

India and Pakistan

Reasons for Partition [Compare to Israelis - Palestinians?]

- A. There were several reasons for the birth of a separate Muslim homeland in the subcontinent, and all three parties-the British, the Congress and the Muslim League-were responsible.
 - 1. British had followed a divide-and-rule policy in India: categorized people according to religion and viewed and treated them as separate from each other.
 - a. The British were also still fearful of the potential threat from the Muslims -- the former rulers of the subcontinent for over 300 years under the Mughal Empire.
 - b. As soon as the Muslim League was formed, they were placed on a separate electorate; thus the idea of the separateness of Muslims in India was built into the electoral process of India.
 - 2. There was also an ideological divide between the Muslims and the Hindus of India:
 - a. While there were strong feelings of nationalism in India, there were also communal conflicts and movements in the country that were based on religious communities rather than class or regional ones.
 - b. Added to this were the memories of power over the Indian subcontinent that the Muslims held on to, especially those in the old centers of Mughal rule -- made it difficult for Muslims to accept the imposition of colonial power and culture:
 - 1) refused to learn English and to associate with the British
 - 2) found that the Hindus were now in better positions in government than they were and thus felt that the British favored Hindus
 - 3) opposition to assimilation and submergence in Hindu society
 - c. Hindus resented the Muslims for their former rule over India; rallied for a ban on the slaughter of cows, a cheap source of meat for the Muslims
 - 3. Indian Congress made several mistakes in their policies which convinced the League that it was impossible to live in a undivided India after freedom from colonial rule because their interests would be completely suppressed.
 - 4. The Congress banned any support for the British during the Second World War. However the Muslim League pledged its full support.
- B. There had been some hope of an undivided India, with a government consisting of three tiers along basically the same lines as the borders of India and Pakistan at the time of Partition. However, Congress' rejection of the interim government plan 1942 convinced the leaders of the Muslim League that compromise was impossible and partition was the only course to take.

Impact and Aftermath of Partition

- A. The partition of India left both India and Pakistan devastated. The process of partition had claimed many lives in the riots. Many others were raped and looted. Women, especially, were used as instruments of power by the Hindus and the Muslims.
- B. 15 million refugees poured across the borders to regions completely foreign to them, for though they were Hindu or Muslim, their identity had been embedded in the regions where their ancestors were from.
- C. Many years after the partition, the two nations are still trying to heal the wounds left behind by this incision to once-whole body of India.
 - 1. The two countries started off with ruined economies and lands and without an established, experienced system of government.
 - 2. lost many of their most dynamic leaders (Gandhi, Jinnah) soon after the partition.
 - 3. Pakistan had to face the separation of Bangladesh in 1971.
 - 4. India and Pakistan have been to war twice since the partition and they are still deadlocked over the issue of possession of Kashmir. The same issues of boundaries and divisions, Hindu and Muslim majorities and differences, still persist in Kashmir.

India Under Nehru

- A. Under Nehru's leadership, the government attempted to develop India quickly by embarking on agrarian reform and rapid industrialization:
 - 1. successful land reform abolished giant landholdings
 - 2. a series of five-year plans emphasized the building of basic industries such as steel, heavy machine tools, and heavy electrical machinery (such as power plant turbines) rather than automobiles and other consumer goods.
 - 3. New investment in those industries, as well as investment in infrastructure, especially railroads, communications, and power generation, was reserved for the public sector. The central government controlled foreign trade stringently.
 - 4. Substantial progress was made toward the goal of industrial self-reliance and growth in manufacturing during the 1950s and early 1960s.
- B. The problem of a national language for the country:
 - 1. The constitution specified that Hindi, spoken in many dialects by 40 percent of Indians, would become the official language in 1965, after a transition in which English, spoken by the educated elite of the country, would serve.
 - 2. Non-Hindi speakers mobilized against central government efforts to impose Hindi.
 - 3. To settle the dispute, the government allowed continued use of English for states that wished to keep it.
- C. *Nonalignment* emerged as attractive alternative to a cold war alliance
 - 1. Indian prime minister Nehru favored policy of nonalignment, the "third path" -- the idea that other countries should refuse to take sides in a mounting ideological and political struggle between the USSR and the United States known as the Cold War.
 - 2. At Bandung Conference in Indonesia, 1955, twenty-nine nonaligned nations met
 - 3. Movement lacked unity; many members sought aid from United States or USSR
- D. Nehru was unable to resolve the hostility with Pakistan -- the division of Kashmir along the 1949 cease-fire line left each country claiming important territory held by the other.
- E. In the late 1950s, conflict with China over the ownership of some largely uninhabited land along India's northeastern border
 - 1. The crisis precipitated a drastic overhaul of Indian defenses, including massive arms procurement and the modernization of its armed forces.
 - 2. This in turn alarmed Pakistan, concerned that its small size and small economic capacity compared with India would condemn it to a permanent position of inferiority on the subcontinent.

