sikh riots against the real Punjab partition on the last leg of the Raj. The British diplomacy succeeded but the masses had to bear its consequences.

The British Punjab as a consolidated province was a purely British creation. However, they could not conserve its consolidation at the end of their Raj. This study reveals that the Hindus had been propounding for the partition of the Punjab since the first decade of the twentieth century. The Sikhs originated this idea in 1923. The Muslims had also been contemplating the separation of Ambala Division from the Punjab since 1926. The Congress also began to refer to it in live with the Nehru Report. The British had been considering it since the holding of Round Table Conferences. Thus, there were numerous

studies for the Punjab partition carried out by the Hindus, the Sikhs, the British, the Congress and the Muslim League. This work sheds light on the fact that the partition of the Punjab did not occur abruptly rather it evolved through decades. However, the Sikhs as well as the Hindus were the main supporters of this idea with the tacit support of the Congress. Thus, this study tries to ascertain that with the declaration of Partition Plan June 3, 1947, the boundary lines for the partition of Punjab had become so clear that the British could enforce it on district or the sub-district levels even without getting the consensus of concerned parties. Therefore, there was neither any justification nor the need of constituting any Boundary Commission as debate extended over decades had cleared the envisaged Punjab boundary line. However, a commission was formed as a British strategy just to avoid imminent Sikh riots that would invariably follow in the wake of Punjab parties. The British were successful in their strategy however; its outcome further enhanced Sikh desperation that intensified Punjab blood bath on its partition.

During Mughal era the Punjab remained divided in the regions of Sirhind, Lahore and Multan. Since 1799 to 1849, the Sikhs ruled the Punjab and it remained divided between Cis-Sutlej and Trans-Sutlej regions.<sup>1</sup> In March 1849, the British annexed it and consolidated it into a province whose boundaries were expanded from Delhi to Peshawar including Delhi. However, in 1901, the British separated its five frontier districts to constitute N.W.F. Province. Then in 1911, they separated Delhi district from the Punjab to form Delhi Capital but from then onward throughout the British Raj, the rest of the Punjab remained intact.

### Evolution of Punjab Partition 1909-1940

The intelligentsia of the Punjab began to forward schemes for the partition of their province since 1909. Consequently, its new boundaries had become clear in 1940. Punjab Bhai Parmanand (leader of Punjab Hindu Sabha) was the first Punjabi who in 1909 presented his idea for the partition of the North West sub-continent to ensure Hindu control.<sup>2</sup> The Sikh press began to

follow it by claiming a Sikh State in 1923.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, the growing communal consciousness began to create tensions among the communities and there were numerous communal during the years 1923-1924. One of the most appalling was a Hindu-Muslim riot at Kohat in North West Frontier Province on 10 September 1924.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, as remedial measures for communal riots, Lala Lajpat Rai suggested division of the Punjab into East and West Punjab because eastern part of the Punjab was predominantly non-Muslim.<sup>5</sup> Then, G.D. Birla (renowned Hindu industrialist) while supporting Punjab partition said to Madan Mohan Malavia (veteran leader of Hindu Mahasabha) in 1927 that, "I do not know whether splitting of Punjab and Bengal would be liked by the people but I would personally welcome it".<sup>6</sup> Perhaps that was the reason that while contemplating the communal problem, the Nehru Report too referred Hindu Zones in Bengal and Punjab Muslim majority provinces.<sup>7</sup> Then, the Sikhs discussed partition of the Punjab with Mahatama Gandhi and Lord Irwin in 1930.<sup>8</sup> On the following year, they discussed it with Lord Willingdon.<sup>9</sup> Coincidentally, Allama Muhammad Iqbal delivered his presidential address at Allahabad. He too suggested exclusion of Ambala Division and other districts from the Punjab where non-Muslims were predominant that would make Muslim state territorially small but population wise large.<sup>10</sup>

Meanwhile, the British held Round Table Conferences in London. During the, conference, with a view to solving the communal tangle in the Punjab, Sir Geoffrey Corbett<sup>11</sup> suggested separation of Ambala Division minus Simla district from the Punjab to make it as one community province.<sup>12</sup> The Sikh delegates rebutted this scheme by submitting their own proposals.<sup>13</sup> There was no further development in this regard. Anyhow, in 1938, while suggesting two federations to solve the communal tangle, G.D. Birla said to Gandhi, "The Muslim Federation may be composed of all provinces or portions of Provinces which contain more than two thirds of Muslim population". Thus, he again propounded partition of the Punjab.<sup>14</sup> The author of the Regional Federal Scheme proposed to treat the

Punjab inclusive of Hindu tracts of the Ambala Division, Kangra District, Una and Garhshankar Tehsils of Hoshiarpur district and all the Punjab non-Muslim states as one regional unit.<sup>15</sup> Then, in early 1939, the author of the "Confederacy of India" divides India into five federations. It's the "Indus Region's Federation" which necessitated either creation of a new province consisting of the Ambala Division, Kangra district, Una and Garhshankar tehsils of the Hoshiarpur district, and the chief commissioner's province of Delhi, etc. or inclusion of all these Hindu areas in the United Provinces.<sup>16</sup> K.L. Gauba emphasized that, "by 1938 and 1939, Pakistan was becoming a fashionable idea".<sup>17</sup> Therefore, Lord Linlithgow broached the subject of Pakistan with Gandhi on 15 March 1939 who responded that, "even if Pakistan admitted of realization, it would never settle the communal question in India".<sup>18</sup> All this began to increase Sikh perturbation therefore, on 10-11 February 1940; they held an All India Akali Conference at Attari (about 15 miles east of Lahore) where they expressed their deep concern about the growing endeavors of certain Muslim quarters to claim Punjab as a part of Pakistan. Accordingly, they unanimously claimed that partition of the Punjab alone would solve their problems and that of other minorities.<sup>19</sup> Thus, the Sikhs had claimed partition to solve their problem several weeks before Muslim League's Lahore Resolution on 23 March 1940, in which it demanded independence Muslim State in Muslim majority areas including Punjab.

While discussing the new Punjab boundaries under Lahore Resolution, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar states that the Muslims had majority in 16 western districts and non-Muslim in 13 eastern districts therefore, these two sets of districts form two separate areas, which provided natural segregation of Hindus and Muslims in the Punjab.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, the author of "Tragedy of Jinnah" criticizes the Lahore Resolution by stating that the Punjab partition based on separation of preponderantly Hindus and Sikh areas of Ambala, Jullundur divisions and Amritsar districts would leave the Punjab economically ruined and crippled. Therefore, according to him, "Mr. Jinnah may then send the Nawab of

Mamdot, Mr. Aurangzeb Khan and Sir Abdullah Haroon to gulp the sands of Sind with all their vitamins and to take exercise by breaking their heads against the rocks of Baluchistan".<sup>21</sup> Thus in 1940, the Indian politicians, intellectuals and writers as well as the British in their discussions had cleared boundaries of the Punjab for its partition.

### What was Pakistan in 1941-1942?

A confidential memorandum "what is Pakistan?" was prepared for M.A. Jinnah in February 1941. It suggested the exclusion of Ambala Division from the Punjab, which not only had majority Hindu and Sikh population but was also a fiscal liability. Therefore, from this date at least, it was clear for Jinnah that he would have to consider necessary readjustment for Punjab's territorial boundaries.<sup>22</sup> As on 17 January 1942, Jinnah disclosed to R.G. Coupland his readiness to cede Ambala Division from the Punjab to United Provinces.<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, the Muslim League's began to propagate that, "Ethnographically, the Punjab proper extends up to the northern limits of Ambala division which differs from the rest of the Punjab in the language, customs and religious proclivities of the people". They began to emphasize that Ambala Division was truly speaking a predominant the Hindu area that could be merged into U.P. or joined with Delhi as a new province. Their conclusion was that shorn of Ambala division with the states of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Faridkot as well as the states of Simla Hills, Sirmur Kalsia, the population of the Punjab would be reduced by 7 millions. Consequently, it would raise proportion of Muslim population from 57 percent to 66 percent in the rest of the Punjab.<sup>24</sup>

The idea of ceding Ambala division from the Punjab to U.P. was not new as it had been considered in the Muslim League circles since 1926.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps due to this, Allama Muhammad Iqbal recommended, "The exclusion of Ambala Division and perhaps some Districts where non-Muslims predominate", in his Allahabad address in 1930.<sup>26</sup> Thus, the Muslim League had cleared its readiness to exclude Ambala Division and other non-

Muslim majority districts from the Punjab before the arrival of the Cripps Mission.

### The Sikhs' Request for 14 Districts in 1942

In 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps arrived with his mission in India and on 27 March 1942, Sardar Baldev Singh, Ujjal Singh, Master Tara Singh and Sir Jogendra Singh met him to discuss the redistribution of provincial powers between East and West Punjab. Master Tara Singh said that, "the only thing that would satisfy the Sikhs, if this scheme were to be implemented, was that the Punjab should be divided". According to him, the whole area South of Sutlej plus the districts of Lahore (less Lahore City), Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Jullundur, Hoshiarpur and Kangra districts should be merged into a separate province.<sup>27</sup> The Sikhs All Parties Committee asked Cripps that the British should divide the Punjab to constitute a new province comprising of Ambala and Jullundur Divisions with three districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Lahore.<sup>28</sup>

Master Tara Singh also made it to Cripps that only the Muslim League would object to the division of the Punjab as proposed by the Sikhs however, "if the British Government be prepared to accept this proposal of the Sikhs, there is a likelihood of the final solution of the communal problem". He added that in that case, "I may be able to persuade the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha to agree to the communal solution outlined in your proposals, as amended by the Sikh proposal".<sup>29</sup> Thus, during the Cripps Mission deliberations, the Sikhs had made clear that they were ready to take only 14 districts excluding the Lahore city.

### Sir Chhotu Ram's Claim for 13 Districts

While the debate on the issue of partition continued, Sir Chhotu Ram warned Sikandar Hayat Khan that, "if the League wanted Pakistan in the Muslim majority provinces because they did not have faith in the Hindu community, the Hindu will be forced to make a similar claim on the Punjab", as according to him, "the Punjab had as many as 13 with Hindu or Sikh majorities

out of 29 districts".<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, Sikandar Hayat Khan presented his formula to solve the communal tangle.<sup>31</sup> Regarding this formula, the Governor Glancy opined that, "assuming the unit concerned to be a district, the Ambala Division and a large part of Jullundur Division and also the Amritsar District would cease to belong to the Punjab", however, "if a smaller unit such as tehsil was taken then possibly certain other areas would also disappear from the province".<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, M.A. Jinnah visited Punjab and he made a pointed attack on this formula but did not mention Sikandar's name in this regard.<sup>33</sup> Thus, Sir Chhotu Ram also made clear his claim for 13 districts and the Governor also cleared the Punjab boundaries.

