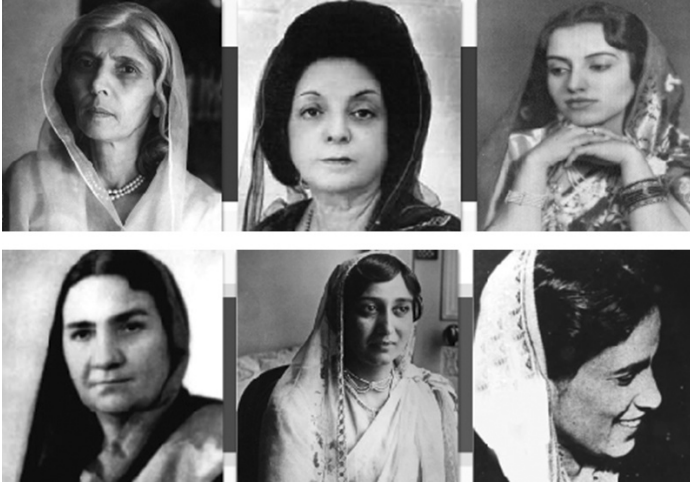

WOMEN OF FREEDOM

Written by:

WOMEN OF FREEDOM



'I know that in the long struggle for the achievement of Pakistan, Muslim women have stood solidly behind their men. In the bigger struggle for the building up of Pakistan that now lies ahead, let it not be said that the women of Pakistan had lagged behind or failed in their duty'.

(Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Broadcast speech from Radio Pakistan, Dacca, March 28, 1948)

After independence, Quaid-i-Azam stood unequivocally for the great role women were to play in the formation of Pakistani nation. He believed in their immense power in national life which is obvious through his words which he spoke on June 28, 1948:

“In the great task of building the nation and maintaining its solidarity, women have a most valuable part to play, as the prime architects of the character of the youth that constitutes its backbone, not morally in their own homes but by helping their less fortunate sister outside in that great task.... I wish to impress on you that the nation can not rise to the heights of glory unless your women are side by side with you.... You should take your women along with you as comrades in every sphere of life avoiding the corrupt practices of western society. You cannot expect a woman who is herself ignorant to bring up your children properly. The women have the power to bring up children on right lines. Let us not throw away this asset”.

MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE CENTRE

MCRC works to provide information, support, and resources to communities facing racial inequality (South Asian and Asylum Seekers/refugees) requiring assistance in a culturally sensitive manner; to develop monitoring mechanism which will assist in identifying the effectiveness of those services. MCRC has been supporting people with Health and mental health problems for 20 years. We are project-based funded organisation. Currently we are also providing out of hours Mental Health support to BAME communities in six different languages over evenings and weekends. The service includes Counselling, Bereavement support, Guided self-help, Mindfulness, Social prescribing, Brief intervention, COVID and vaccine support (to alleviate concerns that impact on peoples MH)

Last year, we: provided direct support to over 500 people
Delivered more than 30 Zoom sessions.

Published two books, 'Poetry behind the Mask and 'Feelings of Lock down'

cultural competence training to 3 agencies

trained 10 volunteers to identify signs of mental health in others responded to more than 1,000 requests for information.

Our services are:

THERAPY TRAINING

Live events and exhibitions

We organise events to promote health and exhibitions which includes South Asian Heritage.

We offer support face to face, telephone and online. During lockdown and taking into account the additional risk factors of infection for our communities, all support has been non face to face for safety reasons. During lockdown we have been working with local community groups and feedback has shown that bi-lingual approach and teletherapy has shown incredibly positive results. We know it can be difficult to connect with others, remain engaged and stay motivated in the unusual circumstances we are living in, so we wanted to give our clients something to keep them feel connected, also getting creative is a great way to keep their mind occupied, and feeling calm and relaxed.

WOMEN OF FREEDOM



‘Women of Freedom’ was a project to work with women and girls in Rochdale. Razia Shamim and Nighat Amini worked with participants by involving them into activities to make them feel physically and emotionally safe. Session worker also helped them to search on net about struggle of women during Pakistan movement.

‘I am very glad that our women are coming forward...women can always play a great part. It is said that the hand that rocks the cradle rules the nation....Our Islamic history shows that women have always worked shoulder to shoulder with men... No nation can ever achieve any big thing unless we take our women with us. [Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League]



‘This project is to highlight the facts which many of us still remain unaware. The historical significance behind the struggles borne by some of our prominent leaders, particularly the female figureheads of Pakistan will inspire our young people’.

Councillor Sameena Zaheer

Multicultural Resource Centre

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Email: mccrochdale@yahoo.co.uk

WOMEN OF INDEPENDENCE

When all India Muslim League Women's Sub Committee was established in 1938 by the instruction of Quad-i-Azam, a few women were participating in their own provinces for National Services. From each province experienced women were nominated to work for independence campaign. This task gave them a violent desire of wakefulness. The veiled ladies started to join the Muslim League from all over the country. This move helped to establish women committees in every city, province, and district of undivided India. These veiled women were visiting door to door with membership documents to organise and publicity and were obtaining the membership from women with a fee of two Anna. If the new member did not have the money to pay for the membership, it was paid by these workers themselves. Hundreds of thousands of women were introduced the meaning of independence and awareness about the objectives of Muslim League and movement of Pakistan. Everyone started working in their own areas.

Women workers did not have only this job of awareness to get independence from English regime but to prepare the young females as well to maintain the stability of Pakistan after independence. That's why these women were also trying to develop women education. There were a few girls' schools. They were establishing girl's schools under Muslim League Women's Sub Committee's supervision wherever they felt a need of a school.

Furthermore, Aligarh Muslim Girls College was the biggest institution. It was established after a hard work of many such

women workers. The girls who got education from this college are working in many educational institutions in Pakistan today. Besides Aligarh, there were schools in Lucknow, Calcutta and Delhi working under the supervision of other women. The establishment of these schools was not the purpose of making money but to prepare these young girls to serve the new state of which they were struggling.

