

Role of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Freedom Movement: Case Study of Abdul Wali Khan

Safi Ullah Khan Marwat

International Islamic University, Islamabad

British created the North West Frontier Province-NWFP¹ (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa-KP²) in 1901. Since its creation, it has gone through continuous freedom movement until 1947. British kept it as a Chief Commissioner province. They were reluctant to introduce constitutional reforms within it at par with rest of the Governors' provinces in British India which played a significant role in stirring up anti-British feelings in KP. In the beginning of 20th century, party politics emerged in KP. It began with the establishment of urban-based provincial branches of the Indian National Congress (INC) and the All India Muslim League (AIML) in KP. In 1920s, Khan Brothers (Dr. Khan Sahib and his younger brother Abdul Ghaffar Khan) became prominent socio-political leaders of the region. They started an organized movement and founded the Khudai Khidmatgars (KKs). Abdul Ghaffar Khan's son Abdul Wali Khan also played a vital role as a freedom fighter in British India. His anti-British struggle is of much significance. In this paper, the role of KP in general and Abdul Wali Khan in particular during freedom movement has been focused. The central theme of the paper is: How the political scenario in India from 1921 to 1947 under British Raj shaped the formative phase of Abdul Wali Khan's political career.

Key Words: freedom movement, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Khudai Khidmatgars, Abdul Wali Khan.

KP is a Muslim majority province located between the parallels 31°44' and 36°57' north latitude and 69°16' and 74°44' east longitude (Shah, 1999, p. 1). In 1947, it became one of the five provinces of newly born Pakistan. Prior to that, it was part of British India when British annexed Punjab in 1849 and, being part of Punjab at that time, it also came under British rule. After coming in contact with KP, the British established a system of indirect rule through pro-British leading Khans (rich nobility or tribal chieftains) of the region on the basis of the principle of 'give and take'. This system worked well until the 1920s when certain developments changed the KP's outlook. First, growing tenant discontent and rivalries within the pro-British and anti-British Khan classes (elite classes) provided a solid ground against the indirect British rule (Talbot, 1988, p. 6). Secondly, Khilafat Movement in 1918 and Hijrat Movement in 1920 were started on religious grounds by the Indian Muslims (Minault, 1982; Qureshi, 1999 & Rauf, 1999). Muslims of KP also joined their co-religious Indian brethren in these movements with religious zeal (Shah, 1992, pp. 6-7). Furthermore, British denied constitutional reforms in KP at par with other provinces under the Minto-Morley Reforms in 1909 and Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms in 1919 due to 'security considerations'. They were of the view that political reforms might endanger KP's stability (Rittenberg, 1977, p. 70). Apart from this, a Tajik out-law named Habib Ullah Kalkani popularly known as Bachaay-i-Saqqawo (son of water-carrier) dethroned the Pakhtun nationalist ruler Amir Aman Ullah Khan of Afghanistan in 1929. Being much sensitive to the issues related to Afghanistan both on religious and ethnic grounds, the fall of Amir Aman Ullah Khan was considered by many Pakhtuns of KP as dismissal of their own leader whose stay on the Kabul throne was an added strength in the rear. They were of the firm belief that his fall had been engineered by the British against whom Amir Aman Ullah Khan had fought and won independence in the Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919. All these developments stirred up anti-British sentiments which turned into freedom movement in KP (Shah, 1992, pp. 6-7).

Role of KP in Freedom Movement

Initially, in KP, most of the freedom fighters were from Ulema (Clergymen) who were anti-British and declared Jihad (Holy War) against them. Pawanda Mulla, Mastana Mulla, Sandakai Mulla, Sayyad Akbar Mulla, Adda Mulla and Maulana Fazli Wahid (popularly known as Haji Turangzai) were some of the prominent figures who mobilized religio-political movements against the British Raj (Shah, 1999, p. 11). In the beginning of 20th century, the religio-political leadership gave way to socio-political leadership who introduced party politics in KP. In 1905, Amir Chand Bombwal (a Hindu nationalist from Peshawar) started to publish the first nationalist newspaper of the province in Urdu language which was titled as *The Frontier Advocate*. In 1907, Ram Chandra Bhargavaj, another educated Hindu nationalist from Peshawar, founded the provincial branch of the Indian National Congress in NWFP. Such like political activities were soon suppressed and banned by the British (Rittenberg, 1977, p. 56). In 1912, the provincial branch of the AIML founded

