

## Contributions of Jamaludheen Musliyar: A study from Malappuram District

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### Abstract

Reformation means making changes to something with the intention of setting it back on the right path. The aim of all reformers is to revive the society and empower the community. Whether it is social reformation or religious reformation, all kind of improvement in the world have been done with the influence of reform leaders only. Difference between religious reformers and social reformers is religious reformers give more important to religious matters but social reform leaders give the conscious on every part of society. That's why study of reformers will help to create new reformers or bring the new ideas to the society. Keeping in this view the present study attempted to understand Jamaludheen Musliyar (known as Usthad) as a Social reformer. It studies various contributions of Usthad in the field of education, charity, orphan care, religious awareness and social development. It also studies influence of Usthad on people from beneficiaries' perspective. Five focus group discussions have been conducted for the data collection.

**Keywords:** Reformation, Usthad, Community, Empowerment

### 1. Introduction

India is a land of different cultures, languages, religions and castes. Various social movements emerged to bring positive changes in society. Though many of them are brought under research, a few are yet to be studied. Jamaludheen Musliyaar is popular among Muslim community of Nilambur Taluk of Malappuram district. The causes of the reformation cannot be located in any one event or in any one aspect of society. It was not just a matter of religion or politics or social discontent. It was, rather, a combination of all of these things.

Mainly reformation has been classified into Social reformation and Religious reformation. It is mainly occurred in the form of movements -Social Movements and Religious Movements. Social reform is a movement that seeks to change the social and political conditions of marginalized groups. Social reform movements involve the marginalized group and the activists in an effort to change political policy while bringing public awareness to the issue through protests, amended legislature and the media. Reform movements are often gradual movements that make subtle changes to particular characteristics of society, although when a subtle social movement does not work, a radical, aggressive social reform may take place. Social movements have sought to reform policies regarding women's rights, slavery, civil rights, public school systems, prisons, alcohol consumption, psychiatric hospitals, homeless shelters and voting rights. Jamaludheen Musliyar is admired by people for his social and religious reform activities. This study is an attempt to bring out his contributions.

### 2. Objectives of the Study

- To study the contributions of Jamaludheen Musliyar.
- To identify Jamaludheen Musliyar as a Social reformer.

### 3. Methodology

The study was undertaken with the objectives of to study the

Jamaludheen Musliyar as a social reformer and to identify the contributions of Jamaludheen Musliyar of Nilambur Taluk in Malappuram District in Kerala. The researcher collected data from five groups of respondents comprising seven members each. Altogether 35 members are involved. They come from various sociological backgrounds such as, peasants, porters, teachers and religious scholars. The five broad categories discussed are (a) Understanding his contribution to education (b) Charity and social services (c) treatment of illness and medicines (d) Religious scholar and propagation and (e) Family, tradition and social life.

### 4. Jamaludheen Musliyar- A Short Biography

Jamaludheen Musliyar (1930-2010) is an Islamic scholar, Sufi and reformer. He was born and brought up in small Village of Vandoor Taluk. His father Kunchali Haji was a spiritual leader. His mother was also a spiritual leader. They followed principles of spirituality of Islamic theology. Musliyar, followed his parents on theological aspects and expanded it further on education, health and other social aspects which is considered as unique by his followers.

After the schooling (Islamic theology from Dars) Usthad submitted his life to society and started his service in Palathingal Juma Masjid as a Priest- Qazi. From there he started his career as a Usthad for people, social service preacher, educationist etc. the respondents told, he held the view that education is the only way to empower the community along with helping the poor people to come forward by giving free education, proper job and proper food. He was an active member of religious organization - Ahlussunnathi Val jamaha especially Samastha. He brought communal harmony and the brotherhood among the different communities and religions. His religious addresses- Vahles, Khuthubas- were indicating this aspect. After fifty years of service in Palathingal Juma Masjid, generally he stopped his service (1999) because of his health problem even though he

was Qazi of Nilambur area up to his death. He worked for the development of Muslim community spiritually and materially. Islamic history of Nilambur Taluk is non complete without his presence, especially his contribution to Vazhikadave, Chungathra, Marutha, Moothedam and Pothukall Panchayaths. His contributions in the field of education, health, charity, theology and so on is visible everywhere. Orphanages (2), Masjids (18) and Madrassas (32) are some of them.

He died in 2010 and buried at Palathingal Juma Masjid Graveyard where he liked to be buried. His Tomb (Makbara) is now religiously visiting place. His death Anniversary (Aand) is commemorated by the people with respect and charity works. Now his families are following his footsteps and continue the reforms.

