



**THE FRAGRANCE  
OF EAST**

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Post Box No. 93  
Nadwatul Ulama  
Tagore Marg  
Lucknow – 226 007  
U.P. (INDIA)

Ph. No. : 0522 - 2740406 E-mail: [fragranceofeast1998@gmail.com](mailto:fragranceofeast1998@gmail.com)

Fax : (0522) 2741221 E-mail: [nadwa@bsnl.in](mailto:nadwa@bsnl.in)

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# The Fragrance of East

**Founder:**

**Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (RAH)**

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## Prophetic Call and Reformatory Movements

**S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi**

There are also revivalist and reformatory movement which expound the concept of Hereafter, its underlying wisdom, the benefits flowing from it and the invaluable contribution of the concept in establishing a stable society imbued with the sense of moral responsibility, but, evidently, the philosophy of after-life employed by them only as a means of educating the people and impressing upon them the spiritual-moral view of life preached by Islam. There is no denying the fact that their endeavour is praiseworthy, for one cannot have a congenial, orderly and ethical society without inculcating the belief in the Hereafter. At the same time, however, the method adopted by these movements is quite different from the way of thought, procedure of reform and the behaviour and deportment of the prophets and their followers. The methodology of reform evolved by the apostles, of God is inspired by an unflinching faith and sincere conviction, a heart-left sentience and fervid enthusiasm: it is a living faith which encompasses the entire being of the believer. The reformist movements on the other hand, are simply an external, outward expression of these deep-seated emotions of faith. The discourses of the former on sequel and life-after-death are marked by their instinctive conviction, glowing ardor, passionate eagerness, impressive earnestness and delicious ecstasy while the latter promote the idea as an expedient to social and moral reform of their people in order to build up a coherent, stable and ethical society. The difference between logical disputations and the secret springs of conviction, and the results achieved by the two, are too well known to be discussed here to explain the difference between the two. ■

**CONTENTS**

1- Influence of Muslims on Indian Civilisation	- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi	7
2- The Prophet's (SAW) Arrival in Madinah	- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi	16
3- 5G Cell Phone Radiation: Note of Caution	- Claire Edwards	21
4- How Islam Came to New Zealand	- Syed Kazim	23
5- Jerusalem, A City of Contested Histories	- Seema Alavi	25
6- Don't Sing in Philibhit	- Tahir Mahmood	27
7- The Globalization of War: America's 'Long War' Against Humanity	- Michel Chossudovsky	29
8- In Defence of Indian Secularism	- Yamini Aiyar	35
9- Restore Democratic Values and Secular Spirit of the Constitution	- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi	37
10- Human Origin Not Linked To Apes	- Maggie Fox	39

### ***Wisdom of Qur'an***

**“(Adhere to the True Faith and) turn to Him, and establish Prayer, and do not be of those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity.”**

*(Al Qur'an – 30-31)*

“To turn to God means anyone who opts to act independently of God's directives and thus deviates from the path prescribed for him by God, or whoever betrays God by accepting to serve aught apart from the One True God, should give up that attitude and revert to serving God Whose born servant he is.

Man should dread the punishment which he will incur by acting independently of, or worshipping others besides God, despite the fact that it is God Who brought him into being. Man should, therefore, shun all attitudes that lead to God's wrath.

Turning to God and holding His wrath in awe are acts of the heart. In order that this state of heart might become manifest and be reinforced, one needs to engage in physical acts which indicate that one has truly returned to the service and worship of the One True God, One Who has no associates in His Divinity. The regular performance of these acts helps develop in man the state of returning to and fearing God. This is why God asks him to engage in the establishment of Prayer.

The performance of the five daily Prayers at their stated times is the most effective means to develop God-consciousness and God-fearing. Thus man rehearses over and over again the Qur'an's teaching that man should believe in God and submit to Him in his day-to-day life. ■

### ***Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)***

Abu Hurairah relates that Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said: **“A person who calls people towards doing good deed will get the same reward as those who follow him and do good; and nothing will be diminished from the requital of the latter. Similarly, those who call the people towards vice will have the same punishment as those who follow him without any diminution in the punishment of the perpetrators.”**

*(Sahih Muslim)*

This hadith gives good tidings to one who invites people to virtue, and warns a person against inviting his fellow beings to vice. Calling people towards doing good deeds is in itself a virtuous act. It wins the pleasure of God. Contrary to it, the act of inviting people to some evil is in itself a vicious act. It earns the Divine wrath.

God can give reward and likewise award punishment, here on earth and in the hereafter as well, to whom He wills. But this does not mean that His judgement is baseless. He knows perfectly well the deeds done by His servants as well as the intention working behind the commission of the deeds. Hence His judgement is based on human actions. He however can forgive whomsoever He wills.

This hadith encourages Muslims to call people towards doing good deeds because it will yield to him the same reward as those who in response to his call do good deeds. Similarly, it forbids them to invite people to do evil because it is a sin and earns the same punishment. ■

*Editor's Note* 

## Remembering Ali Miyan

On 20<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of late Syed Abul Hasan Nadwi aka Ali Miyan (RAH) we reminisce his life and time.

The passing away of Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi Rahmat-ullah-alaih is a great loss not only to India but to all those countries where he was admired and revered as a great scholar. Maulana's end came when he was reciting the verses of the holy Qur'an. As a scholar of Arabic he had a deep knowledge of the holy book. As a historian and theologian he knew the references and context of each and every 'surah'. He was so deeply involved in following the Qur'anic instructions that he not only spent each and every moment living his own life in accordance with the spirit of Islam, but tried his best to make others also understand the message of Allah as interpreted and practiced by Prophet Mohammad (May peace be upon him).

We feel no hesitation in saying that the Maulana was an ardent Muslim, an emblem to Islamic Culture and a rigid follower of Islam. Yet, he can never be accused of nurturing bias against anyone. This is because of his broad vision that derived from the Qur'anic dictate: "To thee your way, and to me mine". Love for his country, its prosperity and well-being always remained central to his concerns. Through his movement of "Payame-Insaniyat" (message of Humanity) he tried his best to bring people of different faiths on one platform. He worked hard to instill confidence, particularly amongst Indian Muslims, and encouraged brotherhood not only between different sects of Muslims but also with their non-Muslim fellow countrymen. Maulana's doors always remained open for all. He believed in listening to others and making others listen to him. He never believed in living a secluded life. His mission had always been 'Dawah' and spreading love, peace and amity.

As an eminent scholar and widely travelled historian he was quite aware of the tremendous achievements that the world had made in the field of science and technology. The revolutionary developments in the electronic field were also considered by him as heavenly blessings to mankind. It was at his initiative that Darul uloom Nadwatul Ulema, introduced computer courses in its syllabus. Internet and e-mail facilities were also acquired.

The late Maulana realised the importance of media in the modern world and emphasised that Nadwa too must establish and develop a well-equipped media centre. It was his constant encouragement that resulted in the creation of a Media Research Centre under the department of Journalism and Publicity in Nadwa. The English magazine "The Fragrance of the East" is in fact the outcome of a long cherished desire of the Maulana to create a forum for transmission of knowledge in Islamic affairs internationally. He was happy and delighted each time the latest issue of the "Fragrance" was presented to him. The editor had his last audience with Maulana on December 27, 1999 just before the 'Iftar' of the Ramadhan fast. This was four days before his demise. His parting words were: "Isko jari rakhiye" [Carry on its (Fragrance) publication). May God give strength and enable us to fulfil his desire.

Maulana through his "Payame Insaniyat" (message of humanity) campaign travelled throughout the country and tried to bring different communities particularly Muslims and Hindus together. He spread messages of love affection and brotherhood among different communities. Incidentally his last public statement issued a day before he died was the condemnation of the hijacking of IC 814 flight. He termed the act inhuman and un-Islamic. ■

**S.A.**

We solicit articles for publication in The Fragrance of East. Suitable remuneration will be paid to writers. We prefer receipt of articles on:  
e-mail: shariq\_alavi@yahoo.com  
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## Influence of Muslims on Indian Civilisation

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

### Muslim Saints and Preachers

Muslims came to India, sometimes, supremely unconcerned with worldly aims and ambitions and guided solely by the lofty sentiment of religious service. They brought with them the Islamic message of equity and social justice in order to show to men thirsting for light and freedom in a dark, narrow world the way to break their shackles and avail themselves of the priceless bounties of nature that were lying scattered all over God's wide earth. The best instances of these dedicated, high-souled preachers are offered by the lives of the devoted servants of Islam under whose benign shadow thousands of oppressed members of the Indian society not only found shelter but also began to live with them as their own, beloved kinsmen. The names of Hazrat Ali Hujweri, Khwaja Moinuddin Ajmeri and Syed Ali bin Shahab Hamadani Kashmiri are richly representative of this holy order of men.

### Rulers and Conquerors

And, sometimes, they came as warriors and conquerors and deep-hearted rulers, such as, Mahmud Ghaznavi, Mohammad Ghorri and Zahiruddin Babar. These men of courage and ambition laid the foundations of a magnificent Empire that continued to prosper for a long time and carried the country to glorious heights or progress

and prosperity.

### Permanent Settlement and Spirit of Service

But, whatever the capacity they came in, the Muslims always treated India as their home. Their belief was that the earth belonged to God and He gave it in the supervision and keeping of whom He pleased. They considered themselves to be the divinely appointed trustees of His land and the servants of His people. "Every country is our country for it is the country of our Lord" was their motto.

The Muslims, as such, unfailingly regarded India as their own country of permanent abode from which they could never turn their eyes away. They ungrudgingly gave of their best mental, physical and spiritual resources, their choicest natural abilities and talents, in its service, thinking that the contribution they would make to its development and prosperity would ultimately be to their own advantage, for was not their future tied up inseparably with it? The attitude of Muslim settlers towards India, thus, was radically different from that of the British and other foreign imperialistic Powers that came to hold sway over the land, or parts of it, at a later stage of its history. The object of the Western imperialists here was simply to make hay while the sun shone. They treated India like a cow which had come into their hands for a few days, and were eager to milk it as thoroughly as they could.

