

Making of Pakistan's Flag: Politics and Controversies

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In the modern times national flag is one of the basic requirements for a nation state. It symbolizes the state and is considered as a matter of honor, respect and pride for the entire nation. Pakistan's national flag, comprised of green and white with a crescent and star, was designed by Amiruddin Kidwai, approved by the Muslim League leadership and finally adopted by the Constituent Assembly of the country. Jinnah showed personal interest in making of the flag. He wanted to make it reflect the feelings of the people of Pakistan and thus annoyed Mountbatten by not accepting his design. There are some controversies regarding the flag including the debate that whether the crescent is in right direction or not, but ever since the birth of Pakistan, there is a national consensus about this flag and not even a slight modification has been made in it.

Keywords: Pakistan, Flag, Jinnah, Muslim League, Mountbatten.

Making of Pakistan against all the odds – opposition of both British as well as the Indian National Congress, the most popular and the most organized of all the Indian political parties at that time – was indeed a great achievement of the All-India Muslim League and its leader, Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Nevertheless, their task was not over when the demand for the creation of a separate state for the Muslims of South Asia was accepted. Planning to run a new born nation state and giving it an administrative set-up from the scratch, that too at a time when neither trained man power nor infrastructure or financial resources were available, was a big ask. The job became further complicated because of the unwanted, and to many, biased interference of Louis Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of British India (Zaman, 1985). Jinnah and his team were up to the task in meeting all the challenges that came their way.

The first task before the planners of Pakistan was to outline the state-structure (Dar, 2014). Ideally, Muslim League should not have left such important matters to be resolved at the last moment and should have done their homework much earlier, yet the unfavorable on ground realities were a big hurdle in achieving the utopian idyllic. They were uncertain, even till very late, if they would get a separate state or not? All their energies were focused on their freedom for struggle and they did not have time to see beyond it. When the partition was announced on June 3, 1947 and it was decided that the power would be transferred to India and Pakistan in a year's time, League leadership decided to use this one year for the necessary preparation for running an independent state and to settle the issues which were required to be settled before the creation of Pakistan. To their surprise, and probably to satisfy Congress' desires, Mountbatten hurried the process and decided to transfer power by August 15, 1947 instead of June 1948 (Afzal, 2013).

Jinnah and his team did much more than what one could expect from them under the prevailing circumstances. They successfully defined the nature of the state-structure of Pakistan before its creation. On certain issues they compromised with the British desires, while on the others they refused to accept the dictates of Mountbatten. On the issue of the making of a national flag, a basic requirement for a nation state, they were clear that it should reflect the religious and cultural sentiments of the people of Pakistan and thus they wanted it to be designed indigenously.

Mountbatten, who considered himself as an authority on flags, took numerous interests in the matter of making the flags for India and Pakistan. He had started working on the designing even before the partition plan was announced and by mid-June he was done with the designing of the two flags. The issue was for the first

time discussed at an official level in the Viceroy's staff meeting held on June 23, when Abell drew the attention towards the concerns of the British officers regarding the flags of the new dominions.¹ Mountbatten informed that he had already worked on the flags and had specimen designs prepared. He assured that he intended to discuss the issue with Nehru and Jinnah at the earliest (Minutes of Viceroy's Forty Sixth Staff Meeting, June 23, 1947). Next day, he had a meeting with Nehru in which he presented him the design of the proposed Indian flag.² Nehru took the design with him and promised to give an early feedback after discussing it with the concerned quarters in the Congress (Interview between Louis Mountbatten and Nehru, June 24, 1947).

In case of Pakistan's proposed flag, Mountbatten preferred to communicate his idea to Jinnah via letter written on June 24. He wrote that he was only suggesting the Muslim League a proposal because he "was for ten years a Signal Officer in the Royal Navy, whose specialty" was "flags". He suggested that he had taken the "present Muslim League flag and placed in the upper canton a small Union Jack". He explained that "the normal size of Union Jack in the case of other Dominions – Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa –" was "one quarter the total area of the flag". However, he suggested only one-ninth space for the Jack not only because of the lack of room in the Muslim League flag to put a bigger one, but also because Pakistan "might not wish to stress the British connection quite as strongly as in the case of the other Dominions". He made it clear that Pakistan would be free to make any change in this flag once it would adopt a new Constitution (Louis Mountbatten to M.A. Jinnah, June 24, 1947). In his personal report of June 27, he informed the Secretary of State about his proposed designs of the two flags and also about his correspondence with Nehru and Jinnah. His anxiety to know about the reaction of the two leaders is quite reflective in the report (Viceroy's Personal Report No. 10, June 27, 1947).

