Chapter – I

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ANCESTRY AND BIRTH

Maulana Azad was born in 1888 AD in Mecca (KSA), his father was an Indian and mother was an Arabian, he was named Mohiuddin Ahmed. ‘Azad’ was his pen name that he adopted later. His father was a great scholar and believed strictly in the old ways of leaning towards orthodoxy and disliked modern education, which he considered would destroy the religious faith. Initial education of Azad was under his father. Other scholars of the day were also employed to teach him additional subjects. At a very tender age, he became well versed in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. He soon attained a unique position among the Indian scholars as a brilliant writer theologian and journalist due to his remarkable contribution. He learned English after his father’s death. He also studied the modern views and philosophies. He was well versed in the modern problems and politics of the world. He studied the problems in his own way. He commented on them masterly and drew his own conclusions as a journalist.

Azad is privileged to come from a learned family with aristocratic background which had the credit of producing many a prominent scholars and theologians. Azad had inherited ‘lofty intellect’ and ‘high learning’ from his forefathers but, temperamentally, he developed a rebellious attitude. He could not reconcile to the traditional ways of life. He was ‘content with the legacy that family, education and environment had given him’.¹ Very soon he cam out of
the old and orthodox ways and came out with his own views. The longing for intellectual emancipation intensively increased in him. The self-acquired title ‘Azad’ indicates how intense the desire was.

It was Sir Syed Ahmed khan, the first writer, who impressed the mind of Azad. The writings of Sir Syed created religious discontent in Azad.\(^2\) He appreciated Sir Syed’s free and rational approach to religion. After completion of traditional course, he came across with the writings of Sir Syed. He was already uneasy and did not like ancient ways and considered the old orthodoxy to be narrow. He found his answer in Sir Syed’s work. Azad had acknowledged the influence of Sir Syed on his views which brought the greatest mental change in his life.\(^3\)

The study of Sir Syed’s writings created in him an interest for the study of modern science and philosophy.\(^4\) He started collecting books on modern sciences in whichever language they were available.\(^5\) Azad gave up the age-old irrational traditions of his ancestors and realized the uselessness of imitating them under the magical impact of the writings of Sir Syed. The influence was so overpowering that he began almost worshiping Sir Syed. But the rebel in him started questioning Sir Syed too. Thus the influence gradually started fading after one year.\(^6\) Again new suspicions raised heads and he found that the satisfaction was only superficial and temporary, and it was a mere mental deception.\(^7\) He was no more content with the views of Sir Syed and could not agree with him in toto. The philosophy of Sir Syed could not satisfy all his
questions. He searched for new relieves. It was not a deviation from rationalism. Even after deviation he applied the principles of rationalism to his approach to life. Azad never accepted the political ideology of Sir Syed in its form. Mahadev Desai observed thus “He had no doubt that Sir Syed Ahmed khan had done a great service to the Muslim community by impressing on the necessity of getting out of the narrow grooves of orthodox learning and theology and of profiting by western education and sciences. But he also opined that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had unconsciously made himself a tool of British imperialism by stopping the Muslims from all political activities and by opposing the Congress, on the one hand, he had hindered the political regeneration of the whole country, and on the other he had directed the foot-steps of the Mussalmans along ways that fostered in them a slavish mentality instead of self-respect, high mindedness and breadth of political outlook.”

When he was in his teens, many fundamental questions of life were hunting his mind. What is reality and where is it? Is it or is it not? If it is and is one, as there cannot be more than one reality, why are there different ways to it? The (ways) are not only different but are also contradictory and conflicting. He himself admitted that the spirit of enquiry begins with suspicion and ends on negation. If one stops there he gets nothing but only disappointment. Azad did not stop there though he went through them. His thirst could not be contented with mere disappointment. His enquiry disclosed that in the very conflict and contradiction and the blind darkness of superstition, there exists one enlightened
and positive way which leads to the objective destination of confidence and belief.\textsuperscript{11} A new self-discovered belief replaced the ancestral one. He studied the Quran again, studied the teachings afresh and in the calm light of his own dispassionate thinking, faith was revived. The old orthodoxy had fled but it had not left a vacuum. A new belief had come, as a result of the spirit’s wrestling with the doubt and the suspicion that had arisen in mind. A radical spirit of reform and even revolution was born.\textsuperscript{12}

