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**Demostration of Islamic
Equality and Fraternity**

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The *Hajj* is a victory for Islamic nationalism over racial, linguistic or territorial nationalisms for which a large number of Muslim countries also have, unfortunately, fallen. It is a proclamation as well as a most impressive manifestation of Islamic nationalism. On reaching there, the Muslims cast away their national or local garments which differentiate them from one another and to which some of them have become attached to the extent of being clannish and parochial, and put on the national robe of Islam, called *Ihram*, and they all sing the same song of humbleness and submission.

O God! Here I am! Here I am in Thy presence! Thou hast no partner! Here I am! All praise is for Thee and from Thee are all blessings! To Thee alone belongs Power and Rule! Thou art without partner!. ■

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Wisdom of Qur'an

“They will certainly carry their own burdens and other burdens besides their own. They will assuredly be called to account on the Day of Resurrection concerning the fabrications which they contrived.”

(Al Qur'an – 29:13)

In the Day of Judgement not only will the unbelievers be punished for straying from the Truth, but they will also be taken to task for misleading others. Let us, for example, consider that one commits a theft and asks another to be his accomplice in the crime. Now, the latter will not be acquitted on the mere plea that he so thieved at someone else's behest. He will be duly punished for his crime, for it is against the dictates of justice that he be exonerated and the instigator be punished in his place. The instigator, however, will receive a double punishment – for his own misdeed as well as for leading another stray.

As for fabrications, they say that if one commits a crime at someone else's behest, the former will be exonerated on the grounds that he committed the sin at someone else's instigation and, hence, the latter will be made to bear the entire burden of the sin. Secondly, they falsely promised that they would bear responsibility on behalf of those who reverted from true faith to unbelief. On the Day of Judgement when, contrary to their expectations, they will come face to face with Hell, they will not be at all willing to suffer for the sins of those whom they misled in this world in addition to suffering from their own unbelief. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Shaddad bin Aus relates that the Holy Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said, “The wise man is really one who keeps his ‘self’ under control and devotes himself to acts beneficial in the next world, while the foolish man is one who devotes himself to his evil desires and cherishes false hopes in his relation to God.”
(Tirmidhi)

This hadith distinguishes between a wise man and a foolish man. The former realises the transitoriness of this physical world while the latter spends his life in the enjoyment of mundane pleasures.

The hadith brings into light two features of such a person who is wise, spends his life in accordance with God's commandments. One, he keeps his self under perfect control; he is not a slave to his desires. That is, he submits all his desires, wishes and dreams to the Will of Allah. The other feature is that he spends his worldly life, keeping an eye on Life after Death. He curbs his desires just to seek the pleasure of God; he also earns and spends only within the permissible limits.

Contrarily, a foolish person devotes his life to the fulfilment of his evil desires in total violation of moral codes of life. He fails to distinguish good from evil. The hadith points out the folly of such a person when he hopes that God will admit him to Paradise anyhow. Even in the so-called enlightened era of today some people are labouring under the burden of the same erroneous notions. ■

Editor's Note 

The Hajj

The Hajj is one of the basic pillar (Rukn) of Islam for those Muslims who can physically and financially afford it. The occasion of its performance comes only once in a year. Its significance is such that whole community gets electrified and activated.

The Holy Qur'an says:

“And proclaim unto mankind the pilgrimage (The Hajj). They will come unto thee on foot and also on every lean camel; they will come from every “deep ravine that they may witness things that are of benefit to them, and mention the name of Allah on appointed days over the beast of cattle that He hath bestowed upon them. Then eat there of and feed there with the poor and the distressed. Then let them make an end of their unkeptness and pay their vows and go around the ancient House (The Ka’ba)” (xxii:27 -29)

Imam Ghazali writes: “If there is an earnest desire for nearness to God, a Muslim will be compelled to strive for it. A lover is passionately attached to every thing that bears an association with the beloved. The House of Ka’ba is associated with God and a Muslim should, therefore, instinctively feel drawn to it, to speak nothing of the attraction of the Recompense promised on it.” (Ihya-ul-Uloom, Vol 1 p:24)

To those who will be in the sacred land of Arab and also those who intend to go there in near future following advice is being offered:

1. Remember that you are on a blessed journey. This journey, which is a migration toward Allah, is based on belief in His Unity (tawheed), on sincerity toward Him, on responding to His call, and on obedience to His commands. There is no greater reward than that of a Hajj which is acceptable to Allah Ta’alah-the reward of the Garden of Paradise.
2. Be on your guard against the mischief of Satan, who intends to cause dissention among you. Love each other as brothers and avoid disputes and disobedience to Allah. Know that the Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said, “None of you has truly relived unless he likes for his brother what the likes for himself.”
3. Whenever you have a question concerning religious matters or concerning the Hajj, ask knowledgeable Muslims until you receive a satisfactory answer. This is in accordance with what Allah has said: “If ye realise this not, ask of those who possess the Message.” It is also in accordance with what the Prophet (PBUH) has said: “When Allah intends good for someone, He gives him understanding of the religion.”
4. Know that Allah has made certain acts fard (obligatory) and other acts sunnah (according to the practice of the Prophet, peace be on him). Allah does not accept a sunnah which violates some fard. Some pilgrims ignore this fact when they harm believing men and women in their zeal to kiss the Black Stone, to hasten in their circuits around the k’abah, to make salah behind the Station of Ibraheem, to drink from Zamzam, and similar practices. These practices are sunnah. To harm any believer in doing them is haram (prohibited).

How is it possible to carry out a sunnah observance while doing a haram deed? Therefore, avoid hurting each other, and Allah will grant you His mercy and will increase your reward.

We would also like to emphasize the following:

- (a) It is not fitting that a Muslim man performs his Salat next to, or behind a woman in the Sacred Mosque or at any other place if it is at all possible to avoid doing so. Women should pray behind men.
- (b) The doors and entrances to the Sacred Mosque are for traffic and should not be blocked by people praying there, even though if it is to join the congregational prayer that may be in progress.
- (c) It is not permissible to block the free flow of people around the K'abah by sitting near the K'abah, by praying near it, or by standing near the Black Stone, or al-Hijr or at the Station of Ibraheem, especially when the place is crowded, as this is a source of harm to other people,
- (d) While safeguarding the dignity of Muslims is a fard, kissing the Black Stone is a sunnah. A fard cannot be sacrificed for a sunnah. When the area is crowded, it is sufficient to point to the Black Stone, saying "Allahu akbar," and to continue to move with the flow of people without causing a break in the lines. Indeed, keeping an easy flow during circuits is the most commendable thing.
- (e) It is not a sunnah to kiss the Yamani corner, but to touch it with the right hand, if it is not overcrowded, and say: "Bismillahi wal-lahu akbar," But if it is difficult to touch it, then move on, do not point to it with your hand, or say takbir. For it is not reported of the Prophet. It is mustahabb (good) to recite the following supplication in between the Yamani corner and the Black Stone:
"Rabbana atina fid-donya hasanatan wa fil-akhirati hasanatan wa qina adhaban-nar",
- (f) In the wake of terrorism all around and recent attempts of explosions in various parts of Saudi Arabia particularly near the Masjid Nabvi in Madina pilgrims should remain cautious and alert .

Finally, the best advice we can give is that one should follow the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Messenger (peace be on him) in all what one does.

"Obey Allah and the Messenger in order that you may receive mercy,"

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:
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Talking of Madina

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Friends have invited me to give a talk on Madina, describing what I saw there, and I have readily agreed. As a Persian poet has said: "To talk of the beloved is no less pleasant than to meet him."

I do not know when I first heard of Mecca and Madina. Like all Muslim children, I was brought up in an environment in which Hejaz (Arabia) and Mecca and Madina were household words. I, distinctly, remember people saying Mecca, Madina together as if these were the same. When they took the name of one of them, they, generally, mentioned that of the other as well. I, thus, came to imagine that Mecca and Madina were not different places, but one, and learnt to appreciate the difference only as I grew up. It, then, became clear that these were two different towns separated from each other by over 300 kilometres.

In my childhood, I had heard people talking about Arabia and the two towns with the same fervour and enthusiasm as they did about Paradise and its joys and comforts, and it was from that time that I was seized with the desire to attain Paradise and visit Arabia.

Soon I realized that it was not

possible for anyone to see Paradise during his lifetime, but he could, of course, go to Arabia. Parties of Hajjis (pilgrims) were visiting it regularly. So, why could I, also, not make a visit to that 'Paradise of Faith'?

Days rolled by and I grew in age. My old eagerness was revived when I read books on the life of the holy Prophet and studied the history of Islam, and the urge to perform the Hajj and make the pilgrimage to Mecca and Madina became so strong that I was never without it.

Then, it so happened that I reached the place where 'neither the grass grew nor rivers flowed.' Only naked mountains stood on all sides of it like sentinels. Yet, as Hafeez Jalandhri has said:

Neither grass grows here nor flowers bloom,

Yet even heavens bend themselves low to meet it.

As I saw the apparently unattractive stretch of land, I felt how devoid of scenery that town was. At the same time, however, I thought what a great favour it had bestowed upon mankind. Without it, the wide world would have been nothing more than a golden cage, and man, a

prisoner. This was the town that took man out of the narrow confines of the earth and made him acquainted with limitless possibilities of development, and restored to mankind its glory and freedom. It relieved humanity of the heavy load under which it was groaning and broke the fetters of unjust rulers and ignorant lawgivers had put around its feet.

