

# **THE KHILAFAT MOVEMENT IN SINDH**

By:

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Towards the close of nineteenth century, Turkey begins attracting the attention of the Indian Muslims. The Muslims of India always had a strong feeling of identity with the world community of Islam. They were very much impressed by Jamal-u-Din Afghani's reminder that all Muslims of the world are brothers-in-faith. The sultan of Turkey had claimed to be the caliph of the Muslim world. The Muslim of India did not much consider this claim as long as there was an independent Muslim rule in India but now they had lost their independence, they began to recognize and respect the Sultan of Turkey as their caliph. Sultan Abdul Hamid of Turkey took this opportunity to propagate his importance as caliph of Muslim world in order to counteract European claims to extra territorial authority in the affairs of Christian minorities in his empire<sup>1</sup>

The world khilafat is derived from the word Khalifa (Caliph)<sup>2</sup>. Khalifa mean a successor<sup>3</sup> or a person who authority

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<sup>1</sup>-I.H Qureshi, The Muslim Community of Indo – Pakistan Sub Continent, Karachi. Ma'aref limited, 1977, P – 226.

<sup>2</sup>- Ibid, P – 309

<sup>3</sup>- A – J Toynbee, Survey of International affairs, London 1927. PP 81-90.

as a representative. The legal authority of the caliph through often challenged, remained intact till the fall of Abbasside caliphate in Baghdad in 1258 A.D.

Since then the symbol of legal authority of the caliph not only ceased to exist but with it the rule of the shariat disappeared as well<sup>1</sup> with the disappearance of the Abbasside caliphate, a number of Muslim state come into existence among column was India, ruled by the Muslims who established dynastic kingship in the country. That had to a change in concept of Muslim state. For about a period of 1000 year the Muslim of India forgot all about the Caliphate, as India was ruled by the Muslims. As much as that during the Mughal rule in India, in the Khutba (The official sermon) of Friday and Eid prayers the name of caliph was not mentioned as was the tactician. Instead, the name of the caliph was replaced by the name of Mughal king.

The ottoman Sultan's assumed the title of Khalifa as they consider themselves the rightful successors of the caliphate, through their authority was not recognized by Indian Muslims, so long as they had their own Muslim king<sup>2</sup>.

The Muslims of India were very much concerned about Turkey future, but all their hopes were thrown to ground by peace. Settlement that followed the war through the treaty of severis. It was death knell for khilafat and was regarded by Muslims as Sheer humiliation to their faith.

Turks had lost their liberty and Turkey was deprived of all its territories in Europe, Africa, and Muddle East (Arabia, Iraq, Jordon, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt). Some of the Balkan states were also taken away from Turkish Empire, It became a very small country in Asia Minor<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>- I.H Qureshi, *The Muslim Community* P. 309.

<sup>2</sup>-Recognition of the ottoman caliphate by Tipu Sultan is a stray case because of the hostility with the Nizam of Hyderabad no support from the Mughal court.

<sup>3</sup>-Narasimham Sarat C.V *Pakistan Movement*, D.K publishers Karachi. 1970 – P. 60.

How for the Indian Muslims were worried about Turkey, which had sustained great losses during the Balkan war can be well imagined by the writings of Abdul Hamid. He writes.

"Moulana Muhammad Ali's Journal 'Comrade' received from the Turks a pamphlet entitled 'COME OVER INTO MECEDONIA AND HELP US'. This appeal describing the Balkan atrocities on the Turks was addressed to Britain and asked for the rescue of Turkey from the clutches of the Balkan's allies but Britain paid no heed to This appeal on the contrary the security deposit of command' was forfeited under the press law, for printing the pamphlet. Thereafter the Muslim community of India focused its entire attention on the affairs of Turkey."<sup>1</sup>.

The Germans, who were building the railway complex in Turkey, came nearer to the government and influenced the Turks to join then in the war. The India Muslim sentiment was naturally Pro-Turkish, hence sympathetic towards Germany. This war the time when Muhammad Ali wrote his famous article.

"The choice of to Turks' in his equally famous paper' 'The Comrade' for which his paper and press were seized by the British Government of India. He advised the Indian Muslim not to join the army because it means fighting against the Muslim of Turkey. For this Moulana Muhammad Ali was arrested and tried for treason and waging war against the king of England and Emperor of India. The trial was held at the Khaliq Dino Hall, Karachi. It was the first political trial of its kind in the history of subcontinent.

