Allama Sahabbir Ahmed Uthmani's Efforts for Islamization in Pakistan

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Abstract:

Allama Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani was one of the prominent religious personalities who made efforts for islamization in Pakistan. So far as the major slogan in 1946 elections were to have a separate homeland of the Muslims where they may be able to live according to the Islamic values. It means Islam was the real power behind the struggle for Pakistan in 1947. After the making of Pakistan a religious scholar Allama Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani presented his services for isalmization in Pakistan as in this respect he had a unique role for the enforcement of Islamic system in Pakistan. Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani wants to see the constitution of Pakistan to be the leading document towards religious state. In this respect Allama Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani made critical efforts for designing the constitution of Pakistan which was finally approved by the Constitutional Assembly of Pakistan.

Key Word: APJUI, BTI, BPC, Constitution of Pakistan, Objectives Resolution

Pakistan appeared on the map of the world on August 14' 1947. Existence of Pakistan was announced in the mid night of August 14 and 15. It was also 27th of Ramdan and the night of "Lala-tul-Qadr". Nobody could deny the fact that after the Islamic state of Madina, if any country has come into existence on the basis of Islamic ideology, is Pakistan. Existence of Pakistan was the result of "Two Nation Theory" which had Islamic concept in its base or foundation. In other words Islam was the real power and spirit working behind the existence of Pakistan. In the words of Ikram Azam; "Islam is Pakistan predominant unifying force and integrative elements". It gave a chance to the Muslim to gather on one platform. In the words of Iqbal;

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Prominent leaders of Pakistan Movement announced it time and again those we Muslims are a separate nation. We want such a price of land where we could mould our society in the light of Quran. Religious scholars and spiritual leaders declared, on the basis of this ideology, Pakistan movement as a battle between believers and non-believers. Atheists were united as they considered rising Islam a permanent threat to their existence. People on the other side had only one single aim of life, imposition of Islam. Significant leaders from the League repeated it in their speeches that the confrontation between leagues and non-leagues was of right and wrong. Support and favour was requested from the nation in the name of Islam, Quran, Allah and the Prophet PBUH. The nation responded positively at this call with full zeal and zest and the League were made a live force. This surprising success and popularity of the League was not the result of neither organizing structure of the League or personal character of the members. But it was under the effect of that clear and non-ambiguous issue presented before the nation as a battle between Muslims-non Muslims, Allah and atheists and right and wrong, ensuring that state of political unrest on all occasions and issues like election, language, national anthem, slaughter of cow and the battle of constitutional rights, the question was that of believers and non believers so the Muslims believed, in true sense of the word, that the movement started by League was Islamic one. League wanted to create such an atmosphere where there would be rule of no human made law but that eternal law will be imposed which no human need mind for its formulation. No human power could bring even a slight change in it. So the idea of Pakistan gained life from Islam and the main purpose of the establishment of Islam was its practical application. Speeches and writing of main leaders of Pakistan Movement reflected the ideology of Islam at many points and with great intensity. Dr. Safder Mehmood wrote that: "Quaid-i-Azam said in his speeches 101 times before the establishment of Pakistan and 14 times after the establishment of Pakistan that the constitution of Pakistan would be based on Islam".4

Pakistan came into being but only one aim of Pakistan Movement was achieved that was the division of the subcontinent. The other one, implementation of Islamic ideology was still pending. Thousands of scarified their honour, property, belongings and even their infants and made possible the establishment of Pakistan.⁵So the main process of imposing Islamic Shariha in the modern state.

According to Maulana Zafer Ahmed Ansari, after the establishment of Pakistan there were two main problems:

- A. Explanation and elaboration of Pakistan ideology, its protection and its imposition. It's very first target was preparation of a constitution that would be supportive in fulfilling the Islamic demands.
- B. Reorganization of elements and personals those were determined to have a practical form of Islamic commands and values in the society. The need was to have integrity and cooperation among their effects.⁶

In the last eleven or twelve years Ulema had struggled hard to achieve those aims. They not only protected the ideology but also took steps to answer the criticism.