As I reflected over what the world would have been without this town, I thought of comparing it with the bigger towns of the world and seeing what would have been the loss of human race and civilization had the latter not come into existence. One by one, all those towns came to my mind, and I felt that they were flourishing merely for the sake of a handful of men and had made no notable contribution to human progress and happiness. On the contrary, they had been guilty of various sins against man, at various stages of history. For selfish gain, one town had razed the other to the ground, and one country had ravaged the other countries.

Civilization, would have been none the poorer without those cities. But without Mecca, humanity would have, certainly, remained un-blest with truths, beliefs, ideals and sciences that were its pride today. It was owing to it that the world regained the imperishable wealth of Faith and

rediscovered the true knowledge that lay buried under thick crust of conjecture and speculation. It got back the dignity and nobility that had been trampled underfoot by cruel oppressors. In fact, humanity was reborn at Mecca, and history turned a new leaf.

But what am I saying? What do I mean when I ask: What would the world have been like had there been no Mecca? It had remained asleep, until the 6th century, with its dry mountains and huge sand-dunes, even with the House of Ka'aba and the Well of Zam-Zam, while humanity was caught in the clutches of death. Surrounded by its mountains and sand-dunes, it went on leading a secluded life as if it had nothing to do with the larger human family, and was not a part of, but apart from the world that lay around it.

I should, therefore, not be enquiring what would have been the state of the world without Mecca, but without its illustrious son who turned the scales of history and showed a new path to mankind.

As I reflected on it, a few scenes emerged on the landscape of my mind. It appeared as if the leader of the Quraish was circumambulating around the House of Ka'aba, alone and by himself, and people were

jeering at him and passing sarcastic remarks, but he was carrying out the circumambulation with supreme indifference to all hostility and opposition.

On finishing the circumambulation, he wants to go into the House of Ka'ba, but the key-bearer, Osman bin Talha checks him with a firm hand. The leader of the Quraish bears it, too, with exemplary fortitude, and says: "Oh Osman! What will it be like on the day when the key will be in my hand and I will give it to whom I please?"

"Will all the Quraish be dead on that day?" asks Osman in anger. "No", he replies. "On that day, they will attain real respect and honour."

I, then, see the same leader circumambulating around the House of Ka'aba, on the occasion of the Victory of Mecca, and his Companions who had sacrificed their all for his sake gathering around him like moths. He sends for the keeper of the key, and says to him: "Osman! This is your key. Take it. Today is the day of showing kindness and keeping the promise."

As history tells, the celebrated son of Mecca did not only become the owner of the key with which he could open the door of the House of Ka'aba, but, with him, also, was the

key with which he could open the locks of humanity no seer or philosopher had been able to do till then. It was the Quran that had been revealed to and the Apostleship that had been bestowed on him.

After performing the Hajj, I flew towards Madina on the wings of eagerness. The hardships of the way seemed to be a blessing to me, and before my eyes were drawn the soul-stirring image of the earlier traveler whose camel had passed through the same route.

The first thing I did on reaching Madina was to offer two Rak'ats of Namaz and express my sincerest gratitude to the Almighty for granting me the good fortune to be there. After it, I betook myself into the 'presence' of the holy Prophet. How boundless was his favour upon me, really! I could never give thanks to him as was his due. I offered Durood and Salaam, and affirmed that he had conveyed the Message of the Lord to the world, proved true to the trust He had placed with him, showed the Straight Path to the Ummat, and strove till the last breath of his life in the way of God.

I, then, made the salutation to both the trusted friends of his whose selfless devotion was without a parallel in history. No one had discharged the duties of companionship or fulfilled the

obligations of succession as they did.

From the Prophet's Mosque, I went to Jannat ul- Baq'ee. What a priceless treasure of truth and purity, of love and dedication is buried in this small plot of land! Asleep here are those who had sacrificed the life of this world for the life of Futurity. These are the men who willingly abandoned their hearths and homes in the way of Faith, and preferred to spend their lives at the feet of the sacred Prophet than with friends and relatives. Among the Believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah. (XXXIII: 23)

Therefore, I visited Ohud where the most spectacular drama of love and fealty was staged. It was here that the world saw living models of faith and steadfastness; it was here that it learnt the true significance of courage and constancy. On reaching there, it seemed that I heard Hazrat Anas bin Nazr say: "I feel the sweet smell of Paradise coming from the side of Ohud." Or that on hearing the news of the martyrdom of the holy Prophet, Sa'ad bin Mu'ad was saying: "What is the joy of fighting and Jihad when the Apostle of God is no more?" And Anas interjecting: "What is the joy of living after him?"

It was here, again, that Abu Dujana had made his back serve as

a shield for the Prophet. Arrows pierced his flesh, but he flinched not. Hazrat Talha, in the same way, had taken the arrows aimed at the holy Prophet on his hands until the arms were paralysed. Hazrat Hamza was killed on this very battlefield and his body was cut to pieces, and Hazrat Mas'ab bin Omair was martyred in such a state that even a shroud could not be provided for him, and he was buried in a blanket which was so short that if the head was covered, the feet became bare, and if the feet were covered, the head became bare.

Would that Ohud gave something of its treasure to mankind! Would that the world got a small particle of the faith and steadfastness of those glorious times!

Friends say: "You took us to Cairo and acquainted us with its important personalities; you have told us about Damascus and its people, and introduced us with its scholars; you have taken us round the Middle East. Now, tell me something about Hejaz and its distinguished sons," But what am I to do? To me Hejaz stands only for one man about whom I can go on talking forever. It is because of him that Hejaz is Hejaz, and the World of Islam is the World of Islam.

Our honour. Indeed, is by Mustafa's name! ■

The Prophet of Mercy

- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi*

Here are two verses from the Holy Qur'an. The first is addressed to Arabs and tells them:-

“Now hath come unto you a messenger from amongst yourselves. It grieves him that you should suffer- Ardently anxious is he over you; to the believers he is most kind and merciful.”

The second is directed to the holy Prophet displaying His pleasures:

“We have not sent you but mercy for the world”.

Both these verses throw light on that aspect of the holy Prophet's characteristic features which distinguish him from others. This is not a simple laudation. This is pronounced by the Creator of Heaven and earth as an everlasting reality.

One can visualise by the study of history of that period the conditions of the world and also the direction towards which it was heading. The men were divided in different groups. Many of them had become great by manipulation, exploitation and the use of brute force. They over powered the helpless and treated them worst than slaves. They were not made to serve only but were also made objects of pleasure by treating them with extreme cruelty and

torture.

While celebrating and rejoicing any occasion they illuminated the venue by putting the slaves on fire. They made them fight with brute animals and it was a pleasant sight for them when they were torn to pieces and killed by these animals. Stadiums were crowded with spectators who enjoyed the game. These chosen few collected such luxuries and niceties around them that one finds it difficult to visualise it. The crown of the King and the turbans of the courtiers were studded with diamonds and precious stones. A big retinue of singers, dancers, attendants and chefs always formed a part of the court.

Woman was a source of pleasure only otherwise she was regarded as inferior to men folk and was unwanted. In her parental home she was considered inferior to her brothers and had to serve them along with her mother. The birth of a baby girl was taken as a bad omen. Her relations with the family were severed after marriage. She was not entitled to share in the inheritance. The death of her husband was a real calamity for her, already detached from her parental home. She was treated with contempt and reduced to the status of a domestic servant.

Our beloved Prophet bestowed all

* Rector, Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow.

human rights on slaves and women. He gave directions for their respectable position in society. He said that all are sons and daughters of Adam. All are equal irrespective of their complexion, Arab or non-Arab and none is inferior to other. The criteria for greatness was righteousness. He taught the world equality of all. Salman Farsi of Persia, Bilal of Ethiopia and Suhaib of Rome lived with him as members of the family. He freed his slave Zaid, son of Harisa, and treated him so affectionately that he was regarded as his foster son. Then he married him with his cousin sister Zainab which was so unusual in those days. He accorded proper rights to women, fixed their share in the patrimony and advised parents to take care of them even after their marriages. He instructed husbands to provide comforts to their spouse according to their status. He allowed separation under specific circumstances when they could not live together. He ordered for moderate expenditure of wealth but forbade to be miserly and closefisted. He made it obligatory for the wealthy people to help the poor and needy.

To extort money from anybody, to dishonour him and to kill him without justification was regarded a grave offence. He permitted revenge for killing innocent but restrained to exceed limits in exercising such rights.

His preaching was not simple, in fact created a society which had to

observe strictly this code of conduct. We find unique examples of adhering to these basic principles and values. When Hazrat Abu Bakr sent an army for the holy war, he issued orders that any worshipper at his religious place should not be ill-treated. No territory should be attacked unless the prospect of a treaty recedes. Nothing should be taken from occupied area without paying its cost. Nobody should be forced to change his religion.

When Hazrat Umar Farooq went to Jerusalem on the invitation of its ruler who wanted to hand over the city to Muslims, he entered the city on foot while his slave was on the camel's back. It was decided that both of them would ride the camel alternately and while entering the city it was the turn of the slave to be on the camel's back. The slave insisted to change positions but the Caliph did not agree.

When Persia was conquered a Muslim Soldier came in possession of the crown of the Emperor. The precious crown of the studded with jewels was brought by the soldier, covered by the front of his shirt, and delivered to the Caliph. On being asked his name he said that God knew his name and did not tell.

