

Muhammad Azeem*
Maqbool Ahmad Awan**
Abdul Qadir Mushtaq***

The Man who did not let to dim the Candle of Aligarh Movement: Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk

Abstract

This article is an attempt to highlight the various personality traits and services of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk (Syed Mehdi Ali) as a true revitalizer of Aligarh Movement and delve his significant contributions for emancipation, empowerment and political organization of Muslims in the Sub-continent. He promoted, uplifted and raised the sinking boat of Aligarh Movement, which was, initially, envisaged by its founding father to ameliorate the downtrodden, backward and poverty stricken Muslim population. After the death of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Muslims were facing intellectual impasse; lack of prudence as well as political maturity which was indispensable to shun the clouds of Hindu domination and colonial subjugation. Under these critical circumstances, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, did not let to dim the candle of education, social amelioration and political organization with his dedication, sincerity and problem solving approach from the platform of Aligarh. The vacuum of leadership created by the death of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was filled by Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk whose enlightened personality carried the mission of Aligarh movement. He also steered the Muslims' socio-political conditions with his literary abilities, socio-cultural understanding and socio-economic planning to cope with hardships and challenges which were being confronted by the Muslims in India. To be more precise, the seeds of Aligarh Movement were sown by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, flourished by Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and ripened by Indian Muslims in the form of freedom when they removed the clouds of Colonial superiority and Hindu domination. This paper encapsulates that Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk injected a new spirit to the Muhammadan Educational Conference and rendered hectic efforts to make it a dynamic force for Muslim political awareness. It also examined that he contributed significantly to bring the Aligarh College from financial and administrative imbroglio and put it to the track of progress, prosperity and advancement. This paper also digs deep the role of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk as a true successor of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, in Aligarh Movement, nuisance of his literary services at this platform and contribution in defence of Urdu language during the era of Urdu-Hindi controversy as well as his political sagacity in Simla Deputation and Muslim political organization; All India Muslims League.

* Muhammad Azeem, Ph. D. Scholar, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore.

** Maqbool Ahmad Awan, Assistant Professor, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore.

*** Dr. Abdul Qadir Mushtaq, Assistant Professor, department of history & Pakistan Studies, GC University Faisalabad.

Key Words: Aligarh Movement, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Congress, Muhammadan Educational Conference, Sub-Continent, British

Introduction:

Syed Mehdi Ali commonly known as Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was born, in Etawah (U.P) India on December, 09, 1837.¹ After getting his early education, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, started his professional career as a petty Clerk, however, he rose to prominence as an able civil servant by dint of his sheer hard work and devotion to duty.² In 1867, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, achieved distinguished position in competitive exam and was appointed as a Deputy Collector permanently at Mirzapur.³ He, exhibited devotion and earned popularity as a renowned bureaucrat of the British Government.⁴ The Collector of Mirzapur was so much satisfied with his performance that at the end of year, he recorded in Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk's service book, "I am in a position to say with confidence that there is no other Government servant as intelligent and honest as Mehdi Ali."⁵ Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, after being recognized as a responsible Indian civil servant, was awarded with the then famous title of Mohsin-ul-Doulah and Muneer Nawaz Jang.⁶

Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, retired from civil services in 1893 and departed from Hyderabad where people gathered and paid tributes for his illustrious career in civil services.⁷ He was very popular with the masses in Hyderabad about which Maulvi Abdul Haq⁸ writes; "when Mohsin-ul-Mulk left Hyderabad thousands of people came to say him farewell. They were virtually weeping over his departure".⁹

In those days, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan needed trustworthy companion as well as a leader of integrity and dedication to render help and relentless dedication to expand the fruit of Aligarh Movement in various parts of India to ameliorate the Muslims pathetic conditions. At that juncture, Mohsin-ul-Mulk decided to settle at Aligarh permanently with his simmering passion and committed personality to put Muslims; on the path of progression as well as socio-economic and educational uplift.¹⁰

Delving Efforts To Kindle The Dimming Light Of Aligarh Movement

Sir Syed and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk

Though, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, initially, possessed some difference of views and divergence of opinion with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan on political, religious, social and educational issues relating to the Muslims, however, his ideas were transformed with the passage of time because of miserable and deplorable circumstances of Muslims. At the outset, Mohsin-ul-Mulk considered that ideas of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan were nationalistic in approach and impractical in execution. However, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, was soon convinced that the platform of Aligarh can be proved as a turning point to strengthen socio-political affairs of the Muslims. Keeping in view these points, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk became determined to lend his hands, to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, for the uplift of Muslims

from their perpetual vacillation and intellectual stalemate. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk demonstrated dexterity when financial deterioration and political marginalization of the Muslims was at the peak in India.¹¹ It was Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk who uplifted the philosophy of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan to improve educationally pathetic and socially deprived state of affairs of Muslims of India. During this era, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk also made several objections related to the interpretations of the *Taurat* and *Anjeel* by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. However, Sir Syed Ahmad and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, had nationalistic views regarding deteriorated and suppressed conditions of the Muslims. With the passage of time, Mohsin-ul-Mulk matured his approach and decided to benefit Muslims from the platform of Aligarh. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was true and sincere leader who kept alive his promises and steered Aligarh Movement; when it was confronting administrative deficiencies and financial crisis.¹²

To elaborate this in detail, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, thus, narrated:

“I remembered the days when I first visited Aligarh and exchanged views with Sir Syed about the progress of the Indian Muslims comprehensively. However, I was a staunch opponent of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan’s philosophy regarding the welfare of the Muslim nation. I used to laugh when I listened the highest flights of Sir Syed’s ideals regarding the emancipation of the Muslim nation. I also used to argue that Sir Syed’s claims about the welfare of the nation were just like building the castles in air. In fact, Muslim nation in India was lazy, careless and lethargic.”¹³

These views of Mohsin-ul-Mulk rightly explained that he changed his mind regarding the uplift of Indian Muslims. Later on, he was convinced by Sir Syed’s philosophy of educational and socio-economic amelioration of Muslims from their socially deprived, financially deteriorated and politically marginalized conditions.

