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Value of Love

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The excellence of man lies in his love and mercy for others: one person is pricked with a thorn but another person feels the pain. Man is gifted with tears which fall from his eyes when he sees a widow's head uncovered in helplessness, a poor man's kitchen unlit, and a sick man in distress. If such a drop of tear is put in a sea of transgression, it will cleanse it. If it falls on a forest of sins, it will burn it and fill the space again with the effulgence of virtue. The angels can bring forward anything, but they cannot present this drop of tear. The angels do not sleep due to their cognizance of Allah's being and attributes, but their vigil does not have the excellence of man's inability to sleep due to the sufferings of others.

The quality of love permeating through the human heart is a very precious gift of God. When something stirs it, it assumes a strange power. It rises above the considerations of religion, community, nation, and motherland. It then only sees another man's heart and feels its suffering and is drawn to it by nature as is pulled an iron chip toward a magnet. ■

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Wisdom of Qur'an

Give to the near of kin his due, and also to the needy and the wayfarers. Do not squander your wealth wastefully; for those who squander wastefully are Satan's brothers, and Satan is ever ungrateful to his Lord. And when you must turn away from them – from the destitute, the near of kin, the needy, and the wayfarers – in pursuit of God's mercy which you expect to receive, then speak to them kindly.

(Al-Qur'an – 17:26-28)

Man should not consider his wealth his own only. Instead, after moderately meeting his own needs he should spend it on his relatives, neighbours, and other human beings who stand in need. Man's social life should also be permeated with a spirit of sympathy and recognition of the rights of others and a spirit of mutual cooperation. Relatives should be especially helpful towards each other. The 'haves' should extend to the 'have-nots' whatever they may be in a position to provide. The concept of the rights of others should be so pervasive that a person should consider those among whom he lives to have claims against him and his resources.

If a person helps others, he should do so with a feeling that he is merely discharging the obligations he owes them rather than burdening them with a debt of gratitude. And whenever a person is unable to be of any service to some needy, he should seek the latter's indulgence at his inability to do so, and should pray to God to bless him with the means that will enable him to serve others. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

It is narrated by Rafa'h that the Holy Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said: "Traders will be raised on the Day of Resurrection as wicked people, except those who had adopted the way of righteousness, goodness and truth."

(Tirmidhi)

Righteousness is the key to Ultimate Success. So the Holy Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) always encouraged his followers to adopt the way of righteousness in every walk of life. This hadith highlights the importance and significance of righteousness, goodness and truth in business.

While doing trade or business, people generally display purely materialistic mentality so much so that even the person regarded as 'religious' fail to deal justly and honestly as required by the religion. They neither care for what is permissible and what is not. Nor do they worry about honesty and truth. They are concerned only about earning money even at the cost of moral and religious bindings. But here the Holy Messenger has warned such traders that if they do not adopt the policy of honest-dealing and good moral conduct, they will have to face the fate of wicked people on the Day of Judgement. "In another hadith, the Holy Messenger said that the person who indulges in hoarding is a sinner. To hoard food grains and other commodities of daily necessity with a view to selling them at a higher price, when their scarcity in the market is causing great hardship to the people, is to take undue advantage of the people's difficulties. Islam considers this mentality criminal. ■

Editor's Note 

SWEET TONGUE

How to make friends and influence people. Wise and learned persons have suggested many ways to achieve this art of living. Frankly speaking it is the tongue of a human being which plays a major role in this direction.

The psychologists are of the opinion that it is the human mind where ideas are generated and then come out of our mouth. So basically we have to train our mind in becoming a 'lovable' human being. To become an ideal person one has to speak truth and a good word. In this context let us see what Islam teaches us.

Abu Hurayrah relates that the Prophet (SAW), said:

"Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak a good word or remain silent."

The importance of this Hadith ...

This hadith discusses some of the ways a Muslim's faith should affect the way he relates to others. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani writes: "This hadith speaks about three matters, and in doing so it brings together everything that good manners entail with respect to both word and deed."

Whoever believes in God and the Last Day...

The first condition is to either speak a good word or remain silent.

Speaking a good word or remaining silent

This is an encouragement to speak what is good and beneficial; at the same time it is a warning, cautioning us to be careful in what we say, lest we say something that is harmful or false.

It is part of a Muslim's faith to speak the truth and to say things that bring about benefit to others. Allah (SWT) says:

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak a word that is right. He will set right for you your deeds and forgive you your sins." (Quran 33:70-71)

"No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right, or bring reconciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking Allah's pleasure, then we shall grant him a great reward." (Quran 4:114)

When we have nothing beneficial to say, silence is golden. Once, Mu'adh ibn Jabal asked

the Prophet (SAW) to inform him of some good work that would admit him into Paradise and distance him from the Hellfire. The Prophet (SAW) mentioned to him the virtues of many good deeds, then said:

“Shall I inform you of the foundation of all of that?”

Muadh said: “Certainly.”

The Prophet took hold of his tongue and said: “Restrain yourself from this.” Muadh then asked: “O Prophet of Allah! Are we held to task for the things that we say?”

The Prophet replied: “May your mother be bereaved of you, O Mu’adh: Does anything topple people headlong into the Hellfire save the harvests of their tongues?”

We should avoid speaking ill of others. We should rather remain silent unless we are seeking justice for some wrong that has been perpetrated against us.

Our tongues are like double-edged swords. They can work for us and against us, both in this world and the Hereafter. We will be held accountable for what we say.

The Messenger of Allah (SWT) said: “The strong man is not the one who can overpower the people by his strength, but the one who controls himself while in anger.”

He (S) also said: “If any of you becomes angry, let him keep silent:”

The Messenger of Allah (S) said, “If any of you becomes angry and he is standing, let him sit down, so his anger will go away; if it does not go away, let him lie down.”

The Prophet (S) said: “Indeed a servant will speak a word pleasing to God that he thinks to be insignificant, but because of it God raises him by many degrees. And indeed a servant will speak a word displeasing to God that he thinks to be insignificant, but because of it, He will consign him to the Hellfire.”

We must be vigilant not to speak falsehood. We must think about what we are saying and the possible consequences of our words before we go ahead and speak. This hadith encourages us to guard our tongues. A person who wants to speak should think upon what he is about to say before he utters it. If it then shows itself to have some benefit to it, he may speak it; otherwise he should refrain from doing so.”■

S.A.

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Role of Muslims in The Struggle For Freedom

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Muslims in the Forefront

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's Crusade

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 naught 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 corps 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.

War of Independence

The Indian sepoy in May 1857, rose in open revolt against the oppressive misdeeds of the British masters, against the contemptuous treatment meted out by them to their Indian subordinates, their insatiable lust for money and persistent violation of the

religious sentiments of Hindus and Muslims. The sepoy uprising quickly developed into a national war with Hindus and Muslims fighting shoulder to shoulder for the emancipation of the motherland. The rebels marched towards Delhi, the seat of the last of the Mughal Emperors, Bahadur Shah Zafar, and proclaimed him to be the spearhead of their struggle and the symbol of national resistance. Battles were fought all over India under his flag. He was the unanimous choice of the people and their rightful leader and ruler and Delhi, the nerve-centre of patriotic India.

Share of Muslims

Though the War of Independence was really and truly a national war in which Hindus and Muslims had participated freely and equally and India had not yet seen a more stirring spectacle of popular enthusiasm, unity and patriotism, its leadership was predominantly in the hands of Muslims. More often than not, the leaders of the movement, at various levels belonged to the Muslim community.

Vengeance of the British

After the failure of the movement, for reasons that are well known, the British took a savage revenge from the Indians and let loose a spate of fury which revived the memories of Chengiz Khan and Halaku. The rebels were ruthlessly pursued, caught and

punished. There was ruin and desolation everywhere. The three young sons of the Emperor, whom the British themselves had given asylum, were killed by them so ruthlessly that it made even the Englishmen shudder. Thirty-three other members of the imperial family, including the old and the infirm, were also slain along with them. The aging Emperor himself was put to the severest indignity. He was tried for treason in excessively humiliating circumstances and would have certainly been put to death had high English army officer not guaranteed the security of his life. He was exiled to Burma to spend the rest of his days in utter poverty and indigence.

Death and Desolation

As the victorious British army entered the city of Delhi the terrible havoc it wrought there provided eloquent commentary to the Quranic verse that:

Kings when they enter a country despoil it, and make the noblest of its people the meanest: thus do they behave.

(-XXVII: 34)

The troops were given a free hand to plunder the city for three days and they made use of the opportunity with such enthusiasm that an English officer, Lord Lawrence, felt compelled to write to General Penny, who was the General-in-Command, in such strong

words about the whole affair, "I believe we shall lastingly, and indeed, justly be abused for the way in which we have despoiled all classes without distinction".