The Holy Prophet, by his practical guidance, created a society of which every member was indifferent for worldly pleasures and cared only for the reward

in the life hereafter. He was prepared to make any sacrifice, even his life, for implementation of truth and righteousness. He was just and honest in all walks of life, he cared for the weak and downtrodden, it was immaterial to what religion the oppressed man came from. Animals were also treated kindly. The spread of Islam was under the shade of kindness and mercy. Parents, relatives and neighbours got the rightful attention.

The world found a social order based on moral values and humanity. An order which had no precedence in history of the past. It was a period when humanity reached the brink of cruelty and injustice. No doubt, in that period, the world had tremendously progressed in the pursuit of knowledge and had achieved such glorious strength and power that its shine glared the vision. The world was wonder struck with the glamour of the Persian and Roman

Empires but humanity was crying under the weight of cruelty and injustice. The rulers, the intellectuals and the clergymen had no feelings for it. If somebody cared for it he found himself helpless to bring any change and abandoned his efforts. God Almighty took pity on this sorry state of affairs. He chose the holy Prophet and gave him perfect code of conduct and made him the last of the Prophets. This code of religious jurisprudence (Shariah) was in harmony with the changing conditions of the world and requirements of life. A code to be followed till the last day. It can stand to any new development.

The bounty, the blessing and the piety which have been brought by the holy Prophet are eternal. The ark of the well being is moving very smoothly. The proclamation of the Creator stands that He has sent the Prophet as the mercy for the worlds. ■

The Difference Between ‘Hajj’ and ‘Umrah’

Hajj is obligatory (farz) and ‘Umrah’ is not. Hajj has to be performed at a fixed time in a year whereas ‘Umrah’ can be performed at any time of the year except 9th to 13th Zil-Hijj. The pilgrim for ‘Umrah’ is not required to go to ‘Arafat’ and “Muzdalifah”. Talbiyah is stopped at the beginning of circumambulation (tawaf) in ‘Umrah’. The talbiyah is stopped at the beginning of ‘Rami’ (stoning) at “Jamaratul Aqabah” in Hajj.

Tipu Sultan's Crusade

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Muslims have played a very significant role in the national struggle for freedom. They have been in the forefront of it. It was, after all, from their hands that the British had wrested power in India. When British Imperialism was spreading its tentacles over the country and devouring one Province after the other, the first man to realise the gravity of the danger was the lion-hearted Tipu Sultan of Mysore. He saw clearly that unless determined efforts were made in time to thwart the nefarious designs of the greedy aliens, the whole of India would ultimately be swallowed up by them. With this resolve, he unsheathed his sword and jumped into a fierce, life-and-death struggle against the British exploiters.

Tipu Sultan made a valiant bid to unite the Indian princes against the British usurpers. He even wrote to Sultan Salim III of Turkey to join hands with him for the expulsion of the British. His whole life was spent in the struggle. He came on the verge of success, the English were about to be swept out of the land, but they managed to achieve through diplomacy what they could not gain by arms. They cleverly obtained the support of some rulers of the South and by the use of other methods of treachery and deceit brought to nought the patriotic ambitions of that gallant son of Mysore. Tipu Sultan was finally killed in the thick of battle on May 4, 1799. He preferred death to a life of servitude under the British. His famous, historic, words spoken a little before he met his death were: "To live for a day like a tiger is far more precious than to live for a hundred years like a jackal". It is reported that when the British Commander, General Horse, received the news of the Sultan's death and went to inspect his corpse, he cried out. In exultation: "From today India is ours".

The history of India does not tell of a braver patriot and a more uncompromising enemy of foreign rule than him. In his life-time he was the most hated man among the English. To give vent to their spite, Englishmen in India even went to the extent of giving to their dogs the name of Tipu. It continued to be like this with them for a long time. ■

(Muslims in India)

The Importance of Education in Human Society

- S. Bilal Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi*

The significance of education in Islam is an acknowledged fact. Islam is the first religion which promoted education in an unprecedented way and made it compulsory for its adherents. The very first revelation sent to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) vividly shows immense significance of education. The Holy Qur'an says, "Read in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created- Created man, out of a leech-like clot: Proclaim!and thy Lord is Most Bountiful, He Who taught the use of pen, taught man that which he knew not"(S.96,A.1-5).

It is clear from the above mentioned verse of the Holy Qur'an that Islam accords its complete attention towards knowledge and learning. The main aim of Islamic education is to know the relation of man with Allah. That is why from the very outset a deep and firm nexus of knowledge has always been to Muslims.No doubt, the first revelation is the main key for enhancing and promoting arts and sciences. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) laid tremendous stress on the acquisition of knowledge. Even he directed the captives of Badr,who were learned, to impart education to Muslims. The very same was their ransom. This also establishes the importance of education.

* *Nazir-e-Aam, Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow*

The prophet ordered some of his companions to learn Hebrew and other languages. The contributions made by Islam regarding education and learning have no parallel in human history. No other religions of the world can reach its one-tenth.

The advancements in education started during the life time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).He set up firm foundations on which vast colonies and splendid buildings were constructed.The fact is that Islam equipped the world with abundant blessings of knowledge that such example is not found in any other religions of the globe.

Islam's main plank is to put knowledge on its right dimensions and incorporate it with the name of Allah. As it was mentioned in the very first revelation "Read with the name of thy Lord" so that human beings may not misuse the knowledge and pen. Muslims dominated all branches of arts and sciences for hundreds of years. Consequently, human beings cutting across religions gained considerable profits from it. The crux of the matter is that Muslims possessed knowledge along with the divine instructions. They followed the footsteps of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in letter and spirit.

The history bears witness that there were well- equipped and well-

furnished hospitals for the service of humanity during Muslim régime in Baghdad. Apart from it there is a hospital named "Bimaristan" in which a host of departments were set up. There was a particular department where some people were appointed merely to gossip the patients so that they may achieve mental peace and tranquility. Unfortunately, such sorts of facilities are not available today. Today, the condition is that if any patient goes to the doctor for check-up, the doctor treats him in harsh manner and puts him into trouble instead of giving good suggestion and sane advice. Sometimes on hearing doctor's severe talk, the patient's condition starts deteriorating. The main reason is that one has knowledge but devoid of its

true spirit. Today, mankind made great strides in the arena of science and technology but their level in morality appears lower than the wild animals. In the past so long as Muslims stuck to ethical values of Islam they achieved extraordinary success in every spheres of life. They were the torch bearers of culture, civilization and education for about six centuries. It was through them that various arts and Islamic sciences were transmitted to Europe.

History is replete with the instances of their remarkable contributions and achievements.

No doubt, it was the Muslim influence which brought about the Renaissance in Europe. ■

(English Rendering: O.R. Nadwi)

Qurbani

It is related by Ayesha that the Apostle of God said: "On the 10th of Zil Hij, i.e., The day of 'Idul Azha, no act of son of Adam is more pleasing to the Lord than Qurbani, and, on the Day of Judgement, the animal of Qurbani, will come with the horns and hooves, and the blood of Qurbani reaches the place of the propitiation and good pleasure of God before it falls on the ground. So, Oh bondsmen of God I perform Qurbani with full willingness of the heart."

-Tirmizi

Abdullah bin Omar related to us that "the Apostle of God stayed in Medina for ten years (after Migration), and performed Qurbani regularly (i.e., Every year)."

-Tirmizi

Hanash bin Abdullah narrates that "I saw Hazrat Ali performing the Qurbani of two rams (upon which) I asked him about it (i.e., why he was performing the Qurbani of two rams instead of one). He replied: 'The Prophet had exhorted me to make an offering on his behalf, also, and, so, I perform one Qurbani in his name.'"

-Abu Dawood

Scientific Advances, First Revelation And The Islamic World

- Suhaib Shahab

Not Namaz! Not Oneness of God! The first word revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at Cave Hira in 610 C.E. was 'Iqra' – READ or EDUCATE yourself at a time when the world never had universities, internet, libraries, scientific technologies and paper just produced by China was yet to be introduced to the world. Mass scale production of paper began in the Muslim world when they began reading and writing the Qur'an, hadiths and the community as a whole joined the learning culture. Libraries were established, book stalls were pioneered and universities had found their way in.

The stereotype – “Is Islam incompatible with modernity?” OR “Is Islam hostile to science?” kill its very own argument from core as history suggests otherwise. From the 8th to the 16th centuries – Islamic civilization underwent what is now known as the Islamic Golden Age. The period of economic growth, intellectual, and cultural developments resulted in a number of inventions and advancements which we still rely on today.

Aman called Al-Khwarizmi, one of the greatest of all time mathematician was Muslim, worked in the golden age

Islam. He's the guy who came up with not just Algebra but Algorithms, without Algorithm we won't have laptops, Oh! without laptops I couldn't even imagine the 'Scientific advancements' and Yes! definitely without which you would not be reading this text of mine right now. Windmills and carpets are some other inventions coming from the Muslim world.

“COFFEE – the favourite drink of the civilized world,” as said by Thomas Jefferson – was first brewed in Yemen around the 9th century. In its earliest days, coffee helped Muslim worshippers stay awake at late nights for devotion. Later brought to Cairo by a group of students, the coffee buzz soon caught on around the empire. By the 13th century it reached Turkey, but not until the 16th century did the beans start boiling in Europe, brought to Italy by a Venetian trader. So next when you visit a CCD grabbing a cup of Cappuccino in your hands remember Mr. KALDI, an Ethiopian goatherd who discovered coffee when he noticed after eating the berries from a certain tree, his goats became so energetic that they refused having a goodnight sleep.

