

The Philosophy of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan of Religious Tolerance, Communal Harmony, Multiculturalism & National Unity

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ABSTRACT

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1898-1817) is a great and historical figure of the Indian subcontinent, whose fans and critics have no shortage. He is criticized by both rights and left groups based on ideological ignorance or misunderstanding. On the one hand, he had rational religious views, which were very different from the traditional pictures of Islam, and for that reasons, a large section of Muslims deny that he was a true Muslim. On the other hand, some people present him as a strict Muslim and a Two Nation Theory founder. Thus, he wholly ignores all his literary, educational, and social reform work. However, the reality is the opposite because Sir Syed never preached conservatism in religious, social, educational, institutional, and literary matters. His whole life was a true manifestation of the principles of peace, tranquility, brotherhood, and religious tolerance of all humanity. He believes in the unity of all religious followers and communal harmony so that all sections of society can work together and strive for free development. He often emphasized Hindu-Muslim unity through his writing, literature, organizational work, and movement. When religious extremism and fundamentalism are on the rise all over the world with India, we need to re-read Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who himself was a symbol of sectarian harmony and sectarianism. Moreover, he was a staunch opponent of sectarianism. The purpose of this article is to highlight Sir Syed's philosophy of religious tolerance, sectarian harmony, and multiculturalism.

KEYWORDS: Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Multiculturalism, Communal Harmony, Religious Tolerance, Urdu Literature, Aligarh Movement, National Unity, Two Nation Theory, Education Mission.

INTRODUCTION

The Indian Muslims suffered the most from the War of Independence of 1857. The reason was apparent, the Muslims had taken an active part in this war, and the British considered them their worst enemy. Muslims suffered the most in response to this war of independence. The treason of 1857 made the British Government extremely angry with the Indians, especially the Muslims, due to which the lives of the Muslims became difficult. Countless Muslims were executed for treason, and myriad houses were demolished. They grabbed their land and property ruthlessly and cut off all livelihoods. Feudal Muslim leaders lost their honour. Small industries were destroyed, leaving industrialists and artisans jobless and starving. In India, such as social, economic, and political misery was created.

At the same time, the British promoted hatred among Hindus and Muslims under '*Divide and Rule*.' The three Hindu-Muslim and Christian (Britisher) societies had intense hatred and fear for each other in their hearts. In such a precarious situation, Sir Syed appears in India. Through his verbal, practical, organizational, motivational, and scholarly work, he has done a great job of bridging Hindus, Muslims, and the British Government and restoring trust.

Objectives:

- ❖ To explain Sir Syed's theory of "Inter-Muslim Unity".
- ❖ To clarify Sir Syed's theory of "Hindu-Muslim Unity".
- ❖ To enlighten Sir Syed's theory of "Hindu-Muslim Unity".
- ❖ To explicate Sir Syed's theory of "Understanding between Muslims and British".

Research Methodology:

This is a historical research in which Primary Data and Secondary Data have been used in the creation of this article. Primary data has been taken from books written by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Furthermore, secondary data has been taken from various articles and books written on Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

A) Syed's Efforts For "Inter-Muslim Unity

Sir Syed's educational mission was to guarantee religious unity, sectarian unity, and unity of various schools of thought, national brotherhood, peace, and the promotion of humanity. He not only tried to establish peace, tranquillity, unity, and trust between Hindus, Muslims, and the British people but also taught unity to the groups of Muslims who called them infidels and atheists. At the same time, we can see the participation of people of all schools of thought in every reform work of Sir Syed. In reality, Muslims from all schools of thought were among the beneficiaries of the Aligarh revolution, from the *All India Muslim Education Conference* to the *Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College* and from the establishment of the *Scientific Society* in Aligarh to the launch of *Tahzeeb-ul-Akhlaq*. However, all the schools of thought of the Muslims were in agreement with them in calling them misguided and infidels.

