

Three Round Table Conferences

The three Round Table Conferences of 1930–32 were a series of conferences to formulate future constitution of India in the light of suggestions given by the Indian Leaders. In Indian Act 1919, it was said that new reforms will be introduced in Indian Act 1929. So, they started planning for 1929 Act. In 1927 British Government appointed a commission to draft coming constitution which is called Simon Commission. There was no representative of Indians in this Commission that's why all the parties decided to boycott of this commission except Shafi League. There was great resentment among Indians because they were waiting for last ten years. Congress wanted a clear declaration from British Government that the main aim of these conferences would be to draft a scheme for Dominion Status to India.

On 19 June, 1930 British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald summoned the Indian Leader to attend these conferences. On 13 March, 1930 Gandhi decided to celebrate Independence Day and started Civil Disobedience Movement for complete independence of India. However, Muslim leaders stayed away from the movement because Hindus were exploiting the Muslim demand for their own rights. Muhammad Ali Jinnah had already given a proposal to British Prime Minister to settle down this issue in London. Gandhi had given ultimatum for the approval of Nehru Report. In this scenario, when the first Round Table Conference started M.K Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were in the jail. Muhammad Ali Jauhar in April 1930 declared, “The aim of the movement was not to work for Indian independence but to make Muslims slave of Hindu Maha Sabah”.

Along with sixteen British members, there were fifty-seven representatives from all Indian states and all parties except Indian National Congress. Muslim Leaders: Quaid-e-Azam, Sir Agha Khan, Muhammad Ali Jauhar, Maulvi Fazl Haq and Sir Muhammad Shafi. Hindu Mahasabha: [B. S. Moonje](#) and M.R. Jayakar. Liberals: [Tej Bahadur Sapru](#), [C. Y. Chintamani](#) and [Srinivasa Sastri](#), Sikh: [Sardar Ujjal Singh](#), Depressed Classes: [B. R. Ambedkar](#), Princely states: [Akbar Hydari](#) (Dewan of Hyderabad), [Mirza Ismail](#) (Diwan of Mysore), Kailas Narain Haksar of Gwalior, [Maharaja Bhupinder Singh](#) of Patiala, [Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III](#) of Baroda, Maharaja [Hari Singh](#) of Jammu and Kashmir, [Maharaja Ganga Singh](#) of Bikaner, Nawab [Hamidullah Khan](#) of Bhopal, [K.S. Ranjitsinhji](#) of Nawanagar, Maharaja [Jai Singh Prabhakar](#) of Alwar and the rulers of [Indore](#), [Rewa](#), [Dholpur](#), [Koriya](#), [Sangli](#) and [Sarila](#).

After lengthy debate, it was decided that federal form of government will be established for India. The Central Executive would be responsible to Federal Legislature. Provinces will be given autonomy in their own affairs and Sindh will be considered a separate province with a responsible government. Two sub-committees were also appointed one will work out the detail of Federal form of government and the other one will sort out the problems of minorities.

On January 19, 1931, the first-round table conference was officially finished. Lord Irwin decided that in the absence of Congress leaders the future of India could not be decided. On January 25, 1931, M.K Gandhi and his colleagues were released from jail and Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed. The Second Round Table Conference, lasted 7 September 1931 to 1st December 1931, made more controversies for British Government. Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar has died before that conference. To resolve the issues of federal and minorities, Gandhi appointed himself the member of both committees. In the absence of other representatives, he remained fail to

resolve the issues. He presented already rejected Nehru Report to resolve the communal problem. Separate electorate for Untouchables in the award forced Gandhi to start fast unto death.

On August 16, 1932, the British Government decided to give its famous Communal Award. In this Award, principle of Weightage was applied (Muslim lost majority in Punjab, Sikh got advantage in Punjab, Europeans got advantage in Bengal because of principle of Weightage). Sindh was awarded the status of separate province. Finally, Communal Award declared untouchables as a minority in India and thus the Hindus depressed classes were given a number of special seats. At that All India Muslim League was divided into two factions; both expressed their dissatisfaction on that Award. At last Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah decided to accept this award till alternative solution. The Hindu press considered it against the fundamental principle of nationalism for India. In the third Round Table Conference, November 17, 1932 to November 24, 1932, the Congress, and Labour Party did not take part. It was decided to setup a federal legislature in India consisting of elected representatives of the British India and of the representatives of the state to be nominated by respective ruler.

To sum up, we can say that the first Conference did not gain success because of the absence of the Congress, the Hindu representative and the second Conference remained fail because of the presence of the Congress which even enhanced the level of hostility between the Hindu and the Muslims and the communal award proved even final blow to the relations of the two communities of Indian subcontinent. As result of these conferences British Government issued a White Paper based on the recommendations which was handed over to Select Committee. On July 4, 1935 a new constitution of India came into being which was approved by both of the Houses of the Parliament.

