

Introduction:

After the death of Aurangzeb, in 18th century, the Muslim society faced some serious problems. The Moghal empire had fallen in to the hands of most incapable successors of Aurangzeb who could not manage the huge empire and withhold the supremacy of Islam. They indulged into luxurious life. The unislamic trends and practices were flourishing. The then situation of Muslims was continuously declining. The and then situation was ripe for ~~the~~ reformer to emerge and pull-out the Muslim society from these trends.

An era of revival of Islam began with the emergence of Shah Wali Ullah, great Muslim thinker, reformer and Muhadis. He was one of the greatest original thinkers of Muslim in India - SM Ikram

Early Ages Of Shah Waliullah

Shah Waliullah was born in 1703 CE, in a noble family in Delhi. The name Shah Waliullah was given to him by people because Waliullah means "Close to God". His real name was Qutub-ud-Din. Shah Waliullah got his early education at his father's Madrass, "Madrassa Rahimya". After that he went to Arabia for higher education of Quran and Sunnah (1724-1732).

During his stay at Hijaz, Shah Waliullah received reports of unstable conditions in India. He immediately set himself to the sacred task of spiritual unification of Muslim Society.

Social Conditions in India:

During those days political and social turmoil was on its peak in the subcontinent. Life property and honour were not secure due

disruptive forces in the Muslim Society. After the death of Aurangzeb, Muslim empire (Mughal empire) was in the hands of weak successors who were unable to withhold the glory of Islam. At that time, constant decline of Mughal Empire, lawlessness, immorality, corruption, gambling, internal conspiracies, tussle between the Shia and Sunni and above all parting away from the Quranic teachings darkened the lives of the Muslims. So, it was the time, for ~~the~~ reformer to appear on the scene for the revival of Islam.

SM. IKRAM, has written in book 'Muslim Rule in India and Pakistan', the content of which is, that Shah Waliullah states himself:

"I was informed through 'Ilham' that I would have to undertake this responsibility. The time has come when every order of the Sharia and the general instruction of Islam should be presented to the world in a rational manner."

Reform Movement

Shah Waliullah believed that the time has come to launch a new reform movement for the revival of Muslims and supremacy of Islam.

Main Objectives

- Muslims should be told the rationality of Islam and informed them that Islam has the capability to solve ^{not only} all the problems of Muslims but of the entire humanity.
- To preach pristine values of Islam.
- To unite the different schools of thoughts i.e. Hanfi-Shafi, Malaki, Hambali Shia and Sunni. It was important because Muslim Nationality was divided into so many sects. Consequently, political fabric of Muslim's rule weaken.
- To unite the people of Subcontinent it was essential to spread the teaching and true understanding of Quran because rationality of Islam is based on Quran.

Religious Contributions

Translation of Quran

Shah Waliullah translated Quran in Persian language. It happened for the first time in the history of India's Subcontinent. He translated Quran so that people fully understand it as Persian was language of the educated Muslims in India. For this act Shah Waliullah faced extreme opposition by other Ulemas. But it was magnum opus. Later on the Quran was translated into Urdu by his sons.

Hujjat al Balagha

The second major step of Shah Waliullah was writing of Hujjat al Balagha which greatly influence the understanding of Muslims. The **crux** of the book is that decline of the Muslims was due to parting away from Islam and Sunnah. He emphasized that Islam is the only suitable religion and solutions of all problems of humanity lies in Quran.

Izalat ul Akhfa And Khatifat ul Khulafa

Shah Waliullah wrote these books to highlight the similarities between

different sects and to remove misunderstanding. Because the differences were already there. So it was important to tell them about the similarities in different sects to unify them. He also synthesized two philosophies, that are Wahdat-ul-Wajud and Wahdat ul Shuhud that there is only thin difference between the two.

Solution To the Problems

Shah Waliullah left behind 51 books on different problems faced by the Muslim community of subcontinent and presented solution to these problems in the light of Quran and Sunnah.

Political Contributions

Apart from imparting religious education to Muslims, Shah Waliullah also provided leadership to the Muslims in the political field. He came out with his great wisdom to create political awakening in the Muslims of India.

