

Question No #03

Introduction:

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi and Shah Waliullah are ranked amongst the greatest Muslim reformers who devoted their lives for the preservation of Islamic and socio-political values of Muslims of subcontinent. Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi worked for the revival of Muslim society. His influence spread to Afghanistan, central Asia, & the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the profound contributions significantly shaped the religious and socio-political landscape of his time and beyond.

Retrospect:

At that time, the Muslims society had degenerated from a powerful and well-integrated community to a helpless and disorganized crowd. Muslims were losing status and their role in subcontinent because of loss of political power. The social evils had spread in society i.e. Riba, gambling, bribery and alcohol consumption. The moral decadence of Muslims threatened the Mughal empire. The greatness of both reformers, Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi and Shah Waliullah lies in

identifying the cause of decline of Muslims and in finding remedies to counter them.

⇒ Role of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi had played an important role in shaping the socio-political landscape of the Muslims of the Sub-continent.

- Revival of Shariah & Sunnah
- Opposition to Akbar's Din-i-ilahi
- Service in regard to Two-Nation theory
- Shaping social moral values

1) Revival of the Shariah and Sunnah:

He is also known as Mujaddid Alf Sani. He emphasized strict following of Shariah and Ijtihad-e-Sunnah. He preached that mysticism without Shariah was misleading and un-Islamic.

This was the reason that he refused to perform the act of prostration before Mughal Emperor.

His contributions are

- Emphasized the concept of Tauheed
- Persuaded the Muslims to give up heretical ideas and return to pure Islam.
- Emphasized the Muslims to maintain separate identity distinct from Hindus.

2) Opposition to Akbar's Din-i-illahi

Mujaddid Ali Farid was noted for his staunch opposition to Mughal Emperor Akbar's Din-e-Ilahi.

It is said that usury, gambling, wine and pork were made lawful by the new religion, slaughter of cows was banned, the laws relating to marriage were amended, etc. Through his writings and teachings,

Siswandhi reaffirmed the supremacy of Sharia.

Dr. Allama Iqbal has given tribute to Siswandhi in these words:

"His neck did not bow before Jahangir.

Due to warmth of his breath

the warmth and freedom of the free born people exist"

3) Mujaddid Ali Farid and Two Nation Theory

He was a staunch supporter of Muslim separation and wanted to keep Muslim nationalism's distinct image. He opposed united nationalism. He believed that the difference b/w Hindus and Muslims should be preserved.

"If Muslims want to live as a nation then they have to quit the talk of Shirk and Bidaat and stay away from Hindus. If the awareness of separate national identity is not awakened in Muslims then it is feared that they would be swept away with the

"Flood of combined nationhood."

(S. Ahmed Sirhandi)

4) Shaping Social Moral values:

Sirhandi's teaching on social ethics and personal morality had a long-lasting effect on the behaviour of Muslims in India. He emphasized living according to the true teaching of Islam. His emphasis on ethical conduct, justice, and adherence to Islamic moral values influenced the socio-religious fabric of the Muslim community.

Shah Waliullah's Role:

He was a prominent Islamic scholar, theologian, and reformer of Indian subcontinent. His services are:

- Views on Politics
- Letters to important figures and factions
- Moral reform of Muslim community
- Necessity of Ijtihad

1) Shah Waliullah's view on Politics:

In his book "Hujjatullah al-balighah", Shah Waliullah defined politics and differentiated it from government. He believed that political authority was essential for maintaining justice, enforcing Shariah, and ensuring the welfare of society. He viewed politics interact with religion and

Social life.

2) Letters to Important Figures and Factions:

Shah Waliullah wrote letters to:

- i) Mughal rulers → to give up corruption and inefficiency practices.
- ii) Soldiers → to inculcate within them the Jihad's spirit
- iii) Ahmed Shah Abdali → to attack Indian and check Maratha menace.

3) Moral Reforms of Muslims

He scathingly criticized the luxurious and indolent lifestyle of Muslims, particularly the upper stratum of society. He believed that the moral decadence of Muslim elite had torn apart the ^{Muslim} ~~sett~~ society. He urged the rulers to shun their decadent and perform their duties responsibly.

4) Necessity of Ijtihad:

Shah Waliullah was a firm believer of the institution of Ijtihad. He emphasized the necessity of ijtihad in Islamic thought, particularly during times of socio-political change. He emphasized the Muslim scholars to engage in Ijtihad to address contemporary issues. In his famous treatise "Hujjatullah-al-Baligha," Shah Waliullah discussed in detail the intellectual and Scholastic requirements of a

mujtahid and the general principles of Ijtihad.

Conclusion:

Sheikh Ahmed Sarhindi and Shah Waliullah stand as a towering figure in Islamic history, revered for their unwavering commitment to the principles of Islam. They emphasized the Muslims of subcontinent to uphold the values of piety, knowledge, and righteousness in their individual and collective lives. They contributed significantly in the religious, social and political spheres.

Critical analysis:

Most of the Islamic world is in turmoil. They are economically, diplomatically and developmentally weak. The causes are same as the ones that resulted in the weakening of the Muslims community of the subcontinent. Suggestive steps to counter the challenges faced by Muslim Ummah are:

- Getting close to Allah → • Economic development Framework
- Unification of Muslim Ummah
- Controlling the political crises
- Focus on education