1. He was a 'rationalist' in his religious ideology, stressing the human understanding of Islamic teachings. His unrivalled clashes of Islam with modern ideas, and his Qur'anic commentary on the early Western movement, were nothing less than a revolution in the development of Muslim theology. It was a phase that shocked the traditionalists. He assumed that there was no disagreement between the Word of God (the Quran) and the work of God (nature). Sir Syed has been willing, through his liberal conceptions, to pave the way for new democratic changes in Islam. He was the first modern Indian Muslim to encourage a new secular, modern and democratic interpretation of Islam. Because of his emphasis on critical interpretation, ignoring the hadith, ignoring the prevalent Islamic beliefs and outlines, the personality became controversial, and he was called an atheist and a naturalist (*Priest of Nature, Rebel of God*).
2. Sir Ahmad Khan played a crucial role in saving his society from total spiritual, intellectual, and educational destruction and spreading enlightenment and modernity through education. This policy was sharply opposed by Muslim intellectuals, whom he invited. Sir Syed was considered an agent of the British by his compatriots, but it was difficult for people to recognize his work and mission during the colonial period. To ease the situation, he requested the Deobandi scholar *'Maulana Qasim Nanotavi'* to chair the college's theological committee to settle the case. However, his proposal was eventually refused, and the Deobandi scholars issued a fatwa on Sir Syed's disbelief and skepticism. Some fatwas were issued against Sir Syed, raising questions among the different sects of Islam regarding the *Aligarh Movement*. But for his opponents, Sir Syed's reaction was not aggressive but friendly.
3. Sir Syed was equally sensitive to intra-Muslim affairs because of the Shia-Sunni differences. To neutralize sectarianism, he made unique plans. The first secular institution where everyone can find students of any faith, ethnicity, race and colour can be extraordinarily M.A.O. School and College. In India, he advised his compatriots and scholars: "*I hope you will try to set an example in both scholarly pursuits and the practice of Islam. Only then will our community be honoured and respected*". (Altaf Hussain Hali)
4. The Aligarh movement itself had many people who did not agree with the rational Islamic views of Sir Syed, and openly disagreed with him, but Sir Syed never expressed negative feelings towards them. On numerous Islamic issues, Allama Shibli Nomani openly disagreed with Sir Syed, but he remained an active member of the Aligarh movement till the end of his life. (Abdullah)

It is an open fact that people, madaras and organizations who strongly opposed Sir Syed later benefited from Sir Syed's educational institutions.

B) Syed's Efforts For "Hindu-Muslim Unity"

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was a multi-faceted academic, political activist, writer, theologian, social reformer, intellectual, educationalist, and the lead organizer of the 19th century modernist Islamic movement in India.

1. What better example could be of Sir Syed's national unity and the secular essence of his college than that its doors were equally open to students of all faiths and sects. Aishwari Prasad, the college's first graduate, was a Hindu, and Amba Prasad, another higher education graduate. The headmaster of the college, Theodore Beck, was Christian, and the deputy headmaster Lala Baijanth Prasad was Hindu. Among the students, Shri Jadav Chandra Chakraborty was a mathematics teacher, and Shri Shiv Shankar was a Sanskrit teacher. Not only that, but the administration of the college also included citizens of all faiths. Hindu teachers and students live on a college campus without discrimination. In this context, it is clear that while the main aim of this college was to promote modern education among Muslims, its doors were open to everyone, irrespective of religion or nationality.
2. Sir Syed continued to spread ideas based on Hindu-Muslim solidarity and religious harmony. During his service in Banaras, Sir Syed invited *Swami Dayanand Saraswati* (1824-1883), the founder of the '*Arya Samaj*' movement, to his house and listened to the Shlokas of the Vedas so that he could benefit from the ideas of the Arya Samaj movement in the comparative study of religions. He used to call Swami Dayanand the word "*Maharshi*" and used

