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Before partition life was rather simple. My father gave me a detailed account, but one thing which was common to almost all Muslims was that somehow Muslims were not as comfortable, or as rich, as the Hindus or the British. Somehow the Muslims had become second rate citizens. As such, Muslims usually did not get first rate jobs, meaning that they weren't high ranking officers in the government, they were not big businessmen, they at the maximum held average or lower level jobs.

So, life was alright, it was rather peaceful. However, that was due to the British maintaining a strict law and order policy. The police were an institution to be feared, that fear continues today in the subcontinent, but during the British tenure that was due to policy. They wanted the police to be strict and disciplinarian. So, although law and order were good, there was no problem as such, but still it was an environment which was somewhat discriminatory towards Muslims.

My father lived in a town called Bhatla, his father before him was from the same town. My grandfather was a retired junior police officer. After his retirement he set up a very small business. He had 3 or 4 horse carts (called tangas), he leased them out to people who drove them, and they gave him a daily instalment. That is how he managed his household. He was not a rich man; he couldn't afford to have his sons and daughters educated after a certain level. Thus, the general trend was whoever passed the tenth grade had to be on his own. This was the case with my father, when he passed his matriculation (i.e. the tenth grade) he left Bhatla and came to Lahore. However, this was years before partition. My father was born in 1912 and he left his hometown in somewhere around the 1930s. Bhatla is not very far from Lahore, my father travelled by bus and reached Lahore in about an hour and a half.

In Lahore he stayed with some relatives and took a job as a schoolteacher. However, he wanted to further his education and thus, at the same time he also got into Islamia college. Currently Islamia College is an all-girls college but at the time it was an all-boys college. In the morning he would go to college and would then spend his afternoon teaching at a small private school.

Lahore was a rather big city; thus, he had more opportunities. However, here as well my father faced the same issue; being a Muslims he could never hope to be in the upper echelon of whatever he was doing. Thus, he had to start at the bottom or at a very junior level, and he was fine with that. Although he was educating himself, he was an enterprising young man, he didn't have big ambitions or high hopes.

The general atmosphere was the same it had been before. The law and order were good, there was no trouble, you could roam around on the streets and no one would bother you. However, the underlying fact was that you had to stay in your limits.

Before partition he finished his college education and as his father before him, he wanted to join the police. He was able to join the police department as a junior officer after his graduation, though he had some difficulty doing that.

During the partition he was stationed in Lahore, in a place called Malaka police station, which is very close to the present railway station. At the time he lived alone in Lahore, his family (i.e. his father, sisters and brothers) was in Bhatala. He was the one who brought them all to Lahore from Bhatala during that time. This endeavour proved to be a great challenge.

Initially, it was thought that the family could come to Lahore via a train or bus. However, when they saw what happened to the people who did that, when they saw the bloodshed, the bus load of corpses coming along, they knew they couldn't do that. People use to board buses to go from India to Pakistan but close to the border the Sikh rioters would butcher whoever was on the bus. Everyone was killing everyone.

As such my father tried to arrange some protection for his family; he asked his superiors if they would allow him to take some policemen with him to get his family from Bhatala. However, the British officers did not allow him to do that. Thus, he decided to apply for a short leave, and he consulted a few fellow officers. They said they would help him out as their own families were also in India. They coordinated with each other and hired a bus to help their families cross the border. They boarded the bus and were able to put all his family, even his extended family, his cousins, as well as the families of a few fellow police officers, onto the bus and began the journey back to Lahore.

The journey was eventful, they were stopped a couple of times but as they were police officers and had weapons, the rioters turned away. The few times they were stopped they displayed their weapons and fired a few shots, nobody bothered them. Thus, they reached Lahore safely.

My fathers were the eldest out of all his siblings and thus, were tasked with not only bringing everyone to Lahore safely but also have them settled in the city.

In total he was able to bring three of his sisters, two brothers, his father, a couple of his cousins, male and female, as well as their families, and his maternal uncle and his family, to Lahore.

Initially, they had wanted to stay back, however, after seeing so much bloodshed, seeing their Hindu friends and acquaintances turn into murders, all sentiments of living peacefully together with the Hindus and Sikhs had evaporated. It was why the family took so long to migrate. They migrated weeks after the initial partition. After witnessing such horrific bloodshed no one wanted to stay behind and thus, everyone came to Pakistan.

The family members who migrated took practically nothing with them, all their belongs, their immovable property was back in Bhatala.

Prior to partition, it was announced that all areas with Muslim majority would be part of Pakistan and thus everyone was reassured they would be part of Pakistan as Bhatala was a Muslim majority area. Thus, it came as huge shock to everyone when they found out that Bhatala was not to be part of Pakistan.

It was my father's opinion that the reason for Bhatala not being part of Pakistan had to be due to Kashmir, as the road to Kashmir passed through Bhatala. If Pakistan was given Bhatala India would not have been able to access Kashmir. It was my father's belief that the British did this in order to create a dispute between India and Pakistan, in accordance of the British divide and rule policy.

It was due to the sudden announcement of Bhatala not being part of Pakistan, that the decision to move was made in great haste. Therefore, they were not able to sell their property or collect their stuff prior to moving. They were itching to move as soon as possible when they saw the bloodshed all around them. Hence, they only came to Pakistan with the clothes on their back and a few valuables.

