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THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST

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Instinct of Love

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Man is neither wholly a rational animal nor is he so helpless as to be obliged to make his submission to any law or authority. He is also not a part in a machine which moves along a set course and according to a fixed law. He is mind as well as heart, faith as well as intuition and submission as well as love. It is in the many-sidedness of his personality that lies the secret of his greatness and nobility and it is through it that he has been also to overcome seemingly insuperable obstacles and perform superhuman deeds. What is more, it was on account of this grand peculiarity of his being that he was entrusted with the 'responsibility' the heavens, the earth and the mountains had declined to shoulder and has succeeded in rising to heights that are the envy of the angels.

The bond between man and his Creator is not only of a legal or logical character that may be limited to the payment of dues, the observance of laws and the enjoyment of rights. It is also a bond of love and other sublime emotions like those of devotion, tenderness and self-effacement and its scope is so wide that no human thought or deed has remained unaffected by it. Islam does not forbid this love. On the other hand, it calls us to it, encourages it and sustains it.

(The Four Pillars of Islam)

Wisdom of Qur'an

Leave them alone: eating and enjoying themselves. Hope distracts them. But soon they will know. (Surah al-Hijr-3)

Commentary:

This is Allah's mercy and justice. If the unbelievers use their faculty of reasoning to choose to deny some hard facts of life and death, and devote themselves madly to building up this world, then, why should they be denied the fruits of their works? (Au.)

Razi writes: "The verse should lead us to believe that an overwhelming indulgence in worldly affairs should be avoided by an intelligent Muslim."

The Prophet (SAWS) has said, "The first generation Muslims succeeded by faith and renunciation, and the last of them will be destroyed by parsimony and vain hopes." He also said, "Four things are a sign of bad luck: inability to cry, hardness of the heart, vain hopes and greed of this world." (Qurtubi) The hadith is in Bazzar, reported by Anas (Shafi)

It is worth quoting here Yusuf Ali's soothing words: "The foolish and the wicked set great store by the pleasures of this world. In their pride they think they have all knowledge. In the fullness of knowledge they will see how wrong they were. Meanwhile those who have received the Light should not for a single moment wonder at the apparent prosperity of the ungodly in this world. They should leave them alone, confident in the goodness and justice of Allah."○

"We did not destroy a people but they had a known decree." (S-al-Hijr-4)

Commentary:

The unbelievers usually taunt the believers: "If we are wrong, why do we prosper? Why are we not destroyed?" The answer is in this verse: "We did not destroy a people but they had a known decree." There is a time for prosperity and there is a term for destruction (Au, with a point from Thanwi). ○

Pearls From the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

It is related by Abu Sa'eed Khudri that the Apostle of God said: "The most beloved of men in the sight of God, on the Day of Resurrection, and the nearest to Him will be the just rulers; and the most hateful of men in the sight of God, on the Day of Resurrection, and farthest removed from Him will be the unjust and tyrannical rulers."

-Tirmizi

Commentary:

It tells that as long as a judge or ruler honestly desires to act justly and impartially, the help and guidance of the Lord is available to him, but when his intention is changed and he adopts the course of injustice and tyranny, the Lord withholds His help, and he becomes a plaything in the lands of the Devil.

It is narrated by Abdullah bin Amr bin el-Aas that the Apostle of God cursed (both) the giver and the taker of bribes."

-Abu Dawood

Commentary:

The imprecation of anyone by God of His Messenger is an expression of extreme displeasure, and a most severe punishment. Condemnation by God shows that He has decided to deprive the wrong-doer of His benevolence while by the Prophet or Angel is in the nature of a prayer against him that he may be excluded from Divine mercy. The Tradition would, thus, mean that the Apostle of God has indicated an excessive dislike for those who give or receive bribes and invoke the wrath of God against them. In some accounts of the same narrative, it is stated that apart from the giver and taker of bribe, the holy Prophet, also, condemned the tout who acted as a middle-man between the two. ○

CONTENTS

1-	Reformative Role of Islam	<i>S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi</i>	7
2-	Hajj	<i>Syed. Sulaiman Nadwi</i>	11
3-	Preaching and Propagation	<i>M. Manzoor Nomani</i>	15
4-	A Study in Contrast Introspection	<i>M. S. Wazeh Rasheed Nadwi</i>	21
5-	Call to the Community to Oppose Central Madrasa Board and Save Madrasas	<i>Syed Shahabuddin</i>	25
6-	Madrasa Move	<i>Chitragada Choudhury</i>	33
7-	Role of Hygiene in Islam	<i>Obaidur Rahman Nadwi</i>	35
8-	Around the World		38



Arabs in India

India has been host to a large Arab population that came here in British times and before as traders, merchants, moneylenders, soldiers, sufis and religious scholars (ulema). Most of the Arabs living in India were from the Hadhramite area of Yemen. This region known for its historic traditions of Islamic learning (Talim) had ulema, sufis and sayyids that had links overseas. The region had a long history of migration to Africa and Asia of all kinds of people moving out to look for opportunities to expand trade, Islamic learning and soldiering. During the 16th century members, in particular, of the sayyid families, established their hospices in several regions of the Indian Ocean. In India their presence was marked in Delhi, Gujarat, Deccan and Malabar. They soon obtained status as influential ulema in Indian society because of their Arabic learning and association with the sacred sites of Islam. However, it was not uncommon to find Arabs in multiple roles as traders, ulema and sufis in India.

In the late 18th century Haiderabad, in the eastern Deccan region, became the center of large scale Arab immigration. By the middle of the 19th century Haiderabad attracted Hadhramis both from within India and Yemen and had a population of Arabs that surpassed that of any other Indian province. As soldiers, mercenaries and scholars they enjoyed high positions in the regional

state of Haiderabad. For instance, al-Sayyis al-Mujahid Abd al Rahman ibn Muhammad al-Zahir became the jamadar in the Nizam's Irregular Forces. In the 19th and 20th centuries as well Arabs like Sayyid Ahmad al-Aydarus (1899-1962) rose to become commander in chief. Another notable name is that of Habib Aydarus who set up his school for Islamic studies at Nanded. The Malabar region (Kerala) too boasted of several influential hadhrami families like that of the famous Sayyid Alawi and his more famous son Sayyid Fadl (1823-1901) who preached Islam and gained notoriety for rebelling against the British.

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 had of course enabled a firmer British control of the Persian Gulf commerce. Now the export and import trade of Qajar Iran for instance was controlled by the British and Iran was integrated albeit in a subordinate way to the global economy. However, by the late 19th century as its imperial rivals in Asia—Russia, Germany and the Ottomans—began enticing Asian powers like Iran, Baghdad etc to build railways for purposes of re-capturing, controlling and facilitating the trade in the Persian Gulf, Britain felt the heat. It was not satisfied only with the political control it had of the ports of the Persian Gulf area that facilitated its commerce. Instead, it turned its attention towards the S-W rim of the Arabian Peninsula as well. Britain now wanted to control not just the

Gulf but the whole rim of the Arabian Peninsula from Bab al-Mandab to the Gulf of Basra. These areas were significant as they had important harbours and ports for the lucrative slave trade, but they were also attractive because they were arenas where the relatively weak Ottoman political sovereignty could be dented with huge political dividends. A pro-active Britain would tame the ambitions of Russia, Germany and France as it threatened their commercial interests by securing 'treaties of protection' with the small emirates that dotted the rim.

British interest in the SW rim of the Arabian Peninsula brought it in direct contact with the hub of Arab traffic across Asia. This region as we saw above has had its historic entanglements with the political economy and geo-politics of India. The Hadhrami Arab diaspora that originated from here was linked to India via trade, family ties, saints and politics. British Indian subjects of Arab Hadhrami origin had family, property and emotional and political investments in this rim of the Arabian Peninsula. Thus Britain's political ambitions in the Arabian region meant that the Arabs in India became very important pawns via whom it could carry on its dealings in the region. It was for this reason that these Arabs began to be categorized by British government in India as Indian Arabs. This meant they

were British subjects. And thus their activities in Arabia legitimized British intervention in the region. The story of 'Indian Arabs' is a fascinating tale of British imperialism in the Arabian Peninsula. ○

The Fragrance in new shape

This issue of the Fragrance is being presented in a changed form. We hope it will be more easy for the readers to go through it. To make this magazine more interesting and useful readers contribution is earnestly solicited. There are many ways by which you can help us in achieving your interest: Introduce the magazine in your friends and relatives circle. Help the management in getting advertisements Persuade your friends to write articles for us Help of those who can translate from Urdu/Persian or Arabic into English is welcome. Suitable remuneration will also be paid. It may be recalled that in 1994 The Fragrance of East was introduced on the advice of S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (RAH). A few days before his demise in December 1999 he asked the Editor that its publication should continue. We hope his admirers will help us in keeping his desire alive. ○

S.A

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

**e-mail: shariq_alavi@yahoo.com
alongwith a hard copy, duly signed, by post.**

Reformative Role of Islam

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Islam has also played a reformative role of profound significance in the sphere of Pilgrimage. The Pagans had introduced numerous perverse innovations and rituals in the *Haj* destroying its spirit and doing a tremendous harm to its aims and advantages. Paganish pride, tribal vanity and the discriminatory behaviour of the Quraish were mainly responsible for it. The holy Qur'an and the *Shariat* put an end to the lamentable state of affairs by doing away with each and every vestige of the days of Ignorance and giving to mankind something the like of which it had never seen before.