It is worth mentioning here that the death of Sir Syed Ahmad proved as a managerial dearth at Aligarh; financial mismanagement and administrative incompetency and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, with his persistent attitude, and sagacious approach handled all the challenges and difficulties sanely. It can be explained that either Scientific Society or Compilation of *Khutbat-i-Ahmadia* or naissance of literary services of *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq*, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk emerged a man with strategic vision and brought the sinking boat of Aligarh Movement towards effective and influential phase to eliminate Muslims lethargic attitude and pathetic conditions regarding their socio-cultural interest as well. Thus, the views of Mohsin-ul-Mulk were custodian of the philosophy of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan to improve the deteriorated conditions of the Muslims and later on, the former proved a true successor; to enlighten the Muslims with knowledge and awareness which was initiated by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

Naissance Of Nawab Mohsin-Ul-Mulk's Literary Approach

Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was an extensive reader with brilliant mind and learning agility. He had analytical approach and deep observation of various religious and political challenges which were being experienced by the Indian Muslims. Some writers are of the view that he had inborn qualities of oratory and debating, his argumentative and convincing approach regarding dogmatic social views always rejected the philosophy of blind following the socio-religious matters.¹⁴ He rejected the path of dogmatism and rendered valuable ideas while advocating the cause of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in his life time and even after his death. He was a visionary personality, with sound religious knowledge and political awareness which helped the Muslims from perpetual nostalgia and useless superstitious beliefs. The writings of Mohsin-ul-Mulk pushed the Muslims from ignorance, social injustice and static affairs towards dynamic and nationalistic character which infused the desire of a separate homeland for the Indian Muslims.¹⁵

Thus, Nawab Mohsin ul Mulk, was the man who kindled the light of knowledge and awareness with the prolific outflow of his pen and he utilized the platform of Aligarh according to its aims and objectives. His publications and writings proved that Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk inculcated lively spirit of learning and analytical thinking in Muslims to bring them out from intellectual chaos. A glance and brief view of the services rendered by Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk.

Contribution In The Compilation Of Khutbat-I-Ahmdiya

William Muir published a book titled "*The Life of Muhammad*" and raised different objections about the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). In response to these objections of William Muir against Holy Prophet (PBUH), Sir Syed Ahmad Khan wanted to write an authentic book. For this purpose, he travelled to England in 1869 and therefrom addressed a number of letters to Mohsin-ul-Mulk to raise funds for the publication of his work.¹⁶

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan wrote on 20th August 1869 to Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk;

“Now a days, my heart is burning and the book of William Muir has broken my heart particularly his unjust views and ideas regarding the life of Holy Prophet (PBUH). Sir Syed also demonstrated his commitment to publish his reply to highlight the illuminatory and matchless character of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).¹⁷

For this purpose, Sir Syed showed a trust of greater magnitude and kept to consult with Mohsin-ul-Mulk on the challenge of Muir's book.¹⁸ As a result of this commitment of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk raised funds successfully and performed a stupendous task for the publication of *Khutbat-i-Ahmadia*.¹⁹ This dedication and collective efforts of Nawab Mohsin ul Mulk and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, to publish *Khutbat-i-Ahmadia*, for the greater respect and love for the Holy Prophet (PBUH), shows that both the aforesaid leaders responded in collaboration with each other to the literary challenges faced by Muslims at religious fronts from the platform of Aligarh Movement.

Knacking Literary Exuberance Of Nawab Mohsin-Ul-Mulk In Tehzib-Ul-Akhlaq

Sir Syed wanted to motivate the Muslims for the acquisition of latest knowledge and to reduce misunderstandings and hatred among the Muslims and the British Colonial rulers. For this purpose, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan introduced magazine titled *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq*²⁰ in 1870. In this scenario, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk became an ardent supporter and advocated vehemently; the cause of *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq* with the point of his pen and became a prolific writer to present his views in various matters of educational, social and political aspects of lives of the people of the sub-continent.

Alongwith Maulvi Charagh Ali²¹ and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk became the regular contributor who used to write essays for *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq*. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote many essays in *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq* i.e. *Islam*²², *Tafseer Bil Rai*²³, *Wajood-i-Aasman*²⁴ *Tadbeer-o-Umeed*²⁵, *Tareef-i-Alfaz Ulloom*²⁶ and *Ilm-i-Tafseer*²⁷ etc. He wrote with deep observation, scholarly outlook, and problem solving approach to cater the challenges and problems which were being confronted by the Muslims in India. It is believed by the researchers, scholars and readers that Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk's essays were replete with literary dynamism, a unique touch of satirical humour and vast information on the issues of national and religious importance. In other words, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was a great writer who used to amalgamate serious ideas in a style full of humour to attract the reader's attention so that his message may touch the reader's heart. He tried his level best to purposefully write essays to uplift the Muslims religiously and to carry on the mission of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan from the platform of Aligarh. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk expressed his views satirically to shun the clouds of lethargic, inactive as well as pathetic conditions of the Muslims and restored their confidence in the pure teachings of Islam. In this way, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk presented strong arguments to infuse intellectual approach in Muslims and inculcating in them the spirit of passion and reform in order to regain the lost and past glory, colour and glow of the life of Indian Muslims; from the platform of Aligarh.²⁸

Thus, Mohsin-ul-Mulk's efforts are indicative of the fact that through the power of his pen from the platform of Aligarh, he carried on the mission of intellectual development of the Muslims with his massive literary approach, sound understanding of socio political issues with his modern ideas.

