

Topic 21

THE GANDHI – JINNAH TALKS 1944:

- Gandhi was released from prison on medical grounds by the new viceroy, *Lord Wavell* in **May 1944**.
- Throughout 1944 Gandhi & Jinnah met at Jinnah's house in *Bombay*.
- Gandhi wanted the League to support Congress in its struggle to remove the British while Jinnah knew that he had to secure partition before British left.
- Gandhi wanted the central government to have control over key issues such as *defense & foreign policy*, while Jinnah wanted these matters to be in the hands in the provinces.
- Gandhi considered himself to be speaking for all India while Jinnah reminded him that really he was just the spokesman of Congress.
- Gandhi gave the impression that he didn't support the *Two Nation Theory*, where as this had now become official League policy.

Expected Questions and Answer:

Question No. 1: were the Gandhi Jinnah talks the most important factor during the 1940s that led to the partition of the sub continent in 1947? Give reasons for your answer. **14**

Nov.2005 Q. 4 c

Question No. 2: why did Gandhi Jinnah talks fail in 1944? **7**

June 2011 Q.4 b

Answer to Question No.1:

During the period of 1940s, there were many events in the sub-continent led towards the partition and independence of the sub-continent and Gandhi Jinnah talks remained one of the important factors in this progress. Gandhi Jinnah talks were held in **Sep. 1944** at *Bombay*. Mr. Gandhi's main arguments were that All Indians are one nation because Muslims are only converts. Therefore demand of separate homeland was baseless. He believed that Congress & ML should cooperate & achieve independence first. Then a referendum may be held in Muslim majority provinces to find out if they wished to be separated. Punjab & Bengal will have to be divided because there are non.-Muslim majority districts. Defense & Foreign offices should be in control of a central authority.

Mr. Jinnah didn't agree & pressed upon an independent & sovereign Muslim state. Therefore the talks failed.

On the other hand Lahore resolution remained the most important factor for the development of independence. Lahore Resolution of March 1940 clearly demanded contiguous Muslim majority provinces in the north west & east of India should be grouped together to form an independent Muslim state. Both the Hindus & the British opposed the partition of the sub continent. But this resolution brought the Muslims of India under one banner & Pakistan became the objective, ambition & goal of the Muslim nation. The resolution increased the importance & popularity of ML. It also greatly added to the credibility & importance of Mr. Jinnah in Indian politics. ML became the true representative of the Muslims of India & Jinnah was the sole spokesman. Surprisingly great support came from the Muslims of minority provinces.

The cabinet Mission plan in March 1946 to find a solution for handing over power in India. After long negotiations the Mission gave its proposals which were accepted by ML. Congress accepted it with its own interpretations & later rejected the plan at which the ML withdrew its acceptance. The Cabinet Mission failed & went back.

Mountbatten, the new Viceroy arrived in March 1947. He realized that the demand for partition cannot be ignored & chalked out a plan for the partition of the sub continent. After getting it approved by the British government, Mountbatten announced the partition of India on **3rd June 1947**. He fixed the date of **15th August 1947** for handing over power, announced the appointment of a boundary commission & the division of assets between India & Pakistan.

Briefly speaking from all the events of 1940s the Lahore resolution was the most important factor that led to the partition of the sub continent. The resolution formed the basis of later decisions & emerged as the only proper solution for the political problem of India after the departure of the British.