CHAPTER – II
WAHABI MOVEMENT

To understand the attitude of the Muslim religious class towards British rule and Western culture, the religious movements that arose in Delhi and Bengal during the first half of the nineteenth century need to be considered. Delhi, a centre of religious and secular learning, saw the birth of an all-India movement under the leadership of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. The movement spread to such distant centres as Hyderabad, Patna, Bengal, Tonk, Oudh, etc. Bengal gave rise to many local movements like those led by Shariatullah, Titu Mir, and Karamat Ali. These movements, though they differed in their vision and in their approaches to the question of Muslim life in British India, were one in seeking resolutely to purify Islam in India. They also aimed at re-establishing Muslim rule. This implied the launching of a consistent struggle against all non-Muslim rulers. In Bengal the non-Muslim rulers were definitely the British. In India as a whole also the British power was now the paramount Power. Even those Indian States which were not directly under the administration of the English East India Company were under the influence of the British by virtue of the Subsidiary Alliances. Hence any move to overthrow even the British-protected non-Muslim Provincial Governments was in effect a move against the British themselves. The religious reformers of Bengal directly confronted the British, but the leaders of the movement in Delhi aimed first at establishing their rule in the vulnerable Provinces and then at undertaking the task of establishing an Islamic Government in the whole of India. Shaikh Karamat Ali in Bengal did not participate in any jihad. He devoted himself exclusively to religious reform. Other religious leaders of Bengal, however, made no secret of their bitter feelings against, and enmity with, the British Government. They pronounced India under British rule a dar-al harb. This entailed migration to a Muslim country and declaration of jihad against British rule and Western culture. The religious leaders of Bengal never slackened in their struggle: they fought on till the end.

The religious leaders of Delhi adopted an ambivalent altitude.¹ They too regarded India under British rule as a dar-al harb. This is apparent from their
statements and activities. Even then they issued no explicit” declaration to that effect. They even allowed congregational prayers on such occasions as Juma and Id. At the same time, during the struggle, they migrated to a Muslim country for waging a jihad. This showed that they considered India a dir-al harb. They hated Western education, and they hated to see Muslims accepting service under the British. And yet they allowed Muslims to learn English and accept service under the British, not for the purpose of earning money, but for the purpose of learning the secrets of the British and utilizing them for achieving their own goals. They aimed at establishing an Islamic State in India, and yet, for quite some time, they avoided a confrontation with the British. The liberal approach of some of the leaders of the Delhi school was misunderstood. Indeed it was widely believed that they were friendly to the British. This impression of them was sought to be reinforced by certain interested parties for their own purposes after 1857. The following discussion would, however, prove that they definitely aimed at establishing an Islamic Government- that, for that purpose, they planned a final confrontation with the British; and that they did fight the British in 1857-58.

Although the movements failed to achieve their political objective and were crushed by 1857, the anti-British sentiment that actuated them and their opposition to British rule continued to inspire the Muslims even after 1857. A close study of the role of the ulama in the national movement of the subsequent years would make this clear.

A close examination of the working of the minds of the orthodox ulama of the school of Shah Waliullah would make it abundantly, clear that the restraint which they exercised in pronouncing India under -British rule a dar-al harb and their proclaimed liberalism in allowing the Muslims to take to Western learning, as also their slow but relentless march towards the annihilation of all non-Muslim Governments, reflected only a diplomatic ambivalence which they considered necessary for their cause. Indeed it may be said that they were the last among the Muslims to reconcile themselves to British rule and Western culture. A historical analysis of their long struggle proves that they aimed, firstly, at the social and
religious purification of Muslim society and, eventually, at the re-establishment of an Islamic Government by accomplishing, necessarily, the annihilation of the British.

The genesis of the movement Tariqah-i Muhammadiyah, generally known as the Wahhabi movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, may be traced back to the reform movement led by Shah Waliullah of Delhi. The basic aim of the movement was to establish an Islamic State with an Islamic social order in India, with the Khilafat-i Rashida as the only basis. The Islamic State represented a unified and compact social, religious, and political approach to life. Islamic polity could not, therefore, be treated as a separate institution. The followers of Shah Waliullah and Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi would reject even a Muslim political order if it was not in harmony with the injunctions to be found in the Quran and the Hadith. Shah Waliullah criticized even the Mughal Government as it was not based on Islamic principles. Throughout his life he endeavoured to bring about religious, social, and political reform of Muslim society. He showed his utmost concern for the improvement of the Mughal administration on the basis of Islamic ideals. He even intended to use the sword for the purpose, but he was basically a man born to wield the pen rather than the sword. The one outstanding fact about the approach of Shah Waliullah—a fact that we must specifically note here—is that he was the first religious reformer to display a measure of flexibility in his methods and approach by introducing the principle of *ijtihad.* And subsequently the use of *ijtihad* became a common feature of the movement under his successors. The use of the principle of *ijtihad* perhaps helped in enlisting the support of kings and of the Hindus for the effort to achieve the final goal. During Shah Waliullah's time, what caused acute concern to him and his followers was the weakness of the Mughal polity and internal revolts rather than the ascendancy of the British. These continued to cause concern to his son and successor Shah Abdul Aziz as well. Indeed Shah Abdul Aziz was called upon to play a much more difficult role, and he responded to the call with great prudence and patience.

Shah Abdul Aziz was born in 1746 and died in 1823. He, therefore, witnessed the imperceptible extinction of the Mughal Empire and at the same time the consolidation of British rule in India. The change in the status of the Muslims automatically brought into play a new set of obligations on their part, and the first of
these obligations was to expel the foreigners; for the Quran is based upon the conception of the Muslims as a conquering, and not as a conquered, people. Shah Abdul Aziz maintained that according to the apostolic tradition, Christian rule was to be at the last stage. He expressed his conviction that the Christians referred to were the British rulers of India and that their rule would be supplanted by that of the promised Mahdi.\(^5\)

Shah Abdul Aziz, however, confined his campaign to preaching and to organizational work. His fatwas on the question of position of the Muslims vis-à-vis the British Government were often vague and self-contradictory. It is clear that he was deliberately seeking to avoid an open pronouncement at this time. He did not pronounce India under British rule a dar-al harb in so many words, but what he said could easily be interpreted that way. He did not say that the learning of English was against the Shari’ah, but he did say that English should not be learnt for deriving any pecuniary benefit or for obtaining employment under the British.

Shah Abdul Aziz advised the Muslims to adopt an attitude of compromise for some time in certain matters. He realized that a certain degree of co-operation with the British was advisable for the Muslims to survive in the situation then obtaining. He envisaged for the Muslims a policy of “no war and no peace”. He issued a fatwa, saying that a Muslim could accept employment under the British Government if he felt that he would not find himself in a situation where he would have to commit the masiyat-i kabira of fighting against his co-religionists and to serve or consume alcoholic beverages and pork. This clause of the fatwa virtually forbade the Muslims to look for employment in the armed forces of the British Government, which were still fighting a number of Muslim princes. The second part of Shah Abdul Aziz's fatva implicitly allowed the Muslims to seek employment in any civilian department or organ of government such as courts of law, the police force, etc.\(^6\)

Shah Abdul Aziz was not opposed to the new learning, but he was afraid lest too intimate a contact with Western culture should ruin the very basis of Islam. Of course, he allowed the Muslims to learn English, but he also prescribed the purposes for which they might learn English. One of his fatvas says:
Learning English for the purpose of reading, writing letters, and knowing the secret meanings of words is permitted. But if any man learns English in order to unite himself with the English, he sins and transgresses the law, as in the case of a weapon. When it is made to drive away thieves or to arrest them, the making of it is a pious act; but if it is made to help or defend the thieves, then the making of it is sinful.\(^7\)

A subsequent *fatwa* issued by Shah Abdul Aziz in the early years of the nineteenth century gives a clear picture of the working of the orthodox mind. We reproduce a part of the *fatwa* here by way of illustration:

\[\ldots\] In this city [of Delhi] the Immd-ul Muslimin wields ro authority, while the decrees of the Christian leaders are obeyed without fear [of the consequences]. Promulgation of the commands of *Kufř* means that in the matter of administration and the control of the people, the levy of lard tax, tribute tolls, and customs, in the punishment of thieves and robbers, in the settlement of disputes, in the punishment of offences, the *kafirs* act according to their discretion. There are, indeed, certain Islamic rituals—as, e.g., Friday and Id prayers, *adhan*, and cow slaughter—with which they do not interfere. But that is of no account. The basic principles of these rituals are of no value to them, for they demolish mosques without the least hesitation, and no Muslim or *dhimmi* can enter the city or its suburbs except with their permission. It is for their own good that they do not object to people going in and out, to travellers and traders visiting the city. [On the other hand] distinguished persons like Shuji-ul Mulk and Wilayati Begam cannot visit the city without their permission. From here to Calcutta the Christians are in complete control. There is no doubt that to the right and to the left there are Muslim principalities like Hyderabad, Rampur, Lucknow, etc., but they do not govern directly as a matter of policy and the possessors of these territories have become subject to them . . . \(^8\)

