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## **Maulana Azad Studies**

For M.A. 1<sup>st</sup> Semester

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# **Unit - 1: Brief Life Sketch of Maulana Azad**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

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Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was one of the most dominant figures as a political and intellectual thinker among Muslims of India who worked for the nation on the principle of unity among the people of all religious and ethnic backgrounds. He was an influential political figure and was the first Education Minister of India after independence. He was born on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1888 in Mecca, the holy city of Saudi Arabia. His name was Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin Ahmed while Azad was his pen name. His mother was an Arab Muslim while his father Maulana Khairuddin was a Muslim who belonged to Afghan origin. During Sepoy revolt his father left India and settled there in Mecca and later on returned to India in 1890 with his family. Azad having Arabic as mother tongue and conventional family background had a striking affiliation for the traditional Islamic studies.

It is striking to note that he did not receive any formal institutional education. Despite that fact he had a striking grip as far as Urdu, Hindi, Persian and English are concerned. It was owing to the private education and practices that he acquired such a proficiency. He was a self-educated figure who has a keen interest in history and politics. In addition, he was a prolific scholar who wrote many works and had interpreted Quran, Hadith and Fiqh. He had a clear and unambiguous concept of Tajdid which had led him to come to the notion that people from all the religions and ethnic groups in India could formulate a federating unit ripped in culture and beliefs within the boundaries of an independent state. He was sure that it could only be materialized if it is based on democracy and secularism. It was due to that very fact that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was deemed to the first Indian thinker and intellectual who had propagated the concept of secular state as far as independent India is concerned.

Keeping in view the family background, his brought up and his self-directed education it was sure that he would be made a clergy or religious scholar as there were many others within his ancestors and family members. He himself mentioned the religious divines' figures among his ancestors. But in spite of all this family and educational background Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had a political frame of mind. At a very young age he showed his inclination towards politics. During that period, he had developed a special liking and interest towards the doctrines that were held by Jamaluddin Afghani and the Aligarh school of thought that was led by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. As he was imbued with Islamic point of view, he visited many historical and religious countries which are deemed as Islamic states such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Turkey. During his visits to these countries he met revolutionary and inspiring figures and formulated a new school of thought based on national revolutionary spirit. The very pen name Azad is an indication toward the fact that he had liberated himself from the narrowness of religion communal way of thinking and adaptation.

It was owing to the meeting with revolutionary figures in Iraq and other countries and on his return to India and meeting with two influential revolutionary spirits of eastern India i.e. "Sri Arabindo Ghose" and "Sri Shyam Shundar Chakravarty" that he joined the groundbreaking radical movement going against the British rule in India. At one hand he became an undisclosed revolutionary figure and on the other hand acquired the rank of Indian nationalist activist. He was sure and advocated the Indian nationalism needed to be based on the fundamental of Hindu-Muslim unity and oneness as a community. In addition, his concept of nationalism was based on

the secular mechanism as far as the statehood and political matters are concerned. He utilized the platform of All Indian National Congress and supported the case of Khalifat movement in Turkey. His support was not meant to restore the old conventional regime in Turkey rather it was meant to let hand to the New Turks who as per his thought were the true essence of actual movement and spirit of Khalifat in the state of Turkey.

In 1912, he started an Urdu weekly paper with the name “Al-Hilal” which used to expose and attack the British imperialism and colonial mentality towards Indian. It used to highlight the misdeeds and cruelties that British had done in India. Due to these vocalizations this paper became a mouthpiece and support for nationalism and revolutionary ventilation of nationalist cause of India. It had also played a key role in formulating Hindu-Muslim unity which was badly shaken by bloodshed that was caused due to communal representation. Hence, this paper was deemed by the British Government as anti-state propagator and agitator and hence was banned in 1914. But Maulana Abul Kalam Azad altered the name of the paper and came up with another version “Al-Balagh” with the same idea of bringing forth Indian nationalism and revolutionary spirit among Indian. It was also meant to bridge the gap between Hindus and Muslims. But British Government banned this issue as well and expelled Azad from Calcutta towards Ranchi and from there he was released after First World War in 1920.

By now Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had attained the position of central figure among the leaders of Indian National Congress and he was deemed as one of the most relied figure and trusted fellow by Gandhi. He was elevated and was selected as the president of the unusual session of Congress which was held in Delhi in 1923 and Ramgarh later in 1940. In the turmoil period of Indian history of 1930s and 1940s Maulana Abul Kalam Azad came up as an intimate and trust worthy friend and advisor of Gandhi. All the negotiations that took place between 1942 to 1946 from Cripps Mission to Cabinet Mission he was constantly consulted by Gandhi especially, with respect to the matter of constitution and communal set ups. The fact can be supported from the idea that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was the key members among those who negotiated with Cripps and Cabinet Mission in 1942 and 1946 respectively.

But as far as his role is concerned it began to wane due to the strengthening the case of Pakistan movement and freedom movement which had set back the concept of Hindu-Muslim Unity within India. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had vocalized it in his autobiography and letters that the partition could have been averted if the congress and congress leaders have paid heed to

his conception of accommodating Jinnah and the supports of Muslims League which was a political representative of the Muslims of India. Azad not only opposed the attitude of the congress and its leaders but had also showed his frustration in his letters. He also had opposed Nehru concept regarding the collapse of cabinet mission. However, their personal relations and friendship was not affected due to these political and ideological differences and it was manifested in his all-time famous autobiography *India Wins Freedom*.

After getting independence from British rule, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad became the first Education Minister of India cabinet headed by Nehru. He started working to promote peace and harmony along with the setting up of educational infrastructure in the country. One of the key focuses of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was to integrate religious education side by side with secular education. He was of the opinion that matter of religious education is very serious and it cannot be left up to the religious leaders of the country as education will be supremacist under their control and command. He was committed to promote and hence taught to the students the common values and conventions that were found in all the religions so that students might not affix any prejudice against each other. He was committed and was of the view that “Today India is free... She can have any kind of mental mold she pleases. Will it be exclusive... or will it be all-inclusive, which has been the characteristic of Indian culture throughout the ages? ... In the advancement of nations there is no greater hindrance than narrow mindedness. It is our duty to keep ourselves free from this disease in the new era of independence.”

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## 1.1 Objectives

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The unit has multiple objectives. After going through the unit, the students shall be able to:

- Know a short biography of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
- Know the literary expeditions undertaken by Maulana Azad.
- Understand Maulana Azad’s ideology towards a democratic nation.
- Comprehend the endeavour of Maulana Azad for an undivided nation.
- Have insight of Maulana Azad’s contribution for freedom through his journals.

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## 1.2 Brief Life Sketch of Maulana Azad

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### 1.2.1 Brief Summary of Azad's Life Events:

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was an illustrious scholar, theologian, political leader, revolutionary activist, poet, writer, and journalist who had attained much significance due to his untiring efforts for the labours he put for freedom movement and for his contribution in mobilizing the people to fight for their civil and human rights. He was an honoured man who attained high impact and integrity value all through his life. Even in his teenage he wrote many poems, articles, and essays about religion, philosophy and later on for political purposes, openly criticized the British rule in India. He was greatly impressed by the Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence during freedom movement. As a politician, he actively participated in Khilafat Movement, Non-cooperative Movement, and Quit India Movement and consequently was put into prison along with other leaders of congress by the British Government but these steps could not assist the British in detaining him from his mission and agenda. And it was the liberation of the nation from the imperial hands of British Rule in India.

He became famous as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad but interestingly it was not the actual name with which he was born. His real name was Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin. He was born to Muhammad Khairuddin and Alia Muhammad Khairuddin. He was married to Zulaikha Begum at the age of mere 13. He had no children. His memorial is in New Delhi. *Ghubar-e-Khatir* was the most noted work that he inscribed between 1942 to 1946. And one of the most celebrated works by Azad is the *India Wins Freedom* which was published in 1957. He served in the Constitutional Assembly of India which was set up to draft the constitution of India. He was elected as a member of Lok Sabha in 1952 and 1957. In 1956, he served as president of the "UNESCO General Conference" in Delhi.

Belonging to eminent scholar family, learning, writing, and teaching came naturally to him. He was multi lingual and have command over several languages i.e. Urdu, English, Hindi, Bengali, Arabic, and Persian. As a young scholar he had a strong aptitude towards learnings which are expanded over numerous subjects like history, science, mathematics, Fiqh, Sharia, and philosophy. He was much ahead of his other fellows in intellect and comprehension. Even at a tender age, he brought up several papers, edited numerous journals, and wrote for other

journalistic and literary papers. In addition, he reinterpreted Quran, Hadith, and principles of Fiqh. At the same time there was a development of radical political stance in him and nationalistic view point. To Azad, national freedom from colonial and imperialistic rule is more significant as compare to other communal issues. He was in opposition of separation and division of country on the base of religion, rather he was an ardent supporter of unity and harmony. He was also against racial discrimination.

He was born and brought up in a clergy\* like environ but instead of taking into account the duties of clergy he devoted himself to the freedom and revolutionary movement in India. He worked hard for two causes all through his life: One for the freedom of India and second for the unity and harmony among Hindus and Muslims. Through his journal Al-Hilal he openly criticized the British rule and paved a way for the unity and brotherhood among Hindus and Muslims. It was banned, he started another journal Al-Balagh with the same objective and mission which too was banned and he was arrested. But it was due to his untiring efforts that there was a strong resentment in Indian against the violations of civil liberties and human rights. After he got released, he joined the non-cooperative movement which was meant to boycott each and every thing the British rule impose like schools, offices, goods, clothes, and services. He was an active member of Khilafat Movement and was elected as the president of the All India Khilafat Committee.

There was deep influence of the life and principles of Prophet Mohammad and Gandhi in the life of Abul Kalam Azad. He was deeply influenced by their philosophies and doctrines. In 1923, he became the youngest ever president of All Indian National Congress. He was against the separation and separate electoral process as proposed by Muslims leaders and Jinnah. He was in a full support to the report brought out by Nehru in 1928 with regard to the constitutional reforms in India. He was in favor of secular India deprived off any communal differences. In 1930, he was yet again arrested in violation of the salt law. He was put behind the bar in Meerut jail and was released in 1934. By the time he was strongly against the stance that was held by Jinnah and other Muslim leaders that the congress rule is actually the rule of Hindus. In 1940, he was reelected as the president of Indian national congress and he held that place till 1946. He was against the separation on the basis of religion and communal difference and wanted to preserve the united and harmonious India.

In 1942, he was again arrested by British empire along with other congress leaders by waging a Quit India Movement. He was put in Ahmednagar Fort where he remained in absolute isolation for about four years. When freedom was drawn upon in India all the political prisoners were released and he was too among them. After his release he led congress for the constitutional assembly. There was no denying the fact that he was an ardent opposer of the partition but he took all the measures to safeguard the security of the Muslims in India after partition. He toured the campuses working for violence and assisted in establishing refugee camps along with food and sense of security. After independence he served as the first Education Minister of India from 1947 to 1958. During that period, he worked for the free and compulsory education for all under 14. Other educational steps he took were the development of adult literacy, to bring about reform in secondary education, and to provide poor and especially women the access to education and learning.

He had strong liking for scientific education and research. He set up several universities and centers for higher education and research in India. It was under his ministership that University Grant Commission was set up. Due to his undeniable efforts, services, and contribution for visionary and united India he was conferred the highest civil award of India “Bharat Ratna” in 1992. After serving the nation and country for several decades before and after freedom till 1958 on numerous posts and portfolio he breathed his last on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1958 due to a stroke attack. Several decades after his death Indian Government established Maulana Azad Education Foundation in 1989 for the promotion and dispensation of education to deprived class of the society. His birthday is celebrated in all over India as a National Education Day every year. Numerous schools, colleges, and educational institutes are named after him as a tribute to the services he did for the reformation of Indian Education system after independence in 1947.

### **1.2.2 Maulana Abul Kalam Azad: Religious and Secular Views**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad’s views on religion were explicitly explained in his famous “Tarjaman ul Quran” and that was that the essence or core values of all the religions are the same. God is the creator, balancer, and guide of the entire universe. The guidelines that is provided in Quran are universal based on divine revelation from the beginning till the end without any alteration. From that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad coined the concept of oneness of the religion. As the Quran is of the view that Allah has sent more than 1,24,000 messengers to



guide and lead human beings on different parts of the world in different time period but their message and guidance was always the same. They preached the same concept irrespective of time, space and the ethnic backgrounds they were in. However, the laws or code of conducts were different in different time bearing in view the communal setups, social and intellectual's conditions of the time and place. The fundamental stratum of the religions was and is the submission to Allah and live a righteous living. The essence of his teaching is that each individual has to struggle to live a righteous life and a better follower of the religion he or she is following.

Religion, Islam as a code of reference, always played a pivot role in shaping the mind and intellect of Maulana Azad. He held it dear while passing through various stages and phases of his life. He started his life from conventional Islamic education and modified it to humanistic approach later on in his life. Islam acted as a paramount force in the development of Maulana Azad thought, vision and especially the revolutionary vision he developed later on. When he devoted himself against British Raj to free himself and his countrymen, he declared it a Jihad, the concept is yet again derived from Islamic point of view. He also acted actively in Khilafat Movement which was meant to protect and safeguard the rights and conventions of Islamic traditions. The very name of Maulana Azad is named after Prophet Muhammad which is yet again indicative of his family convection towards Islam. The title Maulana is yet again attributed with his name due to his deep and persistence commitment with religious righteousness and Islam. His ancestor had very deep religious background especially one of his maternal uncles, Shaikh Muhammad bin Zahir Watri, was a mufti at Madinah.

Maulana Azad was a true representative of synthesis of civilizations, cultures, doctrines, and philosophies which had left an everlasting influence in the Indian History. He acted as a bridge between religions, cultures, and conventions of various ethnic groups in India. Though self-taught in a typical Islamic setup with conventional knowledge but he was open to all the modern advances with regard to various dynamics of knowledge, languages, and intellectual capacity of head and heart. He had shown his caliber through his pen and speech throughout his life as a journalist, writer, literary figure, and a politician. He was deeply imbedded in Islamic culture and Indian traditions and this was reflected through his pen, speech and actions throughout his life. He was so deep rooted in the culture that when partition took place in spite of all his opposition, he pleaded not to disintegrate culture even if the land is to be divided at any

caste. At this occasion he vowed “we should at the same time try to ensure that our culture was not defeated.”

After independence he devoted himself for the nation building despite the fact that he was saddened by the fact of partition but he decided to concentrate on the future prospect of the nation. He tried his level best to train individual who had vision, thought, integrity, and truthful to their commitment so that they could lead the nation in future. He always stressed upon the need to have social justice, truth, and commitment to the purpose, harmony, and openness to new situations as key to move upward in personal as well as national advancement. Time and again he affirmed as an education minister that the intent of their five years plan was not to accomplish anything of material or resources rather it was a quest for the identification of new mind, vision, and people of integrity and caliber. If education is imparted in a befitted and purposeful manner only then other walks of life will be made successful.

The concept of secularism with reference to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is also footed on the concept of oneness of religion on one side and disregard to intermediaries on the other side. To him, all human has to struggle hard to live a righteous life, relishing the good and discarding the evils. During that very struggle there are essentialities of norms to be learnt. The most striking thing about Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was that he was not in favour of asserting the supremacy of any religion. He was of the notion that spiritual life guided by beliefs and actions must be footed on the parameter of mercy and love. In broader sense Azad divided the entire mankind into groups. One, the friends of God, second, the friends of Satan. Friends of God are not a special class or intellectuals group it consisted of those who have submitted themselves to the will of God and have abstained themselves from Satanic will. To Azad, the concept of secularism is not merely confined to the rituals being performed by followers rather it is to live a righteous life and seeking guidance from Almighty in comprehending what is the right path.

### **1.2.3 Maulana Abul Kalam Azad: Services for Hindu-Muslim Unity**

After having able to mobilize Muslims into independence movement, Azad next step was to consolidate the unity and oneness of Hindus and Muslims of India that must be on the footing of the shared culture and communal setup. His conception was in contrary to Muslim Leagues’ leaders and Hindus’ nationalists who were of the opinion that culture is based on religion and as the religion of both the Hindus and Muslims is not fundamentally different but also contradictory to each other and hence it is irreconcilable as far as the matter of cultures among Hindus and

Muslims is concerned. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on the other hand had coined the concept of composite nationalism. In order to support his point of view he cited the instance from the life of prophet Muhammad who formed a state in Medina where people from all the religions came in contact to live as “Covenant of Medina.” Under this covenant if Medina was attacked by any outsiders all have to join hands to defend the city. In spite of this people from other religions like Jews and Christian were free to practice their religious rituals.

In the view of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the unity or oneness of the Hindus and Muslims is more fundamental and basic than the freedom itself if it is to be accomplished by parting India. Muslims were sure of the fact that in united India, Muslims were in minority and Hindus will be in majority which will result in discrimination. Azad was of the opinion “The fact that Hindus are a majority is of no significance. It is the condition to which you have brought yourselves that will insure your destruction... There is no need to fear Hindus. You must fear God... You have to live in India, so embrace your neighbors... You must realize your position among the peoples of the world.” He was the strongest voice against partition and when it took place he was in deep pain and could not reconcile himself to the new emerging situation. His entire political figure was based on the principle of Hindu-Muslim unity and when it was marginalized, he was left with only one plea that if states are to be divided don’t let the cultures divide.

Azad was one of the most distinguished nationalist and freedom fighter who fought against British imperialism in India along with other Hindus and Muslims leaders. During that struggle his main focus of attention was the welding together of Hindus and Muslims and it was the idea that was more significant for him as compare to any other idea. To him, it both Hindus and Muslims will fight collectively against British then they will be able to achieve their goal. For that he not made speeches but also wrote and this concept was dearer to him even from the concept of freedom itself. He regarded this relation as old as the nations and it is embedded in culture, heritage and even in history. In his presidential address in 1923 to the session of Indian National Congress he vocalized the concept as “This (i.e. Hindu Muslim Unity) is the first foundation of our (national) construction without which not only Indian freedom but also all those which are necessary for living and progressing of a country are mere dream and empty thought. Not only that we cannot get freedom without it but without it we cannot even create elementary principles of humanity within us.”

Azad's concept of unity and oneness is not merely limited to the unity of Hindus and Muslims rather he was in favour of universal unity and brotherhood. He was against the concept of building relations on the basis of plots and pieces of land. To him, it is unnatural division and against the will and essence of nature. In addition, Azad was quite clear that Islam was the first voice and tenor that set the tone for universal unity and brotherhood. If the true essence is followed communal and societal harmony can be set up. Azad did not like the policies of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan on the basis that these were meant to legitimate and provide an outlet for colonial rule an extension in India yet he was agreed to his social and economic reforms policies of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. To Azad, the relation between Hindus and Muslims and their unity is very much close to his heart and he deemed this unity as a source hub of enriched Indian culture and traditions. But he was deeply disappointed when partition took place in the form of independent India and Pakistan.

Maulana Azad views, services and contribution had earned him an illustrious status not only in India but also in Pakistan, among Hindus and Muslims alike at one hand and had faced criticism on the other hand. Many Pakistani consider his secular and nationalistic view against Islam and many of the Indian too hold the belief that he had not done enough to save unified India. But the fact is that he only was not against partition but he also condemned all those who contributed in partition on the basis of religion. He was against the biasness being kept by leaders against other community and he relinquished his relation with lady Mountbatten. His major voice was that partition would result in loss for the Muslims on either side. He was of the opinion that such partition will result persistence confrontation between two states. He acted as an advocator of harmony, unity and cooperation between people belonging to different religions and backgrounds. His entire political stature was on the pivot of Hindus Muslims unity which was badly hurt when India was divided into two states in 1947.

#### **1.2.4 Propagation of Azad's Mission through Al-Hilal:**

The true impact of Azad was seen through his weekly Urdu paper *Al-Hilal* which was meant to awake the conscious of the Muslims of the India. It ran for two and half years and when it was banned by the British Govt. as an anti-state agent Azad during his trial explained that he was meant to train and educate his nation and country to demand their due rights and seek freedom and that he was doing so for the last 12 years. Secondly, through this paper Azad advocated and vocalized for the need of Jihad which was not liked by most of the religious

figures at that time. Through others journals and through Al-Hilal he was committed to figure out the concept of in separation between religion and politics. By means of this paper at one hand Azad tried to agitate the political ideas and on the other hand bridged the gap between religious leaders and political dynamics. Through this journal he was able to awake the desire for freedom among his people and on the other hand it creates environ to respect the religious scholars.

The issues which were published under this forum were committed to promote the concepts that there is a dare need to absolute submission before God. It was due to His help that the issue got started and achieved success. Secondly, the concept of joining good and discarding evil is parallel to Jihad in the way of God. Thirdly, there were only few people in all the times and ages that were chosen by God to propagate and accomplish his mission in the world. Last but not the least that Muslims who are friends of God must wage a war against those who are friends of Satan, which was a direct call for the freedom movement to encompass. It is also significant to note that the prime objective and mission of this paper was to make the Muslims of India realized their political, social, economic and educational potential so that it can be maximized to the optimal level. The mission of Azad was to integrate Hindus Muslims unity, nationalism, Islamism and revolutionism to accomplish his objectives which were for the cause of the entire country and nation. He asserted the Muslims with the need to follow the Sharia rules and principles of Prophet Muhammad to create a national harmony and brotherhood with other communities.

The inculcation of the concept of freedom movement was also attained through this paper by Azad. He asserted that this struggle is essential for other communities to secure their place and rights but for Muslims it was equal to Jihad in the way of God to bring peace, harmony, truth, justice, abolition of slavery and for the protection of human rights which were severely violated under British rule. Through this paper Azad had propagated his political ideology which had created stir among old and young. It had set up a new political dynamics and revolutionary stir among the people of India in general and among Muslims in particular. It had further renovated the conventions of press in India as its circulation achieved optimal level as high as 26,000 copies in a very succinct span of time. It has also promoted the concept of patriotism, nationalism and religious enthusiasm got its optimal fame and wider acceptance. Apart from its political dynamics, national case, revolutionary stir against slavery it had a great literary value as well.

### **1.2.5 Azad's Concept of Communal Harmony and National Integrity:**

Throughout his life he gave much significance to the concept of harmony, unity and national integrity. All through his life he stressed upon the need of unity and singularity and he was not in favor of any specific and ethnic group or organization. He was always in favor of singular national organization through which efforts needed to be initiated for freedom movement and to secure the rights of the people. He was not in favor of the concept hold by Muslims League that Indian National Congress is meant for Hindus alone and for holding such views he had to face severe criticism but he was not moved by this criticism and he hold his place. The most significant dynamic of his concept was that state is not to be related with any particular religion rather it is needed to be related with humanity. To him, Islam and Hinduism promote the identical rights and if Hindus are proud of their identity and national integrity the Muslims too have the same privilege to be proud of being a Muslim. To Azad it was not confined to Hindus and Muslim alone, rather all the communities of India had the same rights and privileges.

Azad hold the beliefs that all the religions though distinctive in their outlooks, manners and mechanism have the same concept of truth and brotherhood and to live in harmony with other communal forces like a family to promote national and cultural integrity. To him, being a devotee of any religious doctrine did not prevent anyone from partaking in freedom movement if he or she is enslaved. Rather, Azad doctrine had given vent to justify the freedom struggle from religious view point as well. In addition, Azad never supported the concept of Indian Muslims that their rights would not be safe in India as a minority. He discarded the notion that if Muslims are minority in seven states, they are majority in five states as well. He was a true ardent to integrated and nationalist India and he never supported the partition. He even did not reconcile even the partition took place in 1947. He held the belief that partition was not in favor of any state i.e. Pakistan and India and it will harm both. Due to this very fact he was pained and unhappy when the state was divided into pure and impure land.

In addition, he worked hard for communal harmony and for that he had utilized his Islamic learning and concepts as a tool to convince the Muslims that imperialism is against Islamic concept of truth, justice and equality and hence there was a dare need to root out slavery and fight for the liberation against British colonialism and imperialism. Azad also worked to root out the concept that Muslims were not in favor at their heart to support the revolutionary stir

against British. His untiring efforts to support communal harmony and national integrity was dominantly established when he refused to join the Muslims League when it was founded in 1906. With due course of time Azad emerged as an agitator who had convinced Muslims of India to join hand with Hindus and other communities of India to fight against British for freedom. To him, overthrown was essential and it could be achieved only through national integrity and communal harmony. Joints efforts can maximize the liberation efforts. Throughout Azad preached three things religious training, revolutionary stir and communal harmony.

#### **1.2.6 Political Activism of Maulana Azad:**

As is stated Maulana Azad was an influential political activist, leader, revolutionary activist and writer who started his struggle as a writer and then entered into practical politics to contribute to his nation and country. It was initiated with his active participation in Khilafat Movement meant for the reinstatement of caliph in 1920. In local and national politics his entry was through the Non-cooperative movement which was initiated by Gandhi against the British rule. He left no stone unturned to contribute to this movement and during that period he came close to the ideology and political doctrine of Gandhi. Although, he was skeptical at the start about the proposal being suggested by Gandhi to launch a forceful drive against the British but later on he was convinced and took active participation in all the efforts being taken for the independence of the nation from the clutches of British Raj. He went to all corners of the country, made speeches, writes articles and mobilize the people to for the national cause of independence.

With an extending hand he lent for the freedom movement through partaking in non-cooperative movement and under the influence of Gandhi Maulana Azad joined All Indian National Congress in 1920. He presided over the special session of congress in 1923 and was elected the youngest ever president of congress. After joining the congress, he was always an active member of the party and he was also the member of congress working committee. In addition, he served congress as president and general secretary many times. Despite the fact that Nehru report was badly criticized by the Muslims leaders who were the part of freedom movement, Maulana Azad showed his endorsement to that report. One of the key features of his political movement was his ardent support for single and secular state after independence. He was never in favor of two states on the basis of religion. He was a firm believer of co-existence of all religions in harmony. His dream was a unified India where Hindus and Muslims could

have lived in harmony and peacefully. Although it was shattered but he remained firm to his belief and dream even after partition of India into States.

He was greatly influenced by the doctrines of Nehru regarding socialism as he himself deemed it essential to root out injustice, poverty and inequality from the society. The other doctrine was that of Gandhi which Azad held dear throughout his political struggle and that is the policy of non-violence during fight against slavery in the hand of British. Maulana Azad was appointed to organize the election campaign for congress for the election that were held in 1935 by the British rule in India. Azad actively participated in all the matters related to election like funds raising, selecting trust worthy and able candidates, arranging rallies, campaign and other efforts which were essential enough to make the common Indian realize the significance of election. He assisted his back in making Nehru the president of congress in 1936. He had also a conversation and negotiation with Jinnah of Muslims League from 1935 to 1937 for cooperation, harmony and for the unity of Hindus and Muslims as a part of his resolve for unified India.

Due to his enthusiastic and active part in independence movement he was arrested in 1942 along with other political leaders of the time and it was lasted for almost four years and he was released in 1946. During that period the freedom movement had gone to it impeach and, on his release, he led congress for the election meant for Constitution Assembly. In addition, he was an active member to discuss and negotiate the terms of independence with cabinet mission in 1946. He was a true and an ardent supporter of unity and harmony and was against the concept of partition on the basis of religion. He was in favor of freedom from British but not in favor of dividing the land into pure and impure. He was deeply moved and felt pain with the idea of partition of India into India and Pakistan. Despite the fact that he was not in favor of two states but after partition, when violence emerged in both India and Pakistan against Muslims and Hindus respectively Maulana Azad ensured each and every possible step to look after the safety and security of the Muslims in India.

For that purpose, Maulana Azad travelled towards violence affected regions and ensured to set up refugees' camps. He personally looked into the matter that there should be uninterrupted supply of food, drink and basic necessities of life be provided to the affected Muslims. He was so sensitive about the issue that it was reported that he quarreled with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on the issue of security in Delhi and the Punjab in Cabinet mission's meeting. Keeping his role and efforts in view he was appointed as an educational minister after



independence and was also inducted in the Constituent Assembly which was meant to draft the constitution of the country. Under this minister ship numerous efforts and steps were taken which were not only set the tone for fundamentals of education in the country but also meant to promote and enhance primary, secondary level education along with scientific and research based advancement in higher education of the country. A number of scientific and research-based institutes were initiated at that time.

### **1.2.7 Azad's Contribution in Educational Reforms:**

When constitution of India was drafted under 7<sup>th</sup> schedule which was related with the powers and subjects of the central as well as the states governments, Maulana Azad was strongly against the notion of leaving the matter and legislation regarding educational matters to the hands of states as was the provision in the time of British rule. To him, education is an essential matter and the authority to regulate this subject must be in the hand of the central government so that measures can be ensured from federal level to ensure the unified and national educational standard throughout the country. Though there were few members who opposed this idea but top leadership including Nehru was in full support of the proposal by Maulana Azad. Those who criticized the idea were in favor of giving this provision to states as a mean to decentralize the educational matters to be enacted keeping in view the local needs and backgrounds of each state. Ultimately, it was decided that education will be a matter of subject for states but the provision of subject regarding higher education is given in the hand of state unit.

As an education minister he also set up a "board for adult education" to promote and enhance the capacity of the uneducated adult. In addition, he was in favor of free and compulsory primary education to everyone in the country under the age of 14 as he deemed it absolutely necessary and as a right of each and every citizen of the country as he stressed "We must not for a moment forget, it is a birth right of every individual to receive at least the basic education without which he cannot fully discharge his duties as a citizen." In addition, he set up Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi and came up with the idea of setting up IITs in the country. It was his brain storming that the regulatory body of higher education in India with the name University Grant Commission was created in the country to ensure the promotion and regulation of the higher education which was a subject matter of central government under constitution. Last but not the least during his period he had set up numerous educational institutes including universities, schools, colleges, scientific, and research centers in the country.

Maulana Azad stressed upon the education of adult and women in particular as he deemed it essential to make the citizens of the country aware of their duties and responsibilities so that they might be in a better position to contribute towards the national development. He wanted to make distinction between the citizens of independent India and colonized India. To him, social, cultural, economic and developmental sector can only be transformed through mass education. He was also fully aware of the essentiality of inculcation of science, technology, technical and IT related instruction to meet the futures needs and challenges. Keeping these in view he started several ITs based educational institutes along with institutes for scientific and technical education in the country under his stewardship of education minister. He was well aware of the fact that education for women is a key to nation building and advancement as he asserted in 1949 “no program of national education can be appropriate if it does not give full consideration to the education and advancement of one-half of the society that is women.” Maulana Azad was also aware of the fact that was a dare need to bridge the gap with regard to investment for educational facilities among rural and urban areas at one hand and gender-based disparity on the other hand.

As an educational and cultural minister, he was the initiator of the “Indian Council of Cultural Relations”, “University Grants Commission”, “Indian Institute of Technology”, “Sahitya Akademi, Sangeet Natak Akademi” and numerous organizations. Due to his untiring efforts and contribution towards educational reforms in independent India his birthday is celebrated as “national education day” all over India. There were four basic components of Maulana Azad educational policy. First was the democratization of system of education which stressed upon the basic and fundamental education for all starting from primary to adult education. Second, was to maintain a standard education, he was not merely in favor of imparting education rather education with a purpose and keeping in view the needs of future. Thirdly, widening the educational outlook, education to him must not be mere formal rather advanced and technical education must be the need of the hour. Lastly, education and educational system must be able to serve the elevation of mutual understanding among different segments of the society at large.

During the period of his stewardship as an education minister there were numerous councils, boards, committees, commissions and departmental organizations which were set up for the promotion and management of educational system in the country to achieve the optimal

and future oriented objectives in a precise and systematic way. These include “University Grant Commission”, "All India Council for Secondary Education", "Secondary Education Commission", "All India Council for Technical Education", "Board for Adult Education", "Board for Rural Higher Education", "Central Social Development Board", "central Education Board", " Educational and Vocational Guidance Bureau", "National Organization for Basic Education" and "Council for Scientific and Technical Research"

### **1.2.8 Literary and Journalistic Services of Maulana Azad:**

Maulana Azad was a visionary and revolutionary writer, leader and journalist who had inspired generations in diverse fields of activity who had some mission or purposes behind their writing and journalistic profession. His words and writing had powerful impact on the masses especially with the aim to get freedom. At an age when his age fellows were busy in playing in the streets, he was writing poetry, prose and was editing and writing in journals. Even at his young due to his literary flare and editing qualities he edited a journal called Al-Misbah. He also brought out a monthly journal called Lissan-us-sidq. He also started writing essays at a very tender age though he never got them public or published. His natural flare and talent let him to start a monthly journal termed Nairang-e-Alam from Calcutta at the age of mere 11. At the age of 12 he started monthly Al-Misbah with regard to the contemporary issues and matters. At the same time, he started writing in Armoghan-e-Farkh. In addition, he was also among the editorial team of Husn-ul-Akhbar. Prose part of Khazange Nazar was also looked after by him. Likewise, he took the editorship of An-Nadwah.

His writing and journalistic tasks were predefined and had objective behind it. He did not write mere to get things published but rather utilized it as a tool to get the people from different religions united and unified especially Hindus and Muslims. He also instilled the spirit and desire for freedom among people. He utilized it as a tool to criticize the British Raj and mobilize people to fight for their civil, human and basic rights. He was revolutionary and hence consumed his writing skills as a gadget to express and inspired other through his revolutionary doctrines with regard to politics and freedom movement. He was an activist and as a result was arrested many a time during his struggle though it was non-violent. The publication of Al-Hilal is an illustrious example of his criticism on British rule and instilling the patriotic and revolutionary spirit among people for freedom movement. His approach and vision were much inspiring and enriched as he

himself stated about in Al-Hilal “we are here to not make profit but to search for loss and hardship. We are not looking for praise and fame but we welcome hate and criticism.”

In his writing he called the struggle against British and movement for freedom as jihad. He had a powerful expression and had the courage and will to articulate his ideology through his writing even against imperial force. Through his edited journals, by meaning of writing to diverse journals and brought out his own journals had glorified the profession of journalism to a great deal. It had inspired the people to come forward and actively took part as a freedom fighter bravely and fearlessly. At one hand he was a true supporter of nationalism and on the other hand followed the true spirit of journalism who had urge for freedom of press and he believed in work without accepting any financial benefits from anyone. Due to these qualities of head and heart, visionary writings, and revolutionary journalism that his fame reached all parts of the country and generations of the people had got inspiration from Maulana Azad despite having a short span of life. His courage to take stance against popular wave was frequent thought out his life in numerous occasions on diverse issues.

His writing and bold journalism has left marks on the national horizons and had inspired millions of the people for national cause. He was an ardent supporter of unification and his writing and journalistic aroma is fully embedded with it. Due to his fearless and bold journalism he was able to smooth the way for freedom. Al-Hilal was a strong and true medium for the fulfillment of all these objectives of his personality and traits that he possessed and acted as a milestone as far as journalistic vista, political dynamics and revolutionary spirit are concerned.<sup>27</sup> years of his journalistic experience and its contribution in freedom movement and Hindus Muslims unity Al-Hilal is deemed to be the jewel of Indian journalistic horizon. Apart from this journal his affiliation was with more than a dozen journals which asserted his persona as a journalist. His writing and journalistic flare and explore is a beacon of light for future and aspirant writer and journalists of not of that time but for all times.

### **1.2.9 Conclusion:**

Maulana Azad was a legend that lived under the shades of other legends like Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah. In spite of being under the shadow of other giants of his time he left his own imprints on the hearts and minds of millions of the people due to his multifarious contribution in almost in all walks of life. Although he was under the dominance and shadows of other great figures of his time but there is denial to the fact that 20<sup>th</sup> century would not have been the same if

there was not Maulana Azad. His services to his people ranged from writing poetry, articles and made motivational speeches to social, cultural, educational matters and mobilization of the people to rise up for their civil, human and basic rights. He was an active freedom fighter who not only contributed practically in the movement but inspired and urged his fellows to be on the same path and declared that movement as Jihad. The most illustrious work that he did was his efforts for the Hindus Muslims unity for the cause of unified India.

There were three fundamental features that were there in both in his writing and practically steps he took during his entire life in any walks of life or his services. His religious training and brought up which was obvious in his writing, preaching and practically steps in Khilafat Movement and interpretation of Quran and hadith. His revolutionary flare that is one of the most dominated part of his writing and action as a journalist as well as politician. He held revolutionary spirit and ideas which he propagated through his writing and implemented practically in his political struggle. Last but not the least his commitment to national and cultural harmony among people belonging to different religions. He was not in favor of partition based on the difference of religion or culture.

Maulana Azad was a man who could foresee and had vision. When the issue of Urdu Hindi arose, he recommended that Hindi should also be written in Roman script and this issue could be averted or avoided but no one listened to him. But now we can see such billboards being displayed in both the countries which asserted the fact that he was a man of talent, vision and foresight. He started IITs institutes in India as an educational minister some 70 years ago which is indicative of the fact that he was having the idea and vision and due to that vision India at present is one of the most leading IT transformed country in the world. It is essential to note that his vision, intellectual and foresightedness was not merely confined to his own people, nation or country rather he was humanist and had the same feelings for entire humanity as is quoted by Asif Ali "Tolerance to him did not mean religious tolerance. He believed in the absolute right of individual to differ and hold whatever opinion he believed to be correct." Likewise, he was not merely interested in the unity and harmony of Hindus and Muslims but harmony and cooperation among all men.

He revolutionized the journalistic aroma in India through his powerful impact as a writer and editor. He was a firm believer of independence of press and wanted to extend journalistic services without looking or accepting any monetary benefits. His writing contributed both to

literary and journalistic horizons of the time. In addition, he was a consistent and unswerving as far as his stance, doctrine and efforts were concerned. It is noted that even the greatest giants of his time who had dominated even him altered with the passage of time for adjustment and compromise but it was Azad who stood steadfast though alone at time. He even did not reconcile to the partition even it took place because he was in favor of unified India and never supported the partition on the basis of religion or division into pure and impure land. He remained loyal and honest to those whom he disagreed fundamentally. At his death he was paid tribute by Nehru as “It was the strange and unique mixture of the good qualities of past, the graciousness and deep learning and toleration, with the urges of today that made Maulana Azad what he was.”

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### 1.3 Learning Outcomes

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There are numerous learning outcomes of this unit. Upon completion of the unit, the students are expected to:

- Know in brief about Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
  - Realize the contribution of Maulana Azad in freedom struggle.
  - Know Maulana Azad’s efforts in maintaining Hindu-Muslim unity in the country.
  - Understand Maulana Azad’s contribution in education sector.
  - Know the contribution of Maulana Azad in the field of journalism.
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### 1.4 Glossary

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**Hadith:** A collection of traditions containing saying of the prophet Muhammad which, with accounts of his daily practice (the Sunna), constitute the major source of guidance for Muslims apart from the Quran.

**Fiqh:** The theory of philosophy of Islamic law, based on the teachings of the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet.

**Tajdid:** In an Islamic context, tajdid refers to the revival of Islam, in order to purify and reform society, to move it toward greater equity and justice. One who practices tajdid is a mujaddid.

**Sharia:** Sharia is Islam's legal system. In Arabic, Sharia literally means 'the clear, well-trodden path to water'. Sharia acts as a code for living that all Muslims should adhere to, including prayers, fasting and donations to the poor.

**Federating:** Coming together

**Imperialism:** The policy of forcefully extending a nation's authority by territorial gain or by the establishment of economic and political dominance over other nations.

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## 1.5 Sample Questions

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### 1.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. What is the pen name of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad?  
(a) Maulana                      (b) Kalam  
(c) Azad                         (d) Khairuddin
2. Maulana Azad was born in which country?  
(a) India                         (b) Pakistan  
(c) Egypt                        (d) Saudi Arabia
3. Who is the author of *India Wins Freedom*?  
(a) Mahatma Gandhi            (b) Sardar Patel  
(c) Bhagat Singh                (d) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
4. Who established the University Grant Commission in India?  
(a) Jawahar Lal Nehru            (b) Dr Sarvpalli Radha Krishnan  
(c) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad    (d) Pandil Deen Dyal Upadhyay
5. Who is the first Education Minister of India after partition?  
(a) Lal Bahadur Shastri            (b) Bal Gangadhar Tilak  
(c) Sardar Patel                    (d) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

### Yes/No type questions

1. The book *India Wins Freedom* is an.  
(a) Yes                              (b) No

2. The real name of Maulana Azad was Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin?

- (a) Yes (b) No

3. *Ghubar-e-Khatir* by Maulana Azad is a collection of letters.

- (a) Yes (b) No

4. 'Al-Hilal', started by Maulana Azad, was a weekly journal.

- (a) No (b) Yes

5. 'Al-Hilal' was started in 1919.

- (a) Yes (b) No

### **1.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. What were the motives behind the commencement of Al-Hilal?
2. Comment on the religious and secular views of Maulana Azad.
3. Discuss the role of Maulana Azad in maintaining communal harmony.
4. Did Maulana Azad support two-nation theory? Discuss.
5. Write a short note on political involvement of Maulana Azad.

### **1.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Give a short biography of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
2. Discuss in detail the contribution of Maulana Azad in the freedom movement.
3. Discuss the contributions of Maulana Azad in education sector.

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## **1.6 Suggested Readings**

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Alvi, H. (2015). The Islamic principles of social justice: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and nonviolent civil disobedience. *Contemporary Review of the Middle East*, 2(1-2), 14-30.

Azad, M. A. K. (2021). *India wins freedom: An autobiographical narrative*. Sharda Prakashan.

Jamshed, Q. M. (2010, January). Ideological Influences on Abul Kalam Azad. In *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* (Vol. 71, pp. 662-676). Indian History Congress.

Kumar, R. (1991). *Selected Works of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad*. Atlantic Publishers.

Muzzammil, S. (1988). *Abul Kalam Azad: Islam and Humanity*. Al-Kausar Publication.

Pant, V. P. (2010). Maulana Abul Kalam Azad: A Critical Analysis, Life and Work. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 1311-1323.



## Unit - 2: Maulana Azad as a Journalist

### Structure

#### 2.0 Introduction

#### 2.1 Objectives

#### 2.2 Maulana Azad as a Journalist

##### 2.2.1 An Introduction

##### 2.2.2 Azad's Foray into Journalism: The Newspapers/ Journals he started

##### 2.2.2.1 Analysing *Al-Hilal*

##### 2.2.3 Azad's Journalistic Contribution to other Newspapers

##### 2.2.4 Analysing Azad's Major Contributions to Newspapers/Journals

#### 2.3 Learning Outcomes

#### 2.4 Glossary

#### 2.5 Sample Questions

#### 2.6 Suggested Readings

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### 2.0 Maulana Azad as a Journalist

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Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin Ahmed bin Khairuddin Al-Hussaini Azad (1888-1958) like many other leaders of Indian National Congress was multifaceted. He not only was a prolific writer, notable poet, Islamic theologian, and remarkable journalist but also an outstanding visionary leader who shaped education in India like no one else. He was the First Minister of Education in the Indian Government post-independence. His contribution is undeniable and is celebrated on November 11<sup>th</sup> (his birthday) across India as National Education Day. His dedication to education is also reflected in his contribution in founding *Jamia Millia Islamia* University first at Aligarh, then shifting it to New Delhi without any aid from the British government and his contribution was commemorated by naming the main entrance of the university after him. He is popularly remembered as Maulana Azad though both the names are not related to his name. Maulana in Urdu means *master* and Azad was his penname that meant *free* which can be viewed as a representation of his dedication at achieving freedom for India from the colonizing British Empire. Freedom was so integral to his life that it inspired him to

even name his autobiography as *India Wins Freedom*. For his contribution to India during the freedom struggle and after independence he was awarded India's highest civilian honours of first degree, namely the Bharat Ratna award.

For someone who was home-schooled he was a remarkable teacher (he started teaching at fifteen years of age, became editor of a weekly at the age of twelve and brought out a magazine at the age of sixteen) and was fluent in an impressive number of languages including Arabic, Bengali, Persian, Hindustani, Urdu and English. He was also well versed in world history, science, philosophy, mathematics and Islamic history, texts and traditional schools of thoughts and even wrote treatises on interpretation of Quran and Hadith. It is a lesser-known fact that he was born in Mecca and raised in Calcutta in an influential and highly educated scholarly family of Afghani ancestry. His father authored around twelve books while his maternal grandfather had a far-reaching reputation even outside Arabia as a scholar of repute.

His irrefutable contributions were not limited to dynamic leadership (he was the leader of Khilafat Movement and became the youngest President of Indian National Congress in 1923 and also led INC as the president during the crucial Quit India movement from 1940-46) or even visionary educationist but included exemplary journalistic skills that are a source of learning for anyone pursuing journalism in India even in present times. With the decline in idealism and ethical journalism in India it becomes even more pertinent that Azad's journalistic career be studied with diligence. His preoccupation with freedom and national unity as values to be advocated by journalists is still a pertinent position today. His published work as a journalist revolved around criticism of British Raj in India (so much so that Nishat Qaiyoom identified British Imperialism as the chief target of his journalism (Qaiyoom: 679) ;promoting Indian Nationalism, Hindu-Muslim Unity (especially through *Al-Hilal* newspaper) Socialism and Secularism; treatises on philosophy and ethics of newspaper writing (that can be extended to journalism as a whole). His contributions to two newspapers namely, *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Balagh* are considered "symbols of animated journalism, cautious narration and magnanimity of heart." (Qaiyoom: 679)

He believed that newspapers were the tool through which public opinion could be moulded. In an article contributed to *Makhzan*, titled, "Art of Newspaper Writing" he discussed how throughout Europe and USA public opinion was influenced by newspapers and eventually heralded change in social thinking. He had a lot of faith in not just the power of education but

also newspapers which could define and influence social change. He was keen on cultivating literary tastes among the Muslim reading public while also giving them a taste of literary criticism that could improve quality of literature. These were among the major aims and objectives of his journal, *Lisan-ul-Sidq* (1903-1905) that sadly had a short run due to financial difficulties. The most significant aim was the promotion of social reforms which he believed could be achieved through the instrument of newspaper. Azad's career in journalism began as early as 1899 and through out his long career he contributed in various capacities in diverse newspapers and journals. He had an impressive career in journalism ranging not just in terms of diverse journals and newspapers but also various cities across India. Consequently, it can be argued that his journalistic skills rendered him as an outstanding leader of Modern India. He has left a legacy that has lasting influence on Muslim political thought especially during the early part of 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Apart from these publications, Maulana Azad was in the forefront in all the major movements for the independence like the Khilafat Movement (1919-23), the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22) the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-32) and the Quit India Movement (1942). He was a strong advocate of undivided India and had the foresight to predict that the Urdu-speaking Muslims of India leaving for either East or West Pakistan will be marginalized by the local population. This has come true today when one looks at the plight of the "Mohajirs" in Pakistan and "Biharis" in Bangladesh.

**Check your Progress:**

1. The most significant aim of Azad's journalistic endeavors was the promotion of social reforms.
2. Azad's full name is AbulKalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin Ahmed bin Khairuddin Al-Hussaini Azad and he was born in 1888 and died in 1958.
3. Azad is his pen name as freedom was very important to him.

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## 2.1 Objectives

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Objectives of this unit are as below:

- To give an overview of the journalistic career of Maulana Azad

- To understand and appreciate his contributions as a journalist during and after Independence
- To try to throw light on some of the most significant topics he wrote on
- To understand the relevance of these topics even today
- To take into account the various positions he held as a journalist
- To understand his techniques and styles in writing as a journalist
- To become aware of his perspectives within the context of India's freedom struggle on crucial matters

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## 2.2 Maulana Azad as a Journalist

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### 2.2.1 Introduction:

Azad has been described as a born intellectual and scholar by inheritance. (Shabnoor, 2011, 108) His command over Urdu, Persian, English and Arabic is nothing short of exceptional. He began reading newspapers at the age of ten. His first encounter with a newspaper was '*Akhbar-e-Aalam*' that was published from Lahore. His favourite feature was Akhbar ke Bahar in this paper. He also began reading '*Awadh Akhbar*' of Lucknow, '*Paisa Akhbar*' from Lahore and '*Darul-Saltanat*' that came from Calcutta. His relation with poetry also began early. In fact, one of his *gazals* was published in *Armaghan-e-Farrkh* in 1898 that came out from Bombay. When his poetry started getting popular and getting recognition and fame it became a source of inspiration to begin his own magazine, '*Nairang-e-Khayal*' in 1899 that thrived under his editorship and management. (ibid) He began writing essays after translating two short essays of *Jalaluddin Seweti* from Arabic to Urdu. He even translated some works of '*Imam Gazali*' into Urdu. After this he wrote some literary essays and two pamphlets that were in support of *Nadwat-ul-Ulma*. He got a lot of satisfaction from these and decided to enter the field of journalism. He once said that he began liking essay writing more than writing poetry as slowly realisation dawned on him and he began to feel that the higher status of any human being was to write and publish in his own name and even higher status was to be an editor of a magazine or newspaper. It is astonishing the kind of insight and vision he had as an exceptional child. And this later encouraged him to start his own newspapers at the age of eleven which marks his foray

into journalism. He went onto serve in different capacities in his incredible journey in journalism including as an editor, sub-editor, guest editor columnist, composer, managing and supervisor role etc. that will be analysed in detail in this unit.

Journalism's objectives were described by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in his autobiography as understanding and expressing popular feeling and arousing desirable sentiments in the masses while also fearlessly exposing popular defects in society. (Shabnoor, 2011, 2) These sentiments were shared by most of the freedom fighters in India during the freedom struggle. The same is evident when the history of the Urdu Press in India is evaluated. In this regard, Azad's paper *Al-Hilal* was true to the journalistic objectives set out by the freedom fighters of this century. It attempted to build a Muslim consciousness where both religious as well as political issues were brought into sharp focus. Designed on the Egyptian style of newspapers, it brought, to the public, the kind of content that stimulated their understanding of the world they were living in. It expressed opinions, brought news and was written with a flair for language and style of the new century.

For better comprehension of Azad's journalistic temperament, beliefs, views and arguments it is pertinent that the socio-political context of his times is also taken in account. It was only after India's 1857 revolt that Urdu newspaper publications and distribution caught momentum. Yet a few Urdu newspapers were in operation even before this period. For example, Vijay Datt Sridhar recorded that at the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century, a weekly from Calcutta was in circulation named, *Jam-i-Jehan Numa* in 1822 which became quite popular. When it began it was published in Urdu but as it gained popularity, on public demand it began to be published in Persian after the eighth issue. Another such prominent Persian newspaper was started by the famous social reformer, Raja Ram Mohan Roy in the year 1822. He called it *Mirat-ul-Akhabar* and declared that his newspaper aimed to end ignorance of the *awam* (local masses), provide information and meet the needs of the people while educating them about international affairs. It has to be noted here that both Persian and Urdu newspapers were "marching hand in hand." (Shabnoor, 2011, 2)

In 1837 another weekly was started from Delhi, *Syed-ul-Akhbar* by the elder brother of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Syed Mohammad Khan. This newspaper was edited by Abdul Ghafoor. *Siraj-ul-Akhbar* began in 1841. It reflected Muslim attitude towards the British Government.

Some newspapers like *Ahsan-ul-Akbar* began publication from Bombay in 1847. Within a short period, Delhi, Banaras and Agra became centres for Urdu journalism.

Slowly Urdu newspaper's popularity increased and new publications emerged in Lucknow (*Payam-e-Yar* in 1883), Meerut (*Merrut Gazettee/ Shan-e-Hind* in 1883), Indoor, Lahore, Peshawar, Calcutta, Chennai (*Shams-ul-Akhabar*) Fatehgarh (*Mufid-ul-Nam*), Aligarh (*Akhabar Scientific Society*, 1866 by Sir Syed Ahmed whose standards were so good that it was compared with UK's newspaper, *The Times/ Tahjib-ul-Akhalak/ Aligarh Magazine* in 1894), Bhopal (*Umdatul Akhabar/ Sadakat*), Hyderabad (*Hyderabad Gazettee* in 1871 which reported news on weather, judiciary, market rates, notices, income and expenditure of Government/ in 1894, *Deccan Gazete*), Agra (*Tervi Sadi*), Banaras (*Rafi-ul-Akhabar* 1884), Bombay (*The Muslim Herald* 1889), and Amritsar (*Vakil* 1895) among others (Shabnoor, 2011, 2-18).

Azad recognised the power of journalism at a very young age. As a visionary it was evident to him that journalism can play a major role in not just educating the Indian masses but also sending them the message of nationalism, secularism and freedom struggle. Having studied world history from a very tender age, he was aware about the power newspapers have in shaping public opinion. As a tool of democracy, journalism has the power to decide the fate of a state and Azad wrote in detail on the art of newspaper writing which is valid even in contemporary times. Even though newspapers were brought to India by the British after the invention of the printing press, he was aware that the same can be used in India's freedom struggle against the British themselves. While the British used the newspaper in promotion of Christian faith and consolidation of their Empire, the Indians used the same for spreading awareness among the masses about the ideas and thoughts of Indian leaders and freedom fighters. Similarly, at the tender age of ten, Mualana Azad had begun his endeavours with journalism in India especially with a focus on the Muslim situation in the Indian sub-continent. This, however, did not mean that he was supportive of the partition of India. He spoke vehemently against any such separation on religious lines. It is for this reason that the Hindu-Muslim unity remained a crucial subject that was very close to his heart. He fought hard to resist the partition of India.

For Azad, newspapers were meant for the masses and for this reason, he used newspapers to criticise the British rule, their racial discrimination, and policies that were not reflective of the needs of the Indian people. He skilfully used this tool in igniting the minds of the masses by

making them aware of the means they had at their disposal and could use in fighting for their independence. He strongly believed that any good newspaper should contain public issues and problems of the masses. If the newspapers worked for monetary benefit, he described it as an inhuman act on the editor's part and concluded that such newspapers were a blot on journalism at large (Shabnoor, 2011, 21).

Azad, throughout his long and flourishing career as a journalist, delved deeply and diversely in the art of journalism. Details of his journalistic career will be discussed in the following sections. It will become clear that not only did Azad contribute to journals and newspapers that he founded but was also an avid follower and contributor in other newspapers of his times.

### **2.2.2. Azad's Foray into Journalism: The Newspapers/ Journals he Started:**

Azad was a campaigner for peace and a vociferous freedom fighter who used not just his writing but also his public orations to generate national awakening among Indian masses. Azad was among the few Muslim leaders of his time who resisted India's partition on communal or religious lines. It was one of the most significant aspects of his journalistic endeavours to maintain unity among the two major religions in India. In a moving speech at the Presidential address of the Congress Session in 1923 Azad declared that it was pertinent that Hindu-Muslim unity be never sacrificed because it was far more necessary than immediate swaraj. He believed a delayed Swaraj is more acceptable to him if it means Hindu-Muslim unity is left intact. He feared that if Swaraj is delayed it would be a loss for India. However, it would mean the loss of humanity if Hindu-Muslim unity is sacrificed. He believed that it is far worse and hence needed to be avoided at all costs. His direct quote is as follows:

“If an angel were to descend from the clouds today, settle on the Qutub Minar of Delhi and proclaim from there that India will attain Swaraj provided Hindu-Muslim Unity is renounced, then I would renounce Swaraj and not sacrifice Hindu-Muslim Unity, because if Swaraj is delayed, it is the loss to India, but if Hindu-Muslim Unity is lost, it is the loss to humanity.” (Muzammiluddin: 2005, 1)

Azad, as a journalist, began his career at a very young age. It could be because of his natural flair for writing that led to his journalistic career beginning at the age of eleven. As is mentioned in the box below he started his first monthly magazine at the age of 11 in the year

1899 in Calcutta which included poetic collection of poets of the time. He named it *Nairang-e-Alam*. It was followed shortly by a new journal, *Al-Misbah* which was a weekly that carried articles on contemporary issues. This weekly was launched in 1900 which makes him a twelve-year-old boy with a passion to deal with burning issue of his time irrespective of his age or conditions. He was managing two journals, a weekly and a monthly before he was fifteen. During this time, he also began teaching, sometimes people double his age. He was a true prodigy in this regard.

Syed Muzammiluddin records that it was the year 1908 which marked the genesis of his revolutionary journalism. In his book, *India Wins Freedom*, Azad records his visits abroad during this year. At this time, he extensively travelled and spent considerable time at France, Egypt, Turkey and Syria. His visit to Turkey left a lasting impact on him where he met not just the leaders of the Young Turks Movement but also Mustafa Kemal Pasha who at the time was publishing from Cairo a weekly. He also had an opportunity to interact with Iranian revolutionaries in Egypt where he had the chance to meet Louis Massignon, the famous French Orientalist. All these travels and interactions cemented in his mind the belief that the Muslims of India should join hands with the Hindus in ousting the British from their country together. He felt that it was not just Hindus or Muslims who should carry the mantle but all communities should join forces as it was every Indian's responsibility to fight British Imperialism and end the British Raj to herald freedom or Azadi. It was this unfailing faith in freedom that led him to adopt his penname, *Azad* which means freedom in Hindustani. The result of these travels and learnings resulted in starting the landmark Press *Al-Hilal* that published a weekly by the same name.

*Al-Hilal* has a unique place in history of the press in India because of its circulation figures, an astounding 26,000 (some records show 29,000) copies and demand for republishing of old copies. Its popularity reached such heights that every new subscriber wanted to read and own all the back copies that led to the increase in demand for republishing of old copies. The weekly was so popular due to its intellectually stimulating contents that included the message of patriotism, nationalism and religious fervour that appealed to the Muslim masses suffering under the British rule. It was published with illustrations, advertisements and descriptions based on technology. (Shabnoor, 2011, 2)



All this activity did not go unnoticed by the British Government who imposed a security of 2000 rupees under the Press Act, which Azad paid duly. But this amount was not only confiscated by the British Government but another 10000 rupees was imposed. Not being able to curb the press' anti-establishment stance, the British Government confiscated the press in 1915 and banned *Al-Hilal*. But this did not deter Azad; within five months he began publication of another weekly, *Al-Balagh* with similar contents like that of *Al-Hilal*. This defiance was rewarded by the British Government by invoking the Defence of India Provisions in 1916. It meant that he was banned from entering the following provinces: Calcutta, Punjab, U.P., Delhi and Bombay which forced him to move to Bihar. But before he could even reach Bihar, he was kept under house arrest in Ranchi until December 31, 1919. He was finally released on January 1, 1920 and within a year he had started another weekly, *Paigham* in 1921 and this time the British Government not just banned it but also arrested him. It was not until 1927 that he restarted the publication of the weekly, *Al-Hilal*. (Muzammiluddin: 2005, 1)

#### **2.2.2.1 Analysing *Al-Hilal*:**

*Al-Hilal* was started by Azad with a separate administrative and editorial staff. He directed the editorship, management of the newspaper, raising of funds, printing and producing article, obtaining national and international news, and other materials for his readers. No donations were entertained in order to maintain the paper's independence. He began payment to editorial staff which was unheard of in Urdu newspapers. He records in *Al-Hilal* dated 20<sup>th</sup> July, 1912 that he modelled the paper on English Press but the pattern was Arabic inspired especially from the Egyptian newspapers. His passionatenationalismattracted a lot of readership. It caused a revolutionary stir among the masses. He attempted to unite the Muslims to fight the British and for this he identified issues and collected data to arouse anti-British sentiments. As the newspaper was in Persianized Urdu the British Government was unaware about Azad's agenda until *The Pioneer* from Lucknow made the British aware with a publication in their newspaper. (Ibid)

*Al-Hilal* went on to play a leading role in creating a political climate. The newspaper was able to achieve it mainly due to its "logical editorial policy and strict adherence to journalistic principles and techniques." (Upadhyaya 2015) It is noteworthy that the masthead of the newspaper had a sentence that emphasised that *Al-Hilal* was published on illustrated paper. Even though he

was aware that cartoons would be of significant importance in his newspaper, he was unable to introduce it as there was no cartoonist at his disposal. We are aware of this fact due to Azad's own lament in the newspaper. He laid special emphasis on news photos in the newspaper. It has been recorded that most of the photos in *Al-Hilal* were related to significant international developments and affairs; for example, there were photos of Balkan War and World War-I. There were also pictures of Gandhi's struggle against apartheid in South Africa. There were photos of Tagore when he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. (ibid.)

Azad was also keen on using the latest printing technology in printing and publishing his newspaper. He was very particular about avoiding printing mistakes and therefore always revised the proofs himself. From the getup of the journal to the quality and contents in it, he was involved in everything. He over looked all the work and strived for perfection in his journal. He appointed a team of journalists for this purpose: Abdullah Emadi, Hamid Ali Siddiqui and Syeed Suleman Naqvi who were among the distinguished members of his team. Though it is a common practice in contemporary times, in those days, such appointments were rare. (ibid)

The quality of *Al-Hilal* was so superior that even the Urdu dailies could not compare with it. But it should be remembered that the credit of the success of *Al-Hilal* goes to the exemplary team that Azad appointed and managed. It was not a one-man show even though Azad was the visionary and source behind it. He had the sensibility to make timely decisions and include the latest technology, trends and contents including photos. He edited and improved the articles of his colleagues sometimes going so far that their authorship was under question. Upadhyaya states that "Maulana Azad left his impression on every paragraph in the newspaper and this gave *Al-Hilal* a distinct personality." (ibid)

As was mentioned earlier the British Government banned *Al-Hilal*, and within a year in on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1914, he brought out his second weekly, *Al Balagh*. This journal was, on the face of it, confined to religious issues but deep down it was discussing man's emancipation and freedom in Islamic and historical context. The religious issues had political overtones in this newspaper. As this continued for some time, the British Government found it unbearable and he was confined at Ranchi for a few years.

He was released in 1919 and by that time the political scene had changed dramatically. The masses had joined forces resulting in Hindu-Muslim unity and struggled together in

Gandhi's non-cooperation movement. Once Azad joined politics his career in journalism took a backseat. But even then he kept his interest alive in journalism by starting a weekly, *Paigham* in 1921. But this time he was not the editor; he chose his close associate Abdur Razzaq Molihabadi as the editor. As was mentioned earlier, he then tried reviving *Al-Hilal* in 1927 but sadly, it was just a shadow of its former self. These two newspapers were produced by lithographic printing system; when the earlier ones were type composed newspapers. Unfortunately, both the weeklies could hardly survive for a few months. (ibid)

**Below is a chart that shows the Publication Milestones that Azad achieved:**

Year	Publication Milestones(that he started)
1888	Birth in Mecca
1899 Age 11	Started monthly magazine, <i>Nairang-e-Alam</i> which was a periodical that carried the poetical collection of the contemporary poets.
1900 Age 12	Started <i>Al-Misbah</i> , a weekly that carried articles on national integrity and unity
1912	Started <i>Al-Hilal</i> Press and <i>Al-Hilal</i> weekly
1915	Started <i>Al-Balagh</i> which was a weekly whose content was similar to <i>Al-Hilal</i>
1921	Started a weekly named <i>Paigham</i>
1927	Restarted publication of the weekly <i>Al-Hilal</i>

**Checkyour Progress:** 1. Azad started writing from the age of eleven

2. He was a journalist of great caliber

3. He supported the unity of Hindus and Muslims and his writings reflected that

4. The British Government banned *Al-Hilal*, and within a year as on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1914, he brought out his second weekly, *Al Balagh*

5. In 1927, he restarted the publication of *Al-Hilal*

### 2.2.3. Azad's Journalistic Contribution to other Newspapers:

While he was setting up his own newspapers and journals, Azad had also started contributing to *Makhazan* and *Ahsul-Akhabar*. His circumstances in life were comfortable; he could have chosen to continue living peacefully without jumping into the freedom struggle if he so chose. However, he chose to put his weight and privilege that fate had afforded him into the freedom struggle that he felt was crucial for the growth of India as a nation. He was sensitive to the political situation of his time and felt that he had a mission to fulfil. It is for this reason that he chose journalism. He not only started, contributed to, and edited his own newspapers, but also wrote in other prominent newspapers of his times. He was also the editor at the early age of fifteen years. His famous article, *Art of Newspaper Writing* which was published in the prestigious newspaper, *Lahore-Makhazan* in 1902 was also published at this time when he was just fifteen years old. He became a regular contributor at several newspapers in North India that gained him name and fame across the region. (Upadhya 2015,1)

*Khadang-e-Nazar* was one of the other newspapers he joined as an assistant editor. It was a monthly that came from Lucknow where Munshi Navbat Rai was the editor. Azad worked for just a few months here in 1903. He published the following essays while working at the *Khadang-e-Nazar*:

1. Zamana-e-Qadeem mai Kabootroan ki Dak (S.No 2) May 1902
2. Mubadal-e-Senain January 1903
3. Aasare Qadeema (Heritage) February 1903
4. Minar-e Khusrugar (Basilsila Aasare Qadeema) March 1903
5. Afghanistan April 1903
6. Zo-e-Ghair Maraee (Ek German Professor ki Hiarat Angez Ijad) (S.No. 2) May 1903 (x-ray)

On account of these essays, his reputation reached far and wide and Allama Shibli offered him the position of Assistant editor at *Al-Nadwa*. In 1903, Azad started managing the

setting, composing and writing for the weekly, *Ahsanul Akhbar* as the office was nearby to his house and the editor, Sayyed Ahmed Hasan was a close contact. Azad acknowledged that his association with *Ahsanul Akhbar* benefitted him in a twofold manner: first, all Arabic journals from Egypt, Tunis, Turkey, Al-Jazeera and even America were received in exchange for *Ahsanul Akhbar* and this provided him with the opportunity to study these papers in detail. The office also received literary magazines like *Al-Hilal*, *AL-Minar*, *Al-Muqtif* from Egypt. He started becoming aware of the problems in the Islamic world and his knowledge increased. Second, he was able to write varied kinds of essays. He had the opportunity to translate and select essays and news from Arabic newspapers; setting and composing of both scientific and literary essays, and even review books and journals. He even discussed international news and occurrences. Unfortunately, due to one of his essays, titled *Islam aur Muharram* that critiqued the rituals and customs of Muharram led to the closing down of the newspaper by the Shia Muslims. (Shabnoor 118)

The shock of such a reaction led him to question the means he had used to educate the masses. He realised that he cannot fight the rituals and customs through these means. To quote him, “I have learnt very useful lesson from the experience which perhaps I could not observe and know so soon. We cannot instigate the emotions of masses since it does not improve and will result in collective harm. The work should be done with patience and restrain. Their emotions should not be hurt neither instigating situation be created. As far as possible, adverse controversy is not to be created. The speech should be free from anger and forcefulness. It is better rejection and blaming should not be done by giving name or specifying. Practically such atmosphere is to be created and resources deployed that pleasure lustre and loveliness of these rituals are lessened and attraction is lost on its own.” (ibid 119)

After this he joined another weekly, *Lisanul Sidq* where he was the editor for two years (1903-1905). This monthly has been described as the turning point / a milestone in his journalistic career. (Shabnoor 120) It was this paper from where Azad began his social reform movement. (ibid.138) His articles for this paper were literary in taste and influenced by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s ideas on educational and social reform. His writing style and setting was systematic. It was also written in very good Urdu prose. “It has a standard type of criticism and thinking, balanced wiring, burning titles, and the spirit of social reform.” (ibid 139)

While he was working with so many other newspapers, he was also the guest editor for a year (1902-1903) at *Edward Gazettee*, which was a weekly. He also for a few months worked as an editor at *Darul Saltanat* which was a weekly from Calcutta in 1907.

Maulana Shibli, a renowned scholar and editor insisted that Azad join as an Assistant Editor of this journal, *Al-Nadwa* of Lucknow and Azad acquiesced when Shibli resigned from his employment at Hyderabad and returned to Nadwa. In their many years of association Azad was invited to Hyderabad by Shibli but it never materialised. Azad's work with the journal got him fame and respect. During his time at the newspaper, he wrote some compelling essays that got him respect and prestige among Muslim scholars. *Al Nadwa* was a journal on Islamic theology and civilization. He studied Quran and Islamic history during this time. All this led to his intellectual development. Some of the essays he wrote for the journal include Women's Rights, Judiciary in Islamic Countries, the Muslim's store of knowledge and Guardianship of Europe, (where he emphasised that a middle path between freedom in Europe and restriction in East based on Islamic teaching be adopted) and Education of deaf and mute in Europe. (Shabnoor 122-123)

Apart from this, he was also invited by the proprietor of *Vakil*, which was a famous weekly from Amritsar to join as editor and this offer Azad accepted in 1906. He was given a free hand to express views independently at *Vakil*, records Shabnoor. (Shabnoor 124) He worked tirelessly making it first a bi-weekly and then later on a tri-weekly. He ensured that it was published regularly and also improve qualitatively. It has to be remembered that regularity was a rarity in those days in language journalism and hence his efforts for regularizing need special mention. (Upadhyaya 2015,1) *Vakil* was a serious newspaper that had depth of thought and offered balanced views on societal problems. Azad burned the midnight oil once he assumed editorship of the *Vakil*. He reserved four columns for introductory essays and Shajrat. He insisted that only successful and serious letters be published. (Shabnoor 125) With overwork his health deteriorated and when the news of his brother's sudden death and his father's insistence on return came, he resigned and left for Calcutta.

It can be said that Maulana Azad was so keen on pursuing journalism that he did not return to Calcutta while pursuing journalism until the death of his brother. His father then insisted that he settle permanently in Calcutta and to ensure that he got him married to the

daughter of his follower (his father was a spiritual leader). His wife, Zulekha Begum proved to be a worthy companion and helped Azad in his pursuit of the freedom of the nation. When Azad was imprisoned by the British, she was the one who assured Gandhi that the freedom struggle would continue relentlessly in Bengal even in Azad's absence. All the marital bliss and father's care were not able to keep him holed up in Calcutta; he was restless without being engaged in journalism. It was then that some of his father's followers persuaded the proprietor of *Darus Saltanat*, a weekly to restart the paper that had been closed. And so began Azad's foray into journalism in Calcutta. Under Azad's skilful editorship, the paper was started again but after a short period of time, he resigned from his post due to some differences with the owner. He had the opportunity to re-join *Vakil* in August-September 1907. It was here that he met Abdullah Emadi, who also joined this paper at around the same time. It was he who later helped Azad in starting his own paper, *Al-Hilal*. (Upadhya 2015,1)

Azad also worked in the capacity of supervision authority for the weekly, *Paigham* in 1921 until he was arrested and sent to jail for the khilafat and non-cooperative stance of the paper. He later worked in the same capacity at *Al-Jamia*, a bi-monthly from 1922-1923. He started *Payam*, a daily in 1927 where he worked in the same capacity (supervisor authority).

Tahzebul-Akhlaq was a weekly by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan where many peculiar features by Maulana Azad were published. (Shabnoor, 2011, 19)

Year	Newspaper/Journal
1902	<i>Makhzan</i>
1903	<i>Khadang-e- Nazar</i>
1903	<i>Ahsanul Akhbar</i>
1903-1905	<i>Lisanul Sidq</i>
1907	<i>Darul Saltanat</i>
1902-1903	<i>Edward Gazettee</i>

<b>1906 and 1907</b> (rejoined)	<i>Vakil</i>
<b>1921</b>	<i>Paigham</i>
<b>1922-23</b>	<i>Al-Jamia</i>
<b>1927</b>	<i>Payam</i>

#### **2.2.4 Analysing Azad's Major Contributions to Newspapers/Journals:**

Maulana Azad was an architect of modern secular India. He has been described as a true representative of India's hopes and aspirations. (Shabnoor, 2011, 23) His varied knowledge, flair for writing and learning languages, his travels abroad, and his comprehensive grasp over world history became the base for his journalistic writings. He was impressed with socialism and became close to Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose as a young radical leader. They espoused socialism and declared fight against inequality, poverty and other national challenges. (Shabnoor, 2011, 27)

As Azad contributed majorly on Urdu Press it becomes pertinent that the history and role of Urdu Press in Indian freedom struggle be touched upon before comprehensively analysing some of his major arguments. Vilanilam observed that the Urdu newspapers played a major role in formation of public opinion against the East India Company during the Revolt of 1857. Prof. Bhatt has pointed out that the Urdu press was monumental in national awakening- fighting for the national cause. (Shabnoor, 2011, 102)

For his time and age, he held quite radical views for a Muslim and plunged into the national struggle with passion. His criticism of the British for racial discrimination and ignorance of needs of the masses have been mentioned before. But what needs consideration is that his approach was not just nationalist but also rational and objective. He was very vocal in his criticism of fellow Muslim leaders who put communal issues before national interests. He quite vehemently and outrightly rejected All India Muslim League's communal agenda that prescribed separatism. This can be viewed as professional journalism where he ensured objectivism in his work and newspapers. As has been explored in the earlier pages, his vision as a journalist and editor was exemplary. He campaigned for peace through his writings and oratorial skills at creating national awakening in the masses.



