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Honesty and Trust worthiness

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Virtues like honesty and trustworthiness developed in the early Muslims as the natural fruits of a sense of living belief in the Omnipresence of the Absolute God. Even when alone and unnoticed or in any other situation wherein they could easily transgress the bonds of religious conduct, the fear of God kept the Muslims under rigid control.

It is related in Tarikh-i-Tabari, that, after the victory of Madain, when the Muslims were collecting the booty, one of them brought something he had come upon and deposited it with the treasurer. It was so enormously valuable that those who saw it were astounded. They began to question him, "Are you sure, you have not held back a part of it?" "By God", he replied, "had I wished I could have misappropriated the whole lot without any of you being the wiser." This straightforward reply made a deep impression on them and they felt that they were facing an extraordinary man. They begged him to disclose his name, but he declined. "I can't tell you my name," he said, "because you will then start praising me, while all praise is for Allah. I am well content with whatever He bestows as a reward". When he departed, they sent a man after him to find out who he was. Then it was discovered that he was 'Amir, of the tribe of 'Abd-i-Qais...'

(Islam and the World p. 58) ■

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Wisdom of Qur'an

"Believers! Intoxicants, games of chance, idolatrous sacrifices at altars, and divining arrows are all abominations, the handiwork of Satan. So turn wholly away from it that you may attain to true success. By intoxicants and games of chance Satan only desires to create enmity and hatred between you, and to turn you away from the remembrance of Allah and from Prayer. Will you, then, desist?"

(Al-Qur'an - 5:90-91)

The Qur'anic *ayat* 5:90 categorically prohibits intoxicants and three other things. This prohibition is gradual. Two earlier *ayats* 2:219 and 4:43 hinted at the displeasure of Allah at intoxicants. Before the revelation of the last injunction, the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) had warned the people that intoxicants were highly displeasing to Allah. Hinting at the possibility of their being prohibited, he advised people to dispose of intoxicants if they had any. A little later on the present verse was revealed and the Messenger then proclaimed that those who had intoxicants should neither consume nor sell them, but rather destroy them. Intoxicating liquors were poured into the streets of Madina. Though the word *khamr* in Arabic means literally 'the drink made from grapes', the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) applied the prohibition of wine to all intoxicants, saying 'every intoxicant is *khamr*, and every intoxicant is prohibited', 'every drink which causes intoxication is prohibited' and 'I forbid everything which intoxicates'. In a Friday sermon Caliph Umar defined *khamr* thus: 'whatever takes hold of the mind is *khamr*. So wine and all intoxicating drugs are prohibited. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) reports that Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) cursed ten (persons) with regard to alcohol: "The one who squeezes (the grapes, etc.), the one who asks for it to be squeezed, the one for whom it is squeezed, the one who carries it, the one to whom it is carried, the one who sells it, the one for whom it is bought, the one who pours it, the one for whom it is poured, until he counted ten like this." (Ibn Majah)

This is one of the hadiths which make it clear to the world that Islam is all for banishing alcohol and all other substances that tell badly upon the mind and body of the consumer in particular and his family and society at large. Allah's Messenger has cursed those who are involved in any capacity in the production, sale or consumption of alcohol. The Blessed Messenger has also prohibited the use of alcohol even as gift or medicine. When the *ayat* of prohibition was revealed, his companions wanted some clarifications. When asked if such liquor might be offered to the Jews as a gift, the Blessed Messenger replied in the negative and said: "He who has prohibited it has also required it not to be given away as a gift." A person asked insistently whether or not an intoxicant could be used as medicine. The Blessed Messenger replied that far from being a remedy for any malady it was in itself a malady. ■

Editor's Note 

AIMPLB

In a secular democratic government one has the full liberty to follow ones faith and establish identity. In India we are fortunate enough to have a secular and democratic set up after independence. Infact our Constitution makers were well aware and alive of our plural society. India is inhabited by multifaith followers. Their peaceful cohobition and happy living must be guaranteed by the state.

The communal frenzy which ultimately led to the partition of the country was a sordid event in our history. Since Pakistan was created as an Islamic State Rightwing political parties in India wanted it also to be a Theoratic State. But good sense prevailed on our leaders who had led the freedom struggle to opt for a secular and democratic country.

After more than a decade of independence when effects of Nehruian era began dwindling a section of our political leaders started diluting the secular ethos. In the name of modernisation religious practices of Muslims, as prescribed for them in 'Sharia' became targets of attack. This was a disturbing move. To thwart such reforms aggression an all India Muslim Personal Law Board was established 40 years ago. It is a representative body of all sects of Muslim. Learned clerics of different faiths got

together to protect the Sharia Laws from the onslaught of pseudo-secularists. The Board was lucky enough to have a great Internationally acclaimed Islamic Scholar, Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi alias Ali Miyan (RAH) as its president for a long time and at a crucial period. Maulana's personality was such that it helped in creating a cohesive and effective body to deal with the adverse situations.

Since 2002 the mantle of presidentship has come to the Rector of Nadwatul Ulema Maulana Syed Rabey Hasani Nadwi. In the recently held 23rd session of the Board Maulana has been re-elected its president. Maulana in his presidential address has reiterated the plans of the Board. His call for the release of innocent Muslim youths held on false charges of terrorism, Early court decision of Babri Mosque demolition case, Amendments in inheritance law which infringes the rights of Muslim women after the abolition of Zamindari, exempting Muslim students to bow before the sun (Surya Namaskar) and other such issues will surely be heard in both Union And State governments quarters. ■

S.A.

We solicit articles for publication in The Fragrance of East. Suitable remuneration will be paid to writers. We prefer receipt of articles on:
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Crisis of Confidence

-S.Abul Hasan Nadwi

The World of Islam is passing through a crisis of confidence. However unpalatable it may be, the truth remains that the qualities of self-awareness and self-assurance are not the distinguishing features of Muslims in any part of the world today. Even the Muslim countries that are free (no matter whether they have been free for centuries or attained freedom only recently) are intellectually and educationally subservient to the West. The rulers of these countries often show commendable courage, even to the extent of incurring grave risks, in the political field but where the cultural, intellectual and educational questions come up they betray an awful lack of freedom of judgement. But, it is an accepted fact that cultural and intellectual servility is much more harmful and degrading than political serfdom. Once a country has passed under the cultural and intellectual domination of another it becomes unnecessary for the latter to annex it politically. Further, since in the modern world the conquest and annexation of one country by another has no longer remained possible the Big Powers are getting inclined to concentrate, more and more, on strengthening their cultural and intellectual hold over the

weaker nations instead of seeking their political subjugation.

If there could be any power in the present-day world which could challenge the cultural and intellectual supremacy of the West and its resulting ideological domination it was the World of Islam with its own distinctive personality, its characteristic programme of life and its soul-stirring moral and spiritual appeal, but, unfortunately, owing to the reasons enumerated in detail by the Author in an earlier book, the Muslims have lapsed into such a state of powerlessness and disorder that they can offer little resistance to the growing influence of the West. In addition to it, the Western nations are taking due care to dissipate what little of moral and spiritual awareness and vitality is left in them through a number of well-calculated steps, some of which bear the stamp of innocence and magnanimity while others are openly hostile and vicious. Even the patronage of institutions like the UNESCO is proving detrimental to the interests of Islam in the Muslim countries in many ways. The moral and spiritual stamina of Muslims is being continuously sapped, sometimes through the generous supply of foreign

teachers, researchers, social workers and technocrats, sometime through a liberal provision of the wrong kind of literature which can only disturb the peace of mind and encourage doubt and disbelief by arousing in them what is the worst in man, and, sometimes, through the launching of campaigns like the popularisation of TV in the name of raising the standard of living and making life more worthwhile. Often open-handed economic or military aid is made available to the developing countries, and, in return, they are compelled to enforce such changes or to set into operation such schemes as are positively inimical to the Islamic temperament and can only lead to the disintegration of the Muslim pattern of living. In brief, while apparently keeping away, the West has thrown such a powerful ring around the Muslim countries and created such conditions in them that these sovereign and independent nations are now caught more firmly in its grip than they were in the bygone days of naked Imperialism.

Ironically enough, the rulers of the Islamic World, some of whom never tire of posing before their peoples as the champions of Muslim regeneration or advocates of a separate Islamic block are, themselves, displaying much greater enthusiasm in the implementation of these changes than the Western crusaders of 'modernisation' and

'reform' in the East. The undiscerning manner in which the educational and other so-called progressive experiments made in the Soviet Union or America are being pushed through in the Muslim countries, the unbridled freedom that has been given to the Western experts to draw out programmes of fundamental change in the thinking and disposition of Muslims, the way unlimited opportunities are being provided for indigenous pupils of the Western Orientalists to sow the seeds of skepticism and discord in Muslim society and the recklessness with which the inclination towards luxuriousness and self-indulgence is being fostered and encouragement given to trends like co-education, the abolition of the *pardah* system and free inter-mixing of the sexes drive one seriously to doubt if these leaders are not deliberately functioning as the tools of the West in its destructive designs and trying purposely to pervert the minds of their people in order to deprive them of the religious pride and moral sentiment which can any day pose a threat to their leadership by blossoming into a powerful force of Islamic revival. It is evident that if the process of 'change' and 'reform' is allowed to continue for some time and the forces of moral degradation and anarchy are left free to work themselves out, the rising generations

in the Muslim countries would have drifted so far away from their spiritual moorings that no urge would be left in them to strive against the mounting pressures of Modernism and Westernisation. Among the new generations that are being exposed more and more to values and concepts imported wholeheartedly from the West the process of cultural, moral and intellectual de-Islamisation has already begun, and as this process will gather momentum the moral leprosy which has become the bane of the Western society will inevitably make a thorough conquest of the Islamic countries as well, and, then, there will remain not a single healthy and healthful society in the World which can hold out hope for the moral and spiritual resuscitation of mankind.

