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Begum Zari Sarfaraz: Her Role and Contribution in Pakistan Movement

Abstract

In this brief article, an attempt has been made to revisit the Pakistan Movement in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, former North-West Frontier Province, which acquired a unique character in the sense that here the job of motivating the women was quite difficult because of the strict cultural values and way of life of women folk. Therefore the job of persuading women to participate in the freedom movement seemed difficult. In such circumstances, Begum Zari Sarfaraz rose up from the folk of Women and continued her effort despite discouraging conditions. In this paper, the role and contribution of Begum Zari Sarfaraz, the Khatoon-e-Sarhad, during the Pakistan Movement has been discussed and evaluated. In the line of this argument, the crucial struggle that she led during the final phase of the partition drama will be explored. As far as the literature on Begum Zari Sarfaraz is concerned, very little has been written on her personality as well as on her contribution to the cause of Pakistan.

Key Words: Pakistan Movement, Women Muslim League, Elections, Civil Disobedience Movement, Referendum

Family Background

The family of Zari Sarfaraz belongs to Allah Dad Khel, the famous branch of Yousafzai, which is known by the name of *kishranzai* in Pashtoon history (Javed, Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen, 1967). Her family had a historical personality popularly known as Fateh khan, the title was Qutbuddin, and real name was Zaid khan. He was a disciple of Hazrat Ghausul Afghan Mian Muhammad Umar of Chamkani. When the great warrior Ahmad Shah Abdali had proceeded to Panipat for the third time in 1762 AD (1176AH), some 40,000 horsemen had taken part from his side. About 17500 men out of these forces were the followers of Mian Muhammad Umar of Chamkani; one among them was Fateh khan (Khan, 1980).

This war was fought against Marhaths. The Marhatah army was led by Malhar Rao Bhar, son of Marathas chieftain Sadda Shewar Bahao. Qutbuddin Zaid khan had launched an attack in the murder of the latter and defeat to Marahaths. Qutbuddin Zaid Khan won the title of Fateh khan from Ahmad Shah Abdali because Qutbuddin was mainly instrumental in the victory against Marathas. Ahmad Shah Abdali had paid great tributes to the bravery of Fateh khan and had bestowed on him two swords and two carpets of Marhaths Chieftain, which are still lying with the khans of Hoti (Javed, Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen, 1967).

Her father, the khan Bahadar Khan, was a great social worker. He did graduation from Aligarh Muslim University. He was a famous cricket player and staunch Muslim Leaguer. He took an active part in Tehrik-e-Khilafat and Pakistan Moment and financed the Muslim League on the directives of Quid-i-Azam in order to strengthen the party in Mardan. He worked day and night to organize the Muslims in Mardan under the Muslim League.

The family of her mother was also very notable and reputed and traced back to Amir Dost Muhammad Khan of Afghanistan (Javed, Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen, 1967). Sarfaraz Khan Barakzai, a man of good family and a chief in his tribe, whilst yet a young man, had, under the name of Paindah Khan, acquired reputation for his rare soldiery and administrative qualities. Khondil khan, Rahamdil Khan, Purdil Khan and Shairdal khan were his sons from his second wife. The last-named died in youth, but the other four were jointly governors of the Kandahar province. They divided its

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revenues and shared its rule, each of the brothers being the ruler of its division, i.e. Kilat, Ghilzai, Kandahar proper, Gorrishk and Farrah. Four third wives, Piandah Khan, had five other sons viz, Atta Muhammad Khan, Sultan Muhammad Khan, Pir Muhammad Khan, Yar Muhammad Khan, Yar Muhammad Khan and Sayyed Muhammad Khan. Each of these Sardars was provided with a provincial government on the Indus Frontier, between Dehrajat and Hashtnagar.

