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General Knowledge - III

'Pakistan Affairs'

Part - II

Q.no.2

HISTORICAL Narrative of Religion-derived Nationalism in India.

Sheikh Ahmad SIRINDI (Mujdad Alf-thani) 1564-1626

Introduction:

Sheikh Ahmad SIRINDI is the historical figure in history of sub-continent that first recognised that Muslims were a distinct nation from the rest and they must work to preserve their unique separate identity. He was an ardent reformer for which time and worked for the Revival of Muslims at times when they were at a sensitive religious stand point.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

= Akbar Era

At the times of Mughal Empire Akbar, there were efforts put in by people for the religious synchronization in the sub-continent. Akbar tried to consolidate his political rule in India. For which and was influenced by various

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Social conditions prevailed in his time, like the popular belief in Karamat (miracles), Hindu cultural dominance, Baghti movement and the theory of Wahdat-ull-wujud. In his efforts to consolidate his political rule in the sub-continent he proposed an integration of Hindus and Muslim religious beliefs in form of his self-constructed religion called 'The Deene Ilahi'. He proposed that the ruler is Zil-e-Ilahi (shadow of God) on Earth which was contrary to Islamic concept of Sovereignty of Allah. Secondly the practice of prostration in the courts of Akbar demoralized Islamic concept of Supremacy of Allah. Muslim Society, in Akbar era, was ridden with un-Islamic practices and trends. The so called Sufis of those days openly denied the authenticity of Sharia'a and many means of developing magical and super natural power had been developed. The Ulemas had ceased to refer to Quran and Sunnah in their commentaries and considered jurisprudence as the only religious knowledge.

Revival Efforts of Sheikh Ahmad:

In view of the religious deterioration

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of Muslims of India, Sheikh Ahmad started his revival efforts for this. He sent out a number of his disciples in all directions to preach true Islam.

→ He emphasized on **Ittibae Sunnah** and commandment of Shariah in their sermon and preachings.

→ He wrote out letters to all prominent scholars and stressed upon religious doctrines and Ittibae Sunnah.

→ He was greatly against the concept of atheism and emphasized the concept of **Tawheed**.

→ He exposed the fallacy of Deen-e-Hawi and came out to curb the influence of its satanic creeds.

→ He denounced that mysticism ^{without} ~~that~~ Shariah was misleading and denounced these ulemas who questioned the authenticity of Shariah.

→ He took leading nobles near emperor into his discipleship and through them exerted influence upon them to bring a change. He was able to enlist Abdur Rahim, Khan-e-Khanan, Khan-e-Azam, Mirza Aziz and Mufti Sardar Jahan.

**Theory of Wahdat ul Shahud vs
Wahdat ul Wujud**

- Sheikh Ahmad denounced that Akbar's Wahdat ul Wujud philosophy, who believe that there is no living difference between the man and his creator. He advocated that the ^{entity} particle of universe represents God and, therefore worship of God's creatures was worship of God.
- Sheikh Ahmad openly negated this philosophy and declared it contrary to the principles of Islam. He present the philosophy of **Wahdat ul Sahud** which means that the creator and ~~was~~ ^{the} creations were two different and separate entities.

Imprisonment of Sheikh Ahmad

- Sheikh raised his voice against the practice of prostration in courts of Jehangir. He was imprisoned in fort of Awarior, but after one year Jehangir felt guilty of his act and released him and honoured him to be his Religious advisor.

Sheikh Ahmad & the two Nation Theory

- In order to popularize his Islam, Muslim reformers adopted a liberal point of view in their preachings
- They, however, were successful to attract a large number of people to Islam but

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at the same time this strategy gave rise to joint nationalism.

- This proved injurious to separate distinct identity of Muslims.
- Sheikh Ahmad put an end to this concept and labored to keep alive the national and religious identity of Muslims.
- He was staunch advocate of Muslim separatism and adopted a very stern attitude towards Hindus.

Mujdad's Influence on History of Muslim of INDIA:-

- Sheikh Ahmad was the most forceful and original thinker of Religious revival in Muslims of India before Shah Waliullah and Iqbal.
- He was the first man who could be called as the founder of Muslim Nationalism on religious grounds.
- He kept balance from heterodoxy of Akbar to orthodoxy of Aurangzeb was that is why he was known as the Mujdad of his age.

sheik Ahmad could be regarded as the first reformer and thinker

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who worked and raised the separate Muslim identity in sub-continent. His efforts paved the way for future Muslim struggle for separate national identity in India.

Q NO. 3

The ALIGARH MOVEMENT

Introduction: Background

The War of Independence 1857 ended in disaster for the Muslims. The British choose to believe that Muslims were responsible for the anti-British uprising; therefore they made ~~him~~ them subject of ruthless punishment and merciless vengeance. After dislodging Muslim rulers from the throne the new rulers implemented a new educational policy with drastic changes. The policy banned Arabic Persian and religious education in schools and made English medium of instruction as well as official language in 1835. This spawned a negative attitude amongst Muslims towards everything modern and western and a disinclination to make use of opportunities available under the new regime.

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Seeing this attitude of Muslims of despair and despondency, Sir Syed launched his efforts to revive the spirit of progress within Muslims community of India. He realized that modern education very important for regeneration of Indian Muslims. He tried to transform the Muslim outlook from a medieval one to a modern one. His efforts for Muslim revival are known as the Aligarh Movement in history.