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Dr. Safi Ullah Khan Marwat, Faculty Member at the Department of History & Pakistan Studies, International Islamic University, Islamabad; Email: safiullahkhanmarwat@yahoo.com

in KP. Mian Abdul Aziz Advocate (a resident of Peshawar city) and Ali Abbas Bukhari (a former student of Oxford University) became its President and general Secretary respectively. Unlike its parent organization at the all India level, the AIML in KP was anti-British. Hence, like the INC in KP, it also met the same fate at the hands of British authorities (Shah, 1999, p. 17). Henceforth, both, the AIML and the INC, could not emerge as strong political organizations in KP until 1930s.

After British suppression of the urban intelligentsia in KP, the center of politics shifted to rural areas of the province. In 1920s, Abdul Gaffar Khan (1890-1989) emerged as the socio-political leaders of the region. He belonged to the village of Utmanzai in district Charsadda of KP. He started his political career as a social reformer. In November 1929, he founded the organization of Khudai Khidmatgars (KKs). A Khudai Khidmatgar (KK) had to renounce violence, retaliation, and revenge. He had to devote himself selflessly to the service of humanity. Abdul Ghaffar Khan appealed to the people of KP to join the KKs which was to help them in eradication of social evils from their society, to forge unity among their ranks and file and to struggle for the liberation of their homeland from the foreign yoke (Shah, 1999, p. 27). The KKs emerged as a strong anti-British political party. The people of KP joined it in large number for the liberation of their homeland from British. The establishment retaliated instantly and started to crush the KKs once for all. Their persecution began with the Qissa Khwani Bazar incident in Peshawar on 23 April 1930 resulting massacre of many KKs (Shah, 1999, p. 32). In those days of repression, the KKs sought support from the main stream political parties like the AIML and the INC respectively. The AIML was not in a position to support the KKs in their anti-British activities and, in return, could not win the public support in KP. However, the INC realized the depth of the situation and came forward to join hands with the KKs to strengthen its claim that it was the sole representative political party of the all Indian communities including Muslims. Furthermore, unlike the AIML, the INC and the KKs shared a common goal of the liberation of India from the British yoke. In return, the INC cashed it by gaining the popular support of the KKs. As a result, in August 1931, a formal political alliance forged between the two for the pursuance of their mutual interests (Talbot, 1988, p. 8). After that, the INC emerged as a major political party of KP within no time with support of the KKs. It also succeeded, at least for the time being, to lead people of KP from their 'ethno-religious group feeling' to the concept of 'Composite Indian Nationalism'. Consequently, Congress installed its ministries thrice in KP from 1937 until 1947. Its position was further strengthened in KP during its first ministry from 1937 until 1939 which introduced various reforms to curb the repressive policies of the British (Shah, 1999, pp. 62-81). Other political parties like Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind, Ahrars, and Khaksars etc also established their provincial branches in KP but the KKs-INC alliance remained dominant.

On March 23, 1940, the AIML demanded Pakistan (a separate independent state comprising of the Muslim majority areas of British India) on communal grounds. The AIML advocated this idea on the basis of the fear of Hindu domination on the possible British departure from India. The INC strongly opposed this idea. Initially, the people of KP paid little attention to the idea of separation as there was no communal tension and the fear of Hindu domination was considered as a joke (Shah, 1999, p. 32). Hence, in the 1946-elections, majority of them voted for the INC against the AIML. Both, the INC and the AIML, contested the elections in the name of united or divided India respectively. However, towards the end of the British rule in India, the AIML succeeded in getting support of clergy who inculcated a sense of 'Islam in danger' among the people of KP during the Hindu-Muslim communal riots in 1940s happening outside the province. A considerable chunk of the people of KP reconsidered their earlier thinking on communal grounds which eventually resulted in their support for Pakistan in Referendum held in KP in July 1947 (Rittenberg, 1977, p. 54).

