



# **THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST**

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# The Fragrance of East

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## Honesty and Trust worthiness

**S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi**

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

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

(Islam and the World p. 58)

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## **Wisdom of Qur'an**

*"Your Lord knows very well all those who are in the heavens and in the earth. And We preferred some Prophets over others. We gave Da'ud Zabur. (Surah Al-Isra, A. 55)*

### **Commentary:**

That is, explains Alusi, some of the Messengers were preferred over others in spiritual matters and not in material things (while the unbelievers think that material favor is all that matters: Au.).

Ibrahim (asws) was made a Khalil, Musa (asws) was directly spoken to, Da'ud (asws) was given a revelation that did not have any commandments, Sulayman (asws) was given a (kind of) kingdom that no one else was ever given, 'Isa (asws) was created out of the word kun, and our Prophet's earlier and later sins were forgiven. Further, he was sent to all the peoples of the world. Thus, every Prophet was singled out for a favor, and in that respect preferred over others (Qatada and Ibn Jurayj; Ibn Jarir).

*"Say, Call those besides Him whom you fancy. They have neither the power to remove afflictions from you, nor to turn (them) away." (Surah Al-Isra. A 56)*

### **Commentary:**

Referring to the textual word "za'ama", often translated as "to fancy, allege, maintain, claim" etc. Alusi demonstrates, with the help of several examples, some of which from the hadith, that "za'ama" need not necessarily be in the sense of "fancy, allege" etc. Quite often, especially in history works, it is commonly used in the sense of "belief, assertion or free of doubt." Thus Alusi precedes in answering the allegations of the Orientalists that since Ibn Ishaq often uses the term "za'ama" while narrating traditions concerning life of the Prophet, the reports have a question mark before them. For example, Alfred Auillaume writes in his foreword to the "Sirah": "A word that very frequently precedes a statement is za'ama or za'amu, 'he (they) alleged'. It carries with it more than a hint that the statement may not be true." (Life of Muhammad). This is how the Orientalists managed to plant doubts in the hearts of the Western educated Muslims. This also tells us that even translations of Islamic text by non-Muslims, especially Western scholars, may not be accorded acceptance without a proper review (Au.).

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

It is related on the authority of Amr bin Murra that he told Muawiya that he heard the Apostle of God say: "The ruler who will shut his door to the weak and needy bondmen, God will shut the doors of the heavens at the time of his distress and privation, (Help will not reach him from God' in the hour of his need."

- Tirmizi.

### **Commentary:**

The doors of the holy Prophet, and, after him, of Khulfa-i-Rashideen, always remained open for the suppliants and petitioners. They had a free access to them and could meet and place their difficulties before them without any trouble, but when the Kharijis took to terrorism and Usma' was killed by them and an attempt, also, was, made on the life of Muawiya, the latter placed restrictions on visitors. It was, then, that Amr bin Murra related the above saying of the holy Prophet to him. It is, further, mentioned in the same report that, after it, Muawiya appointed an officer who used listen to the needs and grievances of the people and pass them on to him.

It is related by Sa'eed Khudri that the Apostle of God said: "To say a just word before a tyrannical ruler is the best of Jihad."

-Tirmizi

### **Commentary:**

Though in a war there is the danger of defeat and death, there is, also, the hope of victory. But one, positively, risks his life, or, at least, invites punishment if one dares speak out boldly before a cruel and unjust ruler. For this reason, perhaps, it has been called "the best of Jihad."

**Editor's Note** **WOMEN AND PATRIARCHY**

After half a century of independence Indians have woken up to take account of their achievements and failures. Keeping aside many vital issues suddenly it has dawned upon us that women constitute more than 50% of our population and yet they are devoid of social and political rights with which they can negotiate the patriarchal structures in which they live. It is more than evident that this abysmal situation has arisen because politicoreligious hawks of all hues have been allowed to call the shots in every governmental move on gender issues. These power brokers in a bid to keep their own political positions intact have prevented any progressive legislation benefitting women to pass through. The devastating fall out of such a policy is more than obvious: Rapists get acquitted with ease. Dowry seekers stroll the street with impunity even as dowry deaths increase, and sexual harassment continues unabated with hapless women knocking the doors of justice in vain. From Maya Tyagi of Baghpat (Meerut) to Roopam Deol Bajaj, an IAS officer of Punjab, and Anjana Misra, the wife of an IFS officer in Orissa, there is an endless list of women cutting across classes, caste and community, who have come to exemplify the pitiable state of affairs.

