

**An Historical Overview of the Accession
of Princely States**

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Abstract

The paper presents the historical overview of the accession of princely states. The British ruled India with two administrative systems, the princely states and British provinces. The states were ruled by native rulers who had entered into treaty with the British government. With the fall of Paramountacy, the states had to confirm their accession to one Constituent Assembly or the other. The paper discusses the position of states at the time of independence and unfolds the British, congress and Muslim league policies towards the accession of princely states. It further discloses the evil plans and scheming of British to save the congress interests as it considered the proposal of the cabinet Mission 1946 as 'balkanisation of India'. Congress was deadly against the proposal of allowing states to opt for independence following the lapse of paramountacy. Congress adopted very aggressive policy and threatened the states for accession. Muslim league did not interfere with the internal affair of any state and remained neutral. It respected the right of the states to decide their own future by their own choice. The paper documents the policies of these main parties and unveils the hidden motives of main actors. It also provides the historical and political details of those states acceded to Pakistan.

Key Words: Transfer of Power 1947, Accession of State to Pakistan, Partition of India, Princely States

Introduction

Accession of the states had been the big issue after the division of subcontinent into two major countries. States being the independent entities had to decide their future. This decision proved to be very arduous for a number of reasons. Princely states were theoretically free to choose independence or accession but Lord Mountbatten insisted the princely states to accede either Pakistan or India to maintain discipline. These instructions were issued to achieve the vested political interests.

Princely States at the Time of Independence

The Indian States comprised the native principalities which entered into treaties and agreements with the British East India Company and later with British Crown. The number of such states was around 565, which covered a total area equivalent to about one third and a total population equal to about one fourth of British India 1947.¹ Prior to partition, all business between the states and British India including interstate relations was dealt by the political department of the government of India which was directly under the Viceroy. The states enjoyed external autonomy while defense, foreign affairs and communication was controlled by the government of India. Most of the states were geographically so located that the accession to India was a foregone conclusion. According to Indian Independence Act 1947, 514 states out of 565 were to form part of the new India only 14 states were located within the geographical limits of Pakistan while Jammu & Kashmir contiguous to Pakistan was vital to the nation's economic and strategic interests.² On the eve of independence, the total area of states was equal to one third of British India and a quarter of its population.

Parties' Policies and Position on Accession of States

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1. Z.H. Zaidi, Jinnah Papers, The States: Historical and Policy Perspectives and Accession to Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam Papers Project Culture Division Government of Pakistan. 2003. P,1
 2. Z.H. Zaidi, Jinnah Papers, The States: Historical and Policy Perspectives and Accession to Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam Papers Project Culture Division Government of Pakistan. 2003. P,1

In this part, the study highlights the political parties' stance and approach towards the accession of the states. The two major political parties Muslim League and Congress had their own policies for the states. The third key and most influential party in the policy making towards the accession of states was the Britishers. The policies of these three major parties are discussed below:

British Policy

During the British Raj the princely states were not directly controlled by the British government but rather by a royal ruler under the law of indirect rule.³ The policy of British in the early part of 19th century tends towards the annexation of the states after observing the role of states in the battle of 1857.⁴ The East India Company rule was supplanted by direct British rule under a Royal Proclamation of 1858. Most of Muslim India which had been subjugated by the British and the administration of which was assumed by the British Crown in 1858, came to be termed as British India. The remaining territories,⁵ ruled by the native princes, were allowed to stay as autonomous units under the treaties and agreements entered into by them with the British Government. These units were known as Indian States. So the British Cabinet in their statement of May 1946⁶ pronounced that paramountcy could neither be retained by British Crown nor transferred to any new government in India. The state released from the obligation of paramountcy would work out their relationship with the succession state. These policy formulations were somewhat ambiguous in that they did not define the precise status of the states after British colonial rule in India had come to an end.

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3. Ramusack, Barbara (2004), *The Indian Princes and their States*, *The New Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge and London: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 324, [ISBN 0-521-03989-4](#)
 4. Copland, Ian (1993), "Lord Mountbatten and the Integration of the Indian States: A Reappraisal", *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 21 (2): 385–408, [doi:10.1080/03086539308582896](#)
 5. H.V.Hodson, *The Great Divide: Britain-India-Pakistan*, Karachi, 1985, 22-4.
 6. Cabinet Mission Memorandum on States, Treaties and Paramountcy, 12 May 1946, No.2.

