



# THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST

Vol. XVIII No. 5

May, 2016

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# The Fragrance of East

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## Islamic Culture

**S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi**

The Prophets of Allah do not only call people to the religion of Islam by presenting tenets of the Islamic Faith and its codes of law; they also pioneer a new culture, a new civilization, and a new way of life. Such a culture can aptly be called "Ibrahimi Culture". This culture has certain fundamental principles and characteristics which distinguish it from other cultures based on ignorance. This distinction may be seen in its spirit and principles as well as in its outward manifestations and details.

The first distinctive characteristic of the Islamic culture is the authentic religious beliefs, social ethics, and moral values on which it is based. This factor is commonly shared by Muslims all over the world, irrespective of their nationality, language, and dressing style. Due to this common feature Muslims from different parts of the world look like members of a family, easily identifiable as representatives of the same culture. Thus, the Muslims of the world have a specific culture of their own which could be best called the "Ibrahimi Culture". ■

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## **Wisdom of Qur'an**

***"They say: 'If we were to follow this guidance with you, we should be snatched away from our land.' Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary to which fruits of all kinds are brought as a provision from Us? But most of them do not know."***

*(Al Qur'an – 28:57)*

This is what the Qurayshite unbelievers used to say as an excuse for not accepting Islam. When we reflect on this, we realise that this was indeed the main reason for their denial. In order to appreciate it fully, we should bear in mind the position of Quraysh in those times, a position which they felt would be undermined if they were to accept Islam. "What initially lent eminence to the Quraysh in Arabia was their descent from Ishmael. When, thanks to the sagacity of Qusayy ibn Kilab, the Quraysh became the custodians of the Ka'bah and settled down in Makkah, their importance grew." "Here is God's first answer to the excuse the Quraysh offered. This response amounted to saying: "Is it not because of God's special favour that it is looked upon with respect and veneration by all, and every year thousands of people come to it as pilgrims? It is thanks to this favour that you have become the leaders of Arabia and the major beneficiaries of the flourishing international trade of your time. Do you think that by rebelling against God Who, in the first place, bestowed this favour on you, you will prosper, and that you will be instantly destroyed if you follow God's Religion?" ■

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

***"Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said: "A person who calls people towards doing good deeds will get the same reward as those who follow him and do good; and nothing will be diminished from the requital of the latter. Similarly, those who call the people towards vice will have the same punishment as those who follow him without any diminution in the punishment of the perpetrators."***

*(Muslim)*

*Our deeds are either good or bad as no deed can be both good and evil. And people, in given circumstances, are tempted to do either good or bad deed. This hadith gives good tidings to a person who not only does good deeds but invites others to do so. It also warns a person against inviting his/her fellow beings to vice. Calling people towards doing good deeds is in itself a virtuous act. It wins the pleasure of the Lord Almighty as well as provides an opportunity for the invitee for doing good deeds. Contrary to it, the act of inviting people to commit some evil is in itself a vicious act. It earns the Divine wrath as well as puts the invitee in a position that earns the Divine wrath. "God is All-Powerful. He can give reward and award punishment to whom He wills. He knows perfectly well the deeds done by His servants as well as the intention lurking behind the commission of the deed. Hence His judgement is based on human actions. He however can forgive whomsoever He wills. ■*

## **Message of the Fragrance**

May 2016 issue of the Fragrance is in your hand. By the grace of God this venture has been well received in the circles where it could make its way. Our basic aim is to counter the anti-Islam hysteria built by the western dominated media and also the Indian right wing influenced press that generates erroneous ideas about Islam. Indeed our mission is to combat the onslaught on Islam and project the correct picture of the religion. The dissemination of specious information and propagation of fallacious stories about Muslims and Islam are to be nip in the bud which is why we decided to start this magazine in English. However, the task is gigantic and very challenging and needs patience and persistence. The active cooperation of intellectuals, scholars, academicians, literati and writers is needed to run this magazine. Our efforts to motivate them to write for us have so far drawn blank but we have not lost hope and expect a good response from them.

The importance of having an English magazine or medium to put forward the Muslim perspective was realized particularly when intricate matters concerning Islam crop up and persons not well-versed with the relevant issues venture to express their views. For instance the recent controversy over compulsory recitation of 'Vandanas' in educational institutions. The English/ Hindi papers as well as the electronic media highlighted only a particular view and those who opposed the official promotion of the Vandana were either ignored or distorted version of their arguments was projected so as to trivialise the issue and brand them anti-national. When situation reached a saturation point the Muslim clergy considered it desirable to issue clear and firm directives and give proper advice to community. The most revered Islamic scholar of his time, Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi who kept himself aloof from controversial and political issues, was approached by some media men to seek his opinion on the subject. He graciously explained the reasons for not accepting this uncalled for directive of the government. Since Vande Matram and Saraswati Vandana contradict the basic tenets of Islam Muslim were asked not to recite them. The Maulana without undermining the importance of the motherland and glory of the nation, was well within his domain to warn the community not to commit 'shirk' (associating someone with Allah) He did not issue any 'Fatwa' (religious decree) because that was neither sought nor needed. He simply advised that parents should withdraw their wards from those institutions where they are forced to recite these hymns and bow before any deity. The Maulana's advice did not undermine the faith

of non-Muslims nor did it hurt their feelings. But an intolerant group was so enraged by the Maulana's dictat that they staged demonstrations and made disparaging remarks against him.

Sarswati- according to Hindu mythology is the goddess of learning. Her pictures/ statues may be a source of inspiration to those who believe in idol worship; but a Muslim is forbidden to bow before anyone except Allah. What to say of Muslims even staunch Hindu reformers and Vedic scholars like Swami Dayanand were of the firm view that unless the evil practice of idol worship was given up there was no hope for Hindu society.

Vande Matram, a Sanskrit-Bengali mixed poem composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterji in 1875, begins with the salutation to mother, then the poet evocates the bounteous, lovely land that generously nurtures its children. The bounty and physical richness turn into an image of a motherland with latent strength derived from the image of Durga, the demon slaying goddess, Bankim Chandra Chatterji ascribes to the motherland the status of goddess, within the Hindu pantheon; "It is your image that we worship in all temples."

In 1882 Bankim Chandra Chatterji wrote his famous novel 'Ananda Math' and introduced Vande Matram in it. Here a mob shouting verses from the poem begins to articulate an agenda that goes beyond simple loot- 'Unless we throw these bastards (that is the Muslims) out, Hindus will be ruined .... "When shall we raise the mosque down to the ground and erect Radhamadhaws temples in their place?" Today Muslim boys are urged to recite this poem every morning. This not only amounts to 'shirk' but also is a plea for their own destruction.

It is unfortunate that in a plural society like ours where we swear by secularism day in and day out, such contentious issues get priority over efforts to build a peaceful society. The need of the hour is to provide education to our children eradicate illiteracy and benightment. A sense of brotherhood which may lead to strengthening of the national unity is to be inculcated among them rather than get involved in such emotive issues. ■

**S.A.**

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

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## The Role of 'Ulama' in Changing Times

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Afterwards We made those whom We chose of Our servants the inheritors of the Book, Then of them there are some who wrong themselves, And of them there are some who keep the middle path, and of them there are some who go ahead, by Allah's leave, in virtue. That is indeed great grace.

(*al-Fatir* 35:32)

A faith, divine teachings, a call to truth or noble ideals cannot and do not exist in a vacuum. Without role models in blood and flesh, high ideals cannot be sustained. This is amply borne out by the history of religions and morality. Had this not been the case and had it been in accord with human nature and divine laws scriptures would have descended on mountain tops with the proclamation that people should draw on these. This has not been the case, though. Allah first sends down His messengers. They are blessed with revelation. Messengers are the very embodiments of the divine message. Once 'A'ishah was asked to relate the Prophet's conduct. In reply she said: ('He demonstrated what the Qur'an is.' The Qur'an is the best commentary on his life and morals. Allah gave another special favour to the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), in the words of Shah Waliullah, by making his advent universal. He brought up an entire community to promote his message.

Accordingly, the Qur'an also speaks of the advent of the Muslim community in the following passages: *And thus We have made you a community justly balanced, that you might be witnesses to mankind and that the Messenger might be a witness to you. (al-Baqarah 2:143) And: You are the best community ever sent forth to mankind. You enjoin good and forbid evil and you believe in Allah. (Al 'Imran 3:110)*

*Hadith* conveys the above message more emphatically, telling Muslims: "You have been sent down for making ease, not for erecting hurdles and hardship," Many Companions are on record as transmitting similar ideas. When the Persian commander asked Rub'i ibn 'Amir, the Muslim emissary, as to why the Muslims had approached Persia, his reply was in line with the Prophet's teaching: "Allah has sent us to you that by His command we may free men from their bondage to fellow human beings and make them submissive to Allah." This brings home the point that messengers are the prerequisite for a faith. A messenger should have a community trained and guided by him. These conditions were met in the case of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and his Companions. This arrangement should be in place until the Last Day.

It is evident from the Qur'anic verse quoted at the outset of this section

that successors to the Prophet and bearers of the Book will last to the end of time. Islam is the destiny of mankind, for it embodies divine teachings. In one *Hadith* the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) makes this observation: "In every generation there will be just, pious people as the bearers of faith. They will avoid all extremism and accretions in matters of faith and refute the baseless notions of ignorant people." (*Mishkat*)

'*Ulama*' perform a very significant and delicate duty. Those charged with this role have indeed an onerous responsibility. On realising its magnitude one may feel so overwhelmed as to give up eating and drinking. '*Ulama*'s conduct keeps the masses on the straight way. It binds them to faith and its articles. '*Ulama*'s lapses conversely can have a disastrous effect. It can weaken their link with the public. Their immoral deeds may cause degeneration in the whole community, pushing it to declines materialism, this-worldliness, lust for power, gratification of base desires and selfish motives. As a result, the community is liable to disintegrate into numerous divisions and sub-divisions. It can adversely affect the fate of the entire country and future generations. Religious institutions, including mosques might be afflicted with such decay and decline. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is on record as saying: "Remember, there is a piece of flesh in the body; if it is sound, the whole body functions well. However, if it is diseased, the entire body will be damaged.