### The Sikhs' Azad Punjab Scheme

The Sikhs continued their propaganda and held an All India Akali Conference at Vihala Kalan in the Lyallpur District in July 1942. They passed a resolution demanding the re-adjustment of the boundaries of the Punjab.<sup>34</sup> Again, in October, they suggested to draw a dividing line from north to south right across the Lahore Division.<sup>35</sup> Giani Kartar Singh's group published a booklet, "Taqsim-i-Punjab" in November to advocate the formation of a new province consisting of the Ambala and Jullundur Divisions and the districts of Lahore, Amritsar and Lyallpur.<sup>36</sup> On 27 Feb. 1943, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbhandak Committee in its meeting at Amritsar stated,

"1-In the opinion of this body establishment of Pakistan's detrimental to the Sikhs. 2-Muslim Majority areas of Punjab should be separated from Punjab and in the remaining Punjab Sikh minority rights should be protected in the same way as Muslim rights are protected in U.P. and C.P. and Hindu rights in N.W.F. Province".<sup>37</sup>

At the same time, the Sikhs held a conference at Amritsar to propagate their Azad Punjab Scheme. Master Tara Singh fixed the boundaries of Azad Punjab, which included Ambala, Jullundur

and Lahore Divisions, the Lyallpur and Montgomery districts and a portion of Multan district from Multan Division.<sup>38</sup> On 7 June 1943, the Shiromani Akali Dal passed a resolution to establish Azad Punjab.<sup>39</sup> Anyhow, The Giani Kartar Singh's group continued to seek a way out to secure Muslim Sikh harmony but the holding of an anti Pakistan Conference by the Akalis overturned the situation.<sup>40</sup> Moreover the Sikhs continued to consolidate and clarify their stance to readjust Punjab boundaries to carve out their own province.

### Raja Formula--Gandhi-Jinnah Talks and the Punjab Partition

In July 1944, Mr. C. Rajagoplachari presented his formula with Gandhi's consent, which too conceded partition of the Punjab. According to this formula, a settlement based on the principle of accepting Pakistan was proposed under which the contiguous districts were to be demarcated in the North West and East of India where the Muslims were in an absolute majority.<sup>41</sup> Governor Glancy reported that, "if the C.R. formula were accepted, this would mean that twelve districts of the Punjab (the whole of the Ambala and Jullundur Divisions plus the district of Amritsar) would be excluded from Pakistan".<sup>42</sup> However, Muslims League rejected this formula categorically. The Sikhs also rejected it as Master Tara Singh remarked on 20 August that it would result in dividing the Punjab by putting 17 districts in Pakistan and 12 districts in Hindustan.<sup>43</sup> After this failure, Gandhi held his talks with Jinnah and asked him that "let it be a partition as between two brothers, if a division there must be". Jinnah responded, "I really do not know what this means, and I would like you to elaborate this proposal". To this, Gandhi elaborated that,

"I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations. But as one family consisting of many members of whom the Muslims living in the North-West Zone, i.e. Baluchistan, Sind, North-West Frontier Province and that part of the Punjab where



they are in absolute majority over all other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority desire to live in separation from the rest of India”.

Jinnah responded that. “If this term were accepted and given effect to, the present boundaries of these provinces would be maimed and mutilated beyond redemption and leave us only with husk, and it is opposed to the Lahore Resolution”.<sup>44</sup> The talks ended in failure. After this, Wavell called his conference in June 1945 at Simla to solve the political stalemate of India but that too ended in failure. Thus, the extensive discussions among India’s top leadership were instrumented in clearing in 1944 the new boundaries of the Punjab on its partition.

### Defining the Genuine Muslim Areas

On 16 August 1945, Glancy asked Wavell to deflate Pakistan theory by excluding Ambala and Jullundur Divisions along with the district of Amritsar from Punjab, as in this area there did not exist any Muslim majority district.<sup>45</sup> Accordingly, while discussing complications of the partition of the Punjab, Evan Jenkins<sup>46</sup> submitted a memorandum, “Pakistan and the Punjab” to the Viceroy. He concluded that a partition with the boundary running through the Lahore Division would lead to endless minority problems in the two new units. He also quoted a reference of Prof. Coupland who had pointed out that, “the cities of Lahore and Amritsar are only 25 miles apart, and to plan the boundary of two sovereign states between them would be an extremely awkward and perhaps an impossible arrangement”. Therefore, he suggested that before making any counter-proposals, there should be a thorough enquiry into the practicability of Pakistan.<sup>47</sup> Consequently, based on this a “Note for the Viceroy on Pakistan” was prepared which was sent to the Secretary of State who circulated it in India and to Burma Committee for further considerations.<sup>48</sup>

At the same time, V.P. Menon prepared a more detailed study of Pakistan. On 10 October, K.H. Panikkar sent a memorandum "the next step in India" to him. He stated that her majesty, Government must accept the principle of a Muslim homeland subject to territorial adjustments to meet the claims of Sikhs and Hindus in Punjab and of Hindus in Bengal. Then, there should be a commission of impartial experts to settle the boundaries of the new states. Even Jenkins remarked that he did not believe that a Muslim homeland would be possible and proposed to appoint commission of experts to consider and report on the possibilities of such an idea.<sup>49</sup> Then, while stating that, "in case the Muslim majority provinces opted to form their separate union", he suggested partitioning of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam to make Pakistan small, weak and unattractive for Jinnah. He believed that, "in long run the Punjab and probably Bengal might join the original Federal Union on and terms the prospect of partition would be less attractive when it became imminent". Therefore, he asked V.P. Menon to chalk out further details.<sup>50</sup> Anyhow, while considering "Pakistan Issue", Mr. George Abell opined that, "If the Muslims insist on self determination in genuinely Muslim areas, this must be conceded", as, "there can be no question of compelling large Non Muslim populations to remain in Pakistan against their will".<sup>51</sup>

On 10 December, 1945, special correspondent of API interviewed Jinnah who stated that there would be frontier adjustment, "Where primarily Hindus and Muslims lands are contiguous to the Hindustan or Pakistan states", however, "first it is necessary to take the present provincial borders as the boundaries of the future Pakistan".<sup>52</sup> At this, Wavell asked the Secretary of State that Jinnah was contemplating minor adjustments whereas Congress expected almost half of provinces. The Secretary responded that Jinnah's statement, "there will have to be frontier adjustment is a move in the right direction, as if we do come to having Pakistan, considerable adjustment of that kind seem to me to be inevitable". He directed Wavell to send his

actual proposals for defining genuine Muslim areas, as there would be a lot of need to think about it.<sup>53</sup>

Therefore, on 23 January 1946, V.P Menon and B.N. Rau sent their note "demarcation of Pakistan Areas" to Mr. Abell. They suggested that Western Zone of Pakistan should consist of Sind, the North-West Frontier Province, and British Baluchistan with Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi Divisions of the Punjab. However, this zone had the district of Amritsar, which was not only predominantly non-Muslim but also particularly sacred to the Sikhs. Therefore, they emphasized that exclusion of Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts from the western zone of Pakistan would resolve the objection of the Sikhs as these two districts formed a compact block. In addition, "if the existing Lahore, Rawalpindi and Multan Divisions are included in Pakistan, the number of Punjab Sikhs in Pakistan would be about 2.2 millions and in Hindustan about 1.5 millions", whereas exclusion of Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts would make the corresponding figures vice versa. Therefore, Menon and Rau recommended that Western Zone of Pakistan should include Sind, North West Frontier Province, British Baluchistan with Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Multan Divisions of the Punjab minus the districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur.<sup>54</sup> George Abell thanked V.P. Menon for this top secret about a possible demarcation of the Pakistan areas and sent this note to John Thorne<sup>55</sup> for his comments. He also asked Thorne that Jinnah should be told that, "if the demand for Pakistan is pressed HMG cannot in any case agree to more than the area demarcated going into Pakistan" however, "it might have to be less because it will be necessary to decide the Sikh question on which negotiations between the parties will be essential".<sup>56</sup>

Meanwhile, the Secretary of State again asked Wavell to send his recommendations regarding the genuine Muslim areas, "if we are compelled to give a decision on this".<sup>57</sup> Therefore, I.D. Scott prepared a draft about the demarcation of the Pakistan based on Menon and Rau' draft which George Abell again sent to John Thorne and V.P. Menon for their comments. Menon responded that concerning western zone, "I have no comments on your

draft". Regarding Eastern Zone, he commented that, "Dinajpur [Muslim majority district in West Bengal] has 50.2 percent and it is a nice question whether it should be included in Pakistan or excluded. Since we have excluded Gurdaspur from the Western Zone of Pakistan, we might well include Dinajpur in the Eastern Zone".<sup>58</sup> Thus, on 6 February 1946, Lord Wavell sent his recommendation for genuine Muslim areas. Regarding Western Zone, he stated that, "we should include Sind, N.W.F.P., British Baluchistan and the Rawalpindi, Multan and Lahore Divisions of the Punjab less Amritsar and Gurdaspur". He added that the only Muslim majority district that would not go into Pakistan, "under this demarcation is Gurdaspur (51% Muslim). Gurdaspur must go with Amritsar for geographical reasons and Amritsar being sacred city of Sikhs must stay out of Pakistan". He also stated the fact that, "much of Lahore district is irrigated from Upper Bari Doad Canal with head works in Gurdaspur district is awkward but there is no solution that avoids all such difficulties". According to him, the greatest difficulty was the position of the Sikhs with their homelands and sacred places on both sides of the border but, "this problem is one which no version of Pakistan can solve", however, "under proposed scheme 1461[thousands] will be in Pakistan and the rest in Hindustan".<sup>59</sup>

The Secretary of State circulated these proposals of demarcation in India and Burma Committee along with sketch maps illustrating the effect of the Viceroy's proposals and said that, "I do not think that any better division than the one the Viceroy proposes is likely to be found".<sup>60</sup> Thus, on 6 February 1946, the British circles had made the new boundaries of the Punjab quite clear.

### "This is really worse than Pakistan"

Arthur Moor interviewed Jinnah on 22 January 1946, who said that on the acceptance of Pakistan based on existing provinces of Sind, Baluchistan, N.W.F.P., Punjab, Bengal and Assam, a demarcation commission would be appointed. That would decide the actual frontiers; these would not simply be the existing

provincial frontiers as adjustments would obviously be necessary. This would be settled in the spirit of give and take and the Muslims would not be unreasonable in this regard.<sup>61</sup> Arthur Moor sent note of this interview to Prime Minister Attlee who forwarded it to the members of India and Burma Committee. On 27 January, Nehru also wrote a lengthy note to Sir Stafford Cripps and regarding Pakistan, he stated that,

“By no stretch of imagination can Assam, Delhi and large parts of Punjab and Bengal, which have a non-Muslim majority, be included in Pakistan....Even if the Muslims as a whole support the League and Pakistan that can only mean a division of both Punjab and Bengal. Jinnah has indignantly rejected this. What then? Compulsion of other areas to join Pakistan? That is inconceivable and impossible. Thus, the crux of the Pakistan issue is this: A Pakistan consisting of only part of Punjab and part of Bengal or no separation at all....Finally if a definite area expresses its will clearly in favor of separatism and this is feasible, no compulsion will be exercised to force it to remain in the Federation or Union. But it cannot take other areas away with it against their will, and there must be a clear decision by plebiscite of all the adult voters of that area. I cannot imagine any more generous and far reaching offer. Yet Jinnah refuses both the plebiscite and the demarcation of the area according to the wishes of the inhabitants. It seems clear that he is not after Pakistan but something entirely different, or perhaps he is after nothing at all except to stop all change and progress....There is no reason why all this should take more than a year”.<sup>62</sup>

Sir Cripps sent this note to Lord Pethick-Lawrence with the remarks that, “This will interest you”.<sup>63</sup> Then, while commenting on the forthcoming Cabinet Mission, Nehru said to APA on 20 February 1946 that, “I am convinced that Pakistan, as demanded

by the Muslim league is harmful to all concerned, nevertheless, Congress has declared that an Indian federation must consist of willing units and there should be no compulsion".<sup>64</sup> Again, he said on 10 March 1946 that, "if the Muslims wish to have Pakistan it will not deny it to them".<sup>65</sup> In the meantime, George Abell met Gandhi at Bombay on 13 March who too said that, "Jinnah could certainly have for his Pakistan the genuine Moslem areas".<sup>66</sup> During his discussion with Cabinet Mission, "Gandhi reaffirmed his readiness to accept the truncated Pakistan that he had conceded during his talks with Jinnah, but the formula did not solve the problem unless the mission secured Jinnah's agreement to it", as, "Beyond the formula Pakistan was untruth".<sup>67</sup> At the same time, Patel said that Muslim League could be accommodated by reorganizing the provinces and giving possible full autonomy to the areas in which the Muslims had their predominant majority.<sup>68</sup> Nehru too said in April 1946 that,

