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The Fragrance of East

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Editor's Note:

The recent trend in maligning the Islamic cradles of learning, known as "Madrasas" is quite disturbing. Temples of learning and knowledge have suddenly become the targets of a slander campaign and are being designated as the breeding centres of terrorism. They are looked at as the hearth of extremism and fundamentalism.

Since last two decades a predominantly Muslim dominated Afghanistan has been in news for different reasons. Among other things the rise of the extremist Taliban has been the focus of world attention. To ward off communism from its soil, Ulema resented the increasing influence of Russia in Afghanistan stood-up against it. They got a helping hand from the United States of America in their fight against Russia. Infact students and young boys were encouraged, trained and armed by America to fight the Russian influenced government and establish their own rule. True, American patronage helped young Afghanis, now branded as Taliban, in forming their own government and burying communism for all time to come. But during five years or so of their rule the Taliban government resorted to a narrow interpretation of the Shariah. It provided material to western world media to launch an anti Taliban vis-a-vis anti Islam propaganda.

The torch bearers of Christianity and Judaism found the situation quite amenable to them and girded up their loin to exploit the misdeeds of a handful section of the Afghan society. Their main focus became the "Madrasas" which according to them produced terrorists. If we look back to the history of the establishment of "Madrasas" we find that they are the centres from where Islamic knowledge emanated which created a peaceful and cultured society. There is hardly any evidence in Islamic history that the "Madrasas" were ever used for producing soliders, terrorists or anti-social elements.

At preliminary stage tiny tots are imparted basic knowledge viz. reading of holy Quran, offering prayers,

getting elementary knowledge of Islamic tenets, observing basic lessons on hygiene, cleanliness and keeping themselves away from evils. This does not provide any scope to imprint the tender minds of students against any individual or community. At secondary and higher levels in "Madrasas" curriculum we find emphasis on learning Arabic language, literature and grammar. "Fiqh" (Islamic law, jurisprudence), "Tafsir" (exegesis of the holy Quran), Principles of "Hadis" (Traditions or sayings of the Prophet), logic, philosophy, Islamic doctrines, the Prophet's biography, Islamic history, history in general. In some "Madrasas" arithmetic, algebra, physical and general geography and elementary English are also taught.

In India most of the "Madrasas" where no tuition fee is charged are much handicapped of financial resources. They run on donations and mostly on "Zakat" (the alms tax: one of the five essentials of Islam). It is, therefore, imperative that we view "Madrasas" in their correct perspective and do not unnecessarily malign all of them.

In this issue of the magazine we take the liberty of giving excerpts from Kuldip Kaur's book "Madrasa Education in India" (CRRID, Chandigarh). This book gives a glimpse of the evolution of Madrasas in the Islamic East. We hope our readers will find the excerpts interesting. Those who are not well versed with the Madrasas working will definitely be benefited. ■

SA

ISLAMIC LAW TRANSPLANTED IN ASIAN COUNTRIES

Masaji Chiba*

I want first to express my cordial thanks to the organizers of this symposium for their invitation to me. In fact, I have a doubt whether I am amply qualified to attend the Symposium. I am not more than a scholar studying law in general from sociological and/or anthropological point of view, not specifically interested in Islamic law, nor a Muslim, unlike most of other participants. On the other hand, I think of my positive qualification, too. What I have been seeking for in my scholarly life since more than half a century ago is the intrinsic value of non-western law which has been unreasonably underrated by the overwhelming western jurisprudence. Among many non-western laws I treated, Islamic law is without doubt the most important one with the widest prevalence in the world as a result of tough struggle and accommodation with western law both in theory and practice. This fact drove me to conduct a research, collaborated by thirteen Japanese scholars, into hidden facts related to Islamic law in Asian countries to edit and publish the results in a Japanese book in 1997. The book is left out of concern by most Japanese legal scholars who believe the transplanted western jurisprudence to be the only universal one to rely upon, while I am convinced of its value to have revealed some important facts on how Islamic law is prevailing in Asia. If my achievement in this book forms the reason why the organizers invited me, I think to have to dissipate the initial doubt and participate in the Symposium with great pleasure and thanks. What is spoken below is a result of the research.

1. In Japan, 'East Asia,' one of the main factors in our topic, is often used to mean Far East excluding South-east Asia. Such a usage may be reasonable for other purposes, for instance, to focus on the Cultural Region of Chinese

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Character, or to particularly characterize Asia from a Japanese perspective, or else to differentiate Asian regions from the European eyes. Our purpose here must be, different from them, to make a general view of Muslim world in an Asian region, geographically remote from the home region of Islam. It requires, I understand, to mean both Far East and South-East Asia by the term 'East Asia'.

'Muslim world,' the other factor of our topic, may be first roughly divided into two: 'home countries' of Islam locating in and neighbouring to Arabian Peninsula and 'transplanting countries' of Islam including the other Asian countries in the East of the home countries, together with African countries in the West. The 'transplanting countries' are again divided into 'majority countries' where Muslims occupy a greater part of the whole population of each country and 'minority countries' where Muslim population is of a smaller part.

As far as concerned about Islamic law, I think it reasonable to group Asian countries into three. One is 'home countries' located in west Asia, all of which are 'majority countries' having mainly relied upon Islamic law availing transplanted western law. Next is 'transplanting countries' in near and middle Asia, which include both 'majority countries' such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Seychelles, Uzbekistan and others, including a unique exception of Turkey, and 'minority countries' such as India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar. Among such a mixture of the two types, another feature of law is found in preserving a variety of indigenous laws, as represented by Hindu law, in addition to Islamic law and western law.

Last is 'transplanting countries' in east Asia with the following features. There are some countries where their windows have been kept shut on the world for their socialist policies and information of their Islamic law is lacking to us, such as North Korea, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. Two countries also lack of the information concerned supposedly for their last percentage of Muslim population: Japan and Korea. The number of 'majority countries' is not more than

three: Indonesia and Malaysia with some information concerned, and Brunei with rare information. And, Islamic law is uniquely developed in each of the other three 'minority countries' is not more than three: Indonesia and Malaysia with some information concerned, and Brunei with rare information. And, Islamic law is uniquely developed in each of the other three 'minority countries': Thailand, Philippines and China.

What I report on the contemporary prevalence and problems of Islamic law in East Asia is thus limited to the data obtained by my collaborators from two 'majority countries' and three 'minority countries' before 1996.

2. I begin with Indonesia, one of the two representative majority countries in East Asia containing the biggest Muslim population in the world. In fact, the legal circumstances of the country are complex as a phase of its multi-racial and religious society constituted of indigenous peoples and immigrants from surrounding seas. After independence in 1945, the legal target of the Muslim majority was to elevate customary Islamic law to official law. The advancement of the movement faced a difficult course, for conflicting requirements of various peoples of different racial and religious origins had to be taken into consideration. Their target may be said to have been realized, when one sees it to be a success that a new marriage law was enacted in 1974 to admit Islamic marriage and that a Religious Court was authorized in 1989 for Muslims. The realization of the target is however known to be on the way, because an official project in codifying Islamic law still remains unrealized, which started in 1985 but is continuing due to the conflicting pluralism of various laws, each based on different religious or secular origins, whether indigenous or transplanted.

Malaysia is another majority country in East Asia made up of multi-cultural ethnic groups similar to Indonesia but unique in preserving the former Sultan System in her regime. It is symbolized by two constitutional principles: 1) the status of Islam as the national religion and 2) the authority of the

king as the supreme Islamic ruler, for the king, elected from among the Sultans of constituting nine Islamic states, also rules the other five states which are governed by secular Governors. The Islamic principle is thus permeating into every phase of such official systems of the law as political, court, administrative, educational, as well as personal law and marriage. It should not be overlooked, however, that Muslims, being a little more than half of the total population, are facing difficult problems in achieving further accommodation with other powerful minorities including the Chinese Malaysians.

Two of three minority countries in East Asia to be here mentioned seem to share some typical features of Islamic law in minority countries in the other regions of the world. Thailand represents the countries where a small number of Muslims enjoy a specific official protection, unlike Japan with no official protection specifically afforded. Thailand is truly the representative country of Theravada Buddhism. Her population however contains four percent of Muslims, living in the areas of the capital Bangkok, the old capital Chiangmai with more Chinese immigrants, and four southern prefectures bordering upon Malaysia with many Malays. This has been a result of the policy of Buddhist Kings since the seventeenth century to protect Muslim merchants in the then capital Ayutthaya. After the officialization of Buddhist Sangha in 1902 together with religious freedom in their modern Constitutions, the policy was developed by the following Kings, finally to the establishment of the Mosque Committee in 1945.

The Philippines is the country where the minority Muslims of five percent of the total population living on Mindanao and neighbouring islands have acquired an official institutionalization of Islamic law and after tough struggles against the government. After independence in 1946, Muslims, who had pushed forward the movement to legally elevate the status of unofficial customary Islamic law to official law, finally succeeded in reaching the goal by having the government intact the Code of Muslim Personal

laws of the Philippines in 1977, and establish in 1990 the autonomous region in Muslim Mindanao together with Shari'ah Court. while some activists still complain of the unsatisfactory results of these new policies, Muslims are generally privileged to choose either governmental law or Islamic law for their legal identities.

China is a country to be here mentioned lastly but featured with an astonishing fact of Muslims and Islamic law, that is, containing nearly 20 million Muslims almost equal to the total population of Afghanistan or Iraq. They are dispersed throughout the country but occupy a majority population in each of the 127 local areas with a self-government authorized by the central government, ranging from the biggest autonomous districts of Sinkiang Uygur and Ningxia Hui, through many provinces, prefectures, cities, to the smallest villages. Such prevalence of Islam is the outcome of a long history of a considerable number of Chinese Muslims having indigenized transplanted Islam, as seen in their contemporary home-born denominations, special forms of schools and mosques, various daily practices against traditional Confucianism, Taoism and Mahayanist especially during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1977.

The current Chinese regime admits freedom of religion in the Constitution but places particular administrative restrictions on Muslims originating in its socialist policy. For instance, the Chinese central government prohibits the Shari'ah Court, religious education and marriage, and organizational activities including liaisons overseas except for those specifically permitted. Muslims are allowed by local legislations, on the other hand, to observe their percepts of specific foods and drinks as provided by their local governments, religious festival days, burial instead of regular cremation, and other daily practices including the five virtuous deeds. The Muslims' behaviour thus waivers between Islamic law and Chinese law. As a result, there are found routinized conflicts, together with accommodation, between both laws, including Muslim practices with no visits

to mosques, only irregular serve or total unserve of five daily worships, festival days and Ramadan.

The above is all I am capable of reporting on the given topic. I hope that the report is meaningful in containing some new findings of Islamic law in East Asia and suggesting the audience to try to seek for further findings on the topic. ■

Views expressed in the articles published in this magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily of the institution.

Editor

MEDIEVAL INDIAN MADRASAS

Kuldip Kaur

The history of Islamic learning in India can be traced back to the period of the first Arab contacts with India. The Arab soldiers, commanders in Sind were not only fighters but preachers as well. Besides a band of Muslims, led by Malik-Ibn-i-Dinar reached Cannanore in Kerala, and settled down on the western coast of the state.

When Sind acquired prominence, a large number of men of learning and erudition migrated to this land from Arabia and made it their permanent home. Within a short period of time, Sind, Debal, Mansura and Multan became important centres of Islamic culture in India. In the early days, Debal, being a port of India, became a centre of trade and commerce and was gradually thickly populated by the Arabs. A good number of educational centres were housed in the mosques. There were some *maktabs* (of secondary stage) in Debal. Their syllabus included the study of *Hadis* and *Tafsir*. *Madrasa* education also flourished in Mansura, the capital of Sind. There were many *madrasas* where scholars delivered lectures on *Hadis*, *Tafsir* and *Fiqh* literature, comparable with Damascus. In addition, classes on *Hadis* were also held in different mosques of the city. Qazi Abul Abbas Ahmad ul-Mansuri and Ahmad bin Muhammad Mansur, were among the eminent teachers at Mansura in the last part of the 10th century A.D.

Multan was the important centre of Islamic learning after Mansura. Even though the first proper *madrasa* in Multan was established much later by Nasir-ud-Din Qubacha. Abul Hasan Ali bin Amir bin Hakim is reported to have founded a large centre of learning at the great mosque of the city.

Education Under the Early Turks (1000-1206 A.D.)

Mahmud Ghaznavi raided India seventeen times but he had no desire to conquer and rule over the country. That

is why, perhaps, he did nothing for the promotion of education in India. But he is reported to have bestowed the princely sum of 4,00,000 *Dinars* annually on learned men and poets. Since his zeal for education was not confined to mere support of learned men, in Ghazni, he also founded permanent institutions for the promotion of learning. According to a chronicler, 'he founded a *madrasa* at Ghazni and supplied it with a vast collection of curious books in various languages... For the maintenance of this establishment, he appropriated a large sum of money besides a sufficient fund for students and learned men to instruct youths in the arts and sciences'. Thus Mahmud, known for his militarism, was also a great patron of learning and indeed, in the words of a medieval chronicler, 'no king had ever more learned men at his court', than Sultan Mahmud.

Sultan Masud, his son and successor, followed in the traditions set by his father by erecting magnificent public buildings including *maktabs* and *madrasas*; making provision for their maintenance by rich and adequate endowments, thus maintaining the attractiveness of Ghazni for learned men. He paid particular attention to diffusion of learning, and placing these benefits within the easy reach of the public by establishing educational institutions in several cities of his dominions including Punjab. During his reign, Arabic and Persian literature acquired a rich store of knowledge through interaction with both Sanskrit and Greek literature. Mathematics, astronomy, astrology, philosophy, medicine and pharmacology, which had reached high levels of excellence in India were the favourite subjects of study with Muslim scholars. Translation of Indian works, including a large portion of narrative literature, into Arabic and Persian provided an added incentive to their eagerness. The latter Ghaznavids, however, were not noted for their literary zeal.

The real foundation of Turkish rule in India was laid by Muhammad Ghori (Sultan Shahab-uh-din of Ghor) in the year 1191-1192. The later Ghaznavids transferred their capital from Ghazni to Lahore, which became a centre of

Muslim learning in the twelfth century. After the Ghori conquest, the seat of political authority shifted from Lahore to Delhi and gradually, by the middle of the thirteenth century, Delhi became a great centre of Muslim learning in the East. The pattern of education which reached its zenith during the Saljuk and Ghaznavid rule was adopted by the Ghori rulers and spread all over the country from Delhi. Muhammad Ghori established several *madrastas* at Ajmer, the first of their kind in India.

Muhammad Ghori's reign was a very stormy one. He could not develop any systematic and planned policy for the spread of Muslim education in India. Yet according to one opinion, the study of *Fiqh*, was developed in India during this period. It should, however, be remembered that all efforts were marked by a religious exclusiveness, for the progress of the Muslim subjects only.

Education under the Sultans of Delhi (1206-1526 A.D.)

The Ilbarites (1206-1290 A.D.)

Qutb-ud-din Aibak, who was the first of the ilbarite Sultans of Delhi, built a number of mosques in various parts of his dominion. These became centres of both religious and secular learning. His successor, Iltutmish, was the first to establish a *madrassa* at Delhi, which he named *Madrassa-i-Muizzi* after Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Ghori. A *madrassa* of the same name was also founded at Badaun, which became yet another centre of Muslim culture in northern India.

Iltutmish also gave good education to his daughter Raziya, while the prince - his son Mahmud - was educated in a most befitting manner. At an early age, he became proficient in various arts and sciences. Raziya who fully supported the development of education, encouraged and patronized educational institutions. The existence of the *Muizzi Madrassa* in a flourishing state during her reign is evidence of interest in the spread of education. However, she could not achieve much in this field due to the short period of her rule.

The period under the next two Sultans, Bairam and Masud, are educationally unimportant except for the patronage of Minhaj-i-Siraj, the author of the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, the principal of *Nasiriya Madrasa* in Delhi and the superintendent of its endowments. Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmood was himself a scholar and during the twenty years of his rule, he found ample opportunities for his advancing education. His court was a regular rendezvous of literary geniuses. A *Madrasa* seems to have existed even at Jalandhar, in Punjab. It was perhaps considered a convenient place being mid-way between Lahore and Delhi. Prayers for *Id-uz-Zuha* were offered here by Balban and the followers of Ulugh Khan-i Azam on their way back to Delhi after a successful campaign. Balban also founded a *madrasa* and named it *Nasiriya* after his master. Under Balban, many men of letters thrown out of their homes by the Mongols invasion found shelter in Delhi.

While Balban entertained his learned proteges, his son, Prince Muhammad, in the company of his scholar friends, formed several literary societies, which became a valuable asset to education. Another society of a different type was founded by the second son of Balban, Prince Bughra Khan, for the promotion of music and art. The example set by the imperial house was followed by the nobility and the upper middle class Muslims. As a result, within a short spell of time, numerous such societies sprang up in the Sultanate of Delhi, thus raising the standard of education so high that travellers from distant parts of the world were attracted here to cultivate further their knowledge of literature, music and other arts. The next Sultan, Kaiqubad, ruled only for two years. But during his short span he lowered the high tone of literary culture causing a setback in the progress of education.

The *Firuziya Madrasa* of Uchh, the *Muizziya* and *Nasiriya Madrasas* of Delhi, and *Muizziya Madrasa* of Badaun were among the most famous educational institutions under the Ilbarites. Several other *madrasas* modelled after these also seem to have been established

all over the Sultanate. The syllabus comprised *Hadis*, *Tafsir*, Arabic literature, grammar, Islamic law, Islamic theology, mysticism, logic, astronomy and Greek philosophy. The medium of instructions was Arabic.

The Khaljis (1290-1320 A.D.)

After the fall of the Ilbarites, Jalal-ud-din, who was the first ruler of the new Khalji dynasty, was a great patron of talent. He invited eminent scholars to his parties and listened to them with keenness. But we are not aware about the development or establishment of any educational institutions. Instead he spent thousands on building a magnificent *Khanqah* in front of his door. The tradition of patronage to learning received nourishment under Ala-ud-din, the nephew and successor of Jalal-ud-din, though he was himself uneducated. There were as many as forty-five scholars of arts and sciences who worked as teachers in the *madrasas* in the different parts of the Sultanate while Delhi under him was the rendezvous of the most learned and erudite personages. Among them was Amir Khusrau, who wrote as many as 99 books on various subjects: Amir Hassan, the Saadi of Hindustan; and Shams-ul-Mulk, the minister of Ala-ud-din Khalji, a consummate scholar of high calibre who had the honour of being the teacher of several learned dignitaries of the regime. The inscription on the southern doorway or *Alai Darwazah* describes the Sultan as 'the strengthener' of the pulpits of learning and religion, and the strengthener of the rulers of *madrasas* and places of worship'.

