

Analytical Study of Partition of India

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Abstract

India partition is a subject about which the coming generation has different views from the previous generation. Regarding the partition of India in 1947, most of the intellectuals of the then generation considered the British policy of 'divide and rule' as the main reason for it, but the subsequent generation also considered Mahatma Gandhi responsible for it to some extent. The third generation after two generations could not think clearly on this subject, because they were not allowed to speak and write openly on this subject. The reason was that such a change was deliberately made in the education system of India, in which one should not open his mouth on any controversial subject, otherwise it will be considered communal, and its character will be considered against secularism. These are the things that can be seen in our education system. The controversial subjects of Indian history were deliberately presented in such a way that thinking on it was forbidden in the society. A similar topic is the partition of India. Speaking and writing openly on this topic is not acceptable even today. Even today, the one who discusses it is considered guilty, considering it as an attempt to dig up old graves or to spoil communal harmony. Although with the gradual change in the education system, the new generation has started believing in speaking and discussing openly on all topics. Now it has understood why Article 370, despite being an ordinance, remained in force for years instead of being automatically repealed after six months. Therefore, today's generation wants to discuss any topic openly. On the question of partition of India, the new generation has not been able to know till date that how did the partition of India happen when the Indian National Congress was not in favour of partition? Gandhiji was shouting that the partition will happen over his dead body, yet how did the partition of India happen while he was alive? Even today, Congress leaders say that we never accepted the two-nation theory, then how did the partition of India happen? All these are such unanswered questions, whose answers the new generation wants to know. Although many scholars have expressed their views on this subject and some books have also been published in recent years, everyone has expressed their views according to their ideology, but all aspects have not been discussed openly. Therefore, the question of partition of India is still relevant today.

Keywords: Partition of India, Two-Nation Theory, Divide and Rule Policy, Appeasement Policy. Communalism. Separate Representation

Introduction

Partition of India is considered a 'great disaster' throughout India. This partition is considered a natural final stage of the ancient 'divide and rule policy' of the British and the policy of communalism and separation of the Muslim League. Both of them worked together and forced the Indian National Congress to accept the partition. Some Indian writers blame the Congress leaders to a great extent. The argument is that if the Congress leaders had shown enough wisdom and courage, the partition could have been prevented. While partition is considered completely logical and inevitable in Pakistan, some Indians and many British officials of that time have different views in this context. B.L. Grover and Yashpal write in this context that "whatever be the verdict of history, the credit for this partition will have to be given to Muhammad Ali Jinnah for the way he took advantage of the political circumstances. He became more and more powerful and finally came to be known as Quaid-e-Azam (great organizer). Although, citing the opinion of Jawaharlal Nehru, he also writes that according to Pandit Nehru, the reason for the delay in the emergence of the middle class among the Muslims was communalism, due to which the League filled the Muslim people with a sense of fear. On the slogan 'Islam is in danger', all the Muslims gathered under the banner of the League and Jinnah emerged as a political messiah. (Grover and Yashpal, 1995: 609) Rajendra Kumar, the writer of Chronicle, writes that it can be said objectively that the British, the Congress and the League were all responsible for the partition of India. The policies adopted by all three from time to time ultimately became responsible for the partition. It is true that if the credit for starting the process of partition goes to the British, then Jinnah took the most advantage of it and finally fulfilled his stubbornness by making the circumstances favourable. The failure of the Congress lies in the fact that it failed to develop a well-organized ideology and working system to fight communalism. (Kumar, Rajendra, 2004: 198-199) Thus, it can be said that there have been different opinions regarding the partition of India. In such a situation, the question becomes important whether the partition of India was inevitable or could it have been prevented? Therefore, their analysis is necessary to understand the partition of India.

