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### The Role of Dera Ghazi Khan in the Freedom Movement (1930-1947)

#### Abstract

*The success of the Muslims of South Asia to establish a separate Muslim State has been discussed widely in the academic and intellectual circles. One major theme has been that Muslims as a ruling elite were not ready to subordinate the Hindu majority fundamentally different from them religiously and culturally. However, what was the response of the Muslims of Muslim Majority areas? is an important question. The idea of Pakistan could not be materialized without the support of the Muslim Majority areas. In the Muslim majority areas, the regional and local issues played an important part in the formation of Muslim political opinion. In this context, like other parts of the subcontinent, the Muslims of Dera Ghazi Khan district as a remote and backward Muslim majority region played a vital role in the political process of the formation of Pakistan. The tribal leadership and Tumandar established permanent relations with Muslim leadership and contributed potentially in the formation of political opinion as well as pressurizing colonial administration to accept what All India Muslim League was demanding. For they established good contacts with Muhammad Ali Jinnah and launched a powerful campaign for the elections of 1945-6. The paper aims at exploring and highlighting this role.*

**Keywords:** Muslim identity in the Subcontinent, Pakistan Movement, Contribution of Dera Ghazi Khan, Baloch Tumandar.

#### Introduction

This paper primarily deals with the political contribution of the Muslims of Dera Ghazi Khan in the freedom Movement of Pakistan from 1930 to 1947. Although Dera Ghazi Khan has been considered politically backward region, Muslims of Dera Ghazi Khan played a significant role in establishing the opinions of the Muslims of region and materializing those opinions for the elections 1945-46 as a referendum for the establishment of Pakistan. Muslims of Dera Ghazi Khan countered all government and state tactics and supported the cause of Pakistan with devotion. In the Civil Disobedience Movement, the Muslims of Dera Ghazi Khan, the Muslims of Dera Ghazi Khan posed serious challenges to the British administration. They wrote a history of resistance and demonstration that trampled section-144 underfoot. How the question of Muslim identity became central in Muslim politics? Why the civil disobedience movement became successful in Dera Ghazi Khan? How the people of Dera Ghazi Khan enthusiastically rallied themselves under the banner of Muslim League and successfully carried out the mission of independence? These are important questions for the students of History and for the understanding of Pakistani Nationalism. The primary purpose of this paper is to analyze the political contribution of the Muslims of Dera Ghazi Khan during freedom movement for Pakistan from 1930 to 1947, in the light of such questions. For, the academic opinions on decolonization, Muslim Identity and Pakistan Movement form the conceptual core.

The success of All India Muslim League in articulating Muslim identity into a political-national identity and its impact has been debated widely. A variety of analysis can be found on the issue. One common theme taken up Paul Brass<sup>1</sup>, Francis Robinson, S. Akbar Zaidi,<sup>2</sup> Hafeez Malik, and I. H. Qureshi,<sup>3</sup> focus on Muslim religious-self and its role in the politics of South Asia and formation of Pakistan. However, the historians like S. Qalb-i-Abid and Ian Talbot<sup>4</sup> emphasize the politics of Muslim Majority areas to understand the success of All India Muslim League in the backdrop of a number of all India or regional base political parties having sole concern with the Muslim communal issues in the Muslim majority areas. S. Qalb-i-Abid focuses on the post Second World War scenario in the province of Punjab.<sup>5</sup> In the same way, Ian Talbot extends his analysis to a plurality of issues, factors and forces in the Muslim majority areas of the British India.<sup>6</sup> Riaz Ahmed, Sikander Hayat and Iqbal Chawla owe the credit of success to the Quaid's quality of mobilizing the

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people.<sup>7</sup> A number of writers consider the success of All India Muslim League a reflection of the demand for Pakistan. Still a bread of historians considers the cross-cultural traits of the region as a historical identity working behind the politics of formation of Pakistan during the period. Muhammad Shafique focuses on the regional concerns and factional politics among the Muslims as a major cause of the success of the All-India Muslim League as a main architect of the idea of Pakistan.<sup>8</sup> In this perspective the need to explore a regional perspective working behind the support for the cause of Pakistan becomes important