The next Khalji ruler, Mubarak Shah Khalji, restored to their claimants, all the endowments and lands which had earlier been confiscated by his predecessors. This led to the resuscitation of many a moribund *madrasas* and *maktabs*. He also established the *Madrassa Maqbara-i-Ala-ud-din Khalji* in 1317. It is evident that many of the schools and seminaries, especially under Ala-ud-din's rule, either closed down or survived in a very poor state because of lack of funds. But this does not mean that education was

discouraged, as the place of private schools was taken by the state schools.

The Tughlaqs (1320-1414 A.D.)

Most of the princes of the Tughlaq dynasty were educated by their elders in the disciplines of humanities and the art of warfare. Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq, the founder of the Tughlaq dynasty and its first Sultan, brought with him peace and order and served as a good prelude to an epoch remarkable for its educational improvements. Amir Khusrau, who during his life, served seven out of the ten Sultan who ascended the throne of Delhi, was the prince poet of his court and received 1,000 *Tankas* per month from the state treasury. About a mile from the wall of the Tughlaqabad fort, the isolated hillock, called *Nai-Ka Qila* (Barber's Fort), is believed to have been a *Madrasa* founded by him. Meanwhile, the literary sphere was on decline because of a poor gathering of learned men as compared to the court of Ala-ud-din Khalji.

Although there may have been several reasons for this, two factors stand out prominently. First, there was the barren and troublous reign of Mubarak Khalji that came in between; the second, the 'whimsical' projects indulged in by the second Tughlaq ruler, Muhammad bin Tughlaq himself. This resulted in the direliction of Delhi, the greatest Centre of Muslim learning in India, even if it be for a while, by the literateur. Further, all the *maktabs* and *madrasas*, earlier the resorts of thousands of students, were left with only a few of their *Alumni*. The new capital of the Tughlaqs, at Daulatabad in the Deccan, could not obviously recreate the literary reputation, tradition and atmosphere which were the invaluable assets of the deserted capital, Delhi. But it must be admitted, that the royal court, throughout the reign of Sultan Muhammad was marked by a high literary environment. We also understand that he established a *Madrasa* in Khurramabad fort under *Maulana* Idris. On the other hand, according to a report there were nearly a thousand *madrasas* in Delhi during the reign of Sultan

Muhammad Tughlaq. One of them was of *Shafi'ites*. The teachers were paid from the government treasury. Education was universal and even a good number of slave girls had memorised the holy *Quran*, many of them becoming scholars. Mathematics and natural sciences were also taught with religious subjects.

We are not in a position to say what provisions were made by Muhammad Tughlaq for educating his subjects in his new city. But it is highly unlikely that the literary Sultan would have built his capital without a suitable *Madrasas*, as Firuz Shah, his successor, did in Firuzabad in Delhi. The new capital of Firuz Tughlaq achieved great prosperity and fame as an educational centre. In the long list of Muslim Emperors, who preceded him there was none who tried so hard to disseminate education among his subjects, as Sultan Firuz did. The Sultan himself wrote in the *Futuh-i-Firuz Shahi* : 'Among the gifts which God bestowed upon me, His humble servant, was a desire to erect public buildings. So I built many mosques, some *madrasas* and monasteries, that the learned and the elders, the devout and the holy, might worship God in the edifices and aid the kind builder with their prayers... The *Madrasa* of Sultan Shams-ud-din Iltutmish had been destroyed. I rebuilt it and furnished it with sandal wood doors. I repaired the tomb of Sultan Ala-ud-din and furnished it with sandal wood doors. I repaired the wall of *Akbar-Khana* (repository of drinking water) and the west wall of the mosque which is within the college...' (this college was popularly known as the college of Sultan Ala-ud-din).

Among the *madrasas* built along with the mosques by Firuz Shah, one, known as the *Qadam Sharif* was near the tomb of Fateh Khan. Another, known as *Firuz-Shahi Madrasa* was at Firuzabad. Carr Stephen describes a *Madrasa* built by Firuz Shah on the side of a tank called Hauz Alai or Hauz Khas. The tomb of Firuz Shah, according to Saiyid Ahmad Khan, was also built in the year 1389 by Nasir-ud-din Tughlaq Shah in the village of Hauz Khas. At the side of its north recess was a narrow painted arch which

led into a *Madrasa*. Adjoining this long row of buildings to the north, lay the remains of the *Madrasa* of Firuz Shah on the southern side of the Hauz Khas or Hauz Alai, as further described by Carr Stephen in *Archaeology of Delhi*; 1876.

In this *Madrasa*, renowned masters of many subjects used to lecture on theology and explain to students of *Fiqh* and the commentaries on the *Quran* along with all the time-honoured traditions. Both students and the professors use to reside in the *Madrasa*, providing facilities for the constant communion among the students themselves as well as between the teachers and the taught. The *Madrasa* not only emphasised secular studies, but also looked after the spiritual well-being of the students. There was a big mosque attached to it, where the five compulsory (*Faraz*) as well as the extra prayers (*Nafal*) were regularly said. The compulsory prayers were performed in gatherings conducted by the *Ulama* and Sufis, who, at other times remained engaged in telling beads and praying for the well-being the Sultan. The *Huffaz* had to recite the whole *Quran* and pray for the prosperity of the Emperor. Apart from suitable provision for stipends and scholarships to successful students, every inmate of the *Madrasa*, be he a student, teacher or a traveller lodging there, received a fixed daily allowance.

Firuz Shah thus not only repaired and reconstructed old *madrasas* which were in decay but also built many new ones. All the *madrasas* established by Firuz Shah had mosques attached to them and were most probably of the type indicated by the *Firuz Shahi Madrasa*. Religious training and pursuit of the Muslim faith were essentials of the academic life of the residents of these *madrasas*.

Firuz Tughlaq was followed by a period of successive short reigns of Ghiyas-ud-din II, Abu Bakr and Nasir-ud-din, who could not do much for the cause of education. The subsequent reign of Mahmud Tughlaq was a dark period because of formidable invasion by Timur. He, however, was not without some respect for literary pursuits. During his siege of the town of Loni, he ordered that the houses of the

Saiyids, Sheikhs and learned Muslims were to be protected. During Tughlaq rule much stress was laid on the study of the *Fiqh* along with the study of *Hadis* and *Tafsir*. Though many *madrasas* were established throughout the Tughlaq Empire by the rulers or the Amirs, often as adjuncts to mosques, they served only a small section of the people. Hence, they could not be regarded as having served the purpose of spreading education in the country. In fact, the education of the majority of the population was not regarded as the responsibility of the State.

The Saiyids and Lodis (1414-1526 A.D.)

Khizr Khan, Mubarak Shah and Saiyid Ala-ud-din brought the cities of Badaun and Katehar on par with Delhi and Firuzabad in their intellectual environment. The mosques and *madrasas* in these three cities substantially supplemented the educational achievements of the two imperial cities. The first two Sultans, Khizr Khan and Mubarak Shah followed in the footsteps of the first three Sultans of the Tughlaq dynasty, but could not match them because of the short periods of their reign. The last Sultan, Saiyid Ala-ud-din, lived in Badaun for about thirty years after Bahlul Lodi, the founder of the next dynasty of the Sultans of Delhi had wrested the city from him.

Bahul Lodi was an enlightened patron of letters. He founded Agra, and it appears that he also built some *madrasas* and *maktabs* in his kingdom for both the moral and intellectual improvement of his subjects.

Sultan Bahlul succeeded by his son Sikandar Lodi, who transferred his capital from Delhi to Agra, in 1504, which soon became an important place in every respect. Agra was the new centre of the learned world. Men of learning and erudition from Arabia, Persia, and Bokhara poured into this city in ever increasing numbers at the prospect of receiving better patronage from the ruler of India. These learned men took up residence of the new capital, where they were granted lands and rewards by the state officers. As a result, in course of time, Agra grew into a

great educational centre, with several *maktabs* and *madrasas* where people flocked from far and wide to seeking higher education. Sikandar's reign was remarkable for the fact that 'the Hindus for the first time applied themselves to the study of Persian'. The origin of Urdu or Hindustani language, which according to one opinion, dates from this period, indicates that there must have been close intercourse between the two communities. Sikandar was himself a poet of distinction. He composed verses under the pen name Gulrukh. Seventeen accomplished and learned scholars of merit remained constantly with him in his private apartments. The Sultan also insisted on compulsory education for his military officers. This must have been a new character to the profession of arms, which now combined military training with literary instruction.

The next and last monarch of this dynasty, Ibrahim Lodi was not in the least like his father, Sikandar. Hence there was little progress of education under his rule. During the rule of the Lodi dynasty, many *madrasas* for girls were also established. The girls too memorised the holy *Quran*. A considerable part of the syllabi was devoted to specialised theological studies in (a) exegeses of the Holy Quran, namely *Tafsir* literature; (b) the science of the Prophetic Traditions, namely *Hadis* literature *Usul-ul-Hadis*; and (c) each of the four schools of Islamic law; *Hanafi*, *Shafie*, *Maliki* and *Hambali*, namely *Fiqh* literature and *Usul-ul-Fiqh*.

Education Under the Provincial Kingdom and Private Enterprise

An account of *madrasa* education of the period would remain incomplete without a survey of the achievements of the provincial kingdoms. The histories of many of these kingdoms are mostly unchronicled, partly because they had no court historians and partly because they rapidly changed rulers. This accounts for the paucity of material about them. The disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate started even during the reigns of Muhammed Tughlaq and Firuz Tughlaq and

the process could not be checked by their successors. The situation was no better during the reign of the Saiyid and Lodi rulers. As a result a large number of provincial kingdoms cropped up in various parts of the erstwhile Delhi Sultanate.

The Deccan and South India

Hasan Gangu Bahmani was the first Bahman or Brahman who accepted service under the Muslim prince in the Deccan. This marks the period during which the management of revenue was invariably entrusted to them by all the Deccan Kings. Mujahid Shah Bahmani, who ruled some twenty years after Hasan Gangu was noted for the fluency with which he could speak the Turkish language but his successor Mahmud Shah had a better literary equipment. He was a patron of learning and many poets from Arabia and Persia came to his court and availed of the facilities provided by him. The Sultan founded a *Madrasa* in the Deccan in 1378, to provide education to orphans. They had boarding and lodging at government expense. Learned teachers were engaged for their tuition. He established *maktabs* and *madrasas* in several other cities of his dominion such as Gulbarga, Bidar, Qandhar, Ellichpur, Daulatabad, besides other places and provided substantial endowments for their maintenance. Ghiyas-ud-din Shah and Shams-ud-din Shah, his successors, did not make any contribution to the cause of education.

The next King Firuz Shah, was a great lover of astronomy. He was well versed in many sciences and was fond of natural philosophy. His brother and successor, Ahmad Shah Bahmani, followed in the footsteps of Firuz Shah and gave several villages and extensive lands near Gulbarga to Saiyid Muhammad Gesu Daraz and built for him a magnificent *Madrasa* near Gulbarga. The kings who followed with the possible exception of Muhammad Shah Bahmani II did not make any significant contribution to literary enterprise or training. A noteworthy event of his reign was the munificence of Mahmud Gawan, his minister for

literary pursuits. Which, it is said, was so widespread that there was scarcely a town or a city from where learned men had not derived any advantage from it. The famous *Madrassa* at Bidar, known after his own name as *Madrassa-i-Mahmud Gawan*, was also built by him two years before his death. It had a mosque attached to it to impart religious education along with secular learning. It was even equipped with a library that contained 3000 volumes. Moreover, 3500 books were obtained from Mahmud Gawan's house. The reign of Mahmud Shah Bahmani II is a good example of the extent to which the deep interest of a king can spread education.

After the downfall of the Bahmanis in Deccan, only the succeeding Kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda are of interest for our purpose.

Adil Shah, the founder of the kingdom of Bijapur, was an educated person and a patron of literature. His reign was noted for its patronage to Islamic learning and a rich library containing a rare collection of manuscripts on Islamic studies. Teaching on Islamic sciences was organised at *Asar Sharif*, a famous mosque at Bijapur. The institution was developed by Adil Shah into twin *Madrassas*. He founded another *Madrassa* at Bijapur under Amir Fatah-Ullah Shirazi. Ismail Adil Shah, the successor of Adil, kept up the reputation of his house with his literary pursuits and proficiency in the fine arts. But we are not sure whether he established any educational institution.

In the reign of Ibrahim Adil Shah I, public accounts were kept in Hindavi instead of Persian, and many Brahmans were appointed for this purpose. Soon these Brahmans acquired great influence in the government. During the reign of Yusuf Adil Shah, the Hindus were able to exercise considerable powers in the king's revenue department. This is evidence of increasing intercourse between the two communities and their languages. While Yusuf Adil Shah invited artists and scholars from Persia and Turkey, Ibrahim Adil Shah II, himself was an eminent author to whom we owe the *navras* or 'nine chiefs'. The imperial library of Bijapur was situated in the Asari Mahal.

Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah is highly reputed for his encouragement of education in Golconda. He built the *Chahar Minar* and opened a *Madrassa* in it. The king also built several other *madrasas* and public seminaries, all of which were properly equipped. Learned men were appointed and received liberal remunerations for their services. A *madrasa* was also set up outside the fort of Golconda by Qutb Shah. One of the *madrasas* was close to Hyderabad. Apart from the bigger *madrasa* in southern India, there were *maktabs* attached to the houses of the teachers.

In Ahmadnagar another successor kingdom of the Bahmanis, its king, Ahmad Nizam Shah introduced the practice of the single stick, from the time when he was a boy. Accordingly, everyone began to copy the prince, and 'instead of *madrasas*, as is usual in the Muslim cities, schools for single sword and wrestling were established in all quarters of the city of Ahmadnagar'. The rulers of Ahmandnagar made arrangements for free education and lodging for the poor and the orphans. Burhan Nizam Shah established *Madrassa Isnaashriya*, facing the fort of Ahmadnagar in about 1563. He also founded *Madrassa Tut Tahiriyya*, under Tahir-bin-ul-Hamadani inside the fort.

Hinawr, an important town, situated in the south-western part of the Indian peninsula, was the capital of Sultan Jalal-ud-din Ahsan Shah, the founder of the independent kingdom of Madura. One of the most powerful rulers of Hinawr, he was keenly interested in advancing education in his kingdom. Ibn Battuta, the famous traveller, who visited his kingdom, writes that 'there were as many as twenty-three *madrasa* for boys, and thirteen for girls in his capital'.

Central and Western India

In Malwa, Sultan Mahmud Khalji was a great promoter of learning and literature. During his long rule for over thirty years, he encouraged learned men to such an extent that Malwa became an important resort of literary men. He had founded a *madrasa* at Sarangpur, where special

arrangements were made for teaching arts and crafts to women. According to Ferishta, women were taught dancing, music, sewing, weaving, velvet making, carpenter's craft, goldsmith's craft, iron smith's craft, quiver making, wrestling and the military arts. This reveals that the girls belonging to the higher and middle class families had sufficient opportunities for acquiring proficiency in general learning and crafts.

Many distinguished philosophers and *Maulanas* not only came from other countries to this place but were also attracted to the *madarsas* that Mahmud had founded in different parts of his dominions. One of these was situated in the capital, in close proximity to the mosque of Sultan Hoshang Shah. Many poets and philosophers attracted by its bounty, came here from different countries. Hoshang Shah founded a *madrasa* at Shadiabad Mandu in about 1475 A.D. His successor Mahmud Shah established many *madrasas* in Mandu and sanctioned a grant for teachers and the students. His successors, Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud Shah I founded two *madrasas* at Ghiyasiyya and Zafarabad. He laid stress on women's education and his *Mahalsarai* made arrangements for teaching Quran and *Hadis* to equip them to run the administration.

In Khandesh, in its capital Burhanpur, there was at least one *madrasa*. Its ruler, Muhammad Nasir Khan Faruqi had his own idea about education. Sheikh Zain-ud-din and his preceptor, Burhan-ud-din, who was at one time the principal of a *madrasa* at Daulatabad, were originally from Khandesh.

In Gwalior too there was a *madrasa* founded by Rahim Das of Gwalior. Babur had visited it.

Men of letters from Persia, Arabia and Turkey found it worthwhile to settle in Gujrat. Sultan Ahmad Shah, (1411-1441 A.D.), built the city of Ahmadabad and adorned it with magnificent *maktabs* and *madrasas*, the remains of which remind us of their past glory even today. Hulvi Shirazi, a poet in the court of Ahmed Shah I, composed the history of Gujrat in Persian verse. This history was there even during the days of Akbar.

In the reign, of Ahmad Shah I, there were a number of madrasas in Ahmadabad. Similarly, Sultan Mahmud II also upheld the traditions of his forefathers by expressing his solicitude for learned men and by building *madrasas*. However, the earliest *madrasa* recorded to have existed in Gujrat, was established in 1038 A.D. at Broach. The founder was Baba Raihan, a scholar from Khurasan. Qazi Zain-ul Abidin the grand-father of Qazi Nur-ud-din of Broach, refers to it in a manuscript of his memoirs by the name, *Madrasa of Maulana Ishaq bin Abdul Wahhab*.

This *madrasa* exists even today though shorn of its former glory. An Ishaqia boarding house is still in existence in the locality. It is in Ahmadabad where the greatest number of *madrasas* existed, and it was the capital of Gujrat. A great saint, Sheikh Ahmad Khattu, came to Gujrat in 1399 and settled in Sarkheraj. He was one of the four Ahmads who participated in the foundings of the city of Ahmadabad. After his death, he was buried at Sarkhej and Sultan Muhammad Shah II erected a splendid mausoleum at the place where the Saint had lived. A big *madrasa* sprang up at Sarkhej in 1466 during the reign of Sultan Qutb-ud-din, the son of Muhammad Shah II.

One of the greatest Sufis of Gujrat, Saiyid Usman Shama-i-Burhani founded a *madrasa* on the banks of Sabarmati. It gradually developed into one of the biggest and most famous *madrasas* of Gujrat. The place soon began to be called Usmanpura after this great teacher. Sultan Muhammad Shah was a great devotee of this teacher saint and showed his regards for him by building a *madrasa* at Usmanpura. Sultan Muzaffar II built seminary for Shah Wajih-ud-din. It was later rebuilt as a *madrasa* by Sadiq Khan. Shah Wajih-ud-din spent sixty five years of his life teaching here. Another notable *madrasa* at Ahmadabad was the *Madrasa-i-Saif Khan* built in 1622.