The instant success of *Al-Hilal* and increase in circulation and subscription are a proof of his popularity as a journalist. He received such fame because of his fearless attitude and popular reflections. (Shabnoor, 2011, 105) M. Chalpathi Rau stressed that the newspaper, *Al-Hilal* made no secret of its political objectives and took bold line on matters of social and religious nature. Journalism for Azad was a means to bring about social change and national integration. It can be argued that when the Islamic world was communal and fundamentalist Azad was immersed in nationalism and patriotism. (ibid, 106) The twentieth century was the century of nationalism and as a product of his time he was no different.

He was greatly influenced by Shibli and Sayed Ahmad Khan's writings. He went to great lengths to collect, purchase and gorge every written work ever published by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. He felt it was his writings that shaped him and his thinking. He was also not a conformist as a writer. He declined to be a successor of his father and refused to be tied to existing beliefs. He questioned established beliefs and system and his fame spread far and wide even when he was writing at a tender ages between eleven to fifteen because of his grand and inspiring message and interpretation of Islam. (ibid. 107)

He began writing early but his passion for writing continued through out his life and he remained a prolific writer and poet till the very end. He wrote books in Urdu, Persian and Arabic. He translated the Quran from Arabic to Urdu in a six-volume work that remains his *Magnum Opus*. It was published by Sahitya Academy in 1977 and ever since then countless editions of 'Tarjaman-e-Quran' have come out. Some of his other prominent work include '*Gubar-e-Khatir*' '*Hijr-o-Vasal*' '*Khotbat-e-Azad*' '*Hamari Azadi*' '*Tazkara*' and he also blew a new lease of life into '*Anjamane-Tarraqi-e-Urdu-e-Hind*.' (ibid, 107-108)

As his writing improved and gained recognition, he was presented with opportunities to contribute in many journalistic capacities. He began by sending essays and writing pamphlets. Slowly he began contributing as a columnist. When his reputation reached far and wide, he began getting offers of positions in the newspapers in different capacities: guest editor, special editor, sub-editor and finally with time and learning even editor and managing authority. Once he became a publisher and editor of his own newspapers/journals and magazines he learnt a lot about managing and running them. His vast experience was sought by different editors and owners of newspapers once his own newspaper was banned by the British. What is remarkable is

his unrelenting desire to move ahead when faced by challenges or obstacles. When the British shut down his paper and banned it, he did not lose hope and give up but in fact began another weekly and continued in his passion for journalism. His skills and capacities enhanced till he reached the peak of journalism. (ibid 110)

In *Al-Misbah*, his first weekly, he wrote an essay titled *Eid* that had many reprints including in *Paisa* which came from Lahore and it was a great encouragement and source of pride for Azad. In *Al-Misbah* Azad had the opportunity to discuss major current events and news in journalistic fashion and he shone while writing on different topics and issues. He wrote on *Imam Gazali*, *Newton*, *Masla-e-Kashish Shaqal* (law of gravity) among other interesting topics. (ibid 114)

In conclusion, it can be stated that he was a journalist of great Calibre and can be celebrated as a freedom fighter who imbued the struggle for independence with the spirit of nationalism and unity in India. He opposed discrimination especially based on religion and race that goes against the spirit of India. We can end the paper on a conclusion that Upadhyaya made “As a journalist-cum-social reformer he advocated all round development of the Muslim community and emphasized the importance of education through his papers.”(Upadhyaya 2015)

**Check your Progress:** 1. Azad mostly brought out his papers in Calcutta though he worked in most states of Northern India during his career in journalism that spanned over many decades.

2. He worked in various capacities including assistant editor, sub-editor, editor, manager, composer and special editor of newspapers.

3. He was greatly influenced by ideas of freedom, secularism, socialism and Islam.

4. He worked relentlessly to sharpen his skills and acquired new skills at running and managing a newspaper as an editor and owner.

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## 2.3 Learning Outcomes

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After reading this unit, the students will learn about the Maulana Azad's journalistic career. They will learn not just historical facts about newspapers and journals in which he contributed in different capacities across various Indian cities but also be able to appreciate his writing style and skilful grasp over the burning issue during his time. His command over various languages pertinent to the Indian public and the desire to improve literature through literary criticism will also be comprehended by the students.

While reading about his journey as a journalist they will also be exposed to the trials and tribulations of the Indian leaders during the freedom struggle. They will become familiar with the social problems that were prevalent and how Azad through his writing attempted to bring about a change through social reforms and influence social thinking in India especially among the Muslim community.

The students will get a glimpse of not just history of that period but also the culture, religious and social traditions and beliefs. Hence, apart from creating awareness about historical context in when Azad was writing and editing in newspapers and journals, this unit will also help students appreciate how Maulana Azad marched onwards slowly assuming the role of a leader and educationist even as he reached heights in his journalistic career.

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## 2.4 Glossary

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<b>Visionary</b>	: A person with original ideas about what the future will or could be like
<b>Journalism</b>	: Collection, preparation and distribution of news
<b>Scholarly</b>	: Involving and relating to serious academic study
<b>Magnanimity</b>	: Condition of being nobly generous
<b>Exemplary</b>	: Serving as a desirable model or example
<b>ASTOUNDING</b>	: Surprisingly impressive and notable
<b>Tirelessly</b>	: With great effort or energy
<b>Acquiesced</b>	: Accept something reluctantly but without protest
<b>Emancipation</b>	: To free from restraint, control or bondage
<b>Flair</b>	: A special or instinctive aptitude or ability for doing something well
<b>Instigate</b>	: Bring about or initiate (usually for something bad or unacceptable)

**Milestone** : A significant stage or event

**Monumental** : Great in importance extent or size

**Conformist** : A person who conforms to accepted behaviour or established practices

**Unrelentingly** : In a way that never becomes less/ uncompromising determination

**Pertinent** : Something that is relevant or significant

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## 2.5 Sample Questions

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### 2.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. When did Azad's career in Journalism begin?  
(a) 1899 (b) 1895  
(c) 1988 (d) 1900
2. Which languages did Azad prominently write in as a journalist?  
(a) English (b) Persian  
(c) Bengali (d) Arabic
3. What did his journalistic writings revolve around?  
(a) Secularism and sovereignty (b) Socialism and sovereignty  
(c) Socialism and secularism (d) sovereignty only
4. What did he consider had the power to mould public opinion?  
(a) Education (b) Newspaper  
(c) Journalism (d) Television
5. Which newspaper was not started by Azad?  
(a) *Al-Hilal* (b) *Al-Balagh*  
(c) *Paigham* (d) *Al-Misbah*
6. *Vakil* was a weekly that came out from which city?  
(a) Lucknow (b) Amritsar  
(c) Delhi (d) Calcutta
7. Al-Jamia was a  
(a) Bi-monthly (b) Daily  
(c) Tri-monthly (d) Weekly

8. Which newspaper was shut down because of Azad's controversial writing?

- (a) *Al-Minar*                      (b) *Lisanul Sidq*  
(c) *Ahsanul Akhbar*      (d) *Edward Gazettee*

9. What is the name of Azad's biography?

- (a) India at Noon              (b) India Wins Freedom  
(c) India Wins Azadi      (d) India Wins Independence

10. Which award was bestowed on Azad in 1992?

- (a) Padma Shri Award              (b) Padma Vibhushan  
(c) Bharat Ratna                      (d) Padma Bhushan

### **2.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. What according to Azad had the potential to mould public opinion and why?
2. What were the aims and objectives of Azad in *Lisan-ul-Sidq* and what did they represent?
3. What role did Azad feel education played in bringing social reform?
4. What were some of the positions he held in his journalistic career?
5. Mention in brief some of the new/ unheard things that Azad introduced in Urdu Newspapers and in managing the Urdu Press?

### **2.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. What were some of the lasting influences on Azad's writing? Did his travels abroad influence his writing in later years? Which Indian thinkers influenced his thought process?
2. What were the reasons for Azad's passionate promulgation of social reforms in the Muslim community during the Freedom Struggle? Did he always succeed in bringing about reform or was there a backlash from certain sections of society that led to shutting down of some newspapers he was working in?
3. Capture in brief some of the significant topics Azad wrote on both in the newspapers started by him and also in the newspapers he worked intermittently in.

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## **2.6 Suggested Readings**

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2. Azami, H.A. (1993) Maulana Azad as a Journalist in Abul Kalam Azad A Centenary Tribute, Anjan Kumar Banerji, pp. 91, Dept. of Mass Communication, BHU.
3. Habib, S. Irfan, (2010), Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and the National Education System, Registrar, National University of Education Planning and Administration, New Delhi.
4. Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam. *India Wins Freedom*. Madras, Orient Longman, 1988.
5. Suroor, A.A. "The Literary Contribution of Maulana Azad." *Indian Literature*. vol. 31, no. 4, July-August 1988, pp. 7-16.
6. Pant, Vijay Prakash. "Maulana Abul Kalam Azad: A Critical Analysis Life and Work." *The Indian Journal of Political Science*. vol. 71, no. 4, Oct-Dec 2010, pp. 1311-1323.
7. Malik, Jamal. "From Salafism to Secularism: The Dialectic of Political Islam and Secular Nationalism in the case of Azad's Thought." *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*. vol. 37, no. 4, summer 2014, pp. 32-45.
8. Dar, Farooq Ahmad. "Azad and Jinnah: Parallel Lives." *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*. vol. 36, no.4, summer 2013, pp. 53-67.
9. Qaiyoom, Nishat. "Maulana Azad's Journalistic Crusade Against Colonialism." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*. vol. 73, 2012, pp. 678-685.

## Unit – 3: The Objectives of *Al-Hilal* and Its Political Teachings

### Structure

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### 3.0 Introduction

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Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a man of the world and also a man of parts par excellence. He was a multidimensional personality. He had simultaneously played many roles, and in every domain, he remained successful and effective. He is a literary figure and his literature has a profound influence not only in his lifetime, but is perpetually inspiring and guiding the succeeding generations. The quality and grandeur of his writing has been acclaimed by one and all across cultures and countries. His literature is also used as a criterion to measure the depth and see the standard of the literature written by great writers. He is a theologian possessing in-depth and accurate knowledge of religious mysteries and metaphysical concepts. His comprehension of Islamic fundamentals and the Quranic text is all eye-opening and torch bearing for eminent scholars and researchers. The legacy of religious literature, he has left

behind in the form of translation of the *Quran- The Turjaman-ul Quran*, preaching and casual writing on diverse and difficult issues are of paramount significance for the whole posterity. As a man of politics, he is also unparalleled in more than one ways. In Indian freedom struggle, Maulana Azad has always and everywhere fought from the front as a true and sincere leader. He has displayed his might and main in the form of writing as well as speaking. He left no stone unturned to stand against colonial occupation. He not only participated in anticolonial campaigns and demonstrations, but also inspired and incited public against British rule. He became very popular during pre-independence era across religions, regions and classes. Moreover, Maulana Azad as a journalist is ever alive and all time guide for the people working in this field. In journalism, his contribution is manifold. He has used it as a podium to educate common and illiterate masses regarding the exigency of freedom. He has used journalism as a medium to expose the hypocrisy and exploitative intent of English people. Maulana Azad's vision and mission have worked as a cement to keep the unity of people hailing from various backgrounds. His grand trio magazines- *Al-Hilal*, *Al-Balagh*, and *Lisan al Sidq* have left indelible mark on the professionalism of media writing.

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### 3.1 Objectives

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- To introduce the personality of Maulana Azad to the readers with brief but essential facts.
- To familiarize the students with Indian freedom struggle and scenario *vis-a-vis* Maulana Azad's life.
- To highlight the teachings of *Al-Hilal* about Hindu-Muslim unity during the pre-independence era.
- To demonstrate the ultra nationalistic zeal and revolutionary flair among Indian masses to eliminate colonizers.
- To enlighten the students with *Al-Hilal* as a rich source of literature, besides a classic journalism.

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### 3.2 Objectives of Al-Hilal and Its Political Teachings

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### 3.2.1 Biographical Note on Maulana Abul Kalam Azad:

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's real name is Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin, but is popularly known as Maulana Azad. Maulana Azad is one of the utmost figures of Indian independence struggle. He is well-known religious scholar, renowned poet, an established literary writer and an eminent journalist. He is multilingual and has displayed great acumen in languages viz Urdu, Arabic, Persian, Bengali, English and Hindi. His popularity also rests on his unique competence on debating and discussing social, political and religious issues. This attribute of resolving issues and problems is embedded in his name Abul Kalam whose literary mean 'master or lord of dialogue'. His pseudonym Azad symbolizes and signifies mental emancipation or freedom from the shackles of narrow ideologies of religious and traditional life.

Maulana Azad's ancestors are outsiders in India. His forefathers have arrived from Herat, Afghanistan during Emperor Baber's time. Azad himself has foreign birth. He was born in Makkah, Saudi Arab on 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1888. He belongs to the lineage of famous learned muslim Maulanas or religious scholars. His mother is the daughter of Sheikh Mohammad Zaher Watri, an Arab, and his father, Maulana Khairuddin, a Bengali muslim of Afghan origin. They have left India during Sepoy Mutiny and settled in Makkah from where they returned to Calcutta in 1890. Azad has to pursue the traditional religious education compulsorily due to his orthodox family background. He has learnt many things at home and later on in life has been educated by an eminent appointed teacher. At the initial stage, he has been given education of Arabic and Persian languages and the Geometry, Philosophy, Mathematics and Algebra. He has also gained a great expertise in English language and literature, world history and politics through self-study.

Right from his early life, Maulana Azad has been trained and taught to grow into an eminent clergyman. He has written a number of books and also interpreted religious texts. His translation of the *Holy Quran* titled *The Turjuman-ul Quran* is very popular among muslim community. His tremendous learning had led him to abandon the tradition of conformity (*Taqlid*) and to embrace innovation (*Tajdid*). As being enkindled with the Pan-Islamic spirit, he has travelled to Afghanistan, Turkey, Iraq, Egypt and Syria. In Egypt, he has met the famous revolutionary Sheikh Mohammad Abduhand Saeed Pasha. They have shared and exchanged their

thoughts and ideas mutually regarding Islam and the destiny of Muslims. In Iraq he has also discussed and debated about various issues with the exiled revolutionaries struggling to set up a constitutional government in Iran. He has gained first hand information about ideologies and strategies of the exuberant Turks in Constantinople. All these experiences of the outside world has radically modified his sensibility and prepared him psychologically for a revolution and freedom in India. On his return from abroad, Maulana Azad has met the great revolutionaries like Aurobindo Ghosh, Sri Shyam Sundor Chatteravarty and become the part of revolutionary movement against the colonial rule. During these times, he has realized that the most of revolutionaries are anti-muslims. There was a common notion that the muslims are being used by English people to weaken the Indian freedom campaign. Maulana Azad has left no stone unturned to convince his co-revolutionaries to shed away the enmity and befriend the muslim community.

It is in 1912, Maulana Azad launched a weekly magazine titled *Al-Hilal* to spread the revolutionary ideology and augment the muslim recruits in the same. The journal has played a vital role to remove the conception among anti-muslim people and has bridged the distance between Hindus and Muslims to a considerable extent. *Al-Hilal* has emerged a powerful mouthpiece to communicate and convey the pure native voice. But the English Administration could not tolerate the content of *Al-Hilal* and looked upon it as a promoter of secessionist ideology and thereon banned its publication in 1914. Maulana Azad has tried once again the same in the form of *Al-Balagh* to promote and propagate his mission of nationalism and anticolonialism, and to cement the Hindu-muslim unity. But again the government banned it in 1914 and jailed him at Ranchi till 1920, the end of the First World War. After release from imprisonment, Maulana Azad has inspired the muslim population by means of Khikafat Movement. Its purpose was to restore the Khilafa in the English occupied Turkey. Maulana Azad joined the Indian national Congress in 1920 and fully backed the Gandhi's sponsored Non-Cooperation Movement. He has also been given the presidency of the Special Session of the Congress at Delhi in 1923. He was jailed in 1930 for transgressing the Salt Laws as part of Gandhiji's Salt Satyagargh. In 1940, Maulana Azad became the president of Indian Congress and remained on the position till 1946. Moreover, he has never desired the partition, and when it happened it pained him severely and threw cold water on his long cherished idea of free and united India. After independence, Maulana Azad has become the first Education Minister of

India in Pandith Jawaharlal Nehru's Cabinet from 1947- 1958. Finally he passed away on 22<sup>nd</sup> of February in 1958. He has been posthumously conferred upon India's highest Civilian award, Bharat Ratna in 1992 for his invaluable service and manifold contribution to Indian socio-political setup.

### **3.2.2 Promotion of Hindu-Muslim Unity:**

The propagation and promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity during India's struggle for independence has remained the core concern of Maulana Azad's journal *Al-Hilal*. Maulana Azad has always favoured the united India with complete harmony among different communities particularly between Hindus and Muslims. While reading his literature of politics and religion, he appears a firm believer in the co-existence of diverse communities. His big dream is to see the people of India peacefully cohabited because the same might lead to a mighty nation. He is the representative of East-West amalgamation. He values highly reason and technology but never at the cost of Islamic religion. He opines that Hindu majority would shadow the identity and existence of the muslim minority. During the initial stage of his life, he hardly shows any reaction to the British rule. It is later on with the help of Islamic knowledge, he becomes conscious about his own national and religious identity. So he starts to revolt against the loathsome colonialism and to work for the establishment of religious identity for muslims in India. He regards religion as a guiding light and a source of solution to all human and social problems. For Maulana Azad, the religion and politics are the two sides of the same coin and so cannot be parted at all. Among all the muslim intellectuals and political leaders, Maulana Azad has never agreed on the two nation theory as it was strongly advocated by Ali Mohammad Jinnah. While delivering the presidential address of Indian National Congress in 1923, Azad proclaims:

Today, If an angel were to descend from the heaven and declare from the top of the Qutub Minar, that India will get Swaraj within twenty four hours, provided she relinquishes Hindu- Muslim Unity, I will relinquish Swaraj rather than Hindu- Muslim Unity, Delay in the attainment of Swaraj will be a loss to India, but if our unity is lost, it will be loss for entire mankind.

Maulana Azad has a stellar standing in the socio-political domain, and he has left an indelible imprint on the intellectual ideology of Indian nation. His role to strengthen the Hindu-

muslim coordination and universal humanism is of the utmost value even at present. The history of India not only presents him as a popular freedom fighter, but also a great leader who stands for ideologue among Hindus and Muslims. He is continually regarded as a symbol of communal brotherhood and harmony and is equally revered across the religions even in modern India. His educational thoughts and policies have helped in India's social upliftment and economic development. From day one, he has wielded his pen as an editor and writer of his well-known magazine *Al-Hilal* to achieve the three urgently needed objectives- Hindu-Muslim unity, national integrity and complete freedom from the colonial rule.

Regarding the importance of communal harmony and religious unity, Maulana Azad has always preached a broad nationalism incorporating all religions and communities in a country like India full of religious, regional and lingual diversity. His faith always remained in inclusive India, composite nationalism, and pluralistic setup. His literature and life experiences are a fountain spring of inspiration helpful in socio-cultural binding. His interest are based on national building, national integrity, national understanding, social welfare and individual safeguarding. He repudiates everywhere the discrimination and segregation. Maulana Azad an ardent believer of Islam, considers the whole mankind as a single and joint family. The fundamental principle of Islam is *Towheed*, means 'oneness of Allah'.

Maulana Azad's teaching of the concept of Hindu-Muslim unity has brought the muslims closer to the main stream of politics and national struggle for freedom. When some people opposed his idea by putting forth that Hindus are in majority and so in democratic setup have a right to rule over the Muslim minority, he refers *the Holy Quran*:

God forbids you not with regard to those who fight you not for (your) faith, no drive you out of your homes from dealing kindly and justly with them; for God loves those who are just. God only forbids you with regard to those who fight you for (your) faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friend-ship and protection). It is such as turn to them (in those circumstances) that do wrong.

By analysing these words of the *Quran*, it becomes evident that Hindu and Muslims have lived together as brothers and sisters for centuries. Their country, race, language and culture have remained the same. They have always shared the joys and sorrows of one another and have lived

for each other. The English aliens have come from thousand of miles and dominated the whole nation and have reduced the masses to utter penury and ignorance. They are absolutely callous and savages and ought to be wiped out without any sympathy and pity as early as possible. The very first issue of *Al-Hilal* candidly describes that the Hindu-Muslim unity is the only feasible way to get rid of colonial curse and to bring social and political reform in the country. Maulana Azad cites from the *Quran* that it is permissible for muslims to cooperate non-muslims if it is mutually benefiting them. The dignified and prosperous India is possible only when it is free from communalism and colonialism. It is prerequisite for identity, dignity, and prosperity of individual as well nation. *Al-Hilal* has promoted this message throughout. When the government has made law prohibiting cow-slaughtering on the occasion of Ayodhya Rioto please Hindu population, *Al-Hilal* refutes the policy outrightly. Thus, it is clear that Maulana Azad is a messenger of religious unity and peaceful co-existence. He shows concern for one and all, and tries his best for the betterment and welfare of all communities and classes irrespective of major and minor. His journalism and literature advocate a brotherly co-existence and cooperation among all religions and regions of India as the same is mandatory for a mighty nation and united India.

### **3.2.3 *Al-Hilal* as a Revolutionary Journal:**

Maulana Azad's erudition, learning and scholarly knowledge of various domains got all reflected in his innovative journalism particularly in the most popular magazine *Al-Hilal*. Azad projects himself traditional as well modern simultaneously in his writing. He embraces new scientific and technological knowledge, but never compromises with the validity of age old values and ideals of life. He is a modernist in his approach towards life and translated the same into his literature. At the same time, he is arch believer and follower of religious and moral principles. His journalism is overall looked upon as revolutionary in spirit and substance. It motivates the targeted readers for new undertakings and experiences of life with the ambit of religious moorings. He was polyglot, well adept in Persian, Urdu, Arabic, and English languages, and had left no way untried to exploit his potential for the improvement of human life and amelioration of socio-cultural standard. He has played his role both as a writer and as a preacher. He has worked for the betterment of every section of the society and for all religions and regions.

He believes in universal brotherhood and harmony, and all his actions aim at empowerment of all without any discrimination.

Right from the very inception, Maulana Azad has shown a great literary gumption and edited a weekly magazine *Al-Mishah*. Besides, he has also worked for a monthly periodical called *Lisan-ul Sidq*. At Amritsar, he has also contributed the renowned magazine *Wakeel*. This scholarly mind has made him distinct in the whole pre-independence journalism, and has given him a unique shape in the political leadership. After *Al-Hilal*'s ban in 1914, Azad launches *Al-Balagh* in the same year. The mission and purpose of this journal does not seem different as at all so far as the content is concerned. *Al-Balagh* was also banned by the English government without any delay. But Azad has continued his mission despite all these barriers and bans. He was ultimately put under detention which went on till 31<sup>st</sup> December 1919. After release from imprisonment, Azad has actively started his political life and participated in freedom struggle with zeal and zest. But he has never abandoned writing the reactive and provocative articles against the British illegal domination.

*Al-Hilal* 1912, was basically inspired by great political leaders of the world whom he met earlier as mention in the biographical note. Its main objective is to expose the English colonialism and their divisive policies, and thereby the inner aspirations of Indian masses. He has not only rejected the colonial policy of 'divide and rule', but also abnegates the separatist stance of All India Muslim League. *Al-Hilal* has propagated and promoted the ideas of Indian nationalism and understanding. Through it, Azad has encouraged the muslims to join hands with other religious communities for the attainment of independence and national development. According to Azad, only such unity and harmony could lead the country towards strength and general welfare. Maulana Azad has patterned *Al-Hilal* on the footprints of Arabic journals particularly published in Egypt. It principally tries to motivate muslims to do everything in life in the light of Quranic teachings, and emphasizes everywhere that politics and religion can never be separated at all. While addressing muslims, he writes in *Al-Hilal*: "For Hindus to fight for independence was a patriotic, but for muslims it was certainly a religious duty".

The revolutionary influence of *Al-Hilal* has reached far and wide with no time and it has incited the people with its ideology of unity and freedom so candidly presented. Its publication and circulation has touched the figure of eleven thousand within six month. It was a record in

history. The annual subscription was rupees 12 and the subscribers were mostly muslim population. Within two years of time, the domain of *Al-Hilal* has widened largely and recorded 26000 copies per week, a figure unknown then in the field of journalism. All this has upset the English administration and so it demanded a security of 2000 rupees under the press act from the publisher. These facts and figures underlie the solid substance and message that the journal portrays. *Al- Hilal* has impartially represented the aspirations of Indian people and has highlighted the policies of the nation. It has served a great purpose for the freedom movement and has solidified the bond of common brotherhood among Indians at that time to a considerable extent.

### **3.2.4 Glorification of Indian Nationalism:**

Maulana Azad was a nationalist par excellence. He glorifies the spirit of nationalism in order to attract more and more people towards freedom struggle and nation building. He has played a great part to augment the concept of one nation among people hailing from various backgrounds and the nation has seen the fruition of the same in the form of independence from English rulers. Among all great muslim leaders, Maulana Azad wanted to see a united nation and he realized that the essence of nationalism would do so. Nations only flourish and prosper when citizens love and own them whole heartedly. The spirit of sacrifice among the people make the nation invincible. The nationalists value the nation above to all, and do never make any compromise with their allegiance to it. Azad's journalism has had a vital role in enlarging the enthusiasm of patriotism in the hearts of Indian people particularly the minorities. This becomes evident through the reading of *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Balagh* as well.

During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the extremism in Bengal, Bihar and Punjab was at all time high. Around that time, a new generation of youth came forward and were motivated to use even terror strategies to achieve the nationalist goal. It was also the time of anti-partition campaign and the most powerful opponents of partition were those who believed in aggression and violence as the only tool to get *Swaraj* and *Swadeshi*. The supremo of Bengali extremism from 1907-10, Aurobindo Ghosh worked as an inspiration and motivating factor to many aggressors. They were ready to take recourse in violent uprising with the aid of foreign powers. There was no tendency to exercise the martial discipline, military drills and lathiplay when the lethal atomic weapons could be used to harm the enemies more severely and strikingly.

Maulana Azad was greatly encouraged by these revolutionary and nationalist groups and he had a series of meetings with Aurobindo Ghosh. The ideology of Ghosh convinced Azad to promote and propagate the ideals of these groups and he became an eyesore for English government. Regarding this nationalist political affiliation, Maulana Azad asserts: “Bengal did not take the measure ( partition of Bengal) lying down. There was an unprecedented outburst of political and revolutionary enthusiasm”, He continues, “ It was during this period that I came in contact with Shyam Sunder Chakravarty, who was one of the important revolutionary workers of the day. Through him, I met other revolutionaries. I remember having met Shri Aurobindo Ghosh on two or three occasions. The result was that I was attracted to revolutionary politics and joined one of the groups”.

Fundamentally, Indian nationalism is secular in nature. It is an amalgamation of many communities. Maulana Azad believes it is neither Hindu nor Islamic. He advocates Islam in liberal and universal sense. He also sees that religion and reason are closely related. It is to be remembered that Maulana Azad was not anti-British till 1905. It is afterwards that he gets disillusioned with colonialism and becomes anti-imperialistic. He writes: “I have inherited the rich Islamic traditions of thirteen hundred years.... I feel proud I am an Indian. I am a part and parcel of that indivisible united nationalism without which the structure of India’s greatness would remain incomplete. I am a factor in its structure. I will never forfeit this claim”.

Throughout his life, Azad believes that nationalism can be a powerful weapon, if it is separated from traditional narrow mindedness and prejudice. Mahatma Gandhi once said that Maulana Azad’s faith in nationalism is as robust and sincere as his faith in Islam. Azad always maintains that the unity between Hindus and Muslims may flourish nationalism in India. He backs the Western concept of democracy, an inclusive type. The idea of inclusive and broad democracy and nationalism safeguarding the interests of all irrespective of class, religion, region and language are foregrounded by *Al-Hilal* through its publication.

### **3.2.5 Relation between Religion and Politics:**

Ordinarily speaking, every great religion is a complete code of life incorporating all elements within its defined ambit. These constituent elements may be seen in the form of social setup, economic system, political policies to run the affairs of the state and other rites and rituals



connecting mankind to their origin. when it comes to the Islam, it has been defined as a complete code of life and a guidance in the field of politics, economy, and other socio-cultural situations and matters. Islam guides and counsels in political system with all the required policies and principles. Therefore, there is no question of going beyond its set boundary for the resolution of any issue. Also there is no need to think or do the separation of two- religion and politics. They are interdependent and interactive in nature and are also complementary to each other.

In politics, Maulana Azad is an arch believer of democratic system as it is all embracing and participatory in nature. It is a form of governance which makes public sovereign power deciding their own destiny. It is the will and discretion of the common people on which the success or failure of the system rests on. It ensures individual participation in the formation of the government and guarantees their rights of freedom, free expression, and choice in every domain of life. In real democracy, common individual is master rather than a helpless slave, a sign of false democracy. Maulana Azad firmly believes that an understanding of *the Quran* and its inclusion in governance would undoubtedly help in social, political, and cultural recreation and remaking. He expresses it all in *Al-Hilal*. He has a profound faith in the oneness and sovereignty of Allah, existence of divine kingdom and an universal order. He is also a staunch believer of supreme truth. He has viewed Indian politics in terms of religion, and visualized Islam as an appropriate ideology for the existing and coming generations. For him, Islam is just like a panacea for all individual, social, economic, and political problems. Islamic teaching guarantees and safeguards equality, fraternity, liberty, tolerance and expression of mind for all regardless of religion, class and gender. He has expressed this consciousness of Indian pluralism, socialistic and secular ethos in his journalism everywhere. His vision of sound democracy and inclusive government for India may be well-understood in his presidential address of Congress in 1923 Session: "Today, if an angel were to descend from the heavens and declare from the top of the Qutub Minar, that India will get Swaraj within twenty four hours, provided she relinquishes Hindu- Muslim Unity, I will relinquish Swaraj rather than Hindu- Muslim Unity, Delay in the attainment of Swaraj will be a loss to India, but if our unity is lost, it will be loss for entire mankind".

In *Al-Hilal*, Azad clearly writes that religion and politics cannot be separated at all. He adds that the political ideas are not only influenced by religion, but are outcomes of the same. He

goes on to say that any principle or idea coming from any other source other than Quranic religion is a manifest heresy, and the same is applicable to politics. People having understanding of Allah's existence and His nature, enjoy worth promised by Him. Islam has brought to the life a comprehensive, ubiquitous and ideal system of law and governance. There is no problem in human life for which the *Quran* does not provide solution. Islam guides and helps in every field of life whether it is morality, scholarship, familial and social life or politics, be it in the position of authority, or subject to the authority of others. One who rests his pure faith in Allah, needs no human supervision at all. It is the same that the *Holy Quranis* looked upon as a manifest guide, the infallible truth, the source of spiritual light and treasure of all wisdom which mankind requires to strive for and survive successfully. The Quran explains everything explicitly and there is no terrain in life where it does not guide and teach. This can be candidly discerned in these lines:

For we had certainly

Sent unto them a Book

Based on knowledge

Which We explained

In detail- a guide

And a mercy

To all who believe. ( *The Quran*, VIII: 52)

Maulana Azad has established that Muslims do not need to follow any other political policy than what the Islam shows them. He makes it evident that it is shameful and humiliating to bow down before others for political teachings when one's own system is self-sufficient. Muslims do not need to join any party. They are people who can make the world to join their party as it has been proved in the past. They possess their own clear and complete path, and so should not knock at the doors of others. Allah has elevated them and also admonish them not to surrender before others:

God forgiveth not

That partners should set up

With Him; but He forgiveth

Anything else to whom

He pleaseth. ( *The Quran*, IV:48)

Bearing these statements in mind, it becomes obvious that like in any other affairs of life, the political message of *Al-Hilal* is solid and supreme. By following it, one would never feel deficient at all because it is after all heavenly message well-proposed by Almighty God Himself. Islam is monotheistic religion. It directs mankind to have full faith in the oneness of God and seek help only from him: “ Thee do we worship/ And thine aid we seek” ( *The Quran*, I: 5). God Almighty has also blessed believers by bestowing upon them His Viceregency and Caliphate on this planet earth. Therefore, it is the duty and responsibility of them to realize this great favour and overcome all mundane depression, degeneration, and apprehension. Muslim community also stands for justice, equality, brotherhood and moderation. They are alarmed to display the same at every step of life through preaching as well as practice: “ We have made of an Ummat- justly balanced” ( *The Quran*, II: 143).

People with Islamic faith are propagators of peace and mediation. The aggression, violence and disturbance for them is tantamount to unpardonable sin and severe impiety. *The Holy Quran* puts it in a beautiful manner:

Help ye one another

In righteousness and piety,

But help ye not one another

In sin and rancour. ( *The Quran*, V: 3)

Therefore, it is incumbent upon all muslims to promote goodness and to prevent enmity. Muslims are mandated to perform morally good deeds and also stand against autocracy- denying rights of man. Aggression of autocratic and authoritarian power is to be encountered because no human being has right to impose his or her will on masses illegally. It is only the attribute of Allah Almighty:

It is not (possible)

That a man, to whom  
 Is given the book,  
 And wisdom,  
 And the prophetic office,  
 Should say to people:  
 Be ye my worshippers  
 Rather than God's. ( *The Quran*, III:79)

Only political and democratic government is legitimate. All forms of autocratic governments are prohibited in Islam. Azad stresses that the responsibility of faith holders in Islam is to do their utmost in order to attain legitimate freedom and thereby to establish a parliamentary government.

To conclude, it can be said that political policy is to be formulated in accordance with the above enumerated Quranic principles and teachings. These principles would certainly make a moderate but a dauntless system and would guarantee for every section of the nation peace, security and freedom to enjoy one's rights and perform duties. It would assist to develop complete harmony and to build the nation on the strong and solid footings. There is no scope for mischief and aggression in such a setup. The unambiguous discretion of *the Holy Quran* is to cooperate in good deeds and piety, and thereby to curb sin, evil, disorder and anarchy. Such a system is all inclusive and all acceptable. It is democratic in nature and operation. It would be a facilitator and guarantor of liberty, justice, equality and universal brotherhood among all regardless of status and position. This is the political ideology of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad which he has manifested in his writing and speeches particularly in *Al-Hilal*, a masterpiece in the overall preindependence journalism.

### **3.2.6 Anticolonial stance in *Al-Hilal*:**

One of the major objectives of *Al-Hilal* or Maulana Azad's journalism is to raise voice against colonial occupation and turn English colonizers away from the Indian soil. Azad being a

sensitive and a conscious personality like all great freedom fighters in the preindependence era has left no stone unturned to weaken the strength of British imperialism. Maulana Azad- popular leader, competent journalist, and well-learned writer had contributed in multiple ways to inspire the united nation against the foreign exploitation and injustice being done to Indians. His journalism expresses vividly the dual face of English rulers whose main purpose was to ‘divide and rule’ the country on religious lines and thereon to perpetuate their illegal domination. The colonial hypocrisy has proved fatal for India national unity and communal harmony. The English have dissipated and destroy the centuries old native socio-cultural ethos which used to keep intact the rich cultural heritage and strong traditional India. Their policies and strategies have widened the gap between Hindus and Muslims and eventually the nation got divided at the independence. Maulana Azad has complete understanding of all this colonial contrivance and has used all his channels to spread awareness among the Indian masses and taught them to show the urgency for nationalism and national unity. He was the most impartial and neutral leader so far as united India during freedom struggle is concerned. He has taught people at every step the importance of harmony, cooperation and coordination among all regions and religions. His teachings and preaching have made him very beloved among common masses. *Al-Hilal* within no time of its publication has proved very effective to plead the case of Azad. It had given a strong blow to colonialism and has shaken its roots with its well-crafted content and sensible policy, and it is because of the same that colonial administration banned it instantly.

Maulana Azad was an ardent and strong nationalist and did his utmost to promote nationalism among the people of India. At every step, he has opposed the foreign colonial regime. He likens the fight against British presence in India as *Jihad*. He once said that “ thus, like many other things, the call of *Al-Hilal* is that neither trust the government nor follow the Hindus. Take only the right path, ‘*Seerat-ul Mustaqueem*’ as suggested by Islam”. The idea of *Jihad* would include many other things too, for example strengthening democracy and establishing of a parliamentary and constitutional government. He further says that “ Islam stands for freedom and is against those who wish to perpetuate an autocratic rule through brute force”.

Abul Kalam Azad had a strong mind and sharp wit which he has expressed through writing. His convictions and beliefs published in *Al-Hilal* from time to time reveal his political

ideology, social philosophy, theological principles, and above all his anticolonial stance. *Al-Hilal* has played a crucial role in glorifying the vocation of journalism, and has become a powerful medium for the Indian masses seeking freedom from the slavery of British empire. Azad's political understanding and thought was clear that the freedom from foreign clutches could be attained only through efforts of nation itself rather than from any other external or mystical force. The spirit of nationalism, revolutionary zeal and communal harmony would help to realize such goal. The printing and circulation of *Al-Hilal* was never digested by the colonial power as they had looked upon it a dangerous factor for their existence. So they could not tolerate it and stopped its publication immediately. In 1913, Maulana Azad also made an association called *Hizbullah* with the explicit purpose of arousing the national freedom sentiments and thereby prepare public for actual armed fight against the English yoke. Azad's approach towards colonial rule was a bitter and harsh one as he writes:

Oh, Europeans! How long are you going to pollute God's blessed land with your dirty hands! How long would oppression subdue justice! How would darkness overpower light; Your bloody hands hanged hundreds in Tabriz; made the sand of Tripoli red with blood; and left countless dead in Morocco.

This loathsome attitude of Maulana Azad and his strong nexus with many nationalist and revolutionary parties particularly in Bengal had made him a target to be aimed at by the colonizers. The Criminal Intelligence Department had always been on the vigil and watch for substance to implicate him. Azad himself had realized that the fate and future of *Al-Hilal* and his life is not safe as early as November 1914. The Governor of United Provinces, Sir James Meston wrote an editorial titled "Pro-Germanism in Calcutta" in which he charged Maulana Azad with pro-German tendencies and aspirations. It is a long paper which makes it clear that *Al-Hilal* is under complete and continuous surveillance. The tract reviews the weekly *Al-Hilal* in like manner:

*Al-Hilal* is a weekly illustrated newspaper published in the Urdu language in Calcutta, and is edited by a Dehli Musalman named Abul Kalam. It has a large circulation among Musalmans in these provinces, and probably in other parts of India. Ever since the war broke out, its attitude has been so strikingly pro-German that it must be a matter of amazement to all who read the paper that the Government has managed to tolerate its writings. Possibly this may be accounted for by the fact that the paper attracts little or no attention in Calcutta itself owing to its

being published in Urdu, and there can be little doubt that this was one of the main cause which led the editor to choose Calcutta as the place of publication. Another reason may be that style of the most mischievous articles is very allusive and full of veiled sneers and sarcasm and innuendoes, most of which either disappear or lose their effect when translated in to English, and it is not likely that many European officials read the paper in the original.

### **3.2.7 *Al-Hilal* as a *Zeitgeist* of India's Freedom Struggle:**

*Al-Hilal* was a parcel and package of miscellaneous elements and issues. It gives an overall view of pre-independence environment. It highlights social and political dimensions of the nation undergoing through the torments of slavery and colonialism. It reflects the moral and intellectual ethos of the Indian masses at the juncture of bondage and freedom; deprivation and would be privileged with their own identity and independent nation. It also enriches its readers with the philosophical knowledge of Islam and how it can co-exist with other religions compatibly and harmoniously. The journal has tried with utmost effort at every step to be a panacea in order to find the solution of maximum problems faced by India at the crucial moment.

Through the platform of *Al-Hilal*, Maulana Azad had addressed the two sections of Indian muslims of his time. The people belonged to Aligarh Movement, and conservative backward section. The followers of Aligarh ideology had been advised to merge in the main stream of national struggle for independence, and the orthodox or conservatives were taught to giveup traditional baseless beliefs and embrace the inclusive diversity of India. Maulana Azad preached and propagated rationality in religion and urged the inhibitive muslims to oppose with might and main the British policy of consolidating their power and thereon continuing their colonial dominance. Maulana Azad had himself realized the immediate impact of *Al-Hilal* on Indian public: "[They were attracted] by the new note of strong nationalism preached by it. *Al-Hilal* created a revolutionary stir among the masses" (80). Continuing the same, it is pertinent to include the opinion of Jawaharlal Nehru on *Al-Hilal*'s magical effect on muslims:

Abul Kalam spoke in a new language to them in his weekly *Al-Hilal*. It was not a new language in thought and approach, even its texture was different, for Azad's style was tense and virile.... He used new phrases for new ideas and was a definite influence in giving shape to the Urdu language, as it is today. The old conservative leaders among the Moslems did not reach

favourably to all this and criticized opinions and approach. Yet even the most learned of them could easily meet Azad in debate and argument, even on the basis of Scripture and old traditions for Azad's knowledge of these happened to be greater than theirs ( *The Discovery of India* 345).

Al-Hilal has certainly proved a great motivation for a transition and has embodied a new passion and flair among conservative Indians to embrace innovation and latest trends in life. It has simultaneously worked for social and political justice, national freedom, logic and rationality, moderation in religions, improvement and progress. It has sternly alarmed Indian masses about the ramifications of conservatism, imperialism and autocratic rule, and so also inspired them to struggle for their eradication. *Al-Hilal* has wisely and widely taught muslim community to display intellectual and political awareness as it was urgently required. The weekly has softened the hard stance of separatism and made them join national freedom campaign.

The first and foremost issue towards which Maulana Azad focussed his philosophical and intellectual thought was to evaluate causes of distance and differences among the various sects of Muslim community. He was bewildered to see that the whole community claimed to believe the same sources of the *Quran* and Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), yet were divided within. He had shown the heart-felt concern time and again: "If religion expresses a universal truth, why should there be such differences and conflicts among men professing different religion"? Azad suffered from this acute spiritual anguish for many years. He explicitly gives vent to his mental stagnation in the 'Preface' of *The Quran, The Turjuman-ul Quran Vol.1*:

No conviction had dwelt in my heart that has not been pricked by the thorn of doubt, and there is no article of my faith which has not passed through all the tests of skepticism. I have sipped drops of poison from every cup and tried life-saving nectar from every spring of spirituality. When I was thirsty the anguish of my heart was different from others and when I was quenched, the soul-satisfying fountain was also not the road side.

Maulana Azad's profound understanding and knowledge of Islamic classics with the consciousness of history saturated with his equally great mastery on Western philosophy and political thought made him the towering figure among his contemporaries. He exercised all this learning to bring a positive change in religious, social, political and philosophical approaches in



Indian public particularly among muslim people. In accomplishing these objectives, *Al-Hilal* played an unparalleled role. Being a compendious in nature, it did educate people diversely, profusely and substantially.

*Al-Hilal* has proved innovative in various fields of life. It enjoyed an unprecedented power and popularity in journalism due to its unique style of presenting the substance. It had equally acted as a clarion call to energize as well revolutionize the social, political and religious footings in the colonized India, and had made it imperative for the people to have progressive outlook. Maulana Azad had disclosed his profound learning of human psyche while addressing the backward and illiterate masses. He delivered the message of peace and harmony, yet at the same time encouraged the defiance against all kinds of illegal oppression, domination and subjugation. For him, colonial domination and cultural imperialism are dreadful enemies of human liberty, equality and social justice. It crushes the ideals of human dignity and leads to degeneration and dehumanization. Moreover, *Al-Hilal* also functioned as a catalyst for progressive literary and political movements. *Al-Hilal* started its journey with slogans for justice and freedom in 1912, anterior to the Russian Revolution of 1917, and reflected all the characteristics of progressive and revolutionary thinking. Therefore, it is evident that the ambit of *Al-Hilal* mirrored not only the native social, political, religious, literary and journalistic ethos, but had a great global signification in many ways. It had done a remarkable job in a very short span of time to achieve all these aforesaid objectives and goals. The significance of *Al-Hilal* has not ceased there, but is being continuously acclaimed for its manifold essence. It is still an unexhausted reservoir of variegated scholarship and knowledge.

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### 3.3 Learning Outcomes

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Maulana Azad was a multifaceted personality who had played many roles and shouldered various responsibilities simultaneously in his lifetime. This chapter would provide an insight to the readers regarding the same in a critical manner. It is not only his journalism which has been analysed thoroughly, the chapter in the very preliminary section provides a lucid glimpse of Azad's life- his ambitions, his erudition, experiences, undertakings and his associations not only

in India, but also outside which he had developed by traveling to different countries. He has a practical and first hand knowledge of the whole socio-political scenario of his time. This all has been highlighted for the benefits of the students. The effort has been made to give a crux of Azad's journalism written and edited in the form of *Al-Hilal*. The various dimensions and objectives have been pointed out to make it feasible for the students to understand the philosophy and ideology behind the publication of *Al-Hilal*. While going through this tract, the readers would certainly gain enlightenment regarding the ethos of journalism in general and Maulana Azad's in particular. In a nutshell, the chapter gives an inclusive overview of *Al-Hilal* by bringing out its ostensible message and intended objectives.

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### 3.4 Glossary

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**Acumen:** Acuity; wit; intelligence.

**Amalgamation:** The process of consolidating; mixture.

**Amelioration:** Improvement; revamp.

**Ardent:** Passionate; glowing.

**Augment:** To increase; improve or grow.

**Autocrat:** Despot; dictator; monarch.

**Callous:** Cruel; insensitive; heartless.

**Criterion:** Standard; a test to judge a person and thing.

**Conformity:** The state of being complying with a set of rules, with a norm or standard.

**Co-existence:** The state of living two or more things or people together.

**Dauntless:** Bold; courageous.

**Erudition:** Learning; knowledge; scholarship.

**Gumption:** Initiative; boldness; enthusiasm.

**Heresy:** Any ideaheld against established religious, political, or cultural belief.

**Imperialism:** Imposed dominance in the field of territory, economy, and politics.

**Impiety:** Impious; disrespect.

**Innovation:** Anything new or fresh.

**Indelible:** Difficult to remove or wash out.

**Legacy:** Something inherited from the past or the forefathers.

**Loathsome:** Abominable; hateful.

**Metaphysical:** Pertaining to metaphysics, immaterial, supersensual.

**Manifold:** Diverse in kind.

**Mundane:** Vulgar, earthly, profane.

**Orthodox:** Following the established faith, religion or principles.

**Ostensible:** Evident, clear, apparent.

**Panacea:** Remedy for all diseases, solution to all problems. Elixir.

**Posterity:** Future generations; descendants.

**Podium:** A platform; pulpit.

**Polyglot:** Speaking many languages.

**Posthumous:** Born after the death of one's father; after the death.

**Pseudonym:** A fictitious name used by film stars and literary writers.

**Relinquish:** Abandon, give up or retire from.

**Secessionist:** One who withdraws from a political union or an alliance or organisation.

**Segregation:** The setting apart or separation of things or people.

**Sovereign:** Ultimate power; autonomous.

**Supremo:** The most important person in a particular domain.

**Theologian:** One who studies or knows theology.

**Transgression:** Violation; transcend or go beyond the prescribed limit.

**Ubiquitous:** Omnipresent; universal.

**Zeitgeist:** The spirit of an age; intellectual, cultural and moral aura of the era.

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## 3.5 Sample Questions

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### 3.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. Which of the following expression does not define Maulana Abul Kalam Azad exactly?
  - (a) Religious scholar
  - (b) Great Economist
  - (c) Eminent journalist

- (d) Established literary writer
2. Maulana Azad's real name was:
- (a) Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin
  - (b) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
  - (c) Maulana Ghulam Azad
  - (d) None of the above
3. Which of the following language was not known by Maulana Azad?
- (a) Arabic
  - (b) English
  - (c) Telegu
  - (d) Hindi
4. Maulana Azad was born at which place?
- (a) Islamabad
  - (b) Hyderabad
  - (c) Madina
  - (d) Makha
5. What is the title of Maulana Azad's translation of the *Holy Quran*?
- (a) *The Turjuman-ul Quran*
  - (b) *The Tafheem-ul Quran*
  - (c) *The Tufseer-ul Quran*
  - (d) None of the above
6. Maulana Azad's ancestors came from:
- (a) Arabia      (b) Turkey
  - (c) Iran      (d) Afghanistan
7. Whom did Azad meet in Egypt?
- (a) Sheikh Mohammad Abduh      (b) Khalid Ansari
  - (c) Dalia Alam      (d) Rawya Ateya
8. Maulana Azad was initially trained by his family to grow into:
- (a) A scientist      (b) A mathematician
  - (c) A Bureaucrat      (d) A clergyman
9. When was Al-Hilal launched?

- (a) 1910      (b) 1912  
(c) 1914      (d) 1916

10. Maulana Azad did deliver the presidential address of Indian National Congress in:

- (a) 1921      (b) 1923  
(c) 1925      (d) 1927

### 3.5.2 Short Answer Questions:

1. Elaborate *Al-Hilal* as an anticolonial journal.
2. Briefly describe the journalism of Maulana Azad.
3. Why was *Al-Hilal* banned immediately in 1914 by the Colonial Government?
4. What was the main message of *Al-Hilal*?
5. Precisely illumine Maulana Azad's scholarly learning of various fields.

### 3.5.2 Long Answer Questions:

1. Critically evaluate the *Al-Hilal's* concept and teachings of religion-politics unification.
2. Describe the communal harmony particularly Hindu-Muslim unity as propagated by Maulana Azad through the publication of *Al-Hilal*.
3. Illustrate how *Al-Hilal* did revolutionize the mind and perception of Indian masses to end up foreign yoke?

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## 3.6 Suggested Readings

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## **Unit – 4: The Muslim University**

**(Al-Hilal, 4<sup>th</sup> August 1912)**

### **Structure**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

#### **4.1 Objectives**

#### **4.2 The Muslim University**

##### **4.2.1 Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and the Concept of the Muslim University**

##### **4.2.2 Al Hilal**

##### **4.2.3 The Objectives of Al-Hilal**

##### **4.2.4 Maulana Azad and Education**

##### **4.2.5 Maulana Azad and the Muslim University**

##### **4.2.6 Al Hilal: Views about the Leaders of the Muslim Community**

##### **4.2.7 Al Hilal and Views about the Muslim University**

##### **4.2.8 Summing Up**

#### **4.3 Learning Outcomes**

#### **4.4 Glossary**

#### **4.5 Sample Questions**

#### **4.6 Suggested Readings**

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### **4.0 Introduction**

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Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a renowned scholar, poet, freedom fighter, politician as well as a journalist. He had served as the first education minister of the Independent India. As an Education Minister, he emphasized on educating the underprivileged section of India. He believed that the poor could be empowered with education only. As the Chairman of the Central Advisory Board of Education, he promoted adult literacy, Primary and Compulsory Education for all the children below the age of fourteen. He believed that education was the birth-right of every individual and without education one could not perform one's duties towards the nation to the best of one's ability. His views about the Indian Education system were revolutionary. While, being an integral part of the Indian freedom struggle, he had realized that the country could

progress only with world-class education. Since the very beginning, Maulana Azad was a promoter of the cause of education for all. While he was just twelve years old, he had started his own library with a reading room and a debating society. His journalistic insight came to the fore at the age of fourteen when he started contributing articles to 'Makhzan' - a literary magazine of that time. Maulana Azad's scholastic vision and calibre were ahead of his contemporaries. He was a far-sighted man who could see ahead of his times. That was the time when Muslims, under the British rule, had forgotten their glorious past and were living in oblivion. The community needed guidance to regain its strength. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had left for his final abode in 1898. Though the Anglo Oriental College was working in the direction of empowering the Muslim community educationally, yet its condition was not very impressive. Maulana Azad was born in 1888. Since his childhood, he got inspired by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's views about education. However, he could not agree with his political views since Maulana Azad's own political views were considered radical. Unlike many other Muslim politicians, he was against the Muslim League. Like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, he too was a supporter of Hindu-Muslim Unity and rejected the politics of separatism.

However, Maulana Azad's interest in politics took him to the field of journalistic writings. He established Al-Hilal, a weekly Urdu newspaper (journal), in 1912. His journalistic writings were a direct attack on the ills of the society. He also wrote against various British policies which were not in favour of the common people. Al-Hilal was one of the renowned newspapers of its time, but it was banned under the Press-Act in 1914. Though this step of the British government was to stop revolutionary writings, yet it could not dishearten Maulana Azad. He started a new journal called Al-Balagh.

Being an educationist, his focus was on the quality of education policies. While the comrades of Sir Syed were busy collecting donations for the university, Maulana Azad scrutinized the efforts of Muslims towards the cause. In his weekly newspaper, Al-Hilal, he wrote how the money from donations could be utilized in a better way. He had always believed that instead of supporting political parties, the community should spend money for the cause of education. This chapter would discuss in detail Maulana Azad's views about the Muslim University as expressed in Al-Hilal.



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## 4.1 Objectives

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Objectives of the present chapter would be as follows:

- To enable the learners to study and appreciate the works by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
- To critically analyze the articles in Al-Hilal
- To understand the thought and imagination contained in the articles.
- To inculcate in the readers an aesthetic sense so as to let them derive pleasure from reading.
- To enhance the love for reading and understanding of literature.

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## 4.2 The Muslim University

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Maulana Abul Kalam Azad believed that success could be achieved by an amalgamation of Indian civilization with the Islamic Culture. Similar to the views of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, he had also advocated 'unity in diversity'. After the revolt of 1857, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan worked, extensively, for the upliftment of the Muslim community. He worked hard to introduce the modern education system and MAO School was a result of his efforts. This school was established to impart modern education along with the traditional values to the younger generations of the community. Sir Syed had always dreamt of establishing a university and after his death, his supporters and followers worked for the cause. Their efforts resulted in the materialization of Sir Syed's dream. Maulana Azad was ten years old at the time of Sir Syed's death. As a child, he was influenced by the writings of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. However, he moved away from Sir Syed's political and religious ideas. Both of them belonged to two different phases of Indian History and has faced different issues. Their thoughts were designed by their contemporary problems of the society, yet their basic concern was communal harmony and peaceful development of the nation. Sir Syed had worked for his 'Qaum' and the word qaum (community) to him meant-Hindus and Muslims of his country. He wanted progress of the entire country, not only of one community. Similarly, Maulana Azad had also talked about harmonious

existence of Hindus and Muslims. He, too, believed that the country could progress only by the progress of all its citizens.

#### **4.2.1 Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and the Concept of the Muslim University:**

As is well known, the Muslims had a glorious past but after the downfall of the Mughal empire and during the British rule their conditions suddenly changed for the worse. Most of them were living a life of penury. The condition of the Muslim community was getting worse by the day. This downfall of the community was unbearable for its well-wishers. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was the first Indian educationist who had visited England and had observed the Oxford and the Cambridge Universities. He had studied their education pattern and then established MAO College in India. After the First War of Indian Independence (called 1857-Indian Mutiny), Sir Syed realized that the citizens of India, especially the Muslims needed to be empowered. He knew that they could achieve their goals with education only. Thus, he devoted himself to that mission of educating the community. With his mission, he succeeded in producing a generation of Muslims who were with him in pre independence India as well as post-independence India. They not only fought with the British but also participated in nation-building in independent India.

Sir Syed advocated Western Scientific Education that could enable the community to carve a niche for itself. He had also promoted an education system that could produce law abiding good citizens. These were the days when Sir Syed Ahmad Khan along with his supporters came forward to change the condition of the community. He said that with the changing times, Muslims should also change. Merely sitting and day dreaming about the good old days would serve no purpose. Maulana Azad agreed with the views propagated earlier by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Achieving the higher goals was possible for the community only with higher education system. Sir Syed's call for change had awakened some of the members of the Muslim community and very soon there was a caravan of people with him. Many renowned Muslims like Altaf Hussain Hali, Maulana Shibli, Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk came forward in the support of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. All of them were members of the 'Aligarh Tehreek'.

Sir Syed established 'Madrasatul Uloom Musalmanan-e-Hind' in 1875 which, after two years, became 'Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College'. Sir Syed's dream was to establish a separate university for the Muslims. A Muslim University Association was formed to conceptualize his dream but it was not an easy task. The British government informed them that

a sum of 30 lakh rupees should be collected for establishing a university. The real hard work began with the asking for donations. A Muslim University Foundation Committee was formed which managed all the funds. Not only Muslims but non-Muslims also contributed to the cause, whole-heartedly. After a long struggle and a lot of hard-work in 1920, Aligarh Muslim University was established through the Aligarh Muslim University Act.

#### **4.2.2 Al- Hilal:**

After the downfall of the Moghal Empire, the British Colonisers controlled the sub-continent. It became a puppet in their hands. After the revolt of 1857, the British adopted a policy of divide and rule. They knew that dividing the Indians in the name of religion or caste would make it easier for them to rule. This division hurtled the nation towards its downfall. There was deterioration in the whole country at every level-economic, social and educational. The British exploited the Indian economy ruthlessly. Maulana Azad started his newspaper Al-Hilal to highlight the wrongs of the government as well as to talk about the needs of the society. Al-Hilal means 'the Crescent'. It was one of the most famous Urdu journals/newspapers of the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It first came out on 1<sup>st</sup> of June 1912. The main aim of Al-Hilal was to advocate nationalism. It was the time when the British empire in India was at its zenith. It would not be wrong to say that Maulana Azad had witnessed the heydays of the British empire and had also seen its downfall. He had played an important part in bringing about this change in our part of the world. He used his journal Al-Hilal as a tool to win the battle against the British. Al-Hilal played a great role in weaning the Muslims from the English camp. Al-Hilal made its presence felt and its circulation grew rapidly. The demand was so high that within the first three months, the entire lot of old issues had to be reprinted because every new reader asked for the complete set of it. It brought a revolution in people's thinking. It had set a landmark in Urdu journalism. Within two years, its circulation reached 26000 copies per week. Its popularity became an issue of concern for the government. Under the press act, they demanded for a security of rupees 2000 from the publisher of Al-Hilal. Within a few months, this security deposit was forfeited and an additional amount of 10,000 was commanded. However, the increasing popularity kept on troubling the British government and in 1915 they seized it under the press act.

#### **4.2.3 The Objectives of Al-Hilal:**

At the very outset, Maulana Azad had declared that the first and foremost objective of Al-Hilal was promoting the Hindu-Muslim Unity and the other role of the journal was to awaken an anti-imperialist consciousness. Maulana Azad had derived his ideals from the Holy Qur'an. In an article, published in one of the early issues of Al-Hilal, he wrote about the relationship between religion and politics. He believed that whether it was politics or any other affair of life, it should be learnt from the Holy Qur'an. He used to say if the principles were not derived from the Holy Qur'an, then those would be sheer heresy.

In Al-Hilal, Maulana Azad declared that the struggle for the nation was a patriotic task for the Hindu brethren but for Muslims it was a religious duty. Therefore, fighting for the nation was a greater cause for the Muslims. The content of the journal was purely secular. It aimed at uniting communities for achieving the goal of freedom.

Another aspect of Al-Hilal was to promote the cause of education as well. Maulana Azad knew that Muslims lagged behind in higher education and thus could not achieve success in various fields. Their lack of higher educational degrees had left them behind others. This was also the reason why he felt that even clearing the competitive examinations would also serve no purpose. He had always encouraged Muslims to study. While the dream of a separate university for Muslims was taking place, Maulana Azad, being a critic, highlighted the weaknesses of the community.

He was a supporter of the cause of education but he had never followed the crowd, blindly. In Al-Hilal, he mentioned that mere donating money did not mean that the community had done its duty. The real duty was to check whether the donated amount was utilized for the same purpose.

In Al-Hilal, he also discussed about the role of national leaders. He felt that it was the responsibility of the leaders to guide and motivate their followers to work for the prosperity of their nation. While criticizing the leaders, he said that they were only focusing upon their own benefits and had forgotten their community.

Al-Hilal had left deep impacts upon the minds of readers. People not only liked and appreciated its content but also joined hands to stand, strongly, against the British.

#### **4.2.4 Maulana Azad and Education:**

Maulana Azad was a great scholar and thinker. He had remarkable religious insights, social consciousness and political understanding. We find a great balance in his words, actions

and ideas. He had a comprehensive knowledge of social and political issues of the nation. According to him education was the most important need of human life. He believed that education was the only solution for all the existing problems of the world. He was not a supporter of orthodox and superstitious beliefs. He knew that the country would progress with the help of latest technology and education. He had always advocated a higher standard of religious education. According to him the standard of the private schools in the country was not as high as it should be. Those schools were teaching only sub-standard syllabi which needed modification. Apart from the content, Maulana Azad laid emphasis on the medium of education too. He advocated mother tongue for educating young students. While reforming the education policy, Macaulay had advocated English as the medium of teaching and learning. His idea was to promote English so that it would be easier for the British to rule over India. He considered Indian languages incapable of imparting modern education. But, Maulana Azad was aware of the power and beauty of teaching children in their mother tongues. He believed that using the regional language or the mother tongue would make learning easier and more effective.

After taking the charge as the education minister of independent India, Maulana Azad introduced a new and more effective system. It was the time when India was struggling to make its own mark on the world map. After pondering over the then situation of India, Maulana Azad enforced some very important policy decisions, like- free education for the children between 6 to 14 years, arrangements for educating the illiterate adults under the social education scheme (Adult Literacy Scheme), improving the senior secondary and higher education system in the country. Along with these he also suggested Scientific and technical education for a better future of the country.

We still see the evidences of his thoughtfulness in Indian education system. His farsightedness had proved that he was not only a politician but he also was an eminent educationist.

#### **4.2.5 Maulana Azad and the Muslim University:**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, along with many others, felt pained at the heart-rending plight of their community. Like many others, he too wanted to help the community. The best way to empower the community was to educate it. This was also the reason behind Sir Syed's the conception of a separate university for Muslims. Maulana Azad, the Education Minister of Independent India, was aware of the need and importance of such a separate University.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a staunch supporter of humanity and education. In his weekly newspaper/journal-Al-Hilal, he had written about the cause of education and the Muslim University. Maulana Azad observed that there was a time when Muslims had a strong hold over the country but slowly, they lost it. During the British rule, not only the Muslim community but also the entire nation had suffered. The British had blocked all the possible ways for Indian to succeed and enslaved the minds of the people. The humiliating treatment at the hands of the British became slowly a part of their lives. As Maulana Azad had written in Al-Hilal, "...the Muslims to be our alien self. And whenever they face some humiliation from the government, we are glad and say: 'yet another shoe-beating'." (78)

While talking about the opportunities available to Muslims, Maulana Azad believed that in India Muslims had better educational possibilities than those in other neighbouring nations. He also referred to the division of Bengal. The annulment of the 'division of Bengal' was the greatest decision of the British Government. Maulana Azad observed that the Muslims of India instead of learning from the mistakes of their past, bewailed about the misfortunes of their present. He also observed said that the community had become stubborn and paid no heed to the teachings of its well-wishers.

#### **4.2.6 Al Hilal: Views about the Leaders of the Muslim Community:**

Further, Maulana Azad added his own interpretation of the term 'Muslim'. He said that the Muslims of India were a different kind of community which could not be found in other parts of the world. He wrote, "They are a group of people which is so trustful, so easy to captivate, worshipping conventions and yet ready to listen to every kind of reforming sermon and preaching". (79) In Al-Hilal, he had written about the Muslim leaders and their growing love for money, power and position.

He remarked that some of the leaders who really cared for the community were working eagerly for its betterment. There were also others who made it their agenda to achieve a specific position for themselves. Such leaders were of no use for the Muslim community. Though they themselves were totally ignorant and did not know about Islam yet they claimed to lead the Muslim community. These so-called leaders succeeded in grinding their own axis by fooling the community. Maulana Azad also felt that it was not just the fault of those fake leaders but the ignorance of the community was also responsible for its own loss. The community had got accustomed to believing in such counterfeits. The Muslims got influenced by the riches of their

leaders and assumed that those leaders would come to their salvage as. The glittering wealth of those fake leaders had blinded the community and when any genuine leader tried to show them the real picture, they averted his gaze. Afterwards, he had distinguished between two types of Muslim leaders-one, the old school leaders known as 'Ulemas' and the other, the new group of leaders. He had considered both these groups of leaders responsible for the pathetic condition of the Muslim community. The old school leaders, though were well-versed in Islam, could not show the real light of Islam to the followers. While the other group of the leaders had themselves not yet gained proper knowledge of Islam. He wrote in Al-Hilal, "The one is thirsty while close to the spring, and the other has not yet reached it". (81) He considered that one of the groups of religious leaders was extremely superstitious. Their prejudiced behaviour and stagnant attitude had taken the community backwards. Whereas the other group of religious leaders was under the impact of West and was following their ways thoughtlessly.

#### **4.2.7 Al Hilal and Views about the Muslim University:**

Maulana Azad had always been concerned about the well-being of the country. He knew that the nation would progress only by educating each and every citizen. He was concerned about the facilities for higher education. Muslim community lagged behind others, in terms of higher education. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had realized many years ago the need for a separate university for the Muslims. In 1912, the university came into existence. Maulana Azad wrote in his Al-Hilal about it. He observed that the Muslim community had become dependent on the charities of the British government. Instead of working hard to change their conditions, they kept grumbling. Whenever they tried to educate themselves or progress in any other ways, the government had given them a new aid. This aid was momentary yet the Muslims felt privileged and sat idle. Later on, when they demanded a separate university, they were given various rules and clauses to be followed for the setting up of the university. They realized about the injustice being done to them since ages. Earlier, Muslims showed gratitude for those charities which were granted to them, but, when the government refused their demands for education and equal rights, they got offended. Maulana Azad felt that the right to complaint was reserved for those who had refused to accept the alms given by the British government. He said that those who demonstrate their will-power, dedication and persistence, they succeed. He believed that Muslims should unite and show their power to the British government, because the world recognized only power. In the

political combat of the nations, only the powerful nations would win. Maulana Azad wanted India to become a powerful nation.

He also described the laziness of humans and compared them with the branches of a tree. He wrote, “The tree which could not stand in its place was ultimately cut into pieces and put into the oven. But the one which by the strength of its roots stood erect, thrived and bloomed, remained verdant and fresh”. (82) Referring to the divine law of the God, Maulana Azad said that laws of God couldn't be changed but some people tried to change those laws. They didn't hesitate in sacrificing the entire community for their personal benefit.

However, Maulana Azad believed that there were many people who were over eager about the university and were ready to gain it at any cost. Though the university was for the upliftment of the entire community but there was some confusion about the university. Due to overexcitement, people kept on suggesting something or another, and the committee for the establishment of the university went on accepting those suggestions. They did not even ponder over the usefulness of those suggestions. Another issue raised by Maulana Azad was about the donations made by people for the construction of the university. People contributed with different expectations; some believed that the schools of their locality would also be raised to the status of a college. Therefore, the university was like a shelter for many, one medicine for all ailments.

Maulana Azad was aware of the need for a separate university. He agreed that the Muslim University would be the most beneficial thing for the entire community. However, he argued that assigning unnecessary features to the university would not be a good step. Adding unnecessary clauses to the constitution of the university might result in unnecessary troubles in future. Therefore, everything should be done after much brain-storming. He also added that after a long struggle and severe hard work for the university, the torch-bearers had also had begun to relax which might have affected the pace of the work. Along with that some others had started thinking about the independent existence of the university. Many others were not satisfied with the organization of several departments and faculties. Maulana Azad had also commented on the demands made about for affiliating various colleges to the Muslim University. He believed that all these suggestions were of no use. The main aim was to collect money for the university and that aim was achieved by the hard-work put in by the well-wishers.



He also wrote in Al-Hilal about the establishment of the university. The Muslim University, he believed, would change many lives. It would be a boon not only for Muslims but for the entire nation. He observed if a truly Islamic university could be established then it would prove to be a solution for all the misfortunes of the community. However, Maulana Azad was not very sure about the fulfillment of that dream. He knew that conditions were not favourable and the journey was difficult. He also highlighted that the university would not be as free as the Aligarh College had been. The British government would continue to keep an eye on the functioning of this educational institution. The establishment of the Muslim University would increase the concerns of the government as the government had been handling the question of the Hindu University already. Nevertheless, Maulana Azad, pondering over the condition of the Muslims, said that limbs of the community had already been amputated and now it was dependent on the British government for its survival. Whatever charity was given by the British government, was considered to be a blessing. After the establishment of the university, the community would educate itself and thus would flourish. This progress of the Muslim community would be a question of concern for the British government.

While commenting on the donations collected for the cause, he wrote about the irresponsible behaviour of Muslims and their leaders. Maulana Azad pointed out that the Muslim community eagerly contributed for different causes like for the political processions, garlands, carriages for their leaders and other similar things. They didn't care for their own selves while praising and honoring their leaders. These leaders had forgotten their responsibility and neglected the community. He also mentioned that the community was so careless that it never bothered to enquire about the utilization of funds that had been collected for the establishment of the university. Muslims gave donations for the cause of education but they did not care to check whether any building had been constructed with those. This indifferent behaviour was the reason behind most of their problems. Similar was their attitude towards their leaders. They praised their leaders, honoured them but never questioned them. This attitude of the community had given unnecessary freedom to the leaders and they had forgotten their community and its problems.

In AL Hilal, Maulana Azad also wrote about the glorious past of Muslims and reminded them about their valiant ancestors. He wrote that Muslims should strive hard to become as courageous, fearless and honest as their ancestors were. He also mentioned that Muslim leaders should learn leadership from the great Caliph Umar.

#### **4.2.8 Summing Up:**

Maulana Azad was an advocate of education. His efforts towards improving the education system in independent India were extra-ordinary. He appreciated and supported the cause of the Muslim University but at the same time highlighted the weaknesses that the Muslim community had. His efforts were directed towards the improvement of the social and educational status of the Muslim community. The criticism that Al-Hilal presented was to awaken the community from its age- old slumber. He knew that Muslims had not only adjusted themselves to the new environment but had also accepted their lot. Though the charities of the British were due to their circumstances, but those charities were making the community dull and dependent. Maulana Azad wanted his community to recall its glorious past and recreate a world of its own.

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### **4.3 Learning Outcomes**

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After reading the article, “Muslim University” in Al-Hilal, the students would be able to understand the vision of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. They would understand the struggles and sacrifices of the great leaders for the independence of the country. When Maulana Azad started Al-Hilal, his major concern was to awaken the slumbering minds of his countrymen. He wished to enlighten them about the real conditions of the people. Though, every Indian was mindful of the hardships during the British rule, yet they needed some guidance and motivation to charge themselves up.

While reading, the learners would understand the importance of education. During the British rule, Indians suffered from abject poverty. Sir Syed and many others realized the need for education and worked for its cause. Their efforts reached fruition and a separate university came into existence. The learners would appreciate Maulana Azad’s views in AL-Hilal when he criticized the over-excitement of the Muslim community for the establishment of an exclusive university.

The study of this chapter would enable the learners to recognize the efforts of Maulana Azad for the cause of education. He observed the existing education system and conceptualized various modifications to it. The learners would appreciate the new education system introduced by Maulana Azad. This study would enable them to compare and contrast the education policy of the British and the education policy introduced in independent India.

An amalgamation of modern and traditional education would further their understanding of their cultural values. The learners would be able to assimilate traditional values along with the benefits of modern education.

The diction employed in Al-Hilal by Maulana Azad would intensify the aesthetic sense of the learners. The language, metaphors, examples and critical analysis of the situations would provide an in-depth understanding of the conceptualization of the Muslim University.

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## 4.4 Glossary

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**Constitute:** To form or create something/ to give a legal form to something.

**Contribution:** A part played by someone/ a gift or payment given by someone

**Desperation:** Over eagerness/ a state of despair resulting in extreme behaviour

**Obstinate:** Stubborn

**Preaching:** The delivery of a religious address

**Sermon:** A talk on a moral or religious subject

**Spectator:** Onlooker

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## 4.5 Sample Questions

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### 4.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. When was MAO College established?
  - (a) 1877
  - (b) 1888
  - (c) 1875
  - (d) 1857
2. Who was the founder of MAO College?
  - (a) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
  - (b) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan
  - (c) Sir Mohsin ul Mulk
  - (d) Sir Viqar ul Mulk

3. What was the name of the school established by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan?
  - (a) Madrasatul Uloom Musalmanan-e-Hind
  - (b) Madrasatul Uloom Musalmanan-e-Mulk
  - (c) Madrasatul Uloom Qaum-e-Hind
  - (d) Madrasatul Uloom e Hind
4. When was Maulana Azad born?
  - (a) 1912
  - (b) 1875
  - (c) 1
  - (d) 1
5. When did Al-Hilal begin its publication?
  - (a) 1911
  - (b) 1912
  - (c) 1913
  - (d) 1914
6. When was the British Press Act Passed?
  - (a) 1917
  - (b) 1916
  - (c) 1915
  - (d) 1914
7. The Press Act focused on.....
  - (a) Seizing the Press
  - (b) Restricting the Powers of Press
  - (c) Checking on the content of the News-Papers
  - (d) All of the Above
8. The Muslim University was based on the model of.....
  - (a) Oxford University
  - (b) Delhi University
  - (c) Cambodia University
  - (d) Madras University
9. What does the word Al-Hilal mean?