Did You Know That the First University Was Founded by a Muslim woman? In 859 a young princess named

Fatima al-Firhi founded the first degree-granting university in Fez, Morocco. Still operating almost 1,200 years later. Learning is at the core of the Islamic tradition.

The ancient Greeks thought light emitted from the eye (like a laser) causing us to see. It was a Muslim mathematician in the 10th century that instead realised light entered into the eye. Astronomer and physicist Ibn al-Haitham invented the first pin-hole camera after observing light entering a hole in the shutters. It was Islamic ritual to bathe and wash during times in Europe when bathing was considered bad for one's health.

Arabs originated the general recipe for soap we still use today: vegetable oils with sodium hydroxide and aromatic oils such as orange or thyme. England saw its first shampoo thanks to a Muslim. The 10th century Muslim surgeon called al-Zahrawi designed many of our modern surgical instruments still in use today: scalpels, bone saws, forceps, and fine scissors for eye surgery. The first hospital was established in the Muslim world and was free to get treatments.

In 953, the Sultan of Egypt asked for a pen that would not leak all over his clothes and hands. The fountain pen was invented in which the ink would be held in a reservoir and be delivered to

the paper (or papyrus) by gravity. The idea for our modern checking accounts came from the Arab world. To avoid having to transport money across dangerous terrain, a written vow was honoured to pay for goods upon delivery. "In the 9th century, a Muslim businessman could cash a check in China drawn on his bank in Baghdad."

Who says today's Muslims have obliterated their bequest in scientific contributions of their glorious history. When Covid-19 pandemic engendered the world to its knees, an invisible and a tiny virus became the world's top most scientists' pain, The Husband-and-Wife team worked out a vaccine to solve Covid-19. Dr. Ugur Sahin and Dr. Ozlem Tureci a Turkish Muslim couple who founded BioNTech, a German company, teamed up with Pfizer on a vaccine that was found to be more than 90 per cent effective. "It could be the beginning of the end of the Covid era," Dr. Sahin said in an interview while finding a cure for a disease that has killed more than 1.2 million.

Islam or Muslims furnished the very revolutionary inventions which had changed the course of human civilization, scientific researches and economics. From coffee to checks and the three-course meal, the Muslim world has rendered many innovations that is taken for granted in our day-to-day life. ■

The Message of Eid-ul-Azha

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha are two main festivals of the Muslim world. Eid-ul-Azha is celebrated on the tenth day of Zil-Hijjah, the last month of Islamic calendar. It is observed to reflect the prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his only son Ismail whose Allah bestowed upon him at the age of 86. The story of Prophet Ibrahim's sacrifice was vividly mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. The prophet Ibrahim prayed to Allah, "O my Lord! grant me a righteous son." So We gave him the good news of a forbearing son. Then, when the son reached the age of serious work with him, he said: "O my son! I have seen in a dream that I offer thee in sacrifice. Now see what is thy view!" The son said: "O my father! Do as thou art commended: thus will find me, if Allah so wills one of the steadfast. So when they had both submitted to Allah and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead for sacrifice, We called out to him o Ibrahim! Thou hast already fulfilled the dream. Thus indeed do We reward those who do right. For this was a clear trial and We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice. And We left for him among generations to come in later times. Peace and salutation to Ibrahim. Thus indeed do We reward those who do right. For he was one of our believing servants." (S.37,A.100-

111)

The above narrating makes it clear that a righteous and pious slave of Allah is always ready to obey his Creator's order. Accordingly, if one wants to create closeness to Allah and attain His pleasure, will have to exhibit prophet Ibrahim and Ismail like unprecedented submission, obedience, love and faith towards Allah. The whole story doesn't require the flesh and blood of animals. As Allah says, "It is not their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah: it is your devotion that reaches Him". (S.22,A.37)

Needless to add that Qurbani (sacrifice) is also one of the main parts of the Hajj. Having performed the rites of the Hajj, pilgrims gather at Mina at distance of four miles from the holy city of Makkah for offering sacrifice, worship and recollection of Allah. It should be noted that ten days of the month of Zil-Hijjah or the month of pilgrimage assume tremendous significance as enshrined in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The Holy Qur'an says, "By the down. By the ten days, (S.89,A.1-2) Most of the commentators of the Qur'an say that by the ten nights are usually understood the first ten nights of Zil-Hijjah, the sacred season of pilgrimage. Similarly, the fasting of Arafah (ninth Zil-

Hijjah) holds also immense importance. The prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says, "I am sure that Allah forgives sins of a year before and after of the fasting of Arafah. It goes without saying that for four days on this occasion i.e. from the morning of ninth to the after-noon (Asr-prayer) of the thirteenth Zil-Hijjah, praise and glory of Allah is recited after every prayer, known as takbirat-i-tashriq, the purport of the words recited is as follows: "Allah is Most Great: Allah is Most Great! None is worthy of being worshipped except Allah! Allah is Most Great! Allah is Most Great and all praise is for Allah alone."

Noted Islamic Scholar S. Sulaiman Nadwi says, "Islam means resignation to the Will of God. It implies complete submission to Allah's commands. The sacrifice given by Ibrahim and Isma'il (peace be upon them) proves beyond any shadow of doubt, that they were the true and loyal servants of Allah. In appreciation of the sacrifices of Ibrahim and Isma'il (peace be upon them), Allah, the Exalted, named this sentiment of theirs of resignation and surrender to His as Al-Islam. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an.

"So, when they had both surrendered (unto Allah)". (37: 103)

"And who can be averse to the religion of Ibrahim, but he who infatuated his mind. Indeed We chose him in the

world, and in the Hereafter, he is surely amongst the righteous".

"And when his Lord said to him: Submit, he said: I submit to the Lord of the worlds". (2: 130-131)

In fact the religion of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) is based on Al-Islam i.e. resignation and surrender (to Allah). Ibrahim (peace be upon him) prayed Allah again and again.

"Our Lord! Make us submissive unto Thee and of our progeny a community submissive unto Thee and show us our ways of worship, and relent towards us. Thou art the Relenting, the Merciful." (S. 2 A.128)

In fact, the sacrifice in the path of Allah is not only a tradition but the most preferred adoration of Allah. Generally, the sacrificial offering is divided into three portions, one for household consumption, another for the friends and relatives and the third for the poor and needy regardless of caste, creed, region and colour. Besides, the sum obtained from the sacrificed animals' skins is also given to the poor and downtrodden segments of the society. No doubt, the act of sacrifice strengthens the bond between Creator and His creation. It also fosters real sense of brotherhood and fraternity. In short, the Qurbani (Sacrifice) is the highest form of submission, devotion, obedience and adoration to Allah. ■

Muhammad The Last Prophet

- Hammudah Abdalati

The Muslim's belief that Muhammad is the Last Prophet of God has been misunderstood by many people and, hence, needs an explanation. This belief does not, in any way, mean that God has closed His door of mercy or has retired. It does not impose any restriction on the rise of great religious personalities, or bar the emerging of great spiritual leaders, or obstruct the evolution of great pious men. Nor does it mean that God has done the Arabs, from whom Muhammad was chosen. His Last Favor to the exclusion of everybody else. God is not partial to any race or age or generation, and His door of mercy is ever open and always accessible to those who seek Him. He speaks to man in either of three ways:

(1) by inspiration which occurs in the form of suggestions or ideas put by God into the hearts or minds of pious men;

(2) from behind a veil which occurs in the form of sights or visions when the qualified recipient is asleep or in a state of trance; and

(3) through the Heavenly Messenger Gabriel who is sent down with concrete Divine words to convey to the chosen human messenger (Qur'an,

42:51). This last form is the highest and is the one in which the Qur'an came down to Muhammad. It is confined only to the prophets of whom Muhammad was the Last and the Seal.

But, again, this does not deny the existence or continuance of inspiration in the two other forms to whomever God wills. By choosing Muhammad to be the Seal of the Prophets, God has not lost contact with or interest in man, and man has not been barred from seeking God or obstructed in his aspiration to God. On the contrary, by choosing Muhammad to be the culmination of Prophet-hood and the Qur'an to be the completion of Revelation, God has established a permanent medium of communication between Himself and man, and has erected an ever-radiating beacon of guidance and light. Besides these general observations, there are other points which show why Muhammad is the Last Prophet of God. From among these, a few may be mentioned:

1. The Qur'an states in unequivocal words that Muhammad is sent to all men as the Apostle of God to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and earth (7:158). It also states that Muhammad was sent only as a Mercy from God to

all creatures, human and non-human alike (21:107), and that he is the Messenger of God and the Seal of the Prophets (33: 40). The Qur'an is the word of God, and whatever it says is the truth of God by which every Muslim abides and on which even man should reflect. The Message of Muhammad was not simply a national revival or a racial monopoly or a temporary deliverance from bondage and oppression. Nor was it an abrupt change or reversion in the trends of history. The message of Muhammad was, and, of course, still is, a universal revival, a common blessing, a supranational heritage and an everlasting spiritual deliverance. It is an evolutionary continuance of the previous messages and a well-balanced incorporation of all the former revelations. It transcends all boundaries of race, age, color, and regional features. It addressed to man of all times and it is precisely what man needs. Thus, a Muslim believes that Muhammad is the Last Prophet because the Qur'an bears true witness to that, and because Muhammad's message has the highest qualities of a truly universal and conclusive faith.