Letter To Ahmed Shah Abdali

The rise of Marhatas and Sikhs was a serious threat to Muslim rule. And the Moghal rulers were no more in position to withhold the supermacy of Muslims. Shah Waliullah had rightly noticed that if Marathas are not checked effectively the political power of the Muslims would disappear for ever. He wrote a letter to Ahmed Shah Abdali, king of Afghanistan to attack Marathas. In 1761, Ahmed Shah Abdali came to India and defeated confederacy of Marathas at the 3rd battle of Panipat. Against the hopes of Shah Waliullah, Abdali went back to Afghanistan and didn't initiate a new Afghan Dynasty in India and Muslim didn't rule India once again. However, it paved way for the revival of Islam in India.

Supermacy of Law

Shah Waliullah also criticized the lavish lifestyles of the emperor rather than focusing on state matters and making policies for the poor to uplift their socio-economic conditions. Along with this, he also stressed upon adopting the Islamic laws by the Muslim rulers to set practical examples for the masses. Therefore, his contributions in the political field are worth remembering.

"Balance and uniformity in the system is must"

Critical Analysis

Undoubtedly, Hazrat Shah Waliullah lay the foundation of Islam in the subcontinent at the time when Islamic society was at the edge of destructions. However, he revived the values of Islam and pulled out the poor Muslims from darkness of social evils. He worked sincerely to bridge the differences between different sects of Muslims. Due to his sincere and dedicated

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efforts the illustrious banner of Islam kept flying over the Indian Subcontinent.

"What defines us is how well we rise after falling"

Conclusion

Conclusively, revival of Islam in the Indian Subcontinent in 18th century was only possible through the selfless struggles of Hazrat Shah Waliullah. He emphasized adopting the Islamic values in life and translated Holy Quran and Hadiths to make it easier for Muslims to understand the teaching of Islam and adopt its values. Moreover, his political services by stopping the growing threat of Marathas, Sikhs and Hindus also proved fruitful. Nevertheless, he wrote fifty-one books to carry the legacy for future generations. Shah Waliullah's dedicated efforts inspired the late generations and paved way for Pakistan Movement.

Syed Ahmad Barailly (1786-1831)

Biography

Syed Ahmad Barailly was in a respectable family of Rai Barailly. He was greatly impressed by the preachings and doctrines of Shah Waliullah and was a staunch disciple of his son Shah Abdul Aziz.

Hafeez Malik, has written in his book, Muslim Nationalism in India and Pakistan, about Syed Ahmed, the content of which is

**Syed Ahmed Barailly, the
inheritor of the mantle
of Shah Abdul Aziz.**

— Hafeez Malik

Afterward, Shah Ahmed made his mind to initiate jihad, in order to undergo an army training, he joined the army of Nawab of Tonk, Amir Khan to learn the tactics of war in 1810 which made him a great military commander in the years to come.

Beliefs

Syed Ahmad Barelilly was a man of action. He desired to ~~end the~~ British rule and re-establish the rule of Muslims. He believed in armed struggle against foreign and non-Muslims rather than efforts to become a renowned scholar or mystic. It is believed that he is one of the trend setters who started modern jihad.

There was need to end social evils as they corrupt society in the subcontinent and to improve moral and intellectual condition of Muslims. Syed Ahmed was furious at Sikh rule in Punjab that could a non-Muslim rule the Punjab which was Muslim's province since the day Mehmood Ghaznavi.

Time For Jihad

The British had ensured that the Mughal emperors had little real power. On the ~~ext~~ other hand Sikhs were dominant in the Punjab. Syed Ahmed founded Jihad movement, which called for armed struggle to

overthrow non-Muslim oppression and regain the supremacy of Muslim power. He believed that once this was done Islam could be rejuvenated to Islamic beliefs which had crept into everyday life.

Jihad Movement

Preparation For Jihad

The purpose of Syed Ahmad's life and struggle was not confined to the spread of Islam by preaching only, however he believed in taking practical steps for this purpose.

The **main objective** before Syed Ahmad was the establishment of a state which was based on Islamic principles.

"The object of jihad is to bring the whole world under Islamic Law"

— Bernard Lewis

Social Condition of Muslims

Punjab and N.W.F.P was ruled by Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh. The

Muslims heavily suffered under his tyrannical rule and were restricted to perform and practise their religion. The holy places of the Muslims e.g. mosques, shrines were turned into temples and stables, by Sikh regime. Azan was also forbidden.

