



COMMUNALISM AND  
PARTITION

# COMMUNALISM AND POLITICS OF PARTITION



- **Communalism:**
  - ❑ Is basically **an ideology**.
  - ❑ Defines religious identity of a community as fundamental and unchangeable.
  - ❑ Is **based on 3 intertwined beliefs**:
    - ◆ That a group of people follow a particular religion have common social, political & economic interests.
    - ◆ That the social, political, cultural and economic interests of the followers of one religion are dissimilar and divergent from the interests of followers of another religion,
    - ◆ That the interests of the followers of different religions are mutually incompatible, antagonistic and hostile.

- Is modern phenomenon.
- Made appearance around the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Is a product of colonial socio-economic political structure.

## RISE AND GROWTH OF COMMUNALISM

### Factors

- **Revolt of 1857:** Hindus and Muslims fought together against British.
  - ◆ British were alarmed by Hindu-Muslim unity.
  - ◆ vindictive attitude of British officials against Muslims
  - ◆ in Delhi alone 27000 Muslims were hanged
- **British Attitude towards Muslims changed in 1870s.**
  - ◆ Reason: rise of nationalist movement posed threat to safety and stability of British Empire.
  - ◆ **William Hunter**, a civil servant, authored a book named '*The Indian Musalmans*' in 1871 on the basis of which Lord Mayo Government decided in principle:
    - ❖ use of Urdu as medium of instruction for Muslims in primary and secondary schools.
    - ❖ increased government aid to Muslim educational institutions.
  - ◆ Lord Cross, Secretary of State's communication to Lord Dufferin in 1887:
 

*'That division of religious feeling is to our advantage.'*
- **Pro-British Muslim Association in late 19<sup>th</sup> century.**
  - ◆ Muhammadan Literary and Scientific Society founded by Abdul Latif (1863).
  - ◆ Anjuman-i-Islamia (1884-Lahore)
  - ◆ National Muhammadan Association by Syed Amir Ali.
- **British Policy of 'Divide and Rule'**
  - ◆ Objective was to check the growth of a united national feeling.
  - ◆ started encouraging separatist and communal tendencies.
  - ◆ tried to win over Muslim landlords, zamindars and newly educated.
  - ◆ treated Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs as separate communities.
  - ◆ encouraged movement to replace Urdu as court language.
  - ◆ permitted the propagation of communal ideas and hatred through press, pamphlets, posters and public platform, but suppressed nationalist press and writers.
- **Role of Syed Ahmad Khan:**
  - ◆ A great educationist and social reformer became conservative towards end of his life.
  - ◆ Laid the foundation of Muslim communalism in 1880s and declared that the political interests of Hindus and Muslims were different and divergent.
  - ◆ Preached complete obedience to British rule.
  - ◆ Urged not to listen to Badruddin Tyabji's appeal to Muslims to join Congress.