Role of Abdul Wali Khan in Freedom Movement

Abdul Wali Khan was born on January 11, 1917³ in the village of Utmanzai in the present day district Charsadda of KP. He was the second son of Abdul Ghaffar Khan from his first wife named Meharqanda.⁴ Abdul Wali Khan opened his eyes in an atmosphere which was charged with anti-colonial sentiments in British India. His father, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was striving for the social reformation of Pakhtuns through education as he was of the view that an educated, socially reformed, and a non-violent nation would be in a better position to meet the challenges of that time. For this purpose, he opened a chain of schools bearing the name of Azad Islamia Madrissas. The curriculum of those schools included English, mathematics, history, geography, sciences, and vocational subjects. British government in India was much suspicious about these schools and was not ready to recognize them. These schools were affiliated with Jamia Milliyya⁵ in Delhi. Abdul Ghaffar Khan established the first Madrissa (School) of this chain in his native village Utmanzai in 1921. Abdul Wali Khan was admitted to this school in 1922 and he got the honour of being the first student of the school. He did his matriculation from this school in 1932. After that his Aunt Mary, Dr. Khan Sahib's second wife of Scottish origin, admitted him to Colonel Brown Public School in Deradun (India). He completed his Senior Cambridge there but could not pursue any further formal education as he got a serious injury in his left eye while playing football. He got a permanent eyesight problem and the doctors in Delhi advised him to discontinue his studies, otherwise, he might lose his eyesight for ever (Hewad, 2007, p. 204). He left his studies incomplete and came back to his native village Utmanzai. Here, he started looking after his family and property in the absence of his father who was imprisoned by

British on his involvement in socio-political activities. The political scenario at that time in British India in general and the KP in particular left everlasting effects on Abdul Wali Khan's mind (Munir, n. d., p. 7).

The political developments in KP under British rule provided a foundation for the formative phase of Abdul Wali Khan's political career. During those days of British repression, the Azad Islamiyyah Madrissah of Utmanzai provided a platform to Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his followers for their social, educational and political activities. British arrested Abdul Ghaffar Khan on December 17, 1921 under the Frontier Crimes Regulation (hereafter FCR)⁶ which stirred up political mobilization in KP. His followers in general and students of the Azad Islamia Madrissa of Utmanzai in particular arranged demonstrations demanding his immediate release. Being a founder student of the school, Abdul Wali Khan remained in forefront of those demonstrations. At the opening of each demonstration, he used to recite some verses from the Holy Quran, followed by singing nationalist poems. His ability and nationalist spirit inspired the common Pakhtuns. They started admitting their children in the Azad Islamia Madrissa of Utmanzai with the hope to turn them as able as Abdul Wali Khan (Khan, 2012, p. 2). Abdul Ghaffar Khan was released in 1924. He went on inspection of the Azad Islamia Madrissas across the KP. He was accompanied by the three students of the Azad Islamia Madrissa of Utmanzai including Abdul Wali Khan, Abdul Karim and Sadaat Khan. Each session of the Madrissas' inspection opened with the recitation of some verses from the Holy Quran by Abdul Wali Khan. After that all the three students sung nationalist poems to create nationalist feelings among the audiences. Each year, the annual day of the Azad Islamia Madrissa of Utmanzai celebrated with nationalist zeal. Abdul Wali Khan participated in each annual day of the Madrissa. On the sixth annual day of the Azad Islamia Madrissa of Utmanzai held in April 1927, Abdul Wali Khan along with two other students of the school presented a skit in Pashto written by Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar. The skit was titled as 'Daray Yatimaan' (Three Orphans) and its central theme revolved around the worst financial conditions of a poor tenant family whose elder was sent behind the bars by the British government for not paying the 'Abiyaana' (irrigation tax). The family was stuck by hunger and the three sons of the arrested peasant were living like orphans. Abdul Wali Khan played the role of the elder brother. In the skit, one of the two younger brothers asked his elder brother (Abdul Wali Khan), 'Lala Za Ogay Yam' (brother! I am hungry). The elder brother felt sorry as he had nothing to feed his younger brothers. They were performing their roles in the skit so perfectly and impressively that an old man among the audiences took it as real. He climbed the stage with tears in his eyes, gave some money to the elder brother (Abdul Wali Khan) and asked him, 'Son! Don't be aggrieved. Buy food with this money for your younger brothers' (Khan, 1993, pp. 58-59). In this skit, Abdul Wali Khan and his companions tried to expose the British repressions against the poor tenants of the KP in a very artistic way.

