HIMUNC VII BACKGROUND GUIDE

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JCC: India

Dear Delegates

Welcome to the seventh iteration of the Henrico Invitational Model United Nations Conference! We want to thank you for joining us this year. As your chairs, we are committed to ensuring that this committee is a welcoming, approachable, and accepting environment for every delegate.

We are pleased to welcome you to the Joint Crisis Committee (JCC) simulation focusing on India's role in addressing two pivotal issues following World War II: "Internal Issues" and "Civil Rights Movements". This guide will provide you with essential background information and context to help you better understand the historical context, key stakeholders, and possible actions you may take as delegates representing India during this critical period.

The HIMUNC VII Secretariat, chairs, and vice chairs have put a lot of effort into making a committee that is both engaging and entertaining. If there are any questions, please refer to the dias below, and email your questions to the chairs, or our Under Secretary-General of Crisis Simulations, Sirjan Kaur. We hope to bring you an exciting and interactive committee, and we cannot wait to see you all at HIMUNC VII.

Best,

JCC: India Dais

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Background

A Nation Under Control

The British Empire's colonization of India was catalyzed by two significant factors, the death of its leader, Aurangzeb, in 1707 and the decline of the Mughal Empire. India's vast resources, economic potential, and strategic geographical location made it an enticing and challenging territory for Britain to relinquish. This prompted the British to expand their presence and influence in the region. Then, around 1757, the Bengalese and the French were defeated by the British, allowing them to gain more land. They then overshadowed the Bengalese's powers and took their large navy fleets to India. Following the navy fleets, members of the British Company, Warren Hastings and Robert Clive, were credited to be the individuals to establish control over India, or the British Raj, while emphasizing the urgency to learn Indian culture and their heritage.[1] The British Raj employed a range of controlling tactics in their governance of India, which included various measures that affected the Indian population. This encompassed not only their political rule but also the economic and social aspects of Indian life, resulting in widespread discontent and resistance among the Indian populace. of the British Raj resulted in various nationalistic movements over the years, one of the biggest ones being the Anglo-Sikh Wars. The Anglo-Sikh Wars took place throughout the 1840s, and the British Empire won as a result of the funding and clear financial superiority they carried, and the Koh-i-noor was handed over to Queen Victoria in 1949. This took place when Maharaja Duleep Singh, the ruler of the Sikh Empire, was separated from his family and brought under the influence of Queen Victoria. He was subjected to a process where he was separated from his mother and exposed to British society and its values, essentially undergoing a form of

indoctrination.[2] In 1858, the Government of India Act was passed, which officially transferred British control over India from the company to the crown.[4] There were 11 provinces in India, each of which had its governor along with other appointed officials from the British Parliament. Several years later, in 1876, Queen Victoria of the British Empire was formally endowed, making her the Empress of India. As a result of this, Dadabhai Naoroji and a group of fierce Indian Nationalists founded the India National Congress in 1885, which allowed more and more Indians to play an important role in Indian and British politics.[2]

The Anglo-Sikh Wars

The Anglo-Sikh Wars consisted of two campaigns (1845-46; 1848-49) between the British and Sikh Empires. It resulted in the annexation of Punjab in northwestern India by the British, meaning that the British obtained a victory. In the first war, there were rising tensions between the British and Sikh Empires as a result of the Sikhs' refusal to allow British troops to travel through their territory during the Anglo-Afghan War. Along with the Sikh Empire's *panchs,* or military committees, they conducted an attempt to invade British India, utilizing a forestalling of British attacks on them. This backfired and was defeated by the British through four, long battles of Sobraon, Aliwal, Firozpur, and Mudki. The British celebrated their victory by annexing Sikh lands that were east of the Sutlej River and stationed a British soldier in Lahore to maintain their troops. In the second war, the entirety of Punjab was annexed by the British Empire as a result of poor generalship. Mulraj, governor of Multan, revolted against the British on his own in April of 1948. This escalated the situation as too many troops and rebels joined the revolt on September 14, 1848. The Second Sikh War finally ended on March 12 1849 with

the surrender of Punjab, which caused a full annexation of their territories by the British.[5]

The Rebellion

A few years following the acquisition of Maharajah Dileep Singh as king, the British Company began to employ local Indians to work in the army, and they were called "sepoys". As the British continued to exploit and take advantage of them, tensions rose to a peak, causing the Indian Rebellion of 1857.[1] Mangal Pandey, an Indian sepoy, launched an attack on the British officers in Barrackpore, and he was later arrested and executed for taking the risk of attempting to gain independence. The rest of the Indians who were part of this attack were forced to utilize Enfield Cartridges, which were lined with beef fat, and were feathered, tortured, and executed if they were to refuse to utilize them. The prevailing demographic in India consisted mainly of Hindus, who were significantly infuriated by the British military's practice of using bullets coated with beef fat. This was especially offensive due to the sacred status of cows in Hinduism, intensifying the collective outrage among the Indian populace, including the Hindu community.[3] Consequently, the aftermath of the rebellion saw the British employing ruthless measures, which impacted not only men but also women and children. Families were fractured, and the profound loss of loved ones continues to cast a long shadow over the collective memory of those times.[2]

