CHAPTER IX

SUFI SAINTS OF BENGAL DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
HAZRAT MAULANA MUHAMMAD ABU-BAKR SIDDIQI

He was born in A.D. 1843. He was a descendant of Hazrat Munsur Baghdad and the son of Haji Abdul Muktader and his mother was Musammat Muhabbatunnessa. His father died at the age of 44 when Sufi Abu-Bakr-Siddiqi was 9 months old. He had his early education from Maulavi Ghaniatullah. Then he had his education from Sitapur Madrasah, Hughly, Muhsinia Madrasah and Calcutta. Then he performed Haj in 1905. He had collected many books on hadith from Makka and Madina. He was known as 'Amirus Shariat.

He was a disciple and a Khalifah of Hazrat Shah Sufi Fateh Ali Uwaysi. Hazrat Abu-Bakr Siddiqi was a great Muslim divine and the spiritual guide of a large number of Muslims in this Country. He was the founder of many Schools, Madrasahs, Mosques, Dispensaries and other Charitable Institutions. By his pity and benevolence he endeared himself to large number of people of his Province irrespective of class or community. The death occurred at Furfura (Hooghly) at the age of 99 of his holiness.¹ This great Sufi Saint belonged to the Naqshbandiyya

¹ The Statesman, Saturday, March 18, 1939; also see Muslim Tirtha Pur-fura Sharif (Bengali Text) by Mosud-er-Rahman.
Mujaddi Wali Allahi sufi Order. The Shrine of this Saint is in Furfura Sharif. He died in A.D. 1933.

Shah Sufi Muhammad Abu-Bakr Siddiq had five sons and five daughters. Makhdum Maulana Abu-Hasr

Muhammad Abdul Hai Siddiqi (1904 - 1977) was the eldest of them who succeeded his father at his death. Like his father he also established many schools, mosques and madrasahs. He was the founder of a monthly journal entitled 'Neda-e-Islam', which was first published in 1941. The said journal is till continuing. Hazrat Abdul Hai-Siddiqi died in A.D. 1977 and was buried in Furfura Sharif. 2

Maulana Muhammad Abu-Jafir Siddiqi was the second son of Hazrat Abu-Bakr Siddiqi. He is a Sufi Saint and a very good scholar. He wrote many books in Bengali and Urdu. He is very simple living and a kind hearted person.

2. Ibid. p.49
Makhdum Maulana Muhammad Abdul Qadir Siddqi was the third son of Hazrat Abu-Bakr Siddqi. He had received khilafat like his elder brother from his father. He propagated Islam and sufism in Bengal. At the death of Maulana Abdul Qadir his only son Abul Farah is now continuing the service of Sufism in Bengal.

Makhdum Maulana Abun-Nazm Muhammad Hazmus Sayamat Siddqi was the fourth son of Hazrat Abu-Bakr Siddqi. It is said that he was also a renowned saint. For forty years he preached Islam in Bengal. He died in A.D. 1982, and is lying buried in Furfura.

Makhdum Maulana Muhammad Zulfiqar Ali is the fifth son of Hazrat Abu-Bakr Siddqi. He is a very good speaker and a Sufi reformer.

The Shrine of Khandekar Gulam Mustafa1 (Kala Khandekar) is in Belpara near Furfura Sharif. He was an scholar and sufi of considerable importance.

The dargah of Maulana Badre-Ishak2 is in Belpara. He was a social reformer and a Sufi-Saint. Not much is known about him.

1. Masud-er-Rahman, op.cit. p.57
2. Ibid. p. 58
Hafiz Maulana Muhammad Shoyab was the son of Maulana Badre-Ishak. The tomb of this learned scholar is in Belpara.¹

Hakim Munshi Sadakatullah was the father-in-law of Hazrat Shah Sufi Abu-Bakr Siddiqi. He was a disciple of Hazrat Shah Sufi Fateh Ali Uwaysi.² He had sound knowledge of Persian. He preached Islam in Bengal. He died at the age of 105. The mazar of this saint is in Furfura Sharif.

