

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Aligarh Movement

Students' Learning Outcomes

After studying this chapter, students will be able to:

- describe the dismal situation of Muslims in the post-1857 era.
- highlight Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's effort in Anglo-Muslim understanding.
- illustrate Sir Syed's success to persuade Muslims to acquire modern education.
- delineate Sir Syed's role as a Social Reformer.
- discuss Sir Syed's political manifesto: loyalty to the British Crown and abstention from active politics.
- discuss the establishment of various modern educational institutions in areas constituting Pakistan with particular reference to Sindh Madrassatul Islam.
- trace out the origins, evolution and the accomplishments of Muslim Educational Conference.
- discuss the response of Deoband and Nadva-tul-Ulema to modern education.

The Condition of Muslims after War of Independence (1857)

Although Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs participated in the War of Independence but Hindus succeeded in realizing the British that they were their loyal and friends. On the other hand, Muslims were labelled as rebels against the British. Therefore, the British government was struggling to damage Muslims so that they could not revive their status.

The native people were defeated in the War of Independence due to their disunity, superior technology and modern knowledge of the British. After the war, the British were revengeful against the natives. They declared the last Mughal King as rebel and put him in prison in exile. In this way, Mughal Empire came to an end.

Despite the fact the British had destroyed the Muslims and had brought the major portion of Indian under their control yet they were afraid of the Muslims. They considered Muslims as the permanent threat to their government; therefore, they tried to spoil the Muslims position in the fields of education, social, economic and politics. A brief detail of Muslims condition after the 1857 was as under:

No Government Jobs for the Muslims

Up to the end of the 19th century, the British government took every step against Muslims. Muslims were not offered civil services. Serving Muslims were compelled to leave the service. In every advertisement for the service, there was a condition that Muslims could not apply or the

Muslims were not eligible for the post. So all the civil services were offered to Hindus. The main purpose of this act was to suppress the Muslims in every field so that they might not stand against the British government in future. After the War of Independence, the British and Hindus left no stone unturned to undermine the Muslims.

Ejection of Muslims from Agricultural Land

Besides government jobs, agriculture was another source of income of Muslims for the last many centuries. Most of the Muslims used to work on agriculture lands. British government ejected the Muslims from land and confiscated it. In this way, landlords and farm workers both became victims of adversity. They imposed a lot of new taxes. The taxes which were waived of, were again levied. Resultantly, Muslims fell into worst economic conditions.

Educational Backwardness

Muslims educational and religious institutions were also mal-treated. Earlier, the income of religious institutions was spent on the education of Muslims, now it was being used in other pursuits as per British government's desire.

Most of the Muslim institutions were closed. Muslims, who were educated from the remaining Muslims institutions, could not get any job. It was a big shock for religious factions.

Replacement of Persian by English as an Official language

The British government declared English as an official language in place of Persian. Hindu did not oppose it and accepted it as an official language. But Muslims were shocked by this change because it was meant not only the change of language but the change of Islamic culture and civilization.

Moreover, Muslim children were not ready to get education in English, so they remained aloof from modern education. On the other hand, Hindus established superiority over Muslims in educational field by learning English. So the fields of judiciary, medicine, engineering and others were open for the Hindus. Consequently, Hindus started getting high positions in every walk of life.

After the War of Independence, the conditions of Muslims in social, economic and educational sectors were disappointing. In that situation, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan came forward to rescue Muslims and also made them realize that they were being ruled. Therefore, he introduced a principle of dignified life to Muslims so that they could respectably compromise with British government and move forward.

Efforts of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan for Reconciliation between Muslims and British Government

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was born on October 17, 1817 at Delhi in a noble family. He wanted that Muslims should educate themselves with Western education to regain their lost prestige and status. He loved his nation very much. He could not see the bad condition of Muslims. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan believed that Muslims could not be able to remove British from power. Therefore, the Muslims should reconcile with the British and should educate themselves. He believed in the trinity of ideas (i) loyalty to British, (ii) devotion to education and (iii) aloofness from politics. In this way,

he showed the Muslims the path of progress.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan wanted to remove misunderstanding between Muslims and British and to create reconciliation among them. He had written a pamphlet, "Causes of Indian Revolt" in which he tried his best to tell the British that the real cause of War of 1857 was the unawareness of British with the native ideas and traditions. Native, especially Muslims were hurt by some steps of British Government. The British had exploited religion of Muslims and their maltreatment with Muslims added fuel to the fire.