The repercussions of the Qissa Khwani Bazar incident on April 23, 1930 were wide spread and profound which further strengthened anti-British feelings in KP. Non-violent demonstrations of the KKs and frequent 'Lati-charges' on them became a routine matter. Their properties were looted and their women were insulted (Shah, 1999, p. 32). Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other leaders of the KKs were arrested under the FCR. On May 16, 1930, the British authorities ravaged the village of Utmanzai. Abdul Wali Khan was present at the office of the KKs in Utmanzai. A British soldier attempted to stab him with the bayonet of his gun. Meanwhile, a native British soldier named Sher Khan⁷ stopped the British soldier from stabbing the young Abdul Wali Khan by getting a cut on his own hand. Another British soldier struck him twice with the butt of his rifle. He fell down on the ground and became unconscious. Then the British set the office of the KKs on fire (Khan, 2012, p. 380; Khan, 1994, pp. 96-101). Hence, Abdul Wali Khan was near to be killed by British in his early age but narrowly escaped, perhaps, to play a significant role in the political history of Pakistan. It shows that he participated in anti-British activities even at the risk of his own life. One of his contemporaries, Maulana Mujahid al-Hussaini⁸ stated:

I have always been against Wali Khan's ideas. Yet, when I was member of the Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind in 1930, Abdul Wali Khan was leader of the red shirts movement at that time. And, during that period, no one could dare even to gaze at the British. Yet, Abdul Wali Khan and his companions shouted the slogan of 'Angriz Murdabad' (Down with the British) even at that time (Hewad, 2007, pp. 421-422).

During 1930s Abdul Wali Khan's father was mostly either in jail or exile. As soon as Abdul Ghaffar Khan was out of jail or his exile was waved off, he frequently participated in public gatherings. The doors of his 'Hujra' always remained open for the general public. It was the responsibility of Abdul Wali Khan to look after all the guests of his father (Yunus, 1947, pp. 172-173). In this way, Abdul Wali Khan learnt a lot in his early age under the shadow of his father which shaped his future socio-political life.

Like Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi⁹ (Wolpert, 2001), Abdul Ghaffar Khan too had a strongly faith in the philosophy of non-violence and was titled as 'Sarhadi Gandhi' (Gandhi of the Frontier) by the public. Gandhi visited KP in 1938 and Abdul Wali Khan got an opportunity of close interaction with him. He drove Gandhi's car while travelling to different parts of KP and held long discussions with him. At that time, Abdul Wali Khan was a young boy who seemed exasperated with the pacifism advocated by his father and Gandhi through their philosophy of non-violence. Abdul Wali

Khan told Mukulika Bannerjee (a US-based Indian scholar on Khudai Khidmatgars) about his discussion with Gandhi on the philosophy of non-violence. She narrates:

The young Wali had challenged the Mahatma's philosophy of non-violence by pointing to a chicken in the yard. 'If the cook comes to slaughter this chicken's baby', he said to Gandhi, 'is non-violence on the part of the chicken likely to save the younger life?' (Bannerjee, 2006)

Banerjee further tells:

The story ended with a twinkle in his (Abdul Wali Khan) eyes, when he remembered Gandhiji's reply, 'Wali, you seem to have done more research on violence than I have on non-violence'. (Bannerjee, 2006)

It was Abdul Wali Khan's perception about the philosophy of non-violence and Gandhi's observation about his ideas. His political life illustrates that, sometimes, he was indifferent (theoretically) to Gandhi's and Abdul Ghaffar Khan's philosophy of non-violence but (practically) he followed both of them.