So far as the West is concerned it can never be genuinely sincere or sympathetic towards the Islamic countries. Its malevolence is, partly, the outcome of history with the memories of the *Crusades* and the bloody and long-drawn strifes between the Ottoman Empire and the European nations still fresh in its mind, and, partly, dictated by commonsense for the Muslim World alone possesses the potential strength and capability to constitute a danger to the universal ascendancy of the West or to confront the world with a new power block based on a different philosophy of life

and a call that transcends the limitations of race and geography. It is strengthened, further, by the realisation of the worth and importance of the vast mineral wealth and other resources lying within the frontiers of the Muslim World which can be of a decisive consequence to the West, both economically and politically. And, finally, there is the traditional weakness of the human nature that when a person is afflicted with an incurable disease he, sometimes, begins to derive a sort of morbid satisfaction from the desire that the others also became like him so that there could be nothing to distinguish the healthy from the sick. Only those can remain immune from this failing or overcome it successfully who are endowed with a genuine fear of God and love for humanity, but these noble qualities can be developed in a man only through the teachings of the holy Prophets. This wealth was, sadly, lost by the West centuries ago. The entire history of its rise shows that the countries that came under its sway could scarcely save themselves from catching the infection of moral debasement the Western empire-builders invariably carried. As some of the more honest and objective Western scholars themselves have admitted, movements for the propagation of agnostic ideas have deliberately been set afloat by Western Imperialists in

the Eastern countries as a part of their political policy. However apathetic the West may be towards Christianity and to whatever limits of irreligiousness its craze for rationalism and free thinking may have reached at home, all its broadmindedness and liberality of outlook evaporates into thin air when it comes to the World of Islam. The Christian West can forgive the Jews, but not the Muslims. The anti-Muslim sentiment has become a part of its being. Innumerable instances can be cited to show that in the event of a quarrel between a Muslim and a non-Muslim country the West took the side of the non-Muslim country either openly or through subterfuge. The recent Arab-Israel war has proved conclusively that no Muslim state or community can afford to rely on the friendship of a Western Power. Muslims must learn to depend on God and on their own strength alone in whatever they do.

The leaders of the Muslim countries ought to realise that whatever good the reckless imitation of the West may do to them for the time being it will ultimately rock the foundations of the Islamic *Millat* and bring it to ruin.

In spite of all their faults and shortcomings, the vital religious feeling, the readiness to suffer in the cause of God and the spirit of earnestness, fidelity and love that have

become extinct among the materialistic nations of the West can still be seen in the Islamic countries. The Muslim peoples, their appalling ignorance and backwardness notwithstanding, are the raw material from which the finest models of humanity can be made. Their greatest asset is their faith and their simplicity, earnestness and enthusiasm. In the past, Muslims have worked wonders by drawing upon these matchless reservoirs of power and, in moments of crisis, it is these very qualities that have come to the rescue of the Islamic countries. Even from the purely utilitarian point of view, the rulers of the Muslim countries should appreciate the latent spiritual vitality of their people and regard it as the most valuable instrument for the defence of national freedom and solidarity which can also enable them to play a role worthy of their great past on the stage of history. But, thanks to the all-pervading curse of Westernisation, the Muslim masses are being robbed of their spiritual vitality and are developing a moral cancer against which nothing can avail.

Taking into consideration the irrefutable educational and industrial superiority of the West, there are only two courses open to Muslims. One is that they make a complete submission to it, accept its philosophy of life, its concept of the universe and its spiritual convictions and ethical standards *in*

toto and try to cast their entire existence into its mould. But such a course can, apart from the fact that it will amount to gross apostasy; moral and intellectual *hara-kiri* and shameless betrayal of humanity whose only hope of redemption rests with this very community, raised up as it was, by the last of the Prophets, end up only in relentless bloodshed and chaos within the Islamic fraternity. It would be like pulling down a well-conditioned building in the absurd hope of raising upon its ruins a structure for which neither the right kind of skill nor building material is available and which would neither be suited to the climate of the place nor be in harmony with the environment. Whenever such an attempt has been made in the Islamic World it has resulted in failure. The Muslim masses have rejected it firmly as soon as an opportunity to freely express their opinion has come their way. The same thing is happening in Turkey today and going to happen soon in Syria and Iraq too.

The other course for the Muslims lies in making the fullest use of the physical sciences and technology of the West by learning them wholeheartedly and then subordinating them by means of their own intelligence and industry to the lofty purposes which the last of the holy Prophets has bequeathed to them and by virtue of which they have won the

distinction of being proclaimed as the 'Best of the People'. This happy co-ordination between the ends and means from the absence of which both the West and the East are suffering at present can alter the destiny of the world. It can save it from impending annihilation and put it fully on the road to all-round progress and felicity. The West has all the resources in the world but it is devoid of a healthy sense of purpose; the (Muslim) East is endowed with the sound-est of aims and ideals but is very backward materially. As we have said earlier, this laudable task can be accomplished by no other people than the Muslims who are the successors of the last of the Apostles and the sole inheritors of his Message. The slogan of the Muslims, all over the world, should now be:

"The tyranny of the West has laid the world to waste,

Arise, O Architect of *Harem*, to build it a new. -

A bold and enterprising country of the East, namely, Japan has shown us the way, although in a limited, and, from the stand-point of Islam, most imperfect manner. Japan learnt the material sciences and technology from the West and acquired mastery over them and, at the same time, it held fast to its spiritual background and cultural heritage. But, unfortunately, its religious creed and civilization are such

that they cannot keep abreast of time or fulfil the need of a universal message. The Japanese culture is only an amalgam of antiquated beliefs and out-worn traditions. It is a miracle of the will-power and loyalty to the past of its people that modern Japan is still clinging to it. With Islam, on the other hand, it is wholly different. It stands for a faith, a *Shariat* and a law for which the term 'ancient' and 'modern' have no meaning, and a civilisation whose roots are embedded in imperishable truths. Like an evergreen tree it is always young and ready to send forth new blossoms. Hence, in the Muslim countries the integration between modern sciences and the fundamental teachings of Islam can be worked out with-out any serious difficulty and its impact will also be much more revolutionary and extensive than what we have experienced in Japan. In a tradition-bound country an attempt like this is bound to be self-defeating. For a Muslim, however, there need be no contradiction in it, for, according to him, correct religion and correct knowledge do not pull in opposite directions or stand in the way of each other. Knowledge, says a Tradition of the sacred Prophet, is the lost property of a Muslim and he is its rightful owner. From the Muslim view-point, it is the end for which a means is employed that determines whether it is good or bad. The true purpose of all

knowledge, power and other worldly resources and acquirements is that they serve the cause of the Divine faith and help to promote the genuine welfare of mankind. It is the duty of a Muslim to see that these precious gifts of God are not misused. To take them out of the wrong place and to put them in the right place and to assure that they are employed for constructive ends is a matter of moral responsibility with them.

But Muslims can discharge the sacred obligation only when they are able to produce in themselves that strength faith and courage of conviction and skill and sincerity which can repulse the onslaught of glittering catchwords and the prevalent imitative tendency and overcome the petty considerations of immediate gain, both individual and collective. For this their leaders, too, will have to make the necessary sacrifices, but, even from the personal point of view these sacrifices will not be in vain for, by virtue of them, they will rise tremendously in the estimation of their people, and it will also become possible for them, and, through them, for their countries, to play the sublime role of guidance and leadership they could never dream of.

The Western civilisation is doomed. It has become rotten to the core, and if it is still surviving it is not at

all due to its latent qualities of strength and endurance but because no other civilisation is at present ready to take its place. The other civilisations in the world are, at the utmost, its own hazy carbon copies or third class caricatures or they are so weak and decrepit that it is beyond their power and ability to stand against it, face to face. Now, if a Muslim country or the World of Islam, as a whole, can muster enough strength and competence to fill the void that is going to be created by the fall of the Western Civilisation it can re-establish its claim to the leadership of mankind which, according to the unchanging practice of the Lord, always goes to those that are earnest, deep hearted and resolute. The Muslims, therefore, ought to decide whether it is more honourable to approach the West with a begging bowl or assume the exalted position of the stewardship and guidance of humanity more than which there is no greater glory in the world after Apostleship. Does the sacrifice of worldly renown, power and wealth count for anything before it? Even if a man possessed a hundred lives and had to lay down all of them for the sake of it, the bargain would not be bad.

Let us, now, see which Muslim country comes forward to take up the gauntlet and carries out this gigantic mission in comparison with which the

mighty events of the past, such as, the European renaissance or the French and the Soviet revolutions must fade into insignificance for the forces of peace, progress and freedom it will release will not remain confined to the Islamic countries alone but sweep across the world and give a fresh lease of life to the dying humanity. Only those people or communities can respond to this call which are bound in allegiance to the *Millat* of Ibrahim and for whom the choicest Quranic tidings and appellations of the 'Last of Divine Faiths' and 'the Termination of the Line of Holy Apostles' were meant. Today, the 'Song of Eternity' for the leaders of the Islamic World is the same which the Muslims had heard long, long ago, at the dawn of Islam:

And strive for Allah with the endeavour which is His right. He has chosen you and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship, the faith of your father Abraham is (yours). He has named you Muslims (those who have surrendered unto Him) of old times and in this (scripture) that the messenger may be witness against you, and that you may be witness against mankind. So, establish worship, pay poor-tax, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protecting Friend; the best of Patrons and the best of Helpers.

