CHAPTER-IV

FORMATION OF ANJUMAN

During the first half of twentieth century women were involved in various social and educational reforms activities. This period showed the transition of women’s role from home life to the public field. They formed many social reform organizations (anjuman) at many places in North India such as Kanpur, Aligarh, Bareilly, Delhi, Dehradun, Agra, Lahore, Punjab etc where various women related issues like their education, plan for starting the girl’s schools, fund raising activities etc were discussed. In short, it was a platform where the ladies from various places met and discussed problems relating to several social issues. We find that women’s magazines/journals in Urdu provided descriptive information about the formation of Anjuman in various places of North India which blossomed in the first half of the twentieth century. However, these anjuman formed a network of reforming activities by the establishment of Tahzibi Anjuman, Lahore, Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam, Lahore, Anjuman Khawateen-e-Punjab, Anjuman Darul Khawateen, Rae Bareilly, Aligarh, Bhopal, Agra and Delhi, Anjuman-e-Khawateen, Amravati, Anjuman Muslim Khawateen, Karachi etc.

The editor of women’s Urdu journal Syed Mumtaz Ali in his Tahzib-un-Niswan said about the Tahzibi Anjuman which played an important role to spread many new ideas among the women. Mumtaz Ali supported the formation of the Tahzibi Anjuman for women in every district and cities which were the sole representative of whole city. It strengthens the power of women and makes them self-reliant. He gave the example of Punjab where the girls deprived of inheritance property against of which many articles were written but all efforts were in vain. If the whole community started their movements against this custom, they might reach to fruitful conclusion. Thus, his point clarified the need to form the anjuman. Many respectable women supported his idea and organized such type of anjuman at various places in North India and many noble ladies promised to form it but there were few

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people who raised questions regarding the title of this *anjuman*. They asked that why
this *anjuman* called as *Tahzibi Anjuman* and why not it called by other names? The
editor of *Tahzib-un-Niswan* said that he liked this name very much because it denotes
the original meaning of his journal. The meaning of *Tahzib-un-Niswan* was etiquette
or manner of women. Thus it was more suitable than any other name. The great
supporter of Muslim community Sir Syed Amad khan also favoured this name. He
entitled his newspaper as *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* (refinement of morals). Thus the word
*Tahzib* reflects the original meaning of this association and the social reformers tried
to enrich Muslim community culturally through the manner and etiquettes. Mumtaz
Ali said that if anyone wants to change this name he would change it but entitled same
name for this association and informed all the ladies who already organized the
*anjuman* at various places. He received many letters from *Tahzibi Bahen* (noble
sisters) which relates to *Tahzibi Anjuman*. The *Tahzibi sisters* gave some suggestions
which were as follows2:

- The purpose of *Tahzibi Anjuman* published separately apart from the main
  journal. Thus if anyone needed it, he/she must collected the pamphlet from the
  office of *Tahzib-un-Niswan*.
- The resolution must relate the local matters and it was passed at the same time
  in all *anjuman*.
- The All- India resolution was published separately. Thus any *anjuman* which
  formed later also passed this already assigned resolution.
- Some pages of *Tahzib-un-Niswan* fixed for the news of *anjuman* in which
  importance of *anjuman* would be given and the Secretary of different *anjuman*
  wrote their view in it. Thus the women readers of this magazine were
  interested and inclined towards this *anjuman*.

The Women’s Urdu journals of twentieth century give a detailed description
about the development of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* which was held at many
places in North India under the supervision of active initiators. Every session of this
meeting was organized at the house of reputed person with a large gathering of ladies.
It started with the recitation of Holy Quran and there was a Secretary and Joint
Secretary of every meeting who presented the previous reports of earlier sessions

among the delegates. About the programme of these meetings, we find that the interested lady speakers read their *nazm* (poem) and articles on various important and knowledgeable themes like women’s education and their rights, Islamic fundamentals and sciences etc. Besides these, many social issues and customs such as marriage, dowry, divorce, *Purdah*, dresses, household information, health, hygiene etc were also discussed. The issue of *Tabligh* (Islamic) fund was an important topic in every session and the Secretary of *anjuman*’s meeting presented the list of ladies who contributed to it. Now I will discuss in brief the women’s *anjuman* at various places in North India and highlight its motives which intended to awaken the women towards social reform activities.

An influential lady of Shahjahanpur, Khadijat-ul-kabra wrote about the formation of *Tahzibi Anjuman* and its first meeting was held at the residence of Begum Muhammad Ali⁴ which is cited in *Tahzib-un-Niswan*. These two ladies Khadijat-ul-Kabra and Begum Muhammad Ali contributed a lot for the organization of this *anjuman*. Mumtaz Ali said about the opening of *Tablighi* fund which included in his magazine and requested all the ladies to give their concern on it. The ladies like Ahmad Jahan, headmistress of Government girl’s school in Shahjahanpur and other eminent personalities such as Nazir Begum, Hamida Begum, Zohra Begum, Faiz Jahan Begum, Khujista Bano and Khadijat-ul-Kabra participated in it. Hamida Begum, the daughter of Muhammad Ali discuss about the importance of *anjuman* and all the ladies agreed to form the *Tahzibi Anjuman* and decided to give it the name of *Anjuman Tahzib-e-Niswan*, Shahjahanpur. Begum Muhammad Ali appointed as the President of this *anjuman*, Khadijat-ul-Kabra as Secretary and Hamida Begum as Joint Secretary⁵.

