



Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's Fraternity, and Love for Education: Need of the Day

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The most important or the most heart-wrenching event of the historical scenario of the nineteenth century in India was the "human barbarity" in the "partition of India and Pakistan" whose responsibility falls on those leaders and common man whom history will always consider to be the real cause of resentment between "India and Pakistan" or "Muslim and non-Muslim" due to their "short-sightedness" and "hateful nature". On the other hand the history will always remember an Ace, a daredevil combatant, an ideal, a protagonist and a person of the hour, popularly known as MaulanaAbulKalam Azad for his contribution in the independence of India as well as fraternity among the Hindus and Muslims and his love for Education.

No one can deny that Maulana Azad's personality was multi-faceted and his special aspects were religion, society, politics, education and literature, his love for education and literature was abundant, and his entire life remain associated with these special aspects and these were the goals of his life. This is the reason that thousands of pages have been written on him by the scholars so far, and still researchers are eager to write about new aspects of Maulana's personality. Rather, it will not be an exaggeration if it is said, that just as his life was immersed in the philosophy of life in the seclusions of some periods, scholars are searching for the unknown chapters of his personality. According to Maulana Azad:

"When people set up their shop in the market, they look for a place where there is a crowd of buyers. The day I set up my shop, I looked for a place where the least number of customers can pass by." (Ghubar-e-Khatir).

Maulana gave messages of love and friendship to the Indians in such a situation when the storms of hatred in the Hindus and Muslims were ready to destroy humanity with all their fervour. Similarly, Maulana Azad focused people's attention towards education and mental awareness at a time when Muslims in India were either blindly following the path of "modern education" shown by Sir Syed or completely opposing to Sir Syed. Or they were turned away from education due to not being able to see the positive effects of the education sector. Let us examine the two elements of Maulana Azad's personality, for which Maulana had to face embarrassment and humiliation from the community and faced various accusations and severe problems. And after enduring this sufferings, self-satisfied person like him also stood up and said in grief:

"Alas, there is no one among you who understands my language, there is no one among you who knows me, I truly say that in this whole country of yours, I am a helpless and unfamiliar person" (HamariAzadi, AbulKalam Azad).

"Alas, you do not like those who speak the real and the truth, you are slaves of show, servants of noise and tumult and creatures of temporary emotions, explosions and excitement, you have neither distinction nor sight, You neither know nor convey, the faster you came running, the faster you run away" (Sermon of the President of the Province of Bengal Khilafat Conference, AbulKalam Azad: AhwalWaAfkaar, p. 196).

"The mourning of my life is that I was not a man of this era and occasion, but I was handed over to it" (AbulKalam Azad: AhawalwaShakhsiyat p. 192)

The greatest opposition to Maulana Azad's theory of "Unity of Religions and Community" came with great intensity from the scholars after the translation and commentary of "Tarjuman Al-Qur'an" came to the fore. Maulana openly answered all these objections, that religion is a thing that unites, not a thing that fights. Religion teaches man about mutuality and brotherhood. Religion is the name of making people happy with humanity and bringing people closer to God. It is important to clarify here that this theory of AbulKalam was not adopted by keeping in mind the interest of any sect due to expediency or circumstances, but it was always there in him, due to his religious and mystical thoughts and zeal. And the change of time and the anti-nationalism environment made him the bearer of brotherhood and love. Maulana's main goal was not only to gain independence from the Britishers, or his relationship with politics and society was not for the purpose of gaining a place in these fields, but rather the love of the nation in his heart which God had deposited in him was working behind this goal of Maulana's life. Dr. Zakir Hussain had correctly written about the spirit of unity and brotherhood of Maulana Azad:

"He said that the spirit of religion is the spirit of unity. The spirit of religion is the spirit of service. The spirit of religion is the spirit of sacrificing oneself for others. The spirit of religion is the spirit of believing in unity". (A Universal Personality, Dr. Zakir Hussain "Abullklam Azad No.")

Maulana considered "unity and solidarity" to be a pure component of faith, that's why he responded well to all kinds of opposition. Everyone knows that how much Maulana's thoughts and views, knowledge and practices, principles and rules, beliefs and religiosity were involved in all areas of his life. All his thoughts, speech and character were his faith and confidence. His monkishness and freedom and his bold and truculent nature were representative of the pure religion of Islam. It is clear that if Maulana Azad wanted, he would have spent all his resources in succeeding his father. But he laid the foundation of a new conduct by dedicating himself to the nation and the community. What a beautiful thing he said while delivering a sermon in Agra in 1921:

"I believe that the Muslims of India cannot perform their duties well in India until they unite and agree with the Hindus of India truly, under the rules of Islam" (Khutbat-e-Azad, Malik Ram, p. 47).

