

**FOUNDATION OF PAKISTAN:
A STUDY OF THE
WOMEN LEADERSHIP OF THE
PUNJAB PROVINCIAL MUSLIM LEAGUE**

The ascendancy of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League; its relationship with the Unionist party; its politics; programme and ideology; its election propaganda and League's propaganda for the cause of Pakistan have been discussed at length by some eminent scholars such as Ian Talbot, David Gilmartin, Iftikhar H. Malik and Ikram Ali Malik. Ian Talbot argues that the Unionist party was essentially a collaborator to the Raj and the Raj, because of its own reasons, deserted its collaborators during and after the second World War and extended support to the Muslim League. As a result the Unionist Party was replaced by the Provincial Muslim League. Ian Talbot suggests that the Punjabi Muslims did not flock to the Muslim League's banner from 1942 onwards either because of a sense of separation or because it offered them Pakistan. Rather they entered its ranks because of total factional rivalries and changes brought about by the second World War which resulted in the growth of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and the emergence of the sovereign state of Pakistan.¹

David Gilmartin, on the other hand, argues that the politics and society of the Punjab was controlled and directed by the landed elite, rural aristocracy and the *Pirs* and *Sajjada-Nashins*. This class, he argues, earlier extended support to the Unionist Party and later on shifted their allegiance in the favour of the Muslim League which resulted in the ascendancy of the League in the province. David Gilmartin further argues that in building its base for Pakistan in the rural Punjab, the Punjab

Provincial Muslim League dramatized its claim to speak for a self-conscious Muslim community that transcended the local identities around which rural politics had been built. The rural landed elite and the *Pirs* played a vital role in this process.²

Iftikhar H. Malik's works on Punjab deals with the formation of the socio-cultural identity of the Muslims' communitarian politics and the emergence of the sovereign state of Pakistan. He argues that in the pre-partition Punjab, one finds an explicit transformation of cultural nationalism into presumably full fledged nationalisms seeking complete political sovereignty. By the time of independence, the Punjabi Muslims had largely begun to espouse the case for Pakistan, the way the Hindus had aligned themselves with All-India Politics.³ Whereas, Ikram Ali Malik argues that the Colonial Punjab provided social-cultural, educational, economic and political opportunities to the Muslims of Punjab which resulted in the emergence and growth of the Muslim communal Politics and Muslim communal representation in the political institutions.⁴ Ikram Ali Malik further argues that the Muslim leadership of the Punjab very carefully maintained and protected the political and other interests of the Muslims of Punjab and later on this Muslim leadership raised and supported the cause of Pakistan in order to save the political interests of the Muslims of Punjab for the all time to come.⁵

The study and research of the present author, however, reveals that the social-cultural and political activities of the Muslim Anjumans of Punjab under the guidance of the Muhammadan Educational Conference led to the emergence and consolidation of the socio-cultural and political identity of the Muslims of Punjab.⁶ Afterwards, the Unionist Party with the active support of the rural landed elite, *Pirs* and *Sajjada-Nashians* began to safeguard the political and other interests of the Muslims of Punjab. However, the activities and propaganda of the workers and leaders of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and Punjab Muslim Students Federation began to erode the social bases of the Unionist party. The Punjab Provincial Muslim League presented Pakistan to the Muslims of Punjab as

the panacea of all Muslim grievances, both perceived as well as genuine. The extensive use of the religious symbols and Islamic appeals and the cause of Pakistan, aroused the common Punjabi Muslim, rural or Urban which resulted in the emergence of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League as the real mass body of the Muslim Punjab. Thus, the growth of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan was not strengthened from above but from below. The Punjab Muslim League's brand of puritan pristine and Arab inspired Islam, simply marginalized the Unionist party, rural landed elite and *Pirs* and *Sajjada-Nashins* and also eroded their social bases and this class was left with no other option but to join the cause of Pakistan.⁷

A careful and critical study of the available records of the Provincial Muslim League, the private papers of the leaders of the Punjab Muslim League and the correspondence between Jinnah and the provincial leaders reveal that even the women leadership of Punjab played a significant role in propagating the ideals of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan among the Muslims of Punjab. The part played by the women leadership in the study of the growth of the Punjab Muslim League and the demand of the Pakistan in the Muslim Punjab is a significant aspect which has so far been ignored by the historians and scholars. It was especially between the years 1945 to 1947 that the women leadership of the Punjab Muslim League mobilized the Muslim public opinion in favour of the League and Pakistan. Prominent women leaders of the Punjab Muslim League were Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz, Begum Kamal-ud-Din, Fatima Begum, Lady Vicky Noon, Begum Nazar Fatima and Begum Blossom Latif. In addition to the women leaders of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram, General-Secretary of the Lahore based Indian Social Congress also supported the cause of the Pakistan.

