
"....the students' community played a dynamic role in the struggle for Pakistan.... we find them endorsing the Pakistan Resolution in unequivocal terms by arranging successive Pakistan Conferences from the year 1941 to 1944, at important places....they devoted their energies for the cause of the All-India Muslim League and responded to every call that was made by Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah Their organizational structure and unanimity of purpose ultimately resulted in successive victories for the Muslim League."

PAKISTAN RESOLUTION AND THE MUSLIM STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN THE PAKISTAN MOVEMENT

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DURING the hectic days of the liberation struggle in the South Asian Subcontinent, the two major religions were seen opposing each other over different issues. The Hindus claimed dominance as their birthright whereas the Muslims looked to regain their lost glory. In the pitch of the political combat, while both the opposing quarters appeared to be dominating over the other, their following threw themselves heart and soul siding with their leaders. They had the blessings and active support of the people belonging to all walks of life – the most effective being the youth of both the major political parties – i.e., the All-India Muslim League and the Indian National Congress.

At the time when the struggle for Pakistan was at its peak, there were divergent views over the question of participation of Muslim students in practical politics which had been frequently discussed during the pre-independence days. There was a section of people who would not recommend it while the other was of the view that they, as part of the society, should involve themselves in day-to-day politics. Still another section of the people argued that the students should neither take part in politics nor should they keep themselves completely aloof but, instead, should continue to acquaint themselves with political developments taking shape in India. This issue also attracted the attention of academicians, political

thinkers and the Indian leadership. The Quaid-i-Azam did not appreciate students participation in practical politics as he remarked: "... I have repeatedly made it clear that students should not take an active part in the current politics ... but it is their duty to fully acquaint themselves with the political problems...."¹ While M.K. Gandhi would say that "the higher interests of the country demand active participation of students in politics", it is common knowledge that Gandhi and the Indian National Congress had been strong spokesmen of students' involvement in politics but would object and make criticism on the subject when others would advocate it.

The League leadership, however, did not appreciate direct linkage of the Muslim youth in politics but at times, when the nation demanded services of the students, they stood with vigour and devotion and never disappointed the Muslim India. There is no doubt that half the battle for Pakistan was won by the Muslim students. Their sustained and continuous efforts changed the colour of the movement altogether. They sacrificed their studies and absorbed themselves heart and soul whenever the situation demanded.

From 1937 until the creation of Pakistan, the students from all parts of the South Asian Subcontinent offered to work for the national goal. From the League's point of view, the students had seen the hopeless results of 1937 elections. They

had witnessed the tyranny of the Congress rule in the Hindu majority provinces and, also the Congress mass-contact campaign intended to annihilate the Muslim League and its following, and thereby sowing the seeds of separation. The Muslim youth being the most sensitive organ of the *millat* (Nation) could not sit idle at this hour and resolved to play an effective role in the national struggle.

The All-India Muslim Students Federation (formed in 1937) and its provincial branches, especially the Aligarh branch and the Punjab Muslim Students Federation (PMSF), injected fresh blood into the students' movement. By that time, the provincial branches of the AIMS F had already been set up or were in the process of formation in almost all the provinces and most of the major towns of the region.² "These provincial and district organizations were set in motion to mobilize the youth for the cause of the League". As quoted by Hector Bolitho, "the hundreds and thousands who had been attracted to the banner of the League were not all drawn from the adult masses; Jinnah was also becoming a considerable force in the Universities".³ The students who by then had started calling themselves as *Mujahid-i-Pakistan* (soldiers of Pakistan) and *Khadim-i-Pakistan* (servants of Pakistan) became more vigorous when the All-India Muslim League (AIML) re-oriented itself in early forties under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Their fervour increased when the League set a new goal for Muslim India in March 1940 at Lahore. With a clear-cut and specific goal placed before hundred million Musalmans of South Asia, the Muslim youth, all over the Subcontinent joined its ranks with increased zeal and enthusiasm.

