

Abdul Wali Khan

(1917 – 2006)

A Biographical Sketch

Abdul Wali Khan (Wali Khan) was born on January 11, 1917 in Utmanzai. He was the second son of the great Pakhtun leader and legendary freedom fighter, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, popularly known as Baacha Khan.

Wali Khan started his early education in Azad Islamia High School Utmanzai (AIHSU), founded by his father in 1921 to educate the Pakhtun children. Baacha Khan practiced what he preached. Wali Khan was the first student of Azad School Utmanzai.

The British Government arrested Baacha Khan on December, 17, 1921 under Section 40 of the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) and was given three years rigorous imprisonment. During his absence, the students of AIHSU played the role of vanguards in the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement (KKM). Since political meetings were banned by the British authorities, KKM activists used to arrange religious meetings in the mosques.

Wali Khan used to recite verses from the Holy Quran followed by a national anthem in the company of Abdul Karim and Sa'adat Khan in the AIHSU.

But during this period the young Wali got an irreparable personal loss. One of his eyes was affected by measles. Baacha Khan was in jail and was very anxious about Wali's health. He wrote many letters to his close relations for to pay attention to Wali's treatment but no one paid heed. At last Wali Khan met his illustrious father in Lahore Jail when he had totally lost sight in one eye. Baacha Khan felt grieved and could not get rid of this grief through out his life.

After his release in 1924, Baacha Khan again started his activities and went on inspection tours of the Azad Schools. During these tours, three students of the AIHSU - Abdul Wali, Abul Karim and Saadat Khan of Turangzai would accompany him, and Wali Khan would open every meeting with recitation from the Holy Quran. All the three students used to sing national songs in chorus, creating nationalist feelings in the audience.

The annual day of the Azad School Utmanzai used to be celebrated with great fervor. On this occasion a "*Tarhi Mushaira*" (gathering of poets) was held and a Pashto drama was also staged. The first 'Mushaira' in the history of Pakhto literature was held in April 1927 at Utmanzai on the eve of the annual day of the Azad School.

On the same occasion the first Pakhto drama entitled "*Dray Yateema*" (Three Orphans) was staged. The drama was written by Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar and was staged by the students of Azad School Utmanzai. Abdul Wali Khan played the role of the elder 'Yateem' (Orphan). The story revolved around the family of a poor peasant who had been sent behind the bars for not paying "*Aabyana*" (a form of land tax). The police raid his house and carry every thing leaving nothing, not even food for the family. The performance of the actors in the drama was so

impressive that in one of its scenes when the younger 'Yateem' starts wailing because of hunger, complained to his elder brother (Wali Khan), "*Lala Za Ogay Yam*" (Brother! I am hungry). In the meantime, an old man rises from among the audience, climbs the stage with tears in his eyes, puts some money in the hand of the elder brother (Wali Khan) and says, "Son! Do not grieve. Buy some food with this money for your younger brother."

On April 23, 1930, Baacha Khan was on his way to Peshawar for attending a meeting of the local chapter of the All India Congress. He was arrested at Nahaqi, a village on the Peshawar Charsadda road. The All-India Congress had decided to start a "civil disobedience movement" on this very day. It was the same black day when the army opened fire on the peaceful protesters in the historic Qissa Khani Bazaar Peshawar, killing hundreds of innocent people.

Baacha Khan was again sentenced to 3 years rigorous imprisonment under the obnoxious Frontier Crimes Regulation. The British Government let loose a reign of terror on the Pakhtuns.

After Baacha Khan's arrest the army besieged the Utmanzai village. The people were terrorized. The office of the Khudai Khidmatgars was set ablaze. The workers present in the office were thrown from its second floor down on the road. They were severely beaten like animals. At that time Wali Khan was also present in the office. A British army officer was going to stab him from the back side with his bayonet when a native soldier, named Sher Khan, came forward and took the bayonet thrust on his own hand. Thus Wali escaped narrowly a certain death and found a new lease of life.

In the meantime, he developed trouble in his other eye also and his doctor stopped him from further studies. Thus, after doing his senior Cambridge in 1933 he came to his village, Utmanzai, leaving his education incomplete.

