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"PARTITION HORRORS REMEMBRANCE DAY" - 14TH AUGUST 2026 (IN OBSERVANCE OF HAR GHAR TIRANGA WEEK 9-17 AUGUST, 2026)

RESULTS OF ONLINE POSTER & ESSAY COMPETITION

POSTER COMPETITION RESULT

POSITION	NAME	SEMESTER	SUBJECT
1 ST	ANWITA MITRA	1	ZOOLOGY
2 ND	SEJUTI ROY	7	ZOOLOGY
3 RD	AVIRUP NATH	1	BBA

ESSAY COMPETITION RESULT

POSITION	NAME	SEMESTER	SUBJECT
1 ST	AMARTYA SARKAR	7	ENGLISH
2 ND	SWAPNANEEL BHATTACHARJEE	7	HISTORY
3 RD	SUPARNA GOSWAMI	1	ZOOLOGY
3 RD	PRIYODARSHINI NIOCOLA PAUL	1	COMPUTER SCIENCE

M. Mandal 17/8/26
Dr. Madhumanjari Mandal
Principal
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1st





Beyond the Border

The Story of Goodbyes

15th August

A Human Journey Through the Longest Night

15 August 1947 brought freedom to a nation, but for millions, it also brought uncertainty, separation and loss.

1 When a Line Became a Border

- In 1947, the Indian subcontinent was divided.
- A line drawn across a map suddenly divided homes, villages, friendships and families.
- People who had lived together for generations found themselves on different sides of a new border.



2 The Journey

- Millions were forced to leave their homes.
- They travelled with whatever they could carry — memories, photographs, a few belongings and the hope of finding safety.
- For many, the journey was not simply from one place to another; it was the painful departure from a life they knew.



3 Beyond Numbers

- History often remembers Partition through dates, maps and statistics.
- But behind every number was a person.
- ♥ A mother waiting for her family.
- ♥ A child leaving behind a childhood home.
- ♥ A friend separated by a border.
- ♥ A neighbour who became a stranger overnight.



"A border can divide a land, but it cannot erase the memories of the people who once called it home."

4 What Remains

- Yet, amidst the pain, there were also stories of courage, compassion and humanity.
- People sheltered neighbours, helped strangers cross dangerous paths and carried memories of one another across newly created borders.



Conclusion



Partition is not only a chapter in a history textbook. It is a collection of human stories — of homes lost, families separated, identities reshaped and lives rebuilt. Remembering Partition does not mean remembering only the division. It means remembering the people who lived through it.

♥ Beyond the border, there was — and still is — a story of goodbyes. ♥



3rd

PARTITION HORRORS

A scar that time
can never heal,
a pain humanity
can never
forget.

From the ashes of pain,
let hope rise.
Let unity be our future
Let love be our freedom.

Trains of tears,
Journeys of death.
The tracks remember
What time forgot.