Begum Jahan Ara-Shah Nawaz was the founder President of the Punjab Women Muslim League. She, with the help of Begum Kamal-ud-Din organized the branches of the Punjab Women Muslim League at some of the districts like Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, Montgomery, Sargodha, Attock

and Sialkot.⁸ She along with Begum Kamal-ud-Din even conducted tour of the South-East Punjab and established Muslim League Women Committees at places like Simla, Ambala, Ludhiana, Kalka and Delhi. She collected money for the Punjab Women Muslim League and appealed to the Muslims of this area to work selflessly for the cause of the Muslim League and Pakistan.⁹ Begum Shah Nawaz took an active part in the provincial elections of 1946 and propagated the aims and ideals of the League in some of the constituencies of the West Punjab.¹⁰ The Punjab Women Muslim League under the leadership of Begum Shah Nawaz strongly protested and arranged protest meetings against the British Raj on the matter of awarding sentences to some of the Muslim officials of the I.N.A. The Women Muslim League was of the opinion that the Muslim officials of I.N.A. adopted the only course which the conscientious Muslim could have adopted in those circumstances and thus they should not be sentenced.¹¹

Begum Shah Nawaz, interestingly, advised Jinnah to send a delegation of the All-India Muslim League at a world conference organized by the *New York Herald Tribune* at New York by the end of October 1946. After receiving an invitation from Mrs. Helen Reid, the proprietor of the *New York Herald Tribune*, about the proposed conference, she wrote to Jinnah that it was the golden opportunity for the Muslim League to present its case and raise the demand of Pakistan at the international level. She wrote to Jinnah that, "I know that with such a critical situation prevailing in the country, you are very occupied with urgent and important matters. I also know how very difficult it is for the League to spare anyone at such a juncture even for a few weeks especially as all of us are eager to take part in the coming struggle and would not like to go out of India. However, if none of our elder statesmen can be spared, there are some younger people, who I know would be prepared to volunteer to go at their own expense and would do credit to the League".¹²

Mohammad Ali Jinnah after discussing the matter in the All India Muslim League Council nominated M.A.H. Ispahani

and Begum Shah Nawaz as the delegates of the Muslim League to participate in the proposed conference which was essentially a very representative world conference and was to be addressed by people of the international repute from every country. It is significant to take note that this action on the part of the All India Muslim League was not only welcomed by the Punjab Provincial Muslim League but was also supported by the Lahore based Indian Social Congress under the leadership of Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram.¹³

After participating in the conference at New York, Begum Shah Nawaz wrote to M.A. Jinnah that, "The subject matter of the opening session of the forum was '*Frontier of Justice*' and the opening speech was delivered by a judge of the Supreme Court. The British Ambassador, Mr. Krishan Menon and Mr. Hasan spoke on India. The Indian delegation to the U.N.O. was present on the platform in full force, Mr. J.J. Singh and Mr. Anup Singh were also there. Lord Inver Chappel and Menon's speeches were the usual tall talk. I am glad to say that the sketch of our case, which Hasan so ably and eloquently told us, was laudable enough and the people were talking about it and had started discussing it. How we both wished that you had been here, sir, to see it with your own eyes. I think that we could not have done better then to begin our foreign publicity by placing our case before such a representative gathering of the world. The faces of the members of the Indian Delegation fill and Mrs. Pandit left the Hall soon after Mr. Hasan's speech was over. We are now arranging for a press conference. Most of our time is being spent in interviews and talks. Ofcourse we are very much handicapped in not having even one representative of ours in the UNO delegation from India as it would have been easier for us to make contacts with foreign delegations through him. Nevertheless we mean to do our best.'¹⁴