Baacha Khan was released in 1931 after the Gandhi Irwin Pact. But on December 24, 1931, he was again arrested in Peshawar and was sent to Hazari Bagh jail for 3 years. He was released from the jail in December 1934 but his entry in the Punjab and NWFP was banned. So he went to Wardah and stayed there with Gandhi. But, again, he was arrested for a speech in a function arranged by a Christian society in Bombay. The British Government always treated him discriminately. His children were refused allowance to which he was entitled under the Bengal Regulation III of 1818. At his village the tillers on his land were arrested by the Government and his income from the land was embezzled by others.

As a result Baacha Khan suffered heavy financial loss. His elder son, Ghani, left his education incomplete due to insufficient finances and returned from the U.S.A in 1933. It was during these times that Wali Khan returned from Dera Dhun. He took the management of his landed property and in a short span of time, consolidated his family's financial position. Baacha Khan was very pleased with him and appreciated his management qualities.

In a letter, written on May, 24, 1935 to his elder son, Abdul Ghani Khan, from Sabar Mati Central Jail, Ahmad Abad, Baacha Khan recorded:

"I am sure of the virtues of Wali. You have also written about him to me and other people too are of the same opinion. But I cannot believe in your goodness until other people write to me (that Ghani has

mended his ways) This time the improvement in income is due to Wali's efficient management. No doubt the prices were also high this year. Last year the prices were low but you neither utilized that meager amount of money properly nor you paid back the loans".

Wali was an obedient son and enjoyed complete confidence of his father. In a letter written to Wali on 15.8.1935 from Braili District Jail, Baacha Khan writes to him.

"I always remember you in my prayers. Take care of your health and particularly of your eyes. Always keep a good company and do good deeds. Keep yourself away from bad company and all evils. Keep Lali (Abdul Ali Khan) in your supervision so that he, like Ghani, may not develop the habit of extravagance.

In another letter written from the same jail, on 25.10.1935, Baacha Khan tried to clear some misunderstanding which Ghani had erected about Wali:

"Your apprehensions about Wali are entirely baseless. Very few people will have a brother like Wali. I am aware of the love he has for you. You both had the management of lands for one year each. How you spent the income and in what way he utilized it? He seeks my permission in every matters and acts according to my advice.

POLITICAL CAREER

After the Provincial Assemblies Election in 1937 a new era ushered in the politics of India. The All-India Congress succeeded in forming governments in 8 provinces including NWFP due to its alliance with the Khudai Khidmatgars.

Meanwhile, the World War II broke out in Europe in 1939. The Congress declared that it would help the British government in its war efforts only if it promised to liberate India at the end of the war. But the British government rejected the Congress's demand. Congress started the "Quit India Movement". All the Indians irrespective of any religion or race were asked to participate in the movement and the Indian government servants were called upon to leave their jobs.

Due to this decision a well organized movement was started in NWFP. Khan Abdul Wali Khan started his political career during this movement. At that time due to the absence of his father, he was responsible for his family affairs.

In 1938, when Mr. Gandhi came on a tour of NWFP, Wali Khan had the privilege of driving his car during the entire tour. He took Mr. Gandhi round the whole province. During this visit he got the opportunity to see Gandhi very closely, understand his political philosophy and had long discussions with him.

In this movement Wali visited the entire barren area of Karak in the sizzling heat of summer in the month of *Ramadhan* (Muslims' fasting month). During this tour he went to every village on foot and tried to persuade the people to take part in the movement.

Abdul Wali Khan was arrested, for the first time, in this movement and was sent to Dera Ismail Khan jail in January 1943. In the jail he, once again, had problems with his eye. The jail superintendent called a military doctor for treatment but Wali Khan's condition did not improve.

At last the Governor Sir George Cunningham, unconditionally, released Wali to enable him to dash to Bombay for proper treatment.

In 1945, the “Provincial Parliamentary Board” of the Congress decided to award him (Wali Khan) ticket for the only seat of the Imperial Legislative Council for NWFP. But due to his refusal, the ticket was given to his elder brother Khan Abdul Ghani Khan. In the 1946’s election, he was again given a ticket, but Wali Khan refused and said, “I am a young worker, it is the right of a senior leader”.

Later he was appointed as member of the all India Congress Committee. In 1947, he was elected as Joint Secretary of the Congress in NWFP, and retained both the posts till the partition of India.

However, when Pakistan came into being, Baacha Khan took the oath of allegiance to Pakistan in the Constituent Assembly and addressed the assembly:

“I confess that I was against the division of India. It was my selfless opinion that India should not be divided. But now when it has occurred, our differences and disputes have also vanished. Now all the energies of my friends and mine will only be devoted to the service of our country. I want to make it clear to every one that we want Pakistan to be a truly perfect Islamic state”.