The devotion with which the Muslims strove for the advancement and prosperity of India can be understood only in this context.

### **Cultural Isolation of India**

When the Muslims had set their feet on the Indian soil, there were here the ancient sciences and philosophy and an abundance of food and the raw materials, but, culturally, India had lapsed into isolation from the civilised world for a long time. The mighty mountains on the north and the sea on the other three sides of it had prevented it from having a regular intercourse with the world that lay beyond its frontiers. The last foreign invader to visit India before the Muslims was Alexander the Great. During the period intervening between these two events India had remained severely cut off from the outside world. There had been no exchange of knowledge with the foreign countries. No new idea, no fresh cultural impetus had reached it from abroad, nor had it been able to send out anything from its own ancient fund of wisdom.

### **Contact With the Outside World**

It was at a time like this that the Muslims made their debut on the Indian stage. They were, in those in the East. They brought with them to India a new, practical and highly rationalistic religion, mature knowledge, a progressive culture and an evolved civilisation which included within it all that was best in the cultural stock of many nations—it represented a synthesis of the natural wholesomeness

of the Arab disposition, the dainty refinement of the Iranians and the rugged simplicity of the Turks. Besides, they brought many other priceless gifts and virtues.

### **Concept of Divine Unity**

The most valuable of these gifts was the sovereign and unalloyed Islamic concept of Divinity, which, at one stroke, dispensed with all intermediaries between man and the Maker in respect of prayer and supplication. There is emphatically no place in the Islamic creed for beliefs like Polytheism, incarnation of God and 'the merging of man in the Almighty and becoming one with Him.' Islam declares, plainly and once for all, the Sovereignty and Absolute Oneness of the Divine—One and Everlasting—Who begetteth not, nor is He begotten, and nor does He take partners in the discharge of the functions of Divinity—the creation, the sustenance, the management and the ownership of the universe lie in His hands alone. It was but natural for a belief like this to make a powerful impact on the Indian mind, out of touch as-it had been with pure monotheistic doctrine for hundreds of years. Says K. M. Panikkar of this impact:

“One thing is clear. Islam had a profound effect on Hinduism during this period. Medieval theism is in some ways a reply to the attack of Islam; and the doctrines of medieval teachers by whatever names their gods are known are essentially theistic. It is the one supreme God that is the object of the devotee's adoration and it is to His

grace that we are asked to look for redemption”.

### **Equality and Brotherhood**

Socially, a most epoch-making change was brought about by the Islamic notion of human equality and brotherhood. There was no division of society into permanent classes and no such community as the untouchables among the Muslims. Their belief was that no one was born unclean into the world nor predeterminedly ignorant and debarred by the very fact of his birth in a certain class from the acquirement of knowledge. No trade or occupation was reserved for any particular section of humanity. On the other hand, they fraternised freely with each-other at all levels, the -rich strove with the poor in the pursuit of learning and there was freedom of profession for all. The idea of brotherhood was for the Indian mind and the Indian society a novel experience and a call to renewed thinking which did a lot of good to the country. The bonds of the then existing class-ridden society were relaxed to a considerable extent and thus was witnessed a widespread recoil from the excessive rigidity of the caste-system. The advent of Islam acted as a challenge to social reformers in other fields also. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has offered the following comments on the uplifting influence exerted by Islam and Muslims on the Indian social structure:

“The impact of the invaders from the north west and of Islam on India had been considerable. It had pointed out

and shone up the abuses that had crept into Hindu society—the petrification of caste, untouchability, exclusiveness carried to fantastic lengths. The idea of the brotherhood of Islam and the theoretical equality of its adherents made a powerful appeal especially to those in the Hindu fold who were denied any semblance of equal treatment”.

“Islam’s democratic challenge” to quote another writer of repute, “ has perhaps never been equaled by any other religious or social system. Its advent on the Indian scene was marked by a profound stirring of consciousness. It modified the basis of Hindu social structure throughout northern India”.

### **Rights of Women and Other Social Reforms**

Then there was the recognition of the dignity of women and of their rights as respectable members of the family and life-partners of men. The significance of the rights bestowed by Islam on the softer sex in a country where widows of noble families used to immolate themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands, since in the eyes of society, as well as in their own eyes, they forfeited the right to live with the death of their husbands, does not stand in need of an elaboration. We may, however, reproduce the under-mentioned lines from Burnier’s travel accounts to show what infinite pains did the Muslims take, for instance, for the suppression of the custom of Sutti from the earliest days of their rule.

“..... the number of victims is less now than formerly; the Mahometans, by whom the country is governed, doing all in their power to suppress the barbarous custom. They do not, indeed, forbid it by a positive law, because it is a part of their policy to leave the idolatrous population which is so much more numerous than their own, in the free exercise of its religion; but the practice is checked by indirect means. No woman can sacrifice herself without permission from the governor of the province in which she resides, and he never grants it until he shall have ascertained that she is not to be turned aside from her purpose; to accomplish this desirable end the governor reasons with the widow and makes her enticing promises; after which, if these methods fail, She sometimes sends her among his women, that the effect of their remonstrance’s may be tried. Notwithstanding these obstacles, the number of self-immolations particularly in the territories of the Rajas, where no Mahometan governors are appointed”.

### **Writing of History**

The Muslims also introduced several modern branches of learning, a most important of which was history. Till then, the writing of history was almost an unknown art in India, there being hardly anything to speak of in the line save religious treatises and a few epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The

Muslims produced a whole library of historical works that could compare favourably in authenticity and comprehensiveness with the endeavours made in this branch in any other country. A glance through Maulana Syed Abdul Hai’s monumental book in Arabic, Es-Saqafat-ul-Islamia-Fil-Hind (Islamic Culture in India), will indicate what tremendous efforts were made by Muslims for the compilation of the history of India. To quote Dr. Gustave le Bon :

“There does not exist a history of ancient India. Their books contain no historical data whatever, except for a few religious books in which historical information is buried under a heap of parables and folk-lore, and their buildings and other monuments also do nothing to fill the void for the oldest among them do not go beyond the third century B.C. To discover facts about India of the ancient times is as difficult a task as the discovery of the island of Atlantis, which, according to Plato, was destroyed due to the changes of the earth”.

The writer, after admitting that the epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata, do shed some light on the conditions obtaining during those days, goes on to add that, “The historical phase of India began with the Muslim invasion. Muslims were India’s first historians”.

### **New Techniques**

Liberality of the mind, originality of thought and new techniques of poetry and literature were taught to the Indians by

Muslims. A new angle of vision and a new horizon of thought could not be possible without intellectual and literary integration. To the credit of Muslims also goes the birth of a most beautiful, living, growing and expanding language which became the medium of intercourse among people of the various parts of the country and an excellent vehicle of literary expression. By it, I mean Urdu whose richness and elegance beg no description.

### **Cultural Revolution**

The impress of Muslims is most prominent in the spheres of culture, social manners and general mode of living. The Muslims revolutionised the pattern of life in the country and gave it a new form which was entirely different from what was known here formerly, just as the design of life in modern Europe is totally dissimilar to what prevailed there in the Middle Ages.

### **Babar's Account**

In order to appreciate adequately the extent and value of Muslim influence on the Indian culture it is necessary to obtain some idea of the picture India presented before the arrival of Islam and the Muslims. Babar, fortunately, has left behind a vivid description of cultural decadence that was evident on all sides, and this makes the task of judging the worth and merit of Muslim contribution easy. It may, however, be borne in mind here that Muslims had begun their development activities in India quite a long time before the coming of the Mughals. Writes Babar in his memoirs, *Tuzuk-i-Babari* :

“There are neither good horses in India, nor good flesh, nor grapes, nor melons, nor ice, nor cold water, nor baths, nor candle, nor candlestick, nor torch. In the place of the candle, they use the divat. It rests on three legs: a small iron piece resembling the snout of a lamp is fixed to the top end of one leg and a weak wick to that of another ; the hollowed rind of a gourd is held in the right hand from which a thin stream of oil is poured through a narrow hole. Even in case of Rajas and Maharajas, the attendants stand holding the clumsy divat in their hands when they are in need of a light in the night.

There is no arrangement for running water in gardens and buildings. The buildings lack beauty, symmetry, ventilation and neatness. Commonly, the people walk bare footed with a narrow slip tied round the loins. Women wear a dress consisting of piece of cloth, half of which is wrapped round the legs while the other half is thrown over the head”.

Commenting on Babar's observations on the cultural insolvency and backwardness of India, Jawaharlal Nehru has said:

“..... his account tells us of the cultural poverty that had descended on North India. Partly this was due to Timur's destruction, partly due to the exodus of many learned men and artists and noted craftsmen to the South. But this was due also to the drying up of the creative genius of the Indian people.

Babar says that there was no lack of skilled workers and artisans, but there was no ingenuity or skill in mechanical invention”.

### **Development of Fruit**

In spite of the fertility of its soil, few fruits were found in India and those too were of a poor quality. Most of them were grown wild. People did not take enough interest in the development of horticulture. The Mughals, on the other hand, were possessed of a refined taste and there was a great abundance of fruit in their native land. Fruit-cultivation, accordingly, made a rapid progress in India with their coming. Details of it can be found in the famous memoirs of Emperors Babar and Jehangir—Tuzuk-i-Babari and Tuzuk-i-Jehangiri respectively. The Mughals developed several new and delicious varieties of fruits by making extensive experiments in grafting. The mango is a well-known Indian fruit, but, before the arrival of the Mughals, only one variety of it, the seed-variety (Tukhmi) was in existence. It was the Mughals who developed the beautiful, luscious grafted mangoes. This step, in course of time, led to the introduction of numerous varieties of the fruit.

