

Date: _____

QUESTION

Day: _____

How far the political differences between Muslim League and Indian National Congress played a role in the development of Pakistan

② INTRODUCTION:

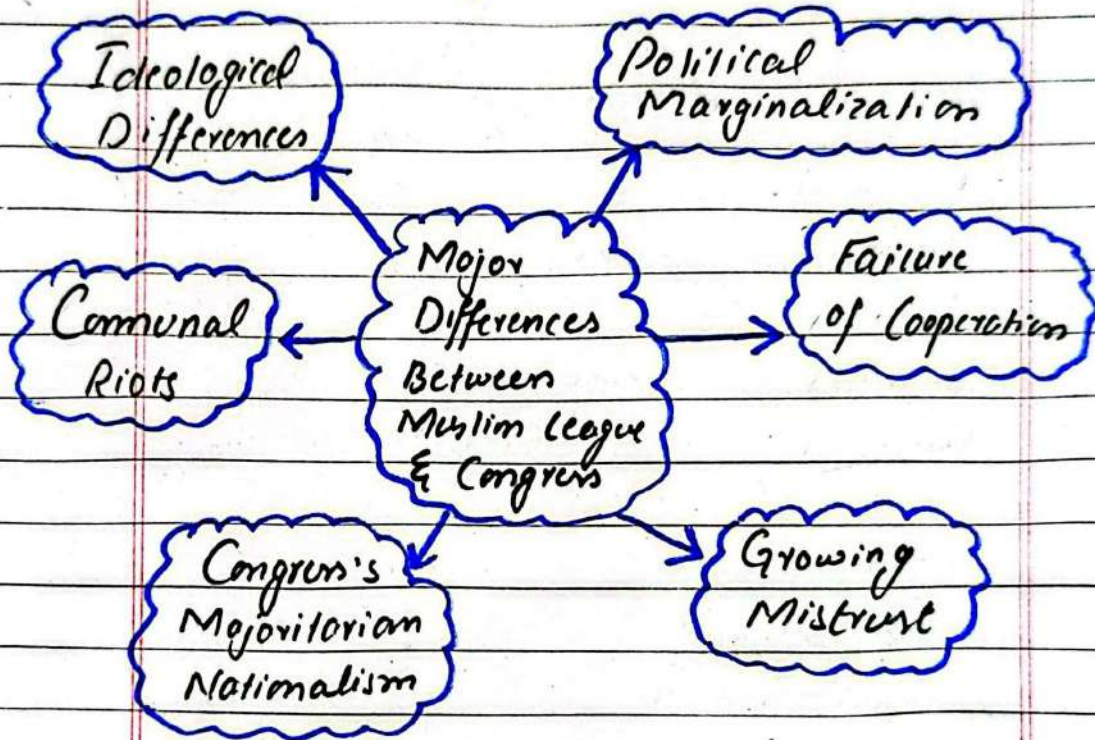
The partition of British India and the subsequent creation of Pakistan was not an abrupt incident but the culmination of a series of political, ideological and communal differences between the Muslim League and Indian National Congress. Among these, the political rift between the two parties stood out as one of the most decisive factors. While the Congress upheld a vision of a united India with a dominant Hindu-majority leadership, the Muslim League advocated for political autonomy and protection of religious and cultural rights, who feared marginalization. These conflicting political ideologies, agendas and the growing mistrust deeply influenced the demand for a separate Muslim homeland, ultimately leading to the creation of Pakistan.

Date: _____

Day: _____

② MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE MUSLIM LEAGUE AND INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS LEADING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF PAKISTAN:

The primary differences between Muslim League and the Indian National Congress were as follows



(3.1) Ideological Differences: Unitary Vs Separate

The Congress promoted the idea of a united India, where all religious communities could coexist.

While the Muslim League argued that Hindus and Muslims are distinct nations with separate religious, cultural and political identities.

Date: _____

Day: _____

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan laid the foundation of this thought when he stated

"Hindus and Muslims are two nations who cannot live together in the same state as one nation"

(3.2) Political Marginalization of Muslims by Congress:

The Muslim League was founded in 1906 to protect Muslim interests, as many felt Congress was dominated by Hindu leadership.

The Nehru Report (1928) spearheaded by the Congress ignored Muslim demand for a separate electorate.

Jinnah responded with

"This is sheer political betrayal"

leading to his famous 14 points (1929) which demand autonomy and religious freedom.

(3.3) Failure of Cooperation and Growing Mistrust:

Despite initial cooperation, such as in Lucknow Pact 1916, major differences emerged.

Date: _____

Day: _____

Khilafat
Movement
(1919-1924)

Congress Initially
Supported but later
withdrew

Government
of India
Act 1935

Congress's refusal to
form coalition government
showing unwillingness
to share power

Congress
Ministeries
1937-1939

Adoption of policies
that alienated
Muslims

Jinnah later stated:

"Congress is nothing but a
Hindu organization that
does not believe in
power sharing"

Historian Stanley Wolpert also
noted

"The 1937 Congress rule
made Muslim feel like
second class citizens,
reinforcing Jinnah's
argument for a
separate homeland"

(3.4) Congress's Majoritarian Nationalism and Muslim League's Reaction

Congress's focus on Hindi as national language and its promotion of Bande Mataram which Muslims considered religiously offensive, alienated Muslims. Moreover, the Wardha Scheme of Education had Hindu religious overtones, making Muslim apprehensive of cultural assimilation.

I.H. Qureshi in "The Struggle for Pakistan" writes:

"Congress policies confirmed Muslim fears that Hindu majority rule would erode their identity"
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(3.5) Muslim Demand for a Separate State: and

Frustrated with Congress's refusal to accommodate Muslim demands, the Lahore Resolution in 1940 formally proposed an Independent Muslim State. The 1946 election saw a landslide victory for the League in Muslim-majority areas, proving that Muslims overwhelmingly supported Pakistan.

Date: _____

Day: _____

The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religion, philosophies, social customs and literature...

To yoke together two such nations under a single state must lead to growing discontent

— Jinnah's Presidential Address, Lahore Resolution 1940

(3.6) Increase In Communal Riots:

Direct Action Day on 16 August, 1946, called by Jinnah saw riots in Bengal and Bihar leading to communal violence. Over 4000 people died in Calcutta alone in the riots. This convinced the British that Hindus and Muslims could not coexist as one nation.

(3.7) Final Political Deadlock and the Creation of Pakistan:

Congress's refusal to accept parity between Hindus and Muslims and the rejection of the League's claim to represent all Muslims led to an impasse.

Date: _____

Day: _____

Mountbatten Plan (1947) formally accepted the partition plan due to inability of both parties to agree on a united constitutional framework.

Jaswant Singh in his book Jinnah: India - Partition - Independence states

"It was not religion but political arrogance and unwillingness to compromise by Congress that hardened the League's resolve for Pakistan"

(4) CRITICAL ANALYSIS:

The political divergence between the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress was the cornerstone of Pakistan's creation. As Ayesha Jalal argues in The Sole Spokesman,

Jinnah initially sought autonomy within a federal India but was forced towards separatism by Congress's majoritarian mindset.

Hence, it was political marginalization

Date: _____

Day: _____

that transformed the idea of Muslim nationhood into a concrete demand for Pakistan.

⑤ CONCLUSIONS

The political differences between Muslim League and Indian National Congress were central to the creation of Pakistan. Congress's unwillingness to accommodate Muslim demands, its attempt at political domination and the rising Hindu-Muslim divide led to the realization that Muslims needed a separate state. Hence political discord played a decisive role in laying the foundation of Pakistan, validating the adage that "nations are born in the minds before on the map."