

Rise and Growth of Jamaat-E-Islami

Mukulesur Rahaman

M.Phil Scholar, Gour Banga University

There are many Islamic reform movements leading to work on fundamental line in Indian sub-continent during the colonial period such was Jamaat-e-Islami, formed on 26 August, 1941 at Lahore under the leadership of Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi¹. Though Moududi established the Jamaat, it was there in his mind for a long time before, as expressed by himself on several occasions. In his late teens itself he, as a journalist, became aware of the deteriorating conditions of Muslims and felt the need of the day of an organisation that could lift his community out of its gloom². By this time, he had formulated his all-embracing concept of Islam to a greater extent. Initially, he was in favour of a non-formal organisation that could prepare the ground for a higher end by attracting the Muslims towards the basics of Islam such as saum wa salat (Fasting and Prayer).

The monthly magazine named '*Tarjuman ul Quran*' was published by Abu Mohammad Masleha. Its aim was to give the message of the Quran every door to door. In 1932 the editing responsibility of the '*Tarjuman ul Quran*' monthly was handed over to Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi seeing his eligibility for that work by him. After taking its charge Maududi started writing of the following matter- the principle of thoughts, doctrine and civilized culture of this world are being broken out, are to be criticized from the corner of the view of Quran, the discussion on the principle of the Quran-Sunnah of every subjects- philosophy, science, economics, culture and society. In his mouthpiece, '*Tarjuman ul Quran*', he applauded Moulana Ilyas Kandhalvi's initiative to form an informal organisation, which became popular as *Tablighi Jamaat*³. Taking the reins of '*Tarjuman ul Quran*' in his own hands was also a step towards achieving this aim. In one of his addresses he vehemently expressed these feeling: "I've started publication of '*Tarjuman ul Quran*' with this intention only. In other words, I haven't issued a magazine but in fact, put the net to catch the fishes of my taste"⁴.

Establishment of *Dar ul Islam* near Pathankote, Punjab, with the initiative of Allama Iqbal, in March 1938, was another step ahead for the embodiment of that inherent desire⁵. The basic aim and objective of *Dar ul Islam*-

- 1) After the fall of Caliphate, Muslims had no ideal environment as per thought & work and in present day *Dar ul Islam* has no representative impression on Muslims.

- 2) To spread and to survive Islamic views through the behaviour, characteristics and speeches need a human tribe.
- 3) To challenge hypocrisy system of thoughts, people need to learn Islamic knowledge as well as modern science.
- 4) It needs to create a team of skilled and well-character people who will unite them canvassing the Islamic thoughts and works.
- 5) Some non-Muslim also can attend in this mission to observe the principles of it to uphold the characteristics of Caliphate.

Maulana Abul Ala Maududi's famous articles, published as a series in '*Tarjuman ul Quran*' from April 1937 to 1941 and later compiled in three volumes under the title '*Musalman our Maujudah Siyasi Kashmakash*', also intended to prepare the ground for creation of such an organisation. In these articles, especially in '*Jamaat-e-Islami Ki Tashkeel*', published in '*Tarjuman ul Quran*', March 1941, he envisaged that: 'though Islam has a true concept or system is not enough; it requires an organised movement to popularise and implement practically for solving all the problems of bewildering humanity with those who require it. Further, Islam is not static religion or mere concept, rather it was a dynamic movement and all the Muslims were in fact the active members of this movement. The Muslims in course of time forgot their status and responsibilities and were reduced to just formal and passive members. They also forgot the comprehensiveness and all-embracing nature of Islam. The degeneration reached to an extent that it affected even their congregational life. Consequently, there was no Muslim organisation in India that had been presenting the Islam in its true and comprehensive spirit; those prevailing organisations had been representing one or the other mundane issues of Muslims. Hence, the Indian Muslims were in an urgent need of an organisation that could present the Islam in its true spirit before the Muslims as well as others'⁶.