Amir Muhammad Khan and Dost Muhammad Khan were sons of a fourth wife. They ruled the Province of Kabul and Ghazni (H.W.Bellow, 1864). After the death of Amir Dost Muhammad Khan, Amir Sher Ali Khan, who was afraid lest Sardar Muhammad Sharif Khan, the great ancestor of Begum Zari Sarfaraz, the throne from him entered into a secret understanding with the Britishers so that he was sent to India, where he was kept under watch. When the conspiracy was disclosed to Sardar Muhammad Sharif, he prepared to proceed to Iraq than live in British custody. Therefore he went and spent his remaining life over there, where he died and was buried near the mausoleum of Shiekh Abdul Aziz Qadir Jilani. His son, Sardar Muhammad Umar Khan, was the maternal grandfather of Zari Sarfaraz, who came from Iraq to Iran, married the daughter of his maternal uncle over there and came to settle at Muree Road in Rawalpindi. It was here that Kaukab Sultana, mother of Zari Sarfaraz, took birth in July 1905. She got married to the landlord of Mardan Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Khan in 1919 and bore three children: Zari Sarfaraz Khan, Mir Afzal Khan and Khan Aziz Sarfaraz Khan (Javed, Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen, 1967). Kaukab Sultana was an active member of the Muslim League during the freedom movement and made a major contribution to the struggle for Pakistan in the N.W.F.P. She died on May 28, 1994, in Islamabad (Daliy Jung, 1994).

Role in Pakistan Independence Movement

All India Women Muslim League and Zari Membership

On April 11, 1946, while addressing a gathering of Muslim members of the Central Assembly of India, Quaid-i-Azam said:

“No nation can show any progress unless the women of that nation also go side by side their men, and even fight the war equally along with the men.”

Therefore, he laid the foundation of the women branch of all Indian Muslim League at Patna in 1938 and made an appeal to all the Indian Muslim Women to establish women Muslim League branches in their provinces, Districts and subdivisions and struggle side by side with the achievement of their objectives. In response to this appeal, branches of the women Muslim League were established at U.P, Bihar, C.P, Bombay, Karachi, Punjab, Madras and Bengal etc.

The circumstance in NWFP was not conducive for women to take part in any political movement. lack of education among them and specific conditions in the province hindered the women from participating in political activities; *Purdah* was compulsory, and getting out of women without protection was too difficult. It was very difficult for a woman to take courage for a home to home to visit and persuasion of women to participate in the independence Movement or make them members of the Muslim League.

The spouse of Abdul Aziz of Khanpur, district Hazara, Fatima Begum, was a member of the All India Women Muslim League working committee and was organizing the women at Bombay, Punjab and Delhi for Pakistan Movement in accordance with the directions of Quaid-i-Azam.

Quaid-i-Azam ordered Mujahida-i-Millat, Fatima Begum to bring the Frontier's women out to the arena of action for the Pakistan Movement. Obeying Quaid-i-Azams directives, Fatima Begum reached Lahore, wherefrom along with eminent female writers and politicians from Punjab, Begum Salma Tassadduq Hussain and Begum Zubaida Shah arrived in NWFP. These days Sardar Aurangzeb Khan was the NWFP Chief Minister. His wife, when asked by Fatima Begum, excused herself for not accepting the responsibility to launch a struggle for the organization of the Muslim League owing to the peculiar conditions in NWFP. Later Mujahida-i-Millat arranged a meeting of few educated families. The women from Qazi Mir Ahmed's house and a few women from his relative participated in the meeting. The meeting was arranged through the efforts of Nazir Niaz, a pupil of Fatima Begum. Begum Qazi Mir Ahmed and her daughter Shireen Wahad were elected as President and General Secretary respectively of NWFP Women Muslim League in the meeting. Hardly thirty Women participated in the

meeting speaking at the meeting; Fatima Begum, in her emotional speech, urged women to come out for the achievement of Pakistan so that they could struggle along with men for the achievement of Pakistan. Later Begum Qazi Mir Ahmed, Shireen Wahad and Nazir Niaz spread the Muslim League's message in every street. From among districts of NWFP, in Hazara, on the direction of Quaid-i-Azam Begum Kamalu, was bringing women into the field of the Muslim League. She organized the women at Abbottabad through her reasonable and emotional oration in meetings. Fatima Begum addressed letters to the prominent women of D.I Khan, Bannu, Kohat and Mardan to establish branches of the Women Muslim League in their areas. The efforts of Fatima Begum brought fruit as the women branches of the Muslim League were established everywhere NWFP, and women became active in the achievement of Pakistan. Prominent Chief of Mardan Khan Sarfaraz Khan spared his daughter, Zari, for the organization of the women Muslim League. He gave financial support to Zari Sarfaraz for the organization of the Women Muslim League in NWFP. Zari Sarfaraz, as a result, rendered matchless services for this cause.

This Zari later became prominent as Khatoun-e-Sarhad Begum Zari Sarfaraz. Her youthful life was spent in Pakistan Movement and later life dedicated to making Pakistan strong (Javed, Sarhad aur Quaid-i-Azam, 1977).