It is clear that the establishment of the Muslim League and its objectives were certainly destructive for national unity, but the League also started singing the song of partition when it did not get a proper place on the political horizon. As far as the question of partition of India by the British is concerned, it is clear that till the Cripps Mission, the partition of India was not accepted by England. The Cripps Mission had two parts - the first was related to far-reaching constitutional questions. It had a provision for calling a Constituent Assembly elected by the Indians and making the Constitution of the Indian State Union by it. In the second part, to satisfy the sentiments of the Muslim League, it was clearly mentioned in these proposals that if any province did not want to join the Indian Union, then such provinces would be given full opportunity to form their own separate union. (Singh, Rajendra Prasad, 2010:

719) Although there was no clear mention of partition in these proposals, the League saw the facility of not joining the Indian Union in the second part as acceptance of the demand for Pakistan. Bipin Chandra writes that “There was a fear of large-scale bloodshed and communal riots, so the nationalist leaders were forced to accept the partition of India, but they did not accept the two-nation theory.” (Bipin Chandra, 2018: 327) This statement of Bipin Chandra seems childish in itself. The country was divided and two nations came into existence and you are saying that the nationalist leaders did not accept the two-nation theory. If they did not accept the two-nation theory then why did they accept the partition?

In their book titled “Bharat Ka Swadhinata Sangharsh,” Bipin Chandra and his fellow authors write that “But why and how did the Congress accept the partition? The Muslim League was adamant to get its rights at any cost and the British government had to accept their demand because it could not escape from the trap it had created itself, but it is also worth considering that why did the Congress, which believed in the integrity of India, accept the partition? This is still a difficult question. (Bipin Chandra, Mukherjee, Mridula, Mukherjee, Aditya, K.N. Panikar and Mahajan, Sucheta, 1995: 395)

Reasons for Partition of India

The reasons for partition of India have been analysed by different historians and scholars in different ways, but all these historians and scholars have similarities regarding some facts, such as almost all have considered the activities of Muslim League, communal problem, appeasement policy of Congress etc. as the main reasons. Along with this, there are some reasons on which there is no consensus among all, but these reasons have been directly or indirectly responsible for partition.

Activities of Muslim League

Everyone knows how the British cooperated in the establishment of Muslim League and through this tried to strengthen their rule in India with the policy of 'divide and rule'. On 30 December 1906, All India Muslim League was formally inaugurated. Its objectives were as follows (Grover, Mehta and Yashpal, 2018: 422) -

1. To increase the feeling of loyalty towards the British government among Indian Muslims and to remove any misconceptions arising about any of the views of the government.
2. To protect the political and other rights of Indian Muslims and to place their aspirations and needs before the government in dignified words.
3. Keeping in mind objectives 1 and 2, to promote goodwill between Muslims and other Indian communities as far as possible.

Thus, the founders of the League have clarified the main objectives of the League to protect the interests of Muslims and to generate respect and loyalty towards the British in their minds.

Congress's policy of appeasement

Congress's policy of appeasement is also considered to be largely responsible for the partition of India. Lal Bahadur writes that "Congress adopted an attitude of appeasing the Muslims and in this way, unintentionally, encouraged them to push forward their unreasonable demands. With a strong desire to win over the Muslims, Congress sacrificed its principles many times, due to which the disease of communalism increased greatly and ultimately India was partitioned." (Khurana, K.L. 2011-12: 234) Unfortunately, Congress never tried to understand the separatist and aggressive policy of the Muslims and till the last moment it kept harbouring such false hopes that suddenly something would happen which would end the communal problem. Congress leaders also failed to understand the tactics of Muslim leaders and they kept making mistakes one after another. On the occasion of the Lucknow Agreement of 1916, they made the mistake of accepting separate electorate for Muslims. The second big mistake was made when the Congress included the Muslim League in the interim government without making it agree to participate in the Constituent Assembly. By joining the interim government, the members of the Muslim League made arbitrary appointments and paved the way for the creation of Pakistan. (Khurana, K.L. 2011-12: 234) In this way, the mistakes of the Congress were responsible for the partition of India. Not only this, Rajendra Kumar writes that "In an effort to satisfy the Muslims and to preserve the integrity of India, Gandhiji accepted the principle of partition in the Congress session of Ramgarh in 1940, but he said that this partition should be like the one that happens in a joint Hindu family. (Kumar, Rajendra, 2004: 199) But this statement of Gandhiji seems childish, partition is partition. This makes it clear that in principle Gandhiji had accepted the two-nation theory. Hence, he cannot be absolved of the responsibility of partition.