The perspective in which Azad had opened his eyes was a great turning point in the history of humanity in every field and every aspect of social, political and economic life of the country. India being a colony of the biggest and the most advanced imperialist power of the day was reflecting the ego in its true nature. The enormous material expansion of one part of the world had created an economic lag in international community. Some parts of the world were progressing rapidly while in other there was still stagnation. Democratic institutions were spreading in Europe and America while in Asia and Africa imperialism and colonialism were growing. This naturally led to the growth of the national liberation movements in those regions. The white European races were armed with the scientific resources and were in more advantageous position as compared with the coloured races of Asia and Africa. The disparity between the developed west and undeveloped East was becoming more pronounced. The possibilities of expansion and exploitation by the developed countries were growing more than they had grown in the past history.
An estimate of the political map of the world in the late 19th century shows that ‘by 1876, 51.5 per cent of the territory of Asia, 100 per of that of Australia and 27.5 per cent of that of Central and south America had been under control of colonialists.’\textsuperscript{13} Africa was divided among them. Colonial plunder reached a height in the last thirty years of 19th century. The building of the Suez Canal brought Europe closer to Asia and Africa. From 1870 to 1902 Britain seized 4,474,000 square miles of African territory whose population totaled nearly 90 million. France, the second biggest colonial power after Britain, occupied Tunisia (1881) and dominated a considerable part of the Congo Basin.

Hobson has called the period from 1884 – 1900 as the period of ‘intensive colonial expansion.’ During this period Britain seized 37 million sq. Km. of territory with a population of 5.7 million; France 3.6 million sq. Km. of territory with a population of 35.5 million; Germany, 1 million sq. Km. of territory with a population of 14.7 million; Belgium, 0.9 sq. Km. of territory with a population of 30 million and Portugal captured 0.8 million sq. Km. with 9 million population.\textsuperscript{14}

The whole globe was fast falling prey to big powers. The intensity of the colonial drive can be marked in the expansion of the three largest colonial countries: Britain, France and Germany. In 1876 the British colonial empire comprised 22.5 million sq. Km. with a population of 251.9 million; by 1914 it comprised 33.5 million sq. Km. with a population of nearly 400 million. During these years French colonial possessions increased ten times ‘from 0.9 million
sq. Km. with a population of six million in 1876 to 10.6 million in 1914’. Germany which had no colonies in 1876, possessed colonies amounting to 2.9 million sq. Km. with a population of 12.3 million shortly before the first world war.¹⁵

Some non-European powers were also struggling hard to emerge as world powers and to shatter the status quo. They could even declare war upon their neighboring states in pursuit of their own interests. Japan’s designs against China in 1894 and those of the U.S.A. against Spain in 1898 are the glaring examples. Fighting beyond Europe for trial of strength was a common feature of the day, example, rivalry of the Germans and the British in the South Africa. The situation had become more complicated with the discovery of gold in Transvaal area in 1886. The foreign businessmen and the prospectors flocked to the place. The Boer wars were the climax of the conflicting interests. “The eight big powers of the world – England, U.S.A., Germany, Austria, Italy, Russia, France and Japan – were located on three continents and had interests all over the world, the whole world was willfully involved in their attitude and disputes.”¹⁶

The growth of imperialism and colonialism caused national consciousness in the dependent countries giving birth to national liberation movements. The political and economic expansion – imperialism and industrialism – involved vast unplanned and unpleasant upheaval in the society, like, unemployment and concentration of wealth in fewer hands.
The revolution in the means of transportation and communication, mobilization of population and urbanization and the growing complexity of the society were instrumental in the formation of the national liberation movements.