After coming back to India, Begum Shah Nawaz decided to participate actively in the Direct Action Movement of the Punjab Muslim League. She along with Begum Kamal-ud-Din conducted some public meetings exclusively for the women in Lahore and some other towns of the West Punjab. The Punjab

Women Muslim League under the leadership of Begum Shah Nawaz and Begum Kamal-ud-Din vigorously campaigned for the cause of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan.¹⁵ In the early 1947, the Punjab Provincial Women Muslim League in close collaboration with the other prominent leaders of the Punjab Muslim League campaigned against the government of Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana. Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz and Begum Kamal-ud-Din, along with the other leaders of the Provincial Muslim League, were arrested by the Punjab Police in January 1947 and were subsequently released without any condition.¹⁶ Both these leaders of the Punjab Women Muslim League, thus made an substantial contribution in pulling down the government of Malik Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana.¹⁷

Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz, thus, played a significant role for the cause of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan. She once wrote to M.A. Jinnah that, "once again allow me to assure you that I shall work with whole hearted devotion to the Quaid-i-Azam and with loyalty and selflessness for our national ideals of Pakistan."¹⁸ The contribution of Begum Shah Nawaz for the Punjab Muslim League can be explained in three ways. Firstly, she must be credited for establishing and organizing the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and also establishing its branches at some of the districts of the West and South-East Punjab. Secondly, She became an instrument in mobilizing the opinion of the women of the Muslim Punjab for the cause of the Muslim League which subsequently strengthened the demand of Pakistan. Thirdly, she must be given the credit to raise the demand of Pakistan at an international conference organized by the *New York Herald Tribune* in October, 1946.

Another prominent leader of the Punjab Provincial Women Muslim League was Fatima Begum. She was the founder Principal of the Jinnah Islamia College for Girls at Lahore. She was one of the founder members of the *Anjuman-i-Khawatin-i-Islam* and worked as its secretary. She was closely associated with the All India Muslim Women's Conference. In

1942, She was appointed a member of the Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League.¹⁹

Fatima Begum was inspired with the activities of the Punjab Muslim Students Federation. In 1942, under the motivating guidance of Jinnah, She organized the Punjab Muslim Girls Students Federation and then invited M.A. Jinnah to inspire the Girls students. She wrote to Jinnah that, "We have learnt it with great pleasure that you are coming to Punjab to preside over the Punjab Muslim Students Federation session at Rawalpindi in the first week of March 1942. We hope you have, by now, received an invitation from the Punjab Muslim Girls Students Federation, urging you to stop at Lahore and inspire the daughters of Islam with a renewed zest to work side by side with their brothers for the achievement of their common goal. We are trying to popularize the Muslim League in the Punjab through our womenfolk."²⁰

In April 1943, Fatima Begum was nominated on the women central sub-committee of the All-India Muslim League. During the Punjab provincial elections of 1946, She arranged several gatherings of the Muslim Women and urged them to vote for Pakistan.²¹ She made extensive tour of the West Punjab and popularized the ideals of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan. Regarding her tours she wrote to Jinnah that, "During the last week, I visited Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Gujrat, Wazirabad and Gujranwala and addressed women's meetings at all these places. They had the desired effect every where. I was also able to enroll about 400 members in the women's section of the League. A lady from Jhelum who was formerly a Congressite has now become a staunch Leaguer."²²

After the elections of 1946, Fatima Begum actively participated in the Direct Action Movement of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. She made extensive tours of the province and popularized the demand for Pakistan.²³ Fatima Begum also hold exclusively women meetings at a large number of places. *The Eastern Times* from Lahore also reported that, "Muslim women of Lahore, at a meeting held in the Islamia

College, Lahore under the Presidentship of Fatima Begum, resolved to play their full part in the coming struggle of the Mussalmans by sacrificing their worldly belongings including their children for the purpose of keeping up the honour and prestige of Islam and also condemned the Government and the Congress for conspiring in this land against the just interests of the Muslims. The meeting also expressed complete faith and confidence in the leadership of M.A. Jinnah".²⁴ In the early 1947, when the Punjab Muslim League started agitation against the ministry of Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, she provided leadership to the women of the Muslim Punjab. She led some women processions and was one of the few women leaders to have shared the honour of imprisonment, though later she was released without any condition²⁵. She like Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz made a substantial contribution in pulling down the ministry of Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana.²⁶

Fatima Begum, thus, played a remarkable role in the political awakening of the Muslim women of the Punjab. She, in fact, acted as an instrument in mobilizing the opinion of the Muslim Women of the Punjab in the favour of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan. She should also be credited for the establishment and organization of the Punjab Girls Students Federation which subsequently popularized the demand of Pakistan among the Muslim Women of the rural Punjab. Lastly, Fatima Begum helped the Punjab Women Muslim League as well as the Punjab Provincial Muslim League in the field of their organizational business.