2. Muhammad himself stated that he was the Last Prophet of God. A Muslim, or anyone else for that matter, cannot question the truth of this statement. Throughout his life, Muhammad was

known to be most truthful, honest and modest. His integrity and truthfulness were beyond doubt not only in the sights of Muslims but also in the minds of his most staunch opponents. His character, his spiritual accomplishments, and his mundane reforms are unparalleled in the entire history of mankind. And it remains yet to be seen if history could produce any equal to Muhammad. He said that he was the Last Prophet because it was the truth of God, and not because he wanted any personal glory or sought any personal gains. Victory did not spoil him, triumph did not weaken his excellent virtues, and power did not corrupt his character. He was incorruptible, consistent, and inaccessible to any notion of personal gain or glory. His words display dazzling light of wisdom and truth.

3. Muhammad was the only Prophet who fulfilled his mission and completed his work in his lifetime. Before he died, the Qur'an stated that the religion of God has been perfected, the favor of God on the believers has been completed, and the truth of revelation has been guarded and will be safely preserved (Qur'an 5:3 and 10:9). When he died, the religion of Islam was completed, and the community of Muslim believers was well-established. The Qur'an was recorded in his lifetime and preserved in its total and original version. All this

means that the religion of God has been completed by Muhammad in concept as well as in application, and that the Kingdom of God has been established here on earth. Muhammad's mission, his example and his accomplishments have proved the point that the Kingdom of God is not an unattainable ideal or something of the Hereafter only, but it is something of this world too, something that did exist and flourish in the age of Muhammad and can exist and flourish in any age whenever there are sincere believers and men of faith. Thus, if any man was destined to be the culmination of Prophet-hood, who could it be other than Muhammad? And if any book was designed to be the completion of Revelation, what could it be other than the Qur'an? The actual fulfillment of Muhammad's mission on earth and the authentic recording of the entire Qur'an in his lifetime should leave no trace of doubt in any mind as to the belief that he was the Last Prophet.

4. The decree of God that Muhammad is the Last Prophet is based on the original and pure authenticity of the Qur'an, on the conclusive and unique accomplishments of Muhammad, on the universality of Islam, and on the applicability of the Qur'anic teachings to every situation, every age, and every man. This is the religion which transcends all borders and penetrates far beyond all barriers of race, color, age

and status of wealth or prestige. It is the religion which assures men, all men, of equality and brotherhood, freedom and dignity, peace and honor, guidance and salvation. This is the pure essence of God's religion and the kind of aid He has always extended to man from the beginning of history. With Muhammad and the Qur'an has come the culmination of religious evolution. This, however, does not mean the end of history or the termination of man's need for Divine guidance. It is only the beginning of a new approach, the inauguration of a new era, wherein man has been sufficiently provided with all the Divine guidance and the practical examples he needs. This Divine guidance is contained in the Qur'an, the most authentic and incorruptible Revelation of God, and these practical examples are found in the personality of Muhammad. If there were to come a new prophet or a new revealed book, what could this add to the quality of prophethood or to the truth of the Qur'an? If it is to preserve the word of God or guard the truth of Revelation, this has been done through the Qur'an. And if it is to show that the Law of God can be implemented in history or that the Kingdom of God can be established on earth, all this has been shown by Muhammad. And if it is to guide man to God and the Right Way of life, this has been well-established by the Qur'an and

Muhammad. Man does not need new revelations or new prophets. What he needs most is to wake up, to open his mind and to quicken his heart. What he needs now is to make use of the already available Revelations, to utilize his existing resources and to draw from the inexhaustible treasures of Islam which has incorporated, preserved and perfected the purity of the previous revelations.

5. God decreed that Muhammad would be the Last Prophet and so he was. No Prophet before Muhammad had done or accomplished or bequeathed so much as he did. And no one after him, of those who have claimed prophet-hood, has done anything comparable to what he did. However, this Divine decree was in anticipation of the great historical events which have followed. It heralded good news for man that he would enter a new stage of intellectual maturity and spiritual heights, and that he would have, from then on, to do without new prophets or new revelations, to be on his own, aided by the rich legacies of prophet-hood and revelations as found in Muhammad and his predecessors. It was in anticipation of the fact that the cultures, races and regions of the world would become closer and closer to each other, and that mankind could do well with one universal religion in which God occupies His rightful position and man realizes

himself. It was a solemn witness to the great role which advanced knowledge and serious intellectual undertaking would play in terms of bringing man to God. And it is true that if man can combine his advanced knowledge and his sound intellectual potential with the spiritual and moral teachings of the Qur'an he cannot fail to recognize the existence of God and adapt himself to God's Law.

The historical stage of prophet-hood has ended with Muhammad to give man the evidence that he can mature on his own initiative, to give science an opportunity to function properly and explore the vast dominion of God, and to give the mind a chance to reflect and penetrate. The nature of Islam is such that it has a great deal of flexibility and practicability and can cope with any arising situation. The nature of the Qur'an is such that it is universal and ever-revealing, and in its guidance is sure, without doubt. The nature of Muhammad's message is such that it is addressed to all men and directed to all generations. Muhammad was not merely a racial leader or a national liberator. He was, and still is, a man of history and the best model of him who seeks God. In him every man can find something to learn, and excellent examples of goodness and piety to follow. And in him every generation can find its lost hope. ■

Islamic Concept of State

- Shaikh Shaukat Hussain

The word "Islam" in Arabic means, submission, surrender and obedience. As a religion, Islam stands for complete submission and obedience to Allah. That is why it is called Islam, and is an attributive title. Whosoever possesses this attribute, may he belong to any race, community, country or clan, is a Muslim. Another meaning of Islam is Peace' and this signifies that one can achieve real peace of body and mind only through submission and obedience to Allah.

ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF LIFE

"I have not created jin and mankind for any other purpose except that they should obey Me."

"Do they seek other than the religion of God? While all creatures in the heavens and on the earth, have willingly or unwillingly bowed to His Will."

Islam lays down that whole of the universe was created by the Almighty Allah and is governed by Him all the time. It is He Who created man on this earth and instead of binding him to the Divine path, in the whole of his life, like other creatures gave him the freedom of choice to follow it or do otherwise in one sphere of his life. The Divine Guidance, regarding that sphere of human life, in which man is given freedom has been revealed to him through the Messengers of God who came to the world in different ages and conveyed to

Mankind the Divine Guidance which was revealed to them, along with the warning that if man does not follow it he has to face bitter consequences in the life Hereafter and sometimes, in the worldly life as well. It was revealed through the Prophets that the purpose of creation of human beings was that they should live in this world as the bondsmen or representatives of the Almighty and that the Divine Guidance should be followed in all sphere of life and those who do this will be rewarded in the life Hereafter and may enjoy a life of harmony and prosperity in this world as well. The revelations of the Almighty were conveyed through the Prophet Muhammed(PBUH), who lays down not only the abstract ideas but the practical guidance for all aspects and spheres of human life.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE ISLAMIC POLITICAL SYSTEM

"O, ye who believe enter completely into Islam and follow not the footsteps of Satan for he is your avowed enemy."

There is no dichotomy in Islam between the temporal and spiritual. The structure of Islam is essentially relegio-political and in this system, the state, as Iqbal rightly puts it, "is only an effort to realize the spiritual in human organization." The bifurcation of the unity of man into temporal and spiritual is totally

done away with. The Christian doctrine of "Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God which is God's," is replaced by the thesis propounded by the prophet (PBUH) himself that, "the whole of this earth is a mosque." Therefore, the political system of Islam is based on the same fundamental principle, which form the basis of Islam itself. These principles are Tawheed (Unity of God), Risalah (the Prophethood of Muhammed(PBUH) and Khilafat (Vicegerency of man). Now let us comprehend these terms in context of the Islamic political system.

Tawheed

"Are not you aware that the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah alone and that you have neither nor helper besides Him."

"The living, the Supporter of the whole universe. He does neither slumber nor sleep. Whatever is in the heavens or the earth is His. Who is there that can intercede with Him except by his own permission. He knows whatever is open to the people and also whatever is hidden from them."

Tawheed means that One God alone is the Creator, Sustainer and Master of this Universe and He alone has a right to command or forbid, worship and obedience are all due to Him alone, none else shares it in any degree or form. It is He Who possesses all the attributes of a Sovereign.

"He is able to all things:"

He has to refer to none and render

accounts to none.

"He cannot be questioned, for His acts."

He is the source of all authority, His authority and power be restrained.

"There is none who can change His works."

He is above error, it is He Whose sovereignty never comes to end.

"The living the Supporter of the whole universe. He does neither slumber nor sleep."

This principle of Tawheed altogether negates the concept of legal and political sovereignty of human beings. No individual, family, class or race can set itself above God. God alone is the ruler and His commandments are the laws of Islam. The principle of Tawheed is the fundamental principle of Islam. When a Muslim declares that there is no god but One, he excludes all other authority but that of God because this, in the words of Iqbal, demands." Loyalty to God and not to thrones"

Risalah-The prophet-hood of Muhammad(PBUH)

"We sent afore time our apostles with clear signs and sent down with them, the Book and the Balance(of right and wrong)that men may stand forth in justice. And we sent down Iron in which is mighty war as well as many benefits for mankind, the God may test who it is that will help."