It is in this context that the present race amongst the political parties to corner credit of providing reservation for women in Parliament and state legislative assemblies appears to be a case of political

hypocrisy. This is of course not to say that Women's Reservation Bill need not be supported, Indeed not only the Women's Bill but also any bill which will provide much needed relief to the women should be whole heartedly supported. The delay in the passage of these bills and the absence of a political will to "push through these pieces of legislation makes the protracted political discourse around these themes meaningless.

It is high time that the political class paid some attention to the entrenched societal attitudes towards women which shape the political handling of gender issues. This is more important than merely shedding crocodile tears on the plight of women and giving lip service to the idea of their being co-sharers of political power. There is a pressing political need to initiate a dialogue in society on the validity of the prescribed "role" for men and women. We adore women, use reverential language to address them, designate them as mothers, sisters or daughters. But we stoutly refuse to accept them in any other role. If women opt to make strides beyond the spheres prescribed for them by men then we see to it they are made vulnerable to male fury, lust and aggression.

The impunity with which violence against women is becoming a routine affair is best brought out in the accounts of partition. Mr. Andrew Whitehead, in his radio series "India: a people partitioned" broadcast on the BBC World Service has aptly observed that during the partition of the country when large scale migrations of people took place across the border women migrants suffered the most. The

extent of sexual violence against women has been concealed behind a veil of silence and shame. Figures available suggest that about one lakh women were abducted mainly in Punjab. How many more were raped and killed or casually cast aside God only knows. Whitehead further says that it is not hard to find veterans of the partition violence who admit sometimes with remorse, often with an obscene pride that they rioted and perhaps even killed. But no one admits to have participated in mass rape of women. Yet in 1947 there were tens and thousands of rapists exacting what they saw as communal vengeance or taking advantage of the breakdown of law and order to brutalise and humiliate women.

The situation is not different even now when communal riots flare up in any part of the country. Women bear the brunt of mob fury. The despicable carnage in Gujrat is the latest instance of brutality towards women. Thus it is imperative that we first create a social atmosphere where women can live without fear of sexual harassment. Without ensuring this basic security all talk of elevation and empowerment are meaningless for a large majority of women.

We do not think that any religion worth its name sanctions aimless killing, what to say of sexual brutalities. Yet, alas! It is the women who become the first targets during riots. The basic attitudes of the patriarchs towards Women first need to be re-formed before the political classes take on the onus of debating the feasibility of "empowering" women. The need of the hour is the enactment of powerful women friendly legislation which

helps rather than intimidates victims of male brutality and aggression. Without that the political discourse on the Women Bill appears to be a farce.

However, since crores of Muslims live in this country it is desirable that while framing laws and acts Islamic views may also be kept in mind. A world wide misconception spread by non-Muslims that Islamic shari' ah is quite harsh towards women must be removed. It is needless to say that as compared to other faiths Islam has restored to women her rights as well as her dignity, assigned her a proper place in the society and protected her against not only the conceit of men but also from irrational and cruel customs. The holy Quran does not distinguish between men and women. Wherever it refers to God's acceptance of good deeds, attainment of salvation and success in the hereafter, it refers to men as well as women.

"And whosoever does deeds of righteousness be it 'male or female, believing-they shall enter paradise, and not be wronged a single date spot" (Q. 4: 124)

And then Lord answers them; "I waste not the labours of any that labours among you, be you male or female-the one of you is as the other." (Q. 3: 195)

The holy Quran promises goodly life to men and women alike in an equal measure. This means a life of peace and contentment and honour in this very world.

S.A.

## A Few Preliminary Remarks

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

These pages describe the peculiar traits and distinguishing features of Islam, its basic creed, permissible behaviours, the sayings and doings of the holy Prophet, his zeal for service to God and spreading his message, fighting in the way of God, virtuous demeanour as demanded by the Quran and the *sunnah* and the character and manners of the Prophet, albeit, briefly, along with the Quranic verses sounding a warning against the ruses of Satan and human weaknesses, for the training and guidance of those who can, by acting on these precepts, set an example for others. Anyone sincerely desirous of his self-reformation and leading a virtuous life need always to be careful of self-delusion but those who want an inner perfection of spirit and propinquity to God should try to follow, with great care, in the foot-steps of the holy Prophet. This is what Allah says for the guidance of such people.

