
Oratory on Social Issues: Ahrar in British Punjab

_____ Samina Awan

Before going into the social activism of the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam (MAI hereafter), it is necessary to discuss the conditions and issues of the Muslim community; only then can one understand how the MAI was able to mobilise the masses. The Khilafat Movement, which led to the formation of an alliance between the western-educated Muslims, ulama and the Indian National Congress, was an unprecedented event. A deviation from the old politics of loyalty to British rulers by Muslims, their coalition with Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948), threatened the colonial system. It also challenged the British policy of collaboration with the 'natural leaders'¹ of Punjab and Sindh.

Khilafat and the Non-Cooperation movements widened the limits of the public sphere, and founded new organisational networks. During this movement, unprecedented scenes of Hindu-Muslim unity were witnessed. By 1919, Amritsar had become the nerve centre of political activity. The annual sessions of the Indian National Congress, under the Presidency of Pandit Motilal Nehru and of the All India Muslim League, under the Presidency of Hakim Ajmal Khan of Delhi; were held concurrently. The Khilafat Conference also met in Amritsar, under the leadership of Maulana Shaukat Ali; and it was during these sessions, that the Ali brothers associated themselves with Indian National Congress, and a new phase of Hindu-Muslim unity started. Muslims accepted Gandhi's leadership, tactics and program; and their leaders and organisations only echoed what Gandhi and the Indian National Congress laid down.² During the Khilafat Conference, a decision was taken to send a deputation of Muslims to Britain and France.³ This delegation met with the British Prime Minister in March 1920, and expressed their concern over the treatment to be meted out to Turkey after the

War, because of the Khilafat's sanctity for the Indian Muslims.⁴ The Prime Minister bluntly refused to accede to their demand to consider the status of the Turkish Sultan, and, as a reaction, a black day was observed in all important Indian cities and towns.⁵ The tempo of the Khilafat Movement continued to rise, due to the efforts of the All India Khilafat Committee⁶ and the ulama, who had entered the political arena with the formation of the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind (JUH). All these developments raised the political consciousness of Muslims from the urban areas of Punjab. The Jallianwalla Bagh massacre in April 1919 also had a profound impact on the nationalist struggle in India.

Muslim support of the Khilafat Movement led to the emergence of a new political force—the ulama. Thus, the result was the infusion of religion into politics, and it assumed a formal role through the JUH, which was formed in 1919. It was an anti-colonial organisation of the Deobandi ulama, such as Allama Anwar Shah Kashmiri and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. The Deobandi ulama were anti-colonial, and joined the countrywide protests. Azad was a well-known leader of the nationalist Muslims, who was sympathetic to the policy and programme of the Indian National Congress. For the ulama, and the rest of the labourers and peasants, Khilafat promised the supremacy of Islamic law; and this utopia had a great appeal for them. After the abolition of the institution of Khilafat in Turkey, the political alliance disintegrated.⁷ The local maulvis⁸ at places like Amritsar, tried to whip up emotions at mosques and rallies, arguing that the time had come for Muslims to seek deliverance from the British. The pro- Indian National Congress Muslims also tried to persuade their co-religionists to join the agitation. Many maulvis were worried about the agitation of Indian National Congress, as an inherently Hindu movement.⁹

The Khilafat Movement in Punjab

Khilafat supporters set up various programmes to spearhead their propaganda in the Punjab: public meetings were held, resolutions passed and forwarded to the government. The ulama used the pulpit and congregation prayers on Fridays to reach the people. Fatwas¹⁰ were issued by the ulama, who called upon the faithful to guard the institution of Khilafat in Turkey. Urdu press

kept ‘the issue’ alive: through impassioned news, articles, editorials and intermittent reports of public meetings and demonstrations. At public rallies, funds were collected and volunteers recruited, and women generously donated their gold jewelry.¹¹ However, all the organisations, which collected funds, did not have a transparent system, and auditing and accountability of these funds was not thorough; but the people were anxious to sustain the tempo of the Khilafat movement at all cost.¹² Muslims supported Gandhi’s call for Non-cooperation, and were also in the front-line of the Khilafat movement, and it led to a Hindu-Muslim alliance. Punjabi leaders like Malik Lal Khan, Dr. Saif-ud-Din Kichlew and several others, played an important role in the movement.