Apart from Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz, Begum Kamal-ud-Din and Fatima Begum, there were few more women leaders who took a keen interest towards the growth of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan. Prominent among them were Begum Nazar Fatima, Begum Blossom Latif, Begum K.F. Khan, Begum Jahanara of Simla and Begum Suraiya Kifait Ali. Begum Nazar Fatima once wrote to M.A. Jinnah that, "The leaders and speakers of Punjab Provincial Muslim League have often said from the platform of the League that the Pakistan Government will be formed by Muslims on

religious basis. On the other hand, you in your interview with the representative of Daily workers said that Pakistan will have a real democratic and popular Government."²⁷ Begum Nazar Fatima further requested to M.A. Jinnah to kindly explain his concept of a democratic and popular government based on the religion so that the workers of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League should not be worried about the future of the Muslim League in the Punjab.²⁸

Begum Salma Tassadduque Hussain, Begum Zainab Kakakhel, Begum Blossom Latif, Begum K.F. Khan and Begum Suraiya Kifait Ali took a keen interest in the provincial elections of 1946 under the banner of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. The Women Muslim League of the Montgomery district not only propagated the ideals of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan but also arranged several protest meetings against the sentence awarded to the Muslim officers of the I.N.A. Begum Nazir Ahmad, President of the Women District Muslim League, Montgomery reported to M.A. Jinnah that, "The Working Committee of the Women District Muslim League, Montgomery, passed a resolution strongly protesting against the sentence awarded to Captain Abdul Rashid of the I.N.A., which they said should have been on the same level as given to Shah Nawaz, Sehgal and Dhillon. It considered the sentence extremely harsh and called upon the Commander-in-Chief to review his decision. The resolution called upon the Muslim Women of the district to organize protest meetings against this sentence as Captain Abdul Rashid adopted the only course which a conscientious Muslim could have adopted in the circumstances."²⁹

The Women District Muslim League of Simla propagated the ideals of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan among the Muslims of central and eastern Punjab. Begum Jahanara, Secretary, of the Women District Muslim League, Simla reported to M.A. Jinnah that, "A big public meeting was held at Kasmiran Mosque, Simla by the Women Muslim League, Simla on February 6, 1946. Begum Zahra Khanum Presided over the meeting, Begum Abdul Ghani recited

some verses of the Quran, Begum Raqia Bukhari, Begum Nasira, Begum Shameen Bano, Begum Maryam and Begum Razwana Bano recited national poems. General-Secretary, Begum Jahanara and Begum Razia Bukhari read the report of their historical tours of Kalka, Ambala City, Ambala Cant., Ludhiana, Lahore, Delhi and other places. The Muslim League Women Committees were established in these cities. The Muslim Women of Ambala City contributed ornaments and the Muslim Women of Ambala Cantt. collected five hundreds Rupees for their Provincial organization. The leaders of the Women Muslim League, Simla attended Muslim League Conferences at Ludhiana and Lahore and has also attended the public meetings of Qaid-i-Azam M.A. Jinnah and Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan at Lahore. The Women Muslim League of Simla also contributed Rupees five hundreds for the cause of the League.”³⁰

The Women District Muslim League of Simla further reported to M.A Jinnah that, “Begum Nadvi and Begum Rehana delivered effective and fiery speeches at the public meeting. General-Secretary, Begum Jahanara stating causes of Muslim Governments repeated downfalls and present degeneration of the Muslims, gave credit to the All-India Muslim League for successfully and singularly uniting the Muslims of India. She expected more sacrifices and selflessness from the Muslims of India. The meeting dispersed in the shouts of Allao-Akbar, Muslim League Zindabad and Pakistan Zindabad.”³¹