“And those who struggle in Our cause, surely We shall guide them in Our ways; and God is with the good-doers.”  
(29 : 69).

It might occur to some of our readers that this slim volume contains nothing new save what is known to every Muslim. All these pages have

been dealt with in detail in the Book of God and the *ahadith*. The writings of scholars, old and new, have these matters dispersed in their numerous writings, as the author has himself cited references to several such books written since the time of Imam Ghazzali. They may have thoughts that this work is only a compilation and summary of old writings rather than an attempt to show a new path. They may also harbour the idea that since they are already leading an Islamic way of life, and following its injunctions, what should they do to derive any worthwhile benefit from this work or how should they make a break to change the pattern of their behaviour which may also be satisfying to them.

We have tried to answer these questions in the light of our own experiences in the following lines and hope that those who have a sincere desire to seek the path of righteousness shall pay heed to our suggestions.

First of all one should try to take this book as a tutor for his beliefs and creed and make it a guidebook for his life. This is not to suggest that this is the work of any *mujtahid* or an academician who has been endowed with any special knowledge by God,

not shared by others; for, this is not at all the intention of the writer who is fully aware of his own shortcomings. The reason for this piece of advice is that it is a collection of all those truths and fundamentals of Islamic creed which are unanimously accepted by the *ahl-i-sunnat wal jama'at*. These are the matters of which every Muslim should keep himself a breast. It would therefore be of no use to go through this work for increasing one's knowledge or for passing one's time, or else to pass a verdict on the erudition or unlearnedness of the writer.

The writer stands in need of benefitting from this work and he considers himself on the same level as his readers. Yet, a few suggestions are given here on the basis of the experiences of the author which can be fruitfully followed by the readers also.

1. Our starting point should be that God who has sent down the Scripture, and the Prophet who preached His message, have left no room for any deviation or aberration from the authoritative creed. We should therefore, first of all have a look at our own beliefs in the light of the Qur'an, for it is the only mirror which can enable us to see our true reflection. This work is an epitome of Quranic teachings, directions of the holy Prophet and researches of the

scholars belonging to *ahl-i-sunnat* in regard to apostolic doctrines of faith.

2. The prescribed devotions and its four practical manifestations should be observed in their true spirit with complete regard to their external and internal as well as physical and spiritual contents. We should follow the path of the holy Prophet, as best as possible, and should try to find out, sincerely and diligently, his modes and manners-for he is the only perfect and complete model for us. Let alone his worshipful devotions to the Lord, his everyday life has been held up as a standard to be followed by us. Says the Lord:

"You have had a good example in God's Messenger for whosoever hopes for God and the Last Day, and remembers God oft." (33 : 21).

The more we are able to follow the example of the Prophet and mould our lives on his pattern, the more our devotions would be acceptable to God. The books narrating the sayings and doings of the holy Prophet contain such a complete record of his prayers, observances, summons for *jihad*, his daily routine, behaviour and manners that nothing comparable to them can be found elsewhere about anyone born on this planet.

After we have patterned our lives after the holy Prophet, we should endeavour that our religious



observances, particularly the prayers, should reflect the reality and strength of our faith. This is the way to translate our faith into our behaviours and morals, into our individual and social life as well as to make them a means to gain certitude in faith and love and propinquity to God.

3. Rights of the people come next to creed, religious observances and the rights of God. "there is not the least doubt that Allah will condone the lapses in regard to the obligations we owe to Him but the remission of wrongs committed by one man to another will be left to the discretion of the wronged person. Bukhari contains a *hadith* wherein the Prophet is reported to have said: "If anybody is under obligation to his (Muslim) brother whether relating to his prestige or something of that sort (like property or loan), it is better that he should meet his obligation in this world rather than defer it to the time when there would be neither *dinar* nor *dirham* (to compensate for it). If the defendant has any meritorious act to his credit so much of it would be taken as can satisfy the claim of the plaintiff. If such a person has none of the -virtues then the claimant's sins corresponding to the dues owed would be transferred to him." Another report in the *Sahih Muslim* says: "All the sins of the martyr would be condoned save a loan." The Prophet added that Gabriel conveyed

