

ABSTRACT

The annexation of Punjab occurred in 1849 and brought Punjab under the British Raj. Punjab received special attention by the British Administration due to its rich and fertile land. The increasing demand of cotton by the Manchester and Lancashire textile industry became one of the main reasons of annexation. Therefore, the development in infrastructure and other areas of Punjab started under "British Raj." The British established "Board of Administration" and provided network of roads, railway, telegraph and other facilities in the province. The British mobilised the local groups and communities socially as well as politically using local leaders, politicians, landlords and feudal for their colonial purposes.

The statistics of the Census Report of India 1941 show that Muslims and Hindus were 57 per cent and 27 per cent respectively in Punjab. The Sikhs with 14 per cent ratio were the third largest community. In 1930s, Muslim League did not have strong hold in the politics of the Punjab but during 1940s, League gained strength. Therefore, according to the results of the provincial elections of 1946, Muslim League secured 80 per cent vote and 73 seats of the Punjab. But the Governor of the Punjab, instead of the Muslim League, invited Malik Khizar Hayat Tiwana of Unionist Party to form government in Punjab. This deprived the Muslim League to form its Ministry in Punjab. The Unionist Ministry came to an end when Khizar Hayat Tiwana resigned in March 1947 in response to the huge tension and communal violence which gave rise to divide the political parties on religious lines. The Sikh community particularly in Rawalpindi and Attock districts suffered a lot during this violence. After Khizer's resignation, the Muslim League's leaders including Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Liaqat Ali Khan and Iftkhar Husain Mamdot tried to form League's Ministry but the Governor Sir E. Jenkins simply refused because the Sikhs and the Hindus could respond in aggression if Muslim League formed the Ministry. Thus, Governor Raj became the fate of the Punjab till 1947 partition.

The Sikhs' supremacy over the economic resources of the Punjab reputed them with the vital position. Sikhs were loyal to the British and serving the Indian

military. They were also a chunk of the Unionist's collative Punjab government. The political activities and demands of the Muslim League enhanced differences between Sikhs and the Muslims of the Indian Subcontinent. Primarily, the Sikhs were not in the favour of partition of the Punjab because it would have increased their miseries which mainly include partition of Sikh community and population, presence of the holy shrines and fertile lands of 9 canal colonies in the west Punjab. Being the Muslim majority province, Muslim League was also not in the favour of partition of Punjab as well. Mr. Jinnah tried to convince the Sikhs but they refused to live under the Muslim rule. In the 3rd June Plan of the Lord Mountbatten, it was decided to form a Boundary Commission for the partition of India. As a result of the partition, Punjab was divided into two parts i.e. West and East Punjab. Pakistan received the West Punjab with 16 districts and India got the East Punjab having 13 districts.

This partition caused one of the world's largest mass movements from one country to another. The history witnessed a huge bloodshed of the 500,000 to 800,000 Muslims during migration from East to West Punjab. RSSS, SAD and MLNG were involved in this violence. The Punjab Boundary Force (PBF) was established under the command of Maj. Gen. Rees to control the situations in the border districts of Punjab which could not deliver and failed. Military Evacuee Organization (MEO) was also formed to shift the refugees from one state to other. The new born state was not equipped to accommodate such a huge number of refugees. The Muslim refugees were in miserable conditions with horrifying stories. The government of Punjab provided them with shelter houses and refugee camps. The Ministry of refugees and rehabilitation was shifted from Karachi to Lahore because most of the refugees were coming from East to West Punjab. The then Governor General of Pakistan also announced QARF (Quaid-e-Azam Relief Fund) to rehabilitate the refugees. This fund also received Aid from out-side Pakistan¹.

The custodians of the evacuee property were appointed. The liaison officers started their services in both the countries to exchange and deal with the record of the evacuee properties. The evacuee lands were transferred to refugees through quasi-permanent rights. The partition caused killings, loot, rape and kidnapping of the

¹ File No. F-80 (9)-GG/47, 3, National Archives Islamabad, Pakistan.

minorities on both the sides. Subsequently, law and order became the biggest issue in 1947. Both the governments enforced many ordinances and acts to control the situation. In 1950, Liaqat-Nehru Pact was also signed to protect the minorities. The majority of refugees wanted to settle in the urban areas to enjoy the urban facilities which was practically not possible. Therefore, slum culture developed in Punjab. The government of Punjab shifted most of the refugees to the rural areas. It launched many housing projects and colonies in the cities to settle down refugees particularly in Lahore, Lyallpur, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala and Gujrat.

Same culture, language and traditions supported the refugees from East Punjab to settle down in the West Punjab. But the natives, biradarism, feudalism, landlords and political elite class did not accept refugees whole heartedly and created hurdles for the new members of the society which often went to the extent of exploitation. The refugees had not any political affiliations in the West Punjab. The migrated politicians from the East Punjab had lost their constituencies. However, by utilizing various political platforms, organizations and with the help of new policies and government acts refugees became the useful part of the overall society of the West Punjab. In 1955, to deal with the issue of managing East and West Pakistan at administrative level, the government launched One-Unit and Lahore became its provincial capital. This development had given Punjab a central position in the politics of Pakistan. Politicians and bureaucrats of Punjab remained dominant in country during the next decades. The government focused on improvement of education, health, economy and socio-political issues of the former West Punjab region during 1955-1970.