"By separating from the Punjab the areas where the Hindus and Sikhs were in majority and divesting Bengal of Burdwan and part of presidency Division four provinces would be created—NWFP, West Punjab, Sind and East Bengal-where Muslim would be in a definite majority and this might placate Muslim opinion to a considerable extent".<sup>69</sup>

On the other hand, on 2 May 1946, Devdas Gandhi in his discussions with Mr. Arthur Henderson referred to a "formula for modified Pakistan for Moslem majority areas" which his father had put forward to Jinnah at the time of Simla discussions. However, his father did not refer this formula in the present discussions but it might be well to bear formula in mind in case circumstances might arise in which its resurrection might be helpful.<sup>70</sup> While commenting on proposed Cabinet Mission Plan, Gandhi wrote to Sir Cripps on 8 May that, "This is really worse than Pakistan" which showed that his vision about original Pakistan was so much clear that he considered Cabinet Mission Plan worse than that.<sup>71</sup>

Sir Cripps responded that, "I appreciate your difficulty though not that it would be worse than Pakistan".<sup>72</sup> Thus, during Cabinet Mission deliberations, the Congress leadership again cleared the areas in the partition of the Punjab that they would be ready to consider for Pakistan. Even, they considered Cabinet Mission's recommendations worse than their envisaged Pakistan. In addition, according to them beyond this formula Pakistan was untruth.

### Smaller Pakistan Vs Larger Pakistan

Cabinet Mission interviewed the Sikh Delegation on 5 April 1946 which proposed a Sikh state consisting of Jullundur, Lahore and Ambala Divisions (except Gurgaon and Rohtak districts of Ambala Division) along with Montgomery and Lyallpur districts of Multan Division. Whereas according to Baldev Singh, Khalistan consisting of Ambala, Jullundur and Lahore divisions was the smallest one but they could consider it.<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, Sir Cripps noted that Western Zone of Pakistan should include, "the whole Divisions of Rawalpindi and Multan and the following districts of the Lahore division, Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala and Sheikhupura," whereas, "The two districts of Gurdaspur and Amritsar would be in doubt but the rest of the Punjab would fall within Hindustan".<sup>74</sup>

Cabinet Delegation interviewed Jinnah on 16 April 1946. They stated that there could be a smaller Pakistan with full sovereignty. Its Western Zone would be consisting of Sind, North-West Frontier Province, and British Baluchistan along with Muslim majority districts of the Punjab except Gurdaspur. Otherwise, there would be a larger Pakistan consisting of six provinces that was League' demand but under Indian Union that would control only foreign affairs, communications and defense department.<sup>75</sup> Jinnah neither rejected small Pakistan nor accepted larger Pakistan in the Indian Union but said that they would insist on an economically, politically and strategically viable Pakistan. Thus, all these discussions helped for defining the new boundaries of the Punjab in case of its partition.

## Partition in Congress Circles January-March 1947

Congress had reconciled itself for partition by December 1946.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, there were continuous discussions among Congress High Circles between January-March 1947 for Punjab partition that further elaborated Punjab boundaries for its partition. Gandhi gave instructions to the Congress Working Committee on 28-30 December 1946, that the members of section A would prepare a full constitution in terms of the Cabinet Mission's statement. He further said that B and C-sections of the Mission Plan could frame their constitution except Assam, N.W. Frontier Province, and the Sikhs in the Punjab and might be except British Baluchistan. Thus, according to him, "the Congress will be thanked by the world for giving Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah a universally accepted and inoffensive formula for his Pakistan".<sup>77</sup> By excluding the Sikhs from the Punjab, Gandhi again made it clear that Jinnah could take only Muslim areas of the Punjab. Consequently, under Gandhi's instructions on 6 January, the Congress considered difficulties of Assam, NWFP, Baluchistan and the Sikhs in Cabinet Mission Plan. Then, it stated that there should be no compulsion for a province to join any of the new political entities and that the rights of the Sikhs in the Punjab should not be jeopardized otherwise a province or part of a province would have the right to take such action as might be deemed necessary in order to give effect to the wishes of the people concerned.<sup>78</sup> By mentioning compulsion and right of the Sikhs, the Congress emphasized on the partition of the provinces where compulsion was happening and rights of the Sikhs had become jeopardized. Accordingly, since early January, Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab and Bengal began to raise a clamour. They began to declare that, "if the sub-continent had, really to be divided, then there must be a division of their provinces" as Muslim majority in these provinces was small so, inclusion of very recalcitrant non-Muslim citizens permanently in Pakistan would be an impossibility.<sup>79</sup>



As this juncture, V. P. Menon and Patel also forwarded their view that, "If we agreed to partition, Jinnah obviously could not ask for those portions of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam which were predominantly non-Muslims".<sup>80</sup> Accordingly, in his meeting with Lord Wavell on 17 February 1947, Patel was quite prepared to "let the Muslims have the Western Punjab, Sind and N.W.FP if they wished to join, and Eastern Bengal".<sup>81</sup> Three days later, Nehru too discussed partition of the Punjab and Bengal with Lord Wavell.<sup>82</sup> He also wrote to Krishna Menon that, "if the League does not come in the Constituent Assembly" then, "in such an event the real difficulty will be about Western Bengal and Southern Punjab" and "this means a division of Punjab and Bengal bringing the richer parts of both these provinces including the city of Calcutta of course in to the Indian Union." Thus, "the truncated Pakistan that remains will hardly be a gift worth having".<sup>83</sup> He also repeated to Gandhi that, "those part of Bengal and Punjab which are fully represented in the Constituent Assembly (Western Bengal and Southern Punjab) should be part of the Union. That means a partition of Punjab and Bengal". Nevertheless, "it is unlikely that Jinnah or the Muslim League will agree to this truncated Pakistan which can never succeed economically or otherwise". At this stage,, Nehru requested Gandhi for his advice as the meeting of the Congress Working Committee was scheduled for 5 March.<sup>84</sup>

While commenting on the statement of 20 February, Gandhi wrote to Nehru that, "This may lead to Pakistan for those provinces or portions which may want it. No one will be forced one way or the other. The Congress provinces if they are wise will get what they want".<sup>85</sup> At the same time, regarding Bengal partition, Gandhi ceded that, "the time had now come when such a division had become desirable in the interest of peace".<sup>86</sup> Meanwhile, Patel also wrote to Kanji Dwarkadas that the only alternative of Muslim League's insistence for Pakistan was the division of the Punjab and Bengal. It could not have Punjab as a whole or Bengal without civil war.<sup>87</sup> In such a scenario, the Congress passed its resolution for the partition of the Punjab on 8

March 1947.<sup>88</sup> On the next day, Nehru wrote to Wavell that, “a proper and fair solution to this difficulty appears to be the division of the Punjab into a predominantly Muslim area and a predominantly non-Muslim area”.<sup>89</sup> Against this background, Krishna Menon visited Lord Mountbatten on 13 March and said that Pakistan based on British provinces would be impossible. Therefore, Western Pakistan in the North-West should include the Muslim majority districts of the Punjab and rest of the Punjab by constituting a separate province should go to India.<sup>90</sup> Meanwhile, Gandhi asked Nehru about the partition resolution, who replied that,

“About our proposal to divide Punjab, this follows naturally from our previous decisions. These were negative previously but now a time for decision has come for passing of resolutions, giving expression to our views means little. I feel convinced, and so did most of the members of the working committee that we must press for this immediate division so that reality might be brought into the picture. Indeed this is the only answer to Pakistan as demanded by Jinnah. I found people in Punjab agreeable to this proposal except Muslims as a rule”.<sup>91</sup>

On his return, Lord Wavell also reported to India and Burma Committee that, Nehru was advocating partition of the Punjab, which would involve great difficulty and Jenkins too did not regard this partition as an impossible solution.<sup>92</sup> Thus, on the eve of Lord Mountbatten’s arrival, the Congress had clear vision as to what it could give to Pakistan in case of its creation so they began to press for immediate partition.

### **Briefing to Mountbatten for Boundaries**

The British circles remained busy considering the Punjab boundaries in case of its partition. On 18 February, Jenkins reported to Lord Wavell that, “no one community could rule the Punjab except by conquest” as Rawalpindi and Multan Divisions

were Muslim areas, the Jullundur and Ambala Divisions were non-Muslim regions; the Lahore Division was common ground and within a territory largely occupied by the Sikhs. Therefore, excluding the possibility of civil war and conquest, there were only two long-term alternatives (a) united Punjab not under Muslim domination, but under Muslim Leadership and (b) partition into two or possibly three states.<sup>93</sup> Again, Jenkins sent an analytical report for Punjab partition to Wavell on 7 March 1947. While examining it in terms of Muslims and non-Muslims with a detailed reference of Gurdaspur that had only 30,000 more Muslims than non-Muslims but its Pathankot Tehsil had non-Muslim majority, he concluded that the non-Muslims had the right for Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts.<sup>94</sup>

In England, the Secretary of State presented his Memorandum, "Transfer of Power to More Than one Authority" to India and Burma Committee. He stated that, "the Committee should consider this subject and have a discussion with the new Viceroy before he leaves for India". As according to him, "There would remain the question whether we should undertake the separation from the Punjab and Bengal of the predominantly Hindu areas in the West and East of these provinces".<sup>95</sup> Then, the British Cabinet held its meeting under the Chair of Mr. Attlee on 13 March. Lord Mountbatten, Lord Ismay and Eric Mieville also attended this meeting. Mountbatten said that if agreement could not be reached between the rival communities, then it would be for him to initiate or permit discussion for the redrawing of the boundaries of the provinces, such as the Punjab and Bengal on communal divisions. It was pointed out to him that, "this possibility was already being explored by the Indians themselves, but that the matter was one to which the Viceroy Designate should certainly give his attention".<sup>96</sup> Thus, all recommendations for genuine Muslim areas were shown to Lord Mountbatten before his coming to India".<sup>97</sup> Madhav Godbole too writes that, "all the home work for boundary", had been, "studied by Mountbatten and his team even before coming to India in March 1947".<sup>98</sup> Lord Mountbatten arrived in India on 22 March and on

the very first day; Lord Wavell held a meeting with him, in which along with other matters they discussed partition of the Punjab as well as Bengal.<sup>99</sup> Thus, Lord Mountbatten too had clear vision and had no ambiguity about the new boundaries of the Punjab as well as Pakistan before his coming to India. Lord Wavell also briefed him personally in this regard.