### **Agriculture, Trade and Industry**

The same was the case with textile. Dresses in India were generally made from rough, coarse, cloth. A number of textile factories were set up in Gujarat by Sultan Mahmud Shah, better known as Mahmud Baigrah (died, 1511) where cloth-

weaving, dyeing, printing and design laying were undertaken. He also established industrial centres for stone and ivory carving and paper-making. Gifted as he was with an advanced, constructive mind, the Sultan had succeeded in arousing a rare enthusiasm for progress in trade, industry and agriculture among his subjects. Maulana Syed Abdul Hai says,

“Among the outstanding works of the Sultan for the development of the country were included the construction of mosques, schools and the planting of fruit-bearing trees and orchards. He aroused the people magnificently for these tasks. He also built wells and canals for irrigation. Skilled artisans and craftsmen came to him from Iran and Turkestan and set up their crafts and industries in his kingdom. As a result, Gujarat had become a rich, fertile stretch of greenery with flourishing gardens, dense groves and delicious fruit, as well as an important trading centre which exported cloth to foreign lands. This was due entirely to the ceaseless efforts of Sultan Mahmud and the keen interest he took in the welfare of his people”.

### **Reforms of Akbar and Sher Shah**

Cloth-weaving factories were established also during the reign of Akbar. That great Mughal emperor also introduced many valuable agrarian reforms appertaining to the measurement of land, and the assessment and collection of land revenue. The improvements made by Sher Shah and

Akbar in the field of finance, specially in coinage and currency, had not been heard of in India before. Sher Shah had a unique gift for legislation and administrative organization. In fact, it was his example which Akbar followed later.

### **Public Utility Works**

Muslim rulers also achieved great success in the training of animals and the improvement of livestock. We can obtain an elaborate idea of the good work done by them in these directions from historical records like Tuzuk-i-Jehangiri and Ain-i-Akbari. They built numerous hospitals, poor-houses, public parks and gardens, and tanks and canals. Maulana Syed Abdul Hai has furnished, in his unique work, Jannat-ul-Mashriq, a long list of hospitals and other benevolent and public welfare institutions set up and development projects undertaken in India during the so-called Muslim period.

All the huge highways that connect the western parts of the sub-continent with its eastern parts were given to it by Muslim kings and emperors. The most important of them is the one built by Sher Shah. It is 3,000 miles (or 4,832 Kilometers) long, and runs from Nilab in Sind to Sonargaon in what is now Eastern Pakistan. At every second mile of the road there was a caravansarai with separate charitable grub houses for Hindu and Muslim travellers and a mosque. The Muezzin, Imam and Hafiz for the mosque were appointed by the State. A pair of speedy horses were stationed at each

caravansarai to carry the mail so that letters and messages could be sent regularly from Nilab to the distant borders of Bengal. Fruit-bearing trees were planted on either side of the road whose fruit and shade were a great boon to the travellers.

### **Cleaner and Better Mode of Living**

Over and above all this, the Muslims acquainted the original inhabitants of India, with a cleaner and better mode of living. They taught them the refinements and luxuries of taste and food and drink. They taught them the principles of hygiene and sanitation, the advantage of building airy houses and the use of cups and other vessels of food. Till then the Indians used to take their meals, even at large feasts, from leaves of trees, a custom which is still prevalent at some places. The Muslims, brief, brought about a big change in Indian social customs, living habits, domestic comforts and home-decoration. They ushered in a new style in architecture, which, in the delicacy of its design, grace, symmetry and dignity, was distinguished from what traditionally obtained here. The Taj offers a classical instance of the new Mohammedan architecture. In the words of Pandit Nehru:

“The coming of Islam and of a considerable number of people from outside with different ways of living and thought, affected these beliefs and structure. A foreign conquest, with all its evils, has one advantage: it widens the mental horizon of the people and compels them to look out of their shells.

They realise that the world is a much bigger and a more variegated place than they had imagined. So the Afghan conquest had affected India and many changes had taken place. Even more so the Moghals, who were far more cultured and advanced in the ways of living than the Afghans, brought changes to India. In particular, they introduced the refinements for which Iran was famous. . “

The same view was expressed by Dr. Pattabhi Sitacamayya in his Presidential Address to the Fifty-fifth Session of the Congress held at Jaipur in 1948. He said that the Muslims had “enriched our culture, strengthened our administration, and brought near distant parts of the country ..... It (the Muslim Period) touched deeply the social life and the literature of the land “.

### **Medicine**

The Muslims, moreover, brought to India a new system of medicine—the Unani system—which, before the dawn of modern medicine, was universally recognised as the most advanced and scientific system for the treatment of diseases. At their hey-day the countries of Iraq, Iran and Turkestan were the most important centres of the Unani system of medicine in the world, and it was there that its greatest exponents and practitioners were born during the medieval age. After the establishment of Muslim power in India, and encouraged by the generous patronage the Muslim rulers extended to men of learning and ability, a steady stream

of outstanding masters of the system poured into the country for a period stretching over five hundred years. Due to the priceless services rendered by these worthy men and their pupils—their spirit of dedication and high proficiency—the Unani system touched its peak in India. The indigenous systems faded into insignificance before the progress it made. No city or town was left without a practitioner of the Unani school. This system was cheap, simple, and in harmony with the Indian climatic and temperamental conditions. So it spread in India very quickly and did a wonderful service to the people, composed as they were mainly of the poorer classes. The Indian physicians, by their contribution, lent further glory to it. During the declining phase of Muslim rule, Delhi and Lucknow were its two major strongholds and now India remains the only country where this system is still in vogue.

### **Ten Gifts of Muslims**

The noted historian, Sir Jadunath Sircar, has, in a paper entitled, ‘ Islam in India ‘, enumerated ten gifts, which, according to him, the Muslims conferred on India. Some of these we have already discussed in this chapter ; the rest are as follows : (i) the establishment of contact with the outside world ; (ii) political unity and uniformity of culture and dress specially in the upper classes ; (iii) a common official language and an easy, simple style of prose in the evolution of which both the Hindus and Muslims have taken part ; (iv) the promotion of regional

languages under the aegis of the Central Government so that there may ensue general peace and contentment and equal opportunities for literary and cultural advancement may be made available to all ; (v) the revival of maritime trade which was originally in the hands of the people of South but had been lying suspended for a long time ; and (vi) the formation of the Indian navy.

### **Material and Spiritual Achievements**

Speaking of the material and spiritual achievements of Muslims in India, W. W. Hunter, a noted anti-Muslim writer, has observed that: "The Musalmans led several of these great land reclamation colonies to the southward, and have left their names in the Eastern Bengal as the first dividers of the water from the land. The sportsman comes across their dykes, and metaled roads, and mosques, and tanks, and tombs in the loneliest recesses of the jungle ; and wherever they went, they spread their faith, chiefly by a bold appeal to the two great instincts of the popular heart. The Hindus had never admitted the amphibious population of the Delta within the pale of their community. The Muhammadens offered the plenary privileges of Islam to Brahman and outcaste alike. ' Down on your knees, every one of you,' preached these fierce missionaries, 'before the Almighty in whose eyes all men are equal, all created beings as the dust of earth. There is no god but the one God, and His Messenger is Muhammad '. The battle cry of the warrior became, as soon as the conquest

was over, the text of the Divine".

### **Luminous Torch**

And so does N. S. Mehta, a gifted Indian civil servant, says in course of an article entitled, ' Islam and the Indian Civilization ':

"Islam had brought to India a luminous torch which rescued humanity from darkness at a time when old civilizations were on the decline and lofty moral ideals had got reduced to empty intellectual concepts. As in other lands, so in India, too, the conquests of Islam were more widespread in the world of thought than in the world of politics. Today, also, the Islamic World is a spiritual brotherhood which is held together by community of faith in the Oneness of God and human equality. Unfortunately, the history of Islam in this country remained tied up for centuries with that of government with the result that a veil was cast over its true spirit, and its fruits and blessings were hidden from the popular eye".

In sum, as it would be evident from the facts we have stated in the foregoing pages, and the opinions we have examined, what the Muslims gave to India was much greater and far more lasting and valuable than what they took from it. The coming of Islam and Muslims marked the beginning of a new era in its history—an era of enlightenment, progress and prosperity—which it can never possibly forget. ■

## The Prophet's (SAW) Arrival in Madinah

- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi\*

On arrival in Madinah, he (SAW) entered the city from the Quba side. It is a locality affiliated with Madinah at a distance of about three miles south of it. It has orchards of date-palms. Besides, it has, in its southern regions on the eastern and western sides untraceable mountainous ups and downs extended up to Madinah city which are called Hirrah The rocks of such regions are black, uneven and sharp-edged. It is hard to tread on them. Madinah Munawwarah is surrounded by regions of such rocks from East, South and West. Hence, those bound for the city enter it only from its Northern side. But, the Prophet (SAW) arrived there from the Southern side. Probably, he (SAW) did so out of circumspection; and, it was from this very side, too, that his arrival was awaited. On arrival at Quba, he (SAW) had his halt there for several days. There he had a mosque built which earned the renown of being the first ever mosque built after the advent of Islam. It is about it that the Quran says:

(Surely a mosque built from first day on piety is worthier than thou shouldst stand therein. In it are men who love to purify themselves, and Allah approves the pure.)(Al-Tauba:108)

It was Monday when he (SAW) had arrived there. Three days later, on Friday, he set out for Madinah. En route, the time

for the Juma prayers set in and he had the Juma prayers offered en route itself. On arrival in Madinah, he (SAW) was accorded a very warm welcome. The head of each and every family requested him to camp and take up lodging at his house. But, instead of taking a decision himself, he left his mount loose. He had the orders from God to do the same. And, for the mount it was destined by God to halt only at the place that was divinely prespecified for the purpose. Under the instructions from Allah, he (SAW) was to have that very place chosen. Otherwise, there were offers galore from all sides to take up the lodgings at their residences.

