

Jama'at-i-Islami: Movement for Islamic Constitution and Anti-Ahmadiyah Campaign

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Abstract

Jama'at-i-Islami is one of the most prominent religious parties of Pakistan that also take active part in the politics of the country. The party is credited with the introduction of Islamic element in the political and constitutional set up of Pakistan. This paper highlights the efforts of the party for the enforcement of Islamic Constitution soon after the creation of Pakistan up to the enforcement of the Constitution of 1956. The style, ideas and politics of the party regarding the Islamic Constitution in Pakistan from 1947 to 1956 are the main focus of the discussion. The second part of the paper deals with the contribution of the Jama'at in the Ahmadiyah issue. How reluctantly the party was involved in the issue and in what way could it win the sympathy of the people as a main leading force of the campaign against Ahmadiya influence in 1953 have been examined in the course of the discussion.

Keywords: constitution making in Pakistan, Islamic politics, Mawdudi, Ahmadiyah issue

1. Syed Mawdududi and Jama'at-i-Islami

Syed Abul Ala Mawdudi, born on 25th September 1903 at Aurangabad in the erstwhile State of Hyderabad (Deccan), son of an advocate Syed Ahmed Hasan Mawdudi, former editor of journals *Madina*, *Muslim*, *Al-Jami'at* and *Tarjuman-ul-Quran*, (Bahadur, 1978, p. 11) formally founded Jama'at-i-Islami in 1941. The formal foundation of the party was followed by a phase of nine years (1933- 41) during which Syed Mawdudi rendered criticism, preaching and advice. Then the changing political conditions of India persuaded him to take the step towards second stage of his programme that was to found Jama'at-i-Islami (Mawdudi, 1950).

2. Objectives of Jama'at-i-Islami

Jama'at-i-Islami was a political party and being a political party its aims and objectives could be supposed to be political only but whether its objectives were political only can be assessed with the proclaimed objectives of the party. The pronounced objective of the party was to prepare a trained group that may work for dominance of Islam in sub-continent. It was deemed that in case the Muslims failed in struggle of partition of India, the party would face the dreadful results of that failure. On the contrary if India was partitioned, as it happened, then the party might be present to raise the flag of Islam in Pakistan and India (Mawdudi, 1950).

3. Constitution of Pakistan and Jama'at

The issue of constitution making was a test of the Jama'at-i-Islami not for its political sagacity but for its proclaimed pledge for the protection of Islam in the process of constitution making. How Jama'at-i-Islami played this role can be seen in Ji's role in constitution making. In Pakistan Jama'at-i-Islami played central part in raising the issue of an Islamic constitution for Pakistan. An Islamic constitution became the central goal of Jama'at soon after the emergence of Pakistan. By its propaganda and manoeuvring it forced both the 'Ulama' and the modernist or secularist politicians to alter their positions towards Islamic Constitution. The Jama'at forced the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan to attempt to settle these questions by the implication of concrete law (Binder, 1963, p. 76).

In his first speeches after establishment of Pakistan on January 6, 1948 and February 18, 1948 at the Law College in Lahore he contended that the case of Pakistan was not the same as that of other Muslim countries

because it was achieved exclusively with the object of becoming the homeland of Islam. (Binder, 1963, p. 100) He wanted the state of Pakistan to embrace Islam, and delivering addresses in major cities of Pakistan he said: “The natural way of any system’s embracing Islam is the same as that of an individual. That, first of all, he is made to accept some basic principles and when he accepts these principles the practical demands of Islam are put before him gradually and the required changes are produced in him”. He demanded to the Constituent Assembly that it must declare:

- (i) That the sovereignty of Pakistan is only for Allah and that the government of Pakistan is to fulfil the wishes of its sovereign in Pakistan.
- (ii) That the basic law of the land is the Sharia.
- (iii) That the Sharia will be gradually repealed and no such law that may be in conflict with the Sharia shall be framed in the future.
- (iv) That the state, in exercising its power, shall have no authority to transgress the limit imposed by Islam (*Tarjuman-ul-Quran*, 1949).