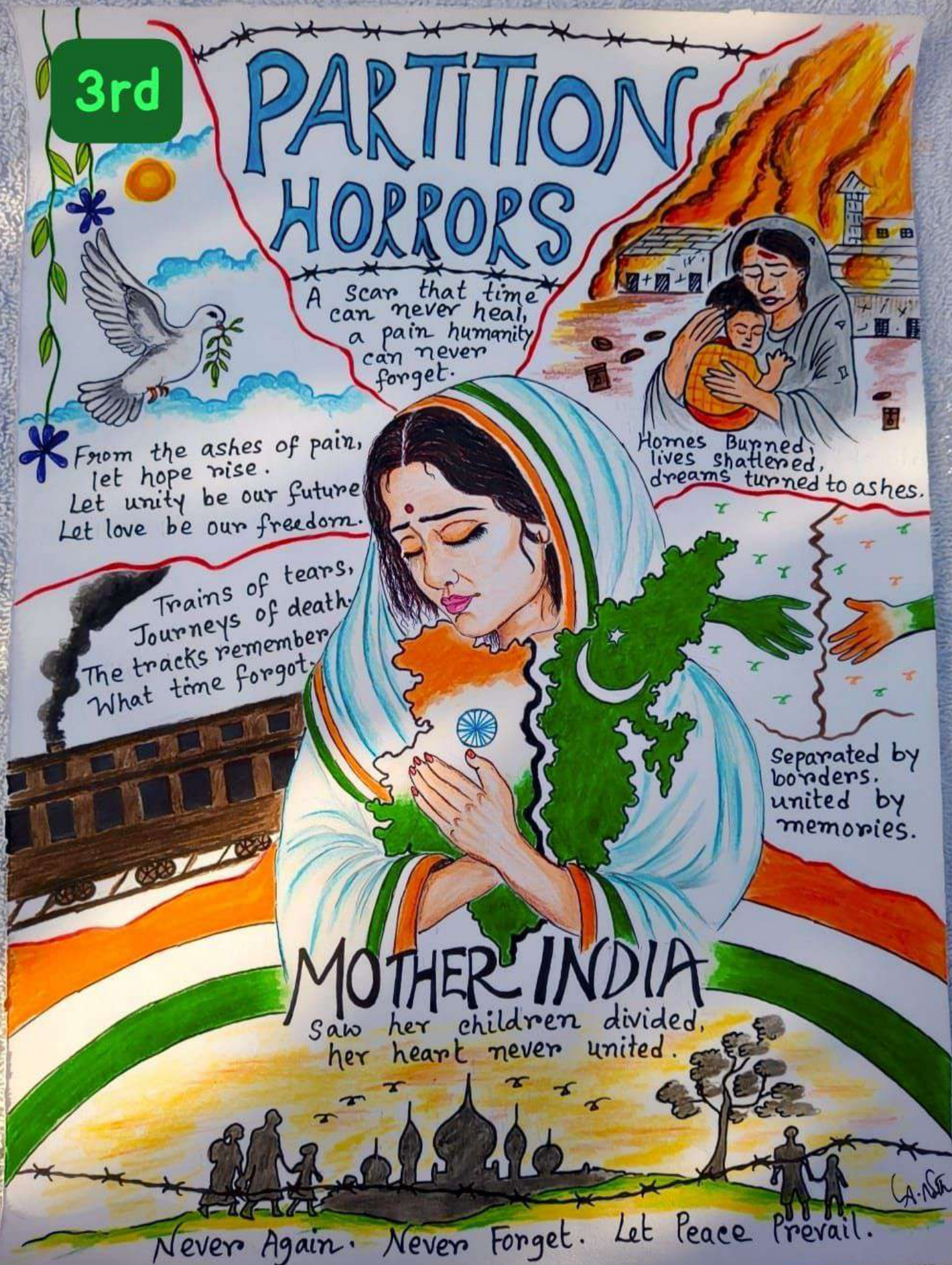
Homes Burned,
lives shattered,
dreams turned to ashes.

Separated by
borders.
united by
memories.

MOTHER INDIA

saw her children divided,
her heart never united.

Never Again. Never Forget. Let Peace Prevail.



The Memory of a Divided Land

Some histories do not announce themselves as catastrophe at the moment they are made. They begin instead as a line or border on paper, and only later do people realise how much of their lives has been altered by that line. The Partition of British India was one such monumental instance of statecraft in history. In 1947, a frontier produced by imperial withdrawal was imposed upon lives that had never understood themselves in territorial terms. Homes were abandoned, neighbourhoods emptied, kinship networks fractured and millions were compelled to cross a border suddenly endowed with the authority of nationhood. What endured was not only the recollection of violence but the intimate disorientation of discovering that a place could cease to be home while continuing to inhabit one's mind.

The scale of Partition can itself make its human reality difficult to apprehend. Millions were displaced across Punjab and Bengal, while communal violence, abduction and sexual assault ravaged communities already in flight. Yet the language of magnitude can often flatten what it seeks to describe. The refugee becomes a statistic and the abandoned village a demographic absence. In Bengal, successive waves of displacement from East Pakistan reshaped Calcutta through refugee colonies, precarious labour and new political solidarities. But there was never a singular refugee experience. Caste, class, gender, region and access to resources determined what could be carried, salvaged or irretrievably lost.