Being too old to take part actively in a religious war, Shah Abdul Aziz devoted his energies to organizational work. He established two Boards of Directors,
one to look after military matters and the other to serve as a surveillance committee for the maintenance of the ideological and doctrinal purity of the movement. The Board set up to look after military matters consisted of Maulana Abdul Haq, Maulana Ismail, and Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi was Chairman of the Board. The Board concerned with the maintenance of the ideological purity of the movement was directed by Maulana Muhammad Ishaq and his brother Maulana Muhammad Yaqoob. Shah Aziz let it be understood that the unanimous decisions of the two Boards would be tantamount to his own judgement. He trained a group of ulama to undertake the programme. He also chose Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi as his successor.

Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi (1786-1831) belonged to a Rai Bareli family. Shah Aziz acknowledged him at his very first meeting as the right man because of his simple Islamic ways and character. After completion of his training and education Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi returned to his home, got married, and led a peaceful family life for some time. His mind, however, was looking for some mission. At first, in 1810, with the permission of Shah Abdul Aziz, he joined the service of Amir Khan of Tonk. In a letter written by him about this time he refers to his joining the army of Amir Khan, and says that it was ordained by God. According to Mehr, it was in keeping with Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi’s plans. He joined the service of the Nawab of Tonk because he was the only Muslim ruler who was independent of British influence. As soon as Amir Khan made an alliance with the British, Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi resigned his post there. This is clear evidence that he was outwardly and inwardly hostile to British rule in India. He had even fought a battle against the British while in the army of Amir Khan and had compelled the British to accept his terms.

A militant propaganda was set on foot by Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi who spoke and wrote as though he considered India a dar-al harb so long as it was under a non-Muslim Power. Of course it is not universally accepted that he actually declared India a dar-al hard. A study of his writings would reveal that he never explicitly pronounced India a dar-al harb, but he knew, and so did all the adherents of the movement, that for all practical purposes India had ceased to be a Muslim State. According to him, so long as India continued to be under a non-Muslim Power, it was
a zone of war. The Christians had snatched the power of the Muslims, and it was a historical fact that they had struck at the very root of Muslim rule. Hence a Jihad against the unbelievers was in order. Together with Mohammad Ismail, Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi initiated action, not against British India, where there was religious tolerance, but against the then non-British Punjab, where the Sikhs were oppressing and persecuting the Muslims. The mujahidin made the Swat Valley their base, and there, from 1816 to 1831, they kept up a militant campaign against the Sikhs, capturing Peshawar itself in 1830. However, they fell fighting in the battle of Balakot in 1831.12

Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi’s abrupt end leaves us in a great confusion. It was not clear whether he had planned to extend his struggle from the Punjab to the whole of the motherland. There is, however, considerable evidence to prove that he meant his campaign in the Punjab to represent only the first phase of his struggle and that he intended to wage war against the British at the right time.

To the Muslims there are four forms of jihad: jihad through the purification of conscience; jihad through speech; jihad through the use of the yen; jihad through the use of the sword.13 The movement had already taken the first three forms and was assuming the fourth, a form which could be stretched to any length of time according to need without any fear but with all due care. A jihad was allowed to be waged against the unbelievers who had appropriated land by force of arms. This implied that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi and his followers were also contemplating a war against the British after the annihilation of the Sikhs. Consequently the successors of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, following in his footsteps, initiated their long tussle with the British.14

As a matter of fact, the Muslims in India under British rule enjoyed religious freedom. Hence India under British rule could not technically be declared a dar-al harb. The Muslims, however, feared that a powerful Government of non-believers could do anything against the interests of the Muslims at an appropriate opportunity. It was not beyond the non-believers to interfere even in the religious life of the Muslims as a number of subsequent events proved. The Muslim States were already being harassed constantly. The Muslims, therefore, thought that they were justified in
waging war against the British for the reestablishment of Muslim rule. The fatvas only indicated either the procedure of, or the legal hitches to be overcome “in, waging war against the British. The fatvas of the different jurists of this period were so ambiguous that they seemed to endorse and support both viewpoints. However, the spirit of their writings, including the fatvas, letters, and other literature, is definitely one of antagonism to British rule and Western culture. They never reconciled themselves to British rule. They were always aiming at establishing an Islamic Government. Besides, Saiyyad Ahmed Barelvi was not carrying on any new movement. His movement was only a continuation of Shah Waliullah's fakku kull-i nizamin.15

W.W. Hunter, S.G. Wilson, and others who have written on the Wahhabis in India opine that the movement led by Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi was, from the very beginning, directed against the British. Maulana Karamat Ali, Mohammad Husain Bata-lavi, Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, and Maulana Jafar Thaneswari denied the charge that the Wahhabi movement was directed against the British. They even sought to prove, especially after 1857, that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi was friendly to the British. In fact they distorted facts so as to disabuse the British of the impression that there was any feeling of antagonism against them. They even allowed themselves to be deluded by some of the diplomatic pronouncements of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi's. For instance, they made good use of the statement. “We do not want to fight any Muslim chief... nor have we any quarrel with the English Government.” Jafar Thaneswari even changed the original text of the letters of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. In his book Tavarikh-i Ajibi he replaced the words “navara nikohida”, which mean “the damned Christian', with “sikhan-i nikohida”, which mean “the damned Sikh”, so as to convince the British that the Wahhabis were not against the British Government.16 However, the fact was that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi had no firm ground to declare war against the British as long as he found conditions in India appropriate for Muslim life in accordance with Islamic law. Perhaps he had intended to wait till all the legal hitches were resolved.
Once, in one of his letters to Shah Sulaiman Jah, the ruler of Chitral, Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi expressed his shock at the lot of the Muslims under Christian rule in India in the following words:

During the last few years fate has been so unkind to the Government and the administration in this country that the Christians and the polytheists have established their ascendancy over the greater part of the country and have started oppressing people. ... My heart is filled with the single thought of jihad. . .17

However, purely practical considerations seem to have determined the policy of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi in choosing the Sikhs rather than the British for immediate action. He wanted to deal with one enemy at a time. Besides, the Sikhs were less powerful, and the Muslim (Pathan) States of the frontier could be depended upon to help. The British too were likely to support in order to cut the Sikhs to size. And once the choice was made, Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi scrupulously avoided giving any offence to the British. He used the territories under British rule as a base for the supply of men and money.18

Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi wrote letters to the Hindu rajas as well, expressing his shock at the capture of power by the British in India. The ulama were ready for co-operation with the Hindus in order to drive the aliens out of India. He wrote to Raja Hindu Rao, vizier of Gwalior:

. . . strangers from across the ocean have become the rulers of India; the mere mercantilists have laid the foundations of an empire; the masonic lodgings of the wealthy and the estates of the rich no longer exist, and their honour and repose has been snatched away. Masters of domain and realm have retired into the limbo of oblivion. At last a few among the saints and the hermits have girded up their loins. These faithful men raised their standard of revolt in the cause of God's own faith. They desire neither worldly joys nor power; when India is freed from aliens and enemies, the ambitions of the faithful are fulfilled. The high ranks of the St Ate and politics will be assigned to those who covet them.19
This letter also makes it clear that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi was not interested in obtaining power for himself. He intended to hand over the command of free India to a deserving person who could establish the long-cherished Islamic State. He even rejected an offer from Maharaja Ranjit Singh of an independent principality in some trans-Satluj area. He restored Peshawar to the vanquished ruler Sultan Muhammad. He confined himself only to the appointment of the qadi and the censor of public morals to ensure that the Muslims conformed to the Islamic code of public behaviour. The followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi such as Saiyyad Qutab Ali Naqvi, his son Jafar Ali Naqvi, and Shaikh Ghulam Ali testify that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi’s jihad was aimed not merely against the Sikhs, but also against the British. One Mason, an English traveller, observed that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi aimed at the annihilation of the Sikhs first and at the conquest of India and China afterwards. Wadud observes that the religious leaders were fighting for the political and economic rights and privileges of the Muslims which had been lost as a result of British encroachment upon Muslim India.20 H.W. Bellew, in his report on the Yusufzais, writes as follows about Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi:

This was no other than Mir Syed Ahmad of Barclay [sic], better known in these parts as Syed Badshah, . . . who, for a brief period, enjoyed a very successful career while stirring up the kings and peoples of the different adjacent Sunni Muhamma-dan Governments to flock to his standard, which was unfurled to re-establish the Empire of Islam and to rid the Indian peninsula of its infidel people, the British, and the Sikhs.21

Once Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi wrote to Nizam Sikandar Jah, inviting him to join his jihad: “My real object is the establishment of Jehad [sic] and carrying the war into Hindostan and not to stay on [sic] in the lands of Khorasan.”22 He chose a frontier State as technically he could wage a jihad only from a Muslim State. For him India had become for all practical purposes a dar-al harb. And a war from a non-Muslim State could be construed as a revolt.