- (a) The Moon
  - (b) The Sun
  - (c) A Crescent
  - (d) Morning Light
10. The Circulation of Al-Hilal reached ..... copies per week, within two years.
- (a) 2600
  - (b) 2700
  - (c) 2500
  - (d) 2650

#### 4.5.2 Short Answer Questions:

1. Describe the main objectives of Al-Hilal.
2. Who was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and how did his views influence Maulana Abul Kalam Azad?
3. Why did Maulana Azad consider the Ulemas (Religious Leaders) responsible for the orthodox and superstitious beliefs of the Muslim Community?
4. Discuss the steps taken by Maulana Azad to reform the education system in independent India.
5. Why was Al-Hilal seized and which magazine was started after that?

#### 4.5.3 Long Answer Questions:

1. Discuss in detail 'Maulana Azad as an educationist'.
2. What were Maulana Azad's views about the Muslim University?
3. Why did Maulana Azad criticize the leaders of the community? Discuss with reference to Al-Hilal.

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## 4.6 Suggested Readings

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1. Ashraf, Ali. Thae Dawn of Hope: Selections from the Al-Hilal of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Northern Book Centre. New Delhi. Pp. 78-85.
2. Ashraf, Muhammad Arslan. *Why Partition of India?: Gandhi, Jinnah, Nehru, Azad – Congress and Muslim League* (2016)
3. Graham, George Farquhar (1885). [\*The Life and Work of Syed Ahmed Khan\*](#). Black wood.

4. [Hali, Altaf Husain](#). *Hayat-i-Javed (A Biography of Sir Sayyid)*. New Delhi: Rupa and Company.
5. <http://www.cis-ca.org/voices/a/azad-mn.htm> [Archived](#) 2003-04-19 at the [Wayback Machine](#),
6. Biography of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on California Center for Islamic Sciences website, Retrieved 3 Nov 2016
7. *The dawn of hope: selections from the Al-Hilal of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* on books.google.com website, Retrieved 3 Nov 2016.

## Unit - 5: Maulana Azad as a Writer

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 Maulana Azad as a Writer
  - 5.2.1 Maulana Azad as a Writer: An Introduction
  - 5.2.2 *Al Hilal*
  - 5.2.3 *Tazkirah*
  - 5.2.4 *Quol e faisal*
  - 5.2.5 *Tarjuman ul Quran*
  - 5.2.6 *Ghubar e Khatir*
- 5.3 Learning Outcomes
- 5.4 Glossary
- 5.5 Sample questions
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### 5.0 Introduction

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In the Introduction to the book *Abul Kalam Azad: An Intellectual and Religious Biography*; Ian Henderson Douglas writes:

In the old city of Delhi, between the Jama Masjid and the Red Fort, both monuments to the glories of Mughal rule, a grassy space covers an area where once stood the houses of the Muslim nobility. They were levelled after the Indian revolt against the British in 1857....Near the mosque, and above the level of the crowded new bazaar, a stone wall encloses a garden in which a tomb of simple dignity marks the resting place of a man born in Mecca in 1888, who died in New Delhi in 1958, Mohiuddin Ahmad, better known as Abul Kalam Azad. (1)

Born on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1888 in a distinguished family of Islamic scholars Maulana Azad followed his heart's desire and carved his own identity in the political and literary realm of India. He left an indelible mark on whatever he did--- his contributions in the field of journalism,

politics, freedom movement and literature are remarkable. He was a visionary leader and a visionary writer who was always concerned about the welfare and progress of his country. His father Maulana Khairuddin was a learned Islamic scholar who made it sure that his son Ghulam Muhiuddin Ahmad received best education in the field of Islamic learning and jurisprudence. Young Muhiuddin showed remarkable scholarship from a very early age which is reflected by the fact that he completed the course of Dars e Nizamiah at the age of fifteen.

Maulana Azad was an intellectual who drew his political inspiration from Islamic and Quranic teachings. Maulana Azad was a true visionary and a real intellectual who always said and advocated in public life what he believed as a person --- the public and political aspect of his life was a manifestation of deep thinking and continuous contemplation. He challenged the established orthodoxy and always promoted thinking and learning which he strongly believed could dispel prejudices and hatred. Maulana Azad was a strong upholder of syncretic tradition of India. He was the most vociferous opponent of India's partition and when that sad and tragic chapter of Indian history became a reality he was amongst those real leaders who tried to restore peace and normalcy in the newly independent nation which found itself in the throes of communal violence and bloodshed. In his book *India Wins Freedom* he narrates with a grim note: "Thus India gained her freedom but lost her unity." (246)

In his speech delivered on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1956 to the General Session of UNESCO Maulana Azad says that "The greatest paradox in the modern world is that while every nation wants peace and talks of peace, almost all governments spend far more on preparation for war than for the maintenance of peace." (*India's Maulana*: 228) He goes on further to say that it is only after peace is established that UNESCO can really work towards realising its real goal wherein "education, scientific research and cultural activities should raise the status of man throughout the world." (*India's Maulana*: 228)

Maulana Azad's thought was not provincial, it was broad enough to accommodate various strands of thought both eastern and western. In 1923 at the age of thirty four he became the youngest President of the Indian National Congress and made a remarkable contribution to the nationalist politics from the 1920's till India got liberated from the shackles of British rule. Maulana Azad was given the important and crucial task of shaping the young minds of India when he became the first Education Minister of Independent India. As the Education Minister of



India he was always concerned about promoting and strengthening cultural ties between people and nations, he said that “it is co-operation and not competition which has made human survival possible.” (*India’s Maulana*: 227) For his invaluable contribution to the nation, Government of India posthumously bestowed upon him the highest civilian award Bharat Ratna in the year 1992.

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## 5.1 Objectives

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- To introduce the students with the thoughts and intellect of Maulana Azad
- To familiarize the students with the writings of Maulana Azad
- To enable the students to appreciate the works of Maulana Azad
- To cultivate the understanding of Urdu prose in the students
- To enable the students to place Maulana Azad amongst his contemporary Urdu writers
- To further elucidate the major literary influences on Maulana Azad

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## 5.2 Maulana Azad as a Writer

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### 5.2.1 Maulana Azad as a Writer: An Introduction

Maulana Azad was a renowned scholar, a great politician, a noted educationist, a reputed journalist, a famous writer and philosopher, but one role that was most dear to his heart was that of a freedom fighter. His dedication and preoccupations in the struggle for India’s freedom didn’t leave much time for him to dedicate himself to writing and literary skills. Maulana Azad was one of the significant and towering figures of twentieth century India. He was born in a family of religious scholars and received education from the best masters in the field. His works; which are considered by many critics as semi autobiographical; *Tazkirah*, *Ghubar e Khatir*, *Abul Kalam ki Kahani khud unki Zubani*, and *India Wins Freedom* provide indispensable information about Maulana Azad and his family; his childhood; upbringing and education. These works also give important insight into his religious, political and philosophical ideas.

It was in 1903 that Azad emerged on the political horizon of India as a religious and social reformer. He was gaining popularity amongst people through his writings and through his speeches which were a class apart in their choice of words and idiom and in the usage of

metaphors and images. The literary quality of his speeches drew both the masses and the classes of Indian populace who were enthralled by the oratorical prowess of young Azad. It was around this time at the age of sixteen he started editing his *Lisan us Sidq* which was primarily directed towards social reform and promotion and cultivation of Urdu language and culture.

It was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's magazine "Tehzib Ul Ikhlaq" which played a significant role in the growth and development of Urdu prose. "Tehzib Ul Ikhlaq" was the result of Sir Syed's concern for the progress of Indian Muslims. He constantly strove for their holistic development and the magazine was a step in this direction. The magazine dealt with the issues of education, ethics, culture, history and politics. He contributed significantly in liberating Urdu prose from the rigid constraints of artificial, archaic and difficult vocabulary. His prose was simple; written in an uncomplicated style; which laid emphasis on effectiveness of words rather than grammatical excellence. Muhammad Hussain Azad is another important name who made significant contribution in Urdu prose. Maulana Shibli and Maulana Hali also made a great impact on Urdu and its readers through their nuanced prose. Maulana Shibli laid the foundation of research and criticism and further introduced the Urdu readership with global issues, motivating them to widen their horizon of understanding literature.

Maulana Azad was greatly influenced by the thoughts and writings of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. His ideas, philosophy and writings kindled a desire of rationality and objectivity in Maulana Azad. It prompted him towards rational learning and research. His association with Maulana Shibli further ignited the flame of creative passion in him and broadened his literary interests. Maulana Azad first met Shibli in Mumbai in 1905 and Shibli was so impressed by young Azad that he invited him to Lucknow and subsequently handed over to him the charge of *Al Nadwah* (A monthly periodical published from Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulema from 1904 and Maulana Shibli Nomani was the editor of this reputed journal at that time). It was from October 1905 to March 1906 that Maulana Azad worked as sub editor of *Al Nadwah*. The writing style of the early phase is greatly influenced by Muhammad Hussain Azad as well. *Lisan us Sidq* (1903) and *Al Hilal* and *Al Balagh* (1912-1916) reflect the immense caliber and creativity of this young writer. These initial works also throw light towards his dedication for reform of Muslims, to motivate and inspire them towards participation in Indian freedom movement and lead them on this path of awakening in the light of Quranic injunctions. Through his speeches and his writings

Maulana Azad brought about a cultural, social, religious, and political awakening amongst Indian Muslims.

Azad's thoughts about religion underwent immense change with the passage of time. He undertook the journey of life and learnt important lessons as he first released his mind from all conventions and finally rediscovered his beliefs with renewed understanding and conviction. He was greatly influenced by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's views on modern education and new learning which cultivated in him a sense of revolt from tradition and orthodoxy and this was the phase that he found himself drifting from his traditional beliefs and he explored new areas of learning which finally established his firm belief in the tenets of Islam. Later on Maulana Azad completely dissociated himself from Sir Syed's ideas and Aligarh Movement as he thought that Indian Muslims cannot remain aloof from the freedom struggle and should actively engage themselves in getting the country free from the British rule.

Maulana Azad was a prolific writer who enriched Urdu language and literature with his writings. Besides his journalistic writings he also penned down such great works as *Tarjuman ul Quran*, *Tazkirah*, *Ghubar e Khatir*, *Karwaan e Khyal* and *India Wins Freedom*. His magnum opus *Tarjuman ul Quran* is a translation and commentary on the Holy Quran and reflects his immense capacity to store knowledge and bears testimony to Azad's understanding of Quran, his clarity of expression and his literary prowess. Hardly having any time for literary pursuits Maulana Azad undertook the arduous task of writing about self and about his ancestors in his book *Tazkirah* on the insistence of his friend Fazluddin Ahmad. *Ghubar e Khatir*, his last work published during his lifetime, is a collection of letters written to his friend Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani during his period of incarceration in Ahmad Nagar Fort.

His *India Wins Freedom* is a political autobiography which was published posthumously in 1959. Maulana Azad dictated the book to Humayun Kabir, his Secretary at that time, in Urdu who then painstakingly translated it into English. Maulana Azad was keenly involved in every stage of the book and meticulously revised each chapter with the help and cooperation of Humayun Kabir. The book provides his unique perspective on various events of the Indian Independence movement. The 1959 version of the book had 30 pages removed from it as was directed by Maulana Azad. The sealed copies of the complete text were kept in the National

Library, Calcutta and The National Archives, New Delhi. The book was published in its final form, including the previously removed thirty pages in the year 1988.

***Check Your Progress:***

1. Name the autobiographical works of Maulana azad?
2. Why did Maulana Azad adopt the pen name ‘Azad’?
3. Who were the two major influences in the early phase of Maulana Azad?

### ***5.2.2 Al Hilal and Al Balagh***

The first edition of *Al-Hilal* (meaning, The Crescent) was published from Calcutta on 13<sup>th</sup> July, 1912 as a twenty four page, two column Urdu paper. It was a weekly, illustrated newspaper and was subtitled as *Ek Haftawar Mussawir Risala*. There were many reasons for *Al Hilal*’s instant appeal to the Muslims of Calcutta: The newspaper was presented in an artistic format, with a highly refined method of typesetting. The eloquent nature of the journal, showcasing knowledge, clarity of thought and mastery of language, along with structured presentation of relevant subject matter, intrigued the readers. The paper often made use of quotations from the Quran, displaying the connection of the subject matter to Islam. This helped the reader get a better understanding of the religion, thereby creating religious fervor among the readers. *Al Hilal* had an edge over its contemporary Urdu journals in maintaining a high standard of journalism due to the fact that it was a weekly newspaper with an excellent editorial staff.

Maulana Azad believed that it is the prime duty of every Muslim to throw the yoke of colonial slavery and to join Mahatma Gandhi’s call for Non Cooperation movement. Time and again Azad emphasizes the Quranic injunction of ‘Enjoining the Good and Forbidding the Evil’ and thus he tries to bring home the message that it is the religious obligation of every Muslim to join the right i.e. freedom struggle and forbid the wrong which is represented by British Government and further exhorts Muslims not to fear anyone except the Almighty. While stating the objectives of *Al Hilal*, he writes:

The real purpose of *Al-Hilal* is no more than to invite the Muslims to follow the Quran in their belief and actions, and act according to the precedent set by the Prophet. It wants to see the Muslims as true Muslims, whether in the educational, cultural, political or any other sphere of activity. (*India's Maulana*: 32)

A little later in the same article exhorting the Muslims to join the struggle for freedom he writes that "It should be the duty of Muslims to make every effort to achieve Independence and, according to their religious precepts, they should not rest until they have established a parliamentary form of government." (*India's Maulana*: 35) In the article "Islam and Nationalism" which was published in the second phase of *Al Hilal* Maulana Azad tries to bring to the notice of his readers that Quran essentially teaches about unity of mankind as the origin of all mankind is one; he writes "The call of Islam was a call to 'humanism' and 'human brotherhood'". (*India's Maulana*: 54)

In the first issue of *Al Hilal*, Azad wrote an article about Rashid Raza, pupil of Mohammad Abduh. The article is an account of Raza's visit to India and his Islamic mission, and it highlights the abject state of the Indian Muslims. *Al Hilal* contained eulogies for the men who were martyred protecting the freedom of Islamic nations. Azad mirrors the declining conditions of the Indian Muslims in many issues of *Al Hilal*, but instead of showing sorrow, Azad uses many literary devices to express his anger and disappointment. In one article, he rebukes the Indian Muslims for their lack of initiative during the independence movement and admonishes them for groveling in front of the British government. Azad disapproves of the Ulema, decrying their superstitions and practices. He says that the Ulema serve the state and themselves instead of the *Ummah*, and end up being instruments of vice and corruption.

*Al Hilal* gave insight on a variety of topics; along with critical coverage of the British government, it also covered issues pertaining to religion, war, and science. Azad stressed upon the importance of Hindu-Muslim unity as being the key to independence. He invited Muslims to crusade for independence, as freedom is enjoined upon them by Islam. Azad believed that Pan-Islamic unity could be a viable solution to Islam under colonial oppression.

Azad rebuked the Muslim league and its leadership as he thought that the energy that should have been put towards striving for independence was redirected towards secondary issues like

education. Through *Al Hilal*, Azad encouraged Indian Muslims to walk on the path of life as laid down by religion. In several issues of the paper, he reiterated the belief that the teachings of Islam contain solutions to all problems, and that the Quran is the ultimate source of knowledge, even when it comes to understanding and solving issues related to politics, education, culture, etc. In 1914, an article was published in the *Pioneer*, stating that *Al Hilal* had pro-German propaganda and harbored disguised insults against the British which became much less severe after translation. Subsequently, orders for the shut-down of the paper were issued, and the last issue of *Al Hilal* appeared on 18 November, 1914.

After a period of one year Maulana Azad launched *Al Balagh* on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1915 which was nothing but *Al Hilal* in disguise. He continued with his mission of political and religious awakening of his countrymen through his journalistic writings in *Al Balagh* but within a short span of five months *Al Balagh* too saw its closure as Maulana Azad was deported to Ranchi under Defence of India Ordinance. Like its predecessor *Al Balagh* too catered to wide base of knowledge and information. It strove to make the Indian Muslims get acquainted with the life of Prophet Muhammad, history of Islam and Muslims, Islam's message of peace and brotherhood, western inventions and discoveries etc.

In its second phase *Al Hilal* was re-launched on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1927 from Calcutta. But in this second phase it saw its closure within a brief period of six months as the last issue was published on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1927. Through the Journalistic ventures of *Al Hilal* and *Al Balagh* Maulana Azad tried his best to work towards Hindu Muslim unity and to mobilize Indian Muslims towards participation in Indian freedom struggle. He succeeded in achieving his purpose to a great extent by bringing change in the thought process of his countrymen. In *India Wins Freedom* Maulana Azad writes that *Al Hilal* was a new chapter in the field of publication and Journalism and goes on to elaborate on the meteoric rise of its fame and popularity. The journal was unparalleled in its selection of high quality and valuable articles. Maulana Azad's aesthetic sense was highly appreciated by the people. He introduced many new terms and phrases in Urdu journalism through his journal. Azad's style in *Al Hilal* is oratorical and reflects his grasp on language and literature.

***Check Your Progress:***

1. What were the main objectives of *Al Hilal*?
2. When and why was the journal closed?
3. How *Al Hilal* played an important part in the awakening of Indian Muslims?

### **5.2.3 *Tazkirah***

Maulana Azad's *Tazkirah* is an autobiography, largely consisting of an account of his ancestors, after a persistent appeal to record his life story made by Fazluddin Ahmad, a close friend of Azad. Initially Azad was hesitant to write about himself, despite Fazluddin's constant insistence. When he finally acquiesced, he seized the opportunity to write about his ancestors. Fazluddin tried to dissuade him from going on about his ancestors, but Azad dismissed this plea, as he was someone who wrote spontaneously and from the heart. Fazluddin wanted Azad to write an autobiography because he saw the great potential that his writings had to move the masses, and wanted the people to learn from his knowledge. Fazluddin thought that his fiery writings and life story could greatly benefit and inspire the people and dispel the darkness of ignorance in which the Muslims community of the time was drowned into. This is recounted at length by Fazluddin Ahmad in his 'Preface' to *Tazkirah*.

In the 'Foreword' to *Tazkirah* which he wrote in October 1919 Maulana Azad comments on the role of a reformer and a guide. He sees himself as a reformer, a torch-bearer of his ancestors' teachings and hopes to pass them on to the people of his country. As in his other works, the importance of the Holy Quran is greatly stressed in the *Tazkirah*. He warns the people not to listen to the Ulema, as all the answers that anyone could ever need are contained in the verses of the Quran. The religious thoughts of Maulana Azad can be reconstructed from *Tazkirah* as it outpours his moral and spiritual values. There is an excessive use of Arabic and Persian words which makes it difficult to understand by the masses. The book gives an account of the spiritual life of his ancestors e.g. the second chapter of the book deals with the life of Sheikh Jamaluddin while the third chapter delves into the life of Maulana Munawwar Ud Din; his maternal uncle; and Shah Muhammad Afzal. In *Tazkirah* Maulana Azad also reflects on different Sufi traditions and their practices. He explores the various stages of spirituality in Sufism, starting from

surrendering to God to the final union with the Almighty which is achieved in the final stage of devotion termed as ‘haqeeqat’.

The book further speaks about the influence of the thoughts of Imam Ibn e Tayyimia on Maulana Azad. This was how he came to understand that high morals, spiritual values and religious teachings are not just essential for personal living but are as much required in political life and all other spheres of life. To follow Quranic teachings and to abide by the *sunnah* was according to him the solution of all difficulties of life.

***Check Your Progress:***

1. Who motivated Azad to write his autobiography?
2. What does Maulana Azad’s *Tazkirah* deals with?
3. In what role does Maulana Azad see himself?

#### **5.2.4 *Quol e Faisal***

Maulana Azad’s written statement which was presented in court at Alipur, Calcutta; during his prosecution; is called as *Quol e Faisal*. Maulana Azad was put on trial under charges of sedition under Section 124 A by the British Government for his role in the Khilafat Movement and his participation in Mahatma Gandhi’s Non Cooperation Movement. Maulana Azad was arrested on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1921 and was sent to Presidency jail, Alipur. He presented the written statement *Quol e Faisal* (the last word or the final verdict) before the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta Court on 24<sup>th</sup> January, 1922. Subsequently Azad was sentenced for one year of rigorous imprisonment on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1922 which he thought was much lighter than what he had expected. Mahatma Gandhi considered the written statement as an ‘eloquent thesis’ on Nationalism and appreciated Azad’s oration and his fearless acceptance of his participation in the freedom struggle.

In his written statement to the court Maulana Azad makes it very clear that he has no hope or desire of justice from the British judicial system and that’s the reason why he was opposed to the idea of participating in the court proceedings. He says that Non Cooperation Movement has resulted from the injustices and oppression of the British rule and the complete sense of



disappointment of the Indian people from the government. Further clearing his stand he states that the Movement is not against individuals but the British Government. He further states that oppressive powers have always suppressed justice and it's his privilege and honour that he is standing in the convict's dock where Jesus Christ had to bear the cross, Socrates had to drink a cup of poison and where Galileo was tried for his discoveries, research and knowledge.

Maulana Azad was very firm in his beliefs and never wavered from the path of truth and righteousness, he was outspoken, honest and upholder of syncretic and pluralistic values of India. He possessed excellent oratorical skills and always expressed his thoughts with cultivated nonchalance. His emphasis on the participation of Muslim populace in the freedom struggle was not a mere rhetoric; it was his religious ideology and creed; reiterating about this duty in *Quol e Faisal* he implores Muslims to be either free or get annihilated: "Under no circumstances is it permissible for Muslims to enjoy life at the expense of freedom. A true Muslim has to either immolate himself or to live as a free man; no third course is open for him in Islam." (India's Maulana: 70) Further stating examples from Islamic history Maulana Azad says that Islam is against all forms of oppression and fear. Quoting from a Hadith he stresses that it is the religious obligation of a Muslim to stop anything which is wrong or to condemn it. Thus he brings home the point that being a Muslim it is his duty to speak against the wrongs done by the British.

Speaking about the charges of sedition Maulana Azad aggressively states to the Magistrate to grant him the severest punishment as he is fully aware of the injustices of the government and is striving along with the other freedom fighters for a total change. He states that he has full faith in the justice of the future which will definitely remember their act as patriotism. He concludes his statement by asserting his hope in Providence as he says that the final judgement will be given by the Almighty and as of now they both are engaged in writing an interesting chapter of history.

The written statement *Quol e Faisal* unravels the fearless side of Maulana Azad and his strong belief in the ideas of truth and liberty and his deep love for his country. In this statement, like most of his writings, he seizes the opportunity to remind his countrymen and particularly his Muslim brothers to strive towards freedom of the nation. Maulana Azad's learning and erudition is reflected in the numerous references that he gives from Islamic history and quotes extensively from Quran and Hadith to send the message that standing on the path of truth and righteousness is the religious duty of every Muslim.

***Check Your Progress:***

1. Why was Maulana Azad arrested on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1921?
2. What is *Quol e Faisal*?
3. Why according to Maulana Azad it's the religious duty of every Muslim to free India from British rule?

### ***5.2.5 Tarjuman ul Quran***

Maulana Azad's *Tarjumanul Quran* is an Urdu translation and commentary on the Holy Quran. The work is considered as a literary masterpiece. He started writing it in the 1910's for the benefit of the Indian Muslim population. The process of getting the work published was long and full of difficulties. Maulana Azad was a prolific writer and a great Islamic scholar. His knowledge about Islam was encyclopedic. He faced many hardships and ordeals while writing *Tarjuman Ul Quran*. By 1921 Maulana Azad was able to complete the work but soon tragedy struck and the Intelligence Department of the British Government confiscated the manuscript on suspicion of anti British writings. Major part of the work got destroyed in the process and he had to restart the work all over again. After a period of grief and despair, in 1927 he once again commenced writing and in about two years time he completed re-writing the *Tarjuman Ul Quran* which was published in 1930.

Maulana Azad's objective in writing *Tarjuman* was to interpret the Quran directly as it was, without using any secondary opinions and re-interpretations. Maulana Azad wanted to enlighten Indian Muslims through Quranic teachings and his *Tarjuman Ul Quran* provided them with simple Urdu translation of Quran along with the commentary. In the Preface to the first edition of the book while stating the purpose of writing the translation he writes that it was for the progress and elevation of Indian Muslims. Maulana Azad had a deep understanding of other major religions of the world--- Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism etc. -- and tried to explain the concept of God from different religious perspectives. He believed in the essential oneness of all religions or 'wahdat-i-din' which was derived from the Sufi concept of 'wahdat-ul-wujud' or unity of existence.

***Check Your Progress:***

1. What were the hardships that Maulana Azad faced while writing *Tarjuman Ul Quran*?
2. What were the main objectives of Maulana Azad in writing *Tarjuman Ul Quran*?

**5.2.6 *Ghubar e Khatir***

Mahatma Gandhi gave the clarion call to the British in the form of Quit India Movement on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1942 in Bombay. The result of this challenge was immediately visible as Maulana Azad and Jawaharlal Nehru along with other prominent leaders of Indian National Congress were arrested on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1942 and were imprisoned at Ahamad Nagar Fort where he was kept till April 1945 and then was transferred to Bankurah jail, from where he was finally released on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1945. It was here that Maulana Azad started writing letters to his friend Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani, an activity he couldn't afford to when he was free. In the captivity of the prison he had enough time for himself and his intellectual pursuits. These letters are essentially reflections of Maulana Azad on diverse and interesting topics about himself, his interests, likes and dislikes and also about his surroundings. These letters were handed over to Hakim Ajmal Khan by Maulana Azad after his release from Bankuda jail. It was on the insistence of Hakim Ajmal Khan that Maulana Azad agreed to get them published in a book form which came into the public sphere in the form of the book *Ghubar e Khatir*.

*Ghubar e Khatir* is a Collection of twenty four letters written by Maulana Azad to his friend Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani. Twenty out of these twenty four letters were written from Ahmad Nagar Fort during the three years of his incarceration from 1942 to 1945. Remaining four letters were added by his friend and Secretary Hakim Ajmal Khan--- one letter was written prior to his arrest and Maulana Azad couldn't post it as he got arrested in Mumbai, two letters were written from Kashmir and one from Simla. These letters were never posted to Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani but by addressing these letters to him Maulana Azad ceased the opportunity to vent out his feelings and emotions and the mere symbolic presence of his friend was enough to

reflect on things of common interest. Maulana Azad's mind takes flights of fancy; even in captivity; as he reflects on diverse topics, which range from highly spiritual and philosophical issues like existence of God, ethics, religion, human existence etc. to his observations about birds, flowers, his passion of drinking tea, rising up early in the morning and his love of music.

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### 5.3 Learning Outcomes

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The students get oriented to the ideas and philosophy of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad through his writings. They are able to appreciate the literary merits of his journalistic writings through *Al Hilal* and *Al Balagh*. *Al Hilal* was a landmark journal which was primarily published to awaken and enlighten Indian Muslims. Students will be able to explore the streak of rebellion and questioning that was very evident in Maulana Azad even when he was a teen aged boy. His personality passed through many phases of transition and maturity— starting from questioning his beliefs to exploring and gaining knowledge through his extensive studies and then reclaiming his religious beliefs with a better understanding and clarity. The students get an understanding of influences of various great personalities on Maulana Azad.

The students will be able to understand the contribution of Maulana Azad in the field of Urdu journalism, Quranic studies, Urdu prose and Urdu letter writing. It orients the readers to the major writings of Maulana Azad and how these writings reflect the concerns of a great mind. Maulana Azad continuously strove for Hindu-Muslim unity and tried to awaken Indian Muslim community to participate in Indian freedom struggle. Maulana Azad was one of the towering figures of Indian freedom movement who continued to serve the country after Independence in the capacity of being the first Education Minister of India. The students will also get acquainted with his political journey and will further get new insights into many political events as they read his book *India Wins Freedom*. The reader understands the growth of Maulana Azad as a writer. *Ghubar e Khatir* marks the achievement of maturity of style and thought as the letter format allows the writer to explore and unravel variety of topics both philosophical and mundane. The wit and humor employed by Maulana Azad in *Ghubar e Khatir* is exemplary in Urdu prose. The encyclopedic range of topics and vocabulary nurtures the taste for Literature in the students.

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## 5.4 Glossary

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**Acquiesce:** To accept something without really agreeing with it.

**Admonish:** To seriously warn or advise someone that they have done something wrong.

**Confiscate:** To seize or to take possession of something from someone as a legal action or punishment.

**Dissuade:** To advise or to persuade someone against doing something.

**Erudite:** Having knowledge, learning and scholarship through extensive study and research.

**Eulogy:** A speech, a poem or piece of writing that pays tribute to someone or praises someone.

**Immolate:** To kill or destroy yourself or someone else by burning.

**Khilafat Movement:** It was a Pan Islamist movement with Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar, Shaukat Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Hakim Ajmal Khan as its prominent leaders. The primary aim of the movement was to restore the Caliph of the Ottoman Caliphate and to protest against the sanctions placed after the World War I against the Ottoman Empire. In 1920 the Khilafat leaders and Mahatma Gandhi promised to work together towards India's Independence and towards the causes of Khilafat. The leaders of Khilafat movement gave a major boost to Non Cooperation Movement led by Mahatma Gandhi.

**Nonchalance:** state of cool indifference or casualness, cool or relaxed behavior.

**Non Cooperation Movement:** Withdrawal of support from the British Government launched as a movement by Mahatma Gandhi on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1920. It was aimed to put pressure on the British to grant full independence to India by refusing to buy British goods and to promote Indian handicrafts.

**Reiterate:** To repeat or say something again for emphasis.

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## 5.5 Sample Questions

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### 5.5.1 Objective Questions

1. Which one of the following is not associated with Maulana Azad?  
(a) *Al Hilal* (b) *Tazkirah*  
(c) *Quol e Faisal* (d) *Tehzeeb ul Ikhlāq*
2. When was the first edition of *Al Hilal* published?  
(a) 12<sup>th</sup> November 1914 (b) 13<sup>th</sup> July 1912  
(c) 12<sup>th</sup> November 1915 (d) 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1911
3. *Al Hilal* was subtitled as \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Ek Seh Mahi Mussawir Risala (b) Ek Haftawar Mussawir Risala  
(c) Ek Roznama Mussawir Risala (d) Ek Mahana Mussawir Risala
4. Who appealed to Maulana Azad to write his life story which took the form of *Tazkirah*?  
(a) Hakim Ajmal Khan (b) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan  
(c) Fazluddin Ahmad (d) Mahatma Gandhi
5. Which of the following personalities did Maulana Azad write about in the first issue of *Al Hilal*?  
(a) Rashid Raza (a) Sheikh Jamaluddin  
(c) Mahatma Gandhi (d) Shah Muhammad Afzal
6. In the Foreword to which of his following works did Maulana Azad hint about himself as a reformer or a guide?  
(a) *Tazkirah* (b) *Tarjuman ul Quran*  
(c) *Karwaan e Khyaal* (d) *Quol e Faisal*

7. When did Maulana Azad present a written statement *Quol e Faisal* in the Calcutta Court?

- (a) 18<sup>th</sup> December 1921 (b) 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1922  
(c) 24<sup>th</sup> January 1922 (d) 20<sup>th</sup> December 1923

8. In which year was *Tarjuman ul Quran* finally published?

- (a) 1920 (b) 1930  
(c) 1924 (d) 1922

9. In the year 1921 the manuscript of which of the following works was confiscated by the Intelligence Department of the British Government?

- (a) *Ghubar e Khatir* (b) *Karwaan e Khyal*  
(c) *Tazkirah* (d) *Tarjuman Ul Quran*

10. Which of the following journals was launched on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1915?

- (a) *Al Hilal* (b) *Lisan us Sidq*  
(c) *Al Balagh* (d) *Nairang e Alam*

### 5.5.2 Short Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on the influence of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Maulana Shibli Nomani on Maulana Azad.
2. Discuss briefly the journalistic contributions of Maulana Azad.
3. Write a short note on *Tazkirah*.
4. What was Maulana Azad trying to assert through *Quol e Faisal*?
5. What were the main objectives of Maulana Azad in writing *Tarjumanul Quran*?

### 5.5.3 Long Answer Questions

1. Write a detailed note on the contributions of Maulana Azad in the field of Urdu Literature.

2. Comment on the role played by the writings of Maulana Azad in awakening the Indian Muslims to participate in Indian Freedom Movement.
3. Discuss Maulana Azad's contribution in upholding the syncretic tradition of India through his writings.

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## 5.6 Suggested Readings

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Azad, Abul Kalam. *India Wins Freedom*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan Private Limited, 2009.

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## **Unit - 6: Qaul-e-Faisal**

### **Structure**

#### **6.0 Introduction**

#### **6.1 Objectives**

#### **6.2 Qaul-e-Faisal**

##### **6.2.1 About the Author**

##### **6.2.2 Discussion**

###### **6.2.2.1 Section – 1**

###### **6.2.2.2 Section – 2**

###### **6.2.2.3 Section – 3**

###### **6.2.2.4 Section – 4**

###### **6.2.2.5 Section – 5**

###### **6.2.2.6 Summary**

#### **6.3 Learning Outcomes**

#### **6.4 Glossary**

#### **6.5 Sample Questions**

#### **6.6 Suggested Readings**

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### **6.0 Introduction**

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This piece is part of the larger prose-document called Qaul-e-Faisal. As you are well aware the writings of Maulana Azad were in Urdu for the most part and you are being offered the original writings in English translation. The original title of the document (selections of which are being prescribed for you) was Qaul-e-Faisal. The title has been translated generally as The Final Verdict or The Last Word. The prose passage that you are about to read stands out against the backdrop of the Indian Struggle for Independence. Those were times when every Indian citizen's mind and heart were afire with the zeal of patriotism. The political will of the people of the country was strong; and the leaders who spoke out, did so on behalf of millions of Indians.

The prescribed piece is a piecemeal selection from a 30 page long 'statement' that Maulana Azad penned to present at the time of his trial in the Court of Calcutta (now Kolkatta).

The passage under study actually appears as appendix to the main document. As such much care has been taken to maintain the coherence of the argument even though much of the original has been left out. The purpose of selecting this piece is to give the essence of Maulana Azad's nationalist thought process. Secondly a detailed reading of this selection gives the reader an opportunity to understand the history of the times. Much reference material is available in the text; and an inquisitive student of this period of Indian history will get a clear view of the sacrifices and efforts that went into the making of a Nation. On the whole it is a rousing document and the selectors feel that it is the right kind of reading material for young adults in order to cultivate a sense of national pride. The multiple references to events, people and dates need to be followed up to get a comprehensive view of a significant juncture in our country's history.

As you know the Indian Independence Movement involved a long period of struggle. The hallmark of the movement was non-violence. So, how did the leaders reach their message and their guidance to the common people? They did so through their writings. Those were the days in which the leaders wrote and published their views in regional languages and regional journals. Gandhiji, Tilak, Azad and so many other leaders used the power of the written language to reach their message to the masses. All the journalistic writings of those days were bold, passionate and fearless. They had a purpose to achieve; and their prose carried the goal of inspiring their readers and filling them with a sense of righteous anger against the injustices being committed by the foreign government.

When Maulana Azad was arrested and produced before the Presidency Magistrate in the Calcutta Court in February 1922, he submitted a written statement to explain his stand and present his side of the argument. In actual fact the statement also served as a message to his fellowmen. It may be said that his target audience (readers) were mainly Indian Muslims. He wanted to make his Muslim brothers understand that the struggle for freedom from foreign rule was directly in accordance to the teachings of Islam. Islam is against slavery of any kind. As such any human being had a right to withdraw support from a system of governance which robbed the citizens of their birthright, that is, Freedom. In the longer document of Qaul e Faisal, Azad presented many examples from Islamic history to show that politics and religion had an impact on each other. He told the Muslims of India that striving to free the motherland was the religious duty of every Indian. Since the notions of Non-cooperation and Non-violence were so

compatible to one another that even Gandhiji thought it fit to launch the national movement of Non-Cooperation alongside the Khilafat Movement.

*Qaul e Faisal* has been described as a “fatwa” by many scholars. What does “fatwa” mean? It means a ruling on a point of Islamic Law given by a recognized scholar. Maulana Azad’s scholarship, his knowledge of Qoran (the Holy Book of Islam), Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic History were of the highest order. Over and above that his understanding of the contemporary times and the politics of the British rule was driven by a realistic approach. This document written by Maulana Azad achieves more benefits than one. We can learn about the man Maulana Azad, the writer and a core participant in the Struggle for Independence in India. We get a glimpse of the masses that thronged the Indian scene; not to overlook the fact that there were different sets of ideologies and political attitudes, sometimes hostile to each other and sometimes with the capacity to coexist with the other. In the text before you, Maulana Azad recognizes very significantly two sides of an issue, which were at the point of speaking, very hostile to one another. The interesting point is that, the British side is not transparent in its stand. It conducts its business under the name of welfare for the masses and reform of Indian Society. The Indian side is totally dismissive of the “well-known deception” of the British Government. We should keep in mind the historic fact that the Indian rejection of the British Rule is the result of a long period of oppression. Please also note that the essay under study is dated 1922. It need not be pointed out to any Indian student that the end of struggle for Independence was yet quarter of a century away from the date on which he is speaking. The essay ends on a note of a prophecy. We have to give credit to the author’s astuteness and positivity of spirit that he has full faith in what lies in store for India.

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## 6.1 Objectives

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The prescribed essay is a good example of non-fiction prose. It is actually a transcribed speech which Maulana Azad intended to deliver in the court of the Chief Presidency Magistrate in Calcutta on 24 Jan. 1922. He was being prosecuted for his support of the Khilafat Movement. *Qaul e Faisal* is an impassioned statement of his political views regarding the unjust practices of the British Government. As such in its written form we see a number of techniques of the spoken form of language. In any public speaking exercise the speaker addresses an audience. As such he

speaks in the first person for the most part, and uses many interactive devices like rhetorical questions, reiteration, references etc. Since this speech is delivered as an official statement in a formal context (that is, in the court), the language is also formal.

The piece is an excellent example of impassioned prose. It exhibits the intrepid nature of a staunch patriot. Maulana Azad's indignation is merely the anger of an honest and free thinking individual whose sense of Truth and Justice has been brought under question. That is what we is "Satyagraha" Don't you think? We can easily see that the indignation that lies at the heart of the piece is hardly a personal sense of being wronged. It is a noble indignation on behalf of his people, his compatriots. His indignation is at the sense of Truth being sullied and the Right being wronged.

*Qaul-e-Faisal* is unique because it shows the strong core of Maulana Azad's brand of Nationalism. His nationalism transcended religious identities. Actually his being a Muslim complemented his nationalist zeal.

The objectives of studying this prescribed essay would be to enable the learner to

- i) Understand the political will of our nationalist leaders
- ii) Appreciate the fearless patriotism that fed the passion of Abul Kalam Azad
- iii) Recognize the soundness of the argument in favor of Truth, Nationhood and against injustice.
- iv) Appreciate the number of devices that good prose writing can employ to fulfill its objective of making a strong impact on the audience and convincing them of the honesty of purpose of the author.

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## 6.2 Qaul-e-Faisal

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### 6.2.1 About the Author:

Maulana Azad was a versatile genius. He was self-assured and unwavering in his views and opinions. He carried his sense of Indian-ness and his religious identity of being a Muslim with confidence and pride. The present selection from *Qaul e Faisal* is a document steeped in the historical moment when all thinking individuals were asserting their right to personal dignity and self-hood.

Maulana Azad emerges as a representative of the times. He speaks with the fervor and zeal which were the hallmarks of the leaders of the time. He does not hesitate to speak his mind. The contribution of Azad and other leaders to the nation's freedom cannot be described in ordinary words.

In this course we present to you the versatile genius of Maulana Azad. He was a literary genius. His felicity with many languages was great. Even though the selected work is a translation of his original Urdu writing, you can easily see how Azad moulds his tone and his vocabulary, to suit his purpose. As we have mentioned elsewhere, Maulana Azad was a didactic writer who was able to write for the sake of the message, and who could choose the style according to the theme and objective of his writing.

While you read the piece you must keep in mind two factors. Firstly Maulana Azad was presenting his arguments in the presence of the Magistrate who was presiding over his hearing in the case related to Maulana Azad's so-called incitement of masses and for his support of the Khilafat movement. As such Maulana Azad's language is formal and quite polite though full of a suppressed indignation. The second factor which is equally important is that the writer is conscious of a second set of audience for his speech. He wishes for his words to reach the Indian masses. That is exactly why the speech is written and published. One can easily see the inspirational tones of the author. You can imagine the impact it must have had on the Indian Readers. No wonder then that Mahatma Gandhi praised the speech in his journal '*Young India*' dated 23 February 1922. One important leader, Maulana Azad, was being indicted and presented before the Presidency Magistrate in the Calcutta court. Here was a Satyagrahi speaking against the common enemy. The great leader of the Independence Movement, the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi, loses no time and comes out in open praise of the words and sentiments of the Satyagrahi Azad.

In the perspective of the context in which this speech was written, it is not a mere speech. It is a historic statement. It is a very representative document which clarifies the mood of the nation. In the perspective of what happened in 1947, the moment of the culmination of the long struggle, *Qaul e Faisal* is a prophesy, a statement which spelled out the future a quarter of a century ahead of the attainment of freedom. Maulana Azad can be seen here as a Seer, a man with a prophetic vision.

You have understood well by now that the prescribed text is merely an extract from a longer and more detailed statement. The purpose of the selection then is to offer you a flavor of the original. The Statement as the complete document is called is an argument wherein the writer is using his arguments like a good advocate, to convince his listeners and his readers to understand his point of view. What are the many devices he uses to persuade his reader to accept what he says? Well. He quotes historical facts. He mentions facts, with dates and details. He gives examples and quotations to support his points. He is like a good debater whose objective is to convince his audience. As Indians we can fall in with Maulana Azad's line of thought easily. But as a good writer, Azad is aware of all kinds of readers. So he makes this essay rise above its Indian context by referring to the issue more broad-based and more universal. We can read this essay as an essay condemning slavery and human bondage. If we read this essay as a universal statement Indian Freedom Struggle and the British Imperialism become metaphors for a fight between Right and Wrong.

## **6.2.2 Discussion:**

### **6.2.2.1 Section - 1:**

#### **“Certainly I said” ... “Liberate my country and my people from servitude”**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad goes straight to the point and confronts the charges and allegations leveled against him. In his earlier speeches Maulana Azad had called the British Government a “Tyrant” Two of Maulana Azad's speeches were picked up by the British Government and he was charge-sheeted. The Government claimed that Maulana Azad was guilty of sedition and treason against the British Government and the Queen of England. In a forthright manner Maulana Azad admits that he had certainly referred to the British Government as a Tyrant. He is surprised that his statement had been considered as seditious. Maulana Azad feels that there can be no other adjective other than “tyrannical” to describe the unjust actions of the government.

The Indian leader clearly states that there are only two ways to mend the situation: The first and the more sensible option would be that the Government should give up its unjust methods, Should the British fail to change its approach, Maulana Azad suggests there is of course another option; and it is that such an unjust Government should be destroyed. This stand is perhaps not in keeping with the non-violence philosophy that Mahatma Gandhi was

propagating. We know that Maulana Azad was in full agreement with Gandhiji's philosophy. The statement appears to hint at some threat of violence to the Government. However, this statement is merely a part of a rhetorical presentation of his argument. Maulana Azad stands with all his countrymen in his complete rejection of the Government and its actions. So far as anyone can see, love for freedom from oppression is the most natural and normal reaction of any human being and it cannot be refuted.

Maulana Azad was a strong nationalist. At the same time, he was proud of his Muslim lineage. He was devout and well-read in matters of Islam. This however does not deter him from his patriotic zeal. As such Maulana Azad proudly declares that the high-handedness of the British Government and its tyrannical rule affects him in a three-fold manner. He suffers because he is an Indian. For Maulana Azad his identity as a Muslim compliments his identity as an Indian. These two identities are not antithetical to one another. Above all, Maulana Azad's agony stems from the fact that the British Government was not respecting the Indians as human beings. As such the Government is unacceptable to him as an Indian, as Muslim and as a human being.

At this juncture in his statement Azad appeals to the principle of human liberty and dignity. Liberty is the birthright of every nation. No people can be robbed of their freedom by any power or any person. We are all God's creatures. Slavery is against the Divine Laws of God. No Government can absolve itself of its high-handedness by claiming that it is enslaving a nation for that nation's good. As such Maulana Azad pledges his duty towards his country and countrymen to liberate them from servitude. He pledges his life in the name of his national, religious and human identities.

We may see that in this Section Maulana Azad expands the scope of his theme. He is focused on the problem of how the British have enslaved India unjustly. While he is doing so, he also expands his vision and talks of human dignity and the infallibility of human spirit. Men are free and that is an indestructible Truth. Any person or country that tries to violate this fundamental right of a human to live freely and with dignity is in the wrong. So this issue of British rule in India is actually an issue of war between Right and Wrong. It is a fight between Good and Evil. The oppressor often takes resort to euphemisms. A country which is undertaking expansion of its own power and supremacy tries to send a message to the enslaved country that what is being done is for its own good. The British Government was trying to push its own schemes to further its own power; but was doing so in the name of reforms and welfare measures



for the Indians. However, Azad says, “Slavery is after all slavery”. It is against the Will of God and should be condemned.

Azad rightly refers to the English poet Milton. Milton’s views on human dignity and freedom are well known. Azad concurs with Milton’s vision when he says that the issue of human liberty is something as evident as the rising of the sun and any other natural phenomenon which is perceived by the human sense. Azad means to say that there may be no two opinions about the issue of liberty and dignity of human beings. Every human being has multiple facets to his or her identity. We may be identified by our nationality, or our faith. Azad says that the British Rule is offensive to Indians on both these counts. Azad himself says that as an Indian and as a Muslim, he finds the British Rule an anathema and an unacceptable matter. Above all this, Maulana Azad is agonized at the attack on human dignity. He pledges his word to liberate his fellowmen from such a three-fold attack and insult.

***Check your Progress***

1. Maulana Azad speaks his mind openly and fearlessly.
2. The author has been indicted on charges of sedition and this is not acceptable to the staunch nationalist Azad.
3. Azad speaks from the broad standpoint of Human Rights and Freedom.

**6.2.2.2 Section - 2:**

**“The well-known deception” ... “transient power in your hands”**

The British Government has always justified its actions by saying that it was implementing reforms for the welfare of the Indians. It was continually extending the time-frame for total handover and self-rule in the name of welfare measures for India. According to Maulana Azad this was nothing but a ruse and a “deception”. All the claims were but empty excuses. Freedom cannot be granted in bits and pieces. Maulana Azad gives the example of an owner of a property who had given his property to someone for temporary use; but now he is rightfully asking to get back his property. The tenant, the temporary holder of the property is however reluctant to give back the property to the rightful owner. He is returning the property to the owner unwillingly, and that too, in a piecemeal manner in installments. India had merely lent

some of its land for use of the British temporarily. This had been at that time unavoidable according to the circumstances of the day. India has every right to get back its land and the rightful dues without any delay. The British had no rightful claim to any further occupation of the Indian soil. The Indians had been forced to compromise on the delay from the British side under one pretext or the other. But it did not mean that Indians would be willing to forego the right on their own land and soil. Freedom from the unwanted presence of the foreigner should be not gradual but complete, in one go. Here Azad is hinting at the concept of *Purna Swaraj*.

Maulana Azad's demand for Independence is born of a philosophic vision that no man or woman should be enslaved. In the immediate context however, India is provoked by the cold bureaucratic approach and ruthless attitude of the British Government in India. Maulana Azad denounces the British Government in clear terms. The British were continuing to rule over India in spite of the wish of millions of the people of the country demanding Independence. The sense of pride and prestige of the English people and their self image was responsible for the whole Empire building enterprise. Their sense of racial superiority was responsible for most of the inhuman actions of the British Government. In order to perpetuate their image of superiority, the British were now resorting to acts of cruelty and were subjecting the Indians to many atrocities. Maulana Azad now enumerates some of the many atrocities perpetrated by the British Government, destroying the lives and properties of Indians. Azad bemoans the fact that the British Government never took responsibility of its actions. The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre in Amritsar in 1919 stands as a gory example of the cruelty of a totally irresponsible and indifferent government. Innocent people had lost their lives on that fateful day. Instances of how people were "made to crawl on their bellies like beasts" indicated the extreme level of tyranny. There were cases of young boys being subjected to merciless beating for not agreeing to salute the Union Jack. In short, young Indian minds were being terrorized and brainwashed against patriotism and love for their motherland. They were being coerced into loyalty to foreign rule. There were but three shocking examples of the extreme callousness and heartlessness of the British. At the International level, the suppression of the Islamic Caliphate and the unjust handing over of Smyrna and Thrace to the Greeks are cited by Maulana Azad as extreme examples of the injustices committed by the British Government. These actions of the British resulted in mass killings and dire loss to property and life. The massacre of innocent masses, and the general unrest in these instances did not move the government. The British

Government not only patently denied any wrong intention; rather, it concocted misinformation to justify its actions. In this matter, Maulana Azad holds the then Prime Minister of England responsible for encouraging wrong data to be propagated. The British Prime Minister not only supported the Greeks in their oppression of the Muslim masses of Smyrna and Thrace, but he also suppressed the Report of the American Mission on the real circumstances. The irony of it was that the American Mission had been sent by England herself, on a fact finding task.

Within the country, the peaceful and non-violent Freedom Struggle was sought to be suppressed through violent means. To the chagrin of the great leader and patriot Azad, the British Government was neither confessing to its crimes nor making any atonement for its wrong deeds. On the contrary in the few months before Azad was indicted and stood before the court, (November 1921 to February 1922) there had been a spate of incidents of violence and repression. The Government had let loose terror and fear among the Indian masses to suppress them and to curtail the widespread Freedom Movement. In the face of these hard facts, Maulana Azad questions the Government's objection to being labeled as a Tyrant. How can tyranny and injustice be tolerated just because the Government was in power, he asks. To borrow a phrase from Maulana Azad's quote of Joseph Mazzini the Italian freedom fighter, the British Government has only "some transient power" in its hands. As such it cannot be absolved of its guilt.

Before closing the discussing on this section, we should focus on the nature of the tone used by the author. The occasion is formal and the author keeps his tone formal but there are some phrases he uses which give away his opinion about the British Government. He wishes to condemn the deviousness of the Government and its habit of self- justification, even in cases of extreme cruelty and unrighteous actions. While talking of how the British Government is misrepresenting facts, Azad says that it takes "boundless courage" to trample upon justice.

***Check your Progress***

1. Maulana Azad's demand is for total freedom; he rejects the idea of a piecemeal independence.
2. He denounces the gradual transfer of power that the Government was envisaging.
3. The Section gives many examples of the injustices and atrocities of the British Government.

### 6.2.2.3 Section - 3:

#### **“In my address” ... “evidence is available of my offence”**

Mahatma Gandhi had introduced the notion of Non-Cooperation Movement and his followers had implicitly adopted this philosophy. Maulana Azad was at the forefront of the supporters of Mahatma Gandhi's Movement. He further explains the notion of non-violence from the standpoint of being a Muslim. Azad clarifies how the Islamic Law and Gandhiji's philosophy of non-cooperation have many things in common.. Islam is a religion of peace, and as such Non-violence is at the heart of Islamic belief. At the same time Islam enjoins on its followers to dissociate themselves from any system of governance that did not follow the principles of justice and equality. Moreover, the Khilafat Conference had resolved that Indian Muslims should not serve in the British army because the British Government was at war with the Islamic Caliphate of Turkey and other Islamic countries. Any Government which was trampling over the rights of innocent people does not have the right to force the people into compliance. As such Maulana Azad claims that it was wrong that Muslims should serve under the British any more. In the view of Maulana Azad this stand of the Indian Muslims was in tune with the views of Mahatma Gandhi. When Mahatma Gandhi came out with his proposal of Non-Cooperation as a mass Movement to overthrow foreign rule, Maulana felt that it was a concept that was close to the Islamic concept. The ideologies of both the movements were so close that the Indian leaders decided to combine the two demands, that is, Indian Freedom and recognition of the Islamic Caliphate.

Maulana Azad was being indicted for the speeches he had made on several occasions declaring the support of Indians for the Khilafat Movement. In a bold and unequivocal manner Maulana Azad says that he has no desire or intention to refute these charges. The anti-British resolution had been drafted by Maulana Azad himself and had been formally passed in three meetings of the National Congress and the Khilafat Conference held in Calcutta, Bareilly, and Lahore. As such he feels that he is solely responsible for the political stand taken in these meetings. In a characteristically bold and defiant style, Maulana Azad goes on to announce that there is nothing underhanded or hidden in his demands and in his denouncement of the British Government's actions. All his Presidential Addresses delivered at the meetings of Congress Committees have been published and are in the public domain. Further Maulana Azad declares that as he had presided over all those meetings, he was morally responsible for any speech made

by anyone on those occasions while he was in chair. He and only he was liable to bear any charge of sedition. In a very candid manner, Maulana Azad says that should the Government need any documentary evidence against him, the speeches were easily available since they had not only published in Urdu but also had been translated into English! What an intrepid and upright leader!

***Check your Progress***

1. Maulana's stand against the British Government is clear and unequivocal.
2. Mualana Azad takes full moral responsibility for all his speeches and actions, and wishes to absolve all his fellow leaders and freedom fighters of any blame, because he was presiding over all the deliberations.
3. He defiantly offers documentary evidence to his opponents. His speeches had not only published but also been translated into English.

**6.2.2.4 Section - 4**

**“During the last two years” ... “Under Section 124 A”**

Maulana Azad admits that he has always been a critic of the British Government's unjust methods. He has been always in the forefront of the millions of patriotic Indians who have demanded liberty from foreign rule. The Indian freedom fighters had not been interested only in their own freedom. They were opposed to any measure where human freedom and human dignity were at stake. That was the reason why the Freedom Struggle in India pitted its strength and support with the Khilafat Movement. The overthrow of the Ottoman Sultan and the snatching away of his powers as the Caliph of Islam had angered Muslims across the world. Indian leaders joined hands with their Muslim fellowmen in their support of the Caliphate. Thus Maulana Azad spoke of the twin concerns of the Indians, that is, the National Movement and the Caliphate Movement (1919-1922) in all his speeches. This twin campaign strengthened the Hindu-Muslim unity in India. The British wished to break this mass movement. They identified the strong leaders and started to isolate them by bringing them under the attack of British laws. Maulana Azad was easy target for such a move. He was indicted under charges of sedition. The charges of rebellion leveled against him were on basis of his speeches. The charge sheet had

cited two speeches in its case. Azad says that he is surprised that the Government cited merely two speeches! The statements in favour of Khilafat and the declarations denouncing the unjust British Raj were statements that he had been making over a period of time in public. Maulana Azad had travelled all over the country alone as well as in the company of Mahatma Gandhi. Among the many issues that he had taken up in his speeches were: the Punjab problem, the movements in favor of Swaraj, and non-Cooperation. He had also been open in his support of the Khilafat Movement.

***Check your Progress***

1. The British Government had cited only two speeches in its formal charges against Maulana Azad.
2. The nationalist leader says that actually he had spoken of these issues in a number of other speeches over the years.
3. The Section shows the status of Maulana Azad within the Congress Party and the significant role that he played in the Indian Freedom Movement.

The British Government had identified merely two speeches delivered in the first two weeks of the year 1921 as insidious; whereas he feels that he had been more “definite, clear, and categorical” in all his other earlier public speeches. He has committed the “so called crime” of speaking up for human rights and liberty so many times times that he had “lost count of it”.

The British Government had charged Maulana Azad under Section 124-A. which was an indictment on basis of sedition. Actually Maulana Azad proudly admits all that he has done and said and written in the past two years was perhaps a sufficient basis for his indictment. He does not regret any of his words or actions. In fact, Maulana Azad says, if the two speeches rendered in July 1921 were a crime, all his other actions and words should be also considered under IPC Section 124A.

In this section we are given a view of the status that Maulana Azad enjoyed among the leaders of India. Maulana Azad was at the forefront of the freedom Movement. He was President of the Indian National Congress in 1921. He presided over the All India Khilafat Conference, the Jamiatul Ulema Session, as well as the Provincial Khilafat Conference. While he cites the high offices held by him in a candid manner, we must see that Maulana Azad holds the offices as

places of trust and responsibility. He offers to take full responsibility for what he had said in each of these meetings.. Over and above that, one is struck by the moral courage of this great leader when he says that he takes full moral responsibility for any statement made by any one on the dais at these meetings because as the presiding dignitary he sees it as his moral duty to accept the reward as well punishment that followed.

#### **6.2.2.5 Section - 5:**

##### **“Well, the Future will sit” ... “Government has started watering it”**

The section begins on a prophetic note. The patriot Maulana Azad is quite prescient and almost prophetic in his vision. “The future will sit in judgment on whatever is happening today” The British high-handedness appears to go on unopposed and unquestioned. But this reality of today will bear repercussions in future. Maulana Azad was a great believer in the Principle of Justice. In the present moment the British Government was behaving in a high handed manner because of its sense of prestige, and cultural superiority. It was unjustly using its power to suppress the voices of the oppressed Indians. But Azad firmly believes that justice will prevail in due course of time and that the future will decide between right and wrong.

Already there are clouds of change on the horizon. Unfortunately the British Government is unable to fathom the signs. It is a pity that the British Government was so myopic and shortsighted that it could not see what was quite evident and obvious. The portents were clear and the beginning of the end had already been announced. The intrepid Maulana makes a reference to his speeches in many of which he had said that the seed of desire for freedom develops into a sapling. This young sapling quickly becomes a tree only when it is irrigated with waters of violence and repression. The seed of Independence has already been sown in the hearts of the people. The Government has failed to realize that by treating the Indians unjustly through violent and repressive measures, it is only allowing the seed of Independence which is already a sapling to take root and grow into a strong tree. Ironically the very measures that the British were employing to terrorize and weaken the Indian Freedom Movement were acting as a tonic to the Indians and they were all the more strengthened in their resolve to win back their independence.

No great writing is limited by the moment and context of it writing. Azad is ever conscious of the responsibility of being a writer. No doubt *Qaul e Faisal* is written under the pressure of the historic events taking shape in the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. As we read the essay today we see how the highly moralistic tone and patriotic fervor which illuminate the

text make it a timeless treatise. This great document celebrates the principles of human liberty, individual choice, moral responsibility and love for justice. The document is unequivocal in its denunciation of injustice and untruth. It cuts across the divisions of religions and creeds; and speaks to humanity as a whole. Maulana Azad is so confident about his being a Muslim as well as a patriotic Indian that he finds no need to be apologetic about any of these identities. Above all he is a human being and his anger is mainly about how one set of human beings can rob the other set of their right to live freely on their own terms. He has such strength of character that he can even pity the enemy for its lack of wisdom and its failure to see the Truth even as it stares it in the face. What a beautiful metaphor to end the passionate speech with!!

***Check your Progress***

1. Maulana Azad is a great believer in Divine justice.
2. He is confident that time will prove who is right and who is wrong.
3. Maulana Azad warns the Government that the signs of the end of tyranny are there to see.

**6.2.2.6 Summary:**

This selection provides a very good sample of non-fiction prose. It is a speech presented in written form and contains many features of spoken English. It represents the passion and contained anger of a man who speaking of a high cause and who stands for Truth. The elevated tone is supported by features like rhetorical questions, exclamations etc.

Maulana Azad delivered fiery speeches on a number of occasions challenging the British Government. He was arrested in Calcutta along with CR Dutta in 1921. These leaders' arrests acted as a fuel to the fire and the Indian mass movements became further strengthened. Maulana Azad was indicted by the British Government for his supposed seditious speeches in 1921. Two of his speeches were quoted in the formal charge sheet against him. Maulana Azad refutes these charges and enumerates the many examples of injustice and cruelty perpetrated by the Government. In a noble gesture, he takes responsibility for his opinions and his speeches. He says that he would also take full moral responsibility for whatever was said by anyone in the meetings which were presided over by him, that is Maulana Azad. With studied sarcasm, Maulana Azad challenges the British Government to right its wrong lest the people of India



would become constrained to take extreme steps. According to Azad if the Government did not mend its ways India would have to remove the Government by any means.

Maulana Azad draws parallels between the Non-cooperation Movement and the Khilafat Movement. As per Islamic teachings, people were enjoined to dissociate themselves from Tyrants. In the same manner, Gandhiji was asking his fellow men to withdraw support from the British Government as it was trampling on the human rights of Indians. Hence the freedom Movement and the Khilafat Movement were based on a similar premise.

In both the speeches which cited in charge sheet, as well as in many other speeches before and after, Azad had unequivocally taken an ant-British stand on its actions in India as well as in Turkey. He had also criticized the British Government on many other issues like the issues of division of Punjab (leading to great unrest), the issues of Swaraj, and Non-Cooperation.

This whole document is inspiring in tone and fearless in its argument. What we see is a grand view of a noble and patriotic mind on display. Mahatma Gandhi praised this rousing statement in the issue of his journal 'Young India' dated Feb. 23, 1922. A close reading of this essay reveals that Maulana uses the Indian Freedom Struggle as a metaphor for the fight between Right and Wrong and Good and Evil. In an idealistic tone, Azad says that Justice will prevail and injustice will be annihilated. He has implicit faith in Future and that the future will sit judgment over the oppressors for their present actions. It was this idealism of the leaders like Gandhi, Nehru and Azad that ignited hope in the hearts of the Indians. It was a future moment about a quarter of a century later, in 1947, that the prophecy of Maulana Azad was fulfilled. The foreign ruler was ousted through non-violent means and the Indian demand for the liberty of Indians and their right to self-Governance was vindicated.

Note: The prescribed selection from *Qaul e Faisal* is a historic document. It verifies many events that happened in the 1920s. Remember, the decade was eventful. The Freedom Movement was at its peak. The British Government was feeling the impact of the mass movement. It was doing its best to curb the spread of the movement by targeting the leaders, closing down avenues of free speech, and by instilling fear among common people by using force. We have the word of a great leader of the time, who is trying to put the matters right. So this important document serves many purposes. Let us briefly count the objectives that the Statement fulfills:

1. Maulana Azad addresses the Magistrate. So the main addressee of the Statement is the Magistrate. It is evident however, that he is sending a message across to the Government of Great Britain through this address.
2. Azad is the author of this document, but he speaks on behalf of millions of his fellowmen.
3. The tone of the document is straightforward, fearless and unequivocal. Maulana Azad is indirectly conveying to the British Government the fact that the people it is trying to suppress are people of courage, and he is a living specimen of the qualities of all Indians.
4. While he addresses the British Government, Maulana Azad is also educating the Indian side. This leader was aware of the many strains of thought and opinion that existed in the Indian groups. He had to use a rhetoric that appealed to all.
5. His open support of the Muslim interest in the Khilafat issue and his speaking of Khilafat and Indian National Movements as struggles for the rights of people, paved the way for Hindu-Muslim unity.
6. Maulana Azad's explication of the concept of Non-Cooperation in the light of Islamic tenets inspired the Muslims of India to join the National movement.
7. Gandhiji was supported by all classes of people when he launched the Non-cooperation Movement.
8. Lastly, the life of any great literary creation is not bound by time. *Qaul e Faisal* is a timeless document. The thoughts expressed and the spirit that fills *Qaul e Faisal* are universal. These ideas are applicable even today.

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### 6.3 Learning Outcomes

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The learners will be able to:

- Understand the significant events of the Freedom Struggle through the words of a leader who was at the front of the action.
- Understand the causes of the fall of the British Empire especially in the Sub-Continent
- Appreciate the dedication and selfless service rendered by Azad and his fellow leaders to free their motherland from foreign rule.

- Delve into the fearless mind of a stalwart and understand his capabilities and his political acumen.
- Appreciate Azad's views on liberty as the birthright of all human beings.
- Understand Azad's political views on the citizens' role in criticizing the Government
- Understand how Azad finds the principles of political theory to be in tune with his religious views.
- Study the piece as a sample of elevated and impassioned prose.
- Study the scope of *Qaul e Faisal* as a historic document as well as a Universal Statement.
- Analyse the leadership styles of Maulana Azad and others who led the Freedom Movement in order to appreciate of the unique quality of Indian War of Independence.
- Identify the features of universality in *Qaul e Faisal*. There are many points raised by Azad regarding human dignity and individual freedom. At the same time, the author speaks of the need to think of common interests as a nation, and as members of a group. Learners may see the value of applying these ideas in their daily lives and in their social, cultural, and political spheres.

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## 6.4 Glossary

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**Islamic Caliphate:** It was a Semi-religious political system of governance in Islam. People within the territories of the Caliphate were ruled by a Caliph (Khalifa). The Caliphate came to an end when the Turkish National Government under Kemal Ataturk declared itself Secular and abolished the Caliphate. The last Caliph Abdul Majeed went into exile in 1924

**Josph Mazzini:** Italian politician and activist (1805-1872). He fought for the unification of Italy, and led the Italian Revolutionary Movement.

**Khilafat Movement:** A political campaign spearheaded by Indian Muslim leaders like the Ali brothers, (Mohammad Ali Jauhar, Shaukat Ali) and Maulana Azad. Their demand was that that the British Government should ensure the continuation of the Islamic Caliphate in Turkey at the end of the World War I. The Indian Khilafat Movement called upon the Turkish people to preserve the Caliphate in the name of Islam. In India, the National Movement supported the Khilafat Movement because both were committed to principles non-violence and non-

cooperation. By end of 1922, the Khilafat Movement ran out of its wind after the Turkish Government abolished the Caliphate.

**Massacre at Jallianwala Bagh:** The shocking incident took place on 13 April 1919 at Amritsar's Jallianwala Bagh. Thousands of people had gathered in a peaceful manner to observe Baisakhi, the Spring Harvest festival of Sikhs and Hindus. Baisakhi marks the Solar New Year. British troops opened fire on the crowd, killing hundreds of innocent people (said to be 379) and wounding thousands many. This incident culminated in Mahatma Gandhi's full commitment to the cause of Indian Nationalism. Colonel Reginald Edward Harry Dyer, who ordered fire to be opened at innocent unarmed men, women and children on that fateful day, is remembered as a murderer of humanity. He has been called the "butcher of Amritsar"

**Non-Cooperation Movement:** The Movement was launched on 4 September 1920. Mahatma Gandhi aimed to force the British Government to grant full Independence (Purna Swaraj) to Indians.

**Punjab Affairs:** Punjab had strategic value for the British. It concentrated on the agrarian development of Punjab. However the contradictions in the colonial policies gave rise to unrest in many regions of Punjab. Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh were seen as the leaders of the agitation. The Punjab struggle went hand in hand with the national struggle. In the 1920s, however, the idealistic notion of Hindu Muslim unity had become clouded by uncertainty and unrest. The growing problems in Punjab was a cause of concern to national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and Maulana Azad.

**Qaul e Faisal:** A phrase borrowed from Holy Quran. Qaul means a 'saying, a speech or a Statement'. Faisal would mean that 'which determines between right and wrong'. Many scholars have interpreted the full phrase as "The Final Verdict" or "The Last Statement" or "The Testament of Faith"

**Section 124 A:** This section of the IPC which deals with the issue of sedition says "whoever, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites, or attempts to excite disaffection towards ..... the Government established by law (in India)...., shall be punished with imprisonment.

**Swaraj:** The concept of Self-Rule was propounded in 1916. The inspiration behind it was the slogan popularized by Bal Gangadhar Tilak: "Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it"

**Union Jack:** Term to describe the national flag of the British Kingdom. It carries red and white crosses against a blue background. During the British Raj the Government was forcing all the colonized nations to respect the British flag.

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## 6.5 Sample Questions

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### 6.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. The Court Statement was made in
  - (a) 1920
  - (b) 1921
  - (c) 1922
  - (d) 1923
2. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad calls a spade a spade. Which of his actions proves this?
  - (a) He refuses to call Black as White
  - (b) He refers to the British Government as a Tyrant
  - (c) He makes bold and revolutionary speeches
  - (d) He believes in liberty
3. In the name of a progressive extension of Self-Rule the British Government was
  - (a) Delaying the grant of Independence to the people of India
  - (b) Suppressing the Khilafat Movement
  - (c) Arresting the leaders of the Independence Movement
  - (d) Enslaving Indians
4. Why were innocent boys flogged by the British?
  - (a) Because they refused to join the British army
  - (b) Obey rules imposed by the British
  - (c) Because they refused to salute the British flag
  - (d) All of the above
5. Which movement under Mahatma Gandhi is mentioned in the Essay?
  - (a) Khilafat Movement
  - (b) Indian National Movement
  - (c) Non-Cooperation

(d) Jamiatul Ulema Conference

6. “Whatever is evil must be mended or ended” What is the “Evil” that is referred to in this sentence?

(a) Partition

(b) Khilafat Movement

(c) Section 124A

(d) British Rule

7. What is the “epithet” used by Maulana Azad to which the British Government had taken an objection?

(a) Unjust

(b) Cruel

(c) Unrighteous

(d) Tyrant

8. According to Maulana Azad human bondage or slavery is wrongful because it

(a) Merely pretends to uplift the human race

(b) Takes away the rights from people

(c) Is contrary to the Will of God

(d) Is against religious laws

9. The Report of the American Mission revealed that

(a) Smyrna and Thrace had a Christian majority population

(b) Greek Government was committing atrocities on the Muslim population

(c) The Prime Minister of Britain was a humane and righteous leader

(d) It supported the British Government

10. Maulana Azad says that he pities the British because

(a) The British are unable to change their policies

(b) Indians hate them

(c) The British are unable to see the future clearly

(d) Gandhiji had started the Non-Cooperation Movement

### **6.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. What are the grounds for Maulana Azad describing the British Government as ‘Tyrannical’?

2. Why was Section 124A used to arrest Maulana Azad?
3. What were the different positions held by Maulana Azad?
4. What was the result of the handing over of Smyrna and Thrace to the Greeks?
5. What are the examples of British atrocities in India mentioned by Maulana Azad?

### **6.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Write an essay on Maulana Azad as a patriot and a man of moral courage
  2. Describe the causes and the context which drive Maulana Azad to make the Court statement
  3. Justify Maulana's anti-British stand as an Indian, a Muslim and as a human being.
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## **6.6 Suggested Readings**

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1. *Abul Kalam Azad: An Intellectual and Religious Biography*. Douglas I H, Nimault G., & Troll. CW. 1988. Delhi: OUP
2. *Eight Lives* by Rajmohan Gandhi, 1986.
3. *Indai Wins Freedom*. Azad. MA. 1988. New Delhi: Orient Longman
4. *Indian Political Trials (1775-1947)*. AG Noorani
5. *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad: Profile of a Nationalist*. Ed. Mahavir Singh. 2003.
6. *Maulana Abulkalam Azad: Selected Speeches and Writings*. Azad AK & Shahabuddin S. 2007. Gurgaon: Hope India Publication.
7. *Maulana Azad, Islam, and Indian National Movement*. Sayyada Saiyidain Hameed 2014. *Oxford Scholarship Online*.(Chapter6:Fatwa Against the British: Qaul e Faisal).