John Briggs, in his Cities of Gujarashtra mentions *madrasa* built by Alam Khan Ghazi in 1636 during reign of Shah Jahan. It was situated on the south east corner of the *Bhadra* with its entrance on the east. In 1820, it was

converted into a district jail. Yet another famous *madrasa* built in Ahmadabad was by Nawab Akram-ud-din Khan, the *Sadr* of Ahmadabad, for the celebrated teacher *Maulana* Nur-ud-din. *Maulana* Rahman Ali writes in the '*Madrasa-i-Hidayat Baksh*' that Muhammad Ikram-ud-din, also known as Sheikh-ul-Islam Khan, the *Sadr* of the *Suba* of Ahmadabad, a pupil and disciple of the *Maulana*, built for him a *madrasa* at a cost of over one lakh rupees. The foundation was laid in 1690 and it was completed in 1697. Shujaat Khan's *madrasa* was built and maintained in Ahmadabad in keeping with the traditions set by some noblemen in the field of education. The date of establishment of the *madrasa* is given in some verses inscribed on a marble slab at the entrance to the adjoining mosque. Translated into English they ran as follows : 'The Khan of exalted position, Shujaat Khan... built a *madrasa* and provided a centre for the seekers of knowledge.it is the seat of learning and the abode of beauty... 1697.

A large number of Arabic and Persian scholars taught hundreds of students in their own homes or ran *madrasas*, privately. But their names are not all available. One of these was *madrasa Kanz-al-maghrib*. Another important *madrasa*, in pattan, was attached to the tomb of Sheikh-Hisam-ud-din multani, where *Maulana* Taj-ud-din and his son Muhammad bin Taj lectured on *Hadis*. In the middle of the sixteenth century, there was another *madrasa* in Pattan, run by Sheikh Abdul Latif at Fatani, who was especially interested in *Tajwid* and *Qirat* Haji Zahid Beg, a rich merchant of Surat, built a *madrasa* adjoining Saiyid Muhammad's tomb. Zafaryab Khan and his grandson Haji Mian founded a *bara-dari*, a *madrasa* and a mosque in the name of their teacher Shah Qutb-ud-din.

Northern India

In Kashmir, Sultan Qutb-ud-din Kashmiri founded a big *madrasa* at Qutb-ud-din Pura in about 1420 and appointed Sajjad Jamal-ud-din as the lecturer in *Hadis*. This *madrasa* produced a good number of learned scholars. Sultan Zain-

ul-Abidin established a residential *madrasa*, near Srinagar, with elaborate arrangements for the lodging and boarding of the teachers and students. His successor, Sultan Husain Khan Chack, also founded a great *madrasa* and appointed a host of reputed teachers, who made significant contributions to the spread of *madrasa* education in Kashmir and Srinagar. During the reign of Akbar, Husain Khan built many *madrasas* in his kingdom and presented the Pergana of Asapur as an endowment.

Husain Shah Langa of Multan will be always remembered for the impetus he gave to education by setting up several *maktabs*, seminaries and *madrasas* and attracting talented teachers. Husain Mirza, the last of the Langa dynasty, also contributed to the progress of education in his kingdom. He encouraged and patronised well-known scholars, among whom were Saad-ullah Lajori and *Maulana* Abdur Rahman Jami. A large number of learned men were his pupils. Though, there is not much evidence to show that Multan was an important centre of education yet so many tombs of Muslim saints and scholars there suggest that the city must have been noted, at one time or the other, for individual teachers of eminence who resided there.

In Sind some of the *madrasas* and *maktabs* established by the Saiyids of Rohri, have survived the passage of time and their minarets and domed roofs dominate the picturesque landscape of that part of the province.

Nasir-ud-din Qubacha, who ruled Sind, about the beginning of the thirteen century and later Shah Beg Arghun, in the third decade of the sixteenth century, were both exceedingly well read. Many learned men, driven out of Ghazni and Ghor by the ruthless ravages of Chengiz Khan, took asylum at the court of Nasir-ud-din-Qubacha. Alexander Hamilton, who visited India during the reign of Aurangzeb, writes that 'only in Thatta, there were four hundred schools for different subjects and art and craft. This was true of every city, every region and every period of Muslim history'. During Ibrahim's reign (1402-40 A.D.) the court of Jaunpur far

outshone that of Delhi and was the resort for all of the learned men of the East.

Sultan Ibrahim patronised *madrasa* education to such a high degree that his capital city Jaunpur became famous as an important centre of education. It produced men like Sheikh Allah-dad Jaunpuri, Zahir Dilawari, Qazi Shahab-ud-din Daulatabadi, *Maulana* Ali Ahmad, *Maulana* Hasan Bakhshi and Nur-ul-Haq.

About the middle of the fifteenth century, Bibi Raji, wife of Mahmud Shah, (son of Sultan Ibrahim) built Jami Mosque, a *madrasa* and a monastery under the name of *Namazgah*. She also awarded stipends to students and teachers. The famous *Itala* Mosque of Jaunpur was the *Madrasa* of Shahab-ud-din Daulatabadi. Founded by Sheikh Muhammad Afdal-ul-Usmani it enjoyed great reputation. There was also a *madrasa* of Sheikh Muhammad Rashid Mustafa-ul-Usmani-ul-Jaunpuri at Mirmast. This grand *madrasa* was situated on the river Ganga in a lofty building along with a mosque and a hostel for teachers and students. One of its outstanding students was Sheikh Nizam-ud-din Lakhnavi.

Mumin Khan of Jaunpur was another notable figure of the fifteenth century. Some apartments near the Big Bridge of Jaunpur, used for the residence and tuition work of a learned man named Sheikhu, are attributed to him. The inner apartments housed a *madrasa* while the outer apartments were rented out. The teachers and pupils were given grants and allowances to help them and devote themselves to learning in complete freedom from material needs. During Humayun's reign, Jaunpur continued to enjoy its high reputation as a centre of learning and remained so through Jahangir's reign up to the time of Shah Jahan, who gave it the name of *Shiraz-i-Hind*. Fresh grants were given if any *madrasa* required. Princes and *Amirs* used to visit to the different *madrasas* of Jaunpur and donate funds. This system continued till the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when Jaunpur fell into the hands of the British.

In late medieval times Lucknow became famous for

its well famous *Madrasa* of Sheikh Nizam-ud-din Sahalvi at Firangi Mahal. The *Madrasa* of Qazi Abdul Qadir-ul-Umri was also a famous institution. Other *madrasas* were Abdul Qadar bin Ahmad's *Madrasa* at Amethi and Sheikh Pir Muhammad's *Madrasa* at Lucknow, which was situated on the banks of river Gomti. For a long period this *Madrasa* was a meeting place for the learned men of the state. Early in the nineteenth century, the king of Awadh, Amjad Ali Shah also founded a great *madrasa* at Lucknow.

Eastern India

Ikhtiyar bin Bakhtyar Khalji's kingdom extended up to the town of Nadia in Bengal in 1197. After consolidating his conquest he set up a new city called Rangpura, which was studded with various *maktabs* and *madrasas*. Similarly Hesam-ud-din Husain Khalji who had conquered the small territory of Sultan Ghiyas-ud-din I, (1212-1227 A.D.) made Lakhnauti (Gour) in malda district his capital. Scholars, artists and saints thronged here to enjoy royal patronage. As a result, a number of *madrasas* sprang up.

Ghiyas-ud-din II was his successor and established the historic *Madrasa* of *Dars Bari* situated near Umarpur village. Husain Shah and Nusrat Shah were patrons of both Hindu and Muslim literature. They founded *maktabs* and *madrasas* in their kingdom and offered plenty of endowments for their maintenance. Husain Shah had also founded a *madrasa* as a memorial to the famous saint Qutb-ul-Alam. The ruins of a quadrangular building on the north bank of the *Sagar Dighi* (a reservoir) on Gour, are said to have been the remains of *Belbari Madrasa* probably built by Husain Shah.

In his *Khurshid-i-Jahan-Numa*, Ilahi Bakhsh-ul-Husaini mentions a *Madrasa* in *Ghurashahid* (a quarter in Gour) in the neighbourhood of the residence of Ghulam Husain, the well-known author of the *Riyaz-ul-Salatin*.

Shaista Khan, the uncle of Aurangzeb, built a mosque and a *madrasa* on the banks of a river in Dacca during his tenure as governorship there (1664-80 A.D.) It has now

become part of a hospital's premises. Another mosque with a *madrasa* was built by Muhammad Azim or Azimush Shah in Azimpur (Dacca). This mosque was double storeyed with its upper portion locating the *madrasa*.

Later, in eighteenth century in Bahur, Burdwan, a *madrasa* was constructed by *Maulana* Abdul Ali. But with time, it was closed down and its rich collection was sent to the Imperial Library (now National Library), Calcutta where its memory survives in the 'Bahur Section'. Similarly, there is a village called Mangalkot which once used to be the meeting place of great *Ulama* and saints of the age. *Maulana* Hamid-ud-din Bengali, a disciple of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, had a monastery there, which continues to be maintained by his followers. With time, the curriculum of the Mangalkot *Madrasa* gradually deteriorated. The entire stock of the literary material (comprising 704 volumes - 460 published and 244 manuscripts) was sent to the *Madrasa Aliya* in Dacca, where they are housed under 'Mangalkot Section'. The *Katra Madrasa* of Murshidabad speaks of the glorious history of *madrasa* built by Murshid Quli Khan, who also built many *maktabs* and *madrasas* in the town.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, there were also some small educational institutions in Silapur in Bengal. Here both Hindus and Muslims were taught Persian and Arabic. Generally these *madrasas* were built by the side of mosques or mosques were built by their side. In far off places where only mosques were built, they served the purpose of both mosque and *maktab*. *Madrasas*, both private and state sponsored, continue to exist even today. The syllabus for these *madrasas* shows little change, except for the introduction of some modern subjects, thus indicating that these are the remnants of the old system introduced by the Sultans.

From all that has been stated above about the progress of education under private patronage, it is clear that Muslim educationalists of the outlying provinces were little behind their rulers in patronising learning and promoting

education on their own. Moreover, their efforts were not always limited to the extension of Islamic education alone.

Education Under the Great Mughals (1526-1857 A.D.)

The Mughal rulers who followed the earlier Muslim rulers - Turks and Afghans - showed a comparatively greater interest in education. Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire, was a scholar of Arabic, Persian and Turkish. He is rightly regarded as the 'prince of autobiographers' and is stated to have invented a new type of handwriting, called *Babri* script in 1504 A.D., after his own name. He cultivated the art of poetry from an early age and is mentioned as the author of a collection of Turkish poems, many of which are quoted in his *Memoirs*.

However great might be the reputation of Babur's *Memoirs* for its accuracy, it certainly is not when it says that 'Hindustan had no college'.

Babar, was interested in paintings, and took with him to India all the specimens of paintings and manuscripts he could collect from the library of his ancestors (the Timurids). Some of these were taken back to Persia by Nadir Shah after sack of Delhi. These manuscripts exercised considerable influence on the art of India. We learn from the *Tawarikh* of Saiyid Maqbar Ali, a minister of Babur, that the public works department of the time, which continued through the reign of the succeeding Mughal emperors, was entrusted, among other duties, the building of *maktabs* and *madrasas*. That education received attention of the government is evident from it being made an item of duty of the state. Babur also established a *madrasa* in the locality of Aziz-ullah in Jaunpur. During his reign from 1526-30 A.D., Amir Rahim Dad established a *madrasa* at Gwalior. His premature death at the age of forty-eight, soon after he subjugated India, did not give Babur much time to do something tangible for the advancement of education.

Babur was succeeded by his son, Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Humayun, who was also a great scholar. We

do not have much information about the education of Humayun, but he followed the tradition of his father. He loved to study astronomy and geography and wrote dissertations on the nature of the elements. We hear of a *madrasa* built by Humayun at Delhi, of which savant Sheikh Husain was a teacher. *Madrasat-uz-Zainiyya* was built on the banks of the Yamuna, opposite Agra, to perpetuate the memory of Sheikh Zain-ud-din, who died in 1534 near Chinar and was buried within the precincts of a *madrasa* founded by him. Another great *madrasa*, connected with Sheikh Farid-ud-din bin Masud, was founded by Masud-din bin Nur-ud-din.

The famous Humayun's Tomb, in the vicinity of New Delhi, was at one time used as a place of instruction. It once housed a *madrasa* fulfilling a task beyond the one for which it was built.

The Sur Interregnum (1540-56 A.D.)

Sher Shah, the founder of the Sur dynasty, who deposed Humayun and ruled for four years, did much for the promotion of education in his dominions notwithstanding the short duration of his reign. Sher Shah Suri used to visit monasteries and *madrasas* and associated with learned doctors and Sheikhs for self-improvement. One such educational institution that he had opened, was the *Sher Shahi Madrasa* at Narnaul. It was located in one of the biggest buildings in the city. His successor, Jalal Khan, whose royal title Islam Shah and also Salim Shah, followed in the footsteps of his father. The eminent scholars, Sheikh Abdullah Sultanpuri Makhdum-ul-Mulk and Sheikh Abul Hassan Kamboh, were his constant companions.

Madrasas were also established by the nobility and the gentry. By the time the Mughals regained power, a large number of *maktabs* and *madrasas* had come up in various parts of the Mughal Empire. Each mosque had a *maktab* attached to it in which pupils learned by heart some portions of the *Quran*, *Kalima* and the three R's. Many scholars taught students in their own houses.

Mughal Dynasty (Resumed)

Akbar's reign marks a new epoch for the system of education in *maktabs* and *madrasas*. The monarch was sincerely eager to further the education of the Hindus and the Muslims alike. They were encouraged to study in the same *maktabs* and *madrasas*. He also introduced changes in the modes of study and in the curriculum etc. The success of these measures gave his historian, Abul Fazl ample reason to feel proud of the fact that 'although all civilised nations had schools to educate their youth, Hindustan was particularly famous for its seminaries'. Akbar introduced the following methods of teaching and learning to improve the existing system

A boy had to pass through three stages before he could learn to read and write without difficulty. He was first taught the Persian alphabet along with accents and marks of punctuation. As soon as this was mastered, which did not take more than two days, he was taught the combinations of two letters. After a week, he had to read short lines of prose or verse containing religious or moral sentiment, in which those combinations frequently occurred. The students tried to read these themselves with occasional assistance from the tutor. Then, for a few days, the master taught them a new hemistich and in a very short time, the boys were able to read with fluency. The teacher gave the young students four exercises daily, viz., (i) the alphabet; (ii) combinations; (iii) a new hemistich or distich; and (iv) repetition of what they had read before. This method proved very successful. What would have usually taken them years was now accomplished in a few months. The curriculum was so modified as to enable the students to acquire education according to their particular aim and ambitions.

Ain 25 of the *Ain-i-Akbari*, which is devoted to the organisation of elementary education for children run as follows:

"In every country, especially in Hindustan, boys are kept for years at *maktabs*, where they learn the consonants and vowels. A great portion of the life of

the students is wasted by making them read many books. His Majesty orders that every schoolboy should first learn to write the letters of the alphabet, and also learn to trace their several forms. He ought to learn the shape and name of each letter, which may be done in two days. Then the boy should proceed to write the joined letters. They may be practiced for a week after which the boy should learn some prose and poetry by heart and then commit to memory some verses to the praise of God, or moral sentences, each written separately. Care should be taken that he learn to understand everything himself, but the teacher may assist him a little. He then ought especially to look after five things: knowledge of the letters; meanings of words; the hemistich; the verse and the former lesson. If this method of teaching be adopted, a boy will learn in a month, or even a day, what it took others years to understand, so much so that people will be quite astonished. Every boy ought to read books on morals, arithmetic, the notation peculiar to arithmetic, agriculture,... geometry, astronomy, physiognomy, household matters, the rules of Government, medicine, logic, the *Tabi-i, Riyazi*, and *Ilahi* science, and history; all of which may be gradually acquired. In studying Sanskrit, students ought to learn the *Bayakaran*, *Niyai Bedanta* and *Patanjali*. No one should be allowed to neglect those things which the present time requires. These regulations shed a new light on maktabas and cast a bright lustre over madrasa..."

The Emperor was not satisfied with these healthy educational reforms and increased the number of educational institutions in his empire by 'continually giving employment to a number of hands in erecting fortifications and palaces, *madrasas* and mosques'. Abul Fazl founded a *madrasa* at Fatehpur Sikri which was known as *Madrasa-i-Abul Fazl*. A big *madrasa* was founded at Fatehpur Sikri by Akbar. A contemporary observer says, 'Akbar on his return from Ajmer made Fatehpur his capital and built many

buildings there, including *Madrasa, Khanqah'* etc. It appears that there were several other *madrasas*, in the city founded at the instance of Akbar. Agra was also a famous seat of learning and a celebrated centre of education. There were several *madrasas*, where several teachers brought from Shiraz, the famous centre of Muslim learning, used to teach.

While speaking of the *maktabs* and *madrasas* of those days, we should not lose sight of the educational work done by the distinguished learned men who taught their pupils in their homes. This supplemented, as already pointed out, the educational work done by the educational institutions, and provided scope for higher studies. This system of imparting education has been in vogue since remote times, especially for those branches of arts and sciences for which *maktabs* and *madrasas* generally made no provision, e.g., music, painting and the other arts, the various industries, studies in the higher branches of a subject and so on.

During Akbar's reign, as also during the reigns of his predecessors, the promotion of education found its supporters not only in the emperor, but also in private individuals belonging to the nobility or the middle classes. A *madrasa* called *Khair-ul-Manzil* was built by maham Anaga in the year 1561. Although the *madrasa* is now in ruins, its dilapidated cloisters are still there. It stands almost in front of the western gate of *Purana Qila* and near the supposed site of the western gate of Sher Shah's Delhi. besides this *Madarsa* of Maham Anaga, there was another one of Khwaja Muin. Here Mirza Mughis Samarqandi taught for three years from 1571. Another *madrasa* was founded by Ala-ud-din ul Lari at Akbarabad, and was called *Madrasa-i-Khas*. Mir Jumla founded a great *Madrasa* in Delhi.

Akbar's systematic and deliberate policy of protecting Hindu learning is evident from the generous provisions he made for educating Hindu youths in their own culture in the *madrasas*, along with the Muslim boys. This apart, he initiated discussion in the *Ibadat Khana* with the orthodox

Hindu learned men, published translations of Hindu classics and scriptures, exhibiting his profound appreciation of the value of Hindu culture his zeal for its propagation. State patronage bestowed on distinguished Hindus for their proficiency in the fine arts such as music and painting, further confirms his policy of protecting Hindu learning.