Since there was no response from Jinnah on the issue, Mountbatten in his meeting with him on July 5 again raised the issue. He asked Jinnah if "he had made up his mind about the Dominion Flag"? He also inquired as if Jinnah liked the design he sent him? In order to put some pressure on Jinnah, he also told him that "Congress were likely to agree to a similar flag". Jinnah said that his party had yet not discussed the issue and promised to let Mountbatten know in good time to have a flag prepared before August 15 (Interview between Louis Mountbatten and Jinnah, July 5, 1947). When the two leaders again met on July 12, on Mountbatten's inquiry Jinnah told him that when the issue was discussed in the League's meeting, he could not find even "one single supporter for the idea of having a Union Jack in the upper canton of the Muslim League flag". The main reason for the refusal to accept Mountbatten's suggestion was that the party's leadership believed that "it would be repugnant to the religious feelings of the Muslims to have a flag with a Christian Cross alongside the Crescent"(Interview between Louis Mountbatten and Jinnah, July 12, 1947). If done so, "all the old hatreds and rivalries would be revived"(Interview between Ismay and Jinnah, July 24, 1947).

Mountbatten was not happy to listen to Jinnah's answer but he did not discuss anything on the issue further in the meeting. According to Ismay, Mountbatten felt this so deeply that he had drafted a telegram to the Prime Minister saying that "it seemed hopeless to try co-operating with Mr. Jinnah"³(Interview between Ismay and Jinnah, July 24, 1947). He, however, informed Jinnah that it would be mandatory for Pakistan Navy "to fly the British Commonwealth white ensign at the ensign staff" as it was the "custom throughout the navies of the Commonwealth". Yet, he allowed Jinnah to fly Pakistan's flag at the Jack staff on the ships of Pakistan Navy. Mountbatten also requested Jinnah to fly "the generally accepted flag of a Governor-General, namely a dark blue flag with the letters 'Pakistan' in yellow and a yellow crown above, both for Government House and his car, and hoist in a warship if he went afloat". The issue of discussing the design of the flags, for the Governors of different provinces of Pakistan were to fly, was also on the agenda of Mountbatten but he intentionally avoided discussing the issue in the prevailing environment (Interview between Louis Mountbatten and Jinnah, July 12, 1947).

¹Abell stated that Sir John Colville had told him that he would not be prepared to remain Governor of Bombay unless he was permitted to fly the Union Jack or a flag embodying the Union Jack.

² The proposed flag was similar to the Congress flag but had a small Union Jack in the upper canton. Since the Congress flag consists of three horizontal stripes, the Union Jack was fitted into the exact width of the space between the stripes, which made the Jack one-sixth of the total area of the flag instead of one-quarter as in case of other dominions.

³ He, however, later decided not to send the telegram for the movement.

In his meeting with Jinnah and Liaquat on July 15, Mountbatten, hoping against hope, that Jinnah might change his mind, once again talked about the issue of Pakistan's flag. To his disappointment, Jinnah was not ready to change his stance. He "renewed his regret that Pakistan would not accept even a small Union Jack on the Dominion flag". On this Mountbatten requested that Jinnah should "at least adopt the custom of hoisting the Union Jack alongside the Dominion flag, either on the same pole or on two separate poles, on all special occasions". Jinnah agreed and asked Mountbatten to provide him the list of the days (Interview between Louis Mountbatten and Jinnah and Liaquat, July 15, 1947).

Congress, like Muslim League, also rejected the idea of the inclusion of Union Jack as being part of the flag of the Dominion of India. Nehru informed Mountbatten that initially party's leadership "expressed their willingness" to accept Mountbatten's proposal, but later they changed their mind because they thought that "the general feeling among Congress extremists was that the leaders were pandering far too much to the British" and that was something which they could not afford. A Committee of the Constituent Assembly designed the future Indian flag and sent it to Mountbatten. The proposed flag was quite similar to the existing Congress flag. The only difference was the replacement of "spinning wheel" with the "wheel from the Sarnath Asokan capital" in center of the flag (Viceroy's Personal Report, July 18, 1947).

