MULIM LEADERSHIP IN THE FIRST WAR OF INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

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The first war of Indian Independence, often called as 1857 Mutiny was the first joined attempt of the Indians against the British Raj. Though different reasons are attributed to the war, all the participants had the single aim of putting and end to the British rule. All of them wanted to bring back the Mughal rule forgetting their differences. That is why the national historians termed the so called mutiny as the First War of Independence. The war was led mainly by *sepoy*s (British Indian Soldiers) and Muslim sbolars (*ulama*) and Brahmin pandits under the leadership of the last Mughal ruler Bahadur Shah Zafar, Some princely states also joined the war when the British authorities denied them their freedom and existence through various acts. Muslim *ulama* played a pivotal role in the struggle, but in the absence of concrete planning and under estimation of the strength of the enemy, the struggle ended in failure. As a result the Muslim community had to bear the consequences at the hands of the British authorities. However, the struggle became a land mark in the history of Indian freedom struggle. It began as a mutiny by the British Indian soldiers over economic and religious issues leading to a popular agitation supported by all who fed up with the British rule. It was the end of the endurance of a people who had been oppressed for a long time. The struggle spread at different parts of the country causing serious damages to the British hegemony.that alarmed authorities had to struggle hard to quell it.

Faslul Haq Khairabadi, the religious scholar who held considerable strength among Muslim masses issued fatwas of *jihad* and instigated the people for rebellion through his blistering speeches. He was later imprisoned and sent to Andaman jails. In his book on the struggle, *Thourat al Hindiayya*, he points out the reasons of the struggle. “When the cities, villages and the regions in Hindustan were usurped by the British Christians their hearts got filled with outrage and enmity. As they attacked everybody with position and status, nobody was able to live with honour. The British made a plan to convert all Indians in to Christianity without giving attention to their status in the society. They thought that as the Indians had nobody to help, they would surrender without a fight. They knew that if the religion of the ruled and the rulers differed that might cause hurdles in governance. Hence they began to destroy the religion and beliefs of the Indians using every chance available. They tried to give education to children and the illiterates in their own language, English and tried to convert them. They established schools in cities and villages for this purpose.”[1]

The utilitarian historians held the view that the 1857 struggle was one made by the religious fanatics against the Christians. It was also considered as a mutiny by the British Indian soldiers. National writer Surendranath Sen rightly says that, if there is no nationalism oriented love for the country that time, the main persuading factor will be religion. In the struggle all sections of people joined the British Indian soldiers to protect their own religions.[2] The mutiny, in one sense, was the result of unity of Hindu – Muslim communities against the western culture. Along with that it was the last struggle made by Brahmins and Maulavis together to expel the

foreigners(Ibid). Indians feared that western culture might destroy the beliefs and customs which they considered as important as their lives and this new wave might convert all Indians to Christianity. Their fear doubled when they saw many of their youths embraced the western culture totally.

The sepoys were hurry to terminate the British rule. They approached their colleagues with the request that English rule should be finished at any cost. As recorded by Colonel Malleson, a British officer, it was the Moulavis who worked behind the mutiny.[3] Sir Sayyid observes; Muslims had much more hatred towards the British than Hindus and hence in all districts they were in the forefront of Mutiny."[4] Alexander Duff recorded that the mutiny was a conspiracy hatched by Muslims through long term deliberations against the supremacy of Great Britain in India.[5] As far as the Muslims were concerned the mutiny of 1857 was the last war against the British, though they failed in their attempt for want of modern armaments and meticulous planning.

Muslim scholars gave a foundation and a philosophy to the struggle. In the cities and villages the struggle was spread by the local sufis and the *ulama*. Longing to die for a noble cause and readiness to sacrifice the life for it, inspired the local Muslims to participate in the mutiny. The *ulama* filled the hearts of the rebels with the hatred towards the British through their *fatwas*. *Jihad* (holy war) against enemy was made incumbent up on every Muslim and death in the attempt assured paradise in the hereafter. The teaching programmes organized by Missionaries with the help of the British government also questioned the identity of Muslims. A British officer blamed the East Company for not compelling the people to convert to Christianity. According to him the East India Company have done a Himalayan blunder in India. The religious policies followed by the Company's government have made them cowards before the people and offenders before God."[6] As Professor Mujib expressed the Mujahideen movement founded by Sayyid Ahammed Saheed earlier exerted persuasion for the development of mutiny, like a fire which burnt for years slowly and all of a sudden transformed itself in to the wild fire of a mutiny in 1857. The most important leaders among the *ulama* who participated in the mutiny were Maulana Muhammed Qasim Nanutavi, Maulavi Sarfaras Ali, Maulvi Nurulhuda, Maulavi Ali Kareem, Maulavi Peer Ali and Maulavi Fazlul Haq. Nanuthavi entered the revolt by establishing Khilafat rule (Caliphate) at Thanabhavan. Nanuthavi later founded the academy, Darul Ulum at Deoband.