Soon after his accession to the throne, Jahangir, like his father repaired and reconstructed moribund *maktabs* and *madrasas*. In 1623 Muhammad Safi, Diwan of the Suba of Gujrat, founded a *Madrasa* at Habalpur besides Saif Khan's *Madrasa*. Under Jahangir, Agra retained its importance as a centre of education, as achieved under Akbar. *Tuzak-i-Jahmagiri* says : 'The inhabitants of Agra exert themselves greatly in the acquirement of crafts and the search after learning. Various professors of every religion and creed have taken up their abode in the city'.

The French traveller Bernier, who visited India in seventeenth century, draws a depressing picture of the state of education in Hindustan, which seems somewhat exaggerated. He states: 'A gross and profound ignorance reigns in those states. For how is it possible that there should be academies and *madrasas* well founded? Where are such founders to be met with? And if there were any, whence were the scholars to be had? Where are those that have means sufficient to maintain their children in *madrasas*? And if there were, who would appear to be so rich? And if they would, where are those benefices, preferments and dignities that require knowledge and abilities and that may animate young men to study'?

Though Shah Jahan's reign may not be distinguished for any special educational progress, yet Bernier's statement does not seem to describe the real state of affairs. Shah Jahan made a distinct and important contribution to education viz., the foundation of a *Madrasa* at Delhi in the vicinity of the famous Jama Masjid. Carr Stephen records
 '... To the South of the Jama Masjid (of Delhi) was the imperial Madrasa and to the north was the imperial dispensary; both these buildings fell into ruin long

before the rebellion of 1857 and were levelled with the ground soon after that event. They were built with the mosques in 1650 A.D.'

Shah Jahan repaired the ruined Madrasa named *Darul-Baqā* and also appointed a few distinguished learned men as teachers. *Maulana* Muhammad Sadr-ud-din Khan Bahadur, the chief justice of Delhi, was appointed as the head of the institution. Two other *madrasas* were founded, one by his wife Fatehpuri Begum and another by Akbarabadi Begum. The *madrasa* founded by his elder daughter, Jahan Ara Begum, in the mosque at Agra achieved great importance and continued to function and prosper even in later times. There was a *madrasa* meant for only girls, named *Madrasa Banat* at Fatehpur Sikri near the royal palace.

Aurangzeb (1658-1707 A.D.), the last of the great Mughals, followed an educational policy in keeping with his general policy of governing the empire and also in the interest of his co-religionists. He promoted *madrasa* education earnestly, diffused Islamic learning throughout his vast empire and enunciated his own theory of royal education which emphasised the importance of general knowledge. He sincerely tried earnestly to foster the education of Muslim youths and appointed and supported teachers in different parts of his empire for the purpose. Stipends were also given to students in proportion to their progress in education. He issued orders to Makramat Khan, the *Diwan* of Gujrat, as also to other *Diwans* in his dominions, to give pecuniary help from the state treasury, with the sanction of the teachers of *madrasas* and of the *sadr* of the place to all students, good and bad, who could read the *Mizan* and the *Kashshaf*. He also issued orders to add three teachers in Ahmadabad, Patna and Surat, and forty-five students in Ahmadabad, to the existing number. Aurangzeb also founded and promoted many *madrasas*. Among them, the one at Firangi Mahal assumed importance. It also appears that Akram-ud-din Khan Sadr built a *madrasa* in 1697 in Ahmadabad, at an expense of Rs. 1,24,000 and

appealed to Aurangzeb for help. In response, the Emperor ordered the revenues of Sundra village (in Pargana Sanoly) and Siha village (in Pergana Kari) to be earmarked for the maintenance of the *Madrasa*. Likewise, Imperial *Farmans* were issued to other provincial governors to take interest in the education of their subjects. Besides, Akram-ud-din Khan Sadr, others also established private *madrasas*. Qazi Rafi-ud-din Muhammad founded one in Bina close to Qazi-kimajid which bears an inscription dated 1670 A.D.

During Aurangzeb's reign Sialkot was a renowned seat of Muslim learning. Learned men from various parts of the country flocked this place. *Maulvi* Abdullah taught here in a *madrasa* set up by his father *Maulvi* Abdul Hakim, himself an eminent teacher. The reputation of Sialkot as a place of learning went back to the time of Akbar. This was possibly the reason why the town specialised, among others, in the paper industry. Sialkot was known especially for the *Mansinghi* and the silk paper which had a good texture and was, clean and durable.

The system of instructions followed in the *maktabs* and *madrasas* founded by Aurangzeb must have been based on his own concept of education. He pleaded for a broad humanist approach, in which history, geography, the language of the surrounding nations, their forms of government, manners and customs must find a suitable place in every curriculum to be prepared for *madrasa* education. The religious element in vocational education for scholars was yet another objective proposed by Aurangzeb. Different in outlook and character, as he was from others, Aurangzeb advocated those very reforms in education which continue to engage attention of scholars even today. Probably political expediency influenced his outlook, and perhaps the curricula were also framed with political expediency in mind.

The Mughal empire began to disintegrate with the death of Aurangzeb. Works of public utility by emperors and private individuals declined after Bahadur Shah came to the throne, even though he was well educated and fond of the

society of learned men. Ghazi-ud-din constructed a *madrasa* near the Ajmeri Gate of Delhi. He taught here and was later buried here.

In 1722, during the reign of Emperor Muhammad Shah (1719-48), Nawab Sharaf-ud-daula constructed a *madrasa* and a mosque close to each other in the Dariba Market of Delhi. It was called *Madrasa Iradatmand Khan*. He also founded another *madrasa* in this market. There was also another one near the Mosque of Bulbuli Khana. Nadir Shah, who invaded India in 1739, carried away with him the celebrated Imperial Library of Delhi along with enormous treasure to Persia. This library had been built up and preserved by the Mughal emperors as their most precious possession. Ironically, some of these valuable books were later sold at ridiculously low prices in Persia.

Hasan Raza Khan, the minister of Asaf-ud-daula of Awadh, founded a *madrasa* at Farrukhabad. During Shah Alam's reign *Maulana* Abdul Wahid Khairbadi was a teacher here. A *madrasa* was established by nawab Alivardi Khan in Hooghly (West Bengal) in 1751 with a '*Wakf*' of 10,000 *Bigha* property. Gahzi-ud-din Khan established a *madrasa* during the time of Alamgir-II (1754-59 A.D.). Nawab Itimad-ud-Daula Fazl Ali Khan, then a minister at the court of the Nawab of Lucknow, gave a sum of Rs. 1,70,000,00 to the East India Company for its maintenance. But the company appropriated the funds for establishing an English teaching school.

Madrasas, did not exist as government institutions. Islam enjoins the pursuit of knowledge as a religious duty upon every Muslim - man or woman. In the wake of the Muslim conquest came preachers of Islam and religious enthusiasts, and mosques sprang up for religious observances and holding congregational prayers. These mosques also served as *maktabs* and *madrasas* in which the rituals of Islam and the recitation of the *Quran* was taught as an essential part of religious observances. The *Imam* of a mosque in addition to his duty to lead prayers, imparted free instructions to boys and girls. This marked the beginning of free education among Muslims and continues

even today. Some Arabic scholars began to impart instructions voluntarily, in the higher branches of Islamic studies, either in a mosque or at home, without seeking any remuneration. As they became popular, ambitious students from surrounding parts of the country gathered round them for higher studies. Noblemen and wealthy persons of ten engaged such scholars to teach their sons alongwith other students of the locality. Sometimes *madrasas* were started under state patronage through grants of land and other allowances. Apart from these *madrasas* of Medieval India, there were many others, but their detailed information is not available.

Alongside these *madrasas*, many others seats of learning existed where facilities were provided for studying Hindu religion. These were at Banaras, Nadia, Mithila, Tirhut, Mathura, Prayag (Allahabad), Hardwar, Ujjain, Ayodhya, Madura and Tanjore. In almost all these seats of learning Sanskrit grammar, literature, system of Hindu philosophy (*Darsana*) and Hindu religious scriptures were taught. Bernier writes about Benaras which he visited in the seventeenth century. 'Benaras is a kind of university, but it has no college or regular classes as in our universities, but resembles rather the schools of the ancients, the masters being spread over different parts of the town in the private houses'.

Madrasas, where in a number of cases, even Hindus were educated, thus, appear to have existed alongside Hindu centres of education as a distinct system in the cultural fabric of India. ■

THE DOCTRINE OF ISLAMIC JIHAD RECONSIDERED

Mohammad Ibrahim*

Under the Islamic Scheme of things much importance had been attached to Jihad; indeed it is at the very core of the scheme. But, ironically, the concept of Jihad remains seriously misunderstood by the non-Muslim world. Deplorably, the non-Muslim world commonly views the Jihad as the holy war to be waged against the people belonging to creeds other than Islam, thereby coercing them into accepting Islam as their religion, and that this war is to be carried out until all the inhabitants of the earth are brought under the yoke of the Islamic rule. This view of Jihad is not only held by the non-Muslim masses and the lay men, but also highly educated cultured class subscribes to the same view as well.

Obviously, this concept of Jihad in Islam is utterly unacceptable to the present world, as it sharply contradicts the universal norms of peaceful co-existence besides defying the basic concepts of human rights, the universally accepted rights today. The matter of human rights is so important that it forced the United Nations Organisation, the supreme world body of the present world, to pay utmost attention to it, and issue the Human Rights Charter, thereby enshrining and safeguarding them internationally. Apart from the U.N. Charter, the Nature itself rejects such concepts which flourish on the basis of sheer coercion rather than their moral appeal and intrinsic value. Such a concept of Jihad is undoubtedly bound to sow hostility between the Islamic world and the world outside, resulting in a lasting conflict between the two, and dividing them between two extremely hostile camps. Perhaps that is why the world has today a general feeling of mistrust of the Muslim world.

Being a sincere Muslim with first-hand knowledge of Islam and its precepts, I feel bound to refute the above

*Naglasahu, PO Jai, Distt. Meerut.

interpretation of Islamic Jihad, declaring it to be absolutely incorrect. It has its basis nowhere in the Quran, the fountainhead of the Islamic ideology, or the Prophet's behaviour, both oral and practical, which is the only authentic explanation of the Quran. The Quran, contrarywise, has explicitly proscribed the compulsion in the matter of religion. To quote the words of the Quran: **"Let there be no compulsion in religion, Truth stands out clear from the Falsehood. So, whoever rejects Tagut (anything worshipped besides Allah) and believes in Allah has indeed grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks and Allah is All-hearing , All-knowing."** (S.2A.256)

In the light of the verse quoted above it becomes quite clear that Islam strictly disapproves coercing methods whatsoever for the purpose of proselytization. Coercing methods for preaching of Islam if used individually or collectively on the part of Muslims in the past were in blatant contradiction with the very directives of Islam, and therefore, must be regarded un-Islamic.

The above view of Islamic Jihad being pure misrepresentation of the doctrine, then, what are the root causes responsible for this dreadful misconception of the non-Muslim world about the Jihad? Obviously, for this, indication might be done to three reasons, which were chiefly contributed to this highly erroneous view. First, the practice of some enthusiastic ignorant Muslim rulers in the past, who sometimes defied the Islamic principles for the purpose of preaching the message of Islam. It was not for the good of Islam, rather to satisfy their cruel instinct, thus bringing shame to Islam.

Here, I am obliged to say that such wrong efforts have mostly been overstated, even, sometimes fabricated, by most historians, who were heavily intoxicated by strong malicious feeling towards Islam and its people.

Second, the modern interpretation of Jihad, expounded by some contemporary extremist organisations. They interpret the Jihad doctrine in aggressive terms.

Indeed, such organisations have erred in interpreting the concept of Jihad. Therefore, this interpretation must not be taken as standard one. In fact it is their own. Third, superficial study of some Quranic verses as well as some sayings of the Messenger conducted by numerous orientallists and non-Muslim scholars, alienating them from their proper contexts.

These lines are meant to explain what the Islamic Jihad stands for. It must be known that the concept of Jihad in Islam is not a negative concept. As a matter of fact, it is a positive one. Literally meaning to strive, to struggle, as an Islamic term it is a comprehensive title for all true and unselfish striving for spiritual good. It does not directly denote fighting. Fighting is the ultimate stage to which Muslims may resort to only when the peaceful means prove ineffective in achieving the goals Islam seeks.

It must be noted here that Jihad in the meaning of fighting cannot be undertaken in the absence of the provisions Islam has made, among which the most important one is the presence of a stable Islamic state. It would be only the governing council of the Islamic state with which the decision lies to undertake the fighting or not for the sake of the goal.

As to the goals, they could be summed up as follows:

(1) Self-defence : it means if the Islamic state, Muslim population or immediate legitimate interests of Islam and its people are threatened with aggression from within or from outside, the Islamic state would be required to undertake a vigorous punitive action against the enemy, thereby nipping the mischief in the bud.

(2) to a the final end the **religious persecution and intolerant autocracy.**

(3) to ensure the **fundamental rights for all the members of human race, male and female, black and white, eastern and western, among which the right to religious freedom is of paramount importance.** To be precise, Islam is the religion of peace, goodwill, mutual understanding and good faith. Admittedly, Islam proclaims that it is the only true religion on the earth, the fittest one to

satisfy the demands of the very nature of mankind, and useful beyond the life after death, yet it is fully tolerant towards other religions and creeds as well. This tolerance of Islam does not mean that it regards other religions and creeds as the representatives of the Ultimate Truth. Instead, it is because of the fact that mankind's present life-span in fact is a test-period. Hence the present human autonomy. Having warned through the channel of the Prophethood, mankind has been granted free will to choose either one out of the two : Truth and Falsehood. Here everyone is free to choose the right way and honest behaviour, or opt for indulging in falsehood and corrupt behaviour. It is the on Day of Judgement that the curtain would be raised and things would be settled finally.

To illustrate these three goals more, a few sentences may be added here. So far as the first goal, **self-defence**, is concerned, it is a generally avowed right of all. It therefore, needs not to be discussed.

So far as the second goal, **eradication of religious persecution**, is concerned, being the most immediate need of mankind Islam must reach to all members of the human race. The Muslims are committed to carry out this task; to preach the message of Islam over the globe. One must be free to exercise one's discretion whether to accept Islam or not. For the purpose of proselytization the Muslims are by Islam itself confined to using only peaceful means : persuasion and constructive **argumentation**. **In the presence of religious presecution and intolerant despotism** it is difficult for Muslims to discharge the commitment of preaching Islam properly on the world scale. Undeniably, the presence of religious persecution in any part of the earth is bound to deprive the inhabitants of that part of their greatest benefit. Islam therefore is committed to remove it by wiping out all the autocratic elements, who commit the crime of the religious persecution. To this end, Muslims may resort to fighting, if necessary.

Yet again, Islam would not be imposed on anyone against one's will. Of course, it comes through the way of

persuasion, not of imposition.

As for the third goal; the protection of fundamental human rights, to Islam holds special import. For proper fulfillment of the Divine Plan of Creation, it is of course necessary that mankind as a whole must enjoy free will; freedom of thinking and action. Under the existing physical structure of the world free will could not be properly exercised by human beings if they are encumbered with artificial restrictions imposed on them on behalf of the ruling authorities, societies or similar despotic institutions. Islam, therefore, is committed to safeguard the basic human rights against any encroachment.

Most obviously, it is a fact that there have been - and naturally will be in future - wicked elements and mischievous souls, which have no aim in life other than creating trouble for others, and threatening the peace of the world. Against such miscreants and menacing elements the Islamic government would necessarily be required to possess a sufficient deterrence, and take appropriate action whenever necessary.

Strikingly, all the goals of the Islamic Jihad are amiably acceptable to the present world. The existence of various provisions under the UNO, pursuing similar goals, amply speaks that the world is always faced with the question tackling the three problems, which are constant source of concern for the world. If the Islamic Jihad offers the world a solution of these three problems, the world must welcome it.

A word more: If some Muslim outfits are fighting for a cause other than these in any corner of the globe, the fight must not be termed as Islamic Jihad. It is something other than the Islamic Jihad, and has its own specific goals. Muslims must take the lead in denouncing such so called jihads and fightings, declaring them mere fightings with no relations to Islam and its concept of Jihad. ■

Indian to teach Arabic, Islamic studies in UAE

DUBAI : An Indian national has become the first person in the United Arab Emirates to get a licence to teach both Arabic language and Islamic education in public schools.

The *Gulf News* daily quoted Abu Salih Anees Al Nadawi, who has been appointed at the Islamic English School in the Abu Dhabi educational zone, as saying that he is the first to be given a licence by the Ministry of Education and Youth.

Al Nadawi said the education ministry normally allows its nationals and Arab teachers to teach only one of these two.

TOI, 10-2-2002

LORD, THE CREATOR

S. Qasim Hasany

The boundless existance and its immensity,
That stuns man's mental faculty,
And the intriguing time factor,
Poses question: what is minor what is major?
O Lord their creator: Only Thou knows better,
Visible is or impreceptible is greater.
And things countless with life or without,
High mountain peaks or deep oceans about,
The power packed atom unseen,
The huge fireball, alternately seen unseen,
From the germs to the huge mammals of the deep,
Million forms of life on the earth sweep.

From falling of a flower from its twig,
Or an empire's fall as big as that was big.
Be it changing into garden of a faggots fire,
Or splitting of the ocean for a road without a mire.
Be it the sailing of the men of war on lands*
Or trampling of the men at lunar rocks and sands.
All events past or present, big or small,
A wise will, Thy Will in them recall.
And all the wisdom present, and of the past ages,
Spoken or written and preached by sages,
Have gleans of Thy words through messengers,
Hence to what Thou wishes, men are no strangers.

But to perceive and divine Thy transcendency,
With all Thy attributes, with might and majesty,
I know that all the great poets' talents combined,
And multimeaning words of all the linguas joined,
Will fail to praise and define Thy might,

**Refers to Turkish war ships being dragged overland to be launched into closed water front of Constantinople at its capture by Sultan Muhammad Fateh in 1453.*

As Thou art, O God of life and light!
Thy praise is beyond the powers of Djins,
Or even of multi winged angels, their Kins.
Yet it was left for that bare footed goatherd,
To receive Thy picture as drawn by Thy Word,
And to teach how Thou shalt be praised!
As from goatherd to crown of creation he was raised.

PROPHET MOHAMMED

Bazmi Abbasi*

Mohammed is eternal light of God,
Throughout the universe and abroad.

He is also the moral light,
Moon like pure, and sun like bright.

Mohammed's character is the pride of humanity,
His message of peace will last till eternity.

His angelic smile and prophetic wisdom,
Are beautiful as he himself is handsome.

This friend of God is the symbol of Islam,
Who leads the humanity to spiritual Calm.

His love for all is the prophetic goal,
which has enlightend the body and the soul.

Islam is the path of sacred life,
Free from violence and strife.

None is big and none is small,
We must hear this Godly call.

None in the world can remain alive,
The truth and love will only survive.