Anyway, this privilege happened to be the lot of Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari (RAA) as it was the doorway of his house where the Prophet's she-camel took the halt and knelt down. And, he (SAW) decided to take up his lodgings there itself. It was a happy coincidence, too, that Abu Ayyub (RAA) was a member of such a blood-line of Khazraj tribe of Madinah which the mother of the Prophet's (SAW) grandfather, Abdul-Muttalib, had belonged to. Thus, the Prophet (SAW) had happened to have a kinship, too, with this household.

### **Construction of Masjid-e-Nabawi (The Prophet's Mosque):**

Then, after having bought the land in front of this very place, he (SAW) had a mosque constructed on it. This land had

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\* Rector, Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow.

belonged to two orphan kids. Coming to know that it was meant for mosque, they wanted to have it donated. But, he (SAW) did not like to have it procured without payment of price. He paid its price in full. In the work of construction of mosque, too, he (SAW) participated equally with others. This mosque got to be known as 'Masjid-e-Nabawi' (the Prophet's Mosque) which assumed the position of the grand and main mosque of Madina.

One of the honours conferred by Allah Almighty on him (SAW) was that this mosque built by him (SAW) was held so auspicious in Allah's reckoning that on offering prayers in it, the merit accrued thereupon got proclaimed to be equivalent to fifty thousand prayers offered in other ordinary mosques. On the South and East of this very mosque and adjacent to it, he (SAW) got the chambers for his pious wives built. And, thus, his (SAW) residence happened to be adjacent to the mosque. Latter, on the advent of his demise, in the chamber of his pious wife, Hazrat Ayisha, adjacent to this very mosque, wherein he had breathed his last, he (SAW) was laid at rest, too, for his final repose. Thus, the occasion of offering prayers in this mosque came to serve as an opportunity for offering Salam to him (SAW) and expressing one's love for, and his bond with, him (SAW). Hence, whoever goes on Haj pilgrimage, pays homage to this mosque as well. That part of this mosque that lies adjacent to his (SAW) place of repose (the grave) up to the pulpit of the mosque has been proclaimed to be a flowerbed from amongst the flowerbeds

of the paradise. To offer prayers in it is like offering prayers in the paradise.

By the time his arrival in Madinah took place, the majority of its inhabitants had already become his followers. And, the aboriginal inhabitants of the place had already given assurances, too, of having him defended and to have their lives transformed, under his guidance, into an Islamic one. It was, thus, the second phase of his Call towards the Truth that had now got launched. And the credit and the honour thereof went to the city called 'Yathrab'. Yathrab was, essentially, the name of a part of the city which got, gradually, applied to the entire city. This word had an opprobrious implication also. He (SAW), therefore, liked it to be expressed in other appellations instead of this one. Since then, it got to be named as 'Taiba, 'Taba and, in ascription to him (SAW), Madinat-unNabi, (Prophet's city). And, for the sake of brevity, Madinat-unNabi came to be called just 'Al-Madinah'.

There had come once an opportunity when this honor and glory could have, perhaps, gone to Taif, had the powers-that-be there appreciated the magnificence of this mission and offered themselves for its support and had him (SAW) shifted there. The Harbinger of this Call for the Truth had himself, having undertaken the arduous journey, put up to them the proposal of extending support to him. But this lofty position was not destined to be the lot of this city. Owing to their obstinacy and contumacy, they had themselves deprived of this honor and

glory. It was, in fact, not destined by the Divinity itself to be their lot.

Ultimately, three years after this very occasion, that glory and honor got bestowed on Madinah, whose people responded to the offer made by him (SAW) in a positive way and gave their consent to lend support to him (SAW) wholeheartedly. And, thus, the city of Yathrab got transformed into Madint-ul-Munawwarah (literally meaning: the city made resplendent with radiance). It became the abode and the domicile of the last Prophet of Allah Almighty wherein he got the opportunity, living, as he did, amidst strong supporters, to disseminate the message of Islam. This phase of dissemination of the message of Islam got commenced after his having spent 13 years facing one severe hurdle after another and one distress after another in performance of the task of calling towards the Truth since he had the office of the Prophecy assigned and under which he was called upon to have this job performed.

Thanks to this shift in location, he (SAW) and his honorable companions had now the opportunity to take safeguards against the enmity and persecutions of the people of the city of Makkah, the place whence the call towards the religion of Truth had gotten initiated. Besides that, the Muslims got also, thanks to the fraternal and cooperative atmosphere that they got here, ample opportunity to fulfill the obligation of carrying out the task of propagating and disseminating the religion of Truth in much more organized manner

and with concentration. Although, it was, in this phase, the hostility at collective and organized level, instead of the enmity and baiting at individual level, that had to be tackled.

### **The Physical and Geographical Condition of Madinah:**

Location-wise, Madinah Munawwarah held a particular place of importance. It is located about 450 kms. North of Makkah Mokarramah. It had around it a range of mountains. On the other side of the mountains on the West is the sea at a distance not far away. In between the sea and the mountain, the land is level. It was' geographically, part of Tehama. Caravans coming from the south bound for Syria, Egypt and Turkey had to pass through it. Being, as it did, in the proximity of Madinah, this route was, in a way, within the domain of the people of Madinah. The city of Madinah, looking at it from its eastward direction, is located on the western end of the mountainous range called Hijaz. Its land is arable and fertile. Hence, farming and husbandry has continuously been done here. There have always been orchards of date-palms and grapes also here. Because of that, denizens of this place happen, generally, to be farmers and land-owners. This was something contradictory to Makkah where the land was arid. The people there used to be, by profession, traders. Owing to that, they had to go, carrying with them their merchandise, sometimes to Yemen and, sometimes, to Syria. On their way to Syria, they had to pass by the vicinity of

Madinah. Hence, throughout the expanse of the Arab Peninsula, this importance of the people of this place was duly appreciated. That, in case they got annoyed, they could cause blockade of the trade routes, particularly vis-a-vis the Quoraish who were, by profession, the traders. Hence, the latter were fully aware of the criticality of having their trade route to Syria passing through the vicinity of Madinah. Moreover, the tribes of Aus and Khazraj, who were the inhabitants of Madinah, belonged to the Qahtanite race of Arabs; whereas the Quoraishite and the tribes of their friends and kinsfolk belonged to the Ishmaelite race. Because of this tribal disparity, too, each of the two groups had, to some extent, a separate mindset of its own. Each of the two groups also had, to certain extent, the racial predilection of their respective tribes.

**The Social Condition:**

This city of Madinah, prior to its people becoming Muslim and the arrival of the Prophet (SAW) here, was, after the custom and tradition of Arab tribes of other regions, in the throes of internecine civil war because of the exaggerated sense of self-esteem. Its regional and local conditions had their own peculiar complexities also. There were here two Arab tribes, Aus and Khazraj, who had, essentially, belonged to the same race. But, spurred by tribalism, they kept fighting each other.

There were, besides them, the Jewish tribes also in the neighborhood. Being non-Arabs, as they did, they were

regarded as aliens. Their population, too, was not much. The main and prominent clans of them were known by the denominations of Banu Nudhair, Banu Quraiza, and Banu Qainqaa. These were the affluent people of this place. They had, generally, turned into landlords. They would employ the Arabs as labourers in their gardens and fields on wages and lend money to their poor and pauper on interest. They would render support to one party against the other in the latter's internecine in-fighting. That would get the internecine fighting of the Arab tribes further intensified. Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Hasani Nadwi writes as follows:

“The life there was far ahead in complexities than that in Makkah. And, thus, the problems faced by the Prophet (SAW) at Madinah were of varied nature. There were several religions, societies and cultures. The task of getting all of them under control and having Madinah dyed with a single dye of one creed and one religion could not have been done but only by a Prophet ‘reinforced by Allah’ Himself, the one whom Allah had endowed with probity and perception, faculty of determination and the extraordinary capability of having the fragmented elements of the humanity reassembled and organized, the capability of having the forces and ideologies engaged in mutual in-fighting converted into associates of each other in performance of the task of Guidance and Reform of the humanity; the one endowed with a charming personage. This is the fact which has been described by Allah Almighty in His Book thus:

(He it is who confirmed thee with His help and with the believers. And He united their hearts Hadst thou spent all that is on the earth thou couldst not have united their hearts. But Allah united them; Verily He is Mighty, wise)" (Al-Anfal : 62-63)

### **The Universal Fraternization:**

Now with the arrival of Muslims of the tribe of the Quoraish in Madinah and their getting united with Aus and Khazraj, the moral and religious bond between the two races of the populace of Madinah, that is Aus and Khazraj, on the one hand, and the Muslims of the Quoraish tribe, on the other, had, at least, eliminated, to a great extent, the prejudicial disparateness between these two races. Under the banner of Islam, both of them got united. Both of them had now just one Mentor and one Leader. And, thus, the Islamic order of life got substantially bolstered by it. It had, in addition, the Prophet's (SAW) sagacious, affectionate and affable guidance available to it. Thus, a force that had its reigns in the Prophet's (SAW) hands, got evolved here. The Muslims coming from Makkah, being members of the Ismailite race did not have the congenital kinship with Aus and Khazraj. Instead, they had deemed each other kind of aliens, nay, rivals, rather. To redeem this disparateness and estrangement, the Prophet (SAW) took the measure that he (SAW) had them formally fraternized. That is, he (SAW) had a covenant of their being brothers, on the line of kinship that exists between the sanguine siblings, formally

solemnized. It was on one-to-one basis. As a result thereof, their racial disparateness got transformed into propinquity and fraternity. Hazrat Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi writes:

"This fraternization was the prelude to establishment of a missionary Ummat, that was the foundation of a unique-of-its-kind, Islamic and universal fraternity which was going to be raised for having a new world order, say, a new world, evolved. It was getting evolved to give the world the correct and specific creeds and such pious objectives as would emancipate it from the desolation and disorder, to give it the bonds of Faith, the real fraternity and unified Campaigning. This bond of limited brotherhood between Muhajirs and Ansar thus proved to be the harbinger of a new life for the world of the humanity."