The religious theme was also discussed in this meeting. This *anjuman* ran very well and the proposed plan of Islamic *Madrasah* was noticed after estimating all the grants from *Tahzibi sisters*⁵.

A lady from Jaunpur, Ummat-ul-Hamid Khanum wrote about the letter of Begum Sahebzada Abad Ahmad Khan, Superintend police of Jaunpur who contributed a

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3 wife of Maulvi Muhammad Ali, an engineer of Shahjahanpur.
5 Ibid.p-762.
big amount for *Tabligh* fund. The other activists who contributed grants for *Tabligh* fund were Khadijat-ul-Kubra and Begum Muhammad Ali from Shahjahanpur, Sharif-un-nissa, a lady doctor from Bombay, Mrs. Samiullah Khan from Bilaspur, Abad Begum from Jaunpur and Ayesha Begum from Kota etc.\(^6\)

On 14\(^{th}\) February, 1926 another meeting of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-un-Niswan* of Shahjahanpur was organized. The following ladies were participated in this meeting such as Begum Muhammad Ali, the Chairperson, Hamida Begum, the Joint Secretary and Khadijat-ul-kubra, the Secretary. The Joint Secretary Hamida Begum read an article on the importance of *Shab-e-Barat* (prayer of Muslim on fifteenth night of *Sha'ban*). She said that many people celebrated this occasion by firework which is un-Islamic.\(^7\)

Next meeting of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-un-Niswan* of Shahjahanpur held on 5\(^{th}\) October, 1926 chaired by Begum Nawab Hamidullah Khan who was a broad-minded educated lady, gave her speech on the main purpose of *anjuman* and the condition of Indian women as compared to other countries.\(^8\)

Another meeting of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-un-Niswan* of Shahjahanpur convened on 17\(^{th}\) December, 1926. Last year one of the supporters of women’s *anjuman* Begum Ayub Husain announced that if the session of this meeting would be held at different places it would be more beneficial. Thus the women of every mohallah participated in it. Therefore, this year the meeting was held at the house of Begum Ayub Husain who arranged the celebration of *Milad sharif* (Birthday of Prophet Muhammad) on this occasion. The gathering of ladies was huge and the Secretary Hamida Begum reported about Begum Ayub Husain who delivered her speech on women’s education and read an important article on this issue. She also pointed out the superstititious rituals followed by the Muslim families.\(^9\)

On 31\(^{st}\) August, 1926, the 5\(^{th}\) monthly meeting of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* was convened at Gharib Khana in Bareilly under the Chairperson of Begum Mr. Fazal ur Rashid Khan. In this meeting the name *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* finally decided. Near about twenty ladies attended the meeting.\(^10\)

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\(^7\) Ibid, vol-29, no-29, (27 February, 1926), p-162.


The organizer of Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan in Bareilly was Mrs. Abdullah Khan and the financial adviser Khadijat-ul-Kubra. It was also decided that the conveyance expenses would be paid from these collected funds and Mrs. Abdullah Khan gave own carriage and motor car for the invitees.

Another meeting of Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan was organized at Kanpur. The various session of this meeting were described in Urdu Journal Tahzib-un-Niswan. Its fourth and fifth session was chaired by Nishat-un-Nisa on 13th March and 7th April, 1927 at the house of Intezar Ali Abbasi. Mushtaq Fatima was appointed as Honorary Secretary and Akhlaq Fatima as Joint Secretary. In the large gathering of ladies articles were read on the fundamentals of Namaz, Zakat and the importance of Ramzan Sharif. The ladies contributed lavishly in the fund.

One of the lady Fatima Begum read an article on Faraiz ke Natiye (Result of duties) and about the issue of Khairät (charity) and a healthy discussion took place between Saeeda Begum and Fatima Begum. An interesting event in Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan of Kanpur was exhibition of handicraft where various handmade articles prepared by the ladies were shown.

However, the first annual meeting of Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan of Kanpur was held on 19th December, 1927 under the Chairmanship of Begum Qudratullah Khan, attended by eighty ladies and the following resolutions were passed:

- The Muslim community should benefit from the present Girls’ school of Kanpur which was run by the municipal board. The parents should send their children to receive education in this school. The permission should be taken by the municipal board for the addition of religious education apart from the Quranic knowledge and if the municipal board did not permit it, the Muslim community should collect the grants by their own efforts. This issue was proposed by Bano, the editor of Al-Barid and was supported by Mushtaq Fatima and Tahzib Fatima Abbas.

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12 An Excise inspector.
14 wife of diwan Qudratullah Khan.
There were different types of lady’s dresses which were in vogue among them and it was difficult to identify the Muslim and non-Muslim ladies. If a particular dress was selected for Muslim community, it was easy to differentiate the other community. This *anjuman* also suggested that as the Muslim community chose a mark of their own community for Aligarh College similarly the Muslim ladies should think about this proposal. This matter was suggested by Tahzib Fatima Abbasi and was supported by Mrs. Abul Maali Wahiduddin Ahmad and editor of *Al-Barid*.16

The *anjuman* complained to the members of Aligarh Old Boys’ Association of Kanpur that they did not show their interest in such type of *anjuman* and could not fulfill their hope. The *anjuman* of Kanpur requested to the Old Boys’ of Aligarh that they send the women of Aligarh to take part in their *anjuman*. It was proposed by Akhlaq Fatima, the joint Secretary of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* and supported by Mrs. Qudratullah Khan17.