THE SOUL OF PRAYER

Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi was once asked: "Is there any way to God nearer than the ritual prayer?" No", he replied, "but prayer does not consist in form alone. Formal prayers has a beginning and an end, like all forms and bodies and everything that partakes of infinite: it has neither beginning nor end. The Prophets have shown the true nature of prayer.....prayer is the drowning soul, so that all these forms remain without. Absorption (*istighraq*) is the soul of prayer."

"PURPOSE OF LIFE"

Khaliuddin Shujauddin

Every day the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. In the mean while under the shades of blue-sky, thousands of incidents occur in our day-to-day life. Some of them cheer us and some make us sad. We by-pass most of these incidents, forget many but a few make a permanent impact on our minds.

Unfortunately, I had come across such a horrible incident which shook my cerebral sphere (mind) and caused me to change the various common placed concepts and beliefs about this moral world and life too.

As, I was crossing the road, near Mandavi Post Office, Bhendi Bazar, Bombay, I saw an innocent lad, seven to eight years old running on the road just to catch a cut-off kite. Suddenly screams of passers by rose-up from that corner. Out of curiosity, I walked a little in that direction and peeped in. I was aghast to see that boy was crushed into peaces as the "Front wheel and thereafter the "Back Wheel of a loaded truck had passed over that boy. He was lying in a pool of blood, and his mother was standing next to him with cries on her lips and tears in her eyes. A huge crowd of people around could not do anything except consoling that anguished mother.

I was marching towards the J.J. Hospital with the thoughts about how that innocent life was crushed "Between the TWO WHEELS" of the truck. I was quite confident that, the boy must have aimed that he any how, had to catch that cut-off kite and just to achieve this he lost his life, a precious one just for the sake of one kite.

A big storm was there in my mind and I was thinking about this materialistic mortal world, how that boy was running fearlessly on the road and lost his life similarly, human beings are also passing on the paths of life without the fear of God "THE ALMIGHTY".

Whenever I put the lenses of reality to visualise the surrounding world. I always notice that they are moving around kites of wealth, money and properties, they are moving around the kites of dictatorship, they are moving around the kites of mortal desires, ambitions and are strenuous efforts and exertion to secure the kites of false concepts of greatness, ego, pride and material gains etc.

It would be better, if we open our eyes and also try to understand the "Purpose of Life" before reaching between the "TWO WHEELS OF LIFE AND DEATH".

Similarly I stand as a witness to one more self-explanatory and shocking incident, which took place at Haffkine Institute, Parel, Bombay. Haffkine Institute, Bombay is one of the famous Institutes of Asia where the ASV (Anti Snake Venom) are prepared at a large scale and supplied throughout the world for the treatment of Snakebite patients. This Institute has laboratories where varied species of Snakes like Cobra, Krates, Vipers etc. are kept in different cages and glass boxes. Here I saw two rats and a big snake inside one glass-box.

Rats were playing nicely without an awareness that they were being kept in the same glass-box as a food stuff for that snake and at any moment snake would attack and eat them up.

Seeing this, I visualised that this world is like a glass box, those rats are like human beings and the snake is a symbol of death.

The death, can finish us at any moment without any prior indication.

As in the word of Holy-Quran:

"Every soul shall taste death, and only on the day of Resurrection shall you be paid your Wages in full. And whoever is removed away the fire and admitted to Paradise he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception. (A deceiving thing)."

Al-Quran, Surah Ale-Imran 3:185.

The above mentioned two incidents i.e. the Kid and the Kite" and Rats and the Snake" are sufficient to make us

ponder about what is life? What is death? What is life hereafter? Why Almighty God sent us on this earth? What are we supposed to do in this world? What is an Ideal pattern of life and what could be the utmost aim and purpose of One's life? etc. etc. which will be helpful to make a grand success in both the worlds.

I am sure, similar thoughts must be coming in everyone's mind. But with an impartial heart and clear mind if someone listens to his conscious and an echo of his heart, he will get one and only one answer that the "Purpose of life" could be nothing else, except the complete submission to the Creator, the Cherisher, the highest and the Supreme Authority. The Almighty", The Lord of all domains of existence."

Let the whole world realize this fact so that everyone should listen and obey to the Creator of the Universe and all disparities, differences and discriminations come to an end. Let the world blossom with His blessings with love, peace and harmony (Amin). ■

There is no piety like abstinence; and there is no ancestry better than good character. O Muslims! Develop the habit of thinking in your hearts; and be thoughtful about the bounties of Allah but do not ponder over the essence of Allah.

Hadith-e-Nabvi (Mishkat)

MUSLIMS IN UZBEKISTAN

M. Zakir Azmi*

Uzbekistan is one of the former Soviet Union's Muslim majority states which was occupied by Russia in 1924. It is considered to be one of the two biggest states of Central Asia. It was freed from Russian domination on December 5, 1991. The separation of Uzbekistan had caused an unrecoverable loss to Soviet Union as Uzbekistan was its strongest state, economically as well as strategically. It supplied one third of the required manpower for Russian army. The total area of this state is about 447,400 square meters, the neighbouring countries being Afghanistan, Turkmanistan and Tajikistan. The population is estimated to be over 17 millions among which the Muslims represent an absolute majority.

The Uzbek Muslims speak Persian and Uzbek languages whereas the official language is Russian. According to a survey, the Uzbek who prefer to recognize Russian as their second language are 25% while the majority of students choose Arabic instead. The religious scholars and Imams widely speak Arabic and encourage other Muslims to adopt it. Previously the script of Uzbek was Arabic, but when the Communists captured the country, they tried to change it to Russian by force. Now the Uzbek Muslims are struggling to readopt the Arabic script for their local language, which shows their enthusiastic and spiritual relation with Islam.

The history of Islam in the region goes back to 55 Hijra when Muslim forces occupied it under the leadership of Sayeed Bin Utman during the period of Caliph Amir Ma'avia. Later on Sayeed was appointed governor of that country. By the end of first century of Islamic Calendar, Islam had spread in major areas of the region.

The capital of Uzbekistan is Tashkand, and Bukhara and Samarkand are its major cities.

It is worth mentioning that the soul of this region had

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produced a number of renowned scholars who played remarkable role in Islamic history. The early compilers of Hadeeth, Imam Mohammed Ismail Bukhari, Abu Eissa Al Tirmizy, and Ahmed Nisayee are well-known to every Muslim: they belonged to this region. Their enormous contribution to Islam can not be ignored. The book of Imam Ismail Bukhari "Sahih Al-Bukhari" is considered to be the most authentic source of Islam after the Holy Qur'an.

The library of Tashkand alone is equipped alone with 40 thousand manuscripts, which shows the interests of Muslims of that region and substantial contributions in the field of education and reserach.

Unfortunately, this Muslim majority region was under the Communists for long time. They had done their best to keep the Muslims away from Islam. Hundreds of thousands of Ulema were killed and other thousands of mosques were demolished. Uzbekistan along with the other 10 states seceded from Soviet Union and declared independence in 1991.

Uzbek Muslims are known for their exemplary hospitality and reception. They usually offer their guests, regardless who they are, with tea and a special kind of bread at all the time. As an Uzbek idiom goes, "A guest more respectable than the father".

The majority of Muslims in Uzbekistan is Sunnis and folllows the *Hanafi* School of Thought. They had to face a lot of problems to practice their religion during the Communists rule, which perhaps made them more practicing. The villagers are more religious than the ones who live in urban areas.

The land of Uzbekistan is full of natural resources as it alone produces 68% of total cotton production of the whole Russia and provides 1/3 of the silk requirements. But in general, the economy of the country is unsatisfactory due to the mechanical, man-made system of 'equal distribution of wealth' imposed by the Soviet regime. The situation has become a little better as the citizens are being encouraged to trade freely, and foreigners are invited to invest in the

country.

It is painful to see the bribery is widespread in the country and no work can be accomplished without offering a bribe. One reason may be the low salaries of employees.

In Tashkand, there is an office named "*Al-Idara Al-Diniyah*" - the religious department - which was purposely formed by the Communist Government in 1941 with an objective to misusing the name of Islam for socialist and communist propaganda in the country. In view of the said department, Islam is a religion that does not conflict with the ideas of Lenin or Marx though the fact is to the contrary.

The year 1989 is considered a turning point in the history of "*Al-Idara Al-Diniyah*" when it became independent. Now this department carries out the following duties: (1) Compiling statistics of mosques and other prayer places, (2) appointing of Imams and Mu'azzins, and (3) replacing the Imams who fail to strictly follow the Islamic ways.

There is no doubt that the mosques play a vital role in reforming the Muslim societies and bring them closer to their religion. Considering this fact, Communists had demolished thousands of mosques in Russia. It is also regretful that there are only five mosques in Tashkand, the capital of Uzbekistan with a population of 2 million and considered one of Russia's four largest cities. There are also some Islamic Centres in Uzbekistan but they lack in proper equipment and fund. Due to this reason, they are unable to play the role that is expected of them. The Muslims in Uzbekistan deserve help and relief from the world Muslim Community. Let us pray for their great achievements! ■

O, Muslim women;
out of the evening create a dazzling morn
to the true lovers of God
Recite the Holy Qur'an
and enthusiastically translate its spirit into
action,
Don't you know that the
pathos of your recitation changed
altogether Umar's fate.

-Allama Iqbal (Secrets of Self)

CAN ISLAM BE LIBERAL?

Khalid A. Ansari

Dissatisfaction has often led people to nihilism and anarchism. In this sense, the September 11 attacks on WTC, despite the scale of operations or choice of target, are nothing novel in world history. Nor is the use of religious idiom by the likes of the Taliban unprecedented. What is remarkable is the association by the western propaganda machinery of terrorism with an entire religious tradition per se, of attributing to Islam the almost exclusive right to terrorism.

The selective distortion of Islam runs deep in the western intellectual tradition. Historically, the west and Islam share an ambivalent relationship. In claiming to possess competing vision of a world-order, they have often met on hostile grounds. In recent years, the Islamic Revolution of Iran (1979) and the WTC episode are reminiscent of the same theme. No wonder Muslims have often seen the West as "the mother of all evils". The West in turn contrives to revisit the Crusades, best exemplified by Huntington's "clash of civilisations" thesis. In this monolithic understanding of each other, many complexities are blurred and truth sacrificed.

The Muslim response to western challenge (since the European Renaissance) has been varied. The most obvious one was to close ranks at a time of crisis and retreat to the ideals of a golden age of Islam. It was literal, exclusivist and fascist in nature, and was the worst face of pan-Islamism. Much of contemporary Islamic terrorism is a product of this line of thinking. Many believe these developments as retribution of crimes committed by the West. This, however, runs contrary to Islamic teachings that emphasise peace. The other response was Modernist, unleashed by the awe-stricken and brainwashed Muslim intellectual elite, mostly educated in the Western universities. It lacked civilisational authenticity and was alien to the consciousness of Muslim

masses. There were also attempts at a synthesis. 'Islamization of knowledge' programme argued and exhorted the Muslims to master Western knowledge systems and sift and adapt it in congruence to the Islamic paradigm. However, all these responses suffered fundamentally: They were either adjustments or reactions.

The Western intelligentsia has in recent years argued for a 'liberal' Islam. Perhaps what it has in mind is an Islam that contrasts the fundamentalist brand. In short, a toothless and manageable Islam that conforms to Western sensibilities. That terrorism does a disservice to the message of Islam itself is understandable. That Islam can be enlightened and entails a capacity for large-hearted tolerance and spirit of free enquiry are historical facts (In Ummayyad Spain, for example). But the question that needs to be asked is: Is a 'liberal' Islam, of the kind the West has in mind, possible?

The vocation of Prophecy in the Islamic tradition has always been anti-establishmentarian. Islam was a statement of dissent, and the Qur'anic text a potent force in resolving the contradictions of the then Arabic society. Liberal Islam is then a contradiction in terms. The late Iranian Revolutionary Ali Shariati attempted to creatively reinterpret the conceptual and symbolic framework of Islam, in order to arrive at an Islam for *al-nas* (the people) and *mustadafeen* (the oppressed). If Islam is to renew the promise of Muhammad, then it cannot do so by resorting to fundamentalism and terrorism. It will have to struggle for a fair world order by addressing the primary contradiction in today's globalised world. The young Muslim thinkers must strive for an epistemic breakthrough that can transcend the mere agitational role of Islam to a more proactive Islam with a confidence to guide the future. In this sense, Islam cannot be fundamentalist. In this sense it cannot be liberal. ■

CURIOSITY OVER ISLAM RISES IN AMERICA

Andrea Shalal-Esa

The September 11 attacks on New York and Washington and the subsequent war in Afghanistan have generated an enormous amount of interest in Islam, and schools, publishers and the media are scrambling to meet the new demand.

The American Muslim council this month sent to government agencies about 10,000 copies of a full-colour brochure explaining the basic tenets of Islam, which has over one billion believers worldwide and is the fastest-growing religion in the United States.

"On Sept. 12 and Sept. 13, the phone was just ringing and ringing nonstop," said Zulfiya Kadir, a spokesman for the group.

"All kinds of people were looking for information or wanting to express their opinion. Most of them were supportive.

Kadir said she was stunned by the surge in interest in all things having to do with Islam, ranging from basic questions about the principles of the religion to detailed queries such as whether autopsies were permitted in Islam.

She said her organisation was gratified by the huge amount of space and air time devoted by the mainstream US media in recent months to Islam and the seven million Muslims who live in the United States.

"Every day we can see news and programs about Islam. I have never seen this before," she said. "Even one year ago, it was a challenge to find information about Islam. You had to search online for hours, but now its everywhere.

Scholastic Corp, a large children's publishing and media company, responded quickly after the Sept. 11 attacks and president George W Bush's call to avoid discriminating against Muslim or Arab Americans.

The company, which reaches 25 million children in nearly every school across the United States, issued weekly magazines crammed full with information about the attacks, maps of Afghanistan and Muslims - all replete with calls for tolerance.

"We've gotten thousands upon thousands upon thousands of responses from teachers and also, obviously, students," said David Goddy, editor-in-chief of Scholastic magazines. "They've been asking for, and we've been providing, a large volume of material," he said.

Goddy said scholastic had been including Islam in its coverage of world religions for at least five years, driven partly by rising immigration to the United States from Muslim countries and growing openness by teachers.

"The difference is that... where people are ignorant, they admit their ignorance, that people are open to ignorance, that people are open to learning about Ramadan and the holidays of other religions," Goddy said. "More and more across the country, they are doing more to teach children about all of the different religions and the holidays. I think it's significantly more inclusive these days than it was even five or ten years ago."

Scholastic, which publishes 30 magazines and a large web site (www.scholastic.com) covers the five major world religions - Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism - in its magazines and publications, Goddy said. As well as providing basic information to students at all levels. Scholastic has also raised concerns about civil liberties violations and discrimination against Arab and Muslim Americans.

The company also launched the new campaign this fall, entitled "Keep the cool in school," which is aimed at curbing verbal abuse and violence in the nation's schools. The campaign, developed together with child trauma expert Dr. Bruce Perry, emphasises the skills children need to grow up to be healthy, caring individuals who value diversity, Goddy said.

The campaign grew out of the company's concern

about violence in schools and school shootings, but has proven useful this Autumn as children struggle to cope with the Sept. 11 tragedy and the ensuing war. Goddy said the response had been "enormous" and "very, very positive." Moira Megargee, publicist for Interlink Publishing, a small independent publisher based in Northampton, Massachusetts, cited huge demand for a translation of the Koran, as well as historical books about the middle east.

Even a volume of poetry by Arab women was selling much better than before Sept. 11, Megargee said, "Our books are on display at the chains. We are getting e-mails from friends all over the country, saying, 'hey, I saw your book.'"

"We are just seeing a greater interest in everything having to do with the Middle East," She said.

Mosques have hosted open houses to help educate their communities, while Churches, schools and synagogues have invited Muslims from the community to come and speak there. ■

The Pioneer

ISLAM-A PERFECT AND UNIVERSAL RELIGION

"Islam had the power of peacefully conquering souls by the simplicity of its theology, the clearness of its dogma and principles, and the definite number of the practices which it demands. In contrast to Christianity which has been undergoing continual transformation since its origin, Islam has remained identical with itself."

(Jean L'heureux, *Etude sur L'Islamisme* p.35)

IS UK SOCIETY VIOLENT TOO?

William Frankel

Much is heard these days about violence in Zimbabwe, Chechniya, the Balkans and even in United States. The British have never even remotely contemplated that theirs could ever be considered a violent society but the story revealed in a murder trial which ended two weeks ago has aroused fears throughout this country about the level of crime, violence and policing in this "green and pleasant land".

Mr. Tony Martin, a bachelor farmer aged 55, lived in an isolated and untended farm house, appropriately named Bleak House, in a rural country of Norfolk. Though rundown in its appearance and squalid inside, the house contains valuable antiques, a situation well-known to the local small time crooks who had repeatedly burgled it. Mr. Martin is known as an eccentric and his fear of crime led him, unlawfully, to acquire a shotgun as well as three fierce Rottweiler guard dogs.

Last August, two oft-convicted criminals who had met in prison and are in their early thirties decided that there were good pickings to be had at Bleak House. They recruited Fred Barras, a local boy, a member of a family of travellers (as gypsies are now termed) who, though only 16, had more than a passing acquaintance with the law having been arrested for no fewer than 29 offences, including burglary and assault, between the age of 12 to 16.

On August 20, young Fred and one of the senior criminals broke into the farm house and began their operation. Hearing the crash they had made when entering through a window, the house owner entered the scene with his shotgun and fired a total of 196 pellets at the two men. Both were hit. The older man survived the onslaught and is still receiving treatment for his injuries but Fred Barras was killed instantaneously.

At the Norwich Crown Court just over a week ago, a

jury composed of six men and six women, by a vote of ten to two, found Mr. Martin guilty of murder for which the mandatory penalty is a life sentence. The law permits the use of reasonable force for defence but the jury decided that firing the gun in the circumstances was not reasonable. Its members had clearly not found it easy to come to their verdict because they had mulled on it for almost ten hours. They cleared the accused of the charge of attempted murder of the senior burglar.

Intimidation

It was immediately apparent that the story would not end there. The defence, in the course of argument, made the point, as Mr. Martin's solicitor put it, "if this area had been properly policed, Fred Barras would be alive today". The High Court judge who heard the case appeared to agree saying that it had raised serious question about rural crime and policing of the countryside.

In so far as it has been expressed, public opinion appears overwhelmingly critical of the murder verdict; the consensus appears to be that man slaughter would have been a more appropriate finding. The exception is the victim's family and friends who vociferously expressed their approval when it was announced in court. There is some suspicion that this group may have tried to intimidate the jury and an application is to be made for this to be investigated.

