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OF EAST**

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# The Fragrance of East

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## Man's Ultimate Responsibility

**S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi**

If human beings subjugate themselves to the supremacy of material things and become slaves to their selfish desires, life on earth will become hellish and unbearable. Man has to remember that his place in the scheme of creation is that of God's vicegerent. As the Quran bears testimony, Allah ordered the angels to bow down in front of man as a mark of respect. This clearly establishes that it is highly humiliating for man, God's deputy on earth, to bow down in front of anybody except his Creator. Had there been any such scope, Allah should have allowed man to bow down in front of the angels as they carry on Allah's orders on the earth: they, for instance, bring rain and make the wind blow. By making the angels bow down in front of man Allah clearly revealed His will that the world has been given to the care of man as His vicegerent and that he himself is created for the worship of Allah the Almighty. Man must look at his present miserable lot and tell himself that he is supposed to do better. He must rise to his appointed position as Allah's vicegerent, take none else except Allah as his Lord, and save himself and the world from eternal suffering. ■

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

Indeed, We had already taken a promise from Adam earlier, But he forget. We did not find in him a firm resolve. (Taha-115)

**Commentary:** 111. Mawdudi comments on the repetition of Adam's story here. He writes: "Although the story of Adam (peace be upon him) was narrated earlier in *al-Baqarah*, *al-A'raf*, *al-Hijr*, *Bani Isra'il* and *al-Kahf*, it is resumed once again in this *surah*. This, in fact, is the seventh occasion that Adam's story is narrated in the Qur'an. On each occasion, the story has a different context; accordingly, the details of each story have been set out in a different fashion. We find, in certain instances, that details incidental to the story but which are directly related to the theme of the *Surah* are described in one place but omitted at another. Likewise, the style varies from place to place. For a full understanding of the story and its meaning, one should recall the entire narrative as documented in different places throughout the Qur'an."

The verse draws the following comment from Muhammad Asad: "... the faculty of conceptual thinking is man's outstanding endowment, his 'forgetting' God's commandments - resulting from a lack of 'firmness of purpose' in the domain of ethics - is an evidence of the moral weakness characteristic of the human race (cf. 4: 28 - '*man has been created weak*'): and this, in turn, explains man's dependence on unceasing divine guidance, as pointed out in verse 113 above."

The verse implies that some weaknesses are no sign of imperfection. They are but natural. A further implication is that the perfect man too can sometimes commit errors (Thanwi). ■

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

*It is related by Abu Moosa Ash'ari that, the Apostle of God, said: "After the major sins (such as, Polytheism and adultery) from which God has strictly enjoined upon us to abstain, the greatest sin is that a man died in a state that he owed a debt to anyone and left behind no assets to pay it off."* -

*Musnad Ahmad and Daarimi*

*It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of God said: "The soul of a faithful Believer remains suspended in the middle owing to indebtedness, until the debt is paid off."*

*Musnad Shaf'ae, Musnad Ahmad, Abu Dawood and Daarimi*

**Commentary:** It shows that if a person dies in such a condition that he is a Muslim, and has, also, done good deeds that are a source of deliverance, but he is in debt and has not been careful enough to pay it back, he will not be admitted to Paradise until the debt has been paid back on his behalf.

*It is related by Abdullah bin 'Amr that the Apostle of God said: "If a person is killed in the path of God, all his sins are forgiven (by virtue of martyrdom), except a loan."*

- Muslim

**Commentary:** Martyrdom is such a meritorious act that all the sins of a man are forgiven as a result of it. But if a person owes a debt to anyone and he falls a martyr in the way of God without having paid it off and has been negligent about it, he will remain caught in misfortune on account of it, since it is related to the Rights of Men, until the debt is paid on his behalf or the creditor himself decides to write it off for the sake of God. ■

## **Our Social System**

Howsoever our laws may be strong but their implementation is so weak that they have lost their deterrent affect. Perpetrators of crime care two hoots and walk out of the dragnets of the punishment so boldly as if they are immune to any action against them. But in a civil society such a situation should not be allowed to persist for long. The existing social system appears to have failed in containing the most deplorable sexual crimes. Though such crime has become a regular feature of our daily newspapers but no solution is in sight.

Incidents reported only on February 26 & 27, 2013 in newspapers are reproduced below:

1. A month after a school Bus cleaner was booked for molesting a toddler in a moving bus, Mumbai police on February 21 registered a similar offence in which a three year old girl from a playground in Malad was molested by a School Bus Staffer. (I.E. Feb.26)
2. A session court on Monday sentenced a 60 year old school watchman to seven years rigorous imprisonment for sexually abusing a four-year old girl on the school premises. (I.E. Feb.26)
3. Lucknow bench of Allahabad High Court directed on Tuesday the state Govt. to present all the measures taken to check sexual child abuse. Govt. Advocate was asked to present the facts within two weeks. (H.T.Feb.26)
4. Days after the rape and murder of three sisters all of them minors in Bandra, a school teacher has been arrested for sexually harassing students. (H.T. Feb.27)
5. A special Fast Track court has sentenced a man to imprisonment for life for raping his own nine year old daughter. The Judge remarked that "A father is the protector of the honour and dignity of his daughter and a girl child looks towards his parents for every kind of help and

assistance in case of adversity. However, in this case father himself has become the tormentor and has perpetrated the heinous crime of rape upon his own daughter." (The Hindu Feb.27)

6. A class X student died on Tuesday after consuming Sulphas tablets on Monday night as five teenaged boys had allegedly made an attempt to rape her. They had also captured her photo with Cell phone and threatened to circulate it. (I.E. Feb.27)
7. An 11 year old girl was allegedly raped by the owner of the house where she lived with her family at Motia Mubarakpur area of South Delhi. (The Statesman Feb.27)

It is strange that inspite of making the relevant section of the IPC (354) more deterrent and fearful there is no decline in such offences. But Islam offers a cogent solution. The holy Quran and the Prophet's Traditions provide the social system which, if adopted, may relieve us of such ugly acts. If man once loses control nothing can save him from becoming a brute animal, rather " the lowest of the low" even among animals.

"We moulded man into a most noble image, then we reduced him to the lowest of the low : except the believers who did good works." (Al-Quran, 95:4-6)

Readers may recall a hair raising incident occurred in Delhi, on December 16,2012. A young girl was raped aboard moving Bus by a group of youngsters and then thrown out of the moving Bus. Whole nation was stirred out of its slumber. Eruption of rage on roads and mayhem in the Parliament forced the government to make laws on sexual offences more stringent. Many non-Muslim leaders demanded the enforcement of *Sharia laws* of Islam to deal with such offences. ■

S.A.

We solicit articles for publication in The Fragrance of East. Suitable remuneration will be paid to writers. We prefer receipt of articles on:  
e-mail: shariq\_alavi@yahoo.com  
along with a hard copy, duly signed, by post.

## Imparting Education in Science and Technology

-S. Abul Hasan Nadwi

*And We sent down iron in which is great violence and also advantages to mankind, and that Allah may find out who helps Allah, unseen and His Messengers. Certainly Allah is the Strongest, the Almighty.*

**(al-Hadid 57:25)**

Many people, especially Western educated ones, think that the Qur'an makes no reference to science or industry. However, the Qur'an does speak of master architects who not only served mankind, but who also defended their co-religionists and community members. Such thoughts hardly cross people's mind insofar as their perception of the Qur'an is concerned.

While recounting His favours Allah makes particular mention of iron. The Qur'an pointedly says that Allah sent it down. It is not mentioned in passing as one of His numerous created things. Furthermore, attention is drawn to the divine power and mercy in blessing mankind with this bounty. Architecture is part of technology. Iron plays an important role, in architecture, warfare and activities related to defence and combat. Without iron no industry can flourish.

Of many minerals, the Qur'an picks upon iron, proclaiming that Allah sent it down. It is also stressed that iron contains numerous advantages. It represents a sign of Allah's Lordship. It

has many constructive and beneficial uses, apart from its obvious use in manufacturing weapons. The Qur'an draws attention then to its very many benefits.

Furthermore, the Prophet David (peace and blessings be upon him) is specifically referred to as being taught by Allah how to make coats of mail to defend the human body. Iron was thus put at his disposal so that he could use it constructively. Each expression of the above verse conveys a wealth of meaning.

Reference is also made to another of Allah's Messengers, namely the Prophet Solomon, son of the Prophet David (peace and blessings be upon them). He had a retinue of attendants, including *jinn* who acted on his orders. The latter accomplished much in the field of architecture and industry at Solomon's command. Significantly enough, all these activities were markedly constructive. Under the Prophet Solomon's leadership the *jinn* were engaged in beneficial acts. They did what he willed. He utilised them to spread his mission. Today natural resources are abused for destruction. By contrast, men and *jinn* in the Prophet Solomon's day were not absolutely free to do what they liked. They did not invade, destroy and usurp others' belongings. ■

## Hudaibiah Treaty:

-S.M.Rabey Hasani Nadwi\*

On occasion of *Ghazwah of Ahzab*, also called *Ghazwah of Khandaque*, the infidels and pagans of Makkah and the Jews and the hypocrites of Madinah had their ranks and files jointly arrayed against the Muslims. But they had conspicuously been defeated and been compelled to beat a retreat, frustrated and dejected. Thus, the Quoraish had already had the estimation of the strength of the Muslims and their prowess to combat. The Quoraish, therefore, did not make, thereafter, plans for any large-scale adventure. Nevertheless, acts causing some pin-pricks continued to be perpetrated by them. And, wherever reports of threats were received, endeavours to resist and restrain them were kept being made by the Muslims. Hence, this fact had fully been revealed to them that the Muslims were now in a sound position.