### **Historical Perspective of Political Struggle**

Dera Ghazi Khan came under the modern colonial control as a part of Great Game. After the British success against French, the Russian threat encouraged the British statesmen to extend their control in India, Middle East and Central Asia. Therefore, the British armies intervened in Punjab and crossed the Indus River in 1839.<sup>9</sup> The Second Sikh War ended with the success of British and they annexed Punjab as the part of British India in 1849. With this success they introduced new administrative setup and divided Derajat into Dera Ismail Khan and Dera Ghazi Khan Districts respectively. General Courtland was appointed the first Deputy Commissioner of Dera Ghazi Khan in 1849 and served to 1854.<sup>10</sup> In 1853, J.B Hudson was sent to conduct military operation against the people of Dera Ghazi Khan. During this campaign, nine hundred tribes' men were massacred. *In 1853*, Yousaf Khan Qaisrani the head of Qaisrani Tribe decided to fight against British Forces. With 600 tribes men, he attacked British contingents at Dera Fatih Khan, set the barracks at fire and killed several British soldiers. In the same way, at the place of "Hanband", the Buzdar also put up a fierce resistance that caused heavy loss of life and property to the British army. This series of resistance against the British army continued from time to time and laid the foundation of anti-imperial sentiments that later became source of inspiration for the movement that is known as Pakistan Movement. In 1867, the brave Baloch Sardar Kaura Khan Qaisrani captured the British Deputy Commissioner Mr. Gray and imprisoned him in the mountain.<sup>11</sup> The act became a symbol of bravery, courage and resistance and was highly praised by the liberty-loving people. In early 20th century, Border Military Police Post " Tail Hor" was Burnt. In 1867, Major Nicholson carried out a military operation against the Qaisrani tribe and burnt several of their villages. Despite of stern reactions on the part of the British, the tribes of Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajanpur Districts, especially Marri, Bugti, Khitran, Qaisrani and Buzdar continued to resist the British imperial aspirations. The last battle in this series was fought near Fort Munro. In this battle the British Army used cannons against the Khitran and Buzdar tribes. This caused heavy loss of life and property to the Baloch tribes.<sup>12</sup>

This legacy of resistance became more vibrant during the Muslim struggle to reconstruct their political identity. During the Muslims, the People of Dera Ghazi Khan became a symbol of resistance. After the emergence of the Muslim Nationalism in India, the people of Dera Ghazi Khan played a vital role in the political struggle for the formation of Pakistan.

### **Role of Punjab**

Punjab played a historic role in the Pakistan movement. Chaudhry Rehmat Ali, the creator of the word Pakistan, belonged to the province of Punjab and when Punjab Muslim League was formed in 1907, Justice Shah Din was elected its first President and Sir Muhammad Shafi became its first General Secretary.<sup>13</sup> However the league could not gain popularity in the region and in election 1937 Muslim League was defeated badly with only two seats. One of them was Mian Barkat Ali and the other was Raja Ghazanfar Ali. Later, Raja Ghazanfar Ali also joined the Unionist Party.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, in 1937, Punjab Muslim Students Federation was formed. The Muslim students rallied the Muslims of Punjab under the banner of the Muslim League and paved the way for the establishment of Pakistan and persuaded the people to support Pakistan. While Punjab also had the honored to have passed the 1940 Pakistan Resolution. The resolution, which was passed at the famous Minto Park in Lahore and presented by Sher-e-Bengal Fazal-ul-Haq, was first supported by Khaliq-ul-Zaman, a leader from Punjab.<sup>15</sup> During the election campaign Quaid-e-Azam warned Tiwana at Sialkot. He advised the Muslims to buried Unionists<sup>16</sup> and same was proved in elections when Muslim League swept the elections 1945-46. Muslim League launched a full-fledged election campaign in Punjab. And Punjab won 30 out of 30 seats in the Central Assembly while it won 75 out of 86 seats in the Provincial Assembly. Later, four independent members also joined the Muslim League, bringing the total number to 79.<sup>17</sup> Despite the victory of the Muslim League in the elections, the Governor formed a joint government of the Unionists, the Akali Dal and the Congress. Against which the Muslim League launched a full-scale campaign of civil disobedience in Punjab. As a result of disobedience movement, the situation got out of control and the political leadership of Punjab including Iftikhar Hussain Mamdoot, Mumtaz Daultana, Amir Hussain and Feroz Khan Noon were arrested. They were later released. But if the movement did not stop, section 144 was enforced. But this movement spread all over the Punjab. During, along with men, women also took participated in this movement and a girl named Fatima Sughra climbed on the roof of Punjab Civil Secretariat and threw off the Union Jack and hosted the flag of the Muslim League. Due to the force of this movement, the Government of Khizir Hayat resigned on March 26, 1947.<sup>18</sup>