Hence, with the arrival of Islam in this city and its acceptance of the Islamic injunctions, its habitants got instructed into making themselves brothers to each other, and into adopting, having given up the tribal predilections, the attitude of humanistic compassion and justice. Despite the tribal predilection, the feeling of fraternity got generated in them. They (Aus and Khazraj) had not only themselves become brothers to each other, but had made the people of Makkah, too, their brothers. With the arrival of the Prophet (SAW) there, a magnificent ambience of love, brotherhood, compassion and commiseration was created there. ■

## 5G Cell Phone Radiation: Note of Caution

- Claire Edwards

The telecom companies thought that if they called their new, alleged 'communications technology,' adapted from the military Active Denial Technology, '5G' or Fifth Generation, the public would just assume that it was more of the same as 4G, 3G or 2G; and if they could characterize the rollout as a race, the public would not have enough time to find out what a killer technology 5G is.

How wrong they were! Not only has the public found out, but now they know how lethal previous generations of wireless technology – to be used concurrently with 5G – are as well. Much in evidence has been published from a number of different countries that the pushback is huge and growing.

The telcos have lost the propaganda war, despite their control of the mainstream media, from which not a whisper of the dangers of 5G is heard, and of social media and YouTube, who have been desperately deleting millions of accounts to silence the naysayers.

As this article went to press, support arrived from an unlikely source. In an impassioned speech before the United Nations General Assembly on 24 September 2019, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson stated that digital

authoritarianism is not the stuff of dystopian fantasy but of an emerging reality.

He described the Internet of Things, 'smart' cities and Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a giant, dark thundercloud lowering ever more oppressively over the human race, a gathering force reshaping the future of humanity over which the human race has no control and from which, in future, there may be nowhere to hide.

He asked if algorithms could be trusted with our lives and hopes and whether machines should be allowed to doom us to a cold and heartless future in an Orwellian world designed for censorship, repression and control.

He recalled the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and endorsed its ideals of upholding freedom of opinion and expression, the privacy of home and correspondence, and the right to seek and impart information and ideas.

He exhorted the academic committees, company boards and industry standards groups who are writing the rule books of the future, making ethical judgements, and choosing what will, or will not, be rendered possible to find the right balance between freedom and control,

between innovation and regulation, between private enterprise and government oversight.

He insisted that the ethical judgements inherent in the design of new technology must be made transparent to all and that joint efforts must be made to agree upon a common set of global principles to shape the norms and standards that will guide the development of emerging technology.

However, we cannot afford to be complacent and, in particular, we must work to stop the use of the Earth orbits and the stratosphere to beam 5G down

to Earth, for this puts the ionosphere and the entire planet at risk. We must also work to ensure that the use of street lights with blue light for this anti-life agenda is rapidly reversed.

*(Courtesy: Global Research)*

*Claire Edwards, BA Hons, MA, worked for the United Nations as Editor and Trainer in Intercultural Writing from 1999 to 2017. Since May 2018, she has collaborated with Arthur Firstenberg to publish the International Appeal to Stop 5G on Earth and in Space ([www.5gspaceappeal.org](http://www.5gspaceappeal.org)), which is available in 28 languages. ■*

### **Limitations of Human Knowledge**

The realities of things are very often so different from what they appear to us according to our imperfect lights. And, how much the interior of a thing differs from its exterior; the outer from the inside reality; how incomprehensible and enigmatic are the mysteries of the Universe; but man is hotheaded enough to claim that his knowledge compasses all, the secrets of man as well as of universe, down to their core and inner-most realities.

At first sight Khidhr appeared to be away from apparent realities and his actions were the look of meaningless moves. But, to the end of the chapter, we find him more realistic and acting more wisely. The story illustrates that life is ever on the move, presenting us with situations and new realities in every age from its inexhaustible store of secrets and mysteries. The episode also elucidates that knowledge is limitless, beyond the scope of human comprehension.

And over every word of knowledge there is one more knowing.” (Yusuf: 76)

## How Islam Came to New Zealand?

- Syed Kazim

New Zealand is one of the unique countries of the world. According to the Global Peace Index 2018 produced by the Institute for Economics and Peace, New Zealand is the 2nd most peaceful country in the world after Iceland and as per the World Happiness Report 2018, it is the 8th happiest country in the world.

The country is generally not in news, but it was in news when the country witnessed two consecutive terrorist attacks at Mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand on Friday, 15th March 2019, during the Friday Prayer. The attack went on to kill 51 Muslims. The event shook the nation and shocked the people across the globe. But, how did Muslims reach New Zealand is the question which needs to be answered.

The first documented Muslims came to New Zealand in the year 1769, the same time as British arrivals. The earlier arrivals were from colonial India, described as Mohammadans or Mussulmans. Many were male sailors or labourers in the ship. The first two persons on record were Mahmood and Nasrin.

In the early 1800 some men jumped ship and settled down in New Zealand by marrying the women. The early 1850 marked the beginning of family migration. In 1854 a man Sir John

Wilson, who was born in India, brought over a dozen of Indian families on a ship called Akbar and settled in the south of Christchurch. New Zealand respected different faiths.

When the servant of Sir John Wilson was involved in a court case and it was out in the newspapers, he was allowed to swear by the Qur'an, rather than the Bible. A similar report of an Arab sailor named Mubarak from Oman took his employee to court for physically abusing him. The British was caught, convicted and fined.

In 1984, a father and son from Turkmenistan named Sultan Muhammad and Salah arrived in Southland and worked as street venders before settling down in Christchurch. Later Salah opened an ice cream shot at Christchurch and was liked by his friendly personality and became known as Ice Cream Charlie.

More Muslims started arriving in New Zealand in the early 20th century, including three Gujarati men who opened small shops and brought their children over between 1906 and 1920. Their grandchildren went on to become community leaders. The first Muslim organisation was created in New Zealand in the year 1950. The New Zealand Muslim Association was started when there were only around

200 Muslims in the country; most of them were South Asian.

In 1951, thousands of Eastern European Refugees arrived. A small minority of Muslims from Albania, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union arrived. In 1979, one of these refugees Mazhar Krasniqi was elected first president of the first national Muslim organisation, the Federation of Islamic Association of New Zealand. Today, Muslims make up just 1% which is 46,149 (as per a survey) of New Zealand's 4.7 million population, but despite these small numbers, the Muslims are just much as part of New Zealand's history as European Christians.

After the attack, a woman came to Masjid Ibrahim in Beeston with gifts to show sympathy and respect to the Muslims. In the Masjid she met a few brothers who were having something to eat. They invited her to sit down with them and have something to eat and drink. While she was drinking, the brothers were giving her Dawah and she was listening very closely. After the conversation, she took her Shahada and accepted Islam.

The population of the country not only grew due to migration but also because many people accepted Islam. A New Zealand rugby player Ofa Tu'ungafasi became a Muslim. The all black player originally from Tonga, visited victims of the Christchurch

terrorist attack in hospital with fellow player Sonny Bill Williams, a Muslim convert. He described them as an inspiration and prayed for their speedy recovery.

Allah says, "And the disbelievers planned, but Allah planned. And Allah is the best of planners" (Qur'an 3:54). In another place, Allah says, "And (remember, O Muhammad), when those who disbelieved plotted against you to restrain you or kill you or evict you (from Makkah). But they plan, and Allah plans. And Allah is the best of planners" (Qur'an 8:30). The enemies of Islam will plan to demean Islam and would work towards it, but from the ayah we can learn that Allah also plans and Allah is the best planner, so Allah's plan will be successful and the plan made by the disbelieves is bound to fail.

Everything people have tried to harm Islam; it has always worked in favour of Islam. We as true Muslims should never be afraid of any kind of situation. We need to remember that everything happens with the will of Allah. Allah is not going to ask us about things which are not in our control but will surely ask us about things which were within our scope. Today, one of the biggest challenges before Muslims is Islamophobia and we should strive towards overcoming this problem. We should just have a strong faith in Allah and strive in His way. ■

## Jerusalem, A City Of Contested Histories

- Seema Alavi\*

I landed in Jerusalem with some amount of trepidation about what awaits me. But I was taken aback by my first conversation at the hotel desk where they enquired if all was well in India. Clearly, the news about protests against the Citizenship Amendment Bill (now Act) and National Register of Citizens had travelled wide. Talking about it in Jerusalem, home to contested history and identity conflicts, was particularly poignant.

Having lived in India all my life, I had taken the idea of equality before the law for all Indians for granted. I did not quite know how to engage with this conversation. To avoid any further queries, I put the ball in their court. "What about here?" I asked. The Arab staffer said: "Its occupied territory..our citizenship was snatched..we are just residents..But at least in Jerusalem all is stable. We feel different from others, but safe." This sentiment lingered in my mind as I strolled around Jerusalem. The throngs of visitors moved with enthusiasm between the Al Aqsa mosque, the Jewish temple wall, and the Holy Sepulcher church — the site of Jesus Christ's crucifixion— making the city feel like the perfect case of cultural integration.

As I meandered through the alleys, stopping at shops selling beautiful art and ceramics, the bubble of the surface bonhomie burst. I picked up a beautiful bowl and asked, "Is this made here in Israel?' The elderly shopkeeper said, yes, in "Philistine".

Walking down the next morning to Hebrew University, the streets were full of Jewish and Muslim students easily identified with their hijabs and the Jewish kippah. One could hear Arabic and Hebrew being spoken by groups of youngsters. A young boy, with his distinctly Arab family, called out a greeting to his Jewish friend across the street. And just when I began feeling reassured that politics can't kill this spirit, I found a bunch of girls in hijabs being stopped at the police picket.