Another letter by Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi shows his concern not only for the Muslims of the Punjab but for the whole of India.23
Among the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, Shah Ismail and Maulana Abdul Hai made especially notable contributions to the movement, each in his own way. Shah Ismail was a nephew of Shah Abdul Aziz's. He accepted Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi as Imam-ul Muslimin. He actively participated in the military campaigns of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi against the Sikhs and died a martyr with him in the battle of Balakot in 1831. He fully supported the movement, and his attitude to the British cannot, therefore, be considered to be different from that of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi himself.

Shah Ismail wrote a book entitled Mansab-i Imamat to provide an ideological basis to the movement led by Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. The book also reflected the thinking of Shah Ismail on the political issues of the Muslims in India. The book nowhere calls India explicitly a dar-al harb. And yet a careful study of the text would show that for the followers of this school India under Christian rule was enemy country. There is in the work an unspoken desire to wage war against the Christian rulers and to make India an Islamic State. The following extract from the book not only gives a clue as to the attitude of Shah Ismail to the political system then obtaining, but also provides a justification for raising Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi to Mansab-i Imamat:

Sultans who are Muslim in name but in fact had become utter kafirs bent on disgracing Islam through every word and deed ... are type of arrogant ksfirs, zindiqs, and apostates. It is a basic doctrine of Islam to carry on a jihad against them, and to insult them is to honour and praise the Prophet. Their Government absolutely cannot be considered any kind of Imamat.24

Both Shah Ismail and Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi thought it necessary to find a territory that could be called a dar-al amn so that, directing their operations from there, they might make their jihad legal and legitimate. They chose the North-West Frontier as a base from which to wage a jihad against the Sikhs, who had been oppressing the Muslims and interfering in the religious affairs of the Muslims in the Punjab. A complete success against the Sikhs would have strengthened their confidence and served as a morale-booster. And their next target would definitely have been the British. But a partial success disturbed their plans.
Shah Ismail, like Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, was very cautious in making his hostility to the British plain. Hence he too in his writings avoided pronouncing India under the British a *dar-al harb*. In fact the teaching of Muhammad Ismail recommending a loyal *modus vivendi* with the British as long as they did not interfere with the religious freedom of the Muslims stood in sharp contrast with his earliest rulings.\(^{25}\) At the same time, however, it implied that in the event of the British interfering, which was likely and expected; the Muslims had to wage a *jihad* against them too. This interference started just after the battle of Balakot, when William Bentinck and his colleagues took up the task of imparting cultural and religious training to the “backward” Indians. The process gained momentum about 1857, especially from the time of Lord Dalhousie onwards. Shah Ismail abhorred monarchy and intended to establish an Islamic republic. This, obviously, implied an open and final clash with the British at some future date. He equated Christian rule with the rule of the infidels, and hence a *jihad* against Christian rule was inevitable even as it was inevitable against the rule of the infidels.\(^{26}\)

It was true that the Christians were a people mentioned in the book and could not be equated with *kafirs*. And yet, inasmuch as they had departed from their proper beliefs and practices, Shah Ismail considered them to be no better than *kafirs*. He was not a man to wage a *jihad* against one *kafir* and spare another. If the Sikhs were chosen first for attack, it was due entirely to expediency.

Similarly Maulana Abdul Hai, son-in-law of Shah Abdul Aziz, also accepted Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi as *Intim-ul Muslimin* at the instance of his father-in-law and served him as his main adviser. He was an eminent jurist and was offered the position of mufti in Meerut by the British Government. He accepted it at first but resigned it within three years when he found that it was incompatible with his political ideas.\(^{27}\)

When faced with the burning question of the day, viz the position of India under the British, Abdul Hai too adopted a scrupulously moderate attitude. When asked if the Muslims should learn English, he declared, as his father-in-law had done, that they might do so but only to gain useful knowledge and not to advance themselves.\(^{28}\)
He also gave his verdict in clear language on the most vexing question of the period. Asked whether India, under British rule, was a dar-al harb or a dar-al Islam, he replied that India was not a dar-al harb but a dar-al Islam. At the same time he regarded Calcutta and its dependencies as a dar-al harb. A country becomes dar-al harb only when the rule of the infidel is openly exercised, or when it is contiguous to a dar-al harb and there is no dar-al Islam in the neighbourhood to provide relief to the Muslims there, or when neither the Muslims nor the dhimmis enjoyed religious freedom. In like manner he also justified congregational prayers on such occasions as Jumah and Id as the non-Muslim rulers did not interfere in religious affairs. Secondly, according to him, by choosing Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi as their Imam, the Muslims had fulfilled the condition of reading khutba in the name of the Imam instead of the Sultan.29 Such fatvas, however, were not inconsistent with the ultimate aim of establishing an Islamic State. They were needed only when everything was at stake.

Maulana Abdul Hai provided legal guidance to Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. However, the fact that he fully supported Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi's movement and that he resigned from service under the British prove that he too was essentially anti-British and was in favour of establishing an Islamic State in India after ousting the British from India. He, however, died on 24 February 1828, i.e. even before the completion of the first phase of the long struggle.30

The British continued to adhere to the policy of non-interference in religious and social affairs of the people of India till the arrival of William Bentinck. Hence, under the conditions that obtained during the first three decades of the nineteenth century, none of the ulama of Delhi could explicitly pronounce India a dar-al harb. Indeed the ulama avoided direct clash with the British. In the years that followed the British started interfering in the religious and cultural affairs of the people. As a result the fatvas of the ulama of those years explicitly mentioned India as a dar-al harb, and the successors of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi had no hesitation about clashing directly with the British.

After the death of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi in 1831 in the battle of Balakot, his followers were divided into two groups. One group, known as the Sadiqpuri group, was headed by two brothers Wilayat Ali and Inayat Ali. This group believed that
Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi had just disappeared and that, therefore, there was no need for a new Imam to be elected. The other group was led by Maulvi Nasiruddin.... It was convinced that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi had died a martyr in the battle of Balakot. Accordingly it elected Maulvi Nasiruddin as the new leader. However, the struggle was carried on by both groups.\(^{31}\)

Maulvi Saiyyad Nasiruddin, son of Saiyyad Naasiruddin Thaneswari, was related to Shah Waliullah's family on his mother's side. He was the son-in-law of Shah Muhammad Ishaq. He received religious education and training under his father-in-law in Delhi and subsequently joined the movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. He worked so sincerely that after the death of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi he was chosen leader of the movement.\(^{32}\)

Choosing Sind as the most suitable place for the struggle, Saiyyad Nasiruddin migrated there along with his followers in 1835. He reorganized the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. Important followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi like Saiyyad Mohammad Ali Rampuri and Maulana Wilayat Ali extended full co-operation to Maulvi Nasiruddin in his jihad. At first he fought a battle in support of the Mazaris of Rajau against the Sikhs. The Mazaris, helped by the mujahidin, almost won the battle and regained their political freedom and recovered their State. In the process, however, they found it expedient to accept the nominal suzerainty of the Sikhs. The alliance between the Mazaris and the Sikhs made it necessary for Nasiruddin to move out of Rajau.\(^{33}\)