Literature preserves precisely this human remainder of history. Saadat Hasan Manto's "Toba Tek Singh" remains one of the most incisive responses to Partition because it refuses the consolations of political rationality. Bishan Singh, a Sikh inmate of a Lahore asylum, is told he must be transferred to India, yet cannot comprehend where his village now belongs. When he collapses in the strip of land between India and Pakistan, Manto turns the no-man's-land into an indictment of the categories that produced it. The man labelled as mad becomes the one who cannot accept the madness of a world in which belonging can be reassigned by decree.

Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* approaches the same fracture differently. In Mano Majra, an ordinary village is gradually poisoned by Partition's violence until a train arrives carrying corpses instead of passengers. A symbol of movement and connection becomes the vehicle through which distant political cruelty enters everyday life. Manto and Singh reveal what official histories often conceal: violence is most ruinous when it enters the ordinary and makes the familiar unfamiliar.

Tagore's relevance is equally significant, although he died before Partition. His suspicion of nationalism as an absolute moral category gives retrospective force to his prayer for a world "not broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls". For him, freedom required freedom of mind from fear, prejudice and enclosure. Read after 1947, the walls were no longer metaphorical. They had become borders.

Yet borders do not always succeed in producing the consciousness they seek to impose. Partition survives through postmemory, through stories, silences, photographs and absences inherited by those who did not experience it. Literature, oral histories, cinema and public

discourse continue to complicate the idea of a singular Partition, revealing different experiences shaped by region, religion, caste, class, gender and generation.

Something of this complexity has resurfaced on social media. During the recent student protests at Delhi's Jantar Mantar over India's examination crisis, young people in Pakistan followed the demonstrations and expressed solidarity with Indian students, recognising anxieties over education, shrinking opportunities and institutions that seemed indifferent to them. This does not erase the profound hostility between the two states, nor should it be romanticised as an uncomplicated fraternity. Yet, for a moment, young people encountered one another not primarily as Indians and Pakistanis but as students facing struggles that seemed to speak the same language.

There is an almost poignant irony in this. The children of two states born from separation were discovering that their present could resemble one another more closely than the national histories they inherited. Social media did not dissolve the border. It allowed people to look across it without always seeing an enemy first. Young people are not inherently innocent, but they can sometimes encounter another person before the categories through which history has taught them to understand that person. The student can precede the citizen, anxiety can precede nationality and recognition can precede inherited antagonism.

Manto remains indispensable because his fiction makes such recognition difficult to evade. Bishan Singh cannot be contained by either nation, Tagore's imagined freedom cannot be confined within nationalist enclosure and Mano Majra reminds us how quickly intimacy can be corroded when political identity becomes absolute. Together, they suggest that Partition's deepest tragedy was not merely the division of land, but the persuasion of human beings to understand division as destiny.

The border has endured. So have the memories. But so, at times, has the older recognition that preceded it. Grief has no nationality, injustice travels across languages and human vulnerability is rarely obedient to political geography. Perhaps remembering Partition most humanely means not pretending the border never existed, but refusing to let it determine the limits of our recognition. The line on the map was meant to separate two peoples. The lives that followed have repeatedly shown how much remained, and remains, beyond it.

The Perilous Partition and its Heavy Price

*“A letter, a necklace, a utensil; sometimes that's the only thing
smuggled into a new, strange land.”*

– *Historian Aanchal Malhotra*

*(In “Remnants of a Separation: A History
of the Partition through Material Memory”)*

The Partition of the Indian subcontinent in August 1947, which led to the creation of the new sovereign nation-states of India and Pakistan was accomplished by widespread communal violence, resulting in the deaths of approximated 500,000 to 1,000,000 people, and one of the most disturbing mass movements in modern History, involving an estimated 12 to 15 million people. The Horrors and the tragedy of Partition – the loss of lives, livelihoods and ancestral home, with the abrupt sundering of families, communities and emotional bonds – darkened the hopeful horizons of the long-awaited Indian Independence from the British colonisers.