In July 1948 the Khudai Khidmatgar organization was declared an unlawful body. Baacha Khan and his sons, Abdul Ghani Khan and Abdul Wali Khan, former Chief Minister Dr. Khan Sahib and his son Ubaidullah, Amir Muhammad Khan Hoti and Qazi Attaullah Khan were put behind the bars along with thousands of workers.

On 15th June 1948, Abdul Wali Khan was arrested from his house and sent to Haripur jail.

Abdul Wali Khan had to become a special victim, all his property including his living house was confiscated. The police took away everything which they found in his house. Even the perambulator of his infant daughter, named Parveen, was taken and she was thrown on the ground.

On February 14, 1949 his wife died while giving birth to twins. Wali Khan got the sad news of the death of his beloved wife in March 1949. Therefore, he was granted one moth bail on parole. Once the bail period was over he was sent to the notorious Mach jail in Baluchistan. In November 1950, he was sent to Sibbi, another jail of Baluchistan.

In May 1951 he was sent to District jail Quetta and then in May 1952 was moved to Dera Ismail Khan jail. On 14th November, 1953, he was released in the last week of November 1953 from Haripur jail. He had spent exactly 5 years, 5 months and 5 days in the jail.

After his release he married Naseem, the daughter of a very famous Khudai Khidmatgar Amir Mohammad Khan on 22nd November 1954.

Prime Minister, Muhammad Ali Bogra, and latter Sikandar Mirza offered Wali Khan to join the government but he declined.

In 1957, Baacha Khan was released from prison. Wali continued taking some interest in politics yet he disassociated himself from active politics because he felt that in the presence of his father it would be presumptuous on his part to be dabbling in active politics.

After the imposition of martial Law in 1958 Baacha Khan was arrested without any legal justification. During this time Wali Khan, in a social gathering, asked the then foreign minister Manzoor Qadir and the Interior Minister Khalid Sheikh the reason for arresting Baacha Khan. Manzoor Qadir replied: “Baacha Khan is a force. No Government can tolerate another force. Therefore that force must be destroyed”.

On the orders of the Government the workers were beaten and lashed. They were treated like worst criminals. Because of these atrocities several workers and leaders died in jail. Therefore Abdul Wali Khan decided to enter active politics in order to stop the Government from committing atrocities.

Abdul Wali Khan, in the absence of Arbab Sikandar Khan, was elected Provincial President of the National Awami Party (NAP) and the late Afzal Bangash as General Secretary in a meeting of the workers held in Peshawar.

Wali Khan started his campaign by touring the whole province. Public meetings and processions were held through out the province. Due to this forceful campaign the Government was compelled to release all the workers and leaders of the National Awami Party (NAP) and return their forfeited properties. Thus the NAP had the credit of launching the very first movement against a mighty dictator like Ayub Khan and forced him to release its jailed workers.

In 1964 Ayub Khan contacted Abdul Wali Khan and offered him the Chairmanship of P.I.D.C. and then a Ministry in his Cabinet. But Wali Khan repeated his principled stance which he had earlier adopted before Mohammad Ali Bogra and Sikandar Marza. He not only declined the offer but also decided to oppose a dictator like Ayub Khan in the election.

After his election as the President of the NAP, Wali Khan toured both wings of the country. During his visit to East Pakistan he came to know that there was a strong sense of deprivation among them.

During this time, hatred among the masses was on the rise against the Ayub regime. Abdul Wali Khan was arrested on November 13, 1968 and was sent to Sahiwal jail.

Ayub Khan abrogated the 1962 constitution; imposed martial law; and handed over the reins of power to the army Chief, General Yahya Khan on March 25, 1969.

Immediately after assuming power, Yahya Khan announced general elections for a new constituent assembly on the basis of adult franchise.

The nationalist forces of West Pakistan launched a movement against the One Unit Scheme. It was called the “Anti One Unit Front”.

The elections, according to the schedule, were to be held in October 1970.

On March 1, 1971, Yahya Khan had the session of the National Assembly postponed. This decision of Yahya Khan paved the way for a disaster.

The National Awami Party (NAP) had vehemently opposed the military operation in East Pakistan and had stressed for a political solution of the issue. Therefore, on 26th November 1971, Yahya Khan banned NAP. However, Mr. Bhutto after coming to power on December 21, 1971, removed this ban in his first address to the nation⁵⁵.