Post-Nehru Era

- A. Indian democracy
 - 1. Nehru's daughter Indira Gandhi became leader of Congress Party, 1966-77
 - a. Launched "green revolution," adopted harsh policy of birth control
 - b. Regained power in 1980, but faced strong opposition from religious and ethnic groups
 - c. Crushed uprising of Sikhs, was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards (1984)
 - 2. Her son Rajiv Gandhi resumed power in 1985, but was assassinated in 1991
 - 3. Nehru's heirs maintained democracy in India and fought problems of overpopulation, poverty, and sectarian division
- B. India supported the East Pakistani freedom fighters with sanctuary, training, and arms, and when Pakistan bombed Indian airfields on December 3, 1971, India invaded Pakistan to liberate East Pakistan. The Pakistani troops were quickly defeated, and East Pakistan gained recognition as the independent nation of Bangladesh ("Land of the Bengalis"). Pakistan's humiliating defeat, despite the efforts of the United States on its behalf, restored India's pride that had been so badly hurt by its defeat by China.
- C. The success of the Green Revolution, an effort to diversify and increase crop yields, brought India to a position of self-sufficiency in food grain production.

- D. In 1998 the government made India into a "nuclear weapons state" by testing five nuclear devices in underground detonations. Pakistan responded with its own nuclear tests, arousing fears of a regional nuclear arms race.
- E. Fighting between Indian and Pakistani forces in the Kashmir region re-ignited in early 2000.

CURRENT ISSUES

- A. Kashmir
- B. Sikh Nationalism
- C. Preserving the environment -- degraded in India's attempts to modernize and industrialize. India is a key player in international efforts to make progress on global environmental issues both because of its size and its influence on other developing countries.
- D. Poverty -- closely linked with caste and ethnicity.
- E. The Caste system -- Discrimination on the grounds of caste is illegal now in India but it remains a social problem because certain groups (untouchables, for example) lag behind in terms of human development and continue to be victims of systematic discrimination and violence.
- F. Women and Children -- Women represent an increasing proportion of the poor. Violence against women and children, child labor and bonded labor (labor is demanded as a means of repayment for a loan and often continues through successive generations without the debt ever getting paid off, resulting in a form of slavery) are commonplace.
- G. Drug production -- India is also the largest producer of opium for making medicines and a large illicit producer of hashish and methaqualone.
- H. India and China
 - 1. border disputes
 - 2. China's role as the most important international supporter of India's rival Pakistan, to which China gives aid, diplomatic support and technical help for its nuclear and missile programs, is another cause of tension.
- I. The Problem of Corruption -- Corruption in India is normal, not the exception, at every level of public life. Voters face the choice, not between good and bad, but between bad and worse.

Conclusion - India and Pakistan followed separate patterns:

- ⇒ Pakistan, like Southeast Asia, quickly turned to authoritarian government.
- ⇒ India retained democratic institutions but has been dominated at the national level by the Congress Party. At the regional level, other parties gained control.
- ⇒ Regional, economic, and religious diversity are a problem for India.
- ⇒ The Indian government implemented social reform by granting equality before the law for all castes, for the untouchables, and for women and by promoting education, literacy, and social welfare. It promoted economic development through a combination of government economic planning and private initiatives.