These workers were also developing adult education centres for illiterate women. They were providing education themselves without any wages or charges. Every woman was motivated to serve without looking for any reward or good name. They were also preparing themselves to face the problems as a result of this division. The workers started National Guard training sessions to these young girls at their homes under their own supervisions. These girls had to learn about first aid and medicines.

Quaid-i-Azam was very happy with their work and organisation, and he often praised and encouraged them in his speeches. This encouragement was very useful for these women to be more active for the movement of independence. These women workers were allowed to meet Muslim League leaders such as Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, Nawab Ismail Khan, Sardar AbdulrabNishter. Nawab Siddique Ali Khan, etc., freely.

They were also allowed to see these leaders anytime to discuss matters for instructions. Quaid-i-Azam used to spend his valuable time in meetings with these women workers. This encouraged the process of Pakistan movement even more and was becoming successful to convince public about the Muslim League's strategy.

Some workers became very famous. It seemed to be difficult for the management to control the audience when these famous women had to come for their speeches. The most popular figure was Begum Maulana Mohammed Ali who had a speech (without notes) in simply Urdu. The audience used to shout the slogans of Muslim League Zindabad during her speech. Begum Shiasta Ikram-u-llah was also using the same style in her speech. She criticised the English regime and Hindu people in such a way that our illiterate and simple Muslim women understood the message well. The other women were also best speakers.

As a matter of fact, different kind of works was done in respect of the Pakistan movement, and all the women had different kind of abilities. Some were good at speeches and some for collecting donations. Some were good to establish schools and their administrations, and some were very good to arrange meetings. Some were good at doing correspondence related jobs. In short there were women of all abilities. In 1956 there was a meeting in Delhi at Arabic College and Quaid-i-Azam made himself a speech in Urdu. This scene was also amazing to cite. A red colour passage from door to the dice was prepared and girl's national guards were standing on each side in their white Shalwar and green scarf Muslim League flags were hosting everywhere. Not only from Delhi but the women from nearby areas also attended this meeting. The Arabic College was completely full.

The President of the Muslim League Women's Sub Committee, General Secretary and members were waiting to welcome Quaid-i-Azam. He arrived there with his sister Fatima Jinnah in his car. Both were pleased to see such a large women

gathering. The President and Secretary opened the car door while a woman from Delhi belonging to a business family put a copy of Qur'an in the lap of Quaid-i-Azam as a gift. Quaid-i-Azam thanked this lady and came out of the car. Both brother and sister were walking through with the President and Secretary. They walked a few steps yet when the national guards paid salutation. After this ceremony he went forward towards the dice.

On the dice, Quaid-i-Azam was sitting in middle while Fatima Jinnah and President were sitting in each side of him. The secretary was on the microphone and made the announcement "Dear Ladies, it's our good fortune that we have our favourite leader among us today and he is going to deliver his speech to you".

The women were excited and exclaiming "God is great" and "Quaid-i-Azam Zindabad". Quaid-i-Azam gave the speech in Urdu and said "I am pleased to see that you are united and you have established an organisation in every city and street. In fact your unity is the main factor. We can gain success with your unity and organisation. You have worked a lot but I instruct you to unite and work more. I assure you that the rights of women will be protected fully in Pakistan". The Arabic College echoed with slogan shouting "we will get Pakistan, India will be divided". Fatima Jinnah sitting next to her brother wearing white Gharra and white Scarf, smiled when she listened to these slogans.

Shortly after this meeting, in February 1947, Punjab Muslim League started a campaign of civil disorder against the Unionist Government. The women of Punjab had processions and

protests and many were arrested and jailed. Many women travelled from other provinces and cities to help these processions and protests and were arrested. As a result of these actions, the Khizar Government had to resign. In 1947 when Hindu-Muslim sectarian incidents started in undivided India, many affected Muslims from the villages started to gather in relief camps based in cities. The women leaders were arranging clothing, food and other necessities for these helpless people, providing First Aid to injured and midwifery to the pregnant women, looking after and providing milk to these new-born babies.

When this kind of disturbances increased and the cities were on targets too, these women suffered themselves a great deal of troubles. Some remained in India after the partition on 14th of August and were still helping these Muslim male, female and children by taking them to secure places. These women were so much busy to help others while their own homes were destroyed. They were trapped among rascals. They arrived in Pakistan after facing a hell of problems. Their homes and lands were destroyed. Their luxurious life had an end but their promise was completed. "We will get Pakistan, India will be divided".

After the independence of Pakistan, some of these prominent women were the resident of those provinces where the Muslims had the majority of those areas are a part of Pakistan. Many of them were the resident of those provinces where Muslims were in minority and they had to suffer a lot. After a hardship, some of these women made themselves a prominent figure of Pakistan and today they have respect in the society as the best social workers.

In 1947, at the time of the partition, among the women of All India Muslim League Women Sub Committee working from their provinces were included: Lady Abdullah Haroon, President of this committee; Begum Shahnawaz, Begum Tasadaq Hussain, Begum Abdul Aziz from Punjab; Begum Hukam from Bengal; Begum Akhtar from UP; Begum Mohammad Hussain from Bahr and Begum Hussain Malik, Anjuman Ara Begum, Miss Iffat Rifat Hussain and Noor-u-saba Begum from Delhi. The good planning, organisation, unity and active actions taken by these women in respect of the Pakistan movement have been appreciated by the poets of that time in their famous poet Ramzi Alah Abadi in recognition of their civil disorder campaign against the Unionist Government. *(thanks to Hilal Khan)*



PAKEEZA WOMEN GROUP ROCHDALE

There is a near-absence of information in local textbooks on the history of women's movement in Pakistan and the legacy behind it. Every year, students are made to learn a replicated account of the 1947 war of independence, oftentimes omitting the names and the significant roles played by the feminist leaders of Pakistan.

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Founder of Pakistan, himself reiterated the importance of a nation whose women are side by side with men. He said, "No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you. We are victims of evil customs. It is a crime against humanity that our women are shut up within the four walls of the houses as prisoners."

The Pakistan movement was of a great historical significance for Muslim women of the subcontinent as it was the first time they had ever participated in such a great number in any political movement. It marked the cornerstone for the liberation and recognition of Muslim women in the political arena and the creation of Pakistan.