With the announcement of the League holding its 27th session at Lahore, the students flocked to work for its success. The year 1940 was landmark in the history of Muslim India. The students who were already alive to the situation, were eagerly waiting for such an occasion. In response to the League's call, the Muslim students resolved to prepare themselves for the coming session. The Working Committee of the AIMS F, with a view to make the session a success, met at Aligarh, on 26 February, 1940, in the Muslim

University Hall. It chalked out a plan for the Lahore session and constituted different organizing committees for Sindh and Frontier provinces, and the Indian states. Under the directive of the AIMS F the provincial bodies made full preparation for participation in the session. They formed different committees, organized gatherings and made the League creed known to the common man. The PMSF being the 'host' students' organization, represented the entire Muslim youth of the Subcontinent. In conformity to the central body's (AIMS F) policy, the PMSF extended tremendous support to the organizers of the League session. Fully conversant with the Muslim demand and their fundamental differences with the Hindus, they started a regular campaign to popularize the League's programme when finally announced. They held different meetings at various places and instructed all primary branches from District to Tehsil level to do likewise. A separate wing was raised to propagate the idea and still another committee was constituted to make arrangements for its separate session to be held soon after the League's annual session. The Provincial League leadership acquired services of the PMSF workers who responded to every call made by them.⁴ The students made a splendid show of their enthusiasm when the Quaid-i-Azam arrived at Lahore on 21 March, 1940. They exhibited exemplary discipline in the *pindal* during the course of the session from March 22-24, 1940.⁵

The Secretary of the PMSF, which had earlier declared its 'motto' (in 1937) as the creation of a separate homeland for Muslims in India,⁶ wrote to the Quaid on 15 February, 1940, saying,

you are well aware of the importance of the Muslim youth, especially the students, for the assertion of the separate existence of Muslim Nation in India, so we do not seek any further arguments for the desirability of your contact with Muslim students during your stay at Lahore.⁷

Besides they decided to hold a separate session on 24 March in the *pindal* set for the League session. The welcome address to be presented to the Quaid was approved by Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan. Mian Bashir Ahmad, Secretary, Reception Committee of the AIML, informed the Quaid

that "As Nawab Sahib (Liaquat Ali Khan) has already initiated you, the Punjab Muslim Students will present an address to you on the 24th March ... I have read out the said address to Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan who came here the other day and he approved it."⁸ The students devoted themselves to make the session a success and the PMSF organized a propaganda campaign by issuing press statements and holding gatherings. Under the title *Musalmanon ka Naujawan Tabqa Muslim League kay Sath Haiy*, (the Muslim youth is with the Muslim League) the PMSF Secretary issued a press statement in early March appealing to the Muslim youth to rally round the banner of the League. It pointed out that a negative propaganda was being carried out by the rival group which was claiming that the Muslim youth was not cooperating with the League. Besides issuing rebuttal to the opposing factions, a number of primary branches chalked out their programmes. Different caravans (groups) were raised to participate in the session. Efforts were also made by the PMSF for arrangements of special trains to shuttle between different cities and Lahore to carry participants for the session.⁹

On 22 March, 1940, a huge gathering of Muslim students from all over the Subcontinent was present to lend support to the League cause. The students lined up the path from the entrance to the *pindal* and stood with naked swords round the dais. The control of the *pindal* was entirely in the hand of the PMSF.

The Lahore session was of unique importance in retrospect and a landmark in the history of Muslim India for it decreed in favour of separation and added new dimensions to the demands of the Muslims. For the first time the League adopted the achievement of an independent Muslim State as its goal.

After the League session, the students organized a separate session in the Islamia College, Lahore, on 24 March, 1940. The Quaid-i-Azam presided.

The session was historic in the sense that it was organized immediately (only a few hours) after the passing of the Lahore Resolution on 24 March. This gathering of students provided the League leadership an opportunity to express their

vies more explicitly and to add more strength to their verdict of separatism. Thus the Students Federation was the first organized body of Muslim India who immediately endorsed the Lahore Resolution.

On this occasion, the PMSF in its welcome address expressed complete faith in the leadership of the Quaid and in the creed of the League as embodied in the League's Resolution. In the welcome address the PMSF said:

No doubt we want an independence in which we may not lose our own identity and which should be based on a political system in accordance with our faith. We also disagree with the view that a separate and independent Muslim State would hinder the propagation of Islam. Rather the propagation of Islam presupposes an independent Muslim State in India.¹⁰

It would be appropriate to mention that some leading students of the PMSF had envisaged a Khilafat-i-Pakistan Scheme in 1939. They had sent their scheme of partition to the AIML for consideration. It was with this reference that the PMSF, in their welcome address made a reference to it saying: "several schemes have been put before the constitution committee of the Muslim League. We too have submitted our Khilafat-i-Pakistan Scheme. We only request you to give a favourable consideration to our scheme."¹¹ While reiterating their faith in the Quaid, they said:

