

Role of Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung in Pakistan Movement: An Analysis

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Abstract

This article brings to light the services of Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung which he rendered in connection with Pakistan Movement, to bring the people of the states of British India into the fold of All India Muslim League. This was the time when Congress established All India States People's Conference in order to start the campaign of encouraging the people of the states to join the Congress. As a reaction to it, Quaid-i-Azam assigned responsibility of establishing All India States Muslim League to Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung. He organized a political platform and helped them to cause a measure of interaction and integration between the Muslims of British India and those of the princely States of India, in respect of their long-term political goals and aspirations. For the first time he articulated powerfully the Muslim grievances in the Indian States. He aggregated and processed their demands; he built up incrementally and diligently British Indian Muslim interest in their problems and support for their resolution. He took great interest and made his best efforts to organize Muslim League in the States.

Key Words: Pakistan Movement, Congress, All India States Muslim League, All India States People's Conference

In world history, there have been a few men whose achievements made them immortal. The distinguished status they earned was due to their untiring efforts, devotion, diligence and their patriotic feelings. They always remained above all kind of motives like personal gains and privileges rather they spent their lives to achieve the goal of national integrity and solidarity. Among them is Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung, a leader of Pakistan movement; whose role to create the consciousness of self-correction and consolidation among the Muslims, made him immortal for all ages to come. He was an Afghan by origin. His great grandfather had come with Ahmad Shah Abdali and settled in Jaipur. In the first half of the 19th century, during the reign of Nawab Sikandar Jah, this family migrated to Hyderabad to reside here. They were the people of unusual qualities which ranked them high among the nobles of Hyderabad. The state conferred upon them various titles and *Jagir* (land) for their services to the state. Their close contact continued with in the reigns of almost every *Nizam*.¹

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¹ *Nizam* was the title of the ruler of the richest princely state of Hyderabad Deccan in British India.

One of its most effects was that it created political awareness among the Muslims. It held its annual meetings in various cities throughout the country. Political and religious leaders like Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Maulvi Nazir Ahmad and Nawab Vaqar-ul-Mulk etc. took active part in these meetings. They discussed educational, social and political problems of the Muslims. It served as a Political mouth-piece of Indian Muslims. Its contribution to the ultimate partition of India, although not greatly evident on the surface of affairs, was not much less greater than that of most famous child "The All India Muslims League." It was the standard bearer of the values and interests of the Muslims. The Muslim became aware of their political rights. They successfully faced all political problems of the Indian National Congress and the British. It was responsible for establishing the "Two-Nation Theory" in Sub-Continent, declared that the Hindus and Muslims were two separate nations with their own distinct religion and culture. We can say it created political and social awareness among the Muslims. Evolution of the Muslims leadership matched the Wits and Skills of their adversaries, effectively defended the political and social rights of the Muslims, as they became prosperous economically, they got respectable position in the Hindus dominated society. They occupied high government posts and started weeding powers. Many of those people took part in Pakistan Movement, so Pakistan emerged on the map of the world on August 14, 1947, which was the interpretation of the dream of Millions of Muslims on the forum of the Conference, after the passage of history, starting from the event of Lahore Resolution on March 23, 1940 to Independence Day of Pakistan.

Conference had some limitations. It was dominated by Urdu speaking Muslims and operated by them throughout the United India.

Conclusion

All India Muslim Educational Conferences revolutionized the educational and economic life of the Indian Muslims, through educational and economic prosperity; the Muslims got self- confidence which enabled them to launch a new thrilling career of dignity and nationhood. In short we can summarize the MEC effects as under:

1. Remove the mistrust between the Indian Muslims and the British rulers.
2. Acquisition of Western knowledge.
3. Promotion of Arabic and Persian knowledge.
4. Economic Prosperity of the Indian Muslims.
5. Defense of the Urdu language.
6. Political awareness of the Muslims.
7. Promotion of “Two-Nation Theory.”
8. Establishment of the AIML.
9. Evolution of Muslim leadership.
10. Honorable social status of the Muslims.