Maulana challenged Hindu and Muslim communal elements through his sermons and speeches and made every possible effort to make India a united community and a common civilization. Sectarianism and anarchism were everywhere throughout the country and

conspiracies to undermine the democratic structure of the country were at their peak. In such a tough time, Azad, lit the candle of philanthropy and national unity and fought against the prejudiced ideas of colour, caste and religion, that can never be forgotten. The presidential address that Maulana Azad delivered at the 53rd session of the Congress at Ramgarh can be very effective in the current context provided that the Indians of today make it a motto in their lives. Azad says:

"Our common history of eleven centuries has filled every aspect of our life with its edifices. Our languages, our poetry, our literature, our society, our tastes, our dress, our customs, our daily life. No aspect of life is left that is not imprinted by this common life. Our dialects were different but we began to speak one language. Our customs and traditions were alien to each other but they blended together to create a new mold. Our old dress can be seen in old photographs of history but now it cannot be found on our bodies. All these common factors are a wealth of our communal harmony and we do not want to leave it and return to the time when our mixed life did not begin. If there are Hindu minds among us who want to bring back the Hindu life of a thousand years ago, they should know that they are living in a dream and it will never come true. In the same way, if there are minds who want to revive their past culture and society which they brought from Iran and Central Asia a thousand years ago, then I will tell them that they should wake up from this dream as soon as possible. Because it is an unnatural imagination and such thoughts cannot grow in the land of reality."

There is no doubt that sectarians and obscurantists tried their best to prevent this ideology of Maulana Azad from awakening in every Indian, and tried to destroy this determination of Maulana with various conspiracies, but like Gandhi, Maulana A true religious man kept fighting these chaotic elements with his life and wealth. Maulana was sure that the sectarian and other reactionary forces would not be able to stand for long. Maulana's nationalism was neither Hindu nor Muslim, it was pure secular nationalism, that's why when his secular nationalism was called Westernism, he gave very reasonable answers. See two quotes:

"It is not a matter that you should be influenced by the civilization and literature of the West to such an extent that you forget the great civilization of your country. At the same time, it is not right that you close yourself in a shell in such a way that Western sciences and Not even a ray of civilization can reach you. Do not forget that you can confine worldly things to national and geographical boundaries but you cannot compartmentalize knowledge and civilization."

"I am a Muslim and I feel proud to be a Muslim. Thirteen years of wonderful traditions of Islam have come to me as my heritage. I am not ready to let even a small part of it be lost. The teachings of Islam, the history of Islam, the sciences and arts of Islam. The civilization of Islam is my valuable asset, and it is my duty to protect it. As a Muslim I have a special identity in the religious and cultural sphere and I cannot tolerate any interference in that. But with all these feelings I also have another feeling. The spirit of Islam does not stop me from it. It guides me in this way. I feel with pride that I am an Indian. I am an element of the indivisible united nationhood of India without which the temple of its greatness remains incomplete. I am an indispensable factor of this triangle. I can never give up this claim."

Maulana Azad's second most important aspect of personality is the acquisition of knowledge and skills. According to Hazrat Ali (R.A.),

"Knowledge and wisdom are the lost inheritance of a believer, get it even if you have to take it from a hypocrite."

Maulana not only showed the ways for the nation to achieve knowledge, but also rendered such services for them that a dignified and developed country needed before and after independence, and even in the present age. As the first education minister after independence, Maulana led the country for eleven years towards educational development, introduction of modern sciences, In particular, he encouraged the country to develop scientific insights. In the press conference on February 18, 1947, Maulana Azad said some basic things on education, one of the most important thing is that:

"Only education that is free and full of human values, can lead to a great change in people and lead them to progress".

While fulfilling his responsibilities well in view of the contemporary need, Maulana held a conference with the heads of the most important religious madrasas, schools and DarulUloom in Lucknow. In which his focus was on incorporating modern information and advanced forms of science and technology into the curriculum. His aim was to establish consonance in Western and Eastern sciences. Emphasizing on this point, he said that

"The sole purpose of education should not be to earn a living, but education should also be used for personality development, and this is the most useful aspect of education, from education the economic and the cultural aspects will also get better."

Maulana was concerned about the Indian education system and he studied it deeply. He was visualising special goals like intellectual awareness, unity, development, religious tolerance and global brotherhood in the education system, by the achievement of which a pleasant and intellectual atmosphere will emerge in India, and the society here will be called the best society in the world. The two elements that had the greatest effect on the minds of the people during the British rule in India were the feeling of slavery and the feeling of separation and division. Therefore, Azad considered the most important task to educate the new generation as well as instilling talent and art in them, through this, he wanted to end the fascination of the Britishers from those raw minds. He believed that if slavery will be replaced by freedom, and bigotry will be replaced by religious tolerance in the educational objectives of independent India, then they would become self-sufficient and free from narrow-mindedness in the future life. People considered it a matter of pride to study in England and looked down on the educational system of the country. For this reason, whether it was women's education, whether it was junior or basic education, Azad did unforgettable work in every field.

Nowadays, while the country is considered as a world power and the education system here is not weaker in any means than abroad, however, it would not be wrong to say that the education system and society here is gradually moving in the direction that AbulKalam Azad spent his entire life and extraordinary abilities to get out of.