

***Report on the National Conference on
Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah: His
Thought and Contribution, Islamabad,
30-31 December***

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“The National Conference on Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah: His Thought and Contribution” was held at Islamabad, on 30-31 December 2004 under the auspices of the National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, in connection with the 128th birth anniversary of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. This was a gathering of scholars invited from all over Pakistan as well as America and England. The Conference was organized under the supervision of Dr. Riaz Ahmad, Tamgha-e-Imtiaz, Director of the National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Islamabad. The purpose of the Conference was to remind the people of Pakistan of the importance of their great history and the teachings of their great leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The hard work and disciplined life of the Quaid resulted into the creation of Pakistan and we can run our country on the road of success and progress by following his path and advice. Besides the opening and concluding sessions the Conference had six academic sessions which were presided over by Mr. Mahmud Ali, Dr. U.A.G. Isani, Col.(R) S.K. Tressler, Senator Dilawar Abbas, Diwan Jafar Hussain Bokhari and Mr. Ijaz Rahim respectively. Discussants were Dr. Hyder

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Sindhi, Dr. Syed Jafar Ahmad, Dr. Rashid Ahmad Khan, Dr. Parvez Iqbal Cheema, Dr. Hafeezur Rahman, Prof. Sharif al Mujahid, Dr. Humaira Arif Dasti, Dr. Hasan Askari Rizvi, Dr. Saeeduddin Ahmad Dar and Mr. M.H. Khan. The writer acted as the Stage Secretary for all the sessions of the Conference.

Chief organizer of the Conference, Professor Dr. Riaz Ahmad, welcomed the chief guest Lt. Gen.(R) Javed Ashraf Qazi, Federal Minister for Education at the inaugural session. The conference started at 11am with recitation from the Holy Quran. Then Dr. Riaz Ahmad, introduced the conference briefly. He said that this conference was organized in connection with Quaid's 128th Birth Anniversary, to expose the important aspects of his life and his golden teachings to the people of Pakistan. This was followed by the Welcome address by the Vice Chancellor, Quaid-i-Azam University, Dr. U.A.G. Isani. He said that this conference was a very important step for imparting awareness of our historical background to the people of Pakistan. He also stressed the need for holding such conferences more frequently.

After the speech of Dr. U.A.G. Isani, a keynote address was presented by Brig. Noor Ahmad Hussain who also underlined the importance of such conferences which provided a chance to the people to realize the importance of history and the true spirit behind the creation of Pakistan. After that Chief Guest, Lt. Gen.(R) Javed Ashraf Qazi, Federal Minister for Education, addressed the Conference. He said "This gathering of a galaxy of scholars from all the four provinces of Pakistan was very important especially at a time when Pakistan was passing through a crucial phase of its history. "After 9/11 Pakistan had emerged as a very important country both in the region as well as in world politics," he emphasized.

In the first academic session, a number of scholars presented their papers. In her paper on the topic: "Quaid-i-Azam and Muslim League: Its Emergence as A Mass Movement", Ms. Kishwar Sultana said, "No movement can gather momentum until and unless it is supported and backed by the common people. To get their support and to bring about a favourable change in their outlook, the masses will have to play a very prominent role."

Dr. Syed Islam Shah in his presentation on Jinnah's educational philosophy, said: "Quaid-i-Azam was unquestionably one of the most striking, unique and fascinating figures of modern world history. He played a remarkable role in changing the course of history and destiny of man in South Asia. He stood as a superman at least in the society he lived. He was really a remarkable personality. He was a brilliant politician and a farsighted statesman."

In the next session, the chief organizer and scholars welcomed Chief Guest, Col.(R) S.K. Tressler, Former Federal Minister for Culture. He said that Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was leader of every Pakistani. He was not the leader of any specific community. The Quaid assured everybody of equal rights as citizen of Pakistan regardless of the faith that he belonged to. Various scholars presented their paper on this aspect and proved the importance of equality of rights in Quaid's thought.

In the following session, Dr. Parveen Shaukat Ali in her paper said, "Historians of all shades of opinion would agree that the women of Pakistan are under a debt of gratitude to the Quaid. He infused in them love for freedom, dedication and loyalty to the ideals of Islam and placed them on a footing of equality with men of every walk of life. His message, his mission, his zeal, and his honesty will remain a beacon of light for all times to come. It is our hope, belief and prayer that the future of Pakistan will ever remain radiant with the spirit of the Quaid's devotion, sincerity and integrity."

On the 2nd day of the Conference, 31st December 2004, several other scholars presented their paper, with Professor Sharif al Mujahid, Former Director, Quaid-i-Azam Academy and Dr. Humaira Arif Dasti, Chairperson, Dept. of History, Bahauddin Zakariyya University, Multan, as Discussants. Prof. Sharif al Mujahid also presented his paper on the topic: "Jinnah: The Making of Quaid-i-Azam." He said, "Mr. Jinnah was something more than Quaid-i-Azam, supreme head of the state; to the people who followed him, he was more even than architect of the Islamic nation he personally called into being."