"We sent the Messenger to you from among you, who recite to you My

revelations; who purifies your lives; who instructs you in the Book and wisdom and teaches you those things you knew not.”

“Ye have indeed, in the apostle of God a beautiful pattern (of conduct).

The medium through which man receives the law of God is known as Risalah (the Prophet-hood). The mission of the prophets (PBUT) was to convey the Divine guidance to man, propagate it and disseminate the teachings of Allah, and to establish them on this earth. This was the mission of all prophets (PBUT) who appeared in succession ever since man’s habitation on earth up to the advent of Muhammad(PBUH), the last who finally guided man to salvation. Two things have been received through this source (a) The Qur’an (the book in which God has expended His law) (b) the authoritative interpretation and exemplification of the Qur’an by the Prophet Muhammad(PBUH). The broad principles on which the human life should be based have been stated in the Qur’an. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has, in accordance with the Divine Book, set-up model of Islamic life by practically implementing the law of God and providing necessary details where required. The combination of these two according to the Islamic terminology is Shariah. This is the Supreme Law of Islam.

Caliphate (Representation or Vicegerency)

“Behold, thy lord said to the angles,

“I will create a vicegerent on earth.”

“O David, Lo! We have set thee as a viceroy in the earth; therefore judge a right between mankind and follow not desire that it beguile thee from the way of Allah. Lo! those who wander from the way of Allah have an awful doom, for as much as they forgot the day of Reckoning.”

Caliphate is the third basic principle of Islamic polity. The word Caliphate, literally means representation. The real position and place of a man according to Islam is that of a representative of God on this earth as His vicegerent, that is to say, by virtue of powers delegated to him by God, he is required to exercise and realise the Divine authority in this world within the limits prescribed by God. This concept of representation implies five things:

- (i) Man is merely an administrator and does not hold this position as a matter of his own right.
- (ii) He has to administer in accordance with the directions provided by God.
- (iii) He has to exercise this authority within the limits prescribed by God.
- (iv) While exercising these powers he has to fulfil the intention of the Almighty.
- (iv) Whosoever is in authority is accountable for his actions.

“The state which is established in accordance with this political theory will in fact be a, “Caliphate under the sovereignty of God, for fulfilment of the purpose and will of God on God’s earth within the limits prescribed by

Him and in accordance with His instructions, injunctions.”

**NEITHER DEMOCRACY NOR
THEOCRACY**

“Allah hath promised such of you as believe and do good works that He will surely make them Caliphs to succeed (the present rulers) in the earth even as He caused those who were before them to succeed (others) and that He will surely establish religion for them....”

The above verse makes it clear that no individual dynast or class can be Caliph, but the authority of Caliphate is bestowed upon the entire group of people; the community as a whole, if it fulfils the conditions of representation after to principles of Tawheed and Risalah, such a society carries the Caliphate as a whole and each individual share it, “There is no ruler and no ruled.”

This is the point where democracy begins In Islam and every person in an Islamic society enjoys the rights and powers of Vicegerent of God and in this respect all Individuals are equal. The agency for running the affairs of the state will be formed according to the will of these individuals and authority of the state is an extension of powers of individuals delegated to it. Their opinions will be considerable in the formation of Government which will run with their advices and accordance with their wishes, subject to Divine Guidance. Whosoever gains their confidence will undertake the duty and obligation of Caliphate and whenever he loses their

confidence will have to step down. In this respect, the political system of Islam is the most perfect manifestation of democracy. The differences between the western concept of democracy and Islamic concept of democracy is that in the former, the sovereignty rests in the people while in the latter it is vested in God and the people are merely His vicegerents. In the former, people make their own laws while in the latter they have to follow and obey the laws of the Shariah given by God through His Prophet (PBUH). In one, the Government undertakes to fulfil the will of the people while, in the other, both the Government as well as the people undertake to fulfil the purpose of God. In brief, Western democracy is a kind of absolute authority which exercises its power in free and uncontrolled manner whereas the Islamic State is subservient to the Divine Law and exercises its authority within the limits prescribed by the Shariah.

This concept of Islamic State is entirely different from the concept of Theocracy in which one particular group of clergy (priestly class) is supposed to be the representative of God and not the whole of the community of the State, as in Islam.

**ISLAMIC STATE ACCOUNTABLE
BEFORE SUBJECTS**

Authority or power to rule, according to Islam, is a trust (Amanah). It is not the birth right of anyone. Muslims are enjoined to entrust it to those who are competent to fulfil the purpose laid down by the

Almighty. The concept of trust in the of accountability because a trustee appointed by the people has to render accounts to those by whom he is appointed. In the words of Justice Hamoodur Rahman, "Under the Islamic system, the Caliph was responsible to each and every citizen no matter where located and held him also equally accountable and open to correction."

ISLAMIC STATE- AN IDEOLOGICAL STATE

"Islam in non-territorial in character," says Iqbal, "and its aim to furnish a model for the final combination of humanity." Islamic State is an ideological state and is based on an ideology and its purpose is to establish that ideology. These state is the instrument of reform and must act likewise and such a state should be run only by those who believe in the ideology on which it is based and in the Divine Law which it is assigned to administer. Islam does not recognise any geographical, linguistic or colour bars in this respect. Whoever accepts Islam no matter to what race, nation or country he may belong, can join the community that runs the Islamic State. "The believers are but a single brotherhood," declares Allah and describes them as "friends and protectors of one another."

But those who do not accept its ideology are not entitled to have any hand in shaping fundamental policy of the state.

"Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those entrusted with Authority among you."

They can live within the confines of the state as non-Muslim citizens (zimmis). This aspect of the Islamic State resembles that of a communist state. But the treatment meted out by the communist states to the persons holding creeds and ideologies other than its own, bears no comparison with the attitude of the Islamic State.

The non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic State have specific rights and privileges. Their life, property and honour are fully protected and they can occupy the posts of the state except those from where the ideological policy of the state can be influenced. Islamic State gives its non-Muslim citizens right to live in accordance with their own culture. There is no distinction as to the rights and privileges between the Muslims and non-Muslims in the Islamic State. Whatever the distinction is made between the two is in the realm of political responsibility.

Purpose of the Islamic State

"(Muslims are) those whom, if We give power in the land establish the system of Salat (Worship) and Zakat (poor due) and enjoin virtue and forbid evil."

The Holy Qur'an says that the aim and the purpose of this state is the establishment, maintenance and development of those virtues which the Creator wishes human life to be enriched with, and the prevention and eradication of those evils the presence of which in human life is utterly abhorrent to God. In the words of Iqbal, "it is only an effort to

realise the spiritual in human organization.” The State of Islam not intended for political administration only, nor for fulfilment through it of the collective will of any particular set of people. “It is not an end in itself but only a means to an end.” The main object of an Islamic State, according to the Qur’an, is to enforce and implement with all its sources at its organised power that reformatory programme which Islam has given for the betterment of mankind. The purpose of Islamic State is to encourage and popularise good practices which Islam desires humanity to adopt and to discourage, eradicate and crush with full force all those evil practices which Islam considers to be the causes of oppression, exploitation, injustice and disorder. It has to observe the moral principles laid down by Islam at all cost and in all walks of life. Islam lays down unalterable policy for the state to base its functioning on justice, truth and honesty. It is not prepared to tolerate fraud, falsehood, injustice for the sake of any political, administrative or national expediency. Whether it be relations between the rulers and the ruled in the state or the relations of the state with other states, precedence always must be given to the truth, justice and honesty over material considerations. Islam imposes similar obligations on state as on man. The words on the first Caliph Abu Bakar (RA) on his election bring to focus the real nature and the purpose of an Islamic State:

Truth is trust, falsehood treason. The weak among you shall be strong with me till his rights have been and strong among

you shall be weak with me till, if God wills, I have taken what is due from him.

Seeking of Leadership Prohibited

I swear by God I will not entrust leadership to anyone who asks for it or anyone who is eager for it.

An important aspect of Islamic polity is that those who seek leadership are disqualified for it. Thus, no one can declare himself as a candidate for any one of the posts of leadership. It is the people who will elect the pious and efficient one from among themselves for the responsibilities of leadership. There is no scope for canvassing by the candidates. A seeker of trust is considered to be most untrustworthy for it.

ISLAMIC POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

Executive

O Believers, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those entrusted with authority among you.

The responsibility for the administration of an Islamic Government in an Islamic State is entrusted to an Amir (leader). All adult Muslims have a right of being involved in the election of Amir directly or indirectly. The basic qualification for the election of an Amir are that he should command the confidence of the largest number of people in respect of his knowledge and grasp of the spirit of Islam; he should have the quality of piety and be endowed with qualities of statesmanship. In short, he should have both virtue and ability. A Shoora, Advisory Council, is to be elected by the people for

assisting and guiding the Amir in the administration of the state. It will be incumbent on the Amir to take the advice of the Shoora in the administration of the state and to act accordingly.

The Amir can retain office only so long as he enjoys the confidence of the people, and will have to relinquish his office as soon as he forfeits the confidence. He will have authority to govern and exercise the powers of the Government in consultation with the Advisory Council and within the limits set by the Shariah, Amir is in no way above the law and there is no scope for any doctrine like “King can do no wrong” as in the British constitution. Remarkable indeed is the relation between the nation and the Amir. He is not the master but the servant of the nation.