(Continued from page 39)

despite the fact that Prophet Mohammed stated: "Talabul ilmfarizatun ala kulli muslimin wa muslima" (It is compulsory for both men and women to be educated). To say that Muslim women have no rights would be a misnomer as Islam has given sufficient rights to them during the days of the religion's advent. The problem is that most clerics have misinterpreted Quranic teachings with an anti-women tilt. A hue and cry is raised over issues like talaq (divorce), model nikahnama (marriage document), polygamy, family planning and the purdah (veil) - all issues that have been tirelessly talked over for decades without any consensus. But clerics, scholars or politicians rarely bother to promote education of Muslim girls. Abject illiteracy among Muslim women still lies at the root of the endemic backwardness of the community. More than veils, it is education that will make the Muslim women safer".

Yahya M. (US): "At the beginning Islam was the most revolutionary liberalization of women's rights the civilized world has ever seen. But afterwards Muslims became ignorant of this and now Muslim countries are the scene of some of the worst abuses of women's rights".

Dr. Hassan Abdalla Al Turabi (Sudan): "Whenever weakness creeps into the faith of Muslim men they tend to treat women oppressively and seek to exploit them. Present Muslim Society has become unduly conservative for fear that freedom of thought would lead astray and divide the community; and that freedom of women would degenerate into licentious promiscuity - so much that the basic religious rights and duties of women have been forsaken and the fundamentals of equality and fairness in the structure of Muslim Society, as enshrined in the Sharia, have been completely overlooked. In the fallen society of Muslims, women have little freedom. All sorts of subterfuges are employed to deny her inheritance. In the domain of public life, she is not allowed to make any original contribution to the promotion of the quality of life. A revolution against the condition of women in the traditional Muslim societies is inevitable. The teachings of their own religion call upon Islamists to be the right-guided leaders for the salvation of men and women".

Neelofer: "What is certain is that unless societal leaders and modern opinion makers pay some attention to this problem (Women Education) a lot of social frustration and pain is on store for everyone. For, if mothers, daughters, and sisters remain *behind*, can fathers, sons, and brothers go forward"?

Samana Siddiqi: "Statistics point to the low level of literacy of Muslim women in Muslim countries. This is a shame for the people who claim to follow Islam, a religion which has made it a religious obligation on both sexes to seek knowledge. Women's literacy, and in turn ignorance of Islam is a danger to Muslim societies and their stability. What kind of quality of life will an illiterate woman have? And what kind of children will she raise"?

Seema Qazi: The acknowledgement of the universality of women's rights by the international community is relevant to the debate on Islam and women's rights, particularly with reference to women's rights in the family.

The Message of Tauheed for the Entire Humanity

-S. M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi

It was about two and a half or three millennium years before Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) that the very great and important ancestor of his family itself and the favourite Prophet of Allah Almighty, Hazrat Ibrahim (AS), had, having made enormous sacrifices, laid the foundation of the universal movement of *Tauheed*. The innate, unaffected disposition of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) had comprehended *Tauheed* from the very childhood and had, having discarded the '*shirk*', started calling towards '*Tauheed*'. His anecdote has been described in the holy Quran itself:

(And assuredly We gave rectitude to Ibrahim aforetime, and him We had ever known. Recall when he said to his father and his people: what are these images which you are cleaving to? They said: we found our fathers their worshippers. He said: assuredly you, you and your fathers, have been in error manifest.)

(*Al-Anbiaa*: 51-54)

Thereafter such a benediction he had that plenty of Allah's Prophets kept being raised from amongst the descendants of his son, Hazrat Ishaque. They kept promoting and pushing this message forward. "Because of this very distinction Allah Almighty granted his line of descendants lofty position. But, later this line of descendants of Hazrat Ishaque (AS), which was used to be called 'Banu Israil', kept gradually deviating from the straight path.

Then, lastly, Allah Almighty had Muhammad (SAW), from amongst the descendants of another son of Hazrat Ibrahim, Hazrat Ismail, raised as the

universal Prophet. He told him categorically that the very path pursued by Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) was the path that was to be pursued by him. It was he amongst whose descendants Allah Almighty had raised Prophets and all of them had, in their respective times, called the people towards '*Tauheed*' and kept calling towards compliance with Allah Almighty's dictates as they were instructed and exhorted by Hazrat Ibrahim (AS). The holy Quran states:

(And Ibrahim enjoined the same to his sons and so did Yaqub also saying: O my sons: surely Allah has chosen for you the religion; so die not except you are Muslims.) (*Al-Baqra*: 132)

Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) had all his might and strength that he had at his disposal devoted to the propagation of this very message and to having that put into practice. He had, having suffered great hardships and making sacrifices, built anew the House of Allah on the preordained spot in Makkah Mokarramah in order to have the banner of *Tauheed* raised from there. There he got his first sucking babe, Hazrat Ismail, settled along with his mother. It was this very child of his, Hazrat Ismail, through whom the dissemination of '*Tauheed*' had taken place here. His descendants, getting cut off from each and every one, remained steadfast in worshipping the One Allah. They had taken the pledge that they would call the people towards '*Tauheed*' and tell them the truth.

This practice had consistently been pursued when a man from that place got impressed, during a journey he had made of Iraq and Syria, by what he saw there of

the idol worshipping. He brought the idol here with him. As a result thereof, the practice of idolatry got introduced here. Ultimately, once again Allah Almighty selected a peerless individual of this very clan for the revival of the Ibrahimete message and getting the world back to the same ideology and creed. It was he on whom He had the Prophecy culminated. He had his followers entrusted with the task of promoting, generation after generation, this mission of making mankind bound to worshipping the One God and comprehending that their whimsical and their-own-hand-made gods were spurious. They should have this creed inculcated in minds that the functions and operations of all the worlds was only in the Hands of Allah, the One. It is He who has created each and everyone; and, after having created them, has not left them loose. Instead, He has commanded them to be duty-bound to worship and obey Him. The entire creation has to follow His commands. Whosoever would refuse to obey His commands would have to be accountable in the Hereafter and would get punished.

In the days preceding the manifestation of the Prophecy of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the people of Makkah had gone far astray from their path in respect of '*Tauheed*'. It was direly needed to be rectified. This need was fulfilled by Allah by making Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) the Prophet. The primogenitor of the people of Makkah, Hazrat Ibrahim (AS), had already had this supplication made to Allah that the Prophet for the reform, edification and education of these people be sent from amongst these very people. Allah had already granted this supplication of his. Then, having granted them a long term

respite, He chose Muhammad (SAW) from amongst his descendants themselves. He also had this announcement made that after him there will be no other Prophet, nowhere and never at all. He, and he only, is the last Prophet and for all the people and for all times to come. Thus, the Prophecy conferred on Muhammad (SAW) was a sort of resumption of the self-same Prophecy that was conferred on his ancestral father, Hazrat Ibrahim (AS). And both of them were the followers of the same path.

In His Book that He sent down to His Prophet, Allah Almighty had the *Ayats* (verses) conveyed to him, gradually and as per the demands of the situations and requirements, through His angel. And, beside the guidance towards the Faith and deeds of righteousness, He had therein narrated, in very felicitous and impressive style, such events of the previous peoples and Prophets as would make it known in how many varied means and ways Allah Almighty's Wrath had descended on peoples because of their persistence on perpetrating acts of '*shirk*' and other sins.

Hence, if the similar conditions prevailed amidst the Arabs of Makkah and their accomplices from amongst the Arab tribes, Allah Almighty's Wrath, taking the form of Retribution, may descend on them, too. Hence, these people should learn their lessons from these events and remain mindful how much severe punishments were inflicted on previous peoples for their intransigence and irreligiousness. They should, therefore, comply with the Prophet's advice and get back to the right path, the path of truth. They should have their ways mended under the guidance of the Prophet, excellence of whose manners and morals are already well known to them. ■

Taqwa (God-Consciousness)

-S. Sulaiman Nadwi

If we were to explain the sum and substance of all the Islamic teachings in one word, that proper word is *taqwa* (God-consciousness). Islam aims at infusing this spirit in every action of its followers. So in the very second surah of the Holy Qur'an it has been stated that only those who are *muttaqin* (those who possess *taqwa*) can benefit from the Holy Qur'an:

This is the book, wherein there is no doubt, a guidance to the God-conscious. (2: 2)

The word *muttaqin* (God-conscious) means one who endeavours to ward off evil. The true meaning of this word has been beautifully explained by an eminent companion of the Holy Prophet Ubayy b. K'ab (Allah be pleased with him). It is narrated that once Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) asked Hadrat Ubayy b. K'ab (Allah be pleased with him) to explain to him the true significance of *taqwa*. He said: Commander of the Faithful, have you ever had a chance to pass by a path surrounded by thorny bush? Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) said: Of course many a time. Whereupon he said: Then what care do you exercise while going along that path? I tuck up my clothes and walk carefully along the path, said: 'Umar

(Allah be pleased with him), that no part of my clothes may be entangled in these thorns. It was upon this that Ubayy b. K'ab (Allah be pleased with him) said: This is what the term *taqwa* implies. *Muttaqi* is in fact a person who has an earnest desire to avoid evil and do good and thus seek the pleasure of God.

