

Pak Affairs - Paper 2017

Question :-

Discuss the 3rd June Plan and also describe how it was implemented?

Answer

Introduction

“The Mountbatten plan, announced on June 3, 1947, marked a turning point in India's history. It proposed the division of British India into two separate nations along religious lines, leading to the birth of India and Pakistan. The plan set in motion a chain of events that would forever alter the course of the sub-continent.”

[Dominique Lapiere & Larry Collins - Freedom at midnight]

The plan played a significant role

In the process of partitioning British India, the plan was implemented, leading to the formal establishment of India & Pakistan as independent nations.

Background

Lord Mountbatten was appointed the viceroy of India in early 1947, with the mandate to oversee the transfer of power from British rule to Indian hands. The mounting communal tensions and the failure to reach a consensus between Indian Congress and All-India Muslim League necessitated the formation of plan to resolve the political dead lock.

Approval of the 3rd June Plan

Lord Mountbatten soon began negotiation with the political leaders of India.

After prolonged talks, on 2nd May 1947 he sent a partition plan to England for approval. The British Government

approved it and sent it back. This draft was not accepted by Nehru and other Congress leaders. Thus at the request of the viceroy, Nehru and Memon prepared a revised partition plan which suited their interests. Mountbatten took that plan to England and at the threat of his resignation got it approved by the British Cabinet.

Key Points

1. Partition of India
2. Transfer of Power
3. Princely states
4. Boundary Demarcation

1. Partition of India :-

The Mountbatten plan proposed the partition of British India into two separate nations: India and Pakistan, based on religious lines. The plan aimed to create Hindu-majority India and a Muslim-majority Pakistan.

2. Transfer of Power :-

The mountbatten plan set a deadline of August 15, 1947 for the transfer of power to the newly created dominions of India and Pakistan.

3. Princely states :-

The plan gave the princely states the option to join either India or Pakistan or remain independent. The rulers of these states were given the freedom to decide the future of their states based on the wishes of their people and the geographical contiguity of the regions.

4. Boundary Demarcation :-

The plan provided for the delineation of boundaries for the new nations of India and Pakistan. The process involved the drawing of the Radcliffe line, named after the British lawyer "Sir Cyril Radcliffe".

5 • Acceptance :-

The Indian-National Congress led by Nehru, and the All-India Muslim League, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, both accepted the plan, albeit with reservations. Despite concerns and objections from various political leaders, the plan was implemented.

Implementation of the Plan

The achievement of the plan included the verdicts of the provinces and parliamentary legislation. The administrative services and armed forces needed to be divided, assets & liabilities to be apportioned and the boundaries in the disputed areas to be settled.

1 • Bengal Province :-

The provincial Legislative Assembly met in Bengal and decided to join the new Constituent Assembly. West Bengal with a Muslim majority decided to

join existing Indian Constituent Assembly, by fifty-eight votes to twenty-one. On the other hand, muslim majority areas of East Bengal decided to join Pakistan by 106 votes to 35. The same majority also decided that Sylhet should be amalgamated with that province.

2: Punjab Province :-

The Punjab Legislative Assembly decided by 91 votes to 77 to join a new Constituent Assembly. The members from the muslim majority areas of West Punjab decided, by 69 votes to 27, against the partition of the province. Whereas the East Punjab decided to join the existing Indian Constituent Assembly by 50 votes to 22.

3: Sindh Province :-

The Sindh Legislative Assembly met as well to decide by 30 votes to 20 to join new Constituent Assembly. A majority

of the voters were in favour of separation and joining East Bengal.

4: NWFP Province:-

Implementation of the Mountbatten Plan in the North West Frontier Province was little bit difficult due to the communal conflicts in the region. The 3rd June Plan offered to the voters the choice either to join a new Constituent Assembly or to continue with the existing one. Another problem was between Ghaqqa and Jinnah.

5: Baluchistan Province:-

Baluchistan, the members of Shahi Jirga and the municipality of Quetta decided in favour of new constituent assembly. Finally, East Bengal, West Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan and the NWFP all voted for Pakistan. Fresh elections were held in Sylhet, for the election

of representatives to the respective Constituent Assemblies.

6: Governor General's Issue

Mountbatten wanted to be joint Governor General of India and Pakistan while ML decided to appoint Jinnah as the first Governor General of Pakistan in July.

Significance

“The Mountbatten Plan played a crucial role in shaping the future of Pakistan and India. While it provided a framework for the transfer of power and the establishment of two nations, its implementation witnessed the tragic consequences of partition, including violence, displacements and the loss of countless lives.”

(Hov Hodson - The Partition of India)

Reaction of muslims & Hindus

The Mountbatten Plan evoked mixed reactions among muslims and Hindus. muslim saw it as the fulfillment of the demand for a separate homeland while Indian Congress initially had reservation about the partition. They advocated for a united India. But at the end both accepted the Plan.

Conclusion

The Mountbatten Plan of June 3, 1947, marked a crucial moment in the history of British India, leading to the partition of India and Pakistan. The Plan aimed to address deep-seated communal tensions and political dead-locks.