## Unit - 7: *Ghubar-e-Khatir*: An Introduction

### Structure

#### 7.0 Introduction

#### 7.1 Objectives

#### 7.2 *Ghubar-e-Khatir*: An Introduction

##### 7.2.1 *Ghubar e Khatir*: An Introduction

##### 7.2.2 Background and Publication Details

##### 7.2.3 *Ghubar e Khatir* and its Significance in Urdu Letter Writing

##### 7.2.4 Prose Style

##### 7.2.5 *Karwaan e Khyal* and Other Collection of Letters

#### 7.3 Learning Outcomes

#### 7.4 Glossary

#### 7.5 Sample Questions

#### 7.6 Suggested Readings

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### 7.0 Introduction

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Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was born in Mecca in 1888 and his family moved back to India and settled in Calcutta in the year 1898. He was trained at home in Islamic theology by his father and by other prominent teachers. The spirit of inquiry and quest for knowledge compelled him to question his religious beliefs and turned him into a free thinker. It was during this phase that he adopted the pen name ‘Azad’. He got associated with the field of journalism at a very early age and founded the Urdu weekly journal *Al Hilal* (The Crescent) in 1912; which didn’t go too well with the British authorities and the journal was banned in 1914. It was because of his involvement in the Khilafat Movement that Maulana Azad came in contact with Mahatma Gandhi and established a close and lifelong association with him. Subsequently he got engrossed in Non Cooperation Movement and became one of the prominent leaders of Indian National Congress and was elected as the President of the Party in the year 1923. Maulana Abul Kalam



Azad dedicated his life to serve the nation and its people. In spite of the fact that he was born in a noble and learned family, and could have led a comfortable and luxurious life, he opted for a life which was full of difficulties and challenges. He preferred a life of solitude and confesses in one of his letters that he never opted for the hustle and bustle of political life rather it was the chaos of political life that had chosen him.

Maulana Azad's visit to Egypt, Turkey, Syria, and Iraq in 1908 shaped his political ideas and also enabled him to have a first-hand understanding of the discourse of nationalism. This visit to the near Orient reinforced his conviction regarding participation of Muslims in India's struggle for freedom. In his political autobiography *India Wins Freedom* Maulana Azad specifically mentions about having met some 'Iranian Revolutionaries' and 'a group of young Turks' (7) and how this motivated him to take the resolve of awakening the Indian Muslims. Maulana Azad played a pivotal role in India's struggle for Independence and his journal *Al-Hilal* (1912) was a sincere effort to motivate Indian Muslims to join the freedom movement. *Al-Hilal* fared much better than the expectations and Azad himself said that "The publication of *Al-Hilal* marks a turning point in the history of Urdu journalism." (*India Wins Freedom*: 8)

It was due to his deep understanding of Islamic religious thought that he had a deep regard for syncretic tradition of India. The pluralistic tradition of India has been eulogised by different poets and writers but Maulana Azad's address to the Indian National Congress at Ramgarh serves as the most befitting description of India's Ganga Jamuni culture and how Muslims too have made a significant contribution in the making of this pluralistic tradition and are indeed a part of this shared heritage:

It was India's historic destiny that its soil should become the destination of many different caravans of races, cultures and religions. Even before the dawn of history's morning, they started their trek into India and the process has continued since. This vast and hospitable land welcomed them all and took them to her bosom. The last of these caravans was that of followers of Islam, who came in the footsteps of their many predecessors and settled down here. This was the meeting point of two different currents of culture. For a time they flowed along their separate courses, but Nature's immutable law brought them together into a confluence. This fusion was a notable historic event. Since then, destiny, in her

own secret ways, began to fashion new India to take the place of the old. (*India's Maulana*:161)

Maulana Azad stands at the helm of India's literary and political history, without him India's struggle for independence and its books of literary history would have remained incomplete. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's thoughts couldn't have been more relevant than in the contemporary times. Mushirul Hasan in the "Introduction" to his book *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization* while mentioning about the role of Nationalist writers in preserving the composite culture of India and in strengthening the Hindu-Muslim unity particularly writes that "Nehru's reflections in Ahmadnagar jail and Azad's introspection at Ramgarh... are as relevant today as they were in the 1940s." (Mushirul Hasan: 36)

Maulana Azad was gifted with astonishing creative faculties but his involvement with India's struggle for freedom and his other political preoccupations didn't leave him with enough time for literary and creative pursuits. Creative and intellectual pursuits provided him with much needed moments of mental and spiritual relaxation. In spite of being a very busy leader and a statesman Maulana Azad left us with an exemplary corpus of works on diverse topics and interests. His *Tarjuman Ul Quran* is a remarkable contribution in the field of Islamic scholarship, *Ghubar e Khatir* is a testimony to his literary prowess, *Tezkirah* is remarkable in reflecting his philosophical thought and his *India Wins Freedom* is a record of his astonishing political journey which is coalesced with India's journey towards freedom. In most of his works Maulana Azad is either concerned about educating and awakening Muslims in the light of Quranic teachings and motivating them to participate in the Indian Independence Movement or he is engaged in inspiring the Indian populace to remain united and work towards the freedom and growth of the country. It is very rare that we see him moving out of these spheres of his thought. In *Ghubar e Khatir* Maulana Azad has moved away from these above said preoccupations to give a free play to his mind and indulge in other interests of his life. It's the captivity and isolation at Ahmad Nagar Fort which provided him with the luxury to think about his likes and dislikes, his hobbies, his observations regarding flowers and birds and his acute awareness about his surroundings. The letters of *Ghubar e Khatir* reveal a literary mind and a sensitive soul who desires to be in the company of his friend who shares intellectual compatibility and can be a witness to his feelings, emotions, likes and dislikes.

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## 7.1 Objectives

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- To acquaint the students with the writings of Maulana Azad.
  - To familiarize the students with the tradition of letter writing in Urdu.
  - To enable the students to critically analyze *Ghubar e Khatir* in the light of Urdu letter writing.
  - To read and appreciate *Ghubar e Khatir* as a fine specimen of Urdu prose.
  - To understand the circumstances and details of the publication history of *Ghubar e Khatir*
  - To critically appreciate the prose style of Maulana Azad in *Ghubar e Khatir*.
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## 7.2 Ghubar-e-Khatir

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### 7.2.1 *Ghubar-e-Khatir*: An Introduction

*Ghubar e Khatir* marks a new chapter in Urdu prose which was still struggling to find a foothold in the literary scenario of the subcontinent. It comprises of 24 letters, 20 of which were written by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad from Ahmad Nagar Fort (in Maharashtra) during his period of incarceration (between 1942- 45), one letter was written few days prior to his arrest and rest of the three were added by Mohammad Ajmal Khan (Maulana Azad's secretary) which Azad had written from Shimla and Kashmir. A common thread that binds these 24 letters is that all these letters have been addressed to one and the same person i.e. Nawab Sadr Yar Jung, Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani, Rais of Bhikampur, Zilla Aligarh.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Nawab Sadr Yar Jung Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani shared a close bond. Both were fond of Persian Poetry and literature and were Islamic scholars of repute. They both met in Lucknow around 1905 through Allama Shibli Nomani when Maulana Azad was placed there for editing "Al Nadwah". Maulana Azad and Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani both were very different and distinct personalities--- while Maulana Azad was a freedom fighter, a politician and a fearless journalist, Habibur Rahman Khan led a fulfilling and quiet life that he enjoyed within his feudal setup. The beginning of exchange of letters between

the two dates back to 4<sup>th</sup> September 1940 when Maulana Azad wrote his first letter to Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani which later on found its place in the collection of *Karwaan e Khyal*.

The foundation of friendship between Maulana Azad and Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani was laid on their common interest in literature and their love for Persian literature and poetry. Maulana Azad was very careful in choosing his topics of discussion with Habibur Rahman Khan and always kept matters of politics at bay. In *Ghubar e Khatir* Azad has carefully sifted his thoughts and has written to his friend only about those things which he thought might be of interest to him. While throwing light on this matter Ajmal Khan observes in the 'Introduction' to *Ghubar e Khatir* that Maulana Azad kept the matters of politics totally away from those friends and acquaintances who were purely his friends in the realm of literature and culture. The letters of *Karwaan e Khyal* and *Ghubar e Khatir* bear testimony to the friendship of Maulana Azad with Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani. The 'Sidiq e Mukarram' to whom the letters of *Ghubar e Khatir* are addressed to is without doubt his close friend Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani. Both of them loved writing letters to each other as letter writing provided them with some kind of peace and tranquility which one finds in the company of close friends. Maulana Azad was acutely conscious of the fast changing times and diminishing number of like-minded friends with whom he could pour out his feelings. Thus even in the isolation of Ahmad Nagar Fort; Maulana Azad recreates the magical moments of inspiration and tranquility by addressing the letters to his friend and makes him a witness to the creative journey wherein he opens up debates and discussions on diverse issues close to his heart. These thoughts and emotions of Maulana Azad were such that it was difficult to bind them within the structure of a letter and perhaps Maulana Azad was conscious of the limitations of letter writing and was also apprehensive of the fact that these letters might not reach the addressee but was so much swept away by the desire of being in the company of his friend and to express himself that he wrote these letters despite all odds.

Maulana Azad emerges as a researcher and a philosopher in *Ghubar e Khatir*. The text records his keen and detailed observations about his surroundings, about Ahmad Nagar Fort, habits and sounds of birds, about music, about tea and its various types, various brewing techniques, and minute details regarding drinking tea. The book also deals with philosophical issues like existence of God, religion, morality and ethics, worldly existence, etc. Maulana Azad had an immense capacity to detach himself from his surroundings, politics and uncertainties and

rigors of imprisonment. He cherished his friends and their friendship which provided him with much needed respite from the bleak scenario. He often immersed himself in literature, philosophy, art and ethics and could easily free himself from the stress of his political life. The letters provide an insight into the mental state of Maulana Azad and how he dealt with the life of imprisonment and his efforts to make this life of captivity more cheerful. The reader also gets a glimpse into the daily routine of Maulana Azad in prison and his various engagements during these difficult times. In the prison he had enough time to spare and reflect on the past as well as his immediate surroundings as well. The pleasant and cheerful memories from the past flooded his mind and helped him to keep his sanity.

Except for few; the letters of *Ghubar e Khatir* are not limited to personal conversations and reflect the learning and understanding of Maulana Azad. One has to remember the fact that these letters were written during extraordinary circumstances in dismal times by an extraordinary man. Maulana Azad wrote these letters in the period of captivity and isolation in Ahmad Nagar Fort as writing provided him a release from his difficult circumstances of imprisonment. The letters present a detailed account of the city of Ahmad Nagar, and further delve into its geographical location, history and culture. The letters also provide important information regarding the Fort of Ahmad Nagar also. Due to restrictions of imprisonment Azad was not provided with books and thus he was unable to devote himself to serious reading or writing. Letter writing came as an easy escape from the dreary and unproductive life of imprisonment.

In spite of his political responsibilities and engagements Maulana Azad never distanced himself from literary pursuits. He utilized his time in Ahmad Nagar Fort to sharpen his intellectual faculties. He had a keen eye for detailing and minutely observed his surroundings. Even a simple and seemingly routine activity of making and drinking tea becomes a fine art under his pen. Maulana Azad loved drinking jasmine tea and had thus mastered the art of brewing tea. While delving into the details regarding his passion for drinking tea he further introduces his readers with his fondness of smoking and getting up very early in the morning. He goes into the minute details of how he mastered the art of smoking along with drinking tea. Getting up early in the morning was a heavenly experience for Maulana Azad as these moments provided him with complete peace and tranquility to contemplate on serious things of life without distraction. This was also the time when he enjoyed drinking fine quality jasmine tea with its aroma filling his mind and senses. He dedicated the early morning hours to his literary

pursuits of reading and writing. The history of tea and its cultivation, methods of brewing tea, its aromas and flavors have been recorded with great passion and detail in the letters of *Ghubar e Khatir*.

Maulana Azad had a great love for music as well. *Ghubar e Khatir* provides a detailed account of this passion of his. In these letters Maulana Azad emphasizes the need for continuous training and practice to master the art of music. He writes about having received training of music from one of the followers of his father, Maseeta Khan and also refers to the guidance he received from Mirza Mohammad Hadi Ruswa during his stay in Lucknow. Whatever passion Maulana Azad pursued he did it with full dedication, conviction and devotion as he believed in excellence in whatever he did.

Some of the letters in *Ghubar e Khatir* almost read like stories. The “Story of a Pair of Sparrows” or “Chidiya Chide ki Kahani” (letter number 19 and 20) is one of them. What began as a tale of defense against the onslaught of these small birds in Ahmad Nagar Fort; gradually turned into a saga of friendship and understanding between Maulana Azad and these small creatures. Azad narrates the onslaught of sparrows in the fort and his unsuccessful attempts in trying to make them fly away and his ultimate resignation and acceptance of their presence which culminates in exceptional bonding with the birds. This tale is covered in two letters and is rich in the use of similes, metaphors and vivid imagery. The tale is an allegorical commentary on human behavior and freedom movement. Maulana Azad through his evocative writing has tried to motivate his countrymen to join the freedom movement and to throw away the yoke of slavery. In this tale a young chick which was unable to fly on previous attempts finally finds itself flying high in the skies. The little bird is able to accomplish this daunting and seemingly impossible task only when it is consumed by self realization and determination --- when it realizes that flying high in the sky is its ultimate destiny and it is created by the almighty to do so. According to Maulana Azad self realization and determination is the key to achieve any goal. “Story of a Pair of Sparrows” is exemplary in the way in which Maulana Azad has delineated the behavior and unique habits of each single sparrow that surrounded him at Ahmad Nagar Fort to the extent that he gave them names according to their unique qualities and eccentricities. Another significant letter which carries the color of a tale is the “Story of Crow and the Bulbul” or “Hikayat e Zaagh o Bulbul” (letter number 18). In his understanding and knowledge about

different varieties of birds, their voices and habitats Maulana Azad can easily surpass any ornithologist.

***Check your Progress:***

1. To whom did Maulana Azad address the letters of *Ghubar e Khatir*?
2. Why Maulana Azad enjoyed getting up early in the morning?
3. What is the message that Maulana Azad wanted to convey through the “Story of Pair of Sparrows”?

**7.2.2 Background and Publication Details:**

This was the time when All India Congress Committee session in Bombay launched the Quit India Movement led by Mahatma Gandhi. It was on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1942 when Mahatma Gandhi delivered his famous speech in ‘August Kranti Maidan’ and gave the call of “do or die”. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad; who was serving as the President of the Congress at the time; along with many important leaders of Indian National Congress were arrested by the British Government. Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Azad and sardar Patel were imprisoned at Ahmadnagar Fort. Demonstrations and protests were held throughout India. Thousands were killed or injured and more than 100,000 people were put behind the bars by the British in order to suppress the movement. It was in the background of these tumultuous circumstances that Maulana Azad found himself in captivity inside Ahmed Nagar Fort; detached from the hum drum of life.

On his release from Bankuda jail in June 1945 Maulana Azad handed over the letters to his secretary Hakim Ajmal Khan with the intention of making a copy of those letters and then to post them to the addressee i.e. Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani, but Azad writes that when Ajmal Khan came to know about the letters he insisted that these should be given for publication in the form of a book, to which he complied and the letters were given for publication without any revisions or corrections. As already discussed *Ghubar e Khatir* is a collection of 24 letters written by Maulana Azad to his friend Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani. Out of these 24 letters; 20 letters were written during the three years of incarceration (1942-1945) in Ahmad Nagar Fort, one letter was written prior to his arrest and three more letters written by Maulana Azad during

his stay in Shimla and Kashmir were added to the corpus by Ajmal Khan. All these 24 letters were published in the form of a book titled *Ghubar e Khatir* on May 1946.

### **7.2.3 *Ghubar-e-Khatir* and its Significance in Urdu Letter Writing:**

Letter writing is an important genre in Urdu literature and reflects the personality and interests of the letter writer himself. Through this genre the letter writer pours out his thoughts, feelings and emotions in the letter and discusses minor details of daily routine. There is hardly any space for formality or artificiality as the writer pens his feelings directly to the addressee with whom he shares a personal and intellectual rapport. The style of the letter is often defined by the relationship between the letter writer and the addressee. Best letters are those which are addressed to friends with whom one can establish an emotional and intellectual connect and can discuss matters of common interests. A good letter can even qualify to be a literary masterpiece. Letter writing in Urdu is not bound by any strict rules and regulations nor does it require any special qualification or training as its essential charm lies in its spontaneity, simplicity and directness as it's a matter between two individuals. Even while being a personal conversation between two people a good letter can be a record of contemporary history and culture. The best examples of the tradition of letter writing in Urdu are the letters written by the famous Urdu poet Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib. Ghalib's letters in spite of being extremely personal are store house of information about Delhi's history and culture and are considered as literary masterpieces in their own right. Like other literary genres letter writing too makes use of a distinctive expression and style and possesses certain distinctive features as well.

Letter writing in Urdu has flourished in the hands of writers like Mirza Ghalib, Maulana Altaf Hussain Hali, Maulana Shibli Nomani, Mehdi Afaadi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Safiya Akhtar. While Ghalib's letters are addressed to various people and deal with variety of topics; Maulana Azad's letters are addressed only to his "Sidiq e Mukarram" i.e. to his friend Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani. Maulana Azad was essentially an introvert and never made his personal life public. Many unforeseen facets of his life get reflected in the letters of *Ghubar e Khatir*. Still Maulana Azad uses restraint in many instances. These letters are an important source on Maulana Azad's life to his biographers. The life of Maulana Azad can be studied and analyzed in the light of these letters. These letters provide insight into his personal life, his family, his likes and dislikes, his education etc. These details are very important and indispensable for any biographer.



***Check your Progress:***

1. Why is *Ghubar-e-Khatir* an important source for the biographers of Maulana Azad?
2. Which other Urdu writers are famous for their letters?
3. What are the important characteristics of a Personal letter.

**7.2.4 Prose Style:**

Maulana Azad has extensively quoted from Urdu and Persian poetry in *Ghubar e Khatir*. This is a reflection of his mental prowess and his capacity to store knowledge and to use it at his will. The most extraordinary thing about Maulana Azad's writing style in *Ghubar e Khatir* is the way he is able to dissociate himself from the physical reality of the prison and delve into creative writing. Azad's intellectual side was unfettered from politics and he could manage to move away from politics and immerse himself into intellectual thinking. This provided him with much needed relief in the times of political crisis.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's letters of *Ghubar e Khatir* are a class apart because of their literary flavor which gets enhanced because of his use of Arabic, Persian and Urdu couplets. Azad's prose in these letters moves away from his usual style and is more serious but at the same time is delightful and simple. It is these qualities that make *Ghubar e Khatir* an important text in Urdu prose. Although some critics are of the view that because of the predominance of Arabic words, phrases and couplets the language of the letters sometimes becomes difficult to understand. Maulana Azad's prose is influenced by the rhetorical style of Arabic and Persian. Azad's creativity was such that he could convert the most insignificant and prosaic topics into literary masterpieces by the magic of his pen. His detailing and nuanced writing is reflective of his learning and erudition. His style is simple yet enchanting and serious yet witty. His prose stands out for its clarity and crispness of thought which is augmented through his use of vivid imagery. Urdu language is greatly indebted to Maulana Azad for his contribution of new coinages and words which he derived from his extensive reading of Persian and Arabic literature. The popularity of the work can easily be gauged by the fact that several editions were published in a very short span of time. *Ghubar e Khatir* is interspersed with the poetic and aesthetic sense

of Maulana Azad. His wisdom and creativity knew no bounds and had the power to undertake flights of fancy where the hardships of prison life got dissolved to produce a thing of beauty, a literary masterpiece. The letter titled “Story of Crow and the Bulbul” (letter number 18) is full of wit and irony and introduces the reader to the humorous and witty side of Maulana Azad. He narrates an incident when he heard the nightingale singing and on asking his fellow prisoner he gets a much unexpected response, he writes:

Next morning, while seated in the garden I heard the warbling once again. I called out to a neighbour to let him know of the Bulbul’s song, and another prisoner, who was walking about in the courtyard, stopped and began to listen. After straining his ears he pronounced, ‘Song? What song? All I hear is the creaking of a wheel--- it must be a bullock cart or something rumbling down the road outside.’

By God! Such taste ---that his ears discern no difference at all between bird song and the crr-crrr of a bullock cart. If you have a choice of being closeted in two separate spaces, one of which is enlivened with the song of a bulbul, while the other thrums to the drone of a bullock cart, which would you prefer? (*The Oxford India Anthology of Modern Urdu Literature*: 274)

According to Malik Ram; the compiler and critic of Maulana Azad; *Ghubar e Khatir* is the last work of Maulana Azad published during his lifetime. He considers this collection of letters to be essays written on diverse topics which have been given an epistolary format. Many Urdu critics have considered *Ghubar e Khatir* as a collection of personal essays which effectively reflect the personality of Maulana Azad. Essay writing is a genre which is characterized by its frank and lucid style where the writer pens down about things which are close to his heart and is not bound by any particular topic. The writer enjoys complete freedom to write about anything under the sun and it also provides him the opportunity to ramble without any particular order or sequence. The essayist enjoys the freedom to digress and to write in an unconventional style. The letters of *Ghubar e Khatir* do reflect these qualities of personal essays to a certain extent. Maulana Azad indeed delves into diverse topics in his letters--- right from tracing the history of Ahmad Nagar Fort, writing elaborately about brewing and drinking of tea, his passion for music, his love of nature, birds and flowers etc. But one thing that stands out in

all these letters is the personality and individuality of Maulana Azad and due to this aspect of his style in he has often been charged with egotism. *Ghubar e Khatir* is different and superior to other Collection of letters; like *Karwan e Khyal*; in its detailing of important episodes related to freedom struggle. The letters also provide important information regarding many freedom fighters, their arrests and the circumstances in which they were arrested.

***Check Your Progress:***

1. Why the letters of *Ghubar e Khatir* are considered as essays by some Urdu critics?
2. What are the unique features of Maulana Azad's prose in his work *Ghubar e Khatir*?
3. Discuss how *Ghubar e Khatir* showcases Maulana Azad's depth of knowledge and his command over Urdu and other Oriental languages.

### **7.2.5 Karwaan e Khyal and Other Collection of Letters:**

*Karwaan e Khyal*, *Makateeb e Abul Kalam* and *Naqsh e Azad* are important Collections of letters written by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. *Makateeb e Abul Kalam* is a Collection of letters of Maulana Azad which he had written to Maulana Shibli Nomani, Syed Sulaiman, Maulana Hali, Maulana Muhiuddin and Maulana Sanaullah Amritsari. This collection was published in 1948.

*Karwaan e Khyal* is a collection of letters and correspondences that were exchanged between Maulana Azad and Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani during 4<sup>th</sup> September 1940 to 12<sup>th</sup> November 1946. *Karwaan e Khyal* is a collection of 27 letters out of which 17 letters were written by Maulana Azad and 10 letters were written by Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani.

The letters of *Karwaan e Khyal* have many similarities with that of *Ghubar e Khatir*. Most of the concerns and inclinations of Azad which were there in *Ghubar e Khatir* get reflected in *Karwaan e Khyal* as well --- right from his interest in music and drinking tea to his habit of getting up early in the morning. The only difference that one can observe in the letters of *Karwaan e Khyal* is that Maulana's presence in these letters is more pronounced and the reader can also feel that the relationship of the letter writer with the addressee is also very well

established. In *Karwaan e Khyal* Maulana Azad is not just penning down the ramblings of his mind but he seeks the involvement of his friend as well. He urges his friend Habibur Rahman Khan to undertake the journey into the past along with him and relive those memories which were peopled with like-minded friends. These letters of *Karwaan e Khyal* not only provide insight into the life of Maulana Azad but also give a detailed account of his personal engagements.

***Check your Progress:***

1. Give the titles of important Collection of letters written by Maulana Azad.
2. When were the letters of *Karwaan e Khyal* written and to whom they are addressed to?
3. What are the similarities between *Karwaan e Khyal* and *Ghubar e Khatir*?

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### **7.3 Learning Outcomes**

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The students get oriented to the text of *Ghubar e Khatir* and in the process they are able to explore the vision and thought process of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. The text unfolds a plethora of topics and the ease with which Azad could write about them and switch from one topic to the other with equal ease and understanding. It gives the reader a glimpse into the encyclopedic mind of Azad who intends to unwind his mind through the letters to his dear friend Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani.

The students are able to understand and look into the circumstances in which Maulana Azad wrote the letters to his friend and confidante Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani during the period of incarceration in Ahmad Nagar Fort after his arrest on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1942. The text further provides insights regarding the bond of friendship that was shared between Maulana Azad and Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani and how this friendship is cherished by him to the extent that Maulana Azad takes all precautions to filter out unnecessary topics from his conversation and

only brings in those topics which are of interest to his friend. The students also get to learn about the circumstances and occasion of their first meeting in Lucknow.

This unit orients the reader to the history and development of prose in Urdu and introduces him to the genre of letter writing in Urdu. Maulana Azad made a significant contribution to the genre through his letters of *Ghubar e Khatir*. The reader is also able to debate on the difficulty of categorizing the text as an exercise into letter writing or can it qualify into the category of personal essays. The readers also get an understanding of the critical reception of the letters and the charges leveled against Maulana Azad that he wrote the letters with the intention of getting published and thus they were essays and not personal letters as he had professed. Further insights are provided into the thought process of Maulana Azad and his preoccupations during captivity.

The students learn to critically analyze the prose style of Maulana Azad. They get acquainted to Azad's use of language which is heavily interspersed with Arabic and Persian words. Use of Persian and Arabic couplets contributes to beauty and richness to his prose, which has a particular poetic quality about itself. They are able to appreciate Maulana Azad's use of symbols and metaphors to convey his ideas and also his use of wit and irony to make it into an interesting read. The light-hearted humor serves to cheer up not only the mood of the reader but lightens the soul of the writer as well who is acutely conscious of his state of captivity but is at the same time enjoying the sense of timelessness which has come as a gift and he is making full use of this luxury of time that he has been blessed with.

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## 7.4 Glossary

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**Epistolary:** A literary work in the form of letters.

**Erudition:** Having knowledge, learning and scholarship through extensive study and research.

**Incarceration:** State of imprisonment or confinement in a prison.

**Non Cooperation Movement:** Withdrawal of support from the British Government launched as a movement by Mahatma Gandhi on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1920. It was aimed to put pressure on the British to grant full independence to India by refusing to buy British goods and to promote Indian handicrafts.

**Pluralistic:** A society which believes in diversity and tolerance. It nurtures coexistence of people from different religious, cultural and racial identities.

**Quit India Movement:** A movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1942 at the All India Congress Committee session in Bombay for freedom from British rule.

**Rhetoric:** Persuasive art of speaking or writing to motivate people and bring home an idea or message.

**Rumble:** To make a continuous, heavy, muffled sound.

**Syncretic:** Combining different religious, cultural beliefs and ideas.

**Warble:** Soft singing of a bird with swift changing of notes.

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## 7.5 Sample Questions

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### 7.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. Maulana Azad's *Ghubar e Khatir* comprises of how many letters?  
(a) 21 letters (b) 24 letters  
(c) 27 letters (d) 19 letters
2. The letters of *Ghubar e Khatir* are addressed to \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Maulana Shibli Nomani (b) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan  
(c) Altaf Hussain Hali (d) Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani
3. When did Maulana Azad write his first letter to Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani?  
(a) June 1945 (a) September 1940  
(c) August 1947 (d) April 1938
4. Where was Maulana Azad imprisoned after getting arrested in 1942?  
(a) Ahmad Nagar Fort (b) Residency  
(c) Golconda Fort (d) Red Fort
5. Whom did Maulana Azad hand over the letters after being released from Bankuda jail in June 1945?  
(a) Malik Ram (b) Humayun Kabir  
(c) Maulana Shibli (d) Hakim Ajmal Khan
6. Letter number 18 of *Ghubar e Khatir* is titled as \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) “Story of a Pair of Sparrows” (b) “Story of Music”  
(c) “Story of the Crow and the Nightingale” (d) “Story of Shehrzad”
7. In which city did Maulana Azad met Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani for the first time?  
(a) Lucknow (b) Delhi  
(c) Calcutta (d) Aligarh
8. In which year was *Ghubar e Khatir* first published?  
(a) 1948 (b) 1951  
(c) 1946 (d) 1953
9. Besides *Ghubar e Khatir* which other Collection of letters bears testimony to the friendship of Maulana Azad with Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani?  
(a) *Makateeb e Abul Kalam* (b) *Karwaan e Khyal*  
(c) *Naqsh e Azad* (d) *Quol e Faisal*
10. Which of the following leader of Indian National Congress was not imprisoned at Ahmadnagar Fort along with Maulana Azad?  
(a) Mahatma Gandhi (b) Sardar Patel  
(c) Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant (d) Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 7.5.2 Short Answer Questions:

1. Briefly discuss how Maulana Azad’s letters of *Ghubar e Khatir* can be considered as personal essays.
2. Write a short note on the prose style of Maulana Azad in the light of *Ghubar e Khatir*.
3. Write a short note on Maulana Azad’s *Karwaan e Khyal*.
4. Briefly discuss the publication details and circumstances during which *Ghubar e Khatir* was published.
5. Write a short note on Maulana Azad’s association with Habib Ur Rahman Khan Sherwani.

#### 7.5.3 Long Answer Questions:

1. Discuss in detail the contribution of Maulana Azad in the field of Urdu Prose.
2. Write an essay on *Ghubar e Khatir* and its significance in Urdu letter writing.
3. Critically examine the concerns of Maulana Azad in his collection of letters *Ghubar e Khatir*.

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## 7.6 Suggested Readings

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1. Azad, Abul Kalam. *India Wins Freedom*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan Private Limited, 2009.
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9. Hasan, Mushirul (Editor). *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001.
10. Malsiyani, A. *Abul Kalam Azad*. New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, 1976.

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2. Azad, Abul Kalam. "The Crow and the Bulbul". Translated by Shantanu Phukan, in Mehr Afshan Farooqi (ed.) *The Oxford India Anthology of Modern Urdu Literature: Poetry and Prose Miscellany*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008.
3. Hameed, Syeda Saiyidain (Editor). *India's Maulana*. New Delhi: Indian Council for Cultural Relations & Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1990.
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## Unit - 8: The Crow and Bulbul

### Structure

#### 8.0 Introduction

#### 8.1 Objectives

#### 8.2 The Crow and Bulbul

##### 8.2.1 Discussion

##### 8.2.1.1 Section – 1

##### 8.2.1.2 Section – 2

##### 8.2.1.3 Section – 3

##### 8.2.1.4 Section – 4

##### 8.2.1.5 Section – 5

##### 8.2.1.6 Section – 6

##### 8.2.1.7 Section – 7

##### 8.2.1.8 Summary

#### 8.3 Learning Outcomes

#### 8.4 Glossary

#### 8.5 Sample Questions

#### 8.6 Suggested Readings

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### 8.0 Introduction

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This unit presents a selection from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad’s famous work *Ghubaar e Khaatir*. You have already been introduced to the work in Unit 7. We now present you the piece in its English version. The title of the original piece in Urdu is “*Hikaayat e Zaagh o Bulbul*”, and it is before you in English translation with the title “The Crow and the Bulbul”. The word ‘*hikaayat*’ in the Urdu title means many things. For our purpose here, the best interpretation of the word would be – Parable. [Do look up a good dictionary and find out what a parable is. You may then be able to decide how this piece can be interpreted as a Parable].

The Crow and the Bulbul is essentially a narrative. When you place it in its real context within the larger framework of *Ghubaare Khaatir*, you will appreciate the tone better. As you know from the information provided to you in Unit 7, *Ghubaare Khaatir* is a creative work of art written in the Epistolary style. All the ‘essays’ in *Ghubaare Khaatir* are actually letters that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad addressed to his dear friend, Nawab Habeeburrahman Khan Sherwani of Aligarh. The special feature of these ‘letters’ is that they were written from Ahmed Nagar Fort where Azad and his fellow activists and freedom fighters were interred in 1942.

This information is important to us. Why? It helps in the understanding of the theme, the style, the mood and the tenor of the piece. Our detailed study will identify the Epistolary techniques employed by the writer. Some of the techniques which you identify easily are,

- a) the familiar tone used by the writer towards the addressee;
- b) Shared experiences with all the people mentioned in the piece;
- c) shared literary, cultural and social experiences; and
- d) The writer’s unique literary persona.

The piece has been presented to you in the form of an essay, without the letter format. For your personal interest you must know that each of the letters in *Ghubaar-e-Khaatir* starts with the phrasal salutation “*Sadeeq-e-Mukarram*” (Esteemed friend) denoting the affectionate regard in which the author of the letter held the intended recipient. I must also add another interesting point that these ‘letters’ were not actually sent to the addressee. They were all collected carefully and published later. Does this indicate that the letters were actually part of a literary exercise? That is, the writer chooses the letter format because he felt that it was the ideal mode of expressing his personal views on select themes. Just as any friend would write to an informal and close acquaintance about the daily occurrences and miscellaneous events;, and share his thoughts in a random manner, the letter-writing format gives Azad the freedom to move from one theme to the other effortlessly. At the same time Azad’s writing is self-conscious, planned and rigorously disciplined. One can say that he covens his art with a seeming artlessness.

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## 8.1 Objectives

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This selection from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad’s best known literary work (also often described as Letter No. 18) helps to fulfill some of the main objectives of the Course under study.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a prolific writer and his work contained varied genres and varied styles. This piece represents his choice of themes and style at a special stage of his very eventful life. As you know Maulana Azad was away from home, in Ahmednagar Fort when he wrote this piece. He was a political prisoner, detached from familiar surroundings and close friends. A study of the piece “The Crow and the Bulbul” will give a clear picture of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad’s a) Literary leanings; b) Patriotic zeal; c) Environmental interests; and d) Wit and humour. Of course as we go along, you may be able to discover many more beauties and interesting facets of the writer’s personality.

Above all, you will be introduced to a very important objective that most great literature is expected to fulfill. The narrative “The Crow and the Bulbul” moves beyond a simple and light narrative towards a didactic finish. The story becomes a metaphor for the larger context of freedom movement. Maulana Azad employs a number of literary devices and techniques. We will dwell on these as we proceed with our detailed reading of the Parable of The Crow and the Bulbul. We shall see how the writer peoples his narrative with real people. His style of presentation of these people is realistic, though he often uses a caricature type of description. The people he describes are of interest to us. They were contemporaries of Azad and thus they are part of our national history. The common factor between them was that they were all united in a similar enterprise. They were all staunch freedom fighters. At the same time Azad they were individuals with their own individual personalities; and this piece brings out the differences between these people in a very interesting manner.

The narrative, as you will see, is interspersed with frequent quotations from Urdu, Persian and Arabic poets. The text before you presents these quotes in English. This technique is a major characteristic of Urdu, Persian and Arabic literary creations. A writer would quote a poet to suit the theme and the context. This technique aids in adding a special meaning and depth to the main writing. Also, the reference to great writers of yore enriches the piece, apart from displaying the erudition of the writer.

What you have before you is only a translation of a great literary work. It has been translated under different titles: “Sallies of the Mind” and “Dust of Memories” are two titles based on the interpretation of the various translators. No doubt much is lost in translation, however faithful it is to the original. But you will be able to see how English extends itself to suit the cultural and linguistic

quality of Urdu. You will do well to see how this opportunity of seeing great literary works in translation is a fulfillment of a special objective of literary studies.

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## 8.2 The Crow and the Bulbul

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*Ghubaare Khaatir* as suitably celebrated as the literary masterpiece of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. A look at the period in which it was written and the circumstances under which it was written adds to our holistic understanding of this literary text. In many ways *Ghubaare Khaatir* documents represent an important juncture of Indian History. As many as nine freedom fighters from all parts of India were brought to this inaccessible place in Maharashtra and kept as political prisoners. Among them were stalwart figures like Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, Acharya JB Kripalani and Acharya Narayan Deo apart from Maulana Azad himself and the other two mentioned by name in the essay, Asif Ali and Sayyad Mahmud. As such their incarceration had created a lot of tension among the Indian public. They were in Ahmed Nagar for no less than three years, isolated from the events happening in the country. The British Government had taken this step because of the highly successful response to the Quit India Movement launched by the Indian National Congress in 1942. It is during the same time in the same prison that Jawaharlal Nehru wrote his magnum opus *Discovery of India*. Reading the documents written by our leaders during their isolation period reveals a lot about their thoughts, their strength of mind and their resolve.

At a second level, *Ghubare Khaatir* shows the great command of Abul Kalam Azad over literary genres and over language and literary devices. His spontaneous wit and his bringing a poetic sensibility to bear on his prose writings indicate his extreme familiarity with the refined culture of literary expression in Urdu writings.

Maulana Azad was not only a prolific writer but also a perfectionist. He did justice to any style of writing that he chose to employ according to its suitability to his theme. In this way he was a didactic writer. His respect for literary form is evident in the discipline with which he employs the techniques. Azad also uses his writings as a means of conveying a message to his readers. He uses his writings to educate his readers in cultivating good taste, in improving their knowledge of history, places and culture. His writings can also be called autobiographical for the most part because in all his writings, we get a glimpse of his personality. Maulana Azad can be seen at his best here as a personal essayist. The great British critic and historian AC Benson has described the essayist as “an

interpreter and critic of life” and a “spectator of life”. He further says that the “charm of the essayist depends on the power of giving the sense of a good humored gracious and reasonable personality and establishing a sort of pleasant friendship with his readers.” Your evaluation may take into account the qualities enumerated by Benson and whether Maulana Azad’s style carries these qualities.

Before we move on with the paraphrasing and interpretation of the text in hand, we should also be prepared to notice the language use. Language and variations in idiom and style are strong forte of Azad. This is a narrative text, purported to a letter that Azad composed in his lonely cell, ruminating over the events in and around the prison, as the days passed. The letter may or may not have been posted or received at some end. But, the literary quality of the piece raises it from the level of a common correspondence between friends. It is a fine sample of refined literary style.

### **8.2.1 Discussion:**

#### **8.2.1.1 Section - 1:**

**“Yesterday lost in a world of thoughts” ... “For you know a thousand will not still melt our heart.”**

The section states the theme clearly at the very beginning. Firstly we are made to look at the writer and his craft. He is planning a piece of writing. The theme is already set out. The title has been planned. He is lost in thought trying to give a shape to his imagination. All this is to be noticed in the context of what we said about Azad being a disciplined writer with a clear agenda about how he should channelize his creativity.

The context for this section of the narrative is set out in the very first sentence. The narrator is busy with his writing. We have ample evidence in many chronicles of the time that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad spent a large part of his many prison sentence periods by busying himself with his creative enterprise. [Does this not remind you of another great leader of the times whose very important literary works were written while he was serving his prison sentence as a political prisoner during the Freedom Movement? Yes! Jawaharlal Nehru of course! It is interesting to know that Nehru wrote his magnum opus, *Discovery of India* during this same period, in the three years that he spent in Ahmed Nagar Fort prison.]

In the true tradition of the Personal Essay “The Crow and the Bulbul” moves swiftly from one topic to another, keeping a tenuous link between the shifts. We are first introduced to the essayist himself for whom the business of writing was a serious one, and in which task he single-

mindedly occupies himself. The scene of action is simply described as “the prison”. There is distraction for our writer one morning in the form of Sayyid Mahmud, a fellow activist and fellow prisoner. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presents the character of Sayyid Mahmud in a caricature style, reminiscent of the style employed by the English Essayist Charles Lamb and the great Indian Story teller RK Narayan.

Sayyid Mahmud was given to the habit of feeding creatures of Nature. Azad describes how, on a sudden whim one morning while sipping his tea, Sayyid Mahmud went about in the premises of the prison looking for ants to feed. Maulana Azad compares the scene of Sayyid Mahmud intently looking at the ground for ants with a plate of sugar in his hand with the sight of a man looking to gather pearls which have rolled off from a broken string. Maulana Azad may have been distracted from his writing desk; but he good humoredly cheers his friend on, in his search of ants. After a while Sayyid Mahmud’s attention turns to sparrows. These birds nested in large numbers in the eaves of the prison house and were rather noisy. [You may like to refer to another important ‘letter’ in the Ghubare Khaatir collection titled Chidde Chidiya ki Kahani (The Story of the Male Sparrow and the Female Sparrow). There is a detailed discussion about the sparrows of Ahmed Nagar Fort. It’s a beautifully written piece.] Coming back back to the narrative in hand, we see that Sayyid Mahmud tries to woo the sparrows to peck at grain out of his palm. Maulana Azad reports that back in Chapra, in his home state of Bihar, Sayyid Mahmud used to run a poultry farm where he used to feed the chickens out of his palm. Here in Ahmed Nagar however, Sayyid Mahmud’s efforts went in vain. The sparrows simply did not accept the feast offered to them. The birds were either scared or wary of this sudden new offer of a feast. When Sayyid Mahmud gets disheartened after a few days, Maulana Azad recites a Persian couplet which he finds describes his friend’s plight well. He equates this situation to that of a lover beseeching his beloved to partake of his feast. The beloved (here the sparrows) spurns his offer and turns away leaving the lover (here Sayyid Mahmud) dejected.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad then speaks of how as a good friend should, he exhorted his friend Sayyid Mahmud into a mood of forbearance and patience. The writer appears to be mocking at his friend in an indulgent manner. At the same time the obsession of Sayyid Mahmud for feeding ants, birds and other creatures of Nature is raised on to the level of a romantic fancy. The scene of a man walking around making noises to invite the creatures of Nature is described in a language embellished with poetic metaphor. The stylistic device of interspersing prose narrative with well-

chosen, contextually appropriate Persian or Arabic couplets is a device that many Urdu writers use. This is common in many Indian formal as well as oral narratives, where writers resort to giving a break to a prose narrative by reciting pieces from either Sanskrit or old classical texts.

***Check your Progress***

1. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and nine other political activists were in prison Ahmed Nagar Fort of Maharashtra as political prisoners.
2. Some historic research tells us that the incidents took place during the Indian Freedom struggle, after the announcement of the Quit India Movement.
3. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's pastime during his stay in the prison was reading and writing.

**8.2.1.2 Section - 2:**

**“Sometime early in the morning” ... “It takes special kindness to call from faraway”**

In this section, we find a continuation of a discussion of Sayyid Mahmud's hobbies. After having failed in his desire to feed the sparrows and the ants, Sayyid Mahmud turns his attention to a new species. A few pairs of Starlings (Indian Mynahs) had taken to visiting the prison courtyard. Sayyid Mahmud saw another opportunity of playing host. He started going out in the early morning cold with breadcrumbs in hand, which he would invitingly scatter towards the Mynahs, all the while making inviting noises.. In spite of his best efforts these birds also proved impervious to the host's generous overtures. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad describes the Starlings as ‘Gazelles of the air’, referring to their nimbleness and grace during flight. It is also possible that the ‘Gazelles’ analogy is used because the deer (Gazelle in Persianised Urdu) are also shy and timid by nature.

So the ‘Gazelles of the air’ eluded poor Sayyid Mahmud Sahab. However, a horde of crows started gathering around Sayyid Mahmud. Maulana Azad launches on a humorous discussion about the crows. Calling them ‘beggars of the air’ Azad says that crows are invariably ready to grab food wherever they can, even if the ‘feast’ is not meant for them. They make their place anywhere and manage to grab a share of food. Maulana Azad compares the crows to faqirs or beggars who call for food at any door and get what they want by means of mere persistence.

Sayyid Mahmud had failed in wooing the Mynahs to eat out of his hand, but he was quite happy when the crows pounced upon the breadcrumbs. This passage and the portrayal of Sayyid Mahmud carries the flavor of old fashioned wit which one finds in narratives denoting the leisurely refined life of the courts and the nobility. The easy banter and gentle mockery by Maulana Azad at the expense of Sayyid Mahmud, the latter's simple pastimes and innocent preoccupations are interesting to read. We are almost led to feel that here was a totally relaxed group with no care in the world, indulging in idle pastimes. The truth of the matter was this was a group of staunch patriots who had been perforce kept in the fort prison, away from the main vocation of their lives, that is, service of their motherland.

How do we then understand the apparent dichotomy? Was there after all a serious disconnect between the reality of their situation and the non-seriousness that seemed to prevail in their group? To answer these questions one has to delve into the psychology of these people. Their main preoccupation was with the issue of liberating the country from foreign rule. Once they were removed from the main scene of action, they tried to keep themselves occupied in as meaningful a manner as possible. The good humor and cultivation of pastimes was their way of stoic acceptance of the plight. It is remarkable that after each such incarceration, whenever they were free, these leaders bounced back into the field of action and threw themselves into the battle for the freedom of their motherland with renewed energies.

***Check your Progress***

1. Two species of birds are introduced in this section. They are very different from one another.
2. Maulana uses very interesting appellations for the Mynahs and the crows.
3. He describes the Mynahs as “gazelles of the air” referring to their graceful movements, and their timid nature.

**8.2.1.3 Section - 3:**

**“In the northern corner” ... “May you forever be happy, Sir”**

This section presents yet another species of living creatures which are forever foraging for food. A group of squirrels which inhabited the massive trunk of an old Neem tree at the northern



corner of the compound got interested in the goings on between the enthusiastic Sayyid Mahmud Sahab and the ants, sparrows, Mynahs and crows. They clambered down to the courtyard to grab their share of the breadcrumbs left behind by the crows. Maulana Azad compares the squirrels to a group of hungry pilgrims clamoring for food being distributed free of cost. The excitable and hyperactive movements of the squirrels is seen by the author as gestures of appreciation for their host's generosity and a way of saying 'thank you'!

The squirrels were a nuisance with their incessant scampering around trying to stuff their tiny mouths with breadcrumbs. By now the number of crows also increased enormously as though the word about the feast had gone around inviting all the crows of Ahmed Nagar to join in. Far from shooing them away, Sayyid Mahmud did nothing to discourage the birds. All this cacophony alarmed the starlings. They could not get a chance to partake of the feast in the face of the two groups of extremely clamorous and noisy uninvited guests. Maulana Azad humorously comments that the Mynahs, the 'real' guests were sidelined by the 'spongers'. This whole analogy of feast, with invited guests, uninvited guests, persistent beggars, and spongers is so striking because of its closeness to scenes in ordinary life.

While Sayyid Mahmud was savoring the sweetness of his own generosity, a fresh development took place which brought about some changes in the matter. Early one morning, two vultures appeared on the roof of their building. Maulana Azad's description of the vultures is beautiful indeed. He refers to these birds as 'venerable vultures' Looking ageless, aloof, and dignified, these vultures sat atop the building, surveying the scene below. It seemed that the vultures would not deign to climb down from their lofty perch, but would silently demand why they were not being invited to share the feast. Maulana Azad's description of the usual bird behavior is raised to the level of a figure of Speech. The vultures habitually perch on roof tops and keep a keen eye on the ground for suitable food. Azad ascribes these normal body movements of the birds with human-like thoughts and motives. This is very much in keeping with the tradition of Parables where we hear birds and trees speak and think.

The appearance of the vultures brought some relief to the inmates of the prison. In a way it proved to a blessing in disguise. Sayyid Mahmud Sahab was suddenly overcome by misgivings on seeing the vultures because he believed in the old superstition that vultures perching on the roof of a house signified an evil omen for the dwellers in the house and boded some ill in the future. The bird feeding stopped forthwith. The entreaties of all the friends had had no effect on Sayyid Mahmud

Sahab until the arrival of the vultures on the scene. Perhaps the arrival of the vultures indicated to him how over-zealous he had grown in his bird-feeding enterprise. Mahmud Sahab stopped the bird-feeding exercise but the crows continued with their noisy clamor for long after. The crows were like persistent alms-seekers blessing the host and asking for more.

Before we close the discussion on this section it is right that we pay attention to one or two features of general interest. Firstly, Maulana Azad is not only to be appreciated for his wit and humor but also for the graphic manner in which he makes the Ahmed Nagar Fort premises come alive for the readers. By this time, an almost complete map of the campus is clear before us. The Cells, the courtyard with the Neem tree in the northern corner, the high rooftops are described in such a way that we can visualize the place quite well as if we have been there. Another interesting feature is the way the author describes the different birds and animals. The Mynahs are given the appellation of “Gazelles” based on the grace of their flight. The crows are described on the bases of their cacophony and their persistent attempts to grab food as and when they can. The description of the squirrels is very fascinating. The peculiar body language and the hurried movements which are so characteristic to the squirrels have been described and interpreted in such an interesting manner that the passage is rendered at once endearing and humorous. When the squirrels clamber down from the Neem tree excitedly at the sight of food, Azad says they resembled hordes of hungry pilgrims who are ever eager for a free meal. The squirrels stuffed their mouths with bread crumbs left over after the crows had eaten. The way the squirrels sat on their haunches, with the little paws at their mouths, with the head jerking constantly and eyes darting, is a sight that is given a very fine interpretation by Azad. He says that it looked as though the squirrels were appreciating the generosity of Sayyid Mahmud Sahab. At the same time they were saying that they would not mind having a little bit more of the generosity in the form of more food! As for the crows and their persistent cawing, Maulana Azad can only describe it as “unholy din!”

When Maulana Azad refers to the superstitious nature of Sayyid Mahmud, he avoids being critical about it. The irksome bird-feeding could not be stopped by the entreaties of all the friends. But Sayyid Mahmud promptly stopped the whole project as soon as he was struck by fear out of his superstition. The sight of the vultures put him in fear that something evil was about to befall the people who were living in that house. Azad leaves it for us to decide on such matters. Merely with a word or two he does reveal his cynicism about superstitions. For example he uses phrases like “their blessed claws”, “wisdom of the ancients” etc to indicate that he is not agreement with people who

justify superstitions as ancient wisdom.. He merely says that everyone was relieved that Sayyid Mahmud's bird feeding enterprise stopped within seconds of spotting the vultures

***Check your Progress***

1. The squirrels and crows crowded the courtyard taking their turn at the crumbs thrown by Mahmud Sahab.
2. The appearance of the vultures on the roof-top made Sayyad Mahmud stop his bird-feeding enterprise.
3. Mahmud Sahab's superstitious belief regarding the vultures was a blessing in disguise for the others.

**8.2.1.4 Section - 4:**

**“In the meanwhile the weather turned” ... “Thus it was I penned the rules of making wastelands bloom.”**

Maulana Azad and nine other people including Jawaharlal Nehru had been interred in the Ahmed Nagar Fort as political prisoners in the month of August in the year 1942. They had continued to stay in this cold and bleak place through the winter. The monsoons had not brought any relief to the monotony of the place. At this point the prisoner group decided to take up gardening. Being people of great forbearance and stoicism they knew that the best that they could do was to bring about the best change in their circumstances as best as they could under the situation they found themselves in. The exercise of growing some flowers around them would bring some cheer to the surroundings and lighten the hearts of the people. The green color would soothe the eyes and the fragrant flowers would lend solace to the spirit. Moreover we can easily see that they searching for ways and means of breaking the monotony of their lives. Gardening would involve them in some hard work and it should distract them from a spate of depressed thoughts.

The leader in this gardening enterprise was Jawaharlal Nehru. He was always enthusiastic for such work. Maulana Azad pays a fine compliment to Nehru when he says, “May a single moonbeam light up the wastes within”. Is it also possible that Azad's comments about Nehru were more than a reference to his taking charge of the gardening project at Ahmed Nagar Fort? Perhaps he was

referring to the total involvement with which Nehru was leading India in the Freedom Struggle. Coming from one stalwart of the Freedom Struggle to another, such praise is heartening indeed!

The team set to the work of rejuvenating the land. Maulana Azad describes the beauty of Nature cultivated by the human hand. He calls it the “created world ----- this Workshop of color and texture”. Gardening and growing plants and flowers is described by Azad as a sublime activity of animating the world with “Spirit and adorning it with the vestments of Being (*Vajud*)”. Maulana Azad mentions three essentials which may bring waste land to life, to bring greenery out of rubble. These three essential elements which act as the base of any good gardening or agricultural enterprise are: healthy seeds, good soil and water. Every gardener knows the worth of good seeds. As Maulana Azad says, one cannot sow coal and expect to reap a harvest of rubies. The team acquired quality seeds from the Poona Horticultural seed-banks. In this they were helped by their jailer Cheetah Khan. [You will be interested to know that the rough looking but benign person, Cheetah Khan appears in other letters contained under the title *Ghubar e Khaatir*].

The soil in the Fort was difficult to handle. Under the surface were buried huge amounts of rubble from the old gravestones, broken domes, huge stones and lime and sand. When the digging revealed old graves, Azad was very moved. He wondered at the transience of life. Here Maulana Azad’s tone becomes philosophical and ruminative. He wonders how many royal personages must have trodden on these precincts and how many must have been buried there over periods of time. This thought exhorts the people living there at the present time to tread carefully so as not to step on any old bones. It is everyone’s duty to respect the departed souls and honor the history of the place. Azad says in a mood of profound philosophic thought that the old bones seem to be demanding that they be treated with respect.

The technique of how the soil beds were prepared is then described in a vivid manner. Wooden grids were laid at the depth of 2-3 feet. Manure- enriched soil was filled in the grids. Nehru was very busy all through this activity, supervising and leading the gardening project. He is projected as a leader who participated with his team in a fully involved hands-on manner. Maulana Azad is all appreciation for Nehru’s brand of leadership. True to his literary style, Azad quotes a couplet here which speaks of a labor of love and dedication on part of Nehru. According to Azad Nehru offered his blood, so to say, labored hard, to make “wastelands bloom”.

***Check your Progress***

1. This section is dedicated to the efforts of the inmates of the Ahmed Nagar prison to improve their living conditions.
2. Their decision to bring some color and cheer in their bleak surroundings involved very hard work.
3. In a masterful and insightful manner Maulana Azad reveals his understanding of the complexities of cultivation and farm management.

**8.2.1.5 Section - 5:**

**“Eventually, we confronted the issue” ... “Let’s renew the worship of this fire in the Fields of Being.”**

After preparing the soil and sowing the seeds, our writer and his friends were confronted with the problem of irrigation. Water was scarce and the group had little or no means of procuring sufficient water to irrigate their garden. The group had many debates of how science can be used to guide them through the practical management of irrigation. Here Maulana Azad presents yet another caricature without revealing the identity of the gentleman, also a fellow prisoner. Maulana Azad tells us of this Bengali gentleman who had a habit of forcing his ‘learned’ theories on to the unwilling ears of his mates. With regarding to cultivation of a horticultural crop, this gentleman’s view was that if the plants were irrigated with blood, the blooms would be of a high quality. Being full of himself he was unable to see the illogic of his proposal.

Here Maulana digresses in a humorous way and argues that in the war-torn world humans are in dire straits due to need of blood transfusion etc. when wounded in action. It would be out of place to talk of looking for blood for growing flowers. Someone else gave an idea that chicken blood could be acquired from the military kitchen situated in another part of the Fort, where food was being cooked for the army personnel every day. Whatever the practical outcome of this whole discussion might have been, Maulana Azad brings the discussion to a close. The author quotes a contextually suitable couplet which speaks of a nightingale which sacrifices itself so that its blood can lend color to the roses in the garden. In a characteristically self-effacing manner Maulana Azad here admits that his habit of interspersing his narrative with couplets so profusely could be annoying to his reader. At this juncture an important feature is introduced. The Bulbul, the eponymous bird of

the title, gets its first mention. Since the bird Nightingale is alien to the Indian setting, Maulana Azad is of the opinion that Indian poets should substitute Bulbul for the Nightingale. He proceeds to cite yet another couplet, this time featuring a Bulbul which gave its blood to lend a crimson hue to a rose.

As many of the company around were of a literary bent of mind, these quotes by the author set in motion a round of poetry- making and reciting of rhyming verses. Asif Ali proceeded to compose a rather long Ghazal based on the end-rhyme of the couplet offered by Azad. This practice of composing Ghazals on a given pattern of end-rhyme is quite common in elite literary circles. But the exercise got too prolonged and lost its steam resulting in rather inane and pedestrian compositions. This exercise was somehow brought to a halt. Maulana Azad again exhibits his self-discipline as a writer and says that he should stop from digressing from the main topic which was about the garden in bloom in the Ahmed Nagar Fort. About poetic imagination, the author says that if let loose and not disciplined, it can be like an unbridled horse which gets out of control. No doubt he is referring to the pompous attempts most of us make to show off our so-called ‘poetic gifts’!

At the close of the section we learn that the seeds which were sown in September and October germinated well and there was a profuse growth by the start of December. By the time the New Year started the garden was in full bloom bursting into beauty. He compares the flower-filled garden to beautiful girl adorned with flowers or a florist’s shop full of bouquets. The 4 line stanza at the end of the Section talks of how the sight of the flowers blooming in many hues is an awesome spectacle. Such spectacle of natural beauty is awe-inspiring. Azad says that in the face of such beauty one can almost be tempted to fall back into ancient Zoroastrian practices of worshipping Nature.

#### **8.2.1.6 Section - 6:**

**“But here in this bleak prison” ... “delight of birdsong that is the herald of Heaven.”**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad makes a strong and feeling reference to the sense of loneliness that prevailed in prison. Humor, pranks, poetry, gardening and other such activities that they indulged in were just to overcome the “essential bleakness”. At the same time, the prisoners refused to be broken down in spirit by the pressure of circumstances. This resolve gave them strength to be calm and persevering.

Maulana Azad is a conscientious writer. His consciousness and responsibility towards his craft becomes evident when he reminds himself that he must focus on his set theme..., that is, the

story of the Crow and the Bulbul. The digressions are termed by him as “parenthetical thought”. Though Maulana Azad seems to be rather apologetic about his digression, we understand that it is his creative style of giving yet another shift in the treatment of the subject. The digressions themselves add a definite value to the ‘main’ story of the Crow and Bulbul as he calls it.

Seasons were changing. Maulana speaks of the windy February month with its usual ‘changeable’ season. By the end of the month pleasant winds announce the arrival of the Spring season. With the coming of spring, the landscape changed and their courtyard, their “new meadow” became strewn with new blooms. One day, in the month of March, Maulana Azad hears a snatch of a Bulbul’s song. He spotted a pair of birds near his cell. He identifies these birds as Indian Mountain Bulguls which live on plateau lands. Though the Indian mountain bulbul is, as Azad says not as melodious as the Iranian Bulbul, Azad savored the bird song. The plaintive notes of the Bulbul excited Maulana Azad. He was quite surprised that his neighbors could not even hear and appreciate the song of the Bulbul. Here Maulana Azad laments the fact that all of us have been so inundated with the rough voices of machines and vehicles that we have lost the sensitivity to the songs of nature. Here we reminded of the poem of another great poet William Wordsworth titled “The World is too much with us”? The following lines from that poem are almost similar to what Maulana Azad is saying:

Getting and spending, we lay bare our powers. –

Little we see in Nature that is ours;

We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

Maulana Azad tries to rationalize why most of us are impervious to birdsong. He says that Maulana Azad every country has a specific natural environment of flora and fauna. This environment moulds the aesthetic sensibilities of people who live in it. Indian landscape has innumerable species of birds and the Bulbul’s mating-song is very subtle. The calls of the parrot and the Starlings dominate the Indian landscape. The famous Iranian (Persian) poet Hafiz Shirazi also has referred to Indian poets as parrots.

Indian poets use the song of the Koel as a literary metaphor to describe the lament of the dejected lover pining for his beloved. In Iran the Bulbul’s presence and the melodious wafting of its song during Spring season is strongly felt. Azad says that it is a unique experience to hear the song in the Iranian cities of Shiraz and Qazvin. The poet Hafiz has commented on how the Bulbul’s song can send him into a state of trance. Azad says from his personal experience that the Iranian Bulbul’s

song is well-structured in its beauty. It is similar to a Ghazal in its rhyming sounds and refrains. He eulogizes the Bulbul and its song as the “angelic choir” of the “herald of Heaven”.

#### **8.2.1.7 Section - 7:**

**“What do tropical countries know” ... “loosens the bondages to expose the wounds of his heart.”**

In a glowing poetic tribute to the beauties of Nature in Iran, Maulana Azad says that the Spring season in Iran is thrilling to the senses. The advent of Spring after a long and severe winter sends one into ecstasy.

India is a tropical country and the Spring here is brief and almost unnoticeable. The only place in India where the natural exuberance of Spring can be seen in all its glory is Kashmir. Maulana Azad quotes from the Mughal poet Faizi to illustrate the abundance of beauty in Kashmir. Unfortunately many of us have not cultivated the taste for appreciating the sights and sounds of Nature during Spring.

The Mountain Bulbul is native to the hills of India. According to Azad the song of this Bulbul can be best heard in Nainital and Kangra. Among the species of Indian Bulbuls the best singing species is the White Checkered Bulbul. The birds that Azad spotted while in Ahmed Nagar prison are called the White –Whiskered Bulbul. He is happy to report that of the three pairs that he had been lucky to spot, one pair was already nesting in the outside his prison cell when he was there.

In the afternoons, after his siesta, when Azad would begin his daily writing schedule with a cup of tea beside him, the song of the Bulbuls would erupt, as if to offer the most perfect accompaniment to his ruminative and pensive mood.

#### ***Check your Progress***

1. India is a tropical country and experiences a very brief Spring.
2. The Iranian Spring is extended and full of a slow evolving beauty.
3. India has four varieties of Bulbul. Maulana Azad mentions two of them:  
The White Checkered Bulbul, (native to the hills of Nainital) and the  
White Whiskered Bulbul (that Azad spotted near his prison cell  
Ahmednagar).



### 8.2.1.8 Summary:

The prescribed essay *The Crow and the Bulbul* (titled *Hikayat e Zaagh o Bulbul* in the Urdu original) is from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's literary masterpiece --- *Ghubar e Khaatir*. This work is in the form of letters. These 'letters' were composed during his imprisonment in the Ahmed Nagar Fort from 1942- 1945. All his prison inmates were freedom fighters and all of them were intelligent, talented persons from different walks of life. Life in the prison was dismal, but all of them together managed to overcome the loneliness by indulging in various pastimes, sometimes alone and sometimes as a team. The essay meanders between many themes. First the author maps out the premises for us. We get a clear impression of the lay-out with prison cells, courtyard with the huge Neem tree and the imposing ancient fort building with high rooftops. There is a detailed discussion of the flora and fauna which inhabited the Ahmed Nagar Fort prison premises. This discussion is followed by a detailed description of a joint activity that the prisoners took up. They decide to do some gardening in order to bring some color to the drab surroundings of the prison. This episode is followed by a small segment about poetry sessions among the group of prisoners. All these activities were conducted with a view to overcome the gloom and loneliness that pervaded in the prison by virtue of the fact that they had been forcibly removed from the scene of action, that is, the Independence Movement. We must remember that the nine political leaders had been put under detention at the very moment when momentous Quit India Movement had been launched in 1942. Naturally the prisoners were unhappy at being snatched away from mainstream action.

The shifting themes and the loosely connected topics and the light touch in the treatment of all topics are the hallmark of the Personal Essay. Maulana Azad maintains this characteristic in all the essays of *Ghubare Khaatir*. At the same time there is a wealth of sensitivity, aesthetic sense, introspection and sense of responsibility as a writer. *The Crow and the Bulbul* reflects the author's sense of beauty, his attachment to Nature, and his knowledge of the flora and fauna.

The description of Sayyid Mahmud's hobby takes the centre stage at the start of the essay. However, this gives the essayist an opportunity to indulge in his interest in the natural life around them. There are nuggets of beautiful portrayals, and details of animal behavior and how humans can interpret them. The description of the gardening project is also strewn with the author's knowledge about soil and agriculture; and his sense of respect for the history of by-gone eras. In this part of the essay we are shown the deep admiration that Maulana Azad had for Jawaharlal Nehru's

leadership and his dedication to the task in hand. Nehru took full responsibility in leading the gardening project to successful culmination and Azad accords hearty praise for Nehru's leadership qualities. We can see that Azad is actually expressing his admiration of Nehru as a national leader. The way the gardening team overcame difficulties, and brought life and colour to a stretch of arid land with their understanding and their hard labour is actually a metaphor for what the Indian leaders were doing in fighting for bringing freedom to the Indian people.

In the second half of the essay, Azad directs his attention to the second bird of the title, the Bulbul. Again we see many facets of Azad's personality. Firstly, Maulana Azad's aesthetic sensibilities and his sensitivity to beauty are revealed. His response to bird song is an expression of his poetic sensibilities. He compares the Bulbuls of Iran to those in India. His comparison of the Iranian Spring to that in India is very sensitively projected. It shows his love for Nature and it also reveals how widely traveled he is. Maulana Azad's sense of beauty is evident in his description of places. His eulogy to Kashmiri landscape during Spring is of an extraordinary kind. Even in many other writings Azad has praised the beauties of the land of Kashmir.

As stated earlier, this selection is a translation from Urdu and as such retains many elements of Urdu literary culture. This work, executed in the Epistolary style, appears to be a collection of letters addressed to a friend. After Azad's release from the prison, thirty of the 'letters' were collected under the title *Ghubaare Khaatir* and the addressee was revealed as Nawab Habeebur Rahman Khan Sherwani of Aligarh. Apart from this factual information, the work still stands as literary masterpiece for all the different characteristics of High literature that it possesses.

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### 8.3 Learning Outcomes

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When a creative work of any author is prescribed on an academic course, the program visualizes some learning outcomes from the selected piece. It is expected that the learner should find an addition in his or her repertoire of knowledge, information, edification or simple reading experience after studying the selected item. Often a Unit of learning provides one or two of the expected learning outcomes. The piece under study titled "The Crow and the Bulbul" by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is unique in the sense that it has the potential to satisfy many of the objectives of the course. Overtly the course is designed to appreciate the personality of one of the great leaders of India. The objective behind such a curricular decision is to provide inspirational subjects to young

learners and which can motivate them beyond their classroom learning. To begin with the selection is expected to showcase the literary personality of their in their lives beyond the classrooms. The subject of this selection Maulana Azad is a very apt and suitable figure to study. His contribution to the freedom movement makes him a very significant figure in Indian history. As the first Education Minister of Independent India his contribution was great. As a writer Maulana Azad is unique in his versatility. This course touches upon his different literary styles. In this unit we look at Maulana Azad's creative genius as an Essayist, a man of letters an erudite scholar and as a humorist. This Unit will help the learners to:

- Refer to the historic moment in the Indian National Movement when many leaders were being put behind bars for demanding Freedom from foreign rule.
- Appreciate the literary sensibilities of Maulana Azad, his erudition and scholarship
- Appreciate the varied interests and deep knowledge of Maulana Azad in the fields of Literature, environmental matters and the intricacies of human behavior.
- Appreciate not only the love of nature its flora and fauna that Maulana Azad possesses, but also his deep knowledge of animal behavior. He is a keen student of birds, and has a good knowledge of eh different species of birds.
- Understand that Maulana Azad's deep knowledge various subjects comes from hos studies, his power of observation, and his travels across the world.
- Learn about the different genres of literary expression, especially about the art of the Personal Essay.
- Appreciate the prescribed work as an example of elegance in style, wit and the art of characterization.

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## 8.4 Glossary

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**Asif Ali:** Freedom fighter and noted lawyer

**Indian Cuckoo:** It is a medium sized with a high sing-song call, found in the Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia. It is also identified commonly as Koel, as both belong to the same genus

**Faizi:** Poet and scholar of late medieval India, in Akbar's court

**Gazelle:** A graceful member of the Antelope species. Gazelles are known for their swiftness and are found in the Savannas of Africa, in central Asia and the Indian subcontinent

**Sayyid Mahmud:** A freedom fighter and senior leader in the Indian Freedom Movement. He held high offices in the Bihar Government in post-Independence India

**Shiraz:** A famous city in Iran, known to be the birthplace of the famous Persian poet Hafiz

**Vulture:** A large bird that eats the flesh of dead animals, recognizable by its bare featherless neck and bald head

**William Wordsworth:** Great English poet of the Romantic age (1770-1850)

**Zoroastrians:** One of world's oldest religions being practiced. Zoroastrianism is based on the teachings of the prophet Zoroaster. In India the followers of this religion are called Parsis. Their Holy Book is Zenda Avesta. Their prayers are said while facing the sun, fire or other sources of light

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## 8.5 Sample Questions

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### 8.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. Hafiz of Shiraz was a poet of the ----- language.  
(a) Arabic (b) Persian  
(c) Urdu (d) Hindavi
2. What was Sayyid Mahmud's favorite pastime?  
(a) Farming (b) Writing Poetry  
(c) Imitating bird noises (d) Feeding birds
3. Which of the bird species lured by Sayyid Mahmud's calls?  
(a) Crows (b) Sparrows  
(c) Starlings (d) Vultures
4. Why did Sayyid Mahmud stop the bird-feeding enterprise?  
(a) He was tired of calling out to the birds  
(b) He was disappointed by the indifference of the Mynahs  
(c) He did not like that the crows were crowding around him  
(d) He was superstitious about the appearance of the vultures.
5. Which of the living species is described as "spongers" by Maulana Azad?

- (a) Sparrows and Crows      (b) Crows and Squirrels  
(c) Sparrows and Mynahs      (d) Vultures and humans
6. Who took the lead in the gardening project?  
(a) Maulana Azad      (b) Sayyid Mahmud  
(c) Jawaharlal Nehru      (d) Asif Ali
7. According to Maulana Azad, which bird-song is the most beautiful in the spring season?  
(a) Nightingale      (b) Bulbul  
(c) Cuckoo      (d) Parrot
8. How many sub-species of Indian Mountain Bulbul are mentioned in the essay The Crow and the Bulbul?  
(a) 1      (b) 2  
(c) 3      (d) 4
9. Maulana Azad compares the Iranian Bulbul's song to  
(a) Arabian Music      (b) Persian poetry  
(c) Ghazal      (d) Lullaby
10. Which Indian landscape experiences the most beautiful Spring season, according to Maulana Azad?  
(a) Nainital      (b) Shiraz  
(c) Kashmir      (d) Poona

### **8.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. What is the difference between the Iranian Spring and the Indian Spring?
2. Compare the song of the Cuckoo with that of the Bulbul.
3. Write a character sketch of Sayyid Mahmud as you gather from Maulana Azad's description.
4. Write a paragraph about Sayyid Mahmud's unique pastime in the Ahmed Nagar Fort prison.
5. What was the fellow prisoner's response when Maulana Azad drew his attention to the song of the Bulbul? What are Azad's comments about it?

### **8.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Write an essay on the response of a poet to the beauties of Spring.
2. Describe the gardening project undertaken by the prisoners in Ahmednagar Fort.
3. Write an essay on the varied interests of Maulana Azad and his knowledge about Nature.

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## 8.6 Suggested Readings

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1. *Essays of Elia* (1823-33) by Charles Lamb
2. Letters from a Father to a Daughter (collection of 30 letters written to his daughter Indira Priyadarshini) by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1928. Pub 1929 by Allahabad Law Journal Press.
3. *Malgudi*
4. “*Chidde Chidiya ki Kahani*” from *Ghubaare Khaatir* by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
5. *Malgudi Days* by RK Narayan.

## **Unit – 9: Maulana Azad as a Leader**

### **Structure**

#### **9.0 Introduction**

#### **9.1 Objectives**

#### **9.2 Maulana Azad as a Leader**

##### **9.2.1 Azad: Emergence of a Leader**

##### **9.2.2 Azad as an educational Leader**

##### **9.2.3 Azad as a Political Leader**

##### **9.2.4 Azad and his universal appeal as a leader**

#### **9.3 Learning Outcomes**

#### **9.4 Glossary**

#### **9.5 Sample Questions**

#### **9.6 Suggested Readings**

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### **9.0 Introduction**

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Maulana Azad has left indelible impact on the Indian history through his contribution in various spheres of human existence in personal as well as national life. His contribution in the fields of politics, religious, journalism, and education. Looking back at his origin, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was born on 11 November 1888 in Mecca, Hejaj. It was then the part of Ottoman Empire. Working for the cause of Indian independence throughout his life, he died on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1958 at the age of 69 with stroke. He was one of the notable leaders of Indian National Congress. He played vital role in the Indian Independence Movement. His experience, observations and philosophical inclination has made him key persons in the freedom struggle. His name Azad suggests the freedom from the shackle of traditional approach towards education, world and life. Being Azad from the orthodox patterns of Islamic point of view has made comprehensive and all-inclusive leader in the Indian subcontinent. Maulana Azad as a leader has contributed towards various aspects of society i.e. political movement, education, religion, culture and journalism.

This unit aims at understanding the leadership dynamics of Maulana AbulKalam Azad.

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## **9.1 Objectives**

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This chapter has following objectives for the study:

1. To understand the leadership dynamics of Maulana Azad.
  2. To study the political leadership of Maulana Azad.
  3. To understand the contribution of Maulana Azad in the field of Education.
  4. To understand the Maulana as a nationalist leader.
  5. To study Maulana Azad's leadership in journalism.
  6. To understand the universal appeal of Azad's leadership.
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## **9.2 Maulana Azad as a Leader**

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### **9.2.1 Azad: Emergence of a Leader**

Maulana AbulKalam Azad was one of the prominent leaders in the history of modern India. Being born in a Muslim family his exposure to Islamic studies, Islamic belief system and education system gave him insights into the existence of Muslims in a country that was ruled by Muslim rulers and on the other hand, the community which was brutally persecuted after the uprising of 1857 which was considered as an effort to save the Mughal Empire and throw out the British East India Company's rule. His father has particularly witnessed the horrors of 1857 aftermath. Amid this national and religious background, Azad's birth in Mecca, a city loved and revered by all the Muslims across the world, has opened new doors of understanding for young Azad.

