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“Sir Syed Ahmed was neither a politician nor a political leader. He was essentiallyasocialreformerandhispanaceaforalltheillsofhiscommunity were education.” HafeezMalik

“SirSyedwasanardentreformerandhewantedtoreconcilemodernscientific thoughtwithreligionbyrationalisticinterpretationsandnotbyattackingbasic belief.Hewasanxioustopushneweducation.Hewasinnowaycommunally separatist.Repeatedlyheemphasizedthatreligiousdifferencesshouldhaveno political and nationalsignificance”.

Jawaharlal Nehru, Former Prime Minister of India

### Introduction

The War of Independence 1857, proved catastrophic for the Muslims of Indian Subcontinent. The most serious repercussion was that the British started to believe that the Muslims were chiefly responsible for the anti-British rebellion. Therefore, they imposed ruthless punishments and callous retribution on them. According to the British historians with the rebellion of 1857, this antagonism infuriated and attempts were made to subjugate and suppress the Muslims.

### ConditionsoftheMuslimsafter1857

AfterdeposingtheMuslimrulersfromthethrone,theyimplementedaneweducational policywithradicalchanges.ThepolicybannedArabic,Persianandreligiouseducationin schoolsandmadeEnglishnotonlythemediumofinstructionbutalsotheofficiallanguage in1835.ThisgerminatedaunconstructiveattitudeamongsttheMuslimstowards everythingmodernandwestern,andaunwillingnesstomakeuseoftheopportunitieson handunderthenewadministration.Thistendency,haditcontinuedforlong,wouldhave provendevastatingfortheMuslimcommunity.ThemiseriesoftheMuslimsreachedatthe zenith.TheBritishresolvedtosquashtheMuslimsunderapremeditatedscheme.

## SYED’SROLEINEDUCATIONALDEVELOPMENT

HisworksfortheeducationaldevelopmentforMuslimsshowsthathewasinnowaypro- British.HewantedonlydevelopmentandprosperityoftheMuslims.

### Farsi MaddarsaMuradabad

HeestablishedaFarsiMaddarsaatMuradabadin1859.ItwasthestartingpointofSir Syed’sEducationalstruggle.InthisMaddarsa,EnglishisalsotaughtbesidesEnglish.

### Establishmentof‘TheScientificSociety’

“ScientificSocietywasalmostthefirstlearnedassociationInNorthernIndia.”Abdul Hamid (His Visit toEngland)

In1860,SirSyedAhmadKhanwastransferredfromMuradabadtoGhazipur.Hisstayin Ghazipurisamilestoneinhislife.ThiswastheplacewhereSirSyedtookadditional responsibilityotherthancreativewritings.Heestablishedapersonalprintingpressin1862 forhispublications,anEnglishmediumschoolin1863andestablishedScientificSocietyin 1864.TheScientificSocietyestablishedatGhazipuron9thJanuary,1864andlatershifted toAligarhwhenSirSyedwastransferredtoAligarh.Thisbecameafocalpointofhisdream projectwhichlatershapedupasTheAligarhMovement.

### Victoria SchoolGhazipur

SirSyedestablishedfirstmodernVictoriaSchoolatGhazipur(1864).Inthisschool,besides ModernEducationfivelanguages(English,Urdu,Arabic,PersianandSanskrit)werealso taught.

### Aligarh InstituteGazette

DuringhisstayatAligarhheissuedaweeklyGazettecalledAligarhInstituteGazette.The Gazetteimpartedinformationonhistory;ancientandmodernscienceofagriculture,natural andphysicalsciencesandadvancedmathematics.

### Tehzib-ul-Ikhlaq

On24thDecember1876heissuedhisfamousmagazinenamedTehzib-ul-Ikhlaqfrom BenaresinordertoapprisetheMuslimsoftheirsocialevilsandmoralshortcomings.This journalcontainedarticlesfrominfluentialMuslimswhoagreedwithSirSyedthattherewas aneedforanewapproachtoeducation.ThismagazinealsopromotedUrdulanguage immensely.AlthoughsomeUlemaattackedthejournal,itplayedamajorpartinbringing about an intellectual revolution amongst Muslim thinkers.

### MuhammadanAngloOriental(MAO)College,Aligarh

InJanuary1877,M.A.O.CollegewasinauguratedatAligarhbyLordLyttontheViceroyof India.Thecollegesoonshowedtremendousprogress.ItbecametheCentreofMuslim educationalandintellectualactivityintheSub-Continent.Itwasaresidentialinstitution. ManyimportantMuslimfigureslikeMaulanaShibli,NawabMohsin-ul-Mulk,MaulanaZafar AliKhan,MaulanaMuhammadAliJauharetc.atonetimeoranotherremainedassociated with thiscollege.

## Sir Syed’sTask

“Hewastheproductofthosecircumstanceswhenoneempirehadgoneinto oblivionandanotherhadcomeintoexistence.Hewaslikealinkwhichconnects glorious parts with uncertainfuture.”

JamilAhmed(100GreatMuslims)

SirSyedAhmedKhan,oneofthearchitectsofmodernIndiawasbornonOctober17,1817 inDelhiandstartedhiscareerasacivilservant.The1857revoltwasoneoftheturning pointsofSyedAhmed’slife.HeclearlyforesawtheimperativeneedfortheMuslimsto acquireproficiencyintheEnglishlanguageandmodernsciencesifthecommunitywereto maintainitssocialandpoliticalidentity,particularlyinNorthernIndia.Hewasoneofthose earlypioneerswhorecognisedthecriticalroleofeducationfortheempowermentofthe poor and backward Muslimcommunity.

## POLITICALACTIVITIES

SirSyedhadperceivedthatifthetensionbetweentheMuslimsandtheBritishcontinued, Hinduswouldgetadvantageofit.Toalleviatethetension,hewroteapamphletentitled: ‘EssayontheCausesoftheIndianRevolt’.InitheprovedthatMuslimswerenot responsiblefortherevoltof1857.In‘TheLoyalMuhammadansofIndia’,hedescribedthe sincereservicesofMuslimsofIndiatotheBritishGovernment.Healsoestablished‘British- IndianAssociation’.SirSyedadvisedtheMuslimsnottojoinIndianNationalCongressasit wasaltogetheraHindupoliticalorganisation.

## SOCIALACTIVITIES

HewasagreatreformeroftheIndiansociety.Hestartedamonthly“Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq”on thepatternofanEnglishmagazine‘Spectator’.Thismagazineplayedanimportantrolein improvingthemoralityoftheIndianMuslims.

## LITERARYACTIVITIES

SirSyed,inhiswritings,touchedallthosetopicsthatcouldnotbeignoredinpracticallife. Heintroducedanewstyleofexpressingthoughtsinsimpleandintelligibleprose.Forthis reason,hemayrightlybecalledthefounderofthemodernUrduprose.

## WESTERNDEMOCRACY

Ifhewaspro-British,hewouldhaveadvocatedwesterndemocracy.Buthewasagainstthe WesterndemocracybecauseitsultimateresultwasthesupremacyofHindumajorityover theMuslims.

## URDULANGUAGE

In1867,theHindusbegantoopposeUrdulanguage.TheHindusdemandedthatUrdu shouldbereplacedbyHindiinpublicoffices.SirSyedopposedeverydemandoftheHindus. HealsoopposedtheideaofonenationlaunchedbytheCongress.

## Conclusion

SirSyedwaspro-developmentandpro-reforms. He wasinnowaypro-British.Heworked forthewelfareofIndians,especiallyoftheMuslims.