However, during discussion with states negotiating committee, which comprised the rules of their representatives, the viceroy confirmed that the accession of a state to one or the other constituent assembly was a matter of free choice.⁷ Whereas the states accepted the British plan for transfer of power as it concerned them. At meeting between viceroy and Indian leaders 13 June 1947⁸ Nehru claimed that the states had no right to declare independence and that the cabinet mission Memorandum of 12 May 1946 did not permit this,⁹ that constitutionally or legally the states could not be mandated by the British government to join one constituent assembly or the other.

However, Mountbatten could hardly disguise his partiality for the congress or act as an honest broker in the matter of accession of the states. He shifted his stance from time to time essentially to suit Indian's interest. For instance, on April 22, he declared that the states would be free to decide which constituent assembly to join, regardless of geographical compulsions,¹⁰ however in a volte-face he subsequently suggested that the rulers take into account geographical compulsions in deciding which dominion to accede to.¹¹

Congress Policy

The congress policy towards the states was apparently characterized by a progressive and pragmatic approach. Its resolution of 15 June 1947¹² unfolded a comprehensive framework regarding states. Its major elements were:

1- States are responsible to join any dominion according to the aspiration of its people.

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7. Viceroy's Meeting with Members of Negotiating Committee, 3 June 1947, Encluseure to No.3.
 8. Viceroy's Meeting with Congress and Muslim League leaders, 13 June 1947, No. 5
 9. Viceroy's Meeting with Congress and Muslim League leaders, 13 June 1947, No. 5
 10. Minutes of the Viceroy's Sixth Miscellaneous Meeting, 22 April 1947, No. 194, item 2, *TP, X*, 365.
 11. Press Communique on Mountbatten's Address to a Conference of the Rulers and Representatives of Indian States, 25 July 1947, No.14.
 12. Resolution of the All India Congress Committee, 15 June 1947, No.7.

2- The people of state must have dominant voice.

3- All the states had to join one or the other dominion in line with the June 3rd plan.

Although the rights of the states to decide their future had previously been announced in parliament but the viceroy overturned it to support the congress plan to pressure the states for accession before 15 August 1947. Speaking at Gwalior on 19 April 1947, as President of the States' People's Conference, Nehru threatened the Rulers to join the Indian Constituent Assembly or be treated as hostile.¹³ Conrad Corfield, a political advisor to viceroy believed that states should act in concert in asserting their "theoretical" right to independence.¹⁴ The congress leadership regarded the objective and reasonable approach of Corfield as hostile policy of political department,¹⁵ Nehru even prevailed upon Mountbatten to retire Corfield and send him back. This left the field open for Nehru to secure maximum political mileage for India.

Muslim League Policy

Muslim League had very clear policy for the accession of the state to any dominion according to their will. Jinnah's approach was legalistic and distinct from congress stand based on real politics. According to its policy, each state had right to accede to one dominion on the ground of public opinion.

Jinnah being the constitutionalist and firm believer in fair political policies did not aware of the going on between Mountbatten and the Congress and the covert support of the crown representatives to the congress drive to get most states to accede to India by threats and force.¹⁶ Jinnah statement of 17 June 1947 reflected his legalistic approach that "Constitutionally and legally, the India states will be independent sovereign states on the termination of

13. H.V.Hodson, *The Great Divide: Britain-India-Pakistan*, Karachi, 1985, 358.

14. H.V.Hodson, *The Great Divide: Britain-India-Pakistan*, Karachi, 1985, 360.

15. Viceroy's Meeting with Congress and Muslim League leaders, 13 June 1947, No.5

16. H.V.Hodson, *The Great Divide: Britain-India-Pakistan*, Karachi, 1985, 368.

paremountacy and they will be free to decide any course they like. It was open to them to join Hindustan constituent assembly or the Pakistan or to decide to remain independent. So the policy of Muslim league was clear from the beginning. Jinnah clarified “we do not wish to interfere with the internal affairs of any state.... Such States as wish to enter the Pakistan Constituent Assembly of their free will and desire to...negotiate with us shall find us ready and willing to do so. If they wish to remain independent and...to negotiate...any political or any other relationship...with Pakistan, we shall be glad to...come to a settlement which will be in the interest of both.”¹⁷

The Muslim League had evinced scant interest and taken little part in the affairs of the princely states until 1939. However, after the death in 1943 of Bahadur Yar Gunj, a dynamic leader from Hyderabad (Daccan), the states League went into relative limbo.

On the eve of announcement of the June 3Plan, the Nawab of Bhopal had complained to Mountbatten about the impending fate of the states. “The States could have joined the weak centre envisaged by the Cabinet Mission, but the 3 June Plan provided a ‘tight centre’ and whichever Dominion we join...will utterly destroy us.”