The peoples of Asia and Africa had for long remained subjected to cruel colonial oppression. Frequent colonial wars and the intensification of colonial plunder aroused the dissatisfaction of the peoples. At the same time ties began to develop between advanced political groups in the colonies and progressives in the metropolitan countries. All this led to various forms of anti-imperialist struggle.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, one of the eminent political leaders of India, a brilliant writer possessed the great spirit of enquiry and search for truth. He arose as an outspoken champion of national liberty and independence, a prophet of progressiveness and rationalism in all aspects of life.

His was a personality which could remind Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, ‘the great men of the Renaissance’ and ‘the Encyclopaedists who preceded the French Revolution’. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru’s admiration is seen from his quotation “He combined the greatness of the past with the greatness of the present.”

His deep learning, scholarship and great oratory greatly impressed his contemporaries. He represented the qualities of two eras – greatness of the past combined with the greatness of the present. The graciousness, the toleration and the deep learning of the past were combined in Azad with an understanding of the needs and demands of modern age.
According to Pandit Jawarlal Nehru he was, ‘a man of luminous intelligence and a mighty intellect with an amazing capacity to pierce through a problem to its core.’

**Revolutionary Trend**

Since ‘his early teens he had burning passions for freedom of the country and was willing to bring violent revolution. The immediate event which took Azad to Political field was the partition of Bengal. Bengal was his home province and was ‘seething with discontent’. Swadeshi and boycott movements were in full swing. The event had given an aggressive attitude to the Indian politics. The terrorist and anarchist movements were rocking the politically conscious province of Bengal. The dark clouds of compulsion and suppression were hanging in the horizon. The genius of Azad could not remain indifferent to his surroundings and thus he joined the revolutionaries of Bengal. He contacted Shyam Sunder Chakravarthy, one of the important revolutionaries of the day who introduced Azad with other revolutionaries including Arvind Ghosh. However, soon Azad realised that ‘that was not the way which would produce results.’

During 1908 Azad had an occasion to go abroad and visit Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Turkey. In Turkey he met some of the Iranian revolutionaries. In Egypt he came into contact with the leaders of ‘young Turks’ who had established a centre in Cairo and were publishing a weekly. He established friendship with some of the leaders of the Movement.
His contacts with the national and the foreign revolutionaries confirmed his political belief. He was more convinced than ever that Indian Muslims must co-operate whole-heartedly in the struggle of the political liberation of the country and must not be allowed to be exploited by the British Government. He realised the necessity to create a new movement among the Indian Muslims and there he decided to take up political work among the Muslims on his return to India with greater seriousness.

**Journalism**

To raise healthy public opinion among Muslims and to educate them politically he needed an organ through which to speak to them. To this effect he established a press at Calcutta called Al-Hilal and started the publication of his famous weekly which was named after the press from July 1912. For Azad it was not the first time to write. He had a powerful pen and had started writing in various weeklies and monthlies, viz. the Makhzan, the Neraing-e-Alam, the Ahsan-ul-Akhbar and the Khudange-e-Nazar etc. He had either edited or had helped in editing one or two journals. In 1903, when he was merely a boy of fourteen, he was editing his own monthly the Lisan-u-sidq, i.e., the language of Truth. He was a born genius and ‘his reputation as a scholar is revealed in more than one story.’ He had become a ‘legendary figure’ and people could hardly believe that ‘a inexperienced youth could be the well known’ scholar and writer and had become an authority of the day. Once Mrs. Sarojini Naidu had remarked about him ‘Do not talk about Maulana’s age. He was fifty the day he
Azad was a bold and fearless writer who never shrank from speaking the barest truth without caring for the consequences. ‘The very first issue of the Al-Hilal acted like an explosive.’ Soon the journal became highly popular among the Urdu knowing people of the country and had considerable circulation at that time. ‘The publication of Al-Hilal was considered a turning point in the history of Urdu journalism.’ It preached a new gospel of nationalism and helped in creating a revolutionary stir among the Muslim masses. The demand was so great that within the first three months all the old issues had to be reprinted as every new subscriber wanted the entire set. It never made a secret of its political objectives. It raised a slogan which was quite different from that of Aligarh school. That is why it could attract young educated Muslims who were in search of a new line of thinking. It never hesitated to point out any mistake committed by Muslims. It also vigorously attacked the policies of the British Government in India and abroad. In the meanwhile the First World War broke out. Azad adopted an anti-British policy and admired the German strategy. During the war the paper achieved a circulation of twenty-five thousand copies.