The note of this *anjuman* was published in the newspaper of *Al-Barid, Hamdard, Sadaqat* of Kanpur and the Daily newspaper of Bareilly and the editors gave their opinion on it. The vote of thanks was also given in the Daily newspaper of Bareilly and *Sadaqat* of Kanpur for their efforts and sincerity to give opinion on this matter.

To quote:

`After these proposals, the article on dress was read by Tahzib Fatima Abbasi and various speakers like Mrs. Wahiduddin Ahmad Saheb Mashirmal, Izzat Fatima, Bint Kalam Banu Rashid Ahmad spoke on it.`

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17 Ibid, p-145.
18 Ibid, p-146.
The 16th session was held on 21st February, 1928 and it was chaired by Begum Qudratullah Khan with a gathering of twenty five ladies. The following resolutions were passed in this session:

- All the sisters of *anjuman* gave their concern to follow the Islamic fundamentals and should practiced it. It was prescribed by Begum Qudratullah Khan and was supported by Mushtaq Fatima.
- The exhibition for children which gave them important lessons was organized at many places every year. With the permission of the municipality board to arrange this *anjuman* in Kanpur. This proposal was suggested by Tahzib Fatima Abbasi and supported by Akhlaq Fatima and Fatima Saghir.
- An issue raised by famous personalities was to guide the children how to write an essay and give them various topics for it.

The 17th session convened with a gathering of thirty five ladies under the chairperson of Begum Rafi-al-Qadir who was a deputy collector. The following resolutions were passed in this meeting:

- On 30th January, 1928 in the meeting of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* of Kanpur, proposed a plan to establish an *Islamic Madrasah Niswan* at Kanpur. As the other cities did not come forward for this cause, this *anjuman* requested to the respectable personalities of Kanpur like Khan Bahadur Nazim-ud-din Ahmad, Maulvi Fazlur Rahman, Wahid Ahmad, Abu-al-Mali Wahiduddin, Rafi-ud-din Ahmad etc for their aid and requested them to appeal in other cities for it. The subscriber of this issue was Akhlaq Fatima and supported by Begum Rafi-ul-Qadir.
- According to Maulana Azad Subhani, all the ladies of *anjuman* must know the *Kalima* (Islamic creed) and its meaning.

Besides this, some articles related to important matters like *Qabr Parasti aur Mushrikana Rasm* (visit of graves and polytheism) by Mumtaz Jahan Begum, *Khairat* (Charity) by Mehr Ara Begum, *Khushdili* (Pleasure) by Tahzib Fatima etc were read and an exhibition of handicraft was also shown in this session.

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21 Ibid, p-555.
The 18th sessions held on 26th May, 1928 which was chaired by Begum Khan Bahadur Nizamuddin Ahmad. The following resolutions were passed:

- This *anjuman* proposed that the Muslim ladies should guide their children to recite the verses of Holy Quran with meaning as it was important to do so.
- This *anjuman* should also fixed a date for the discussion on the life of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and many speakers delivered various lectures on this topic.
- This *anjuman* opposed those marriages which were illegally arranged and out of the *Shari‘at* laws. It was proposed by Tahzib Fatima Abbasi and supported by Gohur Begum and Saeeda Begum.

The other sessions of the 18th meeting were held on 30th June, 1928 under the supervision of Begum Rafi-al-Qadir. In this session, many articles were read on Islamic fundamentals and one of speakers Mushtaq Fatima talked about the day of resurrection in Karbala and also mourned this day. The following resolutions were passed at the meeting:

- The Social Reform activist, Mr.Harbilas Sarda sponsored the *Child Marriage Restraint Act* according to which, it was a crime to marry the girls at a very minor age. Thus, he passed a law in favour of girls. The *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* of Kanpur supported this law. The subscriber of this issue was Mushtaq Fatima and supported by Begum Wahid Ahmad, Begum Rafi-al-Qadir.
- The *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* of Kanpur opposed the speeches of any Englishman for Muslim section and favoured the lecture of Syed Ross Masood, whose lectures benefitted the students of Muslim community. It was proposed by Tahzib Fatima Abbasi and supported by Akhlaq Fatima and Begum Rafi-al-Qadir.

The 20th session was held on 31stAugust,1928 under the Chairmanship of Begum Babu Rashid Ahmad. The following schemes were passed at this meeting:

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In this session it was decided that the mark not only fixed for the members of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* of Kanpur but it was also practiced in the *anjuman* of other places. The subscriber of this was Tahzib Fatima Abbasi and supported by Begum Babu Rashid Ahmad and Akhlaq Fatima, joint Secretary of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan*.

Another scheme was proposed on 30th January, 1928, for the establishment of the *Islamia Girls School* in Kanpur and all the respectable personalities of this city supported this proposal. Its appeal was also sent to the members of Aligarh Old Boys’ Association of Kanpur for aids. This was prescribed by Akhlaq Fatima and supported by Saeed Begum and Begum Qudratullah Khan.