On August 08, 1942, the Congress Working Committee (hereafter CWC) passed a resolution at Bombay calling upon the British to quit India. On the passage of this resolution, the INC started "Quit India Movement" under the leadership of Gandhi at all India level. While the whole India was in turmoil, the KP was calm at the beginning of the Quit India Movement. In July 1942, Abdul Ghaffar Khan sent KKs to the tribal belt (CID Diaries, August 18-19, 1942, p. 83) in order to popularize the INC's programme beyond the settled areas. But the KKs met hostile reception everywhere they went (Rittenberg, 1977, p. 280), because majority of the tribesmen had turned against the INC due to the propaganda of pro-government mullas (clergymen) and the tribal Maliks (Chieftains) (Shah, 1999, p.135) The tribes of Mohmand and Afridi, and the Maliks in Malakand refused even to meet the KKs (Rittenberg, 1977, p. 280). The Quit India Movement in KP was so mild that when, on 9 August 1942, the government declared the INC, and the CWC as illegal, no action was taken against the Frontier Province Congress Committee (hereafter FPCC), leaving it the only Provincial Congress Committee (hereafter PCC) in India that was not outlawed (Rittenberg, 1977, p. 281).

On 14 August 1942, the Provincial Congress workers started their civil disobedience movement by picketing liquor stores in Peshawar. The government did not respond as it believed that such activities did not trouble any one and save the face of the Congress (Rittenberg, 1977, p. 282). In September 1942, they also tried to launch the picketing of schools and organizing student strikes but in vain. Only in Bannu (a southern district of KP), the picketers blocked access to the schools and authorities made 450 arrests in response. They also warned that they would shut down the law courts. But the threat could not materialize. The provincial Congress leadership failed even to mobilize the public to the extent which it had in the early 1930s (Shah, 1999, p. 135). However, in October 1942, the movement intensified in KP and Abdul Ghaffar Khan succeeded by ending the lull in the agitation. Many of the KKs from the adjacent villages came to Peshawar and Mardan and picketed the district courts for six consecutive days (Rittenberg, 1977, p. 283). These activities attracted crowds which clashed with the government officials.

This time, the government modified its policy of leniency and started Lathi-charge and firing upon the demonstrators. On 27 October, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was arrested at Mir Wais Dheri, a suburb of Mardan (the second largest city of the KP after Peshawar) (Shah, 1999, p. 136). Similarly, so many other prominent leaders of the KKs in Peshawar, Mardan and Charsadda were also arrested. The remaining leaders of the KKs, who were still outside the prison, tried their best to keep the movement alive by asking public not to pay their revenues; government servants were asked to leave their jobs; and army men were requested to desert the army. But, contrary to their expectations, they could not succeed in gaining general public support on a large scale to sustain the movement. Most of the people took little interest in the movement as they regarded it as a political combat between the Congress and the government (Shah, 1999, pp. 136-137). The movement came to its end in April, 1943 (Rittenberg, 1977, p. 284).

Abdul Wali Khan entered the arena of active politics formally during the Quit India Movement in 1942. He registered himself as a volunteer in the Utmanzai unit of the KKs and took oath on the hand of Ziarati Kaka who was the local 'Jarnil' (Commander) of the KKs (Khan, 1993, p. 346). He along with his uncle Dr. Khan Sahib visited government offices to convince the natives in the British services to resign their jobs and stand with their nation. Amin Jan, Salar-i-Azam (Supreme Commander) of the KKs, put Abdul Wali Khan under the command of Aslam Khan who was 'Salar' (Commander) of the KKs in district Kohat of KP. He was assigned the task to visit Karak which is a dry and rugged mountainous area in district Kohat. It was summer and month of the Ramadan. Abdul Wali Khan along with two other KKs, Fida Muhammad Khan of Rajar (a village in district Charsadda of KP) and Abdul Karim of Utmanzai, had to launch door to door campaign convincing the people to come out of their homes and take part in Quit India Movement. He kept his fasting in the month of Ramadan even in the sizzling heat of the summer and visited the whole barren area of Karak by foot. His feet severely blistered due to which he could not wear his shoes. But, he kept visiting the area bare-footed (Khan, 1993, p. 349-350). It shows his commitment to the cause.