Bakht Khan

Bhakt Khan led the mutiny among the British Indian soldiers. He belonged to the Mughal royal family and served as a *Subedar* in the British Indian army. He got the support of the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar and the *ulama*. Bhakt Khan jumped into the struggle at the instance of Maulavi Srafaras Ali, who along with other *ulama* declared holy war against the British rule. . Maulavi Saheb was the Ameerul Mujahidheen (leader of the fighrters) with Bhakt Khan as his assistant. At the same time he took up the assignment as the Commander – in – chief

of the Mughul emperor too. Bhakt Khan later got in touch with the Hanafi scholar, Fazlul Haq Khairabadi. A joint *fatwa*, signed by different scholars was promulgated, and the *ulama* toured different places to induce the people for *jihad.* The *fatwa* was signed by Mufti Sadrudheen, Maulavi Abdul Qadir, Qazii Hayathulla, Maulana Fais Ahmed, Maulana Naseer Khan, Maulana Muhammed Sa'dulla and Sayyid Mubarack Sha apart by Khairabadi. Bhakt Khan tried his best to prevent the British from entering Delhi. When he found it was hard to accomplish it, he moved to Badaun and from there to Farukhabad. At Luknow and Shajahanpur he joined with Maulavi Ahmadulla Sha and assaulted the British army at different places. The British couldn't capture Bakht Khan and when the mutiny was suppressed he escaped to Nepal.

In Agra it was Vazeer Khan and Maulavi Rahmathulla gave leadership to the struggle. The war sprouted when they were organizing speeches against Christian missionaries. They themselves took charge of the leadership of the war. Vazeer Khan, son of a landlord, was a physician studied at London. He had deep knowledge in Old and New Testaments. He represented Muslims in the debates with Christian missionaries while he was practicing in a government hospital at Agra. At Thanabhavan, Kerana, Samli, and Barhana the local *ulama* took part actively in the struggle. In this area Maulavi Rahmathulla was the main Ameer. Vazeer Khan and Maulavi Fais Ahammed Baduni went to Delhi and joined Bakt Khan. Vazeer Khan without finding any hope of success , left left for Hijaz.

Awadh

After Delhi, Awadh was another centre where the struggle became fierce under Beegum Hazrath Mahal, wife of the late Nawab Vajid Ali Khan. Fazlul Haq Khairabadi and Sufi Saint Ahmadulla Shah of Faizabad (Faizabad Moulavi) were the *ulama* to support the war. . On 2nd July 1857 Begum's army under Fazlul Haq and Moulavi attacked British Residency and killed Henry Lawrence, the Resident. Hazrath Mahal began to rule the country in the name of her ten year old son Brijish Qadir with Nawab Ali Muhammed Khan (Mammoo Khan) as her prime minister. She got the support of many Hindu talukdars like Rajman Singh. Support of Moulavi Ahmadullah Shah and his disciples added strength to the battle. Fearing defeat the Agra Chief Commissioner suggested that it would be better either to leave Awadh or make a treaty with Beegum. When the British army at last defeated her. She escaped to Nepal where Rana Jung Bahadur received her with respect and she spent her remaining life there. She died in 1874. As per reports the surges made by Muslims at Aligarh and Doab were uncontrollable. The Muslim labourers at Aligarh, particularly, the weavers came forward to the war arena chanting 'Deen, Deen". One person named Giyas Muhamed declared himself as the Subedar of Bahadur Shah. Muslims were actively present at Bareily, Rohilkhand, Muradabad, Shajahanpur and Bijnore also.

