

Received : 03 February 2024, Accepted: 07 March 2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33282/rr.vx9i2.28>

## **A DARK CHAPTER IN MUSLIM GENOCIDE: PARTITION OF INDIA 1947**

Dr. Muhammad Rashid<sup>1</sup>, Naveed Irshad<sup>2</sup>, Biniya Meen Chishti<sup>3</sup>

### **Abstract**

There has been discussion of genocide in connection with the fight for independence in South Asia, culminating in the partition of India and the establishment of Pakistan. Non-Muslims, particularly Sikhs, have characterized it as “Genocide”, alleging that Muslims were responsible for the deaths of three million individuals. This article explores the challenges associated with classifying the deaths that took place in 1947. It analyses the numerous instances of extreme violence that occurred during that year, relying on solid evidence, and identifies which of these crimes can be classified as genocide. Partition has significant and wide-ranging implications. Approximately 4.5 million Sikhs and Hindus migrated from West Punjab to the eastern territories that eventually formed a small Partition of India, while around 5.5 million Muslims undertook the other journey, initiating one of the most extraordinary instances of coerced mass migrations in recorded history. As a result, the district's measurement profile experienced a substantial change. Within a span of three to four months, there was a significant influx of people driven by a combination of harsh conditions, violence, and an atmosphere of heightened demand. Regardless of the circumstances, there has been a surprisingly limited amount of research conducted on this particular aspect of Punjabi transformation during this period of destruction, despite the crucial nature of the events (in terms of both the total number of casualties and the threat posed to the state's power and legitimacy by this violence).

### **Introduction**

The term "genocide" has been employed in academic, legitimate, and popular contexts, giving rise to diverse alternative definitions such as "ethnic purging," "mass executing," "holocaust," "monstrosity," and "atrocities," against humankind."<sup>4</sup> One possible explanation for the brutality observed during that period is the riots that took place in Punjab in March. At its peak, it endured for around three weeks. The event

---

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Pakistan Studies, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur. (rashid.sardar@iub.edu.pk)

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Linguistics, University of Agriculture Faisalabad. (navird.pak@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup> Director: Al\_Fareed Educational Complex (al\_fareededucationalcomplex@yahoo.com)

<sup>4</sup> Bose, Sarmila, “The Question of Genocide and the Quest for Justice in the 1971 War,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, 2011, pp. 397.

was characterized by widespread incidents of arson and property destruction, resulting in minimal casualties. Most of the occurrences were limited to the West Punjab region. The consequences for the provinces and territories were unexpected. The second phase, occurring from April to July, was characterized by intermittent and unsettling disruptions among an overall atmosphere of tranquilly. During this time, there was a decline in the frequency of attacks and injuries in urban areas.<sup>5</sup>

Although there was tension in rural areas, there was no uprising in metropolitan areas. Prior to this, the two governments had successfully negotiated and cooperated to efficiently handle cases of abductions well ahead of time. Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan, the Pakistani counterpart of Nehru, jointly announced following their visit to Punjab in early September 1947 that their respective governments would not recognize abductions, restricted marriages, or modifications made after March 1, 1947.<sup>6</sup> The endorsement of this declaration was obtained during a December Inter-Dominion Conference, which also deliberated on the matter of recovery policy. The Central Recovery Offices of both nations were tasked with documenting cases of relatives who had crossed the newly established boundary and exchanging lists of names with the other side. The Punjab government's Liaison Agency has designated District Liaison Officers (DLOs) to oversee the organized relocation of displaced individuals, social workers, and a specified number of "aides" (relatives of abducted women). The DLOs are anticipated to assist the local police in their main objective of locating the kidnapped ladies. The aim was to establish regional travel camps for rescued women, with one camp situated in Lahore to cater to non-Muslim women and another in Jullundar for Muslim women.<sup>7</sup>

### **Create Different Organization to Meet the Challenges**

After the Punjab Boundary Force was dissolved, the Indian and Pakistani Military Evacuation Organizations (MEOs) were created. Their main goal was to provide

---

<sup>5</sup> The total number of casualties in 1947 up to 2 August 1947 were approximately 4632 killed, and 2573 seriously injured. Compiled from Memorandum from Jenkins to Mountbatten 04 August, 1947, IOL, L/P&J/8/663.