Allama Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani is one of those renowned personalities of sub-continent whose services in the field of knowledge, religion and politics are like beacon house. Allama Uthmani played a unique role with great sacrifices in the struggle to achieve Pakistan. His character was also unique in the process of the enforcement of Islamic system in Pakistan. Qarri Fayoz-ur-Rahman writes in his book that: "Allama Uthmani joined Muslim League and provided it great strength after Quaid-i-Azam, existence of Pakistan, is his credit".

Allama Uthmani had arrived Karachi one week prior to the division of the country. He had been selected member of the constitutional assembly from Salhat (Bengal), so he remained the member of Pakistan constitutional assembly.8 Allama Uthmani arrival in Pakistan was related to the cause of serving the country and nation and implementation of Islamic Shariha in the country. He wanted to make Pakistan an Islamic fort and a role model for the rest of the world. He was a soldier of Islam and Pakistan. His life or death was for Islam and Pakistan. Once addressing a gathering with passion and excitement he said, "Brothers: if I am murdered during my struggle for Islam and Pakistan, for the sake of Allah and his Prophet (PBUH), my dead body may not be taken to India. I may be buried in Pakistan as Pakistani soil is sacred and undefiled as compare to the Indian soil".9

Sarwat Solat writes that Allama Uthmani had a great love and passion for Pakistan. Once he was informed that some people were planning to have his life he said, "If I am dead in the path of Allah, my dead body may not be taken to India but my burial may be in Pakistan". 10

First constitutional assembly of Pakistan had its meeting on August 11, 1947 and Quaid-i-Azam was selected the president unanimously. Allama Sabbir Ahmed Uthmani was at forefront in the processes of nomination and support. 11 First session of constitutional assembly was started with these verses of Holy Quran: say, O Allah; owner of sovereignty, you give the kingdom to whom please and take away the kingdom from whom so ever you please. You give honour to which you please and disgrace from whom so ever you please. All the good is in your hand. Surely you have power to everything. After this session, forever session of the assembly started with the recitation of the Holy Quran and this tradition is still in practice.

On 14 August 1947, Friday, whom Pakistan festival was to be celebrated, Muhammad Ali Jinnah honourd Allama Uthmani to hoist the flag accepting his great and historic services for Pakistan. Allama Uthmani recited some verses from the Holy Quran, delivered a short speech, raised the flag of independent Pakistan with his sacred hands and it was inauguration of world's largest Islamic state. 12 In this way Allama Uthmani laid the foundations of the country on Islamic basis so Muslim community welcomed him warmly over his religious, national and political services. Due to these wonderful services of Allama Uthmani, Quaid-i-Azam bestowed him the title of "Sheikh-ul-Islam". Hakeem Aftab Qureshi writes: "He enjoyed the position of Sheikh-ul-Islam in Pakistan and the proposal was presented by Quaid-i-Azam so that the Government can seek advice in religious matters". 13

In this way no one could be "Quaid-i-Azam" after Muhammad Ali Jinnah and no one could be accepted as "Quaid-i-Millat" after Nawab Liagat Ali Khan, no personality was the "Sheikh-ul-Islam" after Allama Uthmani. He was the first and last Sheikh-ul-Islam of Pakistan. Allama Uthmani was personal advisor for Quaid-i-Azam and Pakistan Government not only in political affairs but also in religious matters. Sayyed Suleman Nadvi writes that when he reached Karachi, he demanded no government post except he was special advisor in religious affairs. The people of Pakistan named him as Sheikh-ul-Islam that had been the title of Qazi in Islamic States ¹⁴. As the foundation of Pakistan was based on the sacred "Kalma" so steps were taken, during Pakistan movement, to materialize this slogan. Eminent scholars were together in "Mailis Ulema-i-Pakistan" in Lahore. The very first task of this Majlis was to cooperate with the national government in the process of preparation of a modern but Islamic constitution formation. Scholars were to decide about the line of action in the light of Quran, Sunnah and Figah. On the request of Shafiq Ahmed Siddiqui, Secretary Majlis-i-Ulema, Allama Uthmani accepted not only the membership but also the leadership. Allama Uthmani advised the administrators Muglis-ul-Ulema, through a letter, to invite ulema and intellectuals attached with different scholars of thought. The purpose was to seek their help in the preparation of Islamic constitution so that the constitution is free from any difference of opinion. Allama Uthmani said that he would raise his voice regarding the issue in the assembly. It would be representation of emotions of the Muslims and it would be the voice of his inner self ¹⁶.