Munshi Ghanimutullah was a darwi. His spiritual preceptor was Shah Sufi Fateh Ali Uwaysi.³ He had influenced a large number of people by his sufistic life. The shrine of this Sufi Saint is in Talta Hat near Furfura Sharif.

Hazrat Shah Sufi Maulana Ghulam Salmani

He was a celebrated disciple of Sufi Fateh Ali. He was a resident of Furfura village of Hooghly district. He was a great Muslim divine of Bengal. He was born in

¹ Mosud-er- Rahman, op.cit. pp.58 - 59
² Ibid. p.59
³ Ibid. pp.59-60
1st July A.D. 1854. His father, Gulam Rabbani was a learned Scholar. Shah Sufi Gulam Salmani had his early education from Hooghly Madrasah and then he joined Calcutta Madrasah. He became eminent Scholar and Muhaddith. He had received the title of 'Shamsul Ulama' from the British Government in 1910 and 'Sultanul Arefin' from the contemporary Ulama. He was held in great esteem by the people of his time. He never accepted any favour for himself. When during the days of Lord Harding, (1910 - 16) the British Emperor George V reached Calcutta, Maulana Ghulam Salmani was also present as an important muslim Scholar and government servant in the Imperial Court at Calcutta. The emperor is reported to have asked him to express any of his desired which he can fulfill. But this naqshbandi saint simply said that I only wish that I should die while earning my own livelihood, and Allah has fulfilled this desire of the saint and the same year while in the service of Calcutta Madersah he died on 1st July 1912 and was buried in his village Furfura.

The life and accomplishments of Maulana Ghulam Salmani are mentioned by Maulana Abdus Sattar
in the book entitled 'Tariqī Madrasah Aliya' and by Maulana Abdul Haq in his book Bangladesher Auliyan. Recently Prof. M. Motiur Rahman has collected all the material available on him in his Aiynai Uwaysi.

Among the important disciples of Maulana Ghulam Salmani were Khan Bahadur Abul Khair Mohammad Siddiq, Nawab Sirajul Islam of Brahman Baria, Comilla, Nawab Sultan-i- Alam, Tali Gunj, Calcutta, Khan Bahadur Aminul Islam, Sufi Mohd. Abdullah of Assam and Syed Abdul Bari Shah of Bandel, Distt. Hooghly, out of these his Silsilah continued through the abilities and spiritual achievements of the last of his disciples viz. Syed Abdul Bari Shah.

**Syed Abdul Bari**

Syed Abdul Bari Shah was born around 1860 in the Balgarhi district of Hooghly. His father died when he was only of six years, so he was brought up in extreme poverty by his mother. During his youth he had met Miyan Karim Buksh of Azamgarh District who introduced him in the Chishti order. During these days, his life was full of troubles and all the times he remained busy in prayers and Zikr etc. and passing most of his
times in seclusion and hunger. He also went to live under the spiritual guidance of Maulana Ghulam Salmani who completed his formal spiritual schooling in Naqshbandi, Chishti and Qadiri Sufi orders. He had reached the heights of spiritual perfections but used to pray all the time that in this world nobody should know what Allah has very kindly bestowed upon him in the spiritualism. That is why at the time of his death very small number of people could benefit from him in this path. He died in December 1900 and was buried near Bandel Junction Railway Station in the Hooghly District. His biography has been written under the title Hayat-i-Syed Abdul Bari by Maulana Mohd. Saeed Khan of Azamgarh. Prof. M. Motiur Rahman has also given a graphic picture of his personality in his Aiyāni-Uwaysi.

