

Q2) Explain the services of Shah Waliullah and Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi. How these reformers impacted the history of sub-continent.

Ans) ① Introduction :-

Reformers have greatly impacted the history of sub-continent. The task of reforming the Muslim society in dark times was really a stupendous one which required sustained efforts. Shah Waliullah and Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi not only reformed the society on a cultural and spiritual pattern but also revived the glory of Muslims with

their writings, actions and struggles.

② The Great Services of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi

Background:- Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi was a great reformer and (Mujaddid ~~of~~ Sai) Naqshbandia order. He challenged the might of the great Mughal Emperor, Akbar, to re-establish the glory of Islam which had been gravely threatened by the anti-Islamic trends of Akbar.

2.1) Akbar's Din-i-Ilahi

Akbar, from the beginning of his rule desired to win the collaboration of the Rajput chiefs. He even married Rajput women and Hindus openly indulged in Government's affairs because of their important positions in royal courts. The Hindu courtiers prompted him to introduce a new religious faith by combining salient features of Islam and Hinduism. Greedy impressed by the suggestion, he promulgated his new religion, "Din-i-Ilahi" in 1582. He said,

"honour would be rendered to God, peace would be given to the peoples and security to the empire".

Rise of Unitarian trends:- The gist of Din-i-Ilahi was the introduction of un-Islamic trends.

Akbar sanctioned a number of un-Islamic practices which included worship of sun, fire and artificial lights. Akbar was declared God's shadow on earth and everyone was supposed to bow down before him in adoration. Cow slaughter was prohibited. Azan and call for prayers were forbidden. Mosques were used as warehouses. By all these actions, he acquired Muslim Antagonism. All this resulted in loss of ^{muslim} political hegemony in the subcontinent.

23) Vigorous reaction by Muslims and efforts of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi - Akbar's experiment invited a vigorous reaction by the Muslim saints and particularly Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi known as "Mujadid Alf Sani", exposed the fallacy of Din-i-Ilahi. He was a prominent disciple of Khawaja Baqir Billah (an eminent saint of Naqshbandi order). Mujadid Alf Sani wrote his famous book, "Isbat-un-Nabuwat" (affirmation of prophethood) in which he gave an excellent explanation of prophethood. When he began his Islamic movement, Muslim society was ridden with un-Islamic practices. Supernatural powers, magical and alien to Islam had been developed. Mystics and Sufi

openly derided Shari'ah and Sunnah. These trends excessively diminished the religious spirit and give rise to juristic view of Islam.

ii) Sheikh's efforts to purge Muslims out of Atheist values:-

renegade Af Sani took the task of purifying Muslim society of un-Islamic practices. He sent his disciples in all directions to preach true Islam. He asked people to emphasize on Shari'ah and Sunnah. He worked very hard to restore the true teachings of Islam. He adopted an effective method of persuasion by writing letters to the leading nobles of the royal court, reminding them of their duty and the sad state in which Islam had fallen in India. These letters are known as "Muktubat-e-Gham Rakhani".

All this drew him into serious difficulties. Akbar's ^{Jahangir's} son was informed of his movement and he was summoned in the royal court, where he refused to prostrate before a human being and courageously explained his statements. He was being imprisoned for this in Fort of Gawalia. He still continued his preaching of Islam. After two years, he was released.

iii) Influence of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi's Efforts:-

Sheikh Ahmed also openly negated the philosophy of Wahdat-ul-Wajud and presented his philosophy of Wahdat-ul-Shahid, which meant that the creator

and creatures were too different and separate entities. His efforts left an indelible impact on the history of Muslim India. Allam Iqbal considered him as the 4 spiritual guardian of the Muslims of India. He got an opportunity in a liberal atmosphere in Jhangir's era to use his pen to denounce Iqbal's religious innovations. Islamic practices were again followed properly due to the efforts of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi. He is considered as the pioneer of Muslim self assertion. Khwaja Baghi Billah wrote about him -
"He will turn into a light which will illumine the world."

③ Shah Waliullah's great religious movement.

3) Background:-

After the death of Aurangzeb in 18th century, Muslims faced some serious problems. Mughal empire had fallen into incapable hands and un-Islamic trends were flourishing.

Great anguish was created among saints by the general ignorance of QURAN, Hadith and Islam. Consequently, an era of religious regeneration began with emergence of Shah Wali Ullah who was a great muslim thinker, reformer and Mihadis.

He was a great social scholar and reformer who, with his dedicated services, brought the Muslim society together on stable foundations.

3.8) Social conditions of India at his time-

During his time, political and social turmoil was rampant in the sub-continent. Tussle between Shia and Sunni sects was posing serious threats to Muslim nobility. The Sikhs and Marathas had gained a firm foothold, all of which intensified the social decay in the Muslim society.

3.9) Shah Wali Ullah religious movement

He set himself to the sacred task of spiritual consolidation of Muslim society. He imparted the knowledge of different branches of Islamic teachings and asked them to impart this knowledge to others. He persuaded the Muslims to strictly follow the Sunnah and introduced the basic tenets of Islam to people. He initiated "Tatbiq" of the Muslim society and approached a balanced approach towards religious matters. He also removed the misunderstandings between Shia and Sunni sects. He impressed upon the rulers to enforce Islamic laws. He is regarded as the father of modern Muslim India.

34) Shah Wali Ullah's political services :-

Apart from his religious movement, he also provided leadership to Muslims in the political field. He saved the Muslims from the precarious situation of the Marhata uprising. He called for military assistance from Muslim nobles. Finally, Ahmad Shah Abdali upon the call of Shah Wali Ullah defeated the Marhata in the third battle of Panipat in 1761. It paved way for the revival of Islam in India.

35) Works of Shah Wali Ullah and their influence

He wrote many books on mysticism and diffused Islamic teachings. His outstanding work was his translation of Holy Quran into simple Persian. His madrasa and other institutions founded by him, imparted knowledge to people in the light of his works. Thus, his great efforts truly revived the spirit of Islam in the subcontinent.

Reformers and their

④ Impact on history :-

The above discussed services of both these great reformers truly prove their role in the history of the subcontinent. Both, in their times, revived the glory of Islam and raised the Muslim society

to greater rights. They have impacted history in a way that their services shaped the role of Muslim rule ^{and Muslim society} in the subcontinent, which consequently showed its ~~own~~ spirit in the ^{struggle of} Pakistan movement.

5) Conclusion:-

In conclusion, one can say that these great reformers shaped the golden history of Muslim rule and Muslim society in the subcontinent. Their tireless efforts brought back to Muslims their lost glory and revived the spirit of Islam in the Subcontinent.