The Government disturbed at the success of the Al-Hilal, demanded a security of Rs. 2,000, under the press Act. The security was soon forfeited and another fresh security of Rs. 10,000 was demanded and ultimately the press was confiscated in November 1914. Azad started a new press called Al-Balagh and another Journal with the name after the press the ‘Al-Balagh’ was brought out.
As the Government felt that the press Act was insufficient to curb Azad’s activities the ‘Defense of India Regulations’ Act was passed and resorted to. He was asked to leave Bengal. The Governments of Punjab, Delhi, U.P. and Bombay had already prohibited his entry into these provinces. He went to Ranchi. Bihar Government interned him where he remained till December 1919. During his internment at Ranchi he wrote a major portion of Tarjuman-Ul-Quran. Mahadev Desai has pointed out that Azad “had distinguished himself as a rebel even before Gandhiji, in 1916 when the World War was going on, Gandhiji was a co-operator and proclaimed and preached loyalty to the British rule. But Maulana Azad had even then proclaimed himself a rebel and was interned by the Government.”

**Active Politics**

On December 27, 1919, when Azad was released from internment he found an entirely different political situation prevailing in the country. The political agitations and the satyagrah movements were spreading like wild fire. Mahatma Gandhi had entered the Indian politics. Mahadev Desai has described the then political scene of India in the following words: “The Rowlatt Acts had found Gandhiji shaking himself free of almost a year’s illness and hurling defiance against the proudest imperialist power in the world. At his call the crushed, withered, smothered and even dead humanity in cities and towns and villages had come to life. On the top of what was called the Punjab wrong came to be known as the Khilafat wrong. A British prime Minister’s pledge given to the Indian Mussalmans, in the hours of Britain’s difficulty, to keep their holy
places inviolate and free from the domination of a non-Muslim power was broken, Mussalman rose to protest against this intolerable wrong and to suffer the direst consequences. The people of India who had poured out men, money and material in order to help Britain win the war against Germany looked upon the Rowlatt Acts as the height of ingratitude, and the Mussalmans who had fought, on foreign fields along with the Britishers against man of their own faith looked upon the Khilafat wrong as an intolerable act of disloyalty. In January 1920 Azad met Mahatma Gandhi for the first time in Delhi. The friendship lasted for life.

The Khilafat problem was in full swing. The Muslims had resented the way the British Government was tackling the Khilafat issue. There was a proposal for a deputation of Muslims to visit the Viceroy and acquaint him with the feelings of the Indian Muslims regarding the Khilafat and Turkey’s future. Gandhiji too was interested in these problems. He expressed his sympathy with the Muslims and supported their stand. A common programme of non-violent non-co-operation was chalked out and approved by Khilafat and Congress committees. In the year 1921 the movement was launched. The leaders of the movement were arrested and tried in 1922. It is at this trial that Azad gave his historic statement in the court which is a declaration of rights of a dependent nation. To struggle for its freedom and to oppose the coercion and tyranny of the rulers is a sacred duty of the subservient nation. He was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment and was released on January 1, 1923.
Since 1920 Azad remained attached to the Indian National Congress till his death in 1958. Twice he was elected the president of the Congress. It was in 1923 when for the first time he was elected the president of the All India National Congress. At that time he was the youngest president in the history of the Congress. It was the most difficult time for the organization and it looked as if the Congress would split on the council entry issue. It was he ‘who found honourable compromise and it was really his wisdom and political foresight which helped the Swaraj Party to enter the council without leaving the Congress. 36 Second time when he was elected president by the congress in 1940 again it was a difficult time for him. The Second World War had begun and the Congress ministries had resigned in the provinces and the Congress was heading towards the final phase of its struggle. In the capacity of the president of the most popular and the biggest political party of the country, Azad had to carry on negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps and also with the Cabinet Mission. ‘He kept in the forefront the interest of the country while carrying on these discussions.’37 He was considered as one of ‘Big Five’ Who helped Gandhiji to mould the freedom movement. 38 No doubt, Gandhiji had great appreciation for his virtues. 39 In the midst of storm and conflict, he remained unperturbed. This discipline developed in him a tremendous personality whose power was felt by every one who came into contact with him. 40 He was very much abused by the leaders of the League. They hurled abuses on him but Azad ‘always showed a spirit of toleration and magnanimity in his dealings with the
Muslim league and its leaders.\textsuperscript{41} In-spite of all great oppositions from different corners and hurling of abuses Azad had firm faith in unadulterated nationalism burning to the end and condemned communalism as the most harmful to the progress of every kind.\textsuperscript{42} ‘Not the ugliest vicissitudes of the movement have made him alter his attitude even by a hair’s breadth.’\textsuperscript{43}