Meanwhile, the Prophet (SAW) had a vision in a dream that he (SAW) had entered Makkah and had the circumambulation of the Kaba performed.

It was a true dream. There was, however, no specification of time, month and year in it. He (SAW) narrated this dream to his venerated

\* Rector, Nadwatul-Ulema, Lucknow.

companions in Madinah. Hearing this glad tidings all of them got very delighted. It was since long that they were separated from, and deprived of, Makkah and the Kaba (whose love and veneration was innate to them and ran like blood does in veins in them). They were very ardently eager to visit Kaba and have its circumambulation performed. They were very anxiously waiting for this very day when they would have the beatitude of having that performed. Among the *Muhajirin* the yearning for Makkah was naturally far greater. For, there it was that they were born and had had their upbringing. Its love was to them what the first-ever suckling is to the new-born. That was what they were wistfully pining for since long. Hence, when the Prophet (SAW) gave them these glad tidings, they got aspirant of having that dream come true during the self-same year. This expectation had further flamed the fire of their yearning in them. The Prophet's (SAW) dream, being the Prophet that he was, was true, of course. Hence, he (SAW) took the resolve to pay a visit to, and have the circumambulation performed of, Ka'ba. All the companions, too, got ready to set forth along with him (SAW). Rarely was there any exception to it. The intention was only to have the *Umrah*



performed. No clash was intended. And, in so far as *Umrah* was concerned, anyone coming there with the intention to have it performed was free to do so. No one was, therefore, barred from it. Yet, it was made impossible for Muslims as the Quoraish harboured animus against them. They would not let them enter Makkah. But, the Muslims were now such a strong force that it was no more possible to restrain them. At all events, since the intention was only to have the *Umrah* performed there, the Prophet (SAW) and the Muslims accompanying him had the *Ihram* for *Umrah* donned from the very outset so that the people all around, too, get aware that he (SAW) was going there only with the intention of paying visit to *Bait-ullah* (the Allah's House).

On arrival there, the Prophet (SAW) engaged an informer from the tribe of Khuzaa'ah to scout the Quoraish. When he (SAW) had arrived at a place near 'Asfan, that informer informed him that the tribe of Ka'b bin Luway had already got a horde of Abyssinyans mustered to encounter him (SAW) and bar his progress. He had, rather, a substantially large army already organized. They are resolute, he informed, on preventing him from getting to *Bait-ullah* by waging a war even. The Prophet (SAW) kept, however, marching ahead. When he (SAW) had arrived at the ravine

whence the slope towards them gets started, his (SAW) dromedary, Quaswaa, knelt down. Seeing that, the people took to saying that Quaswaa has jibbed! Quaswaa has jibbed! He (SAW) said: No! She has not jibbed. And, it is not her wont to jib. She is prevented (from further progress) by the Preventor of the elephants. (He - SAW - was obviously alluding to Abraha's elephants which were prevented by Allah Almighty from entering into Makkah.) I swear by the One Who Has my life and soul in His Possession, if these people come up with any such proposal as has the aspect of glorification of Allah Almighty in view, and want me to be considerate to the kinship, I would certainly oblige them. He (SAW) then gave a spur to his dromedary. She got up. But, having changed her direction, she set forth towards Hudaibiyah.

### **Muslims Barred by the Quoraish from Entering Makkah and the Truce:**

The Quoraish, on coming to know about Allah's Pophet's coming over and taking a halt at that place, got very worried and full of misapprehensions. On that juncture, the prophet (SAW) thought it proper to make them rest assured, by sending someone of his companions to them, that they need not have any apprehension of the Muslims getting into confrontation or war with them.

Hence, having Hazrat U'thman (RAA) summoned, he asked him to go to the Quoraish and tell them that: we have not come over here for waging a war; we have, instead, come over only with the intention to perform Umrah. He (SAW) also instructed him to invite them towards Islam. He (SAW) also instructed him to go to those of the Faithful, male and female both, who were, out of compulsion, still stayed in Makkah and give them the glad tidings of the triumph being imminent. Give them the glad tidings, he said, that Allah Almighty is, ultimately, going to make His Religion predominant in Makkah. And, then, they would no more need to keep their Faith hidden.

Hazrat U'thman (RAA) set forth for Makkah where, on arrival, he met Abu Sufyan and other grandees of the Quoraish and had this message of the Prophet (SAW) conveyed to them.

### **The Bai'at-e-Ridhwan (The Ridhwan Oath):**

After Hazrat U'thman had gone there, the Prophet (SAW) got the news that Hazrat U'thman (RAA) had been put to martyrdom. Thereupon, he (SAW) called upon the people to take the oath pledging to lay down their lives for the cause of the Truth and Justice. All the people got, with ardour and fervor, rallied around him. He (SAW) was, at the moment, staying under a tree. There, under that tree, he (SAW)

took the oath from the people that no one would take any escape route (to avoid facing the situation that had newly developed). Holding his own auspicious hand, he (SAW) said: 'this one is on behalf of U'thman. This oath-taking got to be known as the *Bai'aat-e-Ridhwan*. It was held in Hudaibiyah under the shade of an acasia tree. It was Appreciated by Allah Almighty as a symbol of Muslims' integrity and firmness of their Faith. The following verses of the holy Quran mention the same:

(Assuredly well-pleased was Allah with the believers when they swore fealty Unto thee under the tree, and he knew that which was in their hearts, wherefore He sent down tranquillity on them, and rewarded them with a victory near at hand.)

**(Al-Fath :18)**

### **The Peace-loving Attitude of the Muslims and Their Consent to Truce:**

This confused and convoluted situation was still persistent when Budail bin Warquaa el-Khuzai, accompanied by a group of Khuzaa'ah tribals arrived there. He wanted to have a discussion on these issues. He queried as to what was the purpose of his (SAW) visit?

The Prophet (SAW) stated that he and his companions had not come there for waging any war. We have

come here, he said, only with the intention to perform U'mrah. The Quoraish are already smashed and crumbled by the battles. Should they be willing, I might enter into an agreement with them on some specific period during which they would not come in-between me and the people. Should they be willing, they might join the self-same group of people which the others have already joined. Otherwise, they would, in any case, have the opportunity to rest easy and comfortable for some time. But, in case no other alternative, but the war, is acceptable to them, then I swear by the One Who Has my life and soul in His possession, I must fight in the cause of this mission I carry (that is, the religion) till either my head is separated from my body or Allah makes His religion dominant.

When Budail, on his return, conveyed the message of Allah's Prophet to the Quoraish, Urwah bin Maswood eth-thaquafi said: It is a very sound proposal that he (SAW) has proffered. My suggestion is that you people must accept it and let me meet him. They said in unison. That is O,K. Go and have a word with him. Urwah bin Maswood came and met the Prophet (SAW), He (SAW) had the conversation started, Meanwhile, Urwah kept on casting furtive glances at the venerated companions. Such a remarkable state was which the

venerated companions were in that he could not help doing that. He noticed that whenever he (SAW) spat, someone or other of companions would have the sputum received on his hands and have his face and body rubbed with it. In case he gave any orders, every one of them would rush to have it carried out. When he (SAW) performed ablution, they swooped down on the water used in ablution in such a devotional way as would arouse the fear of their getting into a fight. Whenever he (SAW) spoke, they would all be all ears, Owing to exuberance of reverence and respect, no one would dare look him (SAW) into his face. On his return, U'rwah said to his comrades: O my people! I have been to the courts of the kings. I have also seen the grandeur and the glory of Caesar, Khosrau and Negus. But, I swear by God that I have seen no courtiers and comrades of any king paying him so much respect and holding him in so much reverence as do the Mohammad's companions Mohammad. Telling them the details of whatever he had seen here, he said to them: It is a very good proposal that he has proffered and you people must accept it.

### **The Peace Treaty and Its Instrument:**

In the meantime, another person from Bani Kinanah (whose name was Mikraz bin Hafs) had also arrived there.

Both of them gave their eye-witness accounts to the Quoraish. Making Suhail bin 'Amr their emissary, the Quoraish sent him to the Prophet (SAW). No sooner He (SAW) saw him than said: He being sent as the emissary indicates that they are willing to concile. He also said: Get the draft of the treaty prepared in black and white.

For having the draft of the treaty written down, He (SAW) summoned the scribe (who happened to be Hazrat Ali - KAW - at the moment) and said to him: 'Write down: *Bismillah-er-Rahman-er-Rahim* (In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Beneficent I begin...)'. Thereupon, Suhail said: 'In so far as '*Rahman*' is concerned, by God we are not conversant with it. So, in accordance with the ancient practice, do write' *Bismika Allahumma* (In the name of Thee, Oh Allah, I begin...)'. He (SAW) said: 'O.K. Do write: *Bismeka Allahumma*. The Muslims, thereupon, got to saying: 'No, We would write nothing but *Bismillah-er-Rahman-e-Rahim*.' He (SAW) said: ' No, do have *Bismika Allahummah* itself written down.'

Then, he (SAW) said: 'Now write: It is what the Allah's Prophet has agreed upon...' Hearing that, Suhail said: 'By God, had we believed that you were Allah's Prophet, should have we stopped you going to *Bait-ullah*?

And, should have we fought with you?' The Prophet (SAW) then said: 'O.K. Then, write in its place: Mohammad bin Abdullah...'

The Prophet (SAW) said: 'Much as you deny, (the fact remains that) I am Allah's Prophet. Do have 'Mohammad bin Abdullah' itself written down.' He (SAW) bade Hazrat Ali (RAA) to replace what was already written down. Hazrat Ali (RAA) said: 'By God, I cannot do that'- meaning to have the words "Allah's Prophet" that were already written down erase with his own hands. The Prophet (SAW) then said: 'Show me the place where they are'. They showed him the place. Whereupon, he (SAW) himself had that erased.