In 1944, Zari Sarfaraz, on her way to participate in a meeting of the Muslim League Girls Students Federation at Aligarh, stayed at Lahore and in a party at the house of Begum Ahmed Yar Khan Daultana, Begum Salma Tasadduq Hussain registered her as "Two Anna member of Muslim League. Over the Begum Aizaz Rasool, Begum Shaista Suhrawardi and Begum Shah Nawaz all asked her to help Muslim League in arousing the women in Frontier so that they all could get rid of English rule and the dangerous designs of Hindus.

Organization of Women Muslim League National Guard

Till 1944 no women political gathering had been held at Mardan. The agents of congress were flocking the Muslims toward Gandhi-ism. Money was spent profusely by the Tatas and Birlas so that the Muslims did not unite. It was Zari Sarfaraz who took upon herself the responsibility to awaken the Muslim women at Mardan in utter disregard for the influence and money of the Hindus and their agents. She worked a day in and day out for rallying the women under the flag of the Muslim League (Javed, Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen, 1967).

Zari Sarfaraz and Begum Kamaluddin embarked upon tours throughout NWFP Mumtaz Majeed, Sardar Haider, Nazir and Razia Butt were instrumental in women consciousness through their emotional speeches. Women Muslim League National Guard was organized with the financial help of Begum Zari Sarfaraz. Begum Kamaluddin imparted military training to women. The organization of the women Muslim League encouraged the women to come out from their houses. As a result, their husbands and brothers allowed them to openly take part in Pakistan Movement. Women Muslim League gathered enough strength due to the efforts of Zari Sarfaraz. The holding of Public meetings in Mardan, Kohat, Bannu, D.I Khan and Peshawar brought the women in the practical field for the achievement of Pakistan (Javed, Sarhad aur Quaid-i-Azam, 1977).

Foundation of Mardan Zanana (Women) Muslim League and Zari Sarfaraz

In 1945 Begum Nusrat Haroon, wife of eminent Muslim league Leader Sir Abdullah Haroon and president of All India women Muslim League visited NWFP. After reaching Peshawar along with other women, she sent a message to Zari Sarfaraz to organize women meeting in Mardan so that they could be kept abreast with the strategy of the Muslim League. She started preparing for the meetings in Mardan. It was difficult to gather women, and that too, for political motives. She contacted every woman and requested to listen to the League Leaders.

She chose her residence for the meeting. It is a capacious and beautiful house. The verandah of the house was set as a stage. The guests were accorded a warm welcome. None of the speakers knew Pushto and all listeners were Pushto speaking. So as to solve this problem, Zari Sarfaraz acted as a translator. It was the first-ever women political gathering in the history of Mardan in which the women took part to work collectively for the independence of their homeland. At the end of the meeting, the foundation of the Mardan Women Muslim League (Zanana Muslim League) was laid down. The

election was held. Zari Sarfaraz's mother Kokab Sultana, was elected as president and Zari Sarfaraz as the General Secretary. Whereas Begum Nazir Abdul Rehman (Zari's Aunt) and Naeema Shehnaz were elected as treasurer and propaganda secretary respectively (Javed, Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen, 1967).

Zari Sarfaraz never avoided financial sacrifices for the achievement of Pakistan under the directives of Quaid-i-Azam. She worked day and night for the independence of the country and welfare of the nation. Jamila Mujahida of Algeria had rendered monetary and physical sacrifices for the sake of her motherland against the French. Similarly Khatoon-e-Sarhad did in Mardan to eradicate the influence of congress make Muslim League victorious and attain Pakistan through immense sacrifices. Abandoning the luxuries, she spent busy nights and days helping Quaid-i-Azam in the liberation of the country to aware the women and fail the Hindu conspiracy (Javed, Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen, 1967).

During a visit of Quaid-i-Azam to Peshawar in 1945, a delegation of women led by Zari Sarfaraz assured him that the women had united under the banner of the Muslim League and they would be ready to offer any sacrifice for the sake of Pakistan (Javed, Sarhad aur Quaid-i-Azam, 1977).

During the 1945-46 elections, the elections of women Muslim League Mardan were once again held. As her mother could not carry out the assignment as President of Women Muslim League Mardan, so she was elected as President of the Women Muslim League Mardan. She served the party in this position up till 1950. She had great regard for Muslim League till death (Javed, Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen, 1967).

