

Question:

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

⇒ Introduction.

Aligarh Movement was the most prominent movement to revive the Muslims. After the 1857 war of independence, Muslims were sidelined by British authorities considering them as responsible for mutiny. Hindus of India took full advantage of this scenario and occupied the most prominent positions in councils and in administrations. This further marginalised the Muslims. Aligarh Movement proved to be the torch bearer for Muslims as under the leadership of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Sir Syed adopted ~~some~~ policies to achieve or revive the lost glory of Muslims by adopting new and modern methods. Acquiring modern education was one and the most prominent strategy. Question is whether Aligarh Movement was focusing on education only and devoid of politics? Answer to this question is discussed in following paragraphs.

Objectives of Aligarh Movement.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was a farsighted person, he knew that British are rulers of the world and may rule India for coming generations. For that matter he tried to prepare Muslims of India to learn their language, culture and norms to become their peers rather than their servants. Primary objective of Aligarh Movement was to make Muslims mature for doing politics.

In the future, to demand their rights and serve their respective communities. For that matter Sir Syed Ahmed Khan adopted some measures such as:

a opening of schools, specifically for Muslims:

Under the banner of Aligarh Movement, Sir Syed opened Gulshan School at Muradabad in 1859, Queen Victoria School in Ghazipur in 1863, and the most prominent was Muhammadan Anglo-Oriented School in Aligarh in 1865.

All these schools were designed to provide quality modern education along with Islamic education to Muslim children.

Sir Syed wanted Muslim children to become the leaders of future, these

Schools served the training ground for 3
Muslims who became the leaders of
future in Congress and also in All-India
Muslim League. Those leaders are
Liaqat Ali Khan, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan,
Khawaja Nazimuddin, Molana Muhammad
Ali Jauhar and Maulana Shaukat Ali, etc.

b Bringing knowledge at the doorsteps of
Muslims: Scientific Society and Aligarh
Institute Gazette.

Under the umbrella of Aligarh move-
ment Sir Syed Ahmed Khan first time
in India started a translation society.
Primary purpose of the translation society
(Scientific Society) was to make people
of India, specifically Muslim, aware about
the latest development happening in the
field of science and technology. Scientific
Society translated thousands of books,
of philosophy, sociology, physics, biology,
history, politics etc. First time in India
such an initiative taken by any Indian.

Furthermore, Sir Syed started a
gazette, he adopted this idea from the
very famous gazette of England, "The
Spectre". Primary purpose of this gazette
was to make Indian Muslims aware
of culture, customs, and history of

English, along with recent news and political development happening in England and India.

C

Formation of Conferences and Associations

Aligarh Movement is also responsible for forming multiple conferences for the betterment of Muslims of India. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan under his leadership formulated Indian-British Association, Muhammadan-Educational Conference, Urdu-Defence Association, etc. The most important ~~is~~ was Muhammadan Educational Conference which was established in 1886, primary purpose of this conference was to learn, understand, discuss and solve the prevailing issues of Muslims specially in the field of Education. This conference also holds importance because establishment of this, was in contrast to Indian National Congress, Sir Syed guided Muslims not to join Congress because Muslims were not mature enough. Moreover, this conference converted into All India Muslim League in 1906. under the leadership of Sir Aga Khan and Nawab Wajid-ul-Mulk.

Conclusion:

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was a visionary leader. He prepared Muslims for politics at the first place and Aligarh Movement was the training arena for Muslims. Aligarh Movement was the base or foundation of Muslims' independence movement. Aligarh Movement was not devoid of politics rather the whole game was for politics. It can be easily said that if there had been no Aligarh Movement, there would not have been Pakistan. That's why founder of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah said "Aligarh is the arsenal of Pakistan Movement"