For three days death and destruction reigned supreme in Delhi. People were slain indiscriminately, shops were looted, houses were burnt. Men, women and children fled the town in thousands. In the end, the city which, till yesterday, was the seat of Muslim splendour was reduced to shambles. A graphic account of the general ruin and spoliation is furnished in his memoirs by Lord Roberts who had led the English army from Kanpur to Delhi. This entry bears the date, September 24, 1857, which means that it was made soon after the Red Fort of Delhi had fallen to the British. Wrote Lord Roberts:

"That march through Delhi in the early morning light was a gruesome proceeding. Our way by the Lahore Gate from the Chandni Chowk led through a veritable city of the dead; not a sound was to be heard but the falling of our own footsteps; not a living creature was to be seen. Dead bodies were strewn about in all directions, in every attitude that the death-struggle had caused them to assume, and in every stage of decomposition. We marched in silence or involuntarily spoke in whispers, as though fearing to

disturb those ghastly remains of humanity. The sights we encountered were horrible and sickening to the last degree. Here a dog gnawed at an uncovered limb, there a vulture disturbed by our approach from its loathsome meal, but too completely gorged to fly, fluttered away to a safer distance. In many instances the positions of the dead bodies were appallingly life-like. Some with their arms uplifted as if beckoning, and indeed, the whole scene was weird and terrible beyond description. Our horses seemed to feel the horror of it as much as we did, for they shook and snorted in evident terror. The atmosphere was unimaginably disgusting, laden as it was with the most noxious and sickening odours".

Islamic Rebellion

It was, indeed, a general massacre, but the wrath seemed to be directed particularly against the Muslims, for many among the higher British authorities associated the uprising with an Islamic Jihad and believed that the moving spirit behind it were Muslims. To quote Henry Mead: "This rebellion, in its present phase, cannot be called a sepoy Mutiny. It did begin with the sepoy, but soon its true nature was revealed. It was an Islamic revolt".

Another narrator of the dreadful drama says: "An English officer had made it a principle to treat every Muslim as a rebel. He would enquire from everyone he saw if he was a Hindu or a Muslim, and would shoot him dead right there if he turned out to be a Muslim".

Mass Execution of Muslims

After Delhi had been subdued and the British control was firmly established over it, there began the public executions. Scaffolds were built on the thoroughfares and such places were treated as centres of entertainment by the Englishmen. They would collect there in groups to 'enjoy' the executions. Several localities of Muslims were totally wiped out. "Twenty-seven thousand Muslims were executed, to speak nothing of those killed in the general massacre. It seemed that the British were determined to blot out of existence the entire Muslim race. They killed the children and the way they treated the women simply belies description. It rends the heart to think of it".

Lord Roberts writing to his mother on June 21, 1857 remarked. "The death that seems to have the most effect is being blown from a gun. It is rather a horrible sight, but in these times we cannot be particular". The purpose of this "business" was to show "these rascally Musalmans that, with God's help, Englishmen will still be the masters

of India".

Price of the Struggle for Freedom

The Muslims, thus, had to pay most heavily for waging the struggle for freedom. The British held them to be the major offenders and decided that their future generations should also be made to bear the burden of their guilt. The attitude of the British bureaucracy can well be gauged from the following quotation from Henry arrington Thomas of the Bengal Civil Service in his pamphlet, 'Late Rebellion in India and Our uture Policy' written in 1858, i.e. only a year after the rebellion:

"I have stated that the Hindus were not the contrivers or the primary movers of the 1857 rebellion and I now shall attempt to show that it was the result of a Mohammadan conspiracy. Left to their resources, the Hindus never would or could have compassed such an undertaking They (the Mohammadans) have been uniformly the same from the times of the first Caliphs to the present day, proud, intolerant, and cruel, ever aiming at Mohammadan supremacy by whatever means, and ever fostering a deep hatred of Christians. They cannot be good subjects of any government which professes another religion; the precepts of the Quran will not suffer it".

Exclusion of Muslims from Public Services

This attitude towards the Muslims continued to be the cornerstone of British policy in India for a long time. The Muslims were debarred from lucrative government jobs and were ejected from all other gainful occupations, their trade was ruined and the endowments from which their schools used to be maintained were seized. A system of education which ran counter to their cultural and intellectual ideals, and aspirations was introduced deliberately in the country.

It was, sometimes, openly stated in official notifications for government vacancies that only Hindus would be considered for appointment. Thus, Sir William Hunter has reproduced the following extract from a Calcutta Persian paper (*Durbin*), dated July 14, 1869.

“Recently when several vacancies occurred in the office of the Sunderbans Commissioner, that official in advertising them in the Government Gazette, stated that the appointments would be given to none but Hindus”.

Commenting on the above complaint, the author goes on to say:

“..... the Muslims have now sunk so low that, even when qualified for Government employment, they are studiously kept out of it by government

notifications. Nobody takes any notice of their helpless condition, and the higher authorities do not deign even to acknowledge their existence”.

Unconcealed Vindictiveness

The British made no attempt to conceal their ill-will against the Muslims. They caught hold of them at the slightest excuse and owed no mercy. They waged a fierce war against the small band of *Mujahids* (Crusaders) beleaguered in the tribal belt of the North-West. Whoever was suspected by them to be in league with the *Mujahids* or with the party of Syed Ahmed Shaheed was arrested and legal proceedings were started against him. Innumerable religious leaders, merchants and noblemen were tried on these grounds at Patna, Thanesar and Lahore, and sentenced to heavy terms of imprisonment. Some of them were branded as Wahabis and punished on that account. Symptomatic of the boundless British malice and hatred towards the Muslims was the judgement delivered by an English judge while condemning the three alleged Wahabi leaders, Maulana Yahya Ali, Mohammad Jafar Thanesari and Mohammad Shafi Lahori to death. The learned Judge, in the course of his judgement remarked :

“You will be hanged till death, your properties will be confiscated and your corpses will not be handed over to your relatives. Instead, you

will be buried contemptuously in the jail compound”.

After the sentence of death had been passed, parties of English men and women visited the jail to see the condemned prisoners in their cells and to take delight in their sighs and groans. But when they found that the prisoners, instead of being sad and dejected, were actually exulting in their state and looking forward expectantly to the martyrdom that had so blissfully fallen to their lot, they felt cheated and urged upon the government for the revision of their sentence to one of life-imprisonment. Ultimately, it was announced by the Deputy Commissioner of Ambala to the unfortunate men that the Chief Court had altered the death penalty passed against them to transportation for life. He said :

“You rejoice over the sentence of death and look upon it as martyrdom. The Government, therefore, have decided not to award you the punishment you like so much. The death-sentence passed against you has been changed to that of transportation for life”

The three prisoners along with two others, Maulana Ahmadullah Azimabadi and Molvi Abdul Rahim Sadiqpuri were then deported to the Andamans in 1865 where Maulana Yahya Ali and Maulana Ahmadullah

died. The entire property of the family of Sadiqpur in Patna was seized by the Government, their houses were ploughed down and official buildings were constructed on their sites. The tombs of their ancestors were demolished. All this was done to quench the mad thirst for vengeance.

Several other noted Ulema were sent to the Andaman Islands to serve life-sentences in banishment. These included Maulana Fazl-i-Huq Khairabadi. Mufti Inayat Ahmad Kakorwi and Mufti Mazhar Karim Daryabadi, of whom Maulana Fazl-i-Huq met his death in exile while the other two returned home on completing their sentences.

This policy of unmitigated spite and revengefulness was responsible for the political and educational backwardness that came over the Muslims during the earlier stages of the British rule and from which they have not yet been able to recover.

The Formation of the Indian National Congress

The first session of the Indian National Congress was held in 1884. It was attended by some prominent Muslim representatives. The fourth session at Madras, in 1887, was presided over by a Muslim, Mr. Badruddin Tayyabji, and Muslim delegates drawn from different walks of life participated in it in sufficient strength. A donation of Rs. 5,000 - was

announced in that session to the Congress by Mr. Humayun Jah.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Disagreement

Initially Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was a supporter of a common political platform, but he later changed his mind. His contention was that the political and educational backwardness of Muslims demanded that they should dissociate themselves from the national movement and avoid incurring the displeasure of the British Government by joining hands with the extremists of Bengal and other Hindu agitators. He felt that a separate non-political organization would serve the interests of Muslims' better, the other course, that of political collaboration with the Hindus in opposition to the British being fraught with the danger of reviving old wounds and creating fresh difficulties for them.

The Support of the Ulema to the Congress

Notwithstanding Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's opposition, a large number of independent Muslims, under the leadership of the Ulema, extended full support and cooperation to the nationalist activities and the Congress. They did not consider politics to be the 'forbidden fruit' for Muslims. In 1888, a whole set of religious decrees was published by Maulana Mohammad Saheb of Ludhiana urging upon Muslims to ally themselves with the Congress. These decrees were signed

not only by prominent religious leaders of India like Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi and Maulana Lutfullah of Aligarh but of Medina and Baghdad as well.

The Balkan War and its Repercussions in India

A wave of repugnance and anger arose among Muslims against the European Powers-particularly Britain which was then their spearhead-with the outbreak of the Balkan War in 1912. The Islamic political consciousness, gaining in strength as it had been steadily, reached its climax and burst in the East like a boil that had been suppurating for a long time. It was during these days that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad started publishing his fiery weekly paper, *Al-Hilal*. It became popular immediately and acquired a readership among Muslims running into thousands and lakhs. Its bold and trenchant criticism of Britain and the West was followed eagerly throughout the country. In addition to it, Maulana Mohammad Ali's English weekly, *Comrade* (which made its appearance originally from Calcutta and was later shifted to Delhi) and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan's *Zamindar* (Lahore) and a host of other Muslim newspapers and periodicals helped to produce a vigorous anti-British feeling among the educated sections of the community. In the upshot, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana

Hasrat Mohani were arrested and put behind the bars.”

