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

Ans. 1. Introduction

2. Situation at the Time of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi

3. Impact of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi's Reform Movement on History of Muslim India

4. Conclusion

1. INTRODUCTION:-

"Sheikh Ahmed is a light which will illuminate the whole world"

Khanuja Baqi Billah

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi was a reformer par excellence. He helped to massively influence the history of

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the Indian Muslims. At the time of his arrival, the Muslims were in a precarious position. They were losing their grip on their Islamic identity and were straying away from the commandments of the Quran and Sunnah. Sheikh Ahmed helped revive their Muslim identity, remove the influence of Bida'at and unorthodox mysticism, countered Wahdat ul Wajud with Wahdat us Shahood, weaken the influence of Hindus within the political landscape, and much more. In these ways, he proved himself to be a reformer par excellence, who would indeed illuminate the world.

## 2. SITUATION AT THE TIME OF SHEIKH AHMED SIRHINDI:-

Forces that ran counter to the core Islamic principles of monotheism were gaining ground. The Bhakti movement, Akbar's Deen-e-



Elahi and the rise of unorthodox mysticism were causing Muslims to veer away from their Islamic identity. Gambling, riba, drinking were declared permissible. Cow slaughters were made illegal. Salah, Hajj and other such worships were declared unnecessary. Multiple marriages with non-Muslims were permitted. The king was said to be Zil-e-Elahi. Concept of Suleh-i-Kul or Universal Tolerance was weakening Muslim identity. Hindus had gained influence within courts and they were weakening the Muslims politically. Such problems necessitated a reformer, who would bring the Muslims back to their core of Quran, ittebat-e-Sunnah and the commandments of Shariah.

### 3. IMPACT OF SHEIKH AHMED SIRHINDI'S REFORM MOVEMENT ON HISTORY OF MUSLIM INDIA:-

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### 3.1 Wahdat ul Wujud was Exterminated by Wahat us Shahood:

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi's Wahat us Shahood or Unity of Witness managed to counter the effects of Wahdat ul Wujud. This helped Muslims refute the concept of extreme monism between creator and created and reinforced their identity as slaves of Allah alone.

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

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi

### 3.2 Commandments of Shariah were reinforced:

During Akbar's time, a number of worships including Salah, Hajj and even cow slaughter were declared unnecessary or illegal. Furthermore,



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several prohibitions including Interest, gambling, drinking wine etc were made permissible. Due to the teachings of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi, the Ulama reinforced Islamic commandments and brought back the Shariah.

### 3.3 Removal of Political Influence of Hindus:

The Hindus had gained influence and appointment in courts. Sheikh Ahmed feared their growing power and taught Muslims to reinforce their Muslim identity.

'If a separate Muslim identity is not awakened, then it is feared the Muslims would be swept away under the flood of combined nationhood.'

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi

Aurangzeb therefore removed the appointment of ~~Muslim~~ Hindus and weakened their influence.

### 3.4 Planted the Seeds of Two Nation

#### Theory:

Sheikh Ahmed was the first to talk about a separate national identity for Muslims. These ideas helped future thinkers like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Allama Iqbal to strengthen the Muslims and charter a course to the creation of Pakistan.

### 3.5 Tauheed, Ittebat-e-Sunnah and Shariah Strengthened Over Mysticism and Bida'at:

During his time, the Muslims had begun to indulge themselves in mysticism and God-intoxication. Sheikh Ahmed feared these ideas would lead to pantheism. His teachings helped reinforce Tauheed, Ittebat-e-Sunnah and the commandments of Shariah.



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"There are two ways to attain happiness. One is the way of mysticism and God-intoxication, and the other is the way for which the prophets were sent forth"

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi

### 3.6 Muslims were Taught the Value of Purity of Leadership:

Sheikh Ahmed stressed the importance of purity of leadership. According to him, if the Muslim leadership is intellectually corrupt, society will suffer.

"The position of the king is like the position of the heart in the body. If the heart is pure, the body will be pure. If the heart is impure, how can the body be pure?"

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi

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In this way, the Muslims understood the influence of leadership and stressed on their purity. These ideas even made way into the modern Pakistani constitution which stresses that Majlis-e-Shoora appointees be of sound moral character.

#### 4. CONCLUSION:-

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi was indeed a reformer par excellence. Holding true to Khawaja Baqi Billah's words that Mujodid Alf Sani would illuminate the world, Sheikh Ahmed certainly played a major role in reviving Muslim identity and strengthening Islam within the Subcontinent. Such courageous leadership is always needed to uphold the banner of Islam and strengthen the Ummah.

In this dust lies buried the saint, the knower of secrets,

Who refused to bow his head before Jahangir  
(Allama Iqbal)