

# Topic 20

## CRIPPS MISSION 1942:

The passing of the Pakistan Resolution was a turning point in the history of Indian Muslims; it brought about a qualitative change in their status as a minority in India. By the middle of 1940, the war had brought disaster for the allies, as France fell in June 1940, the British Government made renewed appeals for co-operation to all parties in India. In the middle of 1941, the war situation had become more serious for the allies, the **Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor** and America was involved in the war, the initial success of the Japanese armies in South-East Asia brought the war to India's doorstep.

The American President Roosevelt urged Churchill to settle matters with India that finally persuaded Churchill to send Cripps to India.

Cripps flew into Karachi on March 22, 1942, and touched down at New Delhi's airport. During his stay, Cripps met with Maulana Azad, Jinnah, Gandhi and Nehru to discuss the issues regarding India. He met Jinnah on March 25 and explained to Jinnah that he had changed his view about the Muslim League and Pakistan because of the "change in the communal feeling in India and the growth of the Pakistan movement."

Cripps publicly disclosed the contents of the Declaration at a press conference on March 29.

### **Contents of Cripps Mission:**

- (i) An **Indian Union** would be set up with **Dominion status**.
- (ii) A **Constituent Assembly** should frame a new constitution.
- (iii) Elections for the Constituent Assembly would be held immediately after the war.
- (iv) Under the new constitution any province or state will be free to stay out of the Indian Union.
- (v) Government of India act 1935 will remain in force in the meantime.
- (vi) The C-in-C of Indian army & the finance minister will be British till the end of the war.
- (vii) These proposals will be rejected or accepted as a whole. Also these proposals will be implemented if both the congress & Muslim League accept it.
- (viii) These proposals would be applicable after the 2<sup>nd</sup> WW.

### Expected Questions & Answer

- Question No. 1:** why did the Cripps mission fail? 7  
June 2002 Q. 4 b
- Question No.2:** why did the Cripps mission of 1942 fail? 7  
Nov. 2004 Q. 3 b
- Question No. 3:** was the Cripps Mission in 1942 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 2008 Q.3 c
- Question No. 4:** why was the Cripps mission unsuccessful? 7  
June 2009 Q. 5 b
- Question No. 5:** why did the Cripps mission fail? 7  
June 2012 Q. 3 b
- Question No. 6:** War broke out with Germany on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939 and Britain counted on the support from her Empire, including India. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, India was threatened by their advance through South East Asia. As a result the British government sent the Cripps Mission to India.  
(a) Describe the Cripps Mission. 4  
June 2013 Q. 3 a

### Answer to question no. 3:

The *Cripps mission* was sent to India by the British government in March 1942. Its main purpose was to appease the Congress & ML because the WW II was in full fury & the British government needed full support from India. The Cripps Mission promised transfer of power after the war ended with the option that any province could opt out of the federation. The Mission also put condition that the defense of India would be in Britain hands. The Cripps Mission was important because it made it clear that the British would have to leave India sooner or later. It also endorsed the idea & possibility of partition by giving the provinces an option to get separated. Thus the Cripps Mission laid the foundation of independence & the partition.

But besides that the Pakistan Resolution/Lahore Resolution probably remained the most important event contributed for the independence and partition of the sub-continent. Mr. Jinnah for the first time demanded a separate country for the Muslims of the Sub-continent after experiencing congress rule. He was convinced and motivated all Muslims to fight for Pakistan and within short span of seven years Independence was achieved.

Another important event was Gandhi Jinnah talks in 1944 in which Gandhi agreed to partition but argued that the British should leave India for which Hindus & Muslims should work to gather. After this the Muslim majority provinces would decide about partition through a referendum. To this Jinnah didn't agree & argued that partition should be decided before the British left. Also Jinnah wanted six provinces to be included in Pakistan, Whereas Gandhi only agreed to three. The talks failed but it became clear that Muslims will not agree to anything except partition.