Maulana Mahmud Hasan of Deoband

The Principal of the Muslim religious institution of Deoband, Maulana Mahmud Hasan (who later came to be known as Sheikhul Hind) was a sworn enemy of British Imperialism. No greater antagonist of the British had, indeed, been seen in India since the time of Tipu Sultan. A staunch ally of the Ottoman Empire—since it symbolised the power of Islam in the world and also held the Muslim Caliphate—and an indefatigable fighter in the path of India’s freedom, he had dedicated his whole life to work for the liquidation of the British Empire. He did not stop even at establishing secret contacts with the Afghan Government and with the revolutionary leaders of Turkey like Anwar Pasha. He was taken into custody in 1916 by Sharif Husain at Medina in Arabia who handed him over to the British. The Maulana and his associates Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, Maulana Uzair Gul, Hakim Nusrat Husain and Molvi Waheed Ahmad, were deported to the Mediterranean island of Malta in 1917 where they remained till 1920.

Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal

So was Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal a tireless champion of India’s freedom. He organised the Jami’at-i-Ulema-i-Hind to bring the

religious leaders of Muslims on a united platform in the struggle for national independence and took a leading part in Khilafat agitation. During his lifetime the Firangi Mahal in Lucknow functioned as the key-centre of Muslim politics.

Rowlatt Report

Came the Rowlatt Report in 1918, which made the Muslims the main target of its attack and laid the blame for anti-British activities largely at their door. It further brought matters to a head.

Khilafat Agitation and Hindu-Muslim Unity

The Ali Brothers—Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali—were released a year later. A wonderful spectacle of Hindu-Muslim unity was seen thereafter everywhere in India. The two communities gloriously forgot their dissensions and linking their destinies with each-other marched forward like a single body to do or die for the attainment of national freedom and the preservation of the Ottoman Empire. The country’s atmosphere was altogether electrified with rare revolutionary feeling.

India had witnessed a stupendous political awakening. It was ablaze from end to end with resentment against the British masters. Such was the setting in which Gandhiji made his debut on the political stage of the nation. He undertook a countrywide tour in the company of Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali, addressing

mammoth public gatherings from place to place and arousing the masses for the national struggle. Such a tremendous popular upsurge had never been seen in India before.

Non-Cooperation Movement

In 1920, Gandhiji and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presented before the people the two-pronged programme of non-cooperation with the British Government at all levels and the boycott of foreign goods. The proposals found ready acceptance with the masses as the major weapons of their movement and they proved to be so very effective that the Government was compelled to take full note of them. The British were threatened in India with a complete breakdown of the administrative machinery and a general insurrection. The inherent weakness of foreign rule was thoroughly exposed.

British Atrocities on Moplas

During the struggle for freedom, the severest loss in terms of life and property was suffered by the Mopla Muslims of Malabar. Provoked by unmitigated tyranny and coercion, the Moplas rose in armed, revolt against the British Government on August 21, 1921. The rebellion, which lasted for a little over six months, assumed such massive proportions that the Government had to call in even a warship to deal with it and fiftyone lakhs of rupees were spent by them on its suppression from August to

December alone. Thousands of Moplas were killed. As an instance of the ghastly atrocities perpetrated by the British, Mopla prisoners were herded together like cattle in the compartments of a railway train which three doctors had unanimously declared unfit for human transport, with the result that a great many of them perished in the way. The British paid no heed to their loud cries of anguish and pathetic requests for water. The detenus were kept under strict vigilance and subjected to all kinds of humiliation after the rebellion had been quelled, and, for a long time, the Moplas, in general, were denied the enjoyment of ordinary civil liberties. The Committee of Inquiry appointed in 1922 by the Special Commissioner of Malabar reported that: " There are at least 35,000 Mopla women and children whose condition is extremely miserable and unless proper measures are taken for their relief, many of them are likely to die of disease and starvation".

The Last Resort

The British Government in their desperation took resort to the most favourite strategy of imperialists everywhere-that of 'Divide and Rule'. They sowed seeds of communal discord in the land. The then Viceroy took a prominent Hindu leader into confidence and impressed upon him the need for starting powerful missionary movement to bring back into the fold of Hinduism those who had embraced

Islam. The Viceroy also advised him how essential it was to organise his community on a militant basis after the Khilafat agitation had demonstrated beyond doubt the strength, religious fervour and organisational capacity of the Muslims-the Hindus having foolishly allowed the initiative to pass into the hands of Muslims by making common cause with them on the issue of Khilafat which was wholly a Muslim affair.

Shuddhi, Sanghatan and Tabligh Movements

This was the starting point of Hindu revivalist activities which under the twin names of *Shuddhi* and *Sanghatan* spread all over India. As a reaction to them the Muslims also came forward with the *Tabligh* movement. An unending series of religious discussions, debates and conferences ensued, culminating, not unexpectedly by any means, in violent communal disturbances. The country was caught in the grip of terrible Hindu-Muslim riots.

The Congress manfully stuck to its task in the midst of this fearsome madness. It continued to hold its annual sessions regularly. A special session to take stock of the tragic turn of events was summoned in 1922 under the Presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad while the regular annual session in the same year was held at Co-canada and presided over by Maulana Mohammad Ali.

Countrywide Conflagration

The communal frenzy remained unchecked till the peak was reached in 1927, when as many as twenty-five riots were recorded within the space of a few months. The nationalist sections of both the communities were profoundly distressed at this state of things but there seemed to be nothing they could do to restore communal peace and harmony. The gulf between Hindus and Muslims grew wider and wider. Ultimately, the malady began to cast its sinister shadow on the minds of the leaders of the two communities also till the parting of ways between Hindus and Muslims came up before the world as a reality from which there was no escape.

Parting of Ways

A general impression was created among the thinking classes of both Hindus and Muslims that the patriotic fervour of the leaders of the nationalist movement was cooling down quickly and they were getting divided more and more openly into separate communal camps. The basic impulses of their thought and ambitions being communal in essence, they could not be looked up to standing fast by the ideals of Indian nationalism in the hours of trial and opportunity. The Muslims felt in their hearts that the Hindu leaders (whose guiding spirit now was Gandhiji) had failed lamentably to take adequate

steps for combating the communal menace. They had not brought forward that open mindedness, impartially and determination which was expected of them. By virtue of belonging to the majority community they wielded greater power and influence in the country, and could, therefore, have succeeded in putting down the riots had they shown greater courage and objectivity of outlook and denounced the communalists, whoever they were, openly and without fear or favour.

Maybe, this view was wrong or exaggerated but it was wrong or exaggerated but it did alienate the sympathies of many Muslim leaders, who had been in the vanguard of 'the nationalist movement, from the Congress. The Muslims, in general, were persuaded to believe that in order to safeguard effectively their rights and interests they would better rely on their own strength.

Separate Muslim Front and the Demand for Partition

In consequence, Maulana Mohammad Ali resigned from the Congress along with his friends and associates and, joined the Muslim political camp. The separatist instincts among Muslims became sharper and stronger with the passage of time. Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah revived the Muslim League in 1937, and, in a few years, it rose to be the most powerful

representative organisation of Indian Muslims. After the League had consolidated its position, it raised the demand for Pakistan. Thanks to the anomalies of Indian social existence, the bitter experience of communal discrimination in official circles, political immaturity of the people, and inter-communal fear and suspicions, the country was eventually partitioned in 1947.

Maulana Husain Ahmad and Jami'at-ul-Ulema

Muslim religious leaders connected with the Jami'at-ul-Ulema stayed firm in their loyalty to the Congress till the end. They did not waver in the least from their traditional nationalist stand. In the forefront of them was Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani who by his uncompromising hostility towards the British and extraordinary patriotic zeal and sincerity of purpose proved himself to be a worthy successor of his teacher and mentor, Maulana Mahmud Hasan Deobandi. These Ulema cheerfully bore the concentrated opposition and disfavour of their co-religionists, a large majority of whom had come to snare the views of the Muslim League. Maulana Madani strove to the best of his ability, during those fateful years, to make the Muslims realise the folly of the Pakistan demand. He undertook extensive tours of the country, preaching the gospel of unity from town to town and village to village. Morally

and religiously, his conduct remained absolutely stainless and above suspicion throughout that period of trial and crisis, and friend and foe are unanimous in their praise of his integrity and sincerity. After the independence, too, when unlimited opportunities had opened up for personal gain, he sought no favours for himself, so much so that he politely declined to accept the title of Padma Vibhushan, which was conferred upon him by the President of India in 1954, saying that it was against the traditions of his precursors to receive honours from the Government. It is tragically true that the high hopes he had entertained from freedom remained largely unfulfilled and he felt frustrated and heart-broken, but during the struggle he remained firm like a rock, and even after the independence had been won there occurred no change in his political views and convictions.

Another leader of the Jami'at-ul-Ulema, whose services cannot be overlooked in the course of the present narrative, is its General Secretary, Maulana Hifzur Rahman. The courage, resoluteness and enthusiasm with which he strove for the freedom of the motherland before 1947, and has since then been displaying in the safeguarding of the rights and interests of Muslims will not easily be matched by other contemporary Muslim leaders. His heroic services during the post-independence communal riots will

always be remembered with gratitude and admiration. He has never hesitated to expose the bitter truth in connection with these outbreaks, in the Parliament and elsewhere, and in criticising the local administration where it was found to have conducted itself unjustly towards the Muslims during a communal disturbance.