### Stress for Immediate Punjab Partition

The partition of the Punjab had become so clear that in his very first meeting with Lord Mountbatten, Nehru stressed for immediate Punjab partition but pointed out that Jinnah was much opposed to such partition.<sup>100</sup> Mountbatten too considered Punjab partition in his very first staff meeting but suggested that, "he would take no further steps without consulting Mr. Jinnah". George Abell drew his attention "to the many objections against partition on a short term basis". Lord Ismay cast his doubt upon the possibility of ever re-uniting the Punjab once a partition, however, temporary had taken effect. Eric Mieville drew his attention to a telegram from Jenkins concerning the Sikhs' demand that, "In the absence of an agreement acceptable to the Sikhs between Congress and the League, the Sikhs must insist on the partition of the Punjab". Mountbatten replied that, "I will certainly keep in mind the importance of consulting Sikhs".<sup>101</sup> Again, on 1 April, Mountbatten discussed partition of the Punjab with Nehru who linked the question of the partition of Bengal with that of the Punjab. On the next day, Mountbatten discussed his partition observations with Gandhi who said that whatever the decision he wanted to declare, he should take it soon and implement it as early as possible. The Congress did not want to delay transfer of power, as it was ready to give the Muslim majority areas in the Punjab and in Bengal to the Muslim League for its Pakistan. Therefore, it stressed the need of an immediate partition.

## Briefing for Mr. Jinnah

Meanwhile, Eric Mievil prepared a list of a few questions for Lord Mountbatten that he could put before M.A. Jinnah during his meeting with him. Regarding Punjab partition, it stated that,

“...What case could be made out which would justify H.M.G. in handing over to Pakistan the areas contiguous to Hindustan in which there is a non-Muslim Majority? These areas amount to thirteen districts (Hissar, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Karnal, Ambala, Simla, Kangra, Hashiarpur, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Ferozpur, Amritsar and Gurdaspur) in the Punjab....Is not the claim for the whole of the Punjab and Bengal simply a claim to non-Muslim territory. The Congress has said that they are ready to concede the Muslim majority districts. On what principle do you base your demand for the addition of Sikh and Hindu territory?”<sup>102</sup>

These questions left no doubt for the final demarcation between the East and West Punjab. Within ten days of their stay in India, his staff stated categorically that the Congress had conceded the Punjab for the Muslim league except 13 eastern districts including Amritsar and Gurdaspur. What was the basis to announce such decisions on behalf of Congress? What the basis to finalize such decisions within ten days? Obviously, they had studied Wavell’s work regarding demarcation before their arrival. Then, just within ten days, they had decided to bestow Gurdaspur to Hindustan. They were ready to ask Jinnah as why Gurdaspur should not be given to India. Further, no such list was prepared for the Congress leaders, which reveals that the British and the Congress leadership had already decided about the demarcation in the Punjab as well as Bengal but M.A Jinnah was the main obstacle in its declaration. Therefore, they gave Mountbatten the task to overcome that obstacle to ensure the implementation of that decision.

Lord Mountbatten held his first meeting with Jinnah on 5 April and until 11 April he held six meetings with him to discuss his plan. Jinnah argued for partition of India and demanded his Pakistan of six provinces. In response Mountbatten emphasized the partition of Bengal and the Punjab. Jinnah responded that he Mountbatten was trying to give him a truncated and moth eaten Pakistan in place of a viable and workable Pakistan. The Viceroy did not concur with the idea of full Pakistan and said that in fact Sind, half of the Punjab, probably NWFP and half of Bengal would form Pakistan and the remaining provinces would join Hindustan. At this, Jinnah became more distressed and displeased and appealed to save the unity of Bengal and Punjab. Jinnah bitterly complained that the Viceroy was ruining his Pakistan by cutting out half of the Punjab and Bengal including Calcutta and by making it economically very difficult if not impossible to service.<sup>103</sup> All this, helped in crystallizing the boundaries of the Punjab on its partition?

### Outlining the Partition Plan

On 10 April, after discussing with Nehru and other members of the Congress Working Committee Gandhi drafted a formula that,

“So far as Pakistan is concerned and so far as the Congress is concerned nothing would be yielded to force. But everything is to be forcibly taken, it should be open to any province or part there if to abstain from joining Pakistan and remain with the remaining provinces. Thus, so far as the Congress is aware today, the Frontier Province is with it (Congress) and the Eastern part of the Punjab where the Hindus and the Sikhs combined have a decisive majority will remain out of the Pakistan zone....”<sup>104</sup>

On this issue, Sucheta Mahajan writes that on that day, in a note for the Congress Working Committee, Gandhi said that East

Punjab and West Bengal, along with Assam and NWFP would remain out of Pakistan. She adds that Mountbatten's original plan was outlined on 10 April 1947. It envisaged the partition of Punjab and Bengal and the setting up two dominions, India and Pakistan.<sup>105</sup> On the next day, Ismay asked V.P. Menon that,

"I send you herewith the bare bones of a possible plan for the transfer of power. The Viceroy would be glad if you would—amend the draft in any way you think right and put some flesh upon it—how will we set about the partition of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam—workout a rough time table—nothing very precise is required at this stage. The object is to give H.E. a general line on how this plan would be implemented".<sup>106</sup>

On the following day, while stating his, "Plan Union" and "Plan Balkan", Mountbatten said in his staff meeting that he would put these two plans before Jinnah for acceptance, which in fact, would be an un truncated Pakistan with a small centre or a truncated Pakistan. On the same day, he also discussed his both plans with Gandhi. Meanwhile, Mountbatten held his staff meeting in which Lord Ismay stated that he had just completed his draft in consultation with Sir Eric Mieville, George Abell and V.P. Menon. He suggested that, "it might be necessary, if it became apparent that plan 'Balkan' would have to be decided upon, for His Excellency to fly to London in order to hasten a decision on the part of H.M.G.". Mountbatten replied that he intended to stress the urgency of reaching a quick decision. He hoped to have the support of the Governors and Residents in Governors Conference for a very early decision. He also made it clear that, "H.M.G. would have to be plainly told that failure to quick decision would be tantamount to failure to take the responsibility for civil war off the Viceroy's shoulders".<sup>107</sup>

On the next day, in Governor's Conference, by describing the demands of the Sikhs and Hindu Jats of the Punjab, Even Jenkins gave full explanation of the difficulties inherent in Punjab

partition. He suggested that they should obtain an agreement of all interested parties otherwise; there would be fighting on a large scale. To this, Mountbatten directed Ismay and Jenkins to consider together in detail the procedure for the partitioning of the Punjab.<sup>108</sup> On the following day, Jenkins sent a note "The Partition Problem" to Mountbatten to state that the Punjab would be divided between Muslim majority and non-Muslim majority districts but adjustments could be made by agreement in respect of tehsils contiguous to the Muslim or non-Muslim areas and having Muslim or non-Muslim majorities. He suggested setting up a neutral Boundary Commission consisting two Muslim and two non-Muslim members selected by Members of Punjab Assembly.<sup>109</sup> On the second day, Jenkins repeated that Boundary Commission under a British Judge of the High Court should be set up to play down the new boundary line. Regarding time limit for this, he said that, "possibly a month would have to be fixed and agreement by the different parties to the suggested boundary would have to be obtained".<sup>110</sup>

Meanwhile, Nehru, Patel and Kirpalani repeatedly said to divide Punjab and Bengal into predominantly Hindu and Muslim areas to give some kind of Pakistan.<sup>111</sup> Accordingly, Mountbatten told Krishna Menon that, "I might have to yield to a truncated Pakistan" who replied that the Congress would not resist it.<sup>112</sup> Debates for the out lining of partition plan further cleared expected boundaries for Punjab partition.

### Propounding for Gurdaspur District

Gurdaspur District had also been considered in depth during and before the outlining of partition plan. Rajandra Prasad pointed out to Mountbatten that, "there is the district of Gurdaspur with a nominal majority of 51.14 percent" that should be considered keenly in the partition of the Punjab.<sup>113</sup> Some non-Muslim MLAs submitted their memorandum to Lord Ismay on 1 May. While examining boundaries for Punjab partition, they strongly requested for Gurdaspur that there were 51 percent Muslims in Gurdaspur district but out of total annual land



revenue, which was Rs.17, 77,562 Muslims paid only Rs. 6, 16,193 whereas the non-Muslims paid Rs. 11, 61,369.<sup>114</sup> On the following day, Swaran Singh, Harnam Singh and Lala Bhim Sen met Jenkins to say that in many districts and tahsils the Muslim majority was very small. Therefore, it would be grossly unfair to the Sikhs to hand over the marginal districts such as Gurdaspur to the Muslims because of inaccurate figures. They vehemently claimed that Gurdaspur was a non-Muslim district.<sup>115</sup>

At this juncture, Tarlok Singh (Nehru's Private Secretary) asked Mountbatten's Deputy Private Secretary that "Pandit Nehru has been receiving a large number of telegrams every day....many of the telegrams come from Gurdaspur District and the need for a plebiscite is being stressed... whether you would like me to pass these telegrams to you". The Deputy Secretary replied that, "these things prove nothing at all as they are easily organized that Mountbatten will not be impressed by the telegrams and there is no point in sending them to me".<sup>116</sup> Baldev Singh, while stating his worries for Gurdaspur district wrote to Mountbatten that there did not seem any justification to include Gurdaspur in Western Zone as the difference in populations was a mere fraction. Its inclusion in the Western Zone would cut the root of the entire economy and communication of the district which is vitally dependent on Amritsar and would isolate the predominantly non-Muslim area of Kangra etc. Therefore, it would be quite unjust to separate it from the Eastern Zone even in the notional division.<sup>117</sup> Giani Kartar Singh and Sardar Ujjal Singh discussed with Jenkins that some parts of Gurdaspur and Lahore districts were socially and economically one with the Tarn Taran and Amritsar tahsils of Amritsar district but it was difficult on any population basis to get these areas into one state.<sup>118</sup>

Meanwhile, Mountbatten and his staff came to Simla following by Nehru and Krishna and Jenkins. Mountbatten discussed Punjab partition with Nehru and Jenkins on 11 May. He said, "The problem was how to make a partition acceptable to all parties". Nehru replied that Congress did not go into the question of Punjab partition in detail when it was referred to it, however it

agreed that the rough lines of demarcation must be between Muslim and the non-Muslim majority areas. It agreed that the landed property should not be a basis to proceed in this matter but there were Sikh shrines in some of the predominantly Muslim areas and this point should be borne in mind. At this, Jenkins said that it would be very difficult to consider this point when deciding the boundaries. He agreed, "there were a number of Sikh shrines in Western Punjab, but pointed out that the real Sikh Holy Land was in Amritsar which would in any case fall to the Sikhs". To this, Mountbatten said that, "the Boundary Commission could be instructed to take Sikh religious interests into considerations". Then, Nehru raised the case of the Gurdaspur district where division of population between Muslim and non-Muslim was almost equal. Therefore, he asked whether it would be possible to divide this district even for the purpose of notional partition. Jenkins said that he did not consider that this would be possible as the Muslims were fairly equally mixed throughout the district. Nevertheless, he foresaw that, "both Gurdaspur and Lahore districts might well be divided by the Boundary Commission". Nehru stated another possibility to divide Gurdaspur district for notional partition that, "Hindu and Sikh representative from Gurdaspur could vote with the representatives of Eastern Punjab and the Muslims with those of Western Punjab". At this, Mountbatten said that,

"He was in favor of making some such gesture to the Sikhs. Perhaps a clause could be included in the Draft Announcement to the effect that any districts where the population was so evenly divided that there was less than 1 % difference in the number of Muslims and non-Muslims—for example in Gurdaspur—the representatives should be divided for voting purposes as suggested by Pandit Nehru".

To this, Jenkins said that he would agree to such a suggestion so long as the party leaders accepted the general plan.<sup>119</sup> On the

following day, regarding Nehru's demand for the separation of non-Muslim representatives in Gurdaspur district, I.D. Scott reported to Mountbatten that, "any departure from the principle of clearly defining the notional boundary between Muslim and Non-Muslim majority areas would lead to a spate of demands for other departures". To this, Mountbatten said that, "he did not intend to incorporate the suggestion for Gurdaspur made the previous day," but "the Boundary Commission would be instructed to arrange for the handover from one side to the other of any area within border districts where there was clearly a majority of the opposite community".<sup>120</sup> Thus, even Gurdaspur district that later became controversial between India and Pakistan had been studied during the formation of partition plan. All this further cleared boundaries of the Punjab that would become on its partition.

