

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY IN ABUL KALAM AZAD'S WRITINGS WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO *AL-HILAL* AND *TARJUMAN AL-QUR'AN*

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ABSTRACT

Maulana Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiuddin Azad (1888-1958) was a champion of Hindu-Muslim unity in nineteenth century India. He contributed significantly to liberate India, to develop a comprehensive education for all Indians, and economic stability. His tremendous contribution was as one of the most outstanding journalists, Islamic scholars, educationists, and leaders of modern India of his time. He was more concerned with Muslim religious, political, and educational reforms, and the propagation of Indian Muslim unity. The aspect of his life struggle and thoughts of religion and journalism has received less attention on Hindu-Muslim relations from scholars compared to the reforms of his political thought and agenda. He struggled to unite all Indians to liberate all Indians from the British Raj and emphasized on common religious and cultural values as a means of propagating others in the spirit of unity. He presented his message of the unity through *al-Hilal* and *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* against a backdrop of tempestuous Hindu-Muslim relations and recurring communal riots that characterized modern India. The primary aim of the present study is to investigate Azad's inclusive vision of Hindu-Muslim unity and inter-religious and intercultural understanding as means to its consciousness as reflected in his *al-Hilal* and *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*. It seeks to explain why he advocated such a bold vision and how he expected to achieve the goal of Hindu-Muslim relations in a multi-religious and multi-cultural India. Highlighted in this article are the salient features of Hindu-Muslim relations during his time that influenced their development. The article also discusses the magnitude and applicability of his thoughts and ideas on Muslim-Hindu relationships for contemporary India.

Key words: Hindu-Muslim unity, *al-Hilal*, *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, Abul Kalam Azad, independence, British-India.

INTRODUCTION

Maulana Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiuddin Azad¹ (1888-1958) as a pioneer of Hindu-Muslim unity, has a significant contribution in the British India during the early 20th century. He was born and raised in different socio-cultural and religious conservative environments. He grew up from a religiously and culturally an eminent traditional Muslim family in Calcutta. Somehow, critics have not discussed Azad's approach towards Hindu-Muslim unity enough considering his view, outlook, and circumstances. This could be so because others have emphasized on his religious and educational reformations and freedom movement of India. The main reason that inspired this study is the current flaming issue of Hindu-Muslim intolerance and radicalism in present India by which the Hindu-Muslim relations have reached now at their most unpleasant and most threatening level since its independence in 1947 from the colonialists. At present, it is an essential to realize the insecurity of the minority Muslim community and their bitter relations with the Hindu majority community in the country, especially Muslims fully understood and wisely addressed the issue. This adverse phenomena in the question are encumbered with perils not only for Indian people but also for Muslims and Hindus who live together in large number in different countries. The communal violence and religious hatred against non-Hindu minorities are increasing day by day in India and many Muslims are vulnerable victims without due safeguard from the authorities. Our prime attempt in this article is to investigate and understand better the historical root of present-day Hindu-Muslim enmity against Islam and Muslims in India. It is an expectation that the thoughts of prominent Muslim intellectual activists during the colonial period might provide some discernments into the issue. Abul Kalam Azad for instance, as an intellectual and a journalist criticized the British to leave the India for liberation through *al-Hilal* and as a religious scholar wrote *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* to remove all existing myths among Muslims about Islam. His writings mostly were on Hindu-Muslim unity, political awareness of Muslims and struggle for liberty who observed the reality through the eyes of a visionary and idealist. Although religious, political, educational, and social reforms were important aspects of his writing as well, he never conceded his mission for his personal interest or political interest. Azad considered revelation and intellect to be his guiding sources.

The purpose of his religious writing was to explore religious truth, stimulate the Muslims politically and fight against imperialism for national unity, integrity, communal harmony, and the probity in education, administration, and economic progress. He as a nationalist, visionary Islamic scholar and a journalist, wrote on the issues of *muttahida qaumiyyah* (national unity), *wahdat al-Adyan* (unity of religion), communalism, cultural cohesion and policy of common education for uniting all Indians². Azad considered *al-Hilal* and *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* as tools towards India's freedom and Hindu-Muslim unity. He stressed:

'The relationship between Hindus and Muslims is like the Ganga and Jamuna, which flowed for a while through separate courses, but native's immutable law brought them together and joined them in a sangam³'.

To achieve the goal, he built many academic institutions and cultural institutions for all Indians. Most significantly, he stepped out of religious reformative ideas and cultural cohesion to embrace the hearts of the two religious' groups in a spirit of union and

¹ Hereafter, he will be cited as Abul Kalam Azad.

² Presidential Address, Indian National Congress, Fifty third session, Ramgarh, March 1940. Hasan, Mushirul. 1992. Islam and Indian Nationalism; Reflection on Abul Kalam, p. 6. He stated: "I am proud of being an Indian. I am part of the indivisible unity that is Indian nationality. I am indispensable to this noble edifice and without me this splendid structure of India is incomplete. I am an essential element which has gone to build India. I can never surrender to this claim"

³ Randra Kumar. Chapter: Teachings of Maulana Azad by Shri Prabu Das B. Patwari, pp. 27-28

companionship for the tempestuous of Hindu-Muslim relationships and the communal riots throughout his life. The wake of the *Khilafat*, non-cooperation movement and boycotting the goods of British, announced by Gandhi, motivated Azad to join the Congress. He as the president of the Congress, was a bridge-builder between Hindus and Muslims, creator of a reconciliation between two rival groups of no-changers and pro-changers⁴. His mission was to establish a sovereign, secular, pluralist, progressive nation-state, and democratic republic who remained steadfast on his opinions until his death. There are two sources used in this study. The primary source is Abul Kalam Azad's al-Hilal and *Tarjuman al-Quran* while secondary source is writings on his thought by other scholars.

Abul kalam Azad's life and thought has extensively been studied. However, the issue focused on this study is on Azad's wide-ranging vision of Hindu-Muslim unity as reflected in his journal al-Hilal and *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*. It seeks to elucidate why and how Azad embraced such an intrepid vision in a cross-cultural and multi-religious society. The main objective is to argue that despite religious and cultural diversity, he found many common values, most notably, he was a comprehensive, wide-ranging, holistic, non-sectarian, and universal in his outlook. He intersected his cultural and communal boarders to embrace others in his society. He realized that creating Muslims' political awareness, building the unity, communal consciousness and liberating India from the occupation, was substantial to the creation of the plural Indian nation. Thus, he was respectful in his interaction with members from the other religious-cultural community because of his humanistic and secular approaches.