Jama’at-i-Islami had no representation in the Constituent Assembly. Only representative of religious Ulama in the Constituent Assembly was Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, the president of Jama’at al-Ulama-i-Islam that politically supported the Muslim League. Maulana Usmani himself was a Muslim League member of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan (CAP). Jama’at focused attention on Usmani to get a help for the demand of Islamic constitution. In April, 1948, a delegation of Jama’at comprising Maulana Mawdudi, Ameen Ahasn Islahi, Mian Tufayl, and Chaudhri Ghulam Muhammad, Amir of the Jama’at met Usmani to explain the four demands. Usmani did not disapprove of Syed Mawdudi’s four demands, but he never publicly supported them. However he issued statements in favour of Islamic system. His statements were merely warnings of what he might do on the one hand, and on the other they were assurances that the religious view was being represented to the government. He, through his statements, also tried to lessen Syed Mawdudi’s influence (Binder, 1963, p. 138).

While the Jama’at’s publications and writers expanded and developed in detail Mawdudi’s constitutional proposals. Mawdudi himself continued his campaign to popularise his four-point declaration. (Bahadur, 1978, p. 55) He toured West Pakistan propagating the need for an Islamic Constitution. From March to May 1948 large gatherings were arranged in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan, Karachi, Peshawar, Lylepur (Faisalabad), Montgomery (Sahiwal), Gujranwala and Sialkot. He was arrested, under safety act on passing a statement on Kashmir issue. Jama’at claims that the campaign of Jama’at and efforts of Usmani played central role in persuading Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan to get the Objectives Resolution passed by CAP in 1949 (*Roodad Jama’at Islami*. pp. 102-3).

Even after the passage of Objectives Resolution, Jama’at was not contented. On the day when Objective Resolution was passed, the meeting of central Majlis-i-Shura of Jama’at though accepted the Resolution partially saying at least those constitutional conditions have been fulfilled those are necessary to make the state Islamic in principle yet expressed dissatisfaction that the resolution did not declare Pakistan an Islamic state in clear and obvious words

On 17th March and 6-8 April 1949 two meetings of the Shura of Jama’at were held in Lahore. In those meetings despite expression of doubts upon the Objectives Resolution, Jama’at again ratified her decision of 11th March and declared that “all the forms of the relationship with government, except the forms in which such a work have to be done that is in itself against Sharia, have become lawful.” Therefore the civil services banned by the Jama’at on the grounds of Non Islamic Constitution of Pakistan were declared open for the members of Jama’at and litigation for their lawful right in state courts was permitted. Thus to participate in Assemblies and other democratic institutions and becoming their member or voter was stated lawful. Shura also decided that civil servants, Judges, lawyers and contenders formerly forbidden for enrolment in Jama’at were allowed to be enrolled in Jama’at (*Roodad Jama’at Islami*. p. 106).

The issuance of Interim Report of the Basic Principles’ Committee (BPC) on October 7, 1950 once again geared up the activities of the Jama’at for Islamic Constitution. The Jama’at quickly threw the bulk of its efforts into the campaign against the Interim Report. Of particular importance were its periodical and special publications, the most outstanding of which was a compilation of all the press releases of the opposition groups, all hostile editorial comments, and a detailed criticism with suggested amendments of every clause in the report (Binder, 1963, p. 210). Syed Mawdudi (1962) declared in his public speech at Mochi Darwaza Lahore, on 4th October 1950, that the recommendations of BPC contained no characteristic of an Islamic government as described in the Quran and the Hadith. Mawdudi also toured the country criticising the report. When on 21st November 1950 the

Prime Minister of Pakistan announced the postponement of the consideration of the Report by the CAP (Choudury, 1969, pp. 72-73) the Jama'at-I-Islami claimed credit for its withdrawal.