- to meet him from time to time. Some of Sir Syed's words about peace, religious tolerance, humanity, and social harmony have become proverbs and are repeated everywhere in society.
3. Sir Syed had a family ritual with the Hindus. His grandfather *Nawab Farid-ud-Din Khan* divided his property among his sons and gave equal shares to his Diwan *Lala Maluk Chand*. Sir Syed also attended Hindu festivals and congratulated his Hindu friends. When Sir Syed set up a madarsa in Ghazipur, he invited both *Raja Devnarayan Singh* and *Maulana Muhammad Fasih* to lay the foundation stone. Likewise, the incident is also a sign of the Hindu-Muslim unity that Sir Syed Masood's grandson Sir Ross Masood, former Vice-Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University, recited Bismillah Khawani and little Masood in the lap of his grandfather's friend *Raja J. Kishan Das* of Moradabad. He was sitting there, and Maulvi Sahib gave him the first lesson of Bismillah and *Qulhuwallah Sharif*. Sir Syed has always treated his countrymen compassionately.
 4. When he was employed in the Supreme Court during the British rule, cases of all classes came to his court. It is not easy to find an example of the impartiality and generosity he performed his duties. That is why the Hindu people trusted him. Moreover, his non-Muslim contemporaries valued him. His beauty and faith remain unchanged, despite the passing of time. On one occasion, Sir Syed said, "*India is like a bride, and Hindus and Muslims are its two eyes.*" Similarly, Sir Syed has expressed his feelings about unity and harmony, brotherhood, sincerity, sympathy, and love in the following words. "*I consider Hindus and Muslims as my two eyes. I do not like to say that either because people would generally call it the difference between the right eye and left eye. But I consider both Hindus and Muslims as one eye. I wish I had only one eye, in which case, I could correctly compare them to that one eye.*" (Kidwai:51)
 5. Hindu-Muslim unity reflected his fundamental thought, which he considered essential to the unity and dignity of the nation. He realized that the nation could not achieve independence and peace without unity, sacrifice, and tolerance. Similarly, in one of his speeches, Sir Syed spoke to Hindus and Muslims as brothers, as if they were two children of the same mother. These are things that historians and politicians will never digest. This mirror is for those who call Sir Syed a sectarian or a separatist. It raises whether his efforts to promote friendship and modern education with the British government have benefited the Muslim community. The term Sir Syed refers to a community often used for Muslims and sometimes for Hindus and Muslims. Rarely does this mean that there is a global Islamic brotherhood? However, he also put forward the Islamic view: "*It is meaningless whether a believer is black or white, Turkish or, Arab or Chinese, Punjabi or Indian.*" Addressing another gathering, he stated that "*remember that the words Hindu and Muslims are only meant for religious distinction: otherwise all persons who reside in this country belong to the same nation.*" (Abel)
 6. When he formed MAO College, he kept his doors open for every culture. He never discriminated on the grounds of religion when appointing the faculty and staff. His secularism was perfect and rational in motion. At present, the leaders of today need to take a lesson in this respect from him. When Colvin, his province's governor, visited MAO College, he was pleased to know that the Muslims similarly welcomed Hindu scholars. The same feelings were shared by Hindus and Sikhs when Sir Syed visited Punjab.
 7. Sir Syed was conscious that the prerequisites of a pluralistic and democratic society are unity, fellowship, and cooperation between society divisions. The last time he breathed in 1898, there were 285 Muslims and 64 Hindu students. The staff consisted of seven Hindu teachers. He has made the requisite arrangements to teach Sanskrit. Every year a gold medal was issued out of pocket to a Hindu student who passed the BA in merit. He forbade the slaughter of cows on campus. In general, he also noted that "*if giving up the slaughter of cows brings about friendship and friendship between Hindus and Muslims, then do not kill the cows, which is a thousand times better.*" (Kidwai)
 8. It can be said that Sir Syed was a pioneer of modernizing Muslims and even Islam. Observes W. C. Smith, "*He (Sir Syed) was genuinely tolerant, deeming a man's religion as his private affair which should not be obtruded and hardly even discussed between those of different faiths lest friendship is weakened. The slightest religious bigotry distressed him.*" (W. C. Smith)
 9. The key aim of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's actions and struggles in public life was to fully help all people, irrespective of faith and ethnicity, in the creation and growth of their country, dedicating themselves to the spirit of peace and brotherhood. He relied upon his passionate speeches and popular writings to achieve this. He wanted India's people to come forward and join, forgetting all their divisions, as a sincere servant of the country. Syed Ahmad passionately criticized the Turkish caliphate. He said, "*The Turkish caliphate has nothing to do with us; we are the people of India and the subjects of the British government, we belong to the land of India.*" Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's ideology of interfaith tolerance can be easily understood from this view that, "*It is the first and foremost duty of all the well-wishers of the country to strive for the welfare of all people irrespective of any consideration of caste or religion.*" He further writes "*If we ignore that aspect of ours which we owe to God, both of us, based on being common inhabitants of India, actually constitute one nation: and the progress of this country and that of both of us is possible through cooperation.*" (Guha)