During the pre-Islamic days the Quraish did not go to Arafat with other pilgrims but stayed back at Haram. They said that they belonged to the family of God and were the custodians of the House of Ka'aba. They, thus, sought to assert the superiority of their position and perpetuate their privileges. Their Paganish pride and tribal arrogance was brought to an end by God and it was enjoined upon them to do as the others did and make the halt at Arafat.

"Then hasten onward from the place whence the multitude hasteneth onward." (—ii: 199)

Hazrat Ayesha relates that the Quraish and those who followed their example halted at Muzdalifa, and they were known as Hums, while the rest of the pilgrims stopped at Arafat. But when Islam came, God commanded His Apostle to proceed to Arafat and make a halt there also, and, then, return with the other pilgrims. This is what is implied in the Quranic verse: *Then hasten onward from the place whence the multitude hasteneth onward*. Ibn-e-Kathir says that Ibn-e-Abbas, Mujahid, Ata, Qatada, Suddi and other theological doctors also are of the same view. Ibn-e-Jareer, too, has related in the same manner and there is a general agreement over it in the *Ummat*.

Like the fairs of Okaz, Zul Majanna and Zul Majaz, the Haj too, had become an occasion for flourish, pomposity competition and polemics. It was the habit of the Pagans to be on the look out for opportunities of self-glorification. They made use of every festival and congregation to show themselves off in high feather and to

talk about their ancestors in a vainglorious manner. The congregation of Mina was ideally suited for the display of their crude tribal instincts and, hence, it was forbidden by Allah and a better alternative was provided to them.

And when ye have completed your devotions, then remember Allah as ye remember your ancestors or with a more lively remembrance. (—ii:200)

It is related by Hazrat Ibn-e-Abbas that "the Pagan Arabs used to compete with each other in vulgar ostentation and self-praise during the season of the Haj. They bragged about the chivalry, nobility and hospitality of their ancestors, and related how they fed others, carried their loads and shed rivers of blood for their sake. They had no other occupation than to praise their forefathers. It was at such a time that the Quranic verse was revealed: *"Remember Allah as ye remember your ancestors or with a more lively remembrance."*

With the passage of time the Haj had lost much of its purity, simplicity and sanctity and become just another fair in which all sort of games and shows were held and brawls and altercations took place. It all was condemned by God who proclaimed:

There is to be no lewdness nor abuse nor angry conversation on the Pilgrimage. (—ii:197)

Ibn-e-Kathir tells that it was related by Abdullah bin Wahab from Maalik that "the occasion for the revelation of the Divine Commandment, *Let there be no angry conversation on the Pilgrimage* was that the Quraish used to stay at Muzdalifa near Mash'ar-e-Haram and they wrangled among themselves. A group of them would say that it was in the right and the other would say that it was in the right. This was the position so far as I know; but God knows best."

Likewise, when the Pagan Arabs killed the animals as a sacrifice to their gods they placed their flesh before them and sprinkled their blood on them/ upon it, the following verse of the Qur'an was revealed:

Their flesh reaches not Allah, nor their blood. (—xxii:37)

It is related by Ibn-e-Kathir that "the Pagans used to throw the flesh and blood of the sanctified animals at the House of Ka'aba. On seeing it, the holy Companions said to the Prophet that they were more deserving of the gift. At this, the following verse was revealed: *"Their flesh reaches not Allah, nor their blood, but the devotion from you reacheth Him."*

Another custom among the Pagan Arabs was that when they did

the *Niyat* for the Haj they refrained from going into their houses through the doors as it was considered to be sinful. As long as they remained in the state of Ihram they entered into them by scaling the walls. This, too, was prohibited by the Qur'an which said that there was no virtue in it.

It is not righteousness that ye go to houses by the backs thereof, but the righteous man is he who wardeth off evil. So go to houses by the gates thereof. (—ii:189)

Some people avoided taking the wherewithal of the journey with them when they set out on the Haj pilgrimage. They thought that it was against the spirit of reliance upon God to take provisions with them. "We are the guest of God", they said, "Why should we take upon ourselves to make arrangements for our meals and other wants?" Yet they felt no disgrace in begging for their requirements on the way. It was supposed to be an act of penance and resignation. This practice, also, was forbidden by God.

So make provision for yourselves,; the best of provision (of course) is to ward off evil. (—ii:197)

It is related by Ibn-e-Kathir that some people started on the journey in such a condition that they carried no provisions with them and were empty-handed. They would say: "We are going on pilgrimage to the House of

God. Will he not feed us?" It was to discourage them that the verse, so make provision...., was revealed denoting that the pilgrims should take enough provisions to meet their needs and save them from stretching a begging hand before others.

Again, the Pagans considered it sinful to engage in trade during the season of the Haj, and, thus, a lawful activity was rendered unlawful by them. It is related in Bukhari on the authority of Ibn-e-Abbas that in the days of Ignorance the markets of Okaz, Zul Majanna and Zul Majaz were famous but trade was forbidden during the season of the Pilgrimage. Upon it, the following verse was revealed:

O Children of Adam! Look to your adornment at every place (or time) of worship. (—vii:31)

Awfa relates on the authority of Ibn-e-Abbas that "some people did the circumambulation round the House of Ka'aba in nude. To them God sent down the command of *zeenat* (meaning adornment) which signifies a dress that covers the parts of the body that are to be covered and is also seemly and respectable. Ibn-e-Kathir writes that Mujahid, Ata, Ibrahim Nakh'ee, Saeed bin Jubair, Qatada, Suddi, Zahak, Maalik and Zohri have taken the same view of this verse and they all agreed that it was revealed in

respect of the Polytheists who used to circumambulate round the House of Ka'aba without wearing any clothes.

In *Bukhari* it is related from Ibn-e-Abbas that "the holy Prophet had direct the delegation be sent under the leadership of Hazrat Abu Bakr a year before the farewell Haj to proclaim on the sacrificial day that after that year no Polytheist was to perform the Haj nor could any one carry out the circumambulation of the House of Ka'aba naked."

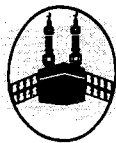
Some of the Pagan Arabs believed that the ritual of walking between the hills of Safa and Marwa should not be observed. The following verse was revealed in that connection.

Lo! (the mountains(As-Safa and Al-Marwa are among who is on Pilgrimage to the House of God or visiteth it (i.e., performs the Haj or Umra) to go around them. (—ii:158)

It is related by Orwa that Once Hazrat Ayesha enquired from him what was meant by the verse, Lo! The mountains of As-Safa and Al-Marwa are the Landmarks of Allah.... He replied that it meant that there was no sin in going around the hills of Safa and Marwa. She, thereupon, remarked, "My nephew! You are wrong. Had it meant what you say it

would have read: It is no sin for him who does not go around them. The verse was revealed in these circumstances that the Ansars, before the dawn of Islam, used to pay reverential homage to the idol of Manat which was installed near Musallah and he who did so regarded the Tawaf of Safa and Marwa to be sinful. Later they enquired about it from the Prophet and said that during the days of Ignorance they regarded as incorrect the Tawaf of Safa and Marwa. Upon it the verse (quoted above) was revealed." Hazrat Ayesha went on to say that the Prophet then instituted the practice of the Tawaf (of Safa and Marwa) which now no one can abrogate. It is related from Mohammad bin Yusuf in *Bukhari* that "I enquired about Safa and Marwa from Anas and he replied that 'earlier we considered it (the Tawaf of two hills) to be a sign of Paganism and on the advent of Islam we abandoned it. Thereupon the verse was revealed."

The Islamic Shariat, through these far-reaching changes, restored the magnificent institution of the Haj to its pristine glory and now it has been protected and made safe against every kind of pollution and distortion.○



Hajj

Syed Sulaiman Nadwi

Hajj is one of the fundamental parts of *Ibadat* in Islam. It is not a new institution but the first and old mode of worship whereby mankind could develop God-consciousness in him. The word Hajj means, literally, repairing to a place for the sake of visit (*al-qasd li ziyarah*), and in the terminology of the Islamic Shariah, it implies repairing to Bait-Allah (the House of Allah) to observe the necessary devotions (*iqamat-an-li-nusuk*) in the sacred places in the Holy Makkah.

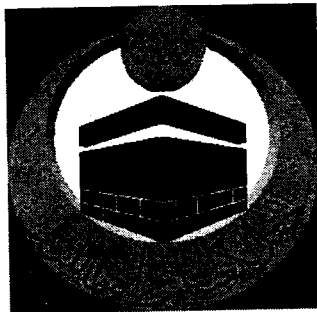
Arabs has its own history of the various stages of human progress. In the days of Ibrahim Khalil (PBUH) it became the abode of a family of preachers of religions. During the period of Isma'il (PBUH) its population consisted of a few camps and huts only but gradually it developed into a big religious city and after the Prophethood of Muhammad (SWS) it became the religious centre of the Muslim world.