### The Political Contribution Of The Muslims of Dera Ghazi Khan

The role of Dera Ghazi Khan can be seen and analyzed in terms of the struggle and resistance by the leading people. Dera Ghazi Khan had played important political role during colonial era as became a bridge to connect Balochistan and Sindh.<sup>19</sup> When the voice of freedom movement started in Punjab, it started to be heard in the streets of Dera Ghazi Khan. Sher Muhammad Dervi was the first person who started to write Pakistani with his own name. He participated in Tehreek-e-Pakistan with full passion. He is the person of Dera Ghazi Khan who met Muhammad Iqbal many times in Lahore and also had the privilege of attending the conferences in Lucknow and Allahabad. As journalist he wrote many articles in the favor of Pakistan through different newspaper at the time. He was a front-line soldier of Pakistan movement from Dera Ghazi Khan. The journey to independence ended with his death in 1951.<sup>20</sup>

Muhammad Aslam Khan Mulghani was a resident of Taunsa. He launched a strong movement against British imperialism, Hindu usurers and local feudal lords. He called this movement non-cooperation and it continued from 1908 to 1914. In this regard, he published his weekly magazine 'Al-Moeen' Amritsar, in which he reflected the sentiments of Muslims. He was a poet and a great critic of the local feudal lords for getting the title of Sir and Nawab. His book " *Sair Dehat*" was also a link in the same chain which was confiscated by the government on the recommendation of the local feudal lords and 'Al-Moeen' was also banned. He also tried to break the monopoly of the British and the Hindus in order to strengthen the Muslims economically. During the caliphate movement, he also proposed to give up the English currency. He established grain banks in the villages. Aslam Khan Exchanged grains with grains and corn, where seeds were provided to farmers. Earlier, the local Hindus suppressed the local people through the business of usury. They even stole the earrings of Hindu women and the grinding mills. Thus, began the struggle at the regional level, he was deported in 1915 to Mianwali and Waziristan. After a short stay, he settled in Afghanistan. The king of Kabul made him his minister and then he stayed there till his death. He is known to have shot down a small English plane, including its pilot, and continued to struggle during his exile. He died in Kabul. He is said to have been poisoned by English spies.<sup>21</sup>

Sheikh Faiz Mohammad was one of the earliest lawyers of Dera Ghazi Khan who was also the Chief Judge of Bahawalpur. The British government also awarded him the title of Khan Bahadur. He was elected MLA in the elections 1945 on the ticket of Unionist Party. Later he joined the Muslim League and had the privilege of meeting with Quaid-e-Azam. He also supported Atta Muhammad Buzdar in bye elections 1945-46.<sup>22</sup> During civil disobedience movement, he returned the title of Khan Bahadur. After the emergence of Pakistan, he was elected the Speaker of Punjab Assembly.<sup>23</sup> The most important role was played by Ghulam Haider famous as *Pathar Halwai*. His passion was visible, he was also a wrestler and the enthusiasm with which he worked in the freedom movement is unparalleled. During the civil disobedience movement, the Muslim League severely disturbed the Tiwana government and paralyzed the administration in Dera Ghazi Khan. Slogans of freedom began to resound everywhere. One day the police and forces charged hard batons and people rained batons. So, Ghulam Haider, carrying the flag of the Muslim League, patiently endured the violence. He was bloodied by the violence but did not let the flag of the Muslim League fall. This brave Son of Dera is the hero of Tehreek-e-Pakistan and a testament to the greatness of this land.<sup>24</sup>