10. He told the people of his homeland that it is in the sense of peace that the well-being of the country and the community rests, which is the necessity of civilization, and Islam teaches us the same. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, in one of his speeches, states, *"Islam has also taught us to be friendly and fraternal with our peers." He who wears the robe of humanity will want the two nations of India to develop equally. Whether Hindu or Muslim or any nation of India, everyone should be united for the betterment of the country.*" (Tajwar)
11. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was a fierce critic of sectarianism. As a country or culture, they considered both Hindus and Muslims as one nation. He saw sectarian hostility as the main obstacle to the development and dignity of the country. Thus, with full courage, patience, and perseverance, he strongly condemned sectarianism in all areas of his life and conveyed the message of love and unity to all his country's people. In a speech given on December 29, 1873, by *Anjuman Punjab Lahore*, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan addressed his people with the following words; *"I have used the word 'nation' many times in my language. By this, I do not mean only Muslims. I do not like religion, sect or group for the sake of the nation. My whole wish is that all human beings, irrespective of nation and religion, should agree on each other's good. Religion, of course, is different for everyone, but there is no reason for enmity between them in this regard."* (Tajwar) The same thing is explained in detail elsewhere, *"By the word nation (community), I mean both Hindus and Muslims. This is the meaning in which, I interpret the word 'nation'. For me, it does not matter what their religious beliefs are. "These are the different reasons why I define the two nations living in India in one word, 'Hindu', meaning the nation living in India."* (Nizami)
12. It is recognised that all social ills, such as sectarianism, religious extremism, bigotry, ethnic and caste discrimination, were present in India during Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's time. As a reformer and sympathizer, Sir Syed urged Indians to avoid all these diseases. He termed all these evil social crimes as poisonous for the development of the country and community.
13. Some blind people misinterpreted his efforts as anti-Hindu and accused him of being the founder of the two-nation theory and sectarian. However, all the writings and speeches of Sir Syed are free from these filthy things and convey the message of national unity, mutual well-being, and elevated human values. In reality, Sir Syed carefully studied Indian Muslims' ignorance, unawareness, backwardness and realized that there was no way out without modern education. He started his mission to enlighten the Indian society mentally, intellectually, educationally, economically, and politically. To spread national unity, Sir Syed strongly condemned the sectarian elements and vehemently denied them. Sir Syed supported not only inter-faith unity and harmony but also made great sacrifices to fulfill this commitment. See his words: *"I hope that in India, in which God has settled our Hindu brothers and us, he intends that we should both be brothers and consider each other as brothers. I pray that God will create in the hearts of both Hindus and Muslims in India the idea of helping each other and supporting each other."* (Tajwar)
14. He was a genuinely dedicated rationalist. He mixed his values with his socio-economic, political, and educational views. He knew very well that only if Hindus and Muslims remained united would India's development be possible. He did not regard the growth of a sect as the development of the country. As long as he lived, with his words and his actions, he continued to testify. Sir Syed has never overlooked the possibility of uniting Hindus and Muslims and conquering them in one series. He also viewed national unity as part of his mission as well as education.
15. He once said to Hindus and Muslims: *"Dear! Just as the noble nations of the Hindus came to this country, so did we come to this country. The Hindus forgot their country; they did not remember the time when they left their country, and they considered India as their homeland. We also considered India as our homeland, and we had to stay in this country just like we did in the past. So now, India is our home."* These words of Sir Syed indicate this fact of history and the inevitability of Hindu-Muslim unity. In this context, it is clear that Sir Syed's main goal and mission was to promote modern education among Muslims, but its doors were open to everyone, regardless of religion or nationality. To advance education, he believed that unity between Hindus and Muslims was important. the core elements of his theory of unity are as follows
 - a) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan wanted secular knowledge to be transferred to Muslims along with religious knowledge. He believed that man needs all knowledge, and it is not right to distinguish between them. The two sides of this coin are religion and secular education, and these two are linked to our lives. This world is the harvest of the Hereafter, so we are unable to live without it. The deeds of this world are counted in the Hereafter. Therefore, it is also of special importance. Also, both types of education are essential for living the best religious life in the world. The laws of religion are subject to any worldly practice of a Muslim.
 - b) As an integral part of the Madrasa ul-Uloom, Sir Syed established religious education and developed separate study programs for students and teachers for the Shia and Sunni sects. He did not want any division in the community, and even non-Muslims were considered brothers. Therefore, he was to promote harmony among Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and wanted everyone to be adorned with educational ornaments and be on the path of developing the country and the world.

