Politics of Religious Activism during the final Phase of Pakistan Movement: A case study of Kul Hind Jam’iyyat Ulema-i-Islam

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Abstract:
Historically, Ulama played a key role in the politics of subcontinent for the maintenance of model state and society. In this connection the contribution KHJUI is enormous. KHJUI played a continuous role during the British period according to the requirements of time to make the compatible with the teaching of Islam. For it contributed politically in the Pakistan movement and worked and supported the Muslim League strongly. In the 1945-46 elections, KHJUI launched a mass campaign to the Muslim of Sub-continent to vote for Muslim League and Pakistan, Especially in the referendum of NWFP and Salhet. The proper analysis the politics of KHJUI for the election 1945-46 to the formulation of Pakistan as a separate state on the basis of Muslim identity.

Key words: All India Jamiat e Ulema e Islam, Muslim Politics in South Asia, Muslim Political Activism, Religious Practices in south Asia.

Retrospect
The Lahore Resolution 1940 can be termed as ‘watershed’ in the history of Muslim political struggle that issued a road-map for a coveted separate homeland for Muslims of the subcontinent. It resulted into an immense increase in the popularity of All India Muslim League (est. 1906), the spokes party of Muslims of South Asian. Muslim masses were enchanted by the idea of Pakistan, to set up a society based on the teachings of Islam. M.A. Jinnah the leader of AIML
addressing a gathering on 1st February 1943 expressed his belief that;

“Islam is not only a religion but it is a complete code of life. All issues of Muslim Ummah whether these are social, political or economical are solved and decided under the light of Islam. We will solve all the issues regarding any department of life according to Islamic teachings”.

Jinnah reiterated this belief continuously even effective establishment of Pakistan and the Muslim masses land a belief in the person and words of Jinnah. The other leader of AIML also confirmed Jinnah’s belief, at the end of 1944 and beginning of 1945, Liaqat Ali Khan and some other leaders from AIML on his visit to Southern India, assured Muslim that Pakistan would be a ‘laboratory for practical Islam’ and supremacy of Islamic principles would be the basic policy of new state. This stance of Muslim League provided a lot of support from the Ulama’s quarters, disappointed from the policies of the Indian National Congress (hereafter Congress).

Prelude to the Religio-Political Activism of All India Jam’iiyat Ulama-i-Islam

By the Second quarter of 20th century, a large number of Ulema including Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani, from Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband, has established their opinion that the Congress was to an anti-Muslim organization. They were not satisfied with the pro-Congress attitude of Jam’iiyat Ulama-i-Hind (hereafter JUH); therefore denied to participating into its Saharanpur Session 4-7 May 1945. Maulana Uthamani resigned from the membership of Jam’iiyat Ulama-i-Hind once for all later. He made himself busy in teaching and learning. It was a peak time of Pakistan Movement (1940-47), inspite that a considerable number of political parties, including Congress, Jam’iiyat Ulama-i-Hind, Shia Conference, Momin Conference, Majlis-i-Ahrar, Jama’at-i-Islami, Muslim Parliamentary Board, Sunny Board, Khudai
Khidmatgar, Anjuman Watan Blochistan, Tehrik-e-Khaksar, Independent Party, Behar and Unionist Party, were working against the formation of Pakistan.⁷

The British Government declaration of World War II 21 August 1945 to hold elections at the end of the year and an grant of freedom. To the British Indian subject made to slogan of Pakistan a manifesto for election and Muslim Leagues claim of representative of Muslim of India.⁸

With the approach of 1945-46 Elections, the claim of Muslim League as the only representative of Muslims of India was questioned by Jam’iyyat Ulama-e-Hind, both politically and religiously. The leaders of the League, mainly from the elite quarters of India believed that with out winning the winning the hearts the success in election seemed difficult.⁹ Ulama did not show any sort of unity among their ranks in favour of Pakistan and two- nation theory. However the situation was not totally hopeless. A number of Ulama from different schools of thought began to support AIML, such as Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani, Mufti Muhammad Shafi and Zafar Ahmad Uthmani. They left even their parent organization Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband in the wake of difference of opinion on the issue of supporting the cause of Pakistan. They decided to issue Fatawa (religious decrees) against the cooperation with Congress as haram [unlawful] and for the published these Fatwa’s to make the public.¹⁰

