



India – partition at the stroke of midnight

India, the jewel of the British Empire, was granted independence in 1947, divided along religious lines into two separate nations – India and Pakistan. The break-up resulted in the exodus of some 15 million people and the deaths of up to two million in internecine bloodshed

■ **1858:** India comes under direct rule of British crown following failed rebellion of 1857

■ **1885:** *Indian National Congress* founded – becomes forum for emerging nationalist feeling

■ **1906:** *All India Muslim League* founded to defend Muslim political interests

■ **1920:** Nationalist figurehead *Mahatma Gandhi* launches anti-British civil disobedience campaign

■ **1930:** Poet *Allama Iqbal* advocates establishment of separate Muslim state

■ **1930s:** Mistrust increases between Muslim League and Congress

■ **1933:** Name “Pakistan” – Urdu for “Land of the Pure” – coined by Cambridge student *Rahmatullah Chowdhry*

■ **1940:** Muslim League leader *Mohammed Ali Jinnah* calls for separate Muslim state

■ **1946, Jul:** Cabinet Mission Plan – British proposal for Hindus and Muslims to work together within united India – collapses

■ **Aug:** Bloodiest Hindu-Muslim violence in nearly a century kills 5,000 in Calcutta – convinces Britain partition is inevitable



◀ **Gandhi:** Opposed partition

PAKISTAN
1947: *Dominion of Pakistan* created. Became world's first *Islamic Republic* in 1956

INDIA
1947: *Dominion (or Union) of India* created. Renamed *Republic of India* in 1950

◀ **Jinnah:** First Governor General of Pakistan



PAKISTAN: Province of *East Pakistan* gains independence as *Bangladesh* in 1971

POPULATION EXCHANGE*

Muslims to Pakistan from India:	7,226,000
Hindus and Sikhs to India from Pakistan:	7,249,000
TOTAL:	14,475,000
Deaths: Estimates range from	1-2 million

*Based on 1951 census

■ **1947, Jun:** Partition plan of British viceroy *Lord Mountbatten* accepted by Jinnah and Congress leader *Jawaharlal Nehru*

■ **Jul:** British Parliament passes *Indian Independence Act*, ordering demarcation of dominions of India and Pakistan by midnight Aug 14-15

■ **Aug 14-15:** Separate states born – secular but Hindu-dominated India and Muslim-majority Pakistan



◀ **Nehru:** First Prime Minister of independent India

Sources: BBC, Emory University, Columbia University

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