Maulana Azad

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had the distinction of serving as the President of the Congress for the largest number of years and at the most critical junctures of the nation's history. Two important British official missions - the Cripps' Mission and the Cabinet Mission - visited India during his ultimate term of office to negotiate with the Indian leaders. The Maulana, as the President of the Congress, took an active part in the negotiations. The delegates, including Sir Stafford Cripps, were deeply impressed by his keen political foresight and acumen.

It was during the Maulana's Presidentship of the Congress that India attained freedom. His memories, published shortly after his death, show that his sagacity was the role of a luminous mind in the machinery of the Congress. He commanded universal respect for his sagacity and political insight. His contribution to the cause of freedom has been as profound as that of anyone anywhere. ■

Resurgence of Muslim is The God's Will

- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi*

The system and functions of the entire universe are ordained by God and are under His direct control. The essential requirement for initiating and promulgation of a pure, pious order of life was that the minds of the target population be uncontaminated and free of any predilections. At the time of emergence of Islam, the civilized world was ruled by two powerful kingdoms, Rome and Sasanians (Present day Iran), both endowed with quality culture, knowledge and wisdom, military power (much akin to USA and USSR of our times). Arabs, bereft of and totally uninitiated to any of such qualities, dwelt in a different territory, in a state of disarray.

This deprivation rendered them as a clean slate upon which original words of advice, guidance and exhortation to positive action, could be inscribed, without having to eradicate too many pre-conceived notions. This coupled with their natural valour and willingness for vigorous action, marked them out as an ideal repository for a new, righteous way of life. They embraced the divine order, Islam, and became the pioneers for its magnificent uprising.

By virtue of untiring devotion and a burning zeal, the Arabs, within a period of two hundred years, became a highly enlightened race and a force to reckon with. So much so, that for over seven

hundred years no other nation could consider itself their equal. Till this day, a vast and rich store house of knowledge in the world owes its origin and existence to Muslims, specially the Arabs. Genesis of this lofty status lay in a simple and pious way of life.

Complacency precedes decline as a natural phenomenon. Muslims, ensconced in a false notion that their status, attained through glorious deeds of their ancestors, would sustain forever, let things drift. As is the law of nature, absence of improvement led to deterioration. As of now, Muslims are one of the most retarded lots as far as education, scientific advancement, social, cultural values, political and military power are concerned. The essence of Islam lies in learning whereas its followers now neglect this aspect to a limit.

The orchestrated efforts of current world powers and media are focused at depriving the Muslim of proper education and block whatever little opportunities are left with them. Media specially concentrate on further degradation of moral and culture of Muslim through meticulously designed programmes. Media all over the globe almost, is controlled by Jews who have a firm grip over the economy also. The basic and important reason is the total devotion and zest of their youth to educational advancement and acquisition of knowledge.

* Rector, Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow.

Our government is based on secularism and as a logical sequence; system of education should be secular. Ground reality is quite something else. Under such an environment, our efforts should be directed to provide at least basic knowledge to the young in a manner which would ingrain in their minds the true message God and teaching of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) so that the survival of Islam and a righteous mode life on earth is ensured. As it is, we have not been able to take care of Urdu language, which is a serious matter and should be paid due attention to.

That the world media and literature are going whole hog to present Muslims as a retrograde, destructive and subversive people, while, at the same, time suppressing the noble and virtuous traits, can be gauged to a great extent by two examples. One illustrates a subtle and other a blatant exercise:

A Western writer, in his book, eulogised the deeds and character of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) describing him (pbuh), as a noble soul yet, side by side, presenting him (pbuh) as a great leader, devoted exclusively to the cause of Arabs. A lay reader would not be in a position to unravel the camouflage designed to pass over the role of prophet (pbuh) as the messenger of truth and peace for the whole world.

The other example is of a blatant attempt to belittle the Muslims. A congregation of Muslims in Calcutta (now

Kolkatta) actually attended by seven lakhs, was reported in an English daily as consisting of a mere few hundreds.

In fact such gimmicks are a global phenomenon, while there is no media under Muslim control or ownership which could counter such vendetta and also bring before the world the true and real image of Islam.

The rationalists have postulated physical theories for the earthquake which occurred in Gujrat in not too distant past, but a discerning mind would know that basically such a scourge is the expression of God's displeasure. When God designated the human being as his vicegerent on earth, the angels, ignorant beyond what had been revealed to them by the Almighty objected, and it was Adam who was gifted with a vast knowledge, by the Creator, at the very outset.

It is the bounden duty of Muslims all over the world, to re-learn the lesson of the original message and the last revelation for leading a life in accordance with God's commandments and along the path marked by his chosen messenger (pbuh). Therein lies the one and only way for regaining the lost glory.

Some indications are evident of steps having moved in the right direction. Future action and hope for revival are the responsibly of the coming generations as the present one is on the way out. God helps those who help themselves, in the first instance. ■

Prevalence of Oppression-An Unhealthy Sign for the Country and Society

- S. Bilal Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi*

Whenever any nation's target is persecution and oppression, it can not last for long. Similarly, governments can't exist with brutality and tyranny.

The main characteristics of India have always been that people belonging to a variety of faiths and religions live together and all flourish and thrive here. But no discrimination showed on the basis of caste and creed. Muslims ruled here more than seven hundred years but all had been accorded full rights and privileges to act on their respective religions. No atrocity was meted out to them in the name of religion. No person was killed, tortured and murdered in the name of religion. Unprecedented tolerance and forbearance was exhibited during Muslim rule.

That is why not a single incident of forcefully conversion of religion was found during the longest period of Muslim rule in India .

Strangely, today some such events are taking place in a democratic country like India which were never seen earlier. It is nothing but a travesty with law and judiciary. Media has totally lost its image and identity.

Today, people are being befooled but reality can not be changed. A section of people is prone to destroy the very existence of the country. What will be the result only Allah knows. Perhaps they have forgotten that when any boat sinks, it sinks with all people aboard. The country is passing through a very critical and tough time. The future of the country seems bleak and hollow.

A deliberate conspiracy is being hatched to make more weak the marginalized section of the country.

It is imperative to ponder over the issue cool mindedly. Moreover, it is time to come forward and combat those who raise their ugly heads to destroy the country's unity and integrity. Anything which is hidden, that can be hidden for some time but not forever. When anything crosses its limits, the situation can not be easily brought under control. If the condition remains unchanged, the anarchy will be rampant in the entire country and it will adversely affect it.

At this juncture, it is the need of the hour that the well - wishers of the country must come forward and steer the sinking boat of it to the shore. ■

(English Rendering: O.R. Nadwi)

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A Peep Into Past Through Pages of Martyr's Diary

- Shaivya Mishra

Frayed and timeworn, the 5x3 inch diary, is among the most prized possessions of the Khan family of Shahjahanpur.

The palm-sized journal has been in the old ancestral home for almost 100 years and has passed through many hands: from a young, feisty revolutionary awaiting execution in a cold death cell to his grieving family and friends back home.

The 40-odd pages, yellowed with age, have loosened at the rib, and the hardbound cover, once black, is embossed with a bleached branding, "principal notebook number one."

The diary belongs to Ashfaqullah Khan, the Indian revolutionary convicted in the Kakori Train Action case of 1925. Like a number of educated, urban, middle class men who resorted to underground activities, Ashfaq was a member of the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA). In the early 1920s, the HRA carried out a series of dacoities to overthrow the British state—including the famous Kakori Train Action.

Following the Action, Ashfaqullah Khan, Ram Prasad Bismil, Chandra Shekhar Azad and others were relentlessly pursued by CID detectives under RA Horton, the primary investigating officer. While Azad, the

master of disguises, escaped through the labyrinthine by-lanes of Banaras, duly alerted in time, an unsuspecting Ashfaq was arrested from his hideout in Delhi.

"My christening was done at the behest of Ashfaqullah Khan himself," says Khan, Ashfaq's namesake and grandnephew, with a smile. A few days before Ashfaq's execution, Riyasatullah Khan visited his younger brother in prison to bid a final goodbye.

According to family folklore, a composed Ashfaq suggested to his brother to name his progeny after him. "This long standing promise was fulfilled at my birth by my father," notes Khan, who is now the diary's caretaker.

While talking to this author in Lucknow, Khan carefully places the notebook on the table with a reverential air. "One has to be very cautious while handling with it". The seam is coming apart and the ink is fading away, he points out worriedly. A few pages, one can clearly see, are moth-eaten and have tiny holes where the text used to be. If urgent measures are not taken, this treasure lost to history," he says.

Khan opens the diary and points to an unfinished entry titled "For children and friends". Its dog-eared pages bear,

(Cont. on page 36)

Mujahideen and Freedom Movement of 1857

- Shah Ebadur Rahman

Sayyid Ahmad had from the very beginning planned to launch his Jihad Movement against the British high-handedness in India. As mentioned earlier, he first fought with the Sikhs only because their atrocities against the Muslims in the Frontier required immediate action. But he never missed the point that the main enemy of the Muslims in India were the British. That is why he wrote to Maharaja Hindu Rao of Gwalior from the Frontier during his engagements with the Sikhs that the rulers of the different states of India, Muslims as well as Hindus, should join hands to fight together against the foreign rule of the British.