Legislature

(Muslims are those) who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation.

The legislature in the Islamic State is supposed to consist it of those people who have great insight in the Islamic Shariah and enjoy the confidence of the people. The legislation will be restricted within the limits prescribed by the Shariah. The legislature will have no power to make any law which is in conflict with the injunctions of the Qur’an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The injunctions of God and His Prophet (PBUH) are to be accepted and obeyed. No legislature can make any alteration or modification in them. The legislature will only be competent to enact rules and regulations within the frame work laid

down. As for the commandments which are liable to two or more interpretations, the duty of ascertaining the reality of injunctions or preferring one of the interpretations also lies of it. Great scope will be available for legislation regarding the question not by specific injunctions of the Shariah. The legislature will be free to legislate regarding such matters, of course always keeping in view the general spirit of Islam. Where there are enacted laws in the books of Fiqh, the legislature may adopt them. Once elected the members of the legislature can function as independent members judging each and every question on merits and not on the basis of their affiliations. All have to act with the sense of collective responsibility.

Judiciary

And when ye judge between man and man that ye judge with justice; verily excellent is the teaching which He giveth you.”

The Judiciary in Islam derives its authority from the Shariah and is answerable to God. The judges are to be appointed the Government but once a judge has occupied his he will have to administer justice among the people in an impartial manner. The functionaries of the Government will not outside its jurisdiction. There is “no immunity from law for anyone. Even the Prophet (PBUH) himself never claimed any immunity.” The prophet (PBUH) once said “By God if Fatima, my daughter, will commit theft I shall cut her hands.” Rulers and ruled are subject to the same law and procedure. All the

citizens will be entitled to free Justice. There will not be any court fees. For resolution of legalistic problems, for carrying out analytical studies and for affording convenience to the public there will be an institution of Ifta. This body, consisting of capable and trustworthy scholars of law (Muftis), could give legal opinion without any fee during the Caliphate.

Citizenship

Those who believed and adopted exile and fought for the faith with their property and persons in the cause of God, as well as those who gave (them) asylum and aid these are all friends and protectors of one another as to those who believed but came not into exile ye owe no duty to help them.

Although, the Islamic State is not a nationalist one, it confines its citizenship to only those persons who live in its territory or migrate to it. It is not an extraterritorial state. In the above verse the Prophet (PBUH) as a head of the Islamic State is exempted from any sort of duty towards the Muslims who are not the citizens of the Islamic State. Thus, only those Muslims will be under the guardianship of the Islamic State who will be living there or who will migrate to it. The relationship of Islamic brotherhood will be there but not the legal responsibility of guardianship. Said the Prophet (PBUH), "I am not responsible for the protection of a Muslim who lives among Mushriks (Polytheists)." If the Muslims of a non-Muslim state are subject to tyranny and

they ask for help of the Islamic State on the basis of their membership of the Islamic fraternity, it is obligatory on the Islamic State to go to their help and to protect them but this function is to be discharged with due regard to international commitments and moral obligations. A Muslim becomes the citizen of an Islamic State as soon as he sets his feet on its territory with an intention to live there.

Rights and Duties

The purpose of existence according to Islam is solely to serve or obey the Almighty. Here it may be suspected that man has no rights but only duties in Islam, but, since within the totality of Islam man's duty to God embraces both his duty to society and every individual rights are protected by the Divine Law. The state itself being subject to this same law is compelled to protect the rights of individual. The rights/duties are to be observed and respected under all circumstances. By the virtue of being Divine in nature they are irrevocable and unamendable. The state as well as its subjects are bound to follow these unless otherwise provided by law. The Islamic State strikes a balance between the individual and the state so that the State may not work in an autocratic manner and render the individual helpless nor grants a degree of unbridled freedom to the individual that he may injure the collective interest. It gives full opportunity to the individual to grow and progress by bestowing certain fundamental rights upon him. ■

Transformation of The Perspective

- M. Abdul Haq Ansari

Education in an Islamic setting in our age has three dimensions. The first concerns the content of education which consists primarily of ideas, although it also includes work and experimentation. The second concerns the method of education and involves preparation of text books, training of teachers, and building of habits and character on the part of the students. Methods of research in various disciplines may also be mentioned in this context. The third dimension of education is its organization and management. It involves the division of education into lower, middle and higher education and into disciplines and subjects. Instruction in traditional disciplines, such as the study of the Quran, Hadith, and Fiqh, and the education of women and children may be placed in this category.

In this paper we will restrict ourselves to the content of education, particularly the aspect of the content which concerns ideas that constitute particular sciences and disciplines, and ideas that inform the general perspective which shapes the development of particular sciences.

From the point of view of ideas, education at the lower level in an Islamic setting is not a problem. For the ideas that are to be imparted to students at this level may be partly derived from our own traditional resources, and partly taken over from modern text books with little or no

modification. The preparation of text books, or the training of teachers for this level are not difficult jobs. They only need faith and determination, and can be carried out at any time.

But at the middle level of education where a student is initiated into various disciplines, the Muslim educationist encounters a real problem which becomes even more serious at the higher level of education. He faces a problem regarding the concepts and theories of particular disciplines as well as the general perspective in which they are worked out. Of course, the nature and gravity of the problem vary according to the discipline concerned. With natural sciences, for instance, the problem is not so much of particular ideas, of the general view of Nature and the logic of the science concerned. In the case of the social sciences, the problem is not confined only to questions of the general perspective on man and society, but also concerns many of the concepts and theories of these disciplines as they have more or less a direct bearing on the various ideas and ideals of Islam. In philosophical disciplines, which examine knowledge and truth, values and ideals, the conception of God and the world, the nature of man and his destiny, i.e. questions of general perspective, the Muslim educationist faces a problem of great magnitude. He cannot reject part of the modern perspective and

accept another. He can select a few ideas, but that would not form a perspective and he must have his own perspective. He must have it spelled out and formulated in such a manner that it can be used in reviewing the literature of various disciplines, before he can write a suitable text book for his students.

During the last hundred years various efforts in the field of education have been made in different parts of the Islamic world, and they have done a great service. But so far as the reorientation of education along Islamic lines is concerned they have only limited success. In traditional madrasas the highest point of achievement is an addition to the curriculum of some European languages and a few modern subjects to give a new look to the teaching of the old subjects. But there has been no modernization of perspective. As a result what we have is a discordant juxtaposition of modern and traditional ideas. On the other hand, in new-styled schools and colleges, the effort in Islamic orientation education does not go beyond the primary level. What we teach in our institutions at the middle or higher levels is not at all different from what is taught in Western institutions.

The reason is neither the lack of determination, nor the paucity resources. The reason is the absence of a perspective, which could guide the educationist as well as the scholar and the researcher. What is more deplorable is that many of us are not even conscious of the importance of this perspective; and the

proof of this lack of consciousness is that we never plan a concerted effort to work out our own perspective. We do not fully realize that mere talk of Islamic transformation of education, or preparation of text books and training of teachers for middle and higher education is idle before we have a transformation of the perspective.

It is untrue to say we do not have any perspective. We do, but at the level of faith. We do not have it translated in terms of general theory or philosophy which may help us review ideas of modern sciences, and which may guide intellectual pursuits and inspire research. Some may turn for a perspective to that literature which the intellectual leaders of Islamic movements in various countries have brought out during the last fifty years. Remarkable though this literature is in many respects, it is mostly concerned with issues in the practical aspects of social, political and economic fields. Contemporary Islamic thought has so far shown little interest in the issues of general perspective.

One might think that this is an incidental phenomenon but it is not an accident; it has deeper roots in Islamic history and tradition. After the Western domination of the Islamic world in the nineteenth century, Muslim thinking turned away from the outside world and centered on its own problems. As there was no problem of perspective among the Muslims, naturally Islamic thought did not become involved with it. It was diverted to practical problems in society and politics.

At the same time, thought in the West was passing through a period of disillusionment with theology and was looking for the essence of religion in moral and social concerns. This trend in Western thought influenced Islamic thinking even further away from the philosophical questions of the perspective. This tendency was welcomed by many sections of Muslim scholars who had always looked on philosophy and theology with suspicion and contempt.

There is another reason why Islamic thought in recent years has been confined largely to social fields. It has been a common belief among Muslim intellectual leaders that the distinction of Islam as a religion lies in its concern with society. Islam is essentially a Sharia. They have been working on the assumption that if the social concern of Islam embodied in the Sharia is sufficiently elaborated in modern idiom, the world at large will be convinced of the truth of Islam, and the Ummah will regain confidence in its own future. Muslims will then be urged to struggle for the Islamic transformation of society and for the restoration of Islam's power and glory. This is a common premise of the strategy adopted by the present movements in Islam working for an Islamic revolution. But their experience in the past few years have led many people in these movements to the realization that their understanding of the problems of the community, particularly the working of the mind of the Western educated ruling class, has been rather superficial. The perspective in which this class looks at

things is different from the Islamic perspective which has not been presented to them in recognizable terms. There is a big perspective gap between the ruling class and the Islamic revolutionists. Some in the Islamic movements have also come to ask whether the socio-political approach to Islam in contemporary Islamic literature is sound. They wonder if the stress should not be now placed on the basic questions of the Islamic perspective.

