

# ***The Role of Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar in Pre and Post-Partition Eras: An Analysis***

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Epoch making sages and personages appeared on the Indian political scene at the turn of twentieth century not only enjoyed great influence on the hearts and minds of the people, but also exercised decisive command on the movement and direction of history. Quaid-i-Azam, Ghandi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Liaquat Ali Khan and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar represented a great response of Indian masses to the challenge of colonial servitude and subjugation. Their roles as men's leaders, freedom fighters, political organizers and statesmen formed a paramount part of that age. In all the above mentioned capacities, they could be placed in a significant position and rightly deserve special place in history without which the stories of freedom movement may be deemed incomplete. Nishtar was one of those personalities who played their due role for the socio-economic and political uplift of the Muslims not only prior to the partition of subcontinent but also after the creation of Pakistan he served the nation for a considerable span of*

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*time. The present study, however, pinpoints the efforts and contribution of Nishtar and critically evaluates his role and political career both in the pre and post-partition periods.*

### **Introduction**

Prior to the partition, the social, economic and political condition of the Indian Muslims was miserable. On the one hand, they were exploited by the Imperialist policies of British, while on the other; they were encircled by a powerful Hindu majority who had their own line of action regarding the independence of Indian subcontinent. The wise leadership and intelligentsia of Hindu community remained efficacious in bridging the gulf between the Hindus and the British government immediately after the War of Independence. Hence, they benefited from the British government which pushed them towards economic well-being and political awareness. The 1857 War of Independence consequently changed the political scenario of India. The British ascended the Indian throne and the direct British rule was imposed. The East India Company ceased to exist from the day the British Crown took over the political reign of India. The War of Independence had amply manifested the temper and tone of the local people to the new rulers who had though realized that it was no more possible to keep away the natives from the affairs of the country yet they were still reluctant to hand over power to them. It was really the political leaders and reformists of the Muslim community of India who took the responsibility to make the Muslims community politically aware in order not to be exploited by the other communities of the subcontinent. Like the leaders of the other provinces, a host of political leaders from the North West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) took active part under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-i-Azam for the achievement of Pakistan. Among those was Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar who proved himself worthy of the Quaid's confidence.

Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar was born in Peshawar on June 13, 1899 in Mohalla Rampura, Kocha Kakran. His father Abdul Hannan was a prominent figure of the Afghan tribe,

Kakar who opposed the British government.<sup>1</sup> He completed his early education in Mission High School and later in Sanatan Dharram High School Peshawar. He completed his B.A. from the University of Punjab and then was sent to the Aligarh Muslim University from where he got the degree of Bachelor in Law. The Aligarh Muslim University proved to be the breeding ground for the Indian Muslim political leaders of the All-India Muslim League in the post-1857 War era and also the source of inspiration of the leaders of League. Besides studies, Nishtar had the opportunities of meeting Maulana Jauhar and other leaders of the Khilafat Movement. He had been trained and prepared by this great institution of learning to take active part in the freedom struggle for the Muslims.

### **The Role of Nishtar in Pre-Partition Era**

Nishtar's active political career started from the hectic Khilafat days when he started participating in Khilafat Movement. He could not tolerate to see the Muslim community of India to be bifurcated in groups as he knew that such sort of fiction would divide the socio-political power of the Muslims. That strong spirit of support and sympathy for them led him to join the Khilafat Movement and strived for the unification of Muslim community across India.<sup>2</sup> In 1929, he joined the Indian National Congress (INC) and was one of the founding members of the Provincial Congress Committee.<sup>3</sup> Almost the whole region of the NWFP at that time was dominated by the Congress, the then leading political organization of India while the All-India Muslim League was not so organized and influential. Jinnah's absence also gave a setback to it as many Muslims joined the Congress due to the lack of sound leadership in the League. The Congress tried to show that it was the only

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1 Syed Mujawar Hussain Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography* (Lahore: Qadria Books, 1985), 3-4.

2 Daily *The Nation*, Islamabad, 13 June 2010, Azeem Ali, "Remembering Abdur Rab Nishtar".

3 Daily *Dawn*, December 30, 2006, Sharif al Mujahid, "Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: An Appreciation".

political organization of representing all the people of India. The League in NWFP was not well-organized due to the local political rivalries and factions among the Provincial League. On the other hand, the Congress was influential enough having a strong representative in the person of Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan.