The Marathas by forgetting their old differences joined hands with the Mughals in the fight against the British. Nana Sahib , the leader of the Marathas joined the struggle, accepting the Mughal rule when the British government declined him the pension. At Rohilkhand Khan

Bahadur Khan, a retired Chief Justice was the leader of Hindus and Muslims. Mughal Emperor honoured him with the title *Intizamuddoula*. He took the main role in organizing fighters at Bareily and Philibith. The war leaders of Philibith were Nizam Ali Khan and Thafassal Hussain. Later, Khan Bhahdur Khan was captured and hanged by the British.

Sunni and Shia scholars supported and participated in the struggle forgetting their sectarian differences. Hindus also considered participating the war as their duty to protect their religion. At Allahabad Hindus and Muslims jointly organized secret organizations. They accepted Maulavi Liyaqath Ali as their leader. Maulavi was appointed as the Viceroy and Khusru Bagh was the headquarters. At Fatheh Garh, Nawab Thafassal Hussain was the commander of the battle. At Amroha the leader was Sayyid Gulsar Ali. Nawab Ali Bahadurand Kale Khan, Muhammad Husain Tahasildar. Hakim Sale Muhammad fought along with Rani Lakshmi Bhai of Jhansi. Nawab Validad Khan (BulandShahar), Inayath Ali (Kakari), Mir Sadiq, Mir Rustum Ali and Mahmood Khan (Bijnore) and Lal Bahadur Khan and Nawab Abdussamad Khan (Mewar) were other notable Muslim leaders who fought the British in the 1857 struggle.

Prince Firoz Shah of the Mughal empire was on Hajj pilgrimage and he without any delat joined the struggle at Indore and Gwalior. He made Muntaiser his centre and started Mughal governance appointing Rana Dhar as his Prime minister. Through a proclamation he asked Hindus and Muslims to join together and fight away the British. Mevaths, Makrans and Afghans joined hands with Firoz Shah. He marched with his army through Delhi, Agra and Farukhabad via Dholpur. He reached Lukhnow via Rohilkhand. He supported Beegum Hazrath Mahal. In 1858 March, when the British army captured Lukhnow, he went to Shajahanpur and joined with Maulavi Ahmadulla Shah there. He also gave support to Tantia Thopi, the Maratha rebel.leader too. He later moved to Karbala of Iraq.

At Bhopal the mutiny was led by Faris Muhammed Khan, Adil Mohammed Khan, Sarfaras Khan and Fazal Muhammed Khan. In Allahabad also the ‘flag of Islam’ flew high during the mutiny. There a scholar named Maulana Liyaqath Ali swore in as the Mughal Governor. The Mughal Governor at Muzafar Nagar was Maulana Rahmathulla. In Patna the leadership of *jihad* was taken up by the scholars Ahmadullah, Muhammed Hussain and Vaaizul Haq.

At Hyderabad Maulavi Alauddeen called for *jihad* against the British infidels. Posters were displayed at Makkah Masjid and Charminar regarding this. In June 1857, leaders led by Maulavis assembled at Makkah Masjid under Rasheedudheen Khan and planned future actions. Thurrabaz Khan was another leader. On 16th July they attacked the British Residency. All the three leaders were killed in the battle. In Patna the mutiny was led by Maulavi Ali Karim and Maulavi Peer Ali. On 3rd July 1857 the government suppressed a struggle led by 200 Mujahids (fighters) who held green flags aloft. The authorities kept the *ulama* of Sadiqpur under custody due to their influence among Muslims.

While majority of Muslims and scholars were ready for the *jihad* a few Muslims criticized it or remained neutral. In Delhi area Sir Sayyid Ahamad Khan and Poet Mirza Galib and in Hyderabad Shamsuddaula and Salarjung were the prominent people who cooperated with the British. Some western educated Muslims and loyal *ulama* also maintained this policy. The Nawab of Rampur supported the British to suppress rebellion. Some Muslim leaders even did the dastardly act of betrayal of the fighters. Rajab Ali Khan and Elahi Baksh who belonged to the family of Mogul Emperor Bahadur Shah, and Hakim Ahsanulla Khan of the Mughal court became infamous in Muslim circles for giving information on the rebel leaders and for helping to capture them.