...In so far as you fight to free India from the yoke of the Congress and the British, we are with you heart and soul. If even the Federation is imposed upon the Muslims of India against their will, we will oppose it with our united strength and determined will. We await your orders Quaid-i-Azam for any such future fight. Now please advise us as to how best we can prepare for the coming struggle.¹²

In reply to the above address, the Quaid eulogized the services of the Students Federation and stressed to take up the task of the League's cause and its ultimate goal as resolved by the AIML the same day. The Quaid made a reference to various partition schemes and said that the League, while honouring the sentiments of Muslim India had set the goal finally and now it depended on the Muslim masses as to how they respond to the call. The Quaid exhorted the students to march on to the goal with determination and perseverance.¹³ With this call from their beloved leader, the students' session fully en-

dorsed the Lahore Resolution and recorded their complete faith in it thereby expressing their whole-hearted support for the attainment of an independent State for Muslims in South Asia.¹⁴

The period following the March session of the AIML was full of enthusiasm among the students. Fully understanding the spirit of the Resolution they organized conferences in 1941 through which they popularized the League's ultimate goal. In a short span of time the PMSF conducted four¹⁵ important conferences on the issue of Pakistan, between February and July 1941. These conferences were undoubtedly a great endeavour on the part of the Muslim students in support of the Pakistan Scheme. The most important of these was the Special Pakistan Conference of March 1941. It was organized on 2 March with the Quaid-i-Azam as President.

It may be pointed out here that after the passing of the Lahore Resolution, this was the first ever conference of the students in which they endorsed the Lahore Resolution. It may be mentioned here that no other organization had ever held a meeting in support of the League's decision since March 1940. This was the foremost occasion that the PMSF took the lead in holding such a conference. Therefore, it was a landmark in the history of the students' movement in the struggle for Pakistan. The Quaid, who had taken the Muslim youth under his fostering care visualized at an appropriate time, the dynamism of the students. He in his letter to the President of the PMSF encouraged the Federation to hold such a conference. However, as regards the name of the conference, the Quaid advised the students "not to call it by the name of Pakistan Conference"¹⁶ and proposed that "you can call it as you propose to do under the auspices of the Provincial Muslim Students Federation, and then you will be at liberty to pass a resolution supporting the Lahore Resolution of the All-India Muslim League, popularly known as 'Pakistan' [Resolution]."¹⁷

The Quaid took personal interest in holding this conference and fully realized its importance when he said, "I would further advise you to go ahead and hold the conference ... It is not that I do not consider the great importance of your conference which is destined to play a very important part in moulding the future destiny of the Musalmans of this country..."¹⁸

It is also important to note that it was the first occasion that the Quaid placed himself in the hands of the organizers of the conference and informed the League leadership to keep in touch with the Federation's President¹⁹ for arranging any future programmes concerned with him (Quaid-i-Azam). On this occasion the Quaid was practically the guest of the students and no evidence is found of any programme that was chalked out without the prior approval or consent of the PMSF. This was a clear-cut sign of the Quaid's faith in the student community and again an indication of the fact that he relied much on the Muslim youth once the League had declared its ultimate goal.

The students were fortunate to have won support of the Muslim press which gave full coverage to their moot.²⁰ The Muslim leadership was equally considerate on this occasion as it lent maximum support to the students and sent its blessings. In this context the views of Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, Nawab Bahadur Yar Jang, Nawab Sir Shah Nawaz of Mamdot, Nawabzada Rashid Ali Khan, Sahibzada Mahmoodul Hassan Naqshbandi, A.K.M. Fazlul Quadir Chaudhry, Mian Mushtaque Ahmad Gurmani, Qazi Mohammad Isa and Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman are important to note which they expressed in their messages.²¹ The students all over the region also responded promptly by making practical contributions in different ways realizing their participation in the Conference.²² The PMSF made different tours, issued press statements, held meetings, wrote letters, and constituted several committees to organize the conference.

