

Pakistan Affairs

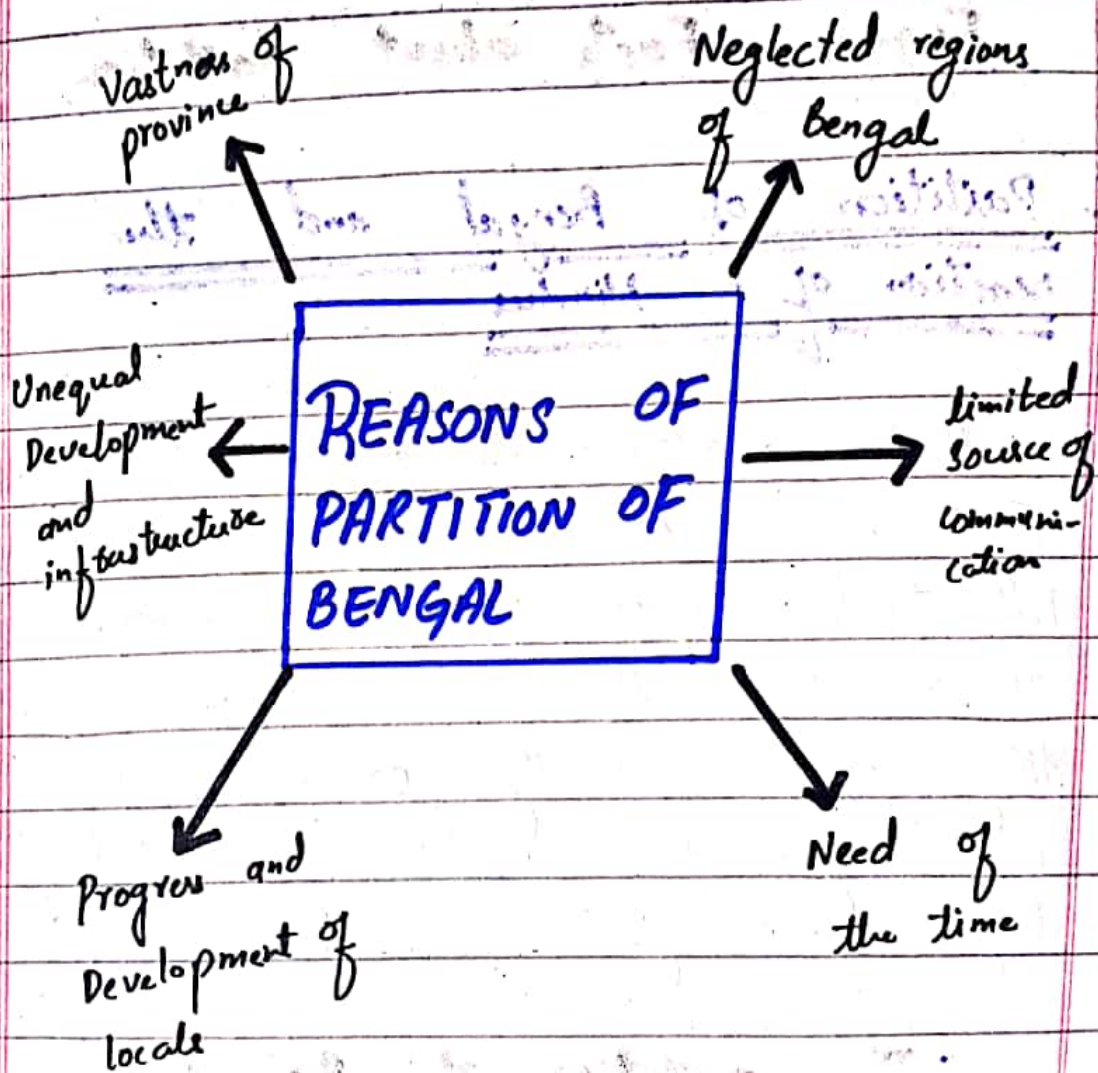
Q: It was the over reaction of Hindus to the partition of Bengal in 1905 that widened the gulf between Muslims and Hindus. Comment.

I. Introduction

Bengal province was partitioned on 16 December, 1905 due to numerous reasons, particularly the administrative. The result was the formation of Hindu-dominated West Bengal and Muslim-dominated East Bengal. However, the Hindus showed utmost resentment over the partition. Their anger was perceived in the politico-economic and social threat to their very existence. They alleged the partition to be the threat to their dominance. Moreover, they did not like the Muslims to be benefitted in any way. Therefore, they started efforts to annul the partition. Despite the administrative opportunities on the part of the government, the partition was annulled in 1911. In a nutshell, Hindus, for no ^{strategic} reason, strived hard to revoke the partition of Bengal.