## 5. Findings of Focus Group Discussions

### 5.1 Jamaludheen Musliyar and Education

Education plays an important role in shaping an individual's career. The level of education helps people to earn recognition and respect in the society. Undoubtedly education is both socially and personally an indispensable part of human life. The inequalities in the standards of education are still a major issue that needs to be solved as early as it could be. The importance of education in our life cannot be ignored at any cost. Education is the only way to get knowledge.

As a religious scholar his services was not shortened in Muslim community alone but it was also widened to other religions. By his attempt general schools and educational institutions have come in to existence and he was initiator of other educational institutions too. That's why he was a role model for everyone and accepted figure among everyone. Unlike other religious leaders, he maintained a balance between religious education and general education as a true social reformer.

He has given contribution to spiritual education (Islamic Theology) and general education. His contribution to Islamic education is categorized to different forms. Dars (Residential form of Islamic institution where students live with teacher in Mosque), Madrassa (Day student system who are coming daily to specified place and leaving after class), Hifzul Quran College (Where students and teachers are staying in a one place on the purpose of by hearing the holy Quran fully), Shareeth College (educational institutions, where students are studying Islamic theology and its teachings. It is not connected with Masjid regularly).

By his hard work 32 Madrassa, 13 Dars, 18 Masjid and 2 orphanages have come to existence. Documentes are verified at Edakkara Muslim Orphanage. Fund for building the Madrassas and Dars is collected by donations from the people. This donation was collected from his Vahlu programs. Some kind of donations has come as a vaqf property as the property of Abdul Azeez Musliyar to Dars of Palathingal. It is verified from documents of Palathingal Juma Masjid. Apart from this, present educational institutions have come to existance by his influence only. Usthad told to the companions that 'in coming world, survival of people without academic education is impossible'. School education gives people identity and awareness of their life that's why He established them.

In Nilambur Taluk especially Vazhikadave Panchayath five schools, one ITI, one English Medium school and boys and girls orphanages were part of it. These institutions provided

free and fundamental education to the poor children. After starting of this kind of basic educational institution nowadays there are number of institutions constructed following it by the difference people and difference groups. Ultimate purpose of his educational reformation was the upliftment of poor people especially Muslim community who were in bottom of society in all aspects at his time.

### 5.2 Jamaludheen Musliyar and Medicine

Usthad's one of the traditional talents was prescribing medicine which he got from his father Kunchali Haji. His brothers were also famous as spiritual medical practitioners. They were treating the patients with spelling of holy Quranic verses, spelled water, holy thread and natural medicines like forest tree leaves, using special soils, wearing special dresses and eating special foods. This is not associated with Unani. It was based on the traditional Kerala medicine particularly among Muslim community. These are initial points of discussion by the respondents of second group.

Usthad was applying his knowledge of ayurvedic, herbal, soil and other natural medicines to his patients. He was giving spelled water and holy thread for the small diseases like back pain, headache and children's diseases. He was also treating infections and chronic diseases with the same medicines. For the snake bites and cancer he applied spelling of hours and patients were returning to normal stages. His medical treatment was in Masjid. He had a special room there which is in Palathingal Juma Masjid. From the different districts, states and places people were coming to him seeking medicines. The money getting from this treatment was used for charity.

He was getting this permission- ijazth- from his father Kunjchali Haji and his teachers. Number of diseases which were not cured from hospitals, got cured by Usthad. He was against black magic and those are affected by black magic are also healed by him.

### 5.3 Jamaludheen Musliyar and Charity

Usthad was renowned for his charity work. Charity as he said is not a social service but a compulsory communication of every human being to another human being. His thought was always upliftment of poor people by giving free education, uniforms, books, dresses etc. He was conducting poor people's marriage and constructing homes for them. These are remembered by all the respondents. Apart from this in special occasion like Eid, Bakreed and School opening he was providing dresses, food items and other instruments of children to the poor people with the help of rich people of this area. Some of the students are benefitted in these events. Boys and girls orphanage is the significant episode in his life.

He created Islamic study center known as Dars in Palathingal Masjid. He also influenced people to donate for the study center and made it as a Vaqf property. Thus, these charity institutions are functioning towards the welfare of the Islamic community in Nilambur. At present twenty students are studying in Palathingal Masjid. All facilities are given to them from the vaqf property of Abdul Azeez Musliyar. It was given to Masjid by the influence of Usthad only. He was giving and leading the charity works without considering the religion, community and caste.

Usthad with his own interest initiated free education for poor people especially for orphan. In Munda there are two orphanages for boys and girls. They are Edakkara Muslim

Orphanage for Boys and Edakkara Muslim Orphanage for Girls. Presently 158 orphans are studying there with free facilities. Apart from this in other institutions like Islamic study center, primary schools, upper primary schools, high schools, higher secondary schools and ITI which were run under his president ship, free education is provided.