In fact, as Sayyid Ahmad did not have any misunderstanding about the British as being the main enemy of Muslims in India, the British also never missed the point that in Muslims they had a most uncompromising opponent, Hunter clearly writes about the activities of the later leaders of the Movement who had taken Sittana as their headquarters then: "Their hand fell heaviest upon the Sikh villages, but they hailed with fierce delight any chance of inflicting a blow upon the English infidel." He supports himself by citing the example of the Kabul War in which the Mujahideen fought relentlessly against the British: "They sent a great force to help our enemies in the Kabul War, and a thousand of them remained steadfast up to death. In the fall of Ghazni alone, three hundred obtained the joys of martyrdom from the points of English

bayonets."

The Mujahideen took a very active part in the anti-British nationalist movement of 1857. When the Indian soldiers who rebelled against the British in Calcutta, Meerath and other places came to Delhi, they appeared before the Mughal King Bahadur Shah Zafar and requested him to patronize them. Bahadur Shah gave them his blessings and the Indian forces declared him the King of India with absolute sovereignty, thus nullifying all political restrictions imposed upon him by the British. Soon the news about the arrival of Bakht Khan to Delhi reached the King. Bakht Khan had rebelled against the British and had gathered a large number of supporters. He entered Delhi with his supporters on July 1, 1847. Since he had a strong military background and was a great supporter of the nationalist movement, Bahadur Shah Zafar ordered Ahmad Quli Khan, father of Zeenat Mahal, his queen, to welcome him. The King appointed him as Commander-in-Chief of the national army and all regiments were put under his command to fight against the British.

Bakht Khan was associated with the Jihad Movement of Sayyid Ahmad. In those days Maulvi Sarfaraz Ali, a leader of the Mujahideen and a staunch disciple of Sayyid Ahmad, was taking the oath of allegiance for Jihad against the British in and around Gorakhpur. When he visited Sultanpur, Bakht Khan, who was the Subedar there, became his disciple and

took an oath at his hands to launch Jihad against the British. Thus, with the appointment of Bakht Khan as the Commander-in-Chief, the leadership of the armed struggle against the British at the national level came in the hands of the Mujahideen. The remaining supporters of the Jihad movement of Sayyid Ahmad also gathered in Delhi and, according to Sayyid Muhammad Mian, stayed mainly in and around the Jam'e Masjid. They supported Bakht Khan and were a source of his strength in Delhi, as is acknowledged in the following passage:

Bakht Khan's main strength lay in his own army and artillery, but due to the efforts of Maulvi Sarfaraz Ali, he also enjoyed the support of the Jihadis who had come with him to Delhi. Generally the number of the Jihadis increased as the Ulema were constantly arousing the Muslims in the name of Jihad to drive the British out of pountry. In Delhi Bakht Khan became the leader of the Jihadis. Some contemporary writers have called the Jihadis by the name of Wahhabis. They were mainly the followers of Sayyid Ahmad Bareilvi. ...They had come from Hansi, Hesar, Jaipur, Naseerabad, Tonk and Bhopal in large numbers. In Hansi, Hesar, Tonk and Bhopal, the Rohila Afghans lived in large numbers who were under the influence of Maulvi Sarfaraz Ali, Abdul Ghafoor Risaldar and Ghaws Milhanunacl Khan.

It is important to note that Sarfaraz Ali, the religious mentor of Bakht Khan and

a leader of Sayyid Ahmad's Movement, was with Bakht Khan when he entered Delhi. Sarfaraz Ali was appointed incharge (Meere Lashkar) of the Mujahideen.

In the 1857 Freedom Movement the Mujahideen took much more active part against the British than is generally known. Hunter writes: "But in 1857 they [the Mujahideen openly formed a coalition against us" with the help of the Yusufzai and Panjtar tribes. He also cites the specific case of Muhammad Jafar Thanasari, an outstanding leader of Sayyid Ahmad's Jihad Movement. Muhammad Jafar was earlier condemned to death by a British court, then exiled to the Andaman Islands, and was finally released after a long period of detention there. Having full knowledge of the fact that the British were keeping an eye on him, he secretly traveled to Delhi with a group of the Mujahideen and joined in the revolution of 1857: "When the mutiny of 1857 broke out, Jafar chose twelve of his most trustworthy disciples, and repaired to the Rebel Camp." Hunter mentions that Muhammad Jafar returned to Thanesar only after the defeat of the nationalist force. Muhammad Mian also comments on the role of the followers of Sayyid Ahmad in the 1857 Freedom Struggle in these words: "This much is clear that the Ulema who took part in the Freedom Movement of 1857 were mostly related to Shah Abdul Aziz or Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed by way of learning or devotion."

After the 1857 Movement the situation changed tremendously. Due to the victory of the British the faithfulness of many nationalist groups changed, but the

Mujahideen remained steadfast. The Jihad centers of the Mujahideen at Asmast and Chamarkancl adhered to their objective to fight for the freedom of India. As quoted by Mehr, Haji Meer Shamsuddeen mentions in His book Sayahate Afghanistan that a tea party was given by Raja Mahindra Pratap, President of the interim national government of India, to the freedom fighters in Afghanistan on 11 November 1926 at a hotel in Kabul. On that occasion Raja Mahindra Pratap spoke highly of the “sacrifices given by the Mujahideen for the freedom of India.” Maulana Basheer, the then leader of the Mujahideen, spoke after him and reiterated the objective of the struggle of the Mujahideen against the British in these words: “Our only objective is that we firmly implant the foundation stones of the palace of India’s future freedom, on the strength of which India may build the pillars and walls of its own government.” Mehr summarizes by stating that “the freedom of India had a very prominent place among the objectives of the Mujahideen. This objective occupied such prominence for the Mujahideen not only at the later stage of the Movement; it was so from the time of Sayyid Ahmad.”

Sayyid Ahmad’s associates and deputies who took charge of his missionary and Jihad activities after his martyrdom never lost sight of the fact that the ultimate aim of the Muslims in India would be achieved in the battle against the British. That is why as soon as the Sikh State collapsed in 1849, against which the Mujahideen were at war, they organized themselves against the British and fought

with them a relentless and uncompromising fight until they left India in 1947. Qeyamuddin Ahmad also acknowledges that the political objective of the Movement was “the defeat of the English.”

In fact, if any group of Indians genuinely threatened the power of the British in India from the beginning till the end, it was the Mujahideen. Hunter writes:

Throughout the whole period the fanatics [the Mujahideen] kept the border tribes in a state of chronic hostility to the British Power. A single fact will speak volumes. Between 1850 and 1857 the Frontier disorders forced us to send out sixteen expeditions, aggregating 33,000 Regular Troops; and between 1850 and 1863 the number rose to twenty separate expeditions, aggregating 60,000 Regular Troops, besides Irregular Auxiliaries and Police.

The Mujahideen maintained their severest opposition to the British against all odds. Hunter further writes about the continued deteriorating situation of the British power in the Frontier:

The whole Frontier was now in flame. On the 4th November CIS63) the Punjab Government had found its military line so dangerously stripped of troops, that it borrowed a part of the escort belonging to the Viceroy’s camp, and hurried forward the 7th Fusiliers to the Frontier. ... By the 14th November things had assumed a still more serious aspect, and the Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in India hurried up to Lahore, and assumed the direction himself. ■

First Citizen Murmu

Droupadi Murmu may have scored an easy victory in the presidential elections but her long journey to Rashtrapati Bhavan is an inspirational story of overcoming adverse circumstances and personal setbacks. Just as her political career hit a high note after terms as legislator and Odisha minister, she faced personal tragedies: she lost both her sons and husband in quick succession. The stint as Jharkhand governor brought her to the limelight, especially when she returned two bills amending tenancy laws passed by the Raghubar Das government, which had raised fears of alienation of tribal lands.

India electing its first Adivasi president is also a tribute to how it is constantly democratising in terms of diversity in political representation. With scheduled tribes forming nearly 9% of the population, a president from the community should have emerged sooner. BJP deserves credit for recognising this lapse and rectifying it by nominating a strong, deserving woman for India's top, though largely ceremonial, constitutional post. Murmu's candidature has also helped BJP politically by sowing disarray in opposition ranks and endearing the party to tribal belts, pan-India.

The cross-spectrum political recognition accorded to Murmu should also progress towards a greater political acknowledgment of the Adivasi community's developmental backwardness. Murmu's village being electrified now despite her lengthy public life reflects the magnitude of this challenge. Inherent in this is a geographical challenge too, because Adivasi heartlands in every state are far from state capitals and located in forested, hilly or remote areas. Given the federal system, chief ministers with their proximate control over bureaucracy have a key role to play here, even as Gol conceives schemes like the Aspirational Districts Programme.

The NFHS-5 survey that divided the 27 lakh sampled households into five equal wealth categories (quintiles) found that 71% of Adivasi households fell in the lowest two wealth quintiles against 49% of Dalit and 36% OBC households. State governments UDISE+ data indicates secondary school level dropout rates of Adivasi children (21%) are double the general category's. ST students comprise just 5.6% of total enrolment in higher education, much lower than their share in the population. Given unequal wealth distribution, education can be the great leveller for India's poor. Let's celebrate Murmu but giving Adivasi children a chance to succeed is one of India's great unfinished tasks. ■

(Editorial, The Times of India 22-07-2022)

Why Some Demolitions Feel Like Collective Punishment

- A Faizur Rahman

The Supreme Court on July 13 refused to halt the contentious demolition drive in Uttar Pradesh and other states, saying illegal structures were not immune from action. The case before the court concerned the demolition of homes of some Muslims protesting against former BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma's widely denounced remarks against Prophet Muhammad.