Hitherto, Maulana Abul Ala Maududi wished that any existing Muslim organisation would set its aim in accordance with the above ideology but his wish remained unfulfilled. However, he did nothing practically to convince any Muslim organisation in this regard.

Maududi, became confident of his hold upon the mind and thought of a considerable number of the Indian Muslims by the advent of the fifth decade. On the contrary, he was anxious of the growing influence of congress' Muslim mass contact programme, Jamiyat ul Ulema's combined nationalism and Muslim League's separatism upon the Indian Muslims. However, he invited all the like-minded people to convey their feelings in this regard to the editor through his mouthpiece, '*Tarjuman ul Quran*' in April 1941, almost one year after the adoption of 'Pakistan Resolution' by the Muslim League. Later, on the basis of the response of the people, through meagre but more than expected, responded from different nooks and corners of India, it was decided to conduct a meeting at Lahore, to discuss the potentialities and possibilities for the formation of a saleh Jamaat (noble organisation) to lead the Indian Muslims at that juncture⁷. Individual invitation to some 150 of such people had been sent. The meeting was scheduled to be held on 25th August, 1941, at the office of Tarjuman ul Quran, Mubarak park, Poonchh Road, in Lahore⁸. However, due to non-arrival of some of the expected delegates it was postponed to the next day. The majority of the participants belonged to those who had a strong urge to do something for the cause of Islam but were disillusioned with the present organisations and leaders⁹.

Mentioning the above gathering, Maududi envisaged that it was the right time to induct an organisation to accelerate the Islamic movement in an organised manner. The purpose of this congregation would be to set up such a movement by mutual consultation with those who had consciously adopted the Islamic faith and ready to relinquish their individual identity into the folds of an organisation in accordance with the dictates of the God almighty and His Apostle¹⁰. However, the immediate underlying concern before Maududi would have been to prevent the Muslims from the onslaught of the non-Islamic notions presented by some of the Muslims organisations, like the Muslim League, under the guise of Islam. Here, Nasir Shamsi's view is noteworthy that the creation of Jamaat was not to oppose the separation but to present Muslim League's alternative at the head of the struggle for a Muslim state, to check Pakistan's secularisation, and to deliver what the Muslim League had promised but could not possibly deliver. The inaugural address set the foundation of the Jamaat's ideology. Maududi stated that the principle difference must be understood well which exists between Jamaat movement and prevailing movements or those movements most commonly found amongst Muslims as follows:

- 1) These movements have either made some aspect of Islam or some worldly objective for Muslims as their foundation. But Jamaat movement would be for the Islam in its whole.

- 2) The organisational structure in them is along the lines of different worldly associations and parties but Jamaat movement would be followed the model of Prophet's first organisation in its organisational matters.
- 3) All kinds of people were recruited in them on the assumption that since they were born in the Muslim community, they would be Muslims and the result was that from members to associates to leaders a majority of people who entered the administration of these Jamaats were neither of reliable character nor capable of shouldering any responsibility. But Jamaat organisation will take only those Muslims who accept the Islam by consciousness of all the requisites, corollaries and consequences of such act and fulfil at least the basic requirements of Islam.
- 4) The other Muslim movements are focussed only India and the Indian Muslim community. Those who have broadened their vision extend it up to Muslims of the world. Thus these movements remain confined to the Muslim community and their interests also remained confined to the problems related to the Muslims. Amongst the activities they do there is nothing that would appeal to non-Muslims and in fact most of them have become a hurdle in the way of non-Muslims coming towards Islam. But Jamaat organisation will engulf all Humans in its sphere of activity¹¹.

After this explanation, Maududi read out the constitution of the proposed Jamaat-e-Islami. Already printed copies had been dispatched to them by various possible means. Maududi, unlike Maulana Ilyas Kandhalvi who founded the Tablighi Jamaat on a non-formal basis, insisted a formal setup with a written constitution. This manifests his modern-nationalist approach. The proposed constitution was adopted unanimously with some amendments and minor modifications. The important points of the constitution were as follows:

Creed: The basic creed of the Jamaat-e-Islami is “La Ilaha Illallaha Muhammad ur Rasul ullah”, i.e. the Divine Being is solely Allah, there being no god except Him, and that Muhammad (peace be on him) is Allah's messenger.