Lady Vicky Noon, wife of Firoz Khan Noon was another prominent women leader of the Punjab Muslim League. She took keen interest in the politics of the Punjab Muslim League, participated in the provincial elections of 1946 and campaigned for the cause of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan during the years 1945 to 1947. During the election days, she always accompanied Firoz Khan Noon and thus visited the places like Lahore, Rawalpindi, Layalpur, Sargodha, Sialkot, Attock, Jhelum, Gujrat, Multan, Montgomery, Jhang, Gujranwala, Ferozpur and Shahpur. She also addressed a numbers of women meetings at some of these places.³²

Lady Vicky Noon was very carefully and keenly watching the events during the election days. She was worried on two accounts—firstly, the biased attitude of the Punjab Government against the candidates of the Muslim League and secondly, the growing indiscipline among the workers and leaders of the Muslim League. She wrote to Jinnah that, “Official pressure is being used in the Punjab against the League. Please, issue direction to the Governor of Punjab to state publically that he does not want government servants to use undue influence in the coming elections. That under section 171 c(2) (b), the Punjab Government have authorized District Magistrates to launch prosecutions against Muslim Leaguers for religion’s undue influence in the elections. But section C(2) (a) has been excluded because it covers undue influence by public servants who are escaping a years’ rigorous imprisonment because the Unionist Government will never give that sanction. Would you like to consider the advisability of approaching the Viceroy on this subject under section 196 criminal procedure code, the Governor General in Council can authorize the District Magistrates or some judicial officers to sanction prosecution of government servants.”³³ Regarding indiscipline among the Leaguers she also wrote to Jinnah that, “We are looking forward to your coming here: True, the League has become a mass movement but there are many uncontrolled elements in it that need your presence very badly. It is unwise when the pupils try to excel their master.”³⁴

The Punjab Provincial Muslim League vigorously campaigned for the provincial elections from November 1945 to January 1946. Jinnah himself visited Punjab in the last week of January 1946 and addressed a few public meetings.³⁵ A few days before the polling, Lady Vicky Noon finally reported to Jinnah that, “We are told that the position in Muslim constituencies is becoming better and better. Altogether, the progress of the Muslim League has been a most wonderful and gratifying experience. The situation in parts, thinking only of the rural areas, still remains fluid but we are heading for a good majority.”³⁶

After the elections, Vicky Noon played a crucial role in formulating the policies of the Punjab Muslim League. She advised Jinnah to start a mass movement against the government of Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana and to attempt to establish a ministry of the League. She wrote to Jinnah, "The disappointment in the public is great and sincere and the only thing for the Muslim League now to do is to work still harder not to let them lose confidence in the Muslim League organization. The electorate was hoping for a League Ministry that could undo all the wrongs that has been committed against them and that will start on the constructive course of administration. Everything possible must therefore be done for the formation of a ministry. I realize that you do not think in terms of ministries but after the elections like the one we just had to fight over here the only possibility of the party, for which the voter had to undergo such humiliations and actual physical dangers, is to do its utmost to be in power so as to save the public from vindication and oppression. Besides, it was a flame like enthusiasm that inspired the people, the villagers in particular to vote for the Muslim League, mainly based on the religious fervor. On the other hand, if the other parties form a coalition, Congress plus Unionist party, then money and official power will be used to reduce and crush the present Muslim League strength."³⁷

Lady Vicky Noon, once the provincial elections were over and the ministry was formed, continued her work for the cause of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan. In the month of April 1946, She has reported to M.A. Jinnah that, "I presided over the Women's Anjuman meeting at Lahore on April 20, 1946 and if you had been there, I am sure I would have made you smile because I actually bossed our famous lady speakers, her M.L.A.'s and other, to stick to ten minutes speech. I succeeded to get through the meeting by 1.4.5 p.m., we started at 10.15a.m. Just as I start to know more about the working of the various organizations here and seeing the obvious mistakes that are being committed, I start to think about the remedies. How true it is when we say that we can learn best from other mistakes. Sometimes the magnitude of the task ahead frightens me, and

then my thoughts revert to you and I pray that you may be given long life so as to guide us.”³⁸ Lady Vicky Noon actively participated in the Direct Action Movement of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. She addressed an exclusively women gathering in Lahore and asked Muslim women to be ready for making all sacrifices to achieve Pakistan. She further said, “The time has come when we will not hesitate to sacrifice our property, our rest, our lives and even our children’s lives in the struggle to obtain our objective.”³⁹