Following the rebellion, the British Empire awaited the calm and put the Koh-i-noor on the Crown for the Empress of India, Queen Victoria.[1] Throughout the following years until India gained its independence in 1947, there would be an increasing amount of revolting and critique upon the British Empire's rule over India. [2]

Topic 1: Internal Issues

Unity Amidst Diversity

Conflicts within the nation of India arose one by one as time passed, and they were not only external conflicts but existed within them as well. One of the internal conflicts that were connected to the All India Muslim League, or the Muslim League, was the political party led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah that pushed for the partition of Indians and Muslims at the time of the Partition of India in 1947. Founded in 1906, The All India Muslim League was made to fight for Indian Muslims' rights. Before this, there had been a great number of Indians and Muslims in India that were clashing with one another, so the Indian Muslims felt as though they needed a separate league to discuss these disparities.[6] Furthermore, the All India Muslim League believed that it alone had the right to represent Muslims and their interests. The League's strong opinions caused conflict with the Indian National Congress with

Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, who contrastingly argued that they represented all Indians only.

To make matters worse, in 1936-37, the British aspired to conduct elections to 11 provincial legislatures, and despite their claim of representing all Muslims' opinions, the Muslim League polled less than five percent of their votes. Criticism began from the Muslim side and they were angered that the Hindu majority of India would suppress Muslims' religion and culture. For instance, they utilized the Hindu and Muslim revolts in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to accuse the Indian National Congress of subverting Muslim culture when they banned Muslims from slaughtering cows. Unlike many other religions, most Hindus worship cows, while Muslims slaughter them. The increasing religious tensions between Indians and Muslims in pre-partitioned India not only fueled fear in Muslim communities but also had broader repercussions for the entire

Indian society. This unrest led to an upsurge in communal riots, changes in laws, and significant societal divisions. The consequences of this fear and mounting tension in India were profound, with far-reaching effects on the nation.

Security in India

During World War II, the British forces utilized Indian soldiers to fight in the war, which began in 1939. The numbers in the army rose from 200,000 men to the largest volunteer army in history, 2.5 million men in August of 1945. They fought across the continent and 18 members of the British Indian Army were awarded the Victoria Cross or the George Cross. Essentially, the British could not have pushed through the World Wars if it weren't for the might of the Indian soldiers. The Indian National Congress recruited Infantry/Armored Divisions, airborne troops, artillery, engineers, the Women's Auxiliary Corps, the Indian States Forces, and the Chindits. India's internal security increasingly required a significant British military presence due to the vastness of the nation.

Questions To Consider

1. The internal turmoil in India is worsening, the causes for this are?

2. What are some ways to solve this without exacerbating the existing conflicts?

3. What diplomatic, political, or economic strategies might the leaders and authorities have employed to create a more seamless transition from British India to independent nations in 1947 while minimizing conflicts?

4. How might the leaders of the Indian independence movement have navigated the challenges and divisions within the movement to achieve a more unified front?

Non-Cooperation Movement

By 1944, the winds of change were blowing strong across British India. The decades-long fight for independence had picked up immense steam, radically transforming the country's sociopolitical landscape. At the forefront of this seismic shift was Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement, launched in 1920 as a nonviolent challenge to British rule. This bold campaign met a harsh response when Gandhi was arrested in Bombay on March 10, 1922, and charged with sedition by colonial authorities afraid of losing their grip on the Jewel in the Crown. India was approaching a decisive turning point, with freedom from the British Empire finally within grasp after long years of struggle. He was sentenced to six years in prison for his involvement in protesting the British colonial government in India. Following his release he continued to protest the registration law by supporting labor strikes and organizing a massive non-violent march. This movement was designed to achieve India's independence through peaceful resistance and non-cooperation with British authorities, ultimately playing a paramount role in the arduous journey towards India's freedom. The Indian National Congress, also known as the INC, played a crucial role in shaping the Non-Cooperation Movement by adopting Gandhi's ideologies of non-violence and civil disobedience. By adopting Gandhi's ideologies of non-violence and civil disobedience, the Indian National Congress (INC) played a crucial role in developing the Non-Cooperation Movement. This turned it into a collective effort rather than solely Gandhi's initiative. This support brought a significant portion of India's population under the movement's umbrella. INC leaders helped mobilize the masses, moving a broad-based and inclusive struggle. The

INC played another vital role in encouraging Indians to engage in acts of civil disobedience, such as the Salt March led by Gandhi.The INC also played a pivotal role in inspiring Indians to engage in acts of civil disobedience, such as the Salt March led by Gandhi. These nonviolent resistance actions not only exposed the injustices of British colonial rule but also had significant consequences for India. They led to widespread unrest and conflicts, eventually contributing to the deterioration of British control and the push for India's independence.

