

Book Review

**Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan: All India Muslim League Documents, 1906-1947, Volumes I & II*
Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural
Research, Centre of Excellence,
Quaid-i-Azam University, 2007
Vol. I, 606 pp. Price Rs.800/-
Vol. II, 599 pp. Price Rs.800/-**

The role of All India Muslim League, being the founding organization of Pakistan, really deserves to be eulogized everywhere in the country. AIML designed a proper mechanism for the Muslims of the sub-continent to get rid of the British imperialists and Hindu *bannias* who left no stone unturned to negate the separate identity of the Muslims. The League since its formation took the responsibility to infuse a new life into the Muslims of the sub-continent and make them politically organized in order to play a constructive role for their independence. This political organization under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-i-Azam led the Muslims of the sub-continent towards their due and ultimate destination i.e., the achievement of a separate state in the shape of Pakistan.

The edited works under review are the most precious and reliable primary sources of information on the historical evolution of All India Muslim League, since 1906 till the creation of Pakistan. History writing is a difficult and challenging assignment in the absence of concrete evidence and documentary foundations. Events and political developments lose its historic significance, if not properly substantiated by reliable sources of information. The Muslim struggle for separate homeland in the sub-continent has been championed by the AIML and pioneered by its dynamic leadership in very unfavourable and difficult circumstances. The struggle may be rightly termed as a wonderful deed which enjoys great significance in the human history.

These documents were earlier edited by Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada and published by National Publishing House, Karachi in 1970. Since then this material has been used by researchers, academicians, authors and historians as a credible and primary source of information. Some renowned authors like Stanley Wolpert, M.J. Akbar, Ayesha Jalal, David Page, K.K. Aziz and Lal Bahadur had frequently referred to informations derived from these documents in their works. The libraries all over the country had been enriched by the presence of these voluminous sources of information for the last thirty-six years. Due to the expansion of libraries network in the country and the extension of research activities, the need of these sources increased with the passage of time. The two volumes of *Foundations of Pakistan* had been out of print for longer period of time and there was a great demand for their publishing. In the early publication of the works some important documents like the proceedings of the Working Committee of AIML were not included. Hence, a third volume was being published. The National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research as a premier research institute of the country have had a proud privilege to undertake the grand responsibility to publish and re-print these edited works of Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada again with some improvements and additions/insertions like the report of Bombay chronicle about the arrival of Mr. Jinnah at Lucknow on 6 December 1916 on pages 344-45. The welcome address of Dr. M.A. Ansari with Resolutions I to XXV on pages 452-77 has been readjusted and shifted from volume II in the earlier print to volume I in the present one. Moreover, volume I of this work has precious primary information on the First Inaugural Session of AIML held at Dacca on 30 December 1924 till the Fifteenth Session held at Lahore on 24-25 May 1924 with proper chronological order. Amongst these documents the materials on Inaugural Session of the AIML, the Bankipure meeting of the Muslim League Council on 31 December 1912 and the Lucknow Session on 30-31 December 1916 with the respective resolutions, represent the most important informations on the evolution of AIML's organization and its cause.

The volume II of this work constitutes materials on Muslim League Annual Sessions, Muslim League Council Meetings and the Muslim League Working Committee Meetings from 1924 to 1947 with three important appendices. These documents include some of the most important archival sources like the presidential address of Sir Mohammad Iqbal in 21st Session of AIML at Allahabad on 30 December 1930, the presidential address of M.A. Jinnah at the 27th Session of AIML at Lahore on 22-24 March 1940 with resolutions I to IV and the League Legislators Convention held in Delhi on 7-9 April 1946 etc. The

third Appendix contains a chart of Muslim League Sessions from 1906 to 1943 and its Council Meetings from 1944-1947. Both the volumes are followed by precise and comprehensive indexes which can be very helpful in the process of identification of the requisite material on various subjects. A total number of 1000 copies of each volume have been published which may fulfil the need at market, institutional and individual levels. Researchers, authors and historians are better advised to base their writings on these primary and original sources of information.

Altaf Ullah*

* Research Fellow, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.