Most of the media comment on the verdict and sentence has been critical, an exception being the liberal "guardian" which advised its readers that "what Tony Martin did cannot be condoned. He broke a fundamental rule of civilised society: rejection of the use of unnecessary and undue force". But all farmers who have spoken out say that they would behave as Martin did if they were faced with a nocturnal intruder.

The farming community claims that the county of Norfolk had fewer policemen per head of the population than any other county in Britain and that, in the past decade the crime rate in the area multiplied seven fold. The concern

of the Norfolk farms is shared by other farmers in the country who are rallying to Mr. Martin's support and contributing to a fund to finance the appeal which is being launched.

Public Disquiet

Not surprisingly, with local elections eminent and a general election on the horizon, the issues involved in the Martin case have been taken up by the politicians. Mr. William Hague, leader of the opposition, having made a partisan issue of the asylum seekers which does not appear to have made much of an impact on the electorate, has now turned his attention to the problems of maintaining law and order.

In a speech this week, he attacked the government for its passivity in the face of what he sees as clear defects in our legal and law enforcement systems. He wants longer sentences, a change in the manner in which sentences are reduced for good behaviour and a redefinition of self-defence to cover such cases as a house owner acting in protection of himself and his home. Mr. Hague also wants to see a reversal of the policy of reducing police numbers in rural areas so as to give the public greater protection.

The speech was designed to respond to public disquiet and it will surely have some impact though its effect on the revival of conservative fortunes is more problematical. It has long been apparent that policing is not what it was. Fewer police into cities are on the beat, more being engaged in test work and in responding to traffic and parking offences rather than forcefully pursuing criminals. There is a feeling, now being expressed, that there exists an imbalance of the system which seems more concerned to protect the rights of criminal rather than those of the victim.

The government's response so far has been to dismiss the criticism as mere election opportunism. But it will nonetheless be under some pressure to take a stronger line on the law and order issue in the light of the widespread disquiet over the Martin case. ■

THE BUSTAN OF SADI

Story of Sadi's Childhood

When a child, unable to distinguish between right and wrong, I once resolved to fast, and a certain devout man thus taught me to perform my ablutions and devotions: "First" he said, "repeat the name of God, according to the law of the Prophet; secondly, make a vow; and thirdly, wash the palms of the hands. Then wash thy nose and mouth three times and rub thy front teeth with thy forefinger, for a toothbrush is forbidden when fasting. After that, throw three handfuls of water upon thy face; then wash thy hands and arms upto the elbows and repeat thy prayers by the telling of the beads and the recital of the attributes and praises of God. Lastly, wipe again thy head and wash thy feet - thus end in the name of God."

"No one," added the old man, "knows the form of ablution better than myself. Dost thou not see that the elder of the village has become decrepit?"

Hearing these words, the elder cried; "O impious wretch! Did you not say that the use of a toothbrush was unlawful in fasting? - I suppose, then, that slander is lawful? Before thou settest about a fast, wash first thy mouth of improper words."

[Source: The Bustan of Sadi, by A. Hart Edwards]

THE DAY OF THANKSGIVING

S.M. Rabey H. Nadwi

Maulana Rabey Hasani Nadwi, on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, December 16, 2001 Shah Ilm-ul-lah, addressed a large congregation including those who were there for itikaf in Ramadhan. The tape recorded speech, provided by Abdur-Rasheed Nadwi Rajasthani, rendered into English, not purporting to be a literal translation, is presented here.

All praise and glory to the Almighty by whose grace the month of Ramadhan passed off peacefully, culminating into this day of rejoicing and offer of thanks for Him enabling us to avail of special bounties reserved for the holy month. For the believers, two days, Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha are the days of rejoicing and thanksgiving. In one case the gratitude is for enabling us to observe fast for full thirty days with obeissance and recitation of holy Quran and the other for capability to complete the pilgrimage to Holy Ka'aba and offering sacrifice. Eid prayer is an expression of gratitude for completion of two important functions (word "ritual" is avoided intentionally as it smacks more of tokenism than conviction).

Would such bounties be available to humankind were it not for His great affection, including confinement of major Satanic forces and an award of seventy times the normal award, for each pious, sincere act. This, the intrinsic value of Eid is as gratitude for having had opportunity to walk in all His commandments and be worthy of rewards.

What needs to be pondered and imbibed in proper prespective is the fact of existence and sustenance being under absolute control of God the Almighty.

A discerning eye and a probing mind would readily grasp that the gifts and endowments bestowed by the Almighty would be beyond human reach were it not for His will. All that God expects of mankind is to be ever grateful for all means and provisions. Not many however, ponder and act as truly grateful. No strenuous measures have been prescribed for the purpose of offering thanks, except

compliance of clear-cut rules, punctiliously though. Of these, the five compulsory prayers during a day are the paramount of all. Prescribed fasting during Ramadhan is not designed for inflicting hardship but as an investment against rewards assigned for the life hereafter. It is a promise from the Almighty that the reward on the day of judgement, for sufferings sustained in this world shall be several times more, so much so that people would wish that it would have been better had more hardships come to them in the material world.

All in all, every act of a person is recorded as gratitude for the bounties showered by God and does not benefit God, who is above any needs, but the person performing the act. One who shares his belongings liberally with others in need, earns the pleasure of God and would be rewarded in immeasurable terms.

Hence it transpires that Ramadhan is a unique opportunity for enhancing our credit in the ledgers of pious deeds. Were it not for such magnificent provision, the loss would be of the entire humanity.

Muslim is defined as one who devotes oneself entirely to His will and an infidel the one wavers from total belief in God and considers some other forces also as gifted with divine powers. Hence, for us the greatest endowment and blessing is to be Muslim, worthy of His affection and mercy. Even if one, who is a true believer by virtue of human nature, does commit an act liable to displease his Creator-Preserver, the door to repentance and pardon is always open, provided a sincere apology, with a resolve for non-repetition, is tendered.

A few simple examples would be illustrative enough:

Where would water for drinking and food for nourishment, so essential for sustenance, be available if He wills against their supply? During life on earth, a human being while reaping all benefits given by the Almighty, is not however, immune from ailments and perils. Cure for disease, protection, fortitude against accidents and injuries are all at His command and incarnate in the system created by

Him. Each function is under the charge of an angel deputed for a set duty. Instances of people coming through most horrendous accidents and grave illness, unscathed, are an everyday observation. Curative effects are inbuilt into all consumable and other commodities. A new-born would hardly have a chance to survive and develop were it not for the innate affection of a mother, which is a priceless gift from the Creator-Preserver.

The well known parable of Quroon, the wealthy braggart, being buried into the earth under the weight of his own possessions, is illustrative of the curse of being ungrateful to Almighty. Similar was the case of one whose eyes went dry and all efforts to provide moisture proved futile as he had boasted of himself being capable of providing a remedy.

This particular day of Eid-uf-Fitr is one occasion for rejoicing in having complied with the commandments. Awards, not susceptible to our means of measurement are in store for the really faithful and devoted. May such occasions be repeated and may we all be steadfast in obeissance to our Creator, for this worldly life is only a transient phenomenon, to be followed by life eternal. ■

Rendered into English by Mashhoon Ahmad

SAYINGS OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

On the authority of Abu Hurayrah, 'Abdur Rahman ibn Sakhrm who said : I heard the Messenger of Allah say: "What I have forbidden to you, avoid; what I have ordered you [to do], do as much of it as you can. For it was only their excessive questioning and their disagreement with their prophets that destroyed those who were before you."

Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Maulana Manzoor Nomani

This much is known to everyone that whoever is born into the world has got to die one day or the other. But nobody knows on his own what happens or will happen after death. This is known only to God. God vouchsafes the knowledge of it to His Prophets and through the Prophets men like you and me also come to know about it. Every Prophet of God, in his time, had revealed clearly to his people through what stages they would have to pass after death and how at each stage they would be recompensed for their deeds - good as well as bad - during the earthly sojourn. Since the Prophet Mohammad (Peace and Blessings of God be upon whom) is the last of the Divine Apostles and Messengers, and no Prophet is going to be raised up after him, the different stages through which a man has to pass after death have been explained by him in greatest detail and with utmost clarity. If all that the Prophet has revealed in this connection is brought together it would make a volume by itself. We will, therefore, give a very brief summary of it over here.

There are three stages to follow after death. The first stage runs from death to Resurrection. It is called Barzakh. Whether a person is buried when he dies or is cremated or cast into a river his soul does not perish with him. It is immortal; it lives. It only migrates from the material world of ours to another world. In this other world the angels question him about his spiritual state. If he is a truthful Believer, he gives correct answers whereupon the angels impart to him the glad tidings that he is going to live in peace and happiness till the Last Day. And, if it is otherwise, that is, he turns out to be an Unbeliever, an infidel or a sham he is given or punishment which is not to cease before the Day of Reckoning.

The next stage comprises of the Last Day and the Resurrection. The Last Day means that there will come a time when the entire material world will be destroyed by the

command of God. Annihilation will descend suddenly on everything that exists around us. The whole world will be thrown topsyturvy. Then, after a long time, when God will wish, all men will be raised up again. Every person born into the world will be re-created and called upon to render a full account of his doings on earth. In the Great Reckoning, those who will be found worthy of deliverance will be awarded a place in Paradise and those who will turn out to be guilty and deserving of Divine chastisement will be consigned to Hell.

After this, there will commence the last stage. The dwellers of Paradise will live in a state of eternal bliss, supremely immune from every kind of pain, anxiety and suffering, and exulting in the bounties of their Lord the like of which they would not have dreamt of in the world while those that will be condemned to Hell will have to live permanently in a condition of unmitigated misery and distress. There will be for them nothing but horrible agony and fearful castigation. This will be the ultimate stage after death.

The above was the aim and substance of what the Prophets, especially the last of them, the Prophet Mohammad (Peace and Blessings of God be upon whom), have taught mankind about the Hereafter and what is indicated about it in Quran and the Traditions. We will now examine some of the relevant verses of Quran:

Every soul shall have a taste of death: in the end to Us shall ye be brought back.

(XXIX:57)

Every soul shall have a taste of death: and only on the Day of Judgement shall you be paid your full recompense.

(III:185)

The last day will be a frightful, horrible day.

O mankind! fear your Lord! for the convulsion of the Hour (of Judgement) will be a thing terrible! the Day ye shall

see it: every mother giving suck shall forget her sucking babe, and every pregnant female shall drop her load unformed! thou shall see mankind as in a drunken riot, yet not drunk! but dreadful shall be the wrath of God.

(XXII:1-2)

One day the earth and the mountains will be in violent commotion and the mountains will be as a heap of sand poured out and flowing down.

(LXXIII:14)

A day that will make children hoary-headed.

(LXXIII:17)

At length, when there comes the deafening noise, - that day shall a man flee from his own brothers, and from his mother and his father, and from his wife and children. Each one of them, that day, will have enough concern (of his own) to make him indifferent to others. Some faces that Day will be beaming, laughing, rejoicing. And other faces that day will be dust-stained; blackness will cover them.

(LXXX:33-41)

On the Day of Recompense :

That Day shall ye be brought to Judgement! not an act of yours that ye hide will be hidden.

(LXIX:18)

One day we shall remove the mountains, and thou will see the earth as a level stretch, and We shall gather them, all together, nor shall leave out any of them. And they will be marshalled before the Lord in ranks, with the announcement, "Now have ye come to Us (bare) as We created ye first! Aye, ye thought We shall not fulfill the appointment made to you to meet Us? " And the Book (of Deeds) will be placed before you; and thou wilt see the sinful in great terror because of what is recorded therein; they will say "Ah! Woe to us! What a Book is this! it leaves nothing small or great, but takes account thereof!" They

will find all that they did placed before them; and not one will thy Lord treat with injustice.

(XVIII: 47-49)

A man's own limbs will depose against him before God on the Day of Reckoning.

That day shall be set a seal on their mouths. But their hands will speak to Us, - and their feet will bear witness to all that they did.

(XXXVI:65)

The Quran, in fine has portrayed most graphically and vividly the happenings of the Last Day: the terrific explosions and the dreadful tremors, the total annihilation of the world- *Even the mountains will be wiped out of existence-*, the rising again of men, the gathering together of them for the judgement, the presentation of the Book of Deeds, the deposing of one's own limbs against oneself, the judgement, and finally, the execution of the Divine verdict and the allotment of Heaven or Hell. All these events have been described so candidly in some of the chapters of the Quran that one can obtain a full picture of the happenings of the Last Day by reading them. The Prophet, is reported to have observed, "anyone who wishes to know about the Last Day as if the scene of it was drawn before his eyes should read these chapters of the Quran: *Takvir, Infitar* and *Inshiqaq*.

We will now see a few Traditions of the Prophet pertaining to *Barzakh* and the Last Day. Says he :

"When anyone of you dies the place that is going to be his abode in Heaven or in Hell (on the basis of his conduct in the world) is brought before his eyes every morning and evening, and it is said to him, 'Behold, this is your destination, and, surely, you will reach it'."

"When the Trumpet will first be sounded on the Last Day by the command of God everyone will faint and drop dead on the ground. When it will be sounded next all men will rise again. They will then be commanded to proceed

and make their presence before the Lord. The angels, thereafter, will be told to collect them together and here the investigation into their conduct on earth will begin."

It is related that a Companion once enquired from the Prophet, "O Messenger of God, how will God raise up His creatures from the dead? Is there anything like it here in this world which may be cited as an example?" The Prophet replied, "Has it never occurred to you that you passed by a stretch of land in your country and found it dry and bereft of all vegetation, and, then, coming upon it again, and after sometime, discovered that it was covered lavishly with fresh, green grass?" The Companion replied, "Yes, my master. It has." The Prophet remarked, "This typifies Resurrection. God will raise from the dead in the same manner."

The Prophet is reported to have asked, after reciting the Quranic verse, *On the Day (the earth) will declare her tidings*, "Do you know what it means?" The Companions are said to have replied, "God and His apostle know best." The Prophet, the Tradition goes on to tell, then, said, "On the Day of Judgement the earth will bear witness to all deeds performed by men on it (i.e., at the bidding of God the earth will tell that such-and-such a person had done such-and-such a thing on it on such-on-such a day)."

Speaking of the Day of Recompense the Prophet, further, is reported to have said, "on that Day God will call upon everyone to come forward and be his own witness. He will say to him, 'To-day you are your own witness: Our recording angels are present; this much of evidence is enough.' Then by the command of God the lips of the person will become sealed and he will not be able to utter a word. His limbs (arms, legs etc.) will then be commanded to speak and they will relate the whole story of his doings in the world."

It is reported that once a person went to the Prophet and said, "O Messenger of God, I have some slaves who, sometimes, disobey me, or they steal or tell me a lie. I sometimes, scold them, and, sometimes, I also punish them. How is it going to turn out for me on the Day of Requitat?" The Prophet observed, "God will dispense justice correctly

on the Day of Judgement. If the punishment you mete out to them is proportionate to their faults you will neither get nor have to give anything; you will be quits. If the punishment turns out to be of lesser degree than what they merited, you will be recompensed for it. If the punishment proves to be excessive you will have to recompense the slaves." On hearing the Prophet's reply the enquirer began to cry. He said, "Then, O Prophet of God, the best thing for me is to send them away. I declare before you that I have set them free." The Prophet is also reported to have recited the following verse of the Quran to him :

We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgement, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least. And if there be (no more than) the weight of a musturd seed we will bring it (to account) and enough are We to take account.

(XXI:47)

WOMEN BEHIND BARS IN SAUDI ARABIA

For the first time in the history of the Saudi media, a report has been carried by a Saudi newspaper that reveals the stories of female prisoners in the kingdom's jails.

An investigation by the Arabic daily, Al-Riyadh, has revealed the inhuman ways in which some housemaids are being treated by their employers, particularly their mistresses, in the Kingdom. The report also revealed the depth of remorse felt by Saudi women convicted of manslaughter who are in jail awaiting a court decision releasing them after they have paid the heirs of the murdered servants. On the other hand, the prisoners have no complaint about the treatment of the prison officials and the general conditions here. In fact, the prisoners were thankful to the authorities for looking after them in the prison, providing them with good food, medical care and facilities for visits and pursuing education, training and studying the Holy Qur'an and receiving religious instructions.

Al-Riyadh discussed the prisoners' problems with the prison officials. The newspaper further declared that it meant no harm or damage or sensationalism when it decided to report about the Kingdom's women prisoners for the first time in the history of Saudi media. The objective was to enlighten people on the risks involved in murdering helpless maids who are under their employers' total control and for whom the employers are responsible. The report also stresses the role of the media in helping to prevent such criminal, though not premeditated, acts.

Housemaid killings

The first Saudi who volunteered to discuss her crime was a university graduate who was employed in a government hospital. She was studying for her master's degree before she was arrested and she is married with three children, the oldest of whom is only five. She told her

story: "I had an expat housemaid who spent a year with me. She was polite, obedient and the best maid we had ever had. One day I noticed a surprising change in her behaviour. I was shocked to see her at the door of my house, talking to a strange man of her own nationality. I was seized by an uncontrollable rage and I snatched a broomstick and threatened her as I questioned her about the man. I went on asking her if she would talk to the man when I was away and she was taking care of my children. I was angered further by her refusal to reply my questions. I started beating her with the stick and I did not spare an inch of her body. The punishment was so violent that she did not come to the kitchen next day nor could get up from her bed. I did not concern myself with her condition. She remained in her bed for ten days and then, to my shock, she died. The postmortem revealed she died of internal bleeding caused by the beating. They also discovered large burn scars which I had earlier inflicted on her."

She continued: "I never intended to kill her and I tried to undo my mistakes in every way I could. I paid SR200,000 to her relatives who waived their rights. There remains only the public rights and I am now awaiting the court's verdict. I fully repent of what had happened."

She said she had spent her time in jail memorising the Holy Qur'an and praying regularly. She also hoped to complete her and her children's education.

The newspaper spoke to another Saudi woman who had beaten a housemaid to death. She said, "My problem is that I am obsessed with cleanliness. I want to keep my house spotlessly clean and arrange things in perfect order. I was fed up with the maidservant whom I tried to train according to my standards of cleanliness and order. She seemed to pay no attention to my instructions. She stayed with me only a month and even that was not continuous; during that time, she often went to my mother's house for several days.