The Cabinet Mission Plan (1946) was the most important event which in fact paved the way to independence & the partition. The Plan was accepted by Muslim League but the acceptance was withdrawn because the congress leaders announced that they would be free to bring any change in the plan after coming in power. The cabinet Mission also failed but it made it clear that partition was imminent & that it was the only possible solution for the Hindu – Muslim problem in India. In its long term plan the Mission divided the provinces into three groups according to Hindu Muslim majority population & gave the option that any province or groups will be allowed to get separated. The short term plan of the Cabinet Mission to set up an interim government was accomplished after a few months of its departure. But it became clear that congress & Muslim League cannot work together & therefore the partition became unavoidable. Therefore following the announcement by Attlee that the British would leave the sub continent by 1948, the 3<sup>rd</sup> June plan was formalized.

In the conclusion it can be said that the Cripps Mission was important because it initiated the idea of partition, but the Lahore resolution was much more important because it showed the way of practical steps which could be taken towards the partition of the sub continent.

## **QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT BY GANDHI 1942:**

The Cripps' Mission and its failure also played an important role in Gandhi's call for The Quit India Movement. In order to end the deadlock, the British government on 22nd March, 1942, sent Sir Stafford Cripps to talk terms with the Indian political parties and secure their support in Britain's war efforts. A Draft Declaration of the British Government was presented, which included terms like establishment of Dominion, establishment of a Constituent Assembly and right of the Provinces to make separate constitutions. These would be, however, granted after the cessation of the Second World War. According to the Congress this Declaration only offered India a promise that was to be fulfilled in the future. Commenting on this Gandhi said; "***It is a postdated cheque on a crashing bank.***" Other factors that contributed were the threat of Japanese invasion of India, rule of terror in East Bengal and realization of the national leaders of the incapacity of the British to defend their India.

### **What in quit India campaign?**

- May 1942 Gandhi spoke at a congress meeting in Allahabad.
- He argued that if the British left India, there would no longer be a threat of a Japanese invasion, so they should be persuaded to go by a non-violent protest.
- On 8 August 1942, the all India Congress Committee passed its Quit India Resolution, calling for an immediate withdrawal of the British.
- To support the campaign a mass struggle on nonviolent lines on the widest possible scale.
- 60,000 people arrested included Gandhi, Nehru.
- Congress party was banned.
- ML didn't approve Quit India campaign.

- Jinnah criticized the Quit India campaign as Blackmail, saying that Congress was trying to exploit British problems to win advantages for it.

### **Expected question & answer:**

**Question No. 1:** why was the Quit India Movement formed in 1942?  
7

June 2005, Q.4 b

**Question No. 2:** During the Second World War, Britain was keen to ensure that the sub-continent supported the war effort and made various promises to both the Congress Party and the Muslim League about the future of India. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941, Japan entered the war and advanced through South-East Asia as far as Burma. The British became even more anxious about the sub-continent and sent the Cripps Mission to India but it failed to resolve the situation.

(a) What was the Quit India Resolution?

4

Oct/Nov. 2013 Q. 3 a

#### **Answer to Question No.1:**

The quit India Movement was started by the Congress to gain independence by forcing the British out of India. It was a non-cooperation movement on a large scale. As a result wide spread disturbances broke out in all Hindu majority provinces. The congress believed that the Japanese will conquer India & will liberate the country. The congress planned that if their movement synchronizes with Japanese entry into India, it would be possible for the Congress to grab power & hold the reigns of the government.

World War II was going on. During the first 2-3 years the British faced humiliating defeat at the hands of Germans & Japanese on every front. The congress was quietly jubilant over British defeat. The Japanese were running over the South East Asia without any resistance. Singapore was run over in January 1942 & soon Burma was also captured. Mr. Jinnah believed that Japan was coming to India not as India's enemy but as enemy of the British who will have to withdraw from India & India would be liberated. Congress believed that the movement should synchronize with Japanese entry into India. Congress thought that it would be a good opportunity to oust the British & take over the control of the government. Post offices & railway were burnt & looted, telegraph wires were cut & railway track uprooted at many places. Violence resulted in many places deaths.

Congress passed a resolution on **8 August 1942** asking the British to quit India immediately & hand over the rule of India to the congress. The movement was named as Quit India movement, but the movement was suppressed & it failed. A large number of congress leaders & workers were arrested. Conditions became normal within two months.