Impassioned pleas against "bulldozer justice": Several former SC and HC judges have written to the Chief Justice of India that these demolitions are "an unacceptable subversion of the rule of law" and "a form of collective extra-judicial punishment, attributable to a state policy which is illegal".

The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, Balakrishnan Rajagopal, was also of the view that the demolitions were carried out as collective punishment against the Muslim community for the alleged involvement of some Muslims in violence.

Although the UP government asserts that the demolitions were executed by statutory autonomous bodies as part of their routine effort against illegal constructions, allegations of collective punishment and "bulldozer justice" continue to be made.

Some of these allegations appear to be informed by the demolition policy practised by Israel against Palestinians, ostensibly to send "a severe message of deterrence to terrorists and their accomplices". Not surprisingly, UN Special Rapporteurs see this policy as "collective punishment that contravenes international law". Even the Israeli Supreme Court had, in March this year; stayed the demolition of 38 Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem.

Children suffer the most: To understand the physical and emotional impact of illegal demolitions on innocent children and their families one needs to read Save the Children's 2021 report, Hope Under the Rubble. Prepared after consulting families across the West Bank, it finds that the demolition of Palestinian homes has wreaked such havoc that 80% of the children interviewed felt abandoned by the world and were in a state of total helplessness.

A 16-year-old adolescent's despondent lament was: "Nobody stopped them - or could stop them again from destroying our home, our lives. So why should I bother to dream about a good future?" The emotional toll on parents too was enormous, with 76% reporting that they felt to protect their children losing their homes.

Thankfully, this has never happened in India as courts here have not countenanced the use of force by statutory bodies in a manner that causes psychological damage to vulnerable individuals or communities.

The seminal AP Shah judgment: In the 2010 Sudama Singh & Others vs Government of Delhi & Anr case, Chief Justice of the Delhi HC AP Shah deplored the “psychological and physical suffering” victims of pre-demolition evictions are subjected to. He listed “trauma, frustration, grief, dull dragging apathy, and the surrender of the will to live” among the effects of forcible evictions on the human mind.

Speaking for marginalised hut dwellers, Justice Shah ruled that they cannot be forcibly evicted without first making arrangements for their relocation which has to be “a meaningful exercise consistent with the rights to life, livelihood and dignity” of the dwellers.

In the 2018 Tehseen Poonawalla vs Union of India & Others case, a three-judge SC bench also flagged the risks of psychological injury, but in the context of mob violence. It asked state governments to prepare “a lynching/mob violence victim compensation scheme in the light of the provisions of Section 357A of CrPC”, giving due regard to the nature of not just bodily injury but “psychological injury” too.

Needless to say, psychological injury to the victims of sudden,

unconstitutional demolitions will be far more pronounced because they will have to bear the additional burdens of unjustified loss of property and abrupt homelessness. This in turn serves as a warning to all citizens, thereby traumatising them too.

Preventing legal amoralism: In Hammad Abdulkadar Banota & Others vs State of Maharashtra, the Aurangabad bench of the Bombay HC cautioned against this by underlining how wrongful action against a few can create fear in the minds of the larger community. Quashing FIRS against some Tablighi Jamaat members, the bench stated that “this action (against TJ) indirectly gave warning to Indian Muslims that action in any form and for anything can be taken against Muslims.”

A recent news report suggests that such a fear psychosis is now a reality. It narrates how Muslim families in UP (even those living in huts), whose members were not part of any protest, are “frantically putting together documents and bills to keep the bulldozer away”.

Therefore, it is a categorical imperative for the higher judiciary to intervene to ensure that the interpretation of Indian law remains humane and does not devolve into legal amoralism. ■

*The writer is Secretary-General of the Islamic Forum for the Promotion of Moderate Thought
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Imam Malik: A Star Among Scholars

- Abu TariqHijazi

Malik ibn Anas, known as Imam Malik, is a prominent name in Islamic history. He was not only a great scholar of Hadith, but also a jurist after whom was founded one of the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence: the Maliki school.

He was 13 years younger to Imam Abu Hanifa and 103 years elder to Imam Bukhari. He compiled the first compendium of Hadith named Al-Muwatta. He was the most leading personality of his time in Madinah and was called Imam Darul Hijrah due to his remaining in Madinah for the majority of his life.

He was born in Madinah to Anas ibn Malik and Aaliyah bint Shurayk Al-Azdiyya in 93 AH. His family was originally from the Al-Asbahi tribe of Yemen, but his great grandfather Abu 'Amir came to Madinah in 2 AH, embraced Islam and settled down there.

He was born into a well-to-do family, and Malik did not need to work for a living. He was highly attracted to the study of Islam, and ended up devoting his entire life to the study of Hadith and Fiqh.

Living in Madinah gave him access to some of the most learned minds of early Islam. He memorized the Holy Qur'an in his youth. He studied under various famous scholars like

Hisham ibn Urwah, Ibn Shihab Al-Zuhri, Imam Abu Hanifa and Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq — one of the descendants of the Prophet (saws).

Malik lived with the immediate descendants and the followers of the Companions of the Prophet (saws). Imaam Zahabi said: "There remains no scholar in Madinah after the Tabi'een comparable to Imam Malik's knowledge, jurisprudence, eminence, and memorization."

Thus, Imam Malik became the Imam of Madinah, and one of the most renowned scholars of Islam.

He learned Hadith from Abdur Rahman ibn Harmuz, Nafi ibn Zakwan and Yahya ibn Saeed.

Imam Malik said: "I did not start to give lecture in Fiqh and Hadith until I was declared eligible to do so by 70 teachers of Hadith and Fiqh."

Imam Malik believed that fatwa is a sensitive, precise and important. So, the action [of giving a Fatwa] can have far-reaching results, and was extremely careful about giving it to the extent that if he was not sure about a matter, he would not speak about it.

While narrating Hadith, he used to wear elegant and expensive clothing, usually wearing white and frequently

changing them.

Imam Malik had great love and respect for Madinah. He remained in Hijaz throughout his life and never traveled outside. He went for Hajj only once, fearing that he might die outside Madinah and be deprived of its blessings. Even when he attained old age and became very weak, he never rode on any mount in Madinah. He felt that it was against respect to ride on the very land where the Prophet (saws) is buried.

Imam Malik compiled Al-Muwatta in forty years. It is the first legal work to incorporate and join Hadith and Fiqh together and was received with wide praise. Imam Bukhari said that the soundest of all chains called the 'Golden Chain of Narrators' of Hadith transmission was "Malik, from Nafi, from Ibn Umar."

Imam Malik's teachings were not essentially different from those of Imam Abu Hanifa's. His main sources were primarily the Holy Qur'an, and then the Hadith of the Prophet (saws) of which he preferred those which had been collected and narrated by the scholars of Hadith of Madinah. Next, he would refer to Ijma' (consensus), and then Ta'amul i.e. customs of the people of Madinah such as practices of the Sahabah that represent the true spirit of Islam. Lastly, he relied on 'Qiyas' (analogy) and 'Istislah' (public interest).

It is reported that Imam Malik wrote 100,000 Hadiths by his hand. Imam Malik said: "I showed my book to 70 scholars of Madinah and every single one of them approved it, so I named it 'Muwatta' (The Approved One)."

It is the first Hadith work arranged into juristic sections and organized accordingly.

According to some of the great scholars of the past, Imam Malik was widely regarded as Madinah scholar. The Prophet (saws) had said: "Soon people will beat the flanks of camels seeking knowledge, and they shall not find a single person more knowledgeable than the erudite scholar of Madinah. (Jami Al-Tirmidhi).

Imam Malik was held high in the eyes of other great scholars, such as, Imam Abu Hanifah, who said, "My eyes have never fallen on anyone faster in understanding, correct in answering, and examining as Imam Malik."

Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal said, "I have compared Imam Malik to Awza'i, Hammaad, Aal-Hakim, Thawri, Laith, in knowledge, but he is the leader in Hadith and Fiqh."

The number of Imam Malik's students was in the thousands. Qazi Iyadh has mentioned that over 1300 narrated Hadith for the great Imam.

Some of the most famous

teachers whom he studied with were: Mohammed bin Shihaab Al-Zuhri; Ja'far ibn Mohammed Al-Sadiq; Nafi' ibn Sarjis Al-Daylami; Mohammed ibn Munkadir and Ayyoub Al-Sakhtiyani.

Imam Malik protected the Shariah and courageously upheld it. When the governor of Madinah demanded and forced people to take oath of allegiance to Khalifah Al-Mansour Abbasi, Imam Malik issued a fatwa that such an oath was not binding because it was given under coercion. He based this opinion on the Hadith: "The divorce of the coerced does not take effect."

He gave unbiased decisions and never bowed to political authorities.

He supported Muhammad Zakia Alawi by issuing a Fatwa against the Abbasid Caliph Mansoor, for which he was arrested and was publicly flogged seventy times by Jafar, the brother of Caliph Mansoor. When Mansoor heard about this, he asked Imam Malik to visit

Iraq and to forgive him for the incident. Later, Imam Malik forgave him because of the Caliph's relationship with the Prophet (saws).

