

**THEME 14**  
**UNDERSTANDING PARTITION**  
**POLITICS, MEMORIES, EXPERIENCES**

**Key concepts in nutshell**

- Sources – Incidents narrated by people.
- Partition or holocaust (i) Communal riots  
(ii) refugee problem
- The power of stereotypes – The stereotypes of the extra territorial and Pan Islamic loyalty confused with other objectionable ideas.
- Why partition took place - (i) Mr Jinnah’s two nation Theory  
(ii) Hindu Muslim conflict  
(iii) British policy of divide and rule  
(iv) Communal electorates
- Post war development –Muslim league emerged as sole representative of Indian Muslims in the provincial elections.
- Cabinet mission proposal in 1946.
- Direct action day by Muslim league in 1946
- Gendering partition – women were raped, abducted and sold. Families were uprooted.
- Preserving honor – where the men feared that their would be molested by the enemies, they killed their own women.
- Sources : Oral testimonies – narrations, memories, diaries, family history and hand written accounts

Q.1 What do you mean by the term Holocaust? (2)

Ans. Holocaust means destruction or slaughter on a mass scale. Many scholars have used this term for loot, Arson, killings during the partition.

Q.2 What was Lucknow pact? (2)

Ans. The Lucknow pact of December 1916 was an understanding between the Congress and the Muslim league. The congress accepted separate electorates.

Q.3 What is Pakistan resolution? (2)

Ans. In 1940 the League moved a resolution demanding a measure of autonomy for the muslim majority areas.

Q.4 What was the attitude of the Indian National Congress towards second world war? (2)

Ans. The Indian National Congress was ready to help Britain if they makes a clear declaration to free India after the second world war.

Q.5 What was the impact of separate electorates for Muslims on the communal politics?

Ans. i)The Muslims could elect their own representatives in reserved constituency. (2)

ii)They can favour the people belonging to their own religious groups.

Q.6 The partition of India was a holocaust. Justify? (5)

Ans.

- i) A large number of people were killed.
- ii) Lakhs of people had become refugees.
- iii) A large number of people were rendered homeless.
- iv) There were killings, loots, arson and rape.
- v) People lost their properties and all their assets.

Q.7 What are the merits and demands of Oral history? (5)

Ans.

- i) It helps us grasp experience and memories in detail.
- ii) It enables historians to write richly textured, vivid accounts of events like partition.
- iii) Oral history also allows historian to broaden the boundaries of their discipline.
- iv) Many historians argue the uniqueness of personnel experience makes generalization difficult.
- v) They think Oral accounts are concerned with tangential issues.

Q.8 Why Cabinet missions was sent to India? What were the main features of its plan? (10)

Ans. Cabinet mission was sent to India to suggest a solution for the Indian problem.

-The mission recommended a loose three of her confederation.

-India would have a federal government including princely states and provinces of British India.

-Federal government would be dealing with Defence, Foreign affairs and communication.

-Provisions was made for the grouping of provinces.

-The representation of all three groups meet in a constituent Assembly to draft a constitution.

-Congress and League rejected the cabinet mission's proposal.

Q.9 What was the impact of partition on Indian women. (10)

Ans. Impact of partition of India on Indian Women :

- (1) Harrowing experience of women – Abduction, sold, forced to settle down to a new life etc.
- (2) They were brutally tortured and beaten.
- (3) They found the government of both India and Pakistan insensitive to their problems.
- (4) Government's insensitivity to the feelings of women .
- (5) Women not allowed to voice their opinion.
- (6) Killing of women in the name of saving honour of women .
- (7) Forcing women to commit suicide to save themselves from falling into the hands of enemies.
- (8) Their suicide was treated as martyrdom.
- (9) Dishonouring women of a community seen as dishonouring the community itself and a mode of taking revenge.
- (10) They were not allowed to re-settle their life on their own wish.

Q.10. Read the following passage given carefully. Answer the questions that follow. (8)

**“ WITHOUT A SHOT BEING FIRED ”**

This is what moon wrote :

For over twenty-four hours riotous mobs were allowed to rage through this great commercial city unchallenged and unchecked. The finest bazaars were burnt to the ground without a shot being fired to disperse the incendiaries (i.e. those who stirred up conflict). The . . . District Magistrate marched his (large polices) force into the city and marched it out again without making any effective use of it at all. . . .

1. To which event does the source refer to? Describe what the mobs were doing ? (2)

2. Why did Amritsar become the scene of bloodshed later in 1947 ? (3)
3. What was the attitude of the soldiers and policeman towards the mob ? (2)
4. Give one example to show how Gandhiji tried to bring about communal harmony? (1)

Ans. (1) It refers to an event held at the time of partition .

The mob were looting the market and trade centers.

Ans. (2). The British officials did not act to stop these unlawful and violent activities. The district administration had no control over the city.

Ans. (3). The Indian soldiers had started behaving as Hindu , Muslims or Sikhs. They were helping the people of their community only.

Ans. (4). He advised the people of Hindu and Muslim communities at Delhi to maintain trust on each other.