Political Efforts of Sir Syed in Aligarh Movement:

• Trinity of Ideas:

For the political upbringing of Muslims of India Sir Syed advocated three ideas

- Aloofness from Politics
- Dedication to Education
- Loyalty to British.

• He tried to remove the mis-understandings among Muslims and the British, for this wrote his famous article 'The Causes of India Revolt' in 1858.

• He also wrote 'The loyal Muhammadans of India' to quit the bridge between

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- the Muslims and the British, he sent 502 copies of 'The loyal Muhammadans of India' to UK parliament.
- In 1886, he formed 'British Indian Association' to commute between Muslims and British.
- He was made a member of the Imperial Legislative Council in 1878.
- In 1883, he proposed a 'Local self Government Bill', he was the 1st Muslim who demanded separate electorate for Muslims.
- In 1888, he established 'United Indian patriotic association'.
- He used the word 'My People' and nation which laid the foundation of Two-Nation theory.

Education Aspects of the Aligarh Movement:

- Times of London, title him 'the Prophet of education'.
- Sir Syed said 'educate, educate, educate, cure the roots and the tree will flourish.'
- Sir Syed established various education institutes at Muzaffargarh (1859) and Ghazipur (1863).

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- In 1864 he established 'The Translational Society' at Ghazipur which was shifted to Aligarh in 1869.
- In light of his inspiration from British education, he established Muhammad Anglo Oriental School (MAO) in 1875. Which was raised to college level in 1877 and then to a university in 1920.
- 1886 he also established the 'Muhammadian Educational Conference' to cater Muslim educational needs and act as political platform for Muslims.

Religious Contribution of Sir Syed to the Aligarh Movement:

- Sir Syed wrote an essay on 'Life of Muhammad' and rebattle against the William Muir's objectionable remarks in 'Life of Muhammad'.
- He wrote philosophical commentary called 'Taba'een ul Kalam' on bible - to point out similarities.
- He wrote 'Rahe Sunnat wa Rahe Bidat' to let Muslims aware of the un-Islamic practices of the time.

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Critical Analysis & Conclusion

All the efforts of Sir Syed for Muslim educational as well as political and religious were aimed at not only making Muslims spiritually strong but on political grounds as well. The political philosophy of cooperation, although, had some serious limitations but its broad aim was to revive the lost identity through minor steps. He didn't directly advocate to adopt western ways of life but rather he called for using the western education as a ladder to rise up to the lost glory, and on the way Muslims should also focus on their religious development as well ~~as~~ so they could preserve their unique Muslim identity.

Q No. 5

PAK-Afghan Relations

Asia is like a body made of water and clay
The Afghan Nation is like a heart in Body
Peace in Afghanistan brings Peace in Asia
Chaos in Afghanistan brings Chaos in Asia

~ Iqbal

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Introduction:

The relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan has always been difficult. This has been true since the time of the founding of Pakistan, when Afghanistan first voted against admitting to United Nations. The relations are long since on a roller-coaster and never able to settle despite the cultural and strategic relevance both the countries share. So in view of the recent major shift in political dynamics of the country, after Taliban's take over, this is a new chapter, not written only in history but the national and regional framework both countries need to work on, work because everything can change but the neighbours cannot.*

Historical context:

— Security-Oriented Relationship

Pakistan and Afghanistan have shared a turbulent history, with border disputes over the Durand Line and the spill over effects of Afghan wars. Post 1979, Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan intensified due to the Soviet Afghan war

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US alliances and the rise of Taliban.

— Role of Non-state Actors

Groups like Taliban, Al Qaeda and Tehreek i Taliban Pakistan have historically shaped Pak-Afghan relations. Pakistan was the first to recognise the Afghan Taliban take over in 2021 but despite the efforts, Taliban are reluctant to shake hands and address the security concerns and risk the TTP brought for Pakistan. Just in 2024 648 people were killed in the terrorist attacks conducted by TTP from Afghan soil.

SHIFTING FOCUS: Economic Nature of Relations

- Trade Relations

Despite the fact that India has still not recognised the Taliban government, the recent diplomatic outreach to Afghanistan's Taliban government in the first fortnight of January 2025, rows for multilateral trade cooperation. Pakistan needs to learn from its neighbour and work on improving trade relations with

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.. Afghanistan. The Turkham border serves as a major corridor between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The trade through Turkham Border faces immense issues like visa issues and trade license, and security issues. The closure of the border cause around \$2.5 million losses on daily basis and Rs. 550 million due to import halt from Afghanistan.

- Regional Connectivity Projects:

The CPEC offers potential integration with Afghanistan, especially through initiatives like CASA-1000 and TAPI gas pipeline. These giant economic corporations can boost regional connectivity growth and stability.

- Last year in October 2024, Pakistan ~~co~~ hosted 5th SCO Summit in Islamabad, the inclusion of Afghanistan could shift the relations towards trade and economic rather than security centric.

- Refugees and labor linkage

Million of Afghan refugees settled in Pakistan contribute to informal sector and remittances inflows back to Afghanistan. Economic stability in Afghanistan is vital for managing the refugee crisis and fostering regional development.

Pakistan is still hosting 2.7 million Afghans. Last year, to put pressure on Afghan Taliban to deny their land used by terrorist against Pakistan.

— Banking System

Afghanistan faces banking challenges for its trade relations, for which it has established offices in countries such as Dubai or Istanbul. The issue related to banking could be resolved by introducing barter system and use of local currencies.

So this 'trade for security' approach can help to deal with the misperception that Afghans have about Pakistan, considering the current economic issues of Afghanistan.