It appears that in the early part of 1835 the mujahidin caused some disturbance by attacking Rajau on the right bank of the Indus between Amarkot and Shikarpur and by establishing themselves subsequently at Bungh. After they were expelled from Bungh by the Nawab of Bahawalpur, a British ally, they settled at Shikarpur at the instance of Mir Rustam Khan. The British, objected to the presence of these “fanatics” at such a place, saying that it was prejudicial to the interests of their Government. They informed the Nawab that any action on the part of the mujahidin that might interfere with the navigation of the Indus was likely “to cause great offence to the British Government”. The mujahidin do not seem to have done anything further to cause a rupture in the MIR's relations with the British
Government. Maulvi Nasiruddin remained at Shikarpur till Auckland's war with the Afghans.\(^{34}\)

In 1839 Lord Auckland took up the cause of the unpopular and exiled Afghan monarch Shah Shuja, marched at the head of an armed force into Afghanistan, deposed Dost Muhammad, and put Shah Shuja in his place. Dost Muhammad started hostilities against the British and invited Maulvi Nasiruddin to participate in the struggle. The avowed purpose of the Afghan War was, according to the mujahidin, the destruction of a Muslim kingdom. And so when Dost Muhammad declared a religious war against the British and invited the mujahidin to join him, they did so willingly. They were convinced that as Muslims they had a duty to assist their brethren in defending themselves from what appeared to them to be an unprovoked attack by a Christian Power. Saiyyad Nasiruddin with his followers marched on Kabul and, encamping near Dadur, advanced to support Dost Muhammad. However, in the defence of Ghazni on 21 July 1839 the combined forces of Maulvi Nasiruddin and Dost Muhammad were completely destroyed. The British captured Kabul soon after, leaving the forces of Maulvi Nasiruddin in total disarray.\(^{35}\)

After the defeat of Dost Muhammad, Maulvi Nasiruddin moved to Amb at the invitation of Pauda Khan. Soon he fell ill. Moving on to Sittana, he passed away there in 1840.\(^{36}\)

In a poem Maulvi Nasiruddin defines his religious and political aims as the purification of religion and the establishment of an Islamic State. These were the aims which had animated the movement led by Shah Waliullah. Nasiruddin too struggled to accomplish the annihilation of the Sikhs and the British.\(^{37}\)

The history of the Wahhabi movement, at least from 1831 to 1858, is to a great extent the history of the activities of Wilayat Ali and Inayat Ali of the Sadiqpur family of Patna.

William Hunter has rightly observed:

> Indefatigable as missionaries, careless of themselves, blameless in their lives, supremely devoted to the overthrow of the English infidels, [and] admirably skilful in organizing a permanent system for supplying money and recruits, the Patna caliphs stand forth as the types and examples of the sect.\(^{38}\)
Maulana Wilayat Ali (1790-1852) of Azimabad, Patna, was brought up under prosperous conditions. He was still a student at Lucknow when he got the opportunity to meet Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, who, with some of his followers, had gone there to seek employment. It is said that Wilayat Ali was so impressed by the piety of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi that he left his education incomplete and renounced all worldly comforts to join his circle in Delhi. Wilayat Ali persuaded his relatives, especially his younger brother Inayat Ali, to join the movement. When Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi migrated to the Frontier for the purpose of waging a *jihad*, both brothers joined him. In 1829-30 Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi sent Maulana Wilayat Ali and Saiyyad Mohammad Ali Rampuri to Hyderabad (Deccan) for the propagation of his teaching. Nawab Mubarizuddaulah, brother of Nawab Nasiruddaullah, offered bar ah to Maulana Wilayat Ali. Hardly had the reform movement gained a foothold in Hyderabad when the unfortunate events of Balakot forced the Maulana to return to Azimabad in 1831.

As soon as Maulana Wilayat Ali assumed the leadership of the movement in his region, he sent Maulana Inayat Ali to Bengal to gain adherents for the movement. After two years he himself went to Bengal. Eventually he proceeded to Mecca for hajj. On his return from Mecca Maulana Wilayat Alt recalled Maulana Inayat Ali to Azimabad and directed him to proceed to Balakot to help the *mujahidin* in waging war against Raja Gulab Singh of the Punjab. It was probably after the defeat of Dost Muhammad and Maulana Nasiruddin that Inayat Ali was asked to rush to the Frontier. About three years later he himself moved towards Afghanistan and took over from his brother the reins of the campaign against Gulab Singh. It is believed that he succeeded in occupying the Hazara District. However, the First Anglo-Sikh War and the annexation of the Punjab by the British on 10 February 1846 necessitated a review of the struggle. There is little doubt that after the liquidation of the Sikh State in the Punjab the British inherited from it the problem of the persistent hostility of the *mujahidin*. The *mujahidin* found themselves indirect confrontation with the British. Gulab Singh, who had entered into an alliance with the British, demanded British protection. In response to his request the British Government wrote to Maulana
Wilayat Ali, asking him to stop hostilities against Gulab Singh as the latter was under their protection.\textsuperscript{42} It also warned him that any continuance of the hostilities against Gulab Singh would be treated as an offence against the British. At the same time it sent two military officers with their forces to help Gulab Singh. These officers first avoided provoking a military conflict. As usual they tried diplomatically to create division within the ranks of the mujahidin. They succeeded in winning Saiyyad Zaman Shah of Balakot over to their side. And finally, in 1847, a battle was fought at Dub. In this battle Maulana Wilayat Ali was defeated. This proves that the Maulana had not taken cognizance of the warnings of the British Government and had continued his struggle against the British.\textsuperscript{43}

After his defeat Maulana Wilayat Ali reportedly proceeded to the Swat State of Saiyyad Akbar Shah.\textsuperscript{44} However, as there were some British-controlled-territories on the way; he sought permission from the British officers in charge to pass through them. The permission was granted. On their way to Swat, however, he and his followers were abruptly arrested, on the ground that the officers had no right to grant permission without consulting the Government. This annoyed the mujahidin, but they exercised restraint on the advice of Maulana Wilayat Ali. They were then taken to Lahore and “produced before John Lawrence, then Chief Commissioner of the Punjab. Lawrence received the Maulana with due honour. Under an accord which was reached amicably the Maulana agreed to go back to Azimabad along with his followers. On their arrival at Patna, they were asked by the Commissioner of Patna at the instance of the British Government to furnish two sureties on behalf of two of their followers, Hashmat Dad Khan and Dilawar Khan, for their conduct and stay at Azimabad for two years.\textsuperscript{45}

Maulana Mehr, however, refutes this whole story of arrest, accord, and sureties put out by Jafar Thaneswari. According to him, within three months of their arrival in the Punjab, Maulana Wilayat Ali and his mujahidin were defeated by Gulab Singh in the battle of Dub. After that they reached Azimabad through Lahore. It is wrong to say that they intended to go to Swat at the invitation of Akbar Shah as the latter had not yet become the ruler of the State. Also Hazara and other territories had not yet been annexed by the British Government.\textsuperscript{46}
However, it might have been, Maulana Wilayat Ali and his followers again left for Bengal in 1849-50. From Bengal they proceeded to the Frontier in 1851. Maulana Wilayat Ali now thought that the time was ripe for the execution of his plans. He had found out that the British were planning to send the 4th Native Infantry stationed at Rawalpindi. He started extensive correspondence with the Muslim soldiers of the 4th Native Infantry, and the latter agreed that the regiment would revolt rather than crush the *mujahidin*. A regular organization was established for the purpose of transporting men and arms from Bengal to the Frontier. In Patna the entire Muslim population was supporting the liberation movement. Even the police were in league with the *mujahidin*. In Patna, Maulana Ahraadulla'i successfully resisted the search of his premises, where seven hundred of his followers had assembled to repulse the British authorities by the use of arms. The British Government was alarmed, especially when their secret services seized the Maulana’s correspondence with the 4th Native Infantry. The movement suffered an irreparable loss when Maulana Wilayat Ali suddenly passed away in October 1852. “The British smashed their plans and convicted several of the Muslim soldiers of the 4th Nativ.: Infantry for having collaborated with the *mujahidin*.”

After the death of Maulana Wilayat Ali, his younger brother Inayat Ali took charge of the movement. He was much different from his brother. Very zealous and very impatient, he was in favour of waging a jihad against the Christians without waiting for the return of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. He had already parted with his brother in 1851-52. Wilayat Ali was deeply religious and sincere in his convictions, but his enthusiasm for the faith was not of that wild nature and frantic kind which loses all control and looks upon expediency as a religious weakness. Inayat Ali in contrast was blind to all that was necessary for success. In this attitude he seems to have been guided by the example of the Prophet's conquest of Mecca with an inferior army.