Jinnah was informed by the Nawab of Bhopal, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, on 6 June that the Viceroy had been pressuring the states into joining the ‘existing’ constituent assembly. He reiterated his stance that All India Muslim League after liberal policy to the states to decide about their future.¹⁸ The Nawab urged that the states should be assured that “their sovereignty, integrity and autonomy are in no manner to be jeopardized.”¹⁹ He denied to attend the meeting of the states negotiating committee called on 25 July 1946, protesting that the Rulers “have been invited the oysters to attend the tea party with the walrus and the carpenters”.²⁰

17. The Pakistan Times, 18 June 1947. No. 8.

18. Note by the Ruler of Bhopal, 6 June 1947, No. 4.

19. Note by the Ruler of Bhopal, 6 June 1947, No. 4.

20. Ruler of Bhopal to Louis Mountbatten, 22 July 1947, No. 201, *TP* XII, 296.

States Acceded to Pakistan

Now I will discuss those states separately that acceded to Pakistan to see their position at the time of independence and analyze the impacts of their decision.

After India and Pakistan emerged on 15 August 1947 as two independent Dominions, over 500 of the princely States either acceded to or were integrated into Dominion of India, while 12 States contiguous to Pakistan started negotiating accession to that Dominion.²¹ Five States in Kathiawar, which each had a Muslim ruler but a Hindu majority, namely Dasuda, Vanod, Jainabad, Bajuna and Radhanpur, given their proximity to Sindh, were to join Pakistan, but could not actually do so in the face of vehement Indian opposition. Two of the largest States Kashmir and Hyderabad, preferred to sit on the fence mulling over their future course of action. Pakistan was primarily interested in the accession of states within or contiguous to it, including Jammu and Kashmir, which had an over-whelming Muslim majority. Two of the Kathiawar States, Junagadh and Manavadar had formally acceded to Pakistan²² although they each had a Hindu majority. Their accession was implacably opposed by India. Out of the 12 States within or contiguous to Pakistan, six were in or around the N.W.F.P., four in or adjacent to Baluchistan and Northern Areas (Hunza and Nagar) and one each in or bordering on the Punjab and Sindh. The process of accession was started prior to August 1947 and concluded by March 1948.

Frontier States

The North-Western Frontier Province, created in 1901, which comprised not only the frontier regions, known as common tribal areas, but also six settled districts of Peshawar, Mardan, Kohat, Bannu, D.I.Khan and Hazara, had an estimated population of 5.865 million in 1947. It was made a Governor's Province under the Government of India Act, 1935. In July

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21. Z.H. Zaidi, *Jinnah Papers, The States: Historical and Policy Perspectives and Accession to Pakistan*, Quaid-i-Azam Papers Project Culture Division Government of Pakistan. 2003. P, XVI.
 22. Government of Pakistan, *Instruments of Accession and schedules of States acceding to Pakistan, 1949*, 1-3 and 31-3.

1947, a referendum was held in NWFP and the people of the prince gave a thumping verdict in favour of joining Pakistan.

Of the four Frontier States, namely Amb, Chitral, Dir and Swat, three (Chitral, Dir and Swat) were in Malakand Agency, one of the Six tribal agencies, where central or provincial laws did not apply.

Amb

The State was contiguous to Hazara district with a small population of 48,651. The Ruler, recipient of a purse of Rs. 15,300 per anum from British India, levied a toll on all timber leaving the State.

The Ruler of Amb accepted standstill arrangements with Pakistan in July 1947, the first among the NWFP states to do so.²³ Later, on 31 December 1947, he signed the instrument of Accession to Pakistan.²⁴

Chitral

Chitral (population about 1 lakh) occupied a strategic position in the extreme north of Pakistan. Its proximity to Russia and a route from Kashmir to Chinese Turkestan were important factors, too. It is a region of deep valleys, lofty mountain ranges and rich pine forests. Before 1947, British maintained a 973-strong militia of Chitral Scouts in the state.

The British had imposed the suzerainty of the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir over Chitral, and its northern districts, Yasin, Ishkoman and Ghizar, were incorporated into Gilgit and given away to the Maharaja of Kashmir.²⁵

The State declared its intent to join Pakistan in August 1947,²⁶ but formally signed the instrument of Accession on 6 November, 1947.²⁷

Dir

Dir was a population of about 1.48 lakh, was a small State about 20 miles from Chakdara. The State's relations with the British Government were goverened by the Agreement of 1925, which provided, interalia, that the Ruler shall keep open the

23. Ruler of Amb to M.A.Jinnah, Telegram, 1 September 1947, PS-18.

24. Instrument of Accession, 25-6.

25. Alastair Lamb. Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy, 1846-1990. PP 3, 31.

26. Ruler of Chitral to M.A.Jinnah 3 August 1947. P.S. 35.

27. Instrument of Accession, 27.

road from Chakdara to Chitral, allow trade to pass to Chitral free of tax, and recognize the state boundaries as fixed by the Government of India. He received a purse of Rs. 50,000 per annum from the Government, which also covered the cost of the 275-strong Dir Levies.