Tracing back to the 19th century, the Khilafat Movement was the first instance when the Muslim women made their presence felt in the political arena. Bi Amman, mother of Maulana Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali Johar, raised her voice against British imperialism and addressed large meetings in various parts of India. Pakistan movement followed a similar direction. Women came out of their homes and struggled to achieve a separate homeland. They made immense contributions to the movement by demonstrating their enthusiasm, leadership, intellect, courage and resolve.

The most noteworthy name is of Fatima Jinnah, sister of our founding father. She was credited with the title Madar-e-Millat (Mother of the Nation), and was the first lady to have formed the women's framework for the idea of Pakistan, aiding Quaid-e-Azam greatly in the process. After independence in 1947, these women formed bodies and organization where they could exhibit their leadership qualities and work towards the achievements of their objectives.

The first women to represent themselves in the Legislative Assembly of Pakistan were Begum JahanAra Shah Nawaz and Begum Shaistalkramullah. These exceptional women were deeply committed to the cause of promoting women's rights and their participation in national affairs of Pakistan.

They managed to include the rights of women in the agenda of the constituent assembly and played an active part in the formation of laws that aimed at increasing the political representation of women in Pakistan. They demanded special seats for women in 1956 and lobbied the government to pass the Muslim Personnel Law of 1948, Muslim Family Ordinance 1961 and Muslim Personnel Law of 1962.

The most significant moment in the political history of Pakistan was the decision of Fatima Jinnah to contest the presidential elections. It was a tough challenge in a country where women's participation in politics was a taboo. Even though, Ayub Khan won the presidential elections, but the impact of women had been sealed in history forever.



**MUSLIM LEAGUE ACTIVISTS IN LAHORE,
LED BY JAHANARA SHAHNAWAZ**
(source: Lahore Museum)

Most Muslim women led secluded lives within their homes and were not visible in public spaces. That is how purdah (segregation and separation from men or strangers) was observed, right up to the early part of the 20th century. A handful of women emerged during the Khilafat Movement (1919-1922), a pan-Islamic movement for the restoration of the Caliphate in Turkey. Amongst these was Bi Amma, the mother of Maulanas Mohammed Ali and Shaukat Ali, who addressed public gatherings from behind a sheet. (Source Daily Dawn)



PAKEEZA WOMEN GROUP



FATIMA JINNAH

It was the Muhammad Ali Jinnah who brought about a social revolution in the emancipation and empowerment of Muslim women, a little recognized fact. He repeatedly stressed the importance of treating women as equal partners of men if the Muslims of India were to achieve the dream of a separate homeland. Fatima Jinnah was always at his side, a visible symbol of the new woman, advising and participating in all the activities of the Quaid, and not tucked away at home minding the kitchen.

However, the real game changer was the Muslim League session at Patna in 1938, when the Quaid-i-Azam, who was reorganizing and revitalizing the Muslim League since his return from England in 1934, created the All India Muslim Women's Sub-Committee of the Muslim League. By the mid-40s, a galaxy of women had emerged in the leadership role of the Muslim League, organizing and mobilizing in the cities and also at the district level. Some of the more prominent names that emerged were: Jahanara Shahnawaz, Begum Salma Tassaduq Hussain and Begum Fatima from , Shaistalkramullah from Bengal, Zari Sarfraz from what was then the NWFP, and Lady Abdullah Haroon from Sindh.

BEGUM SALMA TASSADUQ HUSSAIN



Real name Salma Mahmuda, daughter of Mian Fazal Ilahi Bedil, was born in August 1908 at Gujranwala. Brought up and educated in a scholarly atmosphere, Begum Tasadduque began to understand the value of art and literature early in life. In 1922, she was married to Dr. Tasadduque Hussain, Bar-at-Law. She continued her studies even after her marriage and completed her graduation from

the University of Punjab. With the formation of the Punjab Provincial Women's Subcommittee, she became its most active member and in 1940 she was elected as one of its Secretaries. She helped in opening up primary schools and industrial homes for girls at Lahore.

In 1941, she was nominated to the Council of the All India Muslim League. In April 1943, she was taken on by the Central Subcommittee of the All India Muslim League. She played a leading part in the Bengal Relief Fund Committee. In 1944, she was nominated as a member of the working committee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League.

She rendered valuable services during the elections of 1946. She successfully contested on the Muslim League ticket for the Punjab Provincial Assembly seat from the inner Lahore constituency, winning by an overwhelming majority. The same year she was again taken on by the working committee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. (Story of Pakistan.com)

BEGUM FATIMA



As she was picked up, the Muslim Students Federation and its women's wing began playing an increasingly important role in mass mobilization, with girl students traveling even to the Frontier Province, a remarkable act given its social conservatism. Begum Fatima, the founder principal of the Jinnah Islamia College for girls in Lahore, had played a key role in mobilizing female students. She invited the Quaid to come and address the students of her college in November 1942. Imagine the impact on these young minds when this charismatic leader declared, "...I am glad to see that not only Muslim men but Muslim women and children have understood the Pakistan scheme. No nation can make any progress without the cooperation of its women. If Muslim women support their men, as they did in the day of their Prophet of Islam, we should soon realise our goal".

When the Muslim League won all the Muslim seats in the provincial elections of Punjab but was excluded from the formation of the provincial government in February 1946, massive demonstrations were held outside the Chief Minister Khizar Hayat's house, with the women Leaguers' processions making a serious impact. When the government banned the Muslim League National Guard and the RSS, there were police raids at their offices, and the women Leaguers partnered with their male counterparts in offering passive resistance.

JAHANARA SHAHNAWAZ



When the Parliamentary Board was formed in the same year to negotiate with other parties for the formation of a government in Punjab, Jahanara Shahnawaz was made a member of it. The Quaid-i-Azam was invited to send a representative to the USA to attend the International Herald Tribune Forum in September 1946 in order to present the case for a separate homeland for Muslims. He nominated Jahanara Shahnawaz and MAH Ispahani for it, telling Ispahani that it was to counter the Hindu propaganda that Muslims were reactionaries who wanted to create a theocratic state. They addressed public meetings and met heads of delegations at the UN from various countries. Ispahani wrote of Begum Shahnawaz, "The Begum, an experienced parliamentarian, made quite an impression on the audience with her fluent speeches." When the provincial assemblies elected their quota of members to the Constituent Assembly, Begum Shahnawaz was elected from Punjab and Shaistalkramullah from Bengal.