Sir Syed Ahmad Khan

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan said that Hindus were equally responsible of the revolt but Hindus were not being accused. However, all the Muslims did not participate the revolt, even some Muslims protected the Britishers. In this way, he realized the British government that its harsh treatment with Muslims was against the principle of equity and justice. He agreed that Muslims and Christian had the commonality as both had the Holy books. Therefore, they should be closer to each other than Hindus. These arguments created soft corner in hearts of British towards Muslims.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan negated the accusation that Muslims were against British government. In this connection, he wrote, "Loyal Mohammadans of India" in which he explained the conditions of Muslims who had served Britishers with loyalty during the War of Independence.

The efforts of reconciliation of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan proved effective and he succeeded in bringing the two nations closer to each other. When he started the efforts, the conditions of Muslims were very bad and they were helpless. They were backward in the fields of education, social, economic and politics. After Sir Syed's efforts, their condition begin to improve and they started to regain their due place in the society.

Services of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in the Field of Education

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan thought that Muslims could regain their status through modern education. Thus he devoted all his life to impart western education to Muslims. Therefore, he established a school at Muradabad in 1859, in which the education of English and Persian was imparted to the students. Another school was also established in Ghazipur in 1862. In 1863, Sir Syed established Scientific Society; in which English books were translated into Urdu. Hindus supported the efforts of Sir Syed, among them Raja Je Kishin was a prominent name.



A scence of Aligarh Muslim University

A weekly journal under the title of "Aligarh Institute Gazette" was published in 1866 with main effort of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and continued till his death. It was divided into Urdu and English sections. It published all kinds of articles e.g. social, ethical, scientific and political. The paper was always been a valuable instrument for social reforms in the country and for the acceptance of western education.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan founded Muhammadan Anglo Oriental (M.A.O) High School on May 24, 1875 and Maulvi Sami Ullah was appointed its administrator. After two years, the school was upgraded to college level. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan retired from service in July 1876 and took the responsibility of the college. The British government granted 74 acres land for the construction of building. The college became most popular among the Muslims. Many other educational institutions were also established in Punjab, Sindh and NWFP. M.A.O college was upgraded to the standard of university in 1920.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan as a Social Reformer

Sir Syed as a social reformer took many useful steps. He succeeded to reconcile British government with Indian Muslims by removing many hurdles and misunderstandings.

Sir Syed emphasized on adopting the western culture and advised Muslims to use spoons for eating. He created the feelings of national sympathy and national welfare among the Muslims of India.

Sir Syed in his book "Loyal Mohammadans of India" enumerated various services of Muslims for the British government and asked the government to change its attitude towards Muslims. Christian missionaries opened a front against Muslims. He urged on both nations to choose compromising attitude. He claimed Islam and Christianity as two issues of the one message. He also confronted the activities of Christian missionaries. He replied the book "The Life of Mahomed (رَسُوْلُ اللهِ خَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّينَ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) " by William Muir through lectures which were later on printed in book shape under the title, "Khutbat-e-Ahmdia". Later, Sir Syed also got this book translated in English. In his book "Tabian-ul-Kalam" he compared Holy Quran and Holy Bible and proved that both are divine books and have many things in common.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan also put efforts for religious education. He established orphan house and a school for Muslims in Muradabad.

Sir Syed's Political Theory

In the beginning, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan made efforts for Hindu-Muslim unity which were not successful due to the negative attitude of Hindus. Hindu leaders also tried to deprive Muslims of their rights and damage their culture and language. Sir Syed advised Muslims not to take part in the active politics and concentrate their attention on education to improve economic condition. He also made efforts to protect the right of Muslims. So, there was a change in Sir Syed's views after Urdu-Hindi controversy in 1867 and his policies became Muslim specific. It was a first step towards two-nation theory.

Sir Syed proposed to include native people in the legislative council so that the government might remain informed about problems of the people. In response to it, the British government included the natives in the Legislative Council. Sir Syed himself remained the member of Central Legislative Council from 1878 to 1882. Being the member of Central Legislative Council, he opposed the Ilbert Bill because it supported the European accused.

In 1883, when a bill of local self-government was presented in council. Sir Syed proposed an amendment in the bill and demanded separate electorate for Muslims. He also suggested to

nominate Muslims in the councils according to strength of Muslims in each province.

