

Tribute to Khaksar Leader Hameeduddin Ahmed Al-Mashriqi

By Nasim Yousaf



On January 10, 2010, Hameeduddin Ahmed Al-Mashriqi passed away after suffering a heart attack. His death is a great loss for the Khaksar Tehrik and the entire Pakistani nation.

Hameeduddin Ahmed was the son of Allama Mashriqi and Saeeda Begum (Mashriqi's second wife) and was born on November 16, 1958 in Lahore, Pakistan. He obtained his degree in Electronic Engineering from Mehran University of Engineering & Technology. Ahmed was inspired by his father's lifelong struggle for freedom and tremendous contributions to society; he vowed to carry forward Mashriqi's mission of uplifting poor masses, achieving justice, and uniting people of all provinces.

Following his father's example, Ahmed lived a life of simplicity, inhabiting his father's house in Ichhra (Lahore), wearing basic Khaki attire, and living amongst the masses; although he had the means to do so, Ahmed refused to live a life of luxury when the majority of his fellow countrymen were deprived of even basic necessities.

In 1993, Ahmed entered politics, upon the urging of the Khaksars, and was elected President of the Khaksar Tehrik. Subsequently, the Khaksars refused to accept anyone else as their leader and declared him to be President of the Khaksar Tehrik for life. The Khaksars' loyalty to Ahmed reflects the tremendous respect he enjoyed among his followers. Under his guidance, the Khaksar weekly *Al-Islah* (originally started by Allama Mashriqi in 1934) continued its publication from the Tehrik headquarters in Ichhra, Lahore.

After entering politics, Ahmed remained active on a variety of social and political issues. He led marches, attended conferences, and held meetings with prominent political, military, and religious leaders, mobilizing the public in support of national issues.

In 2005, when a devastating earthquake hit Pakistan-administered Kashmir, Ahmed worked tirelessly to collect donations for the victims. Based on his efforts, many truckloads of supplies - some loaded/unloaded by Ahmed himself - were sent to affected areas. Ahmed also established Khaksar camps in the areas of the catastrophe, traveling there to supervise the rehabilitation process and distribute food and other essentials.

Later, Ahmed led countless Khaksar demonstrations to restore democracy, an independent judiciary, and freedom of the Press in Pakistan; he even went on a hunger strike to put pressure on the authorities. During his struggle, he was imprisoned and sent to Attock and Kot Lakhpat jails. He was also kept under house arrest. His struggle helped to bring about positive change, including the removal of the ban on Geo television transmissions and reinstatement of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry.

During his years in politics, Ahmed arranged or presided over a number of conferences, including conferences to mark Mashriqi's death anniversary. He also organized Khaksar rallies to pay tribute to the Khaksar martyrs of March 19, 1940. On April 11, 2009, Ahmed delivered a keynote address at the "National Peace Conference," attended by leading political and religious figures. And most recently, he and the Khaksars protested the price-hikes in basic consumer products. Ahmed was to lead another Khaksar rally in this regard, when he suffered his fatal heart attack. He died on January 10, 2010.

Throughout his public life, Ahmed worked for the downtrodden and underprivileged. He never hesitated to take to the streets if a national cause so demanded. Along with these efforts, one of Ahmed's great desires was to create an Allama Mashriqi Museum, with a research academy where individuals could learn about Mashriqi's services for the nation. Unfortunately, Ahmed was unable to complete this mission during his lifetime; hopefully, the Government of Pakistan can fulfill his dream by completing this project on a priority basis.

Ahmed's death shocked followers and admirers and condolence messages were received from a number of prominent leaders. The Associated Press of Pakistan reported, "Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of the head of Tehreek-e-Khaksaar, Allama Hameedud din Mashriqi. In a message, the Prime Minister lauded his role in creating political awareness among the masses and conveyed his condolences to the family members of the deceased. He also prayed to Almighty Allah to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss with fortitude." The Pakistan Press International also reported, "The Jamaat e Islami chief Syed Munawar Hasan, former chief Qazi Husain Ahmed and Secretary General Liaquat Baloch and deputy chief Muhammad Aslam Saleemi, have expressed deep grief over the sad demise of the Khaksar Tehrik chief Allama Hamidud din Al-Mashriqi. In a condolence message here, they said that Allama Hamidud din Al Mashriqi, was a noble man and a patriotic politician who had always practiced politics of principles. They prayed that the departed soul may rest in eternal peace."

Other prominent personalities who condoled Ahmed's death include Tehrik-e-Insaaf Chariman Imran Khan, Former President of Pakistan Rafiq Tarar, Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Former Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, Chief Minister (Punjab) Shahbaz Sharif, Former Chief Minister (Punjab) Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, and Justice Nasira Javed Iqbal (daughter-in-law of Allama Iqbal).

Individuals from all walks of life – politicians, civil and military officials, students, workers, laborers, lawyers, and journalists – attended Hameeduddin Ahmed’s funeral on January 12. Jamaat-i-Islami leader Qazi Hussain Ahmad led the prayers. Dignitaries in attendance included Lt. General Hameed Gul, Former Federal Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique, Syed Zaeem Hussain Qadri (MPA), and Hafiz Noman (MPA). Hameeduddin was laid to rest next to his parents in Icchra.

Hameeduddin Ahmed’s ultimate dream was to see Pakistan grow into a strong and prosperous country where justice, equal opportunity, and quality education are available to all citizens and the deep-rooted corruption is eliminated. In his death, the people of Pakistan lost an invaluable spokesman and sincere statesman; his passing leaves a tremendous void that may never be filled.

Hameeduddin Ahmed Al-Mashriqi is survived by his wife, Dr. Hira Al-Mashriqi, two sons, Ahsanullah Aslam and Inayatullah Mateen, and daughter Saeeda Haika.

May God rest his soul in eternal peace.

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<http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2010/01/17/tribute-khaksar-leader-hameeduddin-ahmed-al-mashriqi>
- *News from Bangladesh*, January 18, 2010
<http://newsfrombangladesh.net>
- *Pakistan Link*, January 22, 2010
<http://www.pakistanlink.org>
- *The Frontier Post* (Magazine) January 2010
<http://www.thefrontierpost.com>