Jerusalem's rich heritage, embodied above all in its beautiful architecture and urban landscape, stands in stark contrast to the divisive politics and identity contestations that frame the city. The old city not only has the Jewish temple, Al Aqsa mosque and the Holy Sepulcher Church, but fascinating remnants of the Mamluk and Ottoman madrasas, sabils (water drinking spots) and European hospices. These reflect the layers of cultural influences on this historic city. Its richly

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\* Professor (History) Delhi University, Delhi-7

textured history peeps out from the ruins of the past that overlook the alleys of the old city. Not surprisingly, archaeology is big business here. Archaeologists have discovered the city's Roman past, and its Mamluk and Ottoman heritage. Significantly, much of the Ottoman architecture stands on the 13th century Mamluk remains. And the Mamluk sabils or water dispensers boast of having Roman basins.

was reminded that the politics of gender transcends all other issues of identity. A long flowing skirt being flung at me to wear in order to cover my trousers before entering the Dome of the Rock and the mosque reminded me that I had no other identity except that of a woman. This was not entirely surprising. But in a land riveted by contestations of religious and ethnic identity, it was certainly a little jarring. ■

And yet as a woman observer, I

### **A Challenge to Materialistic Outlook**

The story of narrated here is a challenge to the materialistic way of thought. Materialism claims that life is not an iota more than what it explains; it possesses the secrets of the nature and universe; only that is to be believed which is tangible and capable of being comprehended by human perception; that which is perceptible is real and the rest is non-existent, visionary and baseless; and, finally, that man is the rightful owner and master of this world. Materialism elevates man to the position of lawgiver, claims perfection for human knowledge and assumes that nothing in this vast and complex universe is beyond human comprehension.

These have always been the fundamental postulates of materialistic thought, and so it is today also. The Surat-ul-Kahf in general, and the episode of Moses in particular, strikes at the root of materialistic categories of thought. The story concludes with these words of Khidhr:

“Such is the interpretation of that wherewith thou couldst not bear”. (Al-Kahf: 83)

Interpretation signifies, in the phraseology of the Qur'an, the explanation of a reality. Man is always predisposed to commit mistakes, take hasty decisions and rashly deny the existence of a reality; but when he is confronted with truth and stubborn facts, he has ultimately to accept the realities of the situation.

The fourth and the last story narrated in the Surat-ul Kahf, relates to a man who had not only been favoured with a solemn faith but had also at his command power and glory, stupendous assets and natural resources. This man directed his energies to humble the cruel tyrants of his day for the benefit of suffering humanity and to establish a just, humane and civilized order of society.

## Don't Sing in Pilibhit

- Tahir Mahmood\*

“No Lord but Jesus Christ. There is only one true God. Forgive us, Father, for allowing a prayer which is an abomination in your right.” This is what a group of fanatics had shouted in the United States Senate, protesting against the recitation of a classical Indian prayer at the beginning of a session in July 2007. Their deplorable behaviour was later justified by some others on the grounds that “One nation under God” in the US National Pledge referred to the God of “monotheistic” Christian faith and the non-Christian prayer recited in the senate belonged to a “polytheistic” creed. The US media approached people from different walks of life seeking their reaction and the majority of respondents disapproved of the incident.

I happened to be in the US and was invited by Voice of America to participate in a debate on the incident. The so-called “polytheistic” prayer objected to was a Vedic hymn — *Asato ma sadgamayam tamaso ma jyotirgamaya, mmrityoma amritam gamaya*. Translating it into English as “lead us from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality”, I asked my co-debaters “what is polytheistic in it?” No one had an answer. “If the Christian trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost does not make Christianity a polytheistic faith, how can the Indian trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh be seen

as a symbol of polytheism?” I further asked. Again, there was no answer.

Twelve years after defending an Indian prayer on a foreign land, I am confronted with a similar incident in our country. The headmaster of a school in district Pilibhit of Uttar Pradesh allowed his students to sing a traditional Urdu prayer in their morning assembly. A local religious functionary complained to the district administration that the headmaster had deliberately arranged the singing of a “religious” prayer in the school, and the administration lost no time in suspending him with immediate effect, without seeking any clarification from him.

I was flabbergasted to read the media story on the bizarre incident. Look at the wording of the “religious” prayer complained about: *Lab pe aati hai dua ban ke tamanna meri,/ zindagi shama ki surat ho khudaya meri/ Door duniya ka mere dam se andhera ho jaye, har jagah meri chamakne se ujala ho jaye/ Ho mere dam se yun hi mere watan ki zinat,/ jis tarah phool se hoti hai chaman ki zinat/ Zindagi ho meri parwane ki surat yarab,/ ilm ki shama se ho mujhko mohabbat yarab/ Ho mera kam gharibon ki himayet karna,/ dardmandon se zaeifon se mohabbat karna/ Mere allah burai se bachana mujhko,/ nek jo ah ho usi rah pe chalana mujhko.* (To the lips comes my wish turned into prayer, be my life O God like a candle. May the darkness of the world be eliminated by my efforts, be every place illuminated by my light. May I so adorn my

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\* *The writer is former chair of National Minorities Commission & member, Law Commission of India.*

homeland as flowers adorn a garden. Be my life like a moth, God, may I love the candle of learning. Let my mission be helping the poor, loving the sufferers and the elderly. Save me from evil, O God, lead me to the path that's virtuous).

So what is "religious" in this beautiful prayer? Does it become "religious" only because its language is Urdu, or because God is invoked in it by His Urdu names, Khuda and Allah? Notably, this poem was composed by the renowned poet-reformer Mohammad Iqbal whose Urdu poem, "Saare jahan se achha Hindostan hamara (better than the whole world is our India)", is still sung as one of our national songs. Iqbal's prayer is indeed as patriotic as that national song. It was sung in the morning assemblies in schools all over North India before Independence and until many years thereafter. It was abandoned when in the 1950s, Urdu medium in schools was replaced with Hindi. The National Military College in Dehradun, which had also adopted it before 1947, gave it up long after the advent of Independence.

I may mention here that conspicuously religious hymns and songs are sung now in the morning assemblies of schools and colleges all over the country. These are joined by students of all communities and nobody has ever objected to the practice. I had begun my career in 1963 with teaching in the famous Tilak Dhari Singh College of Jaunpur, which had a sizeable number of Muslim teachers and students. In the morning, every day, a religious song, "Jairaghnandan Jaisiyaram", was sung by a group of students on the college's

public address system and everybody used to respectfully stand up in silence; nobody had any problem with it.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, invoking God in school and college songs, in any language, does not violate any law of the country. Article 28 of the Constitution regulates "attendance at religious instruction or religious worship" in educational institutions; its provision cannot be stretched so as to apply it to the practice of singing religion-oriented songs in school assemblies. The language of such songs is immaterial as linguistic pluralism is well-recognised by the Constitution. All citizens have a fundamental right to "conserve" their distinct language (Article 29); and all states can "by law adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the state" as their official language (Article 345). The list of Indian languages in Schedule VIII of the Constitution — which as per Article 351 the state is mandated to take into account for developing Hindi "so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India"— includes Urdu.

According to reports, the suspension of the school headmaster in the UP school has been "temporarily revoked" and, pending inquiry, he has been transferred to another school. I fail to understand what is being inquired into. In view of Urdu being widely understood and spoken in the country, does it really need a prolonged inquiry to discover that the Urdu prayer, for allowing which the poor teacher is facing punishment, is conspicuously non-religious? ■

*(Courtesy: The Indian Express)*

## The Globalization of War: America's 'Long War' Against Humanity - Michel Chossudovsky

*"Michel Chossudovsky is one of the few individuals I know who has analyzed the anatomy of the New World Order and recognized the threat to the entire human species that it is. The Globalization of War is a must read for anyone who prefers peace and hope to perpetual war, death, dislocation and despair."~ Hon. Paul Hellyer, former Canadian Minister of National Defence.*

*"Professor Michel Chossudovsky is the most realistic of all foreign policy commentators. He does not lie for money and position, and he does not sell his soul for influence. His book provides an honest appraisal of the extreme danger that hegemonic and demonic American neo-conservatism poses to life on earth." ~ Dr. Paul Craig Roberts, former Assistant Secretary, U.S. Treasury, former Wall Street Journal editor, former Wm. E. Simon Chair in Political Economy, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University.*

The 'globalization of war' is a hegemonic project. Major military and covert intelligence operations are being undertaken simultaneously in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and the Far East. The U.S. military agenda combines both major theater operations as well as covert actions geared towards

destabilizing sovereign states.

Under a global military agenda, the actions undertaken by the Western military alliance (U.S.-NATO-Israel) in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Palestine, Ukraine, Syria and Iraq are coordinated at the highest levels of the military hierarchy. We are not dealing with piecemeal military and intelligence operations. The July-August 2014 attack on Gaza by Israeli forces was undertaken in close consultation with the United States and NATO. The actions in Ukraine and their timing coincided with the onslaught of the attack on Gaza.

In turn, military undertakings are closely coordinated with a process of economic warfare which consists not only in imposing sanctions on sovereign countries but also in deliberate acts of destabilization of financial and currencies markets, with a view to undermining the enemies' national economies.

The United States and its allies have launched a military adventure which threatens the future of humanity. As we go to press, U.S. and NATO forces have been deployed in Eastern Europe including Ukraine. U.S. military intervention under a humanitarian mandate is proceeding in sub-Saharan Africa. The U.S. and its allies are threatening China under President

Obama's "Pivot to Asia".

In turn, military maneuvers are being conducted at Russia's doorstep which could potentially lead to escalation.

The U.S. air strikes initiated in September 2014 directed against Iraq and Syria under the pretext of going after the Islamic State are part of a scenario of military escalation extending from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean to Central and South Asia.

The Western military alliance is in an advanced state of readiness. And so is Russia.

Russia is heralded as the "Aggressor". U.S.-NATO military confrontation with Russia is contemplated.

Enabling legislation in the U.S. Senate under "The Russian Aggression Prevention Act" (RAPA) has "set the U.S. on a path towards direct military conflict with Russia in Ukraine."

Any U.S.-Russian war is likely to quickly escalate into a nuclear war, since neither the U.S. nor Russia would be willing to admit defeat, both have many thousands of nuclear weapons ready for instant use, and both rely upon Counterforce military doctrine that tasks their military, in the event of war, to preemptively destroy the nuclear forces of the enemy.