<sup>6</sup> Rai, Satya Mehta, *Partition of the Punjab: A Study of Its Effects on the Politics and Administration of the Punjab, 1947-56*. Vol. 1, Asia Publication House, 1965, pp. 81.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, pp.174

security personnel at transit camps and accompany women during their transfer to their respective Dominions.<sup>8</sup> The situation in Punjab deteriorated steadily as the deadline for liberation approached, following the declaration of the 3rd June 1947 plan. Ultimately, on the Indian side, a governing council of representatives from different departments will have the responsibility of organizing and overseeing the rehabilitation works. With each new challenge, untouched areas were engulfed in flames. As a result, nearly every town, city, and territory in the region encountered the August homicides. This discussion will examine the extremely inventive and widely notorious aspect of police brutality, the death of homeless men commuting by train in order to define the extreme use of force, aggressive methods, objectives, and the role of the perpetrators.<sup>9</sup> The human catastrophe that occurred in August 1947 during the territorial division was of a colossal and incomprehensible magnitude. In March, urban areas in the Rawalpindi and Multan regions were targeted by armed assaults. During the months of August and September, there was a significant surge in acts of violence and incidents of looting within the region.<sup>10</sup>

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (R.S.S) was established in 1925 by Keshav Rao Bali Ram Hedgewar, a physician hailing from Nagpur. The core tenet of this ideology was the conviction that the whole Indian subcontinent was the lawful domain of the long-established Hindu populace, and that all Muslims living there were seen as unwelcome trespassers. In November 1946, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh demonstrated its might by a long journey led by its chief organiser and leader of the All-India Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Madho Rao

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pp. 204

<sup>9</sup> In Khushwant Singh's fictional presentation *Train to Pakistan* the saboteurs utilize a thick steel wire tied on two posts over the railroad track. The arrangement is to crash the train when it hits the steel wire and afterward slaughter every one of the travelers. In a piercing peak, the saint cuts the steel wire and falls on the tracks just to be squashed by the passing train that conveys his darling and their unborn tyke securely over the fringe. A Muslim Refugee Special train, for example, left Ambala and was derailed near the Sikh Princely State of Patiala, resulting in 129 casualties and 200 serious injuries. A subsequent enquiry report pointed out the accident occurred 'due to the train having been directed on to a deadline instead of the mainline, which is attributable either to gross negligence of the railway staff or a deep-seated conspiracy. The station assistant master, postman and the driver have been arrested. Report of Shambhu Train Accident, quoted in Singh, *Selected Documents on Partition of Punjab, India and Pakistan*, pp. 565.

<sup>10</sup> Major, Andrew J, "The Chief Sufferers': Abduction of Women during the Partition of the Punjab," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 1995, pp. 57-72

Golwalkar. In 1940,<sup>11</sup> Golwalker, who had previous experience as a physics professor at the university level, assumed the position of the group's supreme leader following Hedgewar. Throughout his voyage, he explored several towns like as Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Dharamsala, Amritsar, Jagroan, Lyallpur, Sheikhpura, Sialkot, and Lahore. Approximately 25,000 volunteers were present at these designated locations to welcome him with parades. Approximately forty thousand Hindu and Sikh pilgrims were invited to join in the rallies as part of this tour. Furthermore, Golwalkar made a stop at Jhang and Kasure.

### **District Level Planning**

Secret meetings were organized at some places where the District Magistrate had banned public gatherings in compliance with section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh was deemed unlawful in Punjab on January 24, 1947, under section 16 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Golwalkar accumulated a total of nearly two lakhs (equal to two hundred thousand) rupees on this tour.<sup>12</sup> The Sangh experienced a membership increase of 1,000 in December, resulting in a total membership of around 47,000. Additional branches were built in the Multan and Ambala regions. Searchers uncovered 50 lathis in Rawalpindi. A total of 77 ax-blades and 38 wooden handles were discovered in Hoshiarpur. Significant papers were found in Karnal, Hissar, and Amritsar. The Sangh had been designated as a proscribed organization. There is evidence suggesting that the Sangh was aware of the potential implications, since otherwise the recoveries would have been more captivating. In addition, today, Master Tara Singh, Sardar Ujjal Singh, Giani Kartar Singh, and Sardar Basant Singh Moga held a meeting with Sir E-Jenksir to request authorization for the establishment of a Sikh private military force.<sup>13</sup>