The main purpose of Islamic *ibadat* (acts of devotion) is to foster *taqwa*. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

O Mankind! Worship your Lord Who created you and those before you so that you might remain conscious of him. (2: 21)

And whoso magnifieth the offering consecrated to Allah, it surely is from devotions of the hearts. (22 : 32)

Their flesh and their blood reach not Allah, but the devotion from you reacheth Him. (22 : 37)

The foundation of the place wherein a Muslim bows his head and prostrate before Allah for worship should be on *taqwa*:

A place of worship which was founded upon duty (to Allah) from the first day is more worthy that you should stand (to pray) therein, wherein are men who love to purify themselves, Allah loveth the purifiers. (9 : 108)

is he who founded his building upon duty to Allah and His good pleasure better; or he who founded his building on the brink of a crumbling, ever-changing precipice so that it toppled with him into the fire of hell? (9 : 109)

So make provision for the journey for verily the best provision is to ward off evil. Therefore keep your duty unto Me. O men of understanding.

(2:197)

O children of Adam, verily we sent down on you garment to conceal your shame and to serve as an adornment, and the garment of piety that is the best. That is one of the Signs of Allah, so that they may remember Allah.

(7 : 26)

The Qur'anic words are clearly indicative of the fact that modesty is ingrained in the human nature and nudity is a satanic feature.

The whole moral system of Islam is based on *Taqwa*. It has been stated in the Holy Qur'an:

To forgo is nearer to piety. (2: 237)

O ye who believe! Be steadfast witness for Allah, and not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to piety. (5: 8)

Assuredly ye will be tried in your property and in your persons, and ye will hear much wrong from those who were given the Scripture before you, and from the idolaters. But if ye persevere

and ward off (evil) then that is of the steadfast heart of things. (3:186)

And make not Allah, by yours oaths, a hindrance to your being righteous and observing your duty to Him and setting things right between people. (2 : 224)

And if you do good and are God-fearing, surely Allah is Aware of what you do. (4: 128)

Those possessing *taqwa* will be fully rewarded in the Hereafter:

The God-fearing will be in gardens and bliss. (52: 17)

Successful are Those who Possess *Taqwa*

Although in the beginning the *muttaqin* have to face difficulties and hardships and abstain from many forbidden and abominable apparently enticing and attractive things and have to adopt illegal and unfair means to obtain them. It does not at all mean that wealth or high status is not in store for the *Muttaqin*. What we want to say is that the avaricious and hasty hankers after wealth set aside all moral principles and resort to every fair or foul means to acquire wealth and popularity within the shortest possible time without any qualm of conscience and fear of Allah.

Those having wisdom and far-sightedness do not resort to dishonest means in order to derive immediate benefits therefrom in this transitory life

at the cost of their eternal and enduring life of the Hereafter. They are never forgetful of it and in their endeavours to make their life worthy for the future life. Allah, the Gracious makes them successful in this world also and bestows His favours and rewards upon them. There is a glad tiding for such people in the Holy Qur'an.

Lo! the sequel is for those who ward off (evil). (11: 49)

And the Hereafter with your Lord is for those who keep away from evil. (43: 35)

Those who Possess Taqwa are Nearer to Allah

It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

Lo! Allah loveth those who keep their duty.

Acceptance of our action will depend upon *Taqwa*.

A deed is done for different motives, but Allah will accept only those deeds which are done with sincerity and devotion for the sake of Allah as has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

Allah accepteth only from those who ward off (evil). (5: 27)

So only those works or deeds are enduring and deserve approbation in this world and in the Hereafter which are done with sincerity and devotion to Allah and not for personal aggrandizement or selfish motive behind it. (9: 7)

The Definition of Muttaqin

Having understood the real signification of *Taqwa* that it is the essence of all Islamic teachings and that all the favours and blessings of Allah in this world and in the Hereafter are for those who possess this virtue, one may question: Who are these fortunate people? The answer to this question has also been given in the Holy Qur'an: It has been said in the *surah Zumar*:

And whoso bringeth the truth and believeth therein-such are the dutiful.

They shall have what they will of their Lord's bounty. This is the reward of the good. (39: 34,35)

In the following verse of the Holy Qur'an the characteristic virtues of the *muttaqin* have been explained in detail:

Virtue is not (this) that you turn your face to the east or west, but virtue is of him who believes in Allah, and the Last Day, and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and he spends wealth, in spite of love for it, for the kindred and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarers and the beggars, and for ransoming the slaves, and establish prayer and pay *Zakat* (and truly virtuous are) they who keep their promise, whenever they make a promise and are self-possessed in misfortune, hardship, and in hour of peril. It is they who are true (in faith) and it is they who are God-conscious.

(2 :177)

Taqwa is a vital attitude which a Muslim develops in time through constant endeavours and there grows within him an awareness of the fact that he is always before God (for, as the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: If you do not see Him, He sees you) and a profound sense of personal responsibility, the habit of doing all matters by Islamic criteria, and love and devotion for God and His guidance. The companions of the Holy Prophet despite the fact that they had the power to take revenge from their enemy did not do so and accepted the truce of Hudaibiya. Allah, the Exalted, praised this attitude of theirs and termed it as *Taqwa*:

He and those who disbelieve had set up on their heart zealotry, the zealotry of the age of ignorance, Allah sent down the peace of reassurance upon His Messenger and upon the believers and imposed on them the word of self-restraint, for they were worthy of it and meet for it. And Allah is Aware of All things. (48: 26)

As a result of the importance which Islam attaches to *taqwa*, all the distinctions of caste, creed, colour race, nationality, high and low, rich and poor became meaningless and only one standard was fixed to judge the worth and superiority of a person. The Holy Qur'an has stated:

O mankind! Lo! We have created you as male and female, and have

made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is All-knowing, All-Aware.

(49: 13)

The *muttaqin* are those who spend (in God's way) in ease as well as in straitness, who restrain their anger and pardon men, for God loves those who do good; those who, when they commit an indecency or do injustice to their own souls, remember God and ask for forgiveness for their sins-And who can forgive sins except Allah? And do not knowingly persist in what they have done. For these the reward will be forgiveness from their Lord and Gardens underneath where rivers flow, to abide therein, and (God's) favour, the reward of those who strive. (3: 134-146)

Verily, the believers are those whose hearts feel fear when God is mentioned, and when His signs (or revelations) are recited to them they increase their faith, and who put trust in their Lord. (8:2)

Verily, those who live in awe for fear of their Lord, who believe in their Lords, signs (or revelations), who do not ascribe partner to their Lord, who give what they give in charity with their hearts full of fear because they are to return to their Lord; it is these who hasten in all good acts and they are foremost in them. (23 : 57-61)

False Allegations

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

India is a democratic country. Our constitution gives freedom of religion to everyone. But it is extremely unfortunate that even after 64 years of independence, parochialism and prejudice like attitude is being meted with the country's largest minority community. We often observe that whenever any terrorist act takes place in the country, the intelligence agencies without making proper investigations, target Muslim youths and implicate them on false charges. Consequently a large number of innocent Muslim youths are languishing in various jails of the country.

As per the Bureau of National Crime Records, Muslim population in India is thirteen percent and twenty one percent of them are long in jails. As per the "India Today" forty five percent of Muslims are in jails in West Bengal, thirty three percent in Maharashtra, and twenty five percent in U.P. While the Muslim population in Gujarat is ten percent, twenty three percent are long in jails. They are six percent in Madhya Pradesh, while thirteen percent are in jails. In West Bengal, there are 1220 inmates in jail out of which Muslims are 530. In Ghazi Abad there are 2200 inmates and Muslims are 720. This is the real picture of Muslim community in India, which has been

ignored by political and social organizations.

On February 26, this issue was raised by various MPs in Lok Sabha. It was alleged that there were many youths from the Muslim Community who are lodged in jails for 10-15 years. A section of them has since been released as they were found to be innocent.

While talking about the release of innocent Muslim youths a national party leader said that the practice of false implication on terror charges should be stopped. He further said: "There were a number of cases in which Muslim youths were acquitted by the court after they were proved innocent. The central government avoid check such convictions as a good number of Muslim youths were still in jails on false charges."

In this context recent mammoth gathering held on March 2, at Rifa-e Aam ground in Lucknow assumes great significant. MP Mohd. Adeb has rightly exclaimed: "I have visited prisons across the country. I have found there are thousands of Muslim youths languishing in jails on terror charges. The government should set up fast track courts to ensure immediate justice. We also demand compensations for the youths acquitted in terror cases, besides

punishment to the police and intelligence officials found guilty of framing false charges against Muslim youths."

Addressing the gathering Maulana Salman Nadwi cautioned as to how long such relations could be maintained. He said that he had given an agenda to Shivpal Yadav demanding the release of youths, 18 percent reservation, Urdu medium schools in UP, and implementation of Sachar and Rangnath Misra reports. He said Shivpal had promised that all these demands will be fulfilled but nothing has been done so far. He said that there is a need to change the situation. He told CM Akhilesh Yadav to stop giving statements and said we give you three months time to fulfill your promises. Salman Husaini said the political Nikah (marriage) with Mayawati ended in talaq, now is the turn of Mulayam. The question is whether he would like to keep the relationship or go for talaq? (M.G.)