The Muslim of India therefore raised a cry of protest against this settlement and to make their voice effective they formed. All India Khilafat committee' in 1919 <sup>2</sup>. This Committee

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<sup>1</sup>-Shaikh Muhammad Hajan, life and work of Moulana Ubedullah Sindhi, Thesis, University of Sindh Jamshoro, 1975, P – 257.

<sup>2</sup>- Narasimham Sarat C.V, Pakistan Movement, Op: cit, P – 60.

demand that no stringent condition be imposed on Turkey and Khilafat should not be disturbed. Thus started the Khilafat Movement Under the leadership of Ali Brothers the movement gained unprecedented all India character. The Khilafat movement in its session in 1919 passed resolutions calling upon the Muslims as part of their religious duties to abstain from participating in victory celebration, to boycott British goods, British-run schools, courts and government offices and to purchase locally made, rather than English made.

The non-cooperation movement engulfed India like a storm-lawyer suspended their practice, title holders surrendered their title, students left their colleges, and schools, on the advice of Gandhi, Ali Brothers, tried to abolish their own Alama Mater, the Aligarh institution Hundred and Thousand of English style clothing were publicly burnt. Thousand of yards of Manchester made cloth were lying on the shelves of the cloth shops with no purchasers. Weaving of Khaddar (home spun material) became the fashion. Even the Ulema, who remained out of politics so far, joined the movement. The more sensitive Muslims left the country, and thus about 1800 people made a Hijrat to Muslim country.

During the Balkan wars, the Aligarh students took the lead in collecting funds to help Turkey. Medical Mission, under the leadership of Dr. Ansari, was sent to help the Turkish army. Among the eight doctors of the mission was also include Dr. Rehman,<sup>1</sup> who later became the personal physician of the Quid-e-Azam the founder and Governor General of Pakistan. Moulana Zafar Ali Khan of Lahore, an old boy of Aligarh, went to Constantinople to handover the collected fund to Grand Vazir of Ottoman Turks.

A society of servants of the Ka'aba was formed to maintain the sanctity of Mecca, Madina and Jerusalem under

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<sup>1</sup>- Dr. Col: Abdul Rehman is the Father-in-Law of the author of "Pakistan from community to Nation"

the secretary ship of Shoukat Ali, The elder other of Muhammad Ali. The name of these two brother because synonymous with khilafat Mohammad.

Meetings were held, processions were taken out and protests were made all over the country, to put pressure on the European authorities to restore the caliph to power. The first conference of all India khilafat committee was held early in October 1919 at tack now, where it was decided to celebrate "yom-i-Dooaa" in favor of turkey. This "yom-i-Dooaa" or day of proper was celebrate on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1919 trough out the subcontinent. <sup>1</sup>

The joint meeting of All India khilafat committæe, All India Muslim league, and All India congress were held at amrita. Several resolution were passed in which the British attitude towards the Turks were condemned <sup>2</sup>.

For this purpose different delegations were sent to the Barites from time to time. They held talks expressed their view point and laid emphasis on their demands.

### **Khilafat In Sindh.**

Sindh was an important center of the Khilafat movement because of its large numbers of Pirs. Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi and Abdullah Haroon gained prominence in the course of this movement. Various conferences, arrests and trials took place there.

Tehrik-i-Reshimi Roomal (Silk Letter Movement) has an important role in khilafat movement in Sindh. Among the pioneers were, Moulana Ubedullah Sindhi, Shaikh Abdul Rahim, Moulvi Abdullah Iaghari, Moulana Taj Muhammad Sadique and many others.

Moulana Ubedullah Sindhi had always rendered selfless services almost in every Muslim cause, in appreciation of which

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<sup>1</sup> - Rashidi, Pir Ali Muhammad, Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1974.

<sup>2</sup> - Narasimham Sarat C.V Pakistan Movement Op: Cit. P- 61.

of the citizen of Karachi, under the auspices of Karachi Municipal Corporation, had arranged a grand reception on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1939. The address of Moulana Ubedullah and services for the subcontinent were recognized and he was specially requested to put his utmost efforts for promoting Hindu-Mullen unity<sup>1</sup>. He made an appeal to people of Karachi to adopt the simple life of a villager.<sup>2</sup> The silk letter movement through it could not survive for long yet it certainly prepared ground for the ensuing khilafat movement.

The foundation of Sindh provincial Khilafat committee was laid down in Sindh during October 1919 by Sir Abdullah Haroon, Pir Turab Ali Shah Rashidi, Pir Anwar Ali Shah Rashidi, Moulana Taj Muhammad Amroti and Pir Sahib of Jhandey Waley to achieve all the above described aims and objects<sup>3</sup>. District Town, Taluka and Muhalla wise branches of Khilafat committee were also established in every nook and corner of Sindh<sup>4</sup>.