On 1 March, 1941, the Quaid reached Lahore and was taken to the *pindal* erected in the ground of Islamia College, Lahore. On the occasion of the flag-hoisting ceremony, the Quaid gave a brief speech and stressed the Muslim masses to maintain discipline and unity in their ranks. He said that the League in a short span of three years, since its reorganization i.e., 1937, had set a goal for Muslim India and though impediments were being created by the opponents it was not impossible for anybody to obstruct the way to Pakistan.²³

The following day, the session was attended by thousands of people including the League leaders like Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Nawab of Mamdot, Malik Barkat Ali, Sir Abdul Qadir, Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman, Sir Saadullah Khan, Mian Bashir Ahmad and Miss Fatima Jinnah.

In the welcome address Mirza Abdul Hamid, the President of the PMSF, declared that the Muslim students, irrespective of sex and creed would rise to the occasion in the struggle for a separate homeland.²⁴

The Quaid in his speech eulogized the students' activism and termed the holding of the conference as a prelude to a chapter that was opening in the history of the province. He said that:

It was the month of March that the League adopted its creed at Lahore in 1940, and today again it is the month of March that the students conference was being organized at Lahore to support the Lahore Resolution. That was March 23rd, and today is March 1st, therefore, let us march on.

The scintillating feature of 2 March programme was that the Quaid did not speak himself, but instead, invited the students to freely express their views on the Lahore Resolution. "I felt at heart", said the Quaid, "that why the students should not be allowed to give their free opinion on the issue."²⁵ He while congratulating the students for having given thought to the historic Resolution invited Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi, a student leader, to move the resolution on behalf of the PMSF. Niazi moved the following resolution.

This conference of the Punjab Muslim Students Federation whole-heartedly supports the Lahore Resolution popularly [known] as the Pakistan Resolution, adopted by the All-India Muslim League on March 23, 1940, in which it has been declared in unequivocal terms that it is the considered opinion of the Muslims in India that in this country no constitution would be workable or acceptable unless it is demarcated on the following basic principles:

That geographically contiguous units should be demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute independent states in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

This session declares that effective and revolutionary safeguards be assured to the minorities in these units and that in other Muslim minority areas in India,

similar effective and revolutionary safeguards be assured in consonance with their religious, cultural, politico-economic and administrative rights in consultation with them and that effective safeguards be assured for the security and rights of the minorities in respect of their religions, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights in consultation with them.

This conference further declares its unflinching determination for the attainment of this purpose by adopting every possible measure which would be within its reach.²⁶

After moving the resolution, Niazi declared that while seconding the resolution, the Muslim students were fully prepared to sacrifice every drop of their blood for the creation of Pakistan.

Mohammad Noman, founding member of the AIMSF, supporting the resolution congratulated the students on having organized so well the historic Pakistan Conference and made a reference to the Congress designs against the Muslim demand of Pakistan.²⁷ Zahurul Hasan Dar of M.A.O. College, Amritsar, supporting the resolution said that Muslim India was now aware and nine crores of Muslims would not tolerate Hindu rule in India.²⁸ After the above speeches, the Quaid put the resolution to vote which was carried by overwhelming majority.²⁹ This was in other words the ratification of the League's earlier decision of March 1940.

Next day, the Quaid in his speech congratulated the students and assured them that their labours had borne fruits. Putting forth his arguments regarding the League's demand of Pakistan, he said that "... I have tried to examine the arguments against the Lahore Resolution. So far as we are concerned: we stand by the Lahore Resolution and we want it as soon as circumstances permit or immediately after the war...."³⁰

The Quaid argued that how was Lahore Resolution against Islam, a theory so enthusiastically propagated by the Hindus. He said that the Hindus should not "bother about us. We thank [them] most profusely for pointing out to us our 'mistake' and 'unwise' decision ... we are prepared to take the consequences of our well-considered resolution."³¹ In conclusion, the Quaid said:

Every intelligent man in this country knows and understands what we mean by Pakistan ... Everybody who has got any intelligence, who is honest, understands perfectly well what we mean when we say Pakistan we mean the Lahore Resolution³² The only solution for the

Muslims of India, which will stand the test and trial of time, is that India should be partitioned so that both the communities can develop freely and fully according to their own genius economically, socially, culturally and politically.³³

Besides the Quaid, the above conference was addressed by Liaquat Ali Khan and Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman as well. Liaquat, in his speech said that the League expected a lot from the Muslim youth. He remarked that the results of the conference would be encouraging and fully endorsed the Quaid's advice to the students i.e., "popularize the demand of Pakistan in every district, town, and village to such an extent that it should become part and parcel of the Muslims ... to carry out the League propaganda at a tremendously large scale so that the whole of Muslim India stood united with full throat Pakistan and nothing else."³⁴