It was the effects of the Conference that the British Ruler’s attitude towards the Muslims became friendly and cooperative. It also united the Muslims who had inclined towards the acquisition of western knowledge. After acquiring the Western knowledge, the Muslims were well-equipped to meet the political, social and economic change. It defended the Muslim cultural heritage. It not only inculcated a spirit of nationalism in the Muslims but also to educate them and brought prosperity and progress in their ranks. Knowledge of English language and modern sciences enabled the Muslims to get important government jobs. With the passage of time the number of Muslim government servant grew at amazing rate. So, employment brought economic prosperity to the Muslim community. They were able to participate in political and Social Movements with confidence. Conference did a great service to Muslims in preserving their cultural values, which included Urdu language. The “Hindi-Urdu” controversy had convinced Syed Ahmad Khan that the Hindus were not sincere towards the Muslims. He issued a magazine entitled “Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq” in order to promote Urdu language. Eminent Urdu writers like Shibli Nomani, Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Vaqar-ul-Mulk, Altaf Hussain Hali, Muhammad Hussain Azad etc. contributed articles for this magazine. These articles, which were written in simple language promoted Urdu immensely.

The Conference's achievement for women was notable. In the inception of the Conference, after five years most of its members would never have approved the idea, debate, commenced over the need for women's School education with the advent of the twentieth century. It not only moved firmly in this direction by setting up the first girls' primary school at Aligarh. But also, as a pressure group in asking government to arrange such education far and wide. It also devoted time for examining such a suitable modern education for women. Later on, the leading role which it undertook in pioneering education for women came to be matched by the leading role, it played, introducing them to the public life of the community. It developed the "All India Based Muslim Ladies Conference (AIMLC) in 1914. It was an organization which aimed to promote women's education and the reforms of laws relating to women and consisted of members of the educated elite and professional classes. In contrast, the Women's Indian Association (WIA) and the AIWC, were not founded until 1917, and 1927, respectively.³⁷

Muhammadan Educational Conference worked for fostering the forum of education, by preparing Muslims for successful careers in a colonial state dominated by western culture, nonetheless made them proud of their Islamic culture. In harmony with this achievement, it worked to preserve the Indo-Muslim cultural heritage including the Persian and Arabic based system of education. It also strove to incorporate Islamic history and culture in higher education and to exclude from the curriculum offensive and objectionable books condemning Islam and the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W).

It should be clear that it did not seek to produce religiously oriented men but those who would be basically loyal to Islam and the Muslim community. It was also a great achievement. It generated among Muslims sentiments of solidarity which steadily drew the community together throughout most of India. Amity and friendship were developed through poems and lectures on Islamic history. Islamic culture and education were used to resist the strong challenge of allegiance based on race language and geography. It should be clear that, because of its essentially modern stance, it was always regarded suspicious by most of the Ulema.³⁸ Although it succeeded in gathering both modernist elite and privileged class yet it had received traditional oriental education in one forum. It was not until 1937, that it began to bridge the gap between orthodox religious leaders who were mostly ignorant of modern sciences, technology and modern educated classes and lacked Islamic favor. It must admit that the achievement of the

³⁷Ibid, 140.

³⁸Agha Hussain Hamdani, *Destawazat, All India Muslim Educational Conference*, 370.

Indian Muslims scattered all over India, usually quite unaware of the educational conditions of their brothers. There was no way in which people of various regions could meet and discuss with each other on national education and their economic development. It was feared that they should move in different direction because of Indian Muslim Community, which had till conservative and stationary. It was considered if the Muslims energies divided, no concert effect produced on Muslim Society. They had adopted different ways for their educational progress because they lived in different localities, unless all the energies of Muslims were united to make concerted efforts in one direction. To achieve this purpose Conferee played a vital role. Conference aimed at the Muslims interests would be best served if able and competent people were assembled at one place to discuss the Muslims problems. It would lead understanding and unity among the Muslims of different Provinces.³⁵