In his personal report of July 18, Mountbatten acknowledged that in spite of his earlier conviction that he would convince the leadership of the Congress and the League to "have the Union Jack in the upper canton of their flags", he failed to persuade both of them. He mentioned that he, however, managed to convince the two parties to host the Union Jack either on the "same flagstaff as the Dominion flag or on a neighboring flagstaff on the 'recognized' days in the year" and the two Dominions' navies would fly the white ensign of the Commonwealth. But for that, both Nehru and Jinnah had requested him that "this scheme would be acceptable if it were not published" and "should simply happen as a matter of routine" (Viceroy's Personal Report, July 18, 1947). Listowel in his reply showed satisfaction over the arrangements regarding the flag and said that it was "clearly desirable to avoid pushing them so far as the direction of accepting the 'externals' of dominion status that they will forfeit the confidence and support of their followers" (The Earl of Listowel to Mountbatten, July 25, 1947). The same was finalized in the meeting of India-Burma Committee, held on July 26 (Meeting of India and Burma Committee, July 26, 1947).

Mountbatten, in the Viceroy's personal report of July 25 claimed that Jinnah backed out from his earlier commitment to fly white ensign on the ships of Pakistan Navy (Viceroy's Personal Report, July 25, 1947). But a good look at the interview between Ismay and Jinnah on July 24 shows that Mountbatten was wrong in his reporting. Jinnah informed Ismay that he had never told Mountbatten that Pakistan's Navy would not fly the white ensign alongside the dominion flag. Jinnah, however, showed his reluctance in flying the Governor-General's flag with the Kings' crest on his residence. He probably was planning to make his own monogram for its replacement. His argument was that "after the 15th August, His Majesty would no longer be Emperor of India and if he were to continue to subscribe himself as such it would be resented" (Interview between Ismay and Jinnah, July 24, 1947). Mountbatten discussed the issue of the Governor-General's flag when he met Jinnah on July 29. Jinnah was still reluctant to the proposal of using the pattern of the flag for the Governor-General as suggested by the viceroy. He feared that India might change the design of its flag after Jinnah's acceptance. He only agreed to the proposal when Mountbatten promised that he would inform Jinnah privately, if there was any evidence that the Dominion of India had any such intentions (Interview between Louis Mountbatten, Jinnah and Liaquat, July 29, 1947). It was finalized that the flag of the Governor-General of Pakistan would be blue with a crown and lion and name of the Dominion written in gold (Ceremonies in India on August 15 and Flags).

Regarding the flag of the Governors, Mountbatten proposed that they should fly flags similar to those of the Governor-Generals but with the name of the Provinces inserted instead of the name of the dominion. Listowel discouraged the idea and suggested that the Provincial Governors should "fly the Union Jack or the Union Jack with the badge of their Province" as being practiced in Australia and Canada (The Earl of Listowel to Mountbatten, July 26, 1947). Mountbatten rejected this proposal and replied that "there was no possibility of securing agreement at this stage to this suggestion" (Mountbatten to the Earl of Listowel, July 27, 1947). In the meeting of India and Burma Committee it was decided that the flags used by Governors should not be similar to

that of Governor-Generals. They should differ in color i.e. "those for Pakistan might have a dark green background and those for India a saffron one"(Meeting of India and Burma Committee, July 28, 1947). Jinnah agreed with the proposal of using deep green color for the "flags of Governors in Pakistan and the armllets for members of the Personal staff of the Governors" (Interview between Louis Mountbatten, Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan, July 29, 1947).

On August 5, Mountbatten issued the list of dates on which Union Jack was to be flown on public buildings in India and Pakistan (Note by the Viceroy, August 5, 1947). Partition Council, however, amended the list. They decided to delete Anzac Day because it commemorated "a victory over the Turks, a Muslim nation whom Pakistan naturally does not want to embarrass in any way". It was also suggested that the title "Empire Day" should be replaced with "Commonwealth Day" for May 24 as the original title "was an unfortunate expression" so far as the people of India and Pakistan were concerned. Nehru also suggested that Independence Day for India and Pakistan would be "the least suitable day in the year to fly the Union Jack". Liaquat suggested that "each Dominion might fly the flag of the sister dominion on this day". Congress refused to endorse Liaquat's suggestion immediately and promised to consider the matter in the summer of 1948 (Viceroy's Personal Report No. 16, August 8, 1947).