The policy of appeasement of the Congress was the same as the British government had adopted towards Hitler during the Second World War. Due to the policy of appeasement, the more facilities the Congress tried to give to the Muslim League, the more the League's attitude became harsh and its demands kept on increasing. (Saxena, C.K. 2004: 180)

Communal reaction

Many scholars believe that due to Muslim communalism, Hindu communalism also got the inspiration to develop and Hindu leaders also established organizations and institutions like 'Hindu Mahasabha,' which adopted the policy of purification to protect Hindu civilization and culture, which sowed the seeds of doubt in the minds of Muslims.

Congress's policy to strengthen India

Many scholars believe that the Congress leaders accepted partition so that further division of India could be prevented. In the then circumstances, seeing the constantly

increasing communalism, the Congress felt that the only way to stop this poison of communalism was to divide India. Sardar Patel has said in this context that "I felt that if we did not accept the partition, India would be divided into small pieces and would be completely destroyed. (Grover, B.L. and Yashpal, 1995: 617)

Creation of a weak Pakistan

Many leaders of India believed that Pakistan would probably be a weak nation from the economic, political, geographical and military point of view and would not prove to be sustainable and soon it would be re-adjusted in India due to its internal weaknesses. In this context, Acharya Kripalani had said, "A strong and happy democratic India can take back the part (Pakistan) that is separating from it, because our independence cannot happen without the unity of India." (Khurana, K.L, 2011-12: 235) In this way, the futile optimism of Indian leaders also played an important role in the creation of Pakistan.

Announcement of transfer of power by Attlee

On 20 February 1947, Prime Minister Attlee of England announced that in any case, the British would leave India by June 1948. This announcement created fear among the leaders of India that if India was not divided by this period, a civil war would begin and the country would be divided into many parts. Therefore, the Congress leaders accepted the proposal of partition, because they did not want to unnecessarily anger the British government by rejecting Mountbatten's formula. (Sarila, Narendra Singh, 2023: 15) In the context of Attlee's announcement, Narendra Singh Sarila, who was Lord Mountbatten's ADC, writes that 'The agreement regarding the partition of India was announced in Delhi on 3 June 1947. The next week, the annual conference of the British Labour Party was held in Margaret City, England. Addressing the delegates in this conference, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin said that "Partition of India will strengthen Britain's position in the Middle East (Asia)." This means that Britain wanted to partition India to strengthen its position in Middle East Asia. (Sarila, Narendra Singh, 2023: 7) Also, in the preface of the book 'The real story of the partition of India', Narendra Singh Sarila writes that 'British strategists firmly believed that it was very important for Britain to have military bases in India to stop the Soviet Union from expanding towards the south. These military bases were very useful in stopping Russia's expansion towards the south in the 19th century. Without them, neither defensive nor offensive action could be taken against the Soviet Union. Russia's impressive victory over Germany in 1945 had increased Stalin's ambition to expand the border areas of the Soviet Union. He had also started doing this in the states of Eastern Europe. The oil wells in the Gulf countries were not very far from the southern border of the Soviet Union.' (Smith, W.C., Modern Islam in India, London, 1946: 183) Thus, according to Narendra Sarila, Britain's policy of maintaining military front against the Soviet Union and its military base by dividing India and bringing

Pakistan under its influence to maintain its dominance over the oil wells of the Gulf countries was more responsible for the partition of India.

Effect of separate representation on Indian politics

When communalism entered Indian politics, it gained power and hollowed out Indian politics like termites. Muslims and people of other classes, who got the right to vote through separate representation, were forced to vote in communal terms, to think in communal terms, to listen to only communal type of election speeches, to evaluate the representatives only on communal basis, to express constitutional and other reforms in communal terms. (Banerjee, A.C., *The Making of India's Constitution*, Mukherjee and Company, Calcutta, 1945: 221-22) Thus, separate electorate created an obstacle in a society which was already suffering from social and economic inequalities. Once it started, it was difficult to reverse it. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report itself admitted that partition on the basis of religion and class would mean, "the creation of organised political camps against each other and it teaches people to adopt a partisan attitude." (Rai, Satya, M. 1987: 372)

Different historians and scholars have had different views regarding the partition of India. For example, European historians and politicians like John Strachey, Churchill and Amery believed that there was no unity in India according to European standards and the country was partitioned due to mutual enmity between Hindus and Muslims. But Gandhi, Nehru and some national historians said that the British policy of 'divide and rule' was the reason for the partition of India. But the spokespersons of the Muslim League were of the view that the demand for Pakistan was inspired by the desire of a new nation to form its ideals and culture, which could not be satisfied with anything other than a fully sovereign state. (Rai, Satya, M. 1987: 379)