The End of Khilafat Movement and Muslims in Punjab

After the abolition of the Khilafat in Turkey by Mustafa Kemal in 1924, the spirit of national accommodation on cultural differences was dying out. The Punjabi countryside was brewing with discontent at a time when, “the disbanded soldiery was returning home to face crop failure, plague and disease”.¹³ The organisational set up of the Khilafat had become weak, fractious and outdated. The Khilafat Committee was breathing its last, after the abolition of the institution of Khilafat.¹⁴ Maulana Abdul Qadir Qasuri headed the Punjab Khilafat Committee which had a large following, especially amongst the Muslim Youth, Journalists, and the Deobandi Ulama.¹⁵ During the Khilafat years, they had become infatuated with the Congress leadership, especially the Mahatma. After the adoption of the Nehru Report by the All-Parties Conference at Lucknow in 1928, the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee also accepted it on 20 August 1928. On declaring its preference for complete national independence, the support for the Indian National Congress from within Muslim Punjab came from the Old Khilafatists and Nau-Jawan Bharat Sabha.¹⁶ The latter organisation had been founded in Lahore, in 1926.

The Khilafat legacy, which the MAI followed, posited it as an anti-establishment and anti-colonial organisation. It had a reformist agenda for rural Punjab, combined with a religious ideology. It struggled against the feudal system in villages,

where its orators mobilised public opinion through ‘Tabligh’ against the Unionist leaders, and held them responsible for many social evils. Its major area of contestation was a sustained anti-Qadiani campaign, which remained a permanent feature of its politics, right from its inception.¹⁷ The MAI was very sectarian in its approach, as it raised doctrinal issues, such as the finality of the Prophethood and praise of the companions of the Prophet Madh-e-Sahaba. It espoused a Sunni form of political Islam, and aimed at reaching the Muslims lower classes in the urban centres. In the following section, an effort has been made to record the anti-Ahmadi movement, and the role of the MAI in the Shahidganj campaign. It would be useful to look at their charity-based social activism during the earthquake of 1935 in Quetta, and the Bengal famine. The MAI’s politics, added to intra-community cleavages, and set a pattern of religio-political activism.

The MAI and Social Issues

The MAI leadership’s advocacy of egalitarianism appeared inspired by socialist ideas.¹⁸ Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) was a socialist, and since the Ahrar leadership belonged to the lower strata, it was naturally fascinated by the Nehruvian socialist egalitarianism.¹⁹ They had a vague idea of class struggle and the orthodox Marxist ideology. Their economic programme, as given in their election manifestoes of 1933, 1934 and 1937, promised a utopian society to the downtrodden. Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman, the President of MAI, combined his Fabian socialism with Islam, and idealised a youthful Jawaharlal Nehru as a political visionary. He was impressed by Nehru’s concern for the poor and underprivileged classes, and throughout his political career, remained sympathetic to Nehruvian idealism. He was in constant touch with Nehru through Abul Kalam Azad. Influenced by Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman, Maulana Gulsher Khan from Attock district also joined the Muslim Bazar campaign. Under this strategy villagers were asked to purchase groceries only from Muslim shopkeepers.²⁰

Such schemes mobilized the Muslim community against the Hindu moneylenders or waderas²¹ in rural Punjab. The MAI opposed colonialism, and focused on what it viewed as British

collaboration with waderas in rural Punjab. Another expression of their anti-establishment sentiments was through the formation of Fauj-i-Muhammadi,²² which was a community venture to combat social evils prevalent among certain groups of Muslims.²³ Through its Shoba-e-Tabligh,²⁴ the MAI preached against social evils like dowry, huqanoshi²⁵ and chhut.²⁶