In the beginning the practice in vogue was that in every habitation, two houses of special kind were built,

one of them was palace of the king of that habitation or fort and the other was the *ma'bad* (the place of worship of the *kahin*). Almost every population protector and that guardian idol or star was worshipped by that population. The courtyard of the *ma'bad* (the place of worship) was called Dar-ul-Aman. All the sacrifices and *nadhirs* etc. offered to these deities and agricultural proceeds were collected there. With the extension of the hold of a habitation there was also an increase in the area of worship of these idols and deities.

Ibrahim's (PBUH) native city was Iraq. He was the first mawahhid (believer in One God) in the world who raised his voice against the worship of the sun and the stars and called the people to submit to One God. His relatives and other people

persecuted him so much that he was constrained to leave his native city. After travelling through different countries Ibrahim (PBUH) turned towards the borders of Arabia and Syria. He got his nephew, Lut (PBUH) and his son, Ishaq (PBUH) settled in Urdunn (Jordan) and Kinan (Palestine) and his other two sons in



Madyan, situated on the Red Sea which even today is called Madyan bearing his name. He (Ibrahim) got his son Isma'il (PBUH) settled down in the valley of Faran. All those places were situated on the highway where there was always great rush of trading caravans who went to Hejaz and Yemen from Egypt and Syria and *vice versa*.

There were two main aims and objects of Ibrahim (PBUH) in settling his progeny in such a way; firstly, they would not find any difficulty in getting corn and other necessary goods as long as the trading caravans are coming and going and could participate in commerce and secondly, these national highways were the best preaching centres for propagating the pure monotheistic religion of Allah or in other words, Tauhid. Here they could spread the true religion by keeping themselves away from highhandedness of the wrathful and tyrant idolaters and star worshipers of Iraq and Syria.

Baitullah

Wherever Ibrahim (PBUH) felt the need he raised a stone reciting the name of Allah and enclosed that place for sacrifice and prayer. In the Torah mention of three such places called Bait Allah (House of Allah) has been made.

The same kind of places of worship and Houses of Allah were

also built by Ishaq, Yaqub and Musa (PBUT). Dawud and Sulaiman (APT) also constructed Bait al Maqdis which was the Qiblah of Bani Isra'il.

It is thus clear that Ibrahim (PBUH) and his progeny usually built such places of sacrifice and Houses of worship. One such House known as the Ka'bah or Masjid-e-Haram, also called Masjid-e-Ibrahim is in the centre of the city of Makkah. During the three thousand years since it was first built, the Ka'bah was demolished several times, but each time was rebuilt at the same site for the same purpose. The Prophet Ibrahim and his son Isma'il (PBUT) built it, as the first sanctuary on earth dedicated to the worship of One God. The story of the building of the Ka'bah has been related in the Holy Qur'an thus:

And remember Ibrahim and Isma'il (PBUT) raised the foundations of the (Sacred) House, (saying): Our Lord! Accept it from us, for Thou art the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. Our Lord! Make us those who submit to Thee and our descendants a people, who submit to Thee. And show us our rites and forgive us. Indeed, Thou are the Forgiving, the Mercy-Giving. (2:127-128)

Remember We made the House a place of gathering for men, and of security. And you take the Station of Ibrahim as a

place for prayer. And we covenanted with Ibrahim and Isma'il (PBUT) that they should sanctify My House for those who circumambulate it, and retire to it for devotion and for those who bow or prostrate themselves (there in worship). (2:125)

The Sacrifice of Isma'il and its Conditions

We have already discussed this subject in detail in the introductory note to Vol. 1 of Sirat-un-Nabi. The fact that God had ordered Ibrahim to sacrifice Isma'il and not Ishaq (PBUT) stand irrefutably proved by the Holy Qur'an. In the Torah we also find that Abraham had prayed to God in these words: Oh, that Isma'il (PBUH) might live in Thy sight. In answer to this prayer God ordered Ibrahim (PBUH) in a vision to sacrifice his son. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

And recall the time when his Lord put Ibrahim to the test with certain commandments and he fulfilled them. He (Allah) said: Behold! I am going to make thee a leader of mankind. (2:124)

Indeed we chose him in the world, and in the Hereafter, he is surely amongst the righteous.

And when his Lord said to him: Submit, he said: I submit to the Lord of the worlds. (2:130-131)

We called unto him: O Ibrahim! Thou hast already

fulfilled the vision. Lo! Thus do we reward the good. (37:105)

The Muslims remember the amazing acts of Ibrahim's (PBUH) submission and devotion to Allah, the one being running into the fire reposing complete trust in God and secondly, his readiness to offer his son as sacrifice for the sake of his Lord and send blessings on him every now and then and five times daily in prayers.

O God! Bless Muhammad (SWS) and his descendants, as Thou didst bless Ibrahim and his descendants.

Explaining the purpose of animals sacrifice the Holy Qur'an says:

Their flesh and their blood reach not Allah, but the devotion from you reacheth Him. Thus We made them subject unto you that ye may magnify Allah that He hath guided you. (22:37)

Ibrahim (PBUH) resolved to slaughter his loving and only son in obedience to Allah's command and the next moment should have witnessed the deed done, Allah called to him:

O Ibrahim! Thou has indeed shown the truth of the vision. (37:104-105)

Thus Ibrahim (PBUH) set an example of total obedience, submission and loyalty to his Creator

and Great Master in negation of his own desires, feelings and sentiments which has no parallel in the history of mankind. He submitted his will to the Will of Allah. The sacrifice of an animal was only a reflection of his loyalty, devotion and submissiveness to Allah.

Islam Demands Sacrifice

Islam means resignation to the Will of God. It implies complete submission to Allah's commands. The sacrifice given by Ibrahim and Isma'il (PBUT) proves, beyond any shadow of doubt, that they were the true and loyal servants of Allah. In appreciation of the sacrifices of Ibrahim and Isma'il (PBUT), Allah, the Exalted, named this sentiment of theirs of resignation and surrender to His will as Al-Islam. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

Then, when they had both surrendered (unto Allah). (37:103)

And who can be averse to the religion of Ibrahim, but he who infatuated his mind. Indeed We chose him in the world, and in the Hereafter, he is surely amongst the righteous.

And when his Lord said to him: Submit, he said: I submit to the Lord of the worlds. (2: 130-131)

In fact the religion of Ibrahim (PBUH) is based on Al-Islam i.e. resignation and surrender (to Allah). Ibrahim (PBUH) prayed

Allah again and again:

Our Lord! Make us submissive unto Thee, and of our progeny a community submissive unto Thee and show us our ways of worship, and relent towards us. Thou art the Relenting, the Merciful. (2: 128)

Our Lord! And raise up unto them a messenger from amongst them who shall recite unto them Thy revelations and shall teach them the Book and the wisdom and shall purify them. Verily Thou art the Mighty, the Wise. (2: 129)

And who else can he be than Muhammad (SWS) since he alone was raised up from amongst the progeny of Isma'il.

The fact that messenger here implies the Holy Prophet (SWS) only is borne out by the Bible: I will raise up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that clearly means the descendants of Isma'il for had it referred to the descendants of Ishaq (Bani Isra'il) the expression could have been something like it: From amongst you. ○

It is related by Anas that "the Apostle of God sacrificed two grey, horned rams. He slaughtered them with *Bismillaah wa Allahu Akbar*. I saw that, at that time, he was placing his right foot on their flanks and saying *Bismillaah wa Allahu Akbar*."

-Bukhari and Muslim



Preaching and Propagation

M. Manzoor Nomani

Essential as it is for us to affirm faith in God and the Prophet and to follow with righteousness and sincerity the straight path of Islam, it is also of no mean importance that we strove earnestly to guide the others, too, to the path of Faith who are ignorant of it or who may be unwilling to adopt it on account of prejudice or spiritual malaise. As God has placed on us the duty of being His pious, devout and faithful servants so also has He made it obligatory for us to work among His other creatures as well towards the same end, that is, towards making them also His pious, devout and faithful bondmen. That is what is meant by the service of Faith and its preaching and propagation.

This work is so great in the sight of God that for it He sent down thousands of Prophets into the world. The Prophets bore tremendous of Prophets into the world. The Prophets bore tremendous hardships and went through the severest of trails and privations to carry out their mission. They worked for the moral and spiritual reform and uplift of mankind. (May the eternal blessings of God be on them and their companions and

supporters).

The glorious chain of Prophecy and Apostleship ended with the last of the Prophets, the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). Through him also God proclaimed to the world that no more Prophets would now be raised up for the guidance of humanity. The celestial mission shall now be carried on by those who have accepted his guidance and the religion he had brought with him into the world.

In sum, after the termination of the luminous line of Apostles the responsibility for preaching and propagation of Faith and religious instruction and reform of mankind has fallen wholly upon the shoulders of the followers of the sacred Prophet. This honour, indeed, is unique. In the Qur'an, the very object of the raising up of Muslims has been defined as nothing but this:

You are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong and believing in God. (iii:110)

The Muslims were, thus, superior to all other peoples and communities for the simple reason that they, in addition to adopting for

themselves the path of Faith and righteousness, were charged with the special duty of striving to bring others also to practice what was right and to avoid what was wrong. It was because of this that they were given the distinction of being the Best of Peoples. It is, also, evident from the above verse that should the Muslims fail to discharge the function they would not only forfeit the claim but also render themselves liable to be punished by God for neglecting the duty He had assigned to them. Let us take an illustration: suppose a company of sentries is posted in a town by the Government to check the immoral activities of its citizens and the sentries not only fail to perform their duty but, what is more, they themselves begin to indulge in the transgressions they were required to suppress. Now, will they be retained in service and rewarded by the Government or taken severely to task by it for their negligence and misconduct? It will, certainly, not be improper or unjust if they were punished more severely than the other offenders.