It was the Conference's achievement to win many Indian Muslims' hearts over to western education. The Muslims were proud of their century's old cultured and social traditions and found it had to admit that sound and useful learning existed in any language except Arabic and Persian. By providing a forum for discussion and debate, the MEC silenced many of the doubts and suspicious which prevailed regarding English education and brought many Muslims to accept its value and importance. The Aligarh College for whose social image and financial condition the Conference did much to strengthen. It became the most popular institution of this new education among the Muslims and students flocked to it from all parts of the Sub-Continent through the annual meetings of the MEC particularly upper India. It came to be overlaid with a network of societies, committees, all was working harmoniously of the views and shared outlook among the educated classes of Muslims in all provinces. The bounds of Islamic brotherhood were strengthened and the way paved for Muslim nationalism which asserted itself in the demand for Pakistan.³⁶

Another achievement of the MEC was its successful campaign for the establishment of a Muslim University. In the forum of the Muslim Conference the scheme of an academic improvement was approved by launching a successful fund-raising campaign all over India. It created enthusiasm among elite and ordinary Muslims alike to achieve this end. It achieved a general condenser to break the deadlock between the radical and the loyalist Muslims which had been an obstacle in the realization of the University from 1913 onwards.

³⁵Abdul Rashid Khan, *The All India Muslim Educational Conference*, 10.

³⁶Ibid, 15-16.

introduce Islamic history at Master's level. At the same time, the Public Service Commission was asked to recognize Islamic history as an elective subject in competitive examinations as were the histories of England, Europe and India.³¹

The efforts of the Conference met with some positive results as in 1939, when Calcutta University approved a scheme to open a Department of Islamic Learning. The Conference paid tribute to Sir Azizul Haq, Speaker Bengal Assembly and the Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University, who was then presiding over the *Shoba* of Islami Tammudun-o-Tarikh (Department of Islamic History and Culture). Other universities were asked to follow the example of the Calcutta University and to open the departments of Islamic history and culture. The government of Bengal was also congratulated on the inclusion of Islamic history, philosophy and culture in the syllabus of competitive examinations. The other provincial governments were asked to follow the example.³²

The introduction of Islamic history and culture during the 1930's as a discipline in various universities and public examinations was definitely the result of the pressure of the Conference. Additionally, the opening of separate departments in Calcutta and other universities not only stimulated the study of that subject but helped to consolidate the Muslim religious identity.

Achievements and Effects of the All-India Muslim Educational Conference

To achieve the objectives of the Conference two main plans were made, holding the session of MEC and setting up sub-committees.³³ Muslim Conference has to hold its annual session every year at any suitable place where Muslim community was willing to take the responsibility of making arrangements for it. At its annual meeting, members would announce any plan. They considered suitable for the advancement of Muslims education. After discussions, they examined their proposal and would be adopted or rejected unanimously. It was to promote the Conference aims in which setting up sub-committees as far as possible in every town and village where the Islamic societies already existed, if the members of societies agreed. They would expect from time to time to send written educational reports of meetings concerning the proposal of schools, *Maktabs*, industries and agricultural conditions.³⁴

We can say everything else, which concerns the Indian Muslims in the town, villages or city would be discussed and presented in the shape of resolutions which were passed by the annual Conference meetings. It would be expected to do all they could to act upon, what had been decided. The problem was that the

³¹Anwar Ahmad Marahravi, *Murraqa-i-Kanfarence*, 181.

³²*Muhammadan Educational Conference Report 1939*, 24.

³³See Appendix No. IV.

³⁴*Muhammadan Educational Conference Report 1894*, (Agra: Asia Printing Press, 1895), 110-111.

of public and aided schools were entitled) plus the right of representation on local boards and provincial legislative assemblies as allowed to those who graduated from universities. A revision of the curriculum in Arabic *Madrasahs* were also desired. Syed Riyasat Ali Nadvi was asked to prepare a directory of Arabic *Madrasahs*. In addition, in order to keep their education at par with that of public and aided schools and colleges, the Muslim University was urged to consider holders of Arabic certificates eligible for English language examinations. An interchange between graduates of the Muslim University and those of registered Arabic *Madrasahs* was urged together with the provision of scholarships.