- c) In colour and character, the Scientific Society, founded by Sir Syed in 1863, was genuinely national. It had 82 Hindu and 107 Muslim members, in addition to British members. MAO College's 22-member steering committee also had six Hindu members.
- d) The schools in Moradabad and Ghazipur reflected Indian unity rather than an Islamic frame of consciousness, as did the *Scientific Society*, which opened its doors not only to Muslims but to all sections of society. When Lord Lawrence, the Viceroy of India, awarded him the gold medal in 1886, the letter of thanks at that time stated that in exchange for service to the people of the country" and not for service to the Muslim community. (Baljon)

C) Syed's Efforts For "Muslim-British Unity"

Sir Syed worked hard for inter-Muslim and Hindu-Muslim unity, but his real effort was to build trust between the Indians and the British. Especially between the Muslims and the British because after the tragedy of 1857, there were sharp differences between the two.

1. In 1870, the British changed their hostility strategy. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who is generally recognized as an advocate for peace and reconciliation between the British Government and Muslims in India, has been primarily responsible for this hostile shift. The revolution in India. His novel, *The Cause of the Indian Rebellion*, was published in 1858. Efforts to reconcile with the British began here. (W. C. Smith)

- a) In 1860-1861, he wrote and published several pamphlets (Articles) in English entitled '*Loyal Muslims of India*'.
- b) In 1862, *Tabeen-Al-Kalam* was published, which was an incomplete commentary on the Bible.
- c) In 1868, he published a religious treatise entitled "*Ahkam-e-Ta'am-e-Ahl-e-Kitab*", which explained the etiquette of eating with the People of the Book (Christians and Jews) and the principles of Islamic law.
- d) Furthermore, in 1872, a commentary on Dr. Hunter's book *Indian Muslims* was published.
- e) In addition to these publications, his seminal works were also published, such as the '*Ahmadiyya Sermons*' published in 1970, which was a collection of articles on the life of the Holy Prophet.
- f) Between 1880 and 1895, *Tafsir-ul-Quran* was published in six volumes, which is an incomplete commentary on the Qur'an and is also called *Tafseer-ul-Quran*.
- g) Besides, his sermons, speeches and writings contain numerous examples and quotations aimed at encouraging Muslims to adopt a positive attitude towards the West. (Baljon)

2. The political situation of Muslims in India was challenging and critical at the time the book "*Reasons for the Indian Rebellion*" was being written. The British Government completely crushed the uprising and blamed the Muslims of India for it. When Sir Syed wanted to send a memorandum to the British Government of India and the British Parliament, his friends stopped him from doing so. Sir Syed completed the process despite the advice. (Hali)

3. He was trying to keep Indians, especially Muslims, free from the accusation that he had deliberately revolted. According to Sir Syed, the main reasons for the uprising were:

- a) Enforcement of laws that were against the established traditions and customs of India,
- b) People's misunderstanding of the Government's intentions,
- c) The Government's ignorance of the living conditions of the people of India, their attitudes and grievances,
- d) The negligence of the British officers (or lack of friendly sentiments towards the people) and poor management of the army. (Hali)

3. Sir Syed aimed to maintain trust between the Indians and the British Government. He wanted to bridge the gap between the Muslims and the British. So he took several steps to carry out this task.

- a) Intending to give Muslims a better understanding of Christianity, especially when discussing or arguing with Christian missionaries and Muslims' skepticism about Islam and the scriptures, Sir Syed wrote the biblical commentary *Tabi'een al-Kalam*. The move was needed at the time to allay suspicions and establish friendly relations between the followers of the two religions. (Hali)
- b) To improve social relations and contact between Muslims and Christians, Sir Syed wrote the magazine *Ahkam-e-Ta'am-e-Ahl-e-Kitab*, in which he believed that Hindu customs were, in fact, the source of bigotry among Muslims when they ate with Christians. Referring to the verses of the Quran, he affirmed that Muslims are permitted to eat with Christians for as long as there is no alcohol or forbidden food.
- c) He commented on the hunter's book on *Indian Musalman* and defended the Muslims, especially the supporters of Syed Ahmad Barelvi (*who were called Wahhabis*), against sedition charges. Sir Syed praised the "*Wahhabis*" for their reformist zeal and insisted that their jihad was directed not against the British but the Sikhs. They were loyal to the British.