Uplifting The Sinking Boat Of Aligarh College

After establishing the Muhammadan Anglo Oriental (M.A.O) School, in 1875 at Aligarh, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan upgraded it to the rank of College in 1877.²⁹ In the meanwhile, the College, at the platform of Aligarh, proved a significant Alma mater of learning which extended its services to groom the Muslims in political, cultural and literary arenas for almost three quarters of a century in India.³⁰ In other words, the College became the epicenter of Muslims; political thoughts, consciousness and socio economic uplift as well as their progression.³¹

After the departure of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan from this transitory world, the financial position of the College was deteriorated and there was large scale

mismanagement in expenditures. As a result, the College was experiencing heavy debts and financial crisis and there was hardly any fund available for the completion of under construction buildings in the premises of College. Although, the construction of these buildings was started during the life time of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan yet these buildings were mostly incomplete and under construction because of lack of funds and resources.³² Besides this, labourers, clerks and other member of College staff were not paid their salaries and remuneration for many months.³³ At that juncture, Syed Mahmood (Son of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan) was appointed as the Secretary of the College after the death of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan) also increased the problems of finance and administration of Aligarh College and he quarreled almost with everybody in the College including Theodore Beck³⁴. In these muddy state of affairs, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk took over the charge as Secretary of Aligarh College on 1st Feb. 1899 and rescued the dimming light of Aligarh College, brought its sinking boat from administrative incompetency and financial crisis; towards the deliverance of excellence in education and management while inculcating modernized educational ideas in the minds of Muslims youths.³⁵ Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk raised the number of students, as a Secretary of the College, from 343 students in 1898, (at the time of Sir Syed death), to almost 800 at his death in 1907.³⁶

Thus, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk completed all incomplete buildings, managed efficiently the financial and administrative affairs and transformed this college into a truly national institution for the Muslims and even orthodox Muslim scholars were made to believe; about the splendid and magnificent services of the College as an educational institution. Hence, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk infused a new light of hope in the dimming spirit of College administration after the death of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.³⁷

The College was visited by the Prince of Wales (later King George-V) (1865-1936) and also by the Amir of Afghanistan, Amir Habibullah (1872-1919). After visiting the College and observing the realistic level of knowledge of students regarding Quraan and Islam at Aligarh, the Amir Habib Ullah rejected the false notions and allegations of the critics regarding the absence of Islamic knowledge and education at Aligarh College. Hence, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, transformed the College into a competent, modern, religious and political seat of learning to shun the clouds of Muslims intellectual bottleneck in India.³⁸

Envisaging Muslims Emancipation From The Pulpit Of Muhammadan Educational Conferene

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, founded All India Muhammadan Education Conference, in 1886, to develop intellectual awareness amongst the Muslims and to infuse in them the spirit of modern learning and knowledge.³⁹ As a result of the formation of All India Muhammadan Education Conference, Muslim intellectual elites got a unique opportunity to ponder, to sit and to think; the ways and strategies for the Muslims welfare and prosperity in India.⁴⁰ In those days, Maulana Altaf Hussain Hali⁴¹ (1837-1914), Shibli Naumani⁴² (1857-1914), Maulvi Nazir Ahmad⁴³ (1831-1912) and Mohsin-ul-Mulk, delivered their variegated speeches, eloquent poetry and views regarding the importance of learning, modern education and critical

thinking in Indian Muslims through the platform of Muhammadan Educational Conference.⁴⁴

Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, after the death of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, got the responsibility of the Secretary of Muhammadan Educational Conference and transformed it into a truly dynamic force while expanding its sphere of influence in far flung areas of India. As a result of these efforts of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, people admitted and appreciated the importance and significance of the conference regarding learning and educational uplift of the Muslims in all the major areas of Sub-continent simultaneously. Thus, during next few years various sessions of the Conference were held in various provinces of India.⁴⁵ Hence, to highlight the specific role of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk in this Conference; he removed the strongest prejudices and narrow minded approach of the people about learning and transformed them into pluralistic individuals through the light of reason, knowledge and education. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk also faced Fatwas of infidelity courageously and dashed all efforts to the grounds which were creating hurdles for his mission.⁴⁶

The Muhammadan Educational Conference was a non-political organization, however, later on, whatever was presented through its platform, it assumed the voice of unified Muslims in the Sub-Continent. To be realistic, Nawab Mohsin ul Mulk, sowed the seeds of Muslims political consciousness, at the platform of Muhammad Educational Conference and transformed the ideas of orthodox Muslim scholars and opponents of Aligarh Movement into enlightened and pluralistic individuals. In this way, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk instilled the spirit of political awareness, organization and unity among the Indian Muslims and continued the vision and idea of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan regarding Muslim progress throughout the Sub-Continent.