### Gandhi, Jinnah and Patiala' Satisfaction for 12 Vs 17 Districts

Lord Ismay with George Abell left for England to explain partition plan to H.M.G. On the same day on 2 May 1947, Hindu newspapers reported draft of partition plan completely. The Hindustan Times, while questioning Viceroy's fair playing stated that partition plan divided the Punjab into 12 non-Muslim and 17 Muslim districts that dealt like a blow to the Sikh interests. It reported Congress considerations that division of the country was the best solution in the prevailed circumstances but it should be absolute and complete by dividing Punjab and Bengal to give a chance to their non-Muslim areas to join Indian Union.<sup>121</sup> Gandhi criticized this reporting and said that, "I do not say that everything this journalist has reported is wrong" but "I totally disapprove of this kind of Journalism". He reiterated that, "Jinnah Saheb wants Pakistan. Congressmen have also decided in favor of acceding to the demand for Pakistan", however, "they insist that the Hindu and Sikh [majority] areas of the Punjab and Bengal cannot be included in Pakistan only the Muslim [majority] areas can be included in Pakistan".<sup>122</sup>

On the other hand, the Sikhs were perturbed over notional partition of the Punjab that had provided 12 Eastern districts to the East Punjab. Therefore, Baldev Singh repeatedly conveyed Sikh objection over 12 districts and reiterated Sikh demand for Ambala and Jullundur Divisions with Amritsar, Lahore and Gurdaspur Districts of Lahore Division. Anyhow, Mountbatten conveyed to Ismay that Maharaja Patiala had accepted the principle of notional partition.<sup>123</sup> Then, Master Tara Singh, Baldev Singh and Swaran Singh wrote to the Secretary of State and other British politicians that the proposal to make only twelve Eastern Districts as homeland for the Sikhs and the Hindus was causing consternation therefore they demanded boundary line along the Chenab with provision for exchange of population and property.<sup>124</sup>

During this, on 5 May, Mountbatten directed Sir Eric Mieville to obtain Jinnah's view about partition of the provinces whether he would accept the plan. Mieville visited Jinnah on the same day and reported that,

"I had an unsatisfactory talk with Mr. Jinnah this morning. He flatly turned down the two drafts on the grounds.... I finally mentioned the Punjab and told him that I had seen Sikhs and Hindus from that province who all had complained to me that in the 17 districts that were going to him all the rich, arable and fertile land would be his. He laughed and said that that was not his fault! This reinforced my belief that he is quite ready to accept the division of the Punjab in spite of his recent statement to the contrary in the Press."

After receiving this report, Mountbatten informed Ismay that certainly in recent conversations, which Mieville and he had held with Jinnah; Jinnah did not appear seriously to contest the need for partition but seemed even grateful for 17 districts of the Punjab.<sup>125</sup> Thus, according to this reporting Gandhi, Jinnah and Patiala had accepted notional partition. Even Jenkins had made it

clear that there would be only minor adjustments in the final partition of the Punjab. They all too knew that there could be no major adjustments in this regard.

### Omitting of Girdawar Circles

On the other hand, the Muslim League did not make any agreement for the partition of Punjab and Bengal. It hoped that in the name of justice and fair play, Her majority, Government and Mountbatten too would not accept this. However, if this fateful decision would have to be taken, then the demarcation should be drawn on the basis of Girdawar circles which was lowest practicable area on an average comprising at least 30 villages.<sup>126</sup> At the same time, Baldev Singh demanded to omit Girdawar circles altogether for demarcation in the Punjab, which meant the boundary would go up to the Sutlej.<sup>127</sup> Regarding this, Nehru said that, "I do not know what these circles are. But I am told that our Sikh friends do not approve this provision".<sup>128</sup> Consequently, the British omitted Girdawar Circles as the lowest base for the demarcation in the final draft of the plan. This too revealed that during the formation of the Punjab partition plan, they had considered its boundary line even based on Girdawar Circles that was a smallest unit of 30 villages but it was omitted to pacify the Sikhs.

### Jenkins Crystallized Boundary Line in mid May 1947

Lord Mountbatten had suggested during Simla Discussions that areas such as, "the Gurdaspur district in which communal strengths are approximately equal should be specially examined by the proposed Boundary Commission". Accordingly, Jenkins reported in detail on 13 May that,

"On a population basis the whole of the Gurdaspur district (the Pattankot tahsil of which has a clear non-Muslim majority) and the following tahsils of other districts qualify for special consideration:

Eastern Area Muslim majority tahsils

- (1) Ajnala
- (2) Ferozpur
- (3) Zira
- (4) Nakodar

Small non-Muslim majority tahsils

- (5) Hoshiarpur
- (6) Dasuya

Western Area Small Muslim majority tahsils

- (1) Narowal
- (2) Sheikhpura

It would be wise to include also the rural area of the Lahore district especially that portion of it which adjoins the boundary of the Tarn Taran tahsil of Amritsar district. I am to point out, however, that the consideration of these special areas may lead to great difficulty. Narowal adjoins Amritsar and Gurdaspur, and its fate would depend upon that of the Gurdaspur district and the Ajnala Tahsil of the Amritsar district. The Sheikhpura Tahsil would probably in any case be an island. The Ajnala tahsil of the Amritsar district has a large Muslim majority. It might go into the Western Section without greatly increasing the inconvenience of partition. The Ferozpur and Zira Tahsils of the Ferozpur district and the Nakodar Tahsil of the Jullundur district make a very awkward block which it would be difficult to include in the western section if the Boundary Commission found that any substantial part of the Kasur tahsil of Lahore should go into the Eastern section. The Hoshiarpur and Dasuya Tahsils of the Hoshiarpur district are east of the Beas and could hardly be included in the western section without upsetting the whole plan".<sup>129</sup>

Surprisingly, on this date, Jenkins's keen examination for Punjab demarcation had crystallized the expected boundary line between the East and the West Punjab. Specially, his observation

regarding Ferozpora and Zira tehsils of Ferozpora district had knitted these two tehsils with the portion of Kasur tehsil of Lahore district. Interestingly, later sketch map story disclosed that the boundary commission had awarded Ferozpora and Zira tehsils to Pakistan but the same map showed that portion of Kasur tehsil in India. According to this report, it was very difficult to award these two tehsils to the West Punjab, as these two tehsils were bound to go with the portion of Kasur tehsil that already had been awarded to the East Punjab by Cyril Radcliffe. Infact, awarding of Ferozpora and Zira tehsils to India was just a political diplomacy.

On 19 May, Master Tara Singh visited Jenkins to ask him to help the Sikhs over the partition of the Punjab who responded that now H.M.G would decide this matter? Nevertheless, he made it clear that, "I did not see how the non-Muslims could possibly get more than the Ambala and Jullundur Division, the Amritsar district and perhaps parts of Gurdaspur and Lahore districts".<sup>130</sup> Surprisingly, Jenkins stated this demarcation on 19 May even before Mountbatten's discussions of his partition plan in London but was the exact boundary line, which later was recommended by Sir Cyril Radcliffe. Thus, Punjab boundary line was an established fact and there was absolutely no need to constitute any boundary Commission in this regard.

### Threat and Persuasion to Jinnah for Punjab Partition

Meanwhile, the British press had reported that the top most leaders were satisfied with proposed boundary line and therefore it was an established reality. Nevertheless, the British had fears that Jinnah would not accept the partition plan. Interestingly, they had no such fears from the Congress as well as the Sikhs. According to official reports, the Hindus and Sikhs were claiming that, "Partition is inevitable", but the Muslims were strongly opposed to partition and were unlikely to change their views except under the instructions from Jinnah.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, Mountbatten asked Liaquat Ali Khan, "Whether the Muslim League was going to accept partition of the Punjab and Bengal"

who responded that, "we shall never agree to it but you may make us bow to the inevitable".<sup>132</sup> Accordingly, Mountbatten stated in his staff meeting that, "Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan had refused to sign this document. They had agreed absolutely to accept the plan but had not been willing to state their agreement in writing". At this, V.P Menon said that Nehru and Patel had accepted the plan so there would be a trouble if the Muslim League rejected it. Mountbatten replied that he had already threatened Jinnah that power would be transferred to the Interim Government if he did not agree. However, Jinnah took this threat calmly as he wanted to become a martyr who had been butchered by the British on the Congress altar.<sup>133</sup>

Meanwhile, Mountbatten left for London and Jinnah visited Eric Mieville to say that, "I beg you to tell Lord Mountbatten once again that he will be making a grave mistake if he agrees to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab".<sup>134</sup> He also reiterated to the Reuters that partition of provinces would lead to bitterness and unfriendly attitude between East and West Bengal and the same would be the case between the West Punjab and East Punjab. He concluded that,

Partition of the Punjab and Bengal, if affected, will no doubt, weaken Pakistan to a certain extent. Weak Pakistan and a strong Hindustan will be a temptation for the strong Hindustan to try to dictate. I have always said that Pakistan must be viable and sufficiently strong as a balance vis-à-vis Hindustan. I am therefore, deadly against the partition of Bengal and the Punjab and we shall fight every inch against it".<sup>135</sup>

The Muslim League continuously reiterated its demand of complete Pakistan.<sup>136</sup> Abdur Rab Nishtar said that, "the Muslim League will continue to press for a Pakistan based on undivided provinces but if a truncated Pakistan is forced on the League, they will accept it," however, "this would always be a source of trouble".<sup>137</sup> Liaquat Ali Khan also said to Jenkins that, "the League



would not agree to the partition of Bengal or the Punjab", however, "whatever decision H.M.G. announced should be enforced with the utmost firmness".<sup>138</sup> Baldev Singh too said to Jenkins that, "the Sikhs would accept the announcement; that the Muslim League would reject it; and Congress, though they might accept it initially, would withdraw their acceptance if the Muslim League proved recalcitrant".<sup>139</sup> Nehru too wrote to Eric Mieville that they had accepted the revised draft but if the Muslim League did not accept it then there could be no settlement as Congress was not prepared to have one-sided acceptance of that.<sup>140</sup>

On the other hand, Lord Mountbatten saw Mr. Winston Churchill to discuss his plan, who asked him whether he, "had received a letter from Nehru accepting Dominion status if power was transferred this year". Mountbatten replied in the affirmative and that he had given a copy to the Prime Minister. However, he pointed out that, "I had been unable to obtain a similar written assurance from Mr. Jinnah". To this, Mr. Churchill said, "he is the one man who cannot do without British help". Then, Mountbatten said in the event of Jinnah's refusal, he proposed to inform Jinnah that, "in that case we could go ahead with the transfer of power this year on a Dominion status basis for Hindustan". At this, Mr. Churchill thought for a long time and finally stated that, "To begin with, you must threaten. Take away all British officers. Give them military units without British officers. Make it clear to them how impossible it would be to run Pakistan without British help". Mountbatten agreed to try and follow the same policy but added that, "we could not escape the fact that ultimately I must be authorized not only to threaten, but also to implement the threat of a transfer of power without Dominion Status". He also pointed out that, "If I could not do this, Jinnah might hold out indefinitely, and that we might then lose both Hindustan and Pakistan". This shook Mr. Churchill however, in the end; he authorized Mountbatten to give his message to Jinnah that "This is a matter of life and death for Pakistan, if you do not accept this offer with both hands".<sup>141</sup> Later, while answering a question as "how important was the message