**Characteristics**

Describing the characteristics of Azad, his biographer Shri Mahadev Desai sketches thus:-

‘Of a tall, erect and stately figure and with eyes that flash intelligence and inspire awe; with polished and refined manner that compels respect every where he goes, and a reserve which does not make it easy for one to class him with some of those leaders who are accessible to everyone. His deep learning and insatiable appetite for knowledge combined with his contemplative temperament make it impossible for him to go and mix the masses. Not that there is any lack of feeling in him for the down trodden of the land.’\textsuperscript{44} He had a scholastic tendency and was a thoughtful and philosophical writer. If all his time outside prison had not been devoted to the service of the motherland, we might have had from him many books full of the profound learning and scholarship.

He was also a philologist. Desai has quoted many examples. ‘The Maulana is a great oriental scholar and his knowledge of Arabic and Persian is profound, but when he speaks he speaks such chaste, elegant and yet simple
Urdu that all can follow him." He never seems to be in want of the right word and sometimes even his casual talk is pregnant with homely and telling similes and with meaning which makes a way into your understanding as nothing else does. Azad had studied widely. He had read famous classics and the masterpieces of the world literature. That is why he possessed an encyclopedic mind. Desai has described his library in these words. “Though he speaks little English, his library is full of all the best English and French classics. He has read many of the English poets, including Shakespeare and Wordsworth and Shelley but the one he likes best, he told me, is Byron.” Azad’s liking of Byron is not so much a matter of a literature falling in love with a poet. “The thing that appeals to him in Byron is the historic way in which he supported the cause of the liberation of Greece and met his death in the attempt, the part he played in revolutionary politics everywhere and his impassioned plea through all his utterances for freedom of life and thought.” Azad was a voracious reader, his reading was not limited to literary work only. He was a thinker himself and as such great thinkers adorned the shelves of his library. “The world’s great thinkers are there in his library - Goethe, Spinoza, Rousseau, Marx, Havelock Ellis - there are the Upanishads and the Vedas, there are all the volumes of the people of all Nations, Historians’ History, International library of famous Literature and so on.” Azad’s love for the literature on religious philosophy was so deep that the barriers of sectarianism did not hold him to Islamic literature alone. He dived deep into the Literature of other religions.
Mahadev Desai describes his passion for such reading thus: “Once on the railway train I found him with a volume on Nyaya vaisheshika philosophy, and he has time even in this busy age (1940) to enjoy a volume on Madame Jeanne Pompadour. The latest volumes on the prophet and Omar the great are there on the rack of books opposite his writing table, but so also are books of Flaubert, and among them Madame Bovary.” Not only with books, he was in constant touch with the big personalities of the world and could understand their problems and views very well. Still his life was absolutely simple and in his office room and drawing room one could not find any thing but books.