Azad's Life and the Formative Period of His Cosmopolitan Outlook

To understand how Azad emerged to embrace a cosmopolitan or cross-cultural outlook in his life and to champion the values of religious harmony and unity in a country that had been getting used to communal strife, riots, and hatred, one should start by first looking into his educational background and the socio-cultural ambience that influenced his thinking in his formative years. Azad was a talented individual with a multi-dimensional personality. As among his distinguished achievements we may mention that he was a freedom fighter against British rule, an apostle of Hindu-Muslim unity, and the first Education Minister of India to have formulated a national policy of promoting the solidarity of all Indians through communal harmony.

Azad was born in Mecca in 1888 into a cultured family that was imbued with traditional religious values. Although his family was orthodox and he was taught at home by his father and different distinguished teachers during childhood⁵, his heart and mind were not at peace with tradition. He could feel that he was experiencing a sense of revolt. He was not satisfied with the existing beliefs, practices, and customs of his community. Therefore, he moved out to seek his own path. One of his forefathers was a leading Islamic scholar who came to India from Herat in Afghanistan during Babar's period and settled first in Agra and then moved to Delhi. Many of his scholarly family members were appointed high government officials in Akbar's time⁶. In 1890, his father settled down in Calcutta and in 1909, his father died in Mecca⁷. Azad never had any formal education in his childhood. He stated:

'My father was a Sufi who believed in the old ways of life...never thought of giving me Western education...modern education would destroy religious faith and values⁸.

At the age of sixteen, he studied al-Quran, Hadith, Fiqh and 'Ilm al-Kalam and attained Modern Sciences, Philosophy, Logic, Geometry, Mathematics, Algebra, History, and Politics. As a talented student, also learnt Arabic, English and French independently by using dictionaries⁹. Rationalism and materialism developed by the Mu'tazilites made him an atheist for eleven years as he stated¹⁰:

'I was by now a complete atheist. I took a great pride in my belief in "materialism" and "rationalism" and saw in religion only ignorance and conjecture¹¹.

He stated:

I am a born Muslim, but I was not content with the religion inherited by birth from my ancestors. I cast it away as soon as I was mentally mature enough to discard what I did not want and tried to search out my own way impartially... I had...to undergo successive intellectual crises. Finally, I found what I wanted..., undoubtedly this is Islam... I am not a Muslim because of my parents...but I am a Muslim because I discovered it through my own efforts and research¹².

However, his independent thinking and open mind inspired him to realize the objectives of religion and to respect all religions and their followers. It also empowered him to create awareness among masses for achieving India's liberty rather than by terrorizing the environment and destroying human life and property.

⁴ S.A.I. Tirmizi. (1990). Maulana Azad A Pragmatic Statesman, p. vii

⁵ Meraj, Ahmad. (2018). 'Maulana Azad's Vision of Modern India,' *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research*, ISSN: 2455-2070, vol. 4, Issue. 2, pp. 107-113

⁶ His father's maternal grandfather was Maulana Munawaruddin, one of the last Rukn ul-Mudarrissin of the Mughul period. His father Maulana Khairuddin was a religious scholar and spiritual guide who became a famous scholar after the publication of ten volume of works in Egypt. His mother, Aliyah was the daughter of Shaikh Mohammad Zaher Watri who was a great Arabic scholar of Medina

⁷ Meraj. Maulana Azad's vision, p. 107

⁸ Azad. p.2-4

⁹ Meraj. p. 107

¹⁰ Engineer. This period lasted from 1902-1910.

¹¹ Engineer, Asghar Ali. (1988). Theological Creativity of Abul Kalam Azad, *Indian Literature*, Journal article, vol. 31, no. 4, (126), July-August 1988, pp. 17-29, published by Sahitya Akademi

¹² Ravindra Kumar. p. 67

Azad's Journalism and Literary Works for Hindu-Muslim Unity

Journals and Literary Works

Despite such an outstanding background, Azad edited at least half a dozen newspapers and magazines in the first decade of the 20th century. In 1889, he started journalism career, to work with "Nairang-e-Alam", in 1900, appointed as an editor of "al-Misbah"¹³, in 1901, associated with *Ahsan-ul-Akhbar*, in 1902, appointed as editor of "Khadang-e-Nazar"¹⁴. From 1903, he began a full-fledged journalistic career with "Lisan-ul-Sidq" in which he wrote on his progressive and reformative views for religious, social and educational changes. His mission was to change mind-sets of Muslims, translate the scientific and philosophical works of Bacon, Darwin and Newton, and popularize literary criticism of books for the improvement of the quality of literature¹⁵. In October 1905, Shibli Nomani (1857-1914) appointed him as an editor of *al-Nadwa*, in 1906 April, Ghulam Muhamamd appointed him as an editor of 'Vakil'¹⁶. In April 1910, he wrote critically an article, "Nadwatul Ulama Ka Ijlas-e-Delhi Aur Quran Ki Shahrah-e-Maqsud" (The Delhi session of the Nadwatul Ulama and goal of the Qur'an), in which he discussed the plight of Ulama who by nature supposed to be the leaders of the nation, but they are degenerated and the dichotomous curriculum of the madrasas, made him upset¹⁷.

After his return from the Arab world with revolutionary thoughts, he felt to establish own press to express his own views, to defend the rights of oppressed people, to explain the real conditions of the country and fight against the aggressor for the liberation of India. His main attempt for the establishment of this was to bridge the widening gap between Hindus and Muslims and to create awareness and more sympathetic understanding in order to strengthen Hindu-Muslim unity. Then, on June 1912, Azad established *al-Hilal*¹⁸ press, a powerful instrument in inaugurating a campaign against the policies of the colonialist and to dislodge the Muslims from the English Camp. *Al-Hilal*¹⁹, as cryptograms of Azad's dynamic journalism, cautious narration and magnanimous heart²⁰, designed to free India from the British rule and to reinterpret the religious truth with his synthesizing power²¹. *Al-Hilal* was a non-profitable publication for uniting all Indians for the liberation of India as Azad stated:

'They are not here to make profit but to search for loss and hardship. We are not looking for praise and fame, but we welcome hate and criticism'²².

Contents of al-Hilal

The contents of *al-Hilal*²³ discussed by Azad are:

- i. Criticizing the divide and rule policies of the British, backwardness of Indian Muslims
- ii. Awakening the political consciousness of the Muslims and Hindus,
- iii. Describing the causes of plights of the Muslim world, turmoil situations of the Muslim countries, revolutionary ideas of the Islamic leaders and their biographies, wars of Balkan and Tripoli and decline of the Ottoman caliphate²⁴.
- iv. For achieving the goal, he initiated to work diligently and hardly as a statement, a humanist, a religious man, a patriot and a nationalist until the end of his life.