Strategic Response To The Challenge Of Urdu-Hindi Controversy

Urdu-Hindi controversy proved a major challenge which created gulf and animosity between Hindus and the Muslims.⁴⁷ A memorial was presented before the Antony Macdonnel⁴⁸ Governor of United Province, in March 1898, to introduce the *Nagri* and Hindi in the Government offices as well as courts. Infact, Muslims considered it as an assault to eradicate Muslims cultural identity and language.

During the last days of Sir Syed, the Urdu-Hindi controversy was in full swing and it required a vibrant and a strategic response on behalf of Muslims to defend it. In these circumstances, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, as a true successor and companion of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan took the responsibility and helped the cause of Muslims to defend Urdu, shortly before the death of Sir Syed.⁴⁹

On 18th April 1900, Govt. of United Provinces declared Hindi as an official language which withdrew the already privileged position of the Urdu language. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk responded with practical approach and fulfilled the responsibility to defend Urdu with pragmatic strategy.⁵⁰ On 2nd May, 1900, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk organized Urdu Defence Association enthusiastically and vibrantly and also arranged various protest sessions in support of Urdu.⁵¹ Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk also attracted sufficient people and demonstrated with huge

crowd at Lucknow meeting to convey Muslims feeling regarding the discriminatory treatment with Urdu language.⁵²

In this scenario of Hindu-Muslim rift, His Excellency Lieutenant Governor threatened the Muslim leadership and conveyed his serious concerns to Aligarh College administration that if Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Muslims would continue to protest, the College will lose financial assistance aid and other patronization of the Government.⁵³ His Excellency also accused Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk for starting agitation against Government decisions.⁵⁴

In this challenging environment, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk resigned from College Secretaryship and remained an ardent advocate as well as supporter of Urdu language. These commitment towards the Muslims cause and protection of Muslims language exhibited Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk as the true successor of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan; to help Muslims and to steer them towards welfare and protection of cultural identity; in the hour of crisis from the platform of Aligarh.⁵⁵ It is also believed that Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk kept alive his love for Urdu and formed the *Anjuman Tarraq-i-Urdu* in 1903; as a wing of Muhammadan Educational Conference.⁵⁶

This aforesaid organization contributed significantly, under the patronization of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, to add richness, glory and literary expansion of Urdu language in entire India. In this way, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, participated and practically contributed for the benefits and uplift of Urdu language, from the platform of Aligarh, in challenging and difficult circumstances.⁵⁷

Conceptualizing And Responding Sagaciously To The Constitutional Demands For Muslims Through Simla Deputation

Previously, in Indian political arena, the Muslims could not present their demands in organized, systematic and sagacious way. However, Hindu-Muslim conflict and with the passage of time, Muslim political maturity provided a more clear message to the colonial ruler in India. To explain it, one can argue that Mohsin-ul-Mulk visualized the idea of meeting a Muslim deputation with Viceroy presenting Muslims demands to be incorporated in the forthcoming constitutional plan of British Government in India. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, with his strategic political approach, convincing sagacity and administrative wisdom, advocated the Muslim cause; that they are no more negligible minority in Government affairs.⁵⁸

In the beginning of the 20th Century, the Liberal Government came into power in England, it became visible that the system of election is going to be introduced in the Legislative Council of India.⁵⁹ The prominent leaders of India like R.C. Dutt⁶⁰ (1838-1923) and Gopal Krishna Gokhale⁶¹ (1866-1915) and others built huge pressure on British Government. John Morley⁶² (1838-1923) while presenting the budget of India in House of Commons, made reference 'the extension of the representative element in Legislative Council.'⁶³ Viceroy Lord Minto, in his speech, also indicated about forthcoming political and constitutional changes in India.⁶⁴ Keeping in view the changing circumstances, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk urged the Muslim leadership to organize themselves for pushing forward reasonable demands for the benefit and welfare of Muslim population in India. For this purpose, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote a letter to Nawab Waqar-ul-Mulk

between 10th and 18th August 1906 mentioning therein that he addressed to mobilize the prominent Muslim leaders and also wrote to William A.J. Archbold⁶⁵ (1865-1929) to inquire from the Viceroy as to whether he would receive a deputation for submission of Muslim memorial.⁶⁶

Mr. A.J. Archbold contacted the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, and replied to Mohsin- ul-Mulk's inquiry that the proposed deputation would be allowed to meet Viceroy for Muslim demands, if it will not go disloyal to the British Government.⁶⁷ The drafting work of the Simla Deputation was a laborious effort and required a hectic concentration. Thus, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk took the entire work himself, and mobilized Muslim leadership like Syed Ali Imam⁶⁸ (1869-1932) from patna, Mian Shah Din⁶⁹ (1868-1918) of Lahore and Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk for drafting of the memorial. Nawab Imad-ul- Mulk accepted the offer and came to Bombay where Mohsin-ul-Mulk was already staying at that time. It needed the careful and prudent efforts to draft the demands of the deputation. Therefore, political acumen, moderation and prudence of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was proved and draft was finally approved in a meeting of prominent Muslim leaders at Lucknow on 16th September which was presided over by Sir Abdul Rahim⁷⁰ (1867-1952). After drafting the memorial, the selection of personnel of the deputation was also a stupendous task. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk accomplished the task with sound judgment; for the cause of Muslims to represent in front of Viceroy.⁷¹

Simla Deputation, met the Viceroy on October 1, 1906 and presented its demands before Viceroy.⁷² The most important demand of the deputation was the election of the Muslim representatives through separate electoral colleges, employment of a due proportion of Muslims in Govt. services as well as appointment of Muslims in High Courts and the Chief Court.⁷³ Hence, the organization, drafting and presentation of demands was the result of enkindled light which was ignited by Aligarh Movement and it inculcated the importance of Muslim political unity and organization to present their demands in future to protect their constitutional, political and social rights under British Government.

