

\_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Muhammad Usama Rashid

0316-4507962

Q How the reform movement of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi influenced the history of Muslim India?

Ans 1. INTRODUCTION:

Throughout history, leaders, thinkers, scholars, groups and orders step forth to revitalize their people and change the course of history. One of the best examples of this, in the context of the Muslims of the Sub-Continent, was Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi. His reform movement helped revive the Muslim identity and strengthen Islam in the sub-continent. He managed to do so by training disciples, writing letters and books, as well as displaying personal courage by standing up to an **intellectually corrupt leadership**. He taught Muslims of the importance of leadership, battled the forces of innovation,

— | — | — : 65

and heresy, helped weaken the rising influence of Hindus, and most importantly, planted the seeds for the two-nation theory. This leadership and vision gave illumination and meaning to the Muslims. History would have been much different if it was not for Mujadid Alf Thani.

"Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi is a light that will illuminate the world"  
Khanwaja Baqi Billah

## 2. INFLUENCE OF SHEIKH AHMED'S REFORM MOVEMENT ON HISTORY OF MUSLIM INDIA :-

### 2.1 Clipped the Wings of Wahdat-ul-Wujud:

The extreme monoistic position of Wahdat-ul-Wujud was countered by Sheikh Ahmed's Wahdat-us-Shahood (Unity of Witness). This helped save the Muslims from pantheism.

\_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ عت

"To consider Ram and Rehman as one is stupidity as the Creator cannot be one with the Created."

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi

## 2.2 Muslims Freed from The Influence of Deen-e-Elahi:

Sheikh Ahmed's books including Tauheed-e-Shahudi, Makhtubat-e-Imam Rabbani and Asbat-un-Nabuwah helped counter Akbar's stance of Deen-e-Elahi. Muslims were freed from innovations like prostration to leaders.

## 2.3 Helped Bring About Reorientation of Ulema:

History of Muslims benefitted after Sheikh Ahmed preached adherence to Tauheed, Ittebat-e-Sunnah and the commandments of Shariah.

Ulema previously were made to make many obligatory forms of worship, including Salah and Hajj as unnecessary.



\_ / \_ / 20\_

## 2.4 The Future saw a Weakened Hindu Political Influence after Sheikh Ahmed:

Aurangzeb, influenced by Sheikh Ahmed's teachings, saw to the elimination of cultural and political patronage of the Hindus. This helped bifurcate the Muslims and the Hindus and ensured Muslims remained the dominant power.

## 2.5 The Reform Movement helped bring back Jizya and made Hindus Zimmis once again:

Islamic political concepts hold Muslims as responsible for all non-Muslims in their land, in exchange for Jizya tax. This tax, previously eliminated by Akbar, was reinforced by Aurangzeb due to Sheikh Ahmed's reform movement. This established Muslims as rulers once again and changed the course of history.

1/1/2021

## 2.6 Shariah Strengthened Over Mysticism, Heresy, Bida'at and Unorthodox Sufism:

During the time of Sheikh Ahmed, Shariah and Tauheed were being supplanted by mysticism, innovations and unorthodoxy. This unique blend presented a religious complex that ran counter to Tauheed and Shariah. Sheikh Ahmed's teachings and leadership helped counter this onslaught and helped bring the Muslims back to orthodox Islam, thereby changing history.

## 2.7 Revived Muslim Identity by Opposing Bhakti Movement:

The Bhakti movement, spearheaded by Baba Guru Nanak, threatened to shift history towards universal toleration and oneness of all. This would erode the concept of a separate Muslim identity. Once

— / — / 2025

again, the reform movement of Sheikh Ahmed influenced history of Indian Muslims by opposing Bhakti movement.

## 2.8 Muslims learned the Importance of Purity of Leadership:

Sheikh Ahmed taught the Muslims the threats that come with an intellectually corrupt leadership. He said that it leads to an age of Islamic poverty. Even today, the modern constitution of Pakistan highlights the importance of sound moral character of the state's leadership.

## 2.9 Future Leadership took Influence from Sheikh Ahmed, Influencing History Further:

Future Muslim leaders of India, including Allama Iqbal, were impressed by the thinking and wisdom of Sheikh Ahmed. They drew on his



vision and insight to secure peace for Indian Muslims.

I visited the shrine of the Saint Mujaddid  
AH Thani,  
The dust of his shrine is a source of  
Illumination,  
Particles of this dust shine brighter  
than the stars,  
In this shrine lays the great Saint,  
the knower of secrets,  
who refused to bow his head  
before Jahangir,  
(Allama Iqbal)

### 2.10 Planted the Seeds of Two Nation Theory:

Perhaps the biggest force reorienting history by Sheikh Ahmed, was his keen vision and insight into the duality of Hindus and Muslims.

"If awareness of a separate

1/1/20

Muslim identity is not awakened in Muslims, then it is feared they would be swept away under the flood of combined nationhood"

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi

His vision taught Muslims that they need a separate state to uphold their Muslim identity and practice Islam freely.

### 3. CONCLUSION:

The influence of Sheikh Ahmed's reform movement on Muslim India is apparent. He fought for the supremacy of Quran and Sunnah and his efforts strengthened the Muslim identity and upheld Islam. His efforts are making a difference even today with the creation of Pakistan and the supremacy of Islam. Indeed Khawaja Bagji Billah was on to something when he said that Sheikh Ahmed will illuminate the world.