Maulana Ihtishamul Haq Thanvi called a meeting of 31 Ulama of various schools of thought in Karachi in January 1951 to send concrete and definite suggestion to government in response of appeal by Prime Minister Liaquat. (Bahadur, 1978, p. 61) Syed Mawdudi alone participated on behalf of Jama'at-i-Islami and he dominated the proceedings (Abd, 1988).

Then he presented an eight-point demand based on principles of Islamic government and demanded the Constitution to be formed till December 1952. Jama'at published Constitutional Proposals first in a meeting of lawyers of Karachi Mawdudi addressed on "Formation of Islamic law". In the third week of November processions and demonstration for the Islamic constitution were arranged. At the night of November 20, 1952 Ameer of Jama'at warned government to take step considerably and not to play with the passions of people (Bahadur, 1978, p. 74).

The influence of Mawdudi on the proceedings of the Talimat-i-Islami Board has been described by Binder in the words that 'The members of the Board of Talimat, of course, had spent a great deal of time considering such questions, while Mawdudi was constantly writing and talking on the subject. At this point the friendship of Ansari, the board's secretary, and Mawdudi laid the basis of a productive co-operative effort. Mawdudi read his principles first, and these were supported with some additions by the members of the board.' (Binder, 1963, p. 216) The drafting of the principles owed much to the constitutional expertise of Maulana Mawdudi. The final report of the BPC, presented on December 22, 1952, was prepared on the basis of the recommendations of the suggestions of subcommittee (Afzal, 1976, p. 138).

Majlis-i-Shura of Jama'at suggested some amendments and reforms in the Report of Basic principles committee. Reforms and amendments were in two parts. One was compulsory, due to rejection of which constitution would not be accepted and the others were necessary but on rejection of which the constitution might be accepted. The suggestions were sent to Ulama who had set up the 22 points. From 11 to 18 January 1953 one more conference of Ulama was held in Karachi and they sent all those amendments necessary in their view to the government. Syed Mawdudi too attended that meeting.

On 28th March 1953 Syed Mawdudi was arrested and sentenced to death which sentence afterwards commuted to 14 years imprisonment. The incarceration of Mawdudi had paralysed the Jama'at to a great extent. The Jama'at leadership decided to pay more attention to civil liberties apart from continuing the campaign for the Islamic constitution. The Majlis-i-Shura in its meeting at Karachi in November 1953 asked its members to join the branches of civil liberties unions wherever they were functioning or to form such unions where they were not in existence.

By October 1954, a new constitution on the basis of amended Basic Principles Committee Report, which bore the influence of the Ulama and the Jama'at-I-Islami was ready. The Jama'at-I-Islami jumped to the defence of the Constitution Bill, which was now threatened by secular politicians, and its Majlis-i-Shura called upon the people to defend the Constitution and the integrity of Pakistan. It also declared that the proposed Constitution of Pakistan was to a very great extent Islamic in character and demanded its adoption forthwith (Bahadur, 1978, p. 74).

Mufti Shafi called upon the citizens of Pakistan to observe Islamic Constitution Day on October 22, 1954 and to demand the enforcement of the draft constitution without delay. The demand for dissolution of the CAP, he said, was designed to destroy the Islamic character of the constitution. Jama'at supported Mufti Shafi's call for observation Islamic Constitution Day and urged that the Assembly enforce the new constitution on December 25, after duly amending it in accordance with the amendments of the 'Ulama'. At the October 22 meeting held under the auspices of the Jamiat-al-ulama-i-Islam resolutions were passed demanding the enforcement of the constitution by December 25. The Jama'at-I-Islami announced that similar resolution had been passed in seventy-seven mosques in Karachi at Friday prayers. Meetings were also held in Hyderabad, Larkana, and Quetta. On October 23, posters containing the press release of Jama'at-I-Islami appeared on walls throughout Karachi (Binder, 1963, pp. 360-361).