it to him. Another report included in the *Sahih Muslim* says: "The Prophet asked his companions, 'Do you know who is a destitute, a pauper?' The companions, replied, 'We call him a destitute who is penniless, without resources.' The Prophet then said, 'The destitute among my followers would be one who would have prayer and fasting and poor-due on the Judgement Day but he would have abused someone, made a false accusation against another, misappropriated someone's property, shed someone's blood or assaulted someone. His virtues would be given to the wronged persons and when these would have exhausted and there would still be some more dues, then the sins of the wronged persons would be heaped on him and he would be cast into the Hell!'"

In order to steer clear of this danger we need to be fair and just in our dealings. We should also know the injunctions of *shari'ah* in this regard and should abide by them.

We ought to contemplate on our acts and dealings in the light of these *ahadith* which also find a confirmation in the Quranic verses, and should apply our minds impartially to our past and present deeds. If there is any loan to be repaid or an adjustable claim pertaining to sale or purchase, undivided property or inheritance, or a liability in consequence of an injury

caused to the feelings of a Muslim, encroachment on someone's rights, libel or backbiting, we should try to redress it in this world by clearing the dues or getting it pardoned willingly by the person concerned. Sometimes we make grievous mistakes in our mutual dealings and they continue to lie on us. These matters require to be given prior attention in the light of above-mentioned pronouncements of the holy Prophet.

4. We should, then, go all length to adopt cardinal virtues, attain purity of self and purge our heart from all faults and failings. Unrighteousness impedes our effort to receive benefit from the Prophetic teachings which constitute the surest way to adopt the 'hue' of Allah. Unvirtuousness makes man a slave of his desires, hideous like a devil, and poses the greatest danger for the health of one's faith and soul. Says the Qur'an:

"Hast thou seen him who has taken his caprice to be his God?" (45 : 23)

We should take the Qur'an and the *sunnah* as the two infallible standards for forming a judgement about the correctness of our own actions and the purification of our inner self.

A man may be exceptionally sagacious and clear-sighted but he can see his reflection only in a mirror. Hence a man is really fortunate if he is

mindful of his own failings like pride, envy, greed, piggishness, pettiness, vindictiveness, fondness for the things worldly and filthy lucre and the tendency to dispare his Muslim brothers, and also tries to get rid of his weaknesses. To fight one's own vices, one has to be a bitter enemy unto them. He has also all the luck who can get a guide perfect in spirit able to warn his disciple about the latter's faults and failings and to show him the way of overcoming them. A man of God brightens the inner self of his disciples and makes it easy for them to get rid of their shortcomings by setting a personal example through his own unremitting fear of God and self-examination.

That was the easiest way during the days gone-by. Even erudite scholars used to seek the company of those perfect in soul even if the guide was not learned like them. They used to get a practical guidance in the purification of inner self from these guides and learnt the way to protect themselves from the ruses of Satan. Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal's son once pointed out to his father *that he* attended the discourses of persons far less well-versed than him, and who actually ought to learn from him. He added that this put him to shame and caused misunderstanding to others. Imam Ahmad replied, .. My son, a man sits where it is profitable to his heart.'

There has never been a time, with all the vulgarity and worldliness, when the world was without elevated souls. But if anyone is unable to find the company of such a godly person, he ought to take stock of his own self, his leaning and desires, like a dispassionate observer and critic, and try to make himself aware of his own faults and failings. The Qur'an says:

"Man shall be a clear proof against himself, latter; even though he offers his excuses." (75: 14-15)

There is not the least doubt that this would help a man to discover his own weaknesses." One should make every effort to overcome one's fault and failings with the help of the Scripture and the *sunnah* as well as in light of experiences and instructions of the spiritual guides of the *ummah* who have written innumerable treatises on the subject. Countless Muslims have derived benefit from such writings as, for example, the *Ihya-ul-'Uloom* of Imam Gazzili, the *Talbis-i-Iblis* of Ibn Jauzi, *Aghathatul Lahfan fi Makayadish Shaytan* and *Madarijis Salikin bain Manazil Iyak n'abudu wa Iyak nasta'yin* of Ibn Qayyim, *Jami al-'Uloom walHakam Sharh Khamsjn Haditha min Jawam'e al-Kalim* of Ibn Rajab, *Sirat-ul-Mustaqlm* of Saiyid Ahmad Shahid and *Tarbiyatus Salik* of Ashraf 'Ali Thanvi, which would be found extremely useful for the purpose.