The conditions prevailing in the entire Muslim World today are so extremely deplorable that, what to speak of the preaching of Faith and correction and reform of others, not more than five or ten per cent of Muslims themselves are true to Islam

and do good deeds and abstain from what is evil and prohibited. In these circumstances, it becomes our primary duty to carry out the mission of moral and spiritual reform and guidance among our own people among such sections of them as have drifted mournfully away from the path of faith and moral uprightness.

One of the reasons for it is that those who call themselves, or are known as Muslims, whatever be their practical state, have, after all, forged a link between themselves and God and His Prophet and Faith, and become members of the Muslim brotherhood or *Ummat*, through the acceptance of Islam. Solicitude for their moral and spiritual well-being is our first responsibility, in any case, in the same way as the responsibility of looking after the welfare of his own children and near relations is greater on a man than that of looking after the welfare of others.

And, secondly, before everything else, it is the actual condition of Muslims from which the world will generally judge about Islam, and the spectacle of degeneration that Muslims, on the whole, present these days is such that it cannot be expected to make a very favourable impression on anyone in respect of their Faith. The non-Muslim World is not likely to think very highly of the excellent teachings of Islam as long

as Muslims remain what they are today. On the other hand, it is a feeling of revulsion and dislike which non-Muslims usually get about Islam when they look at the moral and spiritual depths into which the Muslims have sunk. It has always been like this. People have always formed their opinion, good or bad or indifferent, about a religion from the actual moral and social state of its followers.

In the past when Muslims used to be truthful Muslims, observing strictly the postulates of their Faith, people were attracted towards Islam simply by seeing them. Whole nations and communities were converted to Islam in this way. But since the Muslims sank so low that the majority of them remained Muslims only in name their conduct and morals grew un-Islamic and their hearts got bereft of Faith and righteousness the world has developed a prejudice against Islam itself.

In fine, we should realize the truth of it clearly that the daily life of Muslims, their social and moral and spiritual conduct and behavior, is the biggest testimony and the chief measuring rod with regard to Islam. If the practical life of Muslims is good the world will form a good opinion about Islam and, if it is bad, the opinion the world will acquire about Islam will also be bad. In latter case, the preaching of Islam among non-Muslims is destined

to be fruitless. Hence, the success of all the efforts aimed at the propagation of Islam among non-Muslims as well is dependant on the condition that Islamic life, i.e., the life of Faith and righteous action became the chief attribute of the entire Muslim community. From this point of view, also, it is necessary to strive first for the guidance and reformation of Muslims and to launch the struggle with all our might for popularizing the values of Islamic life among them before we turned our attention to others.

The Qur'an has given the task of religious preaching, reform and guidance the name of Jihad-e-Akbar, the great Jihad. If it is undertaken in the right spirit, with sincerity and selflessness, and solely for the sake of winning Divine sight of God.

Many people suppose that Jihad means only a war which is waged in the path of God and according to the rules and instructions laid down for it in the *shariat*. But it is not correct. The truth is that whatever endeavour that can be made at a particular time for the preaching and propagation of Islam and moral and spiritual correction and guidance of mankind is Jihad of that age.

The holy Prophet remained in Mecca for about twelve years after the mantle of Apostleship had fallen upon him. During this period Jihad of the

Prophet and his Companions consisted altogether in adhering steadfastly to Faith in spite of the terrible persecution unleashed on them by the enemies of Islam, and in doing all that lay in their power, openly as well as secretly, to spread the Divine message of Islam and reform, morally and spiritually, those who lived around them.

To devote oneself to the noble task of guiding the ignorant, the wayward and the thoughtless to the straight path of Islam, and of bringing them nearer to God, to spend one's time and money on it, to sacrifice one's comfort, all this, in any case, is Jihad in Divine estimation. In fact, it is the Jihad of the present age.

The rich reward that awaits those in the Hereafter who engage themselves in the lofty endeavour as well as the dreadful punishment that is going to fall to the lot of those who neglect it and do not participate in it can well be imagined from the Traditions we give below:

"A person who guides another to a deed of virtue shall receive the same recompense for it as the doer of the deed and there will be no reduction in the reward of the doer himself because of it."

What the Tradition means is that suppose ten persons, or even five, were reformed through our

efforts and they came to believe in God and the Prophet and to observe the Divine commandments they began to offer *Namaz* and carry out other religious duties and avoided what was wrong and forbidden then the reward they will earn on it jointly will be granted to us alone also. A little thought will show that there is simply no other way in which a person can win so much reward - the reward of the prayers and other pious and virtuous deeds of hundreds of men.

Another Tradition of the holy Prophet says:

"By the Almighty, if only one man receives guidance through you, it is better for you than red camels."

As we have said earlier, the endeavour for mankind's moral and spiritual guidance and reformation is a service of faith of the highest order and a thing of outstanding merit and excellence. It is the special heritage left to us by the Prophets. It means their deputyship; it means their vicegerency. What worldly gain, what earthly glory, can compare with it?

The holy Prophet, in the under-mentioned Tradition, has made use of a simple example to impress upon us the importance of the work of religious reformation and guidance.

He said, "Suppose there is a double storied boat in which the passengers of the lower deck have to

fetch water from the upper deck. This causes inconvenience to the occupants of the upper deck and they do not like it. Now, if in their foolishness the passengers of the lower deck decide not to go to the upper deck and for their supply of water and begin to bore a hole in the bottom of the boat, and the passengers of the upper deck do not stop them from doing so, the entire boat, with all the passengers, will sink. But if the occupants of the upper deck, somehow, manage to dissuade the occupants of the lower deck from boring the hole, they will save occupants of the lower deck as well as themselves from being drowned. The same is true with wickedness and sin. If a community, as a whole, dwells in a state of ignorance and sinfulness and its enlightened and virtuous sections do not take steps to reform it and to bring it on the right path then Divine punishment will be sent down upon it because of its sins and transgressions and the pious and virtuous members of the community will, also, be caught in it. On the other hand, if an endeavour is made by them to reform the sinners and wrong-doers, the whole community will be saved."

Again, the Prophet is reported to have said:

"By the Almighty in whose power lies my life, do not neglect the

duty of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. Remember if you neglected your duty, it is quite possible that God sent down His punishment on you, and, then, all your prayers and supplications will be in vain."

Brothers, Some of the most enlightened and spiritually evolved divines of our day are of the view that the disasters and humiliations that have been visiting Muslims for a long time, and the troubles and difficulties they are caught in universally these days and which do not seem to abate or relent a bit in spite of all their pathetic petitions to God and prayers etc., are due mainly to the very reason that they have ceased to discharge the function they were raised up for and for which they were made wholly responsible after the termination of Prophecy and Apostleship. Evidently, when a watchman fails to perform his duty he is dismissed from service and castigated sternly for his negligence.

Come, let us resolve solemnly that we shall be found wanting no more in the discharge of our duty. God's help will be with us. He has promised:

God, certainly, will aid those who aid His Cause. (Xxii:40)○

Qurbani

It is related by Ayesha that the Apostle of God said: "On the 10th of Zil Hij, i.e., The day of 'Idul Azha, no act of son of Adam is more pleasing to the Lord than Qurbani, and, on the Day of Judgement, the animal of Qurbani, will come with the horns and hooves, and the blood of Qurbani reaches the place of the propitiation and good pleasure of God before it falls on the ground. So, Oh bondsmen of God I perform Qurbani with full willingness of the heart."

-Tirmizi

Abdullah bin Omar related to us that "the Apostle of God stayed in Medina for ten years (after Migration), and performed Qurbani regularly (i.e., Every year)."

-Tirmizi

Hanash bin Abdullah narrates that "I saw Hazrat Ali performing the Qurbani of two rams (upon which) I asked him about it (i.e., why he was performing the Qurbani of two rams instead of one). He replied: 'The Prophet had exhorted me to make an offering on his behalf, also, and, so, I perform one Qurbani in his name.'"

-Abu Dawood



A Study in Contrast Introspection

Intercultural clash has been engaging the attention analysis of intellectuals and the learned since long; debate and Islamic world is also not quite unanimous.

The theme initially was "clash or unison" between various cultures. Some intellectuals mooted the idea of unity and synchronism between various cultures. Seminars and conferences in several parts of the world were organized to discuss the subject openly. View points were put forward by people belonging to different cultures, specially the Muslims and Christians. The Pope of the day also endorsed the steps being taken. Apparently the debate seemed to revolve around differences in religious beliefs whereas, in reality such clash does not exist. History bears testimony that the followers of various faiths had full liberty to pursue their own religious tenets, shunning interference in each other's actions.

