TAHRIK-I-JADID

ITS BIRTH, ACHIEVEMENTS AND IDEALS

By

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THE month of November in the year 1934 will always remain significant in the annals of the Ahmadiyya Movement when it turned a new leaf in its life and Tahrik-i-Jadid was born which now controls its entire missionary enterprise in foreign lands.

As the incident of birth is ever preceded by the pangs of travail, there was much thundering of dark clouds and the Community had to face many severe trials before Tahrik-i-Jadid saw the light of day.

The cause of all this uproar and clamour against the Community was the growing popularity of Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, the present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community, among masses.

He had, before the dawn of that year, triumphed in the ordeal of the then Kashmir Question and under his prudent leadership the All-India Kashmir Committee had secured some basic rights of freedom for the Kashmiri people from their tyrant Raja.

Ahrar Agitation

The seething lava burst forth and Ahrar, the leaders of anti-Ahmadiyya agitation declared in their manifesto that they would break the Movement into pieces and crush it to 'the last of its supporting props and bricks.'

The Ahrars were a group of unprincipled, bigoted Muslims, who, in their assumed guise of the defenders of Islam were in reality harming its interests by disrupting Muslim unity and supporting their Hindu Masters in the cause of sabotaging Pakistan. Subsequent events revealed that the Ahrar party was a mere puppet in the hands of the Indian National Congress which used it to subvert Muslim ranks.

The Ahrar leaders plied their art of oratory against the Movement and in those days it became a daily routine with them to denounce the Movement from the pulpit as well as in the press and to subject its holy Founder to vile attacks of ridicule and ignominy. This campaign of hatred was conducted throughout the Punjab including Qadian which formed the Headquarters of the Movement at that time.

Then to bring the matter to speedy climax they decided to hold a religious conference at Qadian and incited the infuriated masses to participate in it in thousands to witness for themselves the assumed destruction of Qadian.

The real motive behind it was to provoke a serious riot at Qadian and thereupon to condemn Ahmadis as lawless people thus degrading them in the eyes of both the government and the public.

Unforunately some officials of the then British Government, conniving at the activities of Ahrars, allowed them to hold the so-called religious conference at Qadian and vilify the Movement with impunity.

So the situation at Qadian grew worse. With Ahrars bent upon creating mischief and the attitude of the Government quite unsympathetic the patience of the Community was put to a very severe trial and the whole problem owing to its complexity needed a very cautious handling.

This explosive situation, however, put Hazarat Ameer-ul-Momineen on his mettle and with the Grace and Mercy of God, he managed the affair so ably that nothing untoward happened at Qadian. The plans of Ahrars were frustrated and the Government had also to give up its untenable stand.

It is worth mentioning here that in a sermon concerning Ahrar anti-Ahmadiyya compaign Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momineen, on an inspiration from God declared that Ahrars would soon lose the ground from under their feet. A year had hardly passed on this prediction when Ahrars committed a blunder in handling the case of Shahidganj Mosque and in consequence thereof utterly forfeited the confidence of Muslims. This brought their dreams of assuming Muslim leadership to an ignominious end.

Demands of Tahrik-i-Jadid

Besides combating successfully the Ahrar menace and neutralizing the effects of their machinations Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momineen felt the need of fortifying the Movement against such base attacks. The situation held a threatening challenge to him and posed a big question mark.

The answer came in the shape of Tahrik-i-Jadid or the 'New Scheme.' It was a plan or order of battle designed to stimulate the members of the Community to acts of supreme sacrifice; to establish through their contributions a Permanent Fund for the propagation of Islam and to expand the missionary work of the Movement in all directions until it covered the whole world.

The Scheme consists of 19 demands in all. Its main features, however, are: (1) Simple living and observance of thrift in every walk of life (2) Subscribing towards the Permanent Fund of the Scheme (3) Participating in missionary venture of the Movement by dedicating one's life for a period which suits one's circumstances.

Although the Scheme was not made compulsory and every Ahmadi was free to support it or otherwise as his good sense dictated yet the overall response which it received from the Community was extremely successful. Besides the requisite Fund hundreds of highly qualified young men offered their lives to their revered Imam, asking him to get use of them as he thought fit.

The Community acclaimed the whole Scheme vigorously and rich Ahmadis also reduced their expenses to the minimum.

Marriage ceremonies became simple and Ahmadis vowed not to waste their money in vain pursuits of pleasure like picture going, making unnecessary gold ornaments and fine clothes.

Every year in November, Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momineen inaugurates the dawn of the new year (of the New Scheme) and exhorts the Community to feats of still higher sacrifice in view of greater work ahead. The branches of the Community throughout the world do likewise and celebrate a Day to review the achievements of the past years and renew their pledges for the next year of the 'New Scheme .'

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Achievements of Tahrik-i-Jadid

The story of the achievements of the 'New Schem if told in detail will cover much more space than is availab in this brochure and I have therefore restricted myself give only a brief outline.

The main achievement of the 'New Scheme' whic has stirred the religious world and made the Christia Church admit its defeat comprises the new missions, mos ques and educational seminars built in several foreig countries and the literature which has been produced o Islam.