As a statesman, devoting his life for establishing Hindu-Muslim unity and communal harmony was an inevitable ingredient for newly born India. As a humanist, establishing an atmosphere of love and peace beyond pathos and sorrows between Hindus and Muslims was his mission and vision. As a religious man, reinterpreting religious issues in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah and reforming religious, social, political, economic and educational aspects. As a politician and the founder of education minister, establishing a secular, pluralist, religious diversity, cultural diversity and progressive nation-state in which many academic and cultural institutions were established by him for the progress of Indians such as the Indian Institute of Technology, Sahitya Academy, Sangeet Natok Academy, and University Grant Commission. As a patriot and nationalist, struggling for the national unity and the liberation of India. The motive of his struggle was in line with the vision of Gandhi. He, therefore worked jointly together with Gandhi and other leaders of India for the cause of unity and liberation. For Hindu-Muslim unity, Azad took over the leadership of the Khilafat Movement, supported Non-Cooperation Movement and Salt Satyagraha declared by Gandhiji against

¹³ Nishat, Qaiyoom. (2012). Maulana Azad's Journalistic Crusade against Colonialism, Proceeding of the Indian History Congress, vol. 73, pp. 678-685

¹⁴ Nishat. p. 678

¹⁵ Azad. Lisan al-Sidq, vol. I, No. I, November 20 1903 and see also: August-September, 1904, No. 8-9, vol. II

¹⁶ Nishat. p. 679

¹⁷ Azad. Al-Nadwa, vol. 7, No. 4, April 1910, pp. 11-12

¹⁸ Al-Hilal means crescent, is a weekly Urdu Journal edited by Abul Kalam Azad. His provocative articles forced the British government to ban it after two years in 1914. After few months later, he launched a new weekly 'al-Balagh'. Banning was not able to stop his struggle.

¹⁹ There are seven volumes of al-Hilal published by Azad from 1912-1914 and al-Balagh published by him from 1914-1916. All of his journals and writings devoted for promoting Hindu-Muslim unity for the liberation of India.

²⁰ Ravindra, Kumar. Maulana Azad: A Journalist and an Editor, Azad Academy Journal, Lucknow, April 1991

²¹ His significant contributions are: India Wins Freedom, an autobiographical narrative in 1959, translated by Humayun Kabir into English, Tazkira in 1919 (Memories), Qaul-e-Faisal in 1921, Masla-e-Khilafat (the Question of the Caliphate) in 1920, A Davat-i-Amal (Extracts from editorials of al-Hilal) in 1921, Ithar-i-Islam (The Constitution of an Islamic State), Itihadi-e-Islamic in 1921, Taza Mazamin (collected essays) in 1921, Tarjumanul Qur'an three volumes in 1931, 1936, and 1949, Mukalimat-i-Abul Kalam in 1944, Mazamin-i-Abul Kalam Azad in 1944, Ghubar-i-Khatir (collection of letters to Maulana Habibur Rehman Khan Sherwani from Ahmad Nagar Fort Jail) in 1945, Naqsh-e-Azad (collection of letters), Tashrihat-i-Azad (collection of writings) in 1946, and so on. In addition, several lectures and essays have been published as pamphlets.

²² Azad. Al-Hilal, vol. I, no. 9, p. 61

²³ Azad. Al-Hilal. Vol. I, no. I, p. I, 1912

²⁴ Shibli Nomani. 1912. Comrade, vol. 4, No. 3. P. 48. See: Ravindra Kumar. pp. 6-7

the British, opposed the concept of partition proposed by Viceroy and Two-Nation Theory of Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League²⁵. Al-Hilal as an evident show that his political wisdom, patriotic favor, sacrificial service, selflessness, fearlessness, hard-working and ardent love towards people and country were significant efforts for the liberation of India²⁶.

Factors that influenced to establish al-Hilal

The factors influenced Azad to establish *al-Hilal* were:

1. The inspiration he got from the Islamic leaders of the Arab world who were also struggling to free their countries from British and bring back *al-Khilafah* (political institute), stirred him to prompt his views through writings. After his father's death, though deeply affected, he decided to visit large populated Muslim countries such as Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria and to meet with many important revolutionary figures such as Jamaluddin Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Reda. This contact had a deep impact on Azad's thought because the Muslim leaders were struggling to liberate their countries from imperialist rule and to establish a constitutional and democratic government. This visit also inspired his young mind and changed his political thought as a landmark. After his return from his tour, he decided to join anti-colonial movement and to start a liberation movement in India. His strong willingness and braveness in all circumstances strengthened the Muslims as well as Hindus to support the movement²⁷. In one of his articles, he stated that when Muslim revolutionary leaders questioned, why Indian Muslims became the followers of imperialist while they supposed to lead the national liberty movement for independent country... then I felt it is necessary to create a new movement²⁸. Azad also realized that there was an urgent need to elucidate the misinterpretation of the Qur'an and Sunnah, to halt the myths practices by Muslims, to motivate them to follow Islamic principles in actions and to awaken Muslim community to join national movement with Hindus and other communities against the British rule for independent India²⁹.

Azad questioned in *al-Hilal*:

'...why Muslims should be so opposed to one another when all of them claimed to derive their inspiration from the same source. Nor I could reconcile myself with the dogmatic assurance with which each sect branded the others as mistaken and heretical. These differences began to raise doubts in my mind concerning religion itself. If religion expresses a universal truth, why should there be such differences and conflicts among men professing different religions? Why should each religion claim to be the sole repository of truth and condemn all others as false'³⁰