Another important name is Allah Nawaz Khitran who besides being a famous personality was a great and eloquent poet of Urdu and Persian He had several meetings with Allama Iqbal along with his father. He always stood against British imperialism and endured the hardships of imprisonment. Akhund Abdul Karim was a graduate of Aligarh. He also had an honor of meeting with Quaid-e-Azam. He has the honor of being the first Muslim League member. Akhund Abdul Karim's profession was advocacy, and he played an important role in Pakistan.<sup>25</sup> Dost Muhammad Hajana was a resident of Darkhast Jamal Khan. He published a magazine called "*Moheb-e-Watan*" which continued after the establishment of Pakistan. Through this magazine, he waged a pen jihad and conveyed the message of Quaid-e-Azam from door to door. He also had a quarterly magazine, Dera Ghazi Khan Reporter, which was published in 1930. With his best efforts and hard work, the British repealed a shameful black law in the spirit of which if a poor farmer could not pay taxes, his young daughter or daughter-in-law would be taken captive by Tumandar. But Dost Mohammad's hard work saved the people and saved their honor.<sup>26</sup> During the British rule, Dera Ghazi Khan was the only area where resistance continued against government. Hate against the British also continued. In 1932, a Baloch man was convicted of a crime and locked in a sack and left with a dog. There were strong protests against the incident and resultantly the Deputy Commissioner was replaced. This increased the enthusiasm of the people. Muslims became more active in sub-continental politics after 1937, when the Congress and the Unionists had their roots. But the Muslim League was still unknown and unpopular. Ahmad Yar Qaisrani from Dera Ghazi Khan turned to the Congress. Later he met Quaid-e-Azam and joined the Muslim League in 1943.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, Muhammad Nawaz Shaheed from Rajanpur became the President of the Muslim Students Federation in Bahawalpur in 1939 and later the President of the Muslim Students Federation in SE College till 1941. He had correspondence with the Quaid-e-Azam. He received three letters from Quaid-e-Azam instructing him to work for the Muslim League. Quaid-e-Azam advised him to unite the Muslims under the banner of the Muslim League. The Quaid-e-Azam said, in a letter,

"I can only repeat, we should organize ourselves under the All-India Muslim League and should take up constructive programs for the uplift of our people." He was a brave student. In 1941, when he became the editor of

the English section (Oasis) of SE College's quarterly magazine Gulistan Adab, he was the only student from all over India to write an editorial in favor of the Muslim League in his magazine. Later, the same student also published the Iqbal number of the magazine and also published the letters written by the Quaid in it. Quaid-e-Azam's letter was published on page 88 and this magazine, namely Fikir-e-Iqbal and this 376-page magazine with reference to Quaid-e-Azam, was declared a scholarly piece. The magazine was hailed as a great service by Dr. Baqir, a professor at the University of the Punjab, while the Imperial Library Council of Calcutta declared it a reference book and added it to its repertoire. The Royal Asiatic Society also preserved it as a reference book Bengal over Viceroy of India Frederick sent a congratulatory message. The text of Quaid-e-Azam's letter to Muhammad Nawaz was as follows

10- Aurangzeb Road  
New Delhi, India  
26<sup>th</sup> February 1941

Dear Sir,

I regret that your letter of the 17th last Inst escaped my notice which was mainly due to pressure of work. You will perhaps realize that I have to attend to numerous matters of very great importance regarding the political struggle going on in this country and regarding the entire organization spread all over India. As regards the message I can only repeat we should organize ourselves under the banner of All India Muslim League and should take up the constructive programs for the up lift our people. I am glad that the Muslim students are rising to the occasion and I hope before long Muslims of India will resolve itself in to an irresistible and invincible force for the achievement of our ideal.

Yours faithfully  
M.A Jinnah

Mohd Nawaz Shahid Esq  
S. E College, Bahawalpur, State.<sup>28</sup>

Similarly, two more letters of Quaid-e-Azam also came to his name When Sir Sikandar Hayat was recognized by the Quaid-e-Azam as the Parliamentary Leader of the Punjab Muslim League, Nawaz Shaheed wrote a letter of protest to the Quaid in 1942 and asked him what kind of people he was and what he had to do with the Pakistan Muslim League ? Quaid replied that if you are liberal people, you gather your power then the President will be yours. Now it is not possible for me to establish a dictatorship. On this Nawaz wrote a reply letter to the Quaid that we will try, so that the real workers are the ones who will take over the running of Pakistan. The leader not only informed about the receipt of this letter but also ordered him to continue his work honestly. The Quaid remained in direct contact with the leadership of Dera Ghazi Khan.<sup>29</sup> Muslim League was very weak during 1937-1944 in Punjab due to the hold of Unionists. the people of the Muslim League were leaving the party in many areas out of frustration. The number of Muslim leagues in Dera Ghazi Khan was negligible.<sup>30</sup>

The weakness of the Muslim League was that in the bye-elections of April 1945, in the southern constituency of Dera Ghazi Khan, the Muslim League did not even have a candidate against the candidate of the Unionist Party, Sardar Ghous Bakhsh Mazari. While due to Unionist government, all feudal lords shackled hands with ruling party. Muhammad Jamal Khan Leghari was elected from the Tumandar constituency and took charge as the Minister for Public Works in Unionist government. Later his joining the Muslim League strengthened the party.<sup>31</sup>