Nishtar was a keen observer of matters and always remained a man of practice. When he perceived that the Congress was serving only the Hindu cause, he put his resignation to the Congress, stating, "Separation from the All India National Congress was because of the fact that I had known that Hindus were prejudiced against the Muslims and would never be sincere to them. The success of Indian National Congress in the freedom movement would mean that the Muslims getting them unchained from the British should enslave themselves to the Hindus."<sup>4</sup>

It was actually the Khilafat Movement that motivated Nishtar to concentrate wholeheartedly on politics. At the outbreak of the Movement, the young Nishtar at the age of 20 started composing verses, which expressed his attachment with the Khilafat Movement. The movement for extension of constitutional reforms to the NWFP, *Rangila Rasool* Agitation, movement for induction of elected representatives of the people to the local bodies of NWFP and agitation against Simon Commission added new dimensions to the politics of NWFP. Nishtar participated in all these movements under the banner of Local Khilafat Committee. In one of the gatherings in Peshawar City, he moved the following resolution:

This meeting of the citizens of Peshawar strongly protests against the proposed address to be presented to the viceroy on behalf of the Municipal Committee of Peshawar for its omission

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4 Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1992), 33.

in full or in part of the aspirations of the Frontier people for the extension of the reforms scheme to NWFP.”<sup>5</sup>

During 1929-38, Nishtar was involved with the local bodies in Peshawar. In the first local bodies elections held in November 1929, Nishtar contested the election from Ward No. 5 Peshawar City and stood successful. He served his people as Municipal Commissioner till the end of 1938. The 1935 Government of India Act provided for the first general elections in India. Nishtar contested the election as an independent candidate and elected to the provincial legislature of NWFP. The Quaid sent him a letter when he became member of the assembly:

Dear Mr. Nishtar,

Many thanks for your letter of the 11<sup>th</sup> August. Yes I know that you have been returned to the assembly. Let me congratulate you for it. I am in Delhi till the 21<sup>st</sup> March and shall be very glad to see you if you happen to be in Delhi.<sup>6</sup>

Nishtar had formally joined the League in 1936 as he wrote the Quaid, “In 1936, I was taken on the council of the League and since then I have been formally connected with it.”<sup>7</sup> On the invitation of Jinnah, Nishtar participated in the twenty sixth Annual Session of All India Muslim League, which was held at Patna.

Being an independent candidate in the provincial assembly, Nishtar not only took part in the assembly proceedings but also freely expressed his views on different legislative matters. He was the first one to move the NWFP Repealing and Amending Bill 1937 in the Assembly. The bill was meant to curtail the power of feudal class in the administration of the state affairs. The bill was presented in the NWFP Legislature with the object of amending and repealing certain

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5 Naushad Khan, “Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar”, In *Celebrities of NWFP* Vol. I & II, ed., Parvez Khan Toru and Fazal-ur-Rahim Marwat (Peshawar: Pakistan Study Center, University of Peshawar, 2005), 151.

6 Khan, “Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar,”154.

7 Khan, “Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar,”155.

feudal power by bringing it into the consideration of the Governor General.<sup>8</sup>

The status of Provincial Muslim League was not remarkable till 1937. Mr. Jinnah though accepted the League's defeat in the provincial elections of 1937 yet since then the Muslim League had won every by-election and the Quaid was confident enough that if the general elections were held in this province, the League would succeed. The Frontier League was formally affiliated with its central organization (AIML) on April 17, 1938 at Culcutta Session of the League in which Ziauddin moved a resolution urging upon the Muslims of India to take special steps to combat the Congress anti-Muslim activities in the NWFP. That session was attended by a large number of prominent figures of the province. The Quaid also promised due assistance to be provided to the League in Frontier.<sup>9</sup>

When the Congress Ministry in NWFP resigned on November 7, 1939, it created a favourable situation for the League in NWFP. The then Governor of the province invited Sardar Aurangzeb Khan<sup>10</sup> to form the ministry. Aurangzeb, however, was in trouble as he could not command a majority in the assembly.<sup>11</sup> He asked Nishtar (who was then an independent candidate) to join the ministry, but Nishtar was not in favour of forming a ministry with the help of Hindu-Sikh Nationalists. He knew that such a ministry would meet the

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8 National Archives of India, Home Political NA-1937, NA-F-13-3-37.