"one day I was preparing for a big party in my house. I was supervising her work as she was painfully slow and

untidy. I flew into a rage when I found her toilet in a mess. I took a long hose and began beating her. My husband heard angry words and asked me to lower my voice. He handed me a metal object to hit her with. She took all my blows and hits with resignation and did not try to defend herself but kept saying, "I am not good; you are good. I cannot see properly; I am blind." Earlier I had rebuked her by saying, "Why haven't you cleaned this? Can't you see it is dirty? Are you blind?" After I beat her, she did not come for her lunch. I called her a number of times and insisted that she eat. She finally came and ate something but with difficulty in swallowing. Suspecting that she was trying to upset me, I ordered her to leave the kitchen. When she stood up, I was horrified to see blood on the chair where she had been sitting. I thought it was because her negligence of personal hygiene. After cleaning the chair, I went to make sure she was cleaning herself. I ordered her to change her clothes but she just sat there in her filth, saying all her clothes were dirty. I was filled with uncontrollable rage. I grabbed her by the hair and dragged her to the bathroom and started beating her not caring how hard I struck her nor where. I shouted at her to wash all her clothes. Then I went back to my room cursing my fate at having to put up with such a filthy housemaid. The next morning my husband woke me with the news that the maidservant was dead. I went up to find her in the state I had left her, bent over the wash basin, in the midst of her dirty clothes with water still running. Immediately we called the police. The medical report said she died of internal bleeding caused by beating. It also noted that she had serious visual impairment and was suffering from acute diabetes. Then only I understood why her cleaning was so bad. Also I remembered her once saying she could not see properly and that she had worn glasses in her country. The labour department in her country, however, took away her glasses on the grounds that poor sight would make her unacceptable to work as a housemaid in the Kingdom."

The woman continued, "I am sorry for what I did to all

the maids who worked with me. I thought they would forgive me for my cruelties if I gave them sweets and other gifts. I wish my stay in jail could be an expiation for my cruel behaviour. If only my friends had stopped my cruelty instead of provoking me to be harsh on maidservants."

With tears rolling down her cheeks, she continued: "It never occurred to me that I would be jailed nor did I know what the word jail meant. I maintain good relations with other prisoners here. Once I was respected by all my friends and acquaintances, now I have brought shame to my husband and my family. My husband's physical and mental health is deteriorating because of me.

My father has developed high blood pressure and diabetes, unable to bear the shock of my being here. I observe all my regular prayers and have memorised a good portion of Holy Qur'an. I am awaiting the court's decision. I have vowed that I will never ask for a maidservant again and will do all my housework myself. "She added that she had paid SR85,000 to the maidservant's relatives.

Black Magic

A 37-year-old Saudi woman, mother of seven children, narrated the circumstances which had landed her in prison.

"I offered to help a school teacher to bewitch her husband so that she could be sure of his faithfulness on condition that she pay me SR95,000. I accomplished this by black magic; however, when I completed my part of the deal, the schoolteacher did not pay me. She said she did not have the money and asked me to be patient. I waited for four months and still she did not give me the money. Unable to wait any longer, I went to her school, beat her up and took waht money she had with her. The police came for me after she complained to them. When the police discovered my involvement in black magic, they put me in jail. I have been here for four months awaiting a decision and I have an eight-month-old baby at home. "She said she had repented and now spent most of her time in the jail library. She had been forced to practice black magic

because of poverty.

Swindling

An Arab woman in her early thirties said that she used to impersonate rich Saudi women and deceive banks by illegally withdrawing millions of riyals; this was accomplished with the help and connivance of bank officials.

She said: "I was born and educated in the Kingdom . I grew up as the daughter of a very rich man but when my father divorced my mother, we were sent back to our country and he did not send up any money. We were struggling to live. later I married and came to Makkah on an Umrah visa with the idea of finding employment here. It was not easy for a woman to find a job in Jeddah. I was very worried about my mother and sisters who did not have anyone to support them. Then I was introduced to a man who offered me a job with unlimited potential for making money. The job was very risky but I felt I had no choice. I had to present myself as a female Saudi bank employee to a rich Saudi and plan with him to steal a huge amount of money from a bank account with the help of some bank employees. I agreed to do it without being aware of the risks involved; in any case, I successfully completed part of the operation and was rewarded with SR35,000.

"In fact, I suffered some pangs of conscience and apprehension about the operation and expressed desire to get out of the whole affair. But my employer threatened to reveal my illegal identity to the police or even kill me if I did not obey his orders." Soon after one of my biggest jobs, involving SR8 million, the rich Saudi gave me SR5 million to be divided among my accomplices. When my employer-not the rich Saudi - began to plan another big job, I protested, saying that I needed some rest. I returned with him to my hotel, carrying the SR5 million with me. I told him that I wanted to return home after I had paid each of my accomplices. He did not object but he appeared to be impatient to leave me. I had a hunch that he was trying to escape and leave me alone. He stopped the car on the pretext that he was going

to meet a friend who would come with us. I waited for over an hour and there was no sign of him. When I called him on the mobile, he asked me in a mocking tone to keep an eye on the money in the glove compartment. I was shocked to find that the money was gone. Then the truth dawned on me that he had made off with the money and I was alone in a strange city. I did not know what to do. Finally I decided to tell the rich man of the helpless state I was in. Immediately he came to me and was so moved that he gave SR2 million to give to my accomplices. They refused to believe my story and insisted on getting their full share of the stolen money. I was so miserable and did not know what to do. I went to a family I had known a long time ago and told them my story. I stayed with them for a few days, keeping the SR2 million with me., I had nowhere to go. My husband had abandoned me long ago. I began to suspect that some of the people in the house were after my money so I left them. The oldest son in the family was sympathetic and rented an apartment for me in his name. While the servants were shifting my belongings to the new house, the man went to my room and stole SR1,00,000. I was so angry that I informed his parents. Fearing that their son might be involved in criminal acts if he associated with me. They informed the police that I had a large amount of stolen money with me. I confessed everything to the police and I was sentenced to three years. All my accomplices were also arrested and punished." The woman admitted that though she was in a prison, her present life was much better than living under the shadow of fear. Confessing her crimes had relieved her of an immense mental burden. She has learned the hard way that ill-gotten money brings no joy.

She continued, "I sent SR35,000 that I stole in the beginning to my mother. Soon I heard that she was suffering from cancer of the mouth. I realised at that moment that it was a punishment from God, but Satan weakened my will and dazzled me by the glitter of money. I never thought that one day I would be caught." She ended her tale with a deep

sigh.

Official Statements

Fatima Al-Anzan, director of the Malaz Women's Jail, said that the crime rate among the Kingdom's women was much lower than in other countries. The prison serves as a house for educating and reforming rather than for inflicting painful punishments. There is only one aim - to mould the inmates into a good and honest members of society. Fatima stressed that the authorities did not discriminate between foreign and Saudi prisoners. Though most prisoners were foreigners, they all get the same amount of food, drink and clothes plus a monthly allowance of SR60. The jail provides excellent medical care and has a hospital with beds. Prisoners are instructed mainly in religious matters, which are decisive in determining the course of their future life. The jail also offers accredited certificates for achievement in the eradication of illiteracy.

The authorities have also supplied the jail with several sewing machines and other tools so that the inmates can be trained to earn a living. There is also a school for women above the age of 30. Women below 30 are sent to the Establishment for Young Women's Care. The jail also provides playgrounds and baby-sitters for children who accompany some prisoners. These children are regularly taken out of the prison to amusement centres in the city.

No Saudi prisoner is released from jail unless her legal guardian is present. Expatriates are released with orders for deportation. The unwillingness of some guardians to accept the prisoners back in the family is a serious problem faced by several Saudi prisoners at the end of their jail terms. Relatives come with great reluctance and then after much pressure and counselling. The charges against most of the female prisoners, according to Dina Al-Judi, a social scientist, who has been working in the jail for the last three years, the moral, illegal moneymaking or violations of the Iqama regulations. A special jail near the airport is recommended for Iqama violators where the processing of

their papers can be quickly completed. Their deportation without delay would save the government a considerable sum of money.

Al-Judi stressed the significance of the prisoners' maintaining their relations with relatives. Support from families is a decisive factor in the rehabilitation of a released prisoner who has repented and reformed. The family is the individual's only link with the outside world and remains a strong force for right and good. ■

Y.M. Digest

THE CONCEPT AND SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE IN ISLAM

Muhammad Anver

By sacrificing a camel or a cow or a sheep or goat, a believer is expressing his inner urge to sacrifice his worldly possessions and passions and thus to purify himself. It is also an act of repentance over the past misdeeds and in this rite we have an actual participation in the slaughter of our own wicked self.

In Islam life itself is a test, and each person has to carry his burden of vice or virtue and he would get his reward in proportion to his belief and action and consciousness and submission to Allah. Pilgrimage is one of the disciplines prescribed by Allah and sacrifice is one of the rites. In the Qur'an, Chapter 2, Verse 197 and Chapter 3, Verse 97 refer to this duty of the pilgrimage.

There are certain months fixed for pilgrimage. Whoever then undertakes the pilgrimage, let him not yield to sex promptings, nor employ the language of abuse nor wrangle during the pilgrimage. And whatever good that ye do, God knoweth. And equip yourself for the journey properly and the best of equipment is righteousness. Be mindful of Me then, O men of understanding! (2:197)

Therein are sign-posts including the Station of Ibrahim (the spot where he usually stood for prayer), and he who enters it has entered the abode of peace. And the pilgrimage to this House is a homage due to God from those who have the facility to journey thither. And if anyone should decline to offer it, (be it noted that) God is above the homage of His entire creation. (3:97)

The story of the sacrifice, its genesis and its purpose are given in the following verses of the Qur'an:

And as he (Ismail) grew up to an age when he could walk by his side, his father (Ibrahim) said to him, "My son, I have verily seen in a dream that I have to sacrifice thee,

so consider what view you have to take of it." He said, "My father: do what thou art bidden to do: If God pleases, thou shall find me steadfast in endurance. (102)

And when they both had resigned themselves (to God), and he (Ibrahim) laid him (his son) down upon his forehead. (103)

We cried unto him. O Ibrahim!(104)

"Thou hast indeed proved true to the vision." Thus it is We reward those who do good. (105)

This was indeed a clear test. (106) And We provided a ransom for his (intended) mighty sacrifice. (107) And thus We left him (a good name, so much so that) posterity shall greet him for ever. (108) "Peace be on Ibrahim" (Chapter 37 109: 'The Rows')

And call to mind the occasion when We declared the House (the Ka'aba at Makkah) to be a place of assemblage for mankind and a sanctuary, and ordered, "Make the station of Ibrahim a place of prayer. And We command Ibrahim a place of prayer. And We commanded Ibrahim and Ismail "Keep ye two My house clean for those who go the rounds and those who retreat themselves (for quiet devotion) and those who bend and bow down in prayer".

And call to mind the occasion when raising the foundations of the house' Ibrahim along with Ismail(prayed)' "Our Lord! accept (this from us, for, Thou verily art the Hearer and the Knower!

"Our Lord! Raise up among them from their own midst an apostle who may recite to them, Thy Revelations, and instruct them in the Book, and the purpose underlying it, and reform them. Verily, Thou! Thou art the Mighty, the Wise." (Chapter 2, The Cow).

"And (O Ibrahim) call people to make pilgrimage to it (the Ka'aba in Makkah). They may come on foot or by any fleet camel from any distant place."

....Thus have We made them (the cattle) to serve your purposes that ye may be greatful.

Niether their flesh nor their blood reaches Allah, but what reaches Him, is the spirit underlying your act of peity....(Chapter 22, the Pilgrimage)

Here mention has been made of the great sacrifice of Ismail by his father, Ibrahim (PBUH). Prophet Ibrahim's name occurs sixty six (66) times and Ismail's eight (8) times, the name of Prophet Moses is repeated one hundred and twenty eight (128) times, while Prophet Jesus is referred to thirty six times (as Isa, son of Mary and Messiah) in the Qur'an which has about 6, 250 verses. Mostly all over the world observe this momentous event as a festival of sacrifice during the Eid-al-Adha. Every rite performed during the Hajj or Pilgrimage brings to mind the actions of Sayyidna Ibrahim, his wife Hajira (or Hagar) and Sayyidna Ismail (Allah be pleased with them all).

Act of Piety

Sacrifice is "an act of piety" first performed by Prophet Ibrahim in obedience to Divine instructions, and this Sunnah or way was upheld by the Last Prophet, Sayyidna Mohammad, and by his followers during the pilgrimage on the 10th, 11th and 12th of lunar month of Dudhul-Hijjah. By sacrificing a camel or a cow or a sheep or goat, a believer is expressing his inner urge to sacrifice his worldly possessions and passions and thus to purify himself. It is also an act of repentance over the past misdeeds and in this rite we have an actual participation in the slaughter of our own wicked self. This leads to a new resolve to turn a new leaf in our lifetime, ever remembering the Prophets Ibrahim and Ismail who lived and died in carrying out the Will of God. Hadith literature recalls many sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as to how on the Day of Reckoning we would ride these cattle in safety while crossing the Bridge of Sirat that stands the Hell - fire; and also that every particle of these cattle, including the hair, is weighed to increase our virtues.

In this story of Prophet Ibrahim the question that now crops up is "what then is Islam?" Islam literally means to

submit or resign oneself to the Will of Allah. The Chapter 2, Verse 131 of the Qur'an reads: *"When his Lord said to him 'Resign thyself to me,' (Ibrahim) said, 'I do submit myself to the Lord of all domains of existence'". A Muslim is thus the one who submits himself to Allah, the One, the Eternal, the Merciful, the Creator, the Sustainer, the Knower of the visible and the invisible, "beside whom there is no God. He is the King, the Holy, the Perfect, the Grantor of security, the Guardian, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Most High! Too Exalted is Allah in purity above all those which they associate with Him.... The Originator, the fashioner, His are the Names Excellent!" (59:23-24)*

Neither slumber seizeth Him nor sleep. His, whatever is in the heavens and is in the earth who shall intercede with Him save by His leave!" (2:255) "Master, on the Day of Recompense." (1:3)

A Muslim believes in Allah, His angels His apostles, His scriptures and the hereafter or the Day of Reckoning when, *"None shall bear the burden of another except his own."* (17:65) The Qur'an gives the names of twenty nine (29) chosen individuals or prophets, but says, *"And to every people have We assuredly sent an apostle enjoining 'Serve ye Allah alone and keep away from evil.' (16:36)* Again, *"of some (apostles) We told thee, and of others We told thee nothing." (40:78)* A Muslim is expected to observe a few disciplines like formal prayers, fasting in the month of Ramadhan, payment of poor-rate, if wealthy enough a pilgrimage to Mekkah once in a lifetime and striving to preserve oneself and his society.

Allah's Apostles

The apostles of Allah were chosen from among the individuals of cultured society of the ancient times. Ibrahim was born when the oldest code of the world, the edicts of Hammurabi, were the order of the day. The idol-god, Nannar, and his consort, Ningil, ruled from their three-storied temple in Ur, and he needed human every night. Nannar was the biggest landlord and merchant, the chief executive in the

country's political hierarchy. There was a huge staff to look after the wealth of gold and grain, while the priests pronounced judgements from the precincts of the temple as oracles. Excavations in and around Ur have revealed the names of about five thousand (5000) gods inscribed on the tablets. The chief god of the neighbouring city of Larsa was Shamash, who had under him a pantheon of lesser deities. It needed great courage and sacrifice on the part of an individual to extricate himself from this web of human ingenuity when Ibrahim made his revolutionary pronouncement of the unity of God.

The story of Pharaohs of Egypt and their ugly inhuman and semi-human gods, as the historian Gibbon describes, is almost similar. While the waters of Shatt-al-Arab increased the coffers of gods Nannar, Shamash and others in Iraq, the inundations of the Nile brought kings and devotees to the feet of gods, like Amon Ra, Anubis, Thoth, etc., and their priests. One can imagine the tasks of prophets like Moses (PBUH) to pull out his people from the degradation that once formed a culture, a philosophy, and a way of life. What an uphill task it must have been for the early Christian missionaries to erase the goddesses of the Greek and Roman origin! Where are those worshipful idols and their worshippers? It was indeed a sacrifice to give up the worship of these false gods that manifested themselves sometimes in beautiful and sometimes in ugly idols, for, the society always tried to strangle the voice of *Tawheed* or the Unity of Allah. *"Is not Allah All-sufficient for His servant? Yet they like to frighten thee (O Muhammad) on the strength of their false gods."* (39:36) A grim reminder to the worshippers of 360 of gods of Makkah, who were familiar with the past civilizations and witnessed their ruins during their journeys on land routes of trade touching the borders of the Persian and Byzantine empires in the north, and the coastal areas of Africa and Arabia in the West and South. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

When Muhammad (PBUH) invited the Arabs, the Persians, the Byzantians, the Egyptians, the Black and the

White from 610 A.D. onwards to the fold of Islam, he was only repeating and affirming the call of all the previous prophets and the previous Books revealed to them by Allah. This truth is conveyed by uttering the *Kalimahshahadah* - *there is no god save Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet*. This is sacrificing and smashing all the idols that lurk in the mind of a person. When a believer turns to Ka'aba built by Ibrahim he is turning to the most ancient house of worship of the world where for the past 4,000 years devotees have been continuously praying. A regular devotee bows down before his Creator at least 64 times, a day, a remarkable act of self-effacement and humanity before the All-prevading Omniscient and Omnipotent Lord. Fasting and retreat to mosque in Ramadhan, payment of poor-due and pilgrimage to Makkah - all remind a believer of total resignation to Allah and the sacrifice of earthly pomp and pleasure, time and wealth and faculties of body and mind.

Model Society

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) migrated to Madinah in 622 A.D. in his 53rd year after completing 13 years of his mission in Makkah. This marks the start of the Hijrah calendar. During the rest of 10 years in Madinah, the polytheists of Makkah, the hypocrites of Madinah and other non-believers tried to sabotage the building of a model society against whom he was forced to take up arms.

Ye are a band of good people raised up to be a model for mankind Ye enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and ye repose faith in Allah. (2:110)

We moulded you into a model society that ye might be a pattern unto others, even as the Prophet hath been a pattern unto you. (2:143)

Say, "My prayer and my sacrifice and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of all domains of existence." (6:162)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions who succeeded him, as commanders of the faithful, that is Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman and Ali (Allah be pleased with

them), executed the Divine commandments in letter and spirit and sacrificed their lives for this cause during a span of 30 years (632-661 A.D.). Later on, when the model state began to show signs of worldly overtones, Hussein (Allah be pleased with him) as a champion of the Word of Allah and the tradition of Noble Prophet had to fight against the forces of disintegration at Karbala in 61 AH/680 A.D. Scholars of Islam are unanimous in declaring that the Hussain (Allah be pleased with him) marks the consummation of the human sacrifice offered to Allah by Prophet Ibrahim. These are the models that inspired faithful throughout the ages who sought to seek the favours of the Lord of Resplendent majesty and Glory. Allah assures:

And say not of those who are slain in the Way of Allah, "They are dead." They are alive, although you discern it not.