The people of DG Khan continued to participate in all activities. In the Pakistan Resolution 1940, Ramzan Khalid represented Dera Ghazi Khan. Similarly, Sher Muhammad, who belonged to the city of Dera Ghazi Khan, was the first person who began to suffix Pakistani with his name from 1943. Anyone who did not call them by the name of Pakistani was not answered. In the World War II, the Muslim youth refused to fight against the Turks,<sup>32</sup>

On June 8, 1944, the daily Nawa-e-Waqt published an interview with Sheikh Sajjad Haider, a young man from Dera Ghazi Khan, in which he sharply criticized the British-led Unionist Party and spoke openly in favor of the Muslim League. In response, Quaid-e-Azam wrote a letter in which he encouraged Sheikh Sajjad. In the same way, the Father of the Nation waved the same newspaper; if the alone son of Sheikh Faiz Muhammad can write like this essay the nobody has a courage to stop the emergence of Pakistan. In 1945, Muslim league was formed at the house of Lalla Hakam and 40 to 50 people attended this meeting including Akhwand Abdul Kareem Aleeg, Dr Ghulam Fareed, Ghulam Qadir Pathan and Mehmood Khan Jandila. Mehmood khan was appointed the first General Secretary of Muslim League.<sup>33</sup>

In 1945 Government College was established by British Government and Muslim Students Federation was also established by the Muslim students. Almost thirteen representatives were appointed as Nawabzada Mehmood Leghari President, Habib Ullah Khosa Vice President and Khawaja Ilyas Taunsvi General Secretary, Syed Ghulam Sirwar Shah, Akhwand Abdul Majeed, Mumtaz Punjabi, Shah Nawaz Qaisrani, Ghulam Yaseen Khan Sakhani, Atta Muhammad Khan Sakhani, Ameer Bakhsh Kolachi, Dr. Ahmad Yar Qaisrani were the active member of Muslim Students Federation.<sup>34</sup>

During the time of election 1945 and 1946, Muslim Students warmly participated in election campaign of Muslim League's candidate Atta Muhammad Buzdar on the northern constituency of Dera Ghazi Khan and it was a large constituency from Dera Ghazi Khan to Dera Ismail Khan. Ameer Muhammad Qaisrani was the candidate of Unionist Party and the Tumandar of Qaisrani tribe Sardar Manzoor Ahmad Khan Supported Muslim League's candidate. Returning officer rejected the nomination paper of Ameer Muhammad Qaisrani and Atta Muhammad Buzdar was elected first MLA of Muslim League as unopposed candidate.<sup>35</sup>

Similarly, the position of Akhund Abdul Kareem Muslim League candidate from the middle constituency was stable but the Unionist candidate Sheikh Faiz Mohammad Advocate won the elections by a majority of 641 vote. However the common perception of rigging was dominant in the region. The news was broadcasted on BBC Radio that votes have been stolen from ballot boxes.

Sr.#	Name Candidate	Party	Vote	Position
1	Akhwand Abdul Kareem Advocate	Muslim League	2986	2nd
2	Sheikh Faiz Muhammad Advocate	Unionist	3655	1st

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From the southern constituency, Nawab Bahadur Khan Dareshaak and Ghaus Bakhsh Mazari were contesting in which the Muslim League candidate won. The detail of the election was as under.

Sr.#	Name Candidate	Party	Vote	Position
1	Sardar Bahadur Khan	Muslim League	3237	1st
2	Sardar Ghaus Bakhsh Khan	Unionist	3133	2nd
3	Gul Muhammad	Independent	27727	3rd
4	Muhammad Aziz Khan	Independent	0326	4 <sup>th</sup>

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In election 1945, Nawab Jamal Khan Leghari Tumandar was also elected on the reserved seat with the help of Unionist but after few days Nawab Jamal Khan and Sheikh Faiz Muhammad joined Muslim League in a public gathering the joining of these two provided strengths to Muslim League against Unionist in Bye Election.<sup>38</sup>