9 Riaz Ahmad, ed., *Papers Presented at the Three Days International Conference on All India Muslim League (1906-1947)*, 18-20 December 2006 (Islamabad) Vol. I (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Quaid-i-Azam University, 2006), 176.

10 Sardar Mohammad Aurangzeb Khan pertained to a famous Pakhtun tribe "Gandapur" of Dera Ismail Khan. He was born in a Zamindar family and got his early education in Karachi and Dera Ismail Khan and then went to Peshawar where he completed his B.A. from Missionary College. He obtained his L.L.B. degree from Aligarh University where he was the President of Muslim Student Union. He started his legal practice at Peshawar and remained in close contact with Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayum Khan. He formed the first Muslim League Ministry in NWFP during 1943-45.

11 Riaz Ahmad, *Papers Presented at the Three Days International Conference on All India Muslim League*, 176.

same fate as that of Sir Qayum. According to Nishtar, "I opposed the idea of forming a Muslim League Ministry because of the unfavourable circumstances like high prices and shortage of food and cloth etc."<sup>12</sup> However, Nishtar was convinced by Aurangzeb to join the ministry. Thus on May 23, 1943 the Muslim League Ministry in NWFP was sworn in with Sardar Aurangzeb Khan as Chief Minister. His cabinet was consisted of Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, M. Samin Jan, Abdur Rehman Khan and Sardar Ajit Singh. The portfolio of Finance was handed over to Nishtar.

It was the first Muslim League Ministry in NWFP which started functioning under the premiership of Aurangzeb Khan. The Muslim League got rid of the Congress rule. The formation of this ministry was regarded as a new ray of hope for the Muslims of India in general and for the Muslims of the NWFP in particular. The Congress blamed the authorities of conspiring against the people of province by installing the League ministry without popular support. Though the formation of this ministry was an extraordinary achievement in the political career of the Provincial League but it could work only for about two and a half years. The failure of this ministry had already been predicted by Nishtar which proved his deep foresightedness and insight.

In 1944 when the struggle of League entered into its decisive phase, Nishtar was appointed as member of the AIML Working and Planning Committees.<sup>13</sup> The Quaid himself chose him to represent the AIML at the Second Simla Conference 1946 and the June 3, 1947 Leader's Conference with Viceroy on partition plan. On October 14, 1946 the Quaid nominated him for the Interim Government in India on behalf of the League. In the interim set up he was given the portfolios i.e. Post and Air. Indeed Nishtar constantly remained on various responsible positions throughout his life. He made it clear that Pakistan would be a permanent, independent state with no possibility of future or union with

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12 Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography*, 104.

13 Khan, "Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar", In *Celebrities of NWFP*, 155.

India. The myth of United India was ultimately exposed when the political mission of Muslim League reached to its logical consequence in the shape of two separate states i.e. Pakistan and India.

### **Role of Nishtar after the Creation of Pakistan**

Nishtar did not abandon his political struggle rather he accelerated his activities to serve the nation more. In the initial phase it was necessary for the country to have a government consisting of veteran statesmen and experienced administrators in order to face the new challenges. The Quaid, who had become the first Governor General of Pakistan, had to choose members for the cabinet from amongst those whom he considered competent to steer the ship of the country skilfully through the hot waters. In the meanwhile, Nishtar was taken as communication minister in the first cabinet headed by Liaquat Ali Khan.<sup>14</sup>

After the commencement of Pakistan, one of the mega projects was framing of future constitution of the country. During the first meeting of the Assembly Sardar Nishtar moved a resolution proposing special rule for the election of the president of the Constituent Assembly. With a minor amendment proposed by Mr. Dharendra Nath Datta, rules indicated by Nishtar were adopted by the Assembly. Nishtar also proposed to appoint a committee consisting of a chairman to be nominated by the president of the Assembly to report on the rules of procedure of the assembly, powers of the president and procedure for declaration and filling of vacancies in the assembly. The resolution of Nishtar was adopted by the assembly without any amendment.<sup>15</sup> It demonstrates Nishtar's interest in the procedural formalities

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14 The swearing-in ceremony of the cabinet members took place on August 15, 1947 and the Governor General, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah administered the oath. Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography*, 162. See also, Jamil-ud-Din Ahmed, *Quaid-i-Azam as Seen by his Contemporaries* (Karachi: United Publishers, 1976), 240.