Visits Of Syed Ahmed

Syed Ahmed travelled across India to motivate Muslims for Jihad. He toured the Punjab and N.W.P.F to enlist Mujahideen to fight the Sikhs. He travelled many hundreds of miles to raise a force of Mujahideen. He even went to Afghanistan to enlist Mujahideen and seek support but was dismayed because Afghan people and government didn't respond positive.

Declaration Of War

In 1826, Syed Ahmed established his headquarter near Peshawar. He sent a message to the Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh to allow Muslims to follow Islam or be ready to face the Mujahideen in the battle.

field. Ranjit Singh dismissed the ultimatum, so Syed Ahmed forced to attack. First at Okara in 1826, and then shortly afterwards the Hazrothe, the Sikhs suffered defeat.

Syed Ahmed's victories in dif so many wars, established him as a successful military leader and encouraged other tribes to join the Mujahideen. Soon the army numbered over 80,000 strong. Later on, he became Amir-ul Momineen. His increased authority helped him to unite the various Muslim groups forming the Mujahideen force.

Attack Fort Attack And Betrayal

Syed Ahmed was preparing to attack the fort of Attock when he encountered an army of 35,000 Sikhs near Okara. But he didn't know that Yar Muhammad Khan, a Pathan chief who had joined his army, had been bribed by the Sikhs. First, one of his servants tried to poison Syed Ahmed then Yar Muhammad Khan betrayed in battle. Consequently, Sir Ahmad's forces were defeated and he had to move his headquarters near

Kashmir.

Balakot Battle:

The constant campaigning against fellow Muslims was not what Syed Ahmad desired for, so he moved his forces to Balakot, hoping to free Kashmir and Hazara. Balakot was protected by mountains on three sides, so it was believed as a safe place. But Syed Ahmed was once again betrayed by local leaders who told the Sikhs about ~~the~~ a way through the mountains. Sikhs made a surprise attack on forces of Syed Ahmed. Although, mujahideen fought bravely but were heavily outnumbered and unable to resist the Sikhs. Six hundred mujahideen got martyred including Syed Ahmed and the Muslims were defeated.

With the death of Syed Ahmed the Jihad movement fell into disarray and could not be carried out with old enthusiasm. Therefore, couldn't be conducted for a long time.

Impacts:

- First armed Movement in the Indian history for the religious and spiritual freedom of Muslims.
- Jihad Movement helped to unite the various Muslim groups for one major goal, supremacy of Islam and Muslims.
- Establishment of Islamic system of Government that greatly reduced the tribal chiefs' influence, after the occupation of Peshawar.
- Introduction of social reforms.
- The Movement is regarded by many historians as the fore-runner of the Pakistan Movement.
- Ahmad's efforts were an inspiration to all Muslims in defending their religion, their culture and their freedoms.

Reasons For Failure:

- Well equipped army of Ranjit Singh
- There were financial constraint for Mujahideen force.
- Disputes of different tribes over war booty

- **Betrayal** of close associates of Syed Ahmed, Yar Mohammad Khan and Sultan Mohammad Khan
- **Ethnic diversity** of Syed Ahmed's army..
- Modern Historian **Mubarak Ali** has pointed out another reason.

Strict promulgation of Sharia while tribes were not ready yet e.g zakat, early marriages, widow re-marriages and severe punishment etc.

- Mubarak Ali

Critical Analysis

Syed Ahmed was a great Muslim leader and soldier who united the Muslims of various groups under the flag of Islam and for the supremacy of Islam. He sacrificed his everything to defend Islam, the Islamic culture and for the freedom of Muslims. It was not a movement in order to place a particular leader in power but instead, to achieve religious and spiritual power. Although Jihad Movement was a

Sincere efforts for the restoration of Islamic glory in the sub-continent, yet it could not achieve its immediate objectives due to various factors. However, if we take long view of history, it appeared that the creation of Pakistan is basically a culmination of Jihad Movement. "Failure is not the opposite of Success, it's part of Success"

Conclusion

In the nutshell, Jihad movement was a dedicated effort by Syed Ahmed to defend the supremacy of Islam and freedom of Muslims. However, it failed to achieve its immediate goals due to lack of funds, well equipped and trained force, selfishness and betrayal of Pathan chiefs.

The main reason of failure was the narrow selfishness of the tribal chiefs.

- Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi

Although in long-term, Jihad movement inspired the later generations and paved way for the Pakistan Movement.