This piece of flesh is the heart."

'*Ulama*' occupy the same position in the life of the community as the heart in the body. Any disorder affects the body and so the community. It is worth clarifying that the reform of the community is not the responsibility of any particular group or institution. Rather, it is the role of all '*Ulama*'. If their morals are weakened by worldliness and their links with Allah are not strong enough, the masses will exceed all limits. There will be all-round corruption and degeneration. The fate of faith is linked with the role and conduct of '*Ulama*'. The moral health of a society and a country is in the hands of '*Ulama*'. If '*Ulama*' are derelict, faith will naturally grow weak. No oratory or political order can then salvage such an ailing society. Even if an Islamic state resolves to arrest moral degeneration, it cannot be successful without the active support of '*Ulama*'.

To use an analogy, reference may be made to the small driving machinery or speedometer which monitors the speed and direction of a massive ship. Any disorder in it can lead the ship astray by hundreds of miles. As already stated, '*Ulama*' should serve as the compass for the community. They should always be engaged in performing their duty. Providing they maintain a strong and close link with Allah, act sincerely, actively discharge their role and are characterised with the features special to the successors to Allah's Messengers, the future of faith is secure. Without this, no measure can ensure the spread of faith. ■



## Saiyid Ahmad Shahid – Character and Achievements

- Mohiuddin Ahmad

Tall, fair and strongly built, with close-knit eyebrows, broad forehead, thick beard and of pleasing countenance, Saiyid Ahmad Shahid was utterly simple in his manners and transparently honest in his dealings. Decorous and contemplative by disposition and eloquent in speech, he had a warmth of spirit that inspired everyone who came in contact with him with a feeling of love and respect for him. Himself guileless, he never expected and seldom saw duplicity in others- a weakness of which people took advantage sometimes; but, his unaffected simplicity was matched by an unbound ambition- an ambition to reform and renovate, revive and glorify Islam- which nothing or nobody could balk or balk. The ultimate aim of his endeavours, as he explained in his letters, was to establish a model Islamic State which could unite all the Muslim States from Afghanistan to Central Asia.

Saiyid Ahmad Shahid's initial progress through life seems to suggest to a modern writer 'significant parallels' with the life of the Prophet of Islam. Writes D. Hardy: "Both were men of action rather than men of pen; both migrated with faithful followers from an unpromising to a more promising locale; both had to work with unruly tribesmen and both struggled to establish an Islamic state on the fringe of powerful empires by defying the local powers by force." For all that, however, it

is not sufficient to view the Saiyid's reformatory endeavour, from the outside, merely to discover 'structural similarities' between his career and that of the Prophet. One must view him also, from within, from the Islamic consciousness had patterned his conduct and behavior. The Prophet came to expound, confirm and renew the eternal message of God and to show the way how to live up to those ideals through his life and sufferings and triumphs.

If one were to epitomize the characteristics which issue forth from the personality of the Prophet, these would be summed up as absolute reliance of God, moderation, courage, magnanimity, nobility and serenity. Let us see how far Saiyid Ahmad Shahid reflected these qualities of the prophet, whom, like every other Muslim, he must have held as the model of Perfect Man.

The first and foremost characteristic of the Prophet of Islam, or in truth and reality, of every opposite of God is his absolute reliance on God. It has become difficult for most of us today to grasp the significance of *tawakkul* or confidence in God, *tafwiz* or resignation, *zuhd fi'd-duniya* or renunciation of the world, *qaan'ah* or contentment and *sabr* or patience in adversity which emanate from the core of one's heart having a living faith in the Cause of all causes. The

interdependence of cause and effect normally leads man to believe in the universal causative origin of all phenomena. Gradually, he comes to have faith only in the objective existence of external world and to deny the existence of the Creator and he Lord of the Universe. The prophets on the other side, proceed from the principle that apart from causes and effects, physical laws, matter, substance and properties, there is the transcendental, omnipotent Power that pre-determines every cause and effect, and they accordingly teach us to pin our faith in that Primal cause. They in fact come as the teachers of humanity to demonstrate by their belief and actions that every physical phenomenon, event and incident depends wholly on the will and pleasure of God Almighty, who brings into existence what He will or without a primordial cause. This is one great principle taught by every prophet of God and is discernible par excellence in the life and teachings of the Prophet of Islam. That is why we see all men of God resigned to the will of God, placing all their hopes in Him alone. Saiyid Mohammad 'Ali, the author of Makhzan-i-Ahmadi, has given a graphic description of the serene contentment of Saiyid Ahmad Shahid during the period of his stay at Rae Bareilly in extreme frugal circumstances, but nothing better illustrates his absolute confidence in God than the journeys undertaken by him for the Haj pilgrimage and to the Frontier. On the former occasion he had set out with hundreds of his

followers without a single shell to meet the journey's expenses, while on the latter occasion when he went ahead to launch the jihad against a powerful kingdom, he had only five thousand rupees for five thousand rupees for five hundred men who had to cover 2,400 kilometers of arid deserts and mountains! A man who could undertake such hazards could never be called a quietist, as the mutawwakkalin are very often presented these days. Nor the Saiyid's efforts to make use of the means which God has provided impaired his trust in God's providence. His heart having been revived and illuminated by the love of God, he had realized the triviality of the human before the Divine; subdued the pride of ego, expelled every worldly desire from his heart and learnt to depend on God, a fruit of true faith, which had enabled him to declare: "Even if we were in the deserts of Sind or Arabia where nothing is to be had at all, and all the people of the world were with us, our Lord shall verily arrange to send us food even there."

Moderation marks the harmony of soul which guides a man to take the middle course and avoid extremes, teaches him to be temperate in conduct and enables him to establish equilibrium between different tendencies present in him. It illuminates the most worthy course to be adopted in all fields of human activity, be it personal dealings or social, economic or political decisions one has to take. Shah Muhammad Ismail, the great renovator and martyr, as Abul Kalam Azad calls him,

testifies to this quality of the Saiyid in these words: although very many people have taken to the right path of virtue, but none has betaken the way of life I want; and it is the way between excess and frugality, which I find in the followers of the Saiyid." Maulvi Inayat Ali brought this characteristic of the Saiyid into focus when he said; "One has to have a sound sense and little knowledge of the prophet's traditions to appreciate the rank of worth of the Saiyid. The saints so often reflect the characteristics of different Prophets of God but my mentor has been bestowed the qualities of the Prophet of Islam while his followers blend the characteristics of the Prophet's companions. This is why they come to possess an affectionate regard for the prophet and a breathless anxiety for the promotion of his religion." Moderation also includes abstemiousness, self-denial and restraint of which several instance could be found in his life. They show how the Saiyid spent weeks after weeks in fasting and frugal circumstances cheerfully. Contemplative by nature, the Saiyid never entertained any political or worldly ambition whatsoever.

The whole life of the Saiyid is a beacon of the firmness of his mind and enduring courage: his readiness to face dangers signifies his unbroken nerve which helped him to emerge from perilous situations undefeated, unstudied in every battle he was present, he took the direction in his hand and brought with dauntless courage. In the battle of Mayar when the enemy charged shouting: "Where is Saiyid

! where is Saiyid!" he remained in the forefront leading his men and pressing the attack on the enemy with reckless chivalry. He often used to tell his companions that it was as easy for him to die as to break a piece of straw. Nawab Wazir-ud-daula writes in Wasayah: "When cannon balls and bullets showered all round like rain-drops, the Saiyid remained standing in the battlefield with a smile on his lips, encouraging how to fend off the assault of the enemy. During bloody embroilments when the courage of the doughty warriors failed them, the Saiyid never showed the least trace of losing his nerves." In Amb he rushed to rescue certain persons from the debris of a fallen turret when none dared to go beneath the turret for a part of it still hanged dangerously.

The Saiyid possessed the quality of magnanimity in fullness. Giving away of whatever he had at hand freely, heartily and self-sacrificing signifies that he possessed in abundance the qualities worthy of noble birth. Following in the footsteps of the Prophet, the Saiyid never turned down the request of anybody. Once he was presented with a costly sword by Sheikh Ghulam 'Ali who said that even the Nawab of Oudh would not have a blade so priceless. A Pathan from Rampur who happened to be present on the occasion asked for the sword, and the Saiyid at once gave it to him. Sultan Muhammad Khan had agreed to pay 40,000 rupees as indemnity of war, but the Saiyid gave up the claim on the first meeting with the Khan although he had to borrow money from the

Hindu bankers for feeding his troops. The magnanimity of soul always rises above all that is poor, mean and weak and every feeling pertaining to resentment caused by injury or insult to one's own self. Of these we find numerous examples in the Saiyid's life. On numerous occasions he forgave the enemy spies, sent back his enemies laden with gifts and saved those who had administered poison to him from the wrath of his followers.

It is this magnanimity making its appearance with grandeur and beauty that is known as nobility. We have seen how Pa'inda Khan Tanaoli laid a trap to capture the Saiyid but started professing allegiance to him when his ruse was exposed. And, the Saiyid forgave him promptly. Nowhere is the nobility and generosity of the Saiyid better exemplified than on the occasion of his triumphant entry into Peshawar. Sultan Muhammad Khan had taken oath from his troops, in the battle of Mayar, to kill the Saiyid. Without any feeling of rancor or revenge in his heart, the Saiyid not only pardoned Sultan Muhammad Khan but also reinstated him as the Governor of Peshawar.