When the Muslim League leaders were busy in negotiating the issues related to flag with Mountbatten and his team, there was a flood of interest and enthusiasm over the design and color of Pakistan's flag among the masses. Muslim League members and sympathizers started preparing designs of the future Pakistan's flag and started sending the designs to Jinnah and other League leaders for their consideration and approval. Those who sent proposals included common citizens, (LahiriChoudhury to M.A. Jinnah, August 4, 1947) students (Syed Tehseen Ali Shah to Jinnah, n.d.) truck and car dealers (M.Y. Akbary to M.A. Jinnah, August 6, 1947) professional art companies (N.C. Nag to M.A. Jinnah, August 8, 1947) and even non-Muslims from the areas which were not to be included in Pakistan (George D' Castellias to M.A. Jinnah, August 8, 1947). Some were so enthusiastic that they even designed a number of patterns and left it to the leadership to select anyone of them (A.M.A. Siddiqui to M.A. Jinnah, n.d.). Various designs sent to the League leadership explained the importance and significance of various shades and symbols shown therein. The explanations given by the designers were full of emotions and thus at times very interesting. If on one end it was suggested that words "Allah-o-Akbar" should be embossed on the flag as "crescent and star are the emblems of Turks" and not Islam (MirzaMuzaffar Beg to M.A. Jinnah, n.d). on the other there was a suggestion that there should be a tri color flag – Green with crescent and star in white as symbol of Islamic culture, Saffron with deep blue Swastika as symbol of Hindu past, and white with green bud of lily as the symbol of innocence and purity, representing other minorities (Qadri to Jinnah, July 31, 1947).

As the record shows, most of the proposals received by the Muslim League leadership were sent in late July and early August 1947. While the work on the designing of Pakistan's flag started earlier. With the rejection of Mountbatten's proposal on July 12, League's leadership had to look for an alternative design for Pakistan's flag on immediate basis. AmiruddinKidwai, who was member of Muslim League Council, a lawyer by profession and an artist, was assigned the task to design the proposed Pakistan's flag on the pattern of the flag of Muslim League, which by then had emerged as the symbol of the struggle for Pakistan. He studied the flag of the party and tried to present a design which was based on the League's flag but was not completely similar to it. The only difference between the two flags was that the quarter nearest the flag pole was white instead of dark green. The white stripe was added to represent the minorities living in Pakistan. He presented the design to the top leadership of the League (Central Committee and Council Meeting of All-India Muslim League, July 25, 1947). The design was by and large appreciated but the final decision of accepting or rejecting the design was not immediately made.

In the meeting of India-Burma Committee held on July 26, Mountbatten commented that Pakistan was expected to accept the dark green Muslim League flag with a white crescent and a five-pointed star as the flag of the new dominion (Meeting of India and Burma Committee, July 26, 1947). Both Jinnah and Liaquat were present in the meeting, yet they did not deny Mountbatten's assumption. However, within a day or two the Muslim League leadership in principal decided that the future Pakistan's flag would be based on the design proposed by Kidwai. In a meeting between Mountbatten, Jinnah and Liaquat on July 29, the League leaders told

the viceroy that they had finalized the basic design of Pakistan's flag. Liaquat produced the sample of the flag from his briefcase. After a brief discussion, by and large, there was a unanimous consent of this design (Interview between Louis Mountbatten, Jinnah and Liaquat, July 29, 1947). However, Mountbatten, in order to show his expertise in the field, suggested that the crescent and the star should be tilted forty-five degrees to give the crescent a more realistic resemblance to the rising moon (Ali, 1973). Jinnah took personal interest in the matter and kept working on the flag. According to Pasha Haroon, daughter in law of Abdullah Haroon, the flag was finalized in a meeting held in their house, with Jinnah in chair (*Dawn*, February 14, 2016).