And surely We will test you with something of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and crops but give good things to the steadfast in patience. (154:5)

As for those who say, "Our Lord is Allah," and hold fast to (to this assertion), angels shall come to them (saying) "Fear ye not and nor be grieved, but remain happy in the Paradise which ye have been promised." (41:30)

When we accept Islam and submit ourselves to Allah, we have to devote all our energies in His obedience and remembrance, whether in privacy or in the market place or in an assembly, seeking His Bounty and Grace. It is neither a life of an ascetic but of the one ever mindful of Allah. ■

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of their educational and economic backwardness.

To sum up, the Indian Muslim society is acquiring a new dynamism - political, economic and social. Despite inner social and cultural constraints, it is trying to come out of its shell and breath the fresh air. However, it is the external environment, often hostile and repressive, that forces the community back into the dark chambers, its protective shell. So, the overall progress of Indian Muslims shall march in step with the victory of the secular and progressive forces in the on-going battle with the forces of Hindu communalism and obscurantism, and the establishment of a truly democratic, secular and just society. ■

MUSLIM ETHOS; THE SECULAR CONTEXT

Syed Shahabuddin*

Islam is the youngest world religion, but today its followers constitute about 1/5 of the world population. They are spread from Atlantic to the Pacific in 60-odd states which have a Muslim majority apart from substantial Muslim minorities, in countries like India, China and Russia and comparatively smaller Muslim communities in many other countries, apart from Muslim migrants all over Europe, the U.S.A., Canada and Australia. However, due to various historical reasons, buttressed by the western orientalist and mass media, many misconceptions prevail which reinforce bias and prejudice against the Muslims and present them as violent, fanatic, obscurantist and opposed to all aspects of modernisation and perpetually hostile to all non-Muslims.

Islam is presented as a monolithic force, out to destroy modern civilisation. The fact is that despite common articles of faith, the Muslim world embraces many cultures because in response to local situations Islam has come to terms with local cultures in different parts of the world and acquired a local colour. Thus, there is an Arab Islam, a Malay Islam, an Indian Islam, a Turkish Islam, an Iranian Islam, a Chinese Islam and a Nergo Islam. One may add that with large scale migration to the West a distinct Western Islam is also emerging. Indeed no universal religion can be mono-cultural. There is, thus, no monolithic Islam.

In any case, the Muslim world has no central authority. Islam has no Pope. After a tortuous and controversial existence, the Caliphate was abolished in 1924 but after the end of the great Abbasids, no caliph commanded the loyalty of the Muslim world. Some Muslim States may recognise a religious scholar of eminence as the Grand Mufti for judicial purposes, but he has no political role and

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there is no Islamic State. Normally, religious functionaries who either give instructions in Islam in Madrasas or lead prayers in the masjids are point of reference for local Muslim communities on questions largely relating to their personal and family life.

Islam, is of course, has many sects. The overwhelming majority are Sunnis but they also follow four different schools of jurisprudence, namely; Hanafi, Shafei, Maliki, and Hambli. The second largest sect are the Shias who are also divided among various sub-sects. An emergent sect is the Ahl-e-Hadith or the Salafis who are Sunnis but do not accept the authority of any of the four Imams of the schools of jurisprudence. It is the Holy Quran and the universally acknowledged Traditions of the Holy Prophet, which bind the Muslim communities throughout the world and create the consciousness of being part of a worldwide Ummah. This has been described as pan-Islamic consciousness, which is hardly anything more than a sentiment.

It is often said that from the Muslim point of view, the world is divided between Dar-ul-Islam (Land of Peace) and Dar-ul-Harb (Land of War). Dar-ul-Islam is defined as the country or countries in which Muslims are politically dominant (which is possible in the modern world only where they constitute a majority of the population) and, what is more important, the Shariat based on the Holy Quran and the Traditions is the basis of legislation. There is in the strict sense of the term no Dar-ul-Islam today. Conventionally, it was held that what is not Dar-ul-Islam is Dar-ul-Harb, but essentially, 'Dar-ul-Harb' has to be examined in terms of whether the Muslims enjoy freedom of religion and of conscience and the right to profess, practice and propagate their religion. In this sense, many Muslim-minority countries, which impose no restriction on religious freedom and observance of Islamic worship and exercise of other religious rights, cannot be deemed to be Dar-ul-Harb. Also the international Law, today, defines the rights and duties of States and lays down the obligation to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Muslim states are also

bound, individually and collectively, by the International Law. They are there, therefore, not free to invade or even maintain a state of confrontation with non-Muslim states. The Quran prescribes adherence to agreements.

For the Muslim communities living in the non-Muslim States, enjoying religious freedom as well as security of life, honour and property, treated as equal citizens or vested with human rights even as aliens, the non-Muslim states constitute Dar-ul-Aman and Dar-ul-Ahad, Land of Peace and Land of Accord. For those who have been born in a non-Muslim country, the latter is the *Watan* (motherland) whose love is part of their faith. All Muslims anywhere have to honour and fulfill the obligations under an agreement or covenant. So living in a non-Muslim country, they have to abide by the law of the land, if it does not compel them to act against their religious belief or conscience. Thus the medieval classification does not and cannot be applied to the modern times. It is, therefore, a misconception that a Muslim citizen has any extra-territorial loyalty and that he is in any sense less patriotic than the non-Muslim or that he is disloyal to the state and plotting to convert it into an Islamic state!

Islam is, no doubt, a proselytising religion but the right to propagate religion is now accepted as a human right as the right to change one's religion is. Islam, however, clearly lays down that there can be 'no compulsion in matter of faith' and that every human being enjoys the freedom to choose his faith as Allah has endowed man with free will. The Quran indeed envisages a multi-religious world and does not enjoin upon the Muslims even to endeavour to go beyond Allah's dispensation to convert it into a mono-religious or Islamic world.

Islam is often seen as obscurantist, anti-modern and against science and technology. The fact is that the Muslim world was at the frontier of knowledge for centuries and in fact played the midwife for the birth of the modern era of science and technology. The reasons for its present backwardness in the fields of science and technology are

largely colonial dominance, economic disruption and intellectual stagnation. Islam does not per se reject scientific knowledge or technological innovation. Allah made mankind - all sons of Adam - His vicegerent on earth and His bounties are available to all, irrespective of religion or race, region or language. The Quran enjoins man, time and again, to observe the natural phenomena and to apply his mind and thus provides an incentive for rationalism, the basis of modern civilisation. Allah has generously placed the natural resources, renewable and non-renewable - at the disposal of man and the Quran calls on man to explore and innovate.

All knowledge whose banner has been held by different peoples at different times in human history comes from Allah and is the common heritage of all mankind and cannot be regarded as a monopoly of any human group. Thus it is a misunderstanding to consider that Islam is against knowledge or against science and technology, whatever its source or origin, the West or the East.

Islam is equated with the incessant quest of political power. No doubt, Islam claims that the Quran is the last message of Allah for the guidance of the mankind but Muslims also believe that history is nothing more than the unfolding and manifestation of the divine plan, the power and dominance are a gift from Allah to whomsoever He chooses, which explains rise and fall of peoples, states and civilisations. Islam does not postulate a 'chosen people'. The essence of Islam is thus not the question of power but of piety so that all those who are entrusted with managing society are pious and, therefore, just and compassionate and do not transgress the limits commanded by Allah.

Islam is often considered to be anti-democratic and anti-secular. It is true that when we look around we hardly see more than a few Muslim countries, which are democratic and secular. While Islam appoints Man as the vice-regent of Allah on the earth and enunciates the principle of equality of man before Allah, it does not lay down a detailed constitution or administrative laws. Indeed, Allah prescribes only three essential principles of governance: the principle

of Mushawarat - mutual consultation on problems facing the society, the principle of Justice that those on whom God bestows power should exercise authority on others by being just to all and the principle of Order to ward off chaos and anarchy. The concept of justice also includes the notion of justice not only among individuals but among human groups. The third principle implies that Islam envisages a just and peaceful social order. Modern democracy has sprung from the principle of equality, and consultation can take many institutional forms. Muslim societies are free to evolve their appropriate political institutions, within the framework of Peace, Consultation and Justice. Many contemporary Muslim States are engaged in this process.

Secularism in the final analysis means that political and administrative power should not discriminate among the subjects on the basis of religion and should permit freedom of religion to all religious groups and also equal participation in the management of the society. All these principles are inbuilt in Islam. Muslim countries must respect the rights of their non-Muslim subjects, guarantee religious freedom and a place in political and economic life for all according to their talent. There is no doubt a point of disagreement whether in a Islamic state the rights of a Muslim and a non-Muslim are absolutely equal in every respect e.g. the headship of the State, but that is a matter of detail. In fact, historically Christians, Jews and Hindu minorities under Muslim dominance had access to the hishest administrative posts and managerial positions and enjoyed complete freedom. Indeed, Allah does not discriminate even against those who deny His very existence or who are followers of other religions in showering his bounties, So why should man?

It is a common perception that Islam authorizes violence. This is a misconception, the Quran extols forbearance and forgiveness as against revenge or retribution but since Islam is aware of the nature of man, it permits use of force as a last resort when argument fails or in defence when the other side violates covenants and

agreements. Even in defence, the Quran lays down the limits of war and cautions against committing any excesses.

Muslims are often seen as 'fanatics' and equated with blood-thirstiness and brutality, though admired for courage and valour. Islam demands compliance with its mandates from its followers. In this sense it demands orthodoxy. But orthodoxy is not fanaticism. Islam permits measured violence in self-defence. Islam preaches moderation, forgiveness and compassion, even towards animals. The brutal image of Islam was created largely by the neo-converts who brought their cultural traditions with them when they entered the fold of Islam.

It is alleged that Islam was spread by the sword. This is simply untrue because vast areas in the Indian Sub-continent which remained under Muslim rule for centuries have small Muslim minorities today and what is Bangladesh now, which was under Muslim rule for a much shorter period, has a Muslim majority.

Indonesia, the largest Muslim state today, was never invaded by Muslims. Today Islam is the fastest growing religion in Black Africa and even in the USA. No doubt mass conversion sometimes took place when a local ruler embraced Islam. But Islam owes its propagation largely to the example set by the Muslim saints and the Sufi orders and by its message of Freedom and Equality for the suppressed and deprived social groups.

During the recent wave of terrorism Islam is being identified with terrorism. There are Muslim terrorists and there are terrorists belonging to other religions but there is massive propaganda about 'Islamic Terrorism' and not a whisper about Christian Terrorism or Hindu Terrorism. The Quran places the highest value on life and equates the killing of an innocent person with the killing of the whole mankind. It prescribes rules of conduct even for wars. How can Islam endorse terrorism, which uses force against the innocent persons, to promote or achieve a political objective? Since the technology of modern warfare does not and cannot distinguish between the non-combatants and the

combatants, because nuclear war, or even bombing, hits the innocent and the guilty alike, it would be correct to say that in the eyes of Islam all modern warfare is un-Islamic. So is terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, internal or international.

There is a general misconception both among Muslims and non-Muslims that politics and religion are inseparable in Islam. The problem lies in interpretation of the dictum that like any world religion, Islam seeks to influence and mould all aspects of the life of its followers. But this is often interpreted as an inspiration to acquire political power, in order to dominate and to rule. This is not true because even in a large Muslim country, power cannot be monopolised by one sect or one region; it has to be shared democratically. And in a Muslim-minority state, in this democratic age, Muslims can at most aspire to a proportionate share of power. In any case, essentially Islam is not a quest of power but a quest of piety. Islam lays down that every individual shall be judged by his acts of omission and commission and no one shall bear the burden of someone else. Hence what Islam requires is that in running the affairs of the society, in managing the economy, in providing services, whatever be one's place or status, one should imbibe a sense of accountability and, therefore of integrity, selflessness and goodness. The basic religiosity is what Islam demands of the President of the Republic as from its lowest functionary. The complex machinery of the modern society can only be operated by division of labour and by specialisation but all those engaged in it should, in their individual capacity, be 'religious' in the highest sense, not try to monopolise its services and resources unjustly for themselves or for their groups, to the neglect of the rightful claims of others.

Muslim Image in India

The last article focuses on the Indian Muslims, the second largest Muslim community in the world, about 135 million strong, a Pan-Indian community in the best sense of

the term, with a glorious record of participation in the freedom movement, which is beginning to rise from the impact of the Partition. Their political, economic and social situation varies from one part of the country to another but, except in Jammu and Kashmir, they form a religious minority which is, on the whole, economically and educationally backward, socially occupying the lower rung of the ladder, politically marginalised and, what is worse, as a result of being targetted by Hindu communalism as the historic adversary, psychologically helpless. There are many misconceptions about it, which thrive on hostile propaganda and which it lacks the resources to combat effectively.

Indian Muslims are often accused of looking down upon the non-Muslim com-patriots and calling them 'Kafir'. The word 'Kafir' is descriptive; it simply means 'one who denies or does not accept,' in one sense, the very existence of God'. and in other, the message of Islam. As the follower of a strictly monotheistic religion, Muslims tend to look with surprise, sometimes with horror and even derision at the worship of objects and persons, living or non-living. Monotheism tends to breed a sense of religious superiority in an average Muslim, apart from providing him with the moral armour of absolute faith in God. This sense of superiority sometimes leads him to avoid social fraternisation on equal terms or reciprocal religious intercourse. But Islam does not bar social fraternisation as distinct from religious rituals. A true Muslim leaves the judgement to Allah on who is a Muslim and who is a Kafir and adopts the Islamic standard of equality and justice in all his dealings with his fellow human beings, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. It may be added that many sectarian Muslims often label each other as Kafir!

It is often said that as a community Muslim Indians shun modern education. This is often stated on the strength of the proliferation of Madrasas in Muslim quarters and the low enrollment and high drop-out rate of Muslim children from mainstream education. To a large extent, the surmise is not true because given a nearby school with proper syllabus and textbooks, adequate number of teachers and

free of religious overtones in its culture, Muslim children would be there rather than in Maktabas and Madrasas. In Kerala they attend both: maktabas in the local Masjids in early hours of the morning and later, the normal school. One thing is certain; while Islam encourages acquisition of secular knowledge maintaining religious identity. Muslim parents, therefore, like their children also to learn the basics of Islam and would not like their children to be Hinduised or Christianised which would be the case, if there was a religious vacuum in the minds of their children and the school culture was turned towards another religion. Muslim Indians also tend to invest less than they can or they should, in the higher education of their children, if they perceive lack of equal opportunity in terms of public or private employment. For self-employment or for employment, as skilled workers their children do not have to acquire school certificates or college degree.

The Indian Muslims, for historical reasons have lagged behind in educational and economic fields. Yet the hard fact is that they are better off in both areas than they were at the dawn of independence. So their case is not that they have not advanced but that they have not advanced in the same measure as the Indian people as a whole. But progress has not touched all sections and all religions of the country equally; apart from Muslims there are other disadvantaged, deprived and depressed groups, which have been subjected to social injustice. In India Muslims have been subjected also to communal bias and prejudice, particularly as a reaction to the Partition, which created Pakistan. Of late, the Indian Muslims are moving faster, sowing seeds of educational progress, which are sprouting everywhere, seeking economic avenues, other than public employment, in the spirit of self-reliance. In fact, self-employment is the only economic activity in which they are ahead of all other comparable social groups.

It is alleged that the Indian Muslims constitute a vote bank for one or two political parties. The fact is that for the last 50 years they have voted for different mainstream

parties in different parts of the country but they have shown increasing preference, as the constituency level, for a party, which is in a position to resist and contain, if not defeat Hindu communalism. Except in Kerala and a few Muslim-majority constituencies, they have not voted for any Muslim party. In their political behaviour, the Indian Muslims have largely supported the forces of secularism and reposed their faith in one national leader after another, in Nehru and Indira Gandhi, in V.P. Singh and Chandra Shekhar, in Mulayam Singh Yadav and Laloo Prasad Yadav, in Rajiv Gandhi and Jyoti Basu. Like any minority group in any part of the world, at the constituency level, they tend to vote unitedly for a particular candidate but their choice is not dictated by religious considerations but by their faith in secularism.

The Indian Muslims are often accused of extra-territorial loyalties and of 'conspiring' with the help of pan-Islamic forces, to restore Muslim rule in India and of being Pakistan supporters. These are absurd accusations. All pious Muslims aspire to visit the Holy Land of Arabia for Haj, at least once in their life-time. Beyond that their only loyalty is to their motherland, the land of their birth, which they love, though they do not worship it as a deity, primarily because they enjoy freedom of religion and peaceful co-existence in freedom. There may be a handful of Muslims who may be suffering from what has been called the Andalusian Syndrome, seeking solace in the past 'glories' and dreaming of restoring Muslim rule in India. But the Muslim masses and the Muslim elite both realise that, in the age of democracy, no minority group can presume to rule a country against the will of the majority and that their destiny is inseparable from India's destiny. All they legitimately aspire to is to participate in governance and development and to share the benefits of progress. How can Indian Muslims have any love for Pakistan after what happened in the then East Pakistan in 1971 and what is now happening to Mohajirs in Pakistan?

A foray into any Muslim mahalla in India leads an observer to believe that the Indian Muslims love to live

unhygienically in crowded, dirty bastis with characteristic sounds and smells, with over-flowing stinking drains, in haphazard lanes and by-lanes. In short, they love ghettoisation. To a large extent this is a throwback from the medieval ages where various 'qaums' including professional groups occupied their own quarters in a town. But this also reflects their discriminatory deprivation of municipal services. But the fact is that even those Indian Muslims who can afford it have not spread out to new colonies, townships, and suburbs for various reasons: the all-pervading sense of insecurity impelling them to cluster together, the absence of religious institutions particularly Masjids in the newly developed areas and the inability to find alternative jobs, once they move from their traditional occupations. The ghettoisation, therefore, is not inherent but imposed by circumstances. If the circumstances change, the Indian Muslims can also move out, like others, in search of pollution free environment.

What is painful in the social stagnation of the Indian Muslims, which results from their minority consciousness, from their fear of the continuous, organised and well-articulated campaign to erode their identity and to assimilate them. These majoritarian pressures have acted as a damper on their natural evolution in social terms and reinforced the forces of conservatism. This has blocked social reform and even aggravated many social vices. But the allegations of rampant polygamy and instant divorce among Indian Muslims do not bear objective, statistical analysis, though they are projected as the characteristics of the community. With educational level rising even among them, Muslim women are becoming increasingly conscious of their legal and religious rights. There is a growing movement for regulating polygamy and divorce through a two track approach of social reform and codification of Family Law. In any case, the Muslim woman in India is no longer helpless and dependent as she is often made out to be. The somewhat higher rate of growth of Muslim population is also a function

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