On 24 October 1954, the Governor General of Pakistan, Ghulam Muhammad dissolved the Constituent Assembly. Mian Tufayl Muhammad condemned the dissolution in a press statement that no newspaper published. The first phase of the Jama'at-i-Islami's campaign for an Islamic constitution had come to an abrupt end (Bahadur, 1978, pp. 74-75).

Syed Mawdudi was released from prison on 25 April 1955. Meanwhile the second CAP was formed. The composition of the new constituent Assembly was different from its predecessor. The Muslim League had lost its majority and alliances were formed for getting the majority to form the government. Chaudhri Muhammad Ali formed a coalition government of United Front and the Muslim League. The new Constituent Assembly held its first session in July and by 29 February 1956 a new constitution was adopted which was enforced on 23 March 1956.

The new Constitution was immediately accepted by the Jama'at-i-Islami, with profound thanks to the Almighty, as the Islamic constitution accepting the Sovereignty of God and the legal supremacy of His religion. Chowdhri Muhammad Ali's association with the new 'Islamic constitution had something to do with the quick acceptance by the Jama'at of the new constitution. The Jama'at had praise for only one Prime Minister among the several who had so far assumed power in Pakistan. (*Chiragh-i-Rah*) When the constitution was enforced, the Jama'at-i-Islami declared that to a great extent it was in accordance with the wishes of those having Islamic and democratic tendencies. The Constitution, the Jama'at said, had finally resolved the controversy between the Islamic and non-Islamic trends in the preamble, Directive Principles and Article 198 in favour of the former (Mawdudi, 1962, p. 562).

Syed Mawdudi and the Jama'at-i-Islami launched a countrywide campaign to welcome the 1956 Constitution. Syed Mawdudi spoke on the Constitution at Peshawar on 30 March 1956. Islahi spoke on the Constitution at Rawalpindi and Tufayl Muhammad at Daska on the same day. Mawdudi knew very well that the Constitution had ignored the basic requirements for an Islamic Constitution that he had been advocating since the creation of Pakistan. It had ignored the 22 points of the Ulama Conference of January 1951 and the 8 (later 9) points enunciated by him in August 1952. But he had by then understood that an uncompromising attitude on the question of an Islamic Constitution would not be politically wise. He now claimed that the Jama'at's aim was not merely the statement of truth but also the establishment of truth, and a way had to be found to do this within the realities of the situation (*Tarjuman-al-Quran*).

4. Anti Ahmadiya Movement

The Ahrar had launched a campaign against the followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmed known as Ahmadiyahs. Ahrar demanded that the Qadianies should be debarred a non-Muslim minority. Ahrar had been hammering at the issue since 1949. By the middle of May 1952 the Ahrar had succeeded in arousing public feelings against the Ahmadiya community. (Bahadur, 1978, p. 67). In order to understand the religious politics of the Jamaat it is imperative how the Jamaat participate in the Anti-Ahmadiya Movement. Syed Mawdudi was explicit about his opposition to the Ahrar, and just as frank in accusing the Punjab government of fostering the agitation. On the other hand he agreed with the doctrinal basis of the demands (Binder, 1963, p. 263).

How could Jamaat not participate in the religious movement can be seen in the developments that until representatives of the Jama'at were invited to the Muslim parties' convention they paid little heed to the agitation. Mawdudi called a meeting of the Majlis-i-Shura of the Jama'at early in July 1952 at which it was decided that the Ahmadi question be put off so that all efforts might be concentrated upon party's efforts for "Islamic Constitution. The Jama'at refused two seats on the Majlis-i-Amal which was formed at the convention, while Syed Mawdudi wrote on the Ahmadi question 'for the benefit of the CAP' in both the daily '*Tasnim*' and the monthly '*Tarjuman al-Quran*' in July. Simultaneously, with the news of the police firing on an anti-Ahmadi mob in Multan on July 18, came the announcement that the government would withdraw its cases against the Ahrar leaders in return for their promise of good behaviour. These events were followed by the resolution of the Punjab Muslim League council referring the Ahmadi question to the CAP. The Jama'at thus remained isolated in this attempt to minimise the question. Mawdudi then called a meeting of the Majlis-i-Shura in the first week of August at which it was decided that the demand that the Ahmadiya be declared a non-Muslim minority be added to the other eight 'constitutional' demands of the Jama'at-i-Islami for an Islamic constitution (Binder, 1963, pp. 263-264).