15 The first meeting of the Constituent Assembly was held in the Assembly Chamber, Karachi, on Sunday, August 10, 1947. Government of Pakistan, *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates*, Karachi, August 10-14, 1947.

before some matters were to be initiated. Indeed, he believed that everything should be decided in the light of certain principles and one should not implement policies without making the plans.<sup>16</sup>

Due to his honesty, Nishtar was appointed as chairman of the committee that had to submit its report on the matters related to minorities. Besides his preoccupation with so many hectic tasks, he had to divert his attention towards other matters as well. During September 1947, communal riots took place in East Punjab on a large scale. Nishtar and Liaquat Ali Khan visited Gujranwala, Sialkot, Ferozpur, Jullundar, Moga and Ludhiana and tried to create amicable atmosphere.<sup>17</sup>

As Jinnah proceeded to Quetta in May 1948 due to his severe illness, a committee of twelve persons was constituted to perform the duties of the President of the Constituent Assembly. Nishtar was also appointed as member of the said committee. On the death of Quaid-i-Azam, Nishtar expressed his condolence in these words:

“The father of our nation, the founder of our dear infant state is no more in our midst. That is an event too tragic for words. He was one of the greatest contemporaries and the greatest among the Muslims of his age. Our nation was much fortunate to have the Quaid-i-Azam period in our history. Though not physically present, the Quaid-i-Azam’s spirit will constantly inspire us to serve the state more than ever and to complete the task of building up Pakistan. We feel so helpless, almost like orphans, yet in the hour of our greatest loss and deepest grief, let me remind the nation that our

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16 Liaquat Ali Khan moved that a committee consisting of the president and 15 members be appointed to advise the Assembly on fundamental rights of citizens of Pakistan and on matters relating to the minorities with power to the president to nominate not more than seven members who need not be members of the Constituent Assembly. Nishtar was included in this committee. The committee was subdivided into two committees, to report on the matters relating to the minorities. Sir Zafrullah Khan and Nishtar became the chairmen of the committees respectively. Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography*, 164.

17 Mohammad Haneef Shahid, *Quaid-i-Azam ke Dast-e-Rast*, [Urdu: Right Hand of Quaid-i-Azam], (Lahore: United Publishers, 1976), 4.

Quaid-i-Azam never faltered in the darkest hour of our struggle. As his humble followers we should also bear this sudden calamity with fortitude and strive hard for the attainment of the goal that he set before us. This is the best way to pay our homage to our departed leader. Let us not forget the great motto of Unity, Faith and Discipline which the Quaid-i-Azam gave us".<sup>18</sup>

Nishtar believed that framing of a constitution was one of the most sacred duties of the Constituent Assembly. He clarified the beginning of the preamble of the Objective Resolution to those who opposed it. He was of the view that the sentence "the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan through its people for being exercise within the limits prescribed by Him"<sup>19</sup> means that "Pakistan does not believe in a chaotic land, a land where there is no government, where there is anarchy – Islam believes in an organized existence – and therefore, when we say in this Resolution that authority has been conferred upon the people but to be exercised by the people through their own organized will and in an organized manner."<sup>20</sup>

Nishtar believed in a society based upon the Islamic principles of freedom, equality and social justice for the Muslims and non-Muslims, believers and non-believers, men and women, poor and rich. He thought that the constitution of Pakistan should not only be framed but practiced in order to foster socio-economic and political stability. He held a firm conviction that the constitution of Pakistan based on Islamic principles would succeed and prove a panacea to the ailments which the world was suffering from. He appealed to

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18 Ahmed, *Quaid-i-Azam as Seen by his Contemporaries* (Karachi: United Publishers, 1976), 241. Also see; Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography*, 168.

19 "Whereas sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to Allah Almighty alone and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan, through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust". Government of Pakistan, Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates, *Official Report Vol. V*, Karachi, 07-12 March, 1949, 1.