Zari Sarfaraz and 1946 Election

It was announced on 21 August 1945, by the Viceroy of India Lord Wavel, that the elections to the Central Legislature Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies would be held in winter. The Government of India and the provincial Govt. now started preparation for holding the elections. The Muslim League had already announced that it would contest the elections on the issue of Pakistan and the title of the League to represent all the Muslims. The Quaid-e-Azam and other League spokesmen declared that their demand was that the province of Punjab, Sind, The North-West Frontier province, Balochistan, Bengal and Asam entirely should be formed into a separate sovereign state to be known as Pakistan (V.P.Menon, 1951). On August 25, 1945, the NWFP government: announced the preparation of the list of the electorate for the provincial assembly. The Patwaris Municipal committee cantonment boards and notified area committees were respectively authorized to prepare these lists in Rural and Urban localities.

In the 1946 elections, Muslim League, Congress, Ihrar, Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Hind, Khaksar and independent candidates took part in Frontier's polls as political parties. On December 10, 1945, the Governor of Frontier announced the schedule for the second general elections to NWFP legislature in accordance with sections 14, 22 and 73 of election law's, 1973. According to this announcement, the candidates had filed nomination papers after nine years for the NWFP assembly on Dec: 12, 1945, from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The scrutiny of the nomination papers was carried out on December 4, 1945, and December 17, 1945, had been fixed for their withdrawal. The polling was held from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on January 3, 1946, in Land Lord Constituencies and from 1st February to 14th February 1946 in other Constituencies. The elections for seven days, like previous elections, the polls were had held for 50 seats of NWFP assembly on the basis of the adult franchise (Javed, Sarhad ka Aaini Irtiqā). The women had also been granted the right to vote in these polls. The Hindus were making all-out efforts to defeat the Muslims. Congress spent a lot of money and hired agents for this purpose. It had strengthened its position in NWFP, and it was difficult for Muslim League nominees to win the election in NWFP. Especially in Mardan, it was impossible for the Muslim League nominee to win. However, Zari Sarfaraz went to every house and informed the women about the intrigues of Hindus and appealed for the women votes on her own. Her dedication brought fruit, and Muslim League candidates won the polls due to the women votes.

Later the Muslim League candidate, due to some reason, resigned from the assembly seat. The congress challenged Quaid-i-Azam that the former Muslim League member of Frontier Assembly had

won the election because of his personal influence. If Muslim League was truly the sole representative of Muslims, it should get its another nominee elected.

Accepting the congress challenge, Quaid-e-Azam awarded a Muslim League ticket for Mardan seat

to a middle-class person. It was aimed at testing the strength of the Muslim League against Congress. It was, in fact, a moment of trial for the Muslim League. Hindus and their agents had hypnotized the simple people of Mardan. Zari Sarfaraz was aware that the majority of these simple people had been under the influence of the spell of congress ante victory could only be possible through the efforts of women. So when the election started, Zari Sarfaraz worked still harder for the Muslim League nominee. She brought women from the selected constituencies herself to the polling station. Her struggle and hard work bore fruit, and when the result was announced, the Muslim League candidate won the election from the congress nominee by bagging votes double than the previous victory.

The visit of Quaid-e-Azam to NWFP and the joining of Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan of the Muslim League had brought the Pakistan Movement to the climax in Frontier. Although time was required for electoral victory yet, the Muslim League won 17 seats out of 38 with only three months of effort. The main reason was the lack of organization in the party in NWFP before the elections (Javed, Sarhad ka Aaini Irtiqā).

Zari Sarfaraz and Civil Disobedience Movement

The Muslim League's claim to be the sole representative of the Muslim of India was all but proven by the General elections held in 1945-46. The Muslim League had won a landslide victory. In Punjab, it bagged 75 out of 84 Muslim seats in a house of 175 and emerged as the largest single party. However, it had not been called upon to form a ministry. Instead, a coalition of the Congress, Unionists and Sikhs had been installed as the only provincial coalition ministry. The Muslim League had been smarting under chagrin ever since. This caused an undercurrent of resentment in the league circle. Nevertheless, through public meetings and demonstrations, the League kept up an anti-ministry campaign, especially when in January 1947, the Punjab Government decided to curb the growing power of the Muslim League by declaring the Muslim League National Guards unlawful. On January 24, 1947, the police carried out a search at the Muslim League National Guards headquarter in Lahore. To this, the Muslim League, already embittered, reacted strongly. The government move was challenged and defied, which led to the arrest under the Punjab Public Safety Ordinance of prominent League leaders like Iftikhar Hussain Khan Mamdot, Firoz Khan Noon, Begum Shah Nawaz Shaukat Hayat Khan, Mian Iftikharuddin and Mian Mumtaz Daultana. These arrests triggered off a vigorous civil disobedience movement across the province.