Serenity of the Saiyid expressed itself in his piety, his inward attachment to God. This is the characteristic which made him gentle, genial and agreeable. His serene spirit dwelt as if in the clean upper air, above all storm and shadow.

The peace of heart that 'passeth all understanding' is the reward of absolute

subservience to the Will of God and love of the Prophet. The Saiyid once said to Nawab Wazir-ud-Daula : "For a long time I have not done anything: neither I went anywhere nor came; neither I walked nor sat; neither was I annoyed nor amused except for the pleasure of God. I did nothing at all to gratify my own self or for my own entertainment." On another occasion the Saiyid explained the distinguishing features of his mystic order, the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah, in these words: "Whereas other spiritual orders bear a relationship with the esoteric dimension of prophet hood, the aides of the Tariqah I teach require the traveler of spirit to take his food, put on clothes, marry, sleep, or else engage himself in a business, cultivation or employment, but with the intention of following the way of the Prophet. This Tariqah or spiritual order links the traveler explicitly with the Prophet. The love of God and the Prophet had so overtaken his self that he never countenanced any innovation or deviation from the teachings of Qur'an and the Sunnah howsoever upheld it was by a prevalent custom or the practice of any learned or pious soul. The oath which the Saiyid administered to his disciples while initiating them into his spiritual order invariably required a solemn promise to be made to for-swear every departure from the true faith.

The all-consuming love of God had detached the Saiyid's soul from all worldly desires and affections. But, unlike many other sufis to whom the mystic

communion with God meant mortification of the will-to-live and to renounce all aims at improvement of the conditions of life of the world, the Saiyid realized the subtle relationship between the inward and the outward aspects of love-divine. He knew that submergence in the love of God did not mean freedom from function nor was it tantamount to finding oneself unable to discharge one's social responsibilities or to lack the grit to be a leader, or imam or to feel unable to render his friends and relations that dues. To him the mystic experience of tearing the human veils for inward flight of the commands of God which find an outward expression in the laws of the shari'ah. And, to this end he devoted his life, preaching submission to the commandments of God in every sphere of human behavior, giving up every habit or custom not upheld by the Law of God and actively striving against everything that negated the Truth and disrupted the harmony of soul.

Judged by his personal magnetism and the religious ferment bestirred amongst the masses, there would be few religious teachers who could claim to enjoy the same popular regard as the Saiyid did. His call for repentance of the past misdeeds and be taking the righteous path summoned up such a tremendous religious emotion in the populace that on several occasions as many as ten thousand persons offered themselves for bi'at on his hands on a single day. More than three million persons got themselves initiated in the Saiyid's spiritual order,

claims Maulvi Wilayat 'Ali, during his missionary tours, while another hundred thousand men and women were enlisted by him as his disciples during the Haj pilgrimage. The number of such persons would run into crores, says 'Abdul Ahad, if all the people entering his spiritual fold through the efforts of his spiritual successors were also taken into account. Thousands among the novitiates belonged to nobility or were noted scholars of the time. "A sign of God he was," says Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan of Bhopal, a noted Arabist and scholar, "in guiding the people on the right path and making their hearts incline towards God. A large number of these became pure-hearted saints through the potent influence exerted by him, while his spiritual successors swepted the country clean of all innovations and polytheistic thought and practices ... In short, there was none so godly and perfect of spirit in the whole world in those days, nor was there any mystic or religious scholar who exerted such a salutary influence even over one tenth of the people as he did." Innumerable persons taking oath of fealty to him gave up vocations not approved by the Shariah as 'lawful', took to prayers and litanies and committed the Qur'an to memory, constructed new mosques, opened a chain of theological seminaries all over the country and gave up numerous vain ceremonies and financially ruinous customs. The popular upsurge for reform and renovation of the Muslim society gained such a strength that a number of

Indian ruling chiefs like the Regent Begum of Bhopal and Mubariz-ud-daula of Deccan tried to emulate the strictness of the Chief of Tonk in Their own dominions.

The call of the Saiyid was not novel, but the way it engaged the attention of the masses, enthralled and animated them to devote their life for a higher cause was unparalleled in the country. There had been many mystics who had hundreds of thousand followers and spiritual successors in every part of the country, but none had built up an enduring organization to keep a watch over the manners and morals of all the persons taking a bi'at to them, nor had anybody else created an enthusiasm strong enough to make thousands leave their hearth and home for the service of God. With rare insight and superb qualities of leadership, he inspired all the diverse elements gathered round him for the resurgence of Islam in India. He allotted to each of the followers, a task suited to his ability and inclination. To the Nawab Wazir-ud-daula, the chief of their Tonk, he instructed to rule in accordance with the dictates of the Shari'ah for the well-being of his subjects and to afford assistance for the conduct of holy war. Shah Muhammad Isma'il and Maulana 'Abdul Ha'i, the two paragons among scholars of the day, were asked to preach the path of righteousness through their writings and speeches. He did not fail to discern the organizing capacity of Maulvi Wilayat 'Ali, Maulvi 'Inayat 'Ali, Muhammad 'Ali Rampuri and a host of his

other followers whom he sent to disseminate his message in the far flung corners of the country. He revived the performance of Haj, which had fallen into desuetude and removed the stigma attached to the re-marriage of widows by his personal example. He saw clearly the weakness of the Muslim society and took appropriate steps to prepare the ground for raising a strong movement of reformation of the religious, moral and social affairs of the people. Wherever his message of reform reached, the lives of the people were changed so completely that, according to the testimony of Conningham," even the tailors of Delhi were moved to scrupulously return remnants of cloth to their employers."

The sense of identity imparted to the Indian Muslims by the reformatory endeavours of Saiyid Ahmad Shahid was a still greater achievement to his credit. The Muslim nobility coming from abroad had mostly settled down in the towns, and had in due course fallen a prey to many vices that invariably accompany power and pelf. The vast majority of Indian Muslims spread in every nook and corner of the country owned their accession to Islam to the sufi mystics, and to these pure-hearted souls these Muslims turned for their religious, moral and spiritual guidance. These neo-Muslims abandoned their old habits and social customs gradually by imitating the ways of their spiritual mentors. But, by the time the rule of the Moghuls was fully established in

India the mystic orders had fallen into decay. Ostentatious celebration of the death-anniversaries of departed sheikhs, seeking of intercession at their tombs and devotional practices in the honour of walis and pirs had come to be accepted as the common features of Indian Islam. In the rural areas consultation with the hedge priests, vegetarianism, aversion to re-marriage of widows and even the worship of local deities had hastened the process of de-Islamisation, and at many places only the dissimilar names of Muslims and non-Muslims indicated the difference between the two. Illiterate and misguided sufis, misrepresenting the teachings of the earlier mystics were ever willing to condescend upon every departure from the true faith through their distorted representation of pantheistic monism. It was at this time that the Saiyid raised his voice for rejecting impious traditions of the conventional faith in favour of early Islam as taught by the Qur'an and the sunnah. His teachings demanding absolute loyalty to God did not merely help to formulate intellectual position in relation to the strict monotheism of Islam but also imparted a realization that true faith should be reflected in social life of the individual as well as that of the community at large. This realization, this sense of Muslim identity, has ever since persisted in the sphere of individual and social life of the Muslims of this sub-continent. It is still their most cherished possession—a touchstone for deciding the soundness and acceptability

of every social, religious, economic, cultural or political activity. It is, however, noteworthy that the Saiyid's call meant neither Muslim exclusiveness nor the spiritedness of his followers in the social and religious fields ever gave rise to any conflict of communal interests during half a century of their struggle, first, against the Sikh Raj and then against the British rule. The voluminous mass of letters written by the Saiyid and Shah Muhammad Isma'il's writings do not contain even a hostile reference towards the Hindus whose sympathy and, sometimes, active support, was enjoyed by the jihad movement. The Saiyid's message, in effect called for freedom for the expression of Muslims' religious personality and removal of every social corruption that impeded its way and distorted its image.

The attainments of the organization stemming from the Saiyid also deserve to be mentioned here. It was the first well-knit mass organization with its branches spread all over the country, struggling for socio-political reform. Many of the tactics initiated by it were subsequently adopted by political parties working for India's emancipation from the British rule. "The passive non-cooperation, the Panchavati system, the social boycott of 'loyalis' elements—the hukka pani bund, as Reily puts it—all these were perfected into powerful methods of political agitation during the course of struggle for freedom, but it should be remembered that they had their

beginnings under the Wahabis," according to Qayammuddin Ahmad. The same writer adds: "The un-obtrusive and effective method of collection of funds evolved by the Wahabis was specially cited as a model by Surendranath Banerjee in a public speech, and recommended for adoption. The highly secret and complex Wahabi organization for relay of vital information and transmission of men and money from all over the country appears to be strikingly modern and effective."

The jihad movement had, however, the reawakening of the Muslim masses from their deep slumber as its chief objective. This is performed admirably at a time when the Muslims of India seemed to have no future at all. In fact, the widespread intellectual ferment and quickened vitality of the masses for participation in the jihad on the Frontier would have never been possible without restoring the shattered self-confidence of the Indian Muslims, but this is a topic that needs a fuller and separate study.

However, eclipse of the Saiyid's jihad movement as an organized party from the political field of India towards the end of the third quarter of the last century made almost every historian of the pre-independence era to assume that the fierce enthusiasm of the mujahidin burnt itself out as quickly as straw. A number of studies, however, undertaken recently by competent scholars have tended to show that the impetus and ideals of the

movement survived to make an important contribution to the resurgence of a dynamic Islam later on in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. Nevertheless, a question very often raised is why the martial exploits of the movement could not succeed in its initial stages despite such an upsurge of enthusiastic zeal as well as the sincerity and chivairous sacrifices of the mujahidin and their leaders.