2. The partition of provinces proposed by the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon who also played the divide and rule between Hindus and Muslims, which created the political unrest and jealous among the two rival communities. As a result, imperialist attitude and biased administrative measures towards Indians created anger in his young mind.
3. The movement against the British Raj started by Shri Shyam Sunder Chakravarty and Shri Arabindo Ghosh, also inspired his young mind. They wrote an article to protest the idea of partition proposed by the Viceroy³¹.
4. In the eyes of the radical Hindu revolutionary groups, Muslims were the supporters of the government and obstacle for the attainment of Indian freedom. So, it was necessary to motivate Muslims to join Indian freedom movement.
5. When Azad observed that by the intrigue of the British and Hindus, Muslim community had been vanquished while this community stumbled in poverty, cultural stagnation, illiteracy, and self-pity, by which he became upset.
6. In 1912, he recapitulated his grief by saying that there are two kinds of leadership: Traditionalists and the English-educated liberalists. The first was without conventional knowledge while the second was without religious knowledge who paralyzed the limbs of the community. Furthermore, the first had fallen into religious superstitions, prejudices, and stagnation while the other is caught up in skepticism, liberalism, adulation of the west and love of higher posts and dignified positions, which made him sternly upset³². The said factors had inspired Azad to decide for establishing al-Hilal Press on July 13, 1912, to /explain the real situations of Indian communities and published its first issue from Calcutta, subtitled '*Ek Haftawar Mussawir Risala*' (a weekly illustrated newspaper)³³. Though there were several dailies and weeklies newspapers, published from Uttara Pradas and Panjab but Azad was not satisfied with the quality of their printings and did not expect to achieve his mission³⁴. At this juncture, the propagations of al-Hilal significantly had opened the eyes of the Indians by they did awake up unitedly against the imperial power. For appreciation, Maulana Mohammad Ali (1878-1931) in his weekly '*Comrade*', welcomed *al-Hilal*:

²⁵ Ravindra Kumar. P. 13

²⁶ Ravindra Kumar. (1991). Life and Works of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, India, p. 12

²⁷ Akhtar, Abul Azim. (2018). Revolutionary Journalism and Nationalism: A Case Study of al-Hilal, Interdisciplinary, multi-disciplinary and Multi-cultural Journal, Bharat College of Arts and Commerce, Badlapore, MMR, India, vol. 6, issues:4, p. 3

²⁸ Azad. (1988). India Wins Freedom, Oriental Longman Limited, pp. 7-8

²⁹ Ravindra Kumar. p. 70

³⁰ Abul Kalam. India Wins Freedom, pp. 3-4

³¹ Abul Kalam. India Wins Freedom, p.p. 4-5

³² Azad. Al-Hilal, vol. I, No. 4, p. 4

³³ Azad. Al-Hilal, vol. I, no. I, 13 July 1912, p. I

³⁴ Azad. India Wins Freedom, pp.7-8

We can well understand the enormous labor and expense that Azad, its talented editor, must have gone through before launching this weekly journal. It strikes a new line in Journalism by including pictorial illustrations as a permanent feature in its columns, literary, scientific discussion and Muslim educational affairs will have a permanent space³⁵.

In 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru commented:

Azad spoke in a new language to Muslim, not only in thought and approach but also its texture and style as it provided new phrases for new ideas and new shape for the Urdu language as it is today³⁶.

Mahmudul Hasan of Deoband acknowledged that the Muslim community owe a debt to Azad as such. We had forgotten the true path to which *al-Hilal* brought us back³⁷.

Mission of al-Hilal

The mission of *al-Hilal*³⁸ discussed by Azad are:

- a. Calling upon the Muslims to be a true Muslims in faith and action and fulfilling the important objectives of al-Hilal with a synthesis of nationalism, patriotism, pan-Islamism, social and religious reforms and Hindu-Muslim unity.
- b. Providing a new religious, social, and political directions for Indian Muslims particularly³⁹ and all Indians in general.
- c. Through al-Hilal, reminding the hundred years heritage of the Muslims to wake up with the spirit of their golden ages⁴⁰.
- d. Stimulating their political consciousness, promulgating revolutionary ideas of Muslim revolutionaries and encouraging explicitly young Muslims to join the national movement for independent India.
- e. Motivating the Indian Muslims to join the struggle for the liberation of mother land, which upon Muslims was obliged as a religious duty that is an equivalent to Jihad in Islam.

His approach was praised by the Principle of Deoband Ustaz Mahmudul Hasan: 'We had forgotten the lesson of Jihad and Abul Kalam reminded us again'⁴¹. Al-Hilal's powerful writings were like a storm by which the hearts and minds of the older and younger Indians were inspired to join national movement unitedly. A message of patriotism and nationalism with religious enthusiasm provided by Azad through al-Hilal was well accepted by the audience from all over the country. Religious enthusiasm, patriotism, and nationalism, propagated in al-Hilal, contributed to join the freedom struggle and united struggle in establishing the Hindu-Muslim relations. He criticized the divide and rule policies of the British constructively in order to espousing the Ideals of Indian nationalism and religious pluralism and stabilizing the communal harmony in India⁴². For developing the Hindu-Muslim relations, Azad reminded Muslim community that:

'It is India's historic destiny that many races and cultures and religions should flow to her and many a Carvan should find rest here...full eleven centuries have passed by since then, Islam has now as great a claim on the soil of India as Hinduism. Everything bears the stamp of one joint endeavor. Our manners and customs were dissimilar, but they produced a new synthesis. No fantasy or artificial scheming to separate and divide can break this unity'⁴³.

For establishing united India, in 1922, even during the court trial, Azad stated in front of a Judge that:

'In the last twelve years, I have been training my community and my country to demand their rights and their liberty'⁴⁴.

As a result, Azad's mission was successful in gaining the journalistic goals of al-Hilal, which was united all Indians to fight against the imperial power and attained the independent India⁴⁵. Because of al-Hilal revolutionary writings according to Nishat, was an influential medium by which Azad subjugated the hearts of the Indian people and created a revolutionary stir among the masses in a short period of time⁴⁶. His pen was very powerful by which he wrote heroically against the British to leave India. 'Oh, Europeans! How long are you going to pollute God's blessed land with your dirty hands? How long would oppression subdue justice? Your bloody hands hanged hundreds in Tabriz; made the sand of Tripoli red with blood and left countless dead in Morocco⁴⁷ and you are the ones who attained felicity⁴⁸. It, therefore, is an evident that his commitment and sacrifice toward journalism were widespread from 1912 to 1916, which had marked a new phase in political awakening of the Muslims as well as Hindus in India⁴⁹.

³⁵ Ali, Mohammad. (1912). Comrade, vol. 4, no. 3, 20 July, Calcutta, India

³⁶ Nehru, Jawaharlal. Discovery of India, Asia Publishing House, 1961, p. 4

³⁷ Nishat Qaiyoom. (2012). Maulana Azad's Journalistic Crusade Against Colonialism, Modern India, IHC: Processing, 73rd Session 2012, pp. 683-684

³⁸ There are seven volumes of al-Hilal, which, have been published by Azad from 1912 to 1914 as editor and al-Balagh has been published until 1916. The present study will focus on the contribution of al-Hilal in developing Hindu-Muslim unity for freedom of India.

