Foreign Office Files for India, Pakistan and Afghanistan, 1947-1980
This project features colour digitisation of complete runs of all the files, with full text search of all documents.

This is an outstanding resource for the political and social history of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan in this period. There is excellent content on Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and Kashmir, as well as other frontier regions. The threat posed by China and the Soviet Union is analysed in detail. Other files look at the impact on UK, US and European trade, industrial policy, education and the media. There is an immense variety of material including diplomatic dispatches, inward and outward telegrams, newspaper cuttings and transcripts, maps, photographs, political and economic reports, accounts of visits and tours, minutes of meetings, conference proceedings, letters, leaflets and other ephemera.


Editorial Board

- Joya Chatterji (University of Cambridge)
- William Gould (University of Leeds)
- Ayesha Jalal (Tufts University)
- Yasmin Saikia (Arizona State University)
- Mrinalini Sinha (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor)
- Robert Crews (Stanford University)

Contextual essays are provided. These contain links to the source documents.

“This comprehensive array of complete files from 1947 to 1980 provides a great vantage point from which to survey the high politics and drama of Independence and Partition, the huge human impact in terms of social and cultural interchange after 1947, and the ramifications that these tremendous changes continue to have throughout South Asia today.”
Independence, Partition and the Nehru Era, 1947-1964

The birth and development of the Indian and Pakistani states, the problems of partition and the tensions over Kashmir are examined in great detail, from 1947 through to the death of Jawaharlal Nehru in 1964. These were traumatic years for the region, with the violence of partition and its aftermath erupting into full-scale war between India and Pakistan.

Other topics include:
- Refugees and civil disturbances
- The strategic position of Afghanistan
- The evolution of Indian political relations with China
- Reactions to the deaths of Mahatma Gandhi and Mohammed Ali Jinnah
- Nehru’s visit to the US
- US economic aid to India
- UK arms supplies to India and Pakistan
- The assassination of the Pakistani prime minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, in 1951
- Indian land reform
- Communism in South Asia
- The declaration of martial law in Pakistan
- The political implications of Nehru’s death and the succession crisis in the Congress Party
- The future of the Gurkhas in the British Army

...documents the human dimension of the violence and dislocations of partition but also is an important repository of information on the domestic, regional and international challenges that faced the post-colonial states of South Asia

Ayesha Jalal, Mary Richardson Professor of History
Director, Center for South Asian and Indian Ocean Studies, Tufts University

South Asian Conflicts and Independence for Bangladesh, 1965-1971

Continued fighting over Kashmir and the separation of Bangladesh from Pakistan meant that further conflict dominated this period. It saw Indira Gandhi, Nehru’s daughter, gain power in India, whilst the military government of Pakistan wrestled with political disturbances, military crises and issues in East Pakistan.

Other files look at:
- Asian immigration to the UK
- The internal political situation in India, Pakistan, Bhutan and Ceylon
- The Tarbela Dam project in Pakistan
- US arms sales to India and Pakistan
- British policy on aid and development in the region
- British economic assistance for Afghanistan
- Ceylon’s intention to become a republic
- President Nixon’s visit to Pakistan in 1969
- Reports on events in individual Indian states
- The development of television and films in India
- Nuclear policy in India
- Indo-Soviet relations
- Events leading up to the declaration of independence for Bangladesh
- UN debates - India, Pakistan and the dispute over Kashmir
- Military situation, refugee crisis and famine relief in East Pakistan

“Scholars and students of India history, political science, international relations and economics will find in this publication a rich source of materials to explore and understand a critical period in India’s postcolonial history”

Yasmin Saikia, Hardt-Nickachos, Chair in Peace Studies, Professor of History, Arizona State University
There is excellent material on the government of Indira Gandhi – increasingly dictatorial, she jailed hundreds of opponents and declared a state of emergency in 1975. Two years later her government fell and India elected its first non-Congress prime minister. This decade also saw India develop nuclear weapons and Pakistan begin its own developments in response.

Other files cover:
- Political parties in India and Pakistan
- Industrial unrest in Karachi
- US, British and Commonwealth policy towards South Asia
- Coups in Afghanistan
- International recognition of Bangladesh
- The establishment of a republic in Ceylon/Sri Lanka
- Consequences of the withdrawal of Pakistan from the Commonwealth
- Narcotics and drug trafficking in Afghanistan
- The foreign relations and internal security of Bangladesh
- British food airlifts to Nepal
- The new Pakistani constitution of 1973
- Henry Kissinger’s visit to South Asia in 1974
- Civil disturbances in Sri Lanka in 1977
- Military situation in Afghanistan, 1979-1980

This wide ranging collection of primary materials in easily accessible digitized format is a welcome addition to existing archival sources on the politics and economics of British decolonization in India.

Ayesha Jalal, Mary Richardson Professor of History
Director, Center for South Asian and Indian Ocean Studies
Tufts University

PICTURE CREDITS:

www.amdigital.co.uk
www.amedu.com