During Quit India Movement, Abdul Wali Khan endeavored to convince the rural masses for picketing campaign in urban areas. The purpose was to demonstrate the public anger against the government. The secret correspondences between different British officials illustrate Abdul Wali Khan's political activities. A British official reports on October 24, 1942 as under:

It is reported that Mirza Taj Mohd, Faseh Mian, Abdul Wali Khan, Master Abdul Karim, Zaidullah, Sahibzada Obedullah and Karimullah alias Ali Jah, are wandering in the Charsadda area for collecting funds and preparing Redshirt volunteers for picketing duties at Peshawar (CID Diaries, 1942, p. 217).

Another report of the CID is as under:

It is reported from Charsadda that Abdul Wali Khan s/o A.G.K. is endeavoring through Tamash Gul s/o Hastam of village Hafiz Ji Qilla to influence Abdul Malik of Kulla Dhand and Mohd Zaman of Uthmanzai so that the later may try their best to prepare Redshirt Volunteers for the picketing campaign on courts in Peshawar (CID Diaries, 1942-1943, p. 177).

The British authorities retaliated and arrested Abdul Wali Khan on January 24, 1943 under FCR (CID Diaries, 1942-1943, p. 177). Initially, he was kept in Dera Ismail Khan Jail but, later on, he was transferred to Abbotabad Jail where his father, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was already imprisoned due to his involvement in the same Quit India Movement. It was the first ever political imprisonment of Abdul Wali Khan at the age of 26. In jail, the problem of his eyesight intensified. The superintendent of jail called upon a doctor for the treatment of his eyesight but he could not recover. Abdul Ghaffar Khan requested the government to release Abdul Wali Khan on medical grounds. The Governor of the KP, Sir George Cunningham released him unconditionally for a proper treatment of his eyesight. On his release, Abdul Ghaffar Khan advised him as under:

The government released you for the treatment of your eyes. Even if you get well don't take part in any anti-government activities until the expiry of the term of your imprisonment (Khan, 2012, pp. 678-679).

But after his release, Abdul Wali Khan again started his anti-British activities. A CID official reports as under:

Obedullah s/o Dr. Khan Sahib, Abdul Wali Khan s/o A.G.K. and Amin Jan, Naib Salar, have left for Sardariab camp on the morning of 25-12-43 in connection with arrangements of the camp and meeting". A meeting held there and some one hundred and fifty prominent redshirts and their leaders participated. Amin Jan, Naib Salar, was unanimously elected to the rank of Salar of the province. It was also decided unanimously to build a hut in the Camp for the accommodation of the Salar (CID Diaries, 1943, p. 155).

Abdul Wali Khan regularly remained active in arranging meetings and processions of the KKs. The CID officials chased him as under:

Abdu Wali Khan son of A.G.K. of Uthmanzai interviewed Inzar Gul, Naib Salar, and Babu Ghulam Rasul of Uthmanzai, and Taj Mohd of Prang, at the former's place in Charsadda and discussed with them how to observe the independence day on 26.1.45. It is gathered that he wanted them to celebrate the function with great enthusiasm this year (CID Diaries, 1945, p. 134).

Abdul Wali Khan also financed meetings of the KKs. The CID reports as under:

On 11.2.45 a private meeting of the Redshirts from the villages of, Umarzai, Torangzai, Uthmanzai, and Tangi was held in Torangzai in which it was decided to hold a Redshirts Camp at Umarzai on 26.2.45 which would last for a week... The following were the prominent persons amongst 38 persons, who were present in the meeting: - Master Abdul Karim, Abdul Wali Khan, Obedullah Khan, Murtaza Khan...the following persons have contributed for the expenses of the Redshirts Camp at Umarzai which is now scheduled to be held after Budget Session of the Frontier Legislative Assembly:-

Obedullah Khan	Rs. 100/-
Hidayatullah Khan	Rs. 30/-
Abdul Wali Khan	Rs. 40/-
Mohd Sadiq	Rs. 5/-
Abdul Jalil	Rs. 5/-
Zaidullah	Rs. 5/-
Habibullah	Rs. 5/-
Obedullah, ShoKPepper,	Rs. 5/-
Haji Gul Wazir Shah	Rs. 5/-
Pir Mohd	Rs. 5/-

All the above mentioned persons are residents of village Uthmanzai (CID Diaries, 1945, pp. 85-88).