Similar sentiments were also expressed by AIMPLB Assistant Secretary General Abdur Rahim Quraishi during the Board's executive committee meeting held on 4-2-13 at Darul-Uloom Nadwatul-Ulama, Lucknow. He has vividly said: "A large number of Muslim youths are languishing in Jails for the past several years on terror charges but no charge sheet had been filed against them so

far. He added that the government should pay compensation to the youths who have been acquitted and initiate action against the police officers who falsely implicated them."

In a democratic country like India such odds should not take place. Indian history can never ignore the contributions, achievements and sacrifices made by Muslims in the struggle for nation's freedom movement.

It should be kept in mind that Muslims who remained here even after partition of the country, have love and regard for their motherland. Here their dwelling shows their patriotism and true passion for independence.

At this juncture we may recall the thought provoking words of Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar. He candidly declared, "Where God commands I am a Muslim first and Muslim second and Muslim last, and nothing but a Muslim... but where India is concerned... I am an Indian first, and Indian second and Indian last, nothing but an Indian." (Khilafat To Partition, P, 76)

In short, we all are Indians. The need of the hour is that we must develop this motto "Live and Let Live". Besides it is up to us to strengthen our composite culture and civilization as well as combat disruptive forces and nefarious elements which raise their ugly heads to destroy the country's unity. ■

Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in Islamic Perspective

- Hatijah Hashim *

Alcohol consumption is the world's third largest risk factor for disease and disability; in middle-income countries, it is the greatest risk. Harmful use of alcohol results in the death of 2.5 million people annually, causes illness and injury to millions more, and increasingly affects younger generations and drinkers in developing countries.

Alcohol is a causal factor in 60 types of diseases and injuries and a component cause in 200 others. Almost 4% of all deaths worldwide are attributed to alcohol, greater than deaths caused by HIV/AIDS, violence or tuberculosis. Alcohol is also associated with many serious social issues, including violence, child neglect and abuse, and absenteeism at workplace.

Harmful alcohol consumption is risky both for the drinker and for other people. An intoxicated person can put *people in the way of harm* by involving them in traffic accidents or violent behaviour, or by affecting co-workers, relatives, friends or strangers.

While most of the adult population abstains altogether or drinks at low-risk levels most of the time, the broad range of alcohol consumption patterns, from daily heavy drinking to

occasional hazardous drinking, creates significant public health and safety problems in nearly all countries.

The impact of alcohol consumption reaches deep into society. Alcohol consumption causes harm far beyond the physical and psychological health of the drinker. It also causes harm to the well-being and health of others.

Alcohol is the world's third largest risk factor for disease burden; it is the leading risk factor in the Western Pacific and the Americas and the second largest in Europe.

The harmful use of alcohol is also associated with several infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). This is because alcohol consumption weakens the immune system, reduces inhibitions, effects judgment and has a negative effect on patients' adherence to antiretroviral treatment.

Many countries recognise the serious public health problems caused by the harmful use of alcohol and have taken steps to adopt preventive policies and programmes, particularly to reduce drunk-driving and the carnage that it causes. However, it is clear that much more needs to be accomplished.

* Research Officer, Consumers Association of Penang, Malaysia.

Countries like the United Kingdom, France, Russia and others have begun to work with international agencies to learn more about promising programmes and alcohol-monitoring technologies designed to deal with the "crime and carnage" associated with irresponsible alcohol consumption.

Islamic religious teachings tell the story of a pre-Islamic society where people consumed very large quantities of alcohol, leading to moral and societal dissolution. When Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) declared alcoholic beverages or any substance that intoxicates *Haram* (prohibited), he restored order, safety and morality to society. As the consequences of drinking alcohol are portrayed in Islamic texts as so severe, and the benefits of outlawing it so great, drinking alcohol has become one of the central behavioural prohibitions for Muslims.

On the issue of alcohol, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) recited the final verses from the Qur'ân.

"Oh you who believe! Verily, without a shadow of a doubt, wine, gambling, idol worshipping, instruments used for divining, for telling the future, are all impurities and pollutants from the activities of Satan." (5:90)

They are the production of Satan. They are manufactured by Satan. He has created them and what is his

purpose?

"The soul intention of Satan, through alcohol and gambling, is to cast hatred and enmity amongst you." (5:91)

He wants to see you fight with each other. He wants to see you being in harmful competition against each other. This is his intention and another one of his intentions is:

"and he wishes to prevent you and stop you and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and he wants to prevent you from performing prayers." (5:91)

The fear of God helps Muslims keep from not only alcohol but all other evils prohibited in the Qur'ân.

The word *khamr* (intoxicants) is commonly associated with alcohol. But in Arabic, *khamr* has a broader meaning to it. *Khamr* is what comes over the human intelligence, which means everything that intoxicates a person's mind. In this context *khamr* is not only alcohol, but also every substance that clouds the mind.

Khamr, at the time of our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) meant something that is flowing and in liquid form which clearly proves the prohibition of alcohol.

The prohibition of drugs is proven in the following hadith:

Hafiz Ibnul Qayyum al-Jowzy wrote in his book that in the 13th century,

at the time of the Tartars, a person came to Cairo seeking evidence regarding a substance, which was striking the people of the Muslim world and this substance was called hashish. This person was looking for evidence from the scholars regarding hashish whether or not it was forbidden in Islam.

The scholars were having a hard time finding a Qur'ânic injunction regarding this because this substance was not in liquid form or flowing like alcohol. But at the time, Allah put into the knowledge of Hafiz Zay-nuddin Al-Iraqi, who was present at the gathering, a hadith and he said, "I have found a hadith which specifically deals with this issue." Then he mentioned the hadith from As-Sunnan Abu Dawood, which is one of the most authentic books of hadith preached all around the world. He said, "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) prohibited people from the usage of intoxicants and narcotics. Any substance which befogs and intoxicates the mind, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) has stopped us from taking it."

"Everything that intoxicates the mind comes into the category of *khamr* and everything that comes into the category of *khamr* is *haram*." From this, we can see that drugs fall into this category because it intoxicates the mind.

Whatever substance intoxicates a person in large amounts is *haram* in small amounts, too. Once Caliph Umar

(may Allah be pleased with him) was giving a *khutbah* and in his *khutbah*, he was talking on the issue of *khamr* and the definition he gave of *khamr* was: "*Khamr* is that which befogs the mind and which covers the human intelligence."

AllamalbnTaymiyyah, a great scholar of Islam, stated regarding this issue, that a person who takes hashish (drugs) should be given the same punishment as a person who takes alcohol – 40 or 80 lashes. In fact, he goes to the extent of saying that those people who are involved in trafficking drugs are committing an act of *kufr* and he further says that his remains should not be performed. He should be hanged in public.

Escapism is why people take drugs. They are creating an artificial world around them, an unreal world, a world that is more in the mind than in reality. They make a manufactured world around them to make themselves feel good, but the problem is, when the effect of that alcohol or the effect of that drug wears out and the hard realities of this world slap them in the face, then the problem they face, the depression they experience, at that moment, will all be far greater than the problem they started out with.

Islam is a religion that does not believe in escapism. Islam believes in realism, about the hard issues, about the real life. When we have problems, we confront them head on like brave

courageous men, men of spirit, men of heart. We try and come with a solution for them. Then, all problems would be solved. Islam teaches its followers about courage. Those who adhere to Islam are taught patience and if they have all this in them, then they can overcome mountains with this inner strength. They can overcome the greatest problems in their lives.

Although all Muslim sects currently prohibit alcohol consumption, surveys conducted by the World Health Organisation have found that a small amount of drinking still occurs in all Muslim countries, even the ones with harsh punishments.

Malaysia, in spite of being a Muslim country, has been named by WHO as the world's 10th largest consumer of alcohol despite its small population and size.

Statistics by the international body showed that Malaysians spent over US\$500mil (RM1.5bil) on alcohol with a per capita consumption of seven litres.

Beer consumption in Malaysia is 11 litres per capita.

In response to the growing global crisis, in May 2010, WHO released The Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol, endorsed by WHO's Member States.

The Global Strategy promotes a number of proven effective measures for reducing alcohol-related harms including:

- taxation on alcohol;
- reducing availability through allowing fewer outlets to sell alcohol;
- raising age limits for those buying;
- using effective drink-driving measures;
- promotion of screening and brief interventions (SBIRT) in healthcare settings;
- treatment of alcohol use disorders;
- regulating or banning marketing of alcoholic beverages; and
- conducting information and educational campaigns in support of effective policy measures.

Over the years, the list of intoxicating substances has come to include more modern street drugs and the like. Islam prohibits the use of narcotics noting that "every intoxicant is *Haram* (unlawful)". 'Recreational' drugs have become the social culture and despite religious prohibitions, Muslims are just as susceptible to cannabis (marijuana), hashish, and the supposedly herbal '*hukkah*' (a tobacco smoking pipe).

Nonetheless, this drug abuse is also *Haram*, not to mention encouraging illegal drug trade and addiction. One Islamic saying even states that intoxication is worse than rape and murder, because an intoxicated man will commit both of these acts. ■

(Courtesy: Radiance)

Life is Changing for Valley's Trendy Girls

- Seerat Yusra Ali

The craze of modern attire had gripped her for several years up to the extent that it seemed impossible for her to change the attire. But a simple advice from her friend to spare some time to learn about the basics of Quran changed her life forever.