If the Muslim League's agitation were to be successful, they would employ the Muslim Raj as a method to coerce the Sikhs. The Sikhs were instructed to engage in defence measures. I exerted a deliberate and focused effort to hinder their progress,

---

<sup>11</sup> Rastriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, Source: Government of West Punjab, NDC Acc. No. 1976.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

but if they had strong resolve, they will undoubtedly get the obsolete Akali Saina.<sup>14</sup> Hostility towards instigation is growing among Sikhs and Hindus, with the situation notably worsening for the latter group. On February 12th, he reiterated his stance against the instigation, presenting his second argument since its commencement.<sup>15</sup> According to Master Tara Singh, the Muslim invasion of the Punjab region was the catalyst for the exchange of important ideas. He earnestly urged the Sikhs to reinstate the "Akali Fauj". The Sikh volunteer corps, whose dominant influence in Punjab is still celebrated. Sikhs, who are deeply perturbed by recent incidents in Bengal, the Frontier, and the Punjab, will undoubtedly adhere to any directives issued by their leaders.<sup>16</sup> Master Tara Singh has regularly restated his appeal to the Sikh community, both in public and private settings. At a meeting of 150 influential Sikhs in Amritsar on February 14th, he explained his reasoning for why he thought it was essential for All Akali Jathas to get together and get ready for prompt action. Dalip Singh Doabia suggested the formation of a defence committee for Amritsar, including of fifteen members. At its subsequent meeting, which took place 48 hours later, the committee partitioned the urbanized area of Amritsar into six distinct areas. In addition, a distinct committee was established to recruit volunteers for the Akali Fauj, with four individuals chosen from each area.

### **Casualties**

On February 21st, the number of registered individuals was 2,000. The City and District Akali Jathas held their annual conference at Bachhauri, situated in Hoshiarpur district, on February 22nd and 23rd.<sup>17</sup> In addition, a gathering was organised in Amritsar on February 27th, with an attendance of 4,000 participants. The primary orators during the initial event were Jathedar Mohan Singh, Sowarn Singh, and Ishar Singh Majhial. Majhial and Mohan Singh highlighted the

---

<sup>14</sup> Punjab Chief Secretary's fortnightly report for the second half of January, 1947, Source: OIOC Cat No. L/P&J/5/250, NDC, MFU Accession No. 305

<sup>15</sup> Sir E. Jenkins to Lord Wavell, Source: Selection from the NWFP, Civil Secretariat Records, NDC Accession no. II B.6-C.I.

<sup>16</sup> Punjab Chief Secretary's fortnightly report for the first half of February, 1947, Source: OIOC Cat. No. L/P&J/5/250, NDC MFU Accession no. 305

<sup>17</sup> Extract from the Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence for the week ending 22 February, 1947, Source: Special Branch, Lahore NDC Accession No. S. 415.

importance of Sikh solidarity and recruitment in the Akal Fauj to counter the Muslim League.<sup>18</sup> Master Tara Singh voiced his concern in Amritsar that the recent British decision could potentially lead to a civil war. In the process of the ongoing reorganisation of the Akal Fauj or Akal Saina (both names are used interchangeably for the organisation), temporary appointments have been made in Lahore and Rawalpindi for the positions of Commander and Assistant Commander. He vehemently asserted that Britain should relinquish control of the Punjab and return it to the Sikhs, who had given it to them. The audience enthusiastically embraced his call to the Sikhs to be ready to make sacrifices in order to protect the Pant.<sup>19</sup> A total of one thousand individuals in Gujranawala have officially enrolled themselves to provide their services as volunteers. Sikhs will gather at Anandpur in the Hoshiarpur district and Amritsar on March 8th to commemorate the Hola Mohalla. A significant gathering of non-practitioners of the Islamic faith will assemble at Kapurthala House.<sup>20</sup>

