

The Founding Father of the  
National Progressive Movement  
**“Weesh Zalmiyan”**  
(Awakened Youth)



Mohammad Rasul Pashtoon

1900 – 1982

Mr. Mohammad Rasul Khan Pashtoon was the son of Haji Khuday Yaar Khan <sup>(1,2)</sup> (the leader and representative of the Barakzai tribes in the Loya Jirga held in 1923), the grandson of the late Allah Yaar Khan (martyred in the battle of Maiwand in 1880), the great grandson of Habibullah Khan and the descendant of “Lo Adey” <sup>(3)</sup> (The Great Mother), Abdul Mansoor Khan Barakzai <sup>(4)</sup> (Mansoor Nika), and Sardar Abdullah Khan known as the “Great Khan.” According to the elders of the respective region, Sardar Abdullah Khan was martyred in the war of Panipat during the reign of Ahmed Shah Baba. Only his head was brought back to Kandahar and buried in the village of Mansoor Ghunday or Mansoor Kalai.

Mr. Mohammad Rasul Pashtoon was born to an esteemed family in September 1900 in the village of Mansoor Ghunday or Mansoor Kalai located 30 kilometers southwest of Kandahar city. He received his primary education from his parents and a number of well-known scholars in Kandahar. He had a deep understanding and knowledge of philosophy, law, the Sharia rules, Islamic studies, and politics. He was well dedicated and a firm believer to the cause of national sovereignty, social justice, true democracy, and constitutional monarchy; and he fought against fables (mythological tales) until the last moments of his life.

Mr. Pashtoon was a great Muslim and had a social and patriotic personality. Based on a recorded interview by Mr. Mohammad Din Zhwak, the late Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan (also known as Bacha Khan) had named Mr. Pashtoon “the pride of Barak.” Mr. Pashtoon was one of the pioneers of the third period constitutionalists’ movement and was the founder of the “Misaq” (A Promise), “Weesh Zalmiyan” (The Awakened Youth) progressive movement circa 1928, and the Afghan Brotherhood movement in 1965. Mr. Pashtoon died at the age of eighty-two on July 04, 1982, and was buried at the cemetery of (Shuhada e-Saliheen) in Kabul. May Allah bless his soul.

According to the writings of the late Pohand Abdul Shakoor Reshad, the following lines are written on the gravestone of Mr. Pashtoon regarding the dates of his birth and death:

"Truly, to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return.  
Here rests, in need of your prayers, Mohammad Rasul Pashtoon  
(The Son of Haji Khuday Yaar Khan Barakzai).

He was born in Kandahar in 1900 and died in Kabul on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of Ramadan, July 04, 1982.

From his early life until his death, he fought against superstitions and struggled for democracy and people’s rights, and for this “crime”  
he suffered a political imprisonment for 11 years (1952 – 1963)  
allahumu ajzih bima sabar janatan waharirana."

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(1) On page 762 of “Afghanistan dar Maseer e-Tarikh” author Mr. Ghubar has written that Haji Khuday Yaar Khan with the assistance of other elders of Kandahar prevented the British conspiracy known as “Kuchnai Shaheed” the (Little Martyred).

(2) During the reign of His Majesty Amir Abdul Rahman Khan, taxes were levied on the lands owned by the Barakzai tribes in the south and southwest of the country. These taxes continued to be collected during the reign of King Amanullah Khan and remained a major issue on the regional level. At that point, the Barakzai elders from Greater Kandahar came together in a meeting and decided to appoint such a representative who not only has tribal influence and prominence but also has fluency in Farsi. They wanted to have their representative convince the government in Kabul to pardon the Barakzai tribes from paying taxes levied on their lands – most of which are dry lands and are not very productive.

At the end of this meeting, the only suitable person for the job was Haji Khuday Yaar Khan (Haji Baba) who was a tribal elder, and he knew Farsi very well; thus, he was appointed. Haji Khuday Yaar Khan left for Kabul and stayed there for several months. After presenting numerous logical reasons and explanations, he convinced the government to exempt the Barakzais’ properties from taxes.

After the death of Haji Khuday Yaar Khan, his highness Amanullah Khan exempted the Barakzai tribes from paying taxes. The property tax exemption for Barakzais continued throughout the reign of King Zahir Shah. This was considered one of the most remarkable achievements of Haji Khuday Yaar Khan for Greater Kandahar.

(3) Lo Adey (the Great Mother) was Wazir Fateh Khan’s mother, Abdul Mansoor Khan’s and Habibullah Khan’s (the great grandfather of Mohammad Rasul Pashtoon) sister, and Sardar Painda Khan’s wife. She is the founder of the Barakzais’ Sultanate in Afghanistan.