After the debacle of Dhaka the main task before the nation was the integrity of the rest of the country. When Mr. Bhutto came to power, he identified the problems faced by the nation in his first address and appealed to the political parties for cooperation; Abdul Wali Khan welcomed Bhutto's address and offered unconditional support of his party. Bhutto also reciprocated in a friendly way and invited Wali for talks. Thus an era of cordiality and good will between the NAP and the ruling PPP was ushered in and the former wholeheartedly helped the government in framing the unanimous 1973 constitution. But this friendship proved to be very short-lived as immediately after consolidating his position, Mr. Bhutto by-passed the NAP while appointing the governors of NWFP and Baluchistan. The second cause of the differences between the PPP and the NAP was the activities of Mr. Bhutto, which he carried out to augment the influence of his party in NWFP and Baluchistan. His party lost in these two provinces in the 1970's elections. He dissolved the coalition government of the NAP and JUI in Baluchistan in February, 1973.

After the formation of the UDF the fever in political atmosphere of the country started rising once again. In March 1973 the workers of the PPP fired at the meeting of UDF in Liaquat Bagh, Rawalpindi, in which more than twenty workers of NAP (NWFP) were killed. However, Abdul Wali Khan remained steadfast against the dictatorial rule of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He performed his role as opposition leader in the National Assembly very successfully. He proved himself the best and most adept parliamentarian.

He exposed the political moves of Mr. Bhutto on the floor of the Assembly. Wali Khan declared Bhutto's interior and foreign policies as dangerous for the country and said that Pakistan and Mr. Bhutto could not go together⁶³. He suggested that if Pakistan had to be saved, the PPP should elect someone else as its leader to rule the country.

In response once again a poisonous propaganda against the family of Wali Khan was started in the press and the government controlled electronic media. He was declared as a traitor, an enemy of Islam and an agent of Russia, India, Afghanistan and Iraq simultaneously. Once an American lady journalist, after hearing the speech of the Prime Minister in the National Assembly, met Abdul Wali Khan in the cafeteria and exclaimed: "Mr. Opposition Leader! You are certainly the busiest person of this country because according to the Prime Minister, you are, simultaneously, the agent of several countries".

An official campaign was launched to defame Wali Khan. He was accused as an enemy of Islam, anti-state and a traitor. His personality was targeted with accusations to such an extent that it became difficult for the general public to differentiate between truth and falsehood. But even

then the Bhutto government failed to prosecute Wali Khan in public. Therefore, they started working on the second phase of their plan in order to get rid of Wali Khan and his comrades. According to the plan the government amended the 1962 Political Parties Act and enabled the government to declare any political party unlawful. According to the original text of the Act, if the government considered the existence or activities of any political party unlawful it had to send reference against the party to the supreme court of Pakistan. But the amendment enabled the government first to ban any political organization and then send a reference against it to the court for its confirmation. The only aim of the amendment was that Mr. Bhutto wanted to get rid of the NAP and its leaders as soon as possible.

In the meantime, on February 7, 1975, a federal minister and president of the PPP (NWFP) Hayat Muhammad Khan Sherpao, was killed in a bomb blast while addressing an oath taking ceremony in the History Department of the University of Peshawar.

The Government accused Wali Khan and his comrades for the blast. Therefore, on February 8, 1975 he was arrested while going to attend the funeral of Mr. Sherpao. Many leaders and workers of the NAP were arrested.

On February 10, 1975 the government banned the NAP and declared it an unlawful body. The party's offices were closed, funds frozen and record was seized or destroyed. When the government paralyzed the parliamentary and organizational structure of the party and was ensured that its task had been accomplished, it prepared a detailed reference for the confirmation of its act of banning the NAP and sent it to the Supreme Court in June 1975⁶⁶. Besides other allegations the government, in its reference, alleged that the NAP was an anti-state party and was busy in destroying Pakistan on the instigation of the Afghan government.