The Russian Aggression Prevention Act (RAPA) is the culmination of more than twenty years of U.S.-NATO war preparations, which consist in the military encirclement of both Russia and China:

From the moment the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the United States has relentlessly pursued a strategy of encircling Russia, just as it has with other perceived enemies like China and Iran. It has brought 12 countries in central Europe, all of them formerly allied with Moscow, into the NATO alliance. U.S. military power is now directly on Russia's borders.

#### **Worldwide Militarization**

From the outset of the post-World War II period to the present, America's global military design has been one of world conquest. War and globalization are intricately related. Militarization supports powerful economic interests. America's "Long War" is geared towards worldwide corporate expansion and the conquest of new economic frontiers.

The concept of the "Long War" is an integral part of U.S. military doctrine. Its ideological underpinnings are intended to camouflage the hegemonic project of World conquest. Its implementation relies on a global alliance of 28 NATO member states. In turn, the U.S. as well as NATO have established beyond the "Atlantic Region" a network of bilateral military

alliances with “partner” countries directed against Russia, China, Iran and North Korea. What we are dealing with is a formidable military force, deployed in all major regions of the World.

The “Long War” is based on the concept of “Self-Defense”. The United States and the Western World are threatened. “The Long War” constitutes “an epic struggle against adversaries bent on forming a unified Islamic world to supplant western dominance”. Underlying the “Long War”, according to a study by the Rand Corporation, the Western World must address “three potential threats”:

- those related to the ideologies espoused by key adversaries in the conflict,
- those related to the use of terrorism
- those related to governance (i.e., its absence or presence, its quality, and the predisposition of specific governing bodies to the United States and its interests). ... in order to ensure that this long war follows a favorable course, the United States will need to make a concerted effort across all three domains.

Our objective in this book is to focus on various dimensions of America’s hegemonic wars, by providing both a historical overview as well as an understanding of America’s contemporary wars all of which, from a strategic viewpoint, are integrated.

Our analysis will focus on the dangers of nuclear war and the evolution of military doctrine in the post-9/11 era.

The central role of media propaganda as well as the failures of the anti-war movement will also be addressed. While the first chapter provides an overview, the subsequent chapters provide an insight into different dimensions of America’s long war.

**Chapter I, Imperial Conquest: America’s “Long War” against Humanity** provides a post World War II historical overview of America’s wars from Korea and Vietnam to Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. There is a continuum in U.S. Foreign Policy from the Truman Doctrine of the late 1940s to the neocons and neoliberals of the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations.

**Part II** focuses on the dangers of nuclear war and global nuclear radiation.

**Chapter II, The Dangers of Nuclear War Conversations with Fidel Castro** consists of Conversations with Fidel Castro and the author pertaining to the future of humanity and the post-Cold War process of militarization. This exchange took place in Havana in October 2010.

**Chapter III**, focuses on the doctrine of **Pre-emptive Nuclear and the Role of Israel** in triggering a first strike use of nuclear weapons against Iran.

**Chapter IV, The Threat of Nuclear War, North Korea or the United States?** focuses on the persistent U.S. threat (since 1953) of using nuclear weapons against North Korea while labeling North Korea a threat to global security.

**Chapter V, Fukushima: A Nuclear War without a War. The Unspoken Crisis of Worldwide Nuclear Radiation** examines the dangers of nuclear energy and its unspoken relationship to nuclear weapons. Nuclear energy is not a civilian economic activity. It is an appendage of the nuclear weapons industry which is controlled by the so-called defense contractors. The powerful corporate interests behind nuclear energy and nuclear weapons overlap.

**Part III** illustrates at a country level, the modus operandi of U.S. military and intelligence interventions, including regime change and the covert support of terrorist organizations. The country case studies (Yugoslavia, Haiti, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Ukraine) illustrate how individual nation states are destabilized as a result of U.S.-NATO covert operations and “humanitarian wars.” While the nature and circumstances of these countries are by no means similar, there is a common thread. The purpose is to provide a comparative understanding of country-level impacts of America’s long war against humanity. In all the countries analyzed, the intent has been to destroy,

destabilize and impoverish sovereign countries.

**Chapter VI, NATO’s War on Yugoslavia: Kosovo “Freedom Fighters” Financed by Organized Crime** examines the role of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) as an instrument of political destabilization. In Yugoslavia, the endgame of NATO’s intervention was to carve up a prosperous and successful “socialist market economy” into seven proxy states. The political and economic breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s served as a “role model” for subsequent “humanitarian military endeavors.”

**Chapter VII, The U.S. led Coup d’Etat in Haiti** against the government of Jean Bertrand Aristide was carried out in February 2004 with the support of Canada and France. In a bitter irony, the U.S. ambassador to Haiti James Foley, had previously played a central role as U.S. special envoy to Yugoslavia, channeling covert support to the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). In Haiti, his responsibilities included U.S. aid to the Front pour la Libération et la reconstruction nationale (FLRN) (National Liberation and Reconstruction Front) largely integrated by former TontonMacoute death squads. Closely coordinated with the process of regime change and military intervention, the IMF-World Bank macroeconomic reforms played a crucial role in destroying the national and impoverishing the Haitian population.

**Chapter VIII, “Operation Libya” and the Battle for Oil: Redrawing the Map of Africa** reveals the hidden agenda behind NATO’s 2011 humanitarian war on Libya, which consisted in acquiring control and ownership of Libya’s extensive oil reserves, that is, almost twice those of the United States of America. U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) played a key role in the war on Libya in coordination with NATO.

Libya is the gateway to the Sahel and Central Africa. More generally, what is at stake is the redrawing of the map of Africa at the expense of France’s historical spheres of influence in West and Central Africa, namely a process of neocolonial re-division.

**Chapter IX, The War on Iraq and Syria. Terrorism with a “Human Face”: The History of America’s Death Squads** examines U.S.-NATO’s covert war on Syria, which consists in creating Al Qaeda affiliated terrorist entities. The U.S.-led covert war consists in recruiting, training and financing Islamist death squads which are used as the foot-soldiers of the Western military alliance. The ultimate military objective is the destruction of both Iraq and Syria.

**Chapter X, War and Natural Gas. The Israel Invasion and Gaza’s Offshore Gas Fields** focuses on Israel’s attack directed against Gaza with a view to confiscating Gaza’s offshore gas reserves.

**Chapter XI, The U.S. has Installed a Neo-Nazi Government in Ukraine**, the structure of the U.S.-EU sponsored proxy regime in Kiev is examined. Key positions in government and the Armed Forces are in the hands of the two neo-Nazi parties. The Ukraine National Guard financed and trained by the West is largely integrated by Neo-Nazis Brown Shirts.

**Part IV** is entitled **Breaking the American Inquisition. Reversing the Tide of War** focuses on some of the contradictions of the antiwar movement.

**Chapter XII, The “American Inquisition” and the “Global War on Terrorism”** analyzes the central role of America’s “war on terrorism” doctrine in harnessing public support for a global war of conquest. The “Global War on Terrorism” (GWOT) is a fabrication based on the illusion that one man, Osama bin Laden, outwitted the multi-billion dollar U.S. intelligence community.

Today’s “Global War on Terrorism” (GWOT) is a modern form of inquisition. It has all the essential ingredients of the French and Spanish Inquisitions. Going after “Islamic terrorists”, carrying out a worldwide pre-emptive war to “protect the Homeland” are used to justify a military agenda.

In turn, “The Global War on Terrorism” is presented as a “Clash of Civilizations”, a war between competing values and religions, when in reality it is

an outright war of conquest, guided by strategic and economic objectives.

**Chapter XII, “Manufactured Dissent”, Colored Revolutions and the Antiwar Movement in Crisis** examines the role of corporate foundations in funding dissent and the inability of “progressive” civil society organizations and antiwar collectives to effectively confront the tide of media disinformation and war propaganda.

### **Commendations for The Globalization of War**

■ “The Globalization of War is an extraordinarily important book. It tags the origin of a long series of wars and conflicts, from the end of World War II to the present, as being direct products of U.S. Foreign Policy. Nothing happens by accident. U.S. provocateurs, usually agents of the CIA, incite one conflict after another in what Michael Chossudovsky labels America’s “Long War” against Humanity.

“It comprises a war on two fronts. Those countries that can either be “bought,” or destabilized by a corrupt international financial system, are easy targets for effective conquest. In other cases insurrection, riots and wars are used to solicit American military intervention to fill the pockets of the military-industrial complex that General Eisenhower warned us about. The “End Game” is a New World Order embracing a dual

economic and military dictatorship prepared to use atomic weapons and risk the future of the entire human species to achieve its ends.”

~ *Hon. Paul Hellyer, former Canadian Minister of National Defence.*

■ “At these moments when the threat of humanity’s extinction by the forces unleashed by the empire and its vassals, it is imperative that we grasp the nature of the beast that threatens us with its endless wars perpetrated in the name of the highest levels of freedom. This vital work by an outstanding teacher will remain an enduring testimony of the author’s all-embracing humanism and scholarship that has always been inseparable from his political activism that spans several decades. It should be mandatory reading for those seeking to understand, and thus to contain and repel, the compulsive onslaughts of the hegemon’s endless wars with its boundless bestialities and crimes against humanity.”

~ *Frederic F. Clairmonte, award-winning author and political economist, distinguished (former) economic analyst at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).* ■

*The book, The Globalization of War, can be ordered directly from Global Research Publishers.*

*(Courtesy: YMD)*

## In Defence of Indian Secularism

- Yamini Aiyar\*

The protests erupting across India since the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) are a testament to the centrality of secularism as the foundational principle that binds the country together and holds the key to India's survival as a nation. The deathly blow that the CAA and its companion, the National Register of Citizens (NRC), have delivered to secularism threatens the foundations of India's plural social fabric. When secularism is threatened, India is weakened. This is the lesson from the passage of the CAA, and the unrest it has unleashed.