Likewise, other provincial branches followed suit one after the other and the AIMS F in July 1941, declared in unequivocal terms that the Muslim youth was at the beck and call of the League with regard to its political programme as demanded in March 1940 at Lahore. Mohammad Noman of the AIMS F declared that the members of the Federation had taken oath of Pakistan and were destined to lay their lives for the achievement of the League's goal Pakistan.³⁵

In the same year, on 5 July, 1941, the Lyallpur (Faisalabad) branch of the Provincial Federation, organized a District Pakistan Conference which was presided by the Punjab Premier, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan. Since he did not like the reference to Lahore Resolution as the Pakistan Resolution, he criticized the League's demand for Pakistan in his speech. While tracing various schemes since the time of Syed Jamaluddin Afghani, he provocatively asked the students what kind of Pakistan they wanted.³⁶ This speech was an act of sabotage against the students movement from their own platform, which they considered the stronghold of the League in the Punjab. This was seriously taken notice of by the Federation and they entered into correspondence with the Quaid on this issue. Ultimately they resolved to organize another Pakistan Conference on 20 July, 1941, in Lyallpur, which was presided over by Malik Barkat Ali, who in his speech gave a

rebuttal to Sir Sikandar Hayat and thereby elaborated the philosophical justification of the Pakistan Scheme.³⁷ This conference infused a new spirit in the student ranks who expressed complete faith in the leadership of the Quaid and the League's creed of Pakistan.³⁸

While the students movement was at its peak, a controversy over the Viceroy's National Defence Council started. The Muslim youth were agitated over the inclusion of the Muslim premiers in the Council. The PMSF staged resentful demonstrations particularly against the Punjab Premier who was ultimately forced to resign. Since that event, Sikandar tried to avoid direct confrontation with the students and, therefore, the Punjab, the citadel of the Unionists, was saved for some time at least, from the Unionist onslaughts.

While the students were active in the Punjab, they were not lacking in the other provinces. The AIMS F remained active keeping the movement alive. In its fifth annual session held on 26 December, 1941, at Nagpur, under the presidentship of the Quaid-i-Azam, the students made a tremendous show of their strength and enthusiasm for the League's demand. They declared that the Federation had become stronger in Bombay, Karachi and Lahore in particular. They assured the Quaid that the Muslim students wholeheartedly supported the League policy as regards Pakistan and the War. Noman, Vice-President of the AIMS F, prayed for the Quaid's long life and success in the achievement of the cherished goal of Pakistan. On this occasion, the Quaid commended the students for taking part in the struggle for freedom of the country, but stressed that the students should not practically participate in the political developments taking place from day-to-day. Their primary duty, said the Quaid, was to concentrate on their studies.³⁹ In the end, the conference warned that the students would severely resent any agreement reached between the Congress and the Government. "Any repetition of the so-called Gentlemen's agreement" said the students, "between the Congress and the Government and the return of single party Congress ministries without a previous settlement with the Muslim League would lead to a very grave

crisis.”⁴⁰ The Nagpur session was acclaimed by Muslim India as a great success.⁴¹

On 7-8 March, 1942, the PMSF organized a huge conference in Rawalpindi in support of the League cause and arranged another conference on the 14 November, at Jullundhar, which was presided over by the Quaid-i-Azam. The Rawalpindi session moved an important resolution saying:

...this conference of the Muslim Students Federation declares unanimously and in unequivocal terms that no constitution shall be acceptable to the Muslims unless it is based on the principle that the Muslims in India formed by themselves a separate nation and the north-western and north-eastern Muslim blocks are their homelands wherein they shall be entitled to the right of self-determination....⁴²

The importance of the students' endeavour at Rawalpindi hardly needs any comments. To organize a huge gathering in support of Pakistan at the important military centre in the middle of the World War II and in the face of India Rules threatening in so unequivocal terms a revolt against the revocation of British Declaration of 8 August 1941, can hardly be overemphasized.