Even though there is no dearth of literature surrounding the Partition of India (1947), new aspects and oral testimonials seem to make their way highlighting the cataclysm and the gruesome effects of this “*nightmare*” which was the parting gift given to us by the colonisers, as aptly discussed by *Historians Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal*. Communalism along with radicalised political opinion are said to be the main problems which polarised the two communities of Hindus and Muslims to such an extent that they disremembered tying ‘*rakhis*’ to each other (1905) but resorted to wielding weapons against the other religion and neglecting basic morality and ethicality.

Amidst the tension in a desperate bid to carve out Pakistan, The Muslim League on 16 August 1946 called for a “*Direct Action Day*” which witnessed the “*Great Calcutta Killings*” – a black lettered day in the History of India. As nearly as 4000 people were killed and more than 10,000 injured. Within those 4 days, human accounts are full of stories of how families were split, women were dehumanised and people became homeless. Particularly for Bengal, this served as a backdrop of the bigger issue – Bengal’s Second Partition. One cannot overstate the psychological trauma, either.

In the communal fires, both sides had bled and smouldered. Villages were burned, houses of the opposite community were pillaged and looted and many families perished because of the newly drawn borders. Oral accounts also recount about the “*Ghost Trains*,” carrying the deceased bodies of the refugees who were less fortunate than the ones who could travel across the new borders. Pictures of overly-crowded trains materialise in memory. Author *Kushwant Singh* in his novel “*Train To Pakistan*” (1956) had further accentuated on this matter.

During Partition, the bodies of women *became privileged sites* on whose surface the political programmes of both states were brutally inscribed. They were raped, murdered, sold into prostitution, forced into marriage and even faced honour killings. There also existed a “Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation” which had set up a “Women’s Section” for the convalescence of the women victims. The refugee influx of the 1950s also exerted much strain on the border regions of India and even though refugee camps and squatter colonies were constructed, they were overcrowded, inhospitable, unhygienic and solely dependent on the initiatives of the Government.

The Plight of Partition has also been depicted in media, fine arts and culture such as *Ritwik Ghatak's Partition Trilogy* and *Jogen Chaudhury's drawing named "Refugees in Sealdah railway station" (1958)*. Ultimately, the scars of Partition are not buried in History books but remain active as an indelible blot in the History of India.

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For the Essay Competition of “Remembrance Day – 14th August, 2026”.

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14th August 1947: A legacy of loss and remembrance

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August 14th, 1947- one of history's most devastating day, a day where the euphoria of independence was tragically intertwined with unimaginable terror and suffering. While August 14th marks the independence of Pakistan and August 15th the independence of India, the celebrations were overshadowed by violence, fear, grief and mighty loss, leaving millions displaced and traumatized. The single line-drawing the artificial boundaries by political expediency did not just separate India and Pakistan; it shattered the very fabric of society. The rivers did not know they had become borders, the rain still fell on both sides, then what changed? Only the people were told they no longer belonged where they had always belonged.

The horrors of partition are not mere footnotes; they are a living testament to the consequences of division. Hindus and Sikhs moving eastwards into India, Muslims streaming westward into Pakistan was one of the largest migrations of human history.

Not everyone left the moment the border was drawn. Many families stayed. For days. For months. Some even for years. Many waited for the violence to end. They believed that the hatred was temporary, that life would eventually return to the way it had always been. Unfortunately, the hope slowly turned into fear. Families were brutally torn apart, homes reduced to ashes and countless lives lost in

a hysteria of ethnic cleansing. The trains that rolled into stations were filled with the dead and the dying. Families searched every face refusing to believe that the person they loved would never step off the train. The exodus was characterised by mounting cruelty. Women endured horrors that many never found the words to describe. Some were abducted and forced into marriages or conversions. Many were assaulted and raped. The cruellest burden was *surviving*.