SHAISTA IKRAMULLAH



By early 1947, the **Pakistan Movement** had become a mass movement. An intelligence report quoting the Daily Dawn reported that on 2nd February, the Frontier Women's Provincial Muslim League held its annual session in Peshawar, which was attended by a thousand burqa-clad women. By April, groups of women Leaguers were touring the Frontier, for the Frontier

Women's Sub-Committee had asked for help from the Punjab women Leaguers. Mrs. Kamaluddin from Punjab addressed the women of Kohat from the Muslim League office through a loudspeaker. As the date of the referendum approached, parties of women toured the districts of Mardan, Kohat and Hazara. One of these young firebrands was Mumtaz Shahnawaz, who in one of her addresses chastised the men of Mardan for not allowing their women to participate in agitations. Lady Haroon had toured the Frontier Province as far back as October 1945, accompanied by a group of women that included Begum Hakem, the President of the Bengal Muslim League. There was a fair amount of exchange with Bengali Muslim Leaguers.

MUMTAZ SHAHNAWAZ



The penultimate act of women Leaguers' heroism was in February or March 1947, when one young woman climbed on top of the Punjab Secretariat, removed the Union Jack, and hoisted the Pakistani flag. The Quaid not only transformed the Muslim League into an effective mass organization in just under 13 years, but also brought about a social revolution, bringing Muslim women out of their homes, schools and colleges onto the streets as activists and effective parliamentarians. Since then, there has been no turning back for the women of Pakistan, although some of the Zia-era legislation continues to be a challenge to the women's movement for emancipation and empowerment.

RANA LIAQUAT



Begum Raana Liaquat Ali Khan was one of the leading woman and prominent figure in the Pakistan movement along with her husband who not only witness the creation of Pakistan but also give her services to new born Pakistan. She was the radical lady with new thoughts and ideas who always become ready to give her 100% whatever the situation was.

BEGUM ZARI SARFRAZ



This profile of Zari Sarfaraz 28 July 1923 – 27 April 2008 was published by the DAWN magazine circa 2002
By *Intikhab Amir*

There aren't many Pakistani women who can claim to be renowned politicians as well as astute businesswomen. In fact, one would assume that the number of such successful ladies would be negligible in a male dominated society like ours. Fifty years ago, our society was much more orthodox than what it is today. It can be assumed that the atmosphere could not really have been very conducive for women to undertake political struggle. And as for business, there were fewer still, attempting to enter the field let alone conquering the arena. In the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) things were more difficult than in other provinces of the country and much more complex.

The concept of females going out of their homes to earn or even just to work for their own satisfaction was considered improper. Even now, the situation has not really changed that much, but despite all the restrictions, the women of NWFP though handful have managed to pursue noble causes.

One such lady is Begum Zari Sarfaraz, the elder sister of the late Mir Afzal Khan former chief minister of NWFP - and the eldest of the three children of Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Khan, a leading landlord of the Pakhtoon dominated Mardan area of NWFP. She has played an active role in furthering Muslim League cause during the Pakistan Movement while running her own business in the mid 1940s.

"I entered politics and also started taking care of the family's financial concerns at the age of 17, after the death of my father," says Begum Zari Sarfaraz who is now in her late 70s and still has the verve to speak for hours and hours on politics and business.

AMJADI BEGUM



Amjadi Begum wife of Molana Muhammad Ali Johar, with delegates at Muslim League Governing Council's Lahore session.

AmjadiBano Begum was born in 1885 in a devoutly religious family of Rampur. Her father, Azmat Ali Khan, worked as a high official with Rampur State.though handful have managed to pursue noble causes.

NUSRAT KHANUM **(LADY ABDULLAH HAROON)**



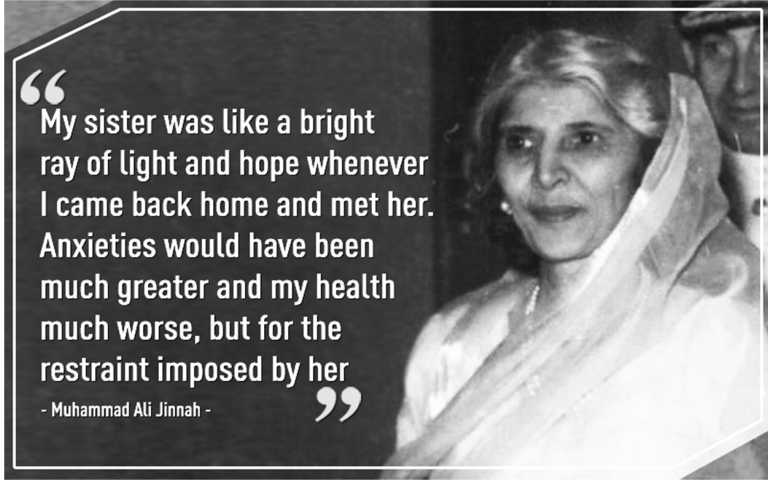
Real name Nusrat Khanum, Lady Abdullah Haroon was born in 1886, in Iran. Her parents migrated to India and later settled in Karachi where in 1914 she married Sir Abdullah Haroon. She took keen interest in female education and started a school at her home. She also founded a female organization known as Anjuman-i-Khawateen to improve the social and economic condition of the women of Sindh.

Quaid-i-Azam, as leader of the caravan of freedom movement, had the Muslim women side by side with him to play their active role. All India Muslim League meeting was held in December 1938 at Patna under the chairmanship of Quaid-i-Azam, to formulate a sub-committee of All-India Muslim League Women Branch. The Committee mainly comprised of those women who had a long experience of participating in the struggle for Pakistan.