Mian Tufayl Muhammad, then Qayyam (secretary general) of Jama'at, also states the hand of government in arousing the Ahrars and reluctant adoption of ninth demand by Jama'at. He says:

Government brought Ahrar forward to escape from the demand of Islamic constitution. Some persons of Ahrar considered it a blessing and became the tool in the hands of Governor Malik Ghulam Muhammad to serve. They got a movement against Qadianies started through Mian Mumtaz Daultana. We (Jama'at leaders) advised them that it was the issue related to constitution. On formation of constitution this issue would itself be solved, but Majlis-i-Ahrar continued the movement. Government of

Punjab helped in providing resources. When Majlis-i-Khatm-i-Nabuvat could not be motivated to come to the line Jama'at included the ninth demand, concerned with the Ahrar demand of debarring Qadianies as a non-Muslim minority, in the Eight Demands for Constitution. (Malik, 1997, p. 99)

By their ninth demand, and by their agreement to participate in the Action Committee of the Muslim Parties Convention, the Jama'at linked themselves with the Ahrar and the 'Ulama' but they did not follow either group wholeheartedly. The principal differences between the Jama'at-i-Islami and the others were that, on the one hand they did not want the anti Ahmadi agitation to overshadow their efforts for an Islamic constitution, and on the other they were more interested in the establishment of the principle of the supremacy of Islamic law than in the establishment of the institution of the 'Ulama' (Binder, 1963, pp. 263-264).

An all Pakistan Muslim Parties Convention was held in mid-January 1953 to consider the Ahmadiya issue. The Convention coincided with another Conference of the Ulama called to consider the Ulama's amendments to the second draft of the basic Principles Committee's report. The Convention which met on 16 January 1953 was attended by Syed Mawdudi and Sultan Ahmad who represented the Jama'at-i-Islami. The Convention formed a Subjects Committee. The Convention decided to adopt 'direct action' to secure acceptance of the demands regarding Ahmadiyas. It also decided to boycott the Ahmadiyas. It demanded the resignation of Khwaja Nazimuddin, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan. A Council of Action was authorised to chalk out a programme of action to get the demands accepted. It organised a deputation to the Prime Minister (Bahadur, 1978, pp. 68-69).

The divergent views of the action taken at the Muslim Parties Convention concerning the question of the association of Jama'at-i-Islami with the 'direct action' decision have been discussed at length by the judges Munir and Kayani in their report on the Punjab Disturbance (Binder, 1963, p. 283).

Syed Mawdudi claimed before the court of inquiry that he had proposed to the convention's Subjects committee that since the Ulama conference had induced the Ahmadiya issue in their amendments to the BPC Report, there was no need for a separate agitation. His proposal was accepted by the Subject Committee but rejected by the open convention. Later the Council of Action launched the agitation although it never co-opted the remaining seven members and consequently all its activities from 17 January to 26 February 1953 were illegal. Syed Mawdudi claimed that he protested against these illegalities through Nasrullah Khan Aziz and Tufayl Muhammad to the Punjab Council of Action. On Syed Mawdudi's instructions the Jama'at Secretary announced on 19 February 1953 that no member of the Jama'at was to sign the pledge that was being circulated on behalf of the Council of Action for Direct Action.