A special tribunal was formed to hold trials of high treason cases against Wali Khan and his fifty eight (58) friends inside the Hyderabad jail. This trial is known as "Hyderabad Conspiracy Case", in which Wali Khan was the principal accused. The first formal hearing of the case was held on May 10, 1976. There were 455 witnesses in the case. The government was creating legal complications through its lawyers to prolong the trial proceedings as much as possible. When only twenty-two of the witnesses were brought to the court in eighteen months, Wali Khan appealed to the court:

"My Lord, please arrange "*Aabe-Hayat*" (the alexir of life) for us so that we could live till the completion of the proceedings of this trial. Take it yourself also to enable your honor to write the judgment in this case. After completion of the proceedings, give it to Mr. Bhutto also so that he could live till the decision of the case. Producing only 22 witnesses in two and a half years means that a half century will be required to hear the statements of witnesses of the prosecution and the same number of years will be required for their cross examination."

On July 5, 1977 army under General Zia ul Haq over-threw the government of Bhutto and took control of the government by imposing material law in the country. General Zia ul Haq went to Hyderabad jail and met Wali Khan. He withdrew all the cases against the NAP leaders. Later he set all of them free. In this way Wali Khan was released from jail in December 1977. Wali Khan was released from Hyderabad jail and was brought to Peshawar in a special plane. All the cases

against him were withdrawn. He and his father, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, were declared great patriots.

But when the military government started using delaying tactics and postponed the elections twice, the relations between Wali Khan and General Zia started deteriorating. He started criticizing the government. The government in a bid to win this support even offered Prime Ministership to Wali Khan through a former governor of NWFP, the late General (retired) Fazal Haq. ⁷⁶ But he refused the offer as he never thought of entering the corridors of power through back doors and unconstitutional ways. Wali Khan never preferred personal aspirations and political gains to the larger national interests.

Despite all victimization by the PPP government, Abdul Wali Khan was the first political leader of the country who raised his voice against Zia's government, when the PPP was in trouble and majority of its leaders had left the country or were sent to jails and were the victim of atrocities of the martial law. Wali Khan appealed to all political parties, including the PPP, to work together for the restoration of democracy and people's rights. Therefore, in February 1981 a political alliance called the "Movement for Restoration of Democracy" (MRD) was launched. Abdul Wali Khan was elected as its first convener.

In 1984 Wali Khan was elected president of the National Democratic Party (NDP) in place of Sher Baz Mazari.

In 1986 the country's four nationalist and progressive parties, namely the National Democratic Party (NDP), the Pakistan National Party (PNP), the Mazdoor Kissan Party (Afzal Bangash Group) and the Awami Tehrik merged together and formed the "Awami National Party "(ANP)". Abdul Wali Khan was elected its first president. In 1987 he was once again elected unopposed as its president. The ANP participated in the October 1988 general elections after the accidental death of General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq.

Due to the political far-sightedness of Wali Khan the political status of the ANP did not decrease despite its poor performance in the elections. After the elections he decided to support the PPP in the parliament instead of the Muslim League whose leaders were mostly the product of Zia's Martial Law. In the N.W.F.P. the ANP formed a coalition government with the PPP.

Wali's political far sightedness is beyond question. His approach in politics is realistic and progressive and that is the reason that he enjoyed a distinct and imminent position in the politics of the country since independence.

HIS WORKS

1. *Rikhtia Rikhtia Dee* (Facts are Facts).

This is the first published work of Abdul Wali Khan. In this book the writer has tried to justify the attitude of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the All-India Congress towards the demand of Pakistan. In order to prove that almost the entire leadership of the Muslim League was toeing the line of the British Government, Abdul Wali Khan has taken great pains in presenting documentary

evidence from the records of the India Office Library in London. He has also unveiled the real faces of certain religious leaders and feudal elites of the NWFP and their infamous role during the freedom movement. The book, for the first time, was published in Pashto in Afghanistan by the ministry of Nationalities and Tribal Affairs in 1987. In Pakistan, it was translated into Urdu and was published by Zahid Khan from Rawalpindi in 1988. Later the book was translated into English also by Aziz Siddiqui under the caption “Facts are Sacred” and was published by Jaun Publishers Peshawar. One of its English, translations by Dr. Syeda Saiyidain Hameed, has been published by Vikas Publishing House New Delhi (India) in 1990.

2. *Asal Haqiq Yeh Hain* (These are the Real Facts).