The constitution was made for this Committee, it was decided to have women sub-committees at Provincial and District levels as well. It was also decided that these sub-committees should start the processes of enrolling members and with the help of more and more members launch a countrywide propaganda campaign to arouse political awareness amongst the Muslim women. The ultimate aim was to provide women an equal chance and share in political, economic and cultural development of the country. The proposals, presented by Begum Habibullah and seconded by Begum Waseem, were as under:

- Women's sub-committees be constituted at the district and provincial levels;
- The sub-committees should increase the membership of the Muslim League;
- The women leaders should launch a propaganda campaign on a vast scale, to arouse political awareness amongst Muslim women;

- It is the duty of the League as a mouthpiece of the Muslim feelings that they should lead the women in such a manner that in the political, cultural and economic development of the society they get an equal share.



Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s younger sister and certainly the most beloved one, Fatima Jinnah was born in 1893.

A qualified dentist from Dr Ahmad Dental College at the University of Calcutta, Miss Jinnah remained an important part of Quaid’s life.

Jinnah, while paying tribute to her sister, once said, “My sister was like a bright ray of light and hope whenever I came back home and met her. Anxieties would have been much greater and my health much worse, but for the restraint imposed by her”.

Miss Jinnah helped him during the ups and lows of life and political career.

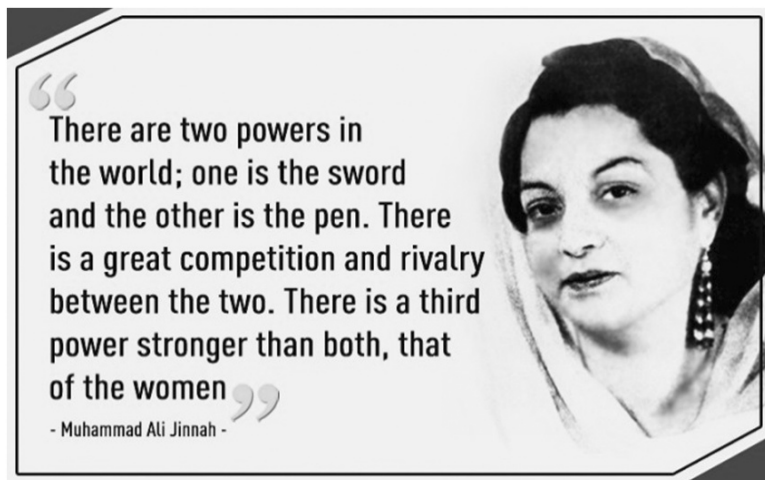
She joined the India Muslim League as a member of the Working Committee Bombay Muslim League and worked in that capacity until the formation of Pakistan.

In March 1940, she attended the Lahore session of the Muslim League that convinced her Muslims needed a free state. On her initiative, the All India Muslim Women Students Federation was organised in February 1941 in Delhi. At the time of independence too, she was an inspiration for Muslim women. She formed the Women’s Relief Committee and played her role in the settlement of refugees. She continued to help social and educational associations and even during Quaid’s illness, she remained passionately attached to him.

In 1965, Miss Jinnah participated in Presidential polls as a candidate of the Combined Opposition Party with a back of a conservative, Jamaat-e-Islami.

Miss Jinnah died in Karachi on July 8, 1967. Pakistanis remember her as ‘Madar-e-Millat’ or ‘Mother of the Nation’.

BEGUM RA'ANA LIAQUAT ALI KHAN



Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan was born on February 13, 1905 in Almora in the United Provinces, received education in Lucknow, earning a Master's degree in 1929. She chose to teach and started working at the Gokhale Memorial School. Little by little with her hard work, she became a Professor of Economics at the Indraprastha Girls' College, Delhi.

1933, was the year when she got married to Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan – Pakistan's first prime minister – in April.

Her efforts to mobilise women within the voluntary cadre gained her several prestigious awards. She was the first Muslim woman to win the Human Rights Award.

Following the reorganisation of Muslim League, Begum Ra'ana devoted herself to the cause of creating political consciousness amongst the Muslim women.

She started a campaign by the name of women's voluntary service in 1948 and encouraged women to take up responsibilities during crises by offering developmental, moral and emotional support.

Begum Ra'ana willingly formed the Pakistan Women's National Guard (PWNG) and the Pakistan Women Naval Reserve (PWNR) in 1949, but the organisations later failed to survive. In 1949, Begum Ra'ana arranged a conference of over 100 women activists from all across the newly formed Pakistan, and announced to form, All Pakistan Women Association (APWA) and became its first president.

APWA moved to the global platform when she won for APWA, the United Nations recognition as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) with consultative status.

FATIMA SUGHRA



No one knew Fatima Sughra, until one day she took down the British flag from the civil secretariat [the Punjab Civil Secretariat Building in Lahore – the main British building in the Punjab] and replaced it with Muslim League flag that made her a hero.

She was born in Lahore, in the old walled city with Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims living in peace in the pre-partition subcontinent.

In 1919, Sughra got married to Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, a famous political leader in Sindh. She actively assisted her husband in his social and political activities and started her own political stint in 1938 as a worker of the All India Muslim League.

In the same year, she became a part of the Women's Central Subcommittee.

With Sughra's dedicated efforts for expanding the organisation, several provincial subcommittees were formed in districts of Sindh.

In December 1943, she became the President of the Women's Reception Committee during an annual session of the All India Muslim League in Karachi.

Civil disobedience movement started in 1946 and 1947 when Muslim women were thrown in jail when they protested. In fact, other women who came out in support them were also put behind the bars.