By then, the students engaged themselves in supporting the League cause by vigorous propaganda. Their 'Intellectual' and 'Social Fronts' lent commendable service to the League. They brought out pamphlets and such other literature that contained League theory. On the 'Social Front', they spread to the Muslim localities in towns and villages popularizing the League creed among the Muslim masses. During this period, they took a serious notice of and, also informed the Quaid, of the anti-Pakistan conferences organized by the opponents particularly in the Punjab.⁴³ Their activism became more noticeable and productive when the Hindu Congress launched an unconstitutional and illegal movement of non-cooperation against the Indian Government. The students, under the directive of the Quaid-i-Azam, kept themselves aside from it despite provocations and, instead, seriously attended to galvanizing their force under the League banner. This was the period when they concentrated more on strengthening themselves by increasing their numbers and opening numerous primary units of their Federation.

The President of the AIMS, Raja Sahib of Mahmoodabad declared on September 8, 1942, that the Muslim youth was at the beck and call of the Quaid and was prepared to give any sacrifice for the cause of Pakistan.⁴⁴

The same year on November 14-15, 1942, the students organized two forceful conferences at Jullundhar, simultaneously. One, organized by the AIMS and the other by the PMSF. The former was presided over by the Quaid and the latter by M.A.H. Ispahani on November 15, 1942. The main feature of these conferences was the endorsement of the League's decision of March 1940 This conference, said a resolution, "solemnly assures Mr. Jinnah that the Muslim youth will be ready to go to any length, under his leadership for the achievement of their sacred ideal popularly known as Pakistan."⁴⁵

The year 1943 saw manifold activities of the students. It was usual with students to lend support to the Quaid and the League on each and every occasion of political development in India. Be it the question of the Cripps proposals or the Supru Committee's findings, they would not remain unconcerned, but would voice with full throat their support of the Quaid. In addition to this, they would observe Pakistan Day ceremonies every year on March 23 and would also celebrate the Quaid's birthday on December 25. On these occasions, they would pass resolutions in support of the Pakistan Resolution and would declare in unequivocal terms their whole-hearted support to the Quaid and his leadership. In addition to this, they would hoist the League flags, distribute the League literature among the Muslim masses and hold meetings to explain the goal of Muslim India.

The students' constant and continuous participation in the movement increased by degrees. Thus, the opening of the year 1944 saw a tremendous output of the Muslim students. It was marked by four important conferences held by the PMSF at Lahore in March, at Sialkot in May, at Rawalpindi in June and in October at Amritsar. Throughout the year, the Muslim students besides holding conferences, resolved to organize the League branches and propagate the scheme of Pakistan by holding a number of gatherings. The Lahore conference of March 1944 was another im-

portant landmark in the history of the PMSF.⁴⁶ It was presided over by the Quaid who took serious notice of the communist activities in the Muslim ranks and plainly discarded the socialist and communist elements.⁴⁷ The Conference proved to be a great success and an overall impression of the masses and leadership was that the Muslim youth had created a history.

During the same year, the Quaid presided over another Pakistan Conference of the Muslim students held at Sialkot in May 7, 1944, where he remarked that the "Sialkot session was no less important than that of Lahore in March 1940."⁴⁸

The students' activities further gained momentum when they opened Summer School of Politics at Lahore in 1944 and a Students' Training Camp at Aligarh during the same period. They were trained in these centres, to fight for the coming struggle of Muslim India. They underwent a fortnight-long tough training programme at these centres where they were given lectures on Muslim history, religious instructions, and current political issues with regard to the League's struggle for Pakistan. Eminent League leaders would deliver lectures on the above subjects. After completion of the refresher courses the students emerged as better and polished followers of the League really capable of playing a dynamic role for Muslim India in the coming years.

It was during this period that the Quaid demanded general elections after the failure of the Simla Conference. The students, who had recently been trained at camps, were looking for an opportunity to show their worth. At the eve of the elections the Quaid appealed to the masses to prepare for the coming battle to fight the political enemy. At this fateful hour of the history of Muslims in India, the entire Muslim nation realizing the gravity of the situation promptly responded to the clarion call of their beloved leader. While the elders fully realized their responsibility, the Muslim youth, too, with missionary spirit dealt with the situation, for which they had so eagerly been clamouring for.

