

# Partition of India and Independence

These notes are your ultimate revision weapon to revise Partition of India and Independence history. We've distilled years of previous exam questions (PYQs) into one powerful, concise resource. Everything you need to know, nothing you don't.

- **PYQs, Decoded:** All key concepts from past exams, organized and simplified.
- **Revise in Record Time:** Short, precise, and designed for last-minute review.
- **Focus on What Matters:** Master high-probability topics and boost your confidence.

## The Final Phase of British Rule and the Partition of India (1947)



### I. The British Government Context

- **Governing Party:** The Labour Party
- **Prime Minister:** Clement Richard Attlee (1945-1951)
- **Monarch:** King George VI (reigned 1936-1952)

### II. Timeline of Key Events Leading to Independence

Date	Event	Description
Feb 20, 1947	Attlee's Announcement	PM Clement Attlee announced in the British Parliament that Britain would transfer power to "responsible individuals" and leave India by June 1948.
Mar 1947	Appointment of Mountbatten	Lord Mountbatten was appointed Viceroy of India to replace Lord Wavell and oversee the transfer of power.

June 1947	Mountbatten Plan Declared	The official plan for the transfer of sovereignty and the partition of India was announced. It advanced the independence date to August 15, 1947.
Jun 14-15, 1947	AICC Votes on Partition	The All India Congress Committee (AICC), presided over by President J.B. Kripalani, met and voted to accept the partition plan.
Jul 18, 1947	Indian Independence Act	The Act, based on the Mountbatten Plan, received Royal Assent. It ended British sovereignty over India effective August 15, 1947.
Aug 14/15, 1947	Independence & Transfer of Power	Sovereign power was transferred to the Constituent Assembly of India at midnight.

### III. The Mountbatten Plan & The Indian Independence Act

- **Official Declaration:** June 3, 1947.
- **Key Provisions:**
  - Partition of British India into two new dominions: **India** and **Pakistan**.
  - Legislative assemblies of **Punjab** and **Bengal** would vote on their partition.
  - Referendums to be held in **Sindh**, **Baluchistan**, and the **North-West Frontier Province (NWFP)**.
  - A referendum for the **Sylhet district** of Assam.
  - **Princely States** were given the option to accede to either India or Pakistan.
- The plan was enacted into British law via the **Indian Independence Act 1947**.

## IV. The Process of Partition

- **Boundary Commissions:**
  - **Chairman:** Sir Cyril Radcliffe.
  - Two commissions were formed: one for Punjab and one for Bengal.
  - Each commission had four members: two from the Indian National Congress and two from the Muslim League.
  - Task was to demarcate the border based on Muslim and non-Muslim majorities.
- **Historical Context:**
  - The **Cabinet Mission Plan (1946)** was the last proposal for a united India. Its rejection by the Muslim League (who then called for "**Direct Action**" on August 16, 1946) is considered the last opportunity to avoid partition.
  - An earlier, fragmented "Balkan Plan" was considered but not implemented.

## V. Reasons for Accepting Partition

- The primary reason for the **Indian National Congress** accepting partition was to **avoid large-scale communal riots**.
- The Congress did **not believe in the Two-Nation Theory** but accepted partition as a **practical necessity** to achieve freedom.
- **Britain's weakened state** after the Second World War made Indian independence inevitable.
- **Mahatma Gandhi's alternative suggestion**—that M.A. Jinnah be invited to form the government—was rejected by other Congress leaders.

## VI. Key Figures and Leadership

- **Indian National Congress:**
  - **President (1946-1947):** J.B. Kripalani (elected at the Meerut Session in 1946; resigned Nov 1947).

- **Key Leaders:** Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (who seconded the partition resolution).
- **Opponents of Partition:** Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (Frontier Gandhi) and Dr. Kitchlew (who called it a "surrender of nationalism").
- **British Administration:**
  - **Last Viceroy of India (Mar-Aug 1947):** Lord Mountbatten.
  - **First Governor-General of India (1947-48):** Lord Mountbatten.
  - **Last Governor-General of India (1948-50) & first Indian in the role:** C. Rajagopalachari.
- **Independent India's Government:**
  - **First Prime Minister:** Jawaharlal Nehru (appointed by the Governor-General).
  - **First Law Minister & Chairman of the Drafting Committee:** Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

## VII. Independence Day: August 14/15, 1947

- A special session of the **Constituent Assembly** was held at midnight.
- Jawaharlal Nehru delivered his "**Tryst with Destiny**" speech.
- **M.S. Subbulakshmi** sang the national anthem "Jana Gana Mana" and "Sare Jahan Se Achcha".
- **Mahatma Gandhi** did not participate in celebrations; he was in Calcutta, fasting and praying in mourning over the partition.

## VIII. Transition to a Republic

- The Indian Constitution was enforced on **January 26, 1950**.
- This date was chosen to honour **January 26, 1930**, which the Congress had celebrated as the first "**Purna Swaraj**" (**Complete Independence**) Day.

## IX. Historical Perspectives

- **R. Coupland:** "Indian Nationalism was the child of the British Rule."
- **K.M. Panikkar:** "The most notable achievement of the British Rule was the unification of India."

### Know More About Partition of India and Independence:

- [Partition of India and Independence-Old Year Questions and Answers](#)
- [Partition of India and Independence One Liner Questions & Answers](#)