Syed Abdal Bari Shah had led a life of seclusion but his chief disciple Hafiz Hamid Hasan Alavi who is originally belonged to Azamgarh district but had selected Bengal as his sphere of activities after the death of his shaykh had worked along in the spiritual field and in making the Naqshbandi silsilah popular in the Bengal during the early 20th century. He had thousands of his admirers and disciples
in Chittagong, Bogra, Hajshahi, Cox's Bazar and Rangpur districts, like Maulana Karamat Ali who was popularly known as Jaunpuri Huzur, Hafiz Hamid Hasan Alavi was generally known as Azamgarhi Huzur. He was born in the year 1871 and died on 30th September 1959. Among his important disciples of Bengal were Hafiz Munir Ahmed of Hali Shahar, Chittagong, Maulana Nazir Ahmad Chunauti, Distt. Chittagong, Maulana Fazle Haq of Chittagong. Among his other disciples Maulana Abdus Salam of Arkan (Burma) and Maulana Mohammad Saeed Khan of Azamgarh had worked for the spiritual reforms and uplift in that Bengal region. The last mentioned sufi had also completed the spiritual lessons and nisbats of Naqshbandi Sufi order as practised by Hamid Hasan Alavi under the title 'Kitab-i-Talimat'. He had also written detailed biography, teachings and thoughts of Hamid Hasan Alavi under the title 'Hayat-i-Al Hafiz Hamid Hasan Alavi'. His silsilah still continues in Bengal especially in Bangladesh region.

The main features of sufism as practised by these sufis of the time of Maulana Ghulam Salamani is more emphasis on the basic spirit of Naqshbandi sufism i.e. work in accordance with the strict adherence of Shariah for the betterment of the life hereafter and
the least possible interest in the traditional form of Sufism viz. Urs, Khanqah system, hereditary succession, 'Tabiz' and 'jhar phook' etc. They are considered as true representatives of Naqshbandi Mujaddidi Wali Allahi Sufism in Bengal. That is why we do not find tombs on the graves of the sufis of this time. On the other hand slowly the traditional and popular form of sufism has crept in the silsilah of Maulana Abu Bakr Siddiqi of Furfura where all these formalities are given much importance.

Maulana Wajihu'd Mujtaba was the eldest son of Maulana Mustafa Madani. He was a Sufi Saint and a Scholar. The dargah of this saint is in Furfura Sharif.

Shah Nuru'd-Din Muktida was the youngest son of Maulana Mustafa Madani. He was a born Wali. He was born in Furfura Sharif and died there at the age of sixteen years. It is said that he worked many miracles. The shrine of Shah Nuru'd-Din Muktida is in Furfura Sharif.

Makhdum Maulana Gulam Samdani was the grand son of Shah Wajihu'd-Din Mujtuba and the son of Makhdum Muhammad

2. Ibid. pp. 31-33.
3. Ibid. p.34.
Munakka. He was a great alim and a Sufi-Saint. The dargah of this saint is in Furfura Sharif.

SHAH SUFI-SAYYID KANAYAT HUSAIN

The Shrine of this Saint is in Furfura Sharif. He was a Sufi darwish. He was son-in-law of Shah Sufi Hazrat Abu-Bakr Siddiqi. He was a Government Qazi and a teacher of Furfura Alia Fatehia Senior Madrasah. He died in 16th August A.D. 1944.

SHAH SUFI MUHAMMAD EKRAMUL HAQQ

He was born in A.D.(1851) in Jhaljhall, Kuchbihar. He was a disciple and a Khalifah of Shah Sufi Fateh Ali Uwaysi. His father was Khandekar Shah Muhammad Ibrahim. Shah Sufi Ekramul Haq had his spiritual education from Shah Sufi Fateh Ali Uwaysi. He was with his pir for nineteen years. After completing his spiritual education he started preaching Islam. He was a Sufi reformer and he belonged to the Naqshbandi Sufi Order. Like his

1. Mosud-er-Rahmn, op.cit.,p.62

2. Muhammad Mubarak Ali Rahman; Hayate Ekram (Bengali Text), Published in 1977, (Punashi Sharif, P.O. Bahran, Distt. Murshidabad, West Bengal).
spiritual guide he has directed his mighty pen and tongue against the alleged Hinduised beliefs and practices, prevalent among the Muslims of Bengal.