Once Caliph Haroon Rasheed invited him to his court to read his Muwatta but he declined to go and politely advised thus: 'My regards to the Caliph; [but he should know that] knowledge should be visited and not that it should visit the people'.

Later the Caliph, with his sons, came to his mosque and attended the discourse like others.

The Imam died at the age of 86. He was buried in the famous cemetery of Madinah, Jannatul-Baqee, near his tutor Nafi' Maula Ibn Umar (r.a.). He had left behind three sons, Yayha, Muhammad and Hammad.

May Almighty Allah (swt) reward him for his great services to the Ummah.■

(Courtesy: YMD)

O Children of Adam! Look to your adornment at every place of worship.

(-vii: 31)

And the place of worship are only for Allah so pray not unto anyone along with Allah.

(lxxii: 18)

The Sense of Us

*Census work must begin. Its data is critical for policy design.
But there should be no caste census*

On March 28, 2019, Gol formally notified its intent to start work on Census 2021. Three years on, Parliament was informed this week that on account of Covid field activities for the census have been put off till further orders. That's an odd argument. Normalisation of social and economic activity is complete and multiple assembly elections have been held since 2020. Yet field work on India's richest data set keeps getting postponed. Defending this by pointing out that key indicators can be extrapolated from Census 2011 is nowhere near good enough.

India's first census year was 1872. Since then, census field work was never missed. The motivation for it is that a census requires enumeration of individual units such as a household. It, therefore, provides foundational data also used for working sampling frames of subsequent surveys. A census is no longer merely an enumeration of population. It spans critical data that feed into the creation of a demographic, social and economic profile of the population. Therefore, succeeding rounds have built on experience to expand the coverage. To illustrate, there were 14 questions in the 1951 census. By 2011, these had increased to 29.

Given the unquestionable importance of this decadal exercise, its postponement for reasons that are not quite convincing is triggering speculation. Some of that speculation has been addressed by Gol recently. For example, census data won't be used to create a National Register of Citizens (NRC) as the statutory law governing census operations restricts it to the use of aggregated data. That leaves two other suggestions that have gained traction. An innovation that is to feature in Census 2021 is self-enumeration. While details are not in the public domain, there have been suggestions that Census 2021 provides an opportunity to get an accurate picture of the pandemic-induced mortality.

Perhaps the most contentious suggestion is the one raised by many political parties on using Census 2021 to enumerate population based on castes. Post-Independence, caste enumeration for the general population ended. It should stay that way. The decadal census is the most important data collection exercise in India and forms the basis for state interventions in multiple areas. Census data is a public good that also serves as a springboard for research that feeds back into policy intervention. Given its criticality, field work on Census 2021 should not be put off any longer. ■

(Editorial, The Times of India 28-07-2022)

Zakat: The Third Pillar of Islam

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Out of five tenets of Islam, Zakat is such an important pillar of Islam which finds mention a 82 places together with Salat in the Holy Quran. It says: "And be steadfast in prayer and give Zakat: and whatever good ye send forth for your souls before you, you shall find it with Allah: for Allah sees well all that ye do" (Al-Qur'ans. - 2, A.110)

"The word Zakat is derived from the word Zaka which means "it (a plant) grew." The second derivative of this word carries the sense of purification. e.g. qad aflaha man zakkaha (He is indeed successful who purified himself). The other word used for Zakat both in the Qur'an and the Hadith is Sadaqa which is derived from Sidq (the truth). Both these words are highly significant. The spending of wealth for the sake of Allah purifies the heart of man of the love of material wealth of this world." (Sirat - un-Nabi)

Generally, it is said that Zakat is a tax (poor-due) the fact is that it is a form of worship and above all an effective source to improve the economic condition of the poor and needy Muslims. Such sublime system is rarely found in other religions of the world. If this system is fully implemented, the economic condition of Muslims will comprehensively improve. We may recall the phase of Caliph Umar ibn

Abdul Aziz as to how he beautifully levied the Zakat system in the society and brought about an extraordinary change within a short span of time. In his book "Saviours of Islamic Spirit", S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi writes: 'The financial reforms embarked upon by Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz remission of numerous taxes and tithes disallowed by Shariah, did not result in pecuniary difficulties or deficits in the State income. On the contrary, people became so much well-off that it became difficult to find destitutes and beggars who would accept the poor-due (Zakat).'

Maulana S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi further writes: "In the Qur'an Zakat is mentioned side by side with Salat on as many as 82 occasions. The command: Be steadfast in prayer; practise regular charity actually runs through it. Apart from it, where the distinguishing qualities of Muslims are set forth in it is invariably pointed out that they establish prayer and practise regular charity. The Holy Prophet has included it among the fundamental duties of Islam. He has remarked that the foundation of the Islamic creed rests on five pillars, the affirmation of the truth that there is no God save one God, the establishment of Salat, the payment of Zakat, the performance of Hajj and the keeping of fasts in the month of Ramadhan.

Once it was enquired from the

Holy Prophet what Islam was. He replied, "Worship Allah and associate no one with Him, establish obligatory prayer, practice regular charity and observe the fasts of Ramadhan. It is related by D'man bin Tha'iba that once he asked the Prophet. "Tell me upon the word of God that He has commanded you to collect Zakat from those of us that are well-to do and distribute it to the poor," "Of course," the Prophet replied.

There are countless Traditions of the Prophet supporting this view. In the Ummat it has been accepted and acted upon as a matter of course that Salat and Zakat are inseparable and cannot be detached from each other.

The Quran states:

But if they repent and establish worship and pay the poor-due, then leave their way free. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

But if they repent and establish worship and pay the poor-due, then are they your brethren in religion.

It is related by Abdullah bin Omar that the Prophet once said to him, "I have been commanded to wage war against the people until they testify that there is no one worthy of worship save Allah and Mohammad is His Apostle, and establish Salat, and pay the Zakat. If they do so, they obtain the security of life and property from me except for the rights of Islam, and their account is with God."

It is, further, related by Hazrat Abu

Huraira that the sacred against the people till they affirm that there is no God except Allah, and bear faith in me and accept what I have brought. If they act accordingly they gain the security of life and property from me excepting the rights of Islam and for these they are accountable to God."

Imam Al-Gazzali wrote in *Yahya Ulumiddin*: "He (Allah) has made Zakat a foundation and a basis of religion and He purifies who so ever He pleases by enabling him to pay Zakah."

Noted Islamic scholar Dr. Yusuf al Qaradavi has written: "Of the pillars of Islam, Zakah is its social-economic pillar. Zakat is declared a part of worship. Al-Qur'an mentions Zakah together with Salah. But Zakah is an inseparable part of the economic system designed for the community: So much importance is attached to discussion on Zakat in contemporary literature on political constitutional and economic system."

No doubt, Zakat is a Divine bounty given to Muslims so that the economic condition of the have-nots may improve and they may lead a prosperous and happy life in this universe.

We may easily comprehend its significance and importance through strict admonition of first Caliph Hazrat Abu Bakr about those people who refused to pay Zakat. The Caliph vehemently said. "By God, I would definitely wage war against those persons who refuse to pay Zakat."

Dreadful chastisement is there in the Holy Qur'an for those who do not pay Zakat. It says: "And there are those who bury gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah: announce unto them a most grievous penalty on the Day when heat will be branded on their foreheads, their flanks and their backs. This is the (treasure) which you buried for your selves. Taste ye the (treasure) ye buried" (Al-Qur'an-IX:34-35).

The Holy Prophet says: "He who possesses gold or silver (i.e. wealth) but does not fulfill the obligations that are attached to the possession of wealth (i.e. does not pay Zakat etc), plates of fire will be prepared for him on the Day of Judgement. These plates will be heated further in the Fire of Hell and then his forehead and his sides and back will be branded with them. The plates will be heated up again and again to brand him and this will continue throughout the Day of Judgement which will be equal to fifty thousand years in this world."

It should be kept in mind that Zakat becomes mandatory when one attains Nisab, (The quantity of money). It is not obligatory if the amount is less than the Nisab. It should also be kept in mind that amount of Nisab may pass one year in the possession of its owner. If the amount does not last one year in its owner, the Zakat is not obligatory. We may easily understand the rate of Zakat through the following statement of S. Sulaiman Nadwi, "Zakat is paid on the surplus of wealth which is left over the

passage of a year. Leaving aside merchandise, animals and agricultural yield, Zakat is paid at almost uniform rate of 2½ percent. The minimum standard of surplus wealth over which Zakat is charged is known as Nisab. It differs with different kinds of wealth the most important being 200 dirham or 52½ totals (Nearly 21 oz) in case of silver, and 20 mithqals or 7½ totals (nearly 3 oz) in case of gold. The nisab of cash is the same as that of gold and silver" (Sirat-un-Nabi)

The Holy Qur'an defined those persons to whom the amount of Zakat should be given. It says: 'The alms are only for the poor and the needy and those who collect them' and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free, the captives and the debtors. and for the cause of Allah, and (for) the way fares a duty imposed by Allah. Allah is knower, wise: (The Holy Quran: 9:60)

In this context it would be apt to mention that Zakat-ul-Fitr is quite different from the obligatory Zakat. It is paid as a token of thankfulness to Allah for having enabled him or her to observe fasts in the month of Ramadhan. It should be paid at the end of the month of Ramadhan before going out for prayer of Eid-ul-Fitr. If one pays it after Id. It would be Sadqa (Charity) not Zakat-UI-Fitr. Abdullah ibn umar said: "The messenger of Allah imposed Zakat ul-Fitr of Ramadhan as a Saa of dates or a Saa of barley; on every Muslim, slave and free, male or female,

young or old” (Bukhari and Muslim.)