The continuity and consolidation of Ulama’s such efforts to support the cause of Pakistan was the call of the time. For, the Ulama form Deoband School responded in the form of formation of the ‘Jam’iyyat Ulama-i-Islam’ Calcutta on 11 July 1945 under the President ship of Allama Azad Subhani.¹¹ This effort was equally applauded by Allama Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani. In a letter from Bait-ul-Fazal Deoband on October 16, 1945. He expressed his concern with the ‘confusing situation’ has been and ‘sorriest state of affairs’ among Large and small Muslim parties.¹²

Allama Uthmani was plea endorsed by a number of like-minded Ulama, who, decided to establish an all Indian
organization. Resultantly, for, a grand conference in collaboration with Jam’iyyat Ulama-e-Bangala and Jam’iyyat Ulama-i-Islam Calcutta at Muhammad Ali Park Calcutta was organized with the financial assistance of S.M. Hameed and Seith Razzaq to local merchants. Khawaja Nazim-u-Din and Hussain Shaheed Soharwardi were assigned to supervise all the matters and AIML helped to bring Ulama and Scholars to Calcutta. The conference continued from 26 to 29 October 1945 and was concluded by the establishment of Kul Hind Jamiiyyat Ulama-e-Islam (All India Jam’iyyat Ulama-i-Islam; hereafter KHJUI).13

Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani was elected President of Jam’iyyat Ulama-i-Islam in absentia, Maulana Zafar Ali Uthmani as Vice President and Maulana Sayyid Quresh Shamsi as its General Secretary.

Maulana Raghib Ahsan presented the welcome address Maulana Zafar Ahmad Uthmani presided over the meeting.14 Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani Message was read by Maulana Muhammad Mateen. In this message advise the Muslims to support Muslim League. He was of the view that if Muslim League failed at that time, Muslims would have no chance to grow up in the country for a long time. He was supporting Muslim League to preserve Muslim Deen. KHJUI wanted to make Muslim League free from all such elements making hindrance in imposing Islamic system of life.15 Daily Asar-e-Jadid published in detail the aims and objectives of KHJUI in its issue of October 30, 1945 publication.16

Jam’iyyat Ulama-i-Islam announced unanimous and complete to support for Muslim League and to the idea of Pakistan in its first meeting. The Muslim League appointed Mualana Sahbbir Ahmed Uthmani as advisor for religious affairs who replaced Nawab Bahadar Yar Jang.17 From that time onward a perfect confidence and respect can be observed between Jinnah/ Muslim League and KHJUI.18

**KHJUI and the General Elections 1945–46**

As the elections approached, a joint strategy for Ulema and the establishment of Pakistan was devised by AIML and
Kul Hind Jam’iyyat Ulama-i-Islam provided ideological support to Muslim League and the idea of Pakistan at a time when other Muslim parties were working against them in support of Congress. Its popularity was a supervise for the member of Jam’iyyat Ulama-i-Hind. Allama Uthmani wrote a series of letters on partition of India, Jinnah, Muslim League, and Pakistan to answer the objections raised against Pakistan in *Marasalat-i-Sayaseya* [political letters].

These efforts popularized the demand of Pakistan, and no leader could think of betrayal from the demand of Pakistan. Jawaher Lal Nehro, had announced to crush any sort of apposition to Congress, but these efforts made the resistance to Congress permanent and powerful.

Nehru’s announcement was replied by Jinnah on 19 October 1945. He claimed that if the government and Congress would not use unfair means, Muslim League will succeed with heavy mandate. He accused Congress of disbursing among the voters.

The JUH spent all its energy to oppose Pakistan, Jinnah and Muslim League. Pakistan was propagated the brain child of the British and Muslim League was declared as the agent of the British, who wanted to divide India into pieces. Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madni even issued a *Fatwa* against Jinnah and declared him “Kafir-e-Azam” [great infidel] and joining Muslim League as unjust and “Haram” [act]. This *Fatwa* was issued from Delhi on 27 October 1945. Allama Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani defended Jinnah promptly and declared these Fatwas against norms of Islam. He upheld the services of AIML for the upleft of Muslims politically and culturally.