II. Partition of Bengal (1905)

Bengal was partitioned on 16th December, 1905. Due to the vast area and population, administrative difficulty was observed. Following are the major reasons for the partition.



These mentioned reasons are crucial for the governing bodies to partitioned Bengal, which had made into effect after many proposals.

West Bengal	East Bengal
Calcutta, Capital	Dacca, Capital
Inclusion of Bihar, Orissa	Inclusion of Assam, Bagura district
366,692 Km ²	275,938 Km ²
54 million population	31 million
16.67% Muslim	58% Muslim

Figure: Facts about partition

III. Partition of Bengal and the reaction of Hindus

Hindus over-reacted over the partition. They made hue and cry for nothing. The actual reason was the perceived threat to their dominance, because they enjoyed socially, politically and economically in the united Bengal. According to Lala Rajpat Rai

"The partition of Bengal was an insult to the people of Bengal and an affront to the people of India." (Lala Rajpat Rai)

Following tactics were quite enough to demonstrate the over-reaction of Hindus

i- Swadeshi Movement

Hindus had started Swadeshi Movement on August 07, 1905. The rationale behind the movement was the strengthening of their desires against the partition. Under this movement, they urged people to boycott British goods and utilized local products.

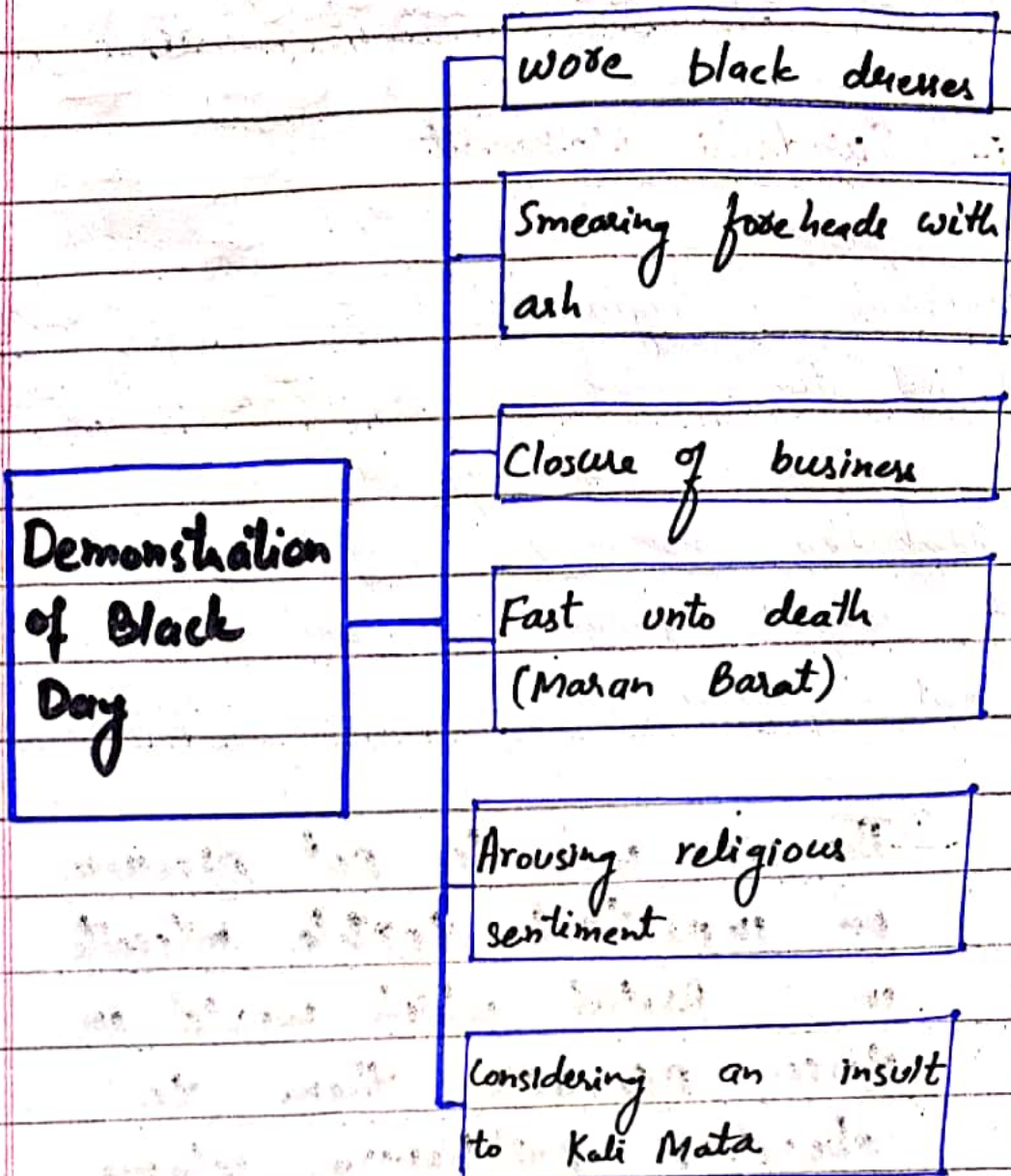
"The aim was to put pressure on important textile interests in British which would in turn pressurize them to abandon partitioning scheme. Hundred meetings were held and student took an active part."