This political achievement, proved impetus for the Muslims which later on, steered the leadership of Muslims to formulate their own Muslims political organization for advancing their political rights, protecting their social identity and to achieve valuable and recognizable revitalization of Muslims in India.⁷⁴ Hence, the dreams and vision which were envisaged by Sir Syed Ahmad at the platform of Aligarh, spread in Muslim population in India and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was the man who not only protected the dimming light of Aligarh Movement but also expanded its message, light and impacts throughout the India to uplift socio-political status of the Muslims.

Nawab Mohsin-Ul-Mulk's Inspirational Contribution To Establish All India Muslim League

After successful presentation and acceptance of Muslims demands through Simla Deputation, Nawab Mohsin-ul Mulk felt that, there should be a Muslim political organization in India in order to protect their social, constitutional and political interests.⁷⁵

Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, (Sultan Muhammad Shah) Sir Agha Khan⁷⁶, (Maulvi Mushtaq Hussain) Nawab Waqar-ul-Mulk with other prominent Muslim leadership met on 30th December 1906 at Dhaka; in the annual session of Muhammadan Educational Conference, and established the All India Muslim League.⁷⁷ Sir Agha Khan was appointed as the first President of All India Muslim League. However, Mohsin-ul-Mulk just contributed with preliminary spadework for the formation of Muslim League and could not contribute more because of his death. Unfortunately, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk passed away in 1907 before holding of the first session of All India Muslim League in Karachi.⁷⁸

He was a sincere leader who worked hard for the prestige, uplift and glory of Aligarh College as well as Aligarh Movement. He injected a new spirit, developed political maturity and organized the Muslims as a nation.⁷⁹ His achievements to uplift the administrative crisis of Aligarh College, contributions for the Muhammadan Education Conference; while expanded its message throughout India kept the Muslims spirit of learning alive. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, from the platform of Aligarh, achieved far reaching political, social and educational benefits for the welfare of Muslim population. Although Mohsin-ul-Mulk died, yet his contributions, services and dedication for the uplift of Aligarh Movement will remain alive forever. He was, in real sense, a loyal companion of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who did not let to minimize the role, impacts and services of Aligarh Movement even after the departure of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan from this mortal world.

Conclusion

Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, was a multidimensional, versatile genius and multi layered personality who possessed visionary zeal and dedicated qualities to uplift and to ameliorate the socio-economic and educational conditions of Muslims in India. After the departure of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the Aligarh Movement experienced various crisis; administrative, educational, religious and in political spheres of life. In these challenging circumstances, Nawab Mohsin ul Mulk promoted, uplifted and raised the sinking boat of Aligarh Movement which was, initially, envisaged by its founding father to ameliorate downtrodden, backward and poverty stricken Muslim population. In other words, he was the man who did not let down the cause of education, social amelioration and political organization with his dedicated efforts, sincere heart and problem solving approach from the platform of Aligarh. Infact, Aligarh Movement was launched to remove miserable conditions of the Muslims; educationally, politically, socially as well as intellectually. Further, it was Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk who carried the philosophy and mission of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan; to improve educationally pathetic and socially deprived state of affairs of Indian Muslims. Moreover, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was an extensive reader with brilliant mind and learning agility. He had analytical approach and deep observation of various religious and political challenges which were being experienced by the Indian Muslims. Furthermore, his efforts are the indicative of this fact too; that the point of his pen, at the platform of Aligarh, carry on the mission of intellectual development of the Muslims with his massive literary approach, sound understanding of socio-political issues and lucid ideas. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk rescued the dimming light of Aligarh College and brought its sinking boat from administrative incompetency

and financial crisis; towards the deliverance of excellence in education and efficiency in management while inculcating modernized educational ideas in the minds of Muslims youth.

Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, in the absence of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, got the responsibility of the Secretary of Muhammadan Educational Conference and transformed it into a truly dynamic force while expanding its sphere of influence in far flung areas of India. He was a true successor and companion of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who took the responsibility and helped the cause of Muslims to defend Urdu, when Urdu-Hindi controversy emerged shortly before the death of Sir Syed. Later on, the Aligarh Movement also brought Muslims towards mature political disposition and Muslim willingly accepted the challenge of Simla Deputation, under the sagacious and meticulous character of Mohsin-ul-Mulk who also organized the deputation and achieved all its credit of success. He was also a towering figure who contributed significantly for the formation of Muslim League, which later on, injected a new spirit in the Muslims and achieved, ultimately, for the Muslims, a separate homeland Pakistan. Thus, it was Mohsin-ul-Mulk who did not let to dim the candle which was enkindled by Sir Syed Khan in the form of Aligarh Movement.

