

# India Gains Independence

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## Exercise

**Q. 1. A. Rewrite the statements by choosing the appropriate options.**

\_\_\_\_\_ was the head of the Interim Government.

- A. Vallabhbhai Patel
- B. Mahatma Gandhi
- C. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
- D. Barrister Jinnah

**Answer :** Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the head of the Interim Government.

**Explanation:** When the Wavell Plan failed and the country faced riots and massacres, Viceroy Wavell established the Interim Government with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as its head.

**Q. 1 B. Rewrite the statements by choosing the appropriate options.**

The plan of creation of two independent nations, India and Pakistan, was made by \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Lord Wavell
- B. Stafford Cripps
- C. Lord Mountbatten
- D. Pethick Lawrence

**Answer :** The plan of creation of two independent nations, India and Pakistan, was made by Lord Mountbatten.

**Explanation:** Lord Mountbatten was declared as the Viceroy of India with the sole mission that he would oversee the separation of India from British dominion. After much discussions with both the leaders of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, Mountbatten came up with the plan to create the two separate independent nations of India and Pakistan based on religious beliefs and majority.

**Q. 2. A. Answer the following questions in one sentence.**

**Which demand was advocated by Barrister Jinnah?**

**Answer :** Barrister Jinnah put forth the two-nation theory and advocated the demand for a separate Muslim nation called Pakistan.

**Elaboration:** Prior to independence, The Indian National Congress was the single most important political entity in India. Pressurised by the various resistance movements occurring in India, the British Government had adopted a 'divide-and-rule' policy which led to the creation of the Muslim League, and this political division was solely based on religion. The Indian National Congress which was founded on the basis of secularism was initially opposed to the idea of gaining freedom with a partition on the basis of religion. Barrister Jinnah, backed by the Muslim League was of the opinion that the Indian National Congress being a solely Hindu organisation would ignore the needs and demands of the Muslims in the country and hence demanded a separate Muslim nation named Pakistan.

**Q. 2. B. Answer the following questions in one sentence.**

**Write the name of the ministers participating in Cabinet Mission.**

**Answer :** The Cabinet Mission comprised of a delegation of British ministers namely Pathick Lawrence, Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander, who in March 1946, put forth England's plan regarding India in front of the Indian leaders.

**Elaboration:** With the Second World War, Britain lost a large amount of economic, military and political strength. With a lowering in support even from its own citizens, the leaders of the United Kingdom opened up discussions with their Indian counterparts regarding the freedom of India.

The Wavell Plan which was the initial method for granting independence to India failed to succeed because of the differences in opinion of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. The British Prime Minister Atlee had announced that England would leave its dominion on India before June 1948.

It was clarified that the issues of the minorities would not hinder India's Independence and India would have the right to draft their own Constitution. The Cabinet Mission comprised of a delegation of British ministers namely Pethick Lawrence, Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander, who in March 1946, put forth England's plan regarding India in front of the Indian leaders.

But similar to the Wavell Plan, the Cabinet Mission also failed. This was because some stipulations were not accepted by the Congress while the Muslim League did not accept it as there was no provision in it for a separate independent Muslim nation or state.

**Q. 3. A. Explain the following statements with reasons.**

**The Indian National Congress approved the partition.**

**Answer :** Pressurised by the various resistance movements occurring in India, the British Government had adopted a 'divide-and-rule' policy which hampered the unification of the already fragile social classes in India. The Indian National Congress

which was founded on the basis of secularism was initially opposed to the idea of gaining freedom with a partition on the basis of religion. But at the same time, it was also against compelling the people of any territorial unit to remain in the Indian Union against their declared and established will. This feeling was intensified with the continued riots that India witnessed prior to her independence. Thus, giving into to the adamant demands by the Muslim League for a separate Muslim nation, the Indian National Congress was forced to approve the partition.

**Q. 3. B. Explain the following statements with reasons.**

**The working of Interim government could not run smoothly.**

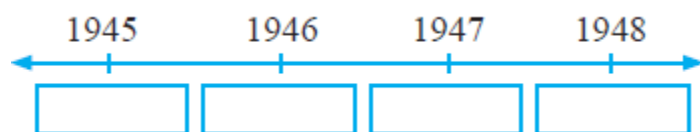
**Answer :** Prior to independence, The Indian National Congress was the single most important political entity in India. Pressurised by the various resistance movements occurring in India, the British Government had adopted a 'divide-and-rule' policy which led to the creation of the Muslim League, and this political division was solely based on religion. When the Wavell Plan failed and the country faced riots and massacres, Viceroy Wavell established the Interim Government with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at its head. Though the Muslim League initially refused to participate in this Government, it realised that it could create more problems by participating in and adopting the policy of obstruction. Hence, the working of the Interim government could not run smoothly.

**Q. 3. C. Explain the following statements with reasons.**

**The Wavell Plan could not become successful.**

**Answer :** The Wavell Plan was drawn up in June 1945, by the then Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell. Among the different provisions in the Plan, one provision stated that in central and provincial legislatures Muslims, Dalits and minorities should be given proper representation and there should be an equal number of Hindu and Muslim members in Viceroy's Executive Council. Barrister Jinnah was of the opinion that the Muslim League should have the right to suggest the names of Muslim representatives to the Viceroy's Executive Council and this was opposed by the Congress stating that it would give the Muslim League too much independence. This caused the failure of the Wavell Plan.

**Q. 4. Write the events on the following timeline.**



**Answer :** 1945 –

- World War II ends and the Labour Party, which was sympathetic to India's call for independence, forms the government.