When the system of separate representation was implemented in 1909, Motilal Nehru wrote to his son Jawaharlal Nehru on 25 March 1909, "No matter how many council reforms are made, this mischief cannot be compensated." Perhaps Motilal Nehru understood the future political damage caused by separate electorate. But the Congress adopted an indecisive attitude on this and neither accepted nor rejected it. But when it was accepted in the Lucknow Agreement of 1916, the British got encouragement from it. Montagu-Chelmsford, therefore, while giving separate representation to the Sikhs, said that "though it is against the democratic ideal, if both the Congress and the League want it, what can we do and if separate representation is given to the Muslims, how can the Sikhs – who are demanding it on the same ground – be denied this right?" (Rai, Satya, M. 1987: 381) Thus, separate representation disrupted the national life of India and later paved the way for partition.

Elections of 1937 and its impact

Till 1936, the Muslim League was a limited organisation and had little influence even in Muslim-majority provinces. In the elections of 1937, the League was badly defeated

in these Muslim-majority provinces, but many of the League candidates were victorious in Hindu-majority provinces. These results were a big blow to the national character of the Congress. To make inroads among the Muslim masses, the Congress formed a committee under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, which was to contact the Muslim masses and win them over by linking them to the Congress program. On the other hand, the League was quite disturbed by the results of the 1937 elections and added a program to improve the economic condition in its program, through which it gave the message to the Muslims that the struggle being waged for Pakistan was a struggle for livelihood and economic progress. On the contrary, the Congress Public Relations Committee did not pay any special attention to this, as a result of which the League gradually succeeded in increasing its influence in Muslim-dominated areas and its demand for Pakistan gained further strength. (Grover, B.L., Mehta Alka and Yashpal, 218: 568) Jinnah's joining the Muslim League As long as Jinnah was a member of the Congress; the League's influence was not very significant. But when the Motilal Nehru Committee rejected his 13-point proposal in 1929, Jinnah walked out in disappointment and later joined the Muslim League and took over its leadership. This led to the unification of Muslim communal forces and Jinnah became its strong leader. M. Satyaray writes that "Many sources say that if Jinnah's proposals had been accepted at that time, as suggested by Tej Bahadur Sapru and Motilal Nehru, then perhaps Pakistan would not have been formed." (Rai, Satya, M. 1987: 384) Along with all these things, it is also true about Jinnah that before 1928 AD, his image was that of a nationalist leader. In the context of moving from nationalism to communalism, his political life can be divided into four parts according to Grover, Mehta and Yashpal (Grover, B.L., Mehta Alka and Yashpal, 2018: 568)-

(a) 1906 to 1920 - During this period, Jinnah worked as a raging nationalist and a big Congress leader who wanted unity of India on secular basis. During these days, he neither expressed any sympathy with the Aligarh Movement nor with the Khilafat Movement. He used to tell people to keep religion away from politics.

(b) 1920 to 1928 - During this period, Jinnah drifted away from the Congress, but he was still bound by the ideal of an Indian nation.

(c) 1928 to 1937 - During this period, Jinnah became influenced by the ideal of the Muslim League. During this period, he came forward as the undisputed leader of the League.

(d) 1937 to 1947 - During this period Jinnah was working as a major spokesperson for the two nation theory and was demanding a separate land for Muslims. It will also be called an irony that the Jinnah about whom B.L. Grover and others write that 'Jinnah as a liberal thinker stood against fanaticism and fundamentalism, used to go to the mosque occasionally to offer namaaz and had no qualms in ignoring food and water as per Islamic tradition. One of his close friends J.N. Sahni often used to dine with him in Mumbai. According to the High Court, his Persian wife used to bring pork sandwiches