One of the controversies that is still highlighted, though on a very small scale, is that the moon on the Pakistan's flag is not a crescent but a waning moon, which "has in its nature and meaning an ominous character: decreasing, diminishing, decline in power, prosperity, intensity, brightness, gradual decrease, dying or dead"⁴ (*The Nation*, August 9, 1991). Arif Rahman Chughtai, son of Abdul Rahman Chughtai, claims that his father received a request from Jinnah to design Pakistan's flag. He made a couple of designs, and one of them was approved by Jinnah but as a result of some "conspiracy the new designs were put aside". He further claims that crescent in the design approved by Jinnah was of a waxing moon but a non-Muslim draftsman, "under instruction from someone", wrongly drafted it and changed the position of the moon to a waning one (*The Nation*, December 17, 1998).

The archival material available, however, does not support his claim. According to the record of Quaid-i-Azam Papers and Freedom Movement Archives, neither Chughtai was asked to design Pakistan flag nor was any design sent by him ever received or approved by Jinnah. He was only asked to design the insignia for the Government of Pakistan in a letter written to him by Wazir Ali on behalf of Liaquat and on the official letter head of the Finance Division, Government of India (Wazir Ali to Abdul Rahman Chughtai, July 9, 1947). Later the first postal stamp of Pakistan was also designed by Chughtai in 1948. However, it is important to note that in both the things designed by Chughtai, crescent is in its original position. Yet there is no evidence that any debate regarding waxing or waning moon ever took place in the Muslim League circles in that era. It is also significant to know that the League's flag, on the pattern of which Pakistan's flag was designed, also shows crescent in the same shape as on the Pakistan flag. It suggests that the use of waning moon instead of waxing moon in Pakistan flag was by mistake and not as a result of any conspiracy.

Another debate regarding the flag of Pakistan generated in early 1980s was that who actually stitched it for the first time? The Government of Pakistan gave Pride of Performance to Afzal Hussain for stitching the first official Pakistani flag. Family of his demised younger brother, Altaf Hussain, protested against it and claimed that the flag was actually stitched by Altaf and not Afzal (*Jasarat*, August 13, 1981). However, a good look into the details suggests that both the brothers together worked on this important assignment. Both Afzal and Altaf, who had a tailor shop in Qabool Bagh Delhi, were die hard followers of the Muslim League and also used to actively participate in the public meetings of the party. Altaf was also the part of Muslim League National Guards and had served for Jinnah's personal security (List of the National Guards, Committee of Action, All-India Muslim League). When the design of Pakistan's flag was finally approved, on the suggestion of Abdul Ghani Quraishi, the General Secretary of the Qabool Bagh chapter of Delhi Muslim League, Altaf was asked to stitch the flag, which he did with the help of his brother, (*Jinnah*, August 17, 2012), Afzal selected the cloth and cut it according to the given dimensions while Altaf stitched it (*Jang*, March 28, 1982). An American Journalist and photographer, Margrate Borak White, along with Barrister Samin Khan, visited their shop and took a photograph in which Altaf was sitting in the forefront stitching the flag while wearing National Guards uniform, while Afzal was in the background. The picture was published in the Life Magazine's edition published⁵ (*Life*, August 18, 1947). Some also claims that the first official flag of Pakistan was stitched by Abdul Hakim, the tailor of Raana Liaquat Ali Khan. However, the fact is that Abdul Hakim actually stitched the flag which Liaquat showed to Mountbatten on July 29, and not the one which was presented by him in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on August 11, 1947.

⁴ Crescent when it is facing North-East it is in the waning position, whereas when it is facing North-West it is the waxing position.

⁵ The same issue of Life Magazine also published the picture of the stitching of Indian flag. Mountbatten's Picture is on the Cover Page.

The issue of flag was so important for the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan that the first resolution ever moved in the house, i.e. immediately after the election of Jinnah as its president on August 11, 1947 was regarding the national flag for the Federation of Pakistan. According to Item 6 of the session, Liaquat while moving the resolution first gave the detailed description of the flag which reads:

A dark green rectangular flag in the proportion of length to width 3:2 with a white vertical bar at the mast, the green portion bearing a white crescent in the centre and a five pointed white heraldic star.