Zulaikha, 20, had never thought even in her dreams that visiting a Darsgah would make such a big difference in her life that she would switch over from western clothes and put in Abaya (a long cloak).

"I was very fashionable and I had no clear concept about Islam. But after following my friend's suggestion, things have changed in my life completely. I was so overwhelmed in the Darsgah that I suggested my other cousins to join the same," she said.

In an effort to impart Islamic education and practice the same in day-to-day life, Maktab Taleem-un-Nisa is in the field to teach young girls from different backgrounds since 2010.

"The initiative is only meant for female folk beyond the age bar or background. Our motive is purely to help them to understand and practice Islam in their day to day lives without choosing the extreme path," said Maulana Adnan Nadvi, owner of Darsgah.

He said that after consultation with Ulema and religious scholars, he along with his wife decided to open a Darsgah

exclusively for female folk of the society to teach them the Islamic values in a practical way for free of cost.

The Darsgah is located in the uptown Bhagat area which is a posh locality and highly trend sensitive and are versatile in fashion things.

"We have received a healthy response from people and hundreds of girls and elderly women are coming in our centre. Initially when we started with our first batch it was disappointing to see less number of people but with time it is improving as more and more students have started to come in," said Nadvi.

A female teacher of Lucknow while appreciating the effort of the people who are directly as well as indirectly linked with the Darsgah said that the basic aim of the institution was to disseminate the Islamic teachings without leaving the practical life.

Majority of our sisters are ignorant about Islamic knowledge, so there is a dire need to help our young girls in understanding the basic knowledge of our religion. We are here no like a family and these teachings have brought a sea of change in our lives. It is really pleasing to see that Islamic code of conduct replacing the western hip-hop trend," said a female teacher.

Unlike other Darsgah's where many people show their reluctance in allowing their daughters to acquire Islamic education, most of the parents have accepted open-heartedly the concept of

the Islamic teachings the Darsgah is providing.

"It is unfortunate to see youngsters getting swayed with the western culture and thus eroding their basic concept of realization. Today we are facing a challenging situation as the immoral scenes have engulfed in the valley, said Muhammad Sultan, a local.

Ghulam Rasool, a parent who recently allowed her daughter to attend the evening classes at Darsgah expressed

his happiness in the way that the Darsgah in imparting education to the young girls.

"There is a need to support such inspirational initiatives especially keeping in view the increasing crime rate in the valley. Parents need to play a pivotal role to save their children from the moral degradation that the youngsters are moving towards be it due to extra freedom and exposure to internet and mobile phones," he said. ■

Muslim cop goes to SC to save beard

- Dhananjay Mahapatra

NEW DELHI: Does growing flowing beard by a religious Muslim policeman clash with his professional requirement? The Supreme Court agreed to examine the issue and sought response from the Union ministry of home affairs to settle the dispute once and for all.

Zahiroddin Shamsoddin Bedade, a constable in the Maharashtra Reserve Police Force, was permitted by the Commandant to keep beard by a May 7, 2012 order with a caveat that it will be kept trimmed, neat and tidy. Five months later, the Commandant rescinded his earlier order saying the permission to grow beard till the rest of the service was not in accordance with the rules. "In future, if it is found necessary to grow bears temporarily during specific months, Bedade should get such permission from this office," the order said.

Bedade challenged this order in the Bombay High Court, which dismissed his petition resulting in initiation of disciplinary proceedings against him by the police department. He moved the Supreme Court. A bench of Justices P Sathasivam and J S Khehar said this issue had arisen in the past before some of the High Courts and most had rejected demands from policeman to keep beard. The time has come for the apex court to examine the issue from the constitutional point of view and settle the controversy once and for all, it said and stayed the disciplinary proceedings against Bedade. ■

(Courtesy: The Times of India)

Arabic In India - Overview

- Zafrul-Islam Khan

Following is the keynote address delivered by MG editor at the two-day National Seminar on Arabic Literature in India, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi on 6 February 2013

I welcome the initiative to hold this important two-day National Seminar on Arabic Literature in India and feel honoured to be invited to deliver the keynote address at the inaugural function of this important literary occasion.

Arabic, as a language, came to our south-western shores long before the advent of Islam. It was the language of the Arabs who frequented this region for trade on their way to Southeast Asia and China. After the advent of Islam fifteen centuries ago, Arabs continued this relationship with parts of India. As a result of these contacts and inter-marriages two *distinct ethnic* groups, Mapillas of Malabar and Labbais of Tamil Nadu, came into being.

Some Arabs known as "Nawa'it" (sailors), settled in the Konkan area, especially in Bhatkal. With the passage of time they stopped speaking Arabic and now use a dialect of the Konkani with a mixture of Arabic, Persian and Urdu. Limited contingents of Yemeni

mercenary soldiers were imported by rulers like the Nizam of Hyderabad. Their descendents still live in Hyderabad and other parts of the erstwhile Nizam state. They no longer speak Arabic but many retain their Arab surnames and some still maintain contacts with their clans back in the Yemen.

While the Arab traders, mostly Yemenis and Basris, arrived and settled in the south peacefully, Muslim Arabs invaded Sindh in the north and established a short-lived enclave in 711 CE which lasted for a few decades and ended abruptly due to the Arabs own internal problems. Thereafter, Islam came to India in a big way in the tenth century. With Muslims, came their religious language, Arabic, though Persian was the language of the administration although major Indian Muslim ruling dynasties were of Turkic origin.

Arabic was not propped up by Muslim political power while Persian was. Hence, Persian disappeared quickly after the fall of the Muslim rule but Arabic remained and gained more strength over the years.

Islam slowly spread in all parts of India but Arabic remained only as

the religious language of the Indian Muslims. While rulers and elites used Persian, common Indians continued to use their regional languages but each and every Muslim had some knowledge of Arabic and used some Arabic words and phrases in his/her daily life, especially while performing Islamic rituals. Every Muslim memorised some short *surahs* of the Holy Qur'an to be able to offer prayers.

During the early Islamic period, Sanskrit works were translated into Arabic, like *Kalila wa Dimna* which is a translation of *Panchatantra*. It is still taught in many Indian madrasahs as a literary text due to its very high class literary language and style.

With the passage of time, Arabic words spread to all Indian languages in varying degrees. Some Indian languages like Tamil (Arwi), Malayalam (Mapilla), Gujarati (Lisan al-Da'wat), Punjabi, Konkani, Sindhi, Kashmiri (Purik), Pashto and Urdu, adopted the Arabic script with some additions and modifications to suit the local needs. Even Sanskrit was written in Arabic for a short while in the nineteenth century (Tahera Qutbuddin, "Arabic in India...", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. 127.3 (2007), p. 334). Though some of these languages have now discarded the Arabic script, Pakistani Punjabi, Sindhi, Kashmiri, Pashto and Urdu still use the Arabic script. Meters of the Urdu poetry

too are Arabic.

Arabic words in Indian languages

Thousands of Arabic words have been borrowed by Indian languages over the centuries. Following are a few examples of Arabic words found in many Indian languages : 'Adalat (justice, court), 'Aql (wisdom), Din (religion), Duniya (world), Fasad (corruption), Fursat (opportunity), Ghazal (poetry of love), Ghusl (bath), Haj (Pilgrimage), Haji (Pilgrim) Haq (right), Haqiqat (reality, fact), Hikmat (wisdom), Iman (belief, faith), Inqilab (revolution), 'Ishq (love), Jahannam (hell), Jannat (Paradise), Kafan (shroud), Kitab (book), Lazzat (pleasure), Majlis (sitting), Makan (place, house), Maqam (station), Matam (mourning), Maut (death), Nazm (poem), Qabr (grave), Qalam (pen), Qarar (verdict or agreement), Qasam (oath); Qasida (poem); Risala (message, magazine); Sadaqa (alms), Salam (greeting), Sharab (wine but originally meaning 'drink'), Shaytan (satan), 'Umr (age), Wa'da (promise), Wafa (loyalty), Wajib (mandatory), Yaqin (certainty), Zalim (oppressor), Ziyarat (visit), Zulm (injustice) (Tahera Qutbuddin, op. cit, p. 327f).

Not just Arabic words, even Arabic phrases and expressions are frequently used by Indians, especially Muslims, like *Insha Allah*, *Masha Allah*, *Jazakallah*, *Subhanallah*, *Alhamdulillah*, *Lahaul or Lahaul wala-*

quwwat [illa billah], *Astaghfirullah*, *Na'udhu billah*. etc.

Inscriptions

Arabic inscriptions are found on epitaphs, dedications and ornamentations on tens of thousands of historical monuments, madrasahs, mosques, coins etc across the country (See, for instance, works of Qeyamuddin Ahmad, Ziyaud-Din Desai and Asoke Kumar Bhattacharya etc.).

Arabic manuscripts

There are hundreds of public and private libraries and innumerable private collections across India which treasure hundreds of thousands of Arabic manuscripts, many of which were brought from Hijaz, Yemen, Iraq and Egypt etc over centuries. Some of the famous Indian libraries which treasure rare collections of Arabic manuscripts are Raza Library in Rampur, Maulana Azad Library of Aligarh Muslim University, Kutub Khana-e-Nasiriyah in Lucknow, Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute of Tonk, Jamia Saifia Library in Surat, Pir Muhammad Shah Dargah Library of Ahmedabad, Khuda Bakhsh Library in Patna, Library of the Asiatic Society in Kolkata, Salarjung Museum Library, State Central Library and Kutubkhana Sai'idiya in Hyderabad and many others. Each of them has thousands of Arabic manuscripts.