The Ahrar orators mobilised the masses in villages, and also produced written literature on these issues.²⁷ Their rallies often used picketing; for instance, in urban areas they focused on the eradication of alcohol addiction by using the strategy of 'picketing' outside the liquor shops. They had learnt those Gandhian methods during the civil disobedience campaign against the British. They also raised the issue of prohibition, especially in the Punjab Assembly.²⁸ In their doctrinal training, the MAI followed the JUH, which strictly followed Sharia't²⁹ of the Deobandi school. Most of its leaders stressed the importance of education for combating social evils, but its major focus remained on creating awareness on a number of social and moral issues. Maulana Ataullah Shah Bukhari visited Azad Muslim School in Gujarat, and used the occasion to encourage parents to support education. They were in favour of traditional religious instruction, and resisted modern Western and Hindi institutions. Although an Ahrar MLA from Punjab, Abdul Rahman Khan, highlighted the absence of Muslim female employees in the education department of Punjab government. He also urged the government to take measures to encourage Muslim girls students and teachers to join the public Schools and Colleges of the province.³⁰

The MAI and Women

The MAI advocated the participation of women in politics. This was apparent during the Kashmir agitation, in which women were very visible. The MAI women activists did fund-raising, and managed the volunteer camps. The MAI nominated some female candidates for elections, but the main focus of the campaign were the male candidates. It condemned Muslim women who did not observe purdah,³¹ and came down hard on the AIML women, such as Begum Shahnawaz, who appeared in public without a veil. The Ahrar had a policy of strict

segregation of genders in politics, and did not believe in open interaction between the genders. While the MAI had a women's wing in the party, yet it never had any women on its working committee.³² The wives of a few Ahrar notables were allowed to participate in, and court arrest, during the Kashmir campaign, but they stayed away from the rallies and picketing. They nominated a female candidate for the provincial elections of 1937, but could not convince voters to vote for her.

The MAI pursued various pressure-building strategies to further its cause. It would hold public meetings under the auspices of Shoba-e-Tabligh to mobilise public opinion, and discuss the impact of various customs on the society; the Ahrar Jaysh³³ would watch the place or people involved in any such activity; they picketed a cinema in Amritsar for four days, which showed the film, *Hur-i-Harm*. The local branch of the MAI alleged that a few scenes and dialogues in the film were obscene, hurt Muslim sentiments, and needed to be censored. The cinema owner did not follow the Ahrar suggestions, and ultimately, a 'war council' was formed by the MAI, and picketing began on 1 August 1933. The first day witnessed a clash between the police and the Ahrar volunteers, which resulted in the death of a young volunteer by the name of Abdul Karim. Abdul Ghaffar Ghaznawi, the "dictator" of the campaign, was arrested, along with four hundred picketers.

The Muslim community in Amritsar was upset, and helped the MAI gain new recruits. Eventually, the agitators were released within a few weeks, and the cinema owner asked to censor the film; but subsequently the film was banned in India.³⁴ The MAI picketed liquor shops in Amritsar and Lahore, where they would parade in their uniform, while carrying axes. Afzal Haq produced printed literature to sensitise the Muslim masses on cultural and social issues, such as the harm caused by *huqanoshi*, poor hygiene, un-Islamic rituals and the wastage of time and money. Apart from being a political leader, he was an established Muslim writer of British India, who publicly sympathised with the underprivileged classes in India, and vowed to eradicate untouchability.³⁵ During the All-India Ahrar Tabligh Conferences, the Ahrar orators stressed the need for the eradication of un-Islamic rituals by urging people to adopt honesty, love for freedom and simplicity in their life styles.

The MAI and Relief Efforts

The MAI took up the campaign for humanitarian and natural calamities in India at different junctures, and engaged in charity work irrespective of caste, creed and religion. In 1935, it established relief camps within two months of a major earthquake in Quetta and the famine in Bengal; and helped in the rehabilitation of refugees in Pakistan after Partition. During the communal riots in India, before and after Partition, the MAI made its presence felt. On all these occasions they used their local and regional branches without undue political propaganda for their Party. The MAI did not seek official grants or donations, and collected and raised its own funds. Its volunteers helped those affected during the riots in Garhmakeshter, East Punjab, and other urban areas in Pakistani Punjab in 1947. It would be useful to look at the relief work they did in greater detail.