Shah Sufi Ekramul Haqq got married at the age of 36 and his wife was Sayyeda Mariam Nesa daughter of Sayyid Sultan Ahmed of Hamundi, Burdwan. Shah Sufi Ekramul Haq had five sons and five daughters.

The great divine of the 20th century Bengal Shah Sufi Ekramul Haqq died in A.D. 1944 at the age of 93. He had many disciples in Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Bangladesh and other parts of India.

Sayyid Shah Sirajul Munir Ahmad Qadiri

Sayyid Shah Sirajul Munir Ahmad Qadiri was a Sufi Saint of Birbhum, West Bengal. He came to Suri from Hyderabad. He was a contemporary of Data Mahbub Shah and also had friendly relation with him. It is at the advice of Data Mahbub Shah, Munir Ahmad Qadiri

1. M. Abdur Rahman, Data Baba Pir Mahbub Shah, pp. 31-36
established his Khanqah and Madrasah at Chandpur near Patharchapri. He worked many miracles. He died on 16th October A.D. 1904. The dargah of this Saint is in Chandpur.

HAZRAT MAULANA SHAH SAYYID ABDUR RAHIM (MUHAMMAD HUSAIN)

He was a descendant of Hazrat Shah Abdullah Kirmani (alive in 1236) of Khustigiri. He was born in B.S. 1247 (21st Jaishtha) A.H. 1843, and died in B.S. 1347 (21st Poush) A.D. 1943. He was a kind hearted person, generous to his friends and amiable to high and low. He was also a very good scholar of Arabic, Persian, Urdu and Bengali. He became very famous in Bengal as a great Muslim divine and an eminent din Muhaddith. He wrote more than sixteen books and, only one book entitled 'Waswa' which was published during his life time.

Maulana Shah Sufi Sayyid Abdur Rahim was also a contemporary of Data Mahbub Shah. It is said once Sayyid Abdur Rahim met Data Mahbub Shah of Pathar Chapri. The dargah of Shah Sufi Muhammad Husain is in Khustigiri, P.O. Batikar, Birbhum, West Bengal.

1. ibid., pp. 37-40.
HAZRAT SAYYID SHAH MUHAMMAD SIDDIQ

Hazrat Sayyid Shah Muhammad Siddiq popularised the Tariqa-e-Abu'l-Ulaiya in Bengal. The Khanqa of this order is situated at 7, Kayet Tuli, Dhaka. Shah Muhammad Siddiq (R) belonged to a highly spiritual family which exerted great influence in the sub-continent from the time of the Mughals. His forefathers came to Bihar (India) and settled there. He was born in 1281 A.H. in Bihar. He passed his life through many vicissitudes and hard Ibadat and Kiyazat. At least his pir ordered him to come to Dhaka city and resided at Ali Naqi Lane. He died there in the night of the 23rd April 1942. The dargah of this Sufi Saint is situated there. After him his son Syed Shah Muhammad Faruq succeeded him.

HAZRAT MUHAMMAD HASHMATULLAH FARIDPURI

He is the Pir Saheb of Atrashi in the district of Faridpur, usually known as Hazrat Faridpuri. He has exerted great influence and has got a large number of followers. Hazrat Faridpuri was a disciple of Hazrat Shah Yunus Ali (R) of Enayetpur, Pabna (b. A.H. 1301, d. A.H. 1371) Hazrat Enayetpuri was a disciple of Shah

1. Tariqa-e-Abdul'Ulaiya, though named as such, is practically not a new Tariqa but a combination of the great Tariqas of the past, such as Tariqa-e-Qadiriya, Tariqa-e-Chishtiya, Tariqa-e-Haqqabandiya and also Tariqa-e-Firdausiya.

