



Research Paper

Maulvi Ahmadullah Shah (With special Reference to Rohilkhand-1857)

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Abstract

The service rendered by the Faizabad Maulvi Ahmad Ullah Shah, Whose ingenious attempts to check the British offensive, is an example of the wonderful military feats of the sepoy war. He was joined by a large body of rebels from the neighbouring areas including the Begum, Firoz Shah and some followers of Nana Sahib. He had assumed the title of King of Hindutan and Inspired so much terror by his activities. British officers like G.B Melleon and Thoms Seaton made mentions about the courage, velour, personal and organizational capabilities of Maulvi. He was known as the light house of rebellion in Awadh region. Maulvi was a rare combination of both a writer and a warrior. He used his sword valiantly, and his pen effortlessly for awakening and mobilizing the people against the British subjugation.

Keywords: Faizabad Maulvi Ahmad Ullah Shah, Faizabad Maulvi : 1857 in Shajahanpur , Rohilkhand in 1857, Raja Jagannath Singh: Pawayan : Mohmmadi ,

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Ahamadullah Shah (1787-5 June 1858) know as Maulvi of Faizabad, was a famous freedom fighter jand leader of the Indian Rebellion of 1857. Maulvi was a rare combination of both writer and warrior. He used his sword valiantly, and his pen effortlessly for awakening and mobilizing the people against the foreign subjugation. Maulvi Ahmdullah shah was known as the light-house of the rebellion. ¹

British officers like G.B Malleon and T. Seaton made mentions about the courage, valour, personal and organizational capabilities of Maulvi. G.B Malleon again and again mentioned in the History of Indian Mutiny. Written in 6 Volumes ².

Among the Maulvis. Who took part in the revolt of 1857, the first name to be taken, was Maulvi Ahmadullah Shah, He had close relations with both the regions – Rohilkhand and Awadh. Even the British Government was influenced by the qualities of Maulvi, specially the perfection of organizing the Revolt. He is known not only as a religious leader but also as a great fighter ³.

The service rendered by the Faizabad Maulvi, whose ingenious attempts to check the British offensive in the early summer of 1858, is an example of the wonderful military feats of the sepoy war. He was helped by the Raja of Mohammdi and Mian Sahib, one of the chief of Lucknow. He was also joined by a large body of rebels from the neighboring areas including the Begum, Firoz Shah and Some followers of Nana Sahib, He had assumed the title of king of Hindustan and inspired so much terror by his activities but the government offered a reward of fifty thousand rupees to anyone who would arrest him⁴.

Fisher has considered the Maulvi as one of the there main leaders of the revolt with Taty Tope and Kunwar Singh. In the some way Melleon has considered Maulvi among the four most prominent rebels with Nana Saheb, Queen of Jhansi and Kunwar Singh. Maulvi felt the importance of the co-operation of general public more then the sepoys for the success of Revolt. So the made every effort to mobiles public for the Revolt and for this, he travelled to many paces and delivered speeches to arouse public feelings against Revolt ⁵.

Melleon has written that the planning of distrubution of Chapties (Bread) among the rebels was propogated by Maulvi. Maulvi was considered so furous that he was expelled first from Lucknow, then from Agra ⁶. After defeating Mauvi on 21 March 1858. Britishners took over the command of whole of Oudh. Maulvi was compelled to go out from Oudh. He came to Shajahanpur ⁷.

Maulvi took the command of the rebels in Shajahanpur and devised several strategies to defeat the British force. Having known the situation, he decided to move to Mohammadi. But before leaving the city he

demolished all the Government officer and important places.⁸ Maulvi was a farsighted man and knew that Sir Collin Campbell would go back to Bareilly leaving only a few men behind to defend the city. Maulvi entered the city and suddenly attacked on the British Camps. The seized the city and Shajahanpur Fort for several days. G.B. Melleson writes that the maulvi acted like an European in the war⁹.

In a letter C.P. Carmichael, officiating Magistrate and collector of Budaun, informed R. Alexander, Dt. Shajahanpur, 15 May 1858, that the rebels were now under the command of their most celebrated leader, the Maulvi of Fazabad Ahmad-Ullah Shah, and he had directed the destruction of all the public building, so that the British might find no shelter on their arrival¹⁰. Russel writes that Maulvi in Shajahanpur commanded 5000 irregular cavalry, Some infantry and a Gun¹¹.

After taking control of Bareilly, Collin Campbell reached Shajahanpur on 18 May 1858 it was at Mohammadi that Maulvi declared himself an independent Ruler. Mean while when Collin Campbell reached, he was disappointed in his hope of bringing the Maulvi to decisive action, for on the day of his arrival, a cavalry petrol was fired on the noise of the shots giving the enemy warning of his approach. The rebels retired and no pursuit was possible owing to the shortage of the mounted force¹². It is interesting to note that despite all the means at their disposal and an organized system of intelligence, the British never succeeded in Capturing Maulvi.

On 25th May, Sir Thomas Seaton was appointed to command at Shajahanpur. On the 5th of June the Maulvi Set out for Pawayan, hoping to induce the Raja to take part in a new league against the British in fact the Raja Jagannath Singh himself had. requested him to personally come to the fort. He went there on a war elephant¹³. but he was refused ingress and on attempting to force an entrance, he was killed by Raja's Brother Baldeo Singh, Thus a great patriot's story was brought to an abrupt end at the hands of a coward black sheep. Raja of Pawayan was rewarded,¹⁴

Melleson wrote that thus died the Maulvi. He was a true Patriot According to Sir Thomas Seaton (Commander at Shajahanpur), the Maulvi was a man of great abilities, of undaunted courage, of stern determination, and by far the best soldier among the rebels. He pays the highest tribute to the Maulvi as a man and a patriot¹⁵.

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