The Unionist Party won the elections but required some support The Unionist government forced Ata Muhammad Buzdar to resign from the Muslim League and join the Unionist Party. A Unionist delegation visited DG Khan, stayed in a rest house in front of Central Model High School for several days, tried to win support of Ata Muhammad Buzdar, but despite persuasion and offers of bribes, Ata Muhammad Buzdar MLA remain loyal to the Muslim League. After failure to win a support, the Unionists challenged the election and got a decision declaring the election of Ata Muhammad null and void. A by-election was called for. It was a big challenge for the Muslim League to protect its winning seat against Unionist government. Quaid-e-Azam sent Raja Ghazanfar Ali and hundreds of students of Muslim Students Federation to campaign for Atta Muhammad Buzdar in the constituency. Unionist ministers were pushing hard in this constituency to win this battle. In this regard, they also got the support of Khawaja Nizamuddin Taunsvi, a spiritual figure. But Khawaja Hafiz Saiduddin and Khawaja Ghulam Zakaria gave their full support to the Muslim League. In this northern constituency, Sardar Manzoor Ahmad Khan Qaisrani and Faiz Muhammad Khan Taunsvi worked day and night for the victory of the Muslim League. At Yaroo Khosa, Sardar Naseer Mohammad Khan addressed the public for the support of the Muslim League's candidate. Similarly, the Muslim Students Federation activists were used to make daily speeches by putting up tents along the Manka Canal and attracting people towards the Muslim League. The local leadership made the people aware of the importance of this election and the struggle continued on a daily basis. This leadership was called the Leader of the Day.<sup>39</sup>

This constituency became so important in the electoral history of the subcontinent that more than a hundred student leaders from Aligarh and Islamia College Lahore came to help the Muslim League candidate to win this by-election. Among them are Mr. Syed Hamad Raza, Ahmed Saeed Kirmani and Habib Jalib. Arshad Hameed Dasti from Forman Christian College, a student from Muzaffargarh, was responsible for delivering orders and covert tactics from the Muslim League leadership. The Muslim Students Federation complied with these orders. Maher Abdul Haq continued to write poems related to independence. Aligarh and Islamia College students rode on bicycles with local students to villages, including the most remote areas of Taunsa Tehsil, where they continued to work for Atta Muhammad Buzdar. On the contrary, the government machinery was equipped with facilities and in the presence of dozens of vehicles; the Muslim League was trying to defeat the candidate. They gave their people cars, speakers and piles of money. Along with Ibrahim Barq and Lehri, Muzaffar Ali Qazalbash were also controlling the entire election campaign. However the lack of resources among the Muslim League was so swear that for the election campaign, Niaz Buzdar demanded the only loud speaker from Mian Iftikhar-u-Din.. Similarly, Muslim League workers were given only one vehicle called Willy from the headquarters. This seat was so important that if the

Unionists had won, they would have got a simple majority and they would have formed the provincial government of Punjab. That is why the Muslim League wanted to save this seat. When the election campaign reached its peak, the Muslim political leadership including Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Mamdoot, Raja Ghazanfar Ali, Abdul Hameed Dasti, Abdul Rahman Baghi, Ghulam Yazdani, Mian Iftikhar Uddin, Mian Abdul Bari, Sardar Shaukat Hayat and Major Ashiq Hussain with local leadership participated in the campaign.<sup>40</sup>

The constituency was divided into 14 polling stations. And polling continued for fourteen days. When the Returning Officer, Puna Lal, was appointed, the Muslim League smelled a sense of cheating. So, on a daily basis, they started guarding the treasury in the Deputy Commissioner's office. In which the Muslim League leaders used to take turns guarding. Even when the day of counting came and the counting began, despite the obstacles, moves and tactics of the administration, the Muslim League candidate won with a larger majority than the earlier polls. Their lead was fourteen hundred and eighty-six votes.<sup>41</sup>

Sr.#	Name Candidate	Party	Vote	Position
1	Atta Muhammad Buzdar	Muslim League	3794	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Ameer Muhammad Qaisrani	Unionist	2308	2 <sup>nd</sup> <sup>(42)</sup>

This by-election put an end to the politics of the Unionist Party in Dera Ghazi Khan and the people of Dera declared their full affiliation and attachment to the Muslim League and made themselves part of the demand for the establishment of Pakistan. Historically, the role of the people of this district in the 1945 election was not only preserved in golden letters but it was a message of hope and encouragement for the Muslims of the subcontinent. This encouraged not only the people but also the leadership. It created a sense of resistance that Muslims still have the ability to deal with high-handed tactics.