The state was poorly managed and there were reports of maladministration against the Nawab. Sardar Nishtar's note of September 1947 to Quaid-i-Azam stated: "...I do not think he is friendly towards Pakistan. One of his brothers who has left the state and lives in village Hathian in the Mardan District is a supporter of the Muslim League. May be that this has something to do with the apathy of the Dir Ruler towards Pakistan. It is possible that this attitude of Dir is due to the fact that his opponent, the ruler of Swat, is staunch supporter of Pakistan."²⁸

The Ruler of Amb informed Jinnah on 3 August 1947 that... "the Nawab of Dir still persists in believing that the British power will never go from India and that even if such a thing miraculously happens will be free to do what he likes on 16, August..." However the ruler of Dir signed the instrument of Accession to Pakistan on 8 November 1947.²⁹

Swat

Swat (population approximately 6 lakh) was the richest, and better administered by far, among the states in the Malakand Agency.³⁰ The ruler known as Wali, undertook to be loyal to Pakistan, to avert raids by outlaws and refuse them asylum, and accept "modified Government control of his forests." He was recipient of a token grant of Rs. 10,500 from the British Government. His total revenue was estimated at Rs. 50 Lakh per annum. Annual allowances of Rs. 43,210 were also paid to the Dir tribes, Maliks, Khans, and Headmen of Swat. Swat signed the instrument of Accession to Pakistan on 24 November 1947.³¹

28. Enclosure 1 to No. 282, vol.V, 289.

29. Instrument of Accession, 28.

30. Enclosure 1 to No. 282, vol.V, 290.

31. Instrument of Accession, 29-30.

Baluchistan States

The political milieu in Baluchistan in 1946-47 had three major dimensions. First, the Province was gravid with tribal ambitions and day-dreams about an independent Phathan and Baluchistan States which were easy to be exploited. Second the lust for power amongst rival tribes manifested itself in growth of fissiparous tendencies. Third there were hardly any effective, well-organized and popular political organizations. The Muslim League, led by Qazi M.Isa and patronized and bankrolled by the khan of kalat had size able “following in urban Quetta,Pishin and Zhob.Congress [Anjuman-i-Watan], organized by Khan Abdus samad ,Khan Achkazi, with a considerable following among Hindu merchants of the towns, besides the intellectuals young baluchs,worked for promotion of Baluchistan National aspirations”.The sardars or the elite of the Province, who enjoyed Enormous political leverage ,largely kept aloof.³²

When the British plan envisaging the partition of India was announced on 3 June 1947, some form of popular choice was offered to grey areas like the N.W.F.P and Baluchitan, a choice between Pakistan and Hidustan. Baluchistan opted in favour of Pakistan by the Unanimous vote of 54 members of the Shahi Jirga [excluding the sardars nominated by the Kalat state] and non-official members of the Quetta Municipality was made by Mountbatten. Both Jinnah and Nehru having been persuaded to drop their pleas for a More Representative vote, on the ground of delay that a broader franchise would entail. The princely States in Baluchistan included and two other States, namely Las Bela and Kharan and the principality of Mekran, all sparsely populated and economically Backward. Administrated by the agents to the Governor-General, these states enjoyed limited autonomy in accordance with agreements signed from time to time with the British Indian Government.³³

32. Z.H. Zaidi, Jinnah Papers, The States: Historical and Policy Perspectives and Accession to Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam Papers Project Culture Division Government of Pakistan. 2003. P, Xviii.

33. Z.H. Zaidi, Jinnah Papers, The States: Historical and Policy Perspectives and Accession to Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam Papers Project Culture Division Government of Pakistan. 2003. P, Xviii.