Much has been written, including in this column, on the damage the CAA and NRC can do to India's secular fabric. However, given its import, it bears repetition. The CAA offers fast-track citizenship to a specified list of non-Muslim migrants living in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh, justified on grounds of experienced or fear of "religious persecution". By introducing religion as a marker of citizenship, the CAA creates categories of citizens with differing pathways to citizenship based on religious identity. The amendment thus upends the constitutional promise of a universal, religion-neutral idea of citizenship. India belonged to all, irrespective of religion. It was this conception of citizenship that

formed the foundation of our secular promise.

But the full import of the CAA can only be understood when viewed in conjunction with the promise of implementing a nationwide NRC. While the CAA deals specifically with the question of migrants and their claims to citizenship, the nationwide NRC will open up the issue of citizenship for all Indians. Designed as an administrative tool to, quite literally, create a registry of all "citizens", and through this, weed out "infiltrators" and "termites", the NRC will effectively empower all arms of the administration to interrogate people and evaluate their claims to citizenship based on documents in their possession.

For those belonging to specific religious categories identified in the CAA, the Act will serve as a protection device. For others, read Muslim, their vulnerabilities will be further enhanced, condemning them to new, torturous paths of discrimination and dispossession. The political message is clear. Together the CAA and NRC amount to no less than a State-sponsored project of "othering" that strikes at the heart of India's secular ethos.

In the days since the passage of the CAA, multiple protests across north and Northeast India last week. Ironically, these protests are themselves expressions of India's overlapping multi-religious, multi-ethnic character that the CAA seeks to

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\* *The writer is president and chief executive, Centre for Policy Research.*

undermine. The mobilisations in the Northeast are about anxieties of ethnicity, culture and language as much as religion while the protests in Delhi, Aligarh and Lucknow are chiefly about religious identity and discriminatory exclusion of Muslims from the CAA.

It is the principle of secularism that has bound these multiple identities and sought forms of peaceful coexistence and tolerance. The resistance in the Northeast hasn't been overtly framed in the grammar of secularism, nor are the protests seeking to defend it as a principle — the northeastern concerns are primarily linked to the historical in-migration of Bengali Hindus from colonial India, and East Pakistan/Bangladesh post-Partition and its impact on indigenous culture and identities. Yet, it is the constitutional ethos of secularism that provided the framework for these multiple identity claims to be articulated and negotiated in the political sphere, in the first place. Secularism allowed India to both celebrate its many identities and defend them, when threatened.

The ethos of secularism, as political scientist Neera Chandoke has argued, found expression in India's freedom movement as a necessary antidote to the politicisation of religion that fuelled communal riots and the competitive nation-building project of Pakistan. Religion had been politicised, making society vulnerable to violence. Secularism offered a pathway to peace. The secularism ethos — all religions are equal in the eyes of law

and that the State shall not propagate one particular religion — provided the foundation for building a society that negotiated multiple identities and enabled them to coexist in security and harmony.

The current wave of protests have found voice precisely because when secularism is overtly threatened, so too are these multiple identities. This is the lesson that home minister Amit Shah and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ought to learn. India needs secularism to survive in peace and harmony.

Of course, India's experiment with secularism has its flaws. Competitive party politics has sought to legitimise the blatant, entrenchment of religious politicisation in the name of "secularism", rather than serve its cause. And it is in this abdication of the core principles of secularism that the BJP successfully appropriated the term, even defending the citizenship amendment as "secular" while accusing political opponents of being "pseudo secularist".

The real challenge that protests and resistance to the CAA and NRC face today is that they are bereft of a vocabulary to defend secularism's cause even though it is the threat to secularism that sparked these protests. India urgently needs to wrest and reclaim secularism, anchoring it in a new vocabulary that redeems its credibility. Our collective ability to do so will determine whether India will reclaim itself or stay firm on its current path toward a re-imagination of its foundations. ■

*(Courtesy: Hindustan Times)*

## **Restore Democratic Values and Secular Spirit of the Constitution**

**- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi**

26th January 1950 is a rememberable day in the history of India. It assumes great significance and importance for all of us. This day the constitution of India was enforced. Indian constitution is considered the best one as compared to other constitutions of the world. It is a written and comprehensive document with 395 Articles (Now 404) and 12 Schedules. R.C. Majumdar says: "The constitution guarantees to all citizens freedom of speech and expression, the right to assemble peacefully and freedom of conscience and worship, subject to general considerations of public security and morality. All citizens, irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth, shall enjoy equality before the law and no disability shall be imposed on them in any respect. "Untouchability" is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. No person shall be deprived of his life, property or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law." (An Advanced History of India, p.992).

It is unfortunate that newly enacted Citizenship Amendment Act (AA) grants citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhist, Christians, Jains and Parsis leaving out Muslims who entered India from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan

until December 31, 2014. The objection is to the sole exclusion of Muslims. Muslims are an integral part of India, yet have been left out of the CAA. It is totally violation of article 14 of the Indian constitution which specifically prohibits any kind of discrimination on the basis of religion.

India is by law a secular democracy, where all people from all religions have equal rights and religious freedom. The need of the hour is to keep country's democratic values and secular norms must be alive. Hence, it is not a good omen for the Union Government to suppress people's thought and speech and takes away their constitutional rights and privileges instead of scrapping the draconian CAA, 2019.

The Republic Day is celebrated with gaiety and enthusiasm all over the country and especially in the capital, New Delhi where the celebrations start with the presidential address to the nation.

On this occasion all government buildings and educational institutions are decorated attractively. Flag unfurling ceremony is held in every school. Children from several schools take part in the parade. They present various cultural programmes and showcase

tableaux highlighting the rich cultural heritage of their state respectively.

India is the largest democracy in the world. India has been the cradle of a variety of civilizations, cultures and religions. It has a pluralistic society. It is known for values of peace, amity, brotherhood, fraternity, unity and integrity. It is the birth place of various icons like the Buddah, Mahavir, Guru Nanak, Mahatma Gandhi, Kabir, Jawaharlal Nehru, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar ' Chandra Vidya Sagar, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Rabindranath Tagore, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, Qazi Nazrul Islam, Swami Vivekananda, Netaji Subash Chandra Bose, Tipu Sultan, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Khan

Abdul Gaffar khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali Jouhar, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Dr. Zakir Husain, Maulana S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi and the like. All these beacons taught lesson of brotherhood and fraternity in their respective period and time. They are no more today. But their instructions and messages still inspire us to lead a peaceful life on this land.

Being Indians, it is imperative for us to maintain its unity and integrity by fostering national integration and propagating the message of humanity throughout India. The constitution of the country teaches us the same message and it is the message of the Republic Day. ■

### Obituary

Syed Mohammad Ghufuran Nadwi, a young teacher of Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama and grandson of well known Islamic cleric Qari Siddique Bandavi died in an accident on November 24, 2019. He was 34. His sudden demise shook and saddened all students and teachers of Nadwa.

He was born on January 14, 1986 in a noble family at Raebareli, U.P. He got his basic education at Jamia Arabia Hathaura and completed his Fazilat from Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow. Besides he did his B.A. from Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi and M.A. from University of Lucknow. He was also doing his Ph.D. in Arabic from University of Lucknow.

Shortly after his passing out from Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama, he was appointed teacher in the same institution. He performed his duties with honesty and integrity. He was sociable and cooperative. He proved himself a good teacher. He always kept himself aloof from controversial issues. He also did various research works. His life was like a lily. A lily is short-lived but it spreads sweetness and beauty all around.

He is survived by parents, wife, three year old son, three brothers and five sisters. A good number of teachers and students were present at his last rite. Maulana Bilal Hasani Nadwi led his funeral prayer. He was buried at the side of his grandfather Qari Siddique Bandavi at Hathaura. May Allah adorn his grave with luminosity and refulgence and grant peace to his soul. Aameen!

- *Obaidur Rahman Nadwi*

## Human Origin Not Linked to Apes

- Maggie Fox

The skeleton of an early human who lived 4.4 million years ago shows that humans did not evolve from chimpanzee-like ancestors, researchers reported [recently]. Instead, the missing link the common ancestor of both humans and modern apes was different from both, and apes have evolved just as much as humans have from that common ancestor, they said.

The researchers stressed that “Ardi” may now be the oldest known hominid, but she was not the missing link. “At 4.4 million years ago we found something pretty close to it,” said Tim White of the University of California Berkeley, who helped lead the research team.

They described the partial skeleton of a female representative of *Ardipithecus Ramidus*. The hominid species lived 4.4 million years ago in what is now Ethiopia. The 4-foot (1.2 meter) tall creature is a million years older than “Lucy” – the skeleton of another species called *Australopithecus afarensis* that is one of the best-known pre-humans.

Genetics suggest that humans and our closest living relatives, the chimpanzees, diverged 6-7 million years ago, although some research suggests this may have happened four million years ago,

“Ardi” is clearly a human ancestor and her descendants did not grow up to be chimpanzees or other apes, the

researchers report in the journal *Science*. She had an ape-like head and opposable toes that allowed her to climb trees easily, but her hands, wrists and pelvis show she strode like a modern human and did not knuckle-walk like a chimp or a gorilla.

“People have sort of assumed that modern chimpanzees haven’t evolved very much, that the last common ancestor was more or less like a chimpanzee and that it’s been ... the human lineage ... that’s done all the evolving,” White said.

But “Ardi” is “even more primitive than a chimpanzee,” White said.

So chimps and gorillas do not knuckle-walk because they are more primitive than humans – they have evolved this characteristic that helps them live in their forest homes.

White, Berhane Asfaw of Rift Valley Research Service in Addis Ababa and a large team analyzed all the bones of Ardi and found she might have been more peace-loving than modern chimpanzees. She does not have the long, sharp canines that chimps use to fight, for instance. And males and females have similar-sized teeth, suggesting more equality than seen among modern apes. But her brain, while small, is positioned in a way more similar to that of *Australopithecus* and modern humans, suggesting more human-like visual and spatial perception. ■

*[Courtesy: Arab News]*

**OUR REPRESENTATIVES ABROAD**

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