This book was published in Urdu by Shabal Publicatons, Karachi in 1988. It contains the statement prepared by Abdul Wali Khan during his detention in 1975 in response to the reference submitted to the Supreme Court by the Government of the Late Z.A. Bhutto against the National Awami Party. In this statement Wali Khan presents a detailed analysis of the role of his family during the freedom movement and, later on, in the politics of Pakistan; clarifies his position against the malicious propaganda of successive governments in this country; and gives a befitting reply to his political rivals and opponents. The book, at the end, also contains one of his informative and thought provoking interviews taken by a renowned intellectual and journalist, the Late Professor Waris Mir on May 6, 1983, at Wali Bagh Charsadda, for the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt, Lahore. This book is very useful and valuable for those who are interested in the study of Pakistani’s politics.

3. **Baacha Khan Aaw Khudai Khidmatgari** (Baacha Khan and the Service of God):

This book, which is in Pashto, is in three volumes. Among them two have been published [while the last one is yet to see the light of the day] *. The first volume contains a detailed history of the political developments taking place in NWFP, from 1833 to 1947 with particular reference to the All-India politics and global policies of the imperialist British empire.

The writer has thrown a searching light on the valuable contributions of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement in creating political awakening among the Pakhtuns and their marvelous sacrifices in breaking the shackles of slavery. At the end, the book includes the text of the tripartite treaty signed among the British Government, Maharajah Ranjeet Singh of Punjab and Shah Shuja of Afghanistan in 1938.

The second volume of the book has been published in 1995. The book consists of the detail of the oppressive politics of the successive Muslim League Governments towards the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement after the partition, the travails of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, his family and comrades, Baacha Khan’s and Wali Khan’s struggle for the basic rights of the masses and the political conspiracies and ugly game of power which started in Pakistan soon after the partition. The book tells us about the unreasonable and wrong internal and external policies of Pakistani leadership with particular reference to the global political changes, which finally resulted in the

* All volumes have been published and translated into English and Urdu by now (editor’s note).

dismemberment of the country. The writer has unveiled the real faces of certain politicians and the army generals who played an unholy role in this national tragedy just for their lust of power.

Abdul Wali Khan, apart from his busy political life has a fine literary taste and vast knowledge and study of Pakhto literature. In 1943 when he was imprisoned, for the first time during the Quit India Movement, he made a valuable contribution to Pakhto literature by collecting 900 Pakhto '*Tapas*' with the force of his memory. Later, he presented this collection to the Pakhto Academy of the University of Peshawar. This collection, in Wali's own handwriting, can be found even today in the library of the Academy. Ms. Salma Shaheen, Research Associate in the Pakhto Academy, has included these '*Tapas*' in her book '*Rohi Sandarey*' (Pakhto Songs) which was published by the Academy in 1984.

Another contribution of Wali Khan to the Pakhto literature is the discovery of an unknown Pakhto book '*Da PakhtunKhwa Da Sher Har-o-Bahar*', (The Beauty of the Poetry of Pakhtunkhwa) written by James Darmister. Wali Khan had found this book in London, brought it to Pakistan, and presented to the Pakhto Academy University of Peshawar and thus enriched the Pakhto literature with one of its lost and unknown pearls.

***Sareetob* (Humanity):**

Wali Khan, apart from politics and literature, has a vast study of social psychology also. In the book, as captioned above, he has discussed the causes of social changes, its impacts on man's psychology and vice-versa. The book is written in Pashto and is, still, un-published.

CONCLUSION

Abdul Ghaffar Khan was one of the most outstanding personality of the twentieth century. He was among those very few persons who thought of a social revolution; political awakening, national consciousness among his people, and had a dream of liberation from the clutches of the British colonial authority.

To materialize his visions, Abdul Ghaffar Khan formed a reformist organization namely the '*Anjuman Islahul Afaghina*' in the third decade of the 20th century. Later on, this organization was changed into the '*Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*', which came into clash with the British government and, after the partition, with different governments in Pakistan.

His family produced a galaxy of politicians of whom the Pakhtoons can, rightly, be proud. Abdul Wali Khan, his second son, is the most glittering star of this galaxy as he, through his role in the political history of Pakistan, has proved himself a true heir of the political legacy of his great father. Abdul Wali Khan himself, more than once, said that he was proud of the role of his father during the freedom movement of the undivided India.

Wali Khan made his political debut from the platform of the '*Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*' in 1942. He was sent behind the bars, for the first time in 1943, during the Quit India Movement. Later on, he was given the membership of the Provincial Congress Committee and was made

Joint Secretary in the provincial organization of the party. He enjoyed this position till the partition of India.