Shah Amir Abu'l Ula was the founder of this order, he was born in A.H. 990. In his youth he was Hazim-e-
Sayyid Wajed Ali (R) of Calcutta who in turn was a disciple of Sufi Baha’ Ali.

It is learnt that Hazrat Faridpuri migrated to Faridpur by order of his pir. Hazrat Faridpuri imparts his disciples spiritual training according to the Naqshbandiya Mujaddidiya Tariqa. He has established a large number of social welfare institution or organisation is known as Viswa Zaker Manzil (the International Abode for the Devotees). Several innovations have crept in his silsilah for example they introduce Zikr jihr in the Naqshbandi order in which the leader performs Zikr and others listen to it. Introduction of Urs on the pattern of Chishti’s have also been introduced by them. This Sufi suborder is at present very known in Bangladesh. The public opinion about them is very much divided.

SHAH AHMADULLAH (Shah Saheb)

The Shah Saheb of Mushuri Khola, perhaps his name was Shah Ahmadullah, exerted a great influence upon the people. He redressed the sufferings—spiritual as of Subae Bengal (Governor of Bengal), but afterwards he gave it up and proceeded in the path of Allah as a faqir. At first he belonged to the Naqshbandiya Tariqa. Gradually he became a great wall and assimilated in him the Faydz and Barkat of a the great Sufi Tariqas. Intense love of the Prophet, his descendants and his companions is the key note of his teaching. He died in 1061 A.H. and is buried in Agra. The Tariqah—Abu’ Ulaiya as such was propagated and popularised by Hazrat Makhdum Mohammad Munim Pak of Patna (d. A.H. 1185).
well as material of a large number of people coming
from different parts of the country. The shrine of
this Saint is in Mushuri Khola, Dhaka.

The Shah Sahebs of Mia Shaheber Haidan also
had great influence on the people. They tried to
help the people and to propagate Islam in its true
orthodox spirit. Shah Sayyid Ahmadullah who died very
recently, served as a professor of Arabic and Islamic
Studies in a Government College in addition to his
usual duties as a Shah Saheb.

MUHAMMAD HUSAIN

Muhammad Husain of Ekgharia, Mahukuma, . . .
Kandi, Murshidabad, was a great Sufi Saint of Bengal.
He was born in A.D. 1884 and died in A.D. 1937 at the
age of 73.

He had established a Khangah at Ekgharia and pro-
pagated Islam from there. He was very famous as a
Sufi Saint. He was also a very kind hearted person.
He had a large number followers during his life time.
He was successful to preach Islam there.
SHAH SUFI PROF. MUHAMMAD FASIH

He was a professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Islamic Intermediate College, Dhaka. He studied in Egypt, and was much averse to Sufism in early life, was attracted to it in his later life and became a renowned Sufi.

MAULANA ABDUL WAHHAB (Pirji Hujur)

He was a Mudarris of Bara-Katra Madrassah (Bangladesh). He became very famous for his learning and piety. Maulana Abdul Wahhab is also known as Pirji Hujur. At a time he had a large number of followers. Many people used to go to him for redressing their suffering.

HAZRAT MUJAHEDDE AJAM ALLAMA SHAMSUL HAQ (R)

He was born on Friday A.D. 1896, in Gauhar Danga Village, P.S. Gopalganj in the district of Faridpur. He belonged to a respectable family. His grandfather was a freedom fighter and a contemporary with Sayyid Ahmad Shahid Bralavi.

Allama Shamsul Haq had his education from Darul-Ulum Deoband (India). He was deeply read in Islamic
Sciences. He was a kind hearted person, generous to his friends and amiable to high and low. He was a thoughtful man and a great social reformer too. He made a very good contribution towards educating the Muslims. He was the founder of many schools and madrasas. He also founded a society called 'Khademul Islam' He fought against Christian Missionaries. He had established 'Anjuman-e-Tabligul Quran' and also wrote many books against Christianity. He also wrote many books on Islam. Some of his books are as follows: i) Jeebaner Pan, ii) Allaher Parichaya, iii) Manuser Parichaya, iv) Charittra Gathan, v) Mutir Path.