Azad was born in an orthodox religious family. Deviation from religious ways was not tolerated. But Azad found it difficult to reconcile with the contemporary prevalent customs and beliefs. His heart and brain were not satisfied with old training and orthodox nature of the family. He was perceiving the sense of new revolt and approach to life. He wanted to free himself from the old shackles and find out the truth himself. This quest for truth, self and modern understanding has freed him. Thus, he adopted his name 'Azad'



In a very short span of his political life he was called as 'Maulana' which means leader. It was due to his extensive visionary, scientific, rational and critical thinking that has awoken the Muslim consciousness of subcontinent to merge with greater cause national interest, to rise above the limits of just being faithful to British rulers, to think from universal perspective on their own existence. His belief in modern education, science and philosophy, political awakening, literary yearning and contribution into journalism have given him identity as a leader of the masses sans religious and cultural, geographical boundaries. Maulana and Azad in his name justify his stature of a leader who believed in synergy and composite culture of India. It was thus the emergence of Maulana Azad as a leader on the horizon of Indian history. He was recognized and accepted as a leader, for his scholarship and acute vision, in public life during his times when they used to refer him as Maulana.

### **9.2.2 Azad as an educational Leader:**

Azad had insider's view into the Islamic education system. Education in those days of Islamic boys was traditional. His father did not believe in western education. In India, Muslim boys would be first taught Persian and then Arabic. After, they would be trained into philosophy, geometry, mathematics, and algebra in Arabic medium. Islamic Theology was essential course in education. Azad was taught by his father at home. His father did not like Madrassa education system. Azad was tutored by different teachers at home. Muslim students would complete their education in traditional way between the age of twenty to twenty-five. These scholars have to teach other students what they have learnt. This would usually prove how much they have acquired mastery over their subjects. Azad taught higher Philosophy, Mathematics and Logic to students.

Azad on reading Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan's writing was impressed by his thoughts of modern education. Azad realized that education is incomplete without learning modern science, philosophy and literature. Azad under the guidance of Maulvi Mohammed Yusuf Zafri, the chief examiner of Oriental Studies started learning English. He also read the Bible. He read it in English, Persian and Urdu. Later he explored history and philosophy after getting proficiency in English. During his travel to Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Azad found great interest in French, but English as the fast-growing international language satisfied his needs. He also focuses on the redundancy of traditional education not only in India but also in the famous universities like Azhar in Cairo. Modern education was the need everywhere to nourish intellect and spirits of youths.

This mission acquiring modern education and knowledge was not limited to himself. It became the public mission too. He became the first education minister of independent India (1947-1958). His belief in modern education which would be based on rational and scientific thinking, experimental learning, and research later on materialized in the formation of University Grants Commission, New Delhi. He played key role in shaping India's education system. He was pivotal figure in giving direction to research in India. He encouraged the research especially in eastern learning and literature. Under his guidance institutes for fine arts were established. His role in establishing institutes of national importance like University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education and IIT Kharagpur, University Education Commission, The Secondary Education Commission, Jamia Milia Islamia has great impact on education at various level in modern education system.

Maulana Azad insisted in compilation of technical terms in Hindi. It highlights the sense of spreading education in a language which known or understood by majority of Indians. Jawaharlal Nehru fondly called him '*Mir-i-Karawan*' which means the leader of caravan. He was praised for his refined and cultured personality by all. His contribution in the field of education is so lasting that his birth day is celebrated as National Education Day

In the fifth meeting of Central Advisory Board of Education, Maulana Azad he reiterated the five-fold program to spread the education throughout India. It included following things:

1. Universal compulsory basic education for all children of school age,
2. Social education for our adult illiterates
3. Measures for improvements in the quality of and expansion of facilities for secondary and higher secondary education.
4. Technical and scientific education on a scale adequate to the nation's needs, and
5. Measures for the enrichment of the cultural life of the community by encouraging the arts and providing facilities for recreation and other amenities.

It suggests the all-inclusive and comprehensive strategy for spread of education in India after independence.

In on his speech he focused on the change in education system and improving standards of education in India. He also focused on the need of public service commission for holding examination for the appointments in government services.

As per the recommendations of Central Advisor Board of Education, University Grants Committee in 1945. Later in 1952, reconstituted University Grants Commission was established with a full time chairman and secretary. It was established with motif of looking after four Central Universities and believed to fulfil following objectives:

1. To advise the Government on the allocation of grant-in-aid from public funds to the central universities.
2. To advise the government on the allocation of grants-in-aid to other universities and institutions of higher learning whose case for such grants may be referred to the Commission by the government; and
3. To advise the universities and other institutions of higher learning in respect of any question referred by the Government to the commission.

Maulana Azad has played great role in establishing All India Council for Technical Education for the spread and popularity of technical education in India. Through this institute, he has impacted the future development of India in science and technology. With an acute sense of future needs and goals of developing India, Azad vision played great role in technical education. Today, India boasts to be the provider of best and trained human resources in technical fields. He has also paid grave attention towards the employability of educated people. He believed in providing trained and educated people in various sectors of human life.

Thus, Maulana Azad gave new directions and vision to education sector during his lifetime. His immense influence on the education system of India have given strong foundation for coming generations to thrive high.

### **9.2.3 Azad as a Political Leader:**

Maulana Azad became immortal for his exceptional leadership in shaping the future of modern India. Maulana Azad as a political leader was an emblem of Hindu-Muslim unity. He carved the niche in Indian history through his continuous efforts to bring Muslim community into the mainstream of Indian freedom struggle and bridging the gap between the contemporary status of Muslim society and their efforts to break the stereotype of colonial agency and loyalty to British rulers. In 1905, the partition of Bengal churned the political scenario in India. Shri Aurbindo Ghosh's paper *Karmayogini* gave new dimensions to Indian aspiration for freedom. Shyam Sunder Chakravarty, a revolutionary, became connecting link for Azad to revolutionaries. The political awakening of Azad brought him in the freedom movement.

Azad has to face the problems as Muslims were not actively recruited in revolutionary activities due to British government's efforts to break and rule policy. Muslims were seen as instruments of British against freedom struggle. Bamfield Fuller openly declared that Muslims are favourite wife of British government. So, they thought to remove every hurdle from the attainment of freedom including Muslims. Maulana Azad contemplated on this issue as:

Maulana Azad thought that Sir Sayed Ahmad had unconsciously made himself a tool of British Imperialism by stopping the Muslims from all political activities and by opposing the Congress. On the one hand, he had hindered the political regeneration of the whole country, and on the other, he had directed the footsteps of the Mussalmans along ways that fostered in them a slavish mentality instead of self-respect, high-mindedness and breadth of political outlook. (Sharma, 2005:16)

Azad tried to convince revolutionaries that such generalization would be injustice towards all the Muslims. He provided the examples of revolutionary Muslims throughout the world for the achievement of democracy like in Egypt, Iran, and Turkey. He strongly believed the Muslims of India would soon join the movement actively. He underscored the fact that active hostility or indifference of Muslims towards freedom movement would make it difficult to achieve political liberty. This caused change in their perception towards Muslims.

Contact with Iran, Arab and Turk revolutionaries have confirmed his political belief. These revolutionaries too expressed either indifference or opposition to nationalist demands in India. These revolutionaries thought that Muslim of India should lead the freedom movement. They should not remain only the camp of British. They cautioned against the use of Muslim against struggle for freedom. At this point, Azad thought over the idea to take earnest steps to include Indian Muslims in struggle for political independence.

Maulana Azad revered Mr. C.R. Das as a one of the most powerful leader in the history of India's freedom struggle. Azad observed that Mr. Das has a practical bent of mind. He believed if India desires to win the freedom through negotiations, then it must be step by step. He predicted that first step to get it would provincial autonomy. His foresight and vision caused the passing of the Government of India Act 1935 after ten years of his death.

Maulana Azad thought that as Europe was divided into two camps representing Nazism and fascism and democratic forces on the other hand. He was of the opinion that India should be with democratic forces if India was given freedom. According to him, it would be too much to

expect to fight for the democracy in the Europe where India itself was not free and democratic country. Hence, India should not cooperate British government.

When United Kingdom declared war against Germany on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939. United Kingdom appealed all its colonies to participate in the war. Viceroy of India without consulting the Central Legislature declare India's participation in the war on his own. It clearly hinted at the approach of British government and the Dominion Parliament towards India and its recognition of rights to decide her own future.

Maulana being cement force of Hindu-Muslim rejected the idea of partition of subcontinent into separate nations on the basis of religion. He outrightly rejected the idea of Two-nation theory.

The hostile or indifferent attitude of Muslims towards national movement as a part of strategy to align with the British loyalty propagated by Sir Sayed Ahmad was thing of worry for the nationalist like Maulana Azad. He was aware of the churning of patriotism and democratic yearnings amongst Hindus during his stay at Calcutta. His observation that Muslims have turned their back towards this nationalist cause is harmful for the community. He was not comfortable with the comfort zones that Muslim community was dwelling and loyalty toward British Government. He was disturbed to see the sorry state of affairs and attitude of community towards national interest. A visionary leader like Azad determined to change the scenario through his writings. He was convinced that the situation must be changed. Muslims of India must be made aware of their stance and reasonability toward the future of community as well as nation. He found the dire need of revolution in thinking patterns of Muslims. For this creating awareness and awakening of the national conscious was necessary. The necessity of bringing them out of their comfort zone and putting their minds on rebellion mode against the policy of Aligarh school of thought was need of the hour. Simultaneously, to align their interest with nationalist movement for larger benefit was important strategy for him. This was the culmination of initiating thought of *Al-Hilal*, a journal. This led towards publication of *Al-Hilal*(the Crescent) a weekly to serve the Muslim world.

For the awareness of Muslims across India and to build their opinions, Azad thought to start journals. Azad's *Al-Hilal* (1912) brought new era in Urdu journalism. Its superior printing and content sent the strong vibes of nationalism. It became popular journal to be preserved by common people. On people's demands it has to be reprinted. Aligarh was the centre of Muslim

leadership in India then. They considered themselves as the custodian of Sir Sayed's belief that Muslims should be loyal to British.

Maulana Mahomed Ali wrote about Al-Hilal in his weekly *Comrade*:

We can well understand the enormous labour and expense that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, its talented editor, must have gone through before launching this weekly journal. It strikes a new line in journalism by including pictorial illustrations as a permanent feature in its columns. The adoption of the Turkish type, though not exactly an innovation, is a welcome departure from the obsolete methods which in spite of their clumsiness and tedium still retain a paralysing hold on the Urdu Press of the country. Literary and scientific discussions and Muslim educational affairs will have a permanent space assigned to them, besides the regular presentment of the state of affairs in Turkey, Persia, Morocco and the Islamic world in general.”(Sharma, 2005:17-18)

The first issue churned the hearts and brains of Muslims across the subcontinent. It had charismatic impact on their psyche. It compelled them to introspect the thinking pattern and attitude towards nationalist interest and future of the community substantially.

The contribution of SirSyed Ahmed was bringing community out from the framework and influence of the powers of narrow-mindedness and darkness. On the other hand, Maulana Azad created the national consciousness and merge their interest in favour of democratic and nationalist favours.

Al-Hilal openly declared its political objectives, and was committed to comment on the matters of social and religious importance. He gave priority to communal peace over cow-slaughter right of Muslims amid the riots in Ayodhya in 1913. His strong belief in communal harmony and keep social fabric intact was beyond dispute. But it created animosity amongst his friends too like Hakim Ajmal Khan who indulged in an unpleasant debate with him.

Maulana Azad's philosophical and intellectual impact was so strong that leader of Muslim League were compelled to change their political objectives as per the changing consciousness of Muslims. Leaders like Syed Wazir Hasan who was the secretary of the Muslim League then opposed Al-Hilal in the beginning. But observing the change in the political sphere, he visited Maulana Azad in Calcutta. The personal meeting and deliberations yielded positive results as Muslim League openly took a stance on political attainment against British government in its annual session at Lucknow in April 1913. Now League had a political

commitment for the attainment of viable self-government for India. The paradigm shift for loyalty towards British to attainment of self-government was radical change in league's attitude. The larger impact and increasing circulation of Al-Hilal can be cited by vivid examples. For the present purpose an incident can be given. Mr. Philby was especially appointed to brief up Punjab government on the journal. He was the member of the Indian Civil Service and deputed in Multan. Secretary of the Board of Examiners for the Civil Service officers, he went to Calcutta. He was deeply impressed with the style of presentation of Al-Hilal. He personally met Maulana Azad and appreciated his editing of the journal. The impression was everlasting. He learnt Arabic and wrote Heart of Arabia during his stay in Mesopotamia.

Another incident was related to Sir James Meston. He was Governor of the United Provinces. Editorial published in the Pioneer of Allahabad in the November issue entitled as *Pro-Germanism in Calcutta*. The editorial charged Maulana Azad with pro-German tendencies. It highlights on the minute observations of the journal from government officers. He introduced the paper to the readers:

“Al-Hilal is a weekly illustrated newspaper published in the Urdu language in Calcutta, and is edited by a Delhi Mussalman named Abul Kalam. It has a large circulation among Mussalmans in these provinces, and probably in other parts of India. Ever since the war broke out, its attitude has been so strikingly pro-German that it must be a matter of amazement to all who read the paper that the Government has managed to tolerate its writings. Possibly this may be accounted for by the fact that the paper attracts little or no attention in Calcutta itself owing to its being published in Urdu, and there can be little doubt that this was one of the main causes which led the editor to choose Calcutta as the place of publication. Another reason may be that the style of the most mischievous articles is very allusive and full of veiled sneers and sarcasms and innuendoes, most of which either disappear or lose their effect when translated into English, and it is not likely that many European officials read the paper in the original.”(Sharma, 2005:23-24)

This suggests the greatness and effectiveness of Maulana Azad as a conscious leader who brought change in the Muslim consciousness at one level and compelled government to take serious cognizance of volatile changes taking place in India. In the content and quality Al-Hilal was superior to contemporary English journals also. He also had a great courage to speak truth

without any fear of consequences. The popularity and revolutionary thoughts of Al-Hilal caused panic in their camp. They thought their leadership is being threatened so they started opposing Al-Hilal. But this opposition only increased the popularity and subscribers of Al-Hilal. It also disturbed the government. They asked for security of 2000 under the press act. Later one asked for 10000 as deposit. In 1914 WW-1 broke and in 1915, Al-Hilal Press was confiscated. Azad started *Al-Balagh*, after five months of Al-Hilal's confiscation, in 1915. But British Government expelled him from Calcutta under Defence of India Regulations. Azad was prohibited from UP, Punjab and Delhi as well as Bombay provinces. So, he went to Bihar. In Ranchi, he was interned and remained in detention till 31<sup>st</sup> December 1919. His leadership in journalism has paved way to the guiding principle of his political leadership.

#### **9.2.4 Azad and his Universal Appeal as a Leader:**

Maulana Azad in a true sense of the words have worked for the universal brotherhood and peace throughout the world through his leadership in political, social, cultural, education, journalism. His influence in each of these fields can be seen in the present development of Indian scenario. The key role he played in the establishment of the principle based politics, vision for future through education services, express objective and honest views on political upheavals, slamming the irrational, unscientific approaches through his writings are very crucial. It makes him a leader sans boundaries. His universal appeal lies in the relevance of his thoughts even in today's context.

Educational institutes and bodies like UGC, AICTE are of prime importance as they regulate and control all the higher education institutes in India. His efforts to bring reformation in education, to spread it to the remote corners in India show his commitment and sense of belonging towards the development of Indian people. The flow of students for higher education in India's different universities and institutes show its global impact. Leaders like Azad spent their lives to preserve the human bonds and compassion in different sects of Indian society. Image of India as secular country is output of these all leaders' life and mission. The history of Indian education and politics, journalism would never be completed without the serious cognizance of Maulana Azad's life and works.

Thus Maulana Azad would be always remembered as a gentleman, erudite scholar, straight forward speaker, balanced politician, honest journalist, philosopher and visionary educationist. His leadership in diverse fields of Indian life has influenced everyday life of



contemporary and future generation. Undoubtedly, his life and times and land mark achievement are legacy of composite culture and true nationalist.

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### 9.3 Learning Outcomes

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After learning this unit, students would be able to

1. Discuss and analyse the leadership dynamics of Maulana Azad.
  2. Understand the political leadership of Maulana Azad.
  3. Correlate the contribution of Maulana Azad in the field of Education.
  4. Understand the Maulana as a nationalist leader.
  5. Discuss Maluana Azad's political leadership through journalism.
  6. Discuss the universal appeal of Azad's leadership.
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### 9.4 Glossary

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**Maulana:**

A Muslim man respected for his religious knowledge or scholarship. It is also used as a courtesy title for a leader or a scholar.

***'Mir-i-Karawan':***

literally mean the leader of caravan. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru used to call Maulana Azad as Mir-i-Karwan.

**National Education Day:**

11<sup>th</sup> November is celebrated as the National Education Day from 2008. 11<sup>th</sup> November is birth date of India's first Education Minister Maulana AbulKalam Azad. For the great and influential contribution of Maulana Azad in the field of Higher Education, his birth date is celebrated as National Education Day.

**Central Advisory Board of Education:**

It is one of the oldest and very crucial advisory board or body of the government of India in education. It was first formed in 1920. After it was dissolve in 1923 due to economy reasons, it

was revived in 1935. It has played great role in shaping the education policies and future of education in India.

**Al-Hilal:**

Al-Hilal literally means *The Crescent*. It was an Urdu language newspaper started in 1912 by Maulana Azad.

**Pro-Germanism:**

*It was the objection against Al-Hilal and Maulana Azad for its anti-colonial stance and demand of self-rule for Indian People. British officers attempted to portray Al-Hilal and Maulana Azad as a threat to British Rule and supporters of Germany in WW-II.*

**UGC:**

University Grants Commission established on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1953 for the wide spread and regulation of higher education in India. It became statutory body by the Government of India Act.

**AICTE:**

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) was established in 1945. It is an apex advisory body to spread and regulate the technical education in India.

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## 9.5 Sample Questions

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### 9.5.1 Objective Questions:

**A. Chooses the correct answer from given below:**

1. Al-Hilal was a weekly newspaper and was published in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Urdu                      (b) Spanish  
(c) Iranian                  (d) Arabi
2. Al-Balagh was started in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 1910                      (b) 1913  
(c) 1915                      (d) 1920
3. Maulana Mahomed Ali wrote about Al-Hilal in his weekly \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Brotherhood            (b) Comrade  
(c) New Dawn                (d) Hope

4. Mr. Philby wrote Heart of \_\_\_\_\_  
(a) Arabia (b) London  
(c) Lucknow (d) Delhi
5. Maulana Azad was charged with Pro-\_\_\_\_\_  
(a) Chinesism (b) Frenchism  
(c) Germanism (d) Spanishism

**B. Write whether following statement are True or False**

1. Maulana Azad believed in traditional education.
2. Maulana Azad became the first Education Minister of Independent India.
3. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru called Azad as 'Mir-i-Karwan'.
4. Azad reiterated five-fold program in Central Advisory Board of Education's fifth Meeting.
5. National Education Day is celebrated on 28<sup>th</sup> December of every year.

**9.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. National Education Day
2. What was the motif behind Al-Hilal Journal?
3. Write a note on Maulana Azad's universal appeal.
4. Comment on the two incidents suggesting Maulana Azad's influence on western readers.
5. Higher Education Institutes in India.

**9.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Write a note on five-fold program of Central Advisory Board of Education.
2. Discuss the various influences that shaped Maulana Azad's political ideology.
3. Write a note on the impact of Al-Hilal on British Government.

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**9.6 Suggested Readings**

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1. Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam. *India Wins Freedom*. Orient Blackswan: Hyderabad, 1959.
2. Sharma S.R. *Life and works of Maulana Azad*, Book Enclave: Jaipur, 2005.

## **Unit – 10: India Wins Freedom (Selection – 1)**

### **Structure**

#### **10.0 Introduction**

#### **10.1 Objectives**

#### **10.2 India Wins Freedom – Selection – 1**

##### **10.2.1 Prospectus**

##### **10.2.2 Congress in Office**

##### **10.2.3 War in Europe**

##### **10.2.4 I Become Congress President**

##### **10.2.5 The Chinese Interlude**

##### **10.2.6 The Cripps Mission**

#### **10.3 Learning Outcomes**

#### **10.4 Glossary**

#### **10.5 Sample Questions**

#### **10.6 Suggested Readings**

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### **10.0 Introduction**

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India attained its freedom after a long struggle against the British rule. British have always implemented the strategy of ‘Break and Rule especially after the Uprising of 1857 when Hindus and Muslims have collaborated to uproot the unjust rule of British East India Company. India came directly under the rule of British Empire after the unsuccessful attempt of Uprising. The policies of British Empire to keep India’s two major communities apart were successful at certain extent. In the wake of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Indian leaders understood the necessity of common efforts to overthrow the British Rule. Indian National Congress was the outcome of elite educated Indians and thinkers like Annie Besant, Dadabhai Naoroji, Badruddin Tayabji and others.

India's struggle for freedom became the people's movement under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. The movement was widespread and so the problems of rift between the Hindus and Muslims. The question of representation on the basis of population, communal reservation in constitutional assembly, rise and popularity of Muslim League in Indian politics, Jinnah's theory of Muslim's as separate nation, two nation theory, impending communal problems, violence, drift between Congress leadership regarding ways to attain the freedom have given new dimensions to Indian Independence Movement and contemporary political scenario in India. Amid such conditions, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad became the president of Indian National Congress. He always considered himself as an Indian first. His observations, personal views, political ideas, plans, and all-inclusive ideology, modernist approach has always been appreciated.

Present unit is taken from his political autobiography *India Wins Freedom*. It deals with the first six chapters as selection-1 including Prospectus, Congress in Office, War in Europe, I Become Congress President, the Chinese Interlude, The Cripps Mission. Let us study them in brief one by one.

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## 10.1 Objectives

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This unit aims to fulfil following objectives:

- To Understand the various aspects of Maulana Azad's emergence as a political activist and Congress Leader
- To Study dimensions of Indian political scenario from the perspective of Maulana Azad
- To understand contemporary political, electoral and constitutional aspects of British Government and India's participation into.
- To trace the development of events leading towards Freedom of India till Cripps Mission
- To discuss and debate various perspectives of Cripps Mission and Maulana Azad's insights into it.
- To highlight the international politics during Second World War and problems of Indian independence movement

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## **10.2 India Wins Freedom – Selection – 1**

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### **10.2.1 Prospectus:**

This chapter deals with the family background of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

### **Family Background:**

His forefathers came to India from Herat in Babar's days and settled in Agra and later in Delhi. His was a scholarly family. Maulana Jamaluddin in Akbars' time was a religious divine. Later the family involved in civil services and acquired positions emperor's court. During Shahjahan's times, Mohmmad Hadi become the Governor of Agra Fort. His father's maternal grandfather, Maulana Munawarduddin was Rukn-ul-Mudarassin in Mughal period. It can be compared to a Director of Education in the modern times. At the age of 2, his father in Mecca. He married Sheikh Mohammad Zaher Watri's daughter. It was scholarly family. His father became famous scholar in Islamic world after publication of 10 volumes in Arabic in Egypt. His father repaired the Nahar Zubeida in Mecca and provided relief to the people. For this he raised fund of 20 lakhs from India, Egypt, Syria, and Turkey. For this work, Emperor of Turkey, Sultan Abdul Majid, awarded him first class Majidi Medal. Azad was born in Mecca in 1888.

### **Education for Islamic Boys:**

Education in those days of Islamic boys was traditional. His father did not believe in western education. In India, Muslim boys would be first taught Persian and then Arabic. After, they would be trained into philosophy, geometry, mathematics, and algebra in Arabic medium. Islamic Theology was essential course in education. Azad was taught by his father at home. His father did not like Madrassa education system. Azad was tutored by different teachers at home.

### **Teach the Taught:**

Muslim students would complete their education in tradition way between the age of twenty to twenty-five. These scholars have to teach other students what they have learnt. This would usually prove how much they have acquired mastery over their subjects. Azad taught higher Philosophy, Mathematics and Logic to students.

### **Modern Education: Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan:**

Azad on reading Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan's writing was impressed by his thoughts of modern education. Azad realized that education is incomplete without learning modern science,

philosophy and literature. Azad under the guidance of Maulvi Mohammed Yusuf Zafri, the chief examiner of Oriental Studies started learning English. He also read the Bible. He read it in English, Persian and Urdu. Later he explored history and philosophy after getting proficiency in English. During his travel to Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Azad found great interest in French, but English as the fast-growing international language satisfied his needs. He also focuses on the redundancy of traditional education not only in India but also in the famous universities like Azhar in Cairo. Modern education was the need everywhere to nourish intellect and spirits of youths.

### **Azad & Modern Education: Breaking the Shackles of Orthodox Mind Set**

Azad was born in an orthodox religious family. Deviation from religious ways was not tolerated. But Azad found it difficult to reconcile with the contemporary prevalent customs and beliefs. His heart and brain were not satisfied with old training and orthodox nature of the family. He was perceiving the sense of new revolt and approach to life. He wanted to free himself from the old shackles and find out the truth himself. This quest for truth, self and modern understanding has freed him. Thus, he adopted his name ‘Azad’

### **Becoming Azad:**

The quest for truth and modern ideas have made him move from his family orbit and sought new path. He observed that there were difference between the numerous sects of Muslims. He doubted how these different sects can claim differences and superiority over others when all of them are derived from the same source. The dogmas and orthodoxy even lead to doubt over the concept of religion itself. He questioned the universal truth that every religion was professing and still its followers are differing from each other as well in conflict. He questioned the claim of each religion as the only custodian of universal truth and condemn others. This was the toughest phase in his life. The dilemmas, inner turmoil, shattering of old thoughts, awakening of new modern outlook took him to stage where he freed himself from the traditional ties. At this juncture, he adopted his pen name ‘Azad’ or ‘Free’

### **Political Awakening:**

1905, the partition of Bengal churned the political scenario in India. Shri Arbindo Ghosh’s paper *Karmayogini* gave new dimensions to Indian aspiration for freedom. Shyam Sunder Chakravarty, a revolutionary, became connecting link for Azad to revolutionaries. The political awakening of Azad brought him in the freedom movement.

### **Anti-Muslim Attitude of Revolutionaries:**

Azad has to face the problems as Muslims were not actively recruited in revolutionary activities due to British governments efforts to break and rule policy. Muslims were seen as instruments of British against freedom struggle. Bamfield Fuller openly declared that Muslims are favourite wife of British government. So, they thought to remove every hurdle from the attainment of freedom including Muslims.

### **Political Awakening of Hindus and Colonial Master's Approach:**

Hindus of Bengal were leading the political awakening of India. British never trusted Hindu officers to deal with revolutionary activities. They hired Muslim officers from United Provinces for Intelligence Branch of the Police. It resulted into the feelings of suspicion amongst Hindus that Muslims are against political freedom of India and Hindus.

### **Azad in Revolutionary Activities: Muslim World and Indian Muslims:**

Azad tried to convince revolutionaries that such generalization would be injustice towards all the Muslims. He provided the examples of revolutionary Muslims throughout the world for the achievement of democracy like in Egypt, Iran, and Turkey. He strongly believed the Muslims of India would soon join the movement actively. He underscored the fact that active hostility or indifference of Muslims towards freedom movement would make it difficult to achieve political liberty. This caused change in their perception towards Muslims.

### **Making of a Leader:**

Contact with Iran, Arab and Turk revolutionaries have confirmed his political belief. These revolutionaries too expressed either indifference or opposition to nationalist demands in India. These revolutionaries thought that Muslim of India should lead the freedom movement. They should not remain only the camp of British. They cautioned against the use of Muslim against struggle for freedom. At this point, Azad thought over the idea to take earnest steps to include Indian Muslims in struggle for political independence.

### **Azad and Journalism: Urdu Journalism**

For the awareness of Muslims across India and to build their opinions, Azad thought to start journals. Azad's *Al-Hilal* (1912) brought new era in Urdu journalism. Its superior printing and content sent the strong vibes of nationalism. It became popular journal to be preserved by common people. On people's demands it has to be reprinted. Aligarh was the centre of Muslim leadership in India then. They considered themselves as the custodian of Sir Sayyid's belief that Muslims should be loyal to British. The popularity and revolutionary thoughts of *Al-Hilal* caused



panic in their camp. They thought their leadership is being threatened so they started opposing Al-Hilal. But this opposition only increased the popularity and subscribers of Al-Hilal. It also disturbed the government. They asked for security of 2000 under the press act. Later one asked for 10000 as deposit. In 1914 WW-1 broke and in 1915, Al-Hilal Press was confiscated. Azad started *Al-Balagh*, after five months of Al-Hilal's confiscation, in 1915. But British Government expelled him from Calcutta under Defence of India Regulations. Azad was prohibited from UP, Punjab and Delhi as well as Bombay provinces. So, he went to Bihar. In Ranchi, he was interned and remained in detention till 31<sup>st</sup> December 1919.

### **Rise of Gandhi:**

Mahatma Gandhi appeared on political horizon with his ideas of satyagraha, non-violence, brotherhood, love, non-cooperation, Khilafat Movement and other ideas to achieve the independence of India in a mild way.

In a meeting held in Delhi on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1920, Gandhiji supported *Khilafat Movement* to support the future of Turkey. He believed that deputations and demands, meetings and memorials were outdated tactics to deal with British empire. He propagated the *Non-cooperation*. It included withdrawal of support to government. Boycott on government titles, law courts, educational institutions were prevalent in this program. Azad correlated this with Tolstoy's open letter to anarchist attacked the King of Italy in 1901. Non-violence was the only method to overcome the violence and hatred. Azad in Al-Hilal suggested such program in some of the articles. Hakim Ajmal Khan needed some time to consider it. Maulvi Abdul Bari appreciated the proposal as it raised some fundamental issues. But he wanted divine guidance. Mohmad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali decided to wait till Maulvi Abdul Bari's decision. On asking Maulana Azad, he accepted the program without hesitation. Gandhiji and Maulana Azad extensively travelled to make the people aware about non-cooperation. This has changed the temperament of Indian politics. In a session at Nagpur held in December 1920, leaders like C.R. Das, Lala Lajpat Rai also accepted the program. Maulana Azad was imprisoned till 1 January 1923. In a Congress Session Gaya presided over by C.R. Das, fraction in Congress were seen as No-Changers versus Pro-Changers. In September 1923, Azad was elected as President of Congress at the age of thirty-five. He was the youngest president of Congress then.

After 1923, Swaraj Party become instrumental in Congress activities. In 1928, British appointed Simon Commission to visit India. In 1929, Congress passed the Independence resolution. In 1930, Salt Satyagraha and Dandi March become turning point in the history of India's freedom struggle. British imprisoned many congress leaders and working committee members. After a year, Gandhi Irwin pact was signed, and congressmen were released from the jail. Congress participated in the Round Table Conference in London. On his return, Gandhi, Azad and many leaders were arrested.

### **Government of India Act (1935):**

In 1935, the Government of Act was passed. This act gave provincial autonomy and a federal government at the centre. Azad reveals the initiation of the aim of '*India Wins Freedom*' to narrate the story of India's struggle for independence.

### **10.2.2 Congress in Office:**

Congress emerged as the major party in the first elections held after the introduction of provincial autonomy as per the provisions of The Government of India Act 1935. Congress became absolute majority in five main provinces and single largest party in other four provinces. Thus, Congress acquired the powers and assumed the office.

### **Provincial Autonomy & Governments Control:**

Maulana Azad gives the features and his observations of The Government of India Act 1935 as below:

1. Complete provincial autonomy
2. But special powers were reserved with the governor. He can declare a state of emergency, and this would suspend the constitution. It enabled him to acquire all powers to himself.
3. So, democracy in provinces was at the mercy or whims of governor.
4. At the Central Government, situation was worse. System of *Diarchy* was reintroduced. It was refuted by provinces. The central government was a weak federation. It also was formulated in alignment with the favourable conditions and vested interests of the princes. It was obviously in favour of British rulers.

### **Complete Independence and Hesitation to Accept Offices:**

Congress demanded for complete independence. So, Congress rejected such federation and autonomy of the provinces. This led congress towards the decision of boycott of the elections. But Azad thought it would be a great mistake as other parties would capture the central and provincial legislatures representing the Indian people. He believed elections campaign would be an opportunity to educate Indian masses in Indian politics. His view was accepted, and congress performed well in elections. Later, congress leadership got divided over assuming the offices as governor held all powers the autonomy would be a mockery to democracy. But it was also decided to make use of the legislature powers and handle popular issues to strengthen the hold on people imagination. During negotiation with viceroy congress wanted an assurance from governor not to interfere with the work of the Ministries.

### **Congress Vs Muslim League:**

Congress has challenge to live up to its national character as Muslim League spread the propaganda that it is national for namesake only. It also defamed congress alleging that congress ministries are not protecting the interest of minorities. It prepared the report making allegations about the unjust treatment given to Muslims and other minorities. But Maulana Azad refuted these all allegations which were baseless. But he also cites two cases of Majority Vs Minority conflict where injustice was done. One case belonged to Mumbai province where Mr. Nariman, a Parsee by faith, was acknowledge leader of the Congress. As per expectations, he would be the Chief Minister of Bombay province but as majority of assembly members were Hindus. So, Sardar Patel and others brought Mr. B.G. Kher to front and he was elected as a candidate for Chief Minister. Unfortunately, Jawaharlal Nehru played safe game of not opposing Sardar Patel, he rejected Mr. Nariman's plea. Mr. Nariman lost the appeal in Congress Working Committee. Azad writes, "We all knew that truth had been sacrificed in order to satisfy Sardar Patel's communal demands." (Azad 17)

Second case belonged to Bihar. Dr. Syed Mahmud was top leader in Bihar and President of Congress Working Committee when congress contested the elections. So, it was obvious that after getting absolute majority, Dr. Syed Mahmud would become the Chief Minister of Bihar province. But Dr Rajendra Prasad called Sri Krishna Sinha and Anugraha Narayan Sinha from central assembly.

Here, Azad mentions that Congress did not live up to its professional ideals. He also hints at stage of maturity that "One has to admit with regret that the nationalism of the Congress had

not then reached a stage where it could ignore communal considerations and select leaders based on merit without regard to majority or minority.

#### **Azad on C.R. Das:**

Maulana Azad revered Mr. C.R. Das as a one of the most powerful leader in the history of India's freedom struggle. Azad observed that Mr. Das has a practical bent of mind. He believed if India desires to win the freedom through negotiations, then it must be step by step. He predicted that first step to get it would provincial autonomy. His foresight and vision caused the passing of the Government of India Act 1935 after ten years of his death.

#### **1921: Montague – Chelmsford Reforms and arrival of Prince of Wales in India**

Montague Chelmsford Reforms scheme proposed the introduction of self-governing institutions in India. The visit of Prince of Wales to India was planned. Congress decided to boycott his arrival. It troubled British government that promised warm welcome to the Prince. For negotiations with Congress, Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya visited Azad and C.R. Rao in Alipore jail. The proposal was to agree not to boycott Prince in Calcutta visit then government would come to a settlement with congress. C.R. Rao and Azad thought it to push forward the demands of congress and meet in Round Table Conference. Though it would not achieve full independence but at least it would push back the British government. They proposed to release all the congress leaders from jail before the Round Table Conference. They asked Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya to get the consent of Gandhiji. But Gandhiji insisted to release all the leaders including Ali brothers first then only proposal for Round table conference would be considered. The delay and debate caused loss to congress as Viceroy dropped the proposal. Though boycott was a great success congress missed the golden opportunity.

#### **Muslim Interest and Fears:**

Mr. C.R. Das proposed the council entry programme in Gaya Congress to carry the political struggle into the legislatures. His approach was appreciated by Hakim Ajmal Khan, Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and Sardar Vithalbhai Patel. A section of congress led by Rajagopalachari thought it to be deviation and repudiation of Gandhiji's leadership. Azad provided his view on Rajagopalachari. Rajagopalachari's interpretation was right but that does not mean Mr. Das was compromising with government but extending the political struggle to other fields. But C.R. Das failed to convince leaders like Rajagopalachari and Rajendra Prasad. When congress was divided into NO-changer and Pro-changers, Azad took neutral stance on the

development focusing more on political struggle. It resulted into special session of congress at Delhi. He was president of this session.

Delhi Congress session decided to give freedom to both the camps in congress to pursue their own program to attain the India's freedom. No-changers like Rajagopalachari, Dr. Rajendra Prasad took on constructive program whereas C.R. Das, Pandit Motilal and Hakim Ajmal founded the Swaraj Party and contested elections.

In the elections, Swaraj Party won majority constituency at central as well as provincial legislatures even in seats reserved for Muslims. The elections were purely communal, only Muslim voters elected Muslim legislators.

### **Representation and seeds of Partition:**

The communal aspect of elections demarked the fears of Muslims and minorities. This instigated Muslim League and other communal parties to play the cards of fears and questions of representations. Mr. Das successfully overcame such apprehensions in Bengal. He declared that if Congress comes in power in Bengal, the 60% all new appointment for Muslims would be reserved. This was based on the majority of Muslim population and less number of their representation in government posts. He understood the economic problem of majorities and minorities too. He highlighted that as long as Muslims were not properly represented in public life and the recruitments, no democracy would prevail in Bengal.

it caused great panic in Bengal. But C.R. Das travelled across the province and sincerely convinced Hindus and Muslims alike about his plan. But his death caused great damage to the policy. Repudiation from his proposal repelled all Muslims from Congress and it germinated the first seed of partition.

### **Parliamentary Board:**

When Congress assumed offices in many provinces, the Parliamentary Board was formulated to supervise and guide the ministries on policy making. Sardar Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, and Maulana Azad were the members of the board. Azad was in-charge of Parliamentary affairs in provinces like Bengal, Bihar, UP and Punjab and the Frontier.

### **Jinnah's Allegations on Congress and Azad's Views:**

The issues came before him regarding the atrocities on minorities by Congress were refuted by Azad. He found his allegations baseless and inspired to tarnish the image of Congress in Public.

Congress took initiatives to abolish the zamindari or proprietorship in land, liquidating agricultural indebtedness and undertaking a large program of education for children and adults alike. Congress was successful in its negotiations with landlords brought out the formula to find out the golden mean.

Maulana Azad mentions that being impartial and his image of not belonging to any group of Congress led them to find the solutions on many of the problems that came before Parliamentary Board. He was stoic in his position and tried to pacify the lefts and rightist in Congress. Rightist were champions of vested interest whereas leftist were with revolutionary zeal. He understood the fears of rightist but also sympathized with the leftist in their reforms. Azad was able to mediate between these two polars successfully and without conflict. But all the plans of Congress Election Plans were suspended due to world war scenario in 1939.

### **10.2.3 War in Europe:**

As the international forces were shaping and reshaping the future of nations, the outbreak of World War II caused great panic all over the world. Simultaneously, all the colonies were trying to gain freedom from empires. International crisis and war in Europe has divided the congress on continuance of freedom struggle with full vigour.

#### **Congress on WW-II**

Congress in its session at Tripuri in March 1939 passed the resolution. Salient features of this resolution can be summed up as below:

1. It disapproved the British Foreign Policy that resulted into Munich Pact and the Anglo-Italian Agreement. It also disapproved the recognition of Rebel Spain.
2. Congress considered this policy as breach against all the democracies and pledges of freedom all over the world.
3. Due to this policy, world has become the state of anarch. Violence prevails and decides the future of nations. Wars is taken shape in the name of peace.
4. Atrocities against Jewish people by Nazi government had sunk Central and south-Western Europe's international morality. Organized terrorism and warfare have destroyed the civilians and refugees.
5. Congress dissociated from British Foreign Policy supporting the Fascist powers resulting into the destruction of democratic countries.

6. Congress believes that if world peace needs to be established imperialism and fascist powers must be ended.

7. Congress thought it to be urgent need for India to form her own foreign policy as an independent nation. For this purpose, India keeps herself aloof from imperialism and fascism to pursue path of peace and freedom.

#### **Gandhi's Refusal to Participate in War:**

Mahatma Gandhi went through acute mental crisis during this period. Western societies appealed him to take initiatives to avert the impending war. Peace loving people looked at him as their leader. Amid such backdrop, he finally suggested Congress Working Committee that India should not participate in upcoming war in any condition “even if such participation meant the achievement of Indian Freedom” (Azad 27)

#### **Maulana Azad on WW-II:**

Maulana Azad thought that as Europe was divided into two camps representing Nazism and fascism and democratic forces on the other hand. He was of the opinion that India should be with democratic forces if India was given freedom. According to him, it would be too much to expect to fight for the democracy in the Europe where India itself was not free and democratic country. Hence, India should not cooperate British government.

When United Kingdom declared war against Germany on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939. United Kingdom appealed all its colonies to participate in the war. Viceroy of India without consulting the Central Legislature declare India's participation in the war on his own. It clearly hinted at the approach of British government and the Dominion Parliament towards India and its recognition of rights to decide her own future.

#### **10.2.4 I Become Congress President:**

This chapter explores the political scenario across the world during second world war and its impact on the India's struggle for freedom. It also deals with the various issues that Congress faced during the dilemma of participating in the war or not.

Maulana Azad was offered Presidentship of Congress in 1938 but then he denied for various reasons. He was offered the office again, this time Azad thought it as a duty to support the party in its critical time to provide transparent leadership. Azad had clearly mentioned his differences of opinion with Gandhiji regarding India's participation in the war. Azad clearly mentions it in this chapter as:

I felt that now that war had started, India must have no hesitation in aligning herself with the democratic powers. The question, however, was: how could India fight for others' freedom when she was in bondage herself? If the British Government made an immediate declaration of India's independence, it would become the duty of all Indians to sacrifice everything for the cause of my duty to serve in any capacity to which I was called. When Gandhiji again requested me to become Congress President, I readily agreed. (Azad 29)

As there was real contest for presidential elections, Azad won the election with humungous majority. Thus, Maulana Azad became the president of Indian National Congress.

Congress Session at Ramgarh

Maulana Azad in his presidential speech talked about the various aspects of Congress Resolution as below:

#### 1. Congress Denied the Imperial motif of British Empire.

As British Government declared the war participation of India without its consideration and acceptance of Indian people. Congress underscored this pronouncement showed that Great Britain is involved in securing and strengthening her imperial motifs. He further expressed that Empire was utilizing as well as exploiting all kinds of resource of Asiatic and African countries for their war. He further said in his speech as:

“The congress therefore strongly disapproves of Indian troops being made to fight for Great Britain and of the drain from India of men and material for the purpose of the war. Neither the recruiting nor the money raised in India can be considered to be voluntary contributions from India. Congressmen, and those under the Congress influence, cannot help in the prosecution of the War with men, money or material.” (Azad 30)

2. Congress also clearly declared that Indian people would not accept anything but complete Independence. He clearly mentioned that “Indian freedom cannot exist within the orbit of imperialism and dominion or any other status within the imperial structure is wholly inapplicable to India, is not in keeping with dignity of great nation, and would bind India in many ways to British policies and economic structure.” (Azad 30)

He believed that Indian people were capable to shape their own constitution and can decide their relations to other countries of the world through the properly formed Constituent Assembly duly elected by the people of India.



### 3. Safeguarding the Communal Harmony and Protection of Minority Rights.

Congress displayed its commitment toward preserving the communal harmony and protecting the minority rights through Constituent Assembly by agreement and or by arbitration.

### 4. Indian Constitution:

Azad focused on the nature of Indian constitution that would be written or created in the future. He writes:

“India’s constitution must be based on independence democracy and national unity, and the Congress repudiates attempts to divide India or to split up her nationhood. The Congress has always aimed at a constitution where the fullest freedom and opportunities of development are guaranteed to the group and the individual, and social injustice yields place to the Juster social order” (Azad 30)

As president of Congress, Azad was ready to side with democratic powers in the War provided that India was free. How could India fight for other’s freedom, when she was in Bondage herself? Azad believed in negotiation through which Indian can attain complete independence. He strongly declared that main aim Indian National Congress was to free India from the British Empire. It is not a pacifying organization so what Mahatama Gandhi believed was irrelevant.

On the other hand, Mahatma Gandhi wanted Peace in the world through non-violence. For him the issue was related to pacifism and not India’s freedom. Gandhiji was convinced that India must aloof from the war. In a meeting, he expressed his views to Viceroy. In a open letter to British people, he also urged not fight Hitler but “oppose him by spiritual force” (Azad 31) Gandhiji insisted Azad on supporting his view on war. On this Azad writes:

“For me non-violence was matter of policy, not of creed. ... If freedom could be obtained by fighting, we would certainly participate in the war” (Azad 32)

For Gandhiji non-violent methods of India’s freedom would lose. Azad believed that there was difference in “internal struggle for freedom and an external struggle against aggression” (Azad 32)

The issue was discussed at the AICC meeting at Poona in July 1940. Resolution of Congress. Azad put forth his views before committee. The committee endorsed his views. Two resolutions were passed as below:

1. First resolution underscored the belief of the Congress that Non-Violence as policy to attain India's freedom. It must be maintained.

2. Second resolution highlighted that in the war between Nazism and Democracy, India rightfully aligns with democracy. But India would not participate in the war till the achievement of her own freedom.

Gandhiji appreciated Maulana Azad for pleading the cause of non-violence for internal struggle for freedom.

But later, the members of Working committee withdrew the support as they felt Gandhiji was opposed on the principle of Non-violence. They were nominated to assist the leader, but they differ from Congress President, Maulana Azad on basic question. So, they offered their resignation.

In August 1940, the Viceroy invited Maulana Azad to discuss the issue of participation of Congress in the Government based on the extended Executive Council with larger powers. But Maulana Azad denied to meet him as he was unable to see the common ground between Congress demand for independence and the Viceroy's offer of an enlarged Executive Council.

Gandhiji supported Maulana Azad and wrote to him a letter, "In his view refusal to meet the Viceroy was a symbol of God's grace. It was not the will of God that India should participate in this war." (Azad 34)

Gandhiji also met Lord Linlithgow and suggested him that "British people should give up arms and oppose Hitler with spiritual force" (Azad 35). Lord Linlithgow was taken aback by this suggestion. Maulana writes that,

"While we differed in our basic approach, we were agreed that India must withhold all support to the British in the present situation. The conflict between my policy and Gandhiji's creed thus remained a theoretical one. The attitude of the British united us in action even though our basic approach remained different." (Azad 35)

Amid such political situation, Gandhiji proposed the civil disobedience movement. He proposed that Indian people should protest individually regarding participation in war. Azad on the other hand suggested extensive and active anti-war movement. He proposed Individual Satyagraha Movement. The first individual Satyagrahi or civil resister to war was Vinoba Bhave. Then Jawaharlal Nehru and gradually it become national movement of Individual Satyagraha. This program was followed with the consent of Gandhiji and Maulana Azad.

Maulana Azad was imprisoned at Lahore for two years and was kept at Naini Jail even before offering himself as an Individual Satyagrahi.

Japan's attack on USA's Pearl Harbour and Germany's attack on Soviet Russia turned the war global in real sense. Japan brought the world war at India's door with occupation of Burma. Japanese ships hovered in Bay of Bengal. Roosevelt, after attack on Pearl Harbour, requested British government to reconcile with Indian leaders. So British Government released Maulana Azad and Jawaharlal Nehru. Maulana Azad was quite distressed over this release as: On all previous occasions, release from jail had brought with it a sense of partial achievement. On this occasion, I keenly felt that even though the war had been going on for over two years, we had not been able to take any effective steps for achieving Indian freedom. We seemed to be the victim of circumstances and not the masters of our destiny. (Azad 37)

On his release, Azad called the meeting of AICC working committee at Bardoli. After discussion with Gandhiji, he found that vast drift between him and Gandhiji's approach. Previously they were differing on principle but now they also differed on the reading of situation.

Gandhiji thought that due to pressure and war conditions Mr. Churchill would grant India its freedom on the participation in the war whereas, Maulana Azad thought, British government would only provide Executive Council with expanded powers with adequate representation of Congress on it. Even after detailed discussion, Azad failed to convince Gandhiji.

In a conference at Calcutta, Azad was asked what if Japan invaded India to which he replied: [...] all Indians should take up the sword to defend the country. I added: 'We can do so only the bonds which shackle our hands and feet are removed. How can we fight if our hands and feet are tied?' (Azad 38)

*The Times* and *Daily News* in London commented on Azad's interview. It clearly hinted at the difference of opinion between Azad and Gandhi. Though Gandhiji was firm on his stand of non-violence and non-participation in war, he didn't press Maulana Azad to change his views.

#### **10.2.5 The Chinese Interlude:**

Maulana Azad in this chapter wrote about the visit of Chinese president Chiang Kai-Shek. He at length provides the information related to his visits, observations and opinions related to India's freedom struggle and participation in second world war. He refers to the President Roosevelt's expectation of India's voluntary participation in war. Chang Kai-Shek also thought in the same line.

He underscored the need of British government to come to terms with India. He insisted on it prominently after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbour. It was to increase his own importance and Chinese influence. China emerged as a political power apart from USA, UK, USSR and France. He stressed that British Government must recognize India's independence. He believed that India can better help with its full capacity in war when she participates voluntarily.

He recounts the Jawaharlal Nehru's short visit to South China. Later Chang Kai-Shek wrote to Maulana Azad to visit India. He desired to visit viceroy of India and Congress Leaders to have way out for Indian problem. He believed that this would aid the association of congress leaders towards war efforts.

On 9<sup>th</sup> February 1942, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek and his wife' arrived in India. But due to language barriers it become difficult to have effective interaction. His speech focused on the two ways that dependent nation can achieve freedom. First, through war foreigners can be expelled and second, through peaceful methods and gradually, dependent nations can drive foreigners out of the their nation. Gradual and step by step, self-government can be achieved. He also conveyed the message of British Prime Minister that, "...if Indians act with wisdom and statesmanship, they could fully utilise the war situation and achieve their freedom." (Azad 42). Chang Kai-Shaek asked with whom India would side in the war. Azad clarified that if British government removes the hurdles in Indian freedom, India would stand with democracies without any hesitation.

In his conversation with Azad, he expressed that there is no substantial difference between dominion status and complete independence. He underscored that India should accept the offer of self-government with dominion status. He also knew that Jawarharlal Nehru and other congress members would not accept it as they want complete independence.

On this, Maulana Azad responded that if British Government gives full freedom and sense of responsibility work, Congress would not refuse the offer. But Chang Kai-Shek displayed that with hostilities of war and its burden, British government would not allow cent percent freedom and responsibility to Indians. Azad clearly put forth the proposal that if British Government assures Indian full freedom after war, then there could be settlement between them. These meetings and close contacts between Congress leaders and Chang Kai-Shek put British government in awkward situations. But Generalissimo already conveyed the purpose of his visit to meet Viceroy of India and Congress leaders too. So British government could not do anything.

Later, Chang Kai-Shek visited Gandhi with Jawaharlal Nehru. Gandhiji spoke about his non-violence, Satyagraha, its practice in South Africa and how it can be used successfully in India's freedom struggle. Nehru thought that Chang-Kai-Shek was not impressed by this. But in Maulana Azad's opinion, Chang Kai-Shek might have not been convinced to Gandhiji's ideas of Satyagraha and non-violence.

In the end, Generalissimo Chang Kai-Shek made an appeal to British government to give real political power to India and recognise her freedom.

#### **10.2.6 The Cripps Mission:**

Maulana Azad in this chapter discussed the various aspects and debates, differences of opinions regarding the Cripps Mission and draft related to the provisions it offered.

Sir Stafford Cripps issued the draft declaration as a representative of British Government regarding the anxieties of Indian people and future of India. It talked about the Dominion Status of Indian government. Cripps Draft Proposal and Maulana Azad's correspondence can be referred ((Azad, Appendix 2, British Government's Proposals of 29 March 1942, 253-255) for detail study.

#### **Azad on Cripps draft:**

Maulana Azad after reading the draft carefully pointed out following :

1. A proposal for new Executive Council of the Viceroy.
2. All the existing members would resign.
3. Congress and other representative organizations would nominate and then constitute the Executive Council.
4. It would be only for War duration.
5. British Government promised to consider the India's Freedom after the end of war.
6. Instead of British Members, Executive Council would be of Indian Members only. British officers would be secretaries.

7. The system of government would not be changed.

When Maulana Azad sought for the clarifications on the draft, he got received it from Sir Stafford Cripps which can be concluded as below:

- a. Position of Viceroy would be that of a constitution head as King in the UK. His will would play major role in decision making. Council would only work till Viceroy wanted.

b. Viceroy would be bound by the advice of the Council. But it does not necessarily a obligation on him.

c. Power would rest with the Council which was illusion.

d. But no detailed description of India Office was ready with Cripps in the beginning but added that it would be a secretary, position would be of Dominion Secretary. In Later stages of discussion, Cripps said, that any change in the status of India of Office or Secretary of State of India would require new parliamentary enactment.

e. Cripps gave ambiguous reply on individual decision-making power of council during war.

f. Cripps didn't mention that Viceroy would have final say.

g. Cripps advised Maulana Azad to accept the proposal at its face and cooperate Britain in war. Freedom of India would be assured after war.

h. Cripps was inclined to look at the things from his own perspectives. He presented the position in a favourable manner to influence the opponents.

i. Indian members would have responsibility but no power or say regarding war strategies.

j. Cripps focused on communal problem as major hindrance between decision to offer complete freedom before war.

k. the rights given to Provinces to opt out suggest the separation.

l. There was vague definition of powers given to Indian Members. Congress denied that Members would be responsible for Public relations and other duties. Cripps reserved all important strategic and defence functions with Commander-in-Chief.

m. Maulana Azad thought that difference between League and Congress were not postponing the Indian Independence. But British did not want to risk anything during the war.

Maulana Azad after second meeting with Sir Stafford Cripps put the facts as below:

1. I now clearly saw that the British Cabinet was not prepared to give freedom to India during the war. The British felt that to do so would be to take risk, and they were not prepared to take it.

2. Circumstances of the war and specially American pressure had brought about a slight modification in the British position. Even the Churchill Government now felt that India must be given an opportunity of cooperating in the war on a voluntary basis. This was the reason why

they were prepared to set up a purely Indian Executive Council and to give it as much power as possible. In law the council would, however, remain only a council and not a Cabinet.

3. It was possible that in actual practice the Viceroy would adopt a liberal attitude and normally accept the decisions of the Council. The position of the Council would, however, remain subordinate to him, and the final responsibility would rest on him and not on the Council.

4. It therefore followed that the answer to the basic question raised by the Working Committee as to who would have the ultimate decision was that it would be the Viceroy.

5. So far as the future was concerned, it was possible that the British Government would, in the words of Cripps, consider the Indian problem from a fresh angle but it could not be said with any certainty that India would become independent with the cessation of hostilities.

6. There was of a course a strong possibility that after the war there might be a new government in place of the Conservative Government headed by Mr. Churchill. It was possible that such a Government would consider the Indian question in a spirit of greater understanding and sympathy but obviously such a contingency could not be a part of the proposals.

7. The result therefore was that if the Congress accepted the Cripps offer, it would be without any clear assurance about the future of India even after the cessation of hostilities. (Azad 54-55)

Thus, Maulana Azad put his views regarding the various interviews and discussion sessions with Sir Stafford Cripps and Mission.

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### **10.3 Learning Outcomes**

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After studying this unit students would be able to:

- Discuss the various aspects of Maulana Azad's emergence as a political activist and Congress Leader
- Think and debate over the dimensions of Indian political scenario from the perspective of Maulana Azad
- Contemplate on contemporary political, electoral and constitutional aspects of British Government and India's participation into.

- Correlate the development of events leading towards Freedom of India till Cripps Mission
- Scrutinize the various perspectives of Cripps Mission and Maulana Azad's insights into it
- Analyse and interpret the international politics during Second World War and problems of Indian independence movement

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## 10.4 Glossary

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**Khilafat Movement:** A movement initiated to support the Khalifa of Turkey

**Non-cooperation:** Civil Disobedience movement to protest the British Government through non-cooperation in various administrative, political and social sphere under British Raj

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## 10.5 Sample Questions

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### 10.5.1 Objective Questions:

(A) Choose the correct option from given below

1. Maulana Azad dedicated *India Wins Freedom* to -----

- |                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| (a) Jawaharlal Nehru | (b) Mahatma Gandhi |
| (c) C.R. Das         | (d) None           |

2. Azad's forefathers came to India from -----

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| (a) Gaza  | (b) Heart  |
| (c) Mecca | (d) Madina |

3. Azad's father settled in \_\_\_\_\_ at the age of 25.

- |           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| (a) Delhi | (b) Calcutta |
| (c) Mecca | (d) Cairo    |

4. Azad was impressed by ----- writings on modern education.

- |                    |                           |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| (a) Mahatma Gandhi | (b) Sir Sayyed Ahmad Khan |
| (c) Tolstoy        | (d) Nelson Mandela        |

5. Mahatma Gandhi supported ----- for Turkey's future.



- (a) Non-Cooperation                      (b) Civil Disobedience  
(c) Khilafat                                (d) None

**(B)** State whether given statements are True or False

1. Al-Hilal Press was confiscated in 1915. (True or False)
2. First Journal of Al-Hilal was published in June 1912. (True or False)
3. Al-Balagh was started after five months of Al-Hilal confiscation in 1915.  
(True or False)
4. Government of India Act was passed in 1935. (True or False)
5. Prince of Wales came to India in 1921. (True or False)

**10.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. Write the significance of name 'AZAD'.
2. Maulana Azad's views on Modern Education
3. Maulana Azad's stand on participation in WW-II
4. Mahatma Gandhi's stand on participation in WW-II
5. Maulana Azad's experiences of Pro-changers and No-changers groups in Congress

**10.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Write a note on Sir Stafford Cripps Proposal
2. Discuss Maulana Azad's observation on Cripps proposal
3. Explain the dilemma and difference of opinion between Mahatma Gandhi & Maulana Azad

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**10.6 Suggested Readings**

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1. Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam. India Wins Freedom. Orient Blackswan: Hyderabad, 1959.

## Unit – 11: India Wins Freedom (Section - 2)

### Structure

**11.0** Introduction

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### 11.0 Introduction

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This unit consists of Selection1 which comprises Chapters VII-X11 from Maulana Azad's book *India wins Freedom*. Chapter VII discusses the reason of the failure of the Cripps Mission. It also raises apprehensions of Maulana Azad in case of Japanese invasion of India. Chapter VIII describes the consequences which led to the call for Quit India Movement. Chapter IX deals with the activities of the Congress leaders during their detention at Ahmednagar Fort Jail and the events that took place during this time. Chapter X discusses the reasons that led to the organization of Simla Conference and the significant decisions taken in the conference. Chapter XI describes the Labour Party's call for elections in India and Azad's supervision of the formation of the ministries in all the provinces subsequently. Chapter XII analyzes the plan of Azad for resolving the communal issue and British Cabinet Mission's scheme of dividing the country into zones.

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## 11.1 Objectives

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- To find out the reasons for the failure of the Cripps Mission.
- To know apprehensions of Maulana Azad in case of Japanese invasion of India.
- To find out the reasons for differences of opinion between Gandhiji and Azad.
- To understand the significance of the resolution passed by Congress Working Committee on 14 July 1942.
- To understand the consequences of the resolution passed by Congress Working Committee on 14 July 1942.
- To know the events that unfolded during Congress leaders' detention at Ahmednagar Fort Jail.
- To prove Simla Conference as a significant event in Indian political history.
- To explain the origin and aims of the Muslim League.
- To know the circumstances that led to General elections in India in 1945-46.
- To understand the Plan of the British Cabinet Mission.

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## 11.2 India Wins Freedom (Section - 2)

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### 11.2.1 Uneasy Interval:

The failure of the Cripps Mission disappointed Indian people. Many Indians felt that the Churchill Cabinet had sent Sir Stafford only due to pressure of America and China. Mr. Churchill infact had no intention to recognize Indian freedom. Negotiations were carried out to prove that Congress was not the true representative of India and British could not hand over the power to India as Indians were not united. The Congressmen were confused. So Maulana Azad called a meeting of the All India Congress Committee which was held from 29 April to 2 May 1942, at Allahabad preceded by a meeting of the Working Committee from 27 April to 1 May 1942 at Wardha.

In the meeting of the All India Congress Committee, Maulana Azad reminded the members that the British government had decided to adopt a new approach to the Indian

problem. Sir Stafford Cripps, a member of the War Cabinet would come to India with proposals to settle Indian problem. The Working Committee at Wardha decided that Congress President would meet Sir Stafford on behalf of Congress. Accordingly, Maulana Azad held consultations with Sir Stafford and told him that the draft declaration was not acceptable. It proposed that defence would be the responsibility of government in England. This would make the transfer of power to India senseless. Maulana Azad further informed the Committee that the Cripps offer could be considered only on the condition whether it would transfer power to India. He was sure that communal and other Indian problems could be solved once political power is transferred to India.

Some members of AICC believed that the Cripps Mission changed the attitude of the people towards the war. However, Maulana Azad considered this view as wrong and misleading. He opined that the Cripps Mission had further damaged Indo-British relations. Sir Stafford Cripps attempted to shift the responsibility of dealing with the Indian situation to Indian leaders. This was not acceptable to Maulana Azad.

Maulana Azad then discussed the possibility of Japanese invasion. He criticized those who believed that Japan would give India freedom. To him, Japanese invasion would be another kind of imperialism, which Indians should resist. As India was not a free country, armed resistance was denied to it. However, Azad opined that India could adopt non-violent approach and oppose Japanese aggression. The AICC agreed with the stand of the Working Committee. It also intended to empower the Working Committee to take necessary action to continue struggle for Indian freedom.

Maulana Azad then returned to Calcutta from Allahabad. He found the situation worsening there. Majority of the people believed that the British would lose the war. But they could not imagine the consequences of Japanese invasion.

After departure of Cripps, Maulana Azad observed a change in Gandhiji's attitude. Earlier, Gandhiji was opposed to any movement during the war as he did not want to leave the path of non-violence. It was with great difficulty that Maulana Azad could persuade him to agree to the civil disobedience movement. But Gandhiji laid down many conditions. In June 1942, when Maulana Azad went to Wardha and stayed with Gandhiji for five days, he realized that Gandhiji now agreed to organize mass movement.

Maulana Azad realized that the government anticipated Japan would attack India. They thought that Japanese would first try to occupy Bengal. Azad came to know that the government had decided to leave Calcutta if such a situation arose. A secret circular was issued to officers instructing them to leave Calcutta at certain stages and follow specific routes. The government had also worked out resistance plan at different places. They planned to blow important bridges and destroy factories so that Japanese could not capture it. It was also decided to destroy Iron & Steel Factory at Jamshedpur, which created unrest there.

Maulana Azad informed about these developments to Gandhiji. He wanted to oppose Japanese by any means. He thought that it would be more difficult to overthrow new Japanese rule. Hence, he asked the Congress organization to build up public resistance against the Japanese. He divided Calcutta into wards and recruited dedicated volunteers who would oppose Japanese aggression. They were instructed to obstruct Japanese army, in case they advance. Maulana Azad felt that as soon as the Japanese army reached Bengal and the British army withdrew towards Bihar, Congress should immediately take control of the country with the help of volunteers. In this way, India could resist new imperialism and gain freedom.

However, Gandhiji did not agree with Maulana Azad. He felt that the Japanese army would be the enemy of the British not Indians. He thought that if the British left immediately, Japanese would not attack India. Sardar Patel also held the same view.

Congress Working Committee met at Wardha in the first week of July. Gandhiji spoke to Maulana Azad about Quit India Movement. Maulana Azad was in dual mind. He believed that it was impossible to cooperate with the British as they wanted Indians to be just camp followers. Japanese had occupied Burma and were moving towards Assam. Maulana Azad felt that Indians should not speak anything or take any action that could encourage the Japanese. It would be better only to wait and see how the war situation develops. However, Gandhiji did not agree. He believed that it was the right time to ask the British to leave India. If the British agree, Japanese can be asked not to advance further. Even if Japan advance, then India could oppose them with all strength. However, Maulana Azad believed that the British would not tolerate an organized mass resistance, contrary to Gandhiji's views. Gandhiji had no clear idea about the programme of resistance when Maulana Azad asked him about it. He mentioned that people should resist arrest this time.

However, Maulana Azad doubted Japanese intentions. He believed that the British withdrawal would provide Japanese an opportunity to occupy India. So he could not agree with Gandhiji's stand. Gandhiji thought that the British would regard mass movement as a warning and not take any action. He then would get time to work out plans for the movement. But Maulana Azad differed from Gandhiji's views. He thought that government would arrest Gandhiji and other Congress leaders once they pass a resolution for launching mass movement. The movement would then become directionless and the people will not withstand Japanese attack. The only way movement could be successful was if Gandhian way of non-violence is abandoned. Maulana Azad thought that people should be encouraged to carry on the movement, whether in violent or non-violent way.

Maulana Azad discussed these possibilities with the Congress Working Committee. Only Nehru supported Maulana Azad, Sardar Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Acharya Kriplani had no clear idea about the war and supported Gandhiji's stand. They believed that Gandhiji would find a way out to make the movement a success just as he led the Salt Satyagraha Movement in 1930 successfully. But Maulana Azad was not satisfied with these views.

Gandhiji believed that the British could negotiate if the movement is launched. He held that they would not take risk during war times and specially if Japanese attack India. However, Azad could not understand how non-violent movement could be maintained in war times. Differences between Azad and Gandhiji widened. Gandhiji wrote a letter to Azad stating that he and Nehru must resign from the Working Committee if Congress wanted Gandhiji to lead the movement. Sardar Patel was shocked to read the letter and protested against this action. He felt that resignation of Azad and Nehru would be disastrous for Congress. Gandhiji later changed his mind and withdrew the letter.

Then the discussions were held regarding the proposed movement. Gandhiji made it clear that the movement would be non-violent. In fact, Nehru clarified that what Gandhiji meant was an open rebellion which was endorsed by Gandhiji. On 14 July 1942, the Working Committee passed a resolution stating that British rule in India must end immediately. It suggested that freedom of India is necessary for safety of the world and ending all forms of imperialism.

It mentioned that Congress always followed the policy of non-violence. But the Cripps proposals proved that there was no change in British government's attitude towards India.

Further, the Congress Working Committee viewed Japanese threat seriously. The communal problem would be settled peacefully. It maintained India will allow the army forces of the Allied in India to resist Japanese aggression. Further Indo-British ties would be strengthened and those Britishers who want to live in India can do so. This resolution was referred to AICC for final decision which was supposed to meet on 7 August 1942 in Bombay.

### **11.2.2 Quit India:**

The publication of the resolution of CWC made the people think that Congress would launch a mass movement to force the British to leave India. The people and the government described it as 'Quit India' resolution. People had faith in Gandhiji's leadership and felt that he would force the government to negotiate. Some even thought that Gandhiji would free India by some magic and there was no need to make special effort for it. The Working Committee then decided to wait for the government reaction. If government accepted the demand, there would be further discussions. Otherwise, movement will be launched under Gandhiji's leadership. However, Maulana Azad was sure that government would not come to terms in those circumstances.

Foreign press came to Wardha and wanted to know the plans of the Working Committee. On 15<sup>th</sup> July, Gandhiji held a press conference and informed that the proposed movement would be non-violent. After the resolution was passed, Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji's secretary asked Miss Slade to meet the Viceroy and explain the resolution. Miss Slade, also popularly known as Mira Ben, was the daughter of a British admiral who became a staunch disciple of Gandhiji. Miss Slade went to meet the Viceroy but he refused to meet her. He stated that the government would not tolerate any rebellion during the war. Miss Slade informed about the British stand to both Maulana Azad and Gandhiji. Soon, Mahadev Desai issued a statement that Gandhiji was misunderstood and never wanted a non-violent rebellion against the British. This surprised Maulana Azad. He thought that Gandhiji could have evolved own meaning of 'open non-violent rebellion' but people perceived that the Congress now resolved to force the British Government to quit power. Maulana Azad was not surprised by the Viceroy's stand as he had anticipated it. Then, a meeting of the AICC was called at Bombay on 7 August 1942 to discuss the situation.

Maulana Azad then held several meetings with Congress leaders of the country. He wanted to make them understand that the movement would develop according to Gandhiji's

instructions if the government accepts the demand. But if Gandhiji and other Congress leaders are arrested, people should be free to adopt any approach for struggle. If the leaders are free, they would be responsible for the course of events. However, the government should own responsibility for the consequences if leaders are arrested. Maulana Azad felt that the movement would be strong in Bengal, Bihar, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces, Bombay and Delhi. He thought that direct action was not possible in Assam as it was the centre of British war effort.

The refusal of the Viceroy to meet Miss Stalin led Gandhiji to believe that the government would not easily come to terms. But unlike Azad, he still thought that government would not take any drastic action which would allow him to built up the movement. Then Maulana Azad informed Gandhiji that the government would take action immediately after the meeting of AICC at Bombay. But Gandhiji asked him to be patient. When Maulana Azad arrived at Bombay, he came to know that the government will arrest all the leaders as soon as the resolution was passed.

The Working Committee met on 5 August and prepared a draft resolution to be placed before the AICC. Maulana Azad explained the reasons which led the Working Committee to plan a struggle for India's freedom. It was necessary for the country to develop strength to resist Japanese aggression. Many members of the AICC supported the resolution but few communists opposed it. A resolution which backed the stand of the Working Committee was passed with great majority on 8 August.

Maulana Azad would stay at the residence of Bhulabhai Desai during his visits to Bombay. When he visited Bombay that time, the disturbed Bhulabhai told that Azad's friend Mohammed Taher informed him that all Congress leaders would be arrested and probably taken to South Africa. Maulana Azad's doubts were confirmed when he came to know that South African government was approached for the purpose. But the decision was changed and the government planned to imprison Gandhiji at Poona and the other leaders at Ahmednagar Fort Jail. As per the decision, Maulana Azad began writing a letter to be sent to President Roosevelt along with a copy of the resolution, but could not finish it due to drowsiness. Soon the Deputy Commissioner of Police came with a warrant to arrest Azad. He was taken to the Victoria Terminus. Azad realized that the government had arrested the members of the Working



Committee as well as the Bombay Congress leaders. Jawaharlal Nehru, Asaf Ali, Dr. Syed Mahmud and Gandhiji were also brought to the Victoria Terminus. But Gandhiji was put in the different compartment.

Gandhiji sent Mrs. Naidu to call other leaders as he wanted to meet them. When they went to meet him, Gandhiji looked very depressed. His perception proved wrong and he was not sure what to do then. Gandhiji asked Azad to inform the government that he wished to continue as Congress president and private secretary and other facilities should be provided to him. But Azad chose not to make an issue for personal facilities in the present situation. Then the Bombay Police Commissioner came there and asked the leaders to return to their compartment. The news of the arrest of the leaders reached Poona and people gathered on the platform. People started shouting slogans. The Commissioner ordered lathi charge on the people as government had ordered that no demonstrations or slogans would be permitted. Jawaharlal Nehru and Shankar Rao Deo came out of the train and argued with the police. Maulana Azad persuaded them to come back. Then Mrs. Naidu and Gandhiji were taken out of the train and detained at Aga Khan Palace at Poona. Azad and other leaders were brought to Ahmednagar Fort Jail and handed over to the military authorities.

### **11.2.3 Ahmednagar Fort Jail:**

Nehru, Sardar Patel, Asaf Ali, Shankar Rao Deo, Govind Ballabh Pant, Dr. Patabhi Sitaramayya, Dr. Syed Mahmud, Acharya Kripalani, Dr. Profulla Ghosh and Rajen Babu were the members of the Working Committee who were imprisoned at Ahmednagar Fort Jail. Foreign prisoners were kept there during the First World War. Maulana Azad was not allowed to carry radio with him. Azad and other leaders were served dinner on iron platters to which Azad objected. The cook could not prepare food according to their taste. The place of detention was a secret. Azad was not surprised by the government action. The Inspector - General of Prisons, Bombay informed the leaders that they could neither write nor receive letters from relatives and friends. They could not be supplied with newspapers. These were restrictions imposed by the government. As the Inspector-General was a physician, he wanted to examine Azad medically. But Azad did not agree. The government knew that he was suffering from influenza.