The Saiyid commenced his reformatory endeavours on returning to Delhi from Amir Khan by the middle of 1818 and left for the frontier in January 1826. Of these seven and a half years, about three years were spent in the performance of the Haj, and thus he got less than five years to preach his message of reform and jihad in India. During this period he did not stay for a long time at any particular place, except at his home in Rae Bareli where he returned after his frequent missionary tours. As these tours were undertaken during a time when the means of communications had not opened up the interior of the country, the Saiyid would not have been able to carry his message to the people living far away from the line of his routes. He had, thus, to leave the follow-up work to the persons appointed by him as his khalifahs or spiritual successors. His success in building up a strong revivalist movement with such an extremely short period speaks volumes of his captivating influence and the sincerity of his deputies, yet, the period of his missionary activities



was, in any case, much too short to build up a full-fledged organization complete with a supply line capable of constant flow of men and material to the front of hostilities lying through a circuitous route over deserts and mountains covering about 2,400 kilometers. This inevitably resulted in shortage of adequate resources and fighting personnel whose effective strength remained round about a thousand Hindustani mujahidin, the core of the force, throughout the life-time of the Saiyid. The subsequent events show that this supply line was built up after the movement had spread to every nook and corner of the country, but by that time the Saiyid was no more alive to guide the movement. It may be asked why the Saiyid did not wait to build up the movement in India before migrating to the Frontier. But, the question does not arise at all, for the events were moving so fast and the calamity befalling the Muslims of the Punjab was so severe, so heart-rending that no well-meaning person, much less a kind-hearted man like the Saiyid, could have postponed the action for deliverance of Muslims in Punjab for better times. The call was insistent and compelling, and had to be responded instantly at all costs, or given up altogether.

We have already discussed earlier the question relating to the choice of the Frontier for engaging in hostilities against the Punjab. There was, of a fact, no other place, either in British India, Sind or Afghanistan where the Saiyid could go for

joining battle with Ranjit Singh. Doubts have been raised that probably the Saiyid "harboured the misunderstanding that since the people of the Frontier region were Muslims and had been fed up with the non-Muslim domination they would eagerly welcome the Islamic State." For the tribesmen of the Frontier have ever been known for their valour and religious zeal, there may be a quantum of truth in this presumption; yet, the question can arise only if we ignore the fact that the Saiyid had no alternative place to wage war against Ranjit Singh. The Saiyid had really no other choice. Another factor normally ignored in considering the Saiyid's choice of the Frontier for starting the jihad is that he had been advised to go there by the Pathans who had come down to India not in the distant past. Many of them still had kinsmen in the Frontier, but they were, almost without any exception, fond of liberty, faithful, hospitable, brave, hardy and sincere. Nobody who had dealings with them could have visualized that their brethren in the rugged hills were disposed, by their upbringing and traditions, to intrigue and deceit. Nevertheless, the Saiyid did whatever was possible for the moral and religious uplift of the tribesmen but as the critics of the Saiyid agree these people were simply "not capable of sustaining caliphate". The Saiyid never lost sight of the fundamental aim of his whole endeavour, which was nothing but the integration of the life of his followers with the eternal law of God, and jihad or struggle for the supremacy of the Truth, was but

one aspect of it. Of a fact, we can see numerous examples of his earnestness in this regard during the stresses and strains of his stay in the Frontier. He never made any compromise with his principles for the sake of expediency; very often he took decisions apparently detrimental to his own interests; and repeatedly pardoned the recalcitrant and obdurate elements where British succeeded later on by a tough policy of swift retaliation and brutal chastisement.

The tribesmen were, to be sure, traditionally attached to strong local or tribal loyalties. There were intense clannish sentiments of the Mohmands, Yusufza'is, Tanaolis and the like, with a marked pride of the clan to which one belonged. Islam, in many respects, was hostile to these racial sentiments. Its insistence upon the brotherhood of all believers was as much antagonistic to these tribal sentiments and loyalties as was the Islam's political ideal of Imamat or universal democratic commonwealth against every form of injustice, exploitation and despotic rule. Bi'at Imamat and enforcement of Shar'iah had made the common man realize the true nature and importance of these Islamic ideals, but it always takes a long time for any new idea to be genuinely accepted by the masses. And only when an idea has been thus accepted, does it form the basis of practical conduct of any people. Such a transformation is probably not the work of a few years but a life-long task, if not more. In fine, the tribal and racial

sentiments permeated the popular consciousness of the tribesmen and their attitudes and behaviours were conditioned, not by what they considered to be just and correct, but by what they found to be more practicable and advantageous.

The long-standing traditions of vendetta amongst the tribesmen did not allow them to unite even in times of crisis; the avarice and short-sightedness of their maliks and khans had made them blind to higher and nobler ends; their contempt for restraint of any kind incited them to flout every law, even if it be the Law of God; their seclusion in the difficult and rugged hills urged them to distrust every foreigner; and the tribal way of warfare had taught them to fight gallantly in brief engagements and leave the battlefield as soon as the encounter seemed to fail or a booty was in sight. This was the human material the Saiyid had to lean upon, but in spite of all the misanthropy of the tribesmen he might have succeeded in his endeavour if the tribesmen had not one more failing—perhaps, the greatest vice of man. And, this was the tradition of treachery, of taking advantage of the friend as well as enemy, however meanly. Some of their proverbs ran: "Keep a cousin poor, but use him" and "speak good words to an enemy very softly; gradually destroy him root and branch." Perhaps few instances of such perfidious behavior as the betrayal of Yar Muhammad Khan or the conspiracy of Sultan Muhammad Khan and the Samah chiefs like Fateh Khan of Panjtar can be

found in the annals of any other people. Even the unparalleled piety of the mujahidin, many of whom were replica of the Prophet's companions, had failed to arouse in them the feelings of honesty, sincerity and fear of God.

For all one knows, the brief span of life allowed by the Providence to the Saiyid appears to have been the most appropriate time for the success of the jihad movement. Had the Saiyid succeeded in gaining control over the Punjab, and this was by no means impossible, the mujahidin would have got the time and resources to build up adequate strength to flight their way into liberating the remaining part of the country from the clutches of the rising power of the British. Despite all the swift strides made by the Englishmen in the fields of arts and sciences, the Indian Muslims had not reconciled themselves to the supremacy of British arms or their technique or culture during the first half of the nineteenth century. The traders coming across the seven seas had been able to extend their dominion in India not because of the supremacy of their arms but owing to the weakness of the Indian princes and the absence of a national sense and patriotic zeal among the inhabitants of this country. And, when the British came across the first outburst of such a righteous indignation in 1857, they succeeded in suppressing it because the Punjab was with them, and the rebellion was neither country-wide nor well-

coordinated. But, after the failure of the uprising, the position had entirely changed. The mujahidin had lost the plains to which they could look forward for consolidation of their power before crossing swords with the British. Then, they had no other place except the rugged hills to fight an uneven combat with a superior power, and with an undependable ally by their side. Within the country, too, the savage suppression of the rebellion and the dire vengeance befalling the Muslims had left them dazed and disheartened. The defeat and humiliation had sapped their self-confidence-the confidence in the superiority of their own culture. Historians have overlooked the fact that any further effort to drive out the British from India was unthinkable for a dejected and disheartened people without bringing forth a fresh wave of self-confidence and enthusiasm among the masses on a wide scale. This, the jihad movement did in an unbelievably short period and caravans after caravans began to move towards the Frontier. It cannot be denied that the mujahidin now found a losing battle, as the British had by then consolidated their hold over India and their military prowess had increased manifold as compared to the pre-mutiny period. Nevertheless, the grit of the mujahidin, their valour, their absolute faith in the righteousness of their cause and their sincerity of purpose urged them to continue their efforts, at all cost, under the most adverse circumstances. Even if they were unsuccessful in achieving their

ends the sacrifices undergone by them preserved their cause from oblivion, and its spirit informed every social, cultural, religious and political movement of the later day Indian Muslims.

It would, thus, be erroneous to bring in a verdict on the Saiyid's reformatory movement merely by the token of success or failure of his jihad in the Frontier, for the Saiyid never visualized religious strength of Islam in terms of its political success alone. That would be a too materialistic interpretation of his movement and achievements. Had that been the ultimate object of the Saiyid, he would not have launched his jihad movement over the heads of the then Muslim rulers nor demanded moral and spiritual purification of the participants in his movement as a primary condition. He invited the rulers, no doubt, to join his movement in the same way as he summoned the laity, but on his own terms—full and complete acceptance of Islam. The Saiyid saw, and saw much deeply, the malaise of Muslim society of his time: he analysed and identified the causes of its latitudinarianism, its lethargic passivity and its disunity as well as the external encroachment threatening its existence; and he reacted against the deterioration with a prodigious energy capable of transferring itself to the multitudes and creating in them a determination to redress those wrongs. The Saiyid knew that the true faith must ramify in every segment of human behavior, be it private or social; and

that it must create a sound moral, social and political environment to keep itself alive, vigorous. The Saiyid gave, on the one hand, a call for inner reclamation and redemption of soul; and, on the other, struggled against external threats instead of meekly submitting to the powers of his time. His struggle against the powers threatening to submerge a weakened and enervated Muslim society was only a part of his more comprehensive programme for the renovation and revitalization of the nineteenth century Islam in India. He succeeded in his ultimate aim although its political aspect could not be put through at the moment. If it was a failure, it was the failure of decadent Muslim society of India, a section of which opposed his puritanical and fundamentalist approach; of the Amir Khans of Indian princely states, Sind, Afghanistan and Central Asia; and of the maliks and khans of the Frontier who failed to see the danger looming large over their heads. It was their failure to unite in the hour of crisis. Nevertheless, the abounding enthusiasm of the Saiyid to redress the wrongs continued to awaken millions of his countrymen to a consciousness that theirs was a community bound by the Law of God, with a distinct personality and having a set purpose and ideal. And, this was the glory of Saiyid Ahmad Shahid which assigns him a honoured place among the galaxy of great mujaddids, the renovators of faith, whom we find giving a call to the faithful at every turning point of their history. ■

## The Event of Me'raj (Ascension)

- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi\*

Having to continuously endure for last seven years the hostilities and harassments had already made him heavy – hearted. Now the additionally worsened conditions were likely to make him further dejected. But, trust that he (SAW) had in his Lord and the Faith that he had in the Divine Assurance of getting the conditions improved in future had kept him, despite all the adversities, steadied all along. Yet, being human that he was, he felt the pressure inwardly: albeit he had the support of the conviction that whatever had happened till then and whatever was happening now, was from Allah. Whether it is the severity of situations or some source of solace, it was in consonance with the Divine Decree. In all likelihood, it was owing to the Divine Decree itself that he was made to undergo the rigours which were conducive to consolidation of his valour and resolve and the Faith in the Divine Assurance.