Moreover, numerous prominent Sikh personalities had chosen to partake in the political conference organized during the Anandpur fair. Concurrently, there are ongoing endeavors to substantially augment the magnitude of this year's holy procession in Amritsar. During this meeting, protests criticizing Muslims and the government led to the occurrence of violent yelling. There were reports suggesting that non-Muslim organizations were supposedly carrying out a door-to-door campaign in the city, seizing Muslim League badges and flags from Muslim citizens.<sup>21</sup> Amid an ongoing inquiry, a cohort of Hindu students clashed with law enforcement officers in close proximity to the district courts. Subsequently, the students allegedly initiated an assault on the police office. The situation in Amritsar is quite grave. A substantial Partition of Hall Bazaar, the main commercial and business street in the city, had been entirely devastated by a fire. In addition, some 30

---

<sup>18</sup> Extract from the Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence for the week ending 1 March, 1947, Source: Special Branch, Lahore NDC Accession No. S. 415.

<sup>19</sup> Extract from the Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence for the week ending 1 March, 1947, Source: Special Branch, Lahore NDC Accession No. S. 415.

<sup>20</sup> Extract from the Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence for the week ending 1 March, 1947, Source: Special Branch, Lahore NDC Accession No. S. 415.

<sup>21</sup> Note by Sir E. Jenkins, Source: OIOC Cat No. R/3/1/176, NDC MFU Accession No. 34.

police officers had been injured, with a few of them suffering from serious injuries. Police vehicles and equipment were also damaged. Allegedly, a grand total of nineteen Muslim individuals died in a violent confrontation that broke out between members of the Sikh and Muslim communities. The fatality count had increased from 27 earlier in the day, culminating in a cumulative total of 117 injured as of Sunday night. Presently, commencing at 2 p.m. The city was subject to a curfew that will be in effect for duration of 48 hours. A significant number of military and law enforcement personnel had been recruited with the objective of restoring law and order.

The task of estimating the death toll in Multan was tough because to the significant number of unidentified victims found in the charred buildings. The majority of the fires had been extinguished, and evidence suggests that the situation had improved since the occurrence of the murders and arsons on the 5th. However, the neighbouring municipalities had also become engaged. Additional police troops from adjacent locations have been sent to strengthen the security in Multan. A significant number of Sikhs held the belief that Master Tara Singh, a prominent Sikh leader, shown a high degree of irresponsibility when he orchestrated a march in Lahore on March 4th. During the procession, Sikhs and Hindus vociferously expressed their opposition to Pakistan by chanting slogans and actively removing Muslim League flags from stores. As a result, a conflict arose between the individual and the police in front of the SSP's office. Rawalpindi had substantial civil unrest, leading to 67 individuals being injured by the early hours of the 7th, with six of them losing their lives. A boisterous demonstrator was lethally shot and several others got injuries when law enforcement officers employed force to save themselves. Around forty police officers were injured, including those who were hit by brickbats.<sup>22</sup>

Sikh and Hindu leaders issued a sequence of vehement declarations, resulting in extensive sectarian violence. The incident was widely referred to as the "War against Pakistan" by various news outlets. During a demonstration in Jullundur, protesters chanted slogans such as "Jo mangega Pakistan, us ko milega Qabristan" (Those who

---

<sup>22</sup> Extract from C.I.O Lahor's Daily Report dated 07.03.1947, Source: OIOC Cat, No. R/3//89, NDC MFU Accession No. 45

ask for Pakistan will end up in the graveyard) and the more commonly used phrase "Pakistan Murdabad" (Death to Pakistan). Additionally, Babu Labh Singh, the former president of the Shiromani Akali Dal, was injured during the incident and later passed away. The death has had a profound effect on the ex-president of the Shiromani Akali Dal.<sup>23</sup> The Akali community has witnessed a significant increase in rage in response to this act of homicide. Curfews have been imposed in these cities, as well as in Ferozpur and Gujranwala. The alarming accounts from impacted areas, specifically Amritsar, Multan, Rawalpindi, and Lahore, have generated considerable anxiety across the Province, notwithstanding the lack of any verified occurrences in other districts.<sup>24</sup> There has been a significant increase in the demand for kirpans, kulharis, and lathis, prompting individuals from many communities to rapidly acquire these weapons. On March 2nd, Master Tara Singh delivered a speech at the Dera Sahib Gurdwara in Lahore, emphasising the significance of Sikhs establishing their authority, referred to as "Raj," in the Punjab region and preparing for the upcoming struggle.<sup>25</sup>