Notes & References

1. G.A. Natesan, *Eminent Mussalmans*, 1st edition (Madras: Nateson & Co. Publishers), 71.
2. G. Allana., 126. Also see, A.H. Al-Biruni, *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India* (Lahore: Ashraf Publishers, 1950), 84. For more details see, S.M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan* (Lahore: Premiers Printers, 1965), 76.
3. S.M. Ikram, 76. Also see, Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Hayat-i-Mohsin* (Aligarh: Muslim University Press, 1934), 5.
4. G.A. Nateson., 73.
5. Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Hayat-i-Mohsin*, 4.
6. *Urdu Encyclopedia of Islam*, Vol. XVIII 1985. S.V. "Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk." 610. Also see, G. Allana, *Our Freedom Fighters 1562-1947: Twenty One Great Lives* (Lahore: Feroz Sons Publishers, 1985), 128. For more details, see G.A. Nateson, 75. Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Tazkirah-i-Mohsin* (Aligarh: Muslim University Press, 1935), 16.
7. G.A. Nateson., 76.
8. Maulvi Abdul Haq (1872-1961) commonly known as Baba-i-Urdu (Father of Urdu) was renowned scholar and linguist. *Amir Khusrow* was an eminent Poet used Urdu in poetry. Maulvi Abdul Haq is called father of Urdu language. He was a champion of Urdu language and demanded for Urdu to be made national language of Pakistan.
9. Safdar Mahmood and Javed Zafar, *Founder of Pakistan* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1968), 77.
10. G.A. Natesan., 77.
11. Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Hayat-i-Mohsin*, 63. Also see, Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Tazkirah-i-Mohsin*, 76. For more details, see Altaf Hussain Hali, *Hayat-i-Javaid* (Lahore: Ashraf Publishers, 1966), 268.
12. Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Hayat-i-Mohsin*, 63-64.
13. *ibid.*, 63.
14. G.A. Natesan., 79-80.
15. Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Hayat-i-Mohsin*, 236.
16. William Muir produced a book titled "*The Life of Muhammad*" in which he leveled some charges and reservations on Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). Sir Syed Ahmad Khan decided and devoted himself to repel the objections raised by William Muir. In this regard, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan went to London, where he consulted the libraries, studied the English literature and books, collected material and answered to William Muir's Book "*The Life of Muhammad*" in his "*Khutbat-i-Ahmadiya*". He collected funds from his friends for publishing of this book. For more details see, William Muir, *The Life of*

Muhammad (London: 1860) and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan *Khutbat-i-Ahmadia* (Delhi: Steam Press, 1887).

17. Rass Masood, *Khutoot-i-Sir Syed* (Badaun: 1924), 49.
18. Ibid., 49.
19. Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Tazkirah-i-Mohsin*, 78-79. Also see Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Hayat-i-Mohsin*, 64.
20. In 1870, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan introduced a journal *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* with the aims to spread social reforms agenda amongst Indian Muslims and also to present original preaching of Islam with purity and simplicity. The language of journal was simple and presented diversified Muslims point of view. It gave voice to the publisher's social, religious and reforming views. For more details see Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Tazkirah-i-Mohsin*, 79.
21. Maulvi Charagh Ali (1844-1895) was an Indian Muslim Scholar of the late 19th century. As a colleague of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, he made a contribution to the school of Muslim Modernists and presented reformative thinking about the Holy Quraan. He contributed numerous works to the school of Muslim Modernists such as "A *Critical Exposition of the Popular Jihad and Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms Under Moslem Rule*". His interactions with Christians in British India and also marked him as a Muslim Apologist with a particular focus on the wars of Muhammad. His goal in the criticism of the Qur'an as well as the shariah is to justify contemporary Western ideals through the Qur'an. He died at the age of 51 and is buried in Bombay.
22. *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq*, 4 No.1 (February 1871):21-.30.
23. *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq*, 18 No. 2 (January 1872):164.
24. *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq*, 18 No.2 (January 1872):164-168.
25. *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq*, 9 No.3 (August 1872).
26. *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq*, 3 No.3 (March 1873):21-.24.
27. *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq*, 2 No.3 (April 1873):26-.38.
28. G.A. Natesan, 78-79. For more details, see Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Hayat-i-Mohsin*, 64-65.
29. Shan Muhammad, *Successors of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan-Their Role in the Growth of Muslim Political Consciousness* (Lahore: Accurate Printers, 1986), 9.
30. Graham G.F.I, *The Life and Work of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* (Calcutta: 1909), 139-140.
31. Ibid.
32. G. Allana, *Our Freedom Fighters 1562-1947: Twenty One Great Lives* (Lahore: Feroz Sons Publishers, 1985), 130. Also see, A.H. Al-Biruni, *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India* (Lahore: Ashraf Publishers, 1950), 83.

33. S.M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan* (Lahore: Premiers Printers, 1965), 75.
34. Theodore Beck (1859-1899) was a British educationist who served in India during British Raj. He was invited by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to work as the Principal of the Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College, Aligarh, who worked in that capacity from 1883-1899. He was the first Principal of Aligarh College. Beck's education was from University of London and Trinity College, Cambridge.
35. Ibid., 75-76.
36. S.M. Ikram., 76.
37. Ibid., 77.
38. A.H. Al-Biruni., 85. Also see, S.M. Ikram., 77.
39. Lal Bahadur, *Struggle For Pakistan* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd. 1988), 5. Also see, Altaf Hussain Hali, 259-260 and S.M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan* (Lahore: Premiers Printers, 1965), 39. For more details, see Safdar Mahmood and Javed Zafar, *Founder of Pakistan* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1968), 66.
40. Altaf Hussain Hali, *Hayat-i-Javaid* (Lahore: Ashraf Publishers, 1966), 262-263
41. Maulana Ataf Hussain Hali (1837-1914) commonly known as Maulana Khawaja Hali, was born in 1837. He was an Urdu poet and writer. After this turning point in his life, Maulana Hali drifted from job to job for several years. Eventually, he arrived in Lahore, where he became the personal servant of Chayanne Mehdi in the mid 1870s. He began to compose his epic poem, the *Musaddas-i-Madd-o-Jazar-i-Islam* (An elegiac poem on the Ebb and Tide of Islam) on the request of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan under the new pseudonym of *Hali* (the contemporary). Hali also wrote one of the earliest works of literary criticism in Urdu, *Muqaddamah-i-Shayr-o-Shairi*. Some scholars of Pakistani nationalism also considered the *Mussadas* an important text for the articulation of a future Muslim nation. Hali has also written biographies of Ghalib, Saadi, Shirazi and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan entitled respectively, *Yaadgar-i-Ghalib*, *Hayat-i-Saadi*, and *Hayat-i-Javaid*. He died in 1914.
42. Shibli Nomani (1857-1914) was born at Bindwal, District Azamgarh presently known as Uttar Pradesh on 3 June 1857. He was famous because of founding the *Shibli National College* in 1883 and the *Darul Mussanifin* (House of Writers) in Azamgarh. Shibli was a versatile scholar of Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Urdu. He was also a poet. Shibli was greatly inspired by the progress of science and education in the West. He wanted to inspire the Muslims to make similar progress by having recourse to their lost heritage and culture, and warned them against getting lost in Western culture. He collected much material on the life of the Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) but could write only first two volumes of the planned work the *Sirat-un-Nabi*. His disciple, Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, made use of this material and added to it and also wrote remaining five volumes of the work, the *Sirat-un-Nabi* after the