20 Government of Pakistan, Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates, *Official Report Vol. V*, Karachi, 07-10 March, 1949, 56-63. See also, Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography*, 170.

the Muslim members of Constituent Assembly, "If my non-Muslim friends do not believe in these principles (Islamic principles) as a matter of faith, accept them on the basis of reason. If you are not ashamed of borrowing phrases from Abraham Lincoln, if you are not ashamed of quoting from Marx, Lenin, Rousseau and others, why should you be ashamed of borrowing something from Islam."<sup>21</sup>

The situation in Punjab became fragile during August 1949 that eventually led to the imposition of governor raj. Nishtar succeeded Sir Francis Mudie as the first Muslim governor of the Punjab province on August 2, 1949. Though the prevailing situation at that time was much crucial but he was hopeful of solving the problems of the province. He kept a direct contact with the general masses and major stakeholders of the province for the sake of socio-political cohesion and unification. He made a stirring call to the people to help him in the sacred task of uniting the different groups of people in order to bridge the gulf among them. Such an unprecedented approach on behalf of Nishtar demonstrates that he considered himself to be the servant of the people and he knew that without the cooperation of the general public it would be very difficult to resolve the problems the province was facing that time. He disliked factional rivalries and believed in unity, which in his view was necessary for the well-being of the country in general and the province in particular.<sup>22</sup>

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21 Nishtar opposed all the amendments proposed by Mr. Prem Hari Barma, Mr. Sris Chundra Chattopadyaya and Mr. Mohammad Iftikharuddin to the Objective Resolution presented by Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan. Nishtar's contribution for Islam was admirable. He considered the success of the Objective Resolution one of the great deeds of his life. When there was a controversy in the Assembly that the head of the State of Pakistan should be Muslim or non-Muslim, it was due to the courageous efforts of Nishtar that made it essential for the president of the state to be a Muslim. *Civil and Military Gazette*, Karachi, August 2, 1949, 1. See also; Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography*, 170-171.

22 While referring to the adverse prevailing situation in the Punjab, Nishtar declared, "Unfortunately the situation in Punjab province had deteriorated to a great extent. The Assembly and Ministry of the province had ceased to exist and Muslim League had also been divided into many groups. There

Indeed, the province was encircled by so many problems which needed immediate attention and proper surveillance. The foremost among them was the rehabilitation of refugees. Nishtar insisted that proper attention should be diverted to the well-being of refugees and he gave more time to the problems of refugees during his governorship. He considered refugees as one of the strongest forces during the freedom movement. He was aware of the fact that if considerable heed was not paid to their problems, the anti-state elements would exploit the issue and would make the refugees play havoc. Nishtar advised the masses that there should be no distinction between refugees and non-refugees. He warned the refugees against indulging in party squabbles and asked them to extend their fullest cooperation to the fellow people to live amicably. He wished that peace should prevail in every corner of the province.<sup>23</sup>

While eradicating the palpable chances of corruption from the province he established an anti-corruption department in the Punjab province under the home secretary, who was directly responsible to the governor. Moreover, he had all sympathies for the tenants. A large number of tenants were ejected by the land-lords in certain areas of the province. Nishtar enforced a law stopping the ejection of the tenants.

Nishtar was in favour of establishing a representative government in the Punjab. He made his efforts in this connection and strived to bring unity among the people and

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were a large number of refugees in the province and it had become a home of economic, political and social problems. I told the Prime Minister that the province had so many problems and whoever went here would bring bad name for him. But he advised me to accept this assignment. I took over as Governor of the Punjab with a view to save this province as its further decline could be dangerous for Pakistan". *Shah, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography*, 171. Also see, Agha Masood Hussain, *Azadi ki Kahani Meeri Zabani*, [Urdu: Story of Freedom by me], (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1976), 175-176.

23 Daily *Dawn*, Karachi, 01 November, 1949. See also, *The Daily Gazette*, Karachi, November 01, 1949, 1. See also, Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography*, 174.

prepare them for the elections of the provincial assembly. An enquiry was conducted against those members of the legislative assembly who were allegedly corrupt. He knew that there were some anti-state elements which were playing in the hands of enemy and were trying to create disturbances in the province. For an effective control of 'gundas', he insisted the central government for the implementation of 'Gunda Act'<sup>24</sup> in the Punjab. When the general atmosphere of the province became little bit normal, the elections for the provincial assembly were held in March 1953. Nishtar had given a stern warning to all the government servants not to interfere in the elections and advised them to remain impartial. The elections were held on adult franchise basis for the first time in the province and the Muslim League won an overwhelming majority. Although some reports of malpractices were received from some of the constituencies yet no politician held the governor responsible for such allegations.<sup>25</sup>