In 1945, in recognition of his active political role, the Provincial Parliamentary Board of Congress decided to offer Abdul Wali Khan a ticket for the only seat of the Imperial Legislative Council reserved for the KP. Similarly, in 1946-elections, a ticket was offered to him for the provincial legislature of the KP. Both the times, he rejected the offer on the plea that it was the right of the senior workers. He preferred to work as an ordinary political worker without holding any position. He was appointed as member of the CWC. In 1947, he was elected as Joint Secretary of the Provincial Congress in the KP. This time he had no other option but to retain both the positions till the partition of India in 1947.

Like his father, Abdul Wali Khan also opposed the creation of Pakistan. He explained his views about the idea of Pakistan as under:

The demand of Pakistan was one of the solutions to the complex political problems of India. There could also be other solutions...Being a political party, the KKs had the right to present their own view point. To them, division of India meant division of the Muslims. The Muslims living in minority provinces were facing different types of problems. No change was possible in their conditions even after the creation of Pakistan as Pakistan was to be contained only those provinces where Muslims were in majority...There was no need at all to safeguard the rights of those Muslims who were residents of the Muslim majority provinces. The real problem was how to safeguard rights of the Muslims in minority provinces...This problem remained unsolved...The conditions of the Muslims left in those provinces became more worse... (Khan, 1988, pp. 72-73).

On the passage of the 3rd June Plan in 1947, like the other KKs, Abdul Wali Khan also demanded provision of Pakhtunistan as a third option along with the options of Pakistan or India in the proposed referendum in the KP. Neither the British and the AIML nor even the INC agreed to their demand. Abdul Wali Khan proposed how to deal with this situation. He suggested as under:

I myself told this way. It was clear if the KKs wanted independent Pakhtunistan and this right had not been granted to the inhabitants of this province by the British then it was very easy to come out of this situation. At that time Congress had complete control over the Constituent Assembly of India. Hence, if the KKs could get passed this resolution from this assembly of India that 'if the people of the Frontier Province would declare joining India in the forthcoming Referendum' then India would grant complete independence to this province and would accept the responsibility to safeguard its independence. And then, in the light of this promise and assurance, Referendum would be contested and the public would be asked 'if they want independent Pakhtunistan for their self then they must vote for joining India. (Khan, 1993, p. 491)

One of his friends belonging to the AIML pointed out the impracticality of his idea of joining India due to geographical distance between the KP and India. Abdul Wali Khan replied to his friend as under:

...why did you ignore the fact that how much distance is there between your East and West Pakistan? If you can create a joint country laying its frontiers at a distance of one and half thousand miles then I have a distance of only less than three hundred miles. Further more, as per your claims, there is a heretic and enemy country between your West and East Pakistan. But I will have Muslim and brotherly Punjab in my neighbor (Khan, 1993, pp. 491-493).

However, the KKs did not adopt Abdul Wali Khan's proposal for the Referendum and opted to boycott it. Referendum held on July 06-19, 1947 in KP. Out of the total 3.5 million population of the province, only 5, 72,799 (16.4 %) population had the right to vote in the Referendum. Total turn out of the Referendum was 2, 92,118 (51%). The total votes in favour of Pakistan were 289,244 and India 2874. As a whole, 8.35 % population of the KP favoured Pakistan in Referendum (Shah, 1999, pp. 223-226).

The KKs and the provincial Congress in KP charged high rigging in the Referendum despite the fact that there was a Congress ministry in KP under Dr. Khan Sahib as its Chief Minister. It was told that vote of Muhammad Yahya Jan (Abdul Ghaffar Khan's son in Law who was Education Minister in the third ministry of Dr. Khan Sahib) had been casted by someone else in his absentia (interview with Saleem Jan son of Muhammad Yahya Jan by the author on December 1, 2012 in Peshawar). Abdul Wali Khan told that in some areas the casted votes were more in number than the total registered voters. Similarly, some voters told that they casted more than one vote. All this happened due to the fact that the KKS and the provincial Congress in KP boycotted the Referendum and there was no one to check the 'officially sponsored' rigging in the Referendum (Khan, 1993, pp. 488-494). According to official results, the Referendum was free and fair which made KP as one of the five provinces of Pakistan (The Referendum in N.W.F.P. 1947: A Documentary

Record, 1996). Abdul Wali Khan and 'the KKs had no other option but to join a state against which they were struggling to maintain the United India' (Shah, 1999, p. 227).¹⁰

Conclusion

In a nutshell, on basis of the aforementioned facts, it may be concluded that KP played a vital role in freedom movement. Freedom fighters of this region played their role differently. Earlier, the freedom movement in KP was religious in nature which was based on the concept of Jihad (Holy War) against the British Raj. Later on, it shaped into a socio-political movement struggling for social reformation and constitutional rights through party politics based on the 'philosophy of non-violence'.