After the creation of Pakistan, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, his family and followers were subjected to brutal political victimization due to their ideological differences with the Muslim League regarding the fate of the Muslims of undivided India. Abdul Wali Khan was also not an exception. He and political companions were imprisoned under an ordinance, which was issued one week after their arrest. In a country, which had come into existence in the name of Islam, the 'Khudai Khidmatgars' were kept behind the bars without any trial for six years and were denied the right of appeal against their unlawful detention, in any court of Pakistan.

In 1954, Abdul Wali Khan was the first among his comrades who was set free on the orders of the Supreme Court of Pakistan (the Federal Court of Pakistan) after the expiry of the term of his detention.

His subsequent political career is a narrative of constant and consistent struggle for democracy, basic human rights, equal distribution of national resources and against oppression, suppression, obscurantism, exploitation of the masses, dictatorial regimes, ignorance and social, economic and political injustices in the name of Islam.

After the creation of Pakistan, a handful of feudal and capitalists had succeeded in occupying the corridors of political power and in monopolizing the national resources with the collaboration of civil and military bureaucracy. To protect their interests, these classes had conspired to hamper the way of healthy political and democratic development and kept the masses deprived of their basic rights as the citizens of Pakistan.

Abdul Wali Khan, under the leadership of his celebrated father, launched a hectic struggle for the basic rights of the entire oppressed masses of Pakistan including the Pakhtuns, for the establishment of a modern secular democratic system in the country and for an exploitation free economic set up. During this struggle he has been the victim of numerous corporal and financial atrocities. He, time and again, was sent behind bars for long terms or detained in his own house. His properties were confiscated and a heinous propaganda of character assassination was launched against him. He was painted as a traitor, enemy of Islam and Pakistan and a prejudiced and narrow-minded Pukhtoon nationalist. His unbridled criticism of the Punjabi dominated ruling clique was termed as his hatred and prejudice against the Punjabi masses and he was propagated as a champion of separatism. That is why his political influence on the mass level could not transgress the boundaries of the North West Frontier Province. Additionally, attempts were also made to deviate him from his political path by offering him ministries and other lucrative posts by several regimes in Pakistan. But he stood like a rock and never budged from the path he had chosen for himself. The dictatorial regime of General Zia-ul- Haq offered him, twice, the post of Prime Minister of Pakistan but he spurned the offer. Thus, he is one of those politicians who can be numbered on fingers and who rejected the offers of political power in a country where politics is considered a way of gaining wealth and power only.

Wali Khan [was] one of the leading lights of the opposition in Pakistan. He played his role excellently as the leader of the combined opposition in the National Assembly, lower house of parliament in Pakistan, during the Z.A. Bhutto regime in 1970s.

He has been the president of the National Awami Party NAP, the National Democratic Party (NDP), the Awami National Party (ANP) and the first convener of movement of Restoration of Democracy (MRD).

Abdul Wali Khan never transgressed the limits of gentility and moral and human values in politics. His political opponents, often, use objectionable means to defame him and use abusive language against him. But he has never tried to pay them in the same coin as he being a self-disciplined leader knows the way of facing his political rivals in political field.

The art of public speaking is a part and parcel of political life. The popularity and success of a politician depends, to a great extent, on his power of oration. Abdul Wali Khan was a fine public orator. It was always a pleasure to listen to him. He had the knack of keeping large crowds spell-bound for hours with the force of his eloquence. But he neither used his talent in this field to exploit the emotions of his audience for gaining his political objectives, nor he ever tried to incite the people on *gherao jalao –siege and burn-* politics.

Abdul Wali Khan was a democrat in the true sense of the word. He has bravely faced successive dictatorial regimes in Pakistan. For the cause of democracy, he has worked shoulder to shoulder even with his staunchest political rivals and has never let his personal grievances stand in his way. In the presidential election of 1964, he supported Fatima Jinnah who not only was a Muslim Leaguer but her party also included his most notorious political opponent, Khan Abdul Qayum Khan. Similarly in the dictatorial rule of General Zia ul Haq he jointly struggled with the Pakistan Peoples Party from the platform of MRD, forgetting all the travails he had suffered during the days of Z.A. Bhutto.

Wali Khan breathed his last on January 26, 2006. His funeral, according to some observers, was as bigger as his illustrious father's. High-profile State officials, both from the ruling and opposition, foreign dignitaries and hundreds of thousands of Pakhtoons mourned his death across the world. Wali Khan left a legacy of honest politics and sincere public service, which remains the true asset of his people.