Another session of 20th meeting was held on 28th September, 1928 under Saeeda Begum and many articles on different topics were presented by the participants. A speaker read an article on the need for the reform of *Purdah* and Akhlaq Fatima, the Joint Secretary of this meeting read the yearly report of *Orphan House Islamia* in Kanpur. This organization was also a part for the welfare of women’s upliftment.

At the 24th session which was organized on 31st October, 1928 under the Chairmanship of Begum Khan Bahadur Abdul Qayyum and the articles for the help of orphan house’s children, *Purdah*, health etc were read.

The 25th session was held on 3rd December, 1928 under the Chairmanship of Begum Babu Rashid Ahmad. At this session an important issue like *apni Gharon ki Muqamal Safai* (complete cleanliness of own houses) raised by Tahzib Fatima Abbasi in which she stressed the need to clear the house and also pointed out the negative side of dirtiness. Thus, the *anjuman* proposed a plan according to which the municipality board appointed the servants who visited every house once or twice weekly. It was advised by Tahzib Fatima Abbasi and supported by Abul Maali Wahiduddin Ahmad. This *anjuman* also passed a scheme in which the municipality board regulated a law according to which if the people left their house dirty, it took action against them. In this way, the people strictly follow the rules of cleanliness.

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The first session of second annual meeting of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan*, Kanpur was held on 31st December, 1928 at the same bungalow of Nawab Intezar Ali and was chaired by Begum Khan Bahadur Abdul Qayyum. A useful scheme was proposed that the parents especially the mother did not give money to the children as it affected them in childhood and they misused it. It was prescribed by Tahzib Fatima and supported by Akhlaq Fatima. An eminent educated lady Mrs. Kalka Prasad, delivered an interesting speech on *Hamare Mulk Mein Aurton Ki Halat* (Condition of women in our country) in which she expressed her grief for the marginalised condition of Indian women and the reason for their illiteracy.

Mrs. Kalka Prasad also informed the members of this *anjuman* to make an arrangement for the ladies in Kanpur with the intention to educate them. The issues of health, house-holding activities, handicrafts etc were discussed in this Organization. In this matter, Mrs. Kalka Prasad, Tahzib Fatima Abbasi, the Secretary of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan*, Kanpur tried to insist more Muslim ladies towards it to become the members of *Intezam-e-Islah-Taalim* (Reformatory Arrangement of Education).

In the second session of this annual meeting which was held on 1st January, 1929 the following schemes were passed:

- It proposed that the habit of chewing betel leaf was bad for children which affected their health. Thus, the parents were made aware about it and asked to keep their children away from this habit. The subscriber of this was Tahzib Fatima Abbasi and was supported by Mrs. Maya Das who was the Principal of Agricultural College of Kanpur.

- A plan was discussed to open an alms-house in every city for the blinds, orphans, handicaps etc. In short, the main motive of this organization was to help the needy people. The government help was also needed for it. It was prescribed by Tahzib Fatima Abbasi and supported by Begum Babu Rashid Ahmad.

The Secretary of this *anjuman*, Tahzib Fatima Abbasi said about an organization, *Anjuman-Darul Khawateen*—its establishment, condition and the aims which worked for the welfare of women. She requested all the members of this

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28 Deputy director of Jhansi.
30 Ibid, p-120.
anjuman to pay their attention on this matter. An arrangement of exhibition was also organized in this session and the prize distributed to the artists\textsuperscript{31}.

The 28\textsuperscript{th} session was held on 8\textsuperscript{th} January, 1929 in the house of late Rizvi Sharif Saeeda Begum Bint Syed Abul Hasan\textsuperscript{32}. The wife of Babu Rashid Ahmad appointed as the Secretary of this anjuman. At this meeting, the preachers like Maulana Muhammad Umar Kanpuri, Maulvi Mahmud Asif and Maulvi Saeed Ahmad sermonized on *Meraj Sharif* (Holy Ascension of Prophet Muhammad). The ladies such as Jahan Ara Saheba, Begum Babu Rashid Ahmad, Safiya Banu, Begum Ahmad Husain, Mukhtar Bahu Saheba, Badshah Begum Saheba and Mushtaq Fatima donated the grant for it\textsuperscript{33}.

The 29\textsuperscript{th} meeting was organized on 31\textsuperscript{st} March, 1929 which was chaired by Mrs. Babu Rashid Ahmad. The resolutions passed were as follows\textsuperscript{34}.

- The *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* of Kanpur expressed gratitude for Syed Mumtaz Ali, the editor of *Tahzib-e-Niswan*, Lahore who spoke on *Rahbar-i-Niswan* for the cause of women in Aligarh. Thus, it proposed to pass a resolution on it.

- The anjuman suggested a new principal to save money for the ladies, involved in household works. If the ladies deposited some money in other fund apart from their daily expenditure of household affairs, they saved large amount after few days.

- Tahzib Fatima Abbasi also initiated another plan according to which the young ladies should know the importance of saving that how to save the money and how to spend money on household activities.

The 30\textsuperscript{th} meeting of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* of Kanpur was held on 31\textsuperscript{st} May, 1929 headed by Begum Khan Bahadur Nizamuddin. At this session, once again the scheme was passed on the importance of saving which was already approved in the last session\textsuperscript{35}.