Engaging oneself oftener in supplications and remembrance, being fearful of one's moral imperfections, sceptical habit of mind towards one's own inclinations and desires and avoiding the company of those who are heedless or indulge in immorality or else endeavour to find an excuse for their misdeeds would be helpful in one's self-correction. Says God:

"Whoso blinds himself to the remembrance of the All Merciful, to him We assign a Satan for comrade, and they bar them from the way." (43: 36).

When one has taken to the approved creed and worshipful acts, attained self-purification to the extent possible and cultivated the habit of protecting oneself against one's baser instincts, one should apply oneself to the study of holy Prophet's character and morals. The Prophet's way of life, his character and behaviour should be held as an ideal to be copied in every walk of life with a yearning to be blessed with the grace thus promised -by God.

"Say (O Prophet): If you love God, follow me, and God will love you, and forgive you your sins." (3 : 31 ).

5. A thorough knowledge of the three religious practices, i. e., *salat*, *saum* and *zakat*, and the rules of *shari'ah* about acts permissible and impermissible, obligatory duties, incumbent acts, *sunnah*, matters

commended or disapproved and the limits imposed by it is absolutely necessary for every believer. One should know the rules of *shari'ah* about the business or calling one is engaged in and act on them as a dutiful and God-fearing man apprehensive of the hereafter. Any book of *fiqh* written by a trustworthy scholar and approved by a reliable religious teacher of the time should be studied from time to time.

6. Many amongst us are scrupulous about the supplications mentioned in the *ahadi th* for recital at the time of performing ablutions, entry in the mosque and exit from it, going to answer the call of nature, retiring for sleep and at awakening, setting out for a journey and on return but there is always the danger that we may not be getting the merits and rewards promised by God, as stated by the holy Prophets, for the simple reason that we might be reciting these supplications in a routine manner by force of habit. There are several acts of worship, commonly known to be obligatory or necessary. A great merit is attached to all of them but their full reward depends on the doer's conviction, zeal and hope for the recompense promised for them. The holy Prophet has said that:

“One who fasts during Ramadhan with the trust in God's promises and the

hope of being recompensed for it, his previous sins will be forgiven.”

“And one who keeps vigil during the *lailatul qadr* with the truth in God's promises and the hope of being recompensed for it, his previous sins will be forgiven.”

Many of us are not very careful about the difference between the acts of prayer and habitual actions. The result is that a great many of our orisons and prayers like *salat*, *saum*, *zakat* and *hajj* tend to become a settled disposition, devoid of their spirit and lack what may be called faith and awareness.

A living awareness of the merits of these acts of worship, complete trust in their efficacy as if they were rooted in the heart, sincere devotion with which these orisons were performed and the importance given to them for gaining proximity to God were the reasons that accounted for the difference between the companions of the Prophet and the pious souls of times goneby, on the one hand, and the later-day Muslims on the other. When the companions performed ablution, which we do several times every day in a mechanical way, they also recalled this saying of the holy Prophet:

When an obedient Muslim

performs ablution and washes his face then the sins he had committed with his eyes are washed away; and when he washes his hands, the sins committed by his hands are washed away; down to the time when he emerges cleansed of all his sins.”

They placed such a trust in everything told by the Prophet as if they had seen it with their own eyes. Their ardent desire to win the promised merits made them perform all those virtuous acts. When they warmly welcomed a brother Muslim or even engaged in their business or trade or did anything else, they used to yearn for the goodly reward promised by God. This turned their prayers and supplications into an enthusiastic devotion and loyalty to God and thus all of their devine services took the shape of complete submission to God.