The Quetta Earthquake

At three in the morning on 31 May 1935, a severe earthquake, more than 9.0 on the Richter scale, caused massive destruction to Quetta and other parts of Balochistan. Almost forty thousand people died instantly, and the rest became homeless. The magnitude and intensity of the earthquake left a vast majority of population in a miserable condition, necessitating all kinds of human help. The MAI was the first political party to respond to the situation, suspending all its political activities. The MAI sent four relief parties to Quetta for help on the spot. Its leaders assembled in Lahore, and decided to establish two relief camps immediately; one each in Lahore and Amritsar.³⁶ Afzal Haq administered the camp in Lahore, while Abdul Salam Hamdani looked after the arrangements in Amritsar.³⁷ The camps included a hundred-bed residential capacity, along with other facilities for logistics. Basic amenities provided by the Ahrar camp included food, medical aid and accommodation. By 2 June 1935, more than two thousand refugees had been brought to the Ahrar camp in Lahore.³⁸ Their main objective was to help the affectees of the Quetta earthquake on humanitarian grounds.³⁹ The MAI also appealed to other political parties to cooperate with them in relief activities during

this major crisis,⁴⁰ and instantly deputed a relief party of twelve doctors and fifty paramedical staff to help the injured in Quetta and Mastung.

Through a circular, the MAI branches were requested to send volunteers who would help transfer the injured refugees from Quetta to Lahore. These refugees were facilitated from the Railway Station and the bus stops to their relief camps outside the Delhi Gate and Mayo Hospital in Lahore, by the MAI.⁴¹ They created an Ahrar Relief Fund, and issued an Ahrar Bulletin on a daily basis, which included information on refugees and donations. Several Ahrar workers had been raising funds through their own individual efforts, and by 30 June 1935, almost twenty thousand rupees had been collected in the Ahrar Relief Fund.⁴² The Viceroy, along with his wife, visited the Ahrar Relief Camp, and donated five thousand rupees. Dr Abdul Qavi Luqman, and a team of local doctors, looked after the camp.

The Ahrar relief camps were maintained for one month, following the earthquake. The MAI declared that it had no political motive behind its relief activities, but its vote bank increased as a result of it. Lahore and Amritsar became strong centres of the Party for future elections, as it received timely support and publicity. Later on the government of Balochistan promulgated martial law in Quetta and Mastung. The Ahrar leaders had been concerned about the rehabilitation of destitute women and children, who had been left without families and shelter; and criticised Hindu and Christian missionaries for using their rehabilitation activities to influence and convert Muslim women and children to their faiths. They were also critical of those prosperous individuals and large landlords of Punjab, who preferred to donate money to the Viceroy's Relief Fund rather than to the MAI relief fund. They refused the Viceroy Lord Wellington's invitation to receive an award for the MAI relief activities, and the working committee decided unanimously not to visit the Viceregal Lodge.⁴³ They took up the cause of their Muslim brethren, but were not willing to accept an award from the British rulers.

The Bengal Famine and the MAI

A severe famine struck Bengal in 1943, where a majority of the population happened to be Muslims. The famine was caused

by the diversion of food and boats to meet the war requirements. It was one of the most debilitating disasters, owing largely to administrative incompetence or 'maladministration'.⁴⁴ The first fact-finding Ahrar delegation was sent to Calcutta and Bihar on 22 October 1943; it was led by Sheikh Hissamuddin, and included Tajuddin Ansari and Nawabzada Mehmood Ali Khan.⁴⁵ It toured the eastern parts of Bengal, and started relief work in this predominantly Muslim area. They sent regular reports to the Lahore Ahrar office, stressing the need for a continuous supply of food items for the famine affectees. Maulana Mazhar Ali Azhar, the General Secretary of the MAI, circulated an appeal to establish the Bengal Relief Fund to all local units, and obtain donations from volunteers.⁴⁶

