**Shah Wali-Ullah (1703-62)**  
Shah Wali-Ullah was a great Muslim saint of the 18th century. His real name was Qutbud-Din Ahmed. He was born to a noble learned family of Delhi on 21st February 1703. His father Shah Abdur-Rahim was a renowned scholar of that period. Shah Wali-Ullah showed great promise at an early age. By the age of fifteen he had completed the learning of Holy Quran, Hadith and Fiqh. Then after the death of his father in 1719 he started delivering lectures in Madressah Rahimyah at the age of seventeen. Then in 1730 he performed Hajj again. In 1733 he returned to Delhi and took over the charge of Madressah Rahimyah. There he wrote many books and rendered many political, religious and national services. He died in 1762. The contributions of Shah Wali-Ullah can be summarized as under:  
1. Religious Services  
Shah Wali-Ullah rendered many religious services. He completed the translation of Holy Quran in Persian in 1738. Later on his sons Shah Rafi-ud-Din and Shah Abdul Qadir translated the Holy Quran in Urdu. Moreover Shah Wali-Ullah termed the Hadith collection by Imam Muttah as the most authentic and wrote its commentary in Arabic and Persian. Shah Wali-Ullah also arranged the Hadith in respect of their topics. In addition he worked for the renaissance of Islam. He propagated that Islam was a universal power and thus the Muslims should be the dominant force in the Sub-Continent and elsewhere.  
Shah Wali-Ullah trained students in different branches of Islamic knowledge and entrusted them with the teaching of students. He recommended the application of Ijtihad against blind Taqlid in his famous work Aqad-al-jaiyad-fi-Ahkam-al-Ijtihad wa-al-Taqlid.

He studied the writings of each school-of-thought to understand their point of view, and then wrote comprehensive volumes about what is fair and just in light of the teachings of Islam. He adopted an analytical and balanced approach towards four major school-of-thought of mysticism. In order to create a balance betweeen the four schools i.e. Hanafi, Malaki, Shafii, Hambali he wrote Al-Insaf-fi-bayan-sabab-al-Ikhtilaf. He worked out a system of thought, beliefs, and values, on which all but the extremists could agree. He thus provided a spiritual basis or national cohension.  
2. Political Services  
Shah Wali-Ullah possessed a deep political insight. He tried to trace the causes of the decline of Mughal Empire. In the middle of the 18th century Marathas had become a great political power. They were threatening to occupy the crown of Delhi. At this critical juncture Shah Wali-Ullah in order to check their advance prepared Najid-ullah (Rohilla Chief) and Shuja-ud-Daulah (Nawab of Oudh) for Jihad. Moreover he wrote a letter to Ahmed Shah Abdali. King of Afghanistan requesting him to save the Muslims from the highhanded-less of the Marathas. Consequently in the Third Battle of Panipat, Ahmed Shah Abdali inflicted a crushing defeat on the Marathas. In short, the Muslim Renaissance Movement launched by Shah Wali-Ullah was the forerunner of all the future freedom movements of Indo-Pakistan. Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanotvi founder of Madressah Deoband and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan were among his followers. Later on his son Shah Abdul Aziz founded the Jihad Movement which was carried forward by Syed Ahmed Shaheed.  
In his time Shias and Sunnis were aggressively hostile to each other and their rivalry was damaging the Muslim unity. Shah Sahab wrote Izalat-al-Akhifa and Khilafat-al-Khulafa in order to remove misunderstanding between Shias and Sunnis. He refused to denounce Shias as heretics.

After Mujaddid Alf Sani, Shah Wali-Ullah worked for unity of Muslims and to develop separate National identify. He created separate national identity among Muslims and convinced them to fight for their rights. Shah Sahib rejected Combine Unity and ensured Religion as only identification of Muslims. The religio-political ideology of Waliullah made a permanent crack in Hindu-Muslim relation in this sub-continent, which undermined the self-pride and dignity of integrated Indian society.  
3. Social Services  
Shah Wali-Ullah was strongly opposed to integration of Islamic culture in the cultural cauldron of the sub-continent and wanted the Muslims to ensure their distance from it. Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi writes in The Muslim Community of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, “Waliullah did not want the Muslims to become part of the general milieu of the sub-continent. He wanted them to keep alive their relation with rest of the Muslim world so that the spring of their inspiration and ideals might ever remain located in Islam and tradition of world community developed by it.” In his opinion, the health of Muslim society demanded that doctrines and values inculcated by Islam should be maintained in their pristine purity unsullied by extraneous influences.  
Shah Wali-Ullah directed his teachings towards reorienting the Muslim society with the concepts of basic social justice, removing social inequalities, and balancing the iniquitous distribution of wealth. He established several branches of his school at Delhi for effective dissemination of his ideas. In his book “Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah”, he pinpointed the causes of chaos and disintegration of Muslim society. These were

1. Pressure on public treasury, the emoluments given to various people who render no service to the state.  
2. Heavy taxation on peasants, merchants and workers, with the result that tax evasion was rampant. According to Shah Wali-Ullah, a state can prosper only if there were light and reasonable taxes.  
**Conclusion**  
Shah Wali-Ullah was responsible for awakening in the community the desire to win back its moral fervor and maintain its purity. To rescue a community’s conscience, belief and faith from destruction was no small achievement. Even after his death in 1762, his sons and followers carried on his work and noble mission. Many future Islamic leaders and thinkers were inspired by his example.  
In short the Muslim Renaissance Movement launched by Shah Wali-Ullah was the forerunner of all the future freedom movements of Indo-Pakistan. Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanotvi founder of Madressah Deoband and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan were among his followers. Later on his son Shah Abdul Aziz founded the Jihad Movement which was carried forward by Syed Ahmed Shaheed.