As far as Islam is concerned, it has been an epitome, non-pareil, of open mindedness, tolerance and forgiveness, and affords full liberty to people of all faiths to act according to

S. M. Wazeh Rasheed Nadwi

their own beliefs. Even during the period of their dominance, no coercive actions were resorted to nor any obstacles placed in performances of rites and rituals. Upon entering any country as conquerors, they treated the citizens with compassion, justice and were extremely condescending. People flocked into the fold of Islam of their own volition, so much so that several countries embraced Islam without any armed action and despite passage of centuries are Muslim majority regions.

Contrast between the attitude of Christian and Muslim conquerors is exemplified by the history of Spain. Before the entry of Muslims as victors into Spain, flag of Christian power fluttered all over the land. Jewish community were under duress, suffering all indignities and humiliation. Islamic conquest resulted in total liberation for them, to the extent of being afforded a hand in administrative affairs. As a result of the contribution of Jews and Christians in all round development of Spain in all fields: viz, education, industry, trade and commerce along side that of Muslims in self-evident.

The communities received equal and just treatment. In stark contrast is the treatment meted out to Muslims by the Christians when they managed to wrest power once again by overthrowing the Muslim government from Spain. Freedom and justice were murdered, virtually; Muslims were forced to convert to Christianity under severe duress and threat of extradition, their schools and mosques were shut down. In the event, hardly any Muslim survived in the entire country.

Similar was the scenario at the time of conquest of Holy land (Palestine) by Muslims. The other two communities received the same treatment and provided equal facilities. Places of worship and other monuments held sacred by Jews and Christians were just as sacrosanct to Muslims. Their monks and preachers enjoyed the same status as they did under their own rule. Peace and tranquility held sway and no outrage of female population occurred anywhere. The great Caliph Omar bin Khattab (APH), in his letter to the Muslim governor of Palestine, Abu Obaida bin al-Jarrah (APH), advised at length to be just and compassionate to non-Muslims, as a result of which transfer of power to Muslims was entirely smooth.

The reputed, reliable historian

Stanley Lane Poole has described the conquest of Palestine by the Christians:

Upon their foray into the holy land they let loose a reign of terror and massacre, to the extent that horses of the riders who entered the mosque of Omar, were knee deep in blood. Children were either banged against the walls or thrown down from the parapets. Jews were all burnt alive inside their place of worship.

(Tarikh-e-dawat-o-Azeemat, vol. I p. 253)

In direct contrast is the case of re-conquest of Palestine by the youthful, prudent Sultan Salah-ud-din Ayyubi (Saladin to the English writers), who earned accolades for all and sundry, including the western writers and historians. Stanley Lane Poole in his book "Sultan Salah-ud-din Ayyubi" is eloquent in vivid terms:

The sultan took no stern action against any non-Muslim. One exception was to chastise Reginald for his threat to invade Makkah and Madinah and for using utterly derogatory language for the mausoleum of the Holy Prophet (SAWS). Sultan saw to it that life and property of his subjects were fully safeguarded.

Message of Holy Qur'an on the subject are explicit:

"Revile not ye those whom they

call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance.” (Al-Anam 6: 108)

Another message is for believing in every messenger of Allah (PBUT) and to respect what they held sacred:

Say: O people of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but Allah: That we associate no partners with Him: That we erect not, from among ourselves, Lord and patrons other Allah.” (Aal-e-Imran 3:64)

The era of western despotism is not too ancient history yet and perpetration of terror is fresh in human memory. No deep probe is required for judging the contrasting attitudes of non-Muslims and Muslim conquerors. While Christianity professes mutual affection, sympathy and forbearance among all human beings, history testifies to just the opposite. Similar is the state of current affairs, with all round air raids and mass massacre. What transpired in Iraq and Afghanistan, the inhumanities committed in Abu Gharib and Guantanamo jails hardly need to be described. Atrocities upon prisoners in secret dungeons of USA continue unabated.

Entire Western and Christian media have waged an anti-Islam vendetta all through the Muslim world

and beyond, spreading concocted versions of the holy message and their missionaries attempting to impose their own faith. Even the realm of education is not immune from pollution aimed at the nascent minds. In the western countries even the observance of Islamic dress code by Muslim women folk is not tolerated. Any member of a legislature or a government employee, observing the tenets of Islam is forthwith suspended or dismissed. On the other hand, Islam imposes no blanket ban on any form of dress, as long as the norms of decency and decorum are not violated.

Every conceivable hindrances is being placed on Islamic faith and religious belief in Europe. Cartoonists and writers, journalists seem hell bent on maligning Islam and its history, so much so that they would not desist from targeting the holy Prophet (PBUH). Propagation and preaching of Christianity goes on unbridled and reports of several Muslim countries entering the fold of Christendom pour in. Even purely welfare and religious organisations are made targets of violent action. Muslim countries which are influenced by the West are being forced to take action against Islamic movements, specially their educational institutions, without any exception.

Publication of cartoon in blatant derogation of the holy Prophet (PBUH), received united support from entire Europe, under the guise of freedom of expression and media. No effort was spared to suppress the show of natural resentment among Muslims, to the extent of using main force. Muslims, on the other hand exercised restraint. No word was uttered nor a pen raised against the Prophets Moses or Jesus (PBUT). History is replete with instances when Muslims have stuck to the path of fair play, peace and forbearance. Jews and Christians have forever resorted to cruelty.

A case in point is of death sentence by Afghan government passed on one Abd-ur-Rahman who had turned apostate. European media lost not a moment in propagating the subject in adverse light, harping upon the usual theme of personal freedom. Another instance is the onset of violent reaction following the demolition of the statue of Mahatma Budh by Taliban. Several mosques were raided and copies of Holy Qur'an consigned to flames. USA threatened to attack the holy Makkah. On the other hand no adverse publicity from Western media is coming forth on the atrocities of the worst degree unleashed on innocent persons in known and not so well known, jails of

USA.

The current reign of sheer despotism is touted as an era of liberty, equality, justice and compassion. The powerful few have taken on the role of sole judge between right and wrong and even are in control of legal jurisprudence. The only aim seems to be concentrate all power in one hand so as make the rest of the nations its subservient satellites, ultimately to enforce one religious and cultural order, the world over. Alongside there is an ostentatious programme of negotiations through conferences and seminars, diplomatic exchanges, which ineffect boils down to orchestrated delirium. In reality internal or external peace, brotherhood and fairplay are nothing more than a pipe dream.

More is the pity that those who should take up cudgels against such unbridled rule are neither united nor find themselves in any position to even enter into an incisive and fruitful dialogue. Such steps are possible only if there was some sort of common platform for such nations, strong enough to spring up a situation akin to tussle between Communism and Capitalism, much like the days of cold war. The current scenario seems to inspire no confidence. ○



Call to the Community to Oppose Central Madrasa Board and Save Madrasas

Syed Shahabuddin

The Madrasa as an institution has always been an eye-sore for the Sangh Parivar. They see it as the defence line for Muslim identity and an obstacle to eventual assimilation of Muslims in the Hindu fold. Under the NDA government the madrasas particularly in border areas were looked upon as cradle for terrorists and shelter for militants. As a result many madrasas including Nadwatul Ulama were subjected to search. Following 9/11 the US authorities added a new word to their lexicon- 'Deobandi' because they were told that the Taliban had been trained in 'Deobandi Madrasas' in Pakistan. These madrasas had been established by the old boys of the Darul Uloom and had no connection whatsoever with Deoband. But, all embassies and intelligence agencies put the Darul Uloom and other Madrasas on their radar. Though, Home Minister Advani admitted that no madrasa manager or teacher anywhere in the country had been prosecuted for any subversive activity, the local police continued to harass them. Harassment has stopped but suspicion lingered about their purpose and their funding. At one stage, government tried to place its own teachers in the madrasas in the name of 'modernization'. Very few madrasa

responded to the bait. This may well be the conceptual origin of the proposed Central Madrasa Board.

History

The National Policy on Education, 1986, updated in 1992, two centrally sponsored schemes for Area Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities and for Financial Assistance for Modernization of Madrasa Education were launched during 1993-94. Under the 10th Plan these two schemes were merged to form the Area Intensive and Madrasa Modernisation Programme. These schemes are now sought to be replaced by a Central Madrasa Board which seeks to coordinate, regulate and control all madrasa education in the country. The State Madrasa Boards, functioning in some states have disappointed the Muslim community.

The Central government has never conducted review of the impact of its Madrasa Modernization Programme whose basic approach was to provide teachers to Madrasas for modern subjects like English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. But the present Bill goes far beyond.

The Central Madrasa Board Bill, drafted during the first UPA

Government (2004-09) was ready for introduction but it was not introduced, whatever, the official reason, because nearly all well known Jamias, Darul Uloom and Madrasas in the country, including the Jamia Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow and the Darul Uloom, Deoband, were totally opposed to the very concept of a Central Board funding Madrasa education, laying down a uniform curriculum and syllabus (even for non-theological subjects), and conducting common examinations. So, this was a tactical move because of the fear of a negative impact on Muslim support for the UPA in the 2009 General Election.

