

Give an account of the life and services of Shah Waliullah. How did he save the Indian Muslims from political annihilation and religious degeneration?

Introduction:

Shah Waliullah was born on 21st February 1703 in Moza park near Delhi. His original name was Qutab ud-Din Ahmed, popularly known as Shah Waliullah.

In 18th Century Islam in the Subcontinent was faced with many problems. Sectarian conflicts, low moral tone of the society, poor understanding of the holy Quran and general ignorance of Islam were just some of the issues which gave rise to fear that political collapse would be accompanied by

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religious disintegration. Shah Waliullah saved muslims from all troubles. He got education at Madrasa-i-Rahimiyyah by his father Shah Abdul Rahim. After completing his education he went for pilgrimage and higher studies to Saudi Arabia. At this time muslims in India were divided into Hanafi, Sufi, Shia, Sunni and Mullah sect. In Hijaz, he decided to launch a campaign to popularize Islamic value amongst the muslims and to present Islam in a rational manner. On his return to the Subcontinent, he started working towards the achievements of these goals.

CONCEPT

Bad Political Conditions.

At that time, loot and plunder were rampant and fighting had

Spread everywhere. Disintegration of Mughal Empire had set in. For example when Aurangzeb died, Shahjahan was four years old, in his life time no less than 10 Jokers ascended the throne. Clearly, indicating the incompetency of the Mughals. Muslims were split among themselves. Consequently Muslims were suffering at the hands of Sikh, Jats and Marathas.

Prevailing Religious Conditions

Muslims were divided into Sects. Basic Islamic injunctions were being challenged. Scepticism and Rationalism had overshadowed the tradition.

Crippling Economic Conditions

Political instability had made the Kingdom vulnerable, therefore different power contenders arose and challenged the

Authority of the State.

Services of Shah Waliullah

a) Educational and Religious Services.

He did Persian-translation of Holy Quran to answer questions of Christian missionaries. In 1838, Shah Waliullah trained students in different branches of Islamic knowledge. He recommended the application of Ijtihad against blind taqlid in his famous work Asyad-ul-Taqlid - fi Ahkam-ul Ijtihad wa-al-Taqlid. He played an important role in removing misunderstandings between Shias and Sunnis.

b) Political Services.

In the middle of 18th century Marathas has become a great political power. They were threatening to occupy the crown of Delhi. At this critical situation Shah Waliullah

in order to check their advance prepared Najid-ullah and Shuja-ud-Daulah for Jihad. Moreover he wrote a letter to Ahmed Shah Abdali, King of Afghanistan requesting him to save the Muslims from Miranashas.

c) Economic Service

Shah Waliullah directed his teachings towards reorienting the Muslim Society with the concepts of basic social justice, removing social inequalities and balancing the unjust distribution of wealth. In his book "Hujjat-ullah-il-Baligh" he pinpointed the causes of chaos and disintegration of Muslim Society. These were

- * Pressure on public treasury,
- The emoluments given to various people who render no service to the State.

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Heavy taxation on peasants, merchants and workers, with the result that tax evasion was rampant. According to him a state can prosper only if there were light and reasonable taxes.

Effects of Shah Waliullah Services.

Shah Waliullah rendered great services, which covered, political, social, religious and economical aspects. He tried to remove the differences of Muslims from within, while he intelligently addressed the looming threats through his lectures and publications. He was responsible for the awakening in the community the desire to win back its moral fervor and maintain its purity.