(4) Munshi Ata Mohammad Shikarpori in his book “Nawa e-Maarik”, pages 230-238, 849-854, 866-872 has written that Abdul Mansoor Khan Abazai Barakzai was the last Afghan governor of Shikarpor in India until 1825 during the reign of His Majesty Shah Mahmood.

### **Official Duties:**

1. Battalion Commander in a newly formed Brigade called (Insha) during the reign of King Amanullah Khan;
2. District Governor - Arghandab (Qalaat), Nawzad, Shurabak (After Saqawi Revolt), and Khakrez (Kandahar) 1927-1932
3. Governor of Rajestan, Border Commander- Spin Boldak - January 1933 - November 1932
4. Secretary, Pashtoon National Corporation - 1933
5. Commander and Chief of Police- Farah - August 1938
6. Chief of Police- Kandahar - November 1939
7. Delivery Manager- Ministry of Economy- Transportation Director, Construction Department Director, Food Supplies Manager Pul e-Khumri - September 1940 - July 1942
8. Deputy Chief- Technical Department Factory of Jabel Saraj - June 1944
9. Director of Inspection Department- Pul e-Khumri - January 1945
10. Chief of Inspection Department, Director of Afghan Fruit Agency- Kandahar Fruit Corporation, Baluchistan - 1945- 1946
11. Director of National Transportation - January 1950
12. General Manager of Government Monopolies - Feb 1950
13. Manager of Baghlan Province Monopolies - September 1951  
(Political prisoner in Baghlan 1952 - 1963)
14. Manager of Kunduz Province Monopolies - 1964
15. Inspector of the Monopolies Department-Kabul - June 1965
16. Manager of Kunduz Province Monopolies - Dismissed for unknown reason after twenty days of appointment during the premiership of Hashim Maiwandwal. The deputy prime minister Mr. Popal ordered to reappoint Mr. Pashtoon and compensate him for his salary for the dismissal period; however, these orders were not carried out due to Daud Khan's coup d'état of 1973.

### **Political Life:**

According to Mr. Habibi (Mr. Pashtoon's Brother-in-Law), Mr. Pashtoon possessed the idea of a progressive nationalistic movement before the beginning of Saqaab's Revolts. In this regard Mr. Pashtoon, in a note based on his autobiography and which was given to Professor Habibi mentions that: "The roots of my movement existed in Kandahar before 1928. The formation of "Weesh Zalmiyan" (The Awakened Youth) and the declaration of its policy had begun 10 days before the Saqaab revolts at the end of 1928. I presented to my friends the platform of the constitutionalists and the proposal for forming an association, which was accepted by them. My associates included Mohammad Rafiq Khan, Mirza Mohammad Azam Ayazi, Munshi Manzor Mohammad, Principle Mohammad Karim Khan, Awliya Udin Khan, a number of teachers and students, and others. From that group I remember the name of Muslim who is still living in Kandahar."

In 1936, political figure Mohammad Rasul Khan Pashtoon was working with Mr. Mohammad Gul Khan Momand in the northern provinces of Afghanistan. He had started discussing with Ghulam Hassan Khan Safi the idea of a collective movement for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. After a little while, when they met in Peshawar, Mohammad Rasul Khan Pashtoon and Ghulam Hassan Khan Safi both decided to initiate their peaceful political movements for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in Greater Kandahar and in Greater Nangerhar respectively. Nonetheless, in 1945 the intelligentsia of Kandahar and Nangerhar both reached an agreement that they would start their peaceful political movement in their respective regions, intellectually and practically, in order to assert democracy and constitutional monarchy.

In 1946 the tyrannical and oppressive period of Prime Minister Mohammad Hashim Khan came to an end with his resignation from office. His brother, Defense Minister Shah Mahmood Khan was appointed to his post. Prime Minister Shah Mahmood Khan fearing the threat of a possible revolt and general uprising by the Afghan people against a totalitarian and autocratic regime, changed his course of action in internal affairs. As a result, in order to illustrate his sympathy with the Afghan people, he released many political prisoners. Meanwhile, he spread the rumors of a phony democracy on the one hand, and made promises to carry out a series of reforms on the other. He accepted allowing free publications and launching free elections for the second term of the parliament and municipalities.

Therefore, in 1947 The Awakened Youths <sup>(5)</sup>, considering their historical mission and national responsibility, acquired the opinions of contemporary scholars and intellectuals. Thus, forty-three scholars – intellectuals, members of think-tanks, and writers – expressed their opinions about The Awakened Youths as such: "The Awakened Youths are the pioneers of the collective national and social movement, and the demonstrators of Afghan might; therefore, it is their duty and responsibility to enter into the arena of political competition of the social life immediately."