The Punjab Government had failed to anticipate and grasp the consequence of its ill-advised move. The outcry against the suppression of civil and political liberties sparked widespread public demonstration and rallies defying the Government ban; thousands courted arrests. The government reacted to this mass upsurge by resorting to lathi-charge, tear-gassing and even firing on the determined and undaunted; the Punjab Government was, in the event, obliged to seek a settlement with the League. The ban on the public meetings was lifted, and released those arrested were released. The government also agreed to consider placing the public safety ordinance before the provincial assembly. The movement was called off on 20th February 1947. The Muslim League had won a decisive political victory. On 2nd March 1947, the Tiwana Ministry resigned (National Archives of Pakistan, 1993).

After the success of the Movement in Punjab, Civil Disobedience movement was launched in NWFP on February 18, 1947. A Sikh girl Basanti Devi of Hazara, after embracing Islam, got married to a Muslim boy Muhammad Zaman on her own choice. It infuriated the Sikhs and Hindus. They gave it a sectarian colour, and they accused Muhammad Zaman was alleged as the murderer of Basanti's father, husband and brother, and she was put in jail. After the incarceration of Muhammad Zaman, Basanti was kept at the residence of NWFP minister Mehr Chand Khanna. She was forced to record the statement saying that Muhammad Zaman killed the relations and forced her for marriage. When the Muslims of NWFP heard of this news, they became furious over the trick and impersonation of Hindus and wanted to meet Basanti, whose Muslim name was Aisha Bibi, to know the real situation,

but the Muslim leaders were not allowed to meet her. This saddened the Muslim who believed that the converted Muslim girl would be reconverted to Hinduism, for which her husband was sent to jail. The Muslim leaders had tried their best to resolve the issue and finally bought out a procession to the residence of the NWFP Chief Minister to seek justice and recover the newly converted Muslim girl. The next day the government clamped down section 144 for two months. This Civil Disobedience Movement started in NWFP from that day (Javed, Sarhad aur Quaid-i-Azam, 1977).

On the directives of high command, Major Khurshid Anwar reached Peshawar to start and make the Civil Disobedience Movement a success. The police was chasing him. To avoid police and issue directives to Muslim League Mardan for successful Civil Disobedience Movement, he reached Mardan where a big posse of police chased him for arrest. Zari Sarfaraz gave shelter to Major Khurshid Anwar. A police contingent comprising 250 men encircled the residence of Zari Sarfaraz. The police demanded that Major Khurshid Anwar be handed over; otherwise, they would carry out the house search. However, Zari Sarfaraz with men with courage and bravery, refused to allow the house search and courted arrest. In the meantime, the women of Mardan, after knowing about the siege of Zari Sarfaraz house, reached there and coated arrests. The police remained bewildered by the courage of the women. The women did not allow the police to enter the house. The spouse of Deputy Commissioner Mardan visited the spot herself and provided the information to him. The Deputy Commissioner was compelled to order the police to go back. The Civil Disobedience Movement, which was started by Muslim League, was gaining momentum day by day in Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. Zari Sarfaraz had played a dynamic role to make this movement successful among the people of Mardan. Assuring cooperation on this critical juncture, she wrote a letter to Quaid-i-Azam. When the Civil Disobedience Movement became sluggish, Zari Sarfaraz sent Mehandi and bangles to men on behalf of women to arouse spine in them that if they had tired or had been discouraging, then accept the gift and sit down in their homes so that their mothers and sisters could come out and perform their duty in their place. As soon as men were stimulated in this way, the movement gained momentum. This movement infused a new life in the Muslim League to attract more people of Mardan who up till now were influenced by congress. Besides making the Muslim League's Civil Disobedience Movement successful in Mardan, she had also published posters and pamphlets and distributed them in every district of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. It was aimed at creating awareness among the people. They were asked to get united and to prove it to British and Hindus that no power on earth could crush the Muslims or make them slaves. To make Civil Disobedience Movement successful, she published these posters in thousands.