At all events, when his valour and determination and the firm Faith in fulfillment of the Divine Assurance had reached their climatic standards, when even on elimination of all such supports as were providing him some succor or other in confronting the tough situations he had been passing through, not the slightest shift occurred in the firmness of his Faith, the consistence in his action and

persistence on patience and submission to Allah's will. Even though the severity of the situations made him restless. Allah Almighty conferred on him, in order to cheer him up and console and comfort him, in order to cheer him up and console and comfort him, the honour of having Me'raj (Ascension). In order to have his grieving heart gladdened. Allah Almighty had the actual spectacle of all that was to happen in the Hereafter and the position that he hold Reckoning shown and revealed to him through the medium of *Meraj* (Ascension). It all happened almost in the same way as had sort of happened to Hazrat Ibrahim (AS). That was when Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) had the sacrifices made of his dearest possessions to propitiate Allah, including the sacrifice of his homeland and his love of his wife and son. To top it all, he had even made, to the extent it was possible on his part to have it done, the sacrifice of his young, precocious son. He had, thus, already achieved the success having passed through these tests and trials. But, for his further satisfaction he made a request to Allah Almighty:

(My Lord! Show me how Thou wilt quicken the dead.)

The answer was:

(Does thou not believe?)

He said:

\* Rector Nadwatul-Ulama, Lucknow-7.

(Yea, but that my heart may rest as ease.)

Why not! I have full Faith. Yet, for strengthening the heart, I want to see how Allah Almighty revives the dead. Thereupon, Allah Almighty had the spectacle of this phenomenon, too, shown to him.

Likewise, when the Prophet (SAW) had attained that lofty position of compliance with the Divine Command and contentment with the Divine Decree, Allah Almighty revealed and showed him the place and position he would hold in the Hereafter, even though he had not asked for it, in order to hearten him up. And, having him called up to His close Proximity, Allah honoured him.

On that particular night he was taking rest in the *Harem* itself. Suddenly, Hazrat Gibrail (AS) appeared and said: Come on! You are summoned. Overnight, he (SAW) was taken from there to the Aqsa mosque in the city of Jerusalem in Syria (Palestine). There he (SAW) was introduced by Allah Almighty to all the previous Prophets. Then he (SAW) himself happened to be eyewitness to it. Then he (SAW) was taken to as close a proximity with the Divine Throne as Allah had Willed him to. There he was conferred upon the beatitude of having a conversation and an audience in seclusion with the Lord of the worlds.

Allah Almighty has, in fact, made the man such a creature as is vested,

along with the materialistic, corporeal physique and its impresses which can be seen and appreciated by means of empirical, apparent perceptions, with exclusively celestial and empyreal conditions also, which cannot be appreciated but by means of empyrean perceptions only. These can, in fact, be witnessed only in man's next life. Nevertheless, in the earthly life, too, Allah Almighty lets his Apostles have, sometimes, the vision of these conditions. What are these conditions which have, on the one hand, an apparent, empirical aspect of their own which can be seen and heard; and have, on the other hand, an invisible one which cannot be perceived by means of these earthly eyes and ears. These are, by way of instance, like this: the legitimately earned wealth appears, according to empirical and materialistic perceptions of man, exactly like the illegitimately earned wealth has a pure and pristine condition; whereas the illegitimately earned one oozes filth and stench. Similarly, the virtuous deeds look, according to empirical and apparent perceptions of man, exactly like the evil deeds. But, according to intrinsic, latent perceptions which have been identified through the medium of Prophets, they are arduous and distressing deeds. Instances thereof have been cited in the holy Quran and the Traditions. For instance, about the acquisition of gold and silver by illegitimate means, it is stated that in the Hereafter, where the intrinsic characteristics of each and everything would get manifested, that

illegitimately acquired gold and silver would be like the red-hot iron with which the sides and foreheads of their benefitters would be branded.

(Then their foreheads and sides would be branded with them)

Likewise, the holy Tradition has it that in case anyone has somebody's land occupied by illegal means, it would be in the Hereafter, having been made into a garland, hang around his neck. Similarly, the usury and illegitimate wealth would turn into something like feces. Thus, the acts of human life have two aspects. One aspect that pertains to this world is the apparent, materialistic one. It is manifested here in its materialistic condition. The other aspect is intrinsic and invisible, which has been communicated by Allah's Prophets. It is the one which the man would come across in his other life. The Prophet (SAW) had the cognizance of this aspect, by virtue of his being the Prophet, in its verisimilitude, Still, to consolidate it further, he was made to have it witnessed, too, on occasion of his Ascension. He (SAW) had, thereby, his conviction by cognizance prompted to the status of conviction by the vision of the verily itself. Thus, the exhortations that he (SAW) gave of performing righteous deeds had the quality and semblance of déjà vu. In this context, was to be told that: whatever your deeds, do not get satisfied and content with only the apparent and manifested aspect of them. For, it is perceived by you only for the duration of your momentary, earthly life.

It is in the life of the Hereafter which is to last indefinitely that its intrinsic aspect would be manifested in concrete form. There would be then no recourse to escape it. Hence, have the precaution taken here itself in order to attain salvation and escape from it.

Anyhow, the things shown him on occasion of his Ascension are mentioned in Traditional versions. For instance, the version given in *Sunan-e-Abu Dawood*, has it that the Prophet (SAW) stated that: when I was on my Ascension trip, I happened to pass by some such people who had their nails made of copper with which they are scratching their faces and chests. I said: O Gibrail! Who are these people? He said: these are the people who ate human flesh and were not considerate to people's repute (that is: did back-biting and defamed the people).

In '*Seerat Ibn-e-Hisham*' and *Tafseer Ibn-e-Katheer*' some other people, too, are mentioned. For example, the miserable plights, corresponding to their respective deeds, of those who usurped the rights of orphans, the usurers, the adulterers, etc., were manifested to him (SAW). Apart from these things, some cases of happy conditions were also shown to him. He was shown his abode in the paradise from afar. He (SAW) wanted to have a view of it at close range. Thereupon he was told that, as of the moment, only that much was enough.

On the night of Accession, three bounties were conferred upon him (SAW)

by Allah: last verse of *Sura Baqra* which consists of glad tidings about the culmination of Islamic creeds and the Faith and the end of its phase of afflictions. The very Exclusive Divine Mercy made the announcement that every follower of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) who would not be guilty of committing the sin of *Shirk* would be conferred upon the favour of His Munificence and Forgiveness. And, a proclamation was made that: *Namaz* (prayers) to be offered fifty times (a day) is made binding on the Ummat. Later, on suggestion from Hazrat Musa, he (SAW) made a request for reduction in number of compulsory prayers got reduced to five per day with the merit earned on that retained to be the same as that of the fifty prayers.

There is in Bukhari a tradition narrated by Ibn-e-Abbas (RAA) to the effect that on the night of Accession, Dajjal (the Antichrist), too, was shown to him (SAW).

Details of the Ascension have been given in the holy Quran as well. For one, it has found its mention in the *Sura 'Al-Isra'*. In the *Sura 'An-Najm'* its details are narrated thus:

(By the star when it goes down. Your companion has not gone astray, nor has he erred. And he speaks not of his own desire. It is but a Revelation Revealed. One of mighty powers has taught it to him. One of mighty make. Then he stood straight. While he was on the uppermost horizon. Thereafter he drew nigh then he

let himself down. Till he was two bow's length off or yet nearer. Thus He Revealed to His bondman whatever He Revealed. The heart lied not in what he saw. Will you then dispute with him concerning what he saw. And assuredly he saw him at another descent, nigh thereto is the Garden of Abode. When that covered the lote-tree which covered it. The eye did not wander, nor did it turn aside. Assuredly he beheld of the greatest signs of his Lord.)

(An-Najm : 1-18)

In the morning next to the night of Ascension, he (SAW) mentioned his Ascension to the people. Thereupon, those who were opposed and hostile to him started ridiculing him, saying: whence was ever such a conveyance in existence as would take someone from Makkah to Jerusalem in no time and get him back before the dawn. It is (this claim made by him, that is), rather, the proof of his (SAW) being a liar. But, the Muslims, on hearing this said: we do believe in much more monumental things than this, what would, then, hinder us from believing in it? And, their Faith got further boosted.