The Muslim students who had been closely watching the whole affair could not remain unconcerned over the rapidly changing political scene during the course of the deliberations for the

Simla Conference. It must be recorded here that it was the students community that first of all endorsed the stand taken by the Quaid. The AIMSIF issued an important statement and called upon the Muslim youth to "immediately come to the forefront and take effective steps ... to organize and prepare themselves in all parts of India to secure the verdict and mandate of the Muslim nation at the coming elections".⁴⁹ They termed it as "the first item on [their] national programme".⁵⁰

It was the first instance that the League leadership appealed to the Muslim youth to practically contribute to the cause of Pakistan. Never had any leader so far asked the students to actively participate in the political field, yet on September 22, 1945, Liaquat Ali Khan gave a call to the Muslim youth to help the Muslim League in the general elections. He asked them to come out of their institutions and spread out for election work. Liaquat said, "no sacrifice is too great at this moment. I do not ask but demand of you to come forward and help us in the elections".⁵¹ "You are the arsenal of Muslim India and I want Muslim students all over the country to play their part boldly and honourably for an issue which would mean either emancipation or perpetual domination." He also said that, "I have already said and so has the Quaid, that students should not take active part in politics at the sacrifice of their studies but there comes a time in the life of a nation when every other activity has to be subordinated to that big issue of the emancipation of Muslim India."⁵²

Awakening, the spokesman of the AIMSIF, commenting on the above appeal wrote, "... the call would be answered by the sons of Islam and they would come out of their class rooms and work among masses so that every Muslim seat is captured by the League so that they would be able to attain the goal of Pakistan."⁵³ The students took up the task in all sincerity dividing their campaign into different phases i.e., issuing appeals for collection of funds; distributing pamphlets and handbills; touring every part of the country canvassing the Muslim voters; organizing League branches and enrolling members to the League. They took the campaign as a question of life and death, and, with their motto, 'Now or Never',

threw themselves whole-heartedly into the electioneering campaign.

Armies of Muslim students from all parts of the country especially Aligarh and Islamia College, Lahore, did tremendous job for the battle of ballot. A number of student batches toured each and every constituency. Election camps worked day and night and made splendid contribution absolutely on their expenses and, never demanded any help from the League. The Central as well as Provincial Students Federations remained in constant touch with the League leadership and determined in consultation with them how the election activities could be harnessed to the utmost benefit of the nation. They played so dynamic a role that the League won every single seat in the Central Assembly and won with overwhelming majority in the provincial elections. The League leadership eulogized their services. Over the gigantic triumph, Liaquat Ali remarked:

The phenomenal success which the League had already achieved and while it was sure to achieve in the next few weeks was due in large measure to the selfless and untiring efforts of the Muslim students and Aligarh students had given a lead in this respect.⁵⁴

The Quaid appreciated the students' efforts in these words:

"Students of the Islamia College (Lahore) and others have done wonderful work. I have not adequate word to praise all (they) have done and the sacrifices (they) have made. How sincerely and selflessly (they) have worked...."⁵⁵

Feroze Khan Noon, paying rich tributes to the students especially their 'battle' in the Punjab, recorded:

It is with pride and pleasure that I am allowed to express my appreciation of the work done by the Muslim students in the elections. They have broken their studies and some of them may lose a whole year. They have fought the forces of the bureaucracy thrown against the League in this province with the evidences of the officials from the highest to the lowest. The Unionist Party did not spare any illegal act in trying to achieve their object. I know of cases when students have been thrown out of Railway carriages, where they have been threatened with murder in the villages, and have been beaten They have walked miles on foot.⁵⁶

Meanwhile, in May 1946, the British Cabinet Mission gave proposals for the solution to the Indian constitutional problem. These were severely resented by the League and the Muslim masses.

The Muslim youth fully endorsed the League decision of April 9, 1946. The students appreciated the stand taken by the Quaid and voiced with full throat: "Pakistan or Perish."⁵⁷ They assured the Quaid of their readiness to make every sacrifice in these words:

We assure our Quaid-e-Azam of our deepest devotion and preparedness to make all sacrifices for Pakistan. We have full faith in your leadership and await your clarion call.⁵⁸

The Muslim students were equally resentful over the question of the Interim Government set up by the Viceroy. On this occasion too, the student community emphatically rejected the Viceroy's action and passed resolutions endorsing the League stand taken in this context.