- d) In the second part of the *Tafsir-ul-Quran*, he gave rational explanations of Muslim beliefs about the birth, miracles, mission, and death of Jesus. Sir Syed wrote that there is no religion other than Islam that has so much respect for Jesus and his teachings. He claimed that the relationship between Muslims and Christians based on natural bonding was accepted only by Islam.
- e) Sir Syed also paid particular attention to the conditions in which "*Jihad*" is obligatory for Muslims. On the subject of jihad, he has published extensively. He had an apologetic tone. Like all of the Holy Prophet's movements were defensive, he claimed that the essence of jihad was defensive. In Islam, there is no compulsion to embrace faith. Only by peaceful persuasion and preaching could conversion arrive. Not by intimidation or sword. It is unacceptable to keep Islam accountable for the errors made by successive Muslim rulers. Islam believes intolerance that is generous. Only in order to protect Islam may Muslims fight. Islam exhorts it is faithful, regardless of their religion, to respect and remain obedient to its authorities. In the early days of Islam, the Prophet told some of his companions to seek refuge in the Abyssinian Christian kingdom who had been persecuted. (Khan)
- f) In 1864, Sir Syed founded the Translation Society, which later became known as the Scientific Societies. Thus, he wanted to acquaint the people of the East with the knowledge and literature of the Western nations. The society moved to Aligarh with Sir Syed Ahmed. He got a worthy Hindu supporter in Raja J. Kishan Das, and this society also played an essential role in the reconciliation between East and West. Murray Titus writes "*Sir Syed gained the sympathy of the ruling power towards his people by showing that they are loyal to the British Government. At the same time, he worked diligently and diligently to bring Muslims to a new way of life, which he believed could be the only way to avoid destruction.*" (Titus)

4. In 1861, in the Legislative Council of the Viceroy, three non-Muslim Indians were elected. Sir Syed Ahmed expressed great happiness and thanked the Almighty God for carrying out their duties with great bravery, perseverance, patience, and integrity. He appreciated them because they did their job well. One of the three was the Maharaja of Patiala, the other was the Maharaja of Banaras, and the third was Dinkar Rao. All three belong to a non-Muslim religion.

5. One such speech by Sir Syed, which he made in Meerut in 1888, explicitly indicates that Sir Syed resorted to claims put out by religious fanatics to establish a communal alliance between Indian Muslims and British Christians. He said, "*Our Hindu brothers of these provinces are leaving us and are joining the Bengalis. Then we ought to unite with that nation with whom we can unite. No Mohammedan (Muslim) can say that the English are not "People of the Book" (Quranic term referring to Jews, Christians, and Sabians). No Mohammedan can deny this: that God has said that no people of 'other religions' can be 'friends' of Mohammedans except 'Christians'. He who had read the Quran and believed it could know that our nation (Muslims) cannot expect friendship and affection from any other people. At this time our nation is in a bad state as regards education and wealth, but God has given us the light of religion, and the Quran is present for our guidance, which has ordained them (Christians) and us (Muslims) to be friends.*" (Shaan)

Thus Sir Syed adopted a policy of not resisting the British rulers and continued to co-operate with them in every possible way. In order to bridge the gap between the two societies. As a result, the British also encouraged Sir Syed and gave him their support. Queen Victoria awarded Sir Syed the Knight title in 1888 to promote intercultural understanding between Christians, Hindus, and Muslims. He sought to find common ground between the world's three major religions, based on scientific thought and logic.