The MAI objectives included an effort to investigate the factors behind the Bengal Famine, and to offer relief to all the affectees.⁴⁷ An Ahrar delegation from Delhi, under the supervision of Chaudhry Abdul Sattar, also joined the relief efforts; whereas the MAI alerted its supporters on saving the Muslim community from conversion by the missionary activities of other religious communities.⁴⁸ The third and the fourth Ahrar delegations left for Bengal in December 1943.⁴⁹ The Ahrar volunteers devoted attention to the issue of the custody of the destitute children and women from Bengal, and managed to send some of them back from Punjab and other parts of the country. They also criticised the AIML government of Bengal, for not having risen to the challenge of this human catastrophe.⁵⁰ As a consequence of their propaganda against the provincial government, Maulana Muhammad Ali Jallundhari and Maulana Khalil-ur-Rehman were arrested.⁵¹ An Ahrar delegation met the Chief Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin in his office, and showed him a few samples of food which had been provided to the famine victims, and which was of poor quality. They accused the British government's food policy for causing this famine in Bengal, which had cost three million innocent lives.⁵² The Chief Minister promised to take steps to improve the relief efforts, but nothing happened.⁵³

The MAI also accused the British authorities of victimizing Bengalis, because Subhash Chandra Bose was a Bengali revolutionary, who had established an Azad Hind Fauj⁵⁴ in collaboration with the Japanese government. It included Indian

prisoners of war, and aimed at liberating India by force.⁵⁵ The MAI pressurised Khwaja Nazimuddin, the Muslim Chief Minister, to resign from his position, because of his failure to deal with challenges posed by the famine. The MAI held political meetings in Punjab, in which it alleged that the best quality wheat donated, had been stored in the government godowns by the British Governor R. G. Casey.⁵⁶ The Ahrar criticised the British government for dispatching high quality food items, such as rice and wheat, to their troops on the Burma Front, while the poor Bengalis faced a devastating famine.⁵⁷ They also criticized the official policy of diverting boats for military missions, rather than for relief work among the people. The Ahrar used the same strategy for relief work which they had used at the time of the Quetta earthquake, establishing a fund, raising donations and sending aid teams to the region.

Communal Riots and the MAI

The frequency of communal riots increased in many parts of India.⁵⁸ The widening gap between the two major communities weakened the position of the nationalist Muslims. Their position was made difficult in the Muslim majority areas as well as in Hindu localities, where the Hindu Mahasabhis were pursuing a populist programme.⁵⁹ Starting in August 1946, India experienced unprecedented communal violence for almost a year. The process started with the outbreak of riots in Calcutta on 16 August, and spread to Bihar, Noakhali and to the Punjab in March 1947.⁶⁰ From Calcutta (a cosmopolitan city) to Khyber, the split between the communities created a serious situation. These riots brought Partition closer, and both the INA (Indian National Army) and the Hindu extremist parties, demanded the division of India. In Punjab, after the Unionist Ministry fell in early 1947, a civil war like situation developed. Communal violence in the NWFP was sporadic, and took place in Peshawar, Bannu and the Hazara areas; but it also broke out in Dera Ghazi Khan in 1947. The flow of refugees, and the violence perpetrated against them, triggered retaliatory attacks. Dogra strikes against Muslims in Poonch, and Sikh action in East Punjab, resulted in counter attacks by the Pushtuns in the NWFP.⁶¹

During the 1939-41 period, the nationalist Muslim parties and their members had been apprehended because of their participation in the Quit India Movement launched by the Indian National Congress. The Government had already detained several Ahrar leaders as a result of their anti-recruitment campaign in the Punjab. After 1943, the MAI focused on its *Hukumat-i-Ilahiya*⁶² scheme, and took little part in the mainstream political activity in India. This state of affairs continued until the next general elections in 1945-46, when they could not obtain their expected number of seats in the provincial assemblies, despite their hectic electoral campaigning. As a consequence, the MAI turned its attention towards social welfare activities, and showed their strength in relief activities during the communal riots in Garhmukaishter, Amritsar and Lahore. Already experienced in relief work, they provided medical help to the wounded, shelter to the homeless, and some financial assistance to the needy. The MAI leaders worked tirelessly to reach the affected people, irrespective of their religion, caste and creed despite not being well-organised on the eve of Partition of India.⁶³