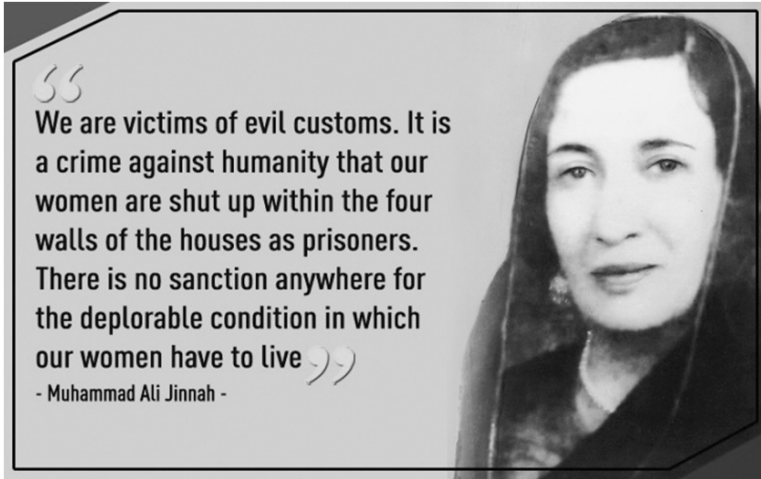
In February 1947, Sughra came to Lahore and took part in political processions, urging the government to accept the League's demands.

She even led a procession that marched towards the Civil Secretariat and took down the British flag, what she thought was an unplanned but a good idea.

Sughra action became a symbol of independence that she received a Gold Medal for 'Services to Pakistan,' making her the first ever to get one.

Her services in the Women's Refugee Relief Committee were commendable. During the deadly Partition riots, she worked with the refugees to relieve their sufferings.

BEGUM JEHAN ARA SHAH NAWAZ



Born in April 1896, Begum Jehan Ara Shah Nawaz was the daughter of a Muslim League leader, Sir Muhammad Shafi. She received her education at the Queen Mary College, Lahore and enjoyed multiple positions before and after independence.

Ever since the All India Muslim Women's Conference became functional, Begum Shah Nawaz devoted all her efforts towards its cause.

She initially helped the organisation pass a resolution against polygamy in its session held in Lahore in 1918.

Besides her role in politics, Begum Nawaz remained associated

with education and orphanage committees of the Anjuman Himayat-e-Islam, Lahore.

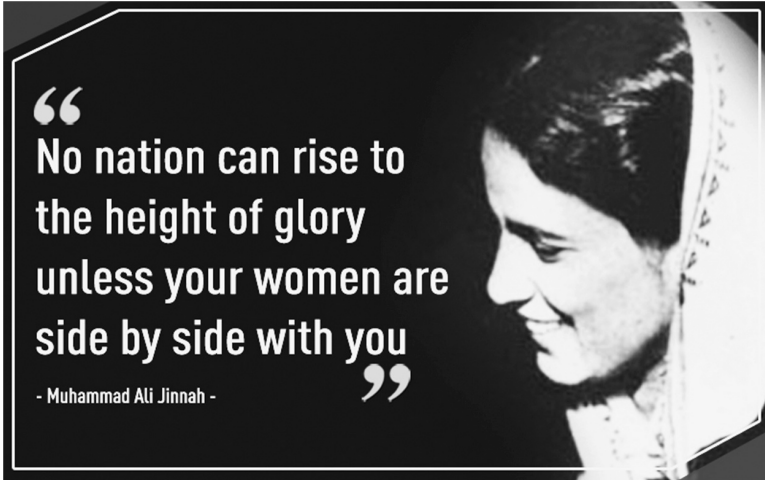
She was active in the All India Muslim Women's Conference and was later made the president of its provincial branch while being the vice-president of the conference. Begum Nawaz was also the first woman to be elected as vice-president of the Provincial Executive and a member of the All Indian General Committee of the Red Cross Society. In 1935, she founded the Punjab Women's Muslim League and in 1937, she was elected as a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly.

Begum Nawaz was appointed as Parliamentary Secretary for Education, Medical Relief and Public Health.

In 1938, she joined the Women's Central Subcommittee of the All India Muslim League and in 1942, the Government of India appointed her as a member of the National Defence Council.

Begum Nawaz's role was major during the 1947 Civil Disobedience Movement in Punjab. She passed away on November 27, 1979, at the age of 83.

BEGUM TASADDUQUE HUSSAIN



The daughter of Mian Fazal IlahiBedil, Begum Tasadduque Hussain – though her real name was Salma Mahmuda – was born in August 1908.

She was brought up in a highly educated and literature-loving family in Gujranwala and was later married to Dr Tasadduque Hussain in 1922.

However, Begum Hussain continued her studies and successfully graduated from the University of Punjab. Following the formation of Punjab Provincial Women’s Subcommittee, she soon became its active member and in 1940 became one of the secretaries.

She assisted in developing several primary schools and industrial homes for girls in Lahore.

Begum Hussain played a main role in the Bengal Relief Fund Committee. In 1944, she was nominated as a member of the working committee Punjab Muslim League.

She contested on the Muslim League ticket for the Punjab Assembly seat in 1946 from a Lahore constituency and won with a majority.

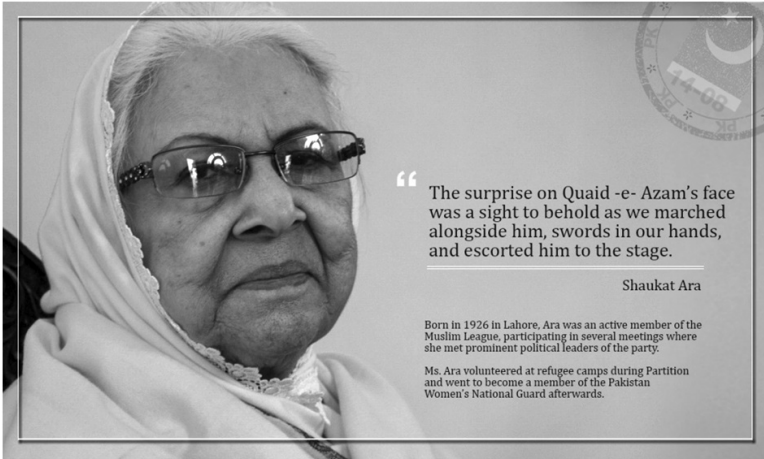
During the infamous Bihar riots, she helped refugees and stayed with them for nearly two months in the affected areas. Following the partition in 1947, her activities did not remain confined to Punjab only and she started taking the keen interest in the affairs of other provinces as well. When the Civil Disobedience Movement spread to the then NWFP (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), she went there and assisted in organisational matters.