³⁹ Azad. (1912). Al-Hilal, vol. I, no. 9, September 8, p. 61

⁴⁰ Majumdar. R.C.. History of Freedom Movement, vol. I, p. 333. See also: al-Hilal, vol. I, no. 9, p. 61

⁴¹ Muzafar. P. 4. Quoted in Sharma

⁴² Azad. Al-Hilal, vol. 9, 1912

⁴³ Muzafar. Vol. 2, issue. 4, p. 4. See also: Azad quoted in Shukla, 1991:57

⁴⁴ Muzafar, Ahmad. (2016). Role of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in Hindu-Muslim Unity during Freedom Struggle, Vol. 2, issue. 4: p. 4

⁴⁵ Muzafar. Vol. 2, issue 2, pp. 4-5

⁴⁶ Nishat. P. 681

⁴⁷ Abdullah. P. 231

⁴⁸ Abdullah. P. 231

⁴⁹ Nishat. p. 684.

In the first fifteen years of his journalistic career, his writings profoundly influenced political thinking and mobilized people for a crusade against colonialism.

Significance of al-Hilal

The main message presented by Azad to the Muslim-Hindu communities was to arouse the spirit of the real faith among them, organize their social and religious life, to create the spirit of freedom among them, which is the message of religion⁵⁰. The significance of al-Hilal explained by him for Muslims in his first five volumes by which his expectation could be understood. Submitting completely on Allah who directed to developing al-Hilal movement and His power would ensure success of its mission. Enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong is equivalent to Jihad in the ways of Allah, which is a religious obligation for every Muslim and could be implemented in various forms. For implementing the purposes of Allah, He, in every age chooses and selects few of His servants whom He endows with special powers. Al-Hilal Azad considered, is a divinely given seed by which the miraculous power had been demonstrated according to the Will of Allah. Muslims are friends of Allah who must be ready to fight against those who oppose them i.e. 'the friends of Satan'⁵¹.

Azad's Interpretation of the Qur'an: *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*

Likewise, a monumental work, *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*⁵², wrote by Azad, started from 1913 and completed in 1930, was three volumes. Two volumes were published during his lifetime and the third volume was published later. This work was translated by Abdul Latif in English language⁵³. His tafsir was in the form of an explanatory translation of the Qur'anic text supported by footnotes and comments whenever necessary. This work was revised by him while he was in Ahmednagar Jail, but manuscripts had been taken away by the government. The purpose of writing of this tafsir was to meet the needs of three distinct set of people who were interested to study the Qur'an details. The translation of the Qur'an was for the needs of its average readers, the commentary for people who cared to make a detail Quranic study and prolegomena to fulfil the needs of the advanced scholars. This monumental *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* contains the essence of his religious views. The main issues discussed in his tafsir al-Qur'an were: Unity of Allah, unity of man, unity of religion, unity of humanity, revelation and human intellect as the main sources of knowledge, religious pluralism, and universal justice.

Motivational factors behind writing of *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*

In an essay, the causes/factors behind writing of *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, discussed by Azad are:

The Qur'anic principles were forgotten by Muslims and traditional interpretation of the Qur'an was not satisfactory. Therefore, there is a need to reinterpret the Qur'an and to revive new ideas in contemporary context⁵⁴. In his Muqaddima-i-Tafsir (introduction of tafsir), *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, three distinct needs he mentioned, should be discussed in connection with the study of the Qur'an, which are:

1. Objectives and principles of the Qur'an should be discussed and enunciated the leading ideas advanced by the Qur'an.
2. The Qur'an should be studied details according to the Qur'an.
3. What are the universal teachings of the Qur'an according to the needs and situations of man and society, which should be discussed, and the methods and guidelines should be provided for the readers for understanding purposes of the Qur'an⁵⁵.

Tarjuman al-Qur'an, especially its introduction is the most significant pieces of religious literature of Azad, which contains the essence of the concepts of his views about religions for the Indian Muslims particularly. He criticized the Muslim scholars and leaders who are devoid of the true spirit of religion and became a source of misguidance, myths, disunity, superstitions, rigidity, and conservatism. He commented:

'Ulema interpreted Islam to be a popular by which they gained a lot of profits like a profitable business without any risk because of their ignorance, prejudice, and selfishness'⁵⁶.

Likewise, hypocrites whom Azad considered more poisonous than snakes and scorpions and greedier than dogs are ruling the whole society. Robbers, gamblers, and those who are slaves of immoral practices are united, but Ulema are not united even within the premises. In these turmoil situations, in 1913, he published *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* and argued:

⁵⁰ Taban, Ghulam Rabbani. (1987). Abul Kalam Azad, N.C.E.R.T., New Delhi, p. 27

⁵¹ Muzafar, Ahmad Dar. (2016). Vol. 2, issue 4, p. 5. See also: Minault and Troll, 1988:114

⁵² *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* was to be published in three volumes. Two of them were published during Azad's lifetime. About the third, he told his distinguished English translator, Syed Abdul Lateef, that its manuscript may have been packed in the trunks that were sent from Ahmednagar jail to Calcutta. That manuscript could never be located. What we have today is Azad's translation of the eighteen chapters of the Qur'an. Cited from, Syeda Saiyidain Hameed (ed.), India's Maulana: Abul Kalam Azad, New Delhi: Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1990.

⁵³ Abul Kalam Azad, *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, Syed Abdul Latif (Tr.), (Hyderabad: Pragati Art Printers, 1962), Vol. I, p.xxv.

⁵⁴ Azad. Al-Hilal, vol. I, no. 3, July 27, 1912, p. 8

⁵⁵ Azad. *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, vol. I, p. x, in his 'preface to the first edition of the *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* in 1930. Interestingly, in 1916, he proposed to publish an explanatory Urdu translation of the Qur'an, styled *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* in his weekly journal 'al-Balagh'. This commentary is also called, 'Tafsir al-Bayan'. He also discussed fourteen obstacles in his preface for understanding his interpretation of the Qur'an.

⁵⁶ Azad. Al-Hilal, vol. I, no. 4, August 4, 1912, p. 2their

‘There is no need to build a new foundation of a house, but it is necessary in present context to revive and reconfirm what the holy Qur’an explicated’⁵⁷.

He disagreed with the view that the Qur’an should support and endorse every new scientific discovery or knowledge⁵⁸. He viewed that when the ideas of the Qur’an were interpreted with the help of philosophical methods and the framework of Aristotelian logic, the real spirit, truth, beauty and attraction of the Qur’an are lost and this distorts the real teaching of the Qur’an⁵⁹.