### **The Unilateral Tough Stand Taken by the Quoraish in respect of the Truce:**

The Prophet (SAW) dictated this clause to be written down in the treaty that: The Allah's Prophet hereby enters into an agreement with you on condition that you would not bar us from entering the *Bait-ullah* and let us have the circumambulation of it performed. Suhail said: If that happened, I am afraid the Arabs' tongues would start wagging that we have signed the treaty submissively or under duress. Hence, this clause should come into effect not this year but the next one. You may then have

the circumambulation performed. The Prophet (SAW) conceded to this amendment, too.

Suhail said: This treaty should also have the provision that in case someone from our quarters comes to yours, you would turn him back to us, even if he were the follower of your religion. Hearing that the Muslims said: *Subhan-Allah!* What a preposterous proposition! How can we turn someone back to the pagans if he comes to us having embraced Islam?!

While this conversation was still in progress, Abu Jandal bin Suhail, son of Suhail himself, suddenly arrived there, staggering and stumbling in fetters. He had come from the slope towards Makkah and had somehow gotten to the Muslims. On seeing his own son having come there in this way, Suhail said: O Mohammad (SAW)! Under this agreement, this is the very first person whose return I demand you to make. The Allah's Prophet said: We have yet not even completed writing down the agreement. He replied: If so, I am not prepared to come to terms on any of the points with you. The Prophet (SAW) said: Allow him just on my say-so (that is just on my personal request to you). He said: I cannot allow him even on your say-so. He (SAW) said: Then do whatever you wish to. He said: I have nothing else to do. Hearing that, Abu Jndal said: O Muslims! I have come to you after having embraced

Islam. Even then I am being turned back to pagans! Don't you people see what is happening to me?! He had certainly undergone great distresses in pursuing the path of Allah. Yet, considering the circumstances that prevailed, the Allah's Prophet had him returned owing to the demand made by the representative of the Quoraish.

Under this treaty, it was also agreed upon between the two parties that the both sides would refrain for next ten years from bloodshed and slaughter. That was in order to enable the people live in peace and equanimity; and, so that no one could lay hands on someone else. The other point agreed upon was that in case any one of the Quoraish gets to Mohammad (SAW), without the permission from his feudal master or the guardian, he (SAW) would have to turn him back to them. And, in case anyone of the companions of the Prophet (SAW) gets to the Quoraish, they would not turn him back to him (SAW). In addition, it was also agreed upon that whoever wanted to get into a covenant with, and sought shelter from, Mohammad (SAW) can do so. Likewise, whoever wanted to get into a covenant with, and sought shelter from, the Quoraish would be allowed to do so. Consequently, the people of the Banu Bakr tribe became allies of the Quoraish and the people of Banu Khuzaah tribe became allies of the Muslims.

### The Muslims on Trial:

On coming to know of the way the treaty was concluded and having to return, in accordance to that, without having performed Umrah and the way the Prophet (SAW) had to endure that, the Muslims got so agonized and heart-broken as it put their lives themselves in jeopardy. So much so that Hazrat Umar (RAA) came to Hazrat Abu Bakr (RAA) and got saying to him: 'Aren't we in the right and these infidels in the wrong?' 'Of course, it is so', said Hazrat Abu Bakr (RAA). 'Why, then', said Hazrat U'mar (RAA), 'we are having to swallow this humiliation in a matter that pertains to religion? And hadn't the Prophet (SAW) said to us that we would go to *Bait-ullah* and have its circumambulation performed?' He said: 'Yes. He (SAW) had said so. But, had he (SAW) said that you would go to *Bait-ullah* this very year and have its circumambulation performed? He is Allah's Prophet. Keep yourself tied to his apron-strings.' Hazrat U'mar then had a similar word with the Prophet (SAW) and he, too, expostulated with him in the same way.

Later, Hazrat U'mar (RAA) used to lament this demeanour committed on his part. He felt the angst that why did he say even that much on this occasion. Overwhelmed by this very angst, he performed many charitable deeds in order to have what he felt was a misdemeanor and misconduct on his

part redeemed. He had, perhaps, in his mind that verse of the holy Quran whereby occurrence of vacillation in the heart even about the judgment made by the Prophet (SAW) has been proscribed:

(...and then find no vexation in their hearts with that which thou hast decreed, and they submit with full submission.)

(An-Nisaa : 65)

And, that was exactly the wont of all the venerated companions of the Prophet (SAW) including Hazrat Umar (RAA). No digression had ever occurred in it. They had full faith in that the Prophet's (SAW) word and deed were all Divinely guided, and that there was no scope of having any vacillation about them. And, that is the instruction imparted to all the Muslims forthcoming up to the Doomsday.

On having finished with the Peace treaty, he (SAW) said to the Muslims: Have the animals brought by you with you for being sacrificed in Mina sacrificed here itself. The Muslims were at their wit's end as to what was happening and why. Hence, they could not get exactly what was the purport of the Prophet's (SAW) diktat. Was it what they heard or was it something else? For, there had been no past precedence of having the animals meant for sacrificing in Mina sacrificed even before reaching

Makkah. They did not, therefore, come forward to make the sacrifices. Getting the impression that the Muslims were, perhaps, not obeying him, the Prophet (SAW) got very worried and anguished. Could it be that the Muslims were shirking from complying with the orders of their Prophet?, he wondered. With this impression and angst in heart he (SAW) entered his tent. It was the Prophet's (SAW) venerated wife, Hazrat Umm-e-Salemah, who had accompanied the Prophet (SAW) on this occasion. He (SAW) mentioned to her what was he (SAW) feeling at heart. She said: O Allah's Prophet! It is not the disobedience. It must be due to the impact of the severe shock their minds have had that they are not getting it right. Hence, you start yourself making the sacrifice. That would get their minds quickened. Hence, the Prophet (SAW) betook himself to the animals meant for the sacrifice and started

slaying them. Thereafter, he (SAW) had his head shaven. For the Muslims, this incident was not less than a calamity. For, while leaving Madinah they did not have the slightest apprehension of their not having the opportunity of getting to Makkah and having the U'mrah performed. Instead, they would have to do, against their own will, something disgraceful and humiliating to them. That was something on account of which, they used to lay down, unscrupulously, in their pre-Islamic days, their own lives, as well as would take others, too. But, on seeing the Prophet (SAW) making the sacrifices and getting his hair shaved, they got up hurriedly and, following the Prophet's (SAW) suit, got busy with making the sacrifices and having themselves shaved. For, they knew at heart-strings that they cannot go against what the Prophet's practice was. ■

### Obituary

**Maulana Syed Mohammad Abdullah Hasani Nadwi, a faculty member of Darululoom Nadwatul Ulema, Lucknow passed away on January 30, 2013 after a prolong illness. In his death we have lost an able teacher of theology an expert in 'Tradition' and a quiet preacher.**

**Born on January 29, 1957. Maulana was the son of a learned and respected nephew of late Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (Ali Miyan). He grew up under the guidance of Ali Mian (RAH). He completed his education at Darululoom Nadwatul Ulema and joined the faculty. He was the son-in-law of Maulana Rabey Hasani Nadwi, Nazim Nadwa.**

**Maulana Abdullah besides being an able and respected teacher was a prominent Arabic litterateur. He remained associated with an Arabic magazine "Al-Raid".**

**We pray that his soul may rest in peace and grief stricken family may be able to sustain this loss. Amin.**

## Tagore in the Land of *Arabian Nights*

- B. Rahman\*

*If they answer not to thy call walk  
alone,  
If they are afraid and cower mutely  
facing the wall,  
O thou unlucky one,  
Open thy mind and speak out alone.*

- Rabindranath Tagore

NO sooner had the Nobel Committee announced; on 13 November 1913, that Rabindranath Tagore had won the Nobel Prize for literature than the news was broadcast to every country around the World. The Arabic-speaking world expressed its enthusiasm in an appropriate manner: The dailies of Egypt, Lebanon and several, other Arab countries published the news with zeal and enthusiasm, presumably because Tagore was the first Asian to receive the award.

In addition to the Egyptian daily al-Ahram, many-Egyptian journals of repute - including *al-Hilal*, *Saut al-sharq*, *al-Jinan* and *al-Muqtataf*-published articles about Tagore. The next year, wadi al-Bustani, a Lebanese writer and translator of Umar Khayyam's Rubaiyat from Persian to Arabic, travelled to Calcutta and stayed

as Tagore's guest for two days. He was so charmed by his host's disposition and erudition that he compared him to an angel on earth.

Al-Bustani was perhaps the first Arab to meet Tagore after he'd won the Nobel Prize and, after *reading-Gitanjali*, *The Gardener* and *Sadhana* in English; he wrote a wonderful article in Arabic about the laureate. This homage was published in *al-Hilal* late in 1916. Soon afterwards, Bustani became the first to translate *Gitanjali* into Arabic.

Tagore travelled to Egypt in 1926 but did not mention this visit in his writing, except for a passing reference in *Pareshey*. Arabic sources reported that he landed at Alexandria and presented a lecture at the al-Hamra opera on 27 November 1926, during which he talked about the existence of God in every living being. On 29 November of that year, he gave another lecture, this time at Cairo's Hadiqa al-Uzbekiyya opera; he spoke about the differences between Western and Eastern philosophies. Reporters for dailies from Egypt- such as al-Balagh and al-Ahram - and other Arab countries covered his talks with zeal.