\textsuperscript{31} *Tahzib-un-Niswan*, vol-32, no-5, (2 February, 1929) p-125.
\textsuperscript{32} Leather merchant of Kanpur.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, vol-32, no-22, (22 June, 1929), pp-589-590.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, p-610.
Another meeting of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan*, Kanpur was held on 25th July, 1929 under the Presidentship of Babu Rashid Ahmad. In this session the proposal was passed to celebrate the *Yum waladat of Rasool* (Birthday of Prophet Muhammad) on 12th Rabi-ul-awal in all the *anjuman* at different places.\(^{36}\)

The next meeting of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* of Kanpur was held on 13th March, 1930 under the Presidentship of Begum Babu Rashid Ahmad. In this session, the functions were arranged for farewell the secretary of this *anjuman*, Mushtaq Fatima.\(^{37}\)

The *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan* was also formed in Roorkee and the first meeting of this organization held on 26th February, 1927 at Tahir Manzil. Begum Nisar Ahmad who was a tahsildar chaired this event and Imtiaz Jahan Begum appointed as the Secretary. The main agenda of this session was importance of women’s education and one of the speakers Hasina Khatun delivered a motivating speech on it. A prominent lady Begum Muhammad Yasin Khan spoke about the *Islamia School* of Saharanpur. Then the Secretary Imtiaz Jahan Begum emphasized the need of *Islamia Madrasah* for the women of Roorkee and requested the delegates for the grants of it. The Ladies like Begum Munshi Ishtiaq Ahmad, Begum Muhammad Ismail Khan, Begum Nasib Khan, Sikandar Jahan, Nawab Jahan, Ashgari Begum and Saghir Begum etc contributed for it.\(^{38}\)

The second meeting of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan*, Roorkee held on 11th April, 1927 at *Islamia Madrasah Niswan* under the Chairperson of Begum Khan Bahadur Mirza Ashiq Husain. In this session, the Secretary Imtiaz Jahan Begum read an article on the life of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). The other ladies like Sikandar Jahan Begum spoke about Islam, Wahida Khanum, Maqbul Fatima and the girls of *Islamia Madrasah* also impressed the Chairperson by reading a *nazm*. The ladies contributed a handsome amount in this meeting.\(^{39}\)

The other session of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan*, Roorkee was held on 31st December, 1927 at Daulat Khana of Begum Hafiz Mehtab Khan. With the support of


Secretary Imtiaz Jahan Begum and Joint Secretary Begum Hafiz Mehtab Khan, Begum Mahfuz Khan was appointed as the President of this meeting. In this session, the honorable lady Sikandar Jahan Begum read an important article on education and Purdah to incline the ladies towards education\(^40\).

The February session of this meeting was held on the occasion of foundation day of anjuman and Madrasah in which the participants of anjuman distributed the prize to the successful students and grants were collected for the school fund\(^41\).

The other session was held on 23\(^{rd}\) April, 1928 by Begum Hafiz Mehtab Khan in which Sikandar Jahan Begum spoke on Tāalim wa Tarbiyat (Education and upbringing). The Secretary informed about the irregularity of this meeting due to lack of members. Thus, she requested the interested ladies to become the members of this anjuman which would help to achieve their goal\(^42\).

The next meeting of Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan, Roorkee was held on 16\(^{th}\) July, 1928, at Madrasah Niswan under the Chairmanship of Begum Hafiz Mehtab Khan. The deputy assistant Fahmeeda Khanum and Jamila Begum organized the whole session. The respectable lady Sikandar Jahan Begum spoke on a proposal to celebrate the occasion Eid Milad. In this meeting, there was also a discussion about the need of trained teacher for the Madrasah Niswan who would have expertise in Urdu, accounts, and handicrafts work. Thus, the Secretary of Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan, Roorkee appealed to the ladies to inform her who would fulfill these criteria\(^43\).

Fatima Begum Bint Muhammad\(^44\) informed that a book section was opened for the Muslim women in the public library and the lady members of this library could get the books at their home every week by the help of a Muslim clerk. The membership fees for per week was eight rupees and entry fees was seven rupees. The entry form was available from the librarian. The address of the librarian was also mentioned\(^45\).

Lahore was another place where the meetings of anjuman were organized. An important women’s association in Lahore was Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam (association

\(^{41}\) Ibid, p-82.
\(^{44}\) A lady from Bangalore.
for the support of Islam). The main purpose of this organization was to gain support of the ladies and incline them towards promotion of Islam and women’s education in its broader sense. The third annual meeting of this committee was convened on 17th December, 1925 at the house of an eminent lady Begum Khan Bahadur Shaikh Abdul Qadir in Lahore. It was presided over by Begum Fazil Husain. There were a large number of ladies assembled in it apart from the girls of Zanana Madrasah. The Secretary of this committee was Mrs. Azimullah who started the programme and an honourable Professor of Girls Intermediate College in Lahore, Mrs. Khadija Ferozuddin delivered an impressive lecture which influenced all the delegates of this meeting. The appeal for grants was made by Begum Shaikh Muhammad Umar and all the lady members gave the grants with full enthusiasm. Some of the ladies gave their precious ornaments and others gave cash as a grant.

As we know that the main agenda of this organization was to promote Islam and Islamic culture thus various important lectures on Islamic fundamentals were discussed in it by the respectable ladies like Zakia Zafar Husain, Mrs. Beg who was the inspector of Girls’ Madrasah of Islamia and Mrs. Azimullah. However, the initiator of this meeting Begum Abdul Qadir delivered an important speech on women’s education and foundation of Girls’ Madrasah. She approached all the ladies to give their comments on it.

