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A Secular *Raksha Bandhan*

The first **Partition of Bengal** was a territorial reorganization of the Bengal Presidency implemented by the authorities of the British Raj in 1905. The partition separated the largely Muslim eastern areas from the largely Hindu western areas on 16 October 1905 after being announced on 20 July 1905 by Lord Curzon, the then Viceroy of India

While the usage of Rakhi is inscribed within our mythology and even within ancient and medieval history, Tagore gave an all-new interpretation of Raksha Bandhan, during the turbulent period of 'Banga Bhanga' (partition of Bengal) in 1905.

He deftly used the concept of brotherhood, togetherness, and 'the thread of protection' as a medium to protest British's partition policy. Tagore thus transformed a socio-religious tradition to a secular motif of unity among diversity.

Tagore used a simple thread and called it a Rakhi, he asked Hindus and Muslims to tie this Rakhi to each other, saying this is a symbol of our brotherhood.

Finally the authorities not able to end the protest, assented to reversing the partition and they did so in 1911. King George announced in December 1911 that eastern Bengal would be assimilated into the Bengal Presidency. Districts where Bengali was spoken were once again unified, and Assam, Bihar and Orissa were separated.