Mr. Mahmud Ali, Federal Minister honoured the Conference by his arrival on second day of Conference. Distinguished delegates, intellectuals, scholars, students, ladies and gentleman welcomed him respectfully by standing up, to admire his courage to attend the Conference, although he was ill. In this session, Mr. Yar Muhammad Badini from Balochistan presented his paper, in which he said, "Spread of education in Balochistan was another ideal of Quaid-i-Azam. On different occasions, during his visits to Balochistan and contact with the masses, he struggled for the spread of education in urban and rural areas of Balochistan. He also emphasized the female education."

Federal Minister, Mr. Mahmud Ali, also addressed the conference at the end of the session. He discussed the separation of East Pakistan with grief. He said that Faith, Unity and Discipline is the most important saying of Quaid and has an utmost importance for the progress of a nation.

The next academic session was dedicated to the topic of Quaid-i-Azam on Islam, Democracy, Humanity, Foreign Policy, and the Kashmir issue. The chief guest of this session was Mr. Ijaz Rahim, Cabinet Secretary, Government of Pakistan.

The last and concluding session started at 5:30pm on Friday 31 December 2004. All the guests, scholars and luminaries welcomed the chief guest, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs. The session started with recitation from the Holy Quran. Dr. Riaz Ahmad, Chief Organizer and Director NIHCR presented the introduction of the conference. A few delegates presented their papers on different topics. Prof. Sharif al Mujahid presented a report and the resolution of the seminar.

At the end, the chief guest addressed the distinguished delegates, scholars, luminaries and all other participants of the Conference. He said that it was absolutely true that all Pakistanis should have equal rights whether they belonged to the Punjab, Balochistan, Sindh or the N.W.F.P. There was no division based on regions of Pakistan. He advised the audience to be united and step towards progress in the light of our enlightened and successful history.

Before the conclusion of this session, the following resolution presented by Prof. Sharif al Mujahid was unanimously adopted by the House:

This National Conference on Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah: His Thought and Contribution, held at Islamabad, on 30-31 December 2004, under the auspices of the National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, notes with extreme satisfaction the following developments:

1. In the context of both the quantity and quality of papers presented to the Conference, the geographical spread of the participants, the discussions that followed the presentation of papers, the academic ambience of the entire Conference proceedings, in the arrangements in terms of logistics, the Conference may be deemed a success;
2. That the NIHCR is studiously engaged in ongoing research on the multi-volume "Comprehensive History of Pakistan," and that two volumes in the series have been re-evaluated and re-edited and ready to be sent to the press for publication at an early date.
3. That the NIHCR is simultaneously engaged in setting up Projects on the Cultural History of Pakistan, of South Asia and of Central Asia;
4. That some 120 works including 10 works on Madar-i-Millat in the past year have been published thus far, that the backlog of the Journal in English and Urdu has been cleared, and that the two journals — viz., *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture* and *Majallah-i-Tarikh-o-Saqafat-i-Pakistan* — are now published on time.
5. That Dr. U.A.G. Isani, Vice-Chancellor, Quaid-i-Azam University has allocated a sizeable plot of land for the Institute at the Campus, and that all steps upto the advertisement of tenders have been completed, and that what remains to be done before starting the work on the site is the formal foundation-laying ceremony; and
6. That the NIHCR has again become proactive under the directorship of Prof. Dr. Riaz Ahmad who was appointed some three years ago.

In view of the above, this Conference feels that the NIHCR bids fair to stake its claim for being entrusted with the prospective assignment of producing suitable literature to mark the centenary of the All India Muslim League, which was founded at Dacca on 31 December 1906. It is recommended that the Centenary events be spread over a period of two years, December 2006–December 2008, as is the usual practice in some

countries. It is also suggested that a viable project for the Centenary Celebrations (including an International Conference and the publication of several monographic and documentary works) be drawn up as soon as possible, and that research on the latter segment be initiated at an early date so as to be completed within the stipulated period. And since the AIML was founded at Dhaka, we request the Government of Pakistan to liaison with the Government of Bangladesh on arranging one-day Conference at Dhaka in December 2006.

This Conference expresses its gratitude to the Quaid-i-Azam University for having entrusted the task of organizing the National Conference on Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to the NIHCR and suggests that such national conferences on various themes be organized once a year, so as to create a platform for the academicians and researchers to meet, exchange notes on on-going research, facilitate academic/research collaboration between them and enable them to bring new research on various topics into "the open", since all such activities would help facilitate and promote research and a research culture which unfortunately, Pakistan is sadly lacking.