Because the Conference's efforts to reform *Madrasah* and *Maktab* education proved fruitful, especially in the 1920's there was a great increase in the number of *Maktab* and *Mulla* schools in this period. Until 1917, there had been 9675 such schools *Maktab*s, *Mulla* and Quran which had 310,444 pupils and on which the government was spending more than ten thousand rupees annually. Between 1917 and 1922 the number of such *Maktab*s rose from 3000 to 21,000 and their pupils increased from 9000 to 21,000.

Stimulating the Study of Islamic History and Culture

In the 1930's Western educated Muslims came increasingly to realize that they had neglected oriental and religious education. Lamenting the fact, Ghulam Saiyidain son of Khawaja Ghulam Saqlain, principal of the Training College Aligarh, criticized the Muslim's defeated and apologetic attitude towards their own civilization. He argued that he had come to forget that they were the custodians of a clear and creative message through which they could discover their own world. Pondering over the ideal of true education he emphasized the necessity of learning modern sciences but also urged his listeners to utilize them according to the will of the Almighty.³⁰

Criticizing Syed Ahmad Khan's ideal of seeking employment through education, Professor Bashiruddin Hashmi said that we are bareheaded and yet have not crowned the Kalimah which Syed Ahmad had promised with philosophy in the right hand and natural sciences in the left hand. This urgency led the Conference to stress the importance of Islamic studies as well as Islamic history and culture. Earlier in 1916, the Conference had regretted Allahabad University's decision to exclude Islamic history from its curriculum. In 1931, it asked the Muslim University to set an example by opening an Islamic studies department. In the same year the Shoba Islami Ulum-o-Fanun Department of Islamic Art and Sciences under Syed Sulaiman Nadvi urged the Muslim University Aligarh to

³⁰*Muhammadan Educational Conference Report 1935, 100.*

risen to 989 with 29,402 pupils. Later, the government stopped grants for purely Quran schools and from 1902-7 grants were given only to secular teaching schools. There were 651 such schools with 19,168 pupils at this time. The *Mulla* school was a striking feature of Muhammadan education and met with extraordinary success. This resulted in a marked improvement and the *Mulla* school became a formidable rival to the ordinary primary school maintained by the local boards. According to the scheme the '*Mulla*' was made a payment or remuneration of Rs 6 (later raised to Rs 10) per student. In 1911, a committee under Sheikh Sadiq Ali, Minister of Khairpur State, comprising G.M. Bhurgri, Muhammad Kadir Shah, and Deputy Collector and prepared a set of religious readers to take the place of departmental ordinary readers in the *Mulla* schools of Sindh.²⁸

In UP according to the Meston Scheme of Special Muslim Education the *Maktab* committees for provincial and district level were proposed to look after the *Maktab*s. If a *Maktab* desired a grant-in-aid, it had to teach a definite secular curriculum prescribed by the Director of Public Instruction in consultation with the provisional *Maktab* committee. The curriculum was to include in Urdu, with some elementary geography and Persian in the higher classes.

The Conference made efforts to elicit the cooperation of ulema who had been patronizing these *Madrasahs* in a traditional way urging them and the *Madrasah* superintendents to organize Islamic *Madrasahs* by opening training schools for the *Imams* of mosques. Simultaneously, in order to save rural Muslims from ignorance, students of Arabic were asked to educate them by popularizing education on Sirat (biography of the Prophet). Apart from this, for the first time in 1937, the Conference established a Shoiba *Madrasah-i-Islamia* (Section of Islamic Learning) on the occasion of its Jubilee celebrations. Maulana Husain Ahmad Madni, Shaikh of Deoband School presided over the meeting and for the first time, ulema from different schools thought to attend the meeting. The earlier efforts by Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk respectively to establish contact by setting up an Arabic Department and to increase the religious content of the Aligarh syllabus had failed to produce any tangible results.²⁹

During the celebrations the Conference expressed its concern over the degeneration of Arabic instruction in UP. In various resolutions, while the people and the government were both asked to work for the uplift of Arabic instruction, the government was urged to make arrangements for scholarships, grants for railway fares and other concessions for *Madrasah* students, (to which the students

²⁸Muhammadan Educational Conference Report 1908, 72.

²⁹Muhammadan Educational Conference Report 1933, 33.