

Q1-2 Basically educational in character, the Aligarh movement was not devoid of political objectives. Discuss.

1 **Introduction :** Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, an educationist, reformer, social activist played a significant role for the Muslims of sub-continent through the Aligarh movement. Ironically, Muslims had been deteriorating socially, politically and economically from Britishers. However, in that circumstances, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan came as a spark to guide the Muslims, emphasized them for Western Education, though Aligarh movement was educational in nature, but it has political objectives too.

2 **Why the Aligarh Movement began:**

The then situation of sub continent was not so well because of the decline of Mughal Empire and also due to war of Independence, as Muslims lost the war, and Britishers as a result took over the subcontinent. Britishers considered the Muslims their sole enemy and started to treat them harshly. Muslims had been deteriorating socially, politically and economically and Muslims self-isolated themselves as a result of British policies.

In that situations, Sir Syed came as a torch bearer for Muslims. His main objective was to remove mistrust between the Britishers and Muslims, emphasized Muslims to acquire the western education. Considerably, due to all these situations, Sir Syed rendered his valuable services to Muslims, which had great impact on Muslims. First he provided educational services to Muslims, such as establishing several educational institutions at Muradabad, Ghazipur and MAO school and college. As far as social and religious services are concerned he wrote several books including social, political and religious domains. Similarly he also contributed in the politics field by giving two nation theory, British Muslim compromise. Therefore Aligarh movement uplifted Muslims in social, political and other domains with the efforts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.

3 Objectives of Aligarh Movement:

Major objectives at time of initiation were to help Muslims to acquire western education and to regain its their lost dignity in the society. The purpose of the movement was to help muslims get strong socially and economically, and get access to British government.

4 Educational Aspect of Aligarh Movement.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan rendered his valuable services in educational field for Muslims to help them to get back on their feet, as Muslims were earlier deteriorated and were under control of Britishers, as a result Aligarh Movement had provided Muslims with educational services in their desperate time of need.

1. Established Schools:

Aligarh Movement emphasized Muslims of subcontinent to get the education on modern terms. For this he established schools that helped the Muslims to enrich themselves with the modern and scientific education. First school to be established was School at Muradabad 1859, then the Muslim leader further embarked the Muslims and rendered his services by establishing School at Ghazipur in 1863 and MAO School in 1874 which then became a college. These schools helped the Muslims to get the basics of modern education at their doorstep to compete with their rivals so they do not lag behind in terms of achievements.

b Modern Education:

Aligarh Movement helped the Muslims to impart the western education to the Muslims of sub-continent which ultimately helped them to compete Hindus equally in the society and regain their lost status in the society. The sole purpose of emphasizing to get the modern education was to help the Muslims to get back their glory and status in the society which they lost at the time of war and at the decline of the Mughal empires, they faced the setback socially, economically and politically.

c Scientific Society.

Aligarh Movement also helped the Muslims to establish and create the Scientific Society in 1864 which was aimed to get western translate the modern western knowledge in Urdu to help Muslims understand them easily and to get the western scientific knowledge to gain the glory and success, and also to establish better terms with Britishers.

d Educational conference:

Aligarh Movement being educational in character also began to establish holding the educational conferences such as: Muhammadan Educational conference annually to analyze the terms and strategies of educational system. It was also aimed to formulate the new strategies and policies for the improvement of educational system keeping in view the modern western education.

e Aligarh Institute Gazette.

In educational services Aligarh movement also launched the newspaper in 1866 with the name of Aligarh Institute gazette to highlight the problems of society, particularly the Muslims of sub-continent and get those issues solved. This paper actually became a voice which spoke for the rights of Muslims of subcontinent in order to awake them to get back to their tracks, it aroused the sense of struggle among the Muslims of sub-continent to regain their status in the society in competence with Hindus and Britishers.

5 Political Aspect of Aligarh.

Though Aligarh Movement was educational in nature, but it was not devoid of political objectives. In political arena of subcontinent, Aligarh has played a crucial role for the awakening of Muslims, in presenting the two nation theory and keeping the ties better between Muslims and Britishers. So considering this movement for the sole purpose of education will not be fair to say as it has rendered its services in education, social, economic arena.

a Political Awareness:

Muslims of the subcontinent were completely unaware of western political system and had no idea how it works. Aligarh movement not only imparted knowledge of western political culture but also trained the Muslims and guided them to fight for their rights.

b Resolved British Muslim Relations

British government and its forces in subcontinent were considering Muslims sole responsible of war of independence 1857 and therefore they have adopted strict policies towards Muslims to crush them. Muslims on the other hand were at odds with British forces too.

Such conflicts and mistrusts between Muslims and Britishers left the Muslims in deplorable conditions. In order to create a sentiment of trust and friendship between the two nations, Aligarh movement published a magazine on the causes of revolt of 1857 in which other nations of subcontinent were held equally responsible as Muslims. Similarly, in order to further strengthen the ties between British and Muslims, Indian Patriotic Association and British Indian Association 1866 were created by the Aligarh Movement.

c. Urdu-Hindi controversy.

Aligarh movement also played crucial role in Urdu-Hindi controversy for the protection of Urdu, the language of Muslims of subcontinent. Sir Syed

Ahmed Khan using the platform of Aligarh demand from the government for the establishment of an institution where modern western knowledge can be translated into Urdu. Similarly scientific society was already in use for this purpose.

d. Two nation theory:

One of the major political services of Aligarh movement was the presentation of two nation theory. Sir Syed, who previously viewed ~~Hindu and Muslims~~ India as a whole with one Hindu eye and

one Muslim eye, now considered as
Hindus and Muslims as separate nations.
It later on became the basis of
Pakistan Movement and finally the
establishment of Pakistan in 1947.

e. Establishment of All India Muslim League.

Aligarh Movement had no doubt played
an important role in giving the political
awareness to Muslims and creating the
separate platform for the Muslims with
the name of All India Muslim League.
The league came into existence when
the Muslim leaders and scholars galk
had gathered from all across India
at Muhammedan Education conference.

This body was formed with the
purpose to help Muslims of sub-continent
to get their rights and this platform
became the foundation in getting
the separate homeland for Muslims.

6 Conclusion

In a nutshell it can be said that the
Aligarh movement was a magical movement
for the Muslims of subcontinent, that has
considerable changed their life in economic
social and political aspects and paved the
way for the creation of Pakistan. Though
its main focus was to impart the education
to Muslims but in view of tangled ~~sit~~ situation
this movement also rendered its services in
political arena.