It was at this stage that the anti-British activities of the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi came prominently to the notice of the British Government by the accidental disclosure of a plot against the Government through an anonymous letter. To Inayat Ali, a sincere faith in the mission of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, that great
spiritual leader, was all that the mujahidin required for achieving victory over the infidels. He had already gained fame in the battle of Balakot, which was fought for Zaman Shah.51

O'Kinealy stresses a very important aspect of the teachings of the Wahhabi missionaries sent to the villages of Bengal by Inayat Ali. According to him, those who were not in a position to abandon the country and join the jihad were asked to resist passively and abstain from all dealings with their kafir rulers and to form, as it were, a power within the Government. They were also enjoined not to seek for help from the infidels and not to go to the courts of the infidels for any kind of redress. Instead, they were to seek settlement of all their disputes amicably by referring them to local leaders.52

Soon after taking charge, Inayat Ali proceeded to settle scores with the Amir of Amb, in whose territories the mujahidin had been plundered on their way to Sittana in 1852.53 Jahan Dad Khan, the Amir of Amb, was an ally of the British and naturally sought help from the British. The British sent their forces under one Aibat to help the Amir. These forces marched towards Ashra Koila, cutting the line of supply of the mujahidin. The mujahidin, who were hardly three hundred in number, abandoned the fort in self-defence in view of the impossibility of taking on the huge combined forces. More than thirty mujahidin were killed in the clash. Inayat Ali left for Sittana with the survivors. There he made an alliance with Saiyyad Abbas, Amir of Mangal Thana, to prepare for a jihad against the British.54 The Maulana made elaborate preparations. In 1853 the British Government sent an ultimatum to the Maulana requiring him to surrender within a month and proposed a settlement. However, the mujahidin refused to accept the humiliating peace terms. Consequently, there occurred another clash between the mujahidin and the British Government at Narinji. In this battle too the mujahidin were defeated. In the first attack the British armies repulsed the mujahidin but failed to arrest Inayat Ali. In 1857 there was another battle at Narinji. The mujahidin offered tough resistance, but the British armies succeeded in occupying a part of Narinji. Inayat Ali again managed to escape to Chinglai.-outside British-Controlled territories.55 In May 1857 he found himself resourceless as no men and money were forthcoming from India. The British Government had arrested
leaders like Maulana Ahraad-ullah, Muhammad Husain, and Maulvi Waiz Ali of the Sadiqpur centre, who used to send money to him.\textsuperscript{56} Inayat Ali thus failed to reorganize the *mujahidin* after this reverse. He is, however, said to have carried on correspondence with the Muslim soldiers of the British forces to make them rally to his banner. He never returned to India, which he regarded as a dar-al harb, and died at Chjpglai itself on 23 March 1858.\textsuperscript{57} 

Thus the movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, popularly known as the Wahhabi movement, was one of the earliest, the most consistent and protracted, and the most relentlessly anti-British movement in the political history of India in the first half of the nineteenth century, Originally socio-religious in character, the Wahhabi movement gained a political orientation, particularly during the period of leadership of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi and the Ali brothers and after. Their struggle continued till long after the Sikhs had ceased to exist as a political force. It is true, however, that during the life time of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi the Northwest Frontier area was the base of operations for the movement and that the first round began with a struggle against the Sikhs. The movement did not, however, come to an end with the downfall of the Sikhs. It survived up to 1857.\textsuperscript{58} 

There was yet another Muslim religious centre in India, the one ir Delhi, which was led by Fazle Imam Khairabadi. Khaira-badi's attitude towards British rule and Western culture is noteworthy. A comparative study of the different religious centres would reveal that they did not react in the same manner. There were differences in their thinking and approaches. The ultimate goal of all was identical, viz to rejuvenate Muslim society and to re-establish Muslim rule in India. Khairabadi ulama at first adopted a mild and moderate approach and tried to adjust themselves to the changed conditions as best they could. Subsequently, however, their bitter experiences turned them against the British. 

When the school of Shah Abdul Aziz was engaged in teaching and propagating Islamic ideals, reforming society, and making preparations for a *jihad*, the Khairabadi school devoted itself exclusively to imparting secular, education in logic and philosophy. The former school with its broad-based objectives aimed at establishing a purely Islamic State; the latter avoided politics and co-operated with
the British Government. Maulana Fazle Imam even agreed to serve as sadr-al sitdur under the British. So did his disciple Sadruddin Azurda. Fazle Imam's son Fazle Haq Khairabadi first received education under the care and supervision of his father and subsequently in the school of Shah Abdul Aziz. He too followed in the footsteps of his father and joined service under the British as sarishtdar about 1825.59

Fazle Haq Khairabadi informs us that on the British occupation of Delhi in 1803, a group of ulama decided not to co-operate with the British administration. Very soon, however, this attitude of non-co-operation was given up, and a number of eminent Muslims of Delhi took up service under the British. Those who consistently opposed the idea of Muslims serving under the British were reduced to a small minority.60

On their arrival in Delhi the British adopted a policy of appointing Muslims of aristocratic families to higher posts so as to win them over to their side. Fazle Haq Khairabadi says that the last obstacle was removed when Shah Abdul Aziz allowed Maulvi Abdul Hai to serve as sadr-al sudur in Meerut. However, by and large, the ulama continued to resist the temptation of taking up service under the British; for they had some reservations on religious grounds.61 Fazle Haq Khairabadi himself resigned from British service as soon as he understood the duplicity and the ulterior intentions of the British Government. He was filled with dismay at the sagging prestige of the last two Emperors, the crucial defeat of the Muslims at Balakot in 1831, and the tragic deposition of the King of Oudh in 1856. He appeared to be very much perplexed and disgusted, moving from one place to another in search of peace. Gradually there came about a radical change in his mind and attitude. He got the feeling that the British were responsible for the total destruction of the Muslims and their culture in India. This turned him into a great opponent of British rule. As soon as he heard the news of the Uprising in 1857, he joined it. He negotiated with many rajas and zamindars—including, especially, Ahmadullah Shah—in connexion with the Uprising.62

Rebels like Mirza Ilahi Bakhsh, Mir Sayeed Ali Khan, Hakim Abdul Haq, and General Bakht Khan approached him for his opinion on the propriety of declaring a jihad against the British. Thereupon Fazle Haq Khairabadi issued a fatva approving of
a *jihad* against the British. The other ulama who signed the *fatwa* were Mufti Sadruddin Khan Azurdah (who was sadr-al sudur of Delhi), Maulvi Abdul Qadir, Qadi Faizullah of Delhi, Mau-lana Faiz Ahmad Badauni, Maulvi Wazir Khan Akbarabadi, and Saiyyad Mubarak Shah Pampuri.\(^{63}\)

The *fatwa* roused the enthusiasm of the people.\(^{64}\) However, disputes and differences within the Royal family led to the defeat of the rebels. British forces finally recaptured Delhi on 19 September 1857. The Maulana and others escaped. The Maulana was, however, arrested later, in 1859, and tried on the charge of rebellion against British rule.\(^{65}\) It is believed that the judge himself was interested in the re'ease of the Maulana as he had once been a student of his. The Maulana argued his own case, but admitted that some of the charges levelled against him were true. All that the judge could do was to save him from death. He awarded him a life sentence.\(^{66}\)

Mehr observes that in his early life the Maulana paid no attention to political matters and was interested in remunerative jobs for leading a respectable and comfortable life. Service under the British provided good opportunities for a prosperous career so he joined it. However, in his later life he was an entirely changed man. His own personal experiences of British rule appear to have been the cause of the change. He was convinced that after having gained political mastery over India, the British were now bent upon replacing the native religions with their own. They had reduced the peasantry and the masses to utter poverty by taking full control of the economic resources of India, especially in the fields of agriculture, commerce, and industry.\(^{67}\) Aziz agrees that the Maulana accused the British of a policy aimed at eradicating Islamic scholarship and reducing the Muslims to stark poverty. The Maulana interpreted it all as a typical manifestation of Christian hostility to Islam. He accused the British administration of an agricultural policy that had impoverished the peasants and reduced them to the status of serfs. The Muslims resented official interference in their religious and educational institutions more bitterly than the Hindus did because religious beliefs in Islam had a revolutionary significance.\(^{68}\) This was why the Maulana ultimately joined the revolutionaries and declared a *jihad*. As ill luck would have it, this attempt too failed. The reasons for the failure were obvious to the Maulana. He never trusted the capacities of the Royal family. The Emperor