This leads us to ask how Islamic perspective differs from the Western perspective. The major premise of the Western perspective is that all beliefs and ideas, aspirations and institutions which are of their own creation, have developed through a long process of history. Similarly, all perceptions of reality and truth, goodness and beauty are the products of history. There are, of course, various interpretations of the historical process. Some Westerners believe that it is dialectical, some that it is evolutionary, and others have offered their own different formulations. But all of them agree on the human origin and the historicity of all forms of ideas and institutions.

Religion, they believe, is a human creation. If there is reality outside the historical process, as the religious believe, it works in and through history. God or the Divine is imminent in the world. He inspires rather than reveals. Beliefs are human responses and aspirations, and what is called sacred literature is a record of all kinds of fallible human interpretations and experiences sanctified through ritual over a period of history. There is nothing

absolute in history, everything is relative and is subject to change and transformation.

A Muslim reader of Western writing on Islam often comes across a ruthless application of the historical method and dismisses it by attributing it to the religious bias of its author. It is, of course, true that most of the earlier works on Islam were produced under a strong religious bias, but many of the recent works are largely inspired by the historical view of knowledge we are talking of. The same view is also applied on a far greater scale to the study of Christianity and there was a time when it was supported by the critics of Christianity. Now, it is used by a growing number of faithful scholars and theologians. As a result we have a vast literature on the history of different books of the Old and New Testaments, on the life of Christ, on the development of Christian beliefs, rituals and worship, values and institutions. The method has also been applied to the study of Judaism, and various other religions, primitive, classical or modern.

Most of the modern literature of Islam by Muslim authors is completely unaware of the historical approach. If it ever goes beyond the boundaries of society and touches the issues of the general perspective the views that it chooses to criticize are the old-fashioned materialism, dialectical historicism, and biological evolution. None of these theories is essential to the historical approach, which is primarily a method, although it has some important philosophical

presuppositions. And it is on the account of these presuppositions that the need for the Islamic perspective becomes urgent.

The first problem in the development of an Islamic perspective is the problem of revelation. Contemporary Jewish and Christian theologians understand revelation in the sense of inspiration or the extraordinary quickening of the human spirit, with the clear implication that the content of revelation is essentially human and fallible. They are forced to take this line and interpret the word of God in the Bible in this light because of the modern criticism on the Bible. A Muslim's belief regarding the word of God in the Quran, on the other hand, is that it is a speech articulated by God himself, revealed to the Prophet through an infallible way and preserved in the form that we have it now without the admixture of any element contributed by the Prophet or any other human being. It is in other words meta-historical.

Jewish and Christian writers treat the word of God in the Quran as they treat the word of God in the Bible. They argue their case from two sides. They study the content of the Quran in its historical background, and try to show to their satisfaction that almost all the important Quranic ideas are taken from Christian and Jewish sources, and that the rest are derived from pre-Islamic Arabian society. They also argue from the history of the text of the Quran, as they have constructed it. Literature on the former aspect is quite considerable, on the latter comparatively meager.

Muslim scholars have looked down on this literature with contempt and refused to take note of it, although it determines the attitude of a great number of men and women in the world and exercises quite a considerable influence on our own educated people. I believe it is high time that Muslims gave up the attitude of ignoring this literature and proceed to subject it to a thorough criticism. Criticism, however, should not be the goal. Rather it should produce a positive account of the history of the Quran text, taking into consideration all the relevant modern research into the origin and development of the Arabic language and script.

Muslims should also make thorough studies on various aspects of the Quran. There are verses in the Quran which refer to natural phenomena, and there are statements on historical events and personalities. There are also remarks on the books of the Jews and Christians the Torah, the Psalms and the Gospel — and comments on their beliefs and practices. On all these subjects there are numerous observations in commentaries on the Quran and there are also independent works. However, we need fresh efforts on these subjects that take into account modern historical method as well as the critical literature on the Quran and the Bible. Our old literature on the i'jaz of the Quran and its divine authorship is outmoded. We have to produce a new literature on the Quranic i'jaz.

The second subject that should be taken up with utmost seriousness is research on Islamic values and a

comprehensive statement of the entire value system. There is no work on the subject in any Islamic language. There are only a few elementary works on the ethics of the Quran; the other aspects of the system are almost untouched. Traditional literature on Islamic jurisprudence is concerned with the method of finding out the right hukm (rule) for a new act or event. With the notable exception of Abu Ishaq al-Shatabi (d. 790/1388) in Spain and Waliy Allah (d. 1176/1762) in India none of the jurists have taken up an investigation into the ends (maqasid) of the Sharia and the relation of the maqasid with ahkam (rules and regulations), or to use the terminology of ethics, the relation of the good and the right. Waliy Allah's work is of a general philosophical nature, whereas Shatabi's work is more factual and analytic. But both studies are far from fulfilling our requirements.

What we need is a comprehensive formulation of the stem structure of Islamic values and its dynamics. We have to know how far various priorities have been actually fixed by the Quran and the Sunnah, and how far they have been left to individuals and societies in various periods and circumstances to define themselves. What is the relation between ends and priorities on the one hand, and changes in technology, industry and population, on the other? We need to know what is absolute and what is relative in the Islamic values.

Recent works on Islamic society, policy and economy touch on one or the other aspect of Islamic values. They are

helpful so far as they go. But in order to have a comprehensive view of the system, one has to investigate the structure and the dynamics of the Sharia as a whole. This is necessary not just for a theoretical understanding of the Islamic values, but also to carry further the work on various aspects of Islamic Society. It is feeling that the work on Islamic society based upon the jurisprudential principles laid down centuries ago has reached its zenith. A further breakthrough in the work needs a fresh enquiry into the structure of the Sharia and the system of Islamic values.

Another dimension of the work on Islamic values is philosophical. The system has to be viewed in the context of Islamic views on the questions of reality, truth, and the nature of man and his destiny. Without this, the Sharia as a whole or a part of it cannot be fully justified.

The work on Islamic values is also important from the point of view of establishing the rationality of fundamental Islamic beliefs in God and the hereafter. For beliefs in metaphysical truths are to an extent value statements, consequently they are to be justified to that extent in terms of value.

The third problem that I want to mention here concerns the Islamic view of the history of religion. The Quran is interested in the subject in order to show how God has been working in guiding the destinies of the peoples known to the Arabs, and how God acted, and would act, to various responses which people have made or would make to God's message

and its bearers. What role various statements of this type have played in the success of the Prophetic mission in Arabia can hardly be over emphasized. Similarly the success of the efforts for Islamic revival in our age will be determined to a considerable extent by the formulation of the Quranic perspective on the history of religion by taking into consideration all that has been made known regarding the religions the Quran mentions and those that it does not.

In this connection it is necessary to point out the differences between an Islamic view of history in general and of the history of religion in particular. The Quran is directly concerned with the latter only. But this does not mean that we cannot have or should not have an Islamic view of history. This is one of the important tasks which scholars should take up. But here I am particularly underlining the work on the history of religion, or the study of the Divine scheme for the guidance of humanity.

There are a number of problems besides those I have mentioned, which are equally important for the development of the Islamic perspective. These concern the nature and the destiny of man, the concept of God, and the place of reason and religious experiences vis-à-vis revelation in the formation of a perspective. If I have chosen these three problems or three areas of research for specific mention that is because there is not sufficient realization of their importance and urgency.■

Around the World

Report Russia Earned \$98 bn From Fuel Exports in 100 days of War

Russia earned 93 billion earned (\$98 billion) from fossil fuel exports during the first 100 days of its war in Ukraine, with most sent to the European Union, according to research published. The report from the independent, Finland-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) comes as Kyiv urges the West to sever all trade with Russia in the hopes of cutting off the Kremlin's financial lifeline. According to the report, the EU took 61 percent of Russia's fossil fuel exports during the war's first 100 days, worth about 57 billion euros (\$60 billion). The top importers were China at 12.6 billion euros, Germany (12.1 billion) and Italy (7.8 billion). Even as Russia's exports plummeted in May, the global rise in fossil fuel prices continued to fill Kremlin's coffers. Russia's average export prices were about 60 percent higher than last year, report said. ■

Newborns in Kherson to get Russian citizenship

As Ukrainian forces continued counterattacks to wrench back land in southern Ukraine, Russia took another step in its efforts to deepen its hold on the region: the proxy government in the Kherson region announced that all newborns would be granted Russian citizenship. "Children born after 24 February in the Kherson region will automatically receive citizenship of the Russian Federation," Kirill Stremousov, the deputy head of the Moscow-imposed regional administration, told RNYT ■

WHO Drops Endemic Nation Tag to Boost Monkeypox Fight

GENEVA: The World Health Organization said it has removed the distinction between endemic and non-endemic countries in its data on monkeypox to better unify the response to the virus.

Until the past few months, monkeypox had generally been confined to western and central Africa but is now present in several continents. "We are removing the distinction between endemic and non-endemic countries, reporting on countries together where possible, to reflect the unified response that is needed," the WHO said in its outbreak situation update dated June 17 but sent to media on Saturday.

Between January 1 and June 15, 2,103 confirmed cases, a probable case and one death have been reported to WHO in 42 countries, it said.

The Geneva-based UN health agency is due on June 23 to hold an emergency meeting to determine whether to classify the global monkeypox outbreak as a public health emergency of international concern. The designation is the highest alarm the UN agency can sound.

The majority — 84% — of confirmed cases are from the European region, followed by the Americas, Africa, Eastern Mediterranean region and Western Pacific region. The WHO believes the actual number of cases is likely higher. ■

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