Aims of Tarjuman al-Qur’an

Regarding the aim of Tarjuman al-Qur’an, he wrote:

‘In the beginning of his writing of this tafsir, in 1915, he had three objectives: preparing a translation of the Qur’an for common readers, writing a commentary for those who are interested to study the Qur’an details, and interpreting the verses of the Qur’an for learned people’⁶⁰. He expressed his feeling that he tried to fulfill his duty as understood the Qur’an, now it is up to the Muslims and May Allah grant them success in fulfilling the duty⁶¹. The main objectives of *Tarjuman al-Qur’an* were explained by Azad:

- i. Understanding the Qur’an in a way it was understood by the companions of the Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon Him)
- ii. Improving Hindu-Muslim relations, uniting Hindus, and Muslims for freedom of India and explaining Indian nationalism and religious pluralism for living with peace, justice and co-existence.
- iii. Explaining the holy Qur’an as a guidebook and instructing people to be balanced between faith and action, matter and spirit, and the transcendentalism of the Upanishads and the anthropomorphism⁶².
- iv. For responding challenges espoused by different religious groups, Azad came to adopt and advocate a worldview that was cross-cultural in nature and by which Hindus and Muslims can live together with unity and harmony. He could not remain silent. He asserted and contended through *al-Hilal* and *Tarjuman al-Qur’an* against misunderstandings of the Qur’an and myths of the minds of Muslims in India. His comment was that silent and abstinence is tantamount to sin and infidelity. He then, started his struggle to fight and remove all immoral practices from the society. He stated: The message delivered by all Prophets was that mankind were one people and one community, and...One God for all...they should serve Him together and live...as one community⁶³. Muslim scholars considered his *Tarjuman al-Qur’an* as his ‘opus magnum’ on religious and theological issues in his tafsir. About *Tarjuman al-Qur’an*, he said:

‘I have tried to open the door of its understanding for them. In publishing the *Tarjumān al-Qur’ān*, I feel that whatever my duty in this connection was, I have fulfilled by the grace of God. Now it is up to the Muslims and may God grant them success in fulfilling this duty’⁶⁴.

He also described the essentials of the Qur’an with four visions in his *Tarjuman al-Qur’an* as objectives such as a. presenting the existence of Allah and His Attributes in proper perspective, b. explaining the principles of casualty in man’s life, nature and universe and their relations, c. believing in life after death as a realistic and ethical values, and d. describing the norms and roles of the good life for humanity⁶⁵.

Establishment of Hindu-Muslim unity through Tarjuman al-Qur’an (Interpretation of the Qur’an)

For introducing religious pluralism, he elaborated scholarly the ideas of ‘*wahdat al-adyan*’ or religious pluralism, which is universal approach of the Quran. Providing a comprehensive and true understanding of religions and Islam as understood and practiced by the companions of the prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) was the main aim of his writings. The foundation of Qur’anic calls by Azad is ‘the universal guidance of revelation, which is called the Quranic term, ‘*al-Din*’ that is, the true religion for mankind⁶⁶. According to Azad, all religions are one in origin and true religions. Therefore, there is to him only one true religion. In his support, he referred to the verse of the Qur’an: ‘Men were at first of one religion only and then they differed’⁶⁷. About the variations of religion or deviation of religion, Azad identified that differences in religions exist, which are in accordance with man’s situation and need for adjustment⁶⁸. These differences in religion, Azad divided into two types; one is deviating from the teachings of the true religion by man’s desire, personal interest and egoism by which people have fabricated the real teachings of religions as the Qur’an says:

⁵⁷ Azad. *Al-Hilal*, vol. 2, no 21, Calcutta, 1913

⁵⁸ Azad, (1965). *Tarjuman al-Qur’an*, vol. 1, Bombay, p. xxxvi

⁵⁹ Azad. *Tarjuman al-Qur’an*, vol. I, p. xxxix

⁶⁰ Abul Kalam Azad, *Tarjumān al-Qur’ān*, Syed Abdul Latif (Tr.), (Hyderabad: Pragati Art Printers, 1962), Vol. I, p.xxv and vi

⁶¹ Abul Kalam Azad. (1962). P.76

⁶² Azad. *Tarjuman al-Qur’an*, vol. I, p. 127

⁶³ Azad. *Tarjuman al-Qur’an*, vol. I, p. 168

⁶⁴ Abul Kalam Azad, *Tarjumān al-Qur’ān*, Syed Abdul Latif (Tr.), (Hyderabad: Pragati Art Printers, 1962), Vol. I, p.xxv.

⁶⁵ Abul Kalam Azad. (1962). P. 57

⁶⁶ Azad. *Tarjuman al-Qur’an*, (1995). Vol. 1, ed and trans. By Sayed Abdul Latif

⁶⁷ Q. 10:19

⁶⁸ Azad. (1965). *Tarjuman al-Quran*, vol. 1, pp. 186-191

‘The Jews those who displace words from their right places and say, ‘we hear and we disobey’⁶⁹.

In another verse,

‘To you We sent the scripture in truth, confirming the scripture that came before it, and guarding it in safety: so, judge between them by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their vain desires, diverging from the truth that has come to you’⁷⁰.

The verses imply that people’s desires deviated them from a true religion, which exist among them came from Allah. The second type of difference is originally revealed from the divine source as ordinance and rites that is considered as the laws of the Shariah and the ways of life. Such differences do not disturb the religion of all religions as they were revealed from the divine source. The Qur’an says:

‘To each among you have prescribed ‘*Shir`ah*’ (law) and ‘*Minhaj*’ (way of life)’⁷¹.

According to Azad, the Qur’an proclaimed ‘al-Din’ as primary importance, which is only one and its message is also one, while *Shari`ah* and *Minhaj* are secondary importance. He stated: *Shariah* and *Minhaj* could not have been from the very nature of things uniformly the same for one and all. It was therefore inevitable that they should be different for different countries and different time. The differences of this type are not really differencing in the basis of religion. They are so only in things subsidiary to it’⁷². Azad argued that such differences are necessary with the variations of situations and environment, variations of times and needs of people in which people lived in different ages with different cultures, different norms, and different lifestyles throughout the history of human society. Azad stated:

‘For every age and country God has ordained a special form of worship which suitably conformed to man’s situation and need...Had God willed, He would have made a unified nation and community of all mankind, but we know that God did not so wish. His wisdom demanded that various states of thought and practice be created’⁷³.

He referred to the verse of the Qur’an:

‘If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single people, but His plan is to test you in what he has given. So, strive as in a race in all virtues. The goal of you all is to Allah. And it is He that will show you the truth of the matters in which you dispute’⁷⁴.