Hazrat Abu Bakar Siddique (RAA) said: If it is the Prophet (SAW) who has said so, then he has said the truth. Why should you be amazed at it? By God! He tells me that the Revelation descends on him during any part of the day and night from the heaven to the earth and I testify him. It is something much more complex and farfetched than what you are marveling at. ■



## Islamic Media in Theory and Practice

- Nazrul Hafeez Nadwi\*

Allah (SWT) is the Lord, the creator and the Cherisher of the whole universe and Islam, being His final revelation unto the world, is the religion of the whole mankind. Those who accept this ultimate Reality are called the Muslims and it is their divine duty to propagate this message to others who have not embraced it yet. This had been the duty of all the Messengers (AS) of Allah (SWT). The Holy Quran says:

“Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching”.  
(16:25)

And the Messenger (SAW) says:

“Propagate from me even if it be a single verse”.

The Sahabah (RA) (Companions of the Messenger of Allah) and then the dai's (profunder) of Islam preached the Islamic message to the people of the world even today., it is obligatory on the Muslims to present Islam to the whole mankind. If they shirk from this responsibility, it will be a great sin.

Thus media and daw'ah (Islamic preaching) are indissolubly linked.

In fact the Holy Quran has used the word Daw'ah (nearly) as a synonym

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for media and it is hard to find any alternative to this interpretation. Media acts as a means of daw'ah to glorify Islam.

On the basis of the Quranic use of the term daw'ah, the various connotations of this term can be:

Communicating message to all and/or to a particular personality with the intention of love and good wishing for him.

Daw'ah demands that a da'i must know the psyche of the mad'u (whom the message is conveyed to or in simple terms who is invited to Islam) so that he can succeed in his mission (without annoying the mad'u);

It also means that a da'i must have a firm faith in what he preaches. The more he will feel restless to propagate it to others and the most people will get motivated by him.

Dawa'h also conveys the meaning that a da'l should watch and ward his target people to know whether his propagation has held the ground. Briefly spaking, daw'ah refers to dynamism, which may include in its meaning the terms like repetition, modernity and reminding which, in turn, are three branches of media.

## Repetition and revision

Repeating and revising the same thing so many times as demanded by the changing circumstances so that every time people may consider it as a new thing. For example, there are so many things, which cannot be altered. Their meaning and essence remains same every time everywhere. Be it the vaccination for the control of polio or other diseases or the Islamic teachings regarding Sawm (Fasting), Hajj, Sacrifice (slaughtering of animals on the occasion of 'Id al-Adhha), the respective messages are always the same but there will always remain need to present them in a unique manner so that people of every age can find them up to date.

In the Holy Quran and the Hadith there are given clear guidance's regarding the method of repetition and revising as being a mode of daw'ah.

## Modernity and innovation

Deriving a new thought from an old one while keeping the essence of the original intact is the purpose of this. For example, strong feelings of hatred against attributing partners to Allah (SWT) and idol worship can be driven while talking about the concept of Tawhid (Oneness of Allah); throwing light on the sacred lives of Allah's Messengers implies that we should make these perfect personalities our role models

and should ourselves live; inviting people to live a civilized life in other words means that ignorance and illiteracy should be ended and it may also convey the idea of an organized life, a pollution free atmosphere and an invitation to keeping law and order in the society.

## Reminding or Admonishing

Human nature is to forget. Therefore, there always remains the need to remind man of his duties he has to perform and realities he has to take care of. The Holy Quran testifies thus:

"Therefore do thou remind for thou art one to remind". (88:21)

"O you who believed, believe

But it is strange enough and very unfortunate too that when we remind people of the beauties and virtues of Islam, some of them reject it as mere propaganda. How can it be so? Using media for a positive purpose should not be termed as propaganda which according to a European writer is nothing but prevarication. Yet another writer relates his experiences thus: (Propagandist) individuals or groups have, metaphorically and allusively, made organized efforts to achieve their ends so that they could dominate others' viewpoints.

An American scholar says that propaganda is basically an offensive

weapon rather than defensive. Through it other's view can easily be changed. And a psychologist writes that propaganda is synonymous to cheating and deception.

While launching propoganda the experts always take into consideration the expediencies and interests on whom it depends, its ways and means and the particular thoughts intended to air through it.

The above given explanations of propoganda lead us to the conclusion that propoganda is a negative process aiming at poisoning people's brains with dubious concepts and false ideas having nothing to do with rationality, reality and respect for humanity.

History bears witness to the fact that falsehood has no legs to stand upon. False propoganda always leads to its fate. What happened to Communism in Russia? How was its talismanic edifice razed to the ground by the waves of truth? What happened to Mussolini, Napoleon and Hitler?

The pro-Hitlerism propogandists used to hypnotise people by exciting songs and used to use all kinds of inciting tools when Hitler used to appear to address them.

Keeping in view the differences between Islamic Da'wah and the modern day propoganda one can reasonably say that there is no least

comparison in these two. While the former aims at presenting the divine Message of Islam in its pure and pristine form before the whole mankind without entering into any tussle with the people of other faiths, the latter relies on falsehood and fabrication of truth, a strategy that always has a bad end.

### **Islamic Media and Its Distinguishing Features Truthfulness and Integrity**

Islamic Media bases its endeavors on the truthful character of the Prophetic mission. The Messenger of Islam has commanded his followers to speak truth, come what may. The Holy Quran speaks:

And whosoever bringeth the truth and believeth therein- such are the dutiful. (39:33)

Again Allah says:

And who doth greater wrong than he who telleth a lie against Allah, and denieth the truth when it reacheth him? Will not the home of disbelievers be in hell? (39:32)

The Messenger (SAW) started his mission of Da'wah when he had already been accepted by his country-people as truthful and trustworthy.

#### **Pure and High Objectives**

The sole objectives of the world media in present circumstances are: instigating hatred and enmity among different sections of human society and

nations, provoking the poor against wealthy, inciting clashes among minorities and majorities, airing slogans based upon national and regional prejudice and creating an atmosphere of war between two neighbouring countries in order to sell their weapons. Concealing its own national blunders even if they be as huge as mountains and highlighting others' mistakes even if they be very slight, patting on the back of atheistic and hypocritical people and defending them, tearing human society into pieces, compromising on the principles of faith and belief against a very petty sum of money and distorting and trampling the truth is the hallmark of the modern international media. Contrary to this all – destructive attitude, Islamic media, on the other hand, works in the broader interests of mankind with peace and justice and consolidation of human social fabric as its sole agenda. It guides humanity towards the divine guidance enshrined in Allah's immutable Word, the Holy Quran. And thus, it is based upon construction rather than on destruction. Safeguarding the society from evil and uncertainty and inviting to piety and good is the fundamental principle of the Islamic media. It does not insult peoples' self respect nor does it betray their secrets.

The Islamic media bases its efforts on these Quranic injunctions:

Verily! The hearing, and the sight, and the heart, of each of those one will be questioned (by Allah) (17:36)

Islamic media does not present nonsense stuff just to create sensational headlines thereby attracting people's attention towards it nor does it present news merely on the basis of rumours. It rather scrutinizes the sources of information and thoroughly concentrates on its after effects on the society before publicizing it.

Reformation of the individual and building and organization of society is the basic purpose for which the Islamic media strives. Hence it does not present news merely on the basis of rumours. It rather scrutinizes the sources of information and thoroughly concentrates on its after effects on the society before publicizing it.

Reformation of the individual and building and organization of society is the basic purpose for which the Islamic media strives. Hence it does not present immoral programmes and does not have columns for the sake of wasteful entertainment nor does it spread useless news, publish nude pictures provoking animal instincts and inciting sexuality in society.

Constant alertness and supervision

It is the foremost duty of the Islamic media to keep constant vigil

over the evil and wrong that prevails in the society and it always tries its level best to find out the actual cause of evil, analyses its pros and cons to play a constructive role for the establishment of a healthy society. It does not keep its eyes closed towards happenings like an ostrich, nor does it console the public by giving them vain hopes and keep them entertaining through different programmes of fun and sports and games.

Unlike the media agencies of most of the third world countries, particularly the Muslim countries, that very sadly overlook real issues and ignore vices to woeful extent, the Islamic media takes notice of every kind of incident and acts in earnest, to find out solutions based upon practical wisdom and sagacity. This is all enshrined in the Sunnah of the revered Messenger of Allah (SAW). No sooner did any kind of incident happen in the Islamic society than he ordered his companions to assemble in the mosque. He would then explain the situation until people would have no confusion left in their minds regarding the matter. Once in Madinah a strange shrill voice terrified the people and left them perturbed and confused. Allah's Messenger (SAW) [being the leader of the people and as such the most responsible] rode a horse to know about the fact. He came back and assured the people that nothing wrong

had taken place. This is totally contrary to what media of the third world countries does. They let the rumours spread freely until at last falsehood takes hold in the absence of truth.

The Islamic media is always impartial in dispelling the Truth. It always focuses its attention in the broader interests of the Ummah. Its behavior is based upon social justice and is always free from all kinds of extremism.

The Islamic does not mislead the general masses by exploiting their simplemindedness. The Islamic media stands for spreading awareness about real problems and issues and does not engage in trade by presenting them in ambiguous ways.

### **Responsibilities of the Islamic Media Towards the Youth**

Ironically even the Arab media and also that of the other Muslim countries don't have special religious programmes for their youth, let alone the non-Muslim nations. Due to non-availability of such religious programmes in the media that could guide our youth about the physical and psychological developments that take place in them at the beginning of adolescence and also due to latter's inborn shyness and family atmosphere, our youth lack a proper understanding of sex related problems confronting them and thus go astray. As a result they

get ruined by turning towards wrong and defective knowledge. Neither even the educational institutions nor the mosques come forward to rescue the youth from dilemma. It therefore, lays extraordinary burden on the Islamic media to make well-planned programmes for solving the problems of the youth.

The Islamic media is responsible for proper guidance of the youth so that they can guide their society towards the right direction when they are at the helm and will not become a burden on it.