Notes and References

- 1 The British considered the Punjabi Muslim landed elite as the 'natural leaders' of the province; see Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj: 1849-1947* (Delhi: Manohar, 1988).
- 2 See Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, *Ulama in Politics* (Karachi: Maaref, 1972), p. 259.
- 3 The deputation consisted of Maulana Mohammad Ali, Syed Sulaiman Nadvi and Syed Hussain. Zulqarnain Zaidi, *The Emergence of Ulema in the Politics of India and Pakistan: 1918-1949* (Boston: Writers Club Press, 2003), p.13.

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- 4 See Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New Delhi: OUP, 1982), p. 87.
 - 5 See M. Naeem Qureshi, *Pan- Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of Khilafat Movement 1918-1924* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), p. 263.
 - 6 A Khilafat Committee was formed on 20 March 1919, at a public meeting of 15000 Bombay Muslims. Its president was Jan Mohammad Chotani, a rich merchant with religious orientation and political aims. Later on, this Khilafat Committee of Bombay was converted into an All-India Khilafat Committee, with its branches all over India, in order to mobilise Muslim opinion. Zulqarnain Zaidi, *The Emergence of Ulema in the Politics of India and Pakistan: 1918-1949*, p. 8.
 - 7 Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism And Political Mobilization In India*, p. 212.
 - 8 Religious leader.
 - 9 One of the most effective voices to emerge from Amritsar scene was Ataullah Shah Bukhari (1891-1961), a Deobandi. According to Shorish Kashmiri, one of his biographers, he considered himself as the *mujahid* or holy warrior, of Deoband, and never failed to uphold its cause. With his oratory, he could keep his audience spellbound for hours. He was estimated to have delivered ten thousands speeches in his twenty-six years in Indian politics. Shorish Kashmiri, *Syed Ataullah Shah Bukhari: Sawaneh-o-Afkar* (Urdu) (Lahore: Maktaba -i- Chattan, 1994), pp. 38, 50-51.
 - 10 Religious edicts.
 - 11 The most effective means of mass mobilisation was through the Urdu press. The existing religious

networks were not enough to maintain the momentum of the movement; the newspapers fulfilled this role by reaching a wider audience than ever before. Their extensive coverage of events in Turkey, machinations of European powers, and activities of the Khilafat Committee, began to have a direct impact on Muslims. For the first time they became aware of the relevance of Khilafat in relation to their religious beliefs. Urdu newspapers introduced political and religious aspects of the Khilafat, and every literate Muslim in the bazaars, mosques and educational institutions, served as an instrument of propagating Pan-Islamic ideals. Ashraf Ata, *Kuchh Shikastaa Daastanain: Kuchh Pareshan Tazkaray* (Lahore: Sindh Sagar Academy, 1966), p.31.

- 12 Afzal Haq, *Tarikh-i-Ahrar*, p. 49.
- 13 See M Naeem Qureshi, *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of Khilafat Movement 1918-1924*, p. 269.
- 14 The Muslims of India lamented the loss of the 'only' institution which, "with all its weaknesses, anti-Islamic trends", had served as a symbol of Muslim political unity and a powerful inspiration for the Muslim mind in India to retain its international character'. For details, see Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Lahore: Longman, 1961), p. 74.
- 15 Afzal Haq, *Tarikh-i-Ahrar*, p. ۱.
- 16 League of Young Indians.
- 17 For a detailed discussion on how religion could be used to mobilise people in South Asia, see Ravinder Kaur (ed), *Religion, Violence and Political Mobilisation in South Asia* (New Delhi: Sage, 2005).