The Sikhs become very excited upon hearing speeches in Amritsar and Lahore, as well as in Lyallpur (7,000) and Sheikhupura (15,000), where Ishar Singh Mahajail urged the Sikhs to be ready for any sacrifice. Furthermore, talks with similar content were delivered in Jullundur to an audience of 3,000 people. These speeches aimed to create differences among different religious communities and fostered the perception that finding a middle ground between Muslims and Hindus would be impossible.<sup>26</sup> As a result, the Sikhs felt obligated to promptly make arrangements to seize control of Punjab from the Muslims after the British left India. Master Tara Singh's inflammatory statements sparked the incident, and the Sikhs persist in conspicuously exhibiting their Kirpans, which were granted religious exemption. It was recommended that every Sikh community establish a jatha, in which each household is expected to provide a son, or possibly more depending on the number of male

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Extract from the Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence for the week ending 8 March, 1947, Source: Special Branch, Lahore, NDC Accession No. S 415.

<sup>25</sup> Extract from the Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence for the week ending 8 March, 1947, Source: Special Branch, Lahore, NDC Accession No. S 415.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid



relatives in the family. Membership in the jathas was open to all individuals, irrespective of conscription status.<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, every member must take a solemn oath to faithfully comply with the directives of the S.A. As a reaction to these measures, three committees were set up in the Jullundur district to oppose Pakistan, while ten defence committees were founded in the Hoshiarpur area. In addition, there was a scarcity of Kirpans in Jullundur, prompting the establishment of a Sikh Naujwan Jatha in Banga (Jullundur). From December 6, 1947, to April 27, 1948, about 3,912 girls and women who were not Muslims were successfully evacuated from West Punjab.<sup>28</sup> It is anticipated that a further 11,430 individuals will be saved during this time frame. During the identical time frame, a grand total of 7,495 Muslim women were rescued from East Punjab. By June 1948, a total of 5,270 individuals were recovered from Pakistan while 8,344 individuals were saved from India.<sup>29</sup> The East Punjab Liaison Agency and its attached Central Recovery Office ceased operations on November 30, 1948, leading to the cessation of the slow recovery process. India and Pakistan, two prominent nations, took the lead in the rehabilitation effort afterwards. The Abducted Persons (Recovery and Restoration) Act, enacted by the Indian parliament in 1949, has been in operation since 30 September 1957. By 31 October 1952, a total of 8,326 girls and 16,545 boys had been relocated from Pakistan and India.<sup>30</sup>

As of September 30, 1957, the number of females had risen to 10,000, while the number of boys had reached 25,856. Sikhs and Hindus are strongly urged to adopt a proactive stance. The Akali Party has been explicitly endorsed and there have been serious accusations of widespread arming by the Sikhs, as well as illicit weaponry trafficking from the neighbouring Sikh State. Although officials had acknowledged

---

<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> Sir E. Jenkins to Lord Mountbatten, Source: OIOC Cat No. L/P&J/5/250 NDC MFU Accession No. 305.

<sup>29</sup> Extract from the Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence for the week ending 5th April, 1947, Source: Special Branch, Lahore, NDC Accession No. S 415

<sup>30</sup> Extract from the Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence for the week ending 12 April, 1947, Source: Special Branch, Lahore, NDC Accession No. S 415.