To influence the KHJUI on their political stance, JUH initiated a dialogue to develop a consensus. A delegation from JUH including Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madni, Maulana Hefiz-ur-Rahman Seoharvi, Mufti Kifayat Ullah, Maulana Ahmed Saeed, Maulana Abdul Haleem Siddiqui, Maulana Abdul
Hannan and Maulana Mufti Ateeq-ur-Rahman visited Allama Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani on 7 December 1945 at his home. The purpose of these negotiations was to remove misunderstanding and difference of opinion. These negotiations continued for three hours. Allama Uthmani refused to withdraw his support for Pakistan. Allama Uthmani argued that:

1. The demand for Pakistan was beneficial for the Muslims. Allama Uthmani harshly criticized the stance of JUH and raised the question that,
2. How can an assembly, having 60 to 70% non-Muslim members, decide any matter in the favour of Muslims?
3. He defended and stressed that Jinnah could never be an agent of British nor he could be pressurized.
4. Mullah Uthmani rejected the JUH delegations request of not supporting the Muslim League and Pakistan. 26

KHJUI’s support strengthened Muslim League’s demand for Pakistan and Muslim League in true expressed its belief in the Islamic code of life. In a meeting with Maulana Ghulam Murshid, a founding member of KHJUI, at Calcutta, Jinnah not only discussed the English translation of Qur’an, rather reiterated his belief that the Book has rules and regulations about military, administration, economics, morality and about almost every sphere of life. The constitution given in Qur’an is perfect and Comprehensive. Its rules are unmortal e.g when Allah says at many places; the punishment of every crime should be as per the intensity and situation. It is an international and immortal principle.27

Mualana Murhid was highly impressed with Jinnah’s religious knowledge and ethical tendencies.28 KHJUI advocated the point of view that prosperity and survival of Indian Muslims and implementation of Islamic system was
possible with the establishment of Pakistan. Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani addressing in a huge gathering at Deoband on 25 December 1945 and pointed out that he had left politics after Khilafat Movement. But after much thinking and pondering he had reached the conclusion that if his blood was needed to achieve Pakistan, it would be a matter of pride for him and he would never hesitate for that to strong supporter of Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani.

Maulana Zafar Ahmad Uthmani and Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi toured the whole India including Uttar Pradesh (UP), Bihar, Bengal, Punjab, Sindh and Frontier Province to advocate the cause of Pakistan. As a result of these untiring efforts, common Muslims began to assemble under Muslim League’s flag. These efforts resulted in the marvelous victory of AIML winning 428 seats out of 492 in provincial assemblies’ elections. This outstanding success of Muslim League was unexpected and amazing. Muslim League won 75 seats in Punjab assembly out of 86 Muslim seats and defeated the land lords’ Unionist Party that secured only ten seats inspite of having provincial Government since 1921. The success was demonstration of Muslim will in favor of the demand for Pakistan. Expressing his views on this wonderful success in election, Jinnah on 28 January 1946 reiterated that Muslims of India had made it clear without any shadow of doubt that the only solution of political problems of India was hidden in the partition of India into Pakistan and Hindustan. Jinnah stressed upon the British Government and Viceroy to make a clear pronouncement without any delay, about their policy on the partition of the subcontinent.

Pakistan Movement got immense strength from the success in 1945-46 elections and KHJUI had great contribution in this success Jinnah acknowledge the role of KHJUI very loudly. When Allama Uthmani congratulated Quaid-i-Azam, on this great victory, Jinnah replied: “Maulana you deserve the congratulation in reality as the success is fruit of your labour.” Jinnah called a meeting of newly elected
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assembly members at Delhi on April 9, 1946 to take oath and to deliver a message to the world in general and British Government in particular that Pakistan was their least and final demand and that they would make no compromise over it. Jinnah resolved in his speech that the Muslims would face every danger, give any sacrifice and go through any situation to achieve independent state of Pakistan. The enemies could cause a delay in the process of establishment of Pakistan but they could not stop its formation.

KHJUI and the Cause of Pakistan Aftermath the election 1946

After the election All India Jam’iyyat Ulama-i-Islam organized conferences of Ulama at different centers, i.e., Lahore, Hyderabab, Merath, Peshawar and Bombay etc. Maulana Shabbir Uthmani, President of KHJUI Jam’iyyat presided over the conferences in Lahore, Bombay and Peshawar. Addressing the KHJUI Lahore Conference in January, 1946 Allama Uthmani reminded the Congress and British Government that;

“Remember it, Muslims have awakened. They have reached their aimed destination. Their target is clear and they would not hesitate to lay down their lives and to scarify their wealth during this journey. I have advised you time and again, to try your level best to achieve.”

KHJUI supported the Muslim League at a number of political ventures organized by the British government. Responding to the Cabinet Mission Plan 1946, Maulana Zafar Ahmad Uthmani, the Vice President of KHJUI, sent a telegram to the British Cabinet Mission on 18 April 1946, accepting Muslim League as the only representative political party of the Muslims of India.