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Bahadur Shah was under the influence of his consort Zeenat Mahal and Hakim Ahsanullah Khan, who were both friendly to the British.69

Maulana Fazle Haq Khairabadi developed great hatred for the British while in jail and ridiculed them for injustice and dishonesty.70

A study of the attitudes of the religious reformers of Bengal would reveal that except Shaikh Karamat Ali, who devoted himself exclusively to reform, they were all actively engaged in anti-British activity aimed at annihilating the British and establishing an Islamic State. Shariatullah, Dudu Miyan, and Titu Mir made no attempt to conceal their hostility to the British. Shariatullah pronounced Bengal under British rule a dar-al harb. Dudu Miyan and Titu Mir openly declared war against the British. Movements for religious reform in Bengal were inspired either by the Wahhabi movement of Najd or by the reform movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. From the political point of view, however, it would appear that none of them had a direct connexion with either the Wahhabis or the adherents of the reform movement led by Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. There is hardly any evidence that may prove that they were the offshoots of either of the two.71 The political activities and goals of the movements initiated by the orthodox in Bengal derived from local conditions. However, broadly viewed, the movements exhibited remarkable similarities. It is unfortunate that in spite of such similarities they failed to unite on a common platform and devise a common approach to destroy the common enemy. They basically differed on the propriety of holding congregational prayers on such occasions as Jumdh and Id.

The followers of Haji Shariatullah were known as Faraidis on account of their emphasis on the observance of fardld. As a group of ulama of the Hanafi school they represented the Muslims of East Bengal. The majority of the Muslims of East Bengal were converts from the lower Hindu castes, especially of rural areas, engaged in the various local occupations. Although centuries had passed since they embraced Islam, they still observed certain Hindu rites and customs. They even worshipped the goddess Durga.72
During the period under discussion the British, who had then been in Bengal for quite some time, were directly or indirectly oppressing the peasantry of Bengal. This led to the emergence of Shariatullah, his son Dudu' Miyant and Titu Mir as leaders of the Muslims in Bengal. They tirelessly worked for the reform of the Muslims on the one hand and for the release of the Muslim peasants from their Hindu and British oppressors on the other. The movements initiated by them, therefore, sought in the beginning to revive the pristine purity of Islam and emphasized the obligatory duties prescribed by Islam. However, politics in Islam is not something separate from religion, and that is how religious reform in Bengal went hand in hand with the political regeneration of the Muslims.

The new exploiters, viz the zamindars and the indigo planters patronized by the Government, were sucking the blood of the peasants. They had no sympathy for the peasants; they were only interested in their profits. The Muslim religious leaders, therefore, declared that Bengal under British rule was a dar-al harb. Initially they scrupulously avoided direct clash with the British, but eventually they found that there was no alternative to a head-on collision. A study of the life and career of the religious reformers would show how they clashed with the British and with what aims. The British historians deliberately highlighted the clashes between the Bengal reformers and the Hindu zamindars. They sought thereby to achieve a double purpose, viz to create the impression that the British Government was very popular and had no conflict with the champions of reform, and to sow the seeds of communal hatred between the two major communities which had lived peacefully side by side for centuries together. This bade fair to serve their ends by prolonging their rule. The struggle waged by the Muslim leaders was, however, against a system, an organization, or a particular section of the exploiters which owed its existence to the British Government. It was not against the Hindus as such but against a class of new zamindars which consisted, only incidentally, of a large number of Hindus. The reformers also clashed with the indigo planters who were almost exclusively European and who were as exploitative as, if not more exploitative than, the zamindars.
In the religious field, the aim of the reformers was to eradicate all un-Islamic influences. These included, *inter alia*, the influence of the Hindu religion, at least in Bengal. It is, however, difficult to tell whether the Faraidis entertained any friendly feelings for the Hindus generally, but they were certainly bitter enemies of the British and of those who helped the British in their oppression, Hindu or Muslim. Perhaps they could make some adjustment with the Hindus and could unite with them on a cultural level, but there was hardly anything common between them and the British to warrant their uniting with the British.\(^77\)

Haji Shariatullah (1781-1840), the founder of Faraidi movement, was the son of a petty *talukdar* named Abdul Jalil of the village of Shamail in the Faridpur District. At the age of twenty he went to Calcutta, where he completed his religious education. When his teacher Basharat Ali migrated to Mecca in 1799 out of disgust for the British regime in India, Shariatullah also went with him. In Mecca he learnt Arabic, Persian, and Islamic jurisprudence from Maulana Murad and Tahir Sombal (Abu Hanifa Junior). He also studied mysticism and sufism and was formally initiated into the Qadiriyyah order. He then went to Cairo for an advanced study of Islamic theology at Jamiah-al Azhar. He returned to Bengal in 1818 with a view to propagating the pure doctrines of Islam. However, he soon became disillusioned with the response to his mission and returned to Mecca (between 1818 and 1820). This time he was able to familiarize himself with the Wahhabi movement in Arabia. Upon his return, with the permission and blessing of his spiritual preceptor, he started his movement again with great vigour. He succeeded in abolishing many customs repugnant to Islam and in persuading large numbers of Muslims of the need to observe *faraid*.\(^78\)

The new creed united the Muslim peasantry as never before. The *zamindars* naturally felt alarmed. They had imposed a number of restrictions on the Muslim peasantry such as prohibition of the slaughter of cows. They had also levied idolatrous taxes [such as a tax for the communal worship of the goddess Durga].\(^79\) Owing to the widespread resentment which these had fostered among the peasants, the Faraidi movement soon became popular among the lower classes of Muslims.\(^80\) It flourished by and large in the un-enlightened rural society of the Muslims of East Bengal. At first it came into conflict with the conservative Muslim society and then with the
zamindars of Dacca. From 1838 onwards it came into violent conflict with the Hindu zamindars and the European indigo planters on account of its policy of upholding the rights of the Muslim peasants.  

Shariatullah was primarily a religious reformer. He scrupulously avoided issues that might involve him in politics. However, the declaration he made is of great political significance. He declared that as long as his country was under non-Muslim rule, it was to be considered a dar-al harb and that the congregational prayers such as those offered on the occasion of Jumah and Id were accordingly prohibited there. He thus sowed the seed of political regeneration of his countrymen. He implicitly called upon the Muslims to participate in a jihad when he said that congregational prayers could be held only after India (Bengal) had been converted into a dar-al Islam.

In response the Muslims boycotted British courts. They boycotted English schools as well lest the British should seek to transplant their own religion and culture to Bengal. This was confirmed by Beveridge, especially when he ruled out the possibility of Christianization in the Muslim-dominated districts of Bengal. According to Muinuddin Khan, the Faraidis did not lay as much emphasis on the question of political status of India as a whole as they did on the question of political status of their particular region, viz Bengal. The argument of the Faraidis centred on the definition of Misr-al Jamil. According to them, it signified the place of residence of the Amir and the Qadi, or else of the Hakim, in whom the function of the Amir and the Qadi were combined. As neither the villages nor the towns of Bengal during British rule fulfilled these requirements in a technical sense, i.e. through delegation of authority by a lawful Muslim ruler, the Faraidis saw no justification for holding congregational prayers under British rule. In contrast Maulvi Karamat Ali tried to play safe by giving it as his opinion that the Jumah and Zuhar prayers could be offered together. This only highlighted the uprightness and straightforwardness of the Faraidis.

Shariatullah, however, did not preach jihad or sedition openly or directly against the British although some of the doctrines he taught led people to infer that he wanted them either to proclaim a jihad or to migrate to a Muslim country. However,
more than once he was detained by the police for inciting his disciples to withhold payment of revenue.

From the above it can be asserted that the Faraidi doctrine of non-permissibility of congregational prayers was not just a doctrine for doctrine's sake. It was in fact a protest against the administrative changes brought about by the British to the detriment of Muslim society and in utter disregard of Muslim sentiment. After his death in 1840 Shariatullah's mission was taken to its logical end by his son and successor Dudu Miyan.