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(5) Tarikh Nawin e-Afghanistan (New History of Afghanistan) Author, Youwed Gankofiski and Moscow Mosel, Translation by Dr. Usman Ibrahim, Dr. Qurban Babayuf, and Jumrad Jamshid, Department of Latest History of Afghanistan, Faculty of History and Philosophy, Kabul University, Published in the University Press, June 1986:

"... Dissemination of ideas that reflected the interests of the middle strata, led in 1947 to the emergence of the political organization "Vish Zalmiyan" (Awakened Youth). It was quite colorful in its social composition movement. The number of participants did not exceed 100 persons. In its ranks were the petty bourgeoisie, the bureaucracy, the intelligentsia, and the clergy. At the head was a small landowner from Kandahar Muhammad Rasul Khan Pashtun."

As a result, Mr. Mohammad Rasul Khan Pashtoon along with other awakened youths explicitly and within a rational and logical framework started their peaceful collective movement for the establishment of democracy and constitutional monarchy. This political figure was the most powerful and determined founder of The Awakened Youth's Political Party. It was his indomitable fact or unconquerable soul that made him suffer from political imprisonment for eleven years and eight months.

A true and patriotic son of Afghanistan, Mr. Mohammad Daud Momand had once submitted an article to a publication called Aiena e-Afghanistan (The Mirror of Afghanistan), published in the United States. The article was titled "The Leader of the Third Period Constitutionalists, Mohammad Rasul Pashtoon." In this article Mr. Momand had stated that: "Mr. Pashtoon personally despised acquiring power and fame. Pashtoon had told one of his friends from the time of their struggle, the late ... who had later gotten to the position of ambassador and minister: "...you don't even have one degree, but I have twenty (Mr. Pashtoon pointed to his numerous resignation letters); 'you live in palaces but I live the life of a nomad; you... but I don't even get my retirement; you are capricious, but I have never diverted from my principles, and I will die with these principles..."

### **Notable Work:**

The national and social activist Mr. Mohammad Rasul Khan Pashtoon spent the major part of his life in conducting political activities and/or in prisons. Although he had a great deal of enthusiasm for knowledge and education, Mr. Pashtoon did not have adequate time for writing. The following are Mr. Pashtoon's writings and anthologies:

- Brief history of Weesh Zalmyan (The Awakened Youths), unpublished
- Translation of Abu Shakoor Salimi's book of Faith into Dari, unpublished
- "Andesha ha" Thoughts (philosophical, social, and complimentary essays), unpublished
- Brief history of the world, unpublished
- Summaries in six volumes, unpublished
- The booklet of Women's Movement in the Amani Period
- "My Thoughts and Ruminations" or "My Melancholia\*" unpublished. A book which illuminates Mr. Pashtoon's philosophical thoughts. The book was a critically pre-publication acclaimed work, which was withdrawn from the publication queue by the Head of the Government Publication House, without explanation. The manuscript of the book got "lost", when days after Mr. Pashtoon's passing, the KHAD goons in a 2 a.m. dreaded knock on the door carted away all his papers, notes, and the manuscript of a precious, well critiqued book, Zma Malikholiya, a compendium of his philosophical thoughts. Mr. Pashtoon who was an avid reader, would take notes about his readings, and write his commentaries, critiques and thoughts in custom made small notebooks. A large collection of these gathered through the years notebooks, which had approximately 300-400 pages (3 x 5") in size, also carted away by the KHAD.
- A great number of essays, articles, and poems were printed and published in the magazine Kabul, the gazettes of Angar, Tolo Afghan, Karwan, Afghan Milat and others.

Mr. Pashtoon was a patriotic fighter for national liberation, and for this reason, he suffered imprisonment and deprivations for the purpose of reaching his national goals and always held a firm and solid position about his principles. Mr. Pashtoon was a patriotic fighter for national liberation, and for this reason, he suffered imprisonment and deprivations for the purpose of reaching his national goals and always held a firm and solid position about his principles. Mr. Pashtoon sometimes offered a number of great poems, too. He was a very precocious child with superb memory. Under the wise tutelage of his well-educated mother, he had memorized some five thousand couplets in both Dari and Pashto by age 5-6. He was so good in reciting these poems that he would be brought to the "court" of the then Kandahar governor, Sardar Mohammad Osman Mashrique, who was a good poet in his own right. He continued his home education under his parents' guidance. Later he would continue his education with local famous scholars, getting exposure to Sharia, as well as Moslem scholar thoughts through the ages, and would also memorize The Quran.

*\* In regional usage, this expression is referred to the state of mind defined as: a passion and severe enthusiasm toward a mental and/or physical activity.*



**Mr. Mohammad Rasul Pashtoon  
Baghlan Prison-1961**



Kabul - 1950 Weesh Zalmyans' protest rally showing support for Ghulam Hassan Khan Safi.  
 We sincerely thank the Respected Ulomi Family for sharing this historical photograph with us.



Mr. Pashtoon, Commander and Chief of Police- Farah - August 1938