The combined population of the three States was hardly half a million, preponderantly staunch Muslims, steeped in ignorance and wallowing in grinding poverty. At the same time, Baluchistan held a crucial geo-strategic position between Iran and Afghanistan on the one hand and the Persian Gulf on the other. The area was potentially rich in mineral resources, waiting to be exploited for the economic uplift of the local people. Like other states, of course, British suzerainty over the Baluchistan states was to lapse on 15 August 1947.³⁴

Kalat

The state of Kalat including the territories it claimed were under its suzerainty, held a key position in Baluchistan. The Ruler was conscious of this position and aspires to complete independence. In a Memorandum submitted to the Cabinet Mission in March 1946,³⁵ he claimed that succession of states would inherit only the treaty relationship with British India, not those with white hall. He declared that with the termination of the treaty of 1876, the Kalat state would regain complete independence and be free to determine its own future. Kalat being an independent state the Khan of Kalat his government and his people can never agree to Kalat being included in any form of Indian Union.³⁶ However the ruler desired a friendly and amicable relationship with the Succession States on the basis of reciprocity and recognition of Kalat's independence. Jinnah had problem dealing with the Khan of Kalat who claimed that the state was neither a part of India nor indeed "an Indian State" but "an independent sovereign state",³⁷ by virtue of its treaties with the British Government.³⁸ In a letter sent in

34. Muhammad Ali, *Emergence of Pakistan*, London, 1967, P, 236.

35. Kalat Collection, S. No. 70, QAPP.

36. Seling Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow: Baloch Nationalism and Soviet Temptations*, Washington, 1981, P, 23.

37. Minutes of Viceroy's Twentieth Miscellaneous Meeting, 19 July 1947. PS- 54.

38. Minutes of Viceroy's Twentieth Miscellaneous Meeting, 19 July 1947. PS- 54.

December 1946 to the political department, the Khan had demanded recognition of Kalat as an independent state, retrocession of the leased area of Quetta, Nushki and Nasirabad and determination of future of Las Bela, Kharan and Marri-Bugti areas over which he claimed suzerainty.³⁹ On 19 July negotiations were held by Mountbatten with a Kalat Delegation and the Pakistan state department, the latter conceding Kalat's claim to independent sovereign status once paramountcy had lapsed.⁴⁰ Mountbatten believed that the British Government had been anxious to establish the position that on the transfer of power paramountcy would lapse and States would *de jure* become independent, but *de facto*, very few were likely to benefit from independence. He suggested as well that although Kalat would have gained freedom, no practical course other than some form of association with Pakistan was open to it.

On 28 July 1947, H.A.F. Rumbold, Assistant Secretary, India Office London, commented on the decisions taken on 19 July 1947 in these words....“the viceroy and the Pakistan representatives seem...to be quite wrong in their facts in accepting the claim of Kalat to be regarded as a separate international entity”.⁴¹ On 11 August 1947 a press communiqué was issued in which Pakistan recognized Kalat as an independent sovereign state in treaty relationship with the British Government with a status different from that of Indian states.⁴² It is surprising that even though the Indian Independence Act 1947 did not give the option of independence to any Indian state, Pakistan conceded such a status to Kalat. On 17 October 1947, Jinnah invited the Khan of Kalat to Karachi to arrive at a decision concerning accession and other matters spelt out in the 11 August announcement. The Khan agreed to communicate his final decision after a month or

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39. Muhammad Aslam to Lancelot Griffin, 26 December 1946, Enclosure 1 to P, 49.
 40. Minutes of Viceroy's Twentieth Miscellaneous Meeting, 19 July 1947. PS- 54.
 41. Minutes of Viceroy's Meeting of 19 July 1947 and 28 July 1947, Annex to PS-54.
 42. Press Communiqué on Situation between Pakistan and Kalat State, 11 August 1947.

two.⁴³ Jinnah awaited the response of Khan for a further few months. On 14 February 1948, he invited the Khan of Kalat for final negotiations at Sibi. The Khan signified his consent to accede to Pakistan on the basis of the agreed draft of instrument of accession.⁴⁴ He appeared to have changed his mind however, and probably malingered avoid signing the document at the appointed time. Jinnah took a dim view of his most disappointing and unsatisfactory attitude.⁴⁵

Not favorably disposed towards accession to Pakistan, The Khan was desirous of establishing relation with Pakistan on a treaty basis. While in England Fell sent out Brig. Purves, who was later appointed Chief of Police and Defence Minister Kalat. He advised the Khan it was becoming difficult for Pakistan to continue to accept the presence upon its border of large and important area (Kalat State) whose international status was dubious. So long as the Khan remained legally independent the occupation of Kalat and its annexation could be made unassailable under international law provided the Khan's consent to such a step could be obtained. Any state within reach, including Russia and of course India, could take such a step at any moment.⁴⁶ Fell has also suggested to the Khan that a legal flaw in the Instrument of Accession (with Pakistan) might be a useful card to have up our sleeves to use at a time when circumstances were more favorable than they were now.⁴⁷