Sindh known as Bab-ul-Islam could not celebrate any decision against Islam or Shariat. The Muslims of Sindh celebrated the Khilafat day on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1919 so that they could openly express their feelings. On this occasion Abdullah Haroon read out the presidential address. A few extra are quoted, so as to give an idea about the enthusiasm and religious fervor prevailing then among the Muslim of Sindh Abdullah Haroon said;

"Beside the other duties of Muslim one of them was to select a Muslim king who would be capable of preserving their Islamic culture and who would also help in safe guarding the interest of Islam."

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<sup>1</sup>-Shaikh Muhammad Hajan, life and work of Moulana Ubedullah Sindhi, Op: Cit, P – 343

<sup>2</sup>- Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>- Rashidi, Pir Ali Muhammad, Jang, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1974.

<sup>4</sup>- Annual Report, Jamiat-i-Khilafat Sindh.

Abdullah Haroon reminded the rulers their promises and said;

"Mr. Lloyd George had given assurance that Turkey would maintain its territory and Constantinople shall be its capital".

After having cited many examples of the various promises made and the assurances given by the British Government Abdullah Haroon told the people;

"In the event of these promises made in clear terms by the British Government, it was but natural that the Muslims were confident that their religious interests were quite safe. Moreover the Muslims had spent their money and shed their blood not with the hope that their sentiments would be ignored at the time of peace settlement when during war the Muslims were responsible for having conquered 2/3 of the territory. They could never believe that this would be termed as crusade. If now no importance was being given to the demands of Muslims, they became very much grief stricken broken hearted. <sup>1</sup>

The first prominent conference of Sindh provincial khilafat Committee was held at Larkana on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> February, 1920. It was presided over by Pir Syed Abu Turab Muhammad Rashdullah Shah, Popularly known as Pir Jhandey Waley. For the first time Moulana Shoukat Ali Moulana Abu Kalam Azad came to the Sindh to attend the conference.

The Pir Sahib Jhandey Waley delivered the presidential address, the his tropical address is unforgettable for it brought the deep signification of the sacred institution of khilafat. A few extracts which are self explanatory are quoted here;

"Gentleman, it is clear that we have come here in response to a call. We are aggrieved and have lost our peace.

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<sup>1</sup> - Khilafat Committee Report, Dabdaba Hydri Machine, Karachi Press, 1919.

We are afraid of a fall. The unrest, the apprehension and the grief is because we can well visualize the down fall of the sacred institution of Khilafat and may God forbid the ruin of Islam.

"Gentleman, the khilafat issue is the struggle of life and death of Islam. The use of Muslim completely depends and totally rests on the discipline maintained through the khilafat. I ever go to the extent of saying that may God forbid if the khilafat ends, it shall be the doom of the Muslim."

The significance of Khilafat is very clear to us. It helps to achieve the ends of Islam. The demand of our natural life, our code of life and our mental attitude all these quit shaded by the soul of Khilafat institution.

The Muslims and Khilafat are so much interdependent that they are the two sides of one and the same picture. Is it not a sheer injustice that Muslims are being deprived of their rightful legacy of Khilafat despite being subjected to inhuman cruelty. We are yet bearing it all boldly."

The second meeting of the Sindh provincial Khilafat committee was held on 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> February 1920 at Larkana Moulvi Turab Ali Shah provided over it. His presidential address was certainly very inspiring for the peoples. He said;

"Breather of Islam, it is true that the swords are hovering over the Muslims of Turkey. They are being driven out of their home land.

"If the Muslim were hanged to the Russian Iran, we should be cursed if we do not feel burnt on our necks. If the Muslims are tormented in Asia Minor we shall but be filled with fury at the in human brutality."

"Gentlemen, Islamic brotherhood binds the Indian Muslim with the Muslim of Turkey, it should be remembered that there is only one sword that may be unsheathed to safeguard Islamic faith that is the Holy sword of Khilafat held be Aal-i-



Usman (Descendents of Osman, the third Muslim caliph). This is the first ray of hope of Islamic grandeur we are one with Turks not more so because of unanimous and firm belief in the Khilafat ideology. No nation can even survive without an objective; the most precious ideal at the movement is none else but the Khilafat of the Turkish sultan.<sup>1</sup>

In the last session of meetings a resolution was passed. It was decided to send a delegation of Sindhi Muslims to Bombay. It was to call upon the Governor and give him the details of how the Muslims in Sindh were being oppressed by the Government officials. Jan Muhammad Junejo was to head the delegation. Despite the best efforts they could not succeed in getting an interview with the Governor<sup>2</sup>.