As a writer and poet, Begum Hussain was very popular. Her poems and short stories appeared in leading Urdu journals. She even translated 'Cleopatra' in Urdu. Begum Hussain died on August 7, 1995.

THE indispensability of women in any field of national activity is indeed a universally accepted reality. An incisive peek into the freedom movements around the globe (both past and present) and history of socio-economic development of developed nations unravels the fact that their success stories were woven around the role of women. Muslim women also made a sterling contribution to the Pakistan freedom movement.

Though the women who pioneered the participation of women in the movement belonged to the elitist class in view of the permeating conservatism among the Muslim community, but they were able to enlist the support and active participation of women from conservative milieu, as a result of their unrelenting and unflinching efforts to strengthen the movement from platform of women section of Muslim League which Quaid-i-Azam created in 1938. Quaid-i-Azam was intensely aware of the role of women in the nation building and this is what he said while addressing them “In the great task of building the nation and maintaining its solidarity, women have a most valuable part to play, as the prime architects of the character of youth that constitutes its backbone, not merely in their own homes but by helping their less fortunate sisters outside in the great task. I know that in the long struggle for the achievement of Pakistan, Muslim women have stood solidly behind their men. In the bigger struggle for the building up of Pakistan that now lies ahead, let it not be said that the women of Pakistan had lagged behind or failed in their duty”

But it is regrettable to note that the achievements and contributions made by women in the Pakistan movement are not given the projection that they deserve and it is mostly a male-dominated view of the freedom movement that is disseminated and propagated with relish, reflecting the permeating prejudice against women in our male dominated society. The mosaic of freedom movement cannot be choreographed without the role that women have played in realizing the dream of Pakistan. Malik M Ashraf





Professional Writer MrsNughmanaKanwel Sheikh's poetry book was presented to Mr Ejaz and Raja Sahib who are compiling a book of **'Women of Independence'** in Pakistan.



PAKEEZA WOMEN GROUP ROCHDALE

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Women in Pakistan Movement



Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz



Shaista Ikramullah



Zari Sarfaraz



Lady Abdullah Haroon



Mumtaz Shahnawaz



Sughra Hidayatullah



Viqarunnisa Noon



Noorus Saba Begum



Kulsoom Rehman



Shaukat Ara



Mahmuda Razaq



Tazeen Faridi

بیگم محمد علی جوہر کا اصل نام امجدی بانو تھا۔ وہ ۱۸۸۵ء میں ریاست رام پور میں پیدا ہوئی تھیں۔ وہ ۵ فروری ۱۹۹۲ء کو ہندوستانی مسلمانوں کے خیر خواہ اور آزادی کے متوالے اور تحریک خلافت کے راہ نما مولانا محمد علی جوہر سے رشتہ ازدواج میں منسلک ہوئیں۔

۱۹۱۹ء میں جب مولانا محمد علی جوہر کو تحریک خلافت کے حوالے سے جیل بھیجا گیا تو بیگم محمد علی جوہر میدان عمل میں اُتریں۔ اسی برس انہیں خود بھی قید و بند کی صعوبت بھی برداشت کرنی پڑی۔ رہائی کے بعد وہ عملی سیاست میں مکمل طور پر فعال ہو گئیں اور ۱۹۳۱ء میں مولانا محمد علی جوہر کی وفات کے بعد سیاسی میدان میں ان کی نیابت کرنے لگیں۔

مارچ ۱۹۴۰ء کو آل انڈیا مسلم لیگ کے سالانہ ۲۳ اجلاس میں انہوں نے ہندوستان کی مسلمان خواتین کی جانب سے قرارداد دلاہور کی تائید میں تقریر کی۔ وہ آل انڈیا مسلم لیگ کی پہلی رہنما تھیں جنہوں نے اس قرارداد کو قرارداد پاکستان کا نام دیا۔ ہندوستان کی پریس نے طنز کے طور پر اس نام کو ایسا اچھلا کہ لفظ پاکستان زبان زد خاص و عام ہو گیا اور ۱۱ اگست ۱۹۴۷ء کو ہندوستان کے مسلمانوں نے اپنی طویل جدوجہد سے جو وطن حاصل کیا اس کا نام پاکستان رکھا گیا۔

مسلم لیگ کے تمام بڑے بڑے رہنما اور خاص طور پر قائد اعظم محمد علی جناح اُن کے بے حد عزت کرتے تھے اور ان کی تجاویز اور آرا کو اہمیت دیتے تھے۔

بشکریہ آروائی

ریاست رامپور اپنی اہمیت اور جاہِ حشمت کی وجہ سے ہندوستان بھر میں ایک اہم مقام کا حامل تھا۔ اس ریاست میں امراء و ساء کے بے شمار خانوادے تھے۔ ان خاندانوں میں نواب دولہا ہی خوب شہرت تھی۔ ان کا اصل نام "تجمل شاہ خان" تھا۔ وہ ریاست بھر میں اپنے اعلیٰ ذوق کی وجہ سے عزت کی نگاہ سے دیکھے جاتے تھے۔ نواب دولہا کی شادی قدوسی بیگم سے ہوئی تھی۔ ان کے گھر میں ۱۹۰۸ میں ایک بچی نے جنم لیا۔ بچی کی ولادت اذانِ فجر سے ذرا قبل ہوئی اس لئے اس کا نام "نور الصباح" رکھا گیا۔

نواب شیر پور کا شمار یوپی کی اہم شخصیت میں ہوتا تھا۔ وہ ۱۹۱۱ء سے کانگریس کے پلیٹ فارم سے سیاست میں کلیدی رول ادا کر رہے تھے۔ تحریک آزادی میں انہیں ایک خاص اہمیت حاصل تھی۔ شوہر کی وجہ سے وہ بھی سیاست میں دلچسپی لینے لگیں۔ ۱۹۲۲ء میں ان کی زندگی میں ایک اہم موڑ تب آیا جب وہ اپنے شوہر کے ہمراہ خلافت موومنٹ کی جانب راغب ہوئیں اور ان کی ملاقات "بی اماں" سے ہوئی۔