In mean time in March 1948 Las Bela, Kharan and Mekran which constituted about half of Kalat's territory and the rulers whereof had long disputed Kalat's suzerainty, accede to Pakistan. This development disconcerted the Khan and hardened his attitude. He tried unsuccessfully to muster support

43. S.M.Yusuf to Ruler of Kalat, 4 March, 1948, PS-78.

44. S.M.Yusuf to Ruler of Kalat, 4 March, 1948, PS-78.

45. S.M.Yusuf to Ruler of Kalat, 4 March, 1948, PS-78.

46. Z.H. Zaidi, Jinnah Papers, The States: Historical and Policy Perspectives and Accession to Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam Papers Project Culture Division Government of Pakistan. 2003. P, xxii.

47. Z.H. Zaidi, Jinnah Papers, The States: Historical and Policy Perspectives and Accession to Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam Papers Project Culture Division Government of Pakistan. 2003. P, xxii.

for resisting accession, but only a few illiterate Jhalawan *Sardars* answered his call. He thought the key to accession of Kalat lay in Mekran where he could create problems for Pakistan. He sent his sister to Karachi to fetch his brother in law Bai Khan the ruler of Mekran to force him to retract his decision to accede Pakistan.⁴⁸ Khan's brother Abdul Karim Khan first tried to foment disturbances⁴⁹ in Mekran to embrace Pakistan to line up army reinforcement and then fled to Afghanistan to muster support. The Khan also sent the member of his family over to Afghanistan⁵⁰ to gather support. The Prime Minister of Afghanistan offered his good office for placing the case of Kalat before the United Nations if Kalat so wished. The Khan also chose to withhold ration and transport from the Mekran Levy Corps with the view to exposing them to the danger of starvation. In view of political and security situation following the Khan's intransigence, Pakistan was forced to take certain administrative and defense measures⁵¹ to secure Jiwhani, Turbat, Pasni and Panjgur areas. To ward off any incident or disorder the Kalat Premier was asked to hand over administration in these and other areas to Pakistan along with the treasuries.⁵²

The Khan of Kalat conferred with his advisers and religious leaders. Brig. Purves the Defense Minister had been mulling over possible action in case of military invasion by Pakistan. Fell reported that "if the worse came to the worst he Khan was in favor of evacuating lock, stock and barrel to Khuzdar". On 27 March 1948 Jinnah instructed his foreign secretary Ikramullah that "there should be no negotiations of any kind or any further discussion to create slightest impression that anything but accession is possible"⁵³ A.S.B. Shah a joint secretary in the foreign office and Ambrose Dundas agent to the Governor-General for Baluchistan were also asked to make it clear to Kalat to us his answer whether he is prepared to accede as

48. A.S.B.Shah to M.ikramullah, 25 March 1948, PS-87.

49. A.S.B.Shah to M.ikramullah, 25 March 1948, PS-90.

50. A.S.B.Shah to M.ikramullah, 25 March 1948, PS-87.

51. M. Ikramullah to A. S.B.Shah, Telegram, 26 March 1948, PS-94.

52. M. Ikramullah to A. S.B.Shah, Telegram, 26 March 1948, PS-94.

53. M.A. Jinnah to M.Ikramullah, Telegram 27 March 1948, PS-96.

promised by him more than once or not”.⁵⁴ The same day the Khan somewhat dramatically decided to accede to Pakistan⁵⁵ since Las Bela, Kharan and Mekran had already acceded. The decision announced on 1 April 1948, albeit belated was very welcome; the Dawn editorialized on 30 March 1948 irrespective of the manner of its making and the proceeding publicly known and unknown.⁵⁶

On 2 April 1948 the Khan assured the Pakistan authorities that Kalat is now part of Pakistan and it is the first duty of the state to help Pakistan and cooperate in every way not only in the conceded subjects but in all other matters also.⁵⁷ On 26 May 1948 Jinnah flew into Quetta one of the aims to his visit being to marginalize the disruptive elements and introduce administrative and political reforms in Kalat with a view to creating conditions conducive to its integration into Pakistan.