Aftermath of mutiny

The last stage of the the struggle was a nightmare for Indian Muslims. The British authorities targeted Muslims for every act of rebellion. At Delhi the situation was very pathetic. The streets were filled with dead bodies. Red Fort, the capital of the Mughals was like ghost houses with blood flowing through the corridors. Bahadur Shah the emperor was kicked out of the throne and transported to Rangoon in Burma (Myanmar) by considering his old age. Muslims were selectively assaulted and assassinated everywhere. In the eyes of the English the name Musalman was synonymous with terrorist.[7] British Captain John Lawrence in his letter to Viceroy Lord Canning had pointed out that it was the Muslims in the British Indian Army who had shown more enthusiasm to do atrocities than Hindus.[8] Agra Collector Charles Rake also wrote that it was the Muslims who fostered more hatred against the British: The green flag of Mohammad also has unfolded. The followers of that Prophet of falsehood think that they will regain the lost supremacy under the Mughal Empire. When their fathomless hatred against Christians leaped out of bounds they surged forward killing and destroying.[9]

At Delhi, Meerut and Awadh the active participation was that of the Muslims. Bahadur Sha had not even dreamt of such a battle. Instead, the British Indian Soldiers including Muslims and Hindus had been pushing the monarch up to the leadership position.. The monarch also utilized the opportunity to regain the lost eminence by entering the scene actively by approving the demands of the fighters. On 11th May 1857, Hindus and Muslims together declared Bahadur Shah as the Badusha (emperor) of Hindustan. It was the day following the eruption of the mutiny in Meerut. Twenty one customary gun shots following his ascendance to the throne passed fear in the hearts of the British. The atmosphere of return of the Mughal Empire made the people overjoyed. As soon as the royal declaration came out that all those who were desirous of protecting his own religion should join the Imperial Army, countless people entered the battlefield.

The British meant the suppression of Muslims while taking care of the suppression of the mutiny. In 1858 Villiam Howard Russel recorded: It is the Mohammedan people who give so much trouble to us. Our main hostility is directed towards them… This hatred towards the Mohammadans is stronger than the hatred we have with the worshippers of Shiva and Vishnu.

There is no doubt that Mohammadans are more dangerous to our rule."[10]. After the mutiny the revenge of the British fell on the Mughal family also. Lt. Hodson shot dead innocent Mughal princes. Many royal family members were killed mercilessly. The broad chests of Muslim lords and scholars became targets of British bayonets. Even women and children were not spared. "Here, see an ocean of blood. God knows what all remains to happen." wrote Urdu poet Mirza Galib.

Miyan Panchakush, a Muslim writer and a leading scholar Maulavi Imam Baksh were arrested. They were taken to Rajgharh gate and killed. The dead bodies were thrown in to the river Jumna. Both the children of Maulavi faced the same fate. Many people were exiled to Andaman, Burma or Australia. Sha'ir Dahlavi recorded in the book *Dasthanegadar* that the English army mercilessly shot dead each and every Muslim seen on the street.[11] Those Muslims who escaped with their lives had to pay huge sums as fine too.

British Prime Minister Pamerson sent an order to Viceroy Lord Canning to demolish and remove all buildings linked with Muslim heritage including Juma Masjid at Delhi. The premier Newspaper of England, *Times* asked Christians to carry the Holy Cross against Muslims. The suggestion of the newspaper was to convert Muslims forcibly. But Lord Canning who had his conscience intact did not approve such revenge. He said that there is no doubt about the fact that religion played a major role in making the mutiny active. But like Mohammedans Hindus also involved in it. If there is the need of a revenge against one that is applicable to the other too. There are two sections who fought against us in Delhi. The result of demolishing Brahmin temples and Muslims mosques will be activating two sections who are already our enemies again against us. A few of us are ruling these 15 million people. So it is better to keep them divided and make it sure that they are not suspicious about our intentions. If the order to destroy Delhi was implemented we will have to give huge price for that. More over it may be an injustice too. It was not the residents of Delhi but the British Indian soldiers who came over there, who made the problems. They came in to the City and inflicted atrocities on the people. If we destroy the wealth of the same people instead of arranging any compensation that may really be wrong.[12]

Whatever might be the opinion of Lord Canning, there was no end to British bureaucracy's vengeance towards Muslims. Most of the officials were against Muslims. They compelled the government to adopt cruel methods of subjugation. As per the Eleventh Act passed on 30th May 1857, the government order was issued to kill all those responsible for the mutiny and to impound all their wealth. The officials implemented the rule with vengeance. They acted as they got permission to adopt any oppressive methods. The guilty and the innocent were treated alike. A Muslim name was just enough to treat one as guilty. The confiscated land and materials were auctioned in public. The British supporters and officials utilized the opportunity to amass wealth. The Muslim land lords who supported the mutiny became totally land less. The Mughal royal family members had to beg for their bare existence.