Churchill gave you for Jinnah?" Mountbatten said, "I think it shook him", he reiterated, "I think Churchill's threat would have shown to him that he couldn't look for any support over my head in England, which was at the back of his mind the whole way through".<sup>142</sup> Anyhow, in London, India and Burma Committee considered this problem and recommended that it could be pointed out to Jinnah that the proposals in their present form were very unfavorable to the Sikhs. However, "if the Muslim League refused to accept the scheme, it would be necessary to arrange for the partition of the Punjab on a basis which would be substantially less favorable to the Muslims".<sup>143</sup> The Committee again suggested on 28 May that, "If Mr. Jinnah should prove intransigent; he might be induced to adopt a more reasonable attitude by the suggestion that the consequences of refusal would be a provisional definition of boundaries in the Punjab which would be less favorable from his point of view".<sup>144</sup>

On his return, Mountbatten recalled his staff meeting that, "Mr. Jinnah might be threatened, if he appeared likely to reject the plan, by a suggestion that the notional partition would be drawn more in favour of the Sikhs". To this, Ismay opined that such threat would be striking at the whole basis of the plan and that Jinnah would not be taken in by it. Whereas, Mr. Abell said that, "he considered that it would be more likely to prevail upon Mr. Jinnah by a display of "hurt feelings" rather than by threats. There was general agreement with this view.<sup>145</sup> Accordingly, Lord Mountbatten attempted to persuade Jinnah by hurt feeling rather than threat.<sup>146</sup> All this proved that ultimately Jinnah was persuaded to accept Punjab partition on the threat that otherwise it would be more favorable to the Sikhs than the Muslims. This too proved that boundary line was a settled fact otherwise how could the British claim that otherwise it would be less favorable to the Muslims.

### Declaration of the Notional Partition and Later Results

On 2 June, in his meeting with Indian leaders, Mountbatten pointed out that partition of India would make partition of

provinces inevitable. Then, he handed over his partition plan to party leaders and asked them to let him know until mid night about the consent of their parties. After getting the approval of concerned parties, the British declared their partition plan for India as well as for Bengal and the Punjab on 3 June 1947 in India as well as in England. The plan divided the Punjab provisionally by awarding 17 districts to West and 12 to East Punjab. It stated that the concerned parties would constitute Boundary Commission by agreement that would confirm the final boundaries between the East and West Punjab. The plan awarded Rawalpindi and Multan Divisions with Muslim majority districts of Gujranwala, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Sialkot and Sheikhupura of Lahore Division to West Punjab, rest of the Punjab including Ambala and Jullundur Divisions with Amritsar district of Lahore Division to East Punjab notionally/provisionally. Later the Punjab Boundary Commission was constituted to finalize Punjab Boundary line but it did not make any major changes in the notional partition of the Punjab. It took three tehsils i.e. Batala, Gurdaspur and Pathankot of Gurdaspur District and about half the tehsil of Kasur from Lahore District to bestow these areas to East Punjab and kept the rest of notional Punjab partition as intact. It was the same partition of the Punjab, which the Congress, the Sikhs, the British and somehow Muslim League circles had been considering for the last two decades. Thus, boundary line in the Punjab province in case of its partition was a settled issue on the declaration of Partition Plan on 3 June 1947. Therefore, there was absolutely no need to constitute any kind of Boundary Commission whose outcomes were the same but they brought with them an unprecedented holocaust and great tragedy in the Punjab on its partition.

### **Punjab Boundary Commission just as a Saving Clause**

There arose a critical question that when the outcomes of the Boundary Commission were the same, why was constituted at all. What was the objective to form it? The answer is that it was formed just to prevent the immediate Sikh violence during the

rest of British Raj as on the disclosing of real partition, they could create law and order situation and the British had no desire to confront the Sikh violence on the last leg of their Raj. They engaged the Sikhs by stating that this notional partition of the Punjab is only provisional and the boundary Commission had been bestowed a lot of authority to amend it before its finalization so the Sikhs should prepare their case with strong arguments to plead before the Commission.

Lord Wavell had already referred in his recommendations for genuine Muslim areas on 6 February 1946 that to solve the Punjab boundary problem, there should be a saving clause to prevent immediate violence by the Sikhs. The British should announce that modifications in boundary might be negotiated and no doubt, the interests of Sikhs in particular would be carefully considered in such negotiations. He did not recommend any boundary commission but just referred to frame the saving clause to prevent immediate Sikh violence. Anyhow, his saving clause device was adopted in the partition plan in the shape of the Boundary Commission.

While considering the partition plan, the Secretary of State too questioned the role of the Boundary Commission on 9 May 1947 stating that,

“There is no doubt that the Sikhs are a very dangerous element in the situation. Under your proposals, they will be divided and I do not think that any subsequent adjustment of boundaries can possibly begin to satisfy the claims they put forward. I understand from Ismay that they [Sikhs] are asking that the Lahore Division be kept out of partition you propose pending a Boundary Commission at which Sikh claims would be considered. But Sikh claims are based not on population but on such factors as the economic position of the Sikhs in certain parts of the Punjab and religious sentiments applying to certain areas where there are Sikh shrines. Unless the Boundary Commission were told to give weight to these

factors it could not do more than make marginal adjustments in the boundaries where the division by districts has been included in the Muslim or Hindu areas including the small parts of districts in which Hindus or Sikhs or Muslims were in the majority. *But if you are satisfied that a Boundary Commission, with terms of reference such as will help to keep the Sikhs quiet until the transfer of power, can be set up without provoking the hostility of the two major communities*<sup>147</sup>. I shall be very ready to support your view to my colleagues".<sup>148</sup>

Again, the Secretary wrote to Mountbatten on 13 June that,

"Clearly, the handling of this Boundary Commission business is going to be of crucial importance. *It seems as if the Sikhs may try to get back at the Boundary Commission stage some of the ground, which they surrendered, over the announcement of policy*<sup>149</sup>. It is to be hoped that the staking out of claims, as, for example, for the River Chenab line, in advance of the findings of the Boundary Commission will not get out of hand since, once claims of this kind have been staked out, withdrawal is apt to prove difficult without loss of face".<sup>150</sup>

Thus, the British adopted the strategy of Punjab Boundary Commission to prevent immediate Sikh aggression and violence until the transfer of power. Otherwise, there was absolutely no need to constitute that commission as partition of the Punjab did not occur abruptly but it had been debated among the political circles for decades. Interestingly, on the declaration of Punjab Boundary Award, some quarters also stated that the actual boundary line had been drawn much earlier by the British Government with a view to strengthening the Sikhs but the Boundary Commission was created merely to give the award a semblance of justice.<sup>151</sup>

## Conclusion

Punjab boundary line in case of its partition had been considered among the Congress, the Sikh, the British and the Muslim League circles for almost two decades. Therefore, partition of the Punjab did not appear abruptly as it had been debated through the decades. Accordingly, the Congress, the Sikhs, the British and the Muslims all had clear perception about the boundary line on the partition of the Punjab. In other words, boundary line in the Punjab was a settled fact and formation of the boundary Commission was required as much. Anyhow, there were observations that the Sikhs would react violently on the announcement of the real boundary line and the Boundary Commission was constituted as a strategy to avoid Sikh violence. The Commission meticulously engaged them in its proceedings and prevented the Sikh violence. Anyhow, the successor governments on both sides as well as the poor masses had to face the music of the British strategy.

## Notes and References

---

- 1 The Territory, which was situated between Jumana River and Sutlej River, was called Cis-Sutlej whereas, the areas West North of Sutlej River was called as Trans-Sutlej. The Sikhs ruled in Tran-Sutlej area and they never ruled in Cis-Sutlej territory.
- 2 Ian Talbot, *India and Pakistan* (London: Arnold, 2000), P.119, See, K.K., Aziz, *A History of the Idea of Pakistan*, Vol. 1 (Lahore: Vanguard Books Ltd., 1987), PP. 79-80; also See, Ian Talbot and Gurharpal Sing, *The Partition of India* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), P.42
- 3 Akhtar Hussain, *Muslim-Sikh Relations in the British Punjab after the Lahore Resolution of 1940*, Ph.D. Dissertation, History Department Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, 2011, P. 398

- 
- 4 Kirpal Singh (ed.), *Select Documents on Partition of Punjab-1947* (New Delhi: National Book Shop, 1991), P. XII
  - 5 Ibid.
  - 6 Meha Malik Kudaisya, G.D Birla, *Big Business and India's Partition*, in D.A. Low and Howard Brasted, ed. *Freedom, Trauma, Continuities Northern India and Independence* (New Delhi: Sage Publication, 1998), P.218.
  - 7 As Sharif-ul-Mujahid stated, "It is of interest to note that as early as 1928, the Nehru Report had suggested that both Bengal and Punjab had definite zones of Hindu or Muslim population". Sikandar Hayat, *The Charismatic leader* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2008), P.330
  - 8 A.B. Rajput, *Punjab Crisis and Cure* (Lahore: The Lions Press, 1947), PP.99-100
  - 9 Ibid.
  - 10 Kirpal Singh, *Select Documents on Partition of Punjab*, P.XIII
  - 11 Sir Geoffery Corbett served in the Punjab as Financial Commissioner. At that time, he was Secretary of the Indian Delegation to the Round Table Conference, London. Ibid
  - 12 Ibid.
  - 13 They demanded that the Rawalpindi and Multan divisions excluding Montgomery and Lyallpur district should be separated from the Punjab to amalgamate this area with the North West Frontier Province or to form a separate province. Ibid., P. XIII
  - 14 Kudaisya, G.D. Birla, *Big Business and India's Partition*, P.219
  - 15 K.L. Gauda, *The Consequences of Pakistan* (Lahore: Lion Press, 1946), P.80

- 
- 16 Ibid. PP. 82-83
  - 17 Ibid. P.80
  - 18 B.R Nanda, *Tragedy and Triumph: The Last Days of Mahatama Gandhi*, In S. Sattar and Indira Baptisa Gupta, (ed.), *Pangs of Partition Vol.1* (New Delhi: Manhor and Indian Council of Historical Research, 2002), PP.49-51; See, Amirck Singh (ed.) *The Partition in Retrospect* (New Delhi: Anamika Publishers & Distributors, 2000), P.57. Thus, Gandhi had discussed Pakistan scheme with the Viceroy before Khaliquzzaman's discussion with Lord Zetland on 20 March 1939 in which he suggested partition of India to separate Muslim majority regions. Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Lahore: Longmans, 1961), P. 207
  - 19 *Rajput, Punjab Crisis and Cure*, PP. 101-102
  - 20 B.R Ambedkar, *Thoughts on Pakistan* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2008), PP.107-109, 355 Also see Map which he attached as Appendice.
  - 21 Durlab Singh, *The Valiant Fighter Master Tara Singh* (Lahore: Hero Publications, 1942), PP. 131-132
  - 22 Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1989), P.189
  - 23 R.J-Moore, *Escape from Empire* (Oxford: Larendon Press, 1983), P.54; For Bengal, he also showed his readiness to cede its Hindu western districts to Bihar provided it acquired Assam. Ibid.
  - 24 S. Shamsul Hasan, *Pakistan and Muslim India* (Darya Gunj Delhi: Muslim League Printing Press, 1942), P.125
  - 25 As, in his welcome address at the eighteenth Annual Session of All India Muslim League in Delhi in 1926, Khan Bahadur Pirzada Mulvi Muhammad Hussain Arif who belonged to Rohtak district presented demand for the separation of Ambala Division from the Punjab. Professor Manzural Haq Siddiqui *Tehrik-I-Pakistan Mein Rohtak Ka*



