

## Who was Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India who partitioned Bengal in 1905?

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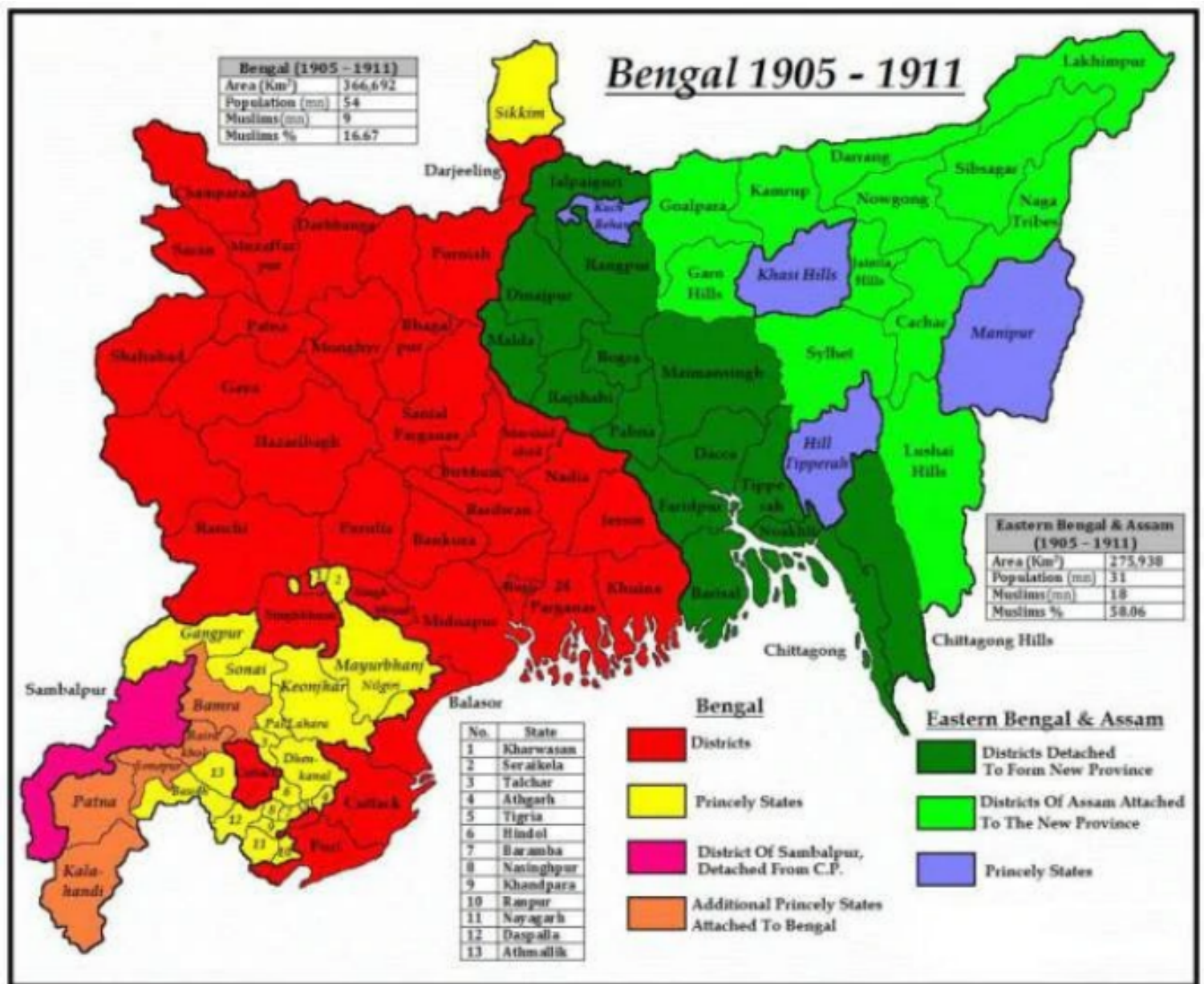
The Bardhaman municipality, West Bengal has decided to erect a statue of an erstwhile maharaja in front of the landmark Curzon Gate in West Bengal.



[ref: Indian Express]

#### About Lord Curzon (George Nathaniel Curzon):

- He was born in 1859.
- He was a **British conservative politician**.
- He served as **Under-Secretary of State for India (1891-1892), and for Foreign Affairs (1895-1898)**.
- He **became the youngest Viceroy of India in 1899 at age 39**, and remained in office until his resignation in 1905.
- He was famous **for the Partition of Bengal**.
  - The Presidency was the **most populous province in India**, with around 8 crore people, and **comprised the present-day states of West Bengal, Bihar, parts of Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and Assam, as well as today's Bangladesh**.



[ref: India Today]

### Other Contributions of Curzon:

### Educational Reforms:

- Curzon took a serious view of the fall in the standard of education and discipline in the educational institutions that in his view had degenerated into factories for producing political revolutionaries.
- To set the educational system in order, he **instituted a Universities Commission in 1902** to go into the entire question of university education in the country.
- On the basis of the findings and recommendations of the Commission, Curzon brought in the **Indian Universities Act of 1904**, which brought all the universities in India under the control of the government.

### Police and Military Reforms:

- Curzon believed in efficiency and discipline and **instituted a Police Commission in 1902** under the chairmanship of **Sir Andrew Frazer**.
- Curzon accepted all the recommendations and implemented them and **set up training schools for both the officers and the constables** and **introduced provincial police service**.
- As for the **remodelling of the army**, it was by and large done by **Lord Kitchener**, the Commander-in-Chief in India in Curzon's time.
- **Imperial cadet corps** was set up which became an instrument for Indianisation of army later.

#### **Calcutta Corporation Act:**

- The Viceroy brought in a new legislative measure namely **the Calcutta Corporation Act in 1899** by which the strength of the elected members was reduced and that of the official members increased.
- Curzon **gave more representations to the English people as against the Indians** in the Calcutta Corporation. There was strong resentment by the Indian members against Curzon's anti-people measures.

#### **Preservation of Archaeological objects:**

- Curzon had a passion for preserving the ancient monuments of historical importance in India.
- He passed a law called the **Ancient Monuments Act, 1904** which made it obligatory on the part of the government and local authorities to preserve the monuments of archaeological importance and their destruction an offence.

#### **Estimate of Lord Curzon:**

- Lord Curzon assumed his office, when he was forty years old.
- All his reform measures were preceded by an expert Commission and its recommendations.
- He **made a serious study of the Indian problems in all their aspects**.
  - At the beginning Curzon earned the popularity and admiration of the Indian people. He lost the popularity by the act of Partition of Bengal.