A respectable lady of Lahore, Miss Ferozuddin reported about the meeting of Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam which was held on 27th March, 1927. Though the meeting was held yearly but due to the interest of ladies this meeting was organized in the mid-session in which large number of ladies participated. The wife of late Mian Nizamuddin of Bhagalpur was appointed as the Chairman of this session. Begum Mahbub Alam and Begum Muhammad Rafi, the Secretary of Islamic Girls Madrasah committee delivered a speech. Another lady Begum Bashir Ahmad encouraged the delegates towards important reformist approaches. One of educated ladies, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu participated in this meeting who was in Lahore at that time. Begum Abdul Qadir, the chief member of Madrasah committee welcomed Mrs. Sarojini Naidu with

46 wife of unionist political leader Sir Fazil Husain.
48 Ibid, p-840.
a remarkable lecture among the others ladies. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu gave a speech in Urdu which impressed the members. Her lecture emphasized the fact that she had a great knowledge of the religion of Islam and showed her respect towards it. Lastly, Bint Mahbub Alam thanked Mrs. Sarojini Naidu on behalf of all ladies. After that, Begum Zakia Zafar Husain, Miss Ghulam Mohiuddin and Miss Khadija Ferozuddin delivered important lectures. The members of this meeting contributed happily and sum of eleven hundred rupees was collected. The lady, Begum Abdul Qadir promised to give a plot to this *anjuman*. Apart from this, she also gave one hundred rupees for the refreshment of delegates but due to the month of *Ramzan*, this amount was spent for the education of girls. All the members appreciated this idea. The ladies such as Begum Mohiuddin and Begum Azimuddin contributed remarkably for the success of this meeting. At the end of this session, Miss Mahbub Alam announced a proposal to help the Boys and Girls of orphan house and requested all the members to contribute for the fund which was send to them on the occasion of *Eid*. Thus all the ladies welcomed this plan.

Another reputed lady Zahoor Fatima who was the Secretary of *Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan*, Lahore reported the fourth meeting of this *anjuman* which was held on 8th January, 1928 at *Muslim Girls School* in Lahore. In this session, the discussion started with religious themes. One of the respectable lady Rashida Latif delivered her lecture on the life of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). The ladies such as Hamida Begum and Saeeda Begum, Bilquis Jahan read an Islamic *nazm* on the praises of Almighty God. Zahoor Fatima read an article on *Mazhab se hamari gafkat* (Unawareness from religion) in which she mentioned the unawareness of peoples who were far from the religious basics. They did not give much concern to religious education and the Muslims were involved in various superstitious belief and customs. The *nazm* of Maulana Hali was also read in this meeting. S.B.Tahira read an article on *Waqt ki Qadr* (Importance of time). The other lady Khadijat-ul-kubra said that the strength of *Tahzibi bahan* in Lahore was large but as she did not know the address of these ladies, she could not send them invitation. Thus she requested all the *Tahzibi bahan* to send their proper address to the office of *Tahzibi Anjuman*. The name of the ladies who included their name for membership of this *anjuman* were Saher Banu,

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Iqbal Begum, S.B.Tahira, Zehra Khanum, Akhtar Jahan, Nazma Sultana, Zubaida Sultana, Jamila Begum, Zahoore Fatima etc. The Secretary of this meeting also mentioned the total grants of contributors who paid for it. These grants were sent to the fund and also the money was given to the needy girls.

The 7th meeting of Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan of Lahore was held on 22nd April, 1928 under the Chairmanship of Begum Shaikh Laiq Ali who was a sub-judge. There were around sixty ladies gathered in this meeting. This meeting was held at the house of Zahoore Fatima. In this session, the articles read were Kam karne me aib (negligence in duties) by Zehra Khanum, Bachcho ki Sawalat (Questions of children) by Akhtari Jahan and Zahoore Fatima’s article on the history of Prophet (S.A.W). Arrangement was also made to educate two orphan girls in Islamia Girls School and provided them with clothes. Thus, it hoped that the Tahzibi Anjuman should be beneficial for the orphan girls.

One of the members of anjuman, Zahoore Fatima wrote about the Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan of Lahore. She wrote after a long time due to her departure from Lahore but she appointed Jamila bint Shaikh Noor-ul-Hai in her place. However, this lady proved unsuccessful in this work. Zahoore Fatima wrote that last year she came in Lahore and published an advertisement in search of a lady who took the responsibility of this anjuman. She found an eligible lady Zahida Khatun bint Khurd Syed Sulaiman Shah who showed interest in this work. Thus, the meeting of this anjuman was held at the house of Zahida Khatun on 24th November, 1928. There were thirty to forty ladies who participated in this meeting. Begum Maulvi Muhammad Ali was appointed as the President of this meeting. Zahoore Fatima read an article on Islamic education. The other two educated ladies, Zehra Khanum and sister Akhtar read articles on Hamari Taraqqi (Our Progress) and Khairat (Charity) and the President delivered a speech on Islahi Mashirat (Reforms of society) at the end of this session.