Madrasahs

Under the Muslim rule and to meet the needs of the Muslim population and the administration, Maktabas and Madrasahs came up in all areas since the tenth century CE. These were usually attached to big mosques where Arabic texts of religious nature were the main subjects with some additions like philosophy and logic which, too, had Arabic texts. These madrasahs were mostly State-founded. After the 1857 Indian revolt against the British colonial rule, private madrasahs sprang up in all parts of undivided India.

These madrasahs followed an Arabic curriculum which included Qur'an, *tafsir*, Hadith, Fiqh etc. Changes were made over the years to adopt new books and subjects. Today, most madrasahs follow a modified version of Dars-i-Nizami which was prepared by Mulla Nizamuddin (d. 1748 CE) on the orders of Emperor Aurangzeb. This curriculum is mostly based on books by Arab and Persian authors, but works by some Indian authors like Mulla Jiwan of Amethi (d. 1718 CE), Muhammad Zahid Al-Harawi (d. 1700 CE), Mulla Mahmud Jaunpuri (d. 1651) and Shah Waliullah al-Dihlawi (d. 1762) were also included. In recent times, books by modern Indian authors like Maulana Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi have been added to the madrasa curriculum.

Today, some of the big madrasahs outside the Arab world are found in India, like Darul 'Uloom at Deoband, Darul 'Uloom Nadwatul 'Ulama of Lucknow, Jamiatul Falah of Bilaryaganj, Madrasatul Islah of Saraimir, Jamia Darussalam of Omerabad (Tamil Nadu), Markazi Darul Uloom of Varanasi, Jamia Saifiya of Surat and many more.

Today, according to an estimate, in India we have around 33,000 madrasahs, all of which to some degree teach Arabic language as well as religious texts in Arabic though the medium of instruction is mainly Urdu. There are hundreds of special madrasahs for memorisation and tajwid of the Holy Qur'an.

Arabic language and literature are also offered at dozens of modern universities and hundreds of government and private colleges across India. Jamia Millia Islamia occupies the pride of place as the most energetic and authentic centre for teaching modern Arabic in India.

Outstanding Arabic works authored by Indians

During these past fourteen centuries of the existence of Islam in India, Indians not only studied and memorized Arabic texts but also authored some of the most authentic and respected texts in Arabic and

Islamic studies. I may mention here only a few:

Majma' Bihar al-Anwar fi ghara'ib al-Tanzil wa Lata'if al-Akhbar by Muhammad Tahir al-Fatni (d. 986H), a commentary of the hadiths of the six Sahih compilations;

Tuhfatu'l-Mujahidin by Zain al-din al-Ma'bari (d. after 991H/1583 CE),

Tafsir al-Rahman wa taysir al-Mannan by 'Ali' al-Din Al-Maha'imi (d. 1431);

Zafaru'l-Walih bi-Muzaffar wa 'alih by Abdullah ibn 'Umar al-Nahrawali (d. 1020H/1611CE),

Musallamuth-thubut in Usul al-Fiqh by Muhibullah ibn 'Abd al-Shakur al-Hanafi al-Bihari (d. 1119 H);

Taju'l-'Arus fi sharh al-Qamusin ten volumes by Sayyid Murtada ibn Muhammad al-Bilgiri al-Zabidi (d. 1205H), one of the most important Arabic dictionaries;

Subhatul Mirjan fi athar Hindustan by Ghulam 'Ali Azad Bilgiri (d. /1200H/1785) in praise of India. He has made a great name in Arabic poetry. *Al-Sab' al-Sayyarah*, the collection of his Arabic poems, is in seven volumes. He is known as "Hassan al-Hind").

Sawati' al-ilham, a unique *tafsir* using only undotted Arabic words, by Emperor Akbar's court poet

Fayzi (d. 1595);

Mashariq al-anwar al-Nabawiyah, a most popular compilation of Hadith by Hasan Al-Saghani [Chaghani] of Lahore (d. 1262);

Kanz al-'ummal fi sunan al-aqwal wa'l-Af'al, an encyclopaedic subject-wise collection of Hadith which is still popular, by 'Ali Al-Muttaqi (d. 1568);

Hujjatullah al-Balighah of Shah Waliullah Al-Dihlawi (d. 1762);

Al-Fatawa al-Hindiyah compiled by a group of scholars at the behest of Emperor Aurangzeb (d. 1760);

Al-Tafsir al-Mazharib by Qadi Thana' Allah al-Panipati (d. 1225H),

Izhar al-Haqq and Izalatu'l-awhamby Rahmatullah al-Kiranwi (d. 1309H),

Mu'jam al-mu'allifin 60 volumes by Mahmud Hasan Khan al-Tonki (d. 1366/1947 CE), a biographical dictionary of authors upto year 1350H;

Nuzhatu'i-Khawatir wa Bahjatu'l-masami' wa'l-nawazir (most extensive biographical record of Muslim personalities ever attempted) by Sayyid 'Abd al-Hayy al-Hasani (d. 1341H);

Jami' al-'Ulumby 'Abd al-Nabi

ibn 'Abd al-Rasul al-Ahmadnagri (d. 12th century H), popularly known as *Dustur al-'Ulama'*, a dictionary of Islamic sciences;

Kashshaf Istilahat al-Fununby Muhammad 'Ali al-Thanawi (d. after 1745 CE), another dictionary of Islamic sciences;

Fath al-Bayan fi maqasid al-Qur'an and 55 other books in Arabic by Siddiq Hasan al-Qannauji, Nawab of Bhopal (d. 1889 CE);

Nizamul Qur'an, Al-Im'an fi Aqsam al-Qur'an and Jamharatu'l-Balaghah etc., by Hamidu'din al-Farahi (d. 1349H),

Madha khasira al-'Alam bi inhitat al-Muslimin by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Hasani Nadwi (d. 1999);

Samt al-la'ali, a commentary on *Al-Amali* of Abu 'Ali Qali, by 'Abd al-Aziz al-Maimani (d. 1978).

I may add here the book *Al-Islam Yatahadda* by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan which has been one of the most popular books in the Arab world during these past four decades. Though it was written originally in Urdu, it was translated into Arabic by an Indian.

These are only a few examples out of hundreds of original Arabic works by Indian authors which are indispensable for Islamic scholars all

over the world.

Of special mention here is that Indian scholars took great care and pain during the last two centuries to serve Hadith, teaching, compiling, explaining and commenting on this vast treasure. The great Egyptian scholar Sayyid Rashid Rida, editor of *Al-Manar*, had said in his introduction to *Miftah Kunuz al-Sunnah*, "Had it not been for the interest of our brethren the scholars of India in the sciences of Hadith in this age, these sciences would have disappeared from the Eastern countries as they were already weak in Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Hijaz since the tenth Hijri century..."

Indian scholars have made some extraordinary contribution to the discipline of Hadith literature like 'Awn al-Ma'bud fi sharh Sunan abi Da'ud by Muhammad Shamsul Haqq al-'Azimabadi (d. 1329 H), *Badhl al-Majhud fi sharh Sunan Abi Da'ud* by Khalil Ahmad al-Saharanfuni (d. 1346H), *Tuhfatu'l-Ahwadhi fi sharh sunan al-Tirmidhi* by Abd al-Rahman al-Mubarakfuri (d. 1353H), *Fath al-Mulhim fi Sharh Sahih Muslim* by Shabbir Ahmad Al-'Uthmani (d. 1396H), *Awjaz al-Masalik ila Sharh Muwatta' al-Imam Malik* by Muhammad Zakariya al-Kandhlawi (d. 1402H/1982 CE) etc... This tradition is being carried forward by the scholars of Darul 'Ulum Deoband (established

1866). Darul 'Ulum Nadwatul Ulama at Lucknow (established 1894) emphasised on Arabic language and this remains its distinguishing point to this day. A third trend was to emphasise on reading and understanding the Holy Qur'an and this was pioneered by Maulana Hamiduddin Farahi (d. 1930) who wrote his unique *tafsir Nizamu'l-Qur'an* in a refreshing Arabic language and style and authored simple and useful books on Arabic grammar and other subjects. This tradition is carried forward by Madrasatul Islah and Jamiatul Falah.

Most of the Arabic works authored in India are on religious themes but there are also works on philology, poetry, philosophy, history, travel, biography, *belle-lettres*, medicine and mathematics, etc.

Arabic in India after Independence

After Independence in 1947, free India was quick to gauge the importance of Arabic language as a bridge to connect with the Arab world spanning from the Gulf to the Atlantic which had great geopolitical and commercial relevance for India. As a result, new Arabic departments were opened in dozens of universities and hundreds of colleges across India. Cultural exchange with the Arab countries has been encouraged, a cultural and literary Arabic journal, *Thaqafat'ul-Hind* is published

since 1957 by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations in addition to a number of Arabic magazines and newsletters published by Indian missions in the Arab world. In addition to this, dozens of Arabic magazines are published by various Muslim organisations and madrasahs in India, some of which, like *Al-Ba'th al-Islami*, have a high reputation. Arabic books are also regularly published in India. These are mostly of religious texts, but also include works on poetry, literature and history etc.