Media (especially daily newspapers and journals) should fully inform the youth about the day-to-day problems of people and the real issues in the society so that, by dint of their inborn and natural faculty to think over these issues and problems, they can come forward for the welfare of people and the betterment of the society. They gradually adopt pragmatic approach in thought and action as long as their age goes on increasing and become more realistic than idealistic in solving the matters of life.

It is thus the duty of the media to guide the youth towards the end.

Similarly, the Islamic media cannot shirk its responsibility to work for the moral and religious development of women. Various problems confronting our women, at domestic and societal

levels, and their solutions, is a challenge before the Islamic media. And since women generally remain often busy with their home tasks, radio can play as vital role in educating them than TV, as they do not need any formal way to watch it. They can listen to it while doing their own job.

Women, especially young girls, get more influenced than men. They are extraordinarily interested in family matters and issues in the society. The Islamic media is therefore, highly responsible for moulding women's mind so that they in turn, could successfully grow religious and moral values in their children. It must highlight the natural qualities of women instead of destroying and wasting them (as does the modern media do by exploiting the physical and psychological traits of women in so many ways). It should also help them find real answers to the problems that often become cause for family disorder.

The Islamic media should educate women about physical, mental, emotional and psychological changes taking place in growing children. It should also strive for making them content by highlighting to them meaninglessness of the ever changing and unstable fashionable goods so that they can live an economically stable life without spending money in wasteful ways.

Senior citizens have also been very vital in the formation of a righteous society. It is the duty of the Islamic media to utilize their experiences in bringing about harmonious relations between the younger and the older generations. They can play a commendable role in the guidance and instructions of the younger generation. Media should also take care of this section of society and should present such things that suit the demands of old age like news not so adventure making, interesting and entertaining programmes and stories. Senior citizens also like ads on modern manufactures and medicines for dealing with the weakness of old age.

### **Some Peculiarities of a successful Media**

The success of media depends upon how much clear it is about its goal to have an already schemed impact on the target people. For this purpose it is necessary for the media men to have a clear vision of people's likes and dislikes, their collective psyche and then have to see clearly what role their programmes (written or spoken) play in the society.

For making an estimate and evaluation of their success in building up public opinion and peoples' mindset, journalists have their specific ways and means to evaluate the impact of news, pictures, analyses, interviews and

discussions on peoples' minds. Media programmes should necessarily represent general public's, or for that matter, feelings and emotions majority of people and they should always have a good effect on the atmosphere and the place where it operates and on the persons or groups targeted.

It is proved through experience that a reader or a listener or a viewer accepts only those things that suit his own taste and interest. He rejects what does not fit to his fervor and liking. In other words media cannot thrust its programmes on people. It however, by highlighting the merits and/or demerits of a particular thing, can change his perception about the same thing. That is, people act on a particular message after they understand it clearly. Thus understanding acts as a prelude to action, which always follows after willingness to act:

Understanding + Willingness =  
Action.

This indicates that whatever the media presents should be understandable to each and everyone addressed. This in turn necessitates for a journalist to have know-how of the addressed person or groups' psyche, mental tendencies and cultural standard.

A successful media wins trust of its people by not exaggerating what it

presents and by not going to extremes, but by presenting facts as they are. Moreover, a journalist should know that people will not get influenced by what he presents to them unless he himself accepts the effect of it. That is to say: unless a journalist first himself gets influenced by the news and articles, he cannot communicate enthusiasm and influence to others; when he himself is ignorant of the real message the news and the articles carry, he should not then expect from the public to know what he wants them to know, no matter how powerful the means of communication at his disposal are.

A question arises here. Why is it necessary for media to gain public confidence? The answer to this question is: When you gain peoples' trust, they expect whatever a journalist presents he is demanded to present it with love and sincerity and it should be reasonable and balanced. It should not carry any kind of harassment, promise or challenge nor should it create any egotism or arrogance.

One more quality of a successful media, that every newspaper editor and producer of radio news and TV programs needs to take into consideration, is that its essay should be concordant with people's psyche and not (necessarily) with logic.

The excellence of a newsreader does not depend on presenting the news as he receives it but it depends upon presenting it to the viewers and the listeners in a way they like most. In other words the newsreader should proceed along with the heartbeats, feelings, understanding, acceptance, agreement, enthusiasm and emotions. He must respect people's emotions before giving food to their intellect. His tone and pronunciation should be in complete harmony with the spirit of what he communicates and should experience it himself from within. We can put it in other way: All materials of media has two wings to fly with- reason and emotions. Both should be balanced.

An important thing for media source to consider is that it should not contradict other sources of information for in that case a common man will get confused and will reject them all, nor should it repeat the same stuff as already aired by others as people always want to get fresh and unique information. They cannot waste their time in reading, listening or watching the same thing more than once. Today so many books, journals and newspaper are written on a particular topic that it is difficult to find even 2% of the required material out of dozens of such books and journals.

Media programmes should be always comprehensive a well grounded



leading to logical conclusion so that one could not contradict them, because such programmes are tested on the grounds of both emotions and logic. It is a fact that unlike individual and personal views and ideas, facts and informations found in practical life are more effective, and attractive. Furthermore, message of the media should be clear and its goal well oriented. It must also be taken into consideration that what type of information is communicated and what should be the proper method, time and place when it is presented. People's views and counter-views play important role as a feed back in media.

Islam has made no difference between means and goal. It is not Islamically lawful to utilize bad means for good end.

In the modern times capitalists and politicians use media to fulfill their commercial interests. Media has now acquired the status of a permanent industry. Shah Waliyyullah of Delhi (a great Islamic Scholar and Spiritual mentor) in his monumental work *Hujjatullah al – Balighah*, writes that economics should be subservient to ethics. But today the commercialized mind, in order to popularize intoxicants, nightclubs, dance clubs, and cinema, has exploited media by giving big advertisements through it. Contrarily to this, the Islamic media consider such ads as against the Islamic principles

and morals.

The Islamic media gives, in any case, first priority to moral values and principles. All other things are subservient to them. In contradiction with this, spiritual and moral values carry no weight before material interests in the Western media. Whatever is communicated, first priority is given to material gain. It is because the Western media does not have any goal to realize or any well-defined purpose to fulfill nor does it intend to play any sincere and selfless role in conflict resolution. The Western media prefers material gain at all costs even if it may have to depend on black money, wine, inciting sexuality in youth, popularizing animal instincts or descending down deep into the pit of disgrace for it.

Therefore, when good means are necessary for achieving good ends, then the essays and articles should also be pure and sane. They must be based on wisdom, sincere guidance, good will. They should be based on seriousness and gravity and not on sentimentalism and provocation. Above all media should be based on the pure belief of Tawhid (Oneness of Allah) and free of myths and voluptuousness for the Islamic media is strongly connected with the Islamic da'wah. ■

## Attributes of Allah, The Creator

- Shahul Hameed

Indeed the knowledge of Allah Almighty given to us through the revelations to our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the most beneficial knowledge we can have. Because, it is this knowledge that enables us to know our Lord and worship Him in the manner He should be worshipped.

Without God allowing us to drink a drop from the boundless ocean of knowledge, we would have been completely lost. But God is all merciful. So He communicated with man:

*"Know, then, (O Man!)*

*that there is no deity save*

*Allah..."(Muhammad 47:19)*

*"Say: 'He is the One God: God the Eternal, the Uncaused Cause of All Being. He begets not, and neither is He begotten; and there is nothing that could be compared with Him.'" (al-Ikhlās 112:1-4)*

In the above verse, Allah is called "As-Samad," which is rendered by the famous Qur'an translator, Muhammad Asad, as "the Eternal Uncaused Cause of All Being." The term "as-Samad" is used in the Qur'an only once, and it stands for an independent and eternal Creator who originated everything and on whom everything depends for its existence.

The verses, "There is nothing that could be compared with Him" (al-Ikhlās 112:4), and "There is nothing like unto Him..." (al-Shourā 42:11) underscore the fact that God is one and unique in every respect. For this reason, any attempt on our part to describe God through the use of similes or symbols may verge on blasphemy.

The maximum we can do is to quote the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet that deal with God and His attributes. Because God is far above the phenomenal world He has created; and consequently He is beyond the scope of human perception familiar with the material world.

Hence the question, "Why can't we see God?" is a meaningless one. Because, the laws of physics, for instance, that govern the workings of the universe do not govern transcendental existence.

It is God who created this world within the bounds of space and time and for that reason the laws He has set for this world do not apply to Him:

*"No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision: He is above all comprehension, yet is acquainted with all things." (al-An'am 6:103)*

Since Allah is entirely different from all things created and far above His creation, His attributes cannot be like the attributes of any of His creation. And yet, in our imperfect language when we try to speak of the transcendence of God, we are constrained to use the same expressions we use to describe limited mundane beings.

Certainly this is likely to create some confusion; but when we read or speak about God, we must bear in mind the huge difference between the Creator and the created.

For instance, we may read in several places in the Qur'an that: "Allah is He Who hears and sees (all things)." (Al-Haj 22:75)

We too can hear and see. But our seeing and hearing are limited by the limitations of our eyes and ears. Allah Almighty can hear millions of people praying at the same time in hundreds of languages from every corner of the earth and understand each of their prayers; and what is more, if He wants, He can see and hear them even before they pray. But we cannot see or hear beyond a particular distance, and if two persons speak to us simultaneously we can listen to only one of them.

The foregoing means that Allah Almighty's ability to see and hear is nothing like our seeing and hearing.

Allah Almighty says in His Qur'an what means:

*"He is the first and the last, the evident and the immanent: and He has full knowledge of all things."* (Al-Hadid 57:3)

*"And verily, it is We Who give life, and Who give death: it is We Who remain inheritors after all else passes away."* (Al-Hijr 15:23)

It is clear from the above verses that all beings and things subject to our sensual perception have only a fleeting existence in this ephemeral world and that the ultimate reality is Allah alone.