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- 18 See the party programme after its reorganization. Appendix.1,p. 248.
- 19 See Judith Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life* (London: New Haven, 2003) also see Stanley Wolpert, *Nehru: A Tryst with Destiny* (Oxford: OUP, 1996) and B R Nanda, *The Nehrus: Motilal and Jawaharlal* (New Delhi: OUP, 1984).
- 20 See Muhammad Omar Farooq, *Maulana Gulsher Shaheed: Sawaneh-w-Khidmat* (Urdu) (Multan: Bukhari Academy, 1992), pp. 91-93.
- 21 Notables, landlords, feudals.
- 22 Army or band of Prophet Muhammad.
- 23 Maulana Gulsher, an Ahrar leader, formed this in Mianwali in 1938. On the advice of Maulana Ghulam Ghaus Hazarvi, Vice President of Majlis-i-Ahrar, Maulana Gulsher was appointed a Patron-in-Chief, Muhammad Khan Mauchh, President and Maulana Fakharuzaman as Salaar. The objective of the Fauj-i-Muhammdi was to train young people for *jihad* and activism against un-Islamic elements in society. Almost five thousand people were recruited at three major centres of Taxila, Mianwali and Bhera. Another aim of Fauj-i-Muhammadi was to lessen the influence of the Khaksar Movement in this area. The Ahrar volunteers in grey and red uniform paraded in the streets before public meetings at which speakers highlighted principles of an ideal Muslim society. Omar Farooq, *Maulana Gulsher Shaheed*, pp. 119-120.
- 24 Section to promote Islamic teachings in the MAI.
- 25 Smoking through a local device called hukah, which is similar to a hubble-bubble.

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- 26 Untouchability.
- 27 See the books written by Afzal Haq, *Mera Afsana*, *Mehboob-i-Khuda* and *Zindagi* (Urdu) (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2000).
- 28 Afzal Haq raised the issue of prohibition in the Punjab Assembly through a motion, and referred to the government's repeated statements that it had advocated the policy of reduction of consumption of liquor in the province, but did not do enough for it. D. Puckle, the Chief Secretary of Punjab by, arguing that there was no country in the world where there was complete prohibition, rejected his statement. The cut was moved and defeated by 43 votes to 17. *PLAD*, vol. I, 1936, p. 204.
- 29 Muslim law.
- 30 *PLAD*, vol. 4, 1938, 105-6.
- 31 Veil.
- 32 The Khawateen Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam (Women's Wing of Majlis) was formed on 5 March 1932. Its office-bearers were President; Begum Chaudhry Abdul Sattar of Ferozepur; Vice Presidents, Begum Maulana Mazhar Ali Azhar, Begum Abdullah of Kasur, and Begum Sheikh Abdul Hamid; Chief Organiser, Begum Sheikh Ghulam Muhammad of Lahore. For details see K. K. Aziz, *Public Life In Muslim India* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1992), pp. 133-145.
- 33 Activist group of volunteers.
- 34 *The Ahrar Movement*, p. 30, also see, Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar*, vol. 1, pp. 351-2.

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- 35 Afzal Haq invited all the untouchables to convert to Islam, and promised to struggle for their basic human rights from the MAI platform. He wrote a book on this issue. For details, see Afzal Haq, *Pakistan and Untouchability* (Lahore: Maktaba-e-Urdu, 1941).
- 36 *Inqilab*, 8 June 1935.
- 37 Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar*, vol. 2, p. 201.
- 38 *Ibid.*
- 39 See the editorial in *Inqilab*, 8 June 1935.
- 40 Afzal Haq's press statement in Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar*, vol. 2, p. 201.
- 41 *Inqilab*, 6 June 1935.
- 42 During the first twenty days of June 1935, almost 3000 rupees were donated to the Ahrar Relief Fund, while twenty lakhs were collected in the Viceroy's Fund. *The Ahrar Bulletin*, 2 June 1935.
- 43 In the working committee of the MAI, Ataullah Shah Bukhari headed the group, which opposed meeting the Viceroy, and refused to accept the award.
- 44 Circular sent to its local units by the Ahrar working committee on 24 September 1943, in Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar*, vol. 5, p. 424. Also see Richard Symonds, *In the Margins of Independence* (Karachi: OUP, 2001), p. 144.
- 45 Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar*, vol. 5, p. 423.
- 46 *Afzal* (Saharanpur) 1 October 1943.
- 47 For the United Nation's role in 'injecting humanity