Now, that the second UPA government has completed 100 days in office, the Bill brought out of the closet, has been circulated to the Muslim MPs for their views. The Bill is not yet quite in the public domain because the heads of nationally eminent Muslim organizations like the JUH, the AIMMM, the JIH, the AIMPLB, the MJAH, and the All India Shia Conference have not been taken into confidence. Nor have the views of Muslim educationists and opinion-makers been sought. The idea is first to placate the Muslim MPs, because they alone can raise a rumpus in the Parliament.

Controversial Aspects

The community, as a whole, is not convinced about the need or urgency of the move. The first question they raise is why the government is so anxious to bring all

madrasas under a centralized administration even to the best of its knowledge, no such central board exists for the Sanskrit Paathshalas whose number far exceeds that of the madrasas. If the idea is to upgrade the standard of education in religious institutions and to make their products more employable than they have conventionally been, the same consideration applies to Paathshalas. The State Madrasa Boards have not distinguished themselves by producing any religious scholars of national repute since their inception or at least since independence. They have been working as attached and subordinate offices of government steeped in corruption, graft and nepotism like the *paathshala*. In some states, for example, in Bihar, official intervention in Madrasas was politically motivated so that the Government of the day or the party in power may secure the free services of a set of drum beaters in every *basti* or *mohalla*! But the standard of these Sarkari madrasas and the employment prospects of their output were so low that they did not acquire any credence or credibility in the community. Largely, it was the products of the Azad (*unaffiliated*) madrasas which refused aid, retained their autonomy and produced the Ulema and religious functionaries.

But the Muslim community did realize that religious scholars who perform conventional functions should also have minimum knowledge about the country and the

world at large and have some idea of the direction in which the world and the country are moving. Therefore, apart from receiving classical instruction in theology, they should acquire basic knowledge of non-theological subjects and current affairs. This idea has been recognized by nearly all the leading madrasas and has flowered over the last 2 or 3 decades and many Darul Ulooms have taken pains to revise and prune their classical syllabus in order to teach non-theological subjects, essential in the modern context and pursue 'contemporary education'. However, they have drawn a line between the two branches of knowledge and always focused on the essential purpose of the madrasas, which is not to produce administrators or engineers or doctor but religious scholars, and devoted only 25% of the academic time to contemporary subjects. At the other extreme, in West Bengal the affiliated madrasas have all been converted into high and secondary schools under the state madrasa board and allotted less than 10% of the academic time to what it calls 'Introduction of Islam', which covers all branches of theology-Tafsir, Hadith, Seerat and Fiqh. One can easily realize that this deformed and distorted education cannot produce any Islamic scholars worth the name, West Bengal has thus killed Madrasa Education.

Unaffiliated Madrasas in UP and Kerala, for different reasons, have followed a common strategy to

achieve the objective. Since primary instruction is prohibited in UP through the medium of Urdu which is the mother tongue of nearly 100% of Muslim students.

Muslim students are normally enrolled in local madrasas where they study up to the primary level. Then most of them take primary examination as private candidates and enter normal schools. In Kerala, school enrollment is nearly universal and all Muslim boys and girls have double enrollment during the first five years spending morning hours in the local madrasas and the rest of the day in schools. At the end of 5 years, those who aspire to become Aalim, stay with the madrasa system while a large majority moves on to the general school. These examples show that neither the Muslim community nor the managers of the madrasas are blind to the changing circumstances and the aspirations of the young Muslims and are trying to adjust as best as they can, without giving up theological instruction to every child at the impressionable age of 5-10, to lay the foundation of his or her Islamic identity.

During the last two decades there has been a very fortunate development. The senior products of the madrasas, comparable to graduates are accepted by several well known universities like the AMU, the JMI, the JNU and the Jamia Hamdard for the master course in several subjects, or a course in Tibb. Some universities require them to

take a one year bridge-course in order to familiarize themselves with the new subjects of study as well as improve English which is often the medium of education. Such products have found their way into government service, including the central civil services, mass communication system, government media and as translators in the foreign service. This development has opened a new horizon for the madrasa products without affecting the autonomy of the institution or diluting its basic purpose.

Why emphasis on Madrasas?

Another important question that arises in the Muslim mind relates to the fact that only 4% of the Muslim students at the secondary level are enrolled in madrasas while 96% study in schools and colleges and receive certificates and degrees. What the community fails to comprehend is the selective approach. Most of the Muslim youth armed with university degrees are unemployed or they take jobs far below their entitlement. Why is it that the government is so anxious about improving the prospects of the madrasa products, while totally ignoring the wide spread unemployment among educated Muslim youth?

Why no Schools in Muslim Areas?

The Government launched Sarava Shiksha Abhiyan and is now implementing the Right to Education Act. But even at the lowest level, the

benefits of universalisation are yet to reach the community in their villages and *mohallas*. Why the government does not care to establish adequate number of schools according to national norms. If they exist they are generally treated step-children. Muslim parents are eager to send their children to schools of minimum quality in the neighbourhood, even braving other linguistic and social obstacles. A legitimate question is addressed to the government why it does not provide minimum educational facility and at least primary education of minimum acceptable quality to Muslim children in most cases have no option but to attend *maktabs* in local masjids.

Outline of the Bill

Let us now have a glance through the Bill. Though the Long Title only mentions coordination and standardization of non-theological education, the Act goes far beyond clearly shows under the Bill that the Board will be established by the Government will not enjoy academic or administrative autonomy. There is no compulsion, no doubt, and the Board shall affiliate why the madrasas which volunteer for the '*honour*' to receive the '*benefits*'. But once affiliated, the Board can disaffiliate them or take disciplinary measures for not following its instructions. However, affiliation entitles the madrasas to receive grant in-aid from the Central or the state governments.

Among the list of subjects to be

taught, theology does not have any priority. Instead of fiq'h, philosophy is mentioned.

The senior products are not guaranteed admission to colleges or universities or government institutions, far less employment.

The Act does not lay down any qualification for the selection of the Chairperson of the Board or the method of selection or appointment (Section 4). Theoretically, it can be a non-Muslim. In any case, he shall be a person who enjoys the confidence of the government in power. Read with the provision for the appointment of Registrar (Section 14) who is to be nominated by the government in consultation with the Chairperson, it is clear that the decisions of the Board shall be taken, whatever the procedure laid down, by the Chairperson and the Registrar both of whom shall toe the line of the government.

The Board shall have 11 additional members (Section 4 (1)), all of them nominated. 7 of them shall be 'renowned' Muslim religious scholars belonging to various sects and denominations. The draft mentions a 'Deobandi' and a "bareilvi" while there are no such sects as they are both Hanafis. It shall have Ahle Hadith, Shafeis as well s two Shia scholars, one belonging to the Bohra community. Thus the Bill lacks a sense of proportion and seeks to divide the community. In addition, the Board shall include three Muslim educationists including a woman as

well as a Muslim philanthropist (why?). No member will have any representative status, as the head of a Muslim organization, Jamaat or institution. The members will serve at the sweet will of the government and may be removed by the government before completing their term of three years.

The Board shall have several Committees. The most important is the Curriculum Committee with 5 including the Chairperson of the Board as its head and the Registrar as Secretary (Section 35)

The Government shall nominate or appoint all other officers or employee. The Rules and Regulations of the Board shall be formulated by the Government.

The Board shall hold an Annual Meetings, prepare an Annual Report as well as an Annual Statement of Accounts, duly audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, to be submitted for presentation to the Parliament.

Section 18 (1) lays down the general duty of the Board as the standardization of the non-theological aspects of Madrasa system for its 'comprehensive, systematic and integrated development'. But this is no more than a mask. Nowhere does the Act lay down the proportion of academic time and energy to be devoted to non-theological instruction. It is presumed that standardization by the Board will universally apply to all affiliated madrasas of the country. One

wonders if it is possible and practicable.

The Act goes further to empower the board to 'emphasise the liberal, universalist and contextually proactive genius of Islam'. It does not even clarify whether the general education in the Madrasas shall be compatible with basic Islamic doctrines.

Sub-section 18 (1) (w) speaks of 'programmes for the consolidation of the inclusive society marked by religious and cultural diversity through proper interfaith understanding'. This is as political an objective as could be and can possibly clash with the basic tenets of madrasa education.

Finally, it provides under sub-clause (ee) for 'adoption of a non-polemical approach to other religions and non-sectarian institutions in a state of fidelity to the Islamic spiritual tradition'. One does not understand what this means. But, it is obvious that any instruction for *da'wa* shall come under a ban.

The Board shall recommend not only textbooks in non-theological subjects but also the prescribed reading material.

Chapter V relating to finance, accounts and audit does not lay down that the affiliated madrasa shall be wholly funded by the government or the Board; it speaks of donations, gifts, etc., which are normally available to the madrasas. The funds of the Board shall be allocated as grants to affiliated madrasas for their maintenance and development and

for such other purpose as may be prescribed including remuneration and honorarium. Again, honorarium to the teaching and non teaching staff of the affiliated madrasas shall match those admissible to those of government schools and colleges.

The Budget of the Madrasa shall be subject to approval by the Board. The financial procedure as well as the audit procedure is the same as generally applicable to government institutions but it will be beyond the capacity of an average madrasa to fulfill the formalities. In addition, the madrasas shall submit periodical reports and returns to the Board, for compilation and submission to the central government.

