

Q) Give an account of the life and services of Shah Waliullah. How did he save the Indian Muslims from political annihilation and religious degeneration? (2016)

### Introduction:-

Shah Waliullah was an influential Muslim scholar and reformer who lived in India in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He is considered to be one of the founding fathers of the Islamic revivalist movement in India. He played an important role in safeguarding the Indian Muslim community from both political annihilation and religious degeneration during a challenging period of India's history.

### Life of Shah Waliullah:-

Shah Waliullah also known as Qutb-al-Din Ahmed, was born on 21 February, 1703 near Delhi in India. Shah Waliullah came from a religious family and received education from his father, Shah Abdul Rahim, at Madrasa-i-Rahimiyah. After completing his education, he went on pilgrimage and pursued further studies in Saudi Arabia.

### Muslim Dilemma during

# Shah Waliullah time

## 1) Prevalent Political Condition of Muslim in Subcontinent:-

During that time, there was a lot of stealing and fighting happening everywhere. The Mughal empire was falling apart. Shah Waliullah was only 4 years old, and there were already 10 different rulers after him. Muslims were also divided among themselves. As a result, they were being mistreated by Sikhs, Jats and Marathas. The division between Shia and Sunni was growing which made the already divided nation even more fragmented.

## 2) Unusual Religious Condition at this time in the Subcontinent:-

The religious scholars were divided into different groups. The fundamental teachings of Islam were being questioned. Doubt and logical thinking were becoming more important than tradition. The religious leaders were relying too much on reason, which had a negative impact on the general public.

### 3) Economic Crisis in the Indian Sub-Continent:-

The kingdom was not stable, it became weak and open to attacks from different groups who wanted power. This meant that the kingdom's resources were being used up quickly. As a result, the country's economic situation was getting worse every day. Additionally, rich people living extravagant lives, the system of giving land as reward and high taxes were all destroyed country's economy.

Mistreated by Sikhs  
Jats & Marathas

Mughal empire  
down fall

Situation at time  
of Shah Waliullah

Shia and Sunni  
Division

Negative Impact  
of religion

## Services of Shah

### 1) Educational and Religious Services of Shah waliullah:-

In 1783, he translated the Holy Quran into

Persian to respond to the questions raised by Christian Missionaries. It was a remarkable service of Shah Waliullah. After words, his sons Shah Rafi-ud-din and Shah Abdul Qadir translated the Holy Quran into Urdu. Shah Waliullah also published some notable publications such as Al-Fauz al-Kabir, Muqadima Fe Tarjumatul Quran, Ajjatul Balagha, Shahr al-Mustafa, Shahr al-Musawa, Msaf-e-Bizan Fe Sabab Ul-Khtlaf, Aqadul Jayad Fe Ahkam ul Ijtihad ul Taqlid and Tashemat Uahi.

a) **Aqad-al-Jayad fi Ahkam al-Ijtihad wa al-Taqlid** notable work:-

Shah Waliullah taught students about different aspects of Islamic knowledge. In his famous work 'Aqad-al-Jayad' he encouraged the use of Ijtihad (Independent reasoning) instead of blindly following others.

b) **Shah address division of Shia and Sunni in 'Izalat-al-Akhifa'**:-

During his time, there was a lot of hostility between Shia and Sunnis and this was causing division.

among Muslims. To address this, Shah Sahab wrote "Izalat-ul-Akhifa" and to help clear up misunderstanding between Shias and Sunnis.

#### 4) Political Services of Shah to the Indian Muslims:-

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Marathas became a powerful force and posed a threat to take over the rule in Delhi. It was critical time, so Shah took steps to counter their advance. He prepared Najid-ullah who was the chief of the Rohilla tribe, and Shuja-ud-daulah, the Nawab of Oudh, for religious war called Jihad.

#### a) Shah Seek help from Ahmed Shah Abdali:-

Shah Waliullah wrote a letter to Ahmed Shah Abdali, the king of Afghanistan asking for his help in protecting Muslims from the Marathas oppressive action. As a result, 3<sup>rd</sup> battle of Panipat, Ahmed Shah defeated Marathas.

#### b) Muslim Renaissance movement:-

initiated by Shah Waliullah paved the way for future freedom movements in

5) **Economic teaching of Shah Waliullah in his book "Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah":-**

Shah waliullah focused his teachings on reshaping muslim society by emphasizing the importance of fairness, reducing social inequalities and addressing the unfair distribution of wealth.

a) **Shah Waliullah highlighted economic reasons behind muslim society:-**

Shah identified the reasons behind the problems and divisions in muslim society:

- i) Putting too much strain on the people treasury by giving salaries and benefits to individuals who don't contribute to the well-being of state
- ii) Imposing high taxes on farmers, merchants and workers, which led to widespread tax avoidance.

6) **Four Basic principles of Economics of Shah Waliullah:-**

Shah waliullah talked about 4 basic principle in economics

- i) **Equitable Distribution of Wealth:-**  
Shah waliullah believed that society should ensure that

wealth and resources are distributed fairly with a focus on reducing economic disparities. This principle aligns with the Islamic concept of Zakat.

### ii) Avoidance of Riba (Interest):

Shah

Waliullah strongly opposed the charging or payment of interest (riba) on loans. This prohibition is in line with Islamic finance principles, where usury is considered exploitative and detrimental to economic stability.

### iii) Promotion of Trade and Commerce:

Shah Waliullah recognized the importance of trade and commerce in economic development. He encouraged Muslims to engage in productive economic activities including trade, to foster economic growth and self-sufficiency.

### iv) Support for Waqf (Endowment) Institutions:

Shah Waliullah advocated for the establishment and support of waqf institutions. Waqf is a system in which individuals or communities donate property, land, or assets for charitable purposes.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Day: \_\_\_\_\_

## 7) Shah Waliullah Services Impacts:-

Shah Waliullah provided significant contributions in the areas of politics, society, religion and economic. He worked to unite Muslim and resolve their internal differences. Shah Waliullah played crucial role in inspiring the conscience, beliefs and faith. From destruction was remarkable achievement.

## Conclusion:-

Shah Waliullah's services to the Indian muslim community were instrumental in preventing their political annihilation and religious degeneration. He helped rekindle a sense of religious identity and revival among muslims, urging them to return to the core teachings of Islam.