In a statement on 1th September 1947, Allama Uthmani said, "we are grateful to Allah that He has granted us an independent country. Muslim Ummah is thankful to Quaid-i-Azam because his untiring efforts and political insight has helped the nation to reach the destination. It should also be kept in mind that the base of two nation theory is religion. If Ulema had not joined Pakistan Movement and it had not been given a religious colour and hence there would have been no zeal and zest in the blood of the Muslims. However, scholars and Muslim leaders worked in collaboration to make the Muslim awake and together at one point. So it is compulsory that Islamic comprehensive and religious principles should be considered before the preparation of constitution.¹⁷

Allama Uthmani considered it the most urgent to mould all institutions of the state and all law into Islamic context. So that Pakistani masses and the leaders do not think about going away from the 'Deen' as was done earlier by Mustafa Kamal in Turkey. Allama Uthmani emphasized the Pakistani leaders, "the wounds afflicted to us before and after the creation of Pakistan can only be healed through Islamic constitution. Non-Islamic practices being seen in Pakistan will not be tolerated, if Ministers and Governors failed to fulfill their promises with Muslims voters. They will have to vacate the designations". 18

Allama Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani knew very well that no constitutional set up can work temporarily because all principles of history, psychology, sociology and ethics are a compulsory part of a constitution. Demands of human nature and the principles of collective benefits are given the priority. SO he gave a chance to constitutional assembly to implement laws of Shariha in the country. On February 27, 1948 Allama Uthmani presented two resolutions in the session of constitutional assembly:

- 1. The Muslim had demanded Pakistan with an aim to have a separate state where they can lead their life according to Islamic laws and Shariha. People of Pakistan are showing no more endurance to achieve the goals so a committee of scholars and thinkers should be formulated to prepare recommendations for a constitution in the light of Islamic Shariha.
- To have an Islamic life pattern, according to the wishes of Pakistani 2. nation, a law making institution should be established. It would work for all religious related matters like administration of Augaf, Islamic preaching and education and such other affairs of the state.¹⁹

After the establishment of Pakistan main focus of Allama Uthmani was upon the implementation of Islamic system in the country. He strongly believed that all works of life would go well if done according to Quran and Sunnah. In this context when Quaid-i-Azam went to visit East Pakistan in March 1948, Allama Uthmani asked Maulana Zafer Ahmed Uthmani, Maulana Ather Ali and Mualana Deen Muhammad (Mufti Azam Dhaka) to have a meeting with Quaidi-Azam. In the meeting, along with other matters, these persons told Quaid-i-Azam that the promise of Islamic System in the country is not being fulfilled. People are in a state of confusion. They ask us where the Islamic system is. On this, Quaid-i-Azam replied, "this promise would be fulfilled. I have not deceived the nation. Your government is an Islamic one. The constitution would be no other than Islamic and it would be before you very soon. Maulana Uthmani is in the assembly and the work is in progress under his guidance. This is a delay due to some unavoidable problems but there would be no delay any more". ²⁰

Quaid-i-Azam had given words to Allama Sabbir Ahmed Uthmani and his companions that there would be Islamic system of life in Pakistan. Quaid-i-Azam was firm on his promise but the new born state was suffering many problems created by Hindus and these problems were causing a delay in the implementation of Islamic system. Allama Uthmani, during this process, continuously had meetings with government representatives and guided them about the line of action. When the situation was a bit better, Maulana Uthmani consulted Allama Ehtsham-ul-Haq Thanvi and Maulana Zafer Ahmed Ansari. It was decided to invite some scholarly persons from India. The purpose was to prepare a sketch of Islamic constitution. So a committee of Ulema consisting of Maulana Sayyid Suleman Nadvi, Maulana Mufti Mohammad Shafi, Sayyid Manzir Ahsan Gillani, Dr. Hameed Ullah Hyderabadi, Maulana zafar Ahmed