The size of the white portion being one-fourth the size of the flag, nearest the mast, the remainder three-fourths being dark green. The dimensions of the crescent and star are obtained as follows:

Draw the diagonal from the top right hand corner to the bottom left corner of the green portion. On this diagonal established two points – “A” and “B”. Point “A” at a distance equidistant from top right and bottom left hand corners of the green portion, i.e. the centre of the green portion. Point “B” at a distance from the top right hand corner equal to $\frac{13}{20}$ th the width of the flag. With centre point “A” and radius $\frac{3}{10}$ th the width of the flag describes the arc of a circle. With centre point “B” and radius $1\frac{1}{4}$ th the width of the flag describes a second arc. The enclosure made by these two arcs forms the crescent. The dimensions of the five pointed white heraldic star are determined by drawing a circle $\frac{1}{10}$ th the width of the flag. The circle surrounds the five points of the heraldic star. The star lies with one point on the diagonal and pointing to the top right hand corner of the flag. The tip of this point lies on the diagonal at a point where the larger arc of the crescent, if completed, cuts the diagonal.

After verbally describing the flag, in the round of applause from the members, he unfolded a specimen of the proposed National flag in the house. He said that this flag was “not the flag of any political party or community” but of the “Nation” and the “State” of Pakistan. He further said that like flags of other nations, Pakistan’s flag was also not merely a piece of cloth but stood for “freedom, liberty and equality to those who owe allegiance to this Flag”. He said that the flag would “protect the legitimate rights of every citizen” and defend “the integrity and independence of the Pakistan Federation”. To him, it would also be “an emblem of peace to help in maintaining peace throughout the world” (Liaquat Ali Khan’s speech in CAP, August 11, 1947).

Bhim Sen Sachar, a Congress member of the assembly from East Bengal, wanted the house not to pass the resolution proposed by Liaquat without the amendment presented by him. He did not give any alternate design of a Flag or any specific changes in the design but talked about the constitution of a seven men committee including Kiran Sankar Roy, Dharendra Nath Datta, Bhim Sen Sachar and “four other members to be nominated by the President of the Constituent Assembly” with the task of “determining the design of the National Flag”. He suggested that the committee would submit its report by 10 o’clock on August 12, “so that no time will be lost”. He said that the purpose of his amendment was “to make the flag more acceptable” (Bhim Sen Sachar’s speech in CAP, August 11, 1947). A good-look at the documents suggests that the Congress members did not have any blue print of a flag in their mind and thus were only trying to buy time. The suggestion to have at least five members to meet the requirement of quorum for the committee, with three Congress members in the committee, could also be used as a tool to delay the process.

Dhirendra Nath Datta, another Congress member in the house, declared Sachar’s proposed amendment as “a modest demand of the minority community” of Pakistan. He said that “in order to enjoy the rights and privileges of the State and share the difficulties”, it was “desirable that the flag should be designed with the assent of the minority so that it may create enthusiasm for all – voluntary allegiance of the minority”. He also raised the allegation that the proposed flag of Pakistan was “almost identical to the Party flag of the Muslim League”. However, when he was asked about the making of Congress flag as the National Flag of India, he tried to justify it and said that Congress flag “was claimed all along – it does not represent any community”. To him the tricolor of Congress flag “represented the virtues of the Nation unlike the Muslim League flag which represents the flag of a particular community”. He assured that the Flag accepted by the committee will be the one which would be made with the consent of the minority community and thus would “be a flag which will

create such enthusiasm that we will be able to say that really the Pakistan State has begun well”(Dhirendra Nath Datta's speech in CAP, August 11, 1947).

These arguments were followed by a debate in the house. Liaquat suggested that there was some confusion in the minds of Congress members, as the suggested Pakistan's flag according to him was “not the same flag as the Muslim League flag” nor was it a “religious flag” as “during the time of our Holy Prophet there was no such flag”. To him “moon and stars” were common for everyone and were as much the property of Muslims as of other communities (Liaquat Ali Khan's speech in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, August 11, 1947). Kiran Sankar Roy asked, “would you have the sun also, which is also a common property?”(Kiran Sankar Roy's speech in CAP, August 11, 1947).Liaquat replied that “the sun's heat is scorching and moon's light is soothing”. They did not want their flag to be scorching but should be giving the light that would “soothe the nerves”(Liaquat Ali Khan's speech in CAP, August 11, 1947). Datta still disagreed and declared that “Sun indicates rapid progress”(Dhirendra Nath Datta's speech in CAP, August 11, 1947).