The psychological wounds inflicted during this period ran deep, leaving several generations coping with loss, resentment and a profound sense of injustice that continues to resonate today- because some borders do not remain on maps. They live inside people, in stories or carried in old photographs.

The remembrance of August 14th, 1947, and the subsequent days, is not about dwelling on past grievances but about acknowledging the profound human cost of political decisions and learning from history's darkest chapters. It is a call to recognize the resilience of those who endured unimaginable hardship and to understand the impact of this event on the identities and narratives of both nations. By remembering, we not only honour the victims, but we acknowledge the trauma that continues to affect communities. The remembrance serves a powerful commitment to foster a future where such horrors are never repeated. It is a pledge to build a future founded on

mutual understanding, profound empathy and shared commitment to achieving lasting peace and reconciliation across the subcontinent.

Partition Horrors Remembrance Day- 14th August

Back in August 1947, there were very few things that sought to bind the newfound country of India and hold it up to its motto of absolute unity, except the exhilarating joy of finally having freedom- fresh and tangible, within our hands, waiting for us to mold it into a bright future for our country. This spirit of exuberance, after a 200 year old, toilsome freedom struggle, despite being copious, did little to prevent one of the greatest horrors in history that followed after. With its heavily approximated statistics, the Partition of India has been named one of the greatest mass-migrations in history and even that understates the intensity of the horrors that it brought about.

When Cyril Radcliffe, a stranger to both India and Pakistan, drew the borders for both countries within his five-week deadline, he sealed the fate of not only the two countries, but of millions of lives scattered across it. His ignorance, although initially viewed as means of impartiality, inevitably fragmented not just the country, but states, cities, towns, villages and even families, overnight. People moved with haste, petrified of being left behind in a country they don't belong to anymore, abandoning years of existence, carrying only what was essential for survival. A common scenario The Partition is recalled by are trains filled to the brim- people not just filling compartments but latching onto the sides and climbing to the roof just to reach the other country. Others set out on foot, ready to sacrifice whatever it took to reach the other side.

The borders that had been drawn, went beyond the geographical sense of it. Gruesome violence in the name of religious differences was exacted in both countries. Some trains transporting refugees, reached their individual countries carrying entire compartments piled with corpses of humans who were merely seeking survival for themselves and their families, earning them the name of 'blood trains'. Properties were ruthlessly set ablaze, leaving the owners homeless and completely at the mercy of people who reasoned only with hatred. The seed of hatred was so intense that lives were taken with horrifying lack of hesitation.

"Few can grasp the awfulness of how it might feel to have their fathers barricaded in their houses and burnt alive, their mothers beaten and thrown off speeding trains, their daughters torn away, raped and branded, their sons held down in full view, screaming and pleading, while a mob armed with rough knives hacked off their hands and feet," Alex von Tunzelmann provided a graphic and precise description in his book "Indian Summer: The Secret History of the End of an Empire". *"Twelve million people were displaced as a result of Partition. Nearly one million died. Some 75,000 women were raped, kidnapped, abducted, forcibly impregnated by men of the 'other' religion,*

thousands of families were split apart, homes burnt down and destroyed, villages abandoned. Refugee camps became part of the landscape of most major cities in the north, but, a half century later, there is still no memorial, no memory, no recall, except what is guarded, and now rapidly dying, in families and collective memory," wrote Urvashi Butali in her book "Other Side Of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India".

The Partition of India stands as one of the greatest testimonies, if not the biggest, to the devastating effects of discrimination and its futility in the face of human existence. To this day, it contrasts the joyous episode of Independence that we celebrate, commemorating this time of the year to not just celebration but also a grave feeling of devastation and remorse for the lives that were lost and the ones that weren't but remain tainted eternally by loss. To this day, a question still lingers- "If the partition never happened, would peace have naturally followed?" While it suffers excruciating scrutiny, the blood on the pages of history remains a chilling reminder to the present and future, serving as a voice of reason over hatred. After all, blood, bones and flesh were given to all; it was humanity that drew the lines.

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