This telegram made it clear to Cabinet Mission that a large number of Ulama were with Muslim League in it their claim for Pakistan. On June 6, 1946 when Muslim League accepted the Mission Plan with recreation that demand for an independent Pakistan was the only aim of Muslim India and
they would use their full force to achieve it, KHJUI supported it whole heartedly.

Muslim League joined interim government along with Congress on the advice of Lord Wavell on 26 October 1946.39 This could not work for long because of belligerent attitude of both Congress and League. They had their own priorities and preferences. However, Muslim league was not ready to accept any solution other than the division of India and even the Congress-Viceroy Nexus to control the politics had to face a political defeat. Lord Mountbatten had to announce that till June 1947, power would be shifted to the people of India, and British would leave India by August.40 Mountbatten presented the 3rd June plan to the leaders of India and emphasized for its urgent approval. NWFP and Salhet had to decide through referendum to join Pakistan or India. Jinnah stressed upon Mountbatten to exercise just and impartial division as he himself announced that his mandate was impartiality.41

An KHJUI delegation including Allama Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani, Zafar Ahmad Uthmani and Mufti Muhammad Shafi met Jinnah in Dehli on 11 June 1947. Allama Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani congratulated him on the fulfillment of the demand for Pakistan. Jinnah appreciates the efforts of KHJUI to achieve the demand for Pakistan.42 The delegation discussed with Jinnah the issues of security of the Pakistan and the Muslims, economic problems and other concerns Jinnah was worried about the result of plebiscite in Salhet and NWFP. The delegation assured Jinnah that result would be in favor of Pakistan, if promulgation of Islamic law in Pakistan be assured as the Muslims of NWFP and Bengal were devotees of Islam and could vote only in the name of Islam.43 Jinnah reaffirmed his view that is work and job to achieved Pakistan was over. Muslims have the authority to implement any system. As there is a majority of Muslims in Pakistan, there for their’s no other option except, to promulgate Islamic system.44 Jinnah rejected any possibility of implementation Mustafa Kamal Pasha’s secular system in Pakistan and reaffirmed his view that Muslims constitution
was formulated fourteen hundred year ago, and our constitution of Pakistan would be based on Quranic injunctions. He requested the Ulama to make the people satisfied as such issues such assurances made the delegation stanch advocate of Pakistan. Allama Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani assured Jinnah of KHJUI leaders, visit to Silhet and NWFP and advocate the case for Pakistan.

After that KHJUI launched a campaign in Silhet and NWFP advising the gathering, Allama Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani assured the Muslims of Frontier that Pakistan would be a state where there would be Islamic rules and laws implemented. The leadership of KHJUI along with Pir Manki sharif expressed the magic of Congress and the leadership of Abdul Gaffar Khan in NWFP and Muslim of NWFP and Silhet voted in favor of Pakistan with 93% of votes.

Jinnah acknowledged the services of KHJUI’s Ulama at every stage and at every forum and honored them with state protocol. On 14th of August 1947, Jinnah as Governor General of Pakistan granted the honor of hoisting the flag of Pakistan to the President KHJUI Allema Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani at the capital of new state, Karachi. Maulana Zafar Ahmad Uthmani performed the same ceremony at Dhaka.

Conclusion:

The All India Jam’iyyat Ulama-i-Islam played an active and pivotal role in the Pakistan Movement. The president of KHJUI Allama Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani was an outstanding personality who rendered valuable services in mobilizing and gearing up the cause of Pakistan. His and other Ulama and Mashaikh’s large number of followers spread all over the sub-continent, and put all their efforts to make up the movement for separate homeland for the Muslims of the British India a success. The services of the Ulama and Mashaikh strengthened the intellectual and political case for Pakistan. These assurances to the Muslims of subcontinent for a separate Muslim state, where they would organize their lives in accordance with Islamic laws and principles of Sharia
without any fear were honored by the masses of large scale. The margins of services include educating their disciples to the cause of Pakistan and awakening the general masses to the need of Pakistan for the Muslims of the sub-continent, making physical and personal contacts with the Muslim masses, even in distant areas, convening of public meetings and ingraining the idea of inevitable necessity of an independent state. Complying with the instructions and directions of the Jinnah in strict manner under the able guidance and instructions of the Ulama and Mashaikh infused the Muslims with a new spiritual power that led to the formation of Pakistan. Still, KHJUI played a pivotal role in defining the future policy frame work and reference and constitutional structure of the new state of Pakistan.

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