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Muhibbuddin al-Khatib wrote about these discourses for al-Zahra. Two years later, he published a brief but comprehensive and scholarly treatise called *Tagore*. The book threw light on the Indian poet's childhood and family background and showcased his patriotism and philanthropy, his message of love and cooperation between countries. It also briefly discussed how Tagore felt aggrieved by the British partition of Bengal. Al-Khatib, like later Arab translators of Tagore, praised not only *Gitanjali* but many of the poet's other writings.

Tagore's visit to Egypt has been documented by many Arab writers, poets and thinkers. For example, Hussain Shawqi son of the great Egyptian poet Ahmed Shawqi, recalled it in his book, *My father Shawqi*. He wrote that his father had held a reception for Tagore, which was attended by many Arab poets, litterateurs and dignitaries; the presence of Saad Pasha, the chief of the Egyptian parliament, added lustre to the gathering. Tagore wore Indian national dress to the reception and, with his great stature and curly locks, resembled a prophet from the Torah, according to Shawqi. Egyptian writer Taha Husain mentioned this reception in his 1926 autobiography, *al-Ayyam*.

Another writer, Syed Qutb, applauded Tagore's poetic qualities in his book on literary criticism and

praised the bard's works for a kind of solemn tranquillity and peace. He also admired the poet for his inherent capacity to bring before readers a world beyond their ken. Tagore was truly a philanthropist and ambassador of the message, of love and peace, marked by his profound humanism, democratic outlook and hatred of oppression. He is adored around the world for his efforts, to create, an atmosphere of mutual trust, friendship and cooperation among nations.

Quite naturally, Tagore's poems and songs overflow the valleys, hills and deserts of the Arabic-speaking world. Not only *Gitanjali*, many of his poems, dramas, short stories, novels and memoirs - almost all of his writings, in fact - are now available in Arabic. In his 1928 treatise, Al-Khatib mentioned that al-Bustani had, translated *The Gardener*, Tanius Abdadah had translated *Ghare Baire*, Mahmud al-Manjuri Al-Afindi had translated *Citra* and Azmi al-Dawary Afindi had begun translating *Sadhana*.

A host of Tagore lovers from Arabic - speaking countries have translated *Gitanjali* and many of his poems and songs. Some have even seen several editions. The translators have included: Hazim Nazim Fadil, Adnan, Bagiati, Mishal Ubri, Suhaila al-Husaini, Musa al-Khuri and Najib Zabi. Abdur Rahman Sidqi has translated five of Tagore's plays. The

best translation of Tagore's *Religion of Man* was rendered by Mishel Ubri. Badi Haqqi, produced exquisite translations of *Gitanjali* and *Fruit Gathering* in 1955.

Three years later, he published *Rawai Taghur fi al-Shi'ra al-Masrah*, which included translations of *The Gardener*, *The Crescent Moon*, *The Spring*, *Chitrangada*, and *Gitanjali* with a review by Mustafa Habib from Damascus.

Another wonderful Arabic translation of *Gitanjali* was done by Khalifa Muhammad at-Tillisi of Libya who described Tagore as a worshipper of nature, divine love and humanism. Tagore's humanitarian outlook has been praised by people of all religions. His spirituality was compared to that of Sufi ibn al-Arabi. But Tagore never advocated an inactive, secluded life. At-Tillisi rightly observed that pessimism had no place in Tagore's life and work. He was instead, a spokesman for hope and aspiration, love and happiness - the key to which lies in selfless service to mankind and the denunciation of ego. At-Tillisi echoed WB Yeats when he compared Tagore with Chaucer and said, "He writes music for words."

Tagore's lyrics are full of subtlety, with delicacies of colour and metrical inventions in simple diction. At-Tillisi also discussed Tagore's role in India's independence movement,

and his awareness of Western culture and civilisation.

In India, too, the late Arabic scholar Professor Rahatulla of Calcutta University, and young scholars-such as Harun al-Rashid, of the University of English and Foreign Languages in Hyderabad and Mirza Nihal Ahmad Baig of Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi- wrote their PhD theses in Arabic on Tagore. Aspirants often translate Tagore's short stories into Arabic and get them published in Arabic magazines in India -mainly *Thaqafatul Hind*, a quarterly of the Indian Council for Cultural Relation New Delhi.

Tagore has always been a subject of interest in the Arabic-speaking world and to the Arabists of India. And why not? He has the unique distinction of being the only poet in the world whose poems, are sung as the national anthems of two independent countries (India and Bangladesh), crossing geographical, linguistic and intellectual boundaries. He is equally well-loved in the land of the Arabian Nights: a number of Arab countries celebrated the 150th anniversary of his birth with gaiety and respect. ■

(Courtesy: *The Statesman*, 16th Dec, 2011)

## We Need to Educate the World on Social values

- Hassan Al-Ahdal\*

Under the patronage of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the Muslim World League has committed to make the Makkah conference an annual feature on the eve of every Hajj.

This year we discussed the "Muslim Society: Permanent values versus changing dynamics of values." An important subject indeed as we are under severe pressure from elements within and outside that are bent upon to undermine the values that our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) so assiduously laid as bricks of the foundation of the grand civilization called Islam.

I take this occasion to recall that the Ummah is not entirely wrong if it fears of the onslaught of materialistic ideologies to which some older cultures in many European lands have already succumbed. The Western culture that we often refer to as one reason to safeguard our own culture from is itself a victim of materialistic pressure. Hence, even if we hold reasons to be on alert against the Western culture, we at the same time

have grounds to be sympathetic with them for the demise of their religious and spiritual culture.

The culture of Islam is on firm foundation. It is an age-old promise, ever new, of which this conference is another expression in its way: that is, the promise of universalism in Islam, unity and equality and brotherhood. When Islam came it introduced a "social revolution" unprecedented in the East or West in ancient or modern times.

Christopher H. Dawson wrote (The Dynamics of World History): "Islam is at once a culture and a religion." According to Abdal Rahman Azzam, who founded the Arab League and was its first Secretary General, wrote in his "The Eternal Message of Muhammad" that "One of the most important aspects of this revolution was the moral and spiritual transformation which Muhammad (peace be upon him) exemplified in his deeds and personality and in the principles he advocated in accordance with the letter and spirit of his Message."

It is the same moral and spiritual institutions of the Western world that had crumbled under stress of the

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materialistic forces and it is the same institutions that we Muslims intend to safeguard in face of increasing pressures. Our fight therefore is directed against those forces of materialism and not the Western world per se. Rather, we need to hold continued talks with other civilizations and educate them on the principles of sound cultural values vital for mankind.

What the Muslim society is facing today is however not new. The anti-Muslim attack began in the 19th-20th centuries when Muslim society and institutions were exposed to the impact of European culture. After the demise of the Communism and with the advent of communication revolution, the debate that we hold today gained added importance. Because, the onslaught of the Western culture is real, and it is getting more and more menacing. This has been influencing Muslim ways and thought and not always advantageously.

It therefore seems vital to defend our society against the impact of alien cultures, particularly those consumed by a materialistic outlook.

The subject of the conference that we debated upon is such which needs to be discussed again and again by means of more meetings, conferences, seminars and media campaigns.

We must not forget the fact that European culture derives from older creeds and cultures of the same general back-ground from which Muslim society draws its inspiration and stimulation.

I'm sure that the conference and the future activities of the League will give an impetus of unity and strength. Muslims of any country is a citizen of the nation of Ummah. This universalism within the fold - Islam as world community - has surely inspired this extraordinary motive behind holding the historic session of the 13th Makkah conference.

But the cardinal questions remain: How to save the Islamic values in the face of persistent onslaught - call it Western or materialistic, or the Western culture laced with materialistic desire and lust? How to save this humanity from being deprived of moral and spiritual values, which are necessary for human survival? And, of course, how to revive the Islamic rejuvenation to bring about transformation for the humanity to survive?

To get an answer to these burning questions, we will have to revisit the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), whose exemplary conduct we know was instrumental in having the greatest influence on the spiritual and moral

transformation, which was accomplished both in his day and following his death.

The Muslim World League has been doing the job of introducing the Prophet's life to the world, the examples of which may be found in the events like "Prophet of Mercy" exhibition and conferences like "Dialog: The Future of All" - both of which were organized in London by the MWL and also launching of organization like the Riyadh-based International Center for Introducing the Prophet. But, I think this is not enough. We need to follow the Prophet's teachings in letter and spirit.

It is time we the Muslims - individuals as well as Muslim

organizations worldwide - will have to rise to the occasion.

When we face an all-round attack on our religious institutions, when Islamo-phobia backed by Western governments is being institutionalized, when values are being consumed by consumerism and materialism, when Muslim faith is becoming vulnerable in the face of anti-Islam onslaught, it is indeed time to wage sort of holy war against materialism and this we can do only by adopting values that our beloved Prophet (peace be upon him) had so studiously inculcated in us. This is a sure way to save not only the Islamic civilization but also the humanity at large. ■

## Man Most Suitable for Managing the World

-S.Abul Hasan Nadwi

When Allah created Adam and made him His vicegerent on earth, the angels who are innocent and do not commit sins, submitted to Allah that as man was inclined to quarrel and shed blood on earth, the vicegerency might be granted to them as they glorified Him and remained engaged in worshipping Him all the time. Allah replied the angels that they did not know the matters of the world. He then tested Adam and the angels by asking them certain questions relating to the world. As Adam was made of dust and had a natural interest in the world, he answered Allah's questions correctly whereas the angels lacking this natural interest in the things of the world failed. Thus Allah established that in spite of all weaknesses man alone was most suitable for managing the world. In fact, his natural weaknesses themselves qualified him for this position. If the world were run by angels, most gifts of God put into it, which were discovered and developed by man due to his interest and need, would have remained unknown and unused.