Objective: The basic objective of the Jamaat-e-Islami and all its endeavours is the establishment of Hukumat-e-Ilahia in this world and achievement of Divine pleasure and success in the life-hereafter¹².

Emirate: There will be an Amir of the Jamaat who will not have the status of the Amir ul Mumineen, rather his status will be that of a leader of an organisation. He will be obeyed by the members of the Jamaat in righteous as their Amir¹³.

All the participants of the meeting, total seventy-five, including luminaries such as Maulana Manzoor Ahmed Numani, Maulana Ameen Islahi and Muhammad Ali Kakwarwi, agreed with Maududi's proposal and unanimously resolved to constitute such an organisation. Hence, on 26th August, 1941, Maududi formally announced the formation of Jamaat-e-Islami. It was just one and half year after the adoption of the famous 'Pakistan Resoluion'.

In 1941, Jamaat's total strength is 75 members- Punjab-41, U.P-13, Madras-3, West Bengal-1, Central India-1, Haryana-1, Bihar-2, Kashmir-1, Hyderabad-2, Gujrat-1, Delhi-1, Bombay-1, the other members were from various part of India. However, some other people who belonged to various organisations were well educated intelligentsia, frustrated Muslim personalities from Muslim League and Congress were attracted towards Jamaat preferably those were Mian Tufayl Muhammad and Malik Ghulam Ali and many others increased its strength joining Jamaat to 850 in April 1944.

But, nearly 300 members were expelled for their shortcoming to the stern criteria in the mid-1944. Besides, there were thousands of Hamdards and Muttafiqeen, i.e sympathisers and those who agreed with Jamaat's aims and objectives. More than eight hundred attended Jamatt's convention held in 1945 at Pathankote. As per the official records of the Jamaat the total strength of member in April 1947 was 532. The zone wise strength of the members was as follows: Punjab-264, U.P-95, Hyderabad-39, Madras-35, Sarhad-23, Delhi-17, Sindh-11, Bombay-11, Bihar-10, West Bengal-08, Rajputana-08, Central India-07, Mysore-04. At the time of bifurcation of the Indian sub-continent, in August 1947, there were 635 members in the undivided Jamaat¹⁴.

(Footnotes)

- ¹ Ahmad Irfan, Islamism and Democracy in India: The Transformation of Jamaat-e-Islami, Ranikhet, 2010,p.61
- ² Dr. Zakirullah Mohd, Jamaat-e-Islami of India: A Political Perspective,2014,p.97
- ³ Tarjuman ul Quran, Oct.1939,vol.15. No.2
- ⁴ Syed Asad Gilani, Tarikh-e-Jamaat-e-Islami, Lahore, 1982,p.395
- ⁵ Tarjuman ul Quran, 1938,vol.13,No.1p.18
- ⁶ Maududi, Musalman our Maujudah Siyasi Kashmakash,vol.III, PP.13-14,35-38,120-123,195-202.
- ⁷ Shoba-e Nashr wa Isha'at, Jamat-e-Islami Hind, New Delhi, 2002, vol.1, p.4

- ⁸ Syed Asad Gilani, *Tarikh-e-Jamaat-e-Islami*, Lahore, 1982,p.166
- ⁹ Rudad Awwal, p.5
- ¹⁰ Rudad Awwal, pp.5-6
- ¹¹ Rudad Awwal, p.5-6
- ¹² A. Maududi, "Dastoor-e-Jamat-e-Islami" in *Tarjuman ul Quran*, May 1941, vol.18, No.3, pp.9-11
- ¹³ *Ibid*,p.79
- ¹⁴ Dr. Zakirullah Mohd, *Jamaat-e-Islami of India: A Political Perspective*,2014,p.112