It is said that the country has more than 100,000 madrasas but the figures may be misleading. The government has not done its home work to quantify the number of *Maktabs* and what the Bill calls primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary madrasas.

If the past experience of the number of institutions which volunteered to receive government grant under 'Modernisations Programmes' is a guide, the total number of madrasas affiliated to the Board may not exceed a few thousands. But this also raises a question on the double affiliation of the Madrasas which are already affiliated to some state boards. The Bill is also silent about the organic relationship between the Central and

State Madrasa Boards.

Conclusion

The Modernisation Programme having failed, the Government now wishes to take over the entire madrasa system. No doubt, the teachers who are ill-paid may be better paid. But for hundreds of years the community has supported the madrasa system and will not easily succumb to the lure of money or official status the community knows that affiliation to a Government Board is an embrace or death which will not merely distort and devalue the system. Ultimately it will kill it. The Community realizes minority institutions. It also knows that despite Article 30, it is not easy to set up minority schools and colleges because of deliberate obstructions, which even the NCMEI has not been able to tackle with any success. Essentially, the madrasas are minority institutions. Nearly, all of them are also wakfs in law. The Bill totally ignores both these crucial aspects. Even the Right to Education Act does not recognize the functioning madrasas as equivalent to schools for the purpose of universalisation of education.

Virtual takeover of the madrasas by the government will amount to gross interference in the religious affairs of the community and a violation of the Constitution.

The madrasas are all modernizing themselves and introducing non-theological subjects, at their own pace and in response to

the felt needs of the community. They cannot be rushed into divesting themselves of their autonomy and their real purpose for the production of Ulema and religious functionaries.

Muslim organizations as well as leading Ulema and eminent Madrasas have already taken a position against the official move. There may be an odd voice here and there, enticed by monetary prospects, but just as the move to take over and regulate madrasas in Pakistan, at the instance of the USA after 9/11, under President Musharraf failed, so will this move. *In Sha Allah!*

Muslim India requests the government not to interfere in the madrasa system but as well-wishers simply create a Madrasa Development Fund which may be drawn upon by some madrasa at the option for their development. And no more.○ (Courtesy: Muslim India)

It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of God said: "Whoever performs the Haj and commits no lustful act during it nor disobeys God (in any other way) shall return from it as pure and sinless as he was at the time of his birth."

-Bukhari and Muslim

Continued from Page 38

established in 1908 as part of the Nation of Islam, an order that was then the most prominent Muslim group in the United States. The Nation of Islam and its most famous adherent, Malcolm X, preached a message of self reliance and racial separatist. According to the imam, the members of its Portland community fit that mold at that time. With a new identity, the mosque in Portland took a new role and became more active in the broader community. The mosque began to encourage and participate in interfaith dialogues, reaching out to the local Christian and Jewish communities. The mosque emphasizes that Islam is a peaceful religion: 'Allah orders us to be just and to work toward bettering humanity. That's Islam.○

Israel is number one threat to Middle East: IAEA Chief

Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Mohamed ElBaradei said on 4 October that "Israel is number one threat to Middle East" with its nuclear arms, IRNA news agency reported.

At a joint press conference with

Iran's Atomic Energy Organization chief Ali Akbar Salehi in Tehran, ElBaradei brought Israel Under spotlight and said that the Tel Aviv regime has refused to allow inspections into its nuclear installations for 30 years.

"Israel is the number one threat to the Middle East given the nuclear arms it possesses," ElBaradei said. Israel is widely assumed to have nuclear capabilities, although it refuses to confirm or deny the allegation.

"This (possession of nuclear arms) was the cause for some proper measures to gain access to its (Israel's) power plants ... And the U. S. President has done some positive measures for the inspections to happen," said ElBaradei.

ElBaradei arrived in Iran for talks with Iranian officials over Tehran's nuclear program. Last month, Iran confirmed that it is building a new nuclear fuel enrichment plant near its northwestern city of Qom. In reaction, the IAEA asked Tehran to provide detailed information and access to he new nuclear facility as soon as possible. ElBaradei said the UN nuclear watchdog would inspect Iran's new uranium plant near Qom on Oct. 25.○



Madrasa Move

Chitrangada Choudhury

“My years as a student in the Darul Uloom were the best training I could get to be an effective MP (Member of Parliament). Because the madrasa taught me that serving people is the biggest act of devotion to God,” said religious scholar and educationist Maulana Asrarul Haque of his 1866 alma mater in the North Indian town of Deoband. The sentences were characteristic of the moral lens the soft-spoken 66-year-old parliamentarian seemed to view the world through.

Haque, who has founded 160 Madrasas across four states and a girl's school in an ill-connected village in his constituency of Kishanganj in Bihar, said, “Education can empower and help build bridges.”

Haque is the sort of Muslim leader the government is now looking to, as it attempts to craft a consensus in a divided Muslim community to help push through a sticky piece of legislation to set up a Central Madrasa Board. The board stillborn for a decade is meant to design a modern curriculum for India's estimated 1000,000 Islamic seminaries. These numbers are private estimates; the government has no definitive information on how many such institutions exist. Under 20,000 are registered under various laws.

There are also no definitive

surveys, but official estimates say that between 4 per cent and 6 per cent of India's Muslim children in the school-going age study in such seminaries. Attending the institutions between four to seven years, they study a three-centuries old curriculum.

Institutions like the madarsa at Deoband are renowned and possess the funds and skills to modernize. But most seminaries cater to areas with concentrations of low-income Muslim households, where the government school system is broken and private schools have no commercial incentives. Like Haque's constituency of Kishanganj, a backward district of small farmers and landless labourers with 70 per cent Muslim residents and a female literacy of 14 per cent, the lowest for any district in the country. While some states such as West Bengal and Bihar have instituted madrasa boards to run such institutions, most seminaries are funded by charities and run by decades-old trusts, which guard their independence from the government fiercely.

Abdul Noumani, based in New Delhi, typifies this strand of thought in the community, which has opposed the formation of a central board as interference in the Islamic faith.

At his office overlooking

graceful arches in the head-quarters of the 1919 Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind, which runs over 10,000 madrasas across India, Noumani said, "The Sachar Commission found that every fourth Muslim child has never attended, or attended and dropped out of school. Why does the government not focus on these children? When only 4 per cent of Muslim children study in madrasas, why is Kapil Sibal (Minister for Human Resource Development) so interested in our affairs?"

"Our experience of government and bureaucracy has not been good in states which have set up their own madrasa boards. It opens the door for corruption and meaningless rules. We can modernize our own curriculum."

But, National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions chairman Justice M. Siddiqui whose office drafted the Bill for the proposed board, argued that the government should help lead that change whereby a madrasa student can learn about Islamic law as well as the Indian Penal Code, Arabic as well as English.

Siddiqui said the board should

go beyond matters of content to improve the quality of education. "It should be given a seed fund of Rs 500 crore by the state and then allowed to function independently. Madrasas currently pay their teachers Rs 500 to Rs 1,500 (per month). How can that attract good people? The board will ensure pay parity with government school-teachers. We have drafted the Bill. The bill is now in the government's court," he said.

For now, the government is treading carefully. In a bid to build a consensus, Sibal has been open to suggestions to people the board with as many educationists as theologians. He has said affiliation to the board will be voluntary. On October 3, at a meeting on the issue with Muslim MPs, he will lobby for the board.

The Kishanganj MP, Haque, said the government's revived efforts will be successful only if "the benefits of the policy are explained clearly to the Muslim community.

The key will be to take all the *ulema* (religious scholars) along."○

The Draft Law	What Madrasas Teach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Central Madrasa Board Bill, 2009 lays down the following: • The board's primary task will be to devise a curriculum for non-theological education in madrasas. • It will consist of at least 11 members, including seven theologians representing various sects, educationists and a philanthropist. • Affiliation to it will be purely voluntary. • The Board will not have the right to interfere in theological aspects of education or the accounts of the madrasa. But it can inspect the institute. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Madrasas run on a system similar to the primary, secondary school and college levels of education, with the highest levels serving as academic training or a career as a cleric. • Students learn Arabic and Urdu. The subjects include Islamic history, culture, philosophy, theology and jurisprudence. Rote learning is emphasized. • Some madrasas also impart a general education, teach the English language, and offer computer studies, or vocational courses such as electronics and engineering.

(Hindustan Times- 30-09-09)



Role of Hygiene in Islam

Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Islam is a complete code of life. It contains a clear and adequate guidance concerning all aspects of life. As regard physical hygiene, Islam lays great stress on it. The holy Qur'an says: "God loves those who turn to Him constantly and loves those who keep themselves pure and clean." (Al-Qur'an 2:222). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Cleanliness is a part of Faith." He further said: "Islam has been founded on purity and cleanliness."

The verse of the Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet show importance and significance of cleanliness and sanitation in the religion of Islam.

In his monumental work "Hujjatullah-il-Baligha" Shah Waliullah writes: "Cleanliness is of three kinds. One, purification from impurity (i.e., to attain purity or cleanliness, by taking bath or performing *wazu* (ablution) in states in which a bath or *wazu* is necessary or desirable according to the Shariah; two, to cleanse one's body, dress or place from an impurity or filth; and three, to remove the dirt or grime that collects in various parts of the body, such as, the cleaning of teeth and nostrils, the pairing of nails and the removing of hair below the

navel."