After the election, Ata Muhammad Buzdar went to meet the Quaid-e-Azam and the Quaid-e-Azam hugged him and paid tribute to him as “well done my boy, I am proud of you.” These words of praise by Quaid-e-Azam were not only a source of pride but also an honor for the people of Dera Ghazi Khan. But the failure of the election by the Unionist government was avenged in such a way that the British governor formed a Unionist government through a coalition. Ata Muhammad Buzdar, an elected representative from Dera Ghazi Khan, was arrested. Sardar Manzoor Ahmad Khan Qaisrani also returned the title of Khan Bahadur on the instructions of Quaid-e-Azam. He was later arrested and on January 28, 1947, they were sent to prison.<sup>43</sup>

During the civil disobedience movement, Akhund Abdul Karim Advocate, Muhammad Khan Leghari, Mahmood Khan Leghari, Gaman Khan Leghari, Faiz Muhammad Shah, Muhammad Khan Gishkori, Ghous Bakhsh Aliani and Mirza Ghulam Sarwar were also imprisoned. In view of the threat of protest, they were first sent to Multan Jail and then from Multan to Sialkot Jail. During this campaign of civil disobedience, the people of Dera washed away all the stains of the past by telling a new story of resistance. During the interrogation, the police got fed up because all the political prisoners of Dera decided that their name is Muslim and they live in Pakistan. In fact, it was an expression of the immense devotion of the people of Dera Ghazi Khan affiliated to the *Tehreek-e-Pakistan*. As a result of these arrests, the movement spread and the Tiwana government could not control it. Meetings and processions were held from the DC office to Pakistan Chowk, Jail Road and sometimes from the railway station to Company Bagh. The whole city resounded with the single slogan of ‘Ban Kay Rahay Ga Pakistan’ (We will win Pakistan). So many times the police came to the league’s protestors and charge batons at the protesters, got them dispersed from one place, the people continued to gather at other places and this eye-rolling continued all day long.<sup>44</sup>

Hayat Niazi was a police inspector who used to come forward to suppress people. Ghulam Haider famous as (Pathar Halwai) was used to carry the flag of the processions. He also used to hold a stool for the speech with the flag. He helped Khair Mohammad Korea.<sup>45</sup> One day in this civil disobedience movement, when Khair Muhammad Korea was leading the rally, police arrived and so many sticks were charged to Korea that he fell down on land but he did not allow the flag to be lowered. He suffered severe head and body injuries, but his spirits remained high. It became the norm for people to go out every day and Hayat Niazi was also the target of public anger to the Khizr government as these slogans began to resound: ‘Hayat is a cowardly officer and a traitor to the people. He is a coward and not a benefactor of the people. He is a puppet. Khizr Tiwana is an agent of the British’.<sup>46</sup>

Fed up with these protests, the government enacted Section 144 to suppress the people, but this move also failed as various Baloch chiefs, especially Nawab Jamal Khan Leghari, called a group of armed Blotches from the mountains for the resistance. Violating the section 144 was not a common thing in the British government and with this violation of the section 144, the government lost control and influence in Dera Ghazi Khan. The government released the leaders of Dera Ghazi Khan on February 21, 1947, they reached Dera Ghazi Khan the next day with a procession on February 22, 1947.

The journey of resistance continued and few days later, the Tiwana government came to an end. Under the formula of Partition of India of June 3, 1947 Plan, when Pakistan was established on August 14, Maulana Ghulam Jahanian raised the flag of freedom in the *Jamia Masjid* Block-3 of Dera Ghazi Khan. Despite achieving this goal, the Muslim Students Federation went there for a referendum in NWFP so that the Muslim League could win against the Congress as directed by the Quaid-e-Azam. The students took part in the referendum campaign against the Red Shirts. The students were led by Khawaja Ghulam Ilyas Taunsvi while others included Khawaja Ghulam Younis, Habibullah Khosa, Muhammad Iqbal Hotani, Zulfiqar Buzdar and Ghulam Sarwar Shah. The Muslim League won the referendum and the border province was annexed to Pakistan. Similarly, the people of Dera sheltered thousands of refugees. This underscores the importance of a full role in the movement in the region.<sup>47</sup>

### Conclusion

This research article highlights a lost story of the past, how the people of this remote and backward region Dera Ghazi Khan played their role in the freedom movement for Pakistan during 1940-1947. It was the 1945 election or a civil disobedience movement, the Muslims here played a decisive role. Although in the freedom movement for Pakistan, the Muslims of the subcontinent narrated the story of a full-fledged struggle and especially the political history of Punjab made deep impressions, but the struggle from the Dera Ghazi Khan was unprecedented. The way in the people fought hard against the oppression of government is itself a golden chapter in history of Pakistan Movement. Dera Ghazi Khan became known as a symbol of continuous resistance since the annexation of Punjab Quaid-e-Azam also paid tribute to the leadership and the people of Dera Ghazi Khan through his many letters- So it can be said that the role played by the people of Dera Ghazi Khan in the way in which the Muslims of India waged the freedom struggle for the protection of political identity was remarkable. The people worked tirelessly to achieve the goal of independence by remaining steadfast in the most difficult circumstances.