The journey to Pakistan was very dangerous and tense, as they knew other people who had tried to travel across the border had been butchered. Due to their fear, my father had to work hard to convince his family to even attempt the journey. Despite having his and the protection of his other police buddies, they were still hesitant to get on the bus my father had procured for them. His sisters especially were extremely reluctant to board the bus, as they had not only seen Hindu and Sikh rioters murder and butcher Muslims; they also witnessed the rioter's rape women. As such they, as well as my grandfather, were very apprehensive to attempt the journey to Pakistan. My father argued against leaving the women behind and made everyone board the bus to travel across the border.

During their journey they came across rioters who would ambush caravans and buses and kill everyone onboard. When the same kind of rioters tried to ambush my father and his family, he fired shots in the air to run them off and succeeded. Their whole journey was very eventful, and they had to be vigilant. Even after reaching Lahore it took some weeks before the females were able to calm down and reach a relatively normal state.

My father never considered moving to India or even to some other city in Pakistan due to a few factors. Firstly, he had a job in Lahore and was settled there. However, a few of his cousins whom he brought over did move to other cities. His father and siblings on the other hand stayed with him in Lahore. My father had a career as a police officer ahead of him and thus his family along with him settled in Lahore. Due to the British no longer having a role in the sub-continent, my father had high hopes, hopes which later became a reality, that he would be able to become a senior officer in the police. Prior to partition, when the British held all senior position, this would not have been possible.

When he initially arrived in Lahore, back in the 1930s, he was provided with a place to stay by the government, a small two room apartment near Old Anarkali, within the police station. After coming back with his family, he was transferred from Malaka police station to Old Anarkali police station. Luckily with the transfer came a larger residence.

As Hindus and Sikh migrated to India they left behind their property, just as my grandfather and his family had to leave their property back in Bhatla. The government seized the houses left behind by the Hindus and Sikhs and distributed them amongst the migrants if they could prove via papers that they had left their property behind in India. This is how my grandfather was able to obtain a house; he showed the papers regarding his old house in Bhatla and was given a house near Mall Road. The house given to him previously belonged to a Hindu freedom movement leader by the name of Lala Rajput Rai. His family moved from Lahore and left the house behind.

At the time of partition, very few illnesses were known by the public at large. They knew about typhoid and tuberculosis but didn't know about heart ailments. The average age during that time was around 50 to 52 years. Due to their unfamiliarity and ignorance regarding most illnesses most deaths during that time were contributed to heart failure.

It was my father's desire to receive higher education. Before the partition my father had already graduated from Islamia College, after partition however, he was presented with opportunity which was not available to him before. Due to the Hindus leaving, many seats in many universities were open and the merit came down and as such my father was able to continue his education and go for post-graduation and eventually get a Law degree. He studied at the Oriental College. This before partition was a farfetched dream, as there used to be so many applicants and only a few could get accepted. The partition was responsible for making so many options available to my father which previously was not feasible.

He was in the police prior to partition, but afterwards more avenues were opened up for him, meaning he could become a senior officer. He did eventually get promoted to senior officer. Without the partition, my father would have probably just retired at a low level. Due to the British vacating all the senior positions after partition it was possible for Muslims to occupy those positions. My father eventually gained the post of Senior Superintendent. This position, prior to partition, would not be possible for my father to gain as it would have been filled by the British.

The civil society as we know it now did not exist at that time. There was a huge middle class, lower middle class, which we don't see nowadays. That middle class was hugely Pro Pakistan. This was the population from which Muslim League drew most of its support and strength. The civil societies we seen in current times, use to either be non-existent, or consisted of the upper class. The upper class already had a privileged position in society; thus, they were not excited by the idea of Pakistan. Thus, they did not provide a lot of help to the general public, who were supported the idea of Pakistan.

The military immediately after partition was still in the hands of the British. They were still in control for some time; the first Chief of Military Staff of Pakistan was a British man by the name of General Gracey. When the war erupted in Kashmir, the first Governor-General of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam, ordered him to defend Kashmir and fight a war with India. However, General Gracey refused. Similarly, the bloodshed which occurred after the partition was announced was mostly blamed on the police and the military. These departments were in control of the British

and did not help or provide safety for the migrants. One of the major reasons for bloodshed was that the Radcliff Commission failed to award all Muslim territories to Pakistan. Thus, people from Muslim majority areas which were not a part of Pakistan had to move to areas which were part of Pakistan. The Radcliff Commission's failure to divide the subcontinent properly is why people had to move in the first place. When murder and mayhem ravaged the two countries, the British did nothing; they did not try to stop the bloodshed. The police were the same; they too did not try to stop the acts of violence which were widespread throughout the country.

For the initial couple of years life wasn't that different than it was before partition. The country was in dire straits as the state didn't have much money or infrastructure. However, in a few years life improved drastically as Muslims no longer had to face any blocks or obstacles. Anyone who wanted to grow or improve their life could do so.

My father was supported the decision of partition. He had seen the bloodshed, murder and violence. He had worked under the British and with Hindus and Sikhs. Everything I'm currently telling you are his impressions. He was extremely happy about the decision of partition.