India is also an important centre of Arabic publishing. Hyderabad's Da'iratul Ma'arif al-'Uthmaniyah (established by the Nizam State in 1888) edited and printed hundreds of rare Arabic manuscripts. Scholars in the Arab world remain forever grateful

for its services. It still survives as part of the Osmania University of Hyderabad. Bhiwandi/Mumbai's Al-Dar Al-Qayyimah, a private publishing house, also published many Arabic books which became popular in the Arab world. Deoband in north India remains an important centre of Arabic publishing catering to the needs of the vast network of Arabic madrasahs in the Subcontinent.

This is only a bird's eye-view of this vast subject. I have limited myself to Arabic though Persian and Urdu scholarship in India has been highly influenced by Arabic language and works. I am sure scholars will treat this subject with more details and specific studies during the next two days of this important seminar. ■

(Courtesy : Milli Gazette)

Maulana Rabey re-elected President of AIMPLB

At a three day 23rd Annual Session of All India Muslim Personal Law Board held at Ujjain from March 22 to 24, 2013. Maulana Syed Mohammad Rabey Hasani Nadwi, Rector Darul-uloom Nadwatul Ulema Lucknow, has been re-elected as President of the Board.

Maulana who has been holding this post since 2002 has made valuable contribution in pushing up the issues related to Muslim Personal Law at different forums. He enjoys the confidence of different sects of Muslims and strives hard to maintain cohesive relation between Muslims of divergent ideologies.

On his election Maulana expressed his gratitude and sought cooperation from members of the Board so that he may lead the Board successfully.

Status of Muslim Women in Islamic Societies—Past and Present

- M. Iqtedar Husain Farooqi*

***Educate a man, you educate a person.
Educate a woman and you educate a
family. Educate a family and you
educate the Ummah.***

Islam brought about liberation of women from bondage and gave her equal rights and recognized her individuality as a human being. Islam improved the status of women by instituting rights of property ownership, inheritance, education, marriage (as a contract) and divorce. The women of the Prophet's time enjoyed the full range of rights and freedoms that Allah and the Prophet allowed them. There were many prominent Muslim women in that generation who were outspoken and contributed to building the Islamic society. Their names have been recorded. Quran is insistent on the full participation of women in society and in the religious practices. The history of Muslims is rich with women of great achievements in all walks of life from as early as the seventh century. Since the beginning of Islam, Muslim women have made strong contributions in the development of Islamic Societies. The Qur'an provides clear-cut evidence that woman is completely equated with man in the sight of God in terms of her rights and responsibilities. Few

examples of Quranic injunctions for the rights of Woman are as follows: "Every soul will be (held) in pledge for its deeds" (Qur'an 74:38).

"So their Lord accepted their prayers, (saying): I will not suffer to be lost the work of any of you whether male or female. You proceed one from another" (Qur'an 3: 195).

"Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has faith, verily to him will We give a new life that is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to their actions". (Qur'an 16:97, see also 4:124).

"When news is brought to one of them, of (the Birth of) a female (child), his face darkens and he is filled with inward grief! With shame does he hide himself from his people because of the bad news he has had! Shall he retain her on (sufferance) and contempt, or bury her in the dust? Ah! What an evil (choice) they decide on?" (Qur'an 16: 58-59).

"O Mankind, keep your duty to your Lord who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate (of same kind) and from them twain has spread a multitude of men and women" (Qur'an 4: 1). A scholar who pondered about this verse states: "It is believed that there is no text, old or new, that

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deals with the humanity of the woman from all aspects with such amazing brevity, eloquence, depth, and originality as this divine decree."It has been rightly claimed by some scholars that any interpretation of the Qur'an that is discriminatory against women is contradictory to core spirit, general principles and ultimate purposes of Islam. Islam honours women as daughters, and encourages raising them well and educating them. Islam states that raising daughters will bring a great reward. For example, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever takes care of two girls until they reach adulthood, he and I will come like this on the Day of Resurrection," and he held his fingers together. (Muslim)

At another occasion Prophet said:

"None but a noble man treats women in an honourable manner. And none but an ignoble treats women disgracefully". (Al-Tirmidhi).

As a result of rather revolutionary laws for women, early Islamic societies saw Muslim women being involved in diverse occupations and economic activities. They were employed in Hospitals as physicians and nurses. They were employed even in Secret Service (as part of Postal Department) during the period of Abbasids and Islamic Spain. In the field of education, they could study, earn Ijazahs (academic degrees), and

qualify as scholars and teachers. The women of Islamic Spain, like their counterparts in other Islamic societies, were active participants in political and cultural affairs. They helped shape the cosmopolitan civilization associated with the Muslims.

There are authentic reports that during the Rise of Islam, (7th Century to 15th Century AD) Muslim women were active patrons and sponsors of public works. Rich women supported many public fountains, gardens, hospitals, and inns through their own assets and property. All through the period of Islamic rise of Medieval Period it was impossible for anyone to justify any mistreatment of woman by any ruling embodied in the Islamic Law, nor could anyone dare to cancel, reduce, or distort the clear-cut legal rights of women given in Shariah. As a matter of fact the reputation, purity and maternal role of Muslim women were objects of admiration by observers from the West. Female religious scholars were relatively common in Muslim Societies. Mohammad Akram Nadwi has compiled biographies of 8,000 female jurists during Islamic Rise. and orientalist Ignaz Goldziher estimated that 15 percent of medieval hadith scholars were women. Women were important Transmitters of Hadith compiled by SahihSittah (Six Collections of Prophetic Traditions). Many Western Scholars have

appreciated Islamic recognition of fundamental rights of women. For instance, Annemarie Schimmel states that "compared to the pre-Islamic position of women, Islamic legislation meant an enormous progress; the woman had the right to administer the wealth she had brought into the family or had earned by her own work." Similarly, William Montgomery Watt states that "Muhammad, in the historical context of his time, can be seen as a figure that promoted women's rights and improved things considerably". Watt further explains: "At the time Islam began, the conditions of women were terrible - they had no right to own property, were supposed to be the property of the man, and if the man died everything went to his sons. Muhammad, however, by instituting rights of property ownership, inheritance, education and divorce, gave women basic safeguards." After fifteenth century AD things started changing against the interest of women. Harsh restrictions on women and general violation of human rights began. Culture and patriarchal constraints played instrumental roles in restricting Muslim women's educational and economic participation. This was the period of Decline (Fall) of the Islamic World. The situation has gone so bad that many people believe that Muslim women are oppressed in Islamic Societies. They are denied education

and other basic rights. These are not baseless accusations. But one must understand that these oppressive practices do not come from Islam. These are part of local cultural traditions in various countries. Western observers portray Islam as uniquely patriarchal and incompatible with women's equality. Two rather unfortunate examples of deprivation of Muslim women from her Islamic Rights, after the fall of Islamic Societies, are with regard to their Education and inheritance in properties. As against the high women literacy during the Rise, (as high as hundred percent in highly developed cities of Baghdad and Cordova), it was deplorable during the Fall. An Indian survey in 1921 showed that only four out of every 1,000 Muslim females were literate. This situation was more or less the same throughout the Islamic World. The reason was the general edict that Muslim girls need not learn the writing as reading was enough for them. In even 21st century women education finds low priority in the Islamic world and the gap between male-female literacy is sometime as high 40%. For Instance, according to the Adult Literacy Rates and Illiterate Population by Country and by Gender report (of September 2006) by UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), Egypt's adult literacy rate for males is 83% whereas that of females is 59.4%. The male adult literacy rate for

Morocco is 65.7% and that of females is only 39.6%. Pakistan, another Muslim country's literacy rate is 63% for males and a 36% for females. Similar is the case of Yemen (male literacy rate 73.1 percent, female 34.7 percent, difference 38.4 percent) and Afghanistan (male 43.1, female 12.6, difference 30.5). In Muslim Countries like Chad, Niger, Benin, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Malawi, the male-female gap is between 20 and 30 percent. This gap in the Western World is between 0 to 3%. In a report published (UNESCO) in 2002, the illiteracy figures among Muslim women (throughout Islamic World) was found to be as high as 90 percent. Denial of inheritance to women was another distressing example of unIslamic attitude during the Fall. A glaring denial of property to her was quietly accepted in India when legislations were passed (20th Century) that Women (Muslims or non-Muslims) had no rights in agricultural land and the properties of Taluqdars (Big Landlords). Similar situations existed then throughout the Islamic world. It is being claimed by some Muslim Scholars of Turkey and Egypt that during the last two decades things have changed in favour of Women with the result that many countries, where Muslims are in majority, like Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Turkey, have been led by women. Nearly one-third of the Parliament of Egypt also

consists of women. Some other Muslim Intellectuals, in recent past, have condemned attitude of Muslim societies for their anti-Islamic treatment of womenfolk. Few examples are stated below:

Mohammed Ali Jinnah: "No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you. We are victims of evil customs. It is a crime against humanity that our women are shut up within the four walls of the houses as prisoners. There is no sanction anywhere for the deplorable condition in which our women have to live". (March 10, 1944, AMU, Aligarh), "I have always maintained that no nation can ever be worthy of its existence that cannot take its women along with the men. No struggle can ever succeed without women participating side by side with men." (March 25, 1940).

Farkhonda Hassan: "Let us prove that a society which empowers its women is a society sure to succeed. In many Muslim countries, gender-based discrimination, coupled with social and cultural barriers, limits access and participation of women in higher education. Some people attribute these barriers to the teachings of Islam, but this is false."

Feroze Bakht Ahmed : "Although there's a lot of wailing about the veiling of Muslim women, no one is bothered about their pathetic literacy levels

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