the authenticity of these reports, no actions had been done to resolve the problem.<sup>31</sup> Despite the prevailing atmosphere of heightened enmity, Sikhs were permitted to openly carry big swords called Kirpans, while Muslims had worldwide limitations even on little knives. Sikhs were permitted to carry kirpans when the security of the country was at risk, but they do not consider this a religious ritual whether they serve in the military, police, courts, parliament, or jails. The prevailing state in Punjab is marked by the widely acknowledged reality that the Sikhs' disposition poses the most prominent threat.<sup>32</sup> The Sikhs had been displaying increasingly provocative conduct in contrast to the Muslims, as seen by Master Tara Singh's delivery of highly harmful statements and advice. When Muslims assert their right to bear a sword, it is argued that while a Sikh's sword symbolises spirituality, a Muslim's sword was seen as a possible threat to others. Giani Kartar Singh is one of the leaders of the United States. The membership of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (R.S.S) has witnessed a significant surge and is currently estimated to be 56,800. Swaran Sing initially attempted to disregard this, but he eventually recognised that the statements made by non-Muslim politicians on March 3rd played a role in the communal clashes. The city of Amritsar and its neighbouring regions are still facing considerable instability, with the current estimated number of members in the Akal Fauj being 8,500.<sup>33</sup>

On a daily basis, there had been occurrences of stabbings, homicides, arson attacks, projectiles being thrown, and instances of civil unrest. On June 1st, Sikhs launched a substantial assault on the village of Kotla Nasir Khan, which is under the jurisdiction of P.S. Hello. On June 2nd, the Sikhs initiated an attack on the villages of Bodh and Khan Kot. Three persons from the Muslim community were killed, while six others were injured during the attack on Bodh village. It is purported that the attack was carried out by some 70 Sikhs, who were equipped with 303 rifles, explosives, and spears. A cohort of five or six Sikhs were positioned and given orders to execute the

---

<sup>31</sup> Major, Andrew J, “‘The Chief Sufferers’: Abduction of Women during the Partition of the Punjab,” *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 1995, pp. 69

<sup>32</sup> Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan to Lord Mountbatten, Source: OIOC Cat. No. R/3/1/90, NDC MFU Accession No. 42

<sup>33</sup> Note by Sir E. Jenkins, Source: OIOC Cat, No. R/3/1/176, NDC MFU Accession No. 34.

assault.<sup>34</sup> There are indications of a substantial exodus of Sargodhas, Hindus, and Sikhs from the Gujrat district. The presence of a substantial population of Pathans and Muslim labourers from the Mianwali district in the Shahpur district has instilled anxiety among the residents of City Sargodha and Sikh Abadkars. On August 12th, in the afternoon, law enforcement or military troops were responsible for the killings of two individuals who followed the Islamic faith and one individual who followed Hinduism in Amritsar. In addition, three individuals who adhered to Islam and five individuals who adhered to Hinduism were inflicted with stab wounds. There were a combined total of four bomb detonations and 10 occurrences of fire.<sup>35</sup>

A contingent of Sikhs initiated an attack on a congregation of Pathan labourers at Chheharta on Grant Trunk Road, leading to 30 fatalities. The commander of the Punjab Boundary Force has informed me that a group of Sikhs carried out a large-scale slaughter of 200 Muslims in a village near Majitha. This resulted in 61 deaths and 9 injuries. The deadline for submitting detailed civil reports was today. According to the reports from Gurdaspur, the police shot one Sikh man, and there were instances of sectarian clashes resulting in the deaths of one Hindu and four Muslims. It is important to mention that the Sikh community was armed.<sup>36</sup> During another altercation with the army on August 12th, they caused 2 injuries but experienced 9 fatalities. An unfortunate occurrence of stabbings occurred in Sialkot, leading to the death of two individuals from the Sikh community and one individual from the Muslim community.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the depicted confrontation between Gurdaspur border troops and police can be described as a communal conflict. A person is presently conducting an inquiry into this issue. One Muslim person died and eight others were injured due to a bombing attack in a village near Ludhiana. In addition, two non-Muslim individuals lost their life. The Sikhs are driven by two primary goals: demanding retribution for the Rawalpindi atrocity and expressing their worries on the boundary problem. Regrettably, the much-awaited formation of

---

<sup>34</sup> Punjab Chief Secretary's fortnightly report for the second half of May, Source: OIOC Cat, No. L/P&J/5/250, NDC MFU Accession No. 305

<sup>35</sup> Extract from the Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence for the week ending 7 June , 1947, Source: Special Branch, Lahore, NDC Accession No. S 415

