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## THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN THE ANTI-PARTITION MOVEMENT

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### Abstract

In the anti-partition movement, the women's power in India plays an important role, they join the movement in various ways, so that the British government's plot to destroy Hindu Muslim unity does not succeed. When Lord Curzon decided to partition Bengal in 1905, Indian women's as well as men join in the opposition. For this, they took several steps including observing Arandhan Vows and boycotting foreign goods. They play a significant role in the formation of Swadeshi organisation and establishment of national unity. Not only that, they participate in revolutionary activities, such as Lavanya Prabha Devi with pistols and revolutionary magazines supply revolutionaries, Manorama Basu leads the procession, Noni Bala Devi supplies weapon to the revolutionaries, Asalata Sen promotes revolutionary ideology. Apart from this, women protested through writings such as Kumudini Mitra Suprabhat, Banalata Devi Antapur, Muslim women Khairunnesa called on Muslims in the anti-partition movement through Swadesinurag Patrika. To protect communal unity, women celebrate Rakhi Bandhan. Sarala Devi promotes patriotism and nationalism through Bharati Newspaper. In conclusion, the contribution of women's power in the anti-partition movement is truly undeniable.

**Keywords:** The context of the partition of Bengal, Women's participation, Arandhan Vows, Swadeshi organisation Establishment, Swadeshi, Boycott, develop Nationalism, participate in revolutionary activities, protesting through Newspaper, Protect communal harmony.

### Introduction

The nationalist movement was one of the most important movement against in British Empire in India in the twentieth century and as a result of this nationalist movement India gained independence. However, the contribution of men as well as women behind this Indian nationalist movement was unforgettable. Among the nationalist movements the contribution of women in the anti-partition movement was very important. The nationalist movements of the twentieth century were a diverse movement, one of the major sub-disciplines of which was the women's movement. Just as in ancient times women were worshiped as goddesses, today women are still worshipped as female powers. In the Brihatsangeeta women is mentioned as the "Griholokshmi" and in the Manusangeeta women is mentioned as the "light of the house". So, when women participate in a movement it goes without saying that the right movement will carry another dimension. The first political activities of Bengali women were launched through the anti-partition movement. However, the steps taken by the British government behind the partition of Bengal were not a single day but its deep conspiracy.

The Context of the Partition of Bengal: -- At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the Bengalis were at the forefront of the political thought, political consciousness and intellect of the then India. The leadership of the National Congress was in the hands of the Bengalis. In a word, Bengalis used to show a new direction then. Seeing this Nationalist attitude of the Bengalis, Lord Curzon, the governor of British India, was terrified. In this word, Bengal was the source of unrest. Therefore, during this tenure, a proposal was made to divide Bengal in order to weaken the politically conscious Bengalis and destroy the nationalist Movement in Bengal as a whole. In protest of this government decision an anti-partition movement was started in the whole of Bengal and India where the role of women was unparalleled. However, long before the Lord Curzon many British ruler has repeatedly proposed the partition of Bengal. For example: -

In 1854, it was proposed that governing Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam was not possible for a leftnent Government. With this proposal in mind, Assam was separated from Bangladesh in 1874 and turn into a separate province. Along with these three Bengali language districts, GoalparaKachar and Shreehot were connected with Assam. In 1896, William Ward the chief commissioner of Assam, proposed the annexation of the Chittagong Division and the district of the Dhaka and Mymensingh to Assam celling commercial and political advantage. Due to mass protests, the proposal was rejected.

Then in 1905, the Leftnent Government of Bengal, Andrew Fraser, again proposed the partition of Bengal the home secretary of the Government of India Herbert Rizley plan was also supported by a storm of national protests. AS a result, he later secretly adopted a new plan for the Partition of Bengal. According to the new plan a new province called East Bengal and Assam would be formed by connecting Dhaka Division, Chittagong Division, Rajshahi Division, Hill Tripura, Malda District and Darjeeling i.e., North Bengal and East Bengal with Assam. Its capital will be Dhaka. It will be ruled by a petty or lieutenant governor. On the other hand, West Bengal will consist of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa with Calcutta as its Capital. Lord Curzon decided to partition Bengal in 1905 for the Minions of administrative work their political means behind it.



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- (I) To weaken the nationalist movement by weakening the gemstone Bengalis in the political movement of India.  
(ii) To create division in the Hindu- Muslim community. Through this discrimination the Muslim community become a supporter of the British government.

In the wake of this consistency of the British government, Bengali women were forced to join the movement.

### Women Join in Anti-Partition Movement

In 1905, following the recommendation of the Rizley commission, Lord Curzon decided to divide Bengal into two parts, known in history as the partition of Bengal. Soon after the partition of Bengal was declared, the women crossed the threshold of their houses and joined the procession to save their mother Bengal. To this end they take many steps.