- June 1945 – Lord Wavell draws up the Wavell Plan which failed due to the opposition between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League.

#### **1946 –**

- March 1946 - The Cabinet Mission comprised of a delegation of British ministers namely Pathick Lawrence, Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander, put forth England's plan regarding India in front of the Indian leaders.
- 16<sup>th</sup> August 1946 – This day was observed as the 'Direct Action Day' called forth by the Muslim League. It led to Hindu-Muslim riots in various parts of the country.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1946 - Viceroy Wavell established the Interim Government with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at its head. It could not run smoothly because of the policy of obstruction as adopted by the Muslim League.

#### **1947 –**

- 18<sup>th</sup> July 1947 - On the basis of the Mountbatten Plan, the Indian Independence Act was passed in British Parliament.
- 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947 – India gains its independence after 150 years of slavery under the British Rule. But it is divided into two nations, India and Pakistan leading mass migration and further violence.

#### **1948 –**

- 30<sup>th</sup> January 1948 – Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated by Nathuram Godse.

#### **Q. 5. A. Answer the following questions in brief.**

##### **Why did the British take steps towards granting freedom to India?**

**Answer :** Starting from the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 and extending for nearly a hundred years, the Indian subcontinent saw a plethora of movements against the British Rule. In spite of the trade and industrial revolutions brought in under the British rule, the rulers were despotic towards the local populace and often treated them as slaves. This caused rebellion among the people and took various forms like the Civil Disobedience Movement, Quit India Movement and even armed resistance the Indian National Army and other revolutionary outfits. With the Second World War, Britain lost a large amount of economic, military and political strength. With a lowering in support even from its own citizens, the leaders of the United Kingdom opened up discussions with their Indian counterparts regarding the freedom of India. This process was further enhanced once the Labour Party, which was sympathetic to India's call for independence, formed the government in Britain.

**Q. 5. B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

**Write information about Mountbatten Plan.**

**Answer :** 1. With the Second World War, Britain lost a large amount of economic, military and political strength.

2. With a lowering in support even from its own citizens, the leaders of the United Kingdom opened up discussions with their Indian counterparts regarding the freedom of India.

3. The Wavell Plan failed to succeed because of the differences in opinion of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League.

4. After the declaration of the 'Direct Action Day', in 1946 the country had erupted in riots and massacres prompting the then Viceroy, Lord Wavell to form an Interim Government with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at the head.

5. The interim government was unsuccessful because of the obstruction policy adopted by the Muslim League. It was in this setting that the British Prime Minister Atlee had announced that England would leave its dominion on India before June 1948.

6. Lord Mountbatten was declared as the Viceroy of India with the sole mission that he would oversee the separation of India from British dominion. After much discussions with both the leaders of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, Mountbatten came up with the plan to create the two separate independent nations of India and Pakistan based on religious beliefs and majority.

7. The Indian National Congress which was founded on the basis of secularism was initially opposed to the idea of gaining freedom with a partition on the basis of religion.

8. But at the same time, it was also against compelling the people of any territorial unit to remain in the Indian Union against their declared and established will. This feeling was intensified with the continued riots that India witnessed prior to her independence.

Thus, giving into to the adamant demands by the Muslim League for a separate Muslim nation, the Indian National Congress was forced to approve the partition.

**Q. 5. C. Answer the following questions in brief.**

**Why did Muslim League declare to observe 16 August as Direct Action Day? What were its effects?**

**Answer :** With a lowering in support even from its own citizens, the leaders of the United Kingdom opened up discussions with their Indian counterparts regarding the freedom of India. Prior to independence, the Indian National Congress was the single

most important political entity in India. Pressurised by the various resistance movements occurring in India, the British Government had adopted a 'divide-and-rule' policy which led to the creation of the Muslim League. The main aim of the Muslim League was the creation of a separate independent Muslim nation.

The Wavell Plan aimed towards India's independence failed to succeed because of the differences in opinion of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. The British Prime Minister Atlee had announced that England would leave its dominion on India before June 1948. It was clarified that the issues of the minorities would not hinder India's Independence and India would have the right to draft their own Constitution.

The Cabinet Mission comprised of a delegation of British ministers namely Pethick Lawrence, Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander, who in March 1946, put forth England's plan regarding India in front of the Indian leaders. But similar to the Wavell Plan, the Cabinet Mission also failed. This was because some stipulations were not accepted by the Congress while the Muslim League did not accept it as there was no provision in it for a separate independent Muslim nation or state.

Since its demand for a separate independent nation was not being met, the Muslim League decided to declare 16<sup>th</sup> August 1946 as the 'Direct Action Day'. It led to Hindu-Muslim riots in various parts of the country as the supporters of the Muslim League resorted to violent ways to bring notice to their demands.

## **Project**

**Q. 1. Collect information about the response of common people after gaining independence, with the help of various reference books as well as internet.**

**Answer :** India's population in 1947 was large, almost 345 million. Lakhs of people who lived from generations at a place had to vacate it due to violence on the basis of religion. Hindus living from a long time had to leave their homes in Pakistan and vice versa.

**Response 1:** We had to leave our home where our grandfathers had built years ago. During the partition, there was chaos all around. Several of our neighbours were killed, and innumerable women raped and abducted. We were uprooted from our local residences and were forced to begin picking up their life from scratch.

**Response 2:** We lost all their immovable property and most of their movable assets, separated from many of their relatives and friends as well. We used to live in a secular society where everyone respected each other's faith and were a believer in brotherhood. But suddenly things turned stranged, and the same people turned foes and were after our lives forcing us to move from where we belonged.