- 
- kirdar (Urdu) (Lahore: Pakistan. Movement Workers Trust, 1998), P.244
- 26 Sharif al Mujahid, Introductory, in S. Hashim Raza (ed.), Mountbatten and Pakistan (Karachi: Quaid-I- Azam Academy, 1982), P.21
- 27 Nicholas Mansergh (ed.), the Transfer of Power Vol. I (London: Her Majesty's Stationery office, 1970), PP.496, 564
- 28 Ibid., P. 587. Later on, during his research, Kirpal Singh concluded that, "Significantly enough this demands for the demarcation of the boundary with the districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Lahore was partially satisfied by the Radcliffe award". Kirpal Singh, Select Document on Partition of Punjab, P.XIV
- 29 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, P. 27; Penderel Moon also said to an Akali leader at Amritsar in 1942 that, "If Pakistan became inevitable it would include the whole of the Punjab or the Punjab would be divided on population basis by a line down the middle so the Wagah Rest House would make the dividing line". Penderel Moon, Divide and Quit (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), PP. 35-36
- 30 Hayat, The Charismatic leader, P. 154
- 31 Sikander Hayat's tentative formula to solve the communal problem in the Punjab,
- (a), "If not less than 75 percent of the total strength of the elected members of the Punjab legislative Assembly pass a resolution either in favor of or against non-accession to the Indian Federation". All the communities of the Punjab as final and binding shall regard that verdict.
- (b), "If neither a resolution advocating nor a resolution negating non-accession is moved or if such resolution, when moved, fails to be passed by the majority indicated in (a) above, but a demand for

---

non-accession continues then the wishes of the Muslim community as a whole shall be ascertained by means of a referendum in which all the Muslim electors on the electoral roll of the Punjab Legislative Assembly shall have the right to vote provided such a referendum is claimed in a formal resolution passed by the vote of not less than 60 percent of the Muslim members of the Punjab Legislative Assembly.

- (c) If as the result of a referendum suggested in (b) above the Muslim community gives its verdict in favor of non-accession, Indian non-Muslims will, for ascertainment of wishes of their community as a whole, have the right to claim, whether with a view to accession to the Indian Federation or formation of a separate sovereign state by themselves or in mutually agreed upon combination with other contiguous territories bordering on the east, a referendum in which all the non-Muslim Indian electors on the electoral roll of the Punjab legislative Assembly shall have the right to vote, for the separation from the present Punjab province of those contiguous portions of it in which non-Muslims constitute a majority provided that such referendum is claimed in a formal resolution passed by the vote of not less than 60 percent of the total strength of the non-Muslim Indian members of the Punjab legislative Assembly". (Lionel carter, *Punjab Politics 1940-1943* (New Delhi: Manhor Publishers & Distributors 2005), P. 317

32 Ibid. P. 314

33 Ibid. P. 333

34 Rajput, *Punjab Crisis and Cure*, P. 105

35 Gauba, *The Consequences of Pakistan* PP. 123-24, Also see, Rajput, *Punjab Crisis and Cure*, PP.105-106

36 Dr. Riaz Ahmad, (ed.), *The Punjab Muslim League 1906-1947*, Secret Police Abstracts (Islamabad: National

---

Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Quaid-e-Azam University , 2008), P. 122; At this time, M.A. Jinnah visited Punjab and during his visit, several talks were held between him and Akali leaders. However, "Mr. Jinnah was unwilling to agree to a readjustment of boundaries", whereas, "the Akalis made it clear that Sikh were not prepared to live under Muslim rule on any terms whatever; the negotiations failed". Ibid. P. 123; Then in December 1942, Jugal Kishor Birla and K.M. Munshi of Hindu Mahasabha suggested that, "let the Muhammadans have Pakistan in those portions of the Punjab and Bengal where they are in majority". Akhtar Hussain Sandhu, Azad Punjab Scheme of the Sikhs, Pakistan Journal of History and Culture Vol. XXXI. July —December 2010, No.2, P.55

- 37 Kirpal Singh, Select Documents on Partition of Punjab-1947, P. 11
- 38 Sandhu, Azad Punjab Scheme of the Sikhs, PP. 43, 45, 46, 53; However, the Sikhs of Rawalpindi Division as well as Central Akali Dal were against this scheme. Ibid. Also See, Baldev Raj Nayar, Minority Politics in the Punjab (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), P. 84
- 39 Rajput, Punjab Crisis and Cure, P. 107. Regarding this, the League leadership remarked that, "If the Sikhs agreed to accept Pakistan, the Muslims would accept Azad Punjab". Sandhu, Azad Punjab scheme of the Sikhs, P. 44; A Hindu group under J.K. Birla, Rajagopalachari and K.M. Munshi also conceded this scheme. Ibid. It was also informed that, "Gandhi showed his willingness to accept the agreement concluded between Shyama Prasad Mukerji, Master Tara Singh and the League". Ibid. Then to counteract League's demand for sovereign 'Muslim State', the Sharomani Akali Dal also put forward its demand for a 'Sikh State'. The proposed state was to consist of the territories of "Central Punjab with the Divisions of Lahore, Jullundur, parts of Ambala and Multan Divisions with the area comprised of Sikh States

---

and Maler Kotla with certain hills in the North and North-East". Kirpal Singh, *Select Document on Partition of Punjab*, P. XV-XVI

40 Ibid.

41 Carter, *Punjab Politics-January 1944-March 1947*, P.113; Tai Yong Tan and Gyanesh Kudaisya assert that, "Through this formula, Rajagopalachari was trying to point out to Jinnah that the provinces that he claimed for Pakistan contained large portions of non-Muslims, such as the Sikhs and the Hindus of the Punjab who would loathe inclusion in to Muslim State". Therefore, by 1945, M. A. Jinnah openly claimed for Pakistan the six full Muslim majority areas of the North-Western Frontier Province, Sind, Baluchistan, Punjab, Bengal and Assam and rejected outright any talk of altering the existing boundaries any of these provinces. Tai Yong Tan and Gyanesh Kudaisya, *The Aftermath of partition in South Asia* (London: Rutledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2002), P.108

42 Carter, *Punjab Politics-Jan. 1944-March-1947*, P.96; he added that such a dismemberment of the province would find few supporters amongst the Punjabi Muslims. Ibid.

43 Sandhya chaudhri, *Gandhi and the Partition of India* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Lid. 1984), P.112, See Virendra, *Pakistan A Myth & a reality* (Lahore: Minerva Book Shop, 1946), P. 108

44 S. Qaim Hussain Jafri, (ed.), *Congress Leaders Correspondence with Quaid-i-Azam* (Lahore: Aziz Publishers, n.d. [1997]), PP.88, 91, 94, 100

45 Carter, *Punjab Politics, Jan.1944 to March 1947*, P.142; At the same time Nehru too said at Lahore that, "If Pakistan is given, then parts of the Punjab and Bengal, where the Hindu population is in majority, will join Hindustan and both the Punjab and Bengal will have to be divided". Sucheta Mahajan, *Independence and Partition* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000), P. 289; See, Virendra, *Pakistan A Myth or a Reality*, P. 50

- 
- 46 He became successor B.J. Glancy as Governor of the Punjab in April 1946 but at the time, he was working as Private Secretary to the Viceroy.
  - 47 Z.H. Zaidi (ed.), Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah Papers Vol.1, Part, II (Islamabad: Quaid-i-Azam Paper Project, National Archives of Pakistan, 1993), P. 507. (Here after as Jinnah Papers)
  - 48 Ibid. P. 511
  - 49 Ibid. PP. 520-523
  - 50 Muhammad Iqbal Chawla, Wavell and the Dying Days of the Raj (Karachi Oxford University Press, 2011), P. 229
  - 51 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. VI, P. 650. At the same time, Mrs. Guy Wint (journalist) on her return from India wrote to Sir Cripps that, " If H.M.G decided that Pakistan in some form was inevitable they could then take the responsibility for altering the provincial boundaries of the Punjab and Bengal to exclude the Hindu districts of the South Punjab and west Bengal". Ibid. P. 770
  - 52 Jinnah Papers Vol. I, Part II, P. 539
  - 53 Ibid., PP. 538-540. In between on 8 January 1946, in his talks with Woodrow Wyatt, Jinnah stated that, "he did not envisage predominantly non-Muslim areas like the Ambala Division remaining in Pakistan but insisted that Pakistan must be a living state economically and culturally". Ibid. Two days later in his interview with Wyatt, Nehru too conceded that, "the British government might have to declare for Pakistan", but "there must be a plebiscite in border districts to confirm it". Ibid. Meanwhile, Wavell also sent a secret letter to London that "We are now faced in India with a situation of great difficulty and danger". As one of his military advisers had written to Wavell that, "they would be extremely lucky to get through till June next without serious trouble". Patrick French, Liberty or Death, (London: Flamingo, 1997), P.218; Accordingly, British Parliamentary

---

Delegation came to India and they reported to Mr. Attlee within one month. One delegate seriously emphasized that, "If the Muslim League were by passed in relation to constitution making, there would be wide spread violation. Therefore, it is necessary to offer Jinnah Pakistan on the basis of Muslim Majority Areas". *Ibid.*, P.219

54 Jinnah Papers Vol. I, Part II, PP. 542-545

55 At this time, Mr. John Throne was a Member for Home Department in Viceroy's Executive Council.

56 *Ibid.* PP. 554-55

57 Mansergh, *The transfer of Power* Vol. VI, P.860

58 Jinnah Papers Vol. I, Part II, P. 565

59 Mansergh, *the Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, PP .912-913; Regarding this, Patrick French writes that, "Wavell was asserting that since the city of Amritsar and its surroundings district constituted the heart of the Sikhdom, it would clearly be impossible to place it within a Muslim homeland". Then, although Wavell's explanation for the West Pakistan lost the natural border imposed by the Beas and Sutlej rivers but in the same letter, he concluded that, "Gurdaspur must go with Amritsar for geographical reasons and Amritsar being sacred city of Sikhs must stay out of Pakistan". Therefore, Wavell's telegram, which recommended boundaries for Pakistan, was one of the most important documents in the history of the transfer of power in India, since it was the first official attempt to show what the Muslim's Pakistan might mean in practice. French, *Liberty or Death*, PP. 221, 277

60 Mansergh, *the Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, PP. 944, 951, 1004-1005; In the same month, he sent a note "Viability of Pakistan" to the Cabinet Delegation for India so that they could consider the economic, defense and finance aspects of this subject. *Ibid.* For the defense problems of Pakistan, it assumed Western Pakistan consisting of

---

Baluchistan, Sind, Northwest Frontier Province and that part of the Punjab, which lies West of the River Sutlej as for an exclusive Ferozepore, thence due north as far as the River Beas near Kakkar and thence following the line of the River Beas. It also considered that the presence of the two large cities of Ferozepore and Amrisar in Hindustan, so close to the frontier near Lahore, would be an added reason for keeping a considerable garrison in Lahore to prevent incidents on the frontier due to inter-communal disturbances in the adjacent territories of Hindustan. *Ibid.* PP. 955-957

61 *Ibid.*, P. 877

62 *Ibid.*, PP.851-859

63 *Ibid.*

64 *Ibid.* P. 957

65 Mahajan, *Independence and Partition*, P. 213

66 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, P.1208

67 Moore, *Escape from Empire*, P. 84. Surprisingly in his interview with Woodrow Wyatt, Gandhi agreed on 13 April that, "It would be much better for Congress to concede Pakistan than for the British. If Congress conceded it, it would be something much more glorious". *The Collected Works of Mahatama Gandhi*, Vol. L XXXIII (83) (Ahmadabad: The Publications Division, Government of India, 1981), P.441; At the same time, Nehru offered a "diluted Pakistan" but under the suzerainty of a strong central Congress Government". Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan* (Karachi: National Publishing House Ltd., 1970), P.507