Liaquat appreciated the suggestions presented by the opposition members but said that “he would have been only too glad to accept a proposition of this kind had there been sufficient time to examine the proposals”. He said that they needed to have a flag ready on immediate basis so that they could disperse the information about the dimensions of the flag to “every nook and corner of Pakistan” before August 15, so that it could be hoisted everywhere. He claimed that one-fourth of Pakistan's flag was made of white, a color made of seven different colors, showing that Pakistan could accommodate “not only all the minorities that are today but for any other minorities that might spring up hereafter”. He clarified that because of the shortage of time, “the Flag was designed by a few of us” and even most of the Muslim members had not seen the flag before, and thus it was not a discrimination against the minority members. He requested Sachar to take his amendment back (Liaquat Ali Khan's speech in CAP, August 11, 1947).

Jinnah as the President of the Assembly asked Sacher if he was willing to take his suggested amendment back. When he refused, the amendment tabled by Sacher was presented before the house, which rejected it. Then Jinnah presented Liaquat's resolution for vote in the assembly. The resolution was duly passed. Roy on behalf of Congress members in the assembly said that the “verdict of the House” was acceptable to him and his party and they were ready to “accept this Flag as the Flag of the State”. He promised to “pay it proper respect” and would remain “loyal to it”(KiranSankar Roy's speech in CAP, August 11, 1947). Liaquat suggested that the flag which was “approved by the House be placed in the National Museum”. However, till the time National Museum was established, “it should remain in safe custody with the President of the Constituent Assembly” (Liaquat Ali Khan's speech in CAP, August 11, 1947).

It is interesting to note that when Nehru presented a resolution for the approval of the Congress' flag with “Ashoka Chakar” as the National Flag for India on July 27, 1947 in the Constituent Assembly of the Dominion of India, Muslim League showed no hesitation in accepting it. Choudhry Khaliqzaman, the leader of Muslim League in the house made a speech in the favor of the resolution. He admitted that he did so because Jinnah had advised the Muslims left in India to remain loyal to their state and Khaliqzaman and his party did not want to create any trouble. Nehru personally went to Khaliqzaman's seat and congratulated him on his speech (Khaliqzaman, 1993). This shows that though the League leadership left in the Indian Dominion had showed a good gesture by accepting Congress' flag with minor amendments as the national flag of India and that too when it was finalized without consulting the League members of Indian Constituent Assembly. But fifteen days later Congress created fuss on the same issues, i.e. selection of Muslim League's flag with minor amendments as the national flag of Pakistan and that the minority community was not consulted before finalizing the flag for the new state in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan.

The flag of Pakistan was for the first time officially hoisted on August 14, 1947, during the transfer of power ceremony that took place at the building of Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Once the indoor proceedings were over, both Mountbatten and Jinnah along with all the invited guests came out in the lawn of the building. Buglers played the music of retreat and the Union Jack was slowly lowered from the flagpole, was neatly folded and then was handed over to Mountbatten by Jinnah. This was the time when Pakistan's flag was

formally unfurled for the first time on the flagpole and thirty one guns were fired (*Civil and Military Gazette*. August 16, 1947). Next morning, i.e. August 15, Pakistan's flag replaced the Union Jack on the building of the Governor-General's House. People all around the country also waved flags and hosted them on their roofs to celebrate independence. A group of Muslim Boy Scouts, who were attending 6th International Jumbori in France, were probably the first to fly Pakistan's flag on International soil. Mohammad Iqbal Qureshi, leader of the group, along with his fellows made a flag using green turban of a Hindu scout from Simla and white shirt of Khursheed Abbas Girdazi, and unfurled it on August 15 (Lodhi, 1986). Shaukat Ali, a student of Art at the Slade School of Art and attending First International Congress of Democratic youth in Prague, made a flag and on August 15 waved it in front of the Czechoslovak parliament (Wille, 2015).

To conclude, Muslim League leadership was clear that they needed to have a national flag before the birth of a new nation state. In this regard they rejected the design proposed by Mountbatten and evaluated the designs of flag sent by common people. Eventually, Amiruddin Kidwai's design was approved with minor changes by the Muslim League leadership. After a debate in the Constituent Assembly it was voted by overwhelming majority in the house as the national flag of Pakistan. Ever since, there is no change in this green and white flag with crescent and star.

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