- death of Molana Shibli Nomani. Maulana Shibli's own writings set the pattern for the latter. He died on 18 November 1914.
43. Maulvi Nazir Ahmad (1831–1912) well known as "Diptee" (Deputy) Nazir Ahmad. He was an Urdu writer, social and religious reformer and scholar. He started his practical life from Kunjah District Gujrat. He was the first Urdu novel writer. He wrote *Miratul Aroos* and *Muntakhibul Hakayat* and *Chand Pand*. He was concerned with Muslim women's education, and their lot in general. Most of his novels revolve around the idea of the perfect woman, who is both practical and learned, and are seen as guidance for young girls. *The Bride's Mirror* has never been out of print in Urdu from that day of its first publication. He spent all his life in Delhi.
44. S.M. Ikram., 39-40.
45. Safdar Mahmood and Javed Zafar., 66.
46. Altaf Hussain Hali., 533-560. For more details, see Shan Muhammad, *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: A Political Biography* (Meeruth: 1969), 69-73. Also cited by G.A. Nateson., 85.
47. Zafar-ul-Islam, *The Genesis and Growth of Muslim Political Consciousness in Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent*, 11.
48. Antony Patrick MacDonnell, commonly known as Sir Antony MacDonnell was born on 07th March 1844 at Palm Field House, Carra-castle, Sharagh, County Mayo. He was educated at Summer-hill College, Athlone, Westmeath. At the age of fifteen, he enrolled at Queen's College Galway. He was an Irish civil servant and also remained in the administration of India. He was the Lieutenant Governor of United Provinces of Agra and Owdh from 1895 to 1901. He was also the Member of the Indian Council in 1902. He was the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal from 1893 to 1895. In 1900, MacDonnell sanctioned Rs. 20,000 from Provincial budget for construction of hostel at Aligarh College to meet lodging troubles of the students of Aligarh College. Nevertheless Antony MacDonnell rose to some of the highest civilian offices in British, he is acknowledged as one of the ablest individual to work in the Indian Civil Service. He died in 1925.
49. S.M. Ikram., 78-79.
50. Ibid., 79.
51. Ibid., 79.
52. A.H. Al-Biruni, *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India* (Lahore: Ashraf Publishers, 1950), 88.
53. Ibid., 88. Also see, S.M. Ikram., 79.
54. S.M. Ikram., 79.
55. S.M. Ikram., 80.
56. In 1886, Sir Syed Ahmad laid the foundation of Muhammadan Educational Conference in order to develop awareness for modern and liberal education

amongst the Muslim community in India. The conference was an All-India body that constituted a major part of the Aligarh Movement. This conference held its meetings at different cities in order to provide a forum to discuss the problems of Muslim community in India. Sir Syed took special care to convene the meetings of the conference and also to publish the proceedings of the meetings every year. Allah India Muslim League was also established in the 20th session of Muhammadan Educational Conference.

57. S.M. Ikram., 81. Also see, A.H. Al-Biruni., 91.

58. Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Documents of Muslim Freedom Movement* (Lahore: United Printing Press, 1970), 70.

59. G. Allana., 135.

60. Romesh Chunder Dutt (R.C. Dutt) was an Indian civil servant, economic historian, writer and translator of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Dutt was born into a distinguished Bengali Kayastha family well known for its members' literary and academic achievements in 1838. Romesh was educated in various Bengali District schools, then at Hare School, Calcutta. After his father's untimely death in a boat accident in eastern Bengal, Romesh's uncle, Shoshee Chunder Dutt, an accomplished writer, became his guardian in 1861. At University College London, Dutt continued to study British writers. He studied law at Middle Temple, London, was called to the bar, and qualified for the Indian Civil Service in the open examination in 1869, taking third place. He was president of the Indian National Congress in 1899. He was active in moderate nationalist politics and was an active Congressman in that party's initial phase. He died in 1923.

61. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was born on 9th May 1866. He was one of the social and political leaders during the Indian Independence Movement against the British Raj in India. Gokhale was the President of Indian National Congress and founder of the Servants of India Society. Through the Society as well as the Congress and other legislative bodies he served in, Gokhale promoted not only independence from the British Empire but also social reform. To achieve his goals, Gokhale followed two overarching principles: non-violence and reform within existing Government institutions. He died on 19th February 1915. Also cited by Stanley Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale: Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India* (California: 1962), 22.