Another meeting of Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan, Lahore was convened on 27th April, 1930 and presided over by Begum Muhammad Ali. There were sixty ladies who gathered in this meeting. The delegates discussed various important issues and

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53 wife of Ahmad Mobin from Lahore
delivered lectures. One of the reputed lady, Mrs. Muhammad Shafi speaks on old rasm (custom), Hamida Begum lectured on women’s education, Saeeda Begum spoke about the Halat Hazrat Mujaddid Sirhindi, Saleha Begum gave her speech on religious education and Hajia Begum delivered lecture on the need for grants.

Zahida Khatun, the Secretary of Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan reported another anjuman’s meeting which was held on 4th July, 1930 in Lahore. It was chaired by Begum Saheba Khan Bahadur Syed Sulaiman Shah. Nearly twenty to thirty ladies participated in it. In this session, Saeeda Laiqa Khatun read article on Eid Milad-un-Nabi in which she discussed the importance of the day of 12th Rabi-ul-awal and how to celebrate this occasion.

One of the social activists, Noor Muhammad Momin from Bombay wrote about the Anjuman-e-Tahzib-e-Niswan, Bombay that though there were many educated ladies in Bombay but no anjuman was formed there due to the ignorance of ladies. He said that the ladies of Punjab were much active in this matter. Thus he requested all the ladies of Bombay to open an anjuman in Bombay and all the ladies should act enthusiastically for its formation.

About the women’s Anjuman in Punjab, the Urdu magazine Tahzib-e-Niswan reported that the organization of Khawateen-e-Punjab which was established since five years among which 142 anjuman were formed to train the ladies for the work of costume design and other activities. In 1929, the numbers of women’s anjuman in Punjab was 124. However, the positions of other anjuman were also mentioned. Several anjuman were formed at different places for e.g, Sialkot (113), Gujranwala (127), Lahore (15), Amritsar (20), Gorakhpur (28), Jalandhar (18), Ludhiana (2), Gujarat (1) and Lyallpur (1). There were 1,03105 rupees saved from these anjuman. Among these, eight anjuman formed for the sake of children in which the children from 2 -14 years were included. The first anjuman of children was established in Gurdaspur which inaugurated by a ten years old girl Hamida Begum. This girl collected the money for this anjuman from her friends and relatives. There was 1135

55 Wife of Mian Muhammad Shafi from Lahore.
59 These anjuman were numerous and collected enormous fund, for details see, *Tahzib-un-Niswan*, vol-33, no-30, (1 November, 1930), pp-1085-86.
rupees saved in this anjuman from which 471 rupees were give to the parents for the education of these children. There were an inspector and sub-inspector who watched the activities of this anjuman. The ladies were very active and they saved a big amount from it. In short, it was a way of their earning.

The inspector of this organization, Miss Ahmad Shah also reported about the Swadeshi Movement of Punjab. If the women stitched the hand-made clothes and cooked bread from their saved money, it was very useful for the promotion of this movement. The women in many parts of the world worked in karkhanas and independently led their lives. Though the women in Punjab were very active, it was expected that they worked enthusiastically for the progress of anjuman which was formed for the upliftment of women.

The meeting of Central Provinces in Punjab was also organized on 24th February, 1931 in which the following agendas were mentioned:

- Announcement of Chairperson.
- To discuss the important programme of All-India and All-Asia Conference which was held in Lahore.
- The annual local committee’s report from 1930-31 which worked for one year.

Later on the formation of Anjuman in various places of North India influenced the women and they began to participate in Tahrik Darul Khawateen organized at many places which gave a momentum to female education movement.

The journal Noor Jahan published from Lahore was to start and propagate a Tahrik-Darul-Khawateen. Lady Imtiaz Jahan Begum, the Secretary of the anjuman Darul-Khawateen, Roorkee suggested that a separate column should be included in it on a permanent basis. Later on, several anjuman of Darul-Khawateen began to set up at various places like Rae Bareilly, at the house of Yameen Aziz Rahman and

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61 Ibid, p-1086.
63 Noor Jahan, (Lahore), vol-7, no-12, (December, 1929), p-43.
64 Railway Engineer.
eleven *anjuman* were formed in Punjab, Lahore, Sindh and U.P and four in Madras. A resolution was passed about monthly donations of the members\textsuperscript{65}.

On 13\textsuperscript{th} October, 1929 a monthly meeting of *Anjuman Darul Khawateen* was held at *Zanana* School (Girls’ school) in Aligarh, attended by large gathering of ladies. The program began with recitation of the Holy Quran. Begum Sikandar Jahan was its President. Begum Imtiaz Jahan addressed the gathering. It was decided that the branch of *Purdah Ladies Club* should be *Darul-Khawateen*. Begum Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah, Honorary Secretary of *Muslim Girls’ School*, Aligarh and some other ladies gave enormous fund for *Darul-Khawateen*\textsuperscript{66}.

The Bhopal branch of *Darul Khawateen* also gives us some information about the educational *Madrasah* and handicrafts centres for women in order to make them self-sufficient. It was due to the efforts of Nawab Sultan Jahan Begum of Bhopal. The Honorary Secretary of the *anjuman* was Abru Begum addressed the gathering\textsuperscript{67}.

Another meeting of the *anjuman* was held at Agra under the Presidentship of Begum Mirza Habib Husain. She highlighted many un-Islamic practices and household duties in her speech\textsuperscript{68}.

In 1930, a branch of *Tahrik Darul Khawateen* started at Delhi. The meeting was presided over by Begum Razaullah Khan. In the speech learned ladies mentioned the deplorable condition of Muslim women and gave useful suggestions to improve their condition\textsuperscript{69}.