## The Prophet's Teachings in 21st Century

- Shahul Hameed

First we need to outline the basic teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) before we can explain their relevance to the present times. The Prophet taught the world these fundamental principles:

1. Allah is One and One Only; and so the universe created by Him is one - that is to say, its parts conjoin and cohere following Allah's laws to serve His purpose.

2. All humans are Allah's creations and as such they are equal before Him. So there is no superiority for any race, color, language, tribe, or nationality. That is to say, all barriers that people use to alienate man from man have no value with regard to human status, dignity or rights.

3. All religions were brought to the world by Allah's own prophets and messengers: and so they are basically the same.

4. Our life in this world is not the be-all and the end-all: there is a Day of Judgment on which Allah will reward those who live a good life in obedience to Him, and will punish those who don't.

5. Allah's creation has a balance and proportion; and He has commanded his servants to observe

balance and proportion - which constitutes the principle of justice - in their life and actions.

The English poet-critic Matthew Arnold in his book, *The Scholar Gypsy*, has diagnosed the symptoms of "this strange disease of modern life" as "sick hurry" and "divided aims."

Today, people have no time; they hurry after several aims, stricken by a desire to attain all of them at the same time. And the result is often stress, depression, and despair, at times leading to severe mental disorders.

What could be the cure of this disease? The Prophet of Islam, about 14 centuries ago, taught his followers to strive after one aim in life: to always seek the way of approach to Allah Almighty. Because, Allah Almighty Himself has said in the Quran what means: "O you man! Certainly you are ever toiling on towards your Lord-painfully toiling - and you shall meet Him." (Al-Inshiqaq 84:6)

It is also worth remembering that another characteristic of modern life is the cult of speed. People today have no time to rest, as they are morbidly engaged in a rat race for money, fame, fashion, and power.

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\* (The writer is an Islamic scholar and Consultant for Islam On-line.net)

We have invented rapid means of transport, though often we have little sense of direction. We have most efficient machines for doing cumbersome work; but we have forgotten the simple joys of handicraft. We have giant organizations and systems; but we have no sense of community and no sympathy for our ailing brothers.

Religion - particularly Islam as taught by Prophet Muhammad - takes us back from the dehu-manized machine-driven world to the happiness of being human. And Muhammad instilled into his followers sincerity and commitment to the good of all; to have a passion for service and sacrifice aimed at the welfare of all.

Prophet Muhammad's message is named 'Islam' which means peace - the peace one attains here in this world as well as the eternal peace one can attain in the other world by leading a life of obedience to Allah Almighty.

Indeed the Prophet taught the Muslims to pray thus: "O God! Certainly You are the source of peace! Peace comes from You and returns to You; so make us O Lord live in peace! And by Your Grace admit us into the Home of Peace!"

Carl Jung, the famous Swiss psychologist, has written that the root cause of the disease of modern man is that he has forgotten his soul. According to him, man is in such a state today that he cannot find any solace in his life,

because he has ignored his soul. (Carl Gustav Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, Harvest Books-New York, 1955)

This is possible only by a return to God. Prophet Muhammad taught his followers to bow before Allah five times a day - no less than five times. That is the way we can keep our mind and soul in harmony with nature, the universe and above all, with Allah's laws.

Most conflicts of the contemporary world stem from two roots: ethnic and economic. It is interesting to note that over fourteen centuries ago, Prophet Muhammad had taught us ways of managing the above two driving forces of modern societies. And in his own society, he put in place systems of handling such issues at their very root.

Consider the question of ethnic violence. Its most notable characteristic is the intensity and the rage it evokes. How can such conflicts be resolved? The Prophet Muhammad effectively instilled into his followers the idea that all humans are from Adam, and Adam is from the earth.

Quoting Allah Almighty's own words, he told them that no one is superior or inferior; that differences of skin color, language, nationality, race, or tribe are God-given; and they do not by themselves represent any sort of superiority or inferiority. They are simply meant for mutual identification and interaction, and not for advancing any

claim for precedence. (see Al-Hu-jurat 49: 13)

The Prophet's society had so well imbibed the spirit of this teaching, that the members of the noblest tribe of the Quraish were prepared to set free their slaves, and embrace them as equals into the society.

In the contemporary world, the gap between the rich and the poor is evident from the following statistics: The richest 2% of the world's population own half of the world's wealth; while half the world - nearly three billion people - live on less than two dollars a day. (*World Poverty Statistics*)

Why is this happening? Affluent people imagine that they have no responsibility towards the destitute. They do not believe in Allah Who bestowed material blessings on some and deprived others of it as a test; and they have practically rejected the belief in the Hereafter, where each person is accountable before Allah for all his deeds including his utter disregard of Allah's Book and His Prophet.

They ignore the Prophetic teaching that the poor and the needy have a claim to a specific share of the wealth of the rich. Hence the widening disparity between the obscenely rich and the starving millions, especially of the Third World.

We know that the bases of human rights are the concepts of human equality and justice. The Prophet

demonstrated in his own society the validity of these two concepts in realizing rights for orphans, the destitute, and the oppressed. And today we live in a world of terrible inequalities and brutal injustices which have been ironically made acceptable to 'civilized society' by spin and hype.

Today, all thinking humans are painfully aware of the fact that without justice, there is no chance for peace. And the teaching of the Prophet about the overarching importance of justice becomes only too apparent in today's context of Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo.

The International Court of Justice, the UNO and all its constituent bodies are shamelessly being coerced and manipulated by the powerful countries to act as their tools, without any regard for justice. But here is Allah's command about justice: "O you who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do." (Al-Ma'idah 5:8)

The horrible scenes of atrocities committed by neo-imperialist forces on subject nations for the sake of plundering their resources bring to light the terrible price humans are made to pay, when the world's nations ignore the teachings of Islam as taught by the Quran and Prophet Muhammad. ■



## Secularism and Moral Values

- Jaafar Sheikh Idris

MORAL values, such as honesty, trustworthiness, justice and chastity, are originally innate values which Allah planted in the hearts of mankind; then He sent His messengers with a system of life in accord with this innate disposition to affirm it.

“So set your face toward the religion, as one by nature upright; the instinctive (religion) which Allah has created in mankind. There is no altering (the laws) of Allah’s creation. That is the right religion but most people do not know.” [Surat Ar-Rum:30].

A believer adheres to these moral values because his nature, fortified by faith, induces him to do so, and because the religion he believes in commands him with them and promises him a reward for them in the Hereafter.

Secularism, on the other hand, even in its less virulent form that satisfies itself with removing religion from political life, rejecting it and the innate values as a basis for legislation, undermines the two foundations for moral values in the hearts of mankind. As for secularism in its extreme atheistic form, it completely demolishes these two foundations and replaces them with human whims, either the whims of a few rulers in dictatorial systems or the whims of the majority in democratic systems.

“Have you seen the one who has taken his own desire as his god? Would you then be a guardian over him?” [Al-Furqan:43].

Since whims and desires are by their nature constantly changing, the values and behaviours based on them are also mutable. What is considered today to be a crime, punishable by law with the severest of penalties, and causes its practitioners to be deprived of certain rights granted to others, becomes permissible tomorrow, or even praiseworthy, and the one who objects to it becomes “politically incorrect.” This shift from one point of view to its opposite, as a result of society’s estrangement from innate religious values, is a frequent occurrence. However ignorant a traditional society may be, it, or many of its members, will maintain some innate values; but the further a society penetrates into secularism, the fewer such individuals will become, and the more marginal their influence will be, until the society collectively rebels against those same innate religious values it used to uphold. There may be another reason for some traditional Jahili cultures to maintain innate religious values: they might appeal to their desires, or they represent their heritage and do not conflict with their desires.

“And when they are called to Allah and His Messenger to judge between

them, Lo! a party of them refuse and turn away. But if the right is with them they come to Him willingly." [Al-Nur: 48-49].

Their relationship with truth is similar to Satan's, as described by the Prophet (sallallahualayhewasallam) to Abu Hurairah, whom Satan had advised to recite Ayat al-Kursi when going to bed: "He told you the truth, even though he is an inveterate liar."

Contemporary Western, secular societies are the clearest examples of the shifting, self-contradictory nature of jahili civilization. From one angle it views culture and the values it rests upon as a relative, variable phenomenon. However, from another angle it characterizes some values as human values, views their violation as shocking, and punishes their violators severely. The sources of this problem are two fundamental principles which democratic secular societies rely upon.

The first is majority rule as a standard for right and wrong in speech and behaviour; the second is the principle of individual freedom. These two principles will necessarily conflict with each other if they are not subordinated to another principle that will judge between them.

Secularism, by its very nature, rejects religion, and in its Western form it does not consider fitrah (innate nature of Mankind) a criterion for what is beneficial or harmful for humanity. It has no alternative but to make these two principles an absolute standard for what

behavior is permissible and appropriate, and what isn't. The contradiction and conflict between these two principles is showing itself plainly in some of the current hot issues in these societies.

Those who advocate the acceptance of homosexuality and the granting to avowed homosexuals equal rights and opportunities in every aspect of life, including military service, base their argument on the principle of individual rights. They see no one as having the right to concern themselves with what they call their "sexual orientation." The same argument is made by supporters of abortion. You frequently hear them say incredulously, "How can I be prohibited from freedom of choice in my own affairs and over my own body? What right do legal authorities have to involve themselves in such personal matters?" The only argument their opponents can muster is that this behavior contradicts the values held by the majority of the population. Even though the basis for many people's opposition to abortion is moral or religious, they can't come out and say so openly, nor can they employ religious or moral arguments, since secular society finds neither of them acceptable.