He adopted a policy of cooperation and reconciliation to bring Muslims close to the British government. He also wrote "Causes of Indian Revolt" to support Muslims.

In 1885, a British A.O. Hume founded a political party named "Indian National Congress". It was dominated by Hindu. So Sir Syed refused to become its member. He wanted to keep Muslims away from active politics which could result in British-Muslim conflict that was why he advised Muslims to stay away from the Congress.

When Congress demanded to introduce parliamentary system in India, Sir Syed Ahmad opposed it and said that sub-continent neither a country nor a single nation lived here. The introduction of British Parliamentary System would result in dominance and dictatorship of majority and the Muslims would become slave.

Muhammadan Educational Conference (1886)

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan established Muhammadan Educational Conference in 1886 to develop devotion for education. Sir Syed was its finance secretary. Its annual meetings were being held in different cities, wherever its need was felt or was demanded by Muslims leaders to consider the education proposal.

Muhammadan Educational Conference provided political platform for the Muslims of India. Muslims of India had no political party, therefore, whenever the meetings of Muhammadan Educational Conference were held, the delegates used to discuss all problems including political and to seek their solutions.

In this connection, Nawab Mohsin ul Mulk, Nazir Ahmad, Shibli Nomani and Maulana Altaf Hussain Hali were the leading figures. They protected the Muslim rights. Sir Syed established this feeling that Muslims should not oppose British. As a result, the British started patronizing Muslims.

Muslim Educational Institutions

Anjuman Hamaiah-e-Islam Lahore

The activities of Anjuman Hamaiah-e-Islam Lahore were the series of struggles for protection of Muslim rights. It was formed in Lahore in 1884. Its founder and first president was Khalifa Muhammad Hameed-Uddin. Its main objectives were the protection of Islamic traditions, imparting of Islamic education to children and struggle for the promotion of Muslim culture. It established various educational institutions and made orphan houses. Many educational institutions have been working since the establishment of Pakistan including Middle and high schools and orphan houses. It published Holy Quran and Sunnah books and various other books on history and Islam.

Sindh Madrasa-tul-Islam Karachi

Hassan Ali Afindi, under supervision of Sindh Muhammadan Association, established Sindh Madrasa-tul-Islam on 1st September 1885 in Karachi. Hassan Ali Afindi toured throughout the country to collect funds for Madrasa. Nawab of Khairpur provided a grant of 12 thousand rupees and promise to pay wages and salary to the Principal. Mr. Percy Hildes an Englishman was appointed

first principal of the Madrsa. Among graduates of the college were Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hadiatullah and A.K. Bruhi. In 1943, the administrative board upgraded the Madrsa to the college level, whose foundation stone was laid by Quaid-e-Azam (R.A). The college has been upgraded to the standard of a university.

Islamia College Railway Road, Lahore

Anjuman Hamiat-e-Islam established Islamia College in 1892. It started its work in a building of Sherwala Gate. It was historical college which provided education to the children of Muslims. The students of the college participated in Pakistan Movement. Quaid-e-Azam (R.A) visited this college many times and addressed the students. Habibia Hall of this college was famous because many seminars regarding Pakistan Movement were held and many Muslim leaders addressed the students in this hall.

Islamia College Peshawar

Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum Khan laid down the foundation of the Islamia College, Peshawar (NWFP) now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on the pattern of Aligarh College. It started imparting education to the Muslims. Students from all over the province used to attend the college. Among the renowned students of the college were Sardar Abdul Rab Nishtar and Dr. Abdul Jabbar Khan. The college played a very important role in creating national consciousness among the Muslims. Therefore Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum was known as the Sir Syed of NWFP.

Darul-Uloom-Deoband

The foundation of Darul-Uloom-Deoband was laid down in Deoband, a small town of Saharanpur district of India, in 1867. Darul-Uloom-Deoband was against the British government and modern education. Various trades were taught in Darul-Uloom so that its graduates would be able to get employment. Among the trades were Khattati, book binding and weaving clothes. It struggled to protect the religious, educational and cultural assets of Muslims.