68 *Ibid.*

69 Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru A Biography*, Vol., I (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), P. 315

70 Mansergh, *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII, P. 402

- 
- 71 The Collected Works of Mahatama Gandhi Vol. LXXXIV (84), P.122
  - 72 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol.VII, P.466; During this, Sir Cripps and Pethick Lawrence further argued with Gandhi that, "would not the division of India into two independent sovereign states and the Creation of Pakistan be much worse than this?" Sudhir Ghosh, Gandhi's Emissary (Bombay: Rupa & Co., 1967), P. 136
  - 73 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. VII, PP.140-142
  - 74 Ibid., P. 178
  - 75 Ibid. P. 284
  - 76 H.V. Hodson, The Role of Lord Mountbatten, in C.H. Philips and Mary Doreen Wainwright (ed.), The Partition of India-Policies and Perspectives 1937-1947 (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 1970), P.117
  - 77 The Collected Works of Mahatama Gandhi , Vol. LXXXVI (86), P.286
  - 78 H.N. Mitra (ed.), the Indian Annual Register, Vol. I, 1947 (New Delhi: Gian Publishing House, 1990), P.115
  - 79 Ian Stephens, Pakistan (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 193), P.159
  - 80 V.P. Menon, The Transfer of Power in India (New Delhi: Orient Longmans, 1957), P.358
  - 81 Penderel Moon, Wavell-The Viceroy's Journal (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997), P.421
  - 82 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. ix, P. 785
  - 83 Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru Vol. 2 (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund 1984) P.54
  - 84 Ibid., PP. 53-54
  - 85 The Collected Works of Mahatama Gandhi, Vol. LXXXVII (87), PP.12-13



- 
- 86 Ibid. P. 29-30. Surprisingly at the same time, in his discussion with Sudhir Gosh in London, Sir Cripps said that, "the Pakistan they are likely to get would be very different from what they wanted and it may not be worth their while". Gosh, *Gandhi's Emissary*, P. 202
- 87 Kanji Dwarkadas, *Ten Years to Freedom* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1968), PP. 207-208
- 88 Regarding this resolution, Alastair Lamb writes that Nehru and Patel knew the contents of Wavell's letter of 6 February 1946 to the Secretary of State therefore, in the light of that knowledge, "the decision of the Congress Working Committee of 8 March was drafted". He also makes it clear that, "The documentary record makes it clear that M.A Jinnah did not possess a comparable understanding of what ideas the British were developing about ultimate shape of Pakistan". Alastair Lamb, *Incomplete Partition, The Genesis of the Kashmir Dispute 1947-1948* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), PP. 33-34
- 89 Kirpal Singh, *Select Documents on Partition of Punjab 1947*, P. 26
- 90 Mansergh, *The transfer of Power*, Vol. IX, P. 948
- 91 *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Vol. 2, PP. 77-78
- 92 Mansergh, *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. X, P. 39
- 93 Carter, *Punjab Politics Jan. 1944-March 1947*, P. 356
- 94 He reported that, "The Muslims would clearly take the Rawalpindi and Multan divisions the non-Muslims would take the Jullundur and Ambala Divisions. But it is not clear how the Lahore Division should be divided on population alone Amritsar should go to the non-Muslim State, and the other five districts (Lahore, Gjranwala, Sialkot, Sheikhupura and Gurdaspur) to the Muslim State. But when we get down to details we inevitably find that crude population figures are not necessarily the only criterion-within district communities are not evenly

---

distributed-city and town populations often have a different communal composition from that of the adjoining countryside; and in some districts, the population of tahsils differ widely. For example, in Gurdaspur with 590,000 Muslim and 560,000 non-Muslims, the Pathankot Tahsil is predominantly non-Muslim while in other three Tahsils the Muslim has small majorities. Again, even within a Tahsil, there may be solid communal blocks-the Riarki tract of the Batala Tahsil of Gurdaspur adjoins the Manjha and resembles it in many ways, though the Batala Tahsil as completely (Including Batala City) has a small majority. The mere settlement of the principles of partition would be extraordinarily difficult, and it is worth considering whether if partition were achieved, the Punjab would be the better for it.

Let us we assume that we have drawn our line say (for the sake of argument) to include Gurdaspur and Amritsar in the non-Muslim State and Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala and Sheikhpura in the Muslim State. Before long the following disadvantages will become apparent:

- (i) Our minority's problem will not be solved. Both states (particularly the non-Muslim State) will have considerable and probably discontented minorities. Punjabis as a whole will be no safer and no more comfortable than they are now.
- (ii) We shall have cut across a section of Punjabis homogenous in speech, and in many other ways, to create an artificial frontier for which geographically, economically, linguistically and socially there is no justification whatever...
- (iii) Lahore must go to one state or the other-it cannot be in both. But Lahore has been created by all Punjabis and not by Muslims or non-Muslims alone.
- (iv) The non-Muslim state will have the lion's share of our power resources; the Muslim state will inherit the colony districts, which are a joint creation of all.

---

We shall have reduced what might be a powerful country to two petty states incapable of real economic development over loaded with overhead charges and useful only as "buffers" between the rest of India and the outer world". Carter, Punjab Politics March-May 1947, PP. 61-65. Kirpal Singh, Select Documents on Partition of Punjab 1947, PP., 20 – 21

- 95 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. IX, P. 840-850
- 96 Ibid., PP. 942-943
- 97 Madhau Godbole, The Holocaust of Indian Partition (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2006), P.14
- 98 Ibid., On the other hand, when the replacement of the Viceroy in India had been announced on 20 February even then Lord Wavell without any cessation continuously submitted his briefing to the New Viceroy Lord Mountbatten about the political difficulties of transferring power in India. As, during the weeks before his departure for New Delhi, Wavell sent Mountbatten a number of letters outlining remaining issues that, "needed to be clarified by the British government". The result was that Mountbatten left London with far clearer instructions than his predecessor had ever been given, even if the policy that Wavell had initiated remained unchanged. Patrick French, Liberty or Death, P.278
- 99 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. IX, P.1011
- 100 Ibid. Vol. X, PP.15-16
- 101 Ibid.
- 102 Ibid., PP. 99-100
- 103 Ibid. PP. 186-187. During this, Jinnah asked to see what the Congress proposals were for carving the Punjab and Bengal, so that he could submit his counter proposals. At this, Mountbatten said that he would ask Nehru for the proposed boundaries for the partition of the Punjab and Bengal. However, on the next day he noted that,

---

“unfortunately time did not permit me to ask Pandit Nehru for the exact Congress proposals for the boundary revisions in the Punjab and Bengal”. Ibid. P. 200

- 104 The Collected Works of Mahatama Gandhi, Vol. LXXXVII (87) P.246
- 105 Sucheta Mahajan, Congress and Partition of Provinces, in Amirk Singh, The Partition in Retrospect, PP. 233-235
- 106 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. X, P.193
- 107 Ibid. PP. 222-223
- 108 Ibid. P. 254
- 109 Carter, Punjab Politics March-May 1947, P.135; He also added that, “It is most improbable that any partition of the Punjab will go through smoothly; the best we can do is to provide machinery by which the Punjabis can decide matters for themselves”. Ibid.
- 110 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. X, P. 271
- 111 Mitra, The Indian Annual Register, Vol. I, 1947, P.56; Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru Vol. 2, P.91; Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. X, PP. 268-269; bid., P.308
- 112 Ibid., P.310
- 113 Latif Ahmad Sherwani, The Partition of India and Mountbatten (Karachi: Council For Pakistan Studies, 1986), 122
- 114 Kirpal Singh, Select Documents on Partition of Punjab 1947, P.55
- 115 Ibid., PP.64-65
- 116 Ibid., P.71; Latif Ahmad Sherwani, The Partition of India and Mountbatten, 122-123
- 117 Kirpal Singh, Select Documents on Partition of Punjab 1947, P.76
- 118 Carter, Punjab Politics March-May 1947, P. 173

- 
- 119 Carter, Punjab Politics March-May 1947, PP. 305-308.  
According to another version, "Nehru also raised the issue of securing a written assurance from Jinnah that he would accept a truncated Pakistan". To this, Mountbatten stated that, "Jinnah had given him such an understanding and if he proved difficult, he would find the Viceroy tough enough". Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vol. 2, P. 127. Sir Zafrullah Khan maintains that British concluded an agreement with the Congress to accept their partition on three conditions i.e. completion of partition within two months, handing over of Calcutta city to India and inclusion of the two Muslim majority tahsils of Gurdaspur districts namely tahsil Batala and tahsil Gurdaspur during the partition of the Punjab into Indian territory. Muhammad Zafarullah Khan, Tahdees-e-Niamat, (Urdu) (Dacca: Benevolent Association Dacca, 1971), P.527
- 120 Mansergh, The Transfer of power, Vol. X, P. 781
- 121 Ibid., PP. 583-584
- 122 The Collected Works of Mahatama Gandhi, Vol. LXXXVII (87), PP. 406, 432
- 123 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. X, PP.520-521, 645-646
- 124 Ibid., P.660
- 125 Ibid., PP. 629, 631
- 126 Ibid., P. 852
- 127 Ibid. P. 865
- 128 Ibid. P. 868
- 129 Carter, Punjab Politics, March-May 1947, PP.177-179
- 130 Ibid., P. 203
- 131 Mansergh, The Transfer of power, Vol. X, P. 197
- 132 Ibid., P. 825
- 133 Ibid. PP. 841-842

- 
- 134 Ibid., P. 916
- 135 Jinnah papers Vol. I, Part. I , P.843
- 136 Ahmad, The Punjab Muslim League 1906-1947, P.353
- 137 Ibid. P. 961
- 138 Carter, Punjab Politics, March-May 1947, PP. 213-214
- 139 Ibid. P. 216
- 140 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power Vol. X, P. 990
- 141 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power, Vol. X, PP. 945-946
- 142 Larry Collins & Dominique Lapierre, Mountbatten and the Partition of India march 22-August 15, 1947 (Singapore: Trans-East Distributing Company, 1982), P. 84
- 143 Mansergh, The Transfer of Power Vol. X, P. 955
- 144 Ibid., P. 1014
- 145 Ibid., Vol. XI, P.5
- 146 Draft of brief stated that, "I am sure that you will not be happy with the details of the plan contained in the announcement, but at least it contemplates the partition for which you have fought for so many years. Indeed, you have yourself said that you would sooner have a few acres of the Sind desert, provided that it was your very own, rather than have a united India with a majority rule. To that extent, therefore, you must be satisfied.... That you will be much disturbed by the prospect of the partition of Bengal and the Punjab goes without saying, but.... If you should, at this stage, mention any reservations, it will give your opponents the opportunity of saying that they too are not prepared to accept this scheme, except as a final settlement: and we shall then be back exactly where we stand....A very heavy responsibility now rests with you. In your hands, perhaps more than anyone else's in the world lies the possibility of ending all this bloodshed that is bringing so much suffering to India and of achieving a

---

permanent and satisfactory solution of this long-standing problem". Ibid., PP.9-10

147 Italics added.

148 Mansergh, *The Transfer of Power* Vol. XI, P.712

149 Italics added.

150 Mansergh, *The Transfer of Power* Vol. XI, P. 336

151 *Disturbances in the Punjab 1947* (Islamabad: National Documentation Centre, 1995), P. 361