The first meeting of the Central Council of Action was held at Karachi on 26 February. Mawdudi claimed that he again sent his objections in writing through Sultan Ahmed. He claimed that he had asked for the Cancellation of programme of Direct Action. The Jama'at-i-Islami and Mawdudi claimed before the Court of Inquiry on the basis of matter's letter to Sultan Ahmed that they had completely dissociated themselves from the agitation, and, consequently, they bore no responsibility for it. However, a study of Mawdudi's letter to Sultan Ahmed does not bring out the emphatic statement of dissociation. He wrote that the time was not ripe for any strong agitation, for two reasons. First, the educated people in the country, including those in the Punjab, were not yet convinced of the correctness of the demand regarding the Ahmadiyas; second, the people of the Punjab and Bahawalpur alone had been prepared to support the agitation and all other provinces including Bengal were completely unaffected by it. In that situation there was no possibility of the agitation being successful. In case of a Direct Action, neither he nor the Jama'at-i-Islami were ready to share the defeat (Yeh Giraftarian Kiun, 1953, p. 29).

Evidence had been brought before the court of Inquiry that the resolution of the Council of Action in January 1953 on Direction Action had been dictated among others by Mawdudi. Further, that Sultan Ahmed was representing the Jama'at-i-Islami in the absence of Mawdudi when the ultimatum to the Prime Minister was sent on 18 January. It was also stated that Sultan Ahmed did not press the Jama'at's position of dissociation before the Majlis-i-Amal on 26 February 1953 at Karachi in spite of the clear instructions from Mawdudi in his letter of 22 February.

When the Government moved against the Ulama on 27 February and arrested some of them, Mawdudi issued a statement condemning Government's action and declaring that the agitation could not be suppressed by violence, though he conceded that there could be difference of opinion between the Jama'at and others. The Majlis-i-Shura of the Jama'at-i-Islami met on 4 and 5 March 1953. The Shura reiterated the demand for declaring Ahmadiyas a non-Muslim minority and for the removal of Chowdhri Zafrullah Khan from the Foreign Ministry. It also declared that the public anger against the Government was justified. It blamed the Government for attempts to

suppress the agitation by violence and warned that this might lead to civil war. The Shura, however, also criticised some of the methods adopted by the agitators.

On 5 March, Mawdudi's *Qadiani Mas'ala* was published. Mawdudi had rallied an array of facts to prove that Ahmadiyahs were outside the pale of Islam and asserted that all the religious organisations in Pakistan had decided to 'excise the cancer' (Ahmadiyahs) from the Muslim society and to have Zafrullah Khan removed from his office because of his activities in spreading this cancer abroad, including in the Muslim countries. The opponents of the demand were called 'imbeciles'. The violent methods adopted by the agitators received a casual disapproval. These methods were, however, justified by blaming the Muslim League for having taught the people these methods through its agitation against the Khizer Hayat Ministry in the Punjab before partition. On 6 March 1953 Martial law was promulgated in Punjab and the agitation was snuffed out in a few hours by the armed forces.

Mawdudi's attitude towards the anti-Ahmadiya movement launched by the Ahrar, "his life long opponents and with whom he never agreed," was all along ambivalent. The Jama'at did not want to be isolated by keeping out of the agitation. It also did not want any other group to take the lead in championing the cause which it imagined was very dear to the Muslims. Though the Jama'at fully agreed with the cause of the agitation which flowed naturally from the Jama'at's ideal of an Islamic state, it had never participated in any such mass agitation since its inception. It was obvious that the agitation, particularly after the launching of the Direct Action, was not going to remain peaceful. Mawdudi himself was holding out dire threats and predicting civil war obviously to steal the Ahrar thunder. But Mawdudi had no control over the course of events. Rather he became an accessory to them by not explicitly dissociating the Jama'at from the Direct Action in spite of his claim that he disagreed with it.