D) Formation Of Organizations For Religious Tolerance:

Sir Syed was the founder of numerous socio-economic and political organizations in the subcontinent. Organizations such *the British Indian Association* and *the Muhammadan Educational Conference* were realistic examples of his services. In a series of articles entitled '*Loyal Muhammads of India*' Sir Syed tried to persuade the British government in various contexts to make them aware of Muslim loyalty. (Kazmi)

a) The Loyal Muhammadans of India (LMI)

The Loyal Mohammedans of India "was published by Sir Syed in 1860. He defended the Muslims in this work against allegations of British treason. He commented extensively on the Muslims' loyal service of the time and described many Muslims to whom they believed their unique at the same time, and he demanded that the British put an end to their hostility to the Muslim community.

b) The British Indian Association (BIA)

In 1866, the British India Association was founded in Aligarh by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to familiarize the British rulers with the feelings of the Indian people regarding governance and politics. The prominent role of the association was to apply to develop a reputed university.

c) The United Indian Patriotic Association (UIPA)

It was a political group founded in 1888 by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Raja Shiv Prasad Singh from Banaras. As the founder of Aligarh Muslim University, the party decided, unlike the Indian National Congress, to establish close ties between the Muslim community and the British Raj.

d) All India Muslim Educational Conference (AIMEC):

A non-political organization that brings together Muslim social and political figures, scientists, intellectuals, and prominent people from all walks of life to improve Muslims' education in India through a common forum. By transforming *Muhammadans Anglo-Oriental College* (MAO College) into Aligarh Muslim University, it changed aspects of the Aligarh movement and fulfilled the dream of its founder, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. The conference also promoted women's education and spawned the Women's College of Aligarh, one of the oldest and largest educational institutions. This apolitical education conference for Muslims in India was initiated to enhance Muslim education in India. Another purpose of the establishment of these organizations was to raise awareness of British rulers about the feelings of the Indian people towards the Government and its policies.

- a) These organizations have also been given the task of showing their loyalty and devotion to the nation. But while these organizations simultaneously have a constructive dynamic, the Government threatened to withhold money from the college and viewed these associations' formation as a political step.
- b) He has formed a committee called '*the Committee for Better Diffusion and Advancement of Learning among Muhammadans of India.*' The committee's main goal was to break the prejudices of different cultures, especially Muslims' reservations about the English language and the Western education system. (Kidwai)

E) Sir Syed's Literary Work, For Interfaith Harmony:

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan has also made written efforts to promote religious tolerance with verbal, practical, organizational, and motivational activities to promote religious tolerance and interfaith harmony. The details of which are given below.

SR. NO.	NAME OF THE BOOK	YEAR OF PUBLICATION	THE SUBJECT OF THE BOOK AND OTHER DETAILS
1	Rebellious District Bijnor (<i>Tarikh Sarkashi Bijnor</i>)	1858	During his stay in Bijnor district, Sir Syed wrote the book "Rebellious District Bijnor". In addition to the causes of the 1857 War of Independence, an attempt was made to bridge the gap between the British and the Indians, and the faults of both the British and the recruits for treason were exposed.
2	Reasons for the Indian Rebellion (<i>Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind</i>)	1859	Sir Syed's well-known work in which the reasons for the revolt of 1857 were described in detail, and it was clarified that not all Indians but some people were responsible for this revolt. The purpose of this book was also to bring the Muslims and the British closer.
3	Magazine, benevolent Muslims (<i>Risalah Khair Khwahan Musalman</i>)	1860	In this book, Sir Syed mentions all the people who were directly and indirectly loyal to the British Government. The purpose of this book was to bring the Muslims and the British closer together after the treason of the Prophet so that the misunderstandings could be resolved.
4	The Mohammadan Commentary on the Holy Bible (<i>Tabyin-ul-Kalam fi Tafsir-al-Taurat-wa-Injil ala Millat-al-Islam</i>)	1862 to 1865	Sir Syed also began work on biblical commentary, aimed at introducing Christianity to recruited Muslims - this was the first work by an Indian Muslim, who argued that Islam was the closest religion to