The responsibility of humans who are endowed with the power of observation and inference is to acknowledge and accept the ultimate reality of Allah Almighty. Genuine Iman demands faithful affirmation of the ultimate transcendent reality, made out of conviction supported by reason. And so the holy Qur'an urges its readers to observe and ponder over the natural phenomena visible in the world around us as the "Signs of Allah Almighty":

*"Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of the night and the day; in the sailing of the ship: through the ocean for the profit of humankind; in the rain which Allah sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; in the beasts of all kind that He scatters through the earth; in the change of the winds, and the cloud which they trail*

*like their slaves between the sky and the earth. Here, indeed, are signs for a people who are wise.*" (Al-Baqarah 2:164)

And Allah says:

*"He is Allah, the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of forms (or colors). To Him belong the most beautiful names: Whatever is in the heavens and on earth, doth declare His praises and glory: and He is the exalted in might, the wise."* (Al-Hashr 59:24)

"The most beautiful names" of Allah actually stand for His attributes of perfection and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), has said in a well-known hadith:

"Verily, there are ninety-nine names of God, one hundred minus one. He who enumerates them (and believes in them) would get into Paradise." (Bukhari)

"The Creator", "the Evolver" and "the Bestower of forms" refer possibly to three aspects of Allah's creative act, which simultaneously take place. [Allah knows best.]

We know that humans usually undertake their 'creative' efforts in a long and tedious process: They conceive an idea in the beginning; plan and design it and then look for the necessary resources for it and then slowly and laboriously work to execute its production. But Allah's act of creation

is a matter of His will: He says in the Holy Qur'an:

*"To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: When He decreeth a matter, He saith to it: "Be," and it is."* (Al-Baqarah 2:117);

*"Verily, when He intends a thing, His Command is, "Be," and it is!"* (Ya-Sin 36:82)

*"For, to anything which We have willed, We but say the word, 'Be,' and it is"*(An-Nahl 16:40)

Allah Almighty says:

*"God is He save whom there is no deity: the Sovereign supreme, the Holy, the One with whom all salvation rests, the Giver of faith, the One who determines what is true and false, the Almighty, the One who subdues wrong and restores right, the One to whom all greatness belongs! Utterly remote is God, in His limitless glory, from anything to which men may ascribe a share in His divinity!"* (Al-Hashr 59:23)

Indeed we "see" God not with our eyes, but with our intellect that prompts us to ponder over the wonders of creation and exclaim:

*"O our Sustainer! Thou hast not created (aught of) this without meaning and purpose. Limitless art Thou in Thy glory! Keep us safe, then, from suffering through fire!"* (Aal 'Imran 3:191) ■

## The Financial System is a Larger Threat Than Terrorism

- Paul Craig

In the 21st century, Americans have been distracted by the hyper-expensive 'War on Terror.' Trillions of dollars have been added to the taxpayers' burden and many billions of dollars in profits to the military/security complex in order to combat insignificant foreign 'threats,' such as the Taliban, that remain undefeated after fifteen years. All this time the financial system – working hand-in-hand with policymakers – has done more damage to Americans than terrorists could possibly inflict.

The purpose of the Federal Reserve and US Treasury's policy of zero interest rates is to support the prices of the over-leveraged and fraudulent financial instruments that unregulated financial systems always create. If inflation was properly measured, these zero rates would be negative rates, which mean not only that retirees have no income from their retirement savings but also that saving is a losing proposition. Instead of earning interest on your savings, you pay interest that shrinks the real value of your saving.

Central banks, neoliberal economists, and the prostitute financial media advocate negative interest rates in order to force people to spend instead of save. The notion is that the economy's poor economic performance is not due to the failure of economic policy, but to people hoarding their money. The Federal Reserve and its coterie of economists and

prostitutes maintain the fiction of too much savings despite the publication of the Federal Reserve's own report that 52% of Americans cannot raise \$400 without selling personal possessions or borrowing the money. [http://www.federalreserve.gov/econresdata/2013-report-economic-well-being-us-households-201407.pdf]

Negative interest rates, which have been introduced in some countries such as Switzerland and threatened in other countries, have caused people to avoid the tax on bank deposits by withdrawing their savings from banks in large denomination bills. In Switzerland, for example, demand for the 1,000 franc bill (about \$1,000) has increased sharply. These large denomination bills now account for 60% of the Swiss currency in circulation.

The response of depositors to negative interest rates has resulted in neoliberal economists, such as Larry Summers, calling for the elimination of large denomination bank notes in order to make it difficult for people to keep their cash balances outside of banks.

Other neoliberal economists, such as Kenneth Rogoff want to eliminate cash altogether and have only electronic money. Electronic money cannot be removed from bank deposits except by spending it. With electronic money as the only money, financial institutions can use negative interest rates in order to steal the savings

of their depositors.

People would attempt to resort to gold, silver, and forms of private money, but other methods of payment and saving would be banned, and government would conduct sting operations in order to suppress evasions of electronic money with stiff penalties. What this picture shows is that government, economists, and prostitutes are allied against citizens achieving any financial independence from personal saving. Policymakers have a crackpot economic policy and those with control over your life value their scheme more than they value your welfare.

This is the fate of people in the so-called democracies. Any remaining control that they have over their lives is being taken away. Governments serve a few powerful interest groups whose agendas result in the destruction of the host economies. The off shoring of middle class jobs transfers income and wealth from the middle class to the executives and owners of the corporation, but it also kills the domestic consumer market for the offshore goods and services. As Michael Hudson writes, it kills the host. The financialization of the economy also kills the host and the owners of corporations as well. When corporate executives borrow from banks in order to boost share prices and their performance bonuses by buying back the publicly held stock of the corporations, future profits are converted into interest payments to banks. The future income streams of the corporations are financialized. If the future income streams fail, the companies can be foreclosed, like

homeowners, and the banks become the owners of the corporations.

Between the off shoring of jobs and the conversion of more and more income streams into payments to banks, less and less is available to be spent on goods and services. Thus, the economy fails to grow and falls into long-term decline. Today many Americans can only pay the minimum payment on their credit card balance. The result is massive growth in a balance that can never be paid off. It is these people who are the least able to service debt who are hit with draconian charges. The way the credit card companies have it now, if you make one late payment or your payment is returned by your bank, you are hit for the next six months with a Penalty Annual Percentage Rate of 29.49%. In Europe entire countries are being foreclosed. Greece and Portugal have been forced into liquidation of national assets and the social security systems. So many women have been forced into poverty and prostitution that the hourly price of a prostitute has been driven down to \$4.12.

Throughout the Western world the financial system has become an exploiter of the people and a deadweight loss on economies. There are only two possible solutions. One is to break the large banks up into smaller and local entities such as existed prior to the concentration that deregulation fostered. The other is to nationalize them and operate them solely in the interest of the general welfare of the population. ■

*(Courtesy: YMD)*

## **AIMPB Meeting**

**- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi**

The working committee meeting of All India Muslim Personal Law Board was held under the Presidentship of Maulana S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi in Nadwa on April 16, 2016. The Board passed a resolution taking a firm stand not to allow any interference by the centre in Muslim' Personal Law. The Board also decided to continue its nationwide programme "Deen aur Dastoor Bachav Tehrik" (Save religion and constitution). The AIMPLB had launched this programme in March 2015 after the Rajasthan government had made 'Surya Namaskar' compulsory in all state-run educational institutions.

"The working committee of the Muslim Personal Law Board is firm on its stand that centre must not interfere in the Personal law of Muslims" Mr. Zafaryab Jilani, member AIMPLB, told, newsmen after the Board meeting. Further emphasizing on The Board resolution, Jilani, who is also a noted lawyer, said: "Previous governments (central governments) have never interfered in Muslim Personal Law. We want the present government to maintain the same stand."

The AIMPLB had to pass such a resolution after the Supreme Court took sou. Motu cognizance of triple talaq issue in March this year. Some Muslim women's Quest for Equality, and Saira Bano's Petition challenging triple talaq would be taken up together by the apex court. The Supreme Court, on its part, has asked the Centre, to inform the court about its stand on the issue of 'triple talaq'. The AIMPLB has filed an interlocutory application in the case. "Supreme Court will take up both the

cases related with triple talaq. The AIMPLB will file its reply before the Supreme Court on the issue," said Mr. Zafaryab Jilani. Another issue taken up at the AIMPLB meeting was related with its ongoing nationwide programme 'Deen aur Dastoor Bachav Tehrik' (Save religion and Constitution).

The Board has decided to continue its programme to save the country's secular fabric. In a bid to check increasing cases of divorce of Muslim couples ending up at family courts, the Board has also decided to set up more Darul Qazas, Islamic Courts, so that Muslims could put up their cases before it instead of going to regular courts.

Hyderabad based Aasma Zehra, member AIMPLB said that the Board is trying to ensure women's rights in Muslim Community. She urged Muslim women to put up their cases related to divorce or dowry in Darul Qazas instead of going to local courts.

Maulana Syed Wali Rehmani was unanimously elected General Secretary of the Board. Maulana Shah Fazlur Rahim Mujaddidi was elected Secretary of the Board.

Prominent among those present at the meeting included Vice President of the Board. Dr. Kalbe Sadiq, Mr. Asaduddin Owaisi, M.P., Maulana Abdul Wahab Khilji, Maulana Khalilur Rahman Sajjad Nomani, Maulana Atiq Ahmad Bastavi, Mr. Kamal Farooqi, Maulana Khalid Rasheed Firangi Mahli, Maulana Anisur Rahman Qasmi, Safia Nasim, Uzma Nahid, Noor Jahan Shakeel, Mamduha Majidah among others. ■

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Rs. 120 (per copy Rs. 12) in India  
\$ 30 (USA, UK, Asian Africa and European Countries)

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