The Jama'at representatives continued to be members of the Central and Punjab Council of Action throughout. He admitted that he could not publicly condemn an organisation (Council of Action) of which he was a member unless he had attempted to correct it from within. While the Jama'at's criticism of the act of violence by the agitators were only indirect and veiled, Mawdudi was throughout emitting fire against the Government in a most harsh language. This was hardly calculated to produce any impression of the Jama'at's dissociation or opposition to the Direct Action. The Court of Inquiry was closer to truth in its judgement on the Jama'at that though it did not believe in the propriety of the programme that had been decided upon in execution of the resolution of direct action the Jama'at was throughout afraid of becoming unpopular by giving frank and honest expression to its real views in public. In its mentality and attitude, therefore, it did not differ from any other political party or organisation, and was much afraid as any one else of doing anything, which might expose it to public criticism.

After the promulgation of Martial Law, Mawdudi and twelve other leaders of the Jama'at in Lahore and 28 others in different parts of the country were arrested on 28 March 1953. The Jama'at newspapers *Tasnim* and *Kawsar* were asked to deposit a total of Rs. 32,000 as security. The police also searched the Central Office of the Jama'at and took away 10,000 rupees from its central fund. It was one of the biggest round up of the Jama'at-I-Islami's leadership. Most of the circle Amirs, district Amirs and members of the Majlis-i-Shura were arrested throughout West Pakistan.

Till 3 May 1953, those arrested were not told why they had been arrested. On that day Mawdudi, Nasrullah Khan Aziz and Naqi Ali were informed that they would be tried for writing, publishing and distributing the *Qadiani Mas'ala*. Nine other members of the Jama'at were released on 9 May but were re arrested and remained in prison for several months. On 11 May 1953 a military court sentenced Mawdudi to death for writing the *Qadiani Mas'ala*. He was also awarded a sentence of 7 years imprisonment for his statements published in the Jama'at organ *Tasnim* in the first week of March 1953. Nasrullah Khan Aziz received 3 Years' sentences and Naqi Ali, printer and publisher of the *Qadiani Mas'ala*, for which Mawdudi was awarded the highest penalty, was never proscribed and remained in circulation. The Jama'at claimed that by 23 March 1953, 57,000 copies of the pamphlet had been sold.

A meeting of the remaining members of the Jama'at's Majlis-i-Shura was convened at Karachi in the first week of April 1953. Sultan Ahmed, the Amir of Karachi and Sind was elected the Amir of the Jama'at-i-Islami of Pakistan. In a press statement issued on 18 June 1953, after a meeting of the Shura at Karachi, the Amir, Sultan Ahmed, accused the ruling circles of attempts to discredit the Jama'at because they did not want an Islamic system, and that this was the reason that the Jama'at leaders had been arrested.

There was widespread agitation against Mawdudi's conviction. Mawdudi had refused to make a mercy appeal. The Jama'at claimed to have organised successful strike in Karachi on 12 May 1953 against Mawdudi's

conviction. Protest was also organised at the Karachi airport on 13 May at the time of the arrival of the Prime Minister. The Martial Law administrator commuted the death sentence to 14 years imprisonment. By the end of the year 1953, most of the prisoners of Martial Law had been released except Mawdudi. Amin Ahsan Islahi was released in March 1953 and was elected Amir of the Jama'at. Sultan Ahmed resigned to make way for him (Bahadur, 1978, p. 27).

Due to the decision of Justice Munir the dismissal of Law of indemnity paved way for the release of Maulana Mawdudi whose sentence of death had been cancelled already. Maulana was released on 28th May having been arrested for twenty-six months. (Malik, 1997) The death sentence and then its dramatic cancellation and then gradual acquittal of Mawdudi popularised him and his party among the educated persons and masses. The confidence of the workers of Jama'at increased and their affection with their leader was aired up. It provided Jama'at a new force on the front of the issue of Islamic constitution.

5. Conclusion

The politics of Jama'at-i-Islami from 1947 to 1956 circled around the issue of an Islamic constitution for Pakistan. Jama'at did not succeed in its goal and it had many reservations on the Constitution of 1956 but Jama'at did not feel it politically expedient to reject the Constitution. During this period the Jama'at also participated in the Anti-Ahmadiyah Movement grudgingly but it gathered the support of religious minded public.

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