It is not possible to list individual achievements o every mission started under the 'New Scheme'. Suffice i to say that in Europe, which is the cradle of modern civi lization and which still exerts a powerful influence on bot Asia and Africa, much new ground has been covered an missions have been opened in countries where Islamic in fluence had never reached before.

Norway, Sweden and Denmark or the Scandanavia countries as they are called lie to the extreme north o Europe and being very remote from the Islamic empires i Europe established by the Moors and the Ottoman Turk practically remained unaware of its existence.

No doubt the thrust made by the Moors through their empire in Spain crossed the rugged Pyrenees, but it did not go beyond some portion of southern France. Similarly the march of Islam through the Ottoman empire though encompassed many eastern countries of Europe was halted at the gates of Germany. So in its earlier expansionist bid Islam never reached the northern extremity of Europe.

The credit for introducing Islam into this part of Europe wholly belongs to the 'New Scheme' and it is through the missions opened under it that we have now a flourishing Muslim Community of Danes in this area. The Mission is further contemplating to build a mosque in Copenhagen.

Our mosques in Holland, Germany and London are also permanent monuments of Islam in Europe. The type of their structure and the simple yet impressive mode of worship held there prompts many Europeans to visit them and ask for more and more information about Islam.

Translation of the Holy Quran in English, Dutch and German languages has already been published, and the one in French will go to Press shortly and so a very large part of European Community has now an easy access to Islamic teachings. Translation in Danish and Russian languages is under preparation.

Translation of some books of the Promised Messiah has also been published, notable among them is the 'Philosophy of the teachings of Islam' written under inspiration from God. Being a comprehensive commentary of the Holy Quran it is an excellent medium of introducing Islam to foreign nations.

Tolstoi wrote about it, 'The idea is very profound and very true.' Its English version has run into several editions. Its translation in French, Spanish, Chinese, Burmese and Sinhalese has also been published and more translations are under preparation.

Besides, it is also under consideration that a cheap edition of this book may be published and when that plan is completed, at least 100,000 copies of the 'Philosophy' will be distributed free in Foreign countries.

What the 'New Scheme' has done in the great continent of Africa is also immensely consequential. The Christian Church has openly admitted its discomfiture in this arena. A deep mood of despair now holds them. The writings of many Western observers and journalists have testified to the fact that the Church has lost its initiative in that continent.

Our Missions in West Africa have gained converts in thousands and there we are running several schools and colleges. Our Ghana Mission alone has a yearly budget amounting to £ 66,370/- or more than Rs. 800,000.

The Mission in East Africa has also been vitally reinforced and better results in conversion are expected. This Mission has published the translation of the Holy Quran in Swahili language which is the Lingua Franca of East Africa. This work will live in the history of the continent as a very great service to the cause of Islam.

In South Africa, no Missionary has so far been sent from the Headquarters but the local Ahmadiyya Community is doing a good job of disseminating literature on Islam and meeting the challenge of Christian Church against it.

Missions in the Indonesian archepalago, Malaya, the U.S.A. and in several other parts of the world have also done highly creditable work in this context. But for the consideration of space it is not possible to narrate their achievements.

The Ideals of Tahrik-i-Jadid

Nevertheless, however magnificent this work may appear it will look insignificant when compared with what remains to be done. When we take account of the task yet to be accomplished we realise that what has been done so far is no more than a drop in the ocean.

The whole world lies in the clutches of Materialism and the worship of Mammon is still reigning supreme. Millions of men and women are quite heedless of the true God, 'Allah', and of the message of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

We, therefore, while taking pride in the achievements of the 'New Scheme' are never content with the pace of progress achieved. For, we are to make Islam dominate the whole world to the extent that it becomes the One Faith of the whole mankind—and this is the Ideal before the 'New Scheme'.

We hope that our Good God, through His grace, will crown our efforts with success and will make the world see in the near future that how true were the words of the Holy Founder of the Movement when he said,"He (Allah) will spread this Movement in all the Countries and will give it supremacy over all through reason and argument....Then all the wise people will discard their belief and there will be only one Faith in the world and one preceptor."

The Message of the New Scheme for Ahmadis.

Dear Ahmadi Readers! I have given above a short account of some of the achievements of the 'New Scheme.' You may be well proud of them but side by side you have to take account of a correct measure of the work which has still to be done. You, therefore, not at all be satisfied with the accomplishments achieved so far but gird up your loins and sacrifice everything which you hold dear.

The 'New Scheme', calls you again. The trumpet is blowing. Will you then pay heed to the call? Islam lies now prostrate before its enemies. False gods have pounced upon it and overwhelmed it. It needs your succour and it is crying for your help.

This is the call with which the air is now ringing. This is the call which was made by the Promised Messiah and which has been renewed by his Promised Son through his 'New Scheme'. Will you then listen and respond to it?

You can do it by:

- Living a simple life and reducing your expenses to the minimum.
- Contributing towards the Permanent Fund of the 'New Scheme' regularly and liberally.
- Leading a life which is patterned to fulfil the moral and spiritual behests of the Holy Prophet and guiding your children to do the same.
- Dedicating your life for the service of Islam and preparing your progeny for the same task.

I have conveyed you the message of the 'New Scheme' and it is up to you now to think on it and act. May God help you. Amen!

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