This verse implies that different people are living in different countries with different customs, different manners, and ways of living. However, according to Azad, these differences of man’s characters are human nature, which could be considered as incidental. Azad did not consider this situation as criteria of truth and untruth. One thing could be considered here is the unity of God’s existence and righteous living in accordance with the unity of religions, which ordained by Him for humanity⁷⁵. These differences do not affect people of different religions to be united. Azad argued based on above verses that Allah is One Who in the Qur’an invites mankind to believe into the unity of religion to become as a united brotherhood as ‘one family of the universe’⁷⁶. This unity of religion creates to Azad, love and holy relationship between each other by which human beings may correct their beliefs and actions and could be considered as the true source of their salvation, satisfaction and happiness⁷⁷. Regarding the implication of religious pluralism, Azad viewed that the Qur’an is the final revelation came to confirm the truth of all religions by which mankind could live together in one community like India and everyone could follow his/her own religious and ritual guidance. In support of his argument, he referred to the Holy Qur’an,

‘When Jesus, son of Maryam said: O Children of Israel, I am the messenger of Allah unto you confirming the Taurat which came before me and giving glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad’⁷⁸.

The verse of 5:48 implies that the Qur’an came to confirm the scripture that came before it i.e. Jabur, Taurah, and Injil. Likewise, the verse of 5: 46 describes that Allah sent down Injil to `Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam, who had come to confirm the Taurat that had come before him. In this regard, an authentic Hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah @: I heard Allah’s Messenger saying, “I am the nearest of all the people to the son of Maryam and all the prophets are paternal brothers and there has been no prophet between me and him (`Isa)’⁷⁹. So, the Qur’an according to Azad is the authentic source of all religions revealed to the prophet Mohammad peace be upon him. He then, argued that the Qur’an asserted the unity of God’s essence, which had been explained by all prophets

⁶⁹ Q. 4:46

⁷⁰ Q. 5:48

⁷¹ Q. 5:48

⁷² Azad. (1965). Tarjuman al-Qur’an, vol. 1, p. 161. See also: Nanang Nurcholis. (2018). Abul Kalam Azad’s thought of Inclusive theology and education for religious pluralism, vol.3, no. 1, Journal of Islamic Culture and Education, pp. 12-15

⁷³ Azad. (1965). P. 189. See also: Nanang. P. 14

⁷⁴ Q.5: 48

⁷⁵ Azad. (1965). Tarjuman al-Quran, vol. 1, p. 161

⁷⁶ Azad. (1965). Tarjuman al-Qur’an, vol. 1, p. 185. See: Nanang. P. 16

⁷⁷ Azad. (1965). Tarjuman al-Qur’an, vol. 1, p. 185. See also: Nanang. P. 16

⁷⁸ Q. 61:6

⁷⁹ Abdullah Ibn Ismail. Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 4, Hadith no: 651. See also: Muhammad Muhsin Khan and Muhammad Taqiuddin. (1995). The Noble Qur’an, 5:48, p. 184

of Allah and all religions. His entire approach to religion was based on the Qur'an, which is a universal approach for mankind because the true religion is for all human beings⁸⁰. The main purpose of his narrative was to create united India and appealed to every citizen of India to join the national movement to liberate this land from the British. He argued that unity is necessary for the national reconstruction of India where religions should not be barriers in this process.

On 25 August 1921, at Agra session, he expressed that the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity is as a moral imperative for the future prosperous of India⁸¹.

The foundation of Azad's religious pluralism was based on the concept of the unity of God, unity of universal humanity and universal brotherhood and peace by which Hindus and Muslims would work together for the freedom of India. In the interpretation of Surah al-Fatiha, *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, he expressed his idea of religious pluralism powerfully by the concept of the oneness of religions (*wahdat al-Din*). Azad argued that Allah's Mercy (*Rahmah*) and His Blessing are provided equally for all nations without any discrimination. Allah as Cherisher of the worlds (*the Rabbul 'Alamin*) transcends all divisions of humanity by race, color and religion. Azad's argument is that all creatures follow the natural laws of Allah ordained by Him. To him, all religions reflected the same orders or same messages formulated by the commands of Allah, God. Therefore, for Azad, there is space for Hindu or Muslim communalism⁸².

From historical perspective, Azad's religious conviction is that all religions were essence one and their aims were to improve human condition and establish a harmonious society. India as a multi-religious, a multi-cultural and a diverse nation had flourished with the history of pluralism in which people have many faiths. Among them, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism exist. Azad premeditated to build religious pluralism education based on the Quranic guidance because the Qur'an to him is as a means of education for religious pluralism, inter-communal harmony, and coexistence⁸³. For encouraging Muslim community to participate liberation movement from religious point of view, he argued:

'The religious duty of every Muslim purely is to establish *al-Khilafah* (political institution). If anyone is against *Khilafah* movement, he or she should be considered as the enemy of Islam and Muslim and the friendship and enmity for Muslims does not depends on personal loses but it should be for the sake of religion⁸⁴. He elaborated in *al-Hilal* that Islam gives the guarantee of the freedom provided by Allah against oppression and exploitation. It is soul of democracy and equality⁸⁵. In *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, he advocated that religious tolerance and dialogue are the keys for Hindu-Muslim unity and argued that understanding religious pluralism may help the both communities Muslims and Hindus to be united because God-Allah as the 'Cherisher' and 'Nourisher (Rabb)' is above all divisions of humanity in race, color, caste, sect, and religion. The verse '*Rabbul Alamin*' (Lord of the universe) does not confine to any one religion. He believed that Islam as a universal religion is a comprehensive and complete way of life for mankind, which encompasses all aspects of human life such as individual, family, society, politics, education, moral, culture, and civilization. He reminded Muslims to work hard to restore their past glory and established an united India for all.