The great Muslim divine Maulana Shamsul Haq was a teacher of Brahmanbaria Madrasah. He had many disciples in Bangladesh. He died in B.S. 1375/ A.D. 1969.

HAZRAT SAYYID ABDUL GHANI

He was born in A.D. 1899 in Karandi, P.O. Masundi, Via- Bharatpur, Distt. Murshidabad. His father was Sayyid Husain, a pious man. Sayyid Abdul Ghani was a great Sufi Saint of Bengal. He had his early education from Salar Edward Zakariya (M) School. During his school days some
seventeen persons were died of his family. He became thoughtful and left home for spiritual education. He came in contact with Shah Sufi Gulam Sarwar of Bombay and became his disciple. Shah Sufi Gulam Sarwar was a great Sufi Saint and had many disciples. Sayyid Abdul Ghani was with his pir for some few years and then came to Bengal and propagated Islam. He had one thousand disciples in India and the sub-continent. The Shrine of this Saint is in Karandi, Murshidabad.

HAZRAT KHANDEKAR ZAKARIYA

He was a very pious man and a Sufi Saint. He preached Islam in Bengal. He was a very kind hearted person and amiable to high and low. He had many disciples in Bengal. The dargah of this Saint is in Sijrom, Ghazipur, Murshidabad.

Khandekar Abdul Hannan, the eldest son of Khandekar Zakariya is now propagating the teachings of Islam. Hannan saheb is a learned scholar and a very good speaker. He has many disciples.

MAULANA ABU-Tahir NURPURI

He was a great Wali. He was Head Mudarrish in Metekona, Madrasah, Illambazar, Birbhum. He had established
MAULANA AHMAD SANADANI

He was a very pious man and a great Şafi. He was a Mufti and a good speaker too. He is lying buried in Kulshuna, Birbhum, West Bengal.

MAULANA MUHAMMAD AYATULLAH

He is lying buried in Bholagoria, P.O. Panrui, Distt. Birbhum, West Bengal. He was a great social reformer. He had his education from Madrasah Rahimia, Dehli. After completing his education he came to Bengal and had joined service as a teacher in Sainthia High School, Birbhum. He became very famous as a good speaker and was called 'Nightingale of Bengal! He was the founder of many schools, Madrasahs and Mosques. He was also able to establish a High Madrasah in his own village e.g. Bholagoria, called Bholagoria Ahmadiya High Madrasah by the help of his village people. This pious man died in A.D. 1977 at the age of 73.
HAAULANA MOHAMMAD AULAD HUDLHAH

He is popularly known as Hafiz Ji Huzur. He was a Khalifa of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi in Bengal. He had established several Madrasahs in Bangladesh and the most important among them was his celebrated Madrasah at Lal Bagh in Dhaka. He had a large number of his spiritual disciples in Dhaka and other districts of Bangladesh. He, in his later years took active part in his country's politics and had fought general elections for the Presidency of Bangladesh twice but was unsuccessful. He died in the year 1988.

SAYYID HAFIZ MUHAMMAD AULAD HUSAIN

He was a renowned Sufi Saint of Bengal who came from Kanpur (U.P.). He was a great preacher of Islam in the district of Birbhum, West Bengal. He died during the second half of the twentieth century.

SAYYID MUHAMMAD OBAIDULLAH

He also came from Kanpur (U.P.). Hafiz Muhammad Aulad Husain was the eldest brother of Hafiz Muhammad Obaidullah. He was quite successful to propagate Islam in West Bengal. He was very good speaker and a social reformer too. He is lying buried in Ghulisah in the district of Birbhum, West Bengal.