which were relished with wine and cigars. (Grover, B.L., Mehta Alka and Yashpal, 2018: 570) Such a Jinnah became a staunch supporter of the Muslim League. That is why again B.L. Grover and others write that "In keeping with Lord Macaulay's dream, Jinnah was a person who had no faith in Islam and Islamic ideology, but still he became the biggest spokesperson of the Muslim community in India. He could not deliver a speech in the gathering of Muslims in Urdu, which was their common language, yet he became the most popular leader of the Muslims. He had no special interest in religion, but still he demanded a separate Muslim nation Pakistan in the name of religion. (Grover, B.L., Mehta Alka and Yashpal, 2018: 570) Jinnah was a skilled politician. He astonished Gandhi, Nehru, Patel and all the Congress leaders with his cleverness. Gandhiji had many other leaders for his help and consultation but Jinnah had mostly second-rate small leaders. He used to work mostly alone. Once he jokingly said, "I alone have achieved Pakistan for the Muslims with the help of my private secretary and typewriter." (Saxena, C.K. 2004: 280) Although many scholars have also mentioned it when Jinnah's regret about creating Pakistan later. In this context, C.K. Saxena, in an article written by P.K. Harivansh on 9 October 1988, has written that Jinnah, while addressing Liaquat Ali Khan before his death, expressed his thoughts thus, "You have started thinking that you are a big man. In reality you are nothing. I have made you the Prime Minister of Pakistan. You think that you have created Pakistan. You did not, I have created it. Now I am convinced that I have made the biggest mistake of my life. If I get a chance today, I will go to Delhi and tell Jawaharlal Nehru to forget the past and become friends again." The underlying sentiment behind the creation of Pakistan, the atonement expressed for its ill-effects, automatically expresses all the agony and pain. (Saxena, C.K. 2004: 280)

Although Gandhiji repeatedly said that he would not accept the partition of India, as C.K. Saxena also writes that "Mahatma Gandhi congratulated the British government on fixing the date for the transfer of power, but the idea of the possible partition of India made him shudder and he said, "Even if the whole of India burns, Pakistan will not be formed." On another occasion he said, "Pakistan will be formed only over my dead body." (Saxena, C.K. 2004: 278) Gandhiji's advice regarding the Indian National Congress as a political party has been mentioned by many scholars. In this context, Sumit Sarkar writes that "A few days before his assassination, Gandhiji had warned that the country was yet to achieve social, moral and economic freedom for its "70000 lakh villages", that the Congress had created rotten boroughs which lead to corruption, these are institutions which are popular and democratic only in name." For this reason, he had advised that the Congress as a political party should be dissolved and in its place a Lok Sevak Sangh should be established, which should have people who are truly dedicated, self-sacrificing, and do constructive village work. (N.K. Bose, My Days with Gandhi, Calcutta, 1953: 305)

Along with many other reasons, Jinnah's policy and his actions were a major responsible factor for the establishment of Pakistan. But subsequent events made it

clear that states based on religion cannot be permanent. The repartition of Pakistan in 1971 and the establishment of the 'Independent Bangla Republic' is a satire on Jinnah's 'two-nation principles'. (Jain, Pukhraj, 1993: 382) Certainly, the partition of India has been a serious tragedy.

Opinions of various authors in the context of the partition of India

In the preface of his book 'Guilty of Partition of India', Shri Ram Manohar Lohia has listed eight main reasons for the partition of India. One, British deceit, two, decline of Congress leadership, three, the direct situation of Hindu-Muslim riots, four, lack of determination and capability among the people, five, Gandhiji's non-violence, six, Muslim League's policy of division, seven, inability to take advantage of the opportunities that came and eight, Hindu pride. (Lohia, 2023: 7) Ram Manohar Lohia, while giving details of the meeting of the Indian National Congress Working Committee in the context of the partition of India, writes that "I would like to give details of the meeting that approved the plan of partition. We two socialists, Shri Jayaprakash Narayan and I, were specially invited to this meeting. Except for the two of us, Mahatma Gandhi and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, no one had spoken a single word against the partition. (Lohia, 2023: 26) From this it could be understood how the Congress agreed to the partition. Based on the detailed correspondence of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel regarding the partition of India, a book titled 'Bharat Vibhajan' has been written, which has been edited by Dr. Prabha Chopra. In the context of this book, Prabha Chopra writes that maintaining the unity of India was Sardar Patel's biggest concern. Lord Mountbatten announced his plan on 3 June 1947. In this, the principle of partition was accepted. This plan was accepted by the Congress and the Muslim League. Sardar Patel said that he agreed to partition because he believed that 'in order to keep (the rest of) India united, it must now be divided.' While supporting partition, Pt. Nehru remarked that 'partition is better than the killing of innocent civilians.' (Prabha Chopra, Partition of India, Sardar Patel, 2022: 8) In the foreword to this book, Prabha Chopra writes that in relation to the Muslim League's persistent demand for Pakistan, Sardar Patel urged both Hindus and Muslims to first achieve independence through their combined efforts, and then decide the fate of India after the British left, because 'slaves have neither Pakistan nor Hindustan.' (Prabha Chopra, Partition of India, Sardar Patel, 2022: 7) In his speech of 24 September 1945, Sardar Patel said that 'the government has accepted separate electorates for Muslims with the intention that we will continue to fight each other. Today the League is propagating that the Congress is dominated by Hindus. The Muslim League is crying for Pakistan. No one is being told what Pakistan is? They are crying for the moon. The truth is that slaves have neither Pakistan nor Hindustan.'" (Prabha Chopra, Partition of India, Sardar Patel, 2022: 140) After the partition of India, Sardar Patel said that he would not try to explain the responsibilities of the Congress in the partition of the country. He said that "We have taken this last step after a lot of thought. Despite my strong