About his personal habits his biographer writes: “His habits are regular, he is a very early riser, has no other ‘petty vices’. I do not know he ever visits the places of entertainment. He shuns shows and processions and polished speaker, he has none of the strength or weaknesses of a demagogue. His contribution to a debate is always most valuable, and he is at his best in committee meetings. He can sweep audience off their feet by the direct, simple, incisive eloquence of his speech, but he is not essentially a man of the people.”

Azad had no love for big post and offices. He never cared for name or fame or for honours and titles. Whatever honours he got, they were unsought for or in some cases against his will. Sherwani has given the following examples when Azad refused offers to dignified offices.
Mr. C.R. Das had proposed him to contest the election of Mayor-ship of Calcutta Corporation instead of himself. He insisted Azad to accept his offer but Azad did not agree and said “my ways of life are different from the beginning, and I do not consider myself worthy of such high offices, the two cannot be put together.”

The second illustration is quoted by Dr. Rajender Prasad in his autobiography ‘Meri kahani’. In the Congress session of 1939 which was held at Tripuri near Jabalpur, the Congress Working Committee wanted to elect him the president of the Congress, but anyhow he avoided the office. The same was the situation when he was offered ministry in the Interim Government in 1946 and in 1954 when he was proposed to be awarded with the ‘Bharat Ratna’. The special correspondent of the Daily statesman writes in the issue of January 29, 1960, “Maulana Azad was the first man who opposed the unhealthy tradition of giving awards to the politicians in power, and refused to accept the title of Bharat Ratna till he was in office.”53 One more illustration is given by Mahadev Desai. In a special conference of the spiritual leaders at Lahore, attended by over a thousand spiritual leaders from all the important places in the country, they resolved to appoint Maulana Abul Kalam Azad the Imam – the supreme spiritual head – for all India. There could not have been a greater honour for a Muslim divine or a more attractive offer for one coveting positions of power. But the Maulana respectfully declined. The divines – even the most orthodox ones of Deoband and Lucknow pressed him to accept the honour knowing that he held radical views. But soon he was arrested.
On release in 1923 he was again pressed, but he explained the Executive Committee of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema that the appointment of any one, however exalted, as the spiritual head was filled with danger and might prove an obstacle in the progress of the Muslim community, and therefore he begged them not to press him.\textsuperscript{54}

His addresses were compared with ‘the thundering of clouds, flow of rivers, freshness of meadows, splendor of mountains, beauty of gardens and the melody of Venus with such a proportional and beautiful combination of them that one would feel as if he is roaming in them that one would feel as if he is roaming in the valley of Kashmir.’\textsuperscript{55} His matchless eloquence held audiences spell bound. ‘He was as much in demand in ordinary meetings as well as extraordinary meetings of Muslim divines.’\textsuperscript{56}

Azad had adopted a novel style in Urdu. His prose was considered more effective and better than poetry. Hasrat, famous poet of Urdu expressed his views about the prose style of Azad in the following couplet:

\begin{quote}
Since I have seen the prose of Abul Kalam

The poetry of Hasrat has lost charm.\textsuperscript{57}
\end{quote}

Once Maulana Mohammed Ali said that he had the training in leadership from the prose of Abul Kalam and the poetry of Iqbal.\textsuperscript{58}

\begin{quote}
He could pen down smoothly the complicated problems of the day.\textsuperscript{59}
\end{quote}

The articles in the Al-Hilal were of great journalistic standard but they were
written without any preparation or drafting. From the beginning to the end no unparliamentary word was ever used less to say about the use of any mean word. No personal interest or political prejudices could even move him an inch from his sobriety in style. His style was very beautiful and full of charms. He could use appropriate words according to the subject and situation like an artist without affecting the charm.

