ABSTRACT

Islamic movement is generally defined by contemporary scholars as a sincere collective efforts to turn to pure teaching of Islam and to struggle for the purification of the Muslim society from the non-Islamic beliefs and practices. In my thesis the term connotes the sincere efforts made by different Muslim associations of modern Kerala namely the Sunni movement, Islahi movement, Jama'at-e-Islami, Tablighi Jama'at and others in the fields of Islamic reformation and revival.

The historians unanimously agree that the positive attitude of native rulers, and the role of sufis, and the ulama were the factors that helped the spread of Islam in Kerala, though they differ on the exact period of the advent of Islam and conversion of the Chera King. The Europeans' penetration and their atrocities affected the progress of Muslim community. Muslims were successful in resisting the Europeans with the help of spiritual leaders but they failed Consequently to overcome these imperialist powers.

The colonization of imperialist powers and anti-colonial attitude of Muslims later on caused the social, educational, economic and cultural backwardness of the Muslim community in Kerala. The imperialist colonization created an obstacle in the social and education progress of Muslim community earlier started by Makhdums of Ponnani and Qadis of Calicut.
The side effects of the caste system, existed in social set up of Kerala, was an important factor which helped the spreading of Islam in Kerala. The imperialistic colonization strengthened the exploitation of janmis against the slaves and low caste people, which caused the mass conversion of these people to a religion which provided them a social justice and equal status that led to the emergence of a new phenomenon that is multi-culturalism. The spiritual leaders neglected this opportunity due to the social, economic and political reasons. The practices of new multi-culturalism became the ingredient of Islam. The powerful anti imperialistic feelings forced them to turn into anti-modernism which caused the total backwardness of the Muslim community.

In the beginning of 19th century many of the beliefs and practices of Muslim community were anti Islamic and most of them were against the fundamental principle of Islam ie. tauhid. They gave more importance to Baits, Maulids and Malapattu etc. than the recitation of Holy Qura’n, and they considered it as the part of belief. They preferred the visiting of the graves or shrines of saints and scholars and offering nerchas than the performance of Salah. With the help of Government, the Christian missionaries and Bhakti movements started a process of reconversion among the converted Muslims. This created more tension in the mind of Muslims. The Muslim scholars and ulama realized that it was essential to resist
these anti-Islamic movements and they started socio-educational reforms at the end of 19th Century.

Apart from the socio-religious and political conditions, the reformation movement started in the national and international level also influenced the ulama in Kerala. Mamburam Syed Alavi Thangal (d 1844), Fazal Pukoya Thangal (d 1901), Veliyamkode Ummer Qadi (d 1852), Ali Musliyar (d 1922) etc. motivated the Muslims to develop an anti-imperialist feeling. But Makthithangal, Chalilakath Kunjahammad Haji, Hamadani Thangal, and Vakkam Moulavi were the leaders who worked for the social, educational and religious upliftment of the Muslim community. Their activities not only checked the Christian missionaries and Bhakti movement but also created an awareness to chalk out the socio-cultural programmes for revival and reformation. All these helped to enhance the activities of Islamic movement in Kerala in later years among which Sunni movement is the most influential in its activities and the most popular in Kerala.

The factors like the activities of Ahmadiya sect and deviant Tariqahs – noorisha, Shamsiya, Kondotti and the formation of Aikya Sangam and its Ulama organisation-Kerala Jami’at Ulama and the reformation movement in the Arab world forced the Kerala Sunnis to form an Ulama organisation. It came into exist officially in 1926, namely Samasta Kerala Jami’at al-Ulama. All most all the ulama and
common people became its members and supporters. For the smooth running of ulama organization they formed a 40 members shura council to maintain their day to day affairs of Samasta and issue the religious decree against the non-Sunni organization. All their activities were carried out through the Mahallu committees.

SKJU concentrated on the oration of scholars in the night to propagate their ideology which helped common Muslims to understand the religion and Sunni ideology. They checked the advancement of Ahmadies, different Tariqahs and Wahhabism effectively. They followed same policy towards the Jama’at-e-Islami and Tablighi Jama’at.

Samasta mainly concentrated to impart religious education than modern education. For this purpose they formed a Muslim Educational Board called Samasta Kerala Islam Matha Vidyabiyasa Board in 1951 and established new madarsas and dars, prepare curriculum syllabus and text book and appoint qualified teachers for the effective running of these institution. Later they started Arabic colleges as a part of modernizing the madrasas and dars system. In 1954 Samasta formed a youth organization called Samasta Kerala Sunni Yuva\n\nJana Sangam to spread Islamic ideology on Sunni perspectives and prepare the youngsters to resist the Ahmadis, fake sufis, Mujahids, Jama’at-e-Islami and Tabligh. They carried out social, educational and cultural activities for the upliftment of
Muslim Community. In 1973 Samasta formed a Students organization called *Sunni Students’ Federation* (SSF) to impart Sunni ideology-based education among the Muslim Students. As a part of expanding the activities of Samasta to Southern part of Kerala, they formed another *ulama* organization called *Dakshina Kerala Jamiat ulama* in 1955. They formed a separate educational board to impart the religious education among the Muslim in South Kerala and also formed a youth organization separately. The collective efforts of these organisations helped socio educational development of Muslim Community.