Needless to add that the recipients of Zakat-ul-Fitr are the same as the recipients of the obligatory Zakat.

Noted scholar S. Ghouse has rightly mentioned that Allah the exalted, had instituted Zakat-ul-Fitr to purify one’s fast from the negative consequences of vain talk and of vain actions which one might have made during the fasting month of Ramadhan. It was also institutionalized, with the objective of helping the poor and needy and to thus save them the embarrassment of asking for assistance on the Day of Eid. The poor may, thus celebrate, the joy of Eid along with the rich .”

Hence it became clear that obligatory Zakat and Zakat-ul-Fitr are not alike. Zakat becomes obligatory when one possesses Nisab but Zakat-ul-Fitr becomes Wajib (Necessary) on every Muslim who has a meal of a day and night.

It is unfortunate that scant attention is being paid towards paying the Zakat by us while it is obligatory like that of other four tenets of Islam. It is imperative that we must pay Zakat and Zakat-ul-Fitr and motivate others also to perform it otherwise our wealth would be nuisance for us on the Day of Judgement. May Allah give us strength to pay it and save us all from the chastisement of the Hereafter.■

(Cont. from page 22)

in a well formed cursive hand (in Urdu and English), the musings of a man confronted with the finality of death, and the worst horrors of British colonialism.

“Love and death stand side by side. If you love, and love sincerely to a certain thing, then be prepared for death,” runs a verse. “The idle pass through life leaving as little of their existence as foam upon the water or smoke upon the air,” runs another. The diary contains entries till August 1926.

It was one of the meager belongings handed over to his family after Ashfaq’s execution, along with his body. While a number of documents pertaining to the revolutionary movement — pamphlets, chapbooks, books of songs — were seized by the colonial police, or the CID, and finally ended up in the state archives in India and Britain, this diary has stayed with the Khan family ever since.

His grandnephew is now on his way to Rampur to hand over the diary to the Reza Library for restoration. He is also contemplating approaching the ministry of cultural affairs for facilitating this process. He owes this to his namesake, declares the 50-year-old with a determined glint in his eyes.■

(The writer is PhD scholar in modern Indian history at the University of California, Berkeley).

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Nawab Sirajuddaula (The First Freedom Fighter Who Sacrificed His Life)

- Sultan Shakir Hashmi

It is widely stated and publicised that the Indian Freedom Struggle commenced in 1857 which is absolutely wrong. This is simply an attempt to fully hide conceal, cover the glorious 100 years of Indian Freedom Struggle waged by Muslims of India. As a matter of fact the freedom struggle in India started one hundred years before 1857 i.e. in 1757 when the Nawab of Bengal Siraj-ud-daula fought against the British forces very bravely in 1757. If only Mir Jafar, Jagat Seth and Amir Chand had not betrayed Siraj-ud-daula and conspired with the enemies, the Britishers, in India would have been finished for good then and there. Thus, the actual struggle for freedom in India started in 1757 and not in 1857.

Nawab Siraj-ud-daula was the first Indian who disdained the growing power and influence of the Britishers. Although Ali Wardi Khan had told the Britishers in clear terms that they were only businessmen and there was no need for them to construct Qila (Forts). But when the Britishers and the Frenchmen continued building Qila (Forts) despite the warning, Nawab Siraj-ud-daula at once knew their ugly designs and intentions of capturing political power. He was extremely angry.

He wrote :- "I vow that by God, that

I will completely turn the Britishers out of my country unless they are ready to demolish their Qila (Forts) and agree to abide by the business terms set in the time of Nawab Zafar Khan.

He decided to punish the Britishers for their defiance. He attacked their Qaseem Bazar Factory and took the same under his control. He moved toward Calcutta with 50,000 soldiers. The Britishers were taken aback. Seeing their lives in danger the Governor Mr. Drake and the Commander Michen ran away like cowards. The remaining Englishmen chose Mr. Holwell as their Commander. Nawab Siraj-ud daula inflicted a heavy defeat on the Britishers. When the news of this humiliating defeat reached the Britishers in Madras they were shocked. They were burning to take revenge. An army commanded by Mr. Clive reached Calcutta. Very cunningly using the policy of "Divide and Rule" he some how purchased the loyalty of Meer Jafar, Jagat Seth and Amir Chand. As a result even when Nawab Siraj-ud-daula was killed by Mer Jafar's son Meran, his dead body was taken out for display on an Elephant. But this brave soldier of India had shown unprecedented courage to wipe out the British and save the honour of his motherland before sacrificed his life. ■

Museum to Display Ashfaq's Copy of Qur'an, Rare Pics

- Shaivya Mishra

Ashfaquallah Khan, the president of the Shaheed Ashfaquallah Memorial Society, is also busy setting up a small museum to be opened to the public on December 19, the death anniversary of his uncle in which he plans to display objects belonging to the revolutionary including his Quran Sharif, rare photographs, and the 'tijori' in which he kept his pistol.

He also plans to copy, laminate and display pages from the jail diary. Ashfaq's famed pistol, however, will not be a part of the collection, along with other treasured items as it was stolen in a housebreak in 1988, he laments.

Khan also talks animatedly about a network he has forged with the families of Bismil, Sukhdev, Rajguru, Bhagat Singh and Azad. There are surprises as well, he notes, like receiving an invite from Shaheed Ashfaquallah Khan Foundation in far off Vishakhapatnam or a visit by school teachers to collect dust from Ashfaq's house for a memorial in Sagar, Madhya Pradesh.

Unmindful of all this adulation, Ashfaquallah lies buried in the family graveyard, 300 metres from the sprawling house with latticed windows and wide arches he grew up in — now painted white, blue and brown. In another part of the city stands his mother's haveli, burnt down by an agitated mob after rumors of collaboration with the British surfaced in the city. The house is still known as Jali Kothi.

For a long time, Ashfaq's mazar and the area surrounding it lay unattended. Khan credits Suresh Khanna, local MLA and minister of finance and parliamentary affairs, for his earnest attempts at preserving it. Now with a boundary wall, a hall and a park around it, Ashfaq's final resting place has a quiet dignity about it.

The visitors are far and few. Sometimes school children visit the place and also stray VVIPs on his birth and death anniversaries. But the handsome young bachelor hanged at 27, who famously wished for nothing but a little "khaq-e-vatan" (soil of the motherland) on his grave, wouldn't have cared anyway. ■

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Around the World

Biden raises Khashoggi murder, MbS cites 'US mistakes' in reply

Jeddah: US President Joe Biden told Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and held him responsible for the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, shortly after exchanging a fist bump with the kingdom's de facto ruler.

On a trip to reset relations with a country he had called a pariah after Khashoggi's killing in 2018, Biden said the crown prince, known as MbS, denied involvement in the murder and said he had held those responsible to account. "With respect to the murder of Khashoggi, I raised it at the top of the meeting, making it clear what I thought of it at the time and what I think about it now," Biden told reporters.

"I was straight forward and direct in discussing it. I made my view crystal clear. I said very straightforwardly for an American president to be silent on an issue of human rights is inconsistent with who we are and who I am." US intelligence says the crown prince approved an operation to capture or kill Khashoggi, a Saudi insider-turned-critic, who was murdered and dismembered by Saudi agents inside the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul. Biden said what happened to Khashoggi was outrageous. "He basically said that he was not personally responsible for it," Biden said of the crown prince's response during their meeting. "I indicated that I thought he was."

Red alert: Britain gets ready for travel disruptions, holds emergency meeting

The British government held an emergency response meeting to plan for record high temperatures next week after authorities issued their first-ever "red" warning for extreme heat. The alert covers parts of England on Monday and Tuesday, when temperatures may reach 40°C for the first time, posing a risk of

illness and even death. Cabinet office minister Kit Malthouse warned that transport services will be affected. "The heat will affect rails. There may be fewer services," he said. "This may be a moment to work from home."

Thailand to woo wealthy foreigners with land deals

Thailand will allow foreigners to fully own land for residential use, an official said, seeking to boost its economy by attracting big-spending residents from overseas. Subject to cabinet approval, foreign nationals will be permitted to own up to 0.16 hectares from September, providing they can invest \$1.1 million in property, securities or funds over three years.

India top lender in first 4 months of 2022 amid crisis: Sri Lanka

Colombo: India has emerged as the top lender to Sri Lanka, extending \$376.9 million worth credit compared to \$67.9 million by China in the first four months of this year to rescue the island nation from the unprecedented political crisis and economic turmoil. Loans from India were the highest foreign financing disbursements during the period of January 1 to April 30, 2022, according to Sri Lanka's finance ministry.

After India, Asian Development Bank (ADB) came in as the second largest lender with \$359.6 million being disbursed in the first four months, followed by the World Bank with \$67.3 million.

The total foreign financing disbursements made during the period amounted to \$968.8 million, of which, \$968.1 million was disbursed as loans while \$0.7 million was disbursed by way of grants. The majority of the disbursements were from the loan agreements signed with India, which is almost 39%, followed by Asian Development Bank (37%) and China (7%), according to a report from the ministry. ■

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