"The youth of Hoti Mardan, Come Forward."

She was a member of the war council during the Civil Disobedience Movement as representative of Frontier women, and her headquarter was Peshawar. She participated in almost all women processions of Peshawar and Mardan. She visited every village to persuade the women for taking part in the Movement (Javed, Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen, 1967).

On Thursday morning after an extensive tour of the Frontier Province, in connection with the Muslim League civil Disobedience Movement over there. She spent 13 days in the province, during which she addressed a score of joint meetings of men and women in Peshawar and elsewhere. Her active presence participation in the League campaign gave fillip in the movement and interested the Pathan women who flocked in thousands to participate in the processions. A large number of congress and redshirt Muslim girls joined the Muslim League and became its enthusiastic workers.

Begum Tasadduq Hussain, during her stay in Peshawar, interviewed the Governor of the Frontier Province with the president and secretary of the Frontier League women Sub Committee. She expressed high appreciation of the Frontier Women's Organization skill and capacity for work. The shortage of loudspeakers had very much handicapped the women's work. Begum Zari Sarfaraz, daughter of the late Khan Sarfaraz Khan Mardan, she said, had supplied one loudspeaker set at her own expense, spending over Rs.1, 400/- (National Archives of Pakistan, 1993).

Lord Mountbatten visit (1947) to Peshawar and Zari Sarfaraz Services

Mr. Attlee, the British Prime Minister, declared that the prevailing state of tension and uncertainty in India was fraught with danger and could not be allowed indefinitely to prolong. Hence this

announcement that it was the indefinite intention of His Majesty's government to effect the transfer of power to responsible Indian hands by date not later than June 1948. In March 1947, Lord Mountbatten took over as the viceroy. The ghastly drama of brutal massacre, which was being enacted throughout the country, convinced him of the necessity of the partition of India. Hence he invited the leaders of the various political parties to a conference held in June 3 1947 and placed before them the procedure to be followed for the transfer of power to Indian hands under the prevailing circumstances. His plan, known as the 3rd June plan, was accepted by the Congress, Muslim League and Sikhs (Noor-ul-Amin, 1989).

Begum Zari Sarfaraz brought women from Mardan to Peshawar in buses, cars and trucks to make the procession a success. Thus these brave women performed an important feat by organizing a procession of twenty thousand women at Peshawar (Javed, *Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen*, 1967).

Quaid-i-Azam had realized the great struggle of Frontier's women. He accorded important historical places to the women for their bravery, patriotism and discipline. It is a golden chapter of the struggle of the Pakistan Movement. In his radio speech on June 3, 1947, at 9:00 PM from Delhi, Quaid-i-Azam asked the NWFP Muslim League that the Civil Disobedience Movement launched under compulsion for the restoration of rights of citizens be withdrawn. Along with this, he paid rich tributes to the Muslims of the Subcontinent for their financial and physical sacrifices and their role in the achievement of Pakistan. Declaring the role of Frontier's women in the struggle for Pakistan an important chapter in Pakistan's history, he said (Javed, *Sarhad aur Quaid-i-Azam*, 1977),

Zari Sarfaraz and Referendum in 1947

Although Hindus and Britishers had recognized the demand for Pakistan yet this demand was accepted under compulsion. Under the pretence of this compulsion, it was declared that the people of NWFP and Baluchistan were given a choice to join the Constitutional Assembly of Pakistan or the Constitutional Assembly of India. The Britishers and Hindus thought that there was a Congress government in NWFP, so the people of this province would stand in awe of it and would give their decision to join the Indian Constitutional Assembly instead of Pakistan. Moreover, All India Congress started to spend their wealth abundantly so that the people of this province cast their votes in favour of India. The congress was completely convinced that the people of NWFP would give their decision in favour of the Indian Constitutional Assembly. On the other hand, Quaid-i-Azam believed that the people of NWFP, who were committed to Islam and had struggled for independence for a long time, would foil the designs of Britishers and Hindus. Accordingly, on July 18, 1947, Quaid-i-Azam set up the NWFP referendum Committee. The objective of this committee was the supervision of the referendum and its arrangement. Quaid-i-Azam headed the committee, whereas the members comprised Ibrahim Ismail Chundrigar, Raja Ghazanfer Ali Khan, Pir Sahib Manki Sharif, Hazrat Aminul Hasanat and Sayyid Wajid Ali. Quaid-i-Azam had assigned the committee to keep a vigilant eye on the performance of the Muslim League and issue directions to the party.