The leaders were totally cut off from the world. They felt that they should indulge in some activities to maintain health and spirits. They would gather in Azad's room to discuss

various topics. Nehru proposed that they should develop a garden which could beautify the place and keep them busy.

The leaders did not know the name of Superintendent of Jail and wanted to give him a name. Azad remembered that an Abyssinian Jailor, Cheeta Khan supervised during detention of Chand Bibi in the same jail. He proposed that the present Superintendent should be called Cheeta Khan and everybody agreed.

On 25 August, Maulana Azad wrote a letter of complaint to the Viceroy about the treatment meted out to imprisoned leaders. Azad particularly complained about the denial of their right to correspond. Azad threatened to take some action if the issue could not be addressed by the government. On 10 September, government issued orders that they could correspond once a week. They were also provided a copy of *Times of India* regularly. Then Azad came to know about the events in the country and about the war. His apprehensions about the impact of their arrest proved correct. Bengal, Bihar, W.P. and Bombay took lead in the freedom struggle. Communications were disrupted and factories closed down. Police stations were burnt and railway stations attacked. In other words, the movement was no longer non-violent as anticipated by Azad.

In February 1943, Gandhiji proposed to undertake a fast for twenty one days for self-purification. Azad was convinced that Gandhiji wanted to fast because he regretted that his belief that government would not arrest the Congress leaders suddenly, went wrong. The Government believed that Gandhiji could not withstand fast at his age and must have planned to held government responsible for his death. However, the government was firm and planned for cremation in case Gandhiji dies. Meanwhile, Dr. B.C. Roy requested the government to be Gandhiji's physician during his fast. Even physicians thought Gandhiji would not live but he survived.

The news of Azad's arrest shocked his wife and her health worsened. In 1944, physicians requested the government to allow Azad to meet his wife but they ignored it. Azad himself requested in vain to the Viceroy to meet his wife. Later, Cheeta Khan informed Azad that his wife died. After three months, his sister Abru Begum also passed away.

Meanwhile, Azad came to know that Gandhiji was released. Azad perceived that Gandhiji must have thought that a change in British policy must have led to his release.

However, it was not the case. The government realized that Gandhiji would not survive and did not want that it should be blamed for his death. Moreover, war crisis was over and the government thought that Gandhiji alone cannot be a threat to them, with other leaders being in jail. Gandhiji took treatment for his ailments for some months. After little recovery, he tried to reach understanding with Muslim League and met Mr. Jinnah. He also negotiated with the government. He assured them of support in the war if India is given freedom. Azad was sure that Gandhiji's efforts would not be successful.

Azad believed that Gandhiji's approach to Mr. Jinnah gave importance to him, which he later exploited. Mr. Jinnah lost his political significance when he left Congress. Muslims were also doubtful about Mr. Jinnah and his policy. But Gandhiji's move changed their attitude and they thought only Jinnah can reach beneficial settlement. Gandhiji referred to Mr. Jinnah as 'Qaid-i-Azam' or great leader in his letter. Miss Amtus Salam asked Gandhiji to address him as 'Qaid-i-Azam' as he was addressed so in Urdu newspapers. But its consequences were dangerous. The letter was published in the press and people thought that Jinnah really must be a great leader. Azad believed that Gandhiji made a great mistake. Jinnah exploited the situation and strengthened his position.

Gandhiji's attempt to cooperate with the British caused misunderstanding among Indian people. The reversal of his stand on non-violence made the British think that he wanted to gain sympathy of the government. The government did not pay attention to his offer. Sardar Patel, Acharya Kripalani, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Dr. Profulla Ghosh wanted to resign from the Congress Working Committee on the issue of support to British war effort. They informed Azad that non-violence was more important for them than even Indian freedom. When India became free in 1947, these leaders wanted to bring army under the control of the government of India. In fact, they wanted to increase expenditure on armed forces. Earlier, these leaders would blindly follow Gandhiji, which Azad did not approve. Only Nehru shared Azad's views.

In 1944, it seemed that allied forces will emerge victorious. Hitler's attack on Russia led to his downfall as expected by Azad. Later, the government released Dr. Syed Mahmud on health grounds. The government wanted to cut off the leaders' contact with the outside world. So they were kept under military control at Ahmednagar fort jail. The government then decided to shift these leaders to different places and keep this a secret.

In 1945, Lord Wavell discussed Indian situation with authorities in London. The Viceroy assured to solve Indian political problem. It was decided that a conference would be held at Simla and all political parties would be invited. Congress leaders will be released. People celebrated the release of Azad which he did not like.

#### **11.2.4 The Simla Conference:**

America realized that India will not cooperate in the war effort unless solution to its political problem is found. America became directly involved in the war after Japan attacked Pearl Harbour. President Roosevelt asked Churchill to grant freedom to India. He hoped that India would accept the Cripps offer and join the war on their side but the Cripps Mission failed.

American political leaders expressed their unhappiness at the arrest of Congress leaders in August 1942. It was decided to organize a Round Table Conference. America wanted to defeat Japan which had occupied Burma, Singapore and Indonesia. It realized that Indian help will enable them to defeat Japan. So it pressurized British government to free India.

American journalists met Azad to know the response of the Congress to the Viceroy's offer. Azad informed that India would not be interested in fighting a war for the British. Atlantic Charter assured that all nations would be free to decide their future. But Churchill stated that this charter would not be applicable to India. Azad told the journalists that free India would join the war and send young men to the war.

On 14 June 1945, Mr. L.S. Amery, Secretary of State for India declared that India will decide about the war and the representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League will be asked to form the government. This led the people to believe that freedom is assured and Congress should accept the offer. Azad assured that he will ensure Congress discharge its responsibility. Azad was invited to attend the Round Table conference. The committee authorized him to represent Congress at the conference.

The Viceroy informed Azad that Executive Council would comprise of India leaders and the Viceroy had to act according to its advice. He wanted that India should cooperate with the British in their war effort. He also suggested that Congress and the Muslim League should reach an understanding. But Azad affirmed that agreement with League seems impossible as it had the support of the government. The Viceroy assured that the government would remain neutral. Azad found Viceroy's proposal similar to the Cripps offer. The marked difference was this time

the government sought Indian help despite being close to victory. Azad suggested that he would discuss the proposal with the Working Committee and then place it at the Round Table Conference. Accordingly he called a meeting of the Working Committee in Simla.

Azad did not doubt Wavell's intentions and wanted the committee to accept his proposal. On the other hand, Lord Wavell spoke highly about Azad. People then admired Congress and Azad gained more respect and recognition. The Working Committee met and decided to accept offer of Wavell on certain conditions. They wanted a clear stand on the composition of Executive Council, nature of the army and right of the legislature council to decide about the war. Gandhiji and other members of Working Committee did not raise the issue of non-violence.

The leaders of all the parties attended the Round Table Conference. The Viceroy gave positive response to the three demands raised by Azad. Press release on the discussions in the conference was issued on the advice of Azad. The differences between Congress and the Muslim League became apparent. The conference agreed on the issue of representation for minorities, support of the war effort and the functioning of the reconstituted Executive Council till the end of the war. Mr. Jinnah demanded that Congress could nominate all the Hindu members while the League could nominate all the Muslim members. Azad pointed out that Congress would never accept such a demand and it should have right to nominate any Indian irrespective of religion.

The Simla conference is a significant event in Indian political history. Negotiations failed for the first time due to communal issues. The aims of Muslim League was responsible for it. Muslim League was established with an aim to develop a feeling of loyalty to the British government and protect interests and rights of Muslims. So they opposed the Congress demand for freedom out of fear that the British will not give them representation in elective bodies and services. The League could not tolerate the growing stature of Congress and the reputation it gained during World War I. Mr. Jinnah became the leader of the League and aimed to take advantage of the differences between Congress and the government. It seemed that the League acted according to the wishes of the government.

Lord Wavell stated that the issue regarding the composition of Executive Council should be settled between Congress and the Muslim League. Azad, Nehru and Sardar Patel were the obvious Congress representatives in the council. However, Azad wanted to nominate one Parsee member because he felt that Parsees were affected by the Congress decision in 1937 to ban the

sale of wine. He also wished to nominate one Christian member as he thought that the community had always supported Congress in their struggle. Since the list submitted by the Congress contained only two Hindus, it showed that Congress was truly a national organization. Azad felt that the League was stupid in opposing the Congress as the two Muslims, one supported by Wavell and the other by Congress and five Muslim members of the League would have made Muslim nomination half in the Council.

Azad then held a press conference and explained the stand of Congress and the position taken by Mr. Jinnah. He clarified that the new Indian government would not support any European rule in South-East Asian countries. He regarded Jinnah responsible for the failure of the conference. However, Azad mentioned that Mrs. Asaf Ali worked to built up a resistance against the British war effort. She emerged as a strong leader who even collected money for the nationalist purpose.

#### **11.2.5 General Elections:**

As Azad was ill, doctor advised him to visit Kashmir for a change. Nehru also wanted change and decided to go to Kashmir. In Kashmir, Azad came to know that the Labour Party emerged victorious in the general elections of Britain. Azad congratulated Mr. Atlee and Sir Stafford Cripps and was positive that the Labour Party would keep its promise given to India when it was an opposition party. Mr. Atlee and Sir Stafford Cripps assured Azad that they would settle the Indian problem. However, Gandhiji and Nehru did not like Azad's correspondence as they were not sure about the approach of the Labour Party.

Then the Viceroy announced that general elections will be held in India in winter. So the meeting of the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. was called to decide the stance of Congress after the failure of the Simla Conference. Some members suggested to start a new movement while others called for boycott of elections. Azad could not agree to both these decisions.

Meanwhile, Americans dropped atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It caused great destruction. The Japanese surrendered. But Azad thought that the use of atom bombs on Japan was not justified. World Condemned Germany's use of poison against Allies but ignored America's act of destruction.

On 10 September, Azad reached Delhi by a military plane and started for Poona. The Working Committee met at Poona on 14 September and later at Bombay. There was a discussion

on new policy of Congress. Majority of the members wanted to start a movement. But Azad convinced them that Congress would participate in the general elections.

Later, Azad took up the cause of releasing political prisoners. Lord Wavell agreed to his demand. However, some leftist workers of the Congress such as Jai Prakash Narain, Ramanandan Mishra were not released. Azad again pursued the matter and all were released.

The A.I.C.C. decided that the Working Committee should prepare an election manifesto and place before it. The Working Committee prepared the manifesto. The manifesto highlighted the growth and contribution of Congress in the freedom struggle. It mentioned that Congress stood for equal rights and opportunity for every citizen of India, irrespective of gender, caste, religion and social status. It aims to protect fundamental rights and civil liberties of all its citizens. It intends to address social problems and work for the modernization of agriculture and industry. It also aims to establish world peace and eliminate imperialism. Lastly, it appealed to the voters to support the Congress candidates.

Elections were held and Congress gained majority in all the provinces except Bengal, the Punjab and Sind. The Muslim League got more seats in Bengal, Punjab and Sind because Muslim population was more in these areas and it aroused communal feelings.

Meanwhile, Indian communists supported British war effort. Mr. M.N. Roy took funds from the government and mobilized Indian support in war. The government lifted the ban on Communist Party.

During the war, the defence forces recruited young men from different regions and social classes. They joined the forces in the hope that India would be free after the war. The Navy, the Army, the Air Force and even police displayed patriotic spirit. They assured Azad of siding with Congress in case of conflict with the government. The British realized that the masses as well as people in civil and military services desired freedom.

After the general elections, Azad supervised the formation of ministries in all the provinces. He called Muslim League to cooperate in the formation of government. But Mr. Jinnah prevented them from cooperating with the Congress. The Unionist Party led by Khizr Hayat Khan formed the government in Punjab with the help of Azad. Azad was praised for his skills and statesmanship. But some friends and associates of Nehru did not like Azad's cordial relations with Nehru. They argued that the Congress should have united with the Muslim League

in Punjab. They even told Nehru that Azad would soon assume important position in the Congress. Influenced by these views, Nehru then opposed Azad's stand for the first time in the meeting of Congress Working Committee at Bombay. He then expressed fear that the Congress would have to compromise on its principles since it was in minority. Azad tried to clarify that it would not be the case but made clear that the CWC could adopt any new policy it liked. However, Gandhiji supported Azad's stand and Nehru later admitted his mistake.

Meanwhile, Indian Navy resorted to direct action as they faced racial discrimination. Azad considered their action wrong at that time. Mrs. Asaf Ali supported the Navy. Azad then asked the government to look into the grievances of the Navy and resolve them. Otherwise, Congress would take up their cause. The revolt of the Navy was significant as it was the first rebellion of defence forces after 1857.

Earlier, Indian National Army was formed under Subhash Chandra Bose. Later, many officers of the INA were taken as prisoners. Azad decided to undertake the defence of the INA officers. The formation of the INA was a good decision in those circumstances. The Congress argued that the trial of the officers should be public and legal defence should be provided to them. Lord Wavell agreed and the trial was held. Later, all the officers were released.

Azad mentioned that Bhulabhai Desai was a famous lawyer in Bombay. He won the elections and even was a member of CWC. However, some members of Congress were jealous of his rapid progress. Bhulabhai Desai negotiated with Liaquat Ali, Deputy Leader of the Muslim League. Gandhiji gave him permission for the negotiation. However, some members of Congress caused misunderstanding that Bhulabhai had some secret pact with Liaquat Ali. As a result, Bhulabhai was denied Congress ticket in the general elections of 1945-1946. He regretted that Gandhiji did not defend him despite knowing the facts.

#### **11.2.6 The British Cabinet Mission:**

After coming to power, the Labour Cabinet sent a parliamentary delegation to India in the winter of 1945-46. The Delegation submitted the report to the government pointing out that India freedom could not be delayed. The British government then decided to send a Cabinet Mission to solve Indian problem. Azad was happy as the Cabinet Mission comprised of Sir Stafford Cripps also, who was an old friend.



Mr. Atlee pointed out that all Indians irrespective of religion wanted freedom. He stressed that even civil and military forces displayed patriotic spirit. He wanted that social and economic difficulties in India should be settled by Indians.

Azad realized that the political issue was resolved but the communal issue was not settled. He knew that the Muslims were anxious about their future. Azad proposed that Indian diversity needs decentralization of power. It would dissolve the fear of minorities. Azad advocated that autonomy could be provided to provinces in all areas except defence, communications and foreign affairs. He believed that this constitutional provision would remove the doubts of Muslims. Azad held that this arrangement was better even for practical administration. Azad placed this proposal before the Cabinet Mission. The members of the Mission were satisfied with Azad's approach. Azad then discussed the proposal with the Congress Working Committee. He clarified all the doubts of the members of CWC. Finally, the CWC and even Gandhiji agreed with Azad's solution to the political and communal problem. However, Sardar Patel felt that currency and finance, trade and industry also should belong to the centre. But Gandhiji asserted that states could have a unified policy in these matters.

The Muslim League demanded division of India in its Lahore Resolution. Azad put forth his views to the people of India. He pointed out that Jinnah's Pakistan scheme is based on his two-nation theory. He believed that such division of land as pure and impure is against the principles of Islam. He asserted that the division of India would create problems for Muslims. He felt that Muslims in India would find that they have become aliens. He argued that being minority in India, Muslim interests could not be protected. He opined that the Congress scheme of granting autonomy to states could solve the problem. He even considered extremist Hindus responsible for the stand of the Muslim League.

The Muslim League demanded a separate state for the Muslim majority areas. The Cabinet Mission was not in favour of this demand. Meanwhile, Shri Rajagopalachari of Madras started a campaign that partition of the country should be accepted. Gandhiji did not like his activities and prevented him from meeting the members of the Cabinet Mission. Later, the delegation asked the Presidents of the Congress and the Muslim League to nominate their respective representatives to meet them for negotiations. Nehru, Sardar Patel and Azad represented Congress and Gandhiji was also invited for the talks. After discussions, a white

paper was issued which stated the plan and wish to prepare a new constitution for India. The differences between the Congress and the Muslim League persisted.

Meanwhile, the developments in Kashmir complicated the problem. The National Conference wanted political rights for Kashmiri people. Its leader, Sheikh Abdullah used this opportunity to place his demand before the Cabinet Mission. He wanted the Maharaja of Kashmir to quit. However, Maharaja arrested him. It was decided to defend the leaders of the National Congress legally. Nehru and Asaf Ali left for Kashmir to arrange for the defence. However, Maharaja banned their entry into Kashmir. They were arrested while trying to reach Kashmir. Azad did not want the things to complicate over the Kashmir issue at that time. So he requested Nehru to come back and arranged for his release.

The Cabinet Mission agreed with Azad's idea that Defence, Communications and Foreign Affairs should be the subjects of centre. But it added a new element which divided the nation into three zones, A, B & C to assure the minorities. Section B would include Punjab, Sindh, the N.W.F.P. and British Baluchistan constituting a Muslim majority area. Section C included Bengal and Assam where the Muslims were a small majority. It held that this scheme would remove fears of the Muslim League. The Mission agreed with Azad that Muslims in majority provinces can enjoy autonomy. So Azad felt that Congress should accept the scheme. But Jinnah opposed the scheme. The Cabinet Mission could not think of any other solution to the problem. Then even Jinnah advised the Muslim League to accept the scheme. The members of the League met Azad and he convinced them that the scheme offers better terms for Muslims. Regarding India's relation to the Commonwealth, Azad asked the Mission to leave this decision to India.

Both Congress and the Muslim League accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan. So it was a significant event in the history of the freedom movement in India. Indian freedom was thus secured through negotiations and not violence. It seemed that communal problems were sorted out.

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### **11.3 Learning Outcomes**

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- It became known that the Cripps Mission failed because the proposals of Sir Stafford were not acceptable to Congress.

- Maulana Azad's apprehensions regarding Japanese conquest of India convinced the Congress Working Committee to pass a resolution which called for an end to British rule in India.
- The resolution passed by CWC on 14 July 1942 led to the arrest of Congress leaders.
- Gandhiji's fast led to his release from jail. His negotiations with Jinnah gave him importance which he exploited fully.
- Simla Conference was a significant event in Indian history. Negotiations failed for the first time due to communal problems.
- It becomes evident that Labour Party announced general elections which was the first step towards forming a government in free India.
- The Muslim League was established with the aim of safeguarding the interests of Muslims. However, it ended up dividing India and harming the interests of Indian Muslims.
- The British Cabinet Mission worked sincerely to settle the Indian political problem.
- Azad's formula of granting autonomy to provinces was accepted by the British Government as well as the Muslim League.
- The Cabinet Mission proposed to divide the nation into three zones to assure the minorities and remove the fears of the Muslim League.

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## 11.4 Glossary

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<b>Unanimous:</b>	Agreed by everyone
<b>Contingency:</b>	A possible future situation or event
<b>Inimical:</b>	Not friendly, hostile
<b>Interregnum:</b>	An interval between two periods of office
<b>Precipitate:</b>	To make something happen suddenly
<b>Inertia:</b>	An inability to move or change
<b>Contemptuous:</b>	Scornful
<b>Abjure:</b>	To promise formally not to accept a belief or a way of behaving
<b>Sabotage:</b>	Damage that is done secretly to prevent an enemy from being successful
<b>Repercussions:</b>	An unpleasant effect
<b>Penitent:</b>	Sorry for having done something wrong

<b>Tribulations:</b>	Great trouble or sufferings
<b>Jeopardize:</b>	To do something that may damage something or put it at risk
<b>Poignancy:</b>	Feeling of sadness
<b>Conciliatory:</b>	Intended to gain goodwill or favour
<b>Insurrection:</b>	Violent action against the rulers of a country or the government
<b>Premonition:</b>	A feeling that something unpleasant is going to happen in the future
<b>Barrack:</b>	A building in which soldiers live
<b>Retrospect:</b>	A review of a past course of events
<b>Conscription:</b>	Compulsory enrollment of persons especially during the war
<b>Recuperation:</b>	Recover
<b>Intransigent:</b>	Unwilling or refusing to change one's views or to agree about something
<b>Circuitous:</b>	Long and direct
<b>Franchise:</b>	The right to vote in elections
<b>Cessation:</b>	The stopping of something
<b>Sophistries:</b>	False arguments
<b>Acquiesce:</b>	To accept something with argument
<b>Clemency:</b>	Kindness shown to somebody when he/she is being punished
<b>Insinuation:</b>	Suggestion that something unpleasant is true
<b>Decentralization:</b>	The transfer of control of an activity/ organization to several local authorities rather than a single one.

## 11.5 Sample Questions

### 11.5.1 Objective Questions:

- British plans for the destruction of Iron and Steel Factory at ----- created unrest there.
 

(a) Jamshedpur	(b) Ranchi
(c) Allahabad	(d) Bombay
- Salt Satyagraha Movement was launched in -----
 

(a) 1927	(b) 1942
(c) 1930	(d) 1936

3. ----- was the centre of British war effort.  
 (a) Bombay (b) Assam  
 (c) Calcutta (d) Allahabad
4. ----- was arrested at Patna.  
 (a) Asaf Ali (b) RajenBabu  
 (c) Shankar Rao Deo (d) AcharyaKripalani
5. ----- was the only member of the Congress Working Committee who shared Maulana Azad's views.  
 (a) Jawaharlal Nehru (b) Sardar Patel  
 (c) Dr Profulla Ghosh (d) Rajen Babu
6. ----- acted as the secretary to Maulana Azad during the Simla Conference.  
 (a) Sardar Patel (b) Acharya Kripalani  
 (c) Aruna Asaf Ali (d) Humayun Kabir
7. ----- became the Chief Minister of Punjab after General Elections in 1945-46.  
 (a) Khizir Hayat Khan (b) Bhulabhai Desai  
 (c) Khushwant Singh (d) Rajendra Prasad
8. The Labour Cabinet sent a Parliamentary Delegation to India in -----.  
 (a) 1942 (b) 1944  
 (c) 1945-46 (d) 1939
9. Azad met the members of the British Cabinet Mission on -----.  
 (a) 6 April 1946 (b) 12 April 1946  
 (c) May 1945 (d) June 1941
10. ----- was fighting for political rights of Kashmiri people.  
 (a) Nehru (b) Maharaja Hari Singh  
 (c) Sheikh Abdullah (d) Sardar Patel

### **11.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. Why did the Cripps Mission failed?
2. Why direct action was not possible in Assam?
3. What restrictions were imposed on Congress leaders during their detention at Ahmednagar Fort Jail?
4. Why President Roosevelt pressurized Britain to grant freedom to India?

5. What plan did Azad place before the Cabinet Mission?

**11.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Discuss in detail the resolution passed by Congress Working Committee on 14 July 1942.
2. Explain the origin and aims of the Muslim League.
3. Describe the Plan of the British Cabinet Mission.

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**11.6 Suggested Readings**

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1. Chandan, Md. Shahnawaz Khan. "Remembering Maulana Azad when we need him most". thedailystar.net. Feb 22,2021.
2. Khan, Sadiya Rohma. "Remembering the Great Maulana: Abul Kalam Azad". TwoCircles.net. Nov 21, 2020.
3. Parray, Tauseef Ahmed. "Recalling a legend, Abul Kalam Azad". National Herald. 11 Nov 2018.
4. Correspondence between the Viceroy and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, 1945, shelfmark.IOR/L/1/1287.

## **Unit – 12: India Wins Freedom (Section - 3)**

### **Structure**

**12.0** Introduction

**12.1** Objectives

**12.2** India Wins Freedom (Section - 3)

**12.2.1** The Prelude to Partition

**12.2.2** The Interim Government

**12.2.3** The Mountbatten Mission

**12.2.4** The End of a Dream

**12.2.5** Divided India

**12.2.6** Epilogue

**12.3** Learning Outcomes

**12.4** Glossary

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### **12.0 Introduction**

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This unit consists of Selection 3 which comprises Chapters XIII-XVIII from Maulana Azad's book *India wins Freedom*. Chapter XIII discusses the causes for misunderstanding about the intention of Congress regarding Cabinet Mission Plan. Chapter XIV describes the difficulties that interim government faced and the causes for rejection of Cabinet Mission Plan. Chapter XV deals with Mountbatten's role in the partition of India. Chapter XVI discusses the Mountbatten Plan, inevitability of partition and the issues that emerged due to it. Chapter XVII describes the consequences of partition and the role of Azad, Nehru and Gandhiji in controlling communal violence. Chapter XVIII analyzes the situation post-partition and the tragedy of Gandhiji's assassination.

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## 12.1 Objectives

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1. To find out the consequences of Nehru's statement that the Cabinet Mission Plan could be modified.
2. To know the implications of Cabinet Mission Plan as pointed out by Maulana Azad.
3. To discuss the difficulties in the formation of Interim Government.
4. To know the consequences of handing over the Finance Portfolio to the Muslim League.
5. To discuss the Mountbatten Mission.
6. To discuss how efficiently Lord Mountbatten resolved the issues of boundary, division of Army and Civil Services and sharing of finance.
7. To discuss the consequences of partition.
8. To discuss the role of Nehru, Azad, Gandhiji, Sardar Patel and Lord Mountbatten in controlling post-partition violence.
9. To know the conditions laid down by Gandhiji to break his fast.
10. To know the extent of the spread of communalism in India after partition.
11. To discuss how the creation of a new State was incompatible for the people of Pakistan.

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## 12.2 India Wins Freedom (Section 3)

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### 12.2.1 The Prelude to Partition:

Maulana Azad was elected President of Congress for a period of one year in 1939. But due to war and other circumstances, election could not be held and Azad continued as President till 1946. The issue of election of Congress President arose when the situation returned to normalcy. It was demanded that Azad should be selected as Congress President since he negotiated with Cripps, Lord Wavell and the Cabinet Mission successfully and almost solved the political problem in Simla Conference. However, there were differences of opinion among Congress men. Sardar Patel and his friends wanted that Patel should be elected as Congress President. So Azad decided that he will not allow his name to be proposed as President. Gandhiji wanted Patel as the President while others wanted either Patel or Acharya Kripalani as the



President. But Azad thought that the new President should carry forward his policy. So he proposed Nehru for the post which was accepted.

The CWC met on 6 July 1946 and drafted resolutions to be placed before the AICC. Azad moved a resolution on the Cabinet Mission Plan and spoke about its features. But leftists opposed the plan. However, Azad convinced the gathering that the plan paved the way for freedom without violence. So the British Cabinet Plan was accepted by AICC.

Jawaharlal Nehru held a press conference on 10 July 1946 and stated that the Congress could modify the Cabinet Mission Plan if it felt so. Azad considered Nehru's view wrong as Congress agreed that the central government would be federal and the British Cabinet Mission's decision to divide the country into three zones was also accepted. Modification to this plan cannot be made without the consent of the parties involved. Even Jinnah accepted the plan because he cannot extract more. So Nehru's statement shocked him. He then demanded a review of the situation. He stated that the Muslim League accepted the plan as it would form the basis of constitution of India. He thought that Nehru's view that Congress could change the plan through its majority in the Assembly would mean that minorities depend on the majority. He perceived that Nehru's statement indicate that Congress rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan. So he wanted that the Viceroy should invite the Muslim League to form the government. Jinnah again raised the demand for Pakistan in the meeting of the Muslim League. The League rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan and decided to take direct action for establishing Pakistan.

Azad was disturbed by the development. He thought that the plan he devised was about to fail. So he called the meeting of the Congress Working Committee to take the earlier stand. The CWC believed that condemning President's statement would weaken the organization but dismissing the Cabinet Mission Plan would destroy the country. Hence it drafted the resolution which reaffirmed the decision of the AICC. However, Mr. Jinnah did not relent and continued to doubt the intentions of Congress. As the CWC accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan, the Viceroy invited Nehru to form an interim government at the centre. Nehru requested Jinnah to cooperate but he refused.

Jinnah called for a 'Direct Action Day' on 16 August 1946. The Bengal Government declared 16 August a public holiday. Congress opposed this decision in vain. 16 August was a black day in the history of India. There were riots in Calcutta. Many people were killed and

properties destroyed. The League took out the procession which later began to loot. Both the communities committed arson. Sarat Chandra Bose, the leader of the Bengal Congress asked the Governor to control the situation. However, the military and the police did not take any action. The events made peaceful solution between Congress and the Muslim League impossible. Azad regarded Nehru's statement about the Constituent Assembly which provided Jinnah an opportunity, as responsible for the whole situation.

According to Azad, Nehru's liking for abstract theory led to his statement about the Constituent Assembly. He committed the same mistake in 1937, when the first elections were held. In these elections, the Muslim League could not win more seats except in Bombay and UP. The Muslim League could get majority in UP due to the support of Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind. The Jamiat supported the League hoping that it would cooperate with Congress. Azad spoke to Chaudhari Khaliquzzaman and Nawab Ismail Khan, the leaders of the Muslim League who assured of cooperation with the Congress. They expected entry into the government. Azad made them sign the document assuring support for the Congress programme. Later, Nehru informed that only one of them could be inducted into the ministry. They rejected the offer. Azad believed that the Muslim League would have merged with Congress if these two leaders would have been accommodated in the ministry. Nehru's action reenergized the Muslim League and gave Jinnah an opportunity to exploit the situation.

Azad tried hard to make Nehru change his stand. He pointed out that Nehru made a mistake in not inducting Muslim League into the ministry. He even warned Nehru that this would create difficulties in gaining freedom. However, Nehru did not agree. He argued that the Muslim League could not get more than one seat in the Cabinet on the basis of its strength. Then Azad went to Gandhiji to make him persuade Nehru to change his stand. Even Gandhiji was not able to convince Nehru. So there was no compromise in UP which gave Jinnah an advantage. He was able to win back his supporters who were about to leave him.

However, Azad pointed out that Nehru probably never expected that the Muslim League would take direct action. Since Jinnah was a lawyer, he thought that the British government would hold the talks again after the League rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan. But this did not happen. Irritated Jinnah must have then decided to resort to direct action for achieving his objective.

### **12.2.2 The Interim Government:**

Congress gave the responsibility of forming the interim government to the Parliamentary Committee. Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Rajendra Prasad and even Gandhiji wanted Maulana Azad to join the government. But Azad refused on the ground that he would serve the country better by remaining outside the government. Instead he recommended that Asaf Ali be taken into the cabinet. Azad later regretted his decision of not joining the government.

Azad made a demand again for inclusion of a Parsee in the Cabinet. Sardar Patel was given the responsibility to choose a Parsee representative. He chose Mr. C.H. Bhabha who was neither a leader nor a true representative of Parsees but only a son of his friend. Later Mr. C.H. Bhabha came out of the government. It was also decided to include experienced economist as India's first Finance Minister. Dr. John Matthai who was not a Congressman was selected as a Finance Minister.

The Muslim League was not satisfied with the British. Its attempts to demonstrate failed. Lord Wavell convinced Mr. Jinnah and the League joined the Interim Government. Lord Wavell informed Azad that the participation of the Muslim League in the Govt. was necessary to execute Cabinet Mission Plan and stop communal trouble. Azad stated that the Muslim League could function in the Constituent Assembly. Jinnah was not happy with the experienced leaders of the Muslim League such as Khwaja Nazimuddin of Bengal and Nawab Ismail Khan of U.P. So he did not include them in the list of nominees for the Executive Council. He nominated Liaquat Ali, I.I. Chundrigar, Abdur Rab Nishtar, Ghaznafar Ali, Jogendra Nath Mandal and others. The representation of Jogendra Nath Mandal was surprising and reversal of his earlier stand. Jogendra Nath was not a popular leader. But he was made a Law Member. His British secretary was not satisfied with his working style.

Congress reconstituted the Government to include the nominees of the Muslim League. It decided to drop Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Sir Shafat Ahmed Khan and Syed Ali Zaheer for the purpose. Lord Wavell suggested that one important ministry should be given to the League and Congress should offer Home Ministry to it. Azad too felt that the centre would not have much scope in Home Affairs as it was a provincial subject. But Sardar Patel who was a Home Member opposed the suggestion. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai suggested that Finance Ministry should be given to the Muslim League. He believed that the League would refuse this offer as no member of the

League was able to handle finance. Azad felt that Finance portfolio is key to the government and it would be a mistake to hand it over to the League. But Sardar Patel supported Kidwai's proposal and Lord Wavell informed Jinnah about this offer. Jinnah was not sure that Liaqat Ali could handle finance. However, Chaudhary Mohammed Ali of the Finance Department told Jinnah that it was a great opportunity. He assured Jinnah that he will help Mr. Liaqat Ali. Jinnah accepted the proposal and Liaqat Ali was made the member for Finance. Congress later realized that it made a mistake in allotting Finance to the League.

The British government made Finance portfolio significant for protecting its interests. The Finance Member could interfere in any matter. Hence, Liaqat Ali used his powers and scrutinized every proposal. Even Sardar Patel's proposals were either rejected or modified by Liaqat Ali. It made difficult for Congress to function. It led to internal conflicts and Sardar Patel realized his mistake of agreeing to give Finance to League.

The differences over Defence portfolio led to the failure of the Cripps Mission. This issue again came up when Interim Government was about to be formed. Congress wanted Defence Portfolio for itself. Lord Wavell pointed out that League would make charges against Congress in that case. He suggested that a Sikh should be made a Defence Member. Congress agreed and Sardar Baldev Singh, who was then a Minister in Punjab was made a Defence Member.

Another incident created differences between Congress and the League. It was decided that all the members of the Interim Government would meet informally before the Cabinet meeting. These meetings were arranged in the rooms of different members. But Nehru would often send his Secretary to invite them for tea. Liaqat Ali felt insulted and objected to it. Moreover, he felt that Nehru did not have any right to hold such meetings. Later, Liaqat Ali himself started holding meetings with nominees of the League.

Maulana Azad mentions an incident which reveals impulsive nature of Nehru. The Ministry in the North West Frontier Province was dominated by Congress since 1946. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and his brother Dr. Khan Saheb successfully controlled the organization. After Interim Government was formed, it was decided to stop bombardment of tribesmen in South Waziristan. Later Nehru came to know that many people in NWF province were against Congress and the Khan brothers lost local support and people shifted their loyalty to the League. Nehru believed that this was not true and wanted to take a firsthand view of the situation. Azad

advised Nehru to be cautious and believed that there could be a group opposed to the Khan brothers since there were many factions in the Congress. He thought that Nehru's tour could strengthen opponents and the tour should be postponed. However, Nehru was firm. The Khan brothers asserted their support for Congress. The fact was that Dr. Khan Saheb, Chief Minister of the province lost support as he made some mistakes. The Khan brothers were not hospitable by nature which alienated the people for whom hospitality was a norm. They did not spend public funds and many candidates lost elections as a result. So people's opposition to them grew. According to Azad, British aroused public sentiments against the ministry. Nehru realized it during his tour to the province. He was greeted with black flags and anti-slogans. Dr. Khan Saheb and other ministers failed to control the situation. Nehru found that people were against him in tribal areas. He was injured in an attack. Lord Wavell wanted to take action but Nehru prevented him.

The Congress favoured the Cabinet Mission Plan. But some Assamese leaders opposed the formation of the C group. They feared that the area would be dominated by Muslims if Bengal and Assam are grouped together. Gopinath Bardoloi, the Chief Minister of Assam submitted the Memorandum to the Congress Working Committee in this regard. The Congress Working Committee raised the issue of European participation in the Constituent Assembly elections. Azad threatened that Congress will reject the proposals of the Cabinet Mission in case of European participation. The British met this demand. Meanwhile, Gandhiji supported Bardoloi. Nehru and Azad tried in vain to allay the fears of Assamese leaders.

Congress accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan but Jinnah was not satisfied with the plan. He argued that the Congress Working Committee did not state that the provinces would join the group as categorized in the Cabinet Mission Plan. The British Government, particularly Lord Wavell agreed with the League. Lord Wavell believed that the Cabinet Mission Plan would resolve Indian problem and it would be better for League too. The Cabinet Mission Plan was mostly similar to the scheme outlined by Azad. So he agreed with the plan.

Later, on 26 November 1946, Mr. Atlee invited the representatives of Congress and the Muslim League to London to resolve the problem. Congress was not ready to accept invitation. Lord Wavell told Azad that discussions at London would be objective and free from local pressure. He explained that Atlee's participation in the discussion would be helpful. So Azad

persuaded Congress to participate in the talks. Accordingly, Nehru and Baldev Singh represented Congress and Sikhs respectively. Mr Jinnah represented the League in the discussion. However, the talks failed.

The main reason for the failure of the talks was misinterpretation of the clause related to grouping in the Cabinet Mission Plan. Jinnah observed that the Constituent Assembly cannot change the structure of the Plan. Grouping was a part of the Plan and any change in grouping would amount to deceit. Jinnah held that the plan provide an opportunity to the province to opt out after initial grouping. However, Assamese Congress leaders opined that a province had the right to opt out even before joining the League. Jinnah argued that the League accepted the plan on the basis of the distribution of powers among the centre, the provinces and the groups. But Assamese Congress leaders did not agree and Gandhiji supported their stand.

In the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly on 11 December 1946, there was a discussion on the election of a new President of the Assembly. Nehru and Sardar Patel wanted Azad to become President but he refused. Dr. Rajendra Prasad was then elected as a President. He worked effectively and advised Government on various issues. But after the League joined Interim Government, Nehru wanted Azad to join the government. Gandhiji persuaded and suggested that Education was a significant portfolio and Azad should accept it. Accordingly, Azad became Education Member on 15 January 1947.

Congress wanted to remove economic inequalities. It was a part of Congress election manifesto. Nehru and Azad pointed out that businessman and industrialists did not pay income tax. So they wanted to take action against them to recover taxes. Liaqat Ali presented a budget based on Congress declarations. He proposed a tax policy and took credit himself. But his measures would have caused severe damage to commerce and industry. He also proposed to appoint a Commission for enquiry into unpaid taxes and recovery from industrialists and businessmen. His motive was to harm the national economy. Some Congressmen sided with the industrialists. Sardar Patel and Shri Rajgopalachari opposed the budget. They believed that the budget aimed at harassing industrialists and businessmen who were mainly Hindus, rather than serving interests of the country. Rajaji opposed the proposals and pointed out that they were communal. Azad wanted to examine the issues of tax compliance on the basis of merit.

On the other hand, communal problem could not be solved. Mr. Atlee decided that the British Government should confirm the date of withdrawal from India. But Lord Wavell wanted to pursue the Cabinet Mission Plan as he believed that it would solve the Indian problem. He thought that the British withdrawal would cause riots and it is their moral duty to resolve the differences between Congress and the League. However, Atlee believed that if the British did not withdraw from India, Indians would lose faith in the British Government. Moreover, he wanted to shift the responsibility to India. Lord Wavell argued that history will not forgive the British if communal disturbances take place. When he could not convince Atlee, Lord Wavell resigned. Atlee was determined to help India gain independence. He wished that the Labour Government should not be charged with exploiting communal differences in India. Azad believed that the Labour Government should be given credit for their true intentions. He thought that the British could have taken advantage of the situation and extended their rule for few more years.

According to Azad, Lord Wavell's perception was perhaps right. Wavell's suggestion to postpone the solution of the Indian problem could have bore results. The League would have accepted the stand of Congress due to persistent opposition. Indian Muslims would have criticized the attitude of the League and the partition of India could have been avoided. When Wavell resigned, Azad wanted to give due credit to him for his efforts. Nehru and others did not approve of this. However, Azad acknowledged Wavell's efforts in resolving Indian problem. In his farewell speech, Lord Wavell stated that he tried his level best to find solution to the problem.

### **12.2.3 The Mountbatten Mission:**

Lord Mountbatten was appointed as Governor - General after Lord Wavell's resignation. He was instructed by Atlee to hand over the power to India before 30 June 1948. He wanted to solve the communal problem immediately. Assam and Bengal were grouped together in the Cabinet Mission Plan. According to Congress, no province should be forced to join the group and decision must be left to the provinces. The League pointed out that the province could opt out only after joining the group. It was difficult to understand the motive of League in its emphasis on the question of Assam, as it was not a Muslim majority province. Azad wanted Lord Mountbatten to mediate and sort out the issue. But Nehru and Sardar Patel did not accept the suggestion.

Meanwhile the situation worsened. There were communal disturbances in different parts of the country. But the British were relaxed and did nothing. This led to unrest. The differences between Congress and the Muslim League within Executive Council aggravated the problems. The League held the Finance Portfolio. Liaquat Ali would reject or delay every proposal of the Congress. Sardar Patel realized that he cannot do anything without the approval of Liaquat Ali. Lord Mountbatten exploited the situation and convinced Congress that partition cannot be avoided. Sardar Patel was frustrated and accepted the idea of partition. He was responsible for giving Finance portfolio to the League. He realized that he cannot work with the Muslim League. Moreover, Sardar Patel was convinced of partition by Lord Mountbatten. Nehru was opposed to the idea of partition but Lady Mountbatten persuaded him. Krishna Menon also advised Nehru to accept the idea of partition.

Azad was greatly disturbed to know that Nehru and Sardar Patel accepted Mountbatten's idea of partition. He realized that partition would harm the interests of India as well as Muslims. He was convinced that the cabinet mission plan would preserve the unity of India. He believed that the plan would provide autonomy to Muslim majority provinces and Muslims would have adequate representation even in the centre. Thus, the differences would be resolved. According to Azad, the real problems of India were economic and not communal. He believed that everyone will realize this fact after freedom and resolve their differences. Azad argued with Patel that to accept partition would be to accept Jinnah's slogan of two nations. Sardar Patel stated that two nations in fact exist in India. He realized that Hindus and Muslims could not be united into one nation and it would be better to separate. Azad then tried to persuade Nehru not to accept partition. Nehru admitted that partition was not a solution but found no alternative to it after the experience of League in the Council. He also advised Azad not to oppose Lord Mountbatten on this issue. Azad reminded him of mistakes of not accepting Cabinet Mission Plan and offering Finance portfolio to the Muslim League, which led to the crisis. He warned Nehru that history will never forgive them for partition and blame will be laid on Congress for dividing India. After failing to persuade Nehru and Sardar Patel, Azad turned to Gandhiji. Gandhiji assured Azad that he will never accept partition. Gandhiji then met Lord Mountbatten and then Sardar Patel visited him. Later, Gandhiji's stand changed. However, Gandhiji informed Azad that he suggested Mountbatten that Congress will ask Jinnah to form the Government. Azad then met Lord Mountbatten who told him that partition could be avoided if Congress accepts Gandhiji's



suggestion. But Nehru and Sardar Patel opposed his suggestion. Gandhiji relented and informed Azad that partition cannot be avoided.

Azad thought that Sardar Patel influenced Gandhiji. Sardar Patel realized that it was impossible to work with the Muslim League. He was also impressed by Lord Mountbatten's views. Lord Mountbatten argued that centre would become weak if full provincial autonomy is given and this would lead to divisive tendencies. He pointed out that a strong central government could be planned to build strong India in the absence of the League. He suggested that some land should be given up to build a strong India. Sardar Patel approved the idea and Nehru too supported. The same arguments changed Gandhiji's stand. Azad wanted Lord Mountbatten to take a firm stand on the Cabinet Mission Plan. Lord Mountbatten probably did not want to implement the Cabinet Mission Plan as it was not his idea. So he wished to execute his plan of partition.

Lord Mountbatten pointed out that some areas in Punjab and Bengal are Muslim minority and they must be partitioned. He assured Congress leaders that he will raise this issue at the right time. Meanwhile, Azad requested Gandhiji that transfer of power to India should be delayed by two to three years. He thought that it would force the Muslim League to settle the issue peacefully. But Gandhiji did not show any interest. Meanwhile, Lord Mountbatten framed his proposals for the partition of India and sought approval from the British Government. Azad then met Lord Mountbatten and asked him to make the Cabinet Mission Plan successful. He argued that Mr. Atlee and his party won't be convinced as Cabinet Mission Plan was their idea. He also pointed out that no one would blame the British for delaying the transfer of power on the request of Congress. He also highlighted the fact that the world would suspect the intentions of the British government if they act hastily. Lord Mountbatten assured Azad that he would make the British Cabinet aware of the ground realities and place Azad's suggestions before them. Azad also asked Lord Mountbatten to consider the consequences of partition. He warned that division of India would cause riots and the British would be held responsible for violence. Lord Mountbatten assured that he will order Army and Air Force to act and ensure that violence did not occur. Azad was not sure about Lord Mountbatten's plan. However, Lord Mountbatten convinced the British Cabinet to accept his plan of partition. India was then partitioned which caused large scale violence. The Indian Army was divided and did nothing to control the riots.

#### **12.2.4 The End of a Dream:**

Maulana Azad believed that the Labour Government would not abandon the Cabinet Mission Plan. He hoped that Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Alexander, the members of the British Cabinet would attempt to save the plan as it was formulated by them. However, the British Cabinet accepted the plan of partition proposed by Lord Mountbatten.

Lord Mountbatten discussed the plan with the representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League and the White Paper regarding the plan was issued on 3 June. Thus, the partition was officially accepted. Azad realized that the Labour Government took this decision to protect British interests. The British wanted to maintain its influence in the economic and industrial sphere of India. The partition of India alone could have made this possible. The British base in Pakistan would have compelled India to consider British interests.

The Cabinet Mission Plan offered the choice to India to remain in the Commonwealth after freedom. During the freedom struggle, Congress opposed the British while the League supported them. The Muslim League would join the Commonwealth and India would be compelled to do the same in that case. The proposal of Lord Mountbatten was hence accepted by the Labour Government. Azad thought that Mountbatten must have met Mr. Churchill and convinced Conservative Party. So Indian Independence Bill would have passed with the support of the Conservative Party.

The Congress Working Committee discussed the future of the North West Frontier Province. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan always supported Congress and opposed the Muslim League. The partition would put the Khan brothers and their party in trouble. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan reminded the Congress Working Committee of his support to the Congress. He told that Congress accepted partition without consulting the leaders of the Frontier and the Frontier would regard it as a treacherous act if they are left at the mercy of the League. Gandhiji raised the issue with Lord Mountbatten and told him that he will not support partition unless it is assured that the League would deal fairly with the Frontier leaders. Lord Mountbatten discussed the matter with Jinnah and he wished to meet Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. The meeting was fruitless. According to the Mountbatten Plan, the Muslim majority provinces were to be separated to form a separate State. Muslims were in majority in the Frontier; hence it would be included in Pakistan.

The Mountbatten Plan proposed to provide an opportunity to the provinces to decide its future. Hence, Mountbatten told that the Frontier will also be able to decide what it wanted to do. He suggested that a referendum can be held to decide whether the Frontier would join Pakistan or India. Dr. Khan who was the Chief Minister of the Frontier accepted this proposal as he was sure that majority of the people support him. However, he demanded that the Pathans of the Frontier should also be allowed to opt for their own state. The influence of Khan brothers decreased after the demand for Pakistan. The Muslim majority provinces dreamt of their own state. The British officers supported Pakistan and convinced many tribal chiefs in the Frontier to switch over to the League. Dr. Khan realized that the only way to retain his position was to raise the demand for Pakhtoonistan. He knew that many Pathans would prefer their own state to avoid the domination of Punjab. But Lord Mountbatten ignored the demand.

The Frontier Congress authorized Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan to take the necessary action. The Frontier Congress envisioned a new Pakhtoonistan based on Islamic ideals of democracy, equality and social justice. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan clarified that the Frontier has distinct history and culture and only autonomy could maintain it. He argued that referendum should be done for the formation of Pakhtoonistan as it would represent people's will. The people of Frontier might have then voted against Pakistan. Mr. Jinnah and Lord Mountbatten did not accept the proposal of the Frontier. The Khan brothers appealed the Pathans not to participate in the referendum. When the referendum was held, many people voted for Pakistan. The British Government naturally accepted it. After the partition, the Khan brothers clarified that they did not want a free state, but complete autonomy to the Frontier as a unit of Pakistan. They just wanted to ensure federal constitution of Pakistan which would protect the social and cultural interests of the Pathans. The demand was similar to the resolution passed by the Muslim League. So Jinnah could not oppose it and met Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan several times to reach an understanding. Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan, who formed Ministry in the Frontier, was against alliance between the Khan brothers and Jinnah. His Government harassed the people supporting the Khan brothers. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Dr. Khan Saheb and other leaders were jailed for six years without any trial.

In its meeting on 14 June 1947, the A.I.C.C. moved a resolution for the partition of India. Maulana Azad emphasized that partition was a tragedy and Congress failed in its attempts to avoid it. However, the same culture of both the nations should be preserved. Sardar Patel did not

like Maulana Azad's clarification. He argued that partition of India was the only solution in the prevailing situation. The pseudo-Congressmen used to argue that India has no unified culture and the social life of Muslims and Hindus was different. Later, they opposed the resolution of the partition of India. Pandit Pant and Sardar Patel failed to convince people to accept the resolution. Gandhiji then appealed to them to accept Mountbatten Plan as it was feasible in the existing circumstances. 29 members of the Congress Working Committee voted in favour of the resolution and 15 members voted against it. The members from Sind opposed the resolution. But they were assured that if they are troubled in Pakistan, Muslims in India will have to bear the consequences. Azad realized that the minority would be threatened to protect the minority in other state. This seemed to him barbaric. Kiran Shankar Roy, one of the Bengali Congress leaders realized that this idea would lead to the oppression and murder of Hindus in Pakistan and of Muslims in India. He was convinced by some leaders that it was the only way to protect Hindus of Pakistan.

Mr. Atlee announced that the British government will transfer power to India till June 1948. Lord Mountbatten wished to partition India in three months as he fear that delay in doing so would cause obstacles. Azad was not sure that this could be done in such a short span. But Lord Mountbatten resolved all issues within time and India was partitioned on 14 August 1947.

The announcement of partition caused communal violence throughout the country. Hindu and Sikh representatives pressurized Congress to retain Lahore in India. They argued that Lahore was the political and economic centre of Punjab and it would damage the prospects of Punjab if it became a part of Pakistan. Congress did not accept their suggestion and wanted the issue to be settled by the people. The properties of Hindus who were the landowners in and around Lahore were looted by Muslims. Some Hindus in Lahore killed Muslims as they wanted to drive Muslims away from Lahore to secure Hindu majority. It was reported that leaders of the Muslim League organized attacks on Hindus and Hindu Mahasabha leaders provoked Hindus against Muslims. Similar situation prevailed in Calcutta. The supporters of the Muslim League wanted Calcutta to be a part of Pakistan and those opposed to the League wanted that it should be with India. Lord Mountbatten took the matter in his hands. As per his plan, the matter was settled through referendum. Both the Punjab and Bengal Assemblies voted in favour of partition. Lord Mountbatten appointed a Boundary Commission to decide the border of the two provinces. Mr.

Radcliffe was assigned this task. Though he wanted to start the work after a month's delay, he had to complete it immediately as per the instructions of Lord Mountbatten.

The partition of the Secretariat and the assets of the Government of India was another issue to be settled. Lord Mountbatten supervised the arrangements. He appointed the Committee which sorted out every problem. The issue of dividing the Army and the finances was more complicated. Financial issues were resolved within time. It was decided that India would have three-fourth of the Army while Pakistan would get one-fourth of the Army. But it could not be decided whether the Army should be divided immediately or should be a unified unit for two or three years. The Army Commanders favoured a unified unit. Azad supported this idea as he feared that riots will follow partition and a unified command would prevent violence. But Azad's colleagues did not support him. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, a proponent of non-violence insisted on division of the Army. Azad felt that it was inappropriate to divide the Army on communal basis. As a consequence, the Army remained passive when violence broke out after partition. Some members of the former undivided Indian Army killed Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan and Muslims in India.

Azad suggested that civil services should not be divided on a communal basis. He felt that servicemen should be retained in their own provinces. He wanted that administration should be kept from communalism to instill a sense of security in the minorities of both the states. But Azad's request was turned down and servicemen were provided the right to choose either India or Pakistan. Hindus and Sikhs chose India and Muslims opted for Pakistan. Azad discussed the issue with Lord Mountbatten and obtained his support. Lord Mountbatten was unable to prevent the division of the Army. But he could manage to give the civil servants choice to opt either State permanently or provisionally.

Azad pointed out that the Muslim League was not wise in exercising this option. It caused Muslim officers to opt for Pakistan. The key positions in the Central Secretariat were occupied by Muslims at that time. The League forced them to leave India. Those who were not willing were convinced that they would not be treated fairly by Congress later. Azad then demanded that Government of India should issue a circular to clarify its stand. This demand was met and a circular issued to assure civil servants of Muslim and other minority communities of justice. As a result, many Muslim officers decided to stay in India. When the Muslim League

came to know about it, they threatened these officers that their property and relatives in Pakistan would not be secure. Hence, they were left with no choice but to opt for Pakistan. The decision of the Muslim League was disastrous as the presence of Muslim officers in India would have removed fear from the minds of Indian Muslims.

It was decided that Indian State would come into existence on 15 August 1947 and Pakistan on 14 August 1947. India was given the right to elect its own Governor-General. It was felt that both the States should have same Governor-General initially. India appointed Lord Mountbatten as Governor-General for consistent policy and administration. However, the Muslim League proposed Jinnah to be the first Governor-General of Pakistan. Then Lord Mountbatten suggested India to reconsider its decision and appoint an Indian as the Governor-General. But India stuck to its earlier stand.

### **12.2.5 Divided India:**

India achieved freedom on 15 August 1947. But the tragedy of partition accompanied it. Congress and the Muslim League accepted partition. But people did not come to terms with the reality. Many Indian Muslims opposed the League and did not like the idea of partition. Azad realized that Congress leaders accepted partition either out of anger, hatred or despair. Sardar Patel was the greatest supporter of partition though he believed that it was not the appropriate solution. He supported partition as he was frustrated when his every proposal was rejected by Liaquat Ali Khan. So he thought that there was no alternative to partition. He was also sure that a new State would not survive for long and those provinces will face immense hardship.

Muslims of Pakistan celebrated 14 August while Hindus and Sikhs mourned it. Acharya Kripalani, the then President of the Congress stated that it was a sorrowful day. Azad had expressed that it was better to wait till the proper solution to the problem was found. But his colleagues did not support him. Their anger or despair and the fixation of a date, 15 August probably made them act in that manner.

Some Muslim League leaders remain in India even after partition. Jinnah left for Pakistan urging them to be loyal citizens of India. So these leaders were disillusioned and informed Azad that Jinnah deceived them. It became clear to Azad that these leaders could not understand the real implications of Pakistan. The Muslims of UP and Bihar remained in minority even after partition. But these leaders were convinced that Muslims would be regarded as a separate nation, irrespective of their provinces, once Pakistan is formed and they would enjoy the privileges.

When the Muslim majority provinces went out of India, these leaders realized that partition weakened their position in India. Azad reminded that he had warned them of this situation earlier.

The Constituent Assembly declared India as a free State. Everyone was happy but it was short-lived. Communal violence broke out the very next day. In East Punjab, Hindus and Sikhs killed Muslims while in West Punjab, Muslims attacked Hindus and Sikhs. Punjab leaders were shocked by the development. Even the military there was prejudiced. So they sought military help from Delhi. Violence broke out in Delhi later. Muslims in Delhi were attacked by mostly Sikhs. Thus the theory of revenge was applied in Delhi. Mostly Hindus and Sikhs were military men in Delhi. Their biased approach was a consequence of dividing the Army on communal basis. It was decided to bring soldiers from South to restore law and order. They had not been affected by partition and played a significant role in restoring peace.

Muslim populated areas in Delhi like Karolbagh, Lodhi Colony, Sabzi Mandi and Sadar Bazar were not safe. Azad toured different parts of Delhi and found the Muslims helpless. People became shelterless and sought Azad's help. Azad accommodated people in his home and even put up tents in his compound. But this was not sufficient. It was then decided to keep all the Muslims together in protected camps. Purana Qila became the shelter for large number of Muslims. Many Special Magistrates were appointed to restore normalcy. But some of them were prejudiced. One Magistrate ignored the demand to protect the Muslim locality. But many Congressmen, Hindus as well as Sikhs helped the people in crisis.

Azad acknowledged the role of Mountbatten in controlling the situation. Considering it as a war situation, he set up a Council of Action to take decisions on the spot and ensure these were executed. An Emergency Board which consisted of some members of the cabinet and high civil and military officers worked tirelessly till normalcy was restored.

Nehru displayed the qualities of a true administrator. He realized that the State must not discriminate on the basis of religion. He played a significant role in controlling the riots in Bihar. During this period, Gandhiji tried to secure life and property of Muslims. But his efforts went in vain. Nehru, Sardar Patel and Maulana Azad used to report him. But their versions were different which affected the local administration. The officers were divided into two groups. The larger group responded to Sardar Patel's wishes while the smaller group carried out Nehru's orders. Khurshed Ahmed, the then Chief Commissioner of Delhi did not take strong action out of the

concern that he may be labeled as prejudiced. So the Deputy Commissioner, a Sikh handled the situation. As he completed his term, it was proposed that he should be transferred to Punjab. But many Muslims reacted against this proposal as he was a fair and strong officer. The officer was retained but he could not give proper protection to Muslims in India. The matter was reported to Sardar Patel but he ignored it.

Being the home Minister, Sardar Patel was responsible for the administration of Delhi. When Gandhiji asked him what measures he took to control the violence, he said that Muslims have nothing to fear. When Nehru expressed that he was helpless and found the situation unbearable, he told that Government was trying to protect life and property of Muslims and he should not disapprove the acts of Government. Azad, Nehru and Gandhiji were shocked at Sardar Patel's reaction. Another incident revealed Sardar Patel's mind. He thought that some explanation was required for the attacks on Muslims. He formulated the theory that deadly weapons were recovered from Muslim areas, which Muslims wanted to use against Hindus and Sikhs. The police found some arms from Karolbagh and Sabzi Mandi and brought it to the Government House for inspection. During inspection, it was found that knives, iron spikes and iron water pipes were rusted and useless.

Many Muslims were provided shelter in the Purana Qila. It lacked proper facilities. Dr Zakir Hussain informed the emergency Board of the horrible conditions at the camp. The Board directed Azad to inspect the facilities and suggest necessary measures. Then the Board decided to arrange drinking and sanitation facilities and provide more tents.

Meanwhile, Gandhiji was disgusted because people did not respond to his appeals. At last, he decided to observe fast to restore peace. People did not want him to fast because of his old age. Gandhiji was particularly disturbed by the attitude of Sardar Patel. Sardar Patel was close to Gandhiji. He was earlier a lawyer in Ahmedabad and not a popular figure. Gandhiji nurtured Patel, made him a member of the Congress Working Committee and even the Congress President in 1931. He was hurt because Patel abandoned his policy of non-violence. He was pained to see Muslims of Delhi being killed while his own Sardar was the Home Member of the Government of India. In fact, Gandhiji's fast was a reaction to Sardar Patel's attitude. Sardar Patel complained that Gandhiji's fast would defame him and the Government. But Gandhiji was firm. Sardar Patel did not even listen to Azad's plea to stay. Sardar left as he felt that Gandhiji wanted to blame Hindus for the violence. However, even opponents wanted to save Gandhiji's



life. A public meeting was held to discuss measures to persuade Gandhiji to give up fast. Azad wanted Gandhiji to lay some conditions for breaking his fast. But Gandhiji proposed to bring back the displaced Muslims. Azad thought that it was not a feasible idea as millions of people were uprooted. The displaced Punjabi Hindus and Sikhs cannot be driven out of Delhi. Azad requested Gandhiji to give up this condition. He then suggested that Gandhiji's first condition should be to stop violence and murder and restoration of friendly relations among all communities. Gandhiji agreed to his suggestion finally. He suggested that damaged Muslim shrines and mosques should be repaired. Gandhiji then put conditions for breaking the fast. Accordingly, he wanted Hindus and Sikhs not to attack Muslims and ensure that they do not leave their houses due to threat to life and property. The attacks on Muslims in moving trains should stop. Moreover, Muslims who abandoned their homes near shrines should be resettled. Further, the damaged shrines must be repaired by Hindus and Sikhs. Finally, Hindu and Sikh leaders should change their heart and never incite violence. Azad assured Gandhiji that he would make the people accept his conditions. The people agreed to accept his conditions. The Deputy Commissioner of Delhi took a group of Hindu and Sikh leaders to repair the damaged shrine of Khwaja Qutubuddin. Azad then called the meeting of the representative leaders who later assured Gandhiji that his conditions are met. Everyone was eager to see Gandhiji break his fast. The whole cabinet except Sardar Patel gathered at the Birla House. About 25 Hindu and Sikh leaders vowed that they will fulfill Gandhiji's conditions. Then Azad made Gandhiji break his fast. Sardar Patel returned from Bombay to see Gandhiji who received him with kindness. However, Sardar Patel did not approve Gandhiji's efforts in restoring security among Muslims. The workers of the Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Svayam Sevak Sangh criticized Gandhiji for giving away legitimate interests of Hindus. They opposed his prayer meetings and threatened to disallow the recitation of verses from the Quran or the Bible. They even described him as an enemy of the Hindus. Consequently, a bomb was thrown at him in one of his prayer meetings. Police was unable to find the culprit. It was clear that a certain group was determined to kill Gandhiji. The police and the Delhi C.I.D. should have taken some precautionary measures to protect Gandhiji but nothing was done. Gandhiji continued his prayer meetings to spread his message to the people. On 30 January 1948, Gandhiji was shot at his prayer meeting. Azad returned to Birla House only to find Gandhiji dead.

#### **12.2.6 Epilogue:**

Gandhiji's assassination was the end of an era. Azad recalled that India failed to protect the life of its great son. The prayer meetings were held on the lawns of Birla House which was surrounded by walls. It was not difficult for police to check the people entering through the gate. Yet no precautionary measures were taken despite threats to Gandhiji's life.

The culprit somehow reached the place and shot at Gandhiji. Some people accused Sardar Patel of not taking strong measures. Jaiprakash Narayan expressed that the Home Minister of the Government owed responsibility for Gandhiji's assassination. Mr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh of Calcutta also criticized the Government of India for its failure to protect Gandhiji. Sardar Patel explained that enemies of Congress attempt to divide it by blaming him and they should not fall prey to these tactics.

However, communalism spread in the country. People of Gwalior and Ujjain distributed sweets to celebrate Gandhiji's assassination. Hindu Mahasabha or the RSS leaders did not face the public for some time. Dr Shyama Prasad Mookherjee, the then President of the Hindu Mahasabha and a minister in the Union Government did not come out of his home and later resigned from Mahasabha. Godse who assassinated Gandhiji was prosecuted. Many Indians criticized Godse but some women send him a sweater. A movement was organized to secure his release. Godse's supporters argued that he should not be executed as Gandhiji believed in non-violence. However, the High Court awarded him death sentence.

Meanwhile, Sardar Patel suffered from a heart attack two months after Gandhiji's death. Azad felt that attack occurred due to the shock and humiliation he received for not protecting Gandhiji's life. He cannot forget that he owed everything to Gandhiji. He died four years later. The partition led to the creation of a new State, Pakistan. The Muslim League was the ruling party of Pakistan. The members of the League did not participated in the freedom struggle and never made sacrifices. They were mostly retired officials who joined the party for selfish motives. Most of these leaders came from UP, Bihar and Bombay and cannot speak the language of the areas which formed Pakistan. So there was a barrier between the leaders and the people. These leaders feared that they would not be elected if elections are held. So they postponed the lections to consolidate wealth and power. The constitution of Pakistan was framed ten years after partition. But there were frequent proposals to change it.

The creation of Pakistan weakened the position of Muslims in India. The supporters of the Muslim League and Congress leaders argued that there was no alternative to partition due to

strained relations between Hindus and Muslims. Nehru and Sardar Patel held the similar view. However, Azad was convinced that the scheme he formulated which was the basis of the Cabinet Mission Plan, offer the better solution. Partition widened the gap between Hindus and Muslims. India was divided into two states. Both hated and considered each other as a threat. This caused them to increase their defence expenditure. Defence expenditure of undivided India was hundred crores. Later, two hundred crores were allocated for defence sector in India which accounted for about a third part of the total revenue. Pakistan spent hundred crores on defence. Azad regrets that this fund could have been used for economic development.

Azad points out that Jinnah failed to realize that geography was against them. The uneven distribution of Muslims made it impossible to form a separate State in a particular area. The North- West and North-East were Muslim majority areas. They were geographically, linguistically and culturally different. So it was foolish to assume that religion can bind them. Even Islam was unable to unite all the Muslims countries into one State on the basis of religion. Azad suggests that uniting East and West Pakistan was difficult. Even the provinces of Sind, the Punjab and the Frontier in West Pakistan worked for different interests. But the creation of Pakistan was a reality and friendly relations should be developed between India and Pakistan. Some people believed that partition was inevitable while others suggest that it could have been easily avoided. Azad believe that History will decide whether partition of India was appropriate or otherwise.

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### **12.3 Learning Outcomes**

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1. The British Cabinet Plan was accepted by AICC but Nehru's statement that the Congress could modify the plan made Jinnah suspicious about the intentions of Congress and he raised the demand for Pakistan.
2. The Cabinet Mission Plan envisaged the division of country into three zones which could have allayed the fears of the Muslim League but it was not executed.
3. Lord Wavell suggested that the participation of Muslim League in the interim government was necessary and the Congress reconstituted the Government to accommodate the nominees of the Muslim League.

4. The Finance Ministry was allotted to the Muslim League. The Finance Member used his powers to either reject or modify even Sardar Patel's proposals which frustrated him so much that he agreed to partition.
5. Lord Mountbatten devised the plan of partition and convinced Sardar Patel and even Gandhiji about its necessity in the prevailing circumstances.
6. Lord Mountbatten appointed a Boundary Commission to resolve the border issue. It was decided that India would have three –fourth of the Army and Pakistan would get one-fourth of the Army. Civil servicemen were given the right to choose either India or Pakistan.
7. Partition caused immense human suffering. Many people lost their lives and properties. It fuelled communalism which proved disastrous for both the nations.
8. Azad tried his best to stop communal violence. Nehru acted as a true administrator and Gandhiji resorted to his method of agitation. Sardar Patel could not take strong action against rioters while Mounbatten ordered the Army to control the violence.
9. Gandhiji proposed to stop violence and restore friendly relations between all communities. He suggested that the damaged shrines must be repaired by Hindus and Sikhs.
10. Some people opposed Gandhiji's prayer meetings and warned to disallow the recitation of verses from the Quran and the Bible. They even attempted to kill him.
11. The creation of Pakistan was incompatible as the people of North-East and North-West were culturally, geographically and linguistically different and it was a huge challenge to keep them together.

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## 12.4 Glossary

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**Commotion:** A state of confused and noisy disturbance

**Ratified:** To give formal consent to a treaty, contract or agreement

**Insuperable:** Difficulty or obstacle impossible to overcome

**Vehemence:** Great forcefulness or intensity of feeling or expression

**Unprecedented:** Never done or known before

**Fissiparous:** Inclined to cause or undergo division into separate groups

**Unfettered:** Unrestrained or uninhibited

**Reiterated:** Say something again or a number of times, for emphasis or clarity

**Perturbed:** Unsettled, feeling anxious or concerned

**Unequivocal:** Unmistakable, unambiguous, without question

**Interim:** Provisional arrangement

**Orgy:** Something that is done in a wild way, excessive indulgence

**Dissident:** A person who opposes official policy, especially that of an authoritarian state.

**Inexplicable:** Incapable of being explained, interpreted

**Envisaged:** Contemplate or conceive of as a possibility or a desirable future event

**Arbitration:** Settling of differences between parties by a person chosen to end the dispute

**Despondency:** Loss of hope or courage, dejection

**De facto:** In fact, whether by right or wrong

**De jure:** Of right, based on laws or actions of the state

**Referendum:** A general vote by the electorate or a single political question which has been referred to them for direct decision

**Plebiscite:** The direct vote of all members of an electorate on important public question

**Abject:** Completely without dignity

**Abated:** Become less intense or widespread

**Veto:** A constitutional right to reject a decision or proposal made by a lawmaking body

**Seceded:** Withdraw formally from membership of a federal union, an alliance or a political or religious organization

**Delirious:** In a state of wild excitement or ecstasy

**Reprisal:** An act of retaliation

**Exasperated:** Intensely irritated or frustrated

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## 12.5 Sample Questions

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### 12.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. Jinnah declared ..... as the 'Direct Action Day'.  
(a) 15 August 1947    (b) 20 October 1946  
(c) 26 January 1950    (d) 16 August 1946

2. .... was elected as a Parsee nominee in the Interim Government.  
 (a) C.H. Bhabha      (b) Homi Bhabha  
 (c) Meher Ali      (d) Meher Pestonji
3. .... was elected as the first Indian Finance member in the Interim Government.  
 (a) Maulana Azad      (b) Dr John Mathai  
 (c) C.Rajgopalachari      (d) Liaqat Ali
4. Atlee wished to hand over the power to India before .....  
 (a) 30 June 1948      (b) 15 May 1948  
 (c) 26 Jan 1950      (d) 15 Aug 1947
5. .... was against the alliance between the Khan brothers and Jinnah.  
 (a) Sardar Patel      (b) Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan  
 (c) Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan      (d) Maulana Azad
6. .... resolved the issue of the border of Punjab and Bengal provinces.  
 (a) Lord Mountbatten      (b) Lord Wavell  
 (c) Mr. Radcliffe      (d) Sardar Patel
7. .... was the first Governor-General of India.  
 (a) Sardar Patel      (b) C. Rajgopalachari  
 (c) Lord Mountbatten      (d) Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose
8. The Muslim League proposed ..... to be its first Governor-General.  
 (a) Khalil Chaudhary      (b) Jinnah  
 (c) Lord Mountbatten      (d) Liaqat Ali
9. .... was the Congress President at the time of partition.  
 (a) Sardar Patel      (b) Acharya Kripalani  
 (c) Rajendra Prasad      (d) Maulana Azad
10. Gandhiji's prayer meetings were held at .....  
 (a) Sabarmati Ashram      (b) Wardha  
 (c) lawns of Birla House      (d) Porbandar

### **12.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. What were the implications of Cabinet Mission Plan, according to Azad?
2. What were the consequences of Direct Action Day?
3. Why did the Assamese leaders object to the Cabinet Mission Plan?

4. How were some leaders of the Muslim League deceived by Jinnah?
5. What conditions were laid down by Gandhiji to break his fast?

### **12.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. What were the consequences of handing over the Finance Portfolio to the Muslim League?
2. Discuss the consequences of partition.
3. Discuss the role of Congress leaders and Mahasabha and RSS leaders post-partition.

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## **12.6 Suggested Readings**

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## **Unit - 13: Maulana Azad as an Educationist**

### **Structure**

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### **13.0 Introduction**

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Colonial period was a significant time in the Indian history. It was the time when British ruled on undivided India. Their rise in power has helped us to understand various issues and concerns that were neglected so far by the community leaders or people of the country. More importantly the country was lagging behind in the sector of modern education. Nevertheless, to deal with all these issues we had dynamic personalities from different communities who came forward to help the country and the people of their communities. Thus, one can also say that colonial time has also given us significant personalities. One of them is Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Azad was a dynamic personality and the traits of it were seen from his childhood. He has done so much in his life and the greatest and the most significant of his contributions is in the field of education.

If we look at the introduction of English and English Education in India it dates back to early 19<sup>th</sup> Century when Maclaulay came with “Minute upon Indian Education” (1835). It



followed by Venkunti Sooba Rao's report and appeal for English education in Madras Provinces and similarly Raja Ram Mohan Roy's argument in support of English education. Governor Generals like William Bentinck and Dalhousie took special interests, started grant-aid in schools and textbooks. With "Woods Despatch" gave much importance to English education. Later Indians like Mahatma Jotirao Phule, Dr. B R Ambedkar and others continued speaking for English medium education. Soon after its starting, differences were observed in the native schools and English schools. Even many people at their later stages of life desired for English. English was conceived as modern in comparison to the traditional methods of education in India.

Among Muslims, one of the first names that come into our mind is of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan felt the need and started the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College in late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and later it was shaped into Aligarh Muslim University. He was trying to change the old method of education and was appealing Muslims to study English and Modern sciences. But leaving him, there are other prominent leaders as well who have enormously contributed for the nation and especially in making the Muslim community realise the need to change according to the time.

The most prominent among them is of course Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, one of the 'religious' and most patriotic sons of India. The present module focuses on one of the aspects of Maulana Azad's life as an Educationist or one can also say his final eleven years of life as an Education minister. In this module you will come to know about his early life, Maulana Azad as a freedom fighter, and in the post-Independent India his contributions in the field of education and various other interesting aspects of his personality.