The Role presents a continuity of the history of local resistance as well as the influence of local tribal structure. Local binary politics of clan cast and regional interests also played a prominent role in the success of Muslim League in the elections of 1945-46. However the success was further strengthened by the sacrifices during the Civil Disobedience Movement. In this context , if compared with the other parts of Punjab and South Asia, the people and leaders of Dera Ghazi Khan played stronger role and sacrificed heavily. Even the consensus among the leadership belonging to all parties on the formation of Pakistan was unprecedented.

<sup>1</sup> Pall Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, Cambridge, 1974, pp. 178-9.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Robinson and S Akbar Zaidi highlight the development of Muslim religio-political consciousness in Northern India and considered the consciousness of being in minority in a western type democratic system as the root of Muslim political struggle. See for details Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims—the Politics of United Provinces Muslims 1936-43*, London, 1978; S. Akbar Zaidi, 'Contested Identities and the Muslim Qaum in Northern India, 1860-1900: An Exploratory Perspective', *Pakistan Perspective*, Vol., 10, No. 2 (July-Dec 2005), pp. 13-64.

<sup>3</sup> Hafeez Malik and I. H. Qureshi focus the mainstream developments in the subcontinent as an indicator of the rise of Muslim Nationalism. See for details Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan*, Lahore, 1980; I. H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent (610-147) A Brief Historical Analysis*, Karachi, 1962.

<sup>4</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and The Raj 1849-1947*, Delhi: Manohar Publications, 1988.

<sup>5</sup> S. Qalb-i-Abid, *Muslim Politics in the Punjab 1921-47*, Lahore, 1992; Jinnah, *Second World War and Pakistan Movement*, Multan, 1999.

<sup>6</sup> Ian Talbot, *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement: the Growth of the Muslim League in the North West and North East India 1937-47*, Oxford, 1988, p.90; Sikandar Hayat, *The Charismatic Leader : Quid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the Creation of Pakistan*, Karachi: oxford university Press, 2019; Mohammad Iqbal Chawla, *Wavell and the Dying days of the Raj: Britain's Penultimate Viceroy in India*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Riaz Ahmed, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Second Phase of his Freedom Struggle*, Islamabad, 1994.

<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Shafique, 'Religious Locale and Inter-Religions Demographic Structure of Colonial Multan', *Pakistan Journal of Islamic Research*, 11(June 2013), pp.45-58; Muhammad Shafique and Lubna Kanwal, 'Regional Muslim Politics in Multan under the British', *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 34/2, 2013, pp.743-752; Muhammad Shafique Bhatti, "Indigenous Challenges and Potent Response: Zainulabdin Zeno Shah Gillani (1875-1960) as 'Salar' of Multani Muslim Community", *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. XXX, No. 1 (2009), PP. 159-182.

<sup>9</sup> M.S. Elphinstone, *The Rise of The British Power In The East*, London, 1889, P.543.

<sup>10</sup> Lala Hutto Ram, *Gulbahar*, Qalat Publishers, Quetta, 1982, P.360

<sup>11</sup> Lala Hutto Ram, *Gulbahar*, Qalat Publishers, Quetta, 1872, P.361

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Henry Thornton, *Colonel Sir Robert Sandeman*, Oxford Karachi, 1979, P.28.

<sup>13</sup> Ishrat Iqbal, *Azadi Mein Punjab Ka Kirdar*, Islam Abad, 1990, P. 127.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. P.128.

<sup>15</sup> Iftikhar-ul-Haq, *Punjab Aor Tahreek-e-Pakistan*, Urdu Bazar Lahore, 1998, P.105.

<sup>16</sup> Ian Talbot, Khizir Hayat Tiwana Punjab Unionist Party Aor Taqseem-e-Hind, Translator, T. Kamran, Fiction House,

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