If we could also cultivate the same awareness, perform all the divine services, supplications and acts of worship with the same certitude of faith and constant awareness, we would see their luminous effect *in* our lives. But this does not depend on worshipful acts alone. Our earnings should be lawful and the means we adopt for them whether they be service, business, farming or any other trade should be adopted with the intention of winning the pleasure of God. This

is what the holy Prophet wanted to drive home in one of his pronouncements, accepted unanimously by all the scholars of *hadlth*, and with which Imam Bukhari commences his great work:

“Acts depend on the intentions and everyone will be recompensed in accordance with what he has intended.

This *hadith* is one of those which form the very basis of religion. “This *hadith* forms one-third of knowledge.”, says Imam Shafe’i, “and has a bearing upon seventy sections of jurisprudence. “

The greatest reward and an unforgettable favour of the prophethood of Muhammad, on whom be peace, which was ever, sought by man and which has been articulated in such a simple manner, yet carrying the deepest import, is *niyat* or intention in the *hadith* cited above.

It means that every act performed with the purpose of submitting oneself to God in all sincerity is the means of gaining propinquity to God. It takes man up to the highest reaches of faith. It really means on unadulterated faith, free of every suspicion and doubt whether it takes the form of fighting in the way of God, or the governance of a land, or making use of the world and its conveniences, or fulfilment of one’s rightful desires, or earning one’s living

in a lawful way, or taking pleasure from innocent amusements, or else enjoying a married life. Contrarily every devotion or religious service would be deemed as a worldly affair if it lacks the desire to seek the pleasure of God, is indifferent to divine injunctions and smacks forgetfulness of the hereafter, nomatter whether it is observance of obligatory prayers or migration or fighting or remembrance or even mar-tyrdom. Everyone with this sort of divine service, be he a scholar or a fighter in the way of God, would find himself denied of the recompense of his efforts. Rather his insincere effort may prove calamitous for him, barring his way to the presence of GOD.

One of the innumerable 'favours of the holy Prophet on mankind consists of his bridging the wide gap dividing religious and worldly spheres of human acivity. The two had been divided into separate camps, on apart from the other, segregated and isolated from each other by a great divide or rather both were antagonistic to one another like two adversaries-hostile and inimical like those who are at daggers drawn. The Prophet made them compatible and complementary which now go together hand in hand. The holy Prophet was a harbinger of unity as well as the revealer of a message of cheer and warning. He caused the two warring camps of humanity to stand united in search of faith, clemency to mankind and

pleasure of God, by teaching man to beseech the Lord in these comprehensive words:

"Our Lord! give us good in the world and good in the hereafter, and save us from the torment of fire." (2:201).

"Lo ! my worship and my sacrifice and my living and my dying-all belong to Allah, Lord of the worlds."(6 : 163).

It meant that the life of a Muslim was not a combination of two ,giscordant, incompatible spheres of activity. It was rather a united whole overlaid with the spirit of worship and introspection, complete trust and faith in God and submission to His will. This embraces the entire field of human activity demanding absolute sincerity, true purpose and an intention to win the pleasure of God. It also requires that every act is to be performed after the example set by' the prophets of God. This also demonstrates that the holy Prophet was a messenger of unity and love, a warner and a messenger of glad tidings who converted the entire life of man into a devotion to God by denying the existence of any cleavage between the spiritual and *temporal* spheres of human affairs. He demolished the wedge between men of religion and those of the world and caused all of them to unite their efforts for obtaining the pleasure of God and service of humanity. It was because of him that the world could see ascetics

who wore crown on their heads and warriors who spent their nights in devotions and prayers.

7. It is advisable to cultivate the habit of reciting such portion of the Qur'an as may be convenient to one, and this should not be missed save in the case of illness or for reasons unavoidable. The time spent in reading the holy Scripture should be deemed as the most worthy and well-spent for God says about the Qur'an: Falsehood comes not to it from before it, nor from behind it." (41 : 42).

While engaged in the recital of the Qur'an we should deem ourselves as nearest to God; overawed by His Majesty, ready to melt down like mountains about which it is said that:

Had we brought down this Qur'an upon a mountain, you would have seen it humble itself and 'break asunder for fear of Allah.'" (59: 21).

And God also says:

"God has sent down the fairest discourse as a Book, consimilar in its oft-repeated (verses) whereat shiver the skins of those who fear their Lord; then their skins, and their hearts soften to the remembrance of God." (39 : 23).