opposition to the partition earlier, I have now agreed to it, because I felt that to maintain the unity of India, it should now be divided." (Prabha Chopra, Partition of India, Sardar Patel, 2022: 193) Lord Mountbatten is considered to be most responsible for the partition of India. India was divided by the declaration of Lord Mountbatten on 3 June 1947. Narendra Singh Sarila, author of 'The real story of partition of India', who was Lord Mountbatten's ADC, writes that "When the British left India after ruling it for 200 years, they had to try to save their strategic and economic issues. How this was done by dividing India and deceiving Indian leaders is the subject of this book." (Narendra Singh Sarila, The real story of partition of India, 2023: 10)

Consequences of Partition of India

Partition was not good for India in any case. Due to partition, India was divided into two parts, and at the same time India is also facing many new problems. Partition was done on the issue of Hindus and Muslims, in which there was a clear demand that Muslims should be given a separate nation. The reasoning given behind this was that Hindus and Muslims cannot live together, so partition is necessary, but the irony is that Gandhiji did not let Muslims go to Pakistan, he stopped them in India itself. This can be called generosity, but not justified. Future generations will definitely ask the question that when Muslims had to be stopped in India itself, then why he accepted partition. On the other hand, Hindus kept coming to India from Pakistan. People were affected by Hindu-Muslim riots. In such a situation, what was the justification of partition? Even today India is grappling with many problems arising from partition. Today a large part of India's budget is being spent on security on the Indo-Pak border. There are clashes on the border every day. Pakistan is continuously increasing terrorist activities. This is causing loss of life and wealth on a large scale. It is not that Pakistan is not affected by this. The situation is the same in Pakistan as well. This is affecting the development work of both the countries. The money that should have been spent for development, for taking the country forward, is being unnecessarily spent on building fronts, security etc. against each other. The irony of partition is that today the Muslim population in India has become more than that of Pakistan. Gandhiji's policy of generosity is proving to be a burden on the future generation. To what extent can this form of extreme generosity of giving the food from one's son's plate to someone else be justified? Gandhiji had to prove his generosity, but today's generation is suffering its consequences.

Conclusion

In the light of the above facts, it can be said that if the politicians of that time had will power, then certainly the partition of India could have been stopped. Anyway, communal riots cannot be a factor for the partition of any country. Failure to prevent riots is the failure of the administration, therefore, saying that partition was necessary for maintaining peace seems childish. Accepting partition, preventing Muslim people

from going to Pakistan, increasing defence expenditure of India, terrorism, religious frenzy, etc. are several problems that arose from partition. If partition had not happened, it is possible that India would have gained independence after some time, but all such problems could have been avoided. Many scholars have already predicted that partition would be temporary and India-Pak would be united again. Although this is only a daydream, it is also clear that the only benefit that has come from partition is that of politicians. They got power. The common people are still grappling with many problems that arose from partition. It is possible that the common people are ready to end partition and unite. Even if it is a daydream, many intellectuals are keeping this idea alive even today.

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