He was never short of the appropriate words. The artistic use of words, idioms and new terms, and use of couplets made his writing colourful. Even his pure philosophical articles are not dry and charmless. He invented new ways of expressing the ideas. Even Sir Mohammed Iqbal, a renowned poet of Urdu, has praised his style. His literary qualities were admired even outside India. He has written on every topic, national and international politics, war and history, the bloody events of the day and the martyrs of wars and victims of the bloodshed but nowhere he feels disappointed and disgusted. Life was not all pleasures and comforts for him it was a process of emerging, sinking and again emerging. Another renowned writers of Urdu one late Sajjad Ansari said, “It is my belief that had the Quran not ordained earlier the prose of Abul Kalam would have been selected for it.” He was called the King of Elucidation. His arguments were sound and authentic. He never overlooked any aspect of the subject under discussion. Sometimes he adopted sarcastic style especially where he had to attack more effectively but his sarcasm and sense of humor was splendid and beyond counterattack.
Maulana Abdul Majid spoke about the characteristics of the Al-Hilal in these words” ‘God knows how many new words, new terms, similies and idioms are moulded every week in this literary and scholarly mint and such was the usage that as soon as they were out they were adopted as current coins.’ The greatest writers of the day were spellbound. He did not follow others. As Azad himself had said, “In religion, literature, politics and general views and thought, I had to go alone.” His writing can be enjoyed if read in his original words. It is not possible to translate it. At another occasion, Azad said, “I am complainant of my own style which adopts a romantic language even while discussing the dry subject as philosophy and diplomacy.” Dr. Khwaja Ahmed Farooqui said that Azad’s writing has the power of oration. His articles have the same force that distinguished his oratory.

Critics have pointed out a defect in his style. They say that because of his overwhelming thoughts and depth of his studies he goes into obscure corners in his discussions so that the main point is lost somewhere by an ordinary reader.

Azad preferred to be more humanitarian in his approach than to be a mere puritan. From the beginning to the end, he remained true to humanity. He was above all sorts of sectarianism. He made his suggestions keeping in view the entire humanity. He demanded the same rights and liberties for all the peoples and violently and harshly attacked those who were exploiting the innocent people in their own narrow and selfish interests. ‘He was not an outstanding figure of great courage, fearlessness, integrity and passionate love
for humanity.’

He was imprisoned many times for his utterances but he never shrank from expressing his views publicly. Neither the fear of the Government nor the fear of the masses and the orthodoxy could deter him from speaking the truth. Whatever he thought reasonable and just, he expressed it at the best of the drum. No political attraction, or any charm of authority could move him from his place he had selected after due consideration. He was accused and blamed by his own co-religionists for his convictions. Those who could not reach the depth of his views were satisfied by calling him a mere ‘show boy of Congress’, but he worked undeterred by the oppositions and without caring for their remarks.

Azad had diagnosed the ailment of India in particular, and humanity in general. National and communal dissension, mutual suspicions and fear, passivity in thinking and action and lack of confidence and courage were the general causes of national humiliation and subjections. He boldly raised his voice against these anomalies in man and society and stood for national and human integration. “He stood for, what one may call the emancipated mind, the mind which is free from prejudices of race or language, province or dialect, religion or caste. We had in Maulana Sahab the civilised mind.”

‘His life was both the search and the attainment.’
References:

4. Ibid. p. 257.
5. Ibid. p 257.
6. Ibid. p 405.
7. Ibid. p 405.
11. Ibid, p. 66.
15. Ibid, P. 194.
26. Ibid, P. 70.
27. Ibid, P. 69.
33. Mahadev Desai has produced many illustrations in his Biography of Azad, P. 22-23.
37. Ibid, P. 53.
38. Ibid, P. 53.
40. Ibid, P. 73.
41. Ibid, P. 74.
44. Ibid, P. 51.
46. Ibid, P. 54.
47. Ibid, P. 54.
49. Ibid, P. 534.
51. Ibid, P. 56.
59. Rafi Anwar, op. cit, P. 206.
60. Ibid, P. 207.
63. Ibid, P. 214.
64. Syed Sabah–u–Din Abdul Rehman Al–Hilal ka Mutala, Shahehanpuri, P. 225.
68. Ibid, P. 251.
69. Ibid, P. 312.