62. John Morley was born on 24th December 1838, he was a British Liberal statesman, writer and newspaper editor. Initially, a journalist, he was elected as Member of Parliament in 1883. He was Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1886 and between 1892 and 1895, Secretary of State for India between 1905 and 1910 and again in 1911 and Lord President of the Council between 1910 and 1914. Morley was a distinguished political commentator, and biographer of his hero, William Gladstone. He opposed imperialism and the Boer War. He died on 23rd September 1923. For more details see Wolpert, S. A. *Morley and India, 1906-1910* (California: University of California Press, 1967).

63. S.M. Ikram., 82.

64. Ibid.

65. William A.J. Archbold was born in England in 1865. He completed his graduation in Law in 1887. After completing his Law degree, he received 'Whewell Scholarship' in 1888 and started working as editor for Dictionary of National Biography. In 1905 when Prof. Theodore Morrison resigned from the position of Principal M.A.O. College, Mr. Archbold was working at University of Cambridge and writing a book on French History for Cambridge University Press. M.A.O College made an offer to Mr. Archbold for Principal M.A.O College which he accepted. A delegation of M.A.O College Old Boys comprising Shaikh Abdullah, Barrister Rafi-ud-Din, Syed Abid Hussain and Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan went to Bombay to receive him. Mr. Archbold was known as an able administrator before his joining as Principal of M.A.O College. He also played pivotal role in organizing Muslim Deputation which waited on the Viceroy, Lord Minto at Shimla, 1st Oct. 1906. He resigned in 1909 and served as Principal of Govt. College Dacca. He died in 1929.

66. A.H. Al-Biruni., 92.

67. S.M. Ikram., 82.

68. Syed Ali Imam was born in 1869. After graduation, he went to England for higher studies. He returned Patna in 1890 after getting his Bar at Law from England and became a Judge of Patna High Court in 1917. He also served as the Chief Minister of Hyderabad in 1919 a Princely state of British India and was a law member in the imperial Legislative Council. British India conferred him the title of Sir. Sir Ali Imam, being a politician, served as the President of Muslim League at Amritsar Annual Session in 1908 and President Nationalist Muslim Conference at Lucknow in 1931. He played a pivotal role in the formation of constitution of Bihar as a separate province was born at Neora Patna (India). He died in 1932.

69. Mian Shah Din was born in 1868 in Arain Mian family of Baghbanpura, Lahore. He was a Pakistani politician who took prominent part in Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's educational movement, and in early 1906, When Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk organized an All India Muhammadan Deputation to represent and advocate the claims of the Muslim community, he was one of its prominent member. On 30th November 1907, the Punjab branch of the All India Muslim League had been organized and Mian Shah Din was elected as its first President. In October 1908, he was appointed as a first Muslim judge of the Punjab Chief Court. In 1922, he launched monthly magazine 'Humayun'. Allama Iqbal's poem 'Humayun is also about that magazine. He died in 1928.

70. Sir Abdur Rahim, (1867-1952) was born in a highly educated family of Bengal. He was a judge and politician in British India. Sir Abdur Rahim was educated at Presidency College, Calcutta, and in England at the Inns of Court, he became a Barrister of the Calcutta High Court in 1890, and later became a founding and influential member of the Muslim League. Beyond his profession, Rahim was active in the world of education and became a member of the Senate and the Syndicate of the University of Madras. On 20th July 1908, Rahim was appointed as a Judge of the High Court of Judicature at Madras and in

September 1912 as a member of the Royal Commission on the Public Services in India. Rahim went on to become Chief Justice of the High Court of Madras, Tagore Professor of Law in the University of Calcutta. In August 1919, he was knighted. In 1926, he presided over the All-India Muhammadan Educational Conference and argued for the use of the Urdu language among all Indian Muslims.

71. S.M. Ikram., 84-85.

72. Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Tazkirah-i-Mohsin*, 169. Also see Sharif al Mujahid, ed., *Muslim League Documents* (Karachi: Quaid-i-Azam Academy, 1990) Vol. I, 181-190.

73. Jamil ud Din, *Early Phase of Muslim Political Movement* (Lahore: United Publishers Ltd, 1967), 76.

74. S.M. Ikram., 85-86.

75. A.H. Al-Biruni., 95.

76. Sir Agha Khan was born on 2nd November 1877 at Karachi. He was one of the founders and the first President of the All India Muslim League. His goal was the advancement of Muslim agenda and protection of Muslim rights in India. Even after he resigned as President of the AIML in 1912, he still exerted major influence on its policies and agenda. He was nominated to represent India to the League of Nations in 1932 and served as President of the League of Nations from 1937-38. The distinction of a Knight Commander of the Indian Empire was conferred upon him by Queen Victoria in 1897 (and later Knight Grand Commander in 1902 by Edward VII) and he received like recognition for his public services from the German Emperor, the Sultan of Turkey, the Shah of Persia and other potentates. In 1906, Sir Agha Khan became the first president of the All India Muslim League, a political party which pushed for the creation of an independent Muslim nation in the North West regions of India, then under British colonial rule, and later established the country of Pakistan in 1947. He died on 11th July 1957.

77. Muhammad Amin Zubairi, *Tazkirah-i-Mohsin* 172.

78. S.M. Ikram., 86.

79. G. Allana., 136.