Las Bela

Las Bela (population about 1 lakh, area 7,048 sq miles) had historically occupied an important position in trade and commerce between Sindh and Persia through the Mekran coast. Before 1947, the central and southern Baluchistan was virtually feudatory to the Khan of Kalat. On 16 July 1947 the Jam of Las Bela expressed his wish to join the Pakistan Constituent Assembly.⁵⁸ After Kalat had signed the stand still agreement with Pakistan in August 1947, the Jam of Las Bela felt concerned over the future of his state, and met with Jinnah who assured him that Pakistan Government would examine the issue of his relationship with Kalat as soon as possible.⁵⁹

On the other hand, Kalat insisted that Las Bela was a district of Kalat and the Jam owed allegiance to him as a vassal. Meanwhile, Las Bela agreed to sign instrument of Accession as

54. M.A. Jinnah to M. Ikramullah, Telegram 27 March 1948, PS-96.

55. D.Y. Fell to M.A. Jinnah, Telegram, 30 March 1948, PS-103.

56. The Dawn, 30 March 1948.

57. Kalat Collection, S.No. 51. QAPP. Paper on Baluchistan: the Kalat State and Feudatories, undated, 1962, 11.

58. Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah to M.A. Jinnah 16 July 1947, PS-134.

59. M.A. Jinnah to the Ruler of Las Bela, 28 July 1947, PS-141.

well as a Standstill Agreement with Pakistan.⁶⁰ As the question of Kalat's accession to Pakistan was not resolved till March 1948, Las Bella's case also hung in the balance. It finally accessed to Pakistan on 17th March 1948 along with Kharan and Mekran.

Kharan

Kharan a small princely state, with a population of 40,000 spread over an area of 18,553sq miles, had an utterly inadequate physical infrastructure. Although rich in date production, the population largely pursued livestock-rearing activities. The state came under British control in 1884; in 1940 it was recognized as being separate from Kalat but remained, nominally, under it's over lordship. After the conference of leaders and *motabars* of Kharan, held at Nushki on 19 August 1947, the Ruler announced that the state recognizes itself as an independent state as usual and joins Pakistan Domination as it suzerin and promises to serve Pakistan up to its extent.⁶¹

Kalat did not recognize Kharan as an independent state and maintained that the latter was a part of its territories. For, the Chief of Kharan as the one of the Sarawan Sardars of Kalat, had a seat in Kalat Darbar and enjoyed a measure of internal autonomy subject to the authority of Kalat. The repudiation of Kalat's supremacy by Kharan led to an explosive situation. Kharan had complained to Jinnah in November 1947 that Kalat was arming local elements in Kharan for an armed conflict and creating a law and order situation in the State as well as in the Pakistan-controlled areas of Baluchistan.⁶²

In the support of the claim to independence the Chief of Kharan explained⁶³ to Jinnah, on 1st December 1947, that Kharan had accepted the paramountcy of the British Crown with all concomitant rights and obligations right up to 14 August 1947. On the other hand, Kalat had attempted to subjugate Kharan by force, and in 1939 it had committed aggression against the State but failed in its objective. Kharan accessed to Pakistan on 17 March 1948.

60. Ruler of Las Bela, 28 July 5 September 1947, PS-141.

61. Ruler of Kharan to M.A.Jinnah, Telegram, 21 August 1947, PS-128.

62. Ruler of Kharan to M.A.Jinnah, 18 November 1947, PS-130.

63. Ruler of Kharan to M.A.Jinnah, 18 November 1947, PS-131.

Punjab States

In Punjab, the Ameer of Bahawalpur state on 5th October 1947 acceded to Pakistan. The details of the state are given below:

Bahawalpur

Bahawalpur, stretching 150 miles along the left bank of the Sutlej River and extending 150 miles further down the Indus River to the Sind border was predominantly Muslim state with a population of 15 lakhs in 1947.⁶⁴ It occupied a strategic position because of its location along the border with India. The state comprised three strips.⁶⁵ (1) Most fertile western section, (2) central section irrigated by Sutlej canals, with headworks at Ferozepur, Sulaimanki, Islam and Panjnad and (3) Eastern section known as Cholistan, a desert area extending over some 13000sq. miles. At the time of partition of the Punjab the state faced the threat of stoppage of its share of water from the canal in Eastern Punjab. In a Memorandum⁶⁶ presented to the boundary Commission on 17 June 1947 the State demanded that:

- i. the boundary between East and west and West Punjab should be so demarcated that West Punjab shall secure territorial jurisdiction over the head works at Ferozepur and Sulaimanki.
- ii. the eastern sadiqia and fordwah canals as well as entire canal railway should be brought under the territorial jurisdiction of west Punjab and the boundary between the east and west Punjab should coincide with the irrigation boundary of that canal.
- iii. the Punjab should be so divided as not to prejudice the storage scheme on the Sutlej river and its tributaries which benefited the Sutleg valley canals taking off from Ferozepur, Sulaimanki and Islam headworks.