			Christianity and the Abrahamic Is the closest of religions. However, before he could finish, he abandoned his plan. It is Collection of Essays on Muhammad's Life, and Subsidiary Subjects helped to develop useful links between the British authorities and the Muslim community.
5	Guideline to eat with the Jews & Christians <i>(Ahkam-e-Taam-e-Ahl-e-Kitab)</i>	1868	Muslims avoided Christians in matters of food and drink and considered this act against Islamic teachings. Sir Syed proved through this book that there is no abomination in eating with Christians. Sir Syed's move was a good step towards religious tolerance.
6	Sermons of Ahmadiyya <i>(Al-Khutbat al-Ahmadiya fi'l Arab wa'l Sirat al-Muhammadiya)</i>	1870	Sir Syed Nasser wrote this book in response to William Mayer's Life of Muhammad. The fanatical Christian historian William Muir, in his book The Life of Muhammad, distorted the conditions of Islam and the Holy Prophet. He travelled to England to write the answer and endured extraordinary hardships and wrote the Ahmadiyya Sermons, in which he responded to the betrayals of William Muir writings in a very scholarly and investigative manner. In this book, Sir Syed has written in detail on the subject of jihad and proved with arguments that "Islam does not impose its beliefs on anyone by force.

F) Sir Syed And Two National Ideologies

Although Sir Syed was a tolerant man with a secular mindset, there is always a controversy attached to him that he was a strict Muslim. Although Sir Syed always tried his best to stay with the Hindus and continued to preach it. He was a lifelong supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity. However, a misunderstanding has been attributed to the fact that he is one of the founders of two national ideologies. Some even call them the originators of Pakistan. Many Muslim scholars discussed these issues at the Muhammadans Anglo-Oriental College established by Sir Syed and expressed concern over their future in India. It is also true that those associated with the Demand for Electorates (1906), the formation of the 'All India Muslim League' (1906), and the Demand of Pakistan (1940) had links to the MAO College (MAO College which in 1920 was converted into Aligarh Muslim University) established by Sir Syed. However, Sir Syed not had any direct or indirect involvement in the party's work or movement that divided India. Sir Syed always wanted a united homeland and envisioned a place where Hindus and Muslims or people of any religion would live together in peace and harmony.

Sir Syed's commitment to the Hindu-Muslim unity was demonstrated in his own words at a gathering in Gurdaspur on January 27, 1984, when he said, *"O Hindus and Muslims! Do you belong to a country other than India? Don't you live on this soil and are you not buried under it or cremated on its Ghats. If you live and die on this land, then, bear in mind, that 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' is but a religious word; all the Hindus, Muslims and Christians who live in this country are one nation."* (Zobairi)

Some scholars mistakenly believe that the divide between Hindus and Muslims in India was a byproduct of the two-nation doctrine, supposedly drawn from Sir Syed's philosophy. "Nationalism" as a conscious term was a concept of the 20th century, including in Europe, where it was introduced in India. The respected historian Anil Seal rightly pointed out that there were no two nations in Sir Syed's day, that there was not even one country, and that there was no nation at all.

CONCLUSION

After studying Sir Syed's writings, lectures, and practical life, it is concluded that his life was based on the principles of religious tolerance, peace, love, reconciliation, brotherhood, and respect for all religions. It is summarized below.

1. Sir Syed also had a mission to recognize the plurality of religious diversity in India. According to him, diversity does not hollow out our firm but strengthens it. Once we are strong and united, we can help shape a better future for India and the world.
2. He was an extraordinary man in all these matters who always supported Hindu-Muslim unity. He firmly believed that religion was for the good of the people, not for segregation. Therefore, he wanted all communities and human beings to be given equal status, without discrimination, to live with dignity. Sir Syed believed that Hindus and Muslims were nothing but religious words. All Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Christians living in this country are one nation.
3. He considered only modern Western education necessary to eradicate corrupt mindset, greed, evil nature, extremism, religious fundamentalism, sectarianism, ignorance, ritualism, superstition, and other nations' evils.
4. His view of the British was based solely on the national interest, and to this end, he established cordial relations with the British. He knew that it was foolish and suicidal to compete with British resources. He wanted to make the nation strong and in line with modern requirements by pursuing a sharing and cooperation policy.
5. He firmly believed that a country like India could be strong and develop on its own and lead the world, but only when the Indian people learned to live in mutual goodwill and harmony.
6. Sir Syed was a staunch supporter of the value of Hindu-Muslim and Christian solidarity for India's development. He knew we should prosper together, and he fought for that unity to the last. Of course, in a brief period, he has performed innumerable fruitful duties that have astonished not only the Muslim society but the whole world.

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