

All India Muslim League

After the creation of the Indian national Congress and its time as a 'representative' party for the people of the Indian sub-continent, there was felt a need to reassess its claims at unbiased representation. From the very start of its existence the Congress had shown clear its interest to safeguard the rights of Hindus, alone. Some of the Congress leaders adopted a revolutionary policy to establish Hindu Raj in the sub-continent under the guise of a national movement.

The prediction of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan Soon proved to be fact that, "Hindus and Muslims are two different nations who have different ideologies." The Muslims of India were greatly disappointed by the anti-Muslim stance that the Congress seemed to have adopted. The events following the partition of Bengal and Urdu-Hindu controversy strengthened the desire of the Muslims to organize themselves politically as separate community. The birth of All India Muslim League at Dacca on 30th December 1906 came as an expression of that desire.

Following are the reasons for the establishment of Muslim league.

- 1. Indifferent Attitude of the Congress towards Muslims:** All India National Congress was a pre-dominantly Hindu body. Its interests were always at odds ends to those of the Muslims. By 1906, Muslim leaders were convinced that they must have their own party which may speak for the community on all important occasions.
- 2. Educational and Economic Backwardness:** Muslims had lagged far behind from the Hindus in education and economic progress. Educational and economic conditions could only be up graded by establishing a separate Muslims organization that could represent the wishes of the Muslims.
- 3. Urdu-Hindi Controversy:** The Urdu-Hindu controversy began with the demand of Hindus to replace Urdu by Hindi as official language in Deva Nagari Script. Sir Anthony Macdonal, the then Governor of UP ousted Urdu from public offices. Congress clearly sided with Hindi and supported the movement against Urdu and there was no other political party to support Urdu. Thus, the need of formation of a Muslim political party was felt severely.
- 4. The Evolution of Minto Marley Reforms:** The turning point came in the summer of 1906 during John Morley's budget speech, in which he hinted of constitutional reforms. At that time Muslims did not have a political platform to demand their share. It was reasserted that they wanted a separate political platform.

5. The Success of Simla Deputation: Minto offered fullest sympathy to the Muslim demands. The success of Deputation compelled the Muslims to have a separate political association of their own.

6. To Save Muslim Entity: The belief uttered by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan that the Muslims were somehow a separate entity. The Muslims did not believe that Hindus and Muslims formed one nation. They were different by religion, history, languages and civilization. It became essential for Muslims to establish a political party of their own.

A resolution to form the All India Muslim League was passed by Nawab Salimullah Khan and was seconded by Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali and Moulana Zafar Ali. The resolution was passed by All India Educational Conference on 30th December 1906. A committee was formed to prepare its draft constitution. Sir Agha Khan was appointed as President and Syed Hassan Balgrami was appointed as secretary, while Nawab Mohsim-ul-Mulk and Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk were made joint secretaries with six Vice- Presidents, a Central Committee with forty Members was also constituted. In this way Muslim league was established and became the sole representative of Muslims.

Knowing the circumstances which led to the formation of Muslim league was not difficult to make out what it aimed to. However, the Muslim league laid the following points as its objectives.

- 1.** To create among Muslims the feelings of loyalty towards British Government and to remove misconception and suspicious.
- 2.** To Safeguard the political rights of the Muslims and to bring them into the notice of the Government.
- 3.** To prevent among the Muslims, the rise of prejudicial feelings against the other communities of India.

The first session of All India Muslim league was held at Karachi on 29th December, 1907 and was presided over by Adamji Peer Bhai.

It was being felt from the beginning that the All India Muslim League would not achieve considerable success without winning the British Public opinion to its side. Therefore, Syed Ameer Ali organized the branch of Muslim league at London. The inaugural meeting was held on 6th May 1908, at London Caxton Hall. It was participated by the Muslim and those British people who favoured their view point.

There came into being a political body which was to play a decisive role in the destiny of the Muslim peoples of the Indian sub-continent. The day the Muslim delegation won recognition of the demand of separate electorate, the course of the Muslim freedom struggle was charted. It was the beginning of the growth of Muslim national consciousness. It found visible institutional expression in the form of Muslim League which after a forty (40) years struggle was to achieve for the Muslims the culmination of their national aspiration, Muslim League became a mass movement of the Muslims and succeeded in achieving Pakistan in 1974. Actually the new breed of leadership like Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was instrumental in its metamorphosis. After the acceptance of the demand of separate representation in the Minto Morely reforms, it was common sense to have political party to fight elections for Muslim representation. Whatever may have been the effects of Muslim league, but it made clear that the interests of Muslims must be regarded completely separate from those of the Hindus. Any fusion of both the communities in future was not possible. It steered the ship of Muslim destiny safely through of Political chaos and turmoil to the safer harbour of Pakistan.