The Committee of Quaid-i-Azam made the people of NWFP realized the importance of their vote through general meetings informed them about the dangerous intrigues of Congress (Javed, *Sarhad aur Quaid-i-Azam*, 1977).

It was a critical situation for the Muslims of Frontier. If the good wishers and sympathizers of the nation had not taken courage, the people of Frontier province would have become slaves of Hindus forever after getting rid of the slavery of Britishers. Like other national leaders, Zari Sarfaraz also followed the directions of the Quaid-i-Azam and accomplished an important role through matchless activities during the referendum. Therefore, prior to the establishment of Pakistan, she was a member of the Executive Committee of the All India Muslim League (Javed, *Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen*, 1967).

The referendum was held from July 6 to 17, 1947. The Indian government announced that out of 576798 registered voters, 89244 were polled in favour of Pakistan, and 2874 were polled in favour of India. Congress stopped Muslim League workers and volunteers from exercising their votes. Some untoward incidents occurred. At some places, the congress presented uncalled for demands. Attacks were made on league workers and voters. However, the result was in favour of Pakistan (Javed, *Sarhad aur Quaid-i-Azam*, 1977).

On July 18, the Indian independence Act of 1947 received Royal assent to give effect to the Mountbatten plan of vivisection of the Sub Continent. This Act provided for the partition of India and the establishment of two dominions, India and Pakistan, from August 15, 1947. Thus, after nearly a century of heroic struggle, Pakistan came into being on August 14, 1947, as an independent state for eighty million Muslims. The Quaid-e-Azam became the first Governor-General of Pakistan, while Lord Mountbatten was appointed the first Governor-General of Indian Dominion (Noor-ul-Amin, 1989).

Services for Kashmiri Freedom Fighters

After the creation of Pakistan, India forcibly occupied the Muslim majority state of Jammu and Kashmir and subjected the innocent Muslims to brutalities. Kashmiri Freedom fighters waged war against this oppression. They appealed to Pakistani Muslims for assistance. Like patriotic Pakistanis, Zari Sarfaraz also responded positively to this appeal. She got supplied sewing machines at her home and gathered women to work round the clock and prepare dresses for Kashmiri fighters. Besides the clothes, she handed over the clothes, blankets and other essential commodities to General Tariq, who was commander of Kashmir freedom fighters and refugees; she donated thousands of rupees in charity for the Indian refugees. The clothes, blankets and other necessary items were collected from women in Mardan, and these were then supplied to the refugees. She visited the women refugees' camps and encouraged them. Medical facilities were provided to the women and children. For inviting attention to Kashmir, She arranged women meetings at Mardan and demanded of UNO to solve the Kashmir problem without any delay. Besides assistance for freedom fighters and refugees, she personally donated Rs.30 000/- to the women Relief Committee and Kashmir Relief Committee and collected thousand of rupees as donations for this national cause (Javed, Pakistan ki Namawar Khwateen, 1967).

Conclusion

Winding up the discussion by saying that the province, if we looked back 72 years ago, was backward. What to talk of women, it was difficult for men to talk in terms of social reformers in a tribal and bigoted society. Zari Sarfaraz was one of the few women who provided leadership to the women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the Pakistan Movement and especially in organizing the Women Muslim League (Zanana Muslim League) in Mardan and created political awareness among the illiterate women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. She also played an important role in the 1945-46 elections, in Civil Disobedience Movement and in the Referendum, which was held in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Her endeavors played a vital role in creating political awareness among women. This political awareness of the women was instrumental in the success of the Pakistan Movement in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Quaid-i- Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah had written a letter to her for praising her services during the Pakistan Movement; this was recognition of the work that she had done in a conservative place like Mardan and elsewhere in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to seek support for the creation of Pakistan. Her contribution to the cause of independence made her one of the rare women freedom fighters.

A woman like Zari Sarfaraz could not remain inactive after the creation of Pakistan. She had done a lot of work as a politician from 1952 to 1969. During this period, along with the political work, she kept herself involved in social work also besides looking after the business concerned, which she inherited.

She died on April 27, 2008, after a brief illness at the age of 83. She was buried at her family graveyard at Mardan. The services of Zari Sarfaraz in the Pakistan Movement will be remembered as their meritorious achievements in the history of Pakistan.

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