(K. B. Syed)

ii- Celebrations of Partition as the Black Day

They celebrated 16 October, 1905 as Black Day. They wore black

dresses for the purpose.



iii- Allegations on the British Government for Divide and Rule Policy

They alleged the British Government to divide the province along religious lines. The Hindu and Muslim majority west and East Bengal were the point of contention among Hindus

"In the new province, the Muslims will be in majority, and the Bengali Hindus will be in a minority. We shall be strangers in our own land. I dread the prospect and the outlook fills me with anxiety as to the future of our race."

(Mahindra Chandra)

IV. Why Hindus became so aggressive over the partition?

i- Threat to their political interest

They considered the partition to be the threat on their political interest. In the united Bengal, they exploited Muslims and benefitted themselves.

ii- Economic loss

Partition caused a major setback to their economy because

Hindu landlords were dwelling in Calcutta but their lands were in ^{East} ~~West~~ Bengal. Capitalists and traders wanted status quo.

iii - Threat to the peas

Hindus had monopoly over the peas. Press mostly depicted the Hindu mentality and ideas. With partition, they experienced the reduction in their income.

iv - Practice of the lawyer

United Bengal had unified courts for all residents. However, after partition, the courts were also divided. This had reduced the hegemony.

v - Bengal Partition and Hindu reaction had widened the gulf between Hindus and Muslims

These events had divided Muslims and Hindus further. Hindus

started Hard tactics against Muslims which had drastically widened the relationship. They used following tactics to sabotage Muslims.

Subtle use of art and literature to spread Hatred

Rapid circulation of Bengali newspaper to enhance anti-Muslim sentiments

The stirring of extremism and nationalism in Hindus

Portraying of Shivaji as a great hero

Vande Mataram became a war cry

VI. Repercussions of the Hindus' aggressive behaviour

Rapid aggression and anti-government sentiments resulted in the annulment of Bengal in 1911. Despite the advantages of partition in terms of administration and social services, the united Bengal was formed again to satisfy the

Hindus quest of hegemony.

VII. Conclusion

In a nutshell, the partition of Bengal was a significant development in the history of sub-continent. It was done to properly control the vast area. However, Hindus, considering the danger of their dominancy, did efforts to revoke the decision. They over-reacted over the matter and started Swadeshi movement for annulling the partition. These movements have widened the Hindu - Muslim gulf due to hard tactics used by Hindus against the Muslims. As a result, the Bengal was annuled in 1911.

Just check the dimension of the question.

Q:- What circumstances led to the partition of Bengal in 1905? How it affected the Hindu British and Hindu Muslim relation? Discuss

Outline

I- Introduction

II Circumstances leading towards the partition of Bengal

i- Vastness of province

ii- Limited sources of communication

iii- Neglected regions of Bengal

iv- Need of the time

v- Progress and Development of locale

III- Impact on Hindu-British relations

i- Allegations of weakening Indian nationalist movement by Hindus

ii- Divide and Rule policy by British

iii- Boycott of British products under Swadeshi Movement

iv- Division on religious lines as proclaimed by Briti Hindus against British

IV- Affect on Hindu-Muslim relations

i- Rising anti-Muslim sentiments

ii- Use of art and literature by Hindus to spread hatred against Muslims

iii- Press media for stirring anti Muslim emotions

iv- Stirring extremism and nationalism

V- Conclusion