

LUCKNOW PACT

Pact is a term which refers to a formal agreement between two (or more than two) countries or states. It also includes an agreement between any two or more groups or persons either to help each other or not to fight each other.

The Lucknow Pact (1916) is the most famous Pact decided between the two major parties of the subcontinent; the All India Muslim League (AIML) and the Indian National Congress (INC). Muhammad Ali Jinnah joined the League in 1913 and became the part of Muslim Political Party but he also decided not to leave the Congress. He wished to keep Hindus and the Muslim united in the subcontinent. He viewed that both communities should live together and struggle to get freedom from British. The Muslims were against British Government due to two reasons. First, due to reversal of the partition of Bengal (1911), second, in 1914, the First World War (FWW) had begun; due to war of Balkan, the British were against Turkey (the last one country with caliphate). As the gap between two nations (British and Muslims) was on the top in those days and Jinnah was the political personality who wanted to keep them united.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah then was a participant of the Congress as well as the League. He joined League but not left Congress. AIML added the self-rule for India in 1913 in her objectives as Jinnah wished. This made Jinnah more popular and prominent among the Hindus and Muslims rather than the British.

The committees of AIML and the Congress presented their constitutional schemes. After thorough discussion an agreement was settled between both parties; they accepted major demands of each other to compress the Government.

The most considerable attainments of this pact are as under.

- ❖ It was the first time when Congress recognized that Muslim League was a representative political body of the Indian Muslims.

- ❖ Lucknow Pact is measured as an extraordinary milestone in the history of subcontinent as the Hindus accepted the distinction of Indian Muslims; however, the Muslims had already been granted the right of separate electorate in the Indian Councils Act 1909.
- ❖ It was the first time that Muslims were granted separate electorates in the provincial and Imperial Legislative Council. Hindus agreed on the separate Muslim electorate.
- ❖ Muslims were allowed to elect their own representatives through separate electorates; in this way, they had not been awarded the right to vote in the non-Muslim communities. However, an exception was made in the case of the special interests' constituencies where Muslims had the right to cast the vote.
- ❖ It was decided that a few seats shall be reserved for the Muslims in Hindu majority provinces; on the other hand, the Hindus shall be given safety in the Muslim majority provinces.
- ❖ The Muslims were succeeded to reserve one third (33 percent) of seats in the Imperial Legislative Council, 50% seats in Punjab, 40% of total seats in Bengal, 33% seats in Bombay, 25% seats in the U.P. and 15% each for the Central Provinces and Madras assemblies.
- ❖ It was decided that provincial autonomy would be awarded to the provinces while measures would be taken for the solutions for the communal issues.
- ❖ Both of the parties were agreed to the point that no resolution could be presented and passed in the assembly which harms the interests of the other community.
- ❖ The Muslims who were in dread to lose Islamic and cultural identity were now guaranteed that no bill or a resolution presented by a non-official member would harm affect them.