Muhsin Al Din Ahmad alias Dudu Miyan (1819-62), son and successor of Haji Shariatullah, is regarded as a co-founder of the Faraidi movement. He was a man of ordinary abilities, but exerted an influence far surpassing that of his father. He excelled his father in organizing the Faraidi brotherhood into a well-knit and powerful society. Dudu Miyan completed his education under the care and supervision of his father. Then he went to Mecca, where he stayed for about five years. On his return he was trained for the mission by his, father. When Shariatullah died in 1840, the Faraidis met together and elected Dudu Miyan as their Ustad.\textsuperscript{87} The indomitable energies of Dudu Miyan, which had so long been held in check by his prudent-father, now burst into activity. He started an active campaign against the extortions of the zamindars and the European indigo planters. The peasantry demanded quick and firm action.\textsuperscript{88} Murder, arson, dacoity, plunder, and kidnapping were some of the means by which the peasantry had been forced to take to the cultivation of indigo. It was said that not a chest of indigo reached England without being stained by human blood.\textsuperscript{89} The most remarkable achievement of Dudu Miyan's is that he united the Faraidis into a compact hierarchical organization or system known as the Khilafat system. He divided East Bengal into a number of circles and appointed an agent in each. The duties of an agent were: to hold the sect together, to organize proselytization, and to collect contributions.\textsuperscript{90} The British, Hindu, and Muslim landlords dreaded Dudu Miyan and his followers. Dudu Miyan made his most determined stand against the levying of illegal taxes by landlords. He proclaimed that the earth belonged to God and that no one had a right to inherit any part of it. He exhorted the Muslim peasants to settle on khas mahal land managed
directly by the Government, so that they might escape all taxes except, of course, the revenue due to the State. His policy was to create a State within the State. The peasants were well protected by their boycott of British courts: the absence of witnesses made legal processes inoperative.\textsuperscript{91}

In 1841 and 1842 Dudu Miyan led two campaigns, one against the zamindars of Kanaipur, known as shikddrs, and the other against the zamindars of Faridpur, known as Choshes. The objective was to persuade the zamindars to accept a reasonable relationship with the Faraidi peasantry. These campaigns proved a success. With this success Dudu Miyan found himself at the head of some eighty thousand followers from among the masses. The zamindars felt grave apprehension at the growing power of the Faraidi movement.\textsuperscript{92} In an effort to protect themselves they fanned the suspicion's of the British administrators and indigo planters. At their instigation an Englishman called Andrew Anderson Dunlop, an influential indigo planter who had a factory at Madaripur, swore to destroy Dudu Miyan. Dudu Miyan and his movement were so powerful at this time that the zamindars were afraid of disturbing the peace of the Faraidis by any direct violent means. Kali Prasad Kanjhi Lai, a brahmana who was gumashta in the employment of Dunlop, was in charge of Dunlop's indigo factory of Panchchar within the jurisdiction of the police station at Mulfatganj. This gumashta was dead opposed to Dudu Miyan, and, under the protection of his English master, he sought to oppress the Faraidis wherever possible. On 5 December 1846 a large body of Faraidis attacked the factory at Panchchar and razed it to the ground. They also pillaged the adjoining village. As they departed, they took with them the Brahmin gumashta and later murdered him in the Bakarganj District. According to Jameswise, this attack was motivated by Dudu Miyan's desire to take revenge upon Dunlop. By way of retaliation Dunlop's agents looted the Faraidis at Bahadurpur. The British magistracy, unwilling to let down Dunlop, denied justice to the Faraidis. Dudu Miyan and sixty-three of his followers were later tried in the court of the Session Judge at Faridpur and were convicted in 1847. However, on an appeal to the Nizamat Adalat of Calcutta they were all eventually acquitted. Dudu Miyan and his followers hailed the acquittal. It was another victory for the Faraidi peasantry against, the zamindars and indigo planters. Even Europeans like Edward de
Latour criticized Dunlop and the British magistracy for what they called their corruption. Dudu Miyan enjoyed thereafter a whole decade of peace.  

At the outbreak of the country-wide Uprising of 1857, however, Dudu Miyan was arrested by the British Government and removed to Calcutta. No specific charge was brought against him. Jameswise simply says that he would have been released if he had not boasted before the court that fifty thousand men would answer his summons and march wheresoever he ordered them. He was released in 1859 after the danger to the British Empire had blown over. As soon as he reached home, Dudu Miyan was again arrested and placed under detention at Faridpur.  

According to Dampier, the Commissioner of the Bengal Police, the real objective of the Faraidis was the “expulsion of the foreign rulers and the restoration of the Mohammadan power”. Mallick, however, contradicts this view. He says: “Nowhere do we come across any intention expressed by him [viz by Dudu Miyan] that he wanted or ever aimed at the establishment of political power by the Muslims in place of the British.” This difference in the two assessments derives basically from the difference between the theory of the Faraidis and their practice. Dampier went by their doctrines, which implicitly sought to re-establish Muslim rule. Their activities were in fact a beginning towards that goal. Mallick on the other hand focussed on their activities, especially those of Dudu Miyan, which bypassed the fatwa of Shariatullah, the founder of the Faraidi movement, pronouncing Bengal a dar-al harb so long as it continued to be under British rule. Shariatullah himself had not made any significant effort to convert the dar-al harb that was Bengal into a dar-al Islam, but he had definitely suggested alternative courses for future leaders. Hence the Faraidi movement, if viewed in its totality, would make it clear that whereas Shariatullah provided a theory, a philosophy, for starting an anti-British movement, Dudu Miyan went a step further and sought vigorously through his movement to achieve the immediate objective of humbling the zamindars and the indigo planters. If Dudu Miyan had succeeded in achieving this immediate objective, he would have taken the next step towards the final goal of converting the dar-al harb that was Bengal into a dar-al Islam. As a matter of fact it was then beyond the power of the Faraidis to achieve the final goal in view of their meagre strength as against the
formidable British power. Also, they never went beyond the regional limits. Their influence was limited to the lower-class Muslims of the rural areas of Bengal. They failed to make common cause with the followers’ of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, who were operating in Bengal, also for a similar goal. The silence of Dudu Miyan from 1847 to 1857 also created misgiving. Of course his repeated arrests, first in 1857 and again in 1859, show that he was a much-feared man. Dudu Miyan fearlessly threatened the British with dire consequences for summoning him to the court in 1857. It would, therefore, be wrong to say, as Beveridge does, that the Faraidis did not appear to share the “dangerous” political views of the Wahhabs or that their revolutionary views did not extend beyond quarrelling with their landlords over payment of rent.6 Indeed the Faraidis were more revolutionary than the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, in the sense that they did not conceal their feelings by making vague statements. They declared right at the start that Bengal was a dar-al harb so long as the British continued to rule it.

Mir Nisar Ali alias Titu Mir of the Chandpur Village, Barasat District, was a wrestler and a desperate character. He met Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi in Mecca in 1827 and became a disciple and devoted himself to his mission. Within a short time he succeeded in winning three to four hundred followers in Bengal.7 His political activities, however, owe much to the conditions that obtained at that time. Like Shariatullah he also felt aggrieved over the oppression and exploitation of the Muslim peasantry by the Hindu zamindars although it was the British Government which was ultimately responsible for it. This realization led him to launch an anti-British campaign.

Although the Muslim peasants were being continuously oppressed by the Hindu zamindars the British Government had turned a deaf ear to the complaints of the peasants. This led Titu Mir to take up the cause of the peasants. He sent his lieutenant, Ghulam Masum, to Calcutta to represent the case of the oppressed peasantry. The mission failed. As he felt that it was impossible to secure redress of the grievances by legal means, he decided eventually to call upon his followers to take the law into their own hands and seek revenge by force of arms.8
On 23 October 1831 Titu Mir's men created a tumult at Purnia by killing cows and insulting Hindus. They committed no plunder beyond appropriating to themselves the goods which were lying in the shops before them, but they wounded a brahmana and maltreated an assistant in a local indigo factory. Emboldened by their success, they proclaimed themselves masters of the country. They declared: “The period of British rule has expired ind. . . the Mohammadans have usurped it [power]” Ghulam Masum, who was appointed at this time to lead the insurgents, tried to introduce something like martial order in their ranks.99

The insurgents attacked Lawghatta on 13 November 1831. The proprietors of some of the factories in the area addressed a letter to the Government on the subject. On the following afternoon, Alexander, Joint Magistrate in Barasat, moved out to apprehend the rioters.100 The detachment led by him consisted, inter alia, of a regiment of Native Infantry. Some bodyguards under Major Scot joined him in Barasat.101 A skirmish followed, and one of the European troopers was killed. The action was then put off till 19 November, when the infantry arrived. The insurgents drew up in battle array with the mangled body of a European killed on the previous day exposed in front of the line. After a few rounds of fire they dispersed. The flag, the symbol of sovereignty, was seized. About fifty were killed, including Titu Mir. Some 350 men were arrested. The court sentenced Ghulam Masum, Titu Mir's lieutenant, to death.102

