

**MOUNTBATTEN PLAN (1947)**

On 3 June 1947, Lord Mountbatten announced a plan offering a key to the political and constitutional deadlock

**Chronology of Indian National Movement: (1940 Onwards)** ★

Lahore Session 1940 (Muslim league)  
August Offer 1940  
Individual CDM 1940 (by Gandhi)  
Cripps' Mission 1942  
Quit India Movement 1942  
Karachi Session 1943 (Muslim League)  
Simla Conference and Wavell Plan; 1945  
Cabinet Mission 1946  
Interim Government 1946  
Attlee Announcement February 1947  
Mountbatten Plan June 1947  
India Independence Bill July 1947

created by the refusal of the Muslim League to join the Constituent Assembly formed to frame the Constitution of India. Mountbatten's formula was to divide India but to retain maximum unity. The country would be partitioned but so would Punjab and Bengal, so that the limited Pakistan that emerged would meet both the Congress and the League's position to some extent. The League's position on Pakistan was conceded in that it would be created, but the Congress position on unity would be taken into account to make Pakistan as small as possible. He laid down detailed principles for the partition of the country and speedy transfer of political power in the form of dominion status to the newly formed dominions of India and Pakistan. Its acceptance by the Congress and the Muslim League resulted in the birth of Pakistan.

**June 3rd Plan**

Earlier, when all of Mountbatten's efforts to keep India united failed, he asked Ismay, Chief of Staff, to chalk out a plan for the transfer of power and

the division of the country. It was decided that none of the Indian parties would view it before the plan was finalised.

However, before the announcement of the plan, Nehru who was staying with Mountbatten as a guest at his residence at Simla, had a look at the plan and rejected it. Mountbatten then asked V. P. Menon, the only Indian in his personal staff, to present a new plan for the transfer of power. Nehru edited Menon's formula and then Mountbatten himself took the new plan to London, where he got it approved without any alteration. Attlee and his cabinet gave the approval in a meeting that lasted not more than five minutes. Mountbatten came back from London on 31 May, and on 2 June, met the Indian leaders including Nehru, Patel, Kripalani, Jinnah, Liaquat Ali, Nishtar and Baldev Singh. After these leaders approved the plan, Mountbatten discussed it with Gandhi and convinced him that it was the best plan under the circumstances. The plan was made public on 3 June, and is thus known as the 3rd Plan.

The following were the main clauses of the Plan:

1. The provincial Legislative Assemblies of Punjab and Bengal were to meet in two groups, that is, the Muslim majority districts and the non-Muslim majority districts. If any of the two decided in favour of the division of the province, then the Governor-General would appoint a boundary commission to demarcate the boundaries of the province on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of the Muslims and the non-Muslims.
2. The Legislative Assembly of Sindh (excluding its European members) was to decide either to join the existing Constituent Assembly or the New Constituent Assembly.
3. To decide the future of the North-West Frontier Province, a referendum was proposed. The electoral college for the referendum was to be the same as the electoral college for the Provincial Legislative Assembly in 1946.

4. Baluchistan was also to be given the option to express its opinion on the issue.

5. If Bengal decided in favour of partition, a referendum was to be held in the Sylhet District of Assam to decide whether it would continue as a part of Assam or be merged with the new province of East Bengal.

The Nawab of Junagarh announced to join Pakistan, but the people of the region wanted to join India and therefore, a plebiscite was held and the area remained with India. The Nizam of Hyderabad also made an attempt to claim an independent status but was forced to accede in 1948, after an internal revolt had broken out in its Telangana area and the Indian troops marched in Hyderabad. The Maharaja of Kashmir also delayed accession to India. He acceded in October 1947, after the Pathans and the irregular armed forces of Pakistan invaded Kashmir.

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