1. **Arandhan Vows:** --Ramendra Sundar tribedi a famous scientist and easiest requested to observe the day on which the partition of Bengal took place on ,16 October 1905, as Arandhan Day.Responding to his request Indian women protest against the partition of Bengal by stopping cooking from house to house that day.
2. **Boycott movement of women:** --when Krishna Kumar Mitra editor of Sanjivani, call for a Boycott movement against the partition of Bengal women join the party. After hearing the speech of KaliprosonnaBisarad in Khulna and at his called the women of Bengal boycott foreign products like million, bangles, salt etc. Not only that women followed the picketing and gave another dimension to the anti-partition movement.
3. **Establishment of Swadeshi women organization:** -- During the partition of Bengal women formed many Swadeshi Samiti for the purpose of increasing the Swadeshi movement. Such as Swarna Kamari Devi's "Sakhi Samiti" and Sarala Devi Choudhury Rani "Lakshmi Bhandhar samiti". The women also from the mahila Parishad service team. They play an important role in uniting women.
4. **Increasing National consciousness:** Women of that time played an important role in raising the nationalist consciousness among women. For example, on the occasion sarla Devi Choudhury Rani "Swadeshi andolan", Pratapadityautsav and "BirastromiBrata" were promoted. Through various organization's women spread the patriotic spirit among them. In such a way that women crossed the boundaries of the house and join the movement in groups to save Bengal.
5. **The activity of women in the revolutionary movement:** --The women of the various revolutionary movement that took place during the partition of Bengal not only participated in the movement, but also co-operated in various ways, such as providing money to the revolutionaries and providing shelter to the revolutionaries for the proper conduct of the anti-British movement.For example, during the Swadeshi movement LavannyaPrabhab Devi used to supply regular pistols and revolutionary magazines for her revolutionary brother. Inspired by the Swadeshi Ideology,Ashalata Sen of Dhaka district went door-to-door to spread the revolutionary ideology.DukoriBala Devi hid 7 pistol to help revolutionary NibaranGhatok, for this he was arrested in 1917 and sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment.NaniBala Devi was sentenced to two years in prison for harboring her nephew and armed revolutionary Amarendra Nath chattopadhyay and several others.Manorama Basu of Barisal led a procession.Kadamboni Ganguly and swarnakumari Ghosal attended the congress session.
6. **Movement through newspaper:** --The women of the anti-partition movement held pens in protest of partition. At the beginning of 1905,"Antapur patrika" Bangla hinted at a conspiracy to divide. The "BamabodhiniPatrika" published in August of that year clearly laid out of the plan for the partition of Bengal. Suprova" edited by Kumudini Mitra and "Antapur"edited by Banolota Devi regularly published advertisements for the formation of"Swadeshi Shilpa"(indigenous industries). In October 1905, a Play was published which gained considerable popularity. Sarala Devi through her "Bharati newspaper", also spread patriotism and nationalism.Khairunnessa,a Muslim women called for boycott of foreign goods and acceptance of domestic products in an article in her novel "swadesinurag" .He made the call at a time when some Muslims were away from the Swadeshi movement.
7. **Protecting Communal Unity:** At That time women played a very important role in maintaining Communal Unity. IN order to preserve the communal unity that the British poured into Bengal to destroy the Hindu-Muslim communal unity, the Bengalis tried to strengthen the Hindu-Muslim relationship through the Rakhi Bandhan festival at the initiative of the World poet Rabindranath Tagore.

### Conclusion

The contribution of women in anti-partition movement is still a shining example in Indian history. Not only the women of the highly educated aristocratic families of the city participated in the anti-partition movement, but also the ordinary lower, middle class

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women of the village. IN anti-partition movement in Indian history Girijasundari Devi, saudaminiDevi, Sarojini Devi, Nani Bala Devi, Ashalata Sen, Lavanya prova Devi, Ambujasundari Dasgupta of Jalpaiguri, the widow of Lakshman Chandra Asha Land lord of Mongalanjand Purnalata Gupta of Mymensingh name's will be an undeniable. At the beginning of the twentieth century poet Subhash Mukhopadhyay wrote in his poem, "MichhilerMukh" the way in which women crossed the threshold of the house during the anti-partition movement and join the procession on the highway is a truly fancy aspect of this moment. At that time the British were shocked at the way women jumped into the movement to save Bangla. Finally, it can be said that the contribution of women in the anti-partition movement at the beginning of the twentieth century cannot be judged by any criteria. In a word their contribution was really undeniable.

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