Uthmani, Maulana Idrees Kandhalvi, Maulana Badar Alem Mirthi and Maulana Ehtisham ul Haq Thanvi was formed.²¹ From these Ulema some Ulema were not in Pakistan. So Mallana Uthmani sent Maulana Ehtisham-ul-Thanvi to India. He, on the behalf of Sheikh-ul-Islam, invited Mufti Mohammad Shafi, Maulana Gillani, Maulana Sayyid Suleman Nadyi and Dr. Hameed Ullah to come to Pakistan and help for the preparation of Islamic constitution. Allama Sayyid Suleman Nadvi could not come at that time due to some problem. All the rest feeling the importance of the task came to Pakistan. In mid 1948 discussions went on for three month and a format was prepared inrespect were discussed. All the discussion and further work was done on it.²² The Ullema remained in touch continuously and different steps were considered for the formulation of Islamic laws. But all the efforts to implement Islam in Pakistan faced a great shock with the death of Muhammad Ali Jinnah on September 11, 1948. Allama Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani led the funeral prayer of Quaid-i-Azam. He delivered on impressive and sympathetic speech on this eve. He paid tribute to Quaid-i-Azam and said, "Departure of Quaid-i-Azam has caused a great loss not only to Pakistan but the whole Muslim world. He ruled the hearts of people. He wanted Islam in Pakistan. May Allah give us (Pakistani nation) strength to protect this trust Pakistan and to make it progress". 23

In the same way on December14, 1948 in constitutional assembly session Allama Uthmani favoured the resolution of condolence. He not only paid tribute to Quaid-i-Azam but also expressed the determination to make Pakistan an Islamic welfare state.²⁴After the death of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, most of the persons present in the government and members of assembly were production of non-Islamic foreign environment so they were not in favour of Islamic constitution in the country. To have a secular system in the country, they started a campaign against the Ulema. For one and half month after the death of Quaidi-Azam, there was complete silence with no procession or meeting for the implementation of Shariha. Allama Sabbir Ahmed Uthmani and other Ulema had faith in Governor General Khawja Nazim-u-Din. He during his two year reign arranged many conferences of Ulema, in East Pakistan and the aim was to promote Islamic laws in the country. In this regard when he took as Governor General, he advised his staff to fallow Islamic teachings in their lives and be role model for common people.²⁵

Allama Uthmani says, about preparation and approval of constitution of Pakistan, in a statement, "In party meetings the issue under discussion was the base of the constitution. After correction and amendment in many manuscripts a final one was made ready for discussion, and we announced that we have done our job. Now it is the duty of the men is power and members of the assembly to get it approved by the constitutional assembly with nobody. This manuscript was ready by the end of 1948".26

In a nutshells, we can say that in the process of initial sketch of the constitution, formation of constitutional committee, putting the issue in its agenda and then its approval, Allama Uthmani had the main role, all that was result of his matchless effort and determination. But still the basic sketch needed

approval from constitutional assembly so the secular group of people was busy in spreading hatred against the Ulema who were at fore front in the demand for Islamic constitution. Allama Shsbbir Ahmed Uthmani decided to resign from the membership of constitutional assembly, as a protest against hidden malicious planning's of men in power. But some friend asked him not to resign but to unveil authorities by protesting in the assembly.²⁷

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Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam organized a great conference in Dhaka on 9th and 10th February 1949. The purpose was to raise voice against non-Islamic and selfish attitude of the people in power. Allama Uthmani, in his speech exposed the attitude of the government officials in these words, "Pakistan was achieved on the base of the principle that Muslims are a separate nation. Now it is the duty of the government to make Pakistan strong and stable and this task is not possible without Islamizing the state. There is no need of being as hand of Islam. The government should have courage and declare Pakistan an Islamic state, if Islamic principles are not adopted in Pakistan, its existence may be impossible". Allama Uthmani further said, "Whenever Jamait Ulama-i-Islam presented suggestions in this regard, it is said to be the party of belief worship. Some people criticize it by saying "Mullahs" demand share in the government. Jamait needs no share in the administration; it needs only the government to be Islamic".28

This speech delivered by Allama Uthmani caused a state of earthquake in the power house. So when authorities saw the dizziness of Ulema, they started the constitution process speedily. In the struggle for an Islamic constitution, Hakeem Aftab Qureshi wrote about Allama Uthmani's efforts, determination and his warning to the government, in these words, "Muslim League has announced, under the leadership of Quaid-i-Azam, that the constitution of Pakistan would be Islamic. After the death of Quaid-i-Azam, government personal started opposing this demand and they supported the movement of secularism. Allama Uthmani was agitated and uneasy due to this situation and he decided to organize country wide movement in the favour of Islamic constitution. In this movement, he made it clear to the men and power, "If Islamic constitution demand is ignored in Pakistan, my path way would be different from yours, I would inform the nation that government has no good intentions regarding Islamic constitution".²⁹