In the aftermath of the Liaquat Ali Khan's assassination, Khawaja Nazimuddin formed the cabinet. As no one could question the honesty and patriotism of Nishtar, again his services were requisitioned by the central government and he, in the new cabinet, was given the portfolio of industries. He wished that industries in the country should be promoted to such an extent that the country could become self-sufficient in every walk of life in the coming days. He was very eager in the development and promotion of coal mines in Balochistan and Punjab. He deputed experienced surveyors to submit a comprehensive report on the coal bearing regions in both the provinces. He insisted upon the adoption of proper measures to safeguard against the extensive damage of coal mines in Balochistan. He deemed

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24 For strict legal action against *gunda* elements indulging in illegal acts like bootlegging, gambling, cow slaughter, dealings in narcotic substances, human trafficking, sexual harassment of children, spurious drugs manufacturing, land grabbing, usury, kidnapping, selling illegal weapons, etc., this Act was implemented. For details of the Act see, The Punjab Control of Gunda Act, 1959.

25 Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography*, 178.

that if the scientists of the country work honestly, they could play a vital role in the development of industries and in the proper utilization of natural resources. He believed that factories should not be established with the sole object of earning more money by a few investors, but the workers who produce this wealth should also be given a proper share in the dividends and be provided with all amenities. To him, the trouble of the industrialists and workers was that a discontented labour was always pitched against the management. He insisted that there should be cordial relations between the workers and industrialists and advised both of them for mutual cooperation because it would eventually lead the country towards progress and prosperity.<sup>26</sup>

He strongly opposed the dismissal of Nazimuddin's cabinet and termed this act as unconstitutional and undemocratic. He expressed in his poetical language as "*bas itni khata per rahbari cheeni gayee hum say, kay hum say qafilay manzil pay lutwayay nahi jatay*, [Urdu: the leadership was snatched away from us merely on the ground that we can not abandon the masses at the mercy of dacoits], and *nairangeay siyasat-i-dauran to dekhiyay, manzil unheeh mili jo shareek-i-safar na thay*, [Urdu: look at the irony of contemporary politics, those who shunned the caravan, have reached the destination]."<sup>27</sup> He had also a strong affection with poetry and since his school days he took the pen name of 'Nishtar'. He was inspired from Akbar Allahabadi who for three years corrected Nishtar's poetry. Although most of his early poetry was lost in a house fire yet he wrote in a typical devotional style of the time. Occasionally, he wrote to shake the slumbering Muslim masses from their lethargy and

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26 Nishtar as Minister for Industries directed the Industrial Finance Corporation, Government of Pakistan to extend its support to the private companies and individual industrialists. It was due to his efforts that Finance Development Corporation of Pakistan also installed some industries in the country. Shah, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar: A Political Biography*, 180.

27 *Daily Dawn*, December 30, 2006.

complacency. In some of his poems there is an echo of Iqbal as well.

During his tenure as president of the Pakistan Muslim League (1956-58) he took the responsibility to infuse a new life in this political organization. He organized, reactivated and transformed it into a live organization and remained its president till his death. He died on February 14, 1958 in Karachi due to heart failure. Nishtar Medical College in Multan, Nishtar Park in Karachi, Nishtar Hall and Nishtar Abad (a town) in Peshawar are named after him.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar's role both in the pre-partition period and after the creation of Pakistan was unique and unprecedented. His services, contribution and political struggle were duly acknowledged by Jinnah himself. He was a camp follower of the All-India Muslim League and never dissociated himself from the fold of the League once he joined it. He occupied a place of eminence in the history of Pakistan. He was one of the top ranking leaders of the freedom movement. He plunged into politics since the Khilafat days and his socio-political activities helped him in formulating his ideas and his career as a noble and honoured person. His life was an unremitting service to this people and to his country. He associated himself first with Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar and then with the Indian National Congress, not for his individual purpose but for the sake of his co-religionists. However, soon he realized that the INC was promoting mostly the interests of Hindu community and thus he separated himself from it and worked independently for the betterment of his people. He joined the All-India Muslim League in 1937 when it was reorganized under the leadership of Quaid-i-Azam and till his demise he worked for the Muslim cause under the umbrella of League. With same energy and will, Nishtar served his nation when Pakistan appeared on the world map as an independent state. When he died, on that day the flags were flown at half-mast on all the state buildings as a mark of respect to the great leader.