Shah Waliullah's thought-provoking words summarized the whole corners of cleanliness and purification.

The importance of physical purity in Islam can be realized by the fact that Namaz which is the main pillar of Islam is not accepted without purification and cleanliness. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Whoever is not with *wazu* (ablution) his Namaz shall not be accepted until he performs the *wazu* (ablution)".

To perform ablution is necessary before saying Namaz. The holy Prophet has stated: "The key to prayer is cleanliness." The holy Qur'an says: "O ye who believe when ye prepare for prayers, wash your faces, and your hands and arms to the elbows; and wash your feet to the ankles." The virtues of ablution have also been mentioned in various sayings of the Prophet. It is related by Osman (RAH) that the Apostle of Allah said: "Whoever performed *wazu* (ablution) and performed it well i.e., according to the prescribed rules, all his sins will go out, even from under his nails." (Bukhari) It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of Allah said: "When a Muslim bondsman performs *wazu* and, during it, washes his face

and pours water over it, all the sins he has committed with the eyes are removed from his face (i.e., are washed away with the water, after it, when he washed his hands, all the sins he has committed with hands are washed away from them; and, after it, when he washes his feet all the sins he has committed with the feet (i.e.; by using them for that purpose) go not of them till by the time he has finished *wazu* he becomes completely purified from sin." (Muslim) It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of Allah said: "When my followers will be summoned on the Day of Judgement, their faces, hands, and feet will be radiant with the effects of *wazu*. Thus, whoever of you can increase this radiance and make it perfect, he must do so." (Bukhari)

To maintain physical hygiene the Prophet has laid special stress on cleaning of teeth by *Miswak* (i.e. A twig or tender shoot of the branch of a tree). It is related by Ayesha that the Apostle of Allah said: "*Miswak* cleanse the mouth through and is also greatly pleasing to the Lord."

Commenting the above mentioned tradition of Prophet, Maulana Manzoor Nomani says: "There are two aspect of goodness in everything: one which is beneficial from the worldly point of view and is considered agreeable by the people, on the whole, and the other which is pleasing to God and a source of reward in the Hereafter. The above

Tradition tells that *miswak* possesses both qualities. It cleanses the mouth and removes bad odour; these are its ready material advantages. The other heavenly and eternal benefit is that it is a unique means of earning the good pleasure of the Lord."

It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of Allah said: "If I did not fear that my followers would be put to much hardship, I would have made it compulsory for them to use *miswak* at every prayer-time." (Bukhari)

From this *hadith* one can guess the advantages of *miswak*. Besides this tradition shows the importance of cleanliness and purification in the religion of Islam.

Uncleanliness and impurity have no place in Islam. The holy Prophet said: "Save yourselves from two things which invite the curse of God." "What those things?" Enquired the Companions. The Prophet replied: "One is that anyone defecated on the road (or any other place used by the people), and the other that did so at a shady place." (Muslim)

Needless to add that the news of punishment in the grave was also given by the Prophet (PBUH).

Abdullah Ibn-e-Abbas narrated that the Apostle of Allah happened to pass by two graves, he remarked: "The two persons who are buried in these graves are being punished, and the punishment is not only to a sin that was a difficult matter (i.e., hard to avoid). (Both of them, on the other

hand are receiving the chastisement for a misdeed from which it was quite easy to keep away). The sin of one of them was that he never tried to free himself from being soiled with urine, and the other used to speak ill of others in their absence." The Prophet, then, took a green branch of a date-palm, split it into two and fixed one piece (of it) on each grave. The companions (thereupon) enquired: "O Apostle of God! Why have you done that?" "It is hoped, replied the Prophet, "That the punishment of these persons will be abated till such time as the two pieces become completely dry." (Bukhari and Muslim)

It should be kept in mind that almost every book of *hadith* has a chapter titled 'Kitabut-taharat' (The Book of Cleanliness). Even we cannot touch the holy Qur'an without cleanliness. The holy Qur'an says: "Which (i.e., the holy Qur'an) no one shall touch but those who are clean." (S: 56 A: 79) It is related by Abdullah bin Omar that the Apostle of God said: "No menstruating woman or *Junubi* (the state of uncleanness caused by sexual discharge whether as a result of copulation or in a dream etc., is called *Junabat* while a person who is in that state is called a *Junubi*.) man should recite anything from the Qur'an unless they purify themselves by having *Ghusl*." (Tirmizi) It is also related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of Allah said: "The effect of *Junabat* is under every hair of the

body. Thus, the hair should be washed thoroughly in *Ghusl-e-Junabat* (so that the parts of the body that are covered with hair are cleansed and purified), and the part of the skin which is visible (i.e., is not covered with hair) should, also, be cleansed and purified properly." (Abu Dawood)

So it is evident that Islam teaches its adherents personal purity and cleanliness. Besides it urge them to keep their surroundings neat and clean.

But it is unfortunate that scant attention is paid by us towards purification. Today it is generally said that Muslims do not take care of cleanliness and purity. No doubt due to our shortcomings and carelessness such bad notions are attributed to us.

Hence it is incumbent for us to maintain physical hygiene and keep ourselves neat and clean because cleanliness is a part of Faith. The holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says: "Allah is pure and loves purity, He is clean and loves cleanliness, He is kind and loves kindness, He is generous and loves generosity; therefore, keep your compounds neat and clean and do not be like Jews who gather rotten and stale things in their houses."○



AROUND THE WORLD

University of Science and Technology Opened in Jeddah

King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) was opened here on September 22, Tuesday, two days after the Kingdom celebrated the Eidul Fitr. It also coincided with the 79th National Day of Saudi Arabia. Several dignitaries and Nobel laureates were invited for the opening ceremony at which reigning Saudi monarch King Abdullah opened the University which promises to herald a new era of knowledge and scientific research in Saudi Arabia.

The leaders taking part in the launch of the sprawling new facility to propel the Kingdom into the heady global ranks of technological research included Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, Turkish President Abdullah Gul, and Qatar Emir Shaikh Hamad Bin Khalifa al Thani.

Petroleum and Mineral Resources Minister Ali al Naimi, who is the chairman of KAUST's Board of Trustees, described opening of the state-of-the-art international research institution as the realization of King Abdullah's vision to herald a new era of scientific and economic progress in the Kingdom as well as to increase the contributions of Arabs and Muslims to

human civilization.

In a press statement, Al Naimi said that the university embraces students for higher scientific studies from Saudi Arabia as well as from other countries on the basis of their merit, academic achievements and intellectual capabilities.

"At present there are about 100 Saudi students in the university and we hope that number will increase in the future. The University's research will focus on developing new sources of energy in the Kingdom," he added.

"It will also focus on exploitation of desert sand, cultivation in salt water, development of new crops to be cultivated in hot and arid lands and finally, the optimum utilization of the marine environment", he said adding that the University will play a vital role in strengthening the Kingdom's resources and making available of appropriate economic alternatives in future.

KAUST will also work to narrow gap between Muslim and developed world in knowledge.

Born out of the barren desert, KAUST is now a reality, located in Thuwal, on the Red Sea coast, about 80 km north of Jeddah. KAUST's core campus, sprawling over 36 square kilometers, encompassed a marine sanctuary and research facility around a unique coral reef

ecosystem.

The campus blends traditional and regional architecture with modern styles and amenities. King Abdullah announced his plan to establish the world-class University three years ago.

"The establishment of this university has been a living idea in my mind for more than 25 years and I thank God for helping us to realize it," the King had said during KAUST's ground-braking ceremony in October 2007.

The King has guaranteed that his dream lives on by ensuring that KAUST is self-funded through one of the most generous endowments of more than \$10 billion and will not have to depend on the vagaries of state funding.

"Two years ago it was nothing but sand and sea. Today there is one of the best infrastructures for research," KAUST president Choon Fong Shih said.

Classes, all taught in English, opened in September with 71 professors and 374 postgraduate students. The masters and doctorate degree students represent more than 60 countries, with some 15 percent from Saudi Arabia itself.

KAUST has already launched joint research programmes with institutions ranging from the National University of Singapore to France's Institute Francais du Petrole to Britain's Cambridge and Stanford in the United States.

And it has created its own

research operations spanning nano technology, applied mathematics, solar energy, membrane research and bioengineering.

KAUST's emphasis is unambiguous: scientific research and application to complement the humanities bias of some of the major Saudi universities.

Four strategic research thrusts build KAUST's research agenda: resources, energy and environment; biosciences and engineering; materials science and engineering; applied mathematics and computational science.○

1,392 Embrace Islam in Riyadh

As many as 1,392 expatriates having different nationalities have embraced Islam at Cooperative Dawa and Guidance Office in Riyadh's Suwaidi District, according to a report released recently. The director of the office has said that his office has distributed 19,789 copies of the Qur'an, 59,250 copies of the Islamic cassettes in Arabic and other languages and 15 million copies of booklets and pamphlets among the public. The office appoints learned scholars to give Islamic lectures during the holy month.○

Portland Mosque reflects history of Islam in US

According to Shaheed Hamid, the mosque's imam, the mosque was

Continued on Page 32

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