Some forty years later, this attitude of the Government was severely criticized by an anonymous writer in the Calcutta Review. The writer expressed his astonishment at the apathy displayed by the Government for a movement which, according to him, bad aimed at political power and, as such, deserved serious notice at the hands of the British authorities. The sect, he further argued, had “openly proclaimed the extinction of the Company's rule and claimed the sovereign power as the hereditary right of Mohammedans which had been unjustly usurped by the Europeans”.103

An Inquiry Committee headed by John Russell held an inquiry into Titu Mir's insurrection. It found that the oppression and exploitation of the Muslim peasantry by the Hindu zamindars was not the only reason behind the political activities of Titu
Mir. It was convinced that Titu Mir had definite designs to annihilate the British. One of the members of the Inquiry Committee commented: “Is there any need of evidence against men who formed themselves into a party and came out to fight against the troops of government and many of whom were in prison?” He added: “We confidently assert that if, after this inquiry, the Moosalmans [sic] who have been guilty, are set at liberty, or punishment be inflicted upon those who have not been apprehended, then hundreds of those Teetoos will again be seen.”

It is clear from the foregoing study that despite local variations and individual differences these movements for socio-religious reform aimed at annihilating British rule and preventing Westernization. Their final goal was to establish a purely Islamic State in India.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


2. Titus T. Murray, *The Religions Quest of India* (London, 1963), pp. 178-9; and Saiyyad Mohammad Mian, *Ulama-i Hind ka Shan-dar Mazi* (Delhi, 1957), vol. 2, pp. 6-8 and 30-35. The movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi had no connexion with the Wahhabi movement of Arabia. In fact it was a continuation of Shah Waliullah's movement of Fakku kull-i nizamin, also known as Targhib-i Muhammadian and Tariqah-i Muhammadian. According to Siddik Hasan, Fazal Rasul of Badaun was the first man to describe the Muslim followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi as Wahhabis. See his book *An Interpreter of Wahabiism*, Sayyid Akbar Ali, trans, and ed. (Bhopal, 1884), p. 75.

3. Shah Waliullah, *Hujjat-al ilahil Baligha*, Abdul Rahim, trans. (Lahore, 1962), pt 1, pp. 91 and 111-12. Shah Waliullah aimed at establishing an Islamic State on the model of that of *Khilafat-i Rashidd*, In this context he used the phrase “*Khilafat-Ala Minhaj-it Nabuwwah*”. See, also, Ameer Aii, *The Spirit of Islam* (Delhi, reprinted 1978), pp. 124-5. Ameer Ali observes: “For the existence of Islam, therefore, there must be a Caliph, an actual and direct representative of the master. The Imamate is the spiritual leadership; but the two dignities are inseparable.”

4. K.A. Nizami, “Shah Waliullah and Indian Politics in the 18th Century”, *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad), vol. 25, Jubilee number, 1951; and Irfan Habib, “The Political Role of Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi and Shah Waliullah”, *Enquiry* (Delhi), December 1961, pp. 50-55. Irfan Habib observes that Shah Waliullah distinguished himself from other jurists by emphasizing *ijitihad*. However, his scheme of establishing an Islamic society was not based on equality as is believed. The masses and the Hindus were excluded on the ground that they belonged to a lower category.

6. See the Quran, Sura 1x. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *Glorious Quran* (Cairo, 1938), pp. 1530-1. Here is a summary of the text: “The enemies of your Faith, who would exterminate you and your faith, are not fit objects of love. Follow Abraham's example: but with those unbelievers who show do rancour, you should deal with kindness and justice.” See, also, Malik, n. 5, pp. 151-2.


13. These four are known as *jihad bil Qalb; jihad bil lisan; jihad bit yada;* and *jihad bil saif* respectively.


16. Mohammad Abdul Bari, “The Politics of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi” Ahmad Culture, vol. 31, January 1957, pp. 160-1; Thaneswari, n. 10, p. 150; Mchr, n. 10, pp. 254-60; and Wilson, n. 5, p. 56. N. Chopra quotes a Persian verse that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, free India's first Minister for Education, came across while going through a manuscript in the India Office Library. The meaning of the verse is roughly as follows: Our quarrel is with the feringhis or the White men not with those who wear their hair long [i.e. the Sikhs].” P.N. Chopra’, “Character of the Wahabi Movement”, in Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings (New Delhi), vol. 35, pt 2, February 1960 p 67.


20. Mehr, n. 10, pp. 256-8; Mian, n. 2, p. 217; and Atul Chandra Gupta, Studies in the Bengal Renaissance (Calcutta, 1958), pp. 46S-7. Kazi Abdul Wadud wrongly connects the movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi with the Wahhabi movement of Arabia. According to him, not only were they interested in religious purification, but they fought for the political and economic rights and privileges which the Muslims had lost as a result of the British occupation of India. Kazi Abdul Wadud, Creative Bengal (Calcutta, 1933), pp. 51-53.


22. Ibid., p. 326.


25. Aziz, n. 1, p. 20; and Mujib, n. 5, pp. 394-95.


28. Maulana Abdul Hai, Majmuat-al Fatdovah (Calcutta, n.d.), vol. I, p. 109. A reprint of this work was issued in Lucknow in 1889. Such fatvas of Shah Abdul Aziz and Maulana Abdul Hai were based on one of the hadiths of the Prophet as narrated by Hazrat Abu Huratra.

29. Ibid., p. 124. See, also, Aziz, n. I, p. 19. During the period of Maulana Abdul Hai (d. 1828) the British rulers were, from the legal point of view, merely the vassals of the Mughals. Besides, they did not threaten the religious freedom of the Muslims. Legally too India, excepting Bengal, was still headed by a Muslim. The English East India Company served only as the viceregent of the Mughal Emperor until 1857.
The Mazaris were a clan of Rajau, which is situated on the right bank of the Indus, between Amarkot and Shikarpur. See Mallick, n. 17, p. 118.


37. Ibid.


41. Ibid., p. 99.


44. Ibid, see, also, Mian, n. 2, Vol. 3, pp. 54-58.


50. Ibid.
52. Hunter, n. 38, pp. 49-55. See, also, Ahmad, n. 10, p. 105; and Chopra, n. 16, p. 68.
54. Mehr, Jamat-i-Muajhidin, n. 19, p. 286.
57. Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, p. 75; and Ahmad, n. 10, p. 124.
58. Ahmad, n. 10, pp. xi and 324.
60. Ibid.
61. The ulama did not accept any nazrana or present from the servants of the British Government.” Ibid., p. 39.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid., pp. 154-5.
65. Intezimullah Shahabi, Ghadar ke Chand Ulama (Delhi, n.d.), pp. 41.42.
66. Ibid.


68. Aziz, n. 1, p. 29.


70. Baghi Hindostan, n. 57, pp. 353-5.


73. Hindu Intelligencer (Calcutta), 14 August 1854. See, also, Azu-ur-Rahman Mallick, British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal. (Dacca, 1961), pp. 77-78; and Khan, n. 2, pp. xxxii and xxxv.


75. Beveridge, n. 2, p. 255.

76. Mallick, n. 3, pp. 77-79.

77. Ibid.

78. Khan, n. 2, pp. 1-12.


84. Beveridge, n. 2, pp. 255-8 and 382.

85. Khan, n. 2, pp. 67-73 and 74.

86. Ibid., p. 76. See, also, Pakistan Historical Conference, Proceedings, 1955 p. 180.


91. Ibid. Sec, also, al-Mujahidin. 17, p. 20; and O'Malley, n. 13, p. 395.


96. Beveridge, n. 2, p. 255.

98. Mallick, n. 3, pp. 76-81.

99. Ibid., pp. 80-83.

100. Ibid., pp. 85-86; and Ray, n. 27, p. 179.

101. Ibid., pp. 85-86; and Ray, n. 27, p. 179.

102. Mallick, n. 3, p. 86; and Ray, n. 27, p. 179.

103. Mallick, n. 3, p. 87.

104. John Bull (Calcutta), 23 January 1832. See, also, Ray, n. 27, p. 179.