<sup>36</sup> Sir E. Jnekins to Lord Mountbatten, Source: The Transfer of Powers Vol. XII p. 708-9

<sup>37</sup> Sir E. Jenkins to Lord Mountbatten, Source: OIOC, Cat no. R/3/191 NDC MFU Accession no. 37

Pakistan, which the Muslim community had eagerly expected, fell short of expectations.<sup>38</sup>

The Muslims residing in East Punjab had experienced a deplorable situation, marked by being subjected to physical assaults, homicides, injuries, thefts, humiliations, and forced evacuation from their homes. A substantial pro Partition of citizens feel both empathy and resentment towards the considerable influx of refugees into the regions of West Punjab. Recently, a number of individuals have had horrific assaults, resulting in the development of fear and anxiety. Most Muslims expected that the Punjab Boundary Commission's decision would lead to the expansion of West Punjab's territory and the addition of the Muslim-dominated tahsils in the districts of Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Jullundur, Hoshiarpur, and Ferozepur to Pakistan.<sup>39</sup> The Sikhs were accused of bearing responsibility for the atrocities in East Punjab, while it was said that the British orchestrated the Sikh uprising that led to the extensive massacre of Muslims. There were allegations that the British government deliberately manipulated the border lines in the past to benefit the Sikhs, and the Commission was founded solely to create the appearance of impartiality. The refugees had been freely recounting the atrocities they endured, frequently without fear of retaliation, and the situation has worsened even more. Acts of aggression towards non-Muslim individuals occurred in several places subsequent to the arrival of refugees.<sup>40</sup>

Widespread violence broke out across the entire region, formerly confined to Lahore. An endeavour has been undertaken to incite the refugees to revolt against the current governing body by capitalising on the widespread dissatisfaction among Muslims and the presence of the Khaksars, Ahrars, and disgruntled members of the Muslim League. Angry groups of Muslims, mainly from Amritsar, arranged rallies at the homes of the Prime Minister and other ministers. Furthermore, efforts have been made, mostly by Amritsar refugees, who have orchestrated demonstrations at the mansions of the Prime Minister and other government ministries. Amritsar exiles have made efforts to incite Muslims in West Punjab to participate in looting,

---

<sup>38</sup> Punjab Chief Secretary's fortnightly report for the second half of May, Source: OIOC Cat, No. L/P&J/5/250, NDC MFU Accession No. 305

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

assaulting non-Muslims, and starting fires. Some locations have confiscated assets belonging to non-Muslim citizens. The citizens of Lahore were yearning for a prompt restoration of normalcy, while few persons in East Punjab who partake in harmful actions are taking advantage of the current turmoil to provoke revenge.<sup>41</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Within three to four months after gaining freedom and sovereignty in 1947, there was a significant level of brutality and savagery on both sides of the huge movement. The atmosphere was also filled with a palpable sense of curiosity and anticipation. However, it is important to question the reasons behind the significant impact caused by this brutality, considering the number of human lives lost and the issues faced by the state's knowledge and trustworthiness, particularly in relation to the state's changing direction. All categories of Punjabi males, including Goondas, Hindus, and members of Sikh jathas, were evidently implicated in the mobs. Following the global breakdown of peace in 1947, there was a decrease in moral standards and, occasionally, an increase in the manifestation of customary, unethical conduct. As a result, several individuals, ranging from inexperienced artisans and labourers to landowners and political trailblazers, abandoned their empathy for mankind and actively endorsed the extermination of a religious minority solely based on their affiliation with a distinct group. There has been speculation that the events described in the section were responsible for the decline of Punjab's state. The cruelty witnessed in the Punjab region posed a substantial obstacle to the sustainability of the two recently established states, and this fact is indeed accurate. Nevertheless, the manner in which the subsequent nations addressed this brutality demonstrates the flexibility of the systems they inherited from the departed pioneer state. Furthermore, it unveils the alterations and acquisitions of both the structures and the assets they depended on. Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that the province state and its subsequent states did not experience a full collapse during this period.

---

<sup>41</sup> 1 Extract from the Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence for the week ending 23 August, 1947, Source: Special Branch, Lahore, NDC Accession No. S 415