Lady Vicky Noon not only vigorously participated in the activities of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League but she also used to sent reports and made suggestions to M.A. Jinnah regarding the activities of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and the All-India Muslim League. Regarding the composition of the Interim Government, She has suggested to M.A. Jinnah that, “I have heard that the Congress is demanding a parity in the Interim Government. I see no harm in allowing the Viceroy to nominate a Congress Sikh from the Punjab in the Executive Council. This will further weaken the Akalis who are always source of trouble and as soon as the Sikh member will be absorbed in the Congress, he will have to face the extreme Sikh social pressure which subsequently led to his resignation. You may also persuade the Viceroy that he should appoint those Christian and Anglo-Indian members, who should not be in the pocket of the Congress. It should not be difficult for the Viceroy to find a Christian and a Anglo-Indian who is likely to vote with the Muslim League, or atleast not likely to go against the interests of the League. In this way a compromise can be brought about with the Congress on the question of the parity.”⁴⁰

The correspondence between M.A. Jinnah and Lady Vicky Noon reveals that M.A. Jinnah was very confident of securing the whole of Punjab in his scheme of Pakistan. It was in the later half of 1946 that M.A. Jinnah was negotiating for a residential bungalow at the Kullu Valley through Firoz Khan Noon. Lady Vicky Noon has reported to M.A. Jinnah that, “Only yesterday, August 30, 1946, I passed by the house you are negotiating for. This Valley without any exaggeration is the most

beautiful one but do not forget it is rather under developed one. *The Retreat*, the name of the house you are negotiating for, is standing rather isolated and it lies about half way between Manali and Kullu valley. Firoz wrote that he got you the house offered for Rupees 42,000. It is interesting to have learnt it because earlier the Arya Samaj people have offered to pay Rupees 40,000/- for this house. From Arya Samaj to Mr. Jinnah – a big jump from one direction to the other. The Arya Samaj people intend to open a girl school here in Manali apparently. The local guardian of the house, Mr. Brown, has demanded rupees 50,000/- and he has been offered 42,000/- by Firoz.”⁴¹

Lady Vickly Noon was inspired with the leadership and motivating guidance of M.A. Jinnah. She once wrote to Jinnah that, “I shall tell you the reason why, because I really admire and love you. Not because of your position as leader of the Musalmans of India, no. if you had been of any other nationality or faith, you still have been the leader of those people, because you are a born leader. It is that which makes you a born leader, I admire you and love your intelligent mind, your courage and endurance, your honesty and integrity of purpose. I wish sometimes I were your daughter and were allowed to speak to you like one.”⁴²

The contribution of Lady Vicky Noon for the cause of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and for the cause of Pakistan was significant and that can be exclaimed in two ways. Firstly, Vicky Noon was a serious, keen and careful observer of the Punjab politics and the politics of the Punjab Muslim League. She regularly wrote to Jinnah regarding the political happenings of the province and also time and again, provided useful suggestions to Jinnah on the matters of Punjab Provincial Muslim League. Moreover, her reports and suggestions were always responded to by M.A. Jinnah. She, thus, helped Jinnah to control the politics of the Provincial Muslim League and to formulate his policies regarding the activities of the Punjab Muslim League. Secondly, Lady Vicky Noon herself campaigned for the cause of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan. She addressed a number of women gatherings

during the elections of 1946 and during the Direct Action Movement of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. She stood firmly with the Punjab Muslim League during its struggle for Pakistan from 1945 to 1947. Lady Vicky Noon, in fact, was religiously dedicated to the cause of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan.

It is pertinent here to take note of the role played by Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram for the cause of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan. Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram, an Indian Christian, was not a leader of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League but was the General-Secretary of the Lahore based Indian Social Congress. Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram was of the opinion that Indian National Congress was a body of the caste Hindus and it was intended to establish the caste Hindu rule in India and was oppressing and suppressing the all other minorities in India including the Muslims and Indian Christians. Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram, thus, justified and supported the cause of the Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan and the activities of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. She regularly wrote to M.A. Jinnah and kept him informed about the politics of the Punjab.

Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram, during the early 1946, wrote to M.A. Jinnah that, "I entirely agree with your stand for Pakistan being justly based on the fear of being submerged by a Hindu majority whose Dharma and philosophy, which has fostered and maintained for thousand of years a rigid caste system resulting in the degradation of 60 million human beings to the position of untouchables, creation of unnatural barriers between man and man, and supreme position of social and economic inequalities on a large body of people of this country and which threatens to reduce Muslims, Christians and other minorities to the status of unredeemable human lots socially and economically. Mr. Jinnah, you should not give up the demand for an equal sovereign state. The oppressed and disgraced of the Hindus must have a place to run to and take shelter. Pakistan will be a refuge for such people."⁴³

Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram, during the middle of 1946, reported to M.A. Jinnah about the activities of the Unionist Government and stated that, "I am compelled to write and tell you how the leaders of the Congress party and the Unionist party here are planning to pass a vote of no confidence against the League Mayor of Lahore Mian Ameeruddin. They have got hold of the poor Sadiq Ali and have offered to pay him a sum of Rs. 200/- a month if he goes to their side. Fazul Baksh, a Unionist, is keeping him in secret custody in his own house and only lets him go out in his own car. The minister Lahari Singh has done his level best to nominate only those persons in the Municipal Corporation who have promised to oppose the League at every step. The same game was played by Khizar Hayat Khan during the Cantonment elections, where large amount of money was paid and promises of squares of land was made to those who should openly oppose the Muslim League. So you see what foul means are being used against the Muslim Leaguers to deprive of them of their due in these elections and positions".⁴⁴ Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram was also closely associated with the prominent leaders of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and she was used to make suggestions to them about the policy matters.⁴⁵

Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram not only used to send reports to M.A. Jinnah regarding the activities of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and the Punjab politics but she also used to make suggestions to M.A. Jinnah regarding the growth of the Muslim nation. She, during the later half of 1946, wrote to Jinnah that, "I was very pleased to read of Sardar Shaukat Hayat's attempt in the Punjab to make the Muslim industrial minded. Schemes of this kind only save the Muslims from the Hindu clutches. But the most powerful foundation of a nation can only be laid on the upliftment of its women and girls. No nation can rise half slave and half free. If women are kept backward and ignorant, men will never be able to go ahead alone. Muslim girls and women are the most backward out of all the communities and therefore if the Muslim nation has to rise and stand shoulder to shoulder with, its first duty will be to open ways for the Muslim women. Uptil now the Muslims of Punjab can claim only one private school for the girls, in Jullundhur,

while Hindus have hundreds all over the province. I hope you will first give your attention to this side of planning.”⁴⁶

Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram also regularly sent to Jinnah those cutting of the newspaper which contained the news regarding Muslim League and Punjab politics. These reports, suggestions and newspapers cutting being sent by Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram immensely assisted M.A. Jinnah to know the latest political developments in the Punjab and also to formulate his strategies regarding the growth of the Pakistan movement in the Punjab. M.A. Jinnah always appreciated this gesture and once wrote to Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram that, “Many thanks for your letter of the 18th November 1946 and the previous one which I have been receiving. They are very encouraging and full of information, and I thank you for all the trouble that you are taking, and the press cutting sent by you, are very instructive indeed. I shall always welcome your communication.”⁴⁷ Thus, it is obvious that Mrs. K.L. Rallia Ram made a substantial contribution for the cause of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and the demand of Pakistan.

It has become obvious from the foregone discussions that the womenfolk of the Punjab played a remarkable part regarding the growth of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and to propagate and strengthen the demand of Pakistan. Although the numerical strength of the women leadership and their number of participation was not as large as was of the menfolk, however, in the given socio-cultural environment of the Muslim society, even such participation was a significant aspect in the historical perspective. For all practical purposes the Muslim women of the Punjab were the most background among all the communities, under the given circumstance, it was no doubt a laudable development that the Muslim women, rural or urban, were not only politicized but they were made to take active part for the cause of the League and the demand of the Pakistan. Thus, the women of the Muslim Punjab played a desirable and honourable role in the foundation of Pakistan, even it was truncated and moth-eaten.

Notes and References

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