The failure to meet the Governor could not damp the spirits of the Muslims of Sindh, for they were full of inspiration and their spirits were held high by the fiery speeches delivered by the Muslim leaders in the meetings. The Muslim leaders were arrested and tortured. The high spirited Muslims of Sindh bore them all boldly.

The tale of their courage and forbearance were greatly appreciated all over the country. The all India Khilafat conference was held at Nagpur in 1921; it paid glorious tributes to the heroism of the Muslims of Sindh.

Despite every oppressive measure the Muslims of Sindh were determined to keep the candle of Khilafat burning by their blood if not oil. With this end in view they continued to conduct meetings taking out processions and went on mobilizing the public opinion in favor of Khilafat.

The Sindh provincial Khilafat committee held a conference at Jacobabad in May, 1920. Moulana Taj Muhammad Amroti presided over it.

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<sup>1</sup> - Khilafat Committee Report.

<sup>2</sup> - Sammo, Taj Muhammad, *Main Zindagi*, April 1968, P-10.

Jan Muhammad Junejo during his speech made a bold declaration.

Regular meetings were formulating the public opinion in favor of Khilafat movement. People were not just mentally inclined towards the movement, but they were also practically proving it. Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Bhurgri resigned from the membership of Legislative Assembly <sup>1</sup> He abandoned his title also. Many other Sindh leaders including Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah surrendered their titles and honors granted to them by the British Government.

The Sindh Khilafat Committee held a meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1920 at Hyderabad. It passed a resolution paying grand tributes to the leaders. Another public meeting was held which was addressed by Pir Ghulam Mujaddid Sarhandi, who said:

"The whole word is agreed that the very survival of Islam depends on Khilafat."<sup>2</sup>

A meeting of Khilafat committee was held in Khaliq Dina Hall, Karachi. It condemned the arrest of Moulana Zafar Ali Khan and it was resolved that all the Muslims should be prepared to meet the worst troubles and torments<sup>3</sup>

Another meeting was held under the president of Abdullah Haroon. It decided to continue boycott and face whatever the consequences<sup>4</sup>

Yet another meeting was held in Municipal garden Karachi. It openly declared that if any body contests the election against the advice of Khilafat committee, he shall not be given vote<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> - Al-Wahid, 16<sup>th</sup> May 1920.

<sup>2</sup> - Al-Wahid 21<sup>st</sup> October 1920.

<sup>3</sup> - Al-Wahid 1<sup>st</sup> November 1920.

<sup>4</sup> - Al-Wahid 7<sup>th</sup> November 1920.

<sup>5</sup> - Al-Wahid 9<sup>th</sup> November 1920.

A similar meeting was held in Thatta on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1920 Lal Chand Amer Dino presided over it <sup>1</sup> On the following day Pir Mujaddid Sarhandi presided. Addressing the people insisted on them to sacrifice their all for the achievement of their objective <sup>2</sup>

The historic proceeding of eights sessions of the All India Khilafat conference commendams at Karachi on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 1921 and were attended by about four Thousand people, mostly local<sup>3</sup> It was unanimously decided that the Khilafat Message should be conveyed door to door, so as to make every common man realize to injustice done to Muslim and how best they make amends to it.

First campaign meeting was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1922 at Sukkur <sup>4</sup> the second on 6<sup>th</sup> November, 1922 at Panu Aqil<sup>5</sup> the third on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1923 at Gari Yasins<sup>6</sup> the fourth on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 1923 at Ghotki<sup>7</sup>. The fifth on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1923 at Daharki<sup>8</sup> The Sixth on 27 February 1923 at Ducan<sup>9</sup> and seventh on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1923 at Obaro<sup>10</sup> By then in every town and city of Sindh even the street boys could be seen raising the slogans, O' Son! Give the life for the Khilafat';

The Muslims of Sindh were spiritedly and devotedly fighting for the cause through with restraint, but their patience now gave away and they were fed up of the peaceful struggle; so with their implicit faith in God they were seriously thinking of other ways and means.

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<sup>1</sup> - Al-Wahid 14<sup>th</sup> November 1920.

<sup>2</sup> - Al-Wahid 16<sup>th</sup> November 1920.

<sup>3</sup> - Daily Gazette, 10<sup>th</sup> July 1921.

<sup>4</sup> -Khilafat Committee Report P-3.

<sup>5</sup> - Ibid

<sup>6</sup> - Ibid

<sup>7</sup> - Ibid, P - 4

<sup>8</sup> - Ibid

<sup>9</sup> - Ibid

<sup>10</sup> - Ibid