As Lord Canning wrote such acts of revenge could not extinguish the fire of bravery among Muslims on 20th September 1871, a Punjabi Muslim named Abdulla killed Kolkata Chief Justice Norman by knifing while interrogation was going on. He was a person who abused Muslims very much. In February 1872 Viceroy Lord Mayo was killed by a Muslim soldier named Sher Ali. At many places British officials were killed. At the border provinces Muslim tribal sects got ready for another holy war against the British. The British realized that ideologies could not be suppressed by weapons. There was no respite for the hostility of the Muslims till the government considered them favorably. During the British rule whenever the situation remained calm it was just the indication of an ensuing storm.

Moulavi Ahmadullah Shah

In the struggle of 1857, the part played by Maulavi Ahmdulla Shah is noteworthy. His exceptional skills were recognized even by the British. Ahmadulla Shah (1789 – 1858) was a slim, tall and physically strong person with curved nose, thin lips, thick eye brows, big eyes, long beard and thick hair combed backwards; all these added up to an intellectual exterior. He was generally known as Faizabad Maulavi.

We have no details available about the early days of Maulavi. One opinion is that he was a native of Arcot and was related to Tipu Sultan. Some says that he was the son of a local Chieftain. yet, some others record that he belonged to Qutub Shahi ruling family of Golkonda. In the official records he hails from Multan. He spent long years in Gwalior as the disciple of a Sufi Saint Mihrab Shah.

Maulavi arrived at Delhi as a Sufi teacher. A number of people accepted his discipleship. In the streets of Lucknow, Maulavi and his disciples used to exhibit miracles and magics like fire eating. They used to beat drums to inform their arrival in an area; hence Maulavi was also known as Danka Shah (Danka means drum).[13] In the beginning he had no hatred towards the British and the English were his friends. He is said to have travelled to England and performed *hajj* on his way back. Next twelve years he immersed himself in Sufism. He accepted the spiritual leadership of Sheikh Furkhan Ali of Sambar. From Sambar he went to Tonkh as directed by his Guru. Vazirudheen Khan, the ruler of that place was an ascetic. Ahmadullah Shah remained there for few months and travelled to Gwalior and met Sufi Saint Mahrab Shah Qalandhar who persuaded him to join the struggle. He went directly to Delhi and contacted *ulama* for a joint eftort against the British. The *ulama* at first gave him only a cold response. Maulana Sadaruddeen Azurda advised him to go to Agra and meet Mufti Inamulla Khan. He, however, began to give training to the youth making Agra his head quarters. His speeches inspired the *ulama* as well as the common people. Hindus also gathered to listen his discourses. His steadily increasing influence raised the jealousy of a small group who conspired against him giving news to the officials. The government also took vigil on his movement and later issued order to arrest him, but the police showed a lukewarm attitude in arresting the Maulavi.. Soon he shifted his center to Gwalior and from there to Lucknow. Finally he settled at Faisabad. According to Britsh versions Ahamadulla Shah reached Faizabad to take revenge when some upper caste Hindus of Faizabad assassinated a Sufi saint Maulavi Ameer Ali. He declared holy war against the upper caste Hindus who were supported by the Magistrate.

Maulavi was arrested and put in Jail. In another report it is said that Maulavi had no grudge with Hindus and when he turned against the British, who in order to make a religious divide fabricated this story of Maulavi attacking the upper caste Hindus. Historian S.N.Chanda wrote that apart from this, there were no evidences other than what was created by the British, to prove that Maulavi was an opponent of Hindus.[14] If he was really an enemy of Hindus the British Indian soldiers engaged in the war might not have made him their leader. On 8th June 1857 when mutiny erupted in Faizabad, the fighters attacked the jail and liberated the prisoners. Maulavi also was set free. This event brought serious threats to the British authorities. Maulavi tried to maintain complete discipline in the war front. He never allowed arson and looting by soldiers.

Ahmadullah made an unsuccessful attempt to attack the British residency. He almost reached the gate of the residency fully armed but the British army men thwarted the attempt. However, Moulavi was a divine man for the people who completerly relied upon him. They even believed that Maulavi with his spiritual powers would oust the whitemen from the country. They announced that after the expulsion of the British, Maulavi himself would announce the matter in the streets of London by beating drums. His charisma was so attractive that the people despite their religious differences made him their hero. His speeches and innate capabilities brought all sections of people in Awadh and the neighboring places closer to him.