Since his childhood, Abdul Wali Khan was one of those non-violent freedom fighters who played an active role against the British rule in KP. He was a true follower of his father (Abdul Ghaffar Khan) and a loyal KK-cum-Congressman. He remained committed to the 'philosophy of non-violence' and faced the British repression bravely. He contributed a lot in liberation of India from the British yoke through his non-violent struggle from the joint platform of KKs and Congress in KP.

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NOTES

¹ In 1901, Lord Curzon (the British Viceroy in India) separated the five settled districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, and Dera Ismail Khan from the province of Punjab and named them all together as the North West Frontier Province (abbreviated as NWFP).

² In 2010, the North West Frontier Province renamed as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the 18th amendment to the 1973-Constitution of Pakistan.

³ Some of the researchers like Ihsanullah (researcher at the Bacha Khan Research Center, Peshawar) are of the view that Abdul Wali Khan was born in December 1915. They derive his date of birth on the basis of his father, Abdul Ghaffar Khan's account in his autobiography *Zama Zawand Awo Jiddojihad*. But Abdul Wali Khan's personal documents like his national identity card, school certificate, passport, and even his wife Begum Nasim Wali Khan (in her personal interview with the author on November 9, 2014 at Wali Bagh in Charsadda) and his daughter Dr. Gulalai (in her personal interview with the author on 27-01-2011 in Peshawar) confirmed that January 17, 1917 was Abdul Wali Khan's documented date of birth.

⁴ Meharqanda was the first wife of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. She was daughter of Yar Muhammad Khan who belonged to the village of Rajar in district Charsadda of KP. She married to Abdul Ghaffar Khan in 1912 and gave birth to two children named Abdul Ghani Khan (1915-1996) and Abdul Wali Khan (1917-2006). She died of influenza in 1918. Abdul Ghaffar Khan's second marriage was to Nambata in 1919. Nambata was the daughter of Sultan Muhammad Khan who gave birth to a daughter Mehar Taja (b. 1921) and a son Abdul Ali Khan (1922-1997). She also died in 1926. Later on, Abdul Ghani Khan became a poet, Abdul Wali Khan became a politician, Mehar Taja married to Yahya Jan Khan and became a house wife, and Abdul Ali Khan became an educationist.

⁵ Literally, it means National University. Basically, it was a college established in Delhi in 1920 by Muslim nationalists of British India including Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar, Hakeem Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, and Dr. Zakir Hussain etc.

⁶ It is a set of repressive laws introduced by the British in KP which are still in function in FATA of Pakistan to maintain the law and order situation.

⁷ Sher Khan belonged to village Khweshgi in district Nowshera of KP.

⁸ Maulana Mujahid al-Hussaini was member of the provincial assembly of KP (2002-2007). He was elected from the constituency of PK-14 of district Nowshera on the ticket of Mutahiddah Majlis-i-Amal (United Council of Action), which was a political alliance of religio-political parties of Pakistan in the general elections of 2002. He recorded this statement on the floor of the provincial assembly of KP on Abdul Wali Khan's death on January 26, 2006.

⁹ He was a western educated lawyer and a socio-political reformer who belonged to India. After completion of his education, like many other Indians, he went to South Africa in search of employment. He was badly affected by the apartheid laws prevailing there. He started struggle against the colonialism in South Africa in the beginning of 20th century. In 1915, he came back from South Africa to India and joined the INC. Soon he became the spirit behind the INC's movement against the British imperialism in India. His politics was based on the 'philosophy of non-violence'. He was shot dead in 1948 by a fanatic Hindu.