The total amount of wheat harvested in the British Empire during the 1943-44 year was 29 million tons, but the war efforts absorbed them into their cabinet and utilized them for storage.During the 1943-44 period, the British Empire managed to harvest an impressive 29 million tons of wheat. However, rather than using this abundance to assist the people of Bengal during the famine, they diverted it for war efforts and storage. This action raised serious moral and ethical concerns. Adding to this, the citizens of Bengal were kept in the dark about the surplus of food held in the war cabinet. It's evident that Britain's neglect had a profound impact on India, and as you consider the characters for your committee, it's important to recognize the significant evidence regarding this negligence. They also did not inform the people of Bengal about the surplus of food that they had within their war cabinet, which enraged them greatly.

Bengal Famine of 1943

"I hate Indians. They are a beastly people with a beastly religion. The famine was their fault for breeding like rabbits," Winston Churchill said, clearly emphasizing British imperial attitudes towards Indians in the 1940s. Adding to the hateful view of Churchill, the Bengal Famine of 1943 occurred as a result of manifestations of

conflicts. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) defined these famines as a "humanitarian crisis in a country, region, or society where there is a total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict [that] requires an international response". Essentially, the famine was a consequence of the British Empire's negligence of Bengal, and utilizing their resources and labor power for war efforts. During 1943, there was a vast shortage of rice supply for consumption in Bengal, while there was also a rise in the purchasing price of rice. This caused a great decline in the population of Bengal as the inhabitants were unable to afford food and slowly passed away from hunger. Nevertheless, there is a lot of scrutiny and debate over the reasons why this famine occurred. For instance, the Famine Inquiry Commission (FIC) conducted an investigation into this particular famine, and

the Commission blamed the tendency of Indians to breed excessively and utilized that as an excuse for why they starved. However, there was a great degree of crop shortfalls in late 1942, and it had a great impact on food availability as there were crises such as drought, flood, and devastation from war. This famine mostly affected fishermen, agricultural laborers, and transporters, while the beneficiaries were big farmers, merchants, and rice mill farmers. Eventually, the FIC concluded that the 1943 Bengal Famine was not caused by the natural implications, but rather the policy failure during the British Raj.

During the times between 1920-1947, India faced great famines which resulted in the death of over 5.5 million people. This was severe enough to have a substantial impact on the long-term population growth of the country in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Many public figures stated that the British government

was a major contributing factor to the severity of famines. These famines also caused a huge economic crisis for farmers as during these years there was a major drought which left these farmers unable to harvest any crops. This affected the railroad system as none of the railroads built were able to be used to transport food or other agricultural commodities. British colonial policies significantly contributed to the severity of famines These policies included exploitative land taxation, which placed a heavy burden on Indian farmers, leaving them with limited resources to invest in agricultural practices and weather-resistant crops. Additionally, the British administration favored cash crops for export over food crops for local consumption, leading to a skewed agricultural focus that left India vulnerable to food shortages. Trade policies further exacerbated the problem, as India's agricultural produce was often exported to meet British needs rather than being made available to alleviate famine conditions within the country. These policies, coupled with adverse weather conditions, created a perfect storm that intensified the impact of famines and heightened the suffering of the Indian population.

Bharat Chhodo Andolan

It was a significant and influential movement in the Indian independence struggle against British colonial rule. The Quit India Movement was launched by Mahatma Gandhi on August 8, 1942, during World War II. The Quit India Movement was defined by peaceful acts of civil disobedience, protests, strikes, and a refusal to cooperate with British authorities. It stood as a pivotal moment in the fight for Indian independence, showcasing the steadfast determination of the Indian populace to attain self-governance. During this movement, Gandhi famously rallied for "Do

or Die," encouraging Indians to take any necessary measures to secure their freedom.

Questions To Consider:

1. British policies, such as exploitative land taxation and the preference for cash crops over food crops, are contributing to famines and economic crises in India. What strategies can be employed to mitigate the impact of these policies and ensure food security for the Indian population?

2. While Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement was gaining momentum, it faced repression and arrests by the British authorities. How can India address the issue of British crackdowns on nonviolent movements?

3. How did the Quit India Movement, led by Mahatma Gandhi in 1942, impact the Indian independence struggle and the determination of the Indian population to attain self-governance?

4. In what ways did the Quit India Movement differ from the Non-Cooperation Movement, and what strategies were employed to achieve civil rights and independence?

5. What role did peaceful resistance, protests, strikes, and civil disobedience play in the broader fight for civil rights in British India, and what challenges did activists face during this period?

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