If we accept that there is *no basis* for values except individual or majority opinion, and that it is therefore possible for all values to change from one era to another, and from one society to another, this means there is no connection between values and what will benefit or harm people in their material and spiritual

lives, which in turn means that all values are equality valid and it doesn't matter which values a given society accepts or rejects. However, this means that all behaviour considered abhorrent by secular societies today, such as sexual molestation of children and rape of women for which it has serious penalties, are considered repulsive only because of current inclination, which might change tomorrow, so certain serious crimes may become acceptable, based on the principle of individual freedom.

The reason a secularist is confused when posed with certain questions is that his repugnance toward such crimes is not really based on these two principles, which have become the only accepted bases for argument in societies dominated by secularism; the real reason for it is the remnants of the moral feelings he still possesses from the original nature with which Allah endowed him, and which linger on in spite of his secularism. Perhaps the confusion of the secularist would increase if he were asked for what reason he had given such precedence to these democratic values, until he made them the standard by which all other values and behaviours are judged. If he says his reverence for them is based merely on current personal preference and inclination, or on cultural chauvinism, he will have no reply to one who opposes him on the basis of his contradictory personal preferences, or because the norms of his society differ from those of the other.

The flimsy foundation of values in secular societies makes them liable to turn at any time against all the values they currently hold dear. It also paves the way for them to descend to their practices of the occupation and colonization of weaker nations. There is nothing to make them refrain from doing so, once one of them stands up and announces that there is a nationalist benefit to be gained by it and a large number of fellow citizens believe him. His policy proposal becomes official policy, based on the standard of majority approval.

It is, however, as you can see, an approval based on nothing more than greed. This has been the justification for every transgression in history. In fact it is the basis on which any animal attacks another.

Personal freedom and majority rule are not, then, the fundamental values on which secular culture is based. That is because freedom entails choice, but it is not the criterion for that choice. I mean that whoever is given the freedom to choose needs a standard that he can use as the criterion for his choice. Likewise, majority opinion is not itself the standard; it is merely the result of many individual choices made on the basis of some standard. So what is the basis for the choices of a free individual and a free society in the secular system? It is, without the slightest doubt, those whims and desires which have taken the place of the real Deity. ■

(M.G.)

## Discharge Wrongly Jailed Muslim Youth, Says AIMPLB

- Atiq Khan

Seeking action on the prolonged incarceration of Muslim youth over unsubstantiated terror charges, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) has demanded that those against whom no charge sheet had been filed even after several years of imprisonment be discharged and compensation given to those who have been acquitted. The AIMPLB also sought action against the police officers who "falsely implicated these youths."

Claiming that a sense of insecurity had crept in among Muslims, the Law board decided, during a working committee meeting on Sunday, to submit a resolution to the Central and State governments.

The meeting at the DarulUloom Nadwatul Ulema here was presided over by AIMPLB president Maulana Rabey Hasani Nadwi. The issue — which has not been addressed by the board till now — is expected to be taken up at the general body meeting of the Law Board in Ujjain from March 22 to 24.

AIMPLB assistant general secretary and spokesperson Mohammad Abdur Rahim Quraishi said those Muslims whose cases were tried in court had been acquitted.

Mr. Quraishi said there were Muslim youths who had been in jail between seven to 12 years against whom no charge sheet has been filed till date. Co-convenor of the AIMPLB's committee on Babri Masjid and working committee member Syed Qasim Rasool Ilyas said: "Now that the persons involved in the Mecca Masjid, Ajmer and

Samjhauta Express blasts [have been found] by the Union government, the Muslims youths arrested on these charges should be released". Dr. Rasool demanded that the Nimesh Committee report be made public by the Samajwadi Party government.

The law board's Sunday meeting also decided to address the issue of interference in Muslim laws due to wrong interpretation. Mr. Quraishi said the board would take the issue up with the Centre and secular parties and urge them to take steps to amend such laws.

The law board was opposed to the "compulsory" clause in registration of marriages, deeming that it should be optional. "Since the 'nikahnama' is a written document, the registration of marriage was already there among the Muslims," held the board. According to Dr. Rasool, the AIMPLB felt that the "qazi" — who solemnises a Muslim marriage — should be given the same authority as Registrar of Marriages, as was the case in West Bengal, Assam and Andhra Pradesh.

The AIMPLB meeting also expressed its opposition to the proposed Direct Taxes Code, which would replace the Income Tax and Wealth Tax Acts. The board sought that the exemptions and concessions being provided to religious institutions and religious-cum-charitable trusts be continued and these provisions be incorporated into the Direct Taxes Code. The board demanded that the CBI be directed to examine all the witnesses of the Babri Masjid demolition case as "soon as possible". (The Hindu) ■

## Indian Media

- Hashim Kidwai

The Media continues to be very powerful in India - the largest parliamentary democracy of the world. Over the years, it has grown much stronger and mightier. It has a far more expansive reach today than even before as according to the available figures the readership of papers and magazines in the country is over 190 millions while over 384 million Indians watch television, for news and other types of programmes.

But unfortunately, while the media is growing, it is not growing up. There have been very disturbing trends qualitywise. Apart from truth being the first casualty, the disturbing trends include subjectivity, inaccuracy, misquoting, marketing men heading editorial teams, sting operations with means, methods and morals mixed up to suit ends, TV studios acting as court rooms, sting operations in violation of human rights and prejudiced editors.

Now a days, media has become a sort of entertainment industry in the wake of globalization and entertainment is now treated as synonymous with sex and crimes. Unfortunately, on this account Indian newspapers and magazines are full of pictures of semi nude models, nude pictures and articles on kissing, bed room manners and office romances. It is really distressing that media is making us a nation of sex

aholics. It is really unfortunate that national English dailies are throwing slow poison at the readers every day. Parents are very worried over the sinister effects of these dailies on their children's morals and values. Incidents of rapes are published with lewd details. It is no exaggeration to say that today increase in crimes is to be attributed to the lustful material being published by the print and broadcast by electronic media. It matters little to the media if in the process our highly precious values are subverted and our cultural ethos destroyed.

It is really distressing that the media has degenerated into a highly counter productive force and has abandoned the path of idealism. The main factor responsible for this phenomenon is that the lever of control has been transferred from editors who used to command respect, to the media Mughals for whom only circulation and money are the main objectives. Means are of no consequences. It is the ends that matter. Today media's culture is one of power for power's sake. It no longer aspires to change the world. It is becoming insensitive and profit - driven like any other commercial activity. It is now not only influenced but even led by grossly inflated market prices. It is slowly hijacking the country from its time honoured and highly precious national culture.

Freedom of press is implicit in the fundamental rights of freedom of speech and expression but this freedom is not for the benefit of the press but for the public good. The Press Council of India had been set up as a watch dog, but media takes it very causally as the council does not possess any teeth. There are a number of instances when the council issued guidelines which were treated with contempt by the media. Distinction between broad sheet journalism and tabloid journalism which is still maintained in the west stands obliterated in India, Media enjoys the unique privilege of unaccountability. There is inaccuracy and mis-interpretation on a very large scale in media reporting but there is no punishment for errors.

Media which has sermons for all sections of society from the legislature to the judiciary does little soul searching themselves. It is high time that the Parliament gives punitive powers to the Press Council of India to deal with irresponsible sections of media representing hit and run type of journalism.

Most unfortunate is that important issues like the on-going agrarian crisis leading to suicide by farmers, dowry deaths, displacement of tribals across the country are being sidelined and Muslims are maligned over "teen talaq" which is very uncommon. Media must introspect and rediscover its past i.e. the glorious role which it had played in pre-Independence India. ■

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## **Ibn Sina**

**- A.H. Nomani**

Abu Ali Ibn. Sina was the greatest scientist of the 11th century and also the greatest scientist of all times. He was commonly known as Avicenna in the west and was one of the greatest man that this world ever produced. Although he did not belong to an influential family and was unable to get the worldly facilities of life, yet he became, while still a youth, the author of an encyclopaedic work. His life was full of events and circumstances, often obliged him to travel from court to court where sometime honours were showered upon him and sometime he was cast into prison. But whatever the situations may be, he occupied himself reading, writing, teaching and remained always surrounded by his pupils. He was a physician, philosopher, scientist, poet, philologist, logician, statesmen and thinker, who made research and contributed to the development of all branches of science and through whose efforts medicine recorded an unprecedented progress. He was hailed by the scholars as "Al-Shaykh Al-Rais (the great teacher)". He possessed so many qualities of head and heart that we know while discussing his life history, we almost fail to decide as to what aspect of his life should be more particularly discussed.

Abu Ali al-Hussain Ibn Abdallah Ibn Sina was the most famous Muslim physician, (doctor of doctors) philosopher, encyclopaedist,

mathematician and astronomer. He was born in 370 AH, 980 CE. at Afshaneh a village in the Persian province of Balakh where his father lived. In 985 CE his' family moved to Bukhara where at the age of 5 he started his education, at the age of 10 he has already completed his basic education, and also memorized the Qur'an, and then sent to various teachers under whom, for next six years, he studied algebra, arithmetic, astronomy, logic, philosophy, and theology. At the age of 16 years he turned to medicine. In the course of study of philosophy Ibn Sina was confused by those problems which, were related to metaphysics particular in the work of Aristotle, but ultimately got rid of his difficulties with the help of a commentary by a distinguished philosopher, Al-Farabi. Ibn Sina was an industrious who never slept a whole day or whole night whenever he came across some obscure point he would go to a mosque where he prayed to Allah Subhanah to remove his confliction He was a giant among giants, who displayed exceptional intellectual powers as a child, as we have read in earlier pages, at the age of ten he was already proficient in the Qur'an and Arabic classics had become well versed in the study of the Qur'an and various sciences. During the next six years he devoted himself to Muslim jurisprudence, philosophy, natural science, logic, Euclid and studied the Almagest. He learnt logic and some other

subjects from Abu Abdallah Natili, a famous philosopher of the time. While still young, he turned his attention to serious studies at the age of 17 years he attained such a degree of expertise in medicine and found it in his own words, "not difficult" and his fame spread far and wide.