But the boundary commission perversely awarded Ferozepur and Zira tehsils to India in total disregard of the legitimate interest of Bahawalpur. This was done deliberately to meet the

64. Government of Pakistan, *The Partition of the Punjab*, Vol. 1, National Documentation Cell, Lahore, 1983, P, 406.

65. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. II, London, 1967, 1041.

66. Government of Pakistan, *The Partition of the Punjab*, Vol. 1, National Documentation cell, Lahore, 1983, P, 406.

Indian defense needs.⁶⁷ On the one hand and to please Hindu Bikaner a far smaller user of irrigation water from Ferozepur headworks which had threatened to accede to Pakistan if Ferozepur was awarded to that Dominion on the other. Bahawalpur fears came true when India stop the flow of water from the eastern grey canal for the Rabi season of 1947-48 though supplies were briefly resumed at the intervention of Pakistan Government and Jawaharlal Nehru.⁶⁸ Eventually this vital source of irrigation water for Bahawalpur cut off by India .this happened despite Mountbatten's assurance that the state would retain its existing rights to the supply of water from the Sutlej River".

Within the state of Bahawalpur itself, a vocal if small section of the population comprising *Ahrars* and other congress supporters worked for its accession to India. A statement by a local leader Makhdoom Mohmmad Mohsin and 10 others issued on 23 October 1948 recalled that hardly a year ago, Rifat group ad openly advocated the state accession to the Indian Dominion.⁶⁹ The state was haunted by the spectre of cessation of vital irrigation supplies as well as growing pressure from the pro-Congress group for accession to India, Mountbatten citing geographical compulsion as a critical factor for accession of state informed the king on 26 February 1948, that a large state-Kalat-approached the government of India for Political relationship but refused and unofficial overtures from Bahawalpur (for acceding to India) were similarly discouraged.⁷⁰ In India event on 5 October 1947 Bahawalpur acceded to Pakistan⁷¹ and was given due support for establishing a credible defence system since the state actually bordered India, a none-to-friendly neighbour even at the best of times.⁷²

67. The Daily Telegraph, 24 February 1992.

68. Zafrullah Khan to Jawaharlal Nehru, 19 June 1948, PS 32.

69. Note by Abdur Rab Nishtar on Bahawalpur Muslim League, 2 November 1948, PS-33.

70. Louis Mountbatten to King George VI, 26 February 1948, Enclosure to PS-238.

71. Instrument of Accession of Bahawalpur State, 5 October 1947, PS-28.

72. Frank Messervy to A.D.F. Dundas, 19 August 1947.

Sindh States

At the time of independence, the following states were part of Kathiwar states, Junagadh, Babariawad, Mangrol and Manavadar with the population of 700,000 and area of 3,500 sq miles. The accession of aforementioned states was bitterly opposed by India and it launched war against these states and supplies of all essential commodities were cut off by India. As result of this invasion and pressure these states acceded to India. The state which acceded to Pakistan in Sindh was Khairpur.

Khairpur

Khairpur with a population of 4.72 lakh was the only princely state within the boundaries of Sindh. It had a rich and fertile alluvial land irrigated by canal drawn off the Indus at the Sukkur barrage.⁷³ Its ruler, Mir Faiz Muhammad Khan Talpur, who had an unsound mind was deposed by the crown Representative in July 1947, and his minor son, Mir Ali Murad Khan Talpur was installed in his place.⁷⁴ A board of regency consisting of five *Sahibzadaz* (member of ruling family) was constituted under the Khairpur state regency act IX of 1947.⁷⁵ On 9 October 1947 the ruler through the chairman of the Board of regency and president of the Executive Council Khairpur, accede to Pakistan.⁷⁶

Conclusion

The present paper provides the historical overview of the states acceded to Pakistan at the time of independence. It throws light on the situation developed after the lapse of Paramountcy on August 15. The accession of the states was a vitally important matter concerning the safety, integrity, independence and ultimate existence of the State and also the safety and prosperity of its subjects. The road map for the accession of the state was clear and states had the rights to accede to Dominion of their choice. But India directly and indirectly not only

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73. The Encyclopadia Britanica, Vol. XIII, London, 1967, 323.
74. Muhammadali Talpur to M.A.J.innah, 8 August 1947, PS-124.
75. The Khairpur State Gazette, Extraordinary Issue, 14 July, 1947, Annex to PS-126.
76. Instrument of Accession of khairpur State, 9 October 1947, PS-125.

Attiya Khanam

influenced but threatened the states and also invaded few for their accession to India. Pakistan on the other hand did not influence the integrity of the states and did not scheme any evil plan for the accession of the states. The states acceded to Pakistan took this decision independently without facing any pressure from the government of Pakistan.

Biographical Note

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