

Interim Government, History, Formation, Members

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This was the only cabinet in India's history where the Muslim League and the Congress shared power at the national level. The Interim Government enjoyed considerable autonomy and remained in office until the end of British rule, when the independent dominions of India and Pakistan were established. In modern Indian history, this period represents a significant and pivotal chapter.

Interim Government History

The Interim Government was established as a temporary administration bridging the imperial structure and a democratic framework. It functioned from August 1946 until India's independence on August 15, 1947, when the subcontinent was partitioned into India and Pakistan.

Its formation came from the newly elected Constituent Assembly, whose representatives were indirectly chosen by provincial legislatures. In these elections, the **Indian National Congress** (INC) won a plurality with 208 seats (about 69%), while the Muslim League secured 73 seats. The Interim Government replaced the Viceroy's Executive Council with a Council of Ministers as the administrative branch.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru served as its Vice President and de facto Prime Minister. Although initially opposed to joining the Interim Government, the Muslim League eventually participated to gain political leverage, as Muhammad Ali Jinnah described, “entering the Interim Government to get a foothold to fight for... the cherished objective of Pakistan.”

Interim Government Formation

The Second World War significantly influenced the establishment of the Interim Government. Following the war, a pivotal development occurred with the release of all political prisoners associated with the Quit India Movement. The Indian National Congress, by announcing its participation in forming the Constituent Assembly, laid the foundation for a new administrative structure.

In 1946, the British government, led by the newly elected Prime Minister Clement Attlee, sent the Cabinet Mission to India. Its purpose was to propose a framework for establishing a government that would eventually lead to India’s independence.

Interim Government Members

The Cabinet of the Interim Government of India, formed in 1946, consisted of key leaders from the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. This cabinet was responsible for administering the country during the transitional period leading up to independence. Below is the list of prominent Interim Government Members and their respective portfolios:

Interim Government Members	
Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru	Vice President of the Executive Council, External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations
Vallabhbhai Patel	Home, Information and Broadcasting
Baldev Singh	Defence
Dr. John Mithai	Industries and supplies
C. Rajagopalachari	Education
C.H Bhabha	Works, Mines and Power
Rajendra Prasad	Food and Agriculture
Asaf Ali	Railways

Jagjivan Ram	Labour
Liaqat Ali	Finance
TT Chundrigar	Commerce
Abdur Rab Nishtar	Communication
Gazanfar Ali Khan	Health
Jogendra Nath Mandal	Law

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