Beside this, the journal *Khatun-i-Mashriq* of Meerut reported about the meeting of *Anjuman Darul Khawateen*, Agra held on 1\textsuperscript{st} April, 1930 in which resolution passed in favour of founding the library for the ladies. A respectable lady, Birjis Dulhan delivered an impressive speech in which she emphasised the need of founding the library and club. At first she took participate in the meeting of *Anjuman Darul Khawateen* held in Faizabad where an eminent lady Ummat-ul-Hamid Khanum suggested her to form an *anjuman* in Agra. The ladies who helped for the formation of

\textsuperscript{66} For details of donors List see, *Noor Jahan*, (Lahore), vol-7,no-12, (December, 1929), pp-46-47.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid,vol-8,no-2,(February,1930),pp-149-151.
\textsuperscript{68} Ibid,p-157.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid,pp-159-161.
this *anjuman* were Begum Nazim Ali Khan, Begum Syed Muhammad Mahmud, Iqbal Begum, Raunaq Begum. A meeting of this *anjuman* convened on 27th October, 1929 in which fifty ladies took participate. Thus, the plan to found a *Darul Khawateen* in Agra was decided and there were twenty two ladies became member of this association. The other ladies who showed their interest in it were Begum Sultan Husain, Begum Asghar Ali, Begum Nizam Ali Khan, Begum Sharif Husain. In this way, the monthly meeting of this association convened regularly and the name of member increased\(^{70}\).

After that, Birjis Dulhan said the purpose of this association which gave lesson about morals of life and religion. The other speaker, Khatoon Jahan Begum emphasized the benefit for the foundation of this *anjuman* where the women from different places meet together and discussed various issues\(^{71}\). Thus, this proved an important reform association which awakens the Muslim Ladies.

On 29th October, 1927, the *anjuman* of Amritsar made an appeal to the ladies subscribers of journal *Saheli*\(^{72}\) to attend the meeting of the *anjuman* at Lahore and motivated the ladies to speak on women related issues like un-Islamic practices, dowry, *Nikah* (marriage), inheritance, education of girls in the *Madrasahs* etc\(^{73}\).

The Muslim ladies of Amravati organized a meeting on 28th January, 1930 by the support of Abdul Hai Bil. It was presided over by Mrs.Khwaja Latif Ahmad. The Secretary of this meeting was Khurshid Ara Begum and other ladies who took participate in it were Baghdadi Begum from Jaipur, Mrs.Sofi, Mrs.Syed Muzaffar Husain, Miss Amanullah, Abida Begum etc. They discussed the matter of women’s rights especially the property right\(^{74}\).

In this meeting, the ladies of Amravati also proposed to open an *anjuman* by the name of *Anjuman-e-Khawateen*, Amravati whose main motive was to take up the issue of women’s rights, reforming the old customs in the light of Islamic laws and the other matters like women’s education, various householding activities like cooking, sewing etc\(^{75}\).


\(^{71}\) Ibid,p-40.

\(^{72}\) Edited by Dr.Khadija Ferozuddin.

\(^{73}\) *Saheli*,(Amritsar),vol-3, no-12, (December,1927),p-68.

\(^{74}\) *Ismat*, vol-44, no-3, (March,1930),p-209.

\(^{75}\) Ibid,p-210.
One of the members, Begum Khan Bahadur Abdul Qadir passed a proposal to establish an *Anglo-Vernacular School* at Amravati for the Muslim girls to impart them English education. The arrangement of vehicle was needed for the school girls. Thus, the Secretary Khurshid Ara Begum reported that the ladies in Amravati appealed to provide them vehicle.

To quote:

> "...سلمان انگریزی کی اگر بری اطلاعی کے لئے امریکی نیں اپنے دوریون پر اسکول کھواہی تھوڑی زیادہ "

> امیدو ہے کہ گورنمنٹ نے پڑنے کی سیاسی جاری کردی گئی اسکول کیوں کہ لیکن اسکول کی پوری رقابت کی انتظام کرنے پر حاضری ہوئی ہے...اگر ہو تو اس کے لئے مسلمان انگریزی کی آمیدرہ کے لئے موزم رکھی سے مقرر کرے اور اس کا ذریعہ بیان کر کہ وہ خیال سے بھی مساوی ہے...بگو جس طرح آج کل ناٹل اسکول وہانہ اسکول کی اگریزی کے لئے موثر کر کے گیا ہے...بتیجہ کہ اسکول کہ اورشام کو کھتے..."

The 3rd yearly-meeting of *Anjuman Muslim Khawateen*, Karachi was held on 23rd December, 1933, presided over by Begum Saheba Khan Bahadur Shaikh Muhammad Ibrahim, the former wazir of Khairpur. This session was attended by the ladies of different communities such as Khojah, Bohra, Memon, Punjabi and Marwari etc. The arrangement of *Purdah* was strictly maintained. Speeches on women related issues like *Muslim Khawateen ki Bedari* (Awakening of Muslim women) by Lady S.H.Shafi and Gul Bibi and Begum Abbasi were greatly appreciated\(^\text{77}\).

\(^{76}\) *Ismat*, vol-46, no-3, (March, 1931), p-216.

\(^{77}\) Ibid, vol-48, no-2, (February, 1933), p-140.