مولانا محمد علی و مولانا شوکت علی کی والدہ "بی اماں" نے نور الصباح کی زندگی کو بدل کے رکھ دیا، ماضی میں ان کے کپڑے، جوتے، خوشبو یا وغیرہ سب لندن سے آتے تھے اور وہ شیر پور میں شہزادیوں کی سی زندگی بسر کیا کرتی تھیں، مگر بی اماں سے ملاقات کے بعد انہوں نے اپنا سب کچھ غرباء میں تقسیم کر دیا اور معمولی سوتی کپڑے زیب تن کرنے لگیں۔

۱۹۳۷ میں تحریک پاکستان کی گونج شیرپور میں پہنچی تو انہوں نے "آل انڈیا مسلم لیگ" میں دلچسپی لینا شروع کر دی۔ بچوں کی پڑھائی کی وجہ سے وہ ۱۹۴۱ میں دہلی منتقل ہو گئیں اور وہاں خواتین کی معاشرتی سرگرمیوں میں حصہ لینے لگیں۔ ۱۹۴۵ میں قائد اعظم نے ان سے ملاقات کی، اور مسلم لیگ دہلی کی پہلی سیکریٹری صدر بنا دیا۔ یہ نور الصباح کے لئے بہت اہمیت کی بات تھی کیونکہ بیگم مولانا محمد علی جوہر کے بعد وہی ایک ایسی خاتون تھی جو مسلم لیگ اور کینگ کمیٹی میں شامل تھیں انہوں نے مسلم امراء و رؤسا اور افسران کی بیگمات کو مسلم لیگ میں شامل کرانے کی مہم شروع کی۔

وہ دور ہی کچھ ایسا تھا کہ مسلمان افسران بھی تحریک پاکستان کے نام سے گھبراتے تھے، مگر وہ بے خوف ہو کر ان کی بیگمات کو کھینچ کر لے آتی اور انھوں نے پرانی دلی کارخ کیا اور روایات کی پابند عورتوں کو جلسوں میں لانے کا انتظام کرنے لگیں۔

فروری ۱۹۴۷ میں نور الصباح خضر حیات ٹوانہ کی حکومت کے خلاف چلائی گئی مہم میں حصہ لینے کے لئے لاہور آئی تو انہیں گرفتار کر لیا گیا۔ ۱۹۴۵ء ہی میں بیگم مولانا محمد علی جوہر نے مسلم لیگ شوبہ خواتین کل ہند بنیاد پر تشکیل دی تو وہ مرکزی کمیٹی کی ممبر منتخب ہو گئیں۔ بلا آخر ان کی اور ان جیسی ہزار دیگر خواتین اور مردوں کی کوششیں رنگ لائیں، اور پاکستان کا عمل قائم میں آیا۔

وہ ریاست شیر پور کی جائیداد اور خزانہ سب کچھ پاکستان کے نام پر قربان کر کے ۱۷ ستمبر ۱۹۴۷ کو پاکستان منتقل ہو گئیں۔ پاکستان بننے کے بعد انہیں مسلم لیگ سندھ ورکنگ کمیٹی اور کاؤنسل آل پاکستان مسلم لیگ کا ممبر بنا لیا گیا، لیکن جب ۱۹۵۸ میں مارشل لاء نافذ ہوا تو انہوں نے سیاست سے کنارہ کشی اختیار کر لی اور لکھنے لکھانے کا شوق پورا کرنے لگیں۔

جولائی ۱۹۷۸ کو نور الصباح اپنے ۷ بچوں کو روتا بلکتا ۱۴ چھوڑ کر شیر پور ہاؤس کراچی میں انتقال کر گئیں۔

بعد از مرگ ۱۴ اگست ۱۹۹۲ کو وزیر اعظم پاکستان نے انہیں گولڈ میڈل دیا اور اس محسن پاکستان "نور الصباح" بیگم کو خراج تحسین پیش کیا گیا۔

بشکر یہ تحریم طارق

بی اماں کے نام سے مشہور آبادی بانوں بیگم کی پیدائش ۱۸۵۲ میں ہوئی تھی اور مولانا شوکت علی و مولانا محمد علی جوہران کے بیٹے تھے۔ بی اماں کی شادی عبدالعلی خان سے ہوئی تھی جن کا انتقال اس وقت ہو گیا تھا جب محمد علی محض ۵ سال کے تھے۔ ایسے ناگہانی حالات میں بھی بی اماں نے بلند ہوصلے کا ثبوت دیتے ہوئے اپنے بیٹوں کو دینی و دنیاوی دونوں تعلیم سے آراستہ کیا اور ساتھ ہی ہندوستان کی آزادی کے لیے نہ صرف اپنے بچوں کو آگے بڑھاتی رہیں بلکہ خود بھی خواتین کے درمیان تحریک آزادی کی مہم میں بڑھ چڑھ کر حصہ لیتی رہیں۔ کئی بار پولیس کے ذریعہ ان پر آنسو گیس اور لاطھی چارج بھی کیا گیا لیکن اس سے بی اماں کے عزم پر کوئی اثر نہیں پڑا۔ مسلم خواتین کے طبقے میں انہیں بہت احترام کی نظر سے دیکھا جاتا تھا اور وہ ایک قائد کی حیثیت رکھتی تھیں۔ بی اماں چاہتی تھی کہ ہندوستان کو آزادی تو ملے ہی، مسلمانوں کو بھی ان کا مناسب حق دیا جائے۔ ہی سبب ہے کہ انھوں نے اپنے بیٹوں کو ملک کی آزادی اور حقوق مسلم کی خاطر اپنی زندگی قربان کرنے کی نصیحت دے رکھی تھی اس کا اندازہ ان کے اس پیغام سے بھی لگایا جاسکتا ہے جو انہوں نے قید کے دوران اپنے بیٹوں کو بھجوایا تھا۔ انھوں نے کہا تھا کہ میرے بیٹوں بہادر بنو اور لڑائی کو ترک نہیں کرو، معافی بھی نہیں مانگو۔ حب الوطنی سے سرشار دل رکھنے والی بی اماں کا انتقال ۱۹۲۴ میں ہوا۔

بشکر یہ قومی آواز