Ibn Sina said that "at first he practised medicine not for the sake of money, but for his own experience." At the age of 18 he built up a reputation as a physician and was summoned to attend the Samani ruler, Nouh Ibn Mansoor, the King of Bukhara, of an illness in which all the well-known physicians available there had given up all hope for his recovery. In consequence a boy of 18 was summoned and ushered into the chamber of the sick king, passing through a congregation of astonished dignitaries composed of distinguished courtiers and talented physicians. This boy is Ibn Sina who was finally entrusted with the treatment of the king. The marvellous boy cured the dying ruler, in great astonishment of all who were present there. On his recovery, the King was so pleased that in gratitude for Ibn Sina's service, allowed him to make free use of the royal library, which contained many rare valuable and even unique books. Endowed with extraordinary great powers of assimilating, absorbing and retaining knowledge, he soon mastered all the varied intellectual material found in the royal library, which later enabled him to under take his monumental work. Ibn Sina wrote "I went and found a large

number of rooms filled with books packed up in trunks. I then read the catalogue of the primitive authors and found their-in all I required. I saw many books titles of which were not known to most people.

He started writing at the age of 21 His style was clear and comprehensive. After the death of his father, he had to leave Bukhara due to political disturbances and reached Jurjan which was noted for high culture. His fame travelled faster than him and he was accorded a heartily welcome by Ali Ibn-Mamun the king of Khwarizm (KHivai), a great patron of art and learning and whose Prime Minister was also a man of scholarly taste. It was at this famous seat of learning that he met his famous contemporary Abu Raihan Al-Biruni. He had hardly set his foot there, when Sultan Mahmood of Ghazni demanded from the king Khwarizm to send those intellectual luminaries who was there to Ghazni. Reluctantly the king of Khwarizm had to comply with the request of the great conqueror Mahmood Ghazni and despatched Al-Biruni, Abu Nasr Arraq, and Abul Khan Khammar to Ghazni, but Ibn Sina and Abu Sahi Masihi refused to go to Ghazni and set out for Jurjan which is near the Caspian Sea, attracted by the fame of its ruler Qabus, who had a scholarly taste and the patron of learning. Unfortunately his arrival almost coincided with the deposition and murder of this ruler. At Jurjan Ibn-Sina lectured on logic and astronomy and wrote the first part of the "Kitab Al-Qanun Tibb" his world fame first great work.



He gave his expression to his misfortune and the circumstances under which he lived, in this poem. "When I became great no country had room for me; when my price went up I lack up a purchaser."

At Jurjan he started to practice as a physician and engaged himself in teaching. It was here he met his sincere friend and pupil Abu Ubaid Jawaz Jami. At last circumstances forced him to leave this country too. Later he moved to Ray where a woman named Sayyidah was ruling on behalf of her minor son Majdul Doulah Dalamite who welcomed Ibn Sina and appointed him his minister, he established a busy medical practice there. When Ray besieged, he fled to Hamadan, where he cured Amir Shamsud-Douwala the ruler of the country, who was suffering from colic and subsequently he was made Prime Minister. A mutiny of soldiers against him, was the cause of his dismissal and imprisonment, but subsequently the Amir, being again attacked by the colic, summoned him back, apologized and reinstated him. His life at this time was very strenuous: during the day he was busy with the Amir's service, while a great deal of night was passed in lecturing and dictating notes for his books, the *Al-Qanun fi Al-Tibb* (Canon on Medicine) and the *Kitab Al-Shifa* (book of healing) already composed, and his famous book *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*, was also completed there. Following the death of Amir, Ibn-Sina fled to Ispahan, as new ruler Taj al Douwalah suspected that Ibn.Sina is the

cause of mutiny against him. He was welcomed by the ruler Aloud al Doula. Ibn.Sina was ranked only next to Al-Farabi as greatest musical theorist of Islam. His "*Kitab Al-Shifa*" a philosophical encyclopaedia of repute also contains much original work of music. He also wrote an introduction to the art of music, whilst a few definitions regarding music are found in his "*Division of Science*." The work of Ibn.Sina considerably influenced the West on the subject and Roger Bacon also compelled to recognise his contribution to the therapeutic value of music. According to a western critic of music, "Both Farabi and Ibn.Sina are claimed to have added to what the Greeks taught" Avicenna who was a versatile genius made contribution to the field of astronomy also. He was entrusted by Aloud Douwalah with the work of improving the existing calendar and the arrangement for the establishment of an observatory. "In proving the falsity of astrology" says a western writer "he opposed the fallacious contention of Greek, Arabian and Hindu astronomy who maintained that the obliquity of the ecliptic diminishes gradually towards Celestial Equator."

He is considered as father of science of geology and in his well known treatise published in Latin as "*De coagulatione Lapidum*" he dealt with the formation of the mountain and earth crust. He gives the scientific cause of earthquakes. His literary works, Hal, the son of Yakzan and Al-Tair, directed the course of literary development, in Iran,

Afghanistan, Central Asia and Arabian countries. His best poetical contribution is the Ode describing the descent of the soul into the body from the higher spheres, which is still learnt by heart.

Ibn-Sina surpassed both Aristotle and Galen in dialectical subtlety and his way of reasoning appealed to the scholars of the Middle Age. The "Kitab al-Qanun fi Tibb" formed half the medical curriculum of the European universities in the later part of the 15th century, and continued as a text book up to about 1650 CE in the universities of Montpellier and Louvain. It is still a reference book of the medical profession in the East. After appearance of "Kitab al-Qanun fi Tibb," "Kitab Kamil al-Sana" and "Kitab al-Majusi" which were standard work, was completely abandoned. Among other his Medical writings, there are also "Kitab al-Urjuzah fi al-Tibb," and his treatise on cardiac drugs. The latter lies probably second in importance beside "Kitab al-Qanun fi al Tibb". Two other minor works, namely "Qawaneen" or Laws and "Hudud Al-Tibb, (the limitation of medical science) are known written by him. He also wrote "Mabda wa al Maad" which contains an interesting chapter on the possibility of the production of exceptional physical phenomena, and a treatise on colic. He completed many of his monumental writings in Isfahan. Nevertheless, he continued travelling and the excessive mental exertion as well as political turmoil spoilt his health. He spent his final year in the service of the ruler of the city, Alauda al Doula whom he advised on

scientific and literary matters and accompanied on military campaigns. Excessive travels undermined his health. He was suffering from colic and he prepared some special medicine for his own treatment and probably over doses of it which produced intestinal complication, he returned to Hamadan and confined to bed, having realized that his end was approaching, he took bath, offered repentance and began reciting Qur'an till his end came. Thus in this way he died in 1037 CE.

Pre-op, 10th century style - Ibn Sina is known to have operated on a friend's gall bladder.

Although before his death friends advised him to slow down and take life in moderation, but this was not in his character. "I prefer a short life with to a narrow one with length", he replied. Worn out by hard work and hard living, he died in 1037 CE as stated earlier, at a comparatively early age of 58 years. He was buried in Hamadan where his grave is still protected.

Al-Qifti states that Ibn Sina completed 21 major and 24 minor works on philosophy, medicine, theology, geometry, astronomy and the like. Another source (Brockelmann) attributes 99 books to Ibn Sina comprising 16 on medicine, 68 on theology and metaphysics 11 on astronomy and four on verse. Most of these were in Arabic; but also in his native Persian he wrote a large manual on philosophical science entitled "Danish-Nama-i-Alai" and a small treatise on the pulse.

His most celebrated Arabic poem describes the descent of Soul into the Body from the Higher Sphere. Among his scientific works, the leading two are the Kitab al-Shifa (Book of Healing), a philosophical encyclopaedia based upon Aristotelian traditions and the "Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb" which represents the final categorisation of Greco-Arabian thoughts on Medicine.

Among Ibn Sina's 16 medical works, eight are versified treatises on such matter as the 25 signs indicating the fatal termination of illnesses, hygienic precepts, proved remedies, anatomical memoranda etc. Amongst his prose works, after the great "Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb," the treatise on cardiac drugs, of which the British Museum possesses several fine manuscripts, is probably the most important, but it remains unpublished.

The "Kitab Al-Qanun fi Al-Tibb" is, of course, by far the largest, world fame and most important of Ibn Sina's works. The work contains about one million words and like most Arabic books, is elaborately divided and subdivided. The main division is into five books of which the first deals with general principles; the second with simple drugs arranged alphabetically; the third with diseases of particular organs and parts of the body from the head to the foot; the fourth with diseases which though local in their inception spread to other parts of the body, such as fevers.

The "Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb" distinguishes medicine from pleurisy and

recognizes to the contagious nature of phthisis (tuberculosis of the lung) and the spread of disease by water and soil. It gives a scientific diagnosis of ankylostomiasis and attributes the condition to an intestinal worm. The "Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb" points out the importance of dietetics, the influence of climate and environment on health and the surgical use of oral anaesthetics. Ibn Sina advised surgeons to treat cancer in its earliest stage, ensuring the removal of all the diseased tissue. The "Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb's" materia medica considers some 760 drugs, with comments on their application and effectiveness. He recommended the testing of a new drug on animals and humans prior to general use.