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## 13.0 Objectives

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Objective of this module is to introduce you to the great personality of Maulana Azad, his contribution in the development of India and more specifically in the field of education. It will also help you to understand Maulana's vision for modern India. Further, you will also have an understanding of Muslim's contribution in the making and development of India. Apart from this the module will also give you a sense of India's Independence movement.

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## 13.2 Maulana Azad as an Educationist

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### 13.2.1 His Early Life and Education:

It is quite difficult to talk about the versatile personality like Maulana Azad. He was a scholar, freedom fighter, politician, academician, linguist, reformer, thinker, and moralist and so on. Whatever responsibilities he took up he completed them in an excellent manner. His intellect and foresightedness made many to comment on him. Niyaz Fatehpuri commented,

If only Azad wanted he could have excelled Badi-uz-Zaman in Arabic poetry, Ibn-e-Taiyyima in theology, Ibn-e-Rushd in philosophy, Urufi or Naziri in Persian poetry and Rumi or Ghazali in Sufism. The loss of these branches was the gain of politics and religion which he lifted high to change the course of history (Ali: 2008, 04).

He was such a personality that people believed in him and were confident that he can excel or master everything that he takes up. This is so because he has shown consistently his excellence and intelligence to the world from a very young age. Perhaps it could also be because of his ancestors both from maternal and paternal side who were very erudite and were in high positions. Their great qualities, no doubt, must have passed on to him as well.

Azad was born in the city of Mecca. It is not a rare thing to happen but the significant thing is a Muslim who was born in Mecca rose to fame in Indian politics and counted as one of the great Indian personalities who has immensely contributed for the development and growth of his nation. More importantly he was not in front but always present in every movement to free India since the time he actively began to take part in politics or India's freedom movement. He continued to serve the country even after it got independence from the colonial rule. Every year on his birthday, 11<sup>th</sup> November, is celebrated as National Education Day to honour his contributions in general and more specifically to acknowledge his contributions as the first Education Minister of Independent India.

Maulana Azad has a distinction of being born in the city of Mecca and at the same time becoming one of the great personalities of India. Maulana has contributed immensely in the field of education. This must be the genetic influence as his forefathers who were known for their scholarly works and activities. Today as whatever we know about the genealogy of Maulana is because he left behind a detail and clear explanation about it like who were they and when and during which period they came to India and their contributions to the Indian society during those times.

B. Sheikh Ali writes “They say real education of the child begins at least a hundred years before his birth. Azad was lucky that he inherited the intellect accumulated over centuries. Cross fertilization from three different streams further added brilliance to his genes. His father’s maternal grandfather was Maulana Munawaruddin who came from a reputed family of judges from Herat. His mother was the niece of the renowned Mufti of Medina, Sheikh Muhammad Vitri, who became later the famous exegist of Mecca. Thus the Persian, Arab and Indian blood flew in Azad’s veins, making him a precocious child. ” (Abul Kalam Azad: Vision and Action, 22)

Thus, such was the lineage of Maulana Azad. However, he never took advantage of his lineage and begged for work or anything. He strived hard to achieve success in his life on his own. When one talks about Azad then discussion on his name is difficult to avoid. It was not his birth name. His given name was Firoze Bakht. One finds various instances where Azad has changed his name variously like sometimes he called himself Gulam Mohiyuddin Azad or Abul Kalam Mohiyuddin Ahmed Azad or Abul Kalam Azad Dehlavi or Ahmad-ul-Makni Ba-bil Kalam Azad Dehlavi or Ahmed or Abul Kalam or Ahmed or Abul Kalam. Nevertheless, today the world knows him as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

It is quite difficult to talk about the versatile personality like Maulana Azad. He was a scholar, freedom fighter, politician, academician, linguist, reformer, thinker, and moralist and so on. Whatever responsibilities he took up he completed them in an excellent manner. His intellect and foresightedness made many to comment on him. Niyaz Fatehpuri commented,

If only Azad wanted he could have excelled Badi-uz-Zaman in Arabic poetry, Ibn-e-Taiyyima in theology, Ibn-e-Rushd in philosophy, Urufi or Naziri in Persian poetry and Rumi or Ghazali in Sufism. The loss of these branches was the gain of

politics and religion which he lifted high to change the course of history (Ali: 2008, 04).

When the family of Azad came to India, British were ruling over the sub-continent. During this time Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was trying to change the old method of education and was appealing the Muslims to study English and Modern sciences. But Maulana Azad got his education at home with his siblings. His father and scholars of great repute used to teach them at home. They did study Darse Nizami which was a full course in Arabic and Persian and would include these two languages and philosophy, logic, arithmetic, geography and history. So far Maulana knows Arabic, Persian, Urdu and Turkish. He began to learn Urdu from his father when they were still in Mecca later he learned it from his elder sister and Hafiz Bukhari.

He began to learn English after his father's death in 1909. On his study of English Maulana said,

I began to learn English with the help of a grammar and a dictionary. But, I am not sorry that my father did not send me to an English school. I lost nothing and I think I gained much from having to depend on my own resources to learn the English I needed to learn. I saved plenty of time and energy and learnt only the things I should (Sharma: 2005, 07).

It is important to understand that English education and Education system in India has a close connection. Further, Azad's remarks help one to understand his later remarks related to English language teaching or medium of instructions in Indian schools.

Nevertheless, he began his career as a journalist and writer at a very early age when he was just twelve years old. It is through *Nairang-e-Khiyal* he became famous. His other owned monthly and weekly are *Al-Misbah*, *Lisan-us-Sidq*, *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Balagh*. But his first most famous edited periodical was *Lisan-us-Sidq*. The main purpose of his writings was to reform the Muslim community. He wanted Muslims to participate in the national struggle, make them aware about the in and around happenings of their surroundings and see a united nation etc. Most importantly the main aim was to call the Muslims to fight against the colonisers. Later he wrote *Tazkira*, a biographical account of his ancestors and it is also an autobiography of Maulana.

The only English writing of him is *India Wins Freedom*. Though it is to be said that it is dictated rather written and Humayun Kabir used to write for him but he used to check the draft every night not only because of the content but also for reworking on the language and the style of it. Thus the book shows his mastery over the English language which is quite praiseworthy.

***Check your Progress:***

1. Where was Maulana Abul Kalam Azad born?
2. What was the name given to Maulana Azad by his father?
3. When is the National Education Day celebrated?

### **13.2.2 Maulana Azad and Education:**

One of the issues he held dear was education, with an emphasis on scientific and technical education, which he felt was indispensable for the development of a country colonized and exploited for over 150 years. His commitment to education as Irfan Habib points out can be seen from the days of *Al-Hilal* as he systematically pursued education. (Irfan Habib “Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on Education and Culture in Post Independent India” p.no. 15)

Further, his exposure to the Aligarh Movement and Nadva-tul-Ulum of Lucknow helped him to express his views on education. Later in 1916 he openly began to claim to have prepared a critical insight in the discipline of education. His reasoning more importantly the habit of raising questions or questioning the traditional knowledge or teaching methods and curriculum comes from Ibn Khaldun, the 14<sup>th</sup> century historian, traveler and philosopher, who had a great influence on him. He was also in agreement with Khaldun on the point that unquestioning theology has led to its stagnation not only in religious but also in secular learning. Thus, for him questioning is significant specifically in order for any learning or system of education to survive with the changing times. He also opined that it is through education alone one can rectify this habit of accepting any domain of knowledge without questioning it. He also felt that science and technology is important part of any educational system be it Islamic Madrasa education system or any other.

Apart from Ibn Khaldun, Sir Syed Ahmed has also influenced him in a restricted manner like he was inspired from his opinions on modern education and science specifically for Muslim.

However, he could not focus and stand for this cause as he got engaged in the anti-imperialist struggle.

Further, one can see that he was also in agreement with the Jamaluddin Afghani, who was a political activist and one who travelled extensively to the Muslim countries. Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan never appreciated or liked his ideas but Azad shared his views on modern scientific and technical education. Afghani also criticized those who did not want Muslims to join freedom struggle.

Nevertheless, from the above one can decipher that Maulana Azad's personality or thinking was never narrow and he never restricted himself only to Islamic education or knowledge. He was open to any idea or new knowledge though he initially received only Islamic education but he also explored other subjects of his interest and topics. It was not only the contribution of his constant reading but his personality was also such that he never restricted himself into a single frame of mind. He constantly engaged himself with new ideas and put an effort to do something which takes the country to the path of modernity specifically in terms of education.

From west he was majorly influenced and interested in their varied concepts of education that allows a child to learn freely and independently. He was also interested in the progress of their science and technology. Azad was also in agreement with Rousseau, the French philosopher, when it comes to the innate goodness of human nature. He talked about it in his paper *Al-Hilal* wherein for him Rousseau is someone who revolutionized not only the intellectual but social life of his times. He specifically liked the Rousseau's idea of letting the child understand and learn the concept of truth on his own. At one hand he was in awe of western education system which puts the child on its pedestal on the other hand he was bewildered at the apathy of eastern education system. All these made him understand that education is the only source of development for his country.

Irfan Habib opines that there is an argument among the scholars that Azad had nothing to do with education and it was Nehru who appointed him as the education minister and he also played a key role in making various educational policies be it related to scientific or otherwise. Irfan Habib agrees to the fact that there is no doubt that he was appointed as the minister of education on the insistence of Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi. However, they were very much aware of the fact that how much Azad was passionate about education, culture and science and

technology. Though he might have limitations but Nehru's positive attitude and support was always there for him. More importantly he was the best available man for the job.

Irfan Habib further opines that: He was not a professional educationist like Montessori, Tagore or Gandhi but their influence was huge on education. More importantly he was a scholar, thoughtful man, a litterateur, a divine who was surrounded by intense political life. He luckily was able to club his "life of the mind and his life of intense political activity- a rare quality which he shared with his life-long friend and colleague, Nehru. If we look retrospectively, Azad was the most eminently suited choice to bring India out of the morass it had gone into after partition. There was a need for a person of great vision and character who may be able to assess the situation correctly and adopt sound educational policies which would help, in the long run, to restore mental sanity and balance to national life and instill the right values in it." (18)

**Check your Progress:**

1. Name the 14<sup>th</sup> century scholar who greatly influenced Azad.
2. What were his views on scientific knowledge?
3. On whose insistence he became the Education minister?

### **13.2.3 Medium of Instruction and Azad's Views on It:**

Medium of instruction is a significant step in any country's system of education. In India it had a different history and it played a major and important role in shaping the minds of the Indians. There is or was of course a hope was seen of progress and development but at the same time it demanded huge sacrifice of understanding of our own culture, language and the development of young minds. Nevertheless, there were many debates and discussions before English became the part of Indian education system. It all began during the colonial times when Anglicist won over the orientalist and the natives had little or no say in it. Nevertheless, English became essential part of the education system and a means of survival for the Indians. Post-independence it was once again a huge responsibility to set the tone of the education system which was hugely based on the medium of instructions. Of course Azad knew very well that how important role education plays in one country's progress as he once said in one of his first conferences that "A truly liberal and humanitarian education may transform the outlook of the

people and set it on the path of progress and prosperity, while an ill-conceived or unscientific system might destroy all the hopes which have been cherished by generations of pioneers in the cause of national struggle.’

Irfan Habib opines that Azad was aware of the harmful effect the English medium of instruction has brought on this country which began specifically during the colonial times specifically post-Maculayan period. However, now there was no other way to go and at the same time it is also a fact that “Sanskrit and Persian were unsuited for medium of instruction, “but English could serve the purpose no better”. When the East India Company decided to introduce English as the medium of instruction, we made a beginning in an un-Indian way. The Indians had to shape their minds in artificial and not in natural moulds. He even said that “If the Indian languages had been made the medium of instruction a hundred and fifty years ago they would have come in line with the progressive languages of the world”.

After Independence of India he became the first Education Minister of the country. During his tenure, education in the country became universal for the school going children, social education also started for adult illiterates, gave preference to scientific and technical education and understood the need to enrich the communities’ culture by encouraging it and providing facilities. He did set up A National Centre for the Blind at Dehra Dun. He established a system of cultural scholarships to help and welcome the foreign students to study in India too. He encouraged the use of audio-visual aids in imparting better education to the children.

During his work he has appointed and established various institutions like University Grant Commission (UGC) in 1953, Sahitya Academy in 1954, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur in 1951, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, CSIR for scientific works, turned Visva Bharati Santiniketan as a Central University in 1952, Established Central Institute of Education in 1947, Indian Academy of Dance, Drama and Music in 1953, Lalit Kala Academy in 1954, National Museum in 1947, All India Council for Teaching, Sangeet Natak Academy and so on.

As he was the first Education Minister of the country he had a great task to finish because it was the initial period. The newly Independent India was demanding its own identity. For that he felt the Indian languages need special attention in the presence of the English language because the other Indian languages were not developing in its presence. He suggested another way to develop these languages and that was through the transformation of knowledge or the



translation of various developed languages literature and books should be made available in the Indian languages.

He himself always used to speak and write in Urdu though he knew English. Even his official works and files used to be in Urdu. It is to be said that he never addressed a gathering in English. It does not mean that he was less fluent in English. Ali comments on his command over the English language,

His proficiency in English reached such a level that when Al-Hilaal was revived in 1915 he would translate English articles into Urdu” (Ali: 2008, 30).

The supportive factor can be that he was the Congress president more than once and just before the Independence he held the post continuously five to six times. So, the official works and dealings he did at that time and dealing with English people obviously will be in English only. The other things can be that the hatred towards the English people and their language because the country was in the mood of freedom fighting and everybody just wanted the English people should go from India. But on the same time he never ignored the English language. He knew Ghalib, Kalidas, Amir Khusro but he didn't keep himself away from Shakespeare and Milton. By the way his favourite poet was Byron. But he wanted India to have its own identity in terms of its language and culture. He clearly expressed his views on English language during his address at the Patna University Convocation Day on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1947. He said,

Perhaps this is the first time in the history of the Indian Universities when English is being replaced by an Indian language for delivering a Convocation Address. I do not know what your reactions would be to my speaking in Hindustani. Do you think it is necessary for me to offer an apology for breaking with the past? Indeed, if an apology was needed, it was only for the adoption of a language forced upon us by the course of historical events (Kumar: 1991, 97).

In that speech he did put forward the pros and cons of the English language and the education system which was forced on the natives by the colonisers. He was not against any language or education system but he was worried about the country's identity and about the people of the country. They are forced to learn a foreign language which is the problem. Maulana called this system of education an artificial one because the children are not experiencing the

knowledge the way in which they should get it. But instead of it they are receiving education through the medium of a foreign language. He gave examples of those countries that have their own languages as the medium of instruction like Japan and Turkey. Maulana Azad said,

If the Indian languages had been made the media of instruction a hundred and fifty years ago they would have come in live with the progressive languages of the world (Kumar: 1991, 98).

Though Azad was in the favour of Indian classical languages like Urdu but never ignored English. Maulana made such policies where the English language along with one of the Indian languages used as an official language of the country. He said suddenly we can't adopt a new medium or instructions thus the English was put under review for first 5 years and later again for 5 years and by that time he was no more. But still the country though have Hindi as its national language but people still prefer English over it and the same condition is of the other Indian languages of the country too.

**Check your Progress:**

1. Name the institutions established by Azad as an Education Minister.
2. For how many years English was put under review?
3. How many languages did Azad know?

#### **13.2.4 Democratization of Education:**

Maulana Azad at the All India Education conference said that “We must not for a moment forget, it is a birth right of every individual to receive at least the basic education without which he cannot fully discharge his duties as a citizen.”

India is a country filled with various cultural and religious communities. Religious communities are again divided into various sects and castes. To make the matter more complicated there are different class of people as well. On this diversity and unity Azad was very proud of and once he openly declared that “I am proud of being an Indian. I am part of the indivisible unity that is Indian nationality. I am indispensable to this noble edifice and without me this splendid structure is incomplete. I am an essential element, which has gone to build India. I can never surrender this claim”.

Nevertheless, providing education to all these people of diverse cultural and religious and socio-economic background was an important issue. In this situation it was difficult to cater to the needs of all the people or to say have a vision to think about all the communities on the same line was difficult. It was Maulana Azad who faced this issue in the capacity of an Education minister.

Irfan Habib opines that Maulana Azad used Islam as a frame of reference for the universalization of education. For Azad, who was also an Islamic scholar, Islam is perfect that gives freedom and democracy whose main purpose is to bring back freedom that is taken away from it. It spreads the message of equality and democracy among mankind. In this manner, Habib opines, Azad expanded the idea of the belief system on a large scale especially to make others understand and to decipher the issues of a newly independent country specifically in the matters of universalization of education. (p.no. 22)

To act upon this issue it was necessary to leave the narrow-mindedness aside which is a serious disease. Azad elaborating on it said “Like an actor it masquerades in disguise. In the domain of religion it appears in the form of blind faith and wants to deceive us in the name of orthodoxy. In politics it wants to overpower us in the guise of nationalism. In learning and culture it makes an appeal to us in the name of our nation and country. It behoves us not to be taken in by these fictitious names. We must remember that the root cause of all this is nothing but narrow-mindedness.”

Further when Azad was emphasizing on the matters of universalization of education he was also actively vocal about the cause for the women’s education. He believed that women’s education is very essential as she needs to be educated being the citizen of the country and the second thing is that she becomes an agent who pass on the education to the younger generation. In the Constituent Assembly of 1949 he also raised this issue and requested to increase the educational opportunities for women. In this manner alone education will be available to all in a democratic manner and a country as women are also significant part of this country and excluding them one cannot achieve the objective of universalization of education fully. Azad referred to Disraeli, who believed that “a democracy has no future unless it educates its masters”.

In a newly Independent India wherein everyone enjoys the right to vote and thereby become the makers of democracy, this reason was enough for Maulana Azad to desire for the masses right to education. He wanted them to be educated in order to be informed citizens.

Further, another thing that made him all the more sad to fight for the universalization of education was the huge, that is, 85% percentage of illiterate population inherited after more than 150 years of colonial rule. Apart from this to make the matter worse there were caste and class discrimination. All these matters needed an urgent attention and in order to discard them from its roots education was the only tool. However, the major hindrance to accomplish this task was lack of financial resources. Initially it was only 1% was allocated for education and it later increased up to 10% due to his continuous and untiring efforts. Thus the fund was raised from 20 million to 350 million of rupees during his tenure as an education minister.

Maulana's views were unbiased. We hardly find religious and the same time secular like him in Indian history. Though he did very less for the Muslims especially he never wanted the segregation of the community and he promoted classical and Madrassa education. He wanted Muslim people to come forward in every field. He did not want the citizens of this country to ignore the English language. As an Education Minister he could have taken any decision to discard the English language from the country's offices and institutions but he didn't do that. All great institutions of India today which was established by him follow English and in fact he advocated for English sometimes. He said whatever the medium would be English should be compulsory and our students should learn English because it will help them in higher education and competing with the other worlds.

The man who has immensely contributed and always thought for the nation and it's betterment got very less recognition for his works and services, specially comparison to others. He was in a true sense a secular leader of India. Throughout his life he remained patriotic and understood the need of the hour. He did not just thought about the political, industrial, technological development of the country but also wanted its people to become morally good, intellectual and contribute in making the country advance.

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### **13.3 Learning Outcomes**

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This module has introduced you to one of the greatest personalities of Indian politics, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. In this module you have learnt briefly about his ancestors, educational background, his writings and journalistic career and so on and so forth. More

importantly you have learnt about his huge and great contributions in the field of education he made as an Education minister. Here you have also learnt how much Maulana emphasised on the importance of women's education. Further how consistently he put an effort to increase the budget for Education, established significant scientific and technological institutions, universities, and introduced universalization of education etc. Apart from this, this module has helped you to understand the secular aspect of Maulana Azad, his interest in science and technology, education and so on.

Further, this module has thrown light on the debate of medium of instructions, English education, and colonial rule and so on. Apart from this, it has also helped you to understand the significance of education more importantly how women's education plays a significant role for the development of a nation, and so on.

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## 13.4 Glossary

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**Diversity:** involving people from different ethnic, religious, cultural, race, gender background

**Vocal:** expressing any idea or oneself freely

**Segregation:** the act of separating one thing from the other

**Ignore:** refuse to acknowledge someone or something or disregard someone or something

**Advocate:** supporting openly an idea or something

**Discard:** rejecting something or someone as it is no longer useful or required

**Institution:** a place founded for learning or religious purpose or a law or practice

**Accomplish:** to achieve something

**Hindrance:** creating a problem or obstruction in a work or something

**Universal:** Providing or making things available for all irrespective of class, caste and gender, community

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## 13.5 Sample Questions

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### 13.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. What was the name given to him by his father ( )  
(a) Bakhtiyar                      (b) Firoze Bakht  
(c) Abul Kalam                      (d) Azad

2. Where was Azad's father come from? ( )
  - (a) Bengal (b) Mecca
  - (c) Hyderabad (d) Gujarat
3. Name the two significant weeklies started by Azad ( )
  - (a) *Al-Hilaal* and *Al-Balagh* (b) *Mirat-ul Urs*
  - (c) Hicky's *Bengal Gazette* (d) *Nusrat-ul-Akhbar* and *Nusrat-ul-Islam*
4. Name the autobiography of Maulana Azad which was written by him in Urdu ( )
  - (a) *India Wins Freedom* (b) *Tazkira*
  - (c) *Ghubar-e-Khatir* (d) *Qissa-e-Hatim Tai*
5. Who edited the *Lisan-us-Sidq* in 1903? ( )
  - (a) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (b) Sir Syed Ahmed Khan
  - (c) Maulvi Nasir Ali (d) Syed Hasan
6. How many time Azad became the president of Congress before Independence ( )
  - (a) Five (b) twice
  - (c) Never (d) once
7. He was appointed as the first ( )
  - (a) Education Minister (b) Chief Minister of Bengal
  - (c) President of India (d) Vice-President of India
8. For how many years he held the post of Education Minister ( )
  - (a) 11 years (b) 5 years
  - (c) Never (d) 7years
9. Maulana Azad always spoke in ( )
  - (a) English language (b) Hindustani
  - (c) Persian (d) Urdu
10. He advocated for the ( )
  - (a) Universalization of education
  - (b) Only for English education
  - (c) Male education
  - (d) Education in Regional languages

### 13.5.2 Short Answer Questions:

1. When and where Maulana Azad was born and what was the name given to him by his father?

2. Name the two very famous weeklies of Azad and why were they banned?
3. Name the Indian personalities who influenced the thoughts of Maulana Azad and how?
4. What were the thoughts of Azad on Madrasah education?
5. What were his thoughts on modern science and technology?

### **13.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Briefly discuss the thoughts of Azad on English language?
2. Name the institutions or universities established by Azad during his tenure as an Education Minister.
3. Write his thoughts on English as a medium of instruction and his thoughts about regional languages.

## **13.6 Suggested Readings**

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## **Unit – 14: Contribution of Abul Kalam as the First Education Minister**

### **Structure**

#### **14.0 Introduction**

#### **14.1 Objectives**

#### **14.2 Contribution of Abul Kalam as the First Education Minister**

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### **14.0 Introduction**

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Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has the privilege to carry with him three layers of name. Born in Makkah as Firoz Bakht, known as Ghulam Mohiyuddin at young age and became popular as Abul Kalam Azad later in his life, was such a genius in whom many personalities dwelled. He was an exceptional scholar, a distinguished freedom fighter, a reputed journalist, a litterateur, a poet as well as prose writer whose writing style remains beyond any comparison. He was a great debater, as indicated by his name, Abul Kalam, which literally means ‘Lord of dialogue.’ After

completing formal education at the age of 16 years, he studied modern sciences, world history, politics, philosophy and literature. He visited various countries like Afghanistan, France, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. At the age of 14 years, he started writing Urdu poetry and reviewing scholarly books. He contributed articles to many well-known literary journals and magazines and edited a magazine including his own. He met Maulana Shibli Nomani. He took him to Nadwatul Ulma, Lucknow where he edited *Al-Nadwa* in 1906. He also edited *Vakil of Amritsar*, a bi-weekly magazine. He was the editor of two Urdu weekly *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Bilagh*.

Kalam was multi-lingual, well-versed in Arabic, English, Urdu, Hindi, Persian and Bengali. Politically, he was associated with Indian National Congress. Due to his exceptional talent in the field of education, he was made the first Education Minister of Independent India in Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet from 1947 to 1958. He got the opportunity to serve as the Education Minister for eleven years. Posthumously, he was awarded India's highest civilian honour, Bharat Ratna in 1992. As the first Education Minister, he had a great responsibility of universalizing and democratizing education system in India. He took every effort in this direction and made Indian education system different from the then practicing British education system. He was an advocate of Indian liberal education system free of caste, creed, religion, region and gender.

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## 14.1 Objectives

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- To study Abul Kalam's vision about education
- To bring out Abul Kalam's contribution as Education Minister
- To examine the establishment of various institutes of national repute
- To perceive Abul Kalam's vision of Adult Education
- To focus on Kalam's stand on compulsory basic/primary education
- To elaborate Kalam's language policy
- To elucidate Kalam's contribution to higher education

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## 14.2 Contribution as First Education Minister

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### **14.2.1 Education Policy:**

After assuming the office as the Education Minister on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 1947, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had a great responsibility to deal with the condition in which education system in India was left in. He had reviewed the previous policies of the British government regarding education system in India. Kalam was of the view that in the hands of the alien government education was not imparted in way as was needed. Hence he thought it necessary to review the education schemes and make necessary modifications so that the schemes of education could be in alignment with changed time. He had taken it as his duty to undertake new plans in the field of education in order to reach the objectives of newly independent nation. He could see various difficulties in his way: political uncertainties, lack of funds.

Kalam could find that the process of execution of the schemes of education were certainly slow. For getting favourable results, these schemes needed to be accelerated. He cited two examples of the schemes before he assumed the charge of Education Ministry. A budget provision of Rs. 22 lacks was sanctioned for the establishment of central institute of Education. It was expected that this could be completed within a time of two years but the project proved be a failure as it did not have its own building. It might have started in a temporary or hired building. Secondly, Kalam regretfully mentioned that the scheme of basic education for the country had been agreed upon by the Central Government as well as the Provincial Governments to implement it with immediate effect by giving it priority in the first Five Year Plan. According to this scheme, all citizens of India in the age group of 6 to 14 years would be provided free and compulsory training. Kalam could see that the work of this scheme could not be started.

Kalam pointed out that the scheme of overseas scholarship, though it started in 1944 but it was not implemented meticulously. The capacity of the then existing institutions in India and the country to which the scholars were sent was not favourable. It was the time of war which had worsen the situation in the U. K. and U. S. A. Ninety per of the seat were reserved for ex-service personnel in both these countries. There were great difficulties in respect of housing and food for students who would go to the U. K. Before Kalam could assume the charge of this ministry, two batches of 500 students were already sent abroad as per the plan of sending this number of students each year. It was after Kalam assuming the office as Education Minister, he appointed an Overseas Scholarship Committee and the Scientific Manpower Committee in order to design well thought plans. With the recommendations of these committees new plans were being made,

funds were allocated for the expansion of Indian institutions and their quality improvement. This would help a lot in the selection of candidates who would be sent for training abroad at Government expenses.

The Central Advisory Board of Education recommended that the Basic Education Scheme of Compulsory free education to the citizens of India under the age group of 6 to 14 be implemented gradually for 40 years but Kalam was reluctant to get it implemented from the next academic year, at least in Delhi.

Kalam had given equal attention, along with Basic education and adult education, to technical education and higher education. Accordingly Tata Institute of Science was allocated 35 lakh as non-recurring amount and Rs. 0.5 lakh as recurring amount in the year 1947-48. Similarly, national museum of Art, Archeology and Anthropology were established in the same year in order to preserve Indian art and ancient monuments.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad encouraged research in Higher Polymer Physics and Chemistry at the Indian Association for Cultivation of Science, Calcutta. The Power Engineering Department at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore is also established. Kalam knew that the Central Government has special responsibility for the development of Central Universities and had got the required funds sanctioned from the government.

Kalam, in the light of the then new policy of Government, had got the facility of training expanded within the length and breadth of the country itself instead of sending scholar abroad. Accordingly Eastern and Western Technical Institutes near Calcutta and Bombay were established respectively. Simultaneously, Kalam had an idea of development in all the spheres of education. As a result of this, Training college of Physical Education, Training College for Teachers in Domestic Science were established. Central Institute of Foreign Language was founded with a view to provide opportunity for the Indian and foreign nationals to learn various foreign languages in order to look for better employment prospects. The establishment of Central Bureau of Psychology, Experimental School at Delhi, National Central Copyright Library and the Central School of Indian Architecture and Regional Planning were also the product of Kalam's vision.

#### **14.2.2 Compulsory Basic/Primary Education:**

Abul Kalam Azad had assumed the charge as the first Education Minister on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 1947. He believed that the wealth of a nation is not concentrated in country's book but

in primary schools. The first and foremost action taken by him is the first Education Minister was to implement the scheme of basic/primary education for the country. As per the scheme, to which the central as well as the Provincial Governments agreed to implement the scheme under first Five Year Plan, the government aimed at providing free and compulsory education to the citizens between the ages of 6 and 14. He emphasized the importance of imparting basic/primary education to all irrespective of gender. He was a staunch advocate of girls' education without it achieving the goal of basic/compulsory education would not have been possible. In one of his speeches, he uttered, "No programme of national education can be appropriate if it does not give full consideration to the education and advancement of one-half of the society – that is the women.

AbulKalam could easily see the difficulty that could arise in the implementation of Basic Education Scheme for universal compulsory education. The Central Advisory Board of Education under the previous government had already done important work in the direction of Basic Compulsory Education. The only difficulty which Kalam could visualize was the time take for its implementation. The Central Advisory Board of Education had recommended a period of forty (40) years for its implementation. This time period was not acceptable to Kalam. Instead of relying on the Central Advisory Board of Education, he had set up the Delhi Provincial Education Board in order to implement the full scheme from the coming academic year.

To implement the scheme of Compulsory Basic Education in the length and breadth of the nation could only be possible through organizing All India Educational Conference. At the Conference which held in January, 1948, Kalam had suggested that, instead of 40 years, the government should aim at a target of five years for the completion of the scheme of Compulsory Basic Education. Kalam was extremely confident and hopeful to get the scheme completely executed within a period of at least ten years. The All India Educational Conference agreed unanimously with the expectations of AbulKalam Azad. He enquired about the ground level problems involved in the implementation of Compulsory Basic Education. He was told about the dearth of trained teacher and also of the shortage of funds for the implementation of the scheme.

It was decided at the conference itself that so far as less number of trained teachers available; the work of the scheme must start with the available number of trained teachers. It was also decided that there should be some kind of educational conscription for five years during this time every literate man in the country would be expected to put a certain period of his service as a teacher of the nation. In a sense, the scheme was taken by AbulKalam Azad as a national mission. Secondly, Kalam sanctioned an additional expenditure of Rs. 24 crore per year for next five years. In this way two major problems coming in the way of implementation of Compulsory Basic Education were sorted out. At the Conference itself, it was decided that a committee should be appointed to monitor and examine all available methods for meeting the financial requirements.

### **14.2.3 Adult Education:**

As a visionary, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad wanted to see India developing into an educated and democratic nation in the real sense. He had not only given attention for the improvement of educational facilities among the young generation who had been out of schools for decades together. Due to non-availability of formal education, the adult generation could not have the opportunity of mental development. It is in this sense that Kalam looked at adult education with equal seriousness to that of child education. To quote him:

...There is no doubt that the problem of adult education is as important as that of child education. The adult education has far greater aims than merely teaching adults how to read how to read and write. It is our duty to impart to adults an education which should develop their thinking faculty so that they are enlightened and enabled to due interest in the affairs of a democratic state and society. In no walk of our national life can we progress without the considerate and judicious co-operation of millions of our countrymen. Anyhow, nobody would deny the extreme importance of this work. What we have to see is how best this work can be accomplished in the shortest period. (Speech in Constituent Assembly of India, March 11, 1948)

The condition of an adult, in absence of education, is like a grown-up child. In this condition, according to Maulana Azad, there is no development of thinking faculty. Kalam was of the view that only teaching the uneducated and illiterates how to read and write is not enough. He expected more from them. He wanted to bring the uneducated adults, through educating

them, in the mainstream of the national development. It was because the ratio of uneducated adult was greater than that of the educated.

After assuming the office as Education Minister, like Basic Education, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had paid equal attention to Adult Education Scheme. Kalam wanted to place the scheme before the competent bodies. He did it by placing the scheme before Educational Conference as well as Central Advisory Committee in January, 1948. Both these bodies had approved the scheme of Adult Education. The report of the sub-committee appointed for this purpose by the Standing Committee of the Central Advisory Committee was presented and accepted with some modifications.

According to the scheme of Adult education, there were two branches of it. The first is concerned itself with literary education while the second was related with the development of mental faculties. The later provided, beside oral lectures, the media of radio, films and modern methods of open air dramas. Kalam had made financial provision for creation of film library in this regard. With the help of the financial provision, it became easy to undertake production of educational films which eased the process of teaching and learning for adult learners.

The Education Ministry had started a separate section in order to prepare necessary literature meant for the adult learners. The sub-committee appointed by the Central Advisory Board had stressed the inclusion of certain amount of technical and skill-based education so that it would enable the adult learners to be connected with some profession. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad intended to introduce the scheme of Adult Education in such a way as should enable the schools of Basic Education to become centres of all activities of Adult Education as well. According to Kalam, this would help to create a new intellectual atmosphere in the country.

#### **14.2.4 Technical Education:**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, as the first Education Minister, had paid concentrated attention towards the development and imparting of technical education. Under his ministership, four Higher Technical Institutions, on the model of the American Institutions, were established – two near Calcutta and two near Bombay respectively. Each of the four institutions were allocated an amount of three crores as capital expenditure and rupees forty four lakh as recurring expenditure. These institutions were expected to provide training to 300 students – 2000 Under-graduates and 1000 Post-graduates. Four years' development plan for the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore had been sanctioned during his tenure. Likewise, three years' development

plan for the Delhi Polytechnic had also been sanctioned. Similarly, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) was also recommended by him, in order to give from the Centre a grant to the existing technical institutes in the country. Accordingly, the grant has also been sanctioned for five years. The All India Council for Technical Education was expected to act as the funding agency for the technical institutes. It is still functioning in the same capacity.

In order to send Indian scholars abroad, under the Overseas Scholarship Scheme, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had very clear perspective. Due to very poor condition of Indian institutes, the scholars aspiring to avail overseas scholarship could not prove their talent at international level. Therefore, he undertook the work of raising the status of the existing institutions to a level so as to train students with much higher qualifications, and then to determine according to the plan the subjects for the study of which scholars should be sent abroad and then to grant scholarship for those subjects only. In view of this, Kalam set up a committee to investigate into country's immediate scientific requirements and to prepare a master-plan to meet those requirements.

In the light of the recommendations by the committee, the Central Government and the Education Ministry allocated required funds and established three Central Universities. Along with this, the Provincial Governments were also allocated handsome amounts of fund in order to implement their development schemes quickly in relation to educational institutes. According to the recommendations of the committee 29 Junior Technical Institutions were recognized, 42 Technical High Schools were being opened, 15 Senior Technical Institutions, 140 Junior Technical Schools, 38 Technical High Schools, 16 Polytechnics were opened in the major locations of the country.

#### **14.2.5 Language Policy**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had very vivid vision as to which language should be adopted as medium of imparting primary education to the children in their mother-tongue. Kalam was in total agreement with the recommendations made by the Central Advisory Board Education which was in favour of imparting education in the mother-tongue only. Kalam thought that imparting education to the children in their mother-tongue is the natural and the most appropriated medium for imparting education. According to him, it would become difficult for the children if the language spoken by them as regional language is different and that of taught at



schools is different. After fifth class, the children should be taught State language but the medium of instruction should be the mother-tongue.

According to Kalam, if the language spoken by a certain group of people is not the same which has been adopted by the Provincial Government concerned, in such a situation, it shall have to be admitted that every person residing in that Province should learn the State language otherwise, he will have to suffer. Kalam also had made it clear that university education through different languages. There has to be only one language through which education should be given and that should be the State language.

#### **14.2.6 Job Opportunities for Foreign returned Scholars:**

Kalam had been a staunch supporter of sending Indian students to foreign countries in order to seek higher studies in scientific and technical subjects. Along with this, he was of the opinion that by doing so the main objective of education should be served at its earliest. Kalam had the idea that in future the country could be benefitted by the knowledge of the scholars who are foreign returned. In future, the scholars would impart knowledge within the country to the upcoming generation of students desirous to seek higher studies. Kalam had introduced overseas scholarship for the scholars desirous of going abroad for higher studies. According to him under this scheme the Government had a plan to send every year a certain number of Indian students to foreign countries. At the same time, Kalam opined that along with the approach of the government to send the students to foreign countries for higher studies, an assessment of the academic condition of the existing institutes within the country is equally important. Education Ministry under him had also planned to start new institutions for catering higher education of good quality.

Kalam had been very keen about the employment to the foreign returned students. He was in favour of offering them immediate employment on their return to the home-country after completing their studies. According to him, the knowledge which the scholars have acquired in the foreign country should not go waste if the foreign returned scholars do not get job opportunity immediately after their return.

Abul Kalam Azad, in the light of the scheme to provide job opportunity to the foreign returned scholars, had a plan that various departments of the Provincial as well as Central government must be consulted as to know what kind of persons would be required for their work in future, which technical subjects they want student to be sent to foreign countries. Likewise, a

detailed set of questionnaire prepared and sent to each department. According to this plan, various departments of the government selected a number of subjects and referred them to the Education department. The Education department announced only those subjects and recommended the same to the selection board. The selection board was expected to select and send the students as per the plan of the government. During Kalam tenure, this scheme was successfully implemented and materialized.

#### **14.2.7 Establishment of Visva-Bharati:**

So far as the establishment of Visva Bharati as university is concerned when this bill was submitted for consideration, Kalam's stand about passing the motion in favour of the bill was very important. According to Kalam, the every citizen of India is well aware of the grand reputation of Visva Bharati. For him, granting permission to Visva Bharati to function as university is not new. Visva Bharati had been functioning on the parameters of university itself. It had created its reputation as the institute of national repute. For Kalam, whether the house acknowledged or not it didn't make any difference to the position of Visva Bharati. The object of presenting the bill in the house was only to provide official recognition to it as a university. Kalam remembered the services rendered by Rabindranath Tagore since the time he established Visva Bharati in 1921. Since that time Visva Bharati had been working as a full-fledged university.

Kalam acknowledged that Visva Bharati had been enjoying its reputation as an institute of high esteem not only in India but outside as well. He had endorsed that the scholars and students from all over the world come to Visva Bharati in search of real knowledge which they carry with themselves only to spread the same in different parts of the world. Kalam had mentioned in the bill itself about the type of education Visva Bharati was expected to impart. According to him, there was not need to introduce any kind of change or alteration in the type and system of education. Kalam had recalled that while establishing Visva Baharati, Rabindranath Tagore had cared a little about adoption of general terms of the existing universities. Tagore had adopted Hindi terms for different posts and committees in his institution – for example the word he adopted for the Executive Council is '*karya Samiti*'. Kalam assured that the Education Ministry had not altered any of the term already used by Tagore in Hindi but the provision of using the English version of the Hindi words was made in the bill in order to make it easy for the understanding of the common man.

So far as the issue of financial help to Visva Bharati was concerned, Kalam had made it clear that the management of the university had made it clear that the university would not require any funds at least for coming ten years. Kalam declare a certain amount of budget for construction of the hostel and library buildings. Apart from this, there was no provision of budget was made because Visva Bharati did not need any funds for the construction of classroom. Nature has provided it with a canopy of the sky and the open places.

#### **14.2.8 Approach towards Urdu:**

Referring to the status of Urdu, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad established that Urdu is not the language of any religious group. Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Parsi and other speak Urdu irrespective of their religion. There was much fuss created at the time of sanctioning a budget of Rs. 60,000 to Shibli Academy which had been then working for last 30 to 40 years. Kalam very strongly defended his stand of doing so. The act of sanctioning the budget for one time to Shibli Academy was concerned, Kalam took the side of Shibli Academy by saying that this academy had been working for the maintenance and promotion of Urdu. He could see that there was nothing wrong in doing so. Seth Govind Dass, one of the members of the Parliament had mentioned that in the way of promotion of Hindi, there were to obstacles: English and Urdu. To his objection, Kalam resisted by saying that for the promotion of Hindi, the Ministry of Education had established a separate section but there was no separate section created for the promotion of Urdu. How can this become a hindrance for the promotion of Hindi. He elaborately mentioned that Hindi had been the official language of the country.

#### **14.2.9 Approach towards Hindi:**

So far as Hindi language was concerned, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had opined that all the citizens of the country would be in agreement with Kalam's opinion. According to him, in order to promote Hindi as national language, the Education Ministry had already set up a special section meant for Hindi. In Kalam's opinion, there would not be a single individual in North India who did not want Hindi to progress. Moreover, there are those people who do not know Hindi but ask their children to study it.

Kalam feels sorry for Hindi not making progress as speedily as it could. The main reason behind this condition of Hindi is the unwelcoming gesture that it has been receiving since the time it has been declared the national language of India. Kalam opined that one must not be prejudiced about any language and it is Hindi, absolutely not. Kalam invited every Indian

citizen's attention towards the need of promoting Hindi as national language of the country. For him, it is everyone's duty to render sincere efforts to develop it.

#### **14.2.10 Adoption of International Scientific Terms in Hindi:**

To the issue of whether scientific terms are to be adopted in Hindi or retained in English only. Kalam had clear-cut idea in this regard. He mentioned that he had been on tour to England and France and had found that these countries had not adopted the international terms. For taking a decision over this point, there was established a commission by the government under the name of University Education Commission. The Commission submitted its report in this relation and recommended that for science studies international terms should be adopted in Hindi.

Kalam further had made it clear that the recommendations of University Education Commission before the Central Advisory Board of Education. This Board is a body which represented the State Governments, the Universities and the educationists of the country. It is natural that the government had great respect and value to the recommendations made by the board. The board unanimously accepted the recommendations of the Commission which had established that for science international terms should be adopted in Hindi. Thereafter, the Ministry of Education had formed a committee of expert educationists and scientists which should take up the work of preparation of such terms.

#### **14.2.11 Establishment of various Institutions of National repute:**

During the tenure of Abul Kalam Azad as the first Education Minister of independent India various institutes of higher education were established which are still enjoying the status of institutes of high repute in the country. The first and foremost is the establishment of the University Grants Commission (UGC). Apart from this, Kalam also established Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). This institute has been making noteworthy contribution in the field of academic and cultural development of the nation. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, with the assistance of Kalam, had established the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), one of the landmark institutes to carry scientific realtions. Considering the need of technical education, Kalam had strengthened the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). During his tenure as the Education Minister, first Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in 1951 at Kharagpur which was followed by the institutes of the same nature and reputation at Mumbai, Chennai, Kanpur and Delhi respectively. Kalam had given equal attention towards the

establishment of the Sangeet Natak Academy in 1953, the Sahitya Akademi and the Lalit Kala Akademi in 1954 in order to promote and protected Indian culture and art.

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### 14.3 Learning Outcomes

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The students, through this unit have learnt the following:

- Kalam's vision of education
- Kalam's contribution as the first Education Minister
- Kalam's visionary and landmarking steps of establishing various institutes of national repute
- His vision of adult education
- Kalam's vision and approach towards compulsory basic education
- Kalam's approach towards language and in particularly towards Urdu and Hindi

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### 14.4 Glossary

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<b>Profound:</b>	In depth
<b>Posthumously:</b>	After death
<b>Implement:</b>	Instrument for working with
<b>Dearth:</b>	Shortage, scarcity
<b>Conscription:</b>	Involuntary work
<b>Adult education:</b>	Education meant for the grown up citizens
<b>Provision:</b>	An act of providing
<b>Imparting:</b>	Giving or sharing
<b>Recurring:</b>	Happening frequently
<b>Tenure:</b>	Period of working in an office
<b>Reluctant:</b>	Offering resistance
<b>Gesture:</b>	Motion of the body
<b>Staunch:</b>	Trustworthy
<b>Catering:</b>	Act of providing

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## 14.5 Sample Questions

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### 14.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is honoured with which of the following awards posthumously?  
(a) Bharat Ratna                      (b) Sahitya Akademi Award  
(c) Padma Bhushan                  (d) Dnyanpeeth
2. In whose ministry was Azad the first Education Minister?  
(a) Indira Gandhi                      (b) Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru  
(c) Atal Bihari Vajpai                  (d) Narendra Modi
3. For how many years was Kalam education minister?  
(a) 09                                      (b) 11  
(c) 13                                      (d) 15

### Fill the blanks:

1. Abul Kalam means \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The birth name of Abul Kalam Azad was \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Kalam started \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ magazines.

### Say whether the following statements are true/false

1. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had stressed for compulsory basic education for the children of age between 6-15 years.
2. Kalam was favouring English as a medium of imparting education.

### Answer the following question in one sentence

1. Which is the national language of India?
2. Who is the first Education Minister of independent India?

#### **14.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. Comment on Kalam's approach to Urdu.
2. What was Kalam's approach to Hindi?
3. Bring out Kalam's stand on adult education.
4. What provisions were made for job opportunity to foreign returned students?
5. Enlist in detail Kalam's contribution to various institutes of higher education.

#### **14.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Write in detail on Kalam's education policy.
2. Comment on Kalam's idea of compulsory basic education.
3. Bring out the salient features of Visva Bharati university bill.

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### **14.6 Suggested Readings**

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## **Unit - 15: Inauguration of Madrasa Islamia, 1920**

### **Structure**

#### **15.0 Introduction**

#### **15.1 Objectives**

#### **15.2 Title**

##### **15.2.1 About the Author**

##### **15.2.2 Discussion**

##### **15.2.2.1 Section 1**

##### **15.2.2.2 Section 2**

##### **15.2.2.3 Section 3**

##### **15.2.2.4 Section 4**

##### **15.2.2.5 Summary**

#### **15.3 Learning Outcomes**

#### **15.4 Glossary**

#### **15.5 Sample Questions**

#### **15.6 Suggested Readings**

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### **15.0 Introduction**

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In March 1920, Mahatma Gandhi had spelled out a number of actions that the Indian citizens would resort to as part of expressing their non-cooperation towards the Government. In his original manifesto Gandhi had identified the adoption of the principle of Swaraj, and eradication of untouchability as the two bases of the mass movement. Later many details were added as the public modes for non-cooperation towards the Government. People were asked to surrender the titles conferred on them in the name of the King or Queen of England; they were to boycott the Civil Services; relinquish their posts in the British army, Police, and legislative Councils. Boycott of foreign goods was one of the most successful actions that caught the fancy of the Indian public and made the Government uncomfortable. All these were meant as a preamble to the mass Civil Disobedience Movement. One of the major projects planned for promoting the Non-Cooperation Movement was the boycott of the Western Education system.



Indian leaders were acutely conscious of the fact that the age-old Indian pattern of education was being sidelined and neglected because of the vigorous implementation of the western education pattern in newly set up English Schools and Colleges. The British argument was that the western education would benefit India in the long run; and that it would equip the Indians to take up the Self-Government in an efficient manner when

Mahatma Gandhi had given a formal call in the Session of the Indian National Congress held in Calcutta on 4 September 1920, for the launch of the Non-Cooperation Movement. This speech by Maulana Azad which we are going to study, was delivered in December 1920. About three months intervened between the mooted proposal in September, to the 12 of December in Calcutta, the day on which this speech under study is being delivered. In those three months, many events had taken place all over the country. Most Congress leaders were in total agreement with Gandhiji that the country was ready for the Non-Cooperation Movement; and that it would be the best weapon that could free the country from the hands of the British. The Movement had been planned in a detailed manner with multiple layers of the campaign to be observed. Indian masses and most important leaders were behind Mahatma Gandhi. However, there were many Muslim as well as Hindu organizations, and also many important national leaders who were not in favor of the Non-Cooperation Movement. They considered the call for non-cooperation movement at the time was too pre-mature. Some leaders who were interested in the Council Elections thought that it would prevent their chances and jeopardize their good relations with the Government.

Mahatma Gandhi was disappointed at the outcome of his proposed Movement. He had undertaken journeys all over the country along with some like minded leaders, to persuade people and gather support for the National Cooperation Movement. To the great chagrin of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad many important Muslim leaders were preventing the masses from joining the Non-Cooperation Movement. For Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Gandhiji's call for a widespread anti-British movement and the philosophic base of Non-Cooperation was much in tune with the Islamic precepts. According to Islam, no citizen should obey or cooperate with an unjust and tyrannical Government. As such the Khilafat Movement was working to free the Turkish Caliphate from the British Government by following a stand of total non-cooperation with the British rule. Maulana Azad was of the opinion that the Khilafat Movement was one in spirit with the Non-Cooperation Movement. Gandhiji had declared solidarity with the Khilafat

Movement and announced that the two movements would be twin bases of forcing the Government to re-think its decisions about granting self-rule to Indians. Maulana Azad had been very persuasive in all his negotiations with his compatriots; but he was deeply hurt that the Indian Muslims were not able to see his point of view. They were misled into thinking that the British rule was altruistic in its intentions towards Indian citizens.

In the name of reforms the British Government were leading the country away from its age-old systems and wisdom which had sustained it during all stages of history. Unfortunately many Indian leaders found the British reformist and developmental measures very attractive and futuristic. Older Institutions of learning were falling under neglect while new English schools and colleges were being promoted. The British wanted to create an educated class that could assist the Government in running the country. The establishment of the Calcutta Madrasa by Warren Hastings in 1781 for the teaching of Muslim Law, and the setting up of a Sanskrit College in Benaras by John Duncan in 1791 for the study of Hindu philosophy and its laws were two landmark ventures by the British. On the other hand, Gandhiji favored the notion of self-sufficiency and felt that India should preserve its own older system of education. Mahatma Gandhi, with the support of many stalwarts like CR Das, Patel, Nehru, Ali brothers and of course Azad, succeeded in popularizing the principles of the Non-Cooperation Movement. A number of Indian educational Institutions like the Gujarat Vidyapeeth (1920) and Kashi Vidyapeeth were set up. In a similar vein, Maulana Azad favoured the idea of Madrasas (places of learning) based on the Arabic model of learning. His setting up of the Madrasa Islamiya in Ranchi, and the upgradation of the Madrasa Islamia in Calcutta in 1920 are good examples of his zeal. Maulana Azad was of the firm opinion that any educational system whose goal was merely to enable the learner to earn a livelihood would not be an efficacious model for nation-building. If the people of a nation had to develop the education system should be value oriented. Learning and knowledge should go hand in hand with job-earning capacity. Education cannot have only a mercenary goal. In order to realize the noble goal of acquiring values and learning, any sacrifice would be welcome. With this ideal in mind, Maulana Azad went about many parts of India persuading the students studying in British-sponsored Institutions to boycott their classes and join the Indian system of learning. Muslim students were encouraged to join Madrasas.

The prose passage under study is part of the speech delivered by Maulana Azad on 12 December 1920 in Calcutta. The occasion was the inauguration of the Madrasa Islamia in

Calcutta. Actually this Madrasa had already been running offering Islamic education at a middle level. Under the aegis of the Non-Cooperation Movement Maulana Azad took it upon himself to upgrade the Madrasa and introduce higher study programmes. He wooed many students from the British sponsored Calcutta Madrasa (Madrasa Aliya) to join his Madrasa. He knew that compared to the Government sponsored Institutions, the indigenous Vidyapeeths and Madrasas would not be very attractive as they did not have the facilities or the support of government machinery and funds. Leaders like Maulana Azad knew that the only way to get around the Indian masses was to appeal to their spirit of nationalism.

In the prescribed passage Maulana Azad presses his point in favor of Arabic Education by appealing to the students' sense of the true meaning of learning. In a well-considered argument, Maulana Azad uses a logic that will work very well with the impressionable minds of the young people before him. He knows that these young persons are devout Muslims and their faith in their religion is strong. He appeals to this very attachment for religion and combines it with the problem in hand. Islam enjoins upon its followers that one should acquire learning and understand their own faith. Islam enjoins upon its followers also that they should never bow before anyone but God. Islam has equality of all humans (*masawat*) as its central philosophy. Islam assures its followers that it is not right to abjectly accept a condition of slavery and that defying a cruel slave master is quite correct. Islam also speaks about protecting one's own territory. All these are points which Azad wisely uses as persuasive measures when he encourages these boys to boycott the institutions of English education. The core strength of Azad's argument was that he equated the spirit of nationalism with the spiritual attachment that Indians have to their religions. Since the two were seen as two sides of the same coin, the students' nationalistic feelings were brought to the surface.

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## 15.1 Objectives

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The prescribed selection from the speeches of Maulana Abul Kalam aims to attend to more than one course objectives. Firstly, the content of the piece is rich with historic references. A detailed study with reference to the historic records of the time will help the learners to appreciate the significant role that the author played in the events taking place in the nation in the second decade of the twentieth century. Apart from that we are able to glean the undercurrents

and the reactions of different groups to the issue on hand. We see the great leaders of the day holding their own in the face of opposition and how they turned adversity into a favorable circumstance by their zeal and positive thinking. The non-Cooperation Movement.

The prescribed prose passage is in the format of an orally delivered speech. Such a speech would be different in some ways from a speech like *Qaul e Faisal* that you have already studied. The learners will be able to distinguish between different features of oral and written prose. In any speech there are different types of audiences. We shall notice that the speaker addresses Mahatma Gandhi who held a position as an esteemed guest at the function of the Inauguration of the Madrasa. So the speech starts by directly addressing the Chief Guest. The objective of the speaker is two-fold. Firstly Abul Kalam Azad wishes to introduce the learners of the Madrasa to the Father of the Nation. At the same time the speaker spends much of the content in speaking about the students of the Madrasa. Indirectly he is using the opportunity to laud the learners for their willingness to follow the guidance of Maulana Azad himself. Beyond that, Azad wishes to use the learner group before him as role models. He also uses the speech as a morale booster. There are many glowing tributes to the learner group before him. This gesture would certainly have inspired the group and filled them with renewed energy and enthusiasm to be paid such handsome praise by their mentor, and that too in the presence of the illustrious Father of the Nation.

As for the modern day readers, the document is valuable as an inspirational prose piece, and as the idiom to be adopted by any true patriot against an autocratic and unjust ruler.

Holy books of most religions are full of the spoken form of address. It is not surprising however, in view of the fact that not many addressees of those times were literate enough to read or write. The teachers had to use the oral mode and conversational form of speech to communicate abstract and complex issues that required explication; or when an issue was under doubt and needed persuasion to achieve consensus. The seers had to take recourse to argument, proof, and a balanced approach to negate and offer correctives to wrong beliefs. The foundational books of all religions therefore are full of the spoken models. These passages give us an insight to the oratory and rich thoughts of the great men of yore; at the same time we gain access to the models of speech and language use of earlier times. Thus we understand that the primary objective of a speaker is to persuade his/her listener towards his own way of thinking; or to achieve a consensus of opinion. This is not an easy task.

It is easy to detect the oratorical style of the classical literatures of the East in Maulana Azad's writings. To begin with, Maulana Azad's early training was in Arabic and Persian literatures. He imbibed the grammar and the idiom of these literatures. Many critics have labelled the style of Azad as 'oracular'. The role of Maulana Azad as a leader and opinion- builder during the Indian struggle for Independence necessitated this stance. His didactic view of literary expression made him a sober user of his medium. This sobriety of vision and his consciousness about his own role as leader made him use a kind of language and idiom that suited the moment.

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## **15.2 Inauguration of Madrasa Islamia**

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### **15.2.1 About the Author:**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad belongs to a generation of Indian leaders whose writings, speeches, and correspondence made a significant impact on the reading public and audiences in India and abroad. Maulana Azad's oratory was of an exemplary order. His commitment to nationalistic ideals was serious and as a result the language of his writings as well as speeches was impassioned and profound. His mastery over the Urdu, and the classical languages – Arabic and Persian – was thorough. As such his writings displayed his total command over his literary medium. Another factor that is remarkable about his personality is that he was a hard-core nationalist, unflinching in his loyalty to the Nation. He was also a devout Muslim. In his way of thinking, his religious ideals were in total correspondence with his nationalistic beliefs. He saw the British Government as opposed to Human dignity. He was acutely conscious of how the imposition of foreign rule and the tyranny of the British laws in India were dealing a deathly blow to the human psyche in the country. So he opposed the British Government on all these grounds: as an Indian, as a Muslim, and above all as a free human spirit.

The short prose passage is dense with historic references. That is why it is necessary to look into the historic events leading to the passage in hand. The importance of the passage is that it is a speech delivered by a very important figure of Indian Freedom Movement. Also the time when the speech was being delivered was very crucial. The Non-Cooperation Movement had been announced and soon the leaders found themselves surrounded by a number of problems. They had to contend not only with the opposition from the Government but also had to deal with differences of perspectives and points of view from within their own circles. The speech makes

some direct and some indirect references to the problems that threatened to defeat the very spirit of the Non-Cooperation Movement. It is heartening to see that in spite of everything the Indian leaders were giving all their time and energies to further the struggle for Independence.

The most important point that strikes the reader of this transcript of the speech is the passionate involvement of the speaker with the matter in hand. Maulana Azad was a leader for whom his patriotism was synonymous with his attachment to his religious faith. That is the secret behind the passion that informs all the speeches of Maulana Azad. The sincerity and commitment to a given theme gives the speeches of Azad great profundity and depth. It then impacts the language he employs. Maulana Azad's versatility with languages and his respect for the structures and the idioms of different languages is put to good use in all his creative expressions. Whether it is an editorial, a creative text like the *Ghubaare Khaatir* letters, a formal historic document like *India Wins Freedom*, or a formal address like the *Qaul e Faisal*, we see that the author is a conscious user of language and is a master at suiting the language to the context. His rich technique and his astute use of different strategies in keeping with the different situations and genres is a sample for all users of creative language. The objectives of good learning are well fulfilled through a course such as this.

### **15.2.2 Discussion:**

#### **15.2.2.1 Section 1: “Mahatmaji ... to buy string cots”**

In this Section, Maulana Azad begins by directly addressing Mahatma Gandhi. This is so presumably because Mahatma Gandhi was present on the occasion. Even were Gandhiji not present, it is apt that a speech being delivered on such a momentous occasion should start with the invocation of a name which was of the greatest importance at that juncture in Indian history. While Maulana Azad introduces the students to Mahatma Gandhi, he says that their eyes are “glued to his face”. This was an apt observation on part of Azad. At that time of history and for many years after, the eyes of all Indians were looking up to Gandhiji, hopeful that he would liberate them from foreign rule and restore the lost glory of the land. It is worth noting that Maulana Azad has managed to bring Mahatma Gandhi at the heart of his speech even though he mentions him only twice. Learners will do well to observe such techniques used by a writer who is a master of his craft.

The occasion of the speech is the Inauguration of the Madrasa Islamia, Calcutta. The date is 12 December, 1920. The audience as we can observe, are the students of the Madrasa. We

come to know soon however, that the Madrasa has been already there as an institution of elementary learning; and at the present moment Maulana Azad has taken it upon himself to reinstitute and upgrade the Madrasa. As a man deeply conscious of the need of every human to educate himself, and imbibe the true spirit of learning, Maulana Azad wishes for the Madrasa to develop as an institution of higher learning while safeguarding the ideals of Madrasa Education. To fulfill this objective, he held meetings with the Management Committee, the *Anjuman*, and succeeded in persuading them to upgrade the Institution.

Maulana Azad uses the occasion to comment on the political situation in the country. He has some reservations about some of the happenings. But his main theme is to draw the attention of the dignitaries, especially Mahatma Gandhi, to the learners who are the ‘heroes’ of the day. In order to understand what is so special about the learners who have chosen to study at the Madrasa Islamia, it is important to learn the other side of the story. When Mahatma Gandhi gave the call for the Non-Cooperation Movement in September 1920, there was widespread enthusiasm among the public. This was undoubtedly the result of the charismatic personality of Gandhi, who, by the mere virtue of having adopted the way of life of a common Indian, had been able to ignite the imaginations of the masses. There was great enthusiasm for some of the actions which formed the segments of the Movement like shunning of foreign goods, returning the titles conferred by the British etc. This is what Azad is referring to when he speaks of “fervor of non-cooperation”. The mass participation did not always depend upon the presence of the leaders, or the formal call by Gandhi. The public was so involved voluntarily in the general spirit of the Movement that often, these actions were undertaken on the spur of the moment by groups of common ordinary Indians, struck by what they saw as an insult to the Indian identity. For the most part the Movement was pan-Indian and secular. The call to boycott Institutions of English Education and sponsored by Western educational philosophy also was taken up enthusiastically for the most part. But, to the great disappointment of Mahatma Gandhi and his followers, voices of dissent soon started to be heard. Many people thought that the call for Non-cooperation was too premature, especially where boycott of English Institutions and boycott of Government official services were concerned. The pledge that was taken by all party men at the Indian National Congress Sessions at Calcutta and Nagpur was disregarded in the sense that many leaders from within the congress began to dissuade young people from leaving the Government educational and other Institutions. Maulana Azad speaks of the dissent as equal to “breaking

their oaths”. In the opinion of Maulana Azad, it was the moral duty of the Congressmen, and all followers of Gandhi to be bound to the pledge. Going back on the spirit of the pledge was equal to reneging on a responsibility. As a believer in his religious tenets, Azad considered it deplorable that one should break a promise. It was no less than being unfaithful to the motherland. “Sad spectacle” is an expression of his indignation that he tries to control. One could not but be sad at the way loyal congressmen were turning back on their word! Jhansi and Aligarh witnessed cases where young students were prevented by their local leaders from boycotting the Institutions which English education, or which were sponsored by the Government.

Maulana Azad expresses his opinion about such disloyalty and the disruption in the success of the Non-Cooperation Movement, without directly mentioning any names. Being an optimist however, he now dwells upon the positive side of the issue. To counter the cases of those who chose to break their pledge, there are many who braved all adversity to stand true to sincere nationalistic ideals. Standing at the podium, Azad calls the attention of his leader Mahatma Gandhi and others in the audience, to cast their eyes on the group of young students of Madrasa Islamia. This group had undertaken the oath to boycott Western Education along with others right at the beginning when Gandhiji first gave the invitation to all to join in the Non-Cooperation Movement. They could have continued to study in grand Government –sponsored Institutions like Madrasa Alia. Madrasa Alia was no doubt an Institution where a number of Islam-oriented courses were taught. Yet, these students had decided to relinquish the luxury of an elite establishment with comfortable hostels and other amenities. Their sacrifice was for a cause. The cause was to serve in safe-guarding the dignity and self-respect of their motherland. Serving the nation was a divine duty. By shunning a life of security and comfort, they opted for a life full of lack of material comfort. According to Azad, their actions vouch for two of their qualities. They are true sons of India, because they stood steadfast with their commitments for the sake of the country. Secondly, they were “obedient to the divine injunction” of Islam which always glorifies a life of simplicity in comparison to a life of pomp and show. Another interesting point made by Azad about these students is that, these boys followed their leader without demur, never asking what lay in store for them. Azad rues the fact that these young students have been bearing up against all odds, sleeping on floors during winter as they did not have the means to buy even simple string cots. One can see the leader’s deeply felt sympathies for the students of the



Madrasa, and his admiration for their stoic acceptance of their lot. In Azad's opinion this is true patriotism.

**15.2.2.2 Section 2: "It must be mentioned that ..... to an Institute of higher education."**

This Section highlights a facet of Maulana Azad's personality which will clarify why he was such an indispensable figure in the long-drawn struggle for Independence in India. The Madrasa Islamia was being instituted on 12 December 1920, in the very thick of the Non-Cooperation Movement. To fulfill one of the objectives of the Movement, that is, the boycotting of English Institutions, Muslim and Hindu leaders were going around promoting and setting up educational Institutions in their own communities in different parts of India. Maulana Azad took up the task of Instituting the Madrasa in Calcutta as a counter to the Government sponsored Madrasa Alia. Here Maulana Azad implies that though the pressure of the Non-Cooperation was the immediate motivation for his work with the Madrasa Islamia, this Institution had been on his mind for quite some time.

As we know, Maulana Azad's schooling was done at home in the manner of traditional Muslim families in those days. Arabic texts formed the chief medium of instruction. He was fortunate enough to have learned Islamic philosophy and mathematics under his father and other able teachers. He was self-taught in Persian, Bengali and English. This aspect of his life indicates the value Maulana Azad attached to self-development. Maulana Azad was also influenced by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's philosophy of holistic development through an extensive and inclusive curriculum for learning. So when Azad mentions "Arabic Education" we should realize that he does not mean it in a restrictive sense of merely being the study of Islamic texts. According to him, Arabic texts, be they religious or secular or creative texts, had the potential of expanding the knowledge of the learner. Having been brought up on the Islamic ideals of human dignity and equality, slavery of any kind was anathema to Maulana Azad. He was pained to see his country suffer under an unjust Government. The British Government was denying basic rights of free living and free thinking to the people of India. In the name of reforms it was capturing the age-old avenues and systems of knowledge that India possessed. He noticed that the British persistent plan to 'modernise' India had led to the erosion of the indigent modes of learning of both Hindus and Muslims. He wanted to liberate the Madrasa system from the control and sponsorship of the British Government. With this goal in mind, Maulana Azad held discussions with the Anjuman

trustees in charge of the Madrasa. He persuaded them to break free from the restrictive control of the Government in so much as the courses of study and the management of the curriculum was concerned. Fortunately his hard work bore fruit and the old Madrasa was reinstituted in a rejuvenated form offering advanced courses of study. In this way an old institution was upgraded and brought up to date for young students who wished to acquire knowledge in an the manner of yore. The Madrasa Islamia had originally been established when the Jama Masjid in Calcutta had been built. In keeping with this significant association, Maulana Azad chose to start the Madrasa on the first of *Rabiul Awwal*. [For the interest of the learners it is to be pointed out that if the Madrasa Islamia was re-opened on the first of Rabiul Awwal that year, the date would be 4 November 1920 according to the Gregorian calendar. The year according to the Islamic calendar would be 13309 Hijri.] Maulana Azad's choice of the date perhaps was because it would be held important in the eyes of the Muslim clientele. Fixing the start of any important event according to a date considered to be auspicious according to their religious faith, is a habit of mind among most Indians. Moreover it was to commemorate the date on which the Jama Masjid was built years ago, the Muslims would feel happier. The main intention of Maulana Azad was to upgrade the Madrasa and make advanced courses of learning available for the Muslim youth. Earlier it was in a neglected state and was merely a *maktab*, an institution like a primary school that imparted very elementary education. The British were content to leave it as it was, thereby limiting the future opportunities of the learners. It is this "bondage of the Government" from which Maulana Azad wished to "liberate" young Indian Muslims.

This section reveals Azad's critique of the Government; and also brings out the astuteness of Maulana Azad in curricular planning. It is no surprise that much later, this stalwart of educational philosophy should be given the responsibility of guiding the nation into self-sufficiency as the first Minister of Education in Independent India.

### **15.2.2.3 Section 3: "I would like to draw your attention..... they cannot earn their bread."**

In this section Maulana Azad eloquently visualizes for his audience the two sides of the same coin. The issue being examined is the true goal of education. To emphasize his own point of view in this matter, Maulana Azad creates a set of binary terms and examines them closely. He identifies 'education' and 'learning' as two terms which appear to be synonyms, but carry specific distinction when examined closely. The section begins on a note of audience awareness.

He addresses the audience repeatedly during his speech. His objective is to keep the audience engaged in the debate being projected by him. He is aware that there are two sets of listeners sitting before him. One is the set of students who are the subject of his immediate concern. The second is the group of seniors, leaders, and general public who are of interest to the speaker. The debater, that is Maulana Azad, is intent upon speaking with persuasive logic and sincerity, so that this second group is convinced about his point of view. What is Maulana Azad's objective in speaking on this occasion? He wants the general audience to appreciate the plight of the selfless group of students who have opted to sacrifice their chances of a comfortable life in the service of the nation. The least that the general public can do is appreciate such selflessness and give them their due praise. With swift and telling logic Maulana Azad points out the numerous damages perpetrated on the Indian psyche by the British Government. The callousness of the Government has studiously tried to destroy the national character of the Indians by suppressing their self esteem and self worth. The Indian way of life centered around the Indians' respect for their faith, secularism and age-old wisdom has been continually pressurized by drastic changes. The greatest damage has been done by bringing about sudden and vast changes in the system of education in the country. According to Eastern and Indian philosophy, learning is a sacred quest that human beings conduct to achieve a higher Self. This profound definition of learning was drastically altered after the advent of the Englishmen on the soil of our country. In a way the British rule caused irreparable damage by keeping the new generation of Indians from the core Truth about education. God has ordained that each thinking human being should rise to the trust God has imposed upon him or her. Being born as a human being entails the responsibility upon us to improve ourselves constantly; and to strive to attain complete knowledge. The goal of Learning is Learning itself for the sake of self-improvement. This is how it has been for centuries in our culture. All Eastern cultures teach that Knowledge has to be continually sought at any cost without a desire for any earthly benefits. We should not spare any effort for the attainment of learning. Since the introduction of 'modern' English education in India the young generation is taught that education is a means to an end. Indians have been brainwashed into thinking that we acquire education so that we can get jobs. Government jobs are presented as bait to these innocent young people. The real goal of learning is to seek Truth. But these enslaved minds are made to believe that the real goal of learning is to feed the body. They are told that without acquiring English education they cannot earn any livelihood. True Learning is for the spiritual

sustenance of human beings. Education that can merely satisfy the hunger pangs cannot be true learning.

Here Maulana Azad is pointing a finger at the hidden agenda of the ruling class. The British rulers understood that ruling a vast country like India was a difficult task. They wanted to educate Indians so that a class of educated Indians could be prepared to assist them in governing the country. The objection of our leaders like Azad to this idea was that Indian educated class was being taught only such skills as to make them fit for lowly jobs as clerks etc., so that they would continue to be useful; and yet remain subservient to the ruling class and dependent on them forever. With the carrots of government jobs dangling before them, the Indians were being led into thinking that English education was the ‘be all and end all’ of life. The innocent people did not realize that actually this was also a colonization of a kind; a dangerous colonization where the minds are enslaved. Maulana Azad fears that once this colonization succeeds, India will become a nation of automatons and Indians will lose their spiritual core. The students who have responded to the call of Maulana Azad and such leaders and agreed to boycott English Education are unique. They have saved their own spirits. One can say that they have accepted the touch of divinity. Such is the “distinction that graces this group”.

Maulana Azad has paid his homage to the spirit of true learning in this section. He also pays a fitting tribute to such people who have developed the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong; and have gathered the strength to say ‘no’ to the wrong ways. Maulana Azad’s words in this section carry the weight of his conviction. Our view about education may have altered with time, and we may not agree with all his views expressed with such vehemence. What we need to note is the force of his conviction. His arguments in favor of Madrasa education and his criticism of the English Education were governed by the need of the hour. The call for Boycott of Western instruments had been given by the father of the Nation. As Gandhiji’s true follower, as a staunch Congressman and as a true patriot he saw it as his duty to persuade his people to see things from a certain perspective. In 1920 it was certainly important that Indians should stand concerted and fight for their freedom. British Government was the enemy of the Nation in so much as it was suppressing the freedom of the Nation. As such the common enemy had to be defeated by suing a logic that would appeal to people. In a near hyperbolic image, Maulana Azad presents a picture of two kinds of people who try to acquire education. On the one hand, there are “lovers of learning or

seekers of truth”. These people are selfless and do not seek comforts in their search for knowledge. On the other hand there are people who are allowing themselves to being wooed by the huge educational projects of the Government. They are those who will sell their souls and “worship a handful of wheat and a cup of rice”. No doubt Maulana Azad was intentionally presenting such a contrasting image in order to shake the Indians into a sense of shame at their own shallowness. Such a harangue would certainly succeed in filling the hearts of the Indian masses with a patriotic zeal. As for those who were already converted, the students of the Madrasa who had rallied to the call of the Maulana, certainly they would feel vindicated. They would be filled with great satisfaction on hearing their mentor’s words of high praise.

This Section should be read with care to appreciate the power of oratory for which Maulana Azad was renowned. The serious content is well matched by the grand expression and elevated tone. He speaks like a debater whose aim is to persuade his listeners to agree with his point of view.

15.2.2.4 Section 4: “But I would like to bring to your notice, ..... Connoisseur of sincerity and sacrifice.”

In the previous section Maulana Azad lamented the erosion of the national character due to the overhaul of the educational system of India at the hands of the British. He had drawn a depressing picture of what was happening to the psych of the younger generation of Indians who were gradually being brainwashed by the new ideas regarding education. They were filled with the fear that if they did not acquire English education they would not be able to earn any livelihood.