The benefits derived from the Qur'an left a visible mark on the lives of the pious souls of olden times that helped them to get ahead of others. This was achieved by them not merely

by pondering over the verses of the Qur'an or a deep study of the wisdom contained in it but because of their cognition of Divine Majesty and appreciation of the sublimity of Divine revelation which surpassed the charm of human expression.

Two things are helpful in deriving full benefit from the Qur'an. First, a knowledge of the merits of the Qur'an; its recitation and its competence to create a direct relationship between man and his Creator, and the implicit belief in the rewards that can be had through it in the hereafter. Secondly, one should get oneself acquainted with the way the purer in soul, saints and scholars used to recite the Qur'an ; how they used to deliberate on it and what precautions they took in its recitation.

It is also helpful, as the experience has shown, that we should create a direct link with the Qur'an by discarding all the intermediaries that stand between us and the Qur'an. Nor we should allow anything to stick to our minds that may guide our understanding of the Qur'an into a beaten, groove or the inter-pretation given by a particular exegete, old or new. We should also not allow our own predilections or the modern thought and trends to conceal from our view the beauty and charm of the divine revelation. Dependence on any particular exegete projects the thought

and personality of a forceful commentator in such a way that the reader is unduly impressed by the interpretation peculiar to his way of thought and reasoning.

There are, however, a few exceptions to this general rule. The commentaries elucidating the correct import of difficult words and passages in the light of explanations given by the Prophet himself, his companions or the great jurists of Islam, dictionaries, glossaries and similar other works which have to be consulted for an in-depth study of the Qur'an, particularly by the non-Arabs, fall in this category. While reciting the Qur'an one should be particularly attentive and feel himself as if in attendance to the Author of the Scripture. These norms also do not apply to the exegetes, authors and researchers in the Quranic subjects who have of necessity to undertake an exhaustive study for gaining a thorough knowledge of it. However, every Muslim has neither the time nor necessity to make himself adept in the subject.

8. It is essential to go through the works on *hadith* and biography of the Prophet with the intention of creating a heart-felt attachment with the holy Prophet and for taking to his ways, manners and behaviour in every walk of life. One in love with anybody is always mindful of his beloved and

tries to know all about him. Refreshing the memory of the loved one being a sure sign of affection and attachment, the saints and pious souls were never forgetful of the holy Prophet. Their ardent love for the Prophet is still capable of transmitting the warmth of their hearts to those who go through their reminiscences and biographies. Such works can be especially beneficial to those who have an affectionate devotion to the holy Prophet.

Repeated recitation of *durud*, the prescribed benediction for the holy Prophet, is highly beneficial since the Qur'an has attached great importance to it.

"God and His angels bless the Prophet. O believers, do you also bless him, and pray him p'ease." (33 : 56): The Prophet is reported to have said that:

"One who blesses me once is blessed ten times by God." Also, that:

"He will be nearest to me on the Day of Judgement who blesses me most."

Abi b. K'ab once asked the Prophet, "Do I need only to bless you, ?" "Yes", replied the Prophet" this would solve all your difficulties and cause your sins to be forgiven."

9. There are also remembrances and litanies. We should try to engage ourselves in some of these remembrances regularly and



also recite those for particular occasions, a few of which have been given elsewhere.

10. The biographies of such saints, savants and jurists of Islam whose faith, love for the Prophet, knowledge of the scripture and the *sunnah*, self-purification and anxiety for the hereafter is well-known, should also be regarded studiously. Ibn Jawzi, the reputed critic and scholar of *hadith* writes in the *Said-uf- Khatir*.

“I have found that the study of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and of *hadith* are not sufficient to make the heart receptive.” The way to it is to study the biographies of the earlier men of God which are still capable of moving one's heart. Mere knowledge of the permissible and prohibited acts is not of much help in touching a chord of one's heart. The holy Prophet's acts and doings as well as the behaviour of the saints of olden days can only tug at the heart-strings since they had translated the commandments of the *shari'ah* into their lives. Their actions and behaviours did not conform merely to the outer shape of these injunctions but tried to get to the very spirit of these commandments. What I am stating here, I have experienced myself and seen that normally the scholars of *hadith* try to master the chain of authorities in the narration of *ahadith* ; likewise the jurists pay more attention to the reasons and arguments by which

they may be able to get the better of their