Maulana Sikhandar Shah of Faizabad gave him all support.. When the authorities found that there was possibility for a mutiny in Faizabad they threatened him with dire consequences. War broke out between the people of Moulavi and the British army. One British officer was killed in the encounter. Ahmadullah Shah was arrested. This time rebellion had started at Meerut and following this Moulavi's followers at Faizabad broke into war opening the jail and freeing the prisoners including Maulavi.

Maulavi now moved to a small village called Bari which was at a distance of 25 miles from Lucknow. The British sent a 3000 member army commanded by Mr.Hope Grant to the village. In the attack British army got defeated. From Bari, Maulavi and his army moved to Rohilkhand where Sir Colin Cambel was the British Commander. Sir Colin was preparing to defeat Bahadur Khan, the Nawab of Bareily. Maulavi decided to help the Nawab. His plan was to attack the British army from behind for which he arranged an army contingent with the help of Maratha leader Nana Saheb at Shajahanpur. British Army reached Shajahanpur on 2nd May 1858 on their way to Bareily. Maulavi's army had already demolished the buildings where the British army might camp at the town. Fearing an attack from Maulavi, Colin moved to Bareily after stationing a small army at Shajahanpur under the command of Hale. Maulavi attacked the army. Hale escaped with injuries losing many soldiers. Colin immediately sent an army commanded by Brigadier Johns who defeated the forces of Maulavi. Maulavi remained at Shajahanpur. Now he had only 500 horsemen, one unit of soldiers and few guns. The British army commanded by Johns and Colin made Maulavi's stay at Shajahanpur quite impossible. He moved to another place called Muhammadi where he built a fort fixing 15 guns He further captured the region called Pali and created an army post at Mooriya. His target was the loyal princely states of Sandi and Pavayan.

Maulavi reached Pavayan on 15th June 1858. He had only 200 supporters with him. The king invited Maulavi for a talk assuring him his support. By now the British had declared a price of Rs.50,000/- for his head. Yajur Nath Singh was the ruler of Pavayan. He entrusted his brother Buldeo Singh to talk with

Maulavi who had been invited to the palace. While the talk was going on the soldiers on guard shot a bunch of arrows on the person of Moulavi. They **treacherously** captured him and severed his head while he was alive. Buldeo Singh and his companions went to court of the District Magistrate of Shajahanpur taking the blood oozing head of Maulavi with them. The Magistrate praised both Buldeo Singh and the King. The reward of Rs. 50,000 was handed over to him. Maulavi's head was publicly displayed at the entrance of Magistrate's office building as a warning to the agitators. His body was burnt publicly. His head was later taken to London and preserved at the Royal College of Surgeons till the Second World War.

Mutiny in the eyes of Khairabadi

Maulana Fazlul Haq Khairabadi was a prominent scholar who gave leadership to the First War of Independence. In 1859 the British arrested and exiled him. During his jail term he wrote a book on the mutiny named *Al Thourat al Hindiyya* (Indian Revolution). He also wrote another book also named *Khazaidul Fitnathul Hind*.

Al Thourat gives many insights in to the First War of Independence. The hand written copy of this book written in pure Arabic was brought to India through secret channels by Maulavi Inayath Ahmad Kakori. Maulavi was with Khairabadi in Andaman Jail for some time and was released later.

Al Thourat confirms that the British aimed Christianization of India. "The Christians of Britain with their heart filled with cruelty and hatred had usurped the Indian villages, towns and the adjacent areas. They had made the powerful and honorable Hindu and Muslim personalities so weak that they could not even raise their heads. They executed a plan to Christianize all people of India without taking in to consideration their positions. When Indians did not have any friends they would not dare to oppose the British and had no choice other than yielding. They forced Indians to relinquish their religion and accept Christianity so that India can be transformed to a land of one religion as that of England. The Christians clearly understood that if the ruler and the ruled were of different religions that would be an obstruction to governance and it may also pave the way for revolts and revolution. Hence they tried to suppress the religions and faiths of Indians at any cost. They established schools in villages and towns to popularize their religion. They started to teach children and the illiterate in their own language. They fiercely suppressed eastern studies, sciences, scholars and centers of education."[15]

