

# Aligarh Movement

## Introduction:-

The failure of war of independence resulted in terrible consequences for Muslims. Muslims were held responsible for the uprising. The British adopted repressive policy against Muslims to cripple them. The Muslims were treated as adversaries and harsh punishments were inflicted on them. The new rulers implemented new education policy and banned religious education in school. They made English as a medium of instruction. Muslims response to these policies, further aggravated their plight. In such a situation, of despair, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan attempted to revive the glory of Muslims, starting a movement called Aligarh movement.

## Sir Syed Ahmad Khan:-

### Life Sketch:-

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was born in Delhi in 1817. His family was highly regarded by the Mughal dynasty. He started his career as a clerk in East India company in 1838 and after few years became a sub-judge. In 1869, he went to England

with his son Syed Mehmud. In 1878, Lord Dalton nominated him member of imperial council. In 1888, he received knighthood.

### Objectives of Aligarsh Movement:-

- (a) To remove bitter enmity and create an atmosphere of mutual understanding between the British and the Muslims.
- (b) To persuade Muslims to get modern education.
- (c) To produce an intellectual class from amongst the Muslim community.
- (d) To persuade Muslims to abstain from politics.
- (e) To protect Islam against the onslaught of Orientalists.
- (f) To protect Urdu, and maintain it as an associate official language along with English.
- (g) Rational and enlightened view of life - to meet the demands of new age.

### Services / Aspects:-

Following services were rendered for the revival of Indian Muslims.

- ① Educational / Literary.
- ② Political.

## ① Educational / Literary Services:-

### (a) Establishment of Institutions:-

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan established Gulshan school at Muradabad in 1859. He established another school named 'Victoria' in 1863.

In 1869, he went to England with his son, Syed Mehmud. He was greatly impressed with the cultural and economic progress of the West. During his visit to the University of Cambridge, he was struck not only with the quality and variety of formal education but also the training given to them in the art of civilized living. He started a school, Muhammad anglo-oriental school in 1875, and later on similar patterns and upgraded it to college after two years. It was finally converted to university named, "Aligarh Muslim University in 1920.

### (b) Foundation of Societies/- Committees :-

In 1864, he established scientific society which was involved in translation of English works into native language.

In 1870, he found committees striving for the educational progress of Muslims.

(c) **Muhammadian Educational Conference:-**

He sponsored it in 1886, which provided an intellectual forum to Muslims to disseminate their views in support of modern education and social reforms.

This conference met annually to discuss the educational problems of Muslims. From this forum, it was tried to persuade Muslims to get western education and to abstain from politics.

(d) **Writings (Books and Magazines):-**

Some of his writings are mentioned below.

- (a) Khutbat-e-Ahmadia
- (b) Asbab-e-baghawat Hind
- (c) Abtal-e-Ghulammi
- (d) Asar-us-Sanadid.

His writings played an important role in popularizing the ideals for which aligarh movement stood.

(2) **Political Services:-**



(a) **Admission of Indians to Legislative Councils:-**

Due to the efforts of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Indians got representation in the legislative council. First Indian who became member of the council was S.P. Singh, and the first muslim member was Syed

Ameer Ali:

(b) Opposition to Muslim participation in Politics:-

He opposed Muslim participation in any political activity as they were educationally backward and would become a politically ~~back~~ ineffective community. Another reason was that he feared that involvement in a political activity might revive British hostility towards Muslims. He even refused to join Syed Ameer Ali's Central National Muhammadan Association in 1877.

(c) Muhammadan Educational Conference:

A precursor of Muslim League:-

It was basically created to discuss the educational issues of the Muslims and to persuade them to get western education.

It later became a political mouthpiece of the Indian Muslims and was a precursor of Muslim League.

(d) Opposition to join Congress:-

He advised the Muslims against participation in Congress. He was against the collaboration of Muslims and Hindus in a

joint venture. He disliked Congress demand of an electoral system in India because he thought it would result in exclusion of Muslims from government.

### (e) Two Nation Theory:-

Sir Syed promoted the idea of Hindus and Muslims as two distinct nations. This idea led to the creation of two nation theory. He asserted that Muslims were a separate nation.

### (f) Risala Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-hind and Loyal Muhammadans of India:-

After the war of Independence 1857, the whole responsibility was put on the shoulders of Muslims. British had looked upon them as adversaries. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan wrote "Asbab-e-Baghat-e-hind", in which he discussed the real causes of Indian revolt and held that Muslims and Hindus were equally responsible for this event. He then wrote

"Loyal Muhammadans of India", which helped to reduce the insecurities of British and creating cordial relations between Indian Muslims and the British government.

⑨ Aligarh movement provided new leadership to Muslims. e.g. Liqat Ali Khan, Nawab Muhsin-ul-Mulk, Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din etc.

### Conclusion:

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's services proved instrumental in reviving the prosperity of Muslims. He provided a social, political, educational and economic uplift to Muslims. His movement served as Arsenal for Pakistan movement.