At last demand of Islamic constitution was being made from all corners of the country. The environment became conducive and Objectives Resolution was presented. In this way the people working against it secretly, failed.³⁰ Although Objectives Resolution was presented by the Prime Minister Liagat Ali Khan yet the manuscript was prepared after long thinking and consideration by Allama Uthmani and his companions. One group of the people in power tried to create hindrances and got it approved by the assembly on March 12'194931. It was a promise to make constitution of Pakistan in the light of Quran and Sunnah. Allama Uthmani delivered an excited, wel-argued, literary, comprehensive and end enlightening speech on March 9, 1949³². It shows how deep eye he had on contemporary issues. This resolution set Pakistan in the correct direction. No ruler or dictator can deny it and can not negate its greatness and benefits. Allama

Uthmani has left rememberable and un-erasable marks in the process of preparation and approved of Objective Resolution. At this eve Ulema performed a historic deed. They organized a matchless and unique struggle to make Pakistan ideology secure and the base of constitution Islamic, under the leadership of Allama Uthmani. Ulema proved that their loyality was with real Pakistan ideology.

When Objectives Resolution was passed it become essential to make constitution in the light of Quran and Sunnah. For this purpose authorities, on the advice of Allama Uthmani, formulated a board of five Ulema to mould the constitutional recommendations in Islamic context. This board started its work in the mid of 1949 under the supervision of Allama Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani and Maulana Akram Khan. Except Sayyid Suleman Nidvi all the scholars participated in board activities. Sayvid Suleman Nidvi accepted the membership at the end. Mufti Mohammad Shafi, Dr. Hameedul Allah, Mufti Muzafer Hussain Mujtahid and Maulana Abdul Khaliq were the members of the board.³³It was a time when resentment for Islamic government was at both fronts-insides the assembly and out sides the assembly. At both the fronts no notable difference of opinion was seen. But due to the death of Allama Uthmani on December 13, 1949 in Bahawalpur, the most effective and prominent element of Islamic constitutional movement, vanished.³⁴

In brief, all the efforts, interests and activities of Allama Uthmani regarding preparation and implementation of Islamic constitution were focused on one point. He wanted Pakistan to be an Islamic fort. Due to his religious and scholarly services Punjab University gave him honorary degree of "Doctor of oriental learning" on December 19, 1949.35And after 40years of existence of Pakistan on the eve of Independence Day in 1987, his services for Pakistan were acknowledged and he was given gold medal.³⁶

Conclusion:

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To conclude, it can be said Allama Uthmani was the brightening sun of Islamic Shariah. His whole life was spent serving the country and the nation. Allama Uthmani wanted the system of Khilafat-i-Rashida in the country. He wanted to make Pakistan Islamic fort and an exemplary state. He showed unique spirit, determination and struggle in preparation and approval of Islamic constitution in Pakistan. But it is a matter of extreme sorrow that we deviated from the vision of Allama Uthmani. In this way we have expanded our territorial, lingual, political and economical problems. The reason behind all this is negation of vision of Allama Uthmani and our corruption. If we had been following his vision, we would not have seen such poor circumstances. Now it is the need of the hour that we act upon the teachings of the founders of Pakistan. Only Islam provides solution of all our problems as Islamic system has been declared the saviour of the whole Muslim world.

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- 10. Sarvat Sulat, Pakistan kay Bray Loog, Lahore, Islamic Publication, 1972, p. 213. Nehru offered different posts with Bangloes to stay in India and through a message said, "If Maulana is respectable for the Muslims, he has the same position of prestige for us". But Allama Uthmani rejected all comforts and posts and answered to Nehru, "Pakistan has been created by the blessing of Allah. Now if people throw me out by force, even then I would not like to leave it. My life and death is attached with it". For detail see, The Daily, Nawa-i-Waqat, Rawalpindi, 13 December 1984.
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 Collective regular five time prayers started in Governor General House and it was the result of sincere efforts made by scholars and Ulema regarding implementation of Islamic system in Pakistan.
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