The above lines of Khairabadi showed the attitude of the Muslims towards the British government. Every act of the British towards reforms were interpreted as a an attempt to destroy their religion. This was true to a great extant. Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Safar even came forward to arrest people who studied English when Khairabad himself issued a *fatwa* prohibiting Muslims from studying English. It is notable that during those days the control of the British Education was in the hands of the Christian Missionaries. Even Sir Sayyid, a British supporter, pointed out the activities of the Christian Missionaries and the anxiety that instilled in the minds of Hindus and Muslims as one of the causes for 1st war of independence.[16] Khairabadi also

pointed out the economic exploitation of the British.. The British purchased food products directly from the farmers and acquired the monopoly of the trade and denied Indians any right for trade and commerce.[17] Khairabadi openly criticizes the atrocities done by British Indian soldiers (sepoys): "Lack of discretion led them to anarchy. They killed Christians, looted them and attacked their own commanders and Sardars. Some of them killed women and children and carried out special methods of torture in cruelty and madness. There was no safety to women due to the atrocities commited by the sepoys. Villages and towns went in to the grips of fear and conflicts."[18]

The events took place in the Red Fort at Delhi has been recorded by Khairabadi: "A number of sepoys arrived at the residence of Taimooriya (Mughal) Kings. (the Red fort) There they made the old King (Bahadur Shah Zafar), the leader of the revolution. But he was very weak and inexperienced. He was one who had reached the valley of death after going through different stages in life. To be frank, instead of functioning as an independent King he had become an obedient servant of his wife *(*Zeenath Mahal) and minister (Hakeem Ahsanulla Khan). The minister was a friend of Christians and loyal to the British. He informed the developments to the British officials secretly. The Royal family members also were birds of the same feather. But some of them showed attachment and truthfulness towards the King. But they were working according to their own will without any guidance from any one. At the same time the King was a fickle minded person. He failed to act with a concrete decision. He could't even differentiate between good and bad. It was while all these were going on, a group of courageous Muslims managed to get a *fatwa* from *ulama* and *fuqaha* (theologians) to wage a holy war (*jihad*) and Muslim youths flocked forward from villages and towns to fight the Christians. At the same time the inexperienced Emperor appointed some of his cowardly, wavering and rash sons to lead the Indian soldiers. These sons hated truthful and gentle people. They had neither battle skill nor the talent for using sword and spear. Their friends and partners were street dwellers!"[19]

In the opinion of Khairabadi the reasons for the failure of the mutiny were the incapability, self–indulgence and wickedness of the Emperor and his relatives. He records with contempt the deviation of the rebels from the right path and the cruelly meted out by the sepoys and street dwellers who looted everything and brought unnecessary bloodshed. The sepoys were morally and economically weak. Therey lacked unity. Many of them turned back due to starvation. The support given by a section of Hindus and Muslims to the British also made the situation worse. The Christians who became tired of war and lost courage went for the help of Hindus of the western province. They provided army, money and weapons and this reinforced the British power and suppression of the revolt became easy. During the last stage "thousands of citizens became the friends of Christians. All the Hindus supported Christians. Muslims divided into two factions, one supporting the British and others determining to fight. The supporters amassed enormous wealth out of the revolution and helped to spread disunity among *jihadis."* [20] *"Baniyas* (Hindu traders), other Hindus and the officials of the Emperor fostered hatred towards the *jihadis.* They formulated new plans to massacre Indian soldiers and the citizens. They

blocked import of grains from villages to create artificial famine. This affected the people of Delhi severely. As there was no other option left to relieve the people from starvation, they had to submit themselves. Then the Christians entered the town and captured the fort and the town".[21] The artificial famine was actually the work of Mirza Ilahi Baksh who was the Food Minister of the Mughal emperor, but a supporter of the British. Describing the failure of the revolt at Awadh Khairabadi observes how the inexperience of the young nawab Birjis and the enemies within his court brought the rebellion to a failure. Besides, his ministers and advisors were lazy, foolish, self-indulgent and untruthful. Many of them supported Christians.[22]. Khairabadi had admiration for Ahamdulla Shah who led the mutiny in *Awadh* and adjacent areas. He describes how the ruler of Pavayan had treacherously handed over Ahmadullah Shah to the British after mutilating his head.In 1862 Maulana Faslul Haq Khairabadi left the world after four years of sufferings in the cellular jail of the Andaman.

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