

DR. ABDUL HAQ – AN EMINENT EDUCATIONIST

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Lives of great men all remind us,
we can make our lives sublime,
and, departing, leave behind us,
footprints on the sands of time.

It is said that some men are born great some achieve greatness and on some greatness is thrust upon. Dr. Abdul Haq, the founder of Osmania College was a great philosopher, a spiritual guide, an educationist and a man with the milk of kindness and love in his heart. Great men are born but they are not made. Dr. Abdul Haq was a man by birth great man.

Once in more than thousand years is born a person through whom an entire community expresses its dreams, hopes and aspirations. Such was Dr. M. Abdul Haq who was born in Kurnool on February 21, 1901. He was educated from early childhood under the direct supervision and guidance of his able father Shams-ul-Ulama Moulvi Mohammed Umar. In 1912 he was admitted into the Municipal High School, Kurnool¹. After his matriculation in 1918, he was able to get admission into the Government Mohammadan College (Now Govt. Arts College), Madras through the kind intervention of Moulana Abdus Subhan Saheb who also provided for the boarding and lodging of this poor student in his own house. He passed the Intermediate examination in 1920 and his B.A. with distinction in 1922. In 1924 he passed the M.A examination in Arabic².

Dr. M. Abdul Haq soon left India for Oxford where he was admitted into the St. Catherine's Society, under the supervision of Prof. D.S. Margoliouth. He edited the Diwan of Ibn-e-Sana'al-Mulk (d.608/1211) which was highly commended by his examiners and which was accepted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Oxford³.

Dr. Haq added to his great learning, rich experience by travelling far and wide throughout the continent and the Middle East. His published work in Urdu, 'Italia', was prescribed as a text book for the Secondary School Leaving Certificate Examination in Madras for the year 1957.

In Egypt he was accorded a warm welcome by 'Ulema' of the University of Al-Azhar who bestowed upon him the title of 'Afdal-al-Ulma' and proclaimed it on the front page of the famous Arabic daily newspaper 'Al-Balagh' of Cairo. His photograph and an account of his life were published. During his brief stay at Cairo he had the opportunity of meeting the great commentator of the Quran Allama Shaikh Jauhari Tantawi. In Turkey too he stayed for a month and there also received a warm welcome⁴.

In 1936, Dr. Haq returned to his country and resumed his duties as Professor of Arabic, Government Mohammadan College. He succeeded to its Principalship in the year 1940. The long term of Principalship of Dr. Haq from 1940 to 1948 was marked by all-round progress of the College. He served his Alma Mater, the University of Madras, also as a member of the Senate and Syndicate and Chairman of Board of Studies in Arabic.

In October 1948, Dr. Haq was appointed as the Principal of the Presidency College, Madras, the very college where he was denied admission as a student. He served this institution till 1952, the longest term of office that any Principals held excepting Mr. Papworth. He was one of the most popular Principals, Presidency College ever had.

In 1952, he was called to the Aligarh Muslim University to serve in place of Dr. Zakir Hussain Khan, who was visiting the U.S.A. for a few months. Dr. Haq was appointed Vice-Chancellor in-charge and held the office of Pro-Vice-Chancellor for a short period of six months⁵.

In 1955, he was appointed member of Madras Public Service Commission and acted as its Chairman till his death. In spite of his heavy work he never severed his ties from the sphere of education. Even officially, as a special case, he was permitted to act as examiner and Chairman of Board of Studies in Arabic.

After the passing away of his father in 1946, Dr. Haq concentrated his attention in consolidating and developing the college established by his father- the Islamiah Arabic College at Kurnool. Dr. Haq himself was successful in establishing the Osmania College at Kurnool in the year 1947⁶.

The following institutions were established under the supervision of Dr. M.A. Haq⁷

1. Osmania College, Kurnool.
2. Faruq College, Malabar.
3. Jamal Mohammed College, Tiruchirapalli.
4. South Indian Education Trust Women's College, Madras.
5. New College, Madras.
6. Islamiah College, Vaniyambadi.
7. Jamia Darussalam, North Arcot.
8. Islamiah Arabic College, Kurnool.
9. Islamiah Arabic Tibbi College, Kurnool.

(Renamed as Dr. Abdul Haq Unani Medical College and Hospital)

10. Umar Arabic High School, Kurnool.

Osmania College founded by Dr. M. Abdul Haq in June 1947 is an autonomous institution, which has been accredited for a period of five years with 'A' Grade. The Institution is developing by leaps and bounds under the personal care, devotion and supervision of the present Secretary and Correspondent, Madam Azra Javed Saheba, who is the grand daughter of our founder. She has been working with unassuming and unabated zeal towards the progress of this institution. She has been making relentless efforts to convert this institution into a deemed University.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has recognized the valuable services of Dr. Abdul Haq in the field of education and named the Urdu University as Dr. Abdul Haq Urdu University, located at Kurnool⁸.

Thus, Dr. Abdul Haq has played yeoman service in the development of education.

1. V.Habibullah., Dr. M. Abdul Haq, his life struggles and triumphs., (Kurnool, 1915) P.11.
2. Ibid., P.19.
3. Ibid., P.45.
4. Ibid., P.48.
5. Ibid., P.49.
6. Ibid., P.80.
7. Ibid., P.94.
8. The Dr. Abdul Haq Urdu University has been established by an Act of State Legislature Government of Andhra Pradesh (Act No. 13 of 2016, published 7th May 2016). The Act was amended as Act No 35/2018.