Ibn Sina noted the close relationship between emotions and the physical condition and felt that music had a definite physical and psychological effect on patients. Of the many psychological disorders that he described in the "Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb," one is of unusual interest love sickness Ibn Sina is reputed to have diagnosed this condition in a Prince in Jurjan who lay sick and whose malady had baffled local doctors He noted a fluttering in the Prince's pulse when the address and name of his beloved were mentioned. The great doctor had a simple remedy: unite the sufferer with the beloved.

The Arabic text of the Kitab Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb" was published in Rome in 1593 CE and was therefore one of the

earliest Arabic books to see print. It was translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona in the 12th century. This 'Canon of medicine', with its encyclopaedic content, its systematic arrangement and philosophical plan, soon worked its way into a position of pre-eminence in the medical literature of the age displacing the Works of Galen, Al-Razi and Al-Majusi, and becoming the text book for medical education in the schools of Europe. In the last 30 years of the 15th century it passed through 15 Latin editions and one Hebrew. In recent years a partial translation into English was made. From the 12th-17th century, the "Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb" served as the chief guide to Medical Science in the West and is said to have influenced Leonardo da Vinci. In the words of Dr. William Osler, the "Kitab al-Qanun fi al Tibb" has remained "a medical bible for a longer time than any other work".

Despite such glorious tributes to his work, Ibn Sina is rarely remembered in the West today and his fundamental contributions to Medicine and the European reawakening goes largely unrecognized. However, in the museum at Bukhara, there are displays showing many of his writings, surgical instruments of that period and paintings of patients undergoing treatment. An impressive monument to the life and works of the man who became known as the 'doctor of doctors' still stands outside Bukhara museum and his portrait hangs in the Hall of the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Paris.

His major contribution to medical science was his famous book "Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb," known as the "Canon of Medicine" in the West. The same book is an immense encyclopaedia of medicine extending over a million words. It surveyed the entire medical knowledge available from ancient and Muslim sources. Due to its systematic approach, "formal perfection as well as its intrinsic value, the Al-Qanun superseded Razi's Al-Hawi, Ali Ibn Abbas's Maliki, and even the works of Galen, and remained supreme for six centuries". In addition to bringing together the then available knowledge, the book is rich with the author's original contribution. His important original contribution includes such advances as recognition of the contagious nature of phthisis and tuberculosis; distribution of diseases by water and soil, and interaction between psychology and health. In addition to describing pharmacological methods, the book described 760 drugs and became the most authentic material medica of the era. He was also the first to describe meningitis and made rich contributions to anatomy, gynaecology and child health.

Avicenna wrote 99 books, almost all in Arabic, the language of religious and scientific expression in the entire Muslim world at that time. However, two of his works, the Danish nameh-e-Alai' (Encyclopaedia of philosophical sciences) and a small treatise on the pulse, were written in Farsi (persian), his native language. He wrote about natural

philosophy and astronomy, theology and metaphysics, medicine, psychology, music, mathematics and physical sciences and he is also the reported author of Persian quatrains and short poems:

“Up from Earth’s Centre through the Seventh Gate I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sat, and many a knot unravelled by the Road, But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.”

His philosophical encyclopaedia *Kitab al-Shifa* was a monumental work, embodying a vast field of knowledge from philosophy to science. He classified the entire field as follows: theoretical knowledge: physics, mathematics and metaphysics; and practical knowledge: ethics, economics and politics. His philosophy synthesises Aristotelian tradition, Napoleonic Influences and Muslim theology.

Ibn Sina also contributed to mathematics, physics, music and other fields. He explained the “casting out of nines” and its application to the verification of squares and cubes. He made several astronomical observations, and devised a contrivance similar to the vernier, to increase the precision of instrumental readings. In physics, his contribution comprised the study of different forms of energy, heat, light and mechanical, and such concepts as force, vacuum and infinity. He made the important observation that if the perception of light is due to the emission of some sort of particles by the luminous

source, the speed of light must be finite. He propounded an interconnection between time and motion, and also made investigations on specific gravity and used an air thermometer.

In the field of music, his contribution was an improvement over Al-Farabi’s work and was far ahead of knowledge prevailing elsewhere on the Subject. Doubling with the fourth and fifth was a ‘great’ step towards the harmonic system and doubling with the third seems to have also been allowed. Ibn Sina observed that in the series of consonances represented by  $(n + 1)/n$ , the ear is unable to distinguish them when  $n = 45$ . In the field of chemistry, he did not believe in the possibility of chemical transmutation because, in his opinion, the metals differed in a fundamental sense. These views were radically opposed to those prevailing at the time. His treatise on minerals was one of the “main” sources of geology of the Christian encyclopaedists of the 13th century. Besides *Kitab al-Shifa* his well-known treatises in philosophy are *Kitab al-Najat* and *Kitab al-Isharat*.

Ibn Sina is one of the foremost philosophers in the Medieval Hellenistic Islamic tradition that also includes Al-Farabi and Ibn Rushd. His philosophical theory is a comprehensive, detailed and rationalistic account of the nature of God and Being, in which he finds a systematic place for the corporeal world, spirit, insight, and the varieties of logical thought including dialectic, rhetoric and poetry.

Central aim to Ibn Sina's philosophy is his concept of reality and reasoning. Reason, in his scheme, can allow progress through various levels of understanding and can finally lead to God, the ultimate truth. He stresses the importance of gaining knowledge, and develops a theory of knowledge based on four faculties: sense "perception," "retention," "imagination" and "estimation." Imagination has the principal role in intellection, as it can compare and construct Images which give it access to universals. Again the ultimate object of knowledge is God, the pure intellect.

In metaphysics, Ibn Sina makes a distinction between essence and existence; essence considers only the nature of things, and should be considered apart from their mental and physical realization. This distinction applies to all things except God, whom Ibn Sina identifies as the first cause and therefore both essence and existence. He also argued that the soul is incorporeal and cannot be destroyed. The soul, in his view, is an agent with choice in this world between good and evil, which in turn leads to reward or punishment.

Reference has sometimes been made to Ibn Sina's supposed mysticism, but this would appear to be based on a misreading by Western philosophers of parts of his work. As one of the most important practitioners of philosophy, Ibn Sina exercised a strong influence over both other Islamic and medieval Europe philosophers. His work was one of the

main targets of Al-Ghazali's attack on Hellenistic influences in Islam. In Latin translations his works influenced many Christian philosophers, most notably Thomas Aquina.

He also produced at least two major works on logic: one, "Kitab al-Mantiq," translated as The Propositional Logic of Ibn Sina, was a commentary on Aristotle's Prior Analytics and forms part of "Kitab al-Shifa' the other, "Kitab al-Isharat wa al Tanbihat" (Remarks and Admonitions) seems to be written in the 'indicative mode', where the reader must participate by working out the steps leading from the stated premises to proposed conclusions. He also produced a treatise on definitions and a summary of the theoretical sciences, together with a number of psychological, religious and other works; the latter include works on astronomy, medicine, philology and zoology, as well as poems and an allegorical work, "Hayy Ibn Yaqzan" (The Living Son of the Vigilant). His biographer also mentions numerous short works on logic and metaphysics, and a book on 'Fair Judgment' that was lost when his prince's fortunes suffered a turn. Ibn Sina's philosophical and medical work and his political involvement continued until his death.

*(Extract from "Heroes of Islam" compiled by A.H. Nomani page 512 Price Rs 200=00 Farid Exports, Pataudi House, Daryaganj, New Delhi - 110002)*

## **Around the World**

### **ISRAEL MUST REMOVE SETTLERS, HALT SETTLEMENT EXPANSION:**

#### **UN PANEL**

UN human rights investigators on 31 January called on Israel to halt settlement expansion and withdraw all half a million Jewish settlers from the occupied West Bank, saying that its practices could be subject to prosecution as possible war crimes. A three-member UN panel said private companies should stop working in the settlements if their work adversely affected the human rights of Palestinians, and urged member states to ensure companies respected human rights.

“Israel must cease settlement activities and provide adequate, prompt and effective remedy to the victims of violations of human rights,” Christine Chanet, a French judge who led the UN inquiry, told a news conference.

The settlements contravened the Fourth Geneva Convention forbidding the transfer of civilian populations into occupied territory and could amount to war crimes that fall under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the United Nations report said. “To transfer its own population into an occupied territory is prohibited because it is an obstacle to the exercise of the right to self-determination,” Chanet said. All UN member states must comply with their duty under international law on the settlements, she said. ■

### **MUSLIM POPULATION IN U.K. NOW 2.7 MILLION**

**London:** The population of Muslims in the United Kingdom has shot up to 2.7 million in the 2011 Census from 1.5 million in 2001. Since the data of the UK Census 2011 was revealed last month, a debate has ensued with regard to increasing presence of British Muslim community. The data has revealed that the Muslim population in Britain has almost doubled in ten years so that Muslims make up 50% of the residents in some British towns. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) that conducted the Census, the multiplying of Britain’s Muslim population has occurred for several reasons. The ONS said one of the reasons for the massive growth in the number of Muslims in Britain is the rising number of Britons who are converting to Islam.

Many analysts believe that the true number of Muslims in Britain may be much higher than indicated by the Census data. This is because the religion question was the only voluntary question on the 2011 Census and 7.2% of people did not answer the question.

The increasing proportion of Muslims has inevitably led to a significant presence of Muslims in the public. In this regard, a study published by UK think tank Henry Jackson Society points out the increasing representation of Muslims in the media. According to the study, which monitored statements of religious groups and media coverage of religion in the UK, the most prolific spokespeople over the last decade were the Muslim Council of Britain. This group made more interventions in the national discussion than any other faith group or leader, including even the leader of the Church of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who came a close second. ■

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