It is mission of Musliyar to impact on the well-being of the medically impoverished people. It collects financial donations and goods, including medical, dental, and laboratory items, purchases and distributes such commodities. Goods are reported to be distributed in a non-discriminatory manner without regard to gender, religion, nationality and political beliefs. For providing medical helps he had appointed some of his friends to get information and provide helps. The goals of his works are to relieve human suffering, demonstrate respect for all customers, clients, and patients, collaborate with community organizations to provide services to those in need, maintain a proactive approach to improving services provided. In this charity works all kind of poor people were considered irrespective of religion and caste.

#### 5.4 Jamaludheen Musliyar and Religion

He was known as a renowned scholar of Islam representing Samastha from Nilambur Taluk.

##### 5.4.1 Vahls

Islamic Vahl means spiritual and religious instruction in a particular format. An old time it was forty days or twenty days advises-naseehath- and Jamaludheen Musliyar was one of the preachers. His forty days or thirty days night vahls are remembered even after thirty years. Fund collection for the charity works and renewal works of Masjid and Madrassa had done by this vahls only. Spiritual awakening was its main intention. The members remembered the Ramzan special vahls which were full of crowds and they returned after getting a good spiritual mood. Not only giving the instruction and vahls but also he was bringing other Islamic scholars for that. E.K. Aboobacker Musliyar and A.P. Aboobacker Musliyar are some of them.

##### 5.4.2 Religious Harmony

He was a prominent figure of religious harmony and tolerance. When there was a Hindu -Muslim communal issue in the year 1992 on the name of Masjid in Pannipara he solved the issue by conducting a round table sitting of members from both communities and making proper solution to the issue. His medical treatment, educational services and charity works were not only for Muslim community but also for other all religious people too.

##### 5.4.3 Religious organization (Samastha)

Samastha (All India sunny Muslims organization) mould a strong network between the Muslim scholars in Kerala. The scattered Muslim scholars-Ulama- got at in single platform. It was very helpful to the ordinary people of Nilambur Taluk to be touch with state religious scholars and to know the total upliftment of the state all over the state. When Muslim community is scattered on basis of regional and communal issues samastha use to solve it by announcing the orders and people use to follow it.

Musliyar was care taker of samastha in Nilambur Taluk. Present Kerala is exemplary place for the religious harmony

without having communal rights. For making such peaceful condition, samastha has played a vital role by maintaining the Muslim community keeps distance from harmful events. He was working as a member of education department of samastha and he represented entire Muslims of Nilambur Taluk in samastha. He worked for expansion of samastha by constructing local bodies of samastha in every panchayath of Nilambur Taluk and its charity works in these areas.

#### 5.5 Jamaludheen Musliyar and Family and Tradition

On the part of mother and father he is from a reputed Islamic family called Cheeran Thodika. His life is inspired by number of teachers only, their spirituality, knowledge, life style, and simplicity etc. His father and grandfather were also famous spiritual leaders of Islam. Kunchali Haji's tomb- Maqbara is nowadays a pilgrimage center. Usthad was having nine siblings. They are also religious scholars but settled in other parts of the kerala. They are Muhammed Musliyar, Abdullahkutty Musliyar, Hassan Kutty Musliyar, Sulaiman Musliyar, Abdurahiman Musliyar, Abdul Azeez Musliyar, Kadeeja (V.V. Pookkoya Thangal), Fathima (K.C. Sulaiman Musliyar), Ayisha (Tharammal Muthukoya Thankal) and Ayisha (Karappancheri Mummy Musliyar ).

#### 6. Conclusion

The present study on the role and influence of Musliyar brought out various findings on the development of Vazhikadave Panchayath located in Nilambur Taluk of Malappuram District. The respondents remembered and recognized Musliyar's dedication to Islamic principles and his commitment for education of Islamic community and people of other religion as well. He was having wider vision of reforming the underdeveloped people of Nilambur Taluk. His contributions are brought out five dimensions. They are religion, education, health, charity and tradition. Similar reform leaders are rarely found.

This study brought out the fact of a socio religious leader which was unwritten in the history of Kerala. History of any community is a history of his people. He worked for the development of Muslim community by giving them education and also encouraging the parents to send their children. Further he propagated the reformestic views through his speeches in religious ceremonies. He also advocated for religious harmony. He further influenced through his disease healing skills companied with religious holy power and guiding them to live in a right path. The focus group discussion brought out many facts specifically upon his teachings, charity work, maintaining tradition, establishing educational institutions with the material support of people and healing with less expenditure. Leaders born work and die. It is the duty of the followers to sustain the work of the leaders for evolving many more reformers.

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