The *Islahi* movement started in the beginning of 20th century. The non-Islamic customs and practices of Kerala Muslims led to the emergence of *Islahi* Movement in Kerala which was started in three phases. The first phase of *Islahi* movement started with the formation of *Kerala Muslim Aikya Sangam* in 1923. The activities like establishing educational institution, collecting fund for helping the victims of Malabar revolt, social education awareness programme and working for the eradication of superstitious believes and practices increased its popularity and helped to create a foundation to *Islahi* movement but their attitude towards *Madhab, Istigatha, Tawassul, Taqlid* and *Ijihad* caused labeling them as a Wahhabi Movement. A part from this the formation of Islamic Banking leniency towards *Muslim league*, attitude towards peasants
movement and formation of Muslim Majlis led to the disintegration of Aikya Sangam but the ulama organization Kerala Jami'at Ulama (KJU), which formed in 1924, continued the Islahi activities till the formation of Kerala Nadwat al-Muahideen. During this period KJU mainly concentrated to resisting the orthodox Sunni ulama, carried out educational programmes and forming local Mahallu committee to spread Islahi ideology. But the formation of Jama'at-e-Islami and Tablighi Jama'at, gathering the scattered Islahi local organization and resist sunnis, KJU formed KNM in 1950.

After the formation of KNM, Islahi Movement became more powerful and widened their activities. They started publishing magazines, establish Arabic Colleges and madarsas, and conducted other social education and cultural activities as part of propagation of Islahi ideology. As a part of extending their activities KNM formed a youth organization called Ittihad Shubbanil Mujahideen (ISM). The prime objective was to assure the participation of Muslim youth in the propagation of Islam and Islahi ideology. To expand their activities they started magazine, conducted seminars, symposium, Da’wah squad and tasqiyat camps. Apart from this they also conducted socio-cultural activities as part of the missionary works. KNM also formed a students organization and a Girls organisation for check the demoralization of Muslim students and girls namely Mujahid Students’ Movements (MSM) and Mujahid Girls and Women’s
Movements (MGM). All the activities of these organisations helped to minimize the anti-religious practices and growth of other Muslim organizations.

The activities of Jama'at-e-Islami started in Kerala in the early 1930's in the form of Islahi Movement. The first unit of Jama'at-e-Islami formed in the name of Jami'at al-Mustarshidheen in 1946 which followed the same concept, ideology, ways and methods of Jama'at-e-Islami developed by Abul A'la Maududi. Later it changed into Jama'at-e-Islami in 1948. The activities of Jama'at-e-Islami started in Kerala by Haji V.P. Muhammad Ali on the above name. They spread their ideology through public lectures, literary activities and annual conferences. For this purpose they started translating the books and articles published by Maududi into Malayalam language under Islamic Publishing House. Moreover, they started magazines and a daily which helped to popularize Jama'at ideology among the Muslims of Kerala. They also started sub-organisations like Student Islamic Organistaion of India (SIO) in 1983, Girls Islamic Organisation (GIO) in 1984 and Solidarity Youth Movment (SYM) in 2003. All through these organisations they carried out Shariah and Sirah campaign for the propagation of Islamic ideals, anti-moral weak for fostering moral values and ethics, solidarity weak for communal amity, Hajj cell for Pilgrims, guidance and counseling for students and professionals and other social educational and
cultural activities are carried out as part of Da’wah works and spreading their ideology.

The activities of Tablighi Jama’at started in the beginning of 1940’s, but it flourished after the arrival of Musa Maulana Kanjar who completed the education under great Deobandi scholar Amani Hazrat. Tablighi Jama’at in Kerala followed the same pattern of Tabligh. This formed in Mewat by Muhammad Ilyas. They propagated the six principles of Tabligh in Kerala. For this purpose they formulated Jama’at through out the Kerala. They got more appreciation on South Kerala than in North Kerala due to its cooperation with Sunni Ulama organization. As a part of accelerate their activities they also started educational institutions to mould scholars and huffaz. Even though they were not much acceptance, they carried out their activities in the nook and corner of Kerala.

Thus we can conclude that the result of the Islamic movement in Kerala as follows:

a) Islamic movement did not pay due attention to the traditional Muslim culture and heritage; it rather emphasized on the basic Islamic tenets and pillars of the religious.

b) It popularized the Arabic language by establishing Arabic colleges and other institutions.
c) Islamic movement helped the educational renaissance of Muslim community.

d) Promoting of Malayalam instead of Arabic-Malayalam helped the Muslim to raise their status equal to other communities and this helped them to develop a multi-culturalism.

e) These movements divided the Muslim community among the different organisations and the dream of Muslim Ummah could not be realized.

f) The organisations and their leaders never produced a valuable literary works in Arabic as produced by the earlier leaders of renaissance.

g) The reformation activities led to the deterioration of Dars system that had produced valuable literacy works in Arabic and Arabic Malayalam.

h) They failed to get the support of lower and middle class Muslims like the peasants, farmers, tenants and working classes.

**Suggestion**

1. The present organisational system of each association should be modified and properly guided by their head quarters.

2. The Mahallu committee as the primary units of Islamic organizations should be activated properly.

3. Modernizing the madrasa system by introducing a new curriculum and syllabi is the argent need of the time.
4. The intellectual advancement without partial or fractional affiliations should be created.

5. The educational research work on Islamic sciences should be encouraged.

6. A museum or a heritage centre to preserve and publish the works of great scholars of past should be set up.

7. The Ummah-based policies and programmes should be designed.