The Need for a positive Outlook for Indian Muslims

Based on the overall discussion, the primary mission of Azad's journalism and interpretation of the Qur'an was to establish Hindu-Muslim unity and to fight against the British for the liberation of India where all Indians i.e. Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, and the followers of other religions will enjoy the religious, political, economic, social and educational freedom including freedom of expression. Equally, there will be no discrimination and injustice in terms of race, tribe, caste, color and religion in India. For achieving this goal, common religious and cultural values could be means by which all Indians strove for Indian independence. It is also understood that today, it is essential for Hindus and Muslims to make a clear declaration to all communities about the issue of Hindu-Muslim unity based on the spirit of Abul Kalam Azad in order to safeguard human dignity, integrity, humanity, peace and justice, communal harmony and solidarity and security to life for all in India. His approaches and perspective measures by the state and civil society should be promoted in contemporary context. According to Azad's view, all religions condemn all types of discriminations and hatred perceived by individuals, groups, organizations, and states. People believe that most of the hatred and jealousy happening in the present world is because of misunderstanding of religious teachings, aggression by the foreign power, terrorism, self-interest, and political interest, nothing is for the cause of religion or humanity. Establishing the Indian nationalism and stabilizing its foundation is the duty for every citizen of the country. On 25th 1921, Azad provided four basic assumptions for his political credo by which all Indians could benefit, which are: i. Hindu-Muslim unity is not only for national independence but also for establishing a democratic national identity in India, ii. Promoting Hindus and Muslims to fight jointly by action is an essential for Indian independence, otherwise it would be impossible to achieve it, iii. Supporting non-cooperation movement and boycotting the British products declared by Gandhi was not only political necessity, but also religious obligation to protect religion and fight against the aggressors, iv. Stabilizing the foundation of the Indian nationalism is a religious duty for every Muslim according to the Shariah⁸⁶. For achieving the success of India, Azad appealed to all Indians to consider three factors, which are: Unity, discipline and full confidence in a great leadership of Ghandhi for the prosperous future and successful achievements of

⁸⁰ Azad. (1965). *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, Surat al-Fatiha, edited in English by Sayed Abdul Latif, vol. 1, Bombay Asia Publishing House, pp. 180, 208, 214

⁸¹ Nanang. (2018). P. 16. See also: Khan, R. (1992). *Portrait of Great Patriot: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958)*, in *Political Thinker of India*, vol. 17, pp. 208-209

⁸² Nanang. (2018). P. 18

⁸³ Tharoor, S. (2011). *The Man Who Stayed Behind, in the Elephant, The Tiger and the Cell phone India Energy 21st century Power*, New Delhi: Penguin Book House, p. 28

⁸⁴ Azad. *Al-Hilal*, vol. 1, no. 16. 1912.

⁸⁵ Abdul Azim Akhtar. (2018). *Revolutionary Journalism and Nationalism: A Case Study of al-Hilal*, vol. 6, issue:4, p. 8.

⁸⁶ Khan, Rashiduzzaman. *Portrait of a great patriot in Kashyap. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad: A Centenary*, p. 105

India⁸⁷, which had already been materialized in the Indian subcontinent. According to Azad, the independent India is the fruits of the unity of Indian people who sacrificed their lives and wealth for the cause of liberation and humanity.

CONCLUSION

It is fact that Abul Kalam Azad was a religious and social reformist. His struggle was to unite Hindus and Muslims and to integrate two cultures into one national entity. His main aim as a religious scholar was to explore religious truth in the contemporary context through al-Hilal and Tarjuman al-Qur'an. His motivation for Muslims was to be self-dependent politically and culturally without changing their religions. His prime aim of his struggle was to bridge the gap between Hindu-Muslim communities in India and the aim of the establishment of al-Hilal was to liberate India from the British Raj and to improve a harmonious relation between them. Azad as a champion of Hindu-Muslim unity expressed his revolutionary ideas through his Urdu journals of 'al-Hilal and al-Balagh' and his tafsir of the Qur'an 'Tarjuman al-Qur'an' for uniting all Indians to liberate India from the British rule. His great effort was against the policies of the British 'Divide and Rule' to establish self-rule in India. His emphasis was that all Indians must be united at first for liberating this land from the colonial power and religious, social, political, economic, and educational aspects must be reformed. For achieving his goal, he warned his fellow-countrymen in a statement that, 'I will relinquish Swaraj rather than Hindu-Muslim unity because if we delay to free Swaraj, will be a loss of India, but if our unity is lost, it be loss for entire mankind'⁸⁸. He also believed that a strong unity is only means to liberate India from the foreign power. Therefore, people of India should unite to fight together against the British based on their common religious and cultural values. His motive was to establish an independent and a progressive India with a quality education for all. His aim through scientific and technological education was to enrich the quality of life, and eradicate the poverty, illiteracy, and laziness from the lives of Indian people. In 1947, as a first education minister, he stated:

'Education, science and culture have a unique role to play in making a new India of our dreams with its rich composite culture, its precious unity in the midst of valuable diversities, its overall national integrity, its abiding values of truth, justice and tolerance and its unique capacity to synthesis the culture of the East and the West into a new and creative blend that preserves the best of the part along with the eager pursuit of new paths of progress to enrich the quality of our lives. Let us work together to eradicate the poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, and laziness from our lives'⁸⁹.

The evidence shows that Azad's journalism started from 1900 and continued until 1927 for 27 years and circulated it in the entire India for freeing India from the colonialist. Abul Hasan Hasrat Mohani commented on his outstanding contribution of journalism that 'when I had a glance over the prose of Azad there was no charm left in my own poetry'. It is fact that al-Hilal was the soul and mind of the Indian people in the 20th century, which expressed the feelings of people of India. His significant contribution in his religious, spiritual, intellectual, social, and political aspects honored him as 'Bharat Ratna' for his dedication and sacrifice for the country. His sincere influential and active role as a leader of Khilafat Movement made him closer to a great leader Gandhi, Nehru, and other leaders of India. He led all negotiations with the British government during the critical phase of transfer of power. His stance always was for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity and against the demand for a separate Muslim state of Pakistan. We must learn from his teachings today for national unity and communal harmony. It must be nourished more carefully in these days of linguistic and regional differences which are growing steadily day by day and threaten our integrity and consolidation. His religious, intellectual, and political approaches must be recalled and practiced in contemporary context of India to strengthen Hindu-Muslim unity. His life and works demand for re-visiting and re-evaluation by young generation of today's India.

Based on our investigation, we strongly recommend to the relevant authority of India to formulate a comprehensive national policy on the development of Hindu-Muslim relations for promoting both communities i.e. Hindus and Muslims living together with peace, unity, and co-existence. We also recommend setting up a panel of experts by the state to produce comprehensive guidelines for all. The panel should advise the relevant agencies or authorities to ensure the freedom of expression, freedom of religion, and protect human basic rights and dignity for the establishment of national unity in India.

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⁸⁷ Abul Kalam Azad. (1940; edt. 1985). Congress Presidential Addresses, vol. five, ed. by A.M. Zaidi, published by New Delhi: Indian Institute of Applied Political Research, 1985, p.p. 17-38

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⁸⁹ Kirpal, Prem. (1990). The Education, in Seyda, Sayyidina Hameed, ed. India, new Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, p. 184

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