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- into bureaucracy by trying to insure that provincial government should not cause families to be broken up by their relief measures', see Richard Symonds, *In the Margins of Independence*, p. 142.
- 48 A circular to the local branches for fund raising, 3 November 1943. Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar*, vol. 5, p. 430.
- 49 A circular by the General Secretary of the MAI, detailing Ahrar relief activities in Patna and Bihar, October 1943. Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar*, vol. 5, p. 425.
- 50“ Maladministration seemed to be responsible for as many death as shortage of food”. Richard Symonds, *In the Margins of Independence*, p. 144.
- 51 Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar*, vol. 5, p. 424.
- 52 For a detailed discussion on the causes of famine, see *Famine Enquiry Commission Report on Bengal*, in *Indian Annual Register*, vol. 2, 1945, pp. 305-7.
- 53 The Inquiry Commission for Bengal famine was established in January 1945, which held the Provincial Government responsible for the dismal state of distribution of food in the province. *Zamzam*, 23 January 1954. Also see ‘Sir J. Collville to Mr. Amery’ in *The Transfer of Power (TOP)*, vol. 5, p. 883, IOR, L/PO/10/22.
- 54 Indian National Army, hereafter INA.
- 55 For a detailed discussion on INA, see Leonard A. Gordon, *Brothers Against Raj: A Biography of Sarat and Subhas Chandra Bose* (New York: Columbia University Press 1991), also see his other book, *Bengal: The Nationalist Movement 1875-1940* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974).

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- 56 For a detailed discussion on Casey's Governorship of Bengal see Richard Gardner Casey, *An Australian in India* (London: Holis & Carters, 1947). Also see his *Personal Experience* (London: Constable, 1962).
- 57 Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar*, vol. 6, pp. 28-31.
- 58 Since 1907, the communal clashes in Punjab used to occur at local level on issues, such as the places of worships, cow slaughter, repressive policies of the princely states, and blasphemy. The communities of Punjab (Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims) experienced anxiety on occasions. After the passage of Pakistan Resolution, these clashes rose both in number and volumes, and before the 'great divide', there was much turmoil and distrust. Several studies are available on the issue. See Ian Talbot, *Freedom's Cry: The Popular Dimension in Pakistan Movement and Partition Experience in North West India* (Karachi: OUP, 1996), Asghar Ali Engineer, *Communalism and Communal Violence in India: An Analytical Approach to Hindu-Muslim Conflict* (New Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1993); Gyanandra Pandey, *Remembering Partition, Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001); and *The Partition of the Punjab 1947: A Compilation of the Official Documents*, vol. 1-4 (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 1993).
- 59 Suranjan Das, *Communal Riots in Bengal: 1905-1947* (Delhi: Sage, 1991), pp. 160-166.
- 60 The Bihar riots had shown the dangerous face of Hindu communalism. Attributing the killings in Bihar to the lower rung of the provincial Congress, the Viceroy wrote, "They were undoubtedly organised and organised very thoroughly, by the supporters of the Congress". The Viceroy to the Secretary of State, 22 November 1947, quoted in Bidyut Chakrabarty, *The*

Partition of Bengal and Assam: 1932-1947 (London, Routledge, 2005), see the introduction.

- 61 Yunas Samad, *A Nation in Turmoil: Nationalism and Ethnicity in Pakistan 1937-1958* (New Delhi: Sage, 1995), p. 114.
- 62 Divine Rule, a concept where sovereignty lies with God, and pious and learned Muslims, run the system of government according to Islamic teachings. The MAI propagated *hukumat-i-Ilahiya* in united India. This was MAI's reaction to the 'Pakistan Scheme' by the AIML.
- 63 See Shorish Kashmiri (ed.), "Humiliated and Harassed: They Left", in Mushirul Hasan (tr) *India Partitioned: The Other Face of Freedom*, vol. 2 (New Delhi: Lotus, 1997), pp. 145-157. Also see Shorish Kashmiri, *Boo-i-gul Naala-i-Dil Dood-i-Chiragh-i-Mehfil* (Urdu) (Lahore: Chattan, 1972), pp. 509-534.