In the present section, Maulana Azad speaks about how the theories about Education as being put forward by the British Government are nothing but an insult of learning. He is struck by the fact that the very notion of learning is getting degraded when learning is set up as merely an earning tool. The education scene in the country was quite gloomy, given the attitude of the British Government towards the old Indian Institutions of learning. The existing institutions were being subjected to negligence. New Institutions were being set up, no doubt. But the agenda behind the new glossy structures and institutions was to train Indians into being second class citizens permanently subservient to the Government. The argument that education can accord livelihood did not hold any logic in the eyes of Maulana Azad. He was a man who had engaged all his life in tapping all available avenues of learning. For Azad learning for learning’s sake

could be the only motto. Is it surprising then that he should expect that the young people of India should also move on the path of acquiring knowledge and wisdom through their learning? Education for profit and for livelihood was an unthinkable proposition.

Maulana Azad was a die-hard optimist. A strong wave of what the Government termed as 'educational reforms' was casting a gloom on the sensibilities of Maulana Azad. But in the midst of such negative currents, there was still a "ray of light". There were groups of learners who refused to give up the ancient modes of learning. With great dedication and unflinching faith, these students of the Arabic Madrasas were continuing to study old religious books (like *Tafseer*, *Hadees*, *Fiqh* etc), old (classical) languages like Arabic and Persian. Their study of the core religious texts was supplemented by the study of the "old lores", that is, histories of bygone eras, and biographies of great persons. They continued with their loyalty to the old system of learning even though they knew that earning a livelihood was easier if they acquired English Education. Under the British rule, one could get jobs of any stature only after obtaining English degrees. There was no 'market' for Arabic education. It is ironic that Maulana Azad should use the term 'market' in connection with education and learning. It shows the great scholar's sorrow that in these times education had lost its dignity and was reduced to the status of a marketable commodity. Azad is not blaming the students for this. He understands their anguish and their anxiety for their own futures. With their whole life before them, young persons would certainly wish to know how they would cope with their futures with a qualification that would not land them a job. However, Azad is full of admiration for all such youth who have turned away from English Education and have devoted their lives to Arabic learning. Maulana Azad such youth were undoubtedly under some divine guidance. Their hearts were filled with "a mysterious and powerful urge". What Maulana Azad is trying to say here is that any votary of true learning is a true follower of the truthful path. He is not shaken by any obstacle to learning. True learning pleases God. True learning has "no worldly ends". That is it cannot be measured by the salary that one takes home, or the position one holds in office.

When the Non-Cooperation Movement was announced, many leaders of the Movement took it upon themselves to tour different parts of the country. They felt the need to persuade the common people to participate in the different modes of Boycott to make the Non-Cooperation Movement successful. Among all these boycott activities, the call for the boycott of English educational institutions and boycott of Government elected, and non-elected offices proved to be

the most problematic. People who aspired to be elected to the legislative Councils were reluctant to take part in the Non-Cooperation Movement because the elections were round the corner and they didn't want to lose their opportunities. More unresponsive to the call were a large number of students who were enrolled in Colleges and Universities affiliated to the Government or being sponsored by the Government. They were skeptical about the call as they did not wish to jeopardize their future opportunities for good Government jobs by joining the protest against the Government.

Maulana Azad recounts his experience with the students of Aligarh University. As we all know, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had set up the Mohammad Anglo Oriental College which had developed into Aligarh Muslim University. This Institution had been set up to provide modern educational opportunities for students of minority social classes. As such the students were very secure in their knowledge at being associated with the big venture called Aligarh University. When Maulana Azad started to persuade the youth of Aligarh University, they came out with their doubts and uncertainties. They were unwilling to boycott the classes in response to the call of Maulana Azad. It goes to show the open-mindedness of Maulana Azad. Instead of being offended by the arguments of the Aligarh students, he spent much time with these students, going to great lengths to explain the matter; and to allay their fears. The need of the hour was to stand together as Indian nationals. If sacrifices were needed to be given all Indians, young and old should be ready to free their motherland from foreign rule. This was not the time to consider personal profit. However, Azad understood that the students were within their rights to ask him these questions. They wanted assurances. They wanted the leader to tell them that they did not stand to lose too much by defying the Government. Some of the young men went so far as to ask Maulana Azad if he could guarantee them jobs if they boycotted the University classes and were punished in any way for it. They were bold in their objections. They were reassured after many hours of discussion. Though Maulana Azad does not hold this against the Aligarh boys, he does compare the spirit of those boys to the implicit trust with which the Madrasa boys complied with the call for Boycott of English education. They were convinced when their leader told them that non-Cooperation with a tyrannical ruler is allowed under the divine laws of their faith. Serving their nation was equal to serving in the name of God. Having understood this, the Madrasa boys had no doubts about what was expected of them. Their obedience to the tenets of their faith gave them the strength to forsake all worldly comforts.

Maulana Azad commends the boys for their unquestioning perseverance and stoicism. He praises them open-heartedly; and requests Gandhiji to appreciate their qualities. Gandhiji is of course the right person who would understand and appreciate such sincerity and selfless sacrifice. He himself has been a model of self-effacing service to the Nation. He is like a *Jauhari*, a jeweler, who has amply studied human nature; and understands the true worth of men. These boys are like uncut jewels and Gandhi's perceptive vision can well evaluate their worth.

#### **15.2.2.5 Summary:**

Before we summarize the contents of the speech, it is necessary to look a little more about the background. The Speech under study is unique in many respects. Let us identify the things that we encounter when we study the speech in good detail.

- The piece introduces us to many sets of people who were part of the Indian scenario at the time
- We understand the personality of the speaker
- There is a discussion on different types of education
- We learn to make a distinction between Learning and Education
- We learn about Maulana's views about true learning
- The historic events become clear to us
- The Indian viewpoint about the British Rule is clarified
- The youth of India is presented in its different moods of disappointments, hopes, aspirations etc.

The prescribed speech is brief but it is full of debates on important issues. The speech reveals the views of Maulana Azad. He is a man of ideas, a serious thinker and a great lover of learning. His commitment to his country is also quite evident in all his writings and speeches. However, in this particular passage, it is noteworthy that Maulana Azad has touched upon multiple issues in such a lucid manner. His mastery over the medium, here an oral medium, that is public speaking, is seen at its best.

To begin with the passage is teeming with the presence of human figures. These are presented in the format of groups of people carrying their own specific viewpoints. These groups are represented as antithetical to one another, mostly. As we analyze the passage we come to understand that these groups are symbolic. What Azad is trying to present is, how diversity of life-philosophy can often be detrimental to unity. India of 1920, the year in which the speech was



delivered, was going through turmoil. The country and its people were feeling the indignity of foreign rule. There was much unrest and sorrow in the hearts of the Indians. But within the country, differences of opinion existed. So much so that these differences were surfacing strongly, and were starting to take shape as domestic squabbles. Azad, like Gandhiji, was worried that these differences would perhaps lead to divisiveness. The first group which is pitted against one and the other is the group of students. There is no direct confrontation between them, but there is an attitudinal disagreement. One set of students is malleable. They understand and comply with the views of the national leaders who are in support of Non-cooperation. The other group is belligerent, argumentative and asks questions before agreeing to something. Surely this second group has been misled by someone. But Maulana Azad does not go into those details; nor does he blame anyone. The other group portrayed in the passage in an indirect manner is the group that had withdrawn support from the project of Non-Cooperation against the British. Maulana Azad does not mention any names. However, his anguish at the attitudes of these party men is obvious. These are people who had taken the pledge and agreed to the launch of the Movement. But now due to various reasons they were going back on their oath. Maulana Azad is very disappointed that their great leader Mahatma Gandhi should be left in the lurch in this way. The main addressee of the speech is “Mahatmajji”. It is he who is being exhorted to listen to the heroic tale of the sacrifices of the young students of the Madrasa. It is his presence that is the ultimate proof to his students that their efforts are indeed noble. Gandhi at the time symbolized sacrifice and renunciation. Seeing him before them and being commended by him a like a reward for their efforts.

The crux of the essay, or let us say, the main theme of the speech delivered on 12 December, 1920, is Education. For a self-made scholar like Maulana Azad, Education and acquisition of knowledge was an undeniable asset to a person’s character development. Acquisition of knowledge had been a lifelong project for Maulana Azad. For the most part Azad had been home-schooled in traditional disciplines. Apart from that his curiosity and love of learning set him on the path of learning Mathematics and other Sciences. He also took up the study of English and also poetry even though it was generally frowned upon as per the traditional curricula of learning. With the launch of the Non-Cooperation Movement in September 1920, came the call for the Boycott of Western Educational Institutions. Talking and thinking about education now became a matter of political expediency. Each leader supporting the Boycott call

engaged himself and herself with the specific community to which he or she belonged, and pursued the matter of indigenous education. The need of the moment was to set up new indigenous institutions or upgrade and revamp the older institutions. The intention was that when the students were being asked to boycott English Institutions, they should be provided with alternative systems of education.

The leaders like Gandhi and Azad were depressed because in addition to the expected animosity from the side of the Government, there was the unexpected lack of support from their own ilk. This is the “gloom” that Azad speaks of while describing the prevalent situation. The other thing that pains the great leader is the attitudes of the boys of some institutions and their reluctance to leave or “boycott” their classes. However, Azad does not dwell on the arguments of these disgruntled students in any negative manner. He patiently counters their arguments and finally (after many hours of persuasion) succeeds in bringing them around to his point of view. His patience during the negotiation shows us that essentially he sympathizes with the boys for their misgivings regarding their own future and the risk they might be running by boycotting their classes. Against these skeptic group is the group which complied with their mentor’s suggestions without any hesitation; and readily turned away from posh institutions to get enrolled in Madrasa Islamia. Without much comment or direct comparison, Azad leaves it to the readers to decide the issue. Both groups were representatives of the youth of the country in the same historic moment. Azad’s reference to these groups shows the possibilities of diverse thought processes about one and the same issue.

Let us now summarize the speech succinctly. The speaker addresses Mahatma Gandhi. He begins by making a reference to the rather unsettling events that have been going on different parts of the country. The call for non-cooperation has been met with “fervour” and also there have been “sad spectacles” of “people breaking their oath”. The present moment marks a heartening event of young students responding to the call for boycott of English Institutions. The event is the Inauguration of the Madrasa Islamia in Calcutta. Maulana praises these students for their “steadfastness” and their readiness to adopt the difficult path in service of their nation. They have been able to do so because their religion has taught him the spirit of stoicism and also to oppose any Government which was unjust or cruel. The speech displays Mualana Azad’s deep commitment to true learning. He is opposed to a system of education whose only goal is to enable the students to get livelihood. That is a very narrow definition of learning. Maulana

Azad's view of learning is that God has entrusted human beings with the divine trust to improve them self. As such any person who pursues learning for the sake of learning is fulfilling a divine duty. Acquiring education for merely earning a livelihood is equal to degradation and insult learning itself. The obvious downslide in the general attitude to learning makes Azad feel very depressed. He is disheartened that the British Government is perpetrating a great damage to the youth of India by making them look on education as a marketable commodity. Maulana Azad's spirits are however uplifted when he looks upon the small group of young people who have realized the value of education and learning in the true sense. In response to the call of the leaders these Madrasa students have agreed to support the non-cooperation movement in spite of the sacrifices they would have to make. This indicated that they loved their motherland and also that they understood the value of true learning. They have done this in spite of the fact that they may have to forego the opportunity of getting some kind of Government jobs if they boycotted English education Institutions. At this juncture Maulana Azad finds it necessary to speak of two kinds of attitudes among youth of India. First were angry restless young people who resisted the leaders' appeals and raised a number of questions regarding the call for boycott. They had anxieties in their mind about their future. In contrast is the group of students who put implicit trust in the leaders' words and joined the Boycott without any objections.

The speech closes again with a direct address to Mahatma Gandhi. Maulana Azad rounds up his speech neatly by commending the qualities of Mahatma Gandhi as a great "connoisseur of sincerity and sacrifice". The great leader Maulana Azad is confident that the sacrifice of the students will be appreciated by the Father of the Nation because he himself was an epitome of such qualities.

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### **15.3 Learning Outcomes**

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Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was an exemplary leader and passionate nationalist. He stood tall among his contemporaries in his strong beliefs and the courage to stand by them. He continued to fight for the ideals of nationalism, Hindu-Muslim Unity, and Truthfulness. His equation with the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi was based on total trust and loyalty to the Gandhian ideals and vision of India. Maulana Azad joined forces with Gandhi and other important leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, Jawahar LalNehru etc.,

in all the major movement leading the country to its Independence in 1947. We see the evolution of his political persona from the times of his editorship of the journals *Al Hilal* and *Al Balagh* in the second decade of the 20th century. One cannot but be struck with the strength of convictions about secular ideals. All his life he fought against communal and sectarian politics. He was opposed to the partition of the country and continued to be anguished by the creation of India and Pakistan on the basis of religion.

Apart from his role on the Indian political scene in the Pre-Independence and Post-Independence decades, Maulana Azad's claim to fame is as a writer and a scholar par excellence. He was adept in multiple languages and literatures, among them notably in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Bengali and English. His writings display a scholarship of the highest order. His clarity and honesty is at once evident in all that he writes. As an orator also Maulana Azad showed his mettle in public speaking on various platforms during the Struggle for Independence of India. Azad was widely traveled. This gave him a depth of understanding and experience. These qualities inform all his writings and speeches and letters.

All the prescribed pieces on this course have the objective of showcasing a great mind in its various manifestations. The multi-faceted and multi-talented personality of Maulana Azad is a model that young scholars would find useful to learn from. Such models of versatility are rare to come by.

The present selection is an extract from a speech delivered at the meeting organized in Calcutta to inaugurate the reinstituted Madrasa Islamia. The occasion was historically significant because it represented a moment of grand decisions, noble deeds and great sacrifices. Most speeches at such ceremonious occasions would be formal and restricted in scope. Maulana Azad's speech crosses the boundaries of the occasion and comments on history and the people participating in the larger than life drama taking place around them. Maulana Azad was a man of strong views and we see him expressing his ideas clearly and fearlessly. The speech is full of suppressed excitement, anguish at disappointments, optimism, and anger at perceived injustice. He had an extraordinary nobility of mind and honesty of thought. One brief speech is capable of evidencing all this! Above all this we see that to the core of his personality he was a devout Muslim, a staunch believer in secularism and a hard-core nationalist. These qualities in one man would appear as anachronism in today's world where we are all fast becoming uni-dimensional. But such was the versatility of Maulana Azad!

One of the definitions of good literature is that it should possess the quality of ‘sublimity’. n. Longinus was regarded as a great theorist and a critic of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. He saw the quality of sublimity as a mark of any good writing. Literature should also have the quality of providing pleasure to the readers. According to Longinus, great literature can be recognized by (a) moral and intellectual qualities of the author as evidenced in objective evaluation; (b) total response from the readers; and (c) the design of the work. According to literary theorists like Longinus, an author must possess three innate qualities: ability to portray human “figures”; nobility of diction; and (iii) ability to convey sincerity and dignity of intention. These qualities define the ultimate sublimity of a work of literature, It is such a work that can enthuse the readers and work as models for others.

The challenge and the excitement for the students of this course would be to discover all these qualities of Maulana Azad through the selected passages and essays prescribed. The expected learning outcomes of this Unit on the course are that the learners will

- Discover the power of the written word. Maulana Azad’s command over language and his reasonable arguments truly form the basis of his writing skills
- Understand how literature can reveal personality. Maulana Azad’s writings are transparent. He speaks his thoughts unequivocally. In spite of that he is never blunt or impolite. Decorum is the hallmark of Azad’s style.
- Learn to study the surface structure as well as the deep structure of literature. While Azad is describing a problem of the present, he is also making many references to underlying issues. For example, while comparing the English Education to Arabic Education, MAulana Azad is alluding to the more deep issue of Learning versus Education.
- Imbibe the principles of honesty in what is said or written. Maulana’s thought process is reflected in his writings. Since he was honest in all his dealings, his writings also reflect this sincerity and honesty
- Use the writings of great men as models for right thinking and right living. Lives and works of great men are inspirational and motivational. This course presents one such model of high thinking and high living. It is expected that the learner will be encouraged through this course to cultivate the habit of Biographies of great men and women and also to read their works.

Apart from all that has been said above, Maulana Azad's style is enriched by his rich awareness of the audience, whether it is a reader or a listener or even a recipient of a letter. He is a responsible writer and his focus on his central theme is always strong. If we observe these qualities of Azad's literary style, we can imbibe some of the principles of good and responsible writing. You will be interested to know that much of Azad's literary work was extempore; usually it was the result of writing from memory, from things seen and remembered from the past. But his power of recall and his power of imagination both worked together to embellish his writings with great beauty. The combination of wit and sobriety is also a unique feature of Azad's writings. So we offer on this course a writer whose remarkable style enriches the content and whose choice of subject matter offers a good platform to showcase his style. In other words, style and content complement each other in Maulana Azad's case.

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## 15.4 Glossary

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**Breaking the oath:** In the context of this speech the reference is to the pledge taken on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 1920 at the INC session, Calcutta

**Jama Masjid:** A large congregational mosque. Almost every major city boasts of a Jama Masjid.

**Madrasa:** Usually the term stands for an educational institution where Islamic education is imparted. The word is of Arabic origin, and is taken from the root '*dars*' meaning learning. Traditionally madrasas are places where elementary Arabic and Islamic learning is imparted. In the last many decades much effort is being expended on updating the madrasas with additional modern educational curriculum, so that the products of the Madrasa can enter into mainstream higher education.

**Madrasa e Aalia:** Set up in October 1780 by Warren Hastings in Calcutta under the name Calcutta Mohammedan College. It was also known as Islamic College of Calcutta and Calcutta Madrasa. Logic, Grammar, Islamic Law Astronomy, Geometry, Rhetoric and Oratory were the disciplines taught in this College. It is said that Hastings started and ran the school for one year on his own expenditure, after which the Government took over its management. At present it is sprawling campus known as Alia University.

**Maktab:** A word of Arabic origin generally denoting an institution of elementary education, that is, a primary school. The root word is *kataba*, meaning, to write.

*Rabiul Awwal*: The term refers to the third month in the Islamic Calendar. It is considered a holy month since Muslims all over the world observe it as the month of the birth of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The original meaning of the term was ‘the first month of spring’. It has no significance now, in that sense.

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## 15.5 Sample Questions

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### 15.5.1 Objective Questions:

1. The phrase “sad spectacle of many people breaking their oaths” refers to those who:
  - (a) Boycotted the British Government
  - (b) Joined the Non-cooperation Movement
  - (c) Converted from their faith
  - (d) Turned away after pledging their support for Non-Cooperation Movement
2. “They have renounced the grand buildings...”. This sentence refers to:
  - (a) The students who were in Madrasa Alia earlier
  - (b) The leaders who boycotted British system of education
  - (c) People who opposed the call for non-cooperation movement
  - (d) The British Government for its neglect of Indian heritage
3. According to Maulana Azad the British Government
  - (a) Empowered the common people in all ways
  - (b) Ensured livelihood to people only through Western education
  - (c) Reinstated the old system of Indian Education
  - (d) Gave jobs to all Indians who had degrees
4. Maulana Azad praises the students of Madrasa because they
  - (a) Were ready to adopt a simple way of living
  - (b) Sacrificed everything for the spirit of nationalism
  - (c) Relinquished the opportunity for jobs
  - (d) Became members of the Indian National Congress
5. True devotion to learning means
  - (a) Boycotting the Madrasas and getting modern education
  - (b) Joining in Institutions of English Education and getting Government jobs

- (c) Seeking knowledge for its own sake without expecting any material rewards
  - (d) Obeying the call of Nationalism
6. Why is Maulana Azad pained at the happenings in the country?
- (a) He felt disheartened at the lack of support from some Indian leaders
  - (b) He was unhappy at the lack of amenities for Madrasa students
  - (c) He was unable to upgrade the Madrasas as per his wish
  - (d) Many students' groups argued with him and this made him angry
7. Maulana Azad entreats Gandhiji to
- (a) Extend his call for Non-cooperation Movement
  - (b) Negotiate with the British Government
  - (c) Extend appreciation for the students of the Madrasa Islamia
  - (d) Negotiate with the Indian leaders
8. The phrase that there is “no market for Arabic Education” implies that
- (a) Arabic Education had lost its popularity
  - (b) People could not be certain of making a good living after obtaining Arabic Education
  - (c) The British Government had declared Arabic Education as illegal
  - (d) Arabic Education was an outdated system of learning
9. What factors influenced the Madrasa students to turn away from English Education?
- (a) They were obedient to Maulana Azad
  - (b) Admission in English Education Institutions was difficult
  - (c) They were true lovers of learning
  - (d) They had no guarantee of jobs
10. In what way does Maulana Azad compare Gandhiji to a jeweler?
- (a) Gandhiji alone can understand the worth of the students of the Madrasa
  - (b) Gandhiji was shaping the minds of the Indians
  - (c) Gandhiji was working relentlessly for the freedom of India
  - (d) Maulana Azad is praising Gandhiji as an educationist

### **15.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. What was the response of the Madrasa Islamia students to the call of Non-cooperation Movement?
2. On what grounds does Maulana Azad criticize the Western (English) model of Education?



3. Is the Madrasa Islamia a newly established Institution? What was Maulana Azad's contribution to it?
4. What were the reasons for the Aligarh boys' unwillingness to boycott their classes?
5. Describe what happened at the meetings of Maulana Azad at the "meetings with boys of Aligarh University".

#### **15.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. Write an essay on Maulana Azad's views about true learning. In what way does he contrast true learning with the system of Education being sponsored by the British Government?
2. What are the qualities of the students of the Madrasa Islamia that Maulana Azad extols? How does he compare and contrast the attitudes of other sets of students to those of the Madrasa students?
3. Write a detailed note on Maulana Azad's opinion on what was happening on the political scene in India. Why was he unhappy?

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### **15.6 Suggested Readings**

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- Azad, AK, & Shahabuddin, S. 2007. *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad: Selected Speeches and Writings*. Gurgaon: Hope India Publications
- Gandhi, R. 1987. *Understanding the Muslim Mind*. India: Penguin.
- Khutbaat e Azad. Vol. 1. 4th in the series of commemorative volumes of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's Writings in Urdu. Published by Sahitya Akademi. 2012
- Malsiyani, A. 1976. *Abul Kalam Azad*. New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India.
- Hasan, Mushirul. Introduction and Ed. *Pluralism and Nationhood: Legacy of Maulana Azad*. New Delhi.

## **Unit 16: Future of Education in India, 1953**

### **Structure**

#### **16.0 Introduction**

#### **16.1 Objectives:**

#### **16.2 Future of Education in India, 1953**

##### **16.2.1 About the Author**

##### **16.2.2 Discussion**

##### **16.2.2.1 Section 1**

##### **16.2.2.2 Section 2**

##### **16.2.2.3 Section 3**

##### **16.2.2.4 Section 4**

##### **16.2.2.5 Section 5**

##### **16.2.2.6 Section 6**

##### **16.2.2.7 Summary**

#### **16.3 Learning Outcomes**

#### **16.4 Glossary**

#### **16.5 Questions**

#### **16.6 Suggested Readings**

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### **16.0 Introduction**

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In the different units of this course you are being introduced to the different aspects of Maulana Azad's personality as a litterateur. Apart from dabbling in different genres of literary expression in Urdu, Arabic, Persian and English, Maulana Azad was a committed journalist and a great orator. He put all his literary talents to good use during the many years that he struggled for the freedom of India from foreign rule. Maulana Azad's writing career was purposeful and dedicated to the honor of his country and countrymen. Even his creative writing was purely didactic. His literary energies show his single-mindedness and focus. He was a disciplined writer and an impassioned speaker. In the selected speech, Maulana Azad exhibits this didacticism. He is unwavering in his resolve to bring his life energies to bear on the task in hand. The speech is

delivered in September 1953 at which time Maulana Azad is holding the position of the first Education Minister in Independent India. He is totally involved in considering the serious problems that beset the field of Education of the vast country. He is mulling over the possibilities of reform and repair. This particular speech is delivered at a time that Maulana Azad's focus is on the system of Secondary education in India. A Commission has been set up specially to look into the problems of Secondary Education. The Government of India is going to adopt a policy of making the Secondary Education stage central to the National Education Policy. A great change is being envisaged where at the secondary level, the students are going to be receiving vocational training along with learning through books. At this point in the History of Educational Reforms in India, the Education Minister decides to talk to the nation through a Radio broadcast. Why should he do it? Obviously, the reason is to involve the public in matters of policy reform, and to convince them about the efficacy of the new interventions. The field of education is such that it impacts the life and future of the recipients. Not only students, but also their parents and the whole community have to be persuaded to accept and adopt the new ideas so that the Government can implement the new policies without creating any among the public.

Education was at the core of Maulana Azad's fields of interest throughout his life. No other figure could have been more apt to become the education Minister in the first central cabinet in Independent India. For Maulana Azad Learning and Education were not synonymous. He identified learning with the lifelong project that a thinking sensitive individual would subject himself or herself to, with an ambition of self-improvement. On the other hand, Education, as is generally seen, is a system of acquiring a quantum of knowledge as the qualification for a certain position or job or other such recognition. Education is necessary for livelihood and for status. But the true worth of a human lies in learning for the sake of learning without any desire for material rewards in return. We see that Maulana Azad is troubled by this dichotomy. He sees the need for education but makes his stand clear that education should not be relegated to merely a job-earning certificate. Learning and acquisition of higher knowledge as well as skills should go hand in hand.

Maulana Azad's keen engagement with Education of the individual stems from two aspects of his personality. Firstly he was a devout Muslim. Islam exhorts all Muslims to acquire learning, at any cost. Secondly he was a committed nationalist. As a leader of a vast nation which had been thrust into the darkness of ignorance under foreign rule, he felt it his duty to pull the

nation out of the quagmire of backwardness. He knew that for the nation to be advanced, the system of education had to be brought on par with the other nations. We see that Maulana Azad has no hesitation whatsoever in emulating the example of the British system where necessary, in spite of the fact that India had just freed itself from British rule with much difficulty. During his tenure of eleven years (1947-1958) as Education Minister Maulana Azad helmed the setting up of numerous modern Institutions which served the goal of advancement in Education in many ways. Apart from this he also included art and culture in his agenda of making India a dynamic, modern successful country. As he said, “As a Muslim I have a special identity in the field of religion and culture. But I have another equally deep realization. I am equally proud of the fact that I am an Indian, an essential part of the indivisible unity of the Indian nationhood, a vital factor in its total makeup without which this noble edifice will remain incomplete.” The quote displays his broad, democratic, and humane vision.

There are some ideals that Maulana Azad diligently pursued during his leadership in Free India. Some of his plans for a modern democratic India did not see the light of the day in spite of his best efforts. For example, Azad had espoused the ideas of Social education and adult Education. He had spoken of education for all as a birthright of all citizens of any free country irrespective caste, creed or religion. The notion of a modern University where an individual could access education according to his or her inclination and potential was dear to him. Today most of the ideas have been accepted and are in vogue. RTE Act which came to be passed in 2009-10 was the realization of a dream which Maulana Azad visualized in the first decade after India’s Independence. Maulana Azad always advocated an egalitarian outlook especially in the matters of National Education. He spoke of Mother Tongue education and of common Schools. Today almost all these instruments of growth and development are in place. We have the Kendriya Vidyalayas. Madrasa education is widely being recognized and placed on par with other systems. Mother Tongue Universities have come to be set up. But perhaps we still are missing the passion and commitment of Maulana Azad in the midst of all this.

Contrary to the understanding of many of us, Maulana Azad was against the old, antiquated system of Madrasa Education. He wanted the Madrasa curriculum to be modernized and courses of study like Sciences and Mathematics to be introduced. His educational ideas were no doubt grounded in Islamic precepts, but he carried the ideals he had learned during his own studies and travels close to his heart. His influences were taken from the Islamic texts, European

philosophers, Western thinkers, and Arabic and Persian literary masters as well as mystics. Thus his ideas cut across the barriers of East and West. As he helped Gandhi and other contemporaries to steer India towards freedom, his sole preoccupation was with the project of re-setting the mindsets of the Indians towards a sense of the Self and a realization of their own worth. His people must regain their earlier potential for greatness, and become capable of facing the challenges of the modern world. As the Minister of Education, Maulana Azad plans to create the opportunity for the youth of his country by improving the quality of their minds and lives through meaningful education. Astute leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji (1882) and Gopala Krishna Gokhale (1910) proposed the Right to Compulsory Free Education for Indians. Maulana Azad took up this idea and pursued it in the Constituent Assembly. The ideas of Maulana Azad about education are scattered all over his speeches and letters. He said, “Educationists should build capacities of the spirit of inquiry, creativity, entrepreneurial and moral leadership among students and become their role models.” In one of his addresses Maulana Azad said, “Climbing to the top demands strength, whether it is to the top of Mount Everest or to the top of your career.”

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## **16.1 Objectives**

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Each Unit on the Course has carried some general and some specific objectives. The general objectives are as follows:

The selected piece from Maulana Azad’s literary repertoire is a sample of the many different literary styles which he used in his writings. Maulana Azad was very versatile in his literary styles. He experimented with different genres of literary and non-literary writings and excelled in each. He wrote fiction, poetry, non-fiction and autobiography. Even in his letters and his public speeches he was very self-conscious and disciplined about how and what he wrote, or said. Since he was a perfectionist he respected every format of communication and used the proper idiom and linguistic aspect that was suitable to the format being used.

The speech of Maulana Azad provides a model of refined and persuasive speaking style. Since the speech is formal, and pre-designed, it also works as a good model of writing. As such the learners are expected to be able to compare this speech with other speeches by the same leader, or those by others. Maulana Azad’s own speeches were rendered on different occasions,

from varied platforms. Each of his speeches was driven by a specific purpose. This particular speech is a radio broadcast. It serves the objective of showing how a communication format can be used in different manners.

The selected speech by Maulana Azad carries some interesting features. It serves as an excellent model of formal, pre-designed orally delivered communication. Moreover, because it is a radio broadcast, there is a strong awareness of (i) time-bounded-ness and (ii) the tension of speaking to an absentee audience. In other words, Maulana Azad is speaking on the All India Radio broadcast; and he was conscious of the allocated time. Moreover, this leader who was used to addressing multitudes of listeners sitting before him, listening in rapt attention, was addressing an audience which may be anywhere in the country, but he could not make eye contact with them. It is understandable that audience response is very important to a speaker, even if it is merely nodding the head or yawning and looking away. Then the speaker would mould his speech according to the need of the moment. Here the prepared speech by Maulana Azad has taken into consideration the possible response and on that prediction (or assumption), designed his argument. In a way, he is like an essayist here, writing his thoughts and addressing a remote audience.

It is important to observe a few of the devices that Maulana Azad uses because of his knowledge of the format of the speech. He does not stray from his given theme. The use of the plural person pronoun 'We' is repeatedly used. This indicates that Maulana Azad is speaking on behalf of the Government and the country. More than anything this speech is different from his political speeches or formal address to the Magistrate in *Qaul e Faisal*. Those pieces show Maulana addressing his audience in the role of a speaker expressing his personal thoughts, in the capacity of an individual. If one thing remains common to all the other writings and the one under present study, it is the core of Maulana Azad's personality and his opinions on important issues which affect the nation.

There are two notable features in the present selection. Maulana Azad is speaking as the first education Minister of Independent India. On this occasion Azad is delivering a speech which is to be broadcast on the Radio. So in a way, he is speaking to absentee audience.

What is important to remember in the study of any important writer's art is that we should distinguish between his thought and the form in which the thought is expressed. Azad is a didactic writer. The attention he accords to Style and Form in all his writings is based on his

respect for the craft of writing. He is a self conscious user of his skills as a writer. He moulds his language and the form of literary expression according to the purpose for which it is being used. In this speech Maulana Azad is essentially projecting the policy of the Government. As the education Minister we are sure that he was instrumental in framing most of the policies on National education. But he is responsible enough not to take personal credit for the policy decisions. So he uses the pronoun “we” more than the first person singular “I”

As we look into the details of each section we shall observe some important features of Maulana Azad’s style:

- Azad’s focus on the given theme of his speech
- Azad’s control over the language and expression.
- The use of rational and logical argument
- Avoidance of rigid stand in conveying ideas
- Consciousness regarding limits of time in speech

The objective of this unit is to make the readers/learners familiar with the essence of responsible and disciplined writing culture. This aspect of the writer’s personality becomes even more effective when it is supplemented by a commitment to the given theme. A writer and his or her writing style should be considered as a complement to his overall thought process and his ideological make-up. Each piece of writing has to be appreciated in the light of all his earlier writings, speeches and letters.

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## **16.2 Future of Education in India**

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### **16.2.1 About the Author:**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a leading figure in the history of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century in India. He was a visionary in his understanding of the significance of India as a leader on the sub-continent. His early foundation in classical learning belies the fact that he emerged as one of the most secular, patriotic Indians with an unquestionably modern outlook. His personality exemplified a synthesis of Indian and Western ideas into a single coherent pattern.

As mentioned earlier in other contexts, Maulana Azad is a fine specimen of an erudite mind. His scholarship is of a very high quality and his command over different literary genres is commendable. In this Unit we see the leader speaking on a given topic in a responsible and controlled manner. This is no speech where the oratorical skills are demanded to rouse the audience into a nationalistic fervor, as seen for example in the speech presented for study in Unit 15, where Maulana Azad was speaking in the red-hot moment of the Non-Cooperation Movement, convincing the audience about the boycott of foreign education. Nor is it a speech to present the 'right' and the 'wrong' of a case to a formal authority, as was exemplified in Unit 6 of Block II.

As history of the pre-Independent times and the struggle of Gandhi and his followers shows, the Indian leaders were very unhappy with the system of education introduced by the British Government. Most leaders felt that the Indian citizens were being pushed into a system which would educate and turn them into graduates or even post graduates, but it was not serving the interests of the Indians in any meaningful manner. The objective of the English Education offered to the colonized people was only to prepare them to become second class citizens who would be absorbed into low clerical positions to assist the Government in running the administration. For this reason Gandhi and his fellow leaders had planned the Boycott Movement in 1920 under the banner of Non-Cooperation. Much effort was expended by the Indian leaders to persuade the people to boycott English education Institutions. It is not surprising therefore that, Reforms in education for the citizens of free India should have been the prerogative of the Government. These leaders had already been in the stage of mental preparation of how to run the Government and what should be the priorities. As for Maulana Azad we know from the earliest editorials of *Al-Hilal*, to his later writings and speeches that he had been dedicated to the notion of Learning as an integral part of the development of human personality. His own life shows that he was devoted to learning; and his curiosity took him out of his comfort zones of traditional education to learn new things. He studied Western authors and thinkers; he collaborated with foreign intellectuals; and he even learned music and other fine arts which were considered taboo for persons born in traditional Muslim families of high social status. It is not surprising then that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad should have been the responsibility of the Ministry of Education under the first formed Government of Independent India under the Prime Minister-ship of Jawahar Lal Nehru.



Maulana Azad was born into a social environment and into a family tradition which supported only classical learning and mastery of the religious texts as the totality of an individual's learning curriculum. In spite of this Maulana Azad had set high goals for himself. He went ahead with a lifelong learning process and mastered subjects like Western philosophy, Literature, and Fine Arts. Maulana Azad's essential approach to education emanated from the Islamic precept that Learning was the birthright of every human being. He felt that if any human being was kept away from learning, it equaled to enslavement of the human spirit. In spite of being so steeped in Islamic philosophy, his agenda for learning was always a secular agenda and was concerned with the central notion of self-improvement. Maulana Azad's ideal of a good curriculum was inclusive. He would opt for a meaningful admixture of the Eastern and Western knowledge texts. Throughout his association with the Indian Freedom Movement as also later, if one subject remained close to Maulana Azad's heart, it was Education. In a speech in 1948, Azad had declared, "We must not for a moment forget, it is a birthright of every citizen to receive at least the basic education without which he cannot fully discharge his duties as a citizen."

### **16.2.2 Discussion:**

#### **16.2.2.1 Section 1:**

**"Of the problems which claimed" ..... "cannot find useful employment."**

When the first Prime Minister and his cabinet were sworn in on August 15, 1947, there was hardly any time for long drawn plans and slow execution. The Government had to take the reins of the post-Independent situation in hand, and attend to pressing problem immediately. The issue of National education and the issues related to this were among the most important projects which the Government attended to. The question that occupied the interest of the Government was to decide upon the right model and system which would be suitable for all citizens of India. If we observe closely, the speech was being delivered in 1953, six years after the country attained Independence. This indicates the amount of planning and deliberations which the Government had been going through. The Minister of Education speaks in 1953, and the gist of speech indicates that the issue had not been resolved.

Speaking on behalf of the Government, Azad admits that even now there was there was criticism and questions being voiced against the pattern of Education. Much debate could be heard expressing discontent about the existing system of education. A pressing demand for reforms in Education was being expressed. Maulana Azad admits the criticism. He feels that

everyone has a right to think of issues related to the development. However he has a reservation about the kind of criticism being voiced. Maulana Azad's observation is that these 'critics' were speaking their general views. Very few people have really "thought over the problem". They are not able to pinpoint the actual problems and are unable to offer any solutions. Certainly problems exist but the people who talk about the problems should also come up with some suggestions regarding possible reforms in the system of education in the country.

Maulana Azad takes it upon himself to identify the malaise that trouble the education system in the country. Maulana Azad feels that education should be compatible to the needs of the common people. Education should be sufficient to fulfill the needs of the people. The two terms used by Azad to define the requisites of education are "adequate" and "appropriate". He bemoans the fact that the system of education as it exists today does not meet any of these pre-requisites. These common people are not helped by their education to acquire any gainful employment. There is a small minority of high status and social privileges, who are able to obtain University degrees and study in elite Universities. Ironically University Education does not equip these "privilege" people to be "usefully employed". This is so because they have moved so high up that they covet fancy jobs and high status because of their higher education. Thus they are useless for the development of the nation. Maulana Azad points out another problem related to higher education. Almost everyone wishes to acquire a University degree. As a result, the number of Graduates is very high. There is an imbalance between the graduates in the country, and the number of suitable jobs available for them. Consequently, they are forced to remain unemployed.

The concern of the speaker about the issue of Education in India is evident. Maulana Azad has taken the pains to collect data regarding the status of education among Indians. This is the data available in 1953. According to available information, in 1952, about 3 to 3 ½ lakhs of Indian youth were receiving education in Indian Universities. Considering the population of India, which was about 35 crores then, this, may not be a very high figure. In simple words it means that the youth receiving education in the Indian Universities is not more than 10%. But, according to Maulana Azad, the country's system was apparently defective. The system of governance was such that even this small percentage of University educated youth were unable to find suitable useful employment in the country. The question that Maulana Azad poses for his listeners is: 'Where does the problem lie?' Can the problem be solved by creating more jobs?

Can the problem be lessened by introducing more educational institutions? The logical answer is that any solution should not result in a counter problem. The Demand of the society creates vacancies. If there are more qualified candidates than there are vacancies, then surely unemployment will increase. It is poor economics to say that more jobs should be there to serve the glut of university graduates.

#### **16.2.2.2: Section 2**

**“Unfortunately, the main objective,” ..... Education up to the secondary stage”**

First and foremost Maulana Azad focuses on the aspirants of higher education. The purpose of seeking higher education should be to acquire learning and to improve one's personality. Unfortunately these days, people go for higher education only because they believe that University education will give them good jobs in Government service. However, there is an imbalance in the situation. The supply and demand situation is quite lopsided. The number of jobs available in the Government is not sufficient enough to absorb all the youth who have come out of the Universities with degrees. Any educated youth should be an asset to the country, and a useful partner in the country's progress. But sadly, our graduates are more of a liability than anything. Maulana Azad is very pained at the wasted efforts and defeated aspirations of the youth of India. It is an irony of fate that getting higher education was preventing the young people from getting jobs. They have become “superfluous”, an unwanted factor in the national development scenario. Perhaps it would have been better that they had not receiving any education at all. At least they would have earned a living by taking up jobs demanding manual labor. The educated youth cannot take lowly jobs because their ‘being educated’ comes in the way.

The matter of National Education is a vast and profound matter. On this particular occasion Maulana Azad is constrained for time. He cannot delve into all details his own views and schemes regarding National Education because of paucity of time. He is speaking on a Radio Broadcast and the program is time-bound. As such Maulana Azad responsibly makes his argument concise and presents his views in a succinct manner.

From our study of the earlier Units we already know Maulana Azad's views on Education and Learning. This section reveals his views further. According to Maulana Azad, learning is a life-long process. However, as far as the system of education is concerned, every human being should acquire a certain quantum of education which will develop human faculties and help the person to live a full life. The responsibility of providing such education lies with the State. The

Government should set up a system of education that can help people to improve themselves and acquire sufficient knowledge. Such education is the basic right of every individual. We cannot define education in terms of the “requirements of the society”. Also, the facilities for education cannot be determined by some demands that exist as per some ways of thinking. The State should provide a uniform standard of education up to a certain level. There should be no definitive conditions about who should receive such education and who should not. Every individual has a right to education up to a certain level. Maulana Azad stipulates that the norm of country-wide universally required level of education should be Secondary Stage of education. That should be the least standard that every Indian citizen should be provided by the Government. This issue should not be tied up with the question of employment. This is the essential level for all citizens of India regardless of whether they wish to work or not, and whether they have any specific career in mind. In this Section Maulana Azad has clarified that providing Educational facilities up to the Secondary stage is the responsibility of the Government. It is the State’s duty towards its citizens.

#### **16.2.2.3: Section 3**

**“There are three stages in the secondary education “..... “money on is not of much value in the market.”**

Maulana Azad discusses the structure of Secondary Education. There are three stages in the secondary education: Elementary, Middle and Higher Education. The foundation of National Education lies in the first two stages. If we do not pay attention to the Elementary and Middle stages of Education, we will render the whole system of National Education weak. A system which neglects to make the elementary and middle stages strong is bound to become “insecure and faulty”. Here Maulana Azad speaks of the measures being taken by the Government to ensure a secure and strong system of National Education. As the Minister of education he is in the right position to clarify the official policy regarding National education. The Government has adopted a safe and reliable model of Basic Education. Now it depends on the extent to which the Government succeeds in implementing the pattern. The policy framework has to be put into the execution stage. It is the effective implementation of the policy that will determine the success of the structure of National Education. We may observe that Maulana Azad does not make any false claims. He knows that even the best policies may not prove worthwhile unless they are put to effective implementation stage. As said earlier, the conviction of Maulana Azad is that the

responsibility of providing sound Basic Education is the responsibility of the state towards the individual. Up to this stage, the education provided is for the self improvement of the individual and to provide him with essential knowledge that is the birthright of every human being. Beyond this stage comes the stage of Higher Education. From this stage onwards, any education will be meant for the furthering of the society's ideals and societal needs. The facilities and the knowledge infrastructure also should match the aspirations of the society. Each country has a goal of advancing in certain areas and fields of knowledge. Be it advancement in Science, Professional fields, Commerce or whatever, this advancement can be achieved through such educated citizens who wish to gather the advanced knowledge and skill to help their country in making progress. However, care has to be taken to keep the balance between the demand for certain kind of expertise or skill and the availability of educated persons in the field. If there are less qualified persons than required, progress will come to a standstill. On the other hand if there are more educated qualified persons and the Government cannot employ them usefully, then the education system has failed such persons by not fulfilling the promise held out by that advanced program of study. The whole matter of the success of Higher Education model depends upon how effectively the policy is implemented and how the balance between needs and provision is maintained. In other words, the Higher Education project should produce graduates and skilled professionals who would play a constructive role in nation-building. The Indian society is at a nascent stage of development given that it had acquired independence after a long struggle. There was a great demand for a workforce that could steer the nation onto the road to progress. If the Higher Education project failed and it could not produce capable workers of high caliber, then the rationale of progress would be badly disturbed. It was therefore the responsibility of the Government to ensure that the Higher Education model was worthy of its promise. At no cost can we run the risk of having a weak and ineffective Higher Education system.

Merely increasing the number of students' intake into the higher education institutions would be a foolhardy move. Higher Education is an expensive matter. We cannot simply produce a large number of graduates and postgraduates, if we did not have the jobs to absorb our University products. It would be a futile venture to have a large number of University graduates when the State did not have enough jobs to offer them. Having fewer jobs and more aspirants would result in a social crisis. The large number of unemployed youth would only make for a gloomy and depressed society. Maulana Azad equates this situation to the theory of Supply and

Demand that is central to Economic Theory. As Maulana Azad says, if the supply of people with high degrees is less than the demand, the progress of society is impeded. If it is more, there is unemployment.

A higher degree looks very fascinating and everyone likes to acquire it for the sake of the charisma it appears to carry. Afterwards, when the person realizes that the degree has not lead to any wonderful employment opportunity in spite of years of hard work and expenses incurred, there is bound to be frustration. People also opt for a University degree because it is a necessary prerequisite for Government jobs. But when the University graduates come out into the job market in hordes, then the realization dawns that there not enough jobs in the Government service to satisfy everyone and absorb everyone. The degrees appear to them to be useless acquisitions. This leads to severe disillusionment.

Essentially Maulana Azad's belief is that one should acquire learning and not run after mere educational qualifications.

#### **16.2.2.4: Section 4**

**“If we wish to avoid” .....” the merit of our present-day graduates.”**

In the earlier sections Maulana Azad had maintained that criticism is not bad in itself but criticism should be always followed by constructive suggestions and solutions to remove the problems. Following his own approach, Maulana Azad backs up his criticism of the ills of Higher Education with many suggestions of how to repair the situation. As the system exists, there is a fear of a glut of university degree holders, with no prospect of employment because there are not sufficient jobs available to absorb all the qualified people. It is important that the Government should take steps to organize the system of Higher Education in a meaningful manner. Maulana Azad offers many alternatives to repair the situation. The most important option is to improve the Secondary education system. Young people who pass out of the Secondary stage of education should be provided with the skills and expertise in various professions, industries and handicrafts etc. In this way they will be equipped with the necessary skills to be absorbed into various employment channels. Since not many Government jobs are available, the number of seats in higher education system should be limited so that only a required number of candidates emerge out of the University to take up Government jobs. In other words, Maulana Azad wished that there should be a reduction in the intake capacity of Colleges and Universities so that a superfluity of University Graduates can be avoided. This will help to

maintain the Demand-Supply Ratio of the country's job market in Government fields. This will also reduce the depression and frustration of those who went blindly into higher education; only to find that there were no jobs available for them. Honestly speaking we cannot tell our youth not to aspire for University education. University Education has become a craze among the youth because we have created great hype about higher degrees. Youth are being lured towards University Education, not so much because they are interested in 'learning' as such; but because they are made to believe that is the only way to climb up the social ladder. Gone are the times when people took up advanced studies in order to enhance their knowledge and learning. There is a veritable rat race going on to collect degrees in the hope of attaining status and prosperity. At the heart of this argument is Maulana Azad's sincere concern for the youth of the country. In their anxiety to join the mythical superior race of the 'University Graduates', the youth of the country are investing money and precious time. At the end they are "disillusioned" that they spent such time and money on something which in the end has no value in the market. While essentially Maulana Azad wishes to reform the educational system, he also wishes to prevent unemployment and also safeguard the country's youth from disillusionment.

This is a point that Maulana Azad has been bringing up on many fora. He has always argued in favor of Learning as against mere acquisition of a paper qualification. At this point in his speech however, Azad desists from dwelling on this argument for long. He is conscious of the time constraint in a radio broadcast; and as a responsible and committed speaker he would abide by the rule set on the occasion.

People are no doubt much fascinated by the notion that Government Service is the best kind of employment. It gives security, status and good means of livelihood. In order to get into Government Service one requires a University degree. This makes the youth feel that they must get a university degree at any cost. The Universities on the other hand find it sufficient to dole out degrees since a degree. In this race for Government jobs, a degree becomes a mere "passport". There is no pressure on the students to excel or acquire any new talent. There is no pressure on the Higher Education Institutions either, to offer any new avenues for acquiring excellence. Slowly there is an inevitable erosion of standards. Universities become factories which generate degrees and distribute them. The Universities try to cater to the demands of all and sundry and the number of degree holders increases day by day. There is no pressure upon the students or the institutions to raise the educational standards.

Maulana Azad drives home his argument about the declining standards of higher education in the Universities in the country. He says that anyone who tries objectively to test the merit of the country's graduates, the products of our Universities, can easily gauge that the much sought after University education does not raise the intellectual acumen of the students in any way. Now if such run of the mill products take charge of the country's administration just because they boast of a paper qualification can we have any hopes for a good future of the country?

#### **16.2.2.5: Section 5**

**“We know that in other countries” ..... “the step is worth taking.”**

In a very candid manner, Maulana Azad makes a comparison between the Indian and the British Educational systems. In India, University degrees are considered to be the be all and end all of the future of the young people. If they want to move ahead in life and get good jobs, they must get University degrees. The definition of a good job was considered to be only a Government job. As such, the youth of India fell into the trap of thinking that they would fall behind if they did not go for University Education. In contrast to this, in England, degrees are not necessary for all jobs. A University degree is required in England for launching on to professional careers like medicine, academics, engineering etc. For all other kinds of employment, only two qualifications are considered essential, that is age and capability. Maulana Azad wishes that India also should adopt such principles in recruitment. We should shun the idea that a University degree is essential for employment. We should put the emphasis on ability and practical knowledge tan on mere paper qualification. What is interesting to note here is the candor of Maulana Azad. The country had just recently liberated itself from the British rule. The memory of the hostility with the British Government is still fresh. Still, Maulana Azad does not shy away from proffering praise to the British system of governance where praise is due. This speaks for his broad-mindedness. In a similar manner, Maulana Azad is critical of the unnecessary centrality given to Higher Education. But he does not do so merely as a criticism of the British system. His argument is that India cannot afford to have a large number of educated unemployed.

After Independence the Union Government had set up Public Service Commissions to determine policies of recruitments for jobs in various spheres of Indian society. Maulana Azad is of the opinion that the Public Service Commission should draw out plans of how to measure the



ability of candidates for various Government jobs. A candidate may hold a certain degree; but it should be the responsibility for the Public Service Commission to determine whether the candidate really possesses the ability, knowledge and talent expected from the holder of such a degree. Apart from this, it would be the responsibility of the Public Service Commissions to decide the nature of degree required for each kind of job. In this way, qualification and capability will put on par. We can then ensure that the degree programs are oriented towards building the capabilities of students. The standards of higher Education will be governed by the needs of the various professions for which the degrees have been tailored. This will naturally take care of safeguarding the standards of Higher Education Institutions. Then the “unhealthy emphasis” on University degrees also will be brought under control; and ability and talent will take the front seat in the job market.

If there is any sphere in the job market where University degrees are imperative, it is in the case of professional services. A doctor or an Engineer or a Professor cannot aspire to his or her profession without a relevant degree and advanced qualifications in the relevant field. Academic expertise forms the sound basis of performance in such fields of service. When it comes to the recruitment of personnel in services of general nature, the rules of recruitment should be changed. In such cases, we should not insist on a University Degree. Rather, emphasis should be laid on ability and experience.

We note here that as Minister of Education, Maulana Azad holds strong views on the policies that the Government should pursue. He plans to introduce measures which will remove the existing lacunae in the system of National Education. His views indicate the positive and dynamic leadership formed by a group of leaders who had struggled hard to free the country from foreign rule. It was now the responsibility of the Government to free the society of the ailments of static and routine thinking. We can observe the dynamism and honesty of Maulana Azad in the way he admits that there were problems and lacunae in the system of Education. He thinks of dynamic measures to remove the problems.

In a straightforward manner which is characteristic of him, Maulana Azad admits that solutions to problems are easily spelled out than executed. He had earlier stipulated that it was the work of the Public Service Commission to spell out a workable policy of recruitment to services in the country. The conditions, the yardsticks of testing and selection would have to be laid down by the Public Service Commission. Maulana Azad admits that in a vast country like

ours, and with the agenda of vast development ahead of us, perhaps it would be too ambitious to think that the Public Service Commissions would be able to bear the huge burden of the work entailed. It would not be an easy task to effectively bring about changes in the educational and Service conditions. He proposes that whatever the difficulties, the task is important. If there was a need to revamp the administrative structure and set up additional Public Service Commissions, the Government would be quite prepared to do so. According to Maulana Azad, the additional burden of setting up more Commissions would be quite justified because such a measure would ensure that reforms in the existing system of education, testing, and recruitment will become possible. To quote Maulana Azad, “the step is worth taking”. It is an interesting fact that at the time that MAulana Azad was delivering the speech on the All India Radio in 1953, a new Public Service Commission had been set up especially to look after the Reforms proposed in Secondary Education system.

#### **16.2.2.6: Section 6**

**“Let me briefly recapitulate” ..... “prevents me from dwelling on it.”**

This section reveals a very important aspect of Maulana Azad’s craft. As a writer Azad was very faithful to the chief purpose of writing. Whatever the form he chose for a given piece of expression, he followed the principles of that chosen format. Prose writing can be of many kinds. As we pointed out earlier, this selected speech is an example of a formal speech broadcast over the Radio. The occasion is formal and calls for a formal treatment of the subject. After having discussed the main topic in a methodical manner, the writer comes to the last stage of his radio talk. He finds it necessary to summarise his points made in the previous sections of the speech. The speech is a good sample of expository prose; He had presented his opinions and point of view through very convincing arguments, with examples and in an analytical manner. Now the argument is being drawn to a neat close by reiterating all the points in an ordered manner.

Firstly Maulana Azad had pointed out the need to bring about some important changes in the system of National Education. He talks of the need to “remould” the system in such a way that the people of the country are available to take charge of the various developmental aspects of life in the country. The country has recently become self-sufficient. In order for the progress to take place at a desired rate, we need youth to be career ready. Maulana Azad suggests that our youth should be given good skill training and essential useful education up to the Secondary

level, at which stage they should be in a state of preparedness to take up the challenging skilled jobs in various professions, industries etc. The country needed such trained workers to move on the path of development and self-sufficiency. There are a large number of jobs available for people at that level. A smaller number of jobs are available in professions like medicine, research, etc. People have to go to the Universities to get qualifications and training for such jobs. The ratio of people needed for these jobs requiring higher education is very small compared to the skill based jobs. So we should open up University education for a smaller number of people so that the University graduates do not exceed in numbers in relation to the personnel required. This will prevent a glut of graduates with no jobs to absorb them. In a natural logical manner, we will also be able to prevent a sense of frustration building up among the youth when they see their efforts at higher degrees bearing no fruit.

The second and very important point that Maulana Azad raises is that of upgrading the curriculum at the secondary level of education.. Important changes need to be made in the system of secondary education. With the changing perspective in the Government policy for Education, it was important that the Secondary Education system should be geared to play the significant role it was going to play in the future. Earlier, Secondary Education was being looked at as a median stage between elementary and higher education. As MAulana Azad suggests it had the status of a being a means to enter the Universities. Now the Secondary Education system would be an “end in itself”, meaning that after passing out of the secondary Education stage, a person should be able to become capable of earning a livelihood. At the same time such a person would also be playing a significant role as a significant member of the workforce leading the country towards prosperity.

Next, Maulana Azad explains what he means by saying that the Secondary Education should be revised. During Maulana Azad’s tenure as Minister of Education, there was much discussion on Basic Education as a healthy model for National Education. The main idea behind all the deliberations was that if Secondary Education had to be set up as the crucial stage for the youth of India; and if they were to be made self-sufficient at the end of Secondary Education stage, the whole curriculum and the pedagogy of Secondary Education needed to be redesigned. A major dimension that needs to be added on to the learning based curriculum of the Secondary Education system is the principle of practical training. Maulana Azad calls it “some form of manual work”. He is referring to what we today call Vocational training. Azad is here

visualizing a secondary stage in a person's education as a stage when, apart from the textbook based learning the student would also gain some vocational training and some skill based program of learning. Going a step further, Maulana Azad adds that this practical training principle should go on to become the essential principle of education at all levels in the scheme of National Education.

Whenever any reform is introduced, there is a danger that it faces resistance from the recipients of the reform measures. If the reforms and changes come from the top and implemented as orders and strict rules, the measures are bound to be looked at with suspicion. Naturally such reforms will die a natural death because they were not supported by a positive approach. As such Maulana Azad is conscious of the need to tread softly with the reforms and changes, whether major or minor. He is conscious that the changes being proposed are of a serious nature and would create a huge difference from the existing system. Maulana Azad is also very conscious of the fact that our country is large and there are differences from region to region. As such "one single rigid model" will not work well everywhere in India. Any educational model should be elastic to suit the different needs of different people. Here Maulana Azad displays his understanding of the psychology of learning. Any model should be tailored to the needs of the individual learner, to succeed. Moreover, no program of study can be successful if it is imposed on the people in a rigid manner.

The Secondary Education Commission had been set up in 1952. The work of the Commission had already started. As Minister of Education he was in close observation of the work being done at the Commission. The policies being envisioned by the Ministry of Education had been conveyed to the Commission, and Maulana Azad is very confident that some concrete recommendations for the implementation of the new Secondary Education system would be coming forth from the commission. The Ministry was prepared to take the recommendations in to serious consideration. This shows how different wings of the Government should work in harmony to give meaningful shape to the future of the country.

Right from the start of his speech Maulana Azad had made his opinion about the Higher Education clear. As things stood in Post Independent India, University Education was being given a privileged status. University Education was considered to be the sole means of getting good Government jobs. It was increasingly being considered as a status symbol to get a University degree. As Maulana Azad strongly states, this is resulting in a lot of heartburn for the

degree holders. As there were more people getting degrees, and less jobs requiring a degree as essential qualification the number of educated unemployed was growing. All along his speech we can see Maulana Azad bemoaning this imbalance of 'more graduates and less jobs'. He blames this situation on the centrality we have been according to University degrees. Azad clearly feels that a developing country like India needs educated and skilled people. As such Secondary Education would gain much significance after a vocational edge was introduced in the Secondary curriculum. With a view to bring his speech to a logical and neat closure, Maulana Azad brings the issue of University Education to the forefront of the discussion. He does not agree with the "insistence on degrees as a necessary condition for government service". However, he would like to put the issue for public debate and larger consideration. Being a strong believer in democracy and consensus, Maulana Azad will not impose his views in any way, especially if the matter is one which impacts the youth and the future of the country. Finally, Maulana Azad makes a very pertinent point. If we are to continue with University Education, it should be for such studies as will benefit the youth in higher professional careers which call for advanced academics as well as professional training. Such a scenario also calls for a revision and upgrading of University curricula. This step is crucial in view of the fact that, in the last few years, University Education was falling below the required degree of high standards. Universities needed to tighten the admission procedures, limit the number of admissions and upgrade their syllabi. MAulana Azad closed this speech on the note that the topic of University Education is a vast one and could not be covered in a peremptory manner in the small space of time. The Broadcasted speech was expected to deal with the matter of Reforms in Secondary education and Azad does not wish to deviate unduly from the given task. This neat ending of the speech further establishes Maulana Azad's discipline of the mind and his didacticism.

#### **16.2.2.7: Summary**

Maulana Azad's speech broadcast over All India Radio, New Delhi on September 30, 1953 coincided with the setting up of the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53). At the time of the speech Maulana Azad was already the Minister of Education, having been inducted to the first Cabinet of Independent India under Jawaharlal Nehru's Prime Ministership. This means that the work at the Education Ministry was already in progress. It is necessary to note that Maulana Azad was untiring in his efforts to examine, re-examine and restructure many a policy

related to education throughout his tenure, up to 1958. Maulana Azad considered Education to be a “Problem of Problems”. He was full of ideas about how to improve the system of Education in India as he knew that this was perhaps the only project which could truly impact the developmental aspirations of his country. As we know from the life and speeches and actions of Maulana Azad even before his becoming a Minister of Education, Maulana Azad was always occupied with concern regarding education of common individuals. Maulana Azad’s interest in Education was not a new preoccupation after he took up as Minister of education. Even during the Freedom struggle Maulana Azad participated intensively in activities like the Movement for Boycott of English educational Institutions. Even prior to that Maulana Azad had expressed his deep interest in the progress of the individual through self-improvement of the individual. He had always made a clear distinction between education and learning. He always placed a great onus on individual learning and personality development. In his own case, he had himself consciously chalked out a personal program for self development. He had moved much ahead of the classical learning and the rigid curriculum of his home-school type of education. He had been fortunate enough to be exposed to very excellent training in all the classical disciplines as well as religious exegesis. He had developed excellent writing skills, which came to his aid during his journalistic career. In other aspects of learning like Western art, literature, philosophy and Music etc., Azad was a self taught man.

Now in the position of responsibility in the most crucial Ministry, Maulana Azad would want the youth of his nation to be as capable of self-improvement as he himself was. He knew however, that the vast majority of the youth of India were perhaps capable but lacked the means of self improvement. He and his contemporaries who were in a position of power and privilege to make policies, should open up avenues, and should take the responsibility of guiding the youth. For this purpose his Ministry was already preparing an agenda of development for the youth.

The “problem of problems” that confronted India as soon as it gained its Independence from British Rule was Education. The leader was immediately taken up with the task of reforms in the system of Education. The pattern of National Education under the British Rule was not suitable for the future of an independent Nation. At the time, the British Government was promoting modern, English- based education system so as to create a class of educated Indians who could be useful in subordinate jobs to assist the Government in running the Administration.

Now what India needed was an indigenous workforce that could steer the Country towards progress and self-sufficiency. The system the British left behind in India was not adequate to support the aspirations of a developing nation. No doubt there were many people who shared this view. But Maulana Azad's view was that mere criticism was not useful. There should be concrete plan for what should be done in terms of reform. In Maulana Azad's opinion Education should be appropriate to the needs of the common people. General Education was not adequate in the pattern it was being offered. The ideal system according to Azad would be one which prepared the learners to earn a good livelihood and also be of use to the country. That can be possible if Secondary Education system can be reformed by adding an additional aspect of practical training to the existing book-based learning. Then the pass-outs from the secondary level would have some skills and would be useful in running the industries, factories and manage the handicrafts for the development of the country. According to Maulana Azad the importance given to University Education and the possession of degrees is not helping the country or the youth in any way. It was generally made to appear during the British Raj that a University degree is essential to get a Government job. As a result there was a huge rush after university degrees. Universities started to churn out graduates; and the standards declined sharply. Finally it became apparent that there were far too many graduates and there were not so many jobs to absorb them after all. This resulted in increase of unemployment and frustration among youth. In Maulana Azad's view, a University degree is essential only for a few jobs like Doctors, Engineers, Scientists, or other such professional services. Public Service Commissions should be set up to look at admission and recruitment rules etc. Maulana Azad gives the central position of significance to the Secondary level of education, provided that it is given the additional dimension of vocational training. As for the Higher Education, Maulana Azad feels that there is much scope for reform there too. But that issue is beyond the scope of this speech. No doubt during his tenure as the Education Minister Maulana Azad was instrumental in setting up many Institutions which would be looking after reforms in Higher Education System also. The earlier Units in this Block have acquainted the learners with the yeoman service rendered by Maaulana Abul Kalam Azad in improving the landscape of National Education in the country. It is noteworthy that there were many advanced proposals that had been tabled by the First cabinet of Independent India that have been passed and implemented in recent years. It goes to show that

schemes that our early leaders introduced ideas and these slowly percolated down the years and saw the light of the day in a slow and steady manner.

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### 16.3 Learning Outcomes

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**Form and Structure:-** The course presents different genres of literary expression employed by Maulana Azad at different points in his literary career. In the present Unit, we offer for study a speech delivered by Maulana Azad. A speech is a spoken communication in prose addressed to an audience. The special point to be noted is that a speech of this kind is not random verbal communication. In a formally given address like in this sample, the speaker is using the platform to present his personal views. In this case there is a matter of national importance that is under consideration. The Education system of India is under discussion. Important decisions are in the making at this point in the country. Maulana Azad has an important role to play in this decision making process. His role as Education Minister makes it imperative that he moulds the public opinion to a certain direction. The speech covers a subject that is of importance both to the speaker and the audience the listeners. A good speech is not delivered with the aim to excite or rouse the audience. Rather it is made to inspire and persuade the hearers to think along the lines the speaker wishes them to. Maulana Azad endeavours to present the personal viewpoint in a convincing manner. Maulana Azad endeavours to present the personal viewpoint in a convincing manner. A power-packed speech is one that is charged with the sturdy conviction the speaker has in his/her beliefs. A powerful speech is one in which the speaker presents his arguments in a logical manner and evolves his arguments gradually. In a way, Maulana Azad stands at the podium as a good debater who has to make a case in favour of his side and convince the House of the ‘rightness’ of his opinion.

After studying this Unit the learners will be able to understand how an argument can be allowed to develop organically. The end of the speech also demonstrates how a good speaker brings his argument to a logical close. Summarising the speech and enumerating the main points is a definite way of capturing his listener’s attention and assuring that no point is lost. This is very important because of the speaker’s understanding of the fact that in comparison to written communication, speech is transient. Unless, points are repeated the listener may lose track of the



points made. One must note that repetition of a spoken point is equivalent to underlining a point in writing. Both serve the purpose of highlighting and laying emphasis on some point.

The major learning outcome of this Unit then is to create a distinction between the written model of language and the spoken model. Essentially both have the same goal, that is, communication of a message. However, the users of both these models of communication employ different strategies. The second important outcome of learning from this Unit is that in spoken form of communication, there are a number of variants.

Content: - So far we have spoken about the learning outcomes from the structure and the form of the Unit. At the content level also there are a number of learning outcomes one can expect. The Unit will impact the learner mainly because of its content which is rich with references to the value of learning in an individual's life. The speaker approaches the issues involved in the project of National Education and proceeds to examine the same from all angles. The students of the unit are exposed to a model of speech where a strong critique is levelled against the existing system of education in the country. The speaker is candid in pointing out the lacunae in the system without hesitation, though he happens to be the Minister of education. He offers solutions to the problems after identifying them. This is a constructive way of dealing with criticism. Though the independent democratic Government of India is quite young at the time of the speech, Maulana Azad does not skirt around the issue of any failing on part of the Government. He is conscious of the fact that most of the ills in the system of governance in the early decades of the Nehru Government were a spillover from the earlier regime. But Azad does not believe in complaining or playing the blame game. Instead of ascribing the blame on the erstwhile British regime and its mismanagement, Maulana Azad looks ahead and proposes the kind of changes that his Government is planning to bring about. When Maulana Azad took over as the Education Minister the country was already equipped with a system of a 3-tier education system. The Higher Education Project was already in place. Maulana Azad could have spoken of revamping the Universities. This could have perhaps appeared to be a meaningful, modernist venture for a new country. But for Maulana Azad, National Education did not mean merely a top-heavy, glossy educational edifice. For the nation to be truly educated and self-sufficient, the earlier levels of education should be strengthened. Primary basic education for all was important to make the nation literate. Secondary Education was essential to make the people self-sufficient. It was only after this was accomplished that one could turn to attend to the Higher Education

level. The speech prescribed in this Unit is a Radio Talk by the then Education Minister who makes it his duty to convince his countrymen about the wisdom of this approach to Education. The impact of the Unit lies in this strong content. The learners are sure to come away not only with an appreciation of the language and the model of speech but also the organic manner in which the persuasive argument is presented. The speech thus offers a lesson in history, in Educational philosophy and also the history a developing nation.

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## 16.4 Glossary

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**Basic Education:** Basic Education comprises Primary and Lower Secondary education. (International Standard Classification of Education) Generally now we also include Pre-Primary and adult Education under the head of Basic Education

**Secondary Education:** Education provided to a child starting at the age of 11 and extending up to 15 usually falls under the stage of Secondary Education. Often this stage can cover the middle School, Junior High Schools and High Schools. In India as per present System, after eight years of elementary education, a child does two years of Secondary Studies (Class IX & X), and goes on study for two more years of Senior Secondary studies (Class XI & XII)

**National Education:** The pattern of Education adopted by a country under its National Education Policy to promote and regulate education.

**Theory of Demand and Supply:** The Theory of Supply and demand was propounded by thinkers like Locke, James Stuart, Adam Smith, and Ibn Taymiyyah. The Law defines the relationship between the value of a goods and the need among people to acquire it. It is a central concept in Economics. There should be an Equilibrium between Demand and Supply to avoid economic crisis.

**Public Service Commission:** Union Public Service Commission and State Public Service Commissions are mandated by Articles 315-323 Part XIV of the Constitution of India. They perform the function of Recruitment for All India Services and recruitment to State services respectively. The First Public Service Commission was established in India in 1926.

**Secondary Education Commission:** The Secondary education Commission was set up by the Union Government in 1952 in the light of its resolution to examine and upgrade the existing

Secondary system of education in India. Dr A Laxman Swami Mudaliar was the first Chairman of the Commission. This Commission was also referred to as the Mudaliar Commission.

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## **16.5 Sample Questions**

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### **16.5.1 Objective Questions:**

1. By the phrase “general education available to common people” Maulana Azad refers to :
  - (a) Pattern of education in pre-Independence India
  - (b) Education system prevalent in India in the 1950s
  - (c) Traditional Indian Education System
  - (d) University Education which was set up by the British
2. Who are being referred to as a “liability” and as “superfluous”?
  - (a) People with technical knowledge, but without any degree
  - (b) Educated but unemployed youth
  - (c) The uneducated masses of India
  - (d) People in Government service
3. Why is a large proportion of the thousands of graduates in India unable to secure employment?
  - (a) A large proportion of the graduates is unable to pass the exams because the testing process is strict.
  - (b) Sufficient number of jobs are not available because the number of people going in for University degrees has outbalanced the number of jobs available
  - (c) The graduates are not happy with the jobs they get, and they are on the lookout for better jobs
  - (d) The standard of education in colleges is not good and the graduates are unfit for any job
4. What was the result of too many people joining the Universities for degrees?
  - (a) The nation became a leader in the field of Higher Education during the British Raj
  - (b) Merit of graduates became enhanced because there was tough competition between Universities

- (c) Standards of education declined because Universities admitted everyone and there was no importance attached to quality of education
- (d) More Universities had to be set up to meet the demand for admissions

5. Maulana Azad supports the idea that:

- (a) Professional careers require Higher Education, but others do not. Therefore everyone does not need University degrees
- (b) Degrees should be abolished altogether because there is no standard in Higher Education
- (c) Education should stop at secondary level.
- (d) Getting degrees is an unhealthy option because it is making people unwilling to do ordinary jobs

6. Maulana Azad says about Public Service Commissions that:

- (a) The number of Public Service Commissions should be increased to meet the pressure of selections
- (b) They should conduct examinations for recruiting graduates
- (c) Government should allow the Commissions to decide which job needs graduates and which does not
- (d) They should change the procedures of recruitment

7. What is the feature of Basic Education that Maulana Azad suggests as the basic principle of National education?

- (a) All education should be at the Government's expense
- (b) Learning and training in some manual work should go hand in hand
- (c) There should be a focus on one single stream in education
- (d) Secondary Education should follow the pattern of Basic education

8. Why should Secondary education have "sufficient elasticity"?

- (a) It will be acceptable to all the states, irrespective of region, caste, and creed
- (b) It can be altered time to time according to the changes in the Education Policy
- (c) It can provide jobs to all, irrespective of their individual talents
- (d) It will suit the different needs of different kinds of people

9. How do Government servants get recruited for non-professional jobs in England?

- (a) On basis of their University degrees

- (b) According to their age and personal expertise
  - (c) On basis of competition
  - (d) After their secondary education is over
10. What are the urgent changes suggested for the Secondary Education?
- (a) Apart from education some skills should be taught
  - (b) Secondary Education should be the final stage of education
  - (c) Professional studies should be introduced at the secondary level
  - (d) The academic program should be revised

#### **16.5.2 Short Answer Questions:**

1. What is the role of the State in providing what Azad considers a “birthright” to all citizens?
2. How can we ensure the effective implementation of the first two stages of education?
3. What kind of Secondary Education system is required for India?
4. What should be essential principle of National education?
5. What does Maulana Azad mean by an “unhealthy emphasis” on degrees?

#### **16.5.3 Long Answer Questions:**

1. What according to Maulana Azad are the shortcomings in Higher Education system in India? How can we improve the situation?
2. What are the three stages of Education? Which stage is crucial for the development of a country like India?
3. How does Maulana Azad apply the Economic theoretical model of Supply and Demand to the concept of Higher Education in the country?

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## **16.6 Suggested Readings**

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