The beginning of the year 1947 saw a tremendously disciplined Civil Disobedience Movement launched by the Muslim masses in the Punjab when the students became its vanguard. They made a show of complete discipline in their ranks and faced highhandedness at the hands of the police. The movement lasted for full one month and at its successful termination, rich tributes were paid to the students and all those sections of people which had participated in it. One of the comments read:

Muslim students have for several years been in the vanguard of the Muslim nationalist movement, which is represented by the Muslim League. They played their part most creditably in this movement and organized themselves into a disciplined and efficient unofficial volunteer corps of the Muslim League.⁵⁹

Some believe that this movement was more successful than those of the Congress, Khilafat, Kashmir and Shahidganj movements. Usually the authorities were in a position to curb such movements, at least temporarily if not totally, but in the political history of the South Asian Subcontinent, perhaps it was the first movement which could not be subdued even for a short period.

Meanwhile the confusion had become more confounded in the Indian body politic and the British Prime Minister announced the transfer of power to the Indian hands by June 1948. The new Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten arrived in early 1947 and after a series of talks with the Indian leaders, and in consultation with the British Government, announced the Independence Plan on June 3,

1947, which meant the creation of two independent and autonomous states - Bharat and Pakistan. According to the Independence Act 1947, referendum was to take place in the NWFP. On this occasion, the students' services were again acquired in the Frontier Province, where they worked along with the League workers for referendum. A number of students' batches spread out the in province to convince the Muslim voters to opt for Pakistan. It would not be exaggeration to predict that the League's success in the referendum was due to the student's stupendous work. The students activism was again noticed on another crucial occasion when a huge number of refugees from East Punjab and other parts of India began to pour into Pakistan. The students realizing their national duty immediately responded to the call of the *millat*. They engaged themselves in the refugee relief work. With their headquarters at Rishi Bhavan, Lahore, they divided themselves in different batches to ameliorate the sufferings of the crippled refugees. Camps were established at Wahga and other places including Lahore Railway Station. In these camps, the students escorted the immigrants from India and looked after their needs, such as clothes, utensils, medicines and food, etc. They raised a separate section of refugee relief work especially for the refugee Muslim students. This was known as 'Welfare Department for Displaced Students. Their main concern in context of assistance to such students was provision of books and necessary financial help for their further educational purposes. They also opened a separate Blood Bank and provided First Aid facilities to the sick and wounded refugees.⁶⁰

CONCLUSION

In the light of the above, it becomes apparent that the student community played a dynamic role in the struggle for Pakistan. There was a time when they were going ahead of their elders so far as the idea of a separate homeland was concerned. This fact is proved by the manifesto issued by the PMSF at the time of its inception in September 1937. They were seen in the vanguard at the time of the passing of the Lahore Resolution in March 1940. Again we find them endorsing the Pakistan

Resolution in unequivocal terms by arranging successive Pakistan Conference from the year 1941 to 1944, at important places. On the occasion of every political development, they devoted their energies for the cause of the All-India Muslim League and responded to every call that was made by the Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Whether it be the issue of the Viceroy's Council (1941), the question of the Quit India Movement (1942), the Cripps Proposals (1942), the Sapru Committee's formula or the Simla Conference (1945), they showed exemplary courage and determination to fight out the situation. Their organizational structure and unanimity of purpose ultimately resulted in successive victories for the Muslim League. Their activities were at peak during the crucial elections of 1945-46. This was the historic occasion when they worked as un-paid enthusiastic political workers of the League at the call of their leader. Their love for the Quaid and devotion to the cause of Muslim India brought them to the forefront as undefeatable champions of a nation that was struggling against heavy odds to win freedom not only from the British but also from the Hindus. Their effective participation in the general elections of mid-forties was undoubtedly the most dynamic part of their heroic struggle for the achievement of Pakistan a landmark in their history. Without the students' active help it would not have been possible for the League to have emerged as the only victorious party in the Muslim majority provinces. Their stupendous work during the historic Civil Disobedience Movement of January 1947, against the Unionist Government in the Punjab, has no comparison. Their youthful spirit during the refugee relief activities was taken notice of by the newly born nation. Their selfless sacrifices alone kept up the spirit of the displaced, dejected and mutilated migrants. As obedient followers of the Quaid, they sacrificed all they had. As sons of the soil, they shed their blood for the sanctity of the country. But, it is irony of history that the latter student generation could not keep up the pace and failed to maintain the standards set by those stalwarts whose glorious contributions in the national struggle need to be written in golden letters. Probably the reason was that the earlier generation of students had clarity