Nadva-tul-Ullama Lucknow

Syed Muhammad Ali Kanpuri had established Nadva-tul-Ullama at Lucknow in 1894. He was appointed the first administrator of Nadva. Maulana Shibli Naumani and Abdul Haq Haqani prepared its rules and regulations. Maulana Shabbir's role was very important. This institution imparted both modern and traditional education to the students. At the primary level, the students were educated in science, English and Hindi along with Islam. It was an educational and reformatory institute. The passed-out-graduates of this institute performed many valuable service to the Muslims. Among the prominent graduates were Syed Suleman Nadvi and Maulana Abdul Salam Nadvi. Aligarh movement was meant for modern education, Darul-Uloom Deoband for traditional education and Nadva-tul-Islam for the both i.e. modern and traditional education. By adopting the midway it served the Muslims at large.

Important points

1. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan established Scientific Society at Ghazipur in 1863.
2. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan started Aligarh Institute Gazette for English and Urdu publications.
3. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan wrote Khutbat-e-Ahmdia in reply to book of William Muir.
4. Sardar Abdul Rab Nishtar and Dr. Abdul Jabbar Khan were the renowned students of Islamia College Peshawar.
5. Maulvi Muhammad Ali Kanpuri was founder and first principal of Nadva-tul-Ulema Lucknow.
6. The foundation for Mohammadan Educational Conference was laid down by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in 1886.
7. Anajuman Hamiat-e-Islam was founded in 1884.
8. A movement in favour of Hindi was started in Banaras in 1867.
9. Darul-Uloom Deoband is situated in a small town of district Saharanpur of India.
10. Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum was rightly known as Sir Syed of NWFP.

EXERCISE

Q.1: Tick (✓) the correct answer.

- i. Scientific Society was founded in
a) 1859 b) 1861 c) 1863 d) 1865
- ii. Who was the founder of Sindh Madrsa-tul-Islam?
a) Maulana Zafar Ali Khan b) Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum
c) Quaid-e-Azam (R.A) d) Hassan Ali Afandi
- iii. Which was established in 1886?
a) Indian National Congress b) All India Muslim League
c) Scientific Society d) Mohammadan Educational Conference
- iv. In which year Darul-ul-Uloom Deoband was founded?
a) 1867 b) 1869 c) 1871 d) 1873
- v. In which city was Sir Syed Ahmad born?
a) Dacca b) Delhi c) Bombay d) Bareli

Q.2: Give short answers of the following.

- i. When did Sir Syed Ahmad Khan publish Aligarh Institute Gazette?
- ii. Write down names of two books of Sir Syed.
- iii. Who was the founder of Nadva-tul-Ulema?
- iv. Write the name of five institutions which were established by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.
- v. Write down in three lines the services of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan for the religious education.

Q. 3: Tick (✓) against right answer and cross (×) against wrong answer.

- Sir Syed Ahmad Khan retired from service in 1876.
- In 1943, Sindh Madrsa-tul-Islam was founded.
- In 1861, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan established a Madrsa at Muradabad.
- Syed Muhammad Ali Kanpuri established Nadva-tul-Ulema at Lucknow in 1890.
- Darul-Uloom Deoband is situated at district Saharanpur in India.

Q. 4: Fill in the blanks.

- Sir Syed Ahmad Khan established MAO College on May 24 _____.
- The activities of Anjuman Hamiat-e-Islam were the _____ of struggle for the protection of Muslim rights.
- Islamia College Railway Road Lahore was established by Anjuman Hamait-e-Islam in _____.
- In 1883, the British government introduced the _____ of local self-government.
- Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum of NWFP founded _____ Peshawar.

Q. 5: Relate column A with column B. Write correct answer in column C.

Column A	Column B	Column C
In 1885 at Karachi	Principal was Syed Muhammad Ali Kanpuri	
Anjuman Hamait-e-Islam founded in 1884	remained member of Legislative Council	
In 1886, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan founded	in Lahore	
Sir Syed Ahmad Khan from 1878-1882	Sindh Madrasa-tul-Islam was founded	
The founder of Nadva-tul-Islam and	Mohammadan Educational Conference	

Q. 6: Write answers in detail of the following.

- Discuss the religious, political and educational conditions of Muslims after War of Independence of 1857.
- Discuss the reconciliatory role of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan between British and Muslims.
- Discuss the significance of modern educational institutions in Pakistan.
- Discuss the objectives and role of Mohammadan Educational Conference.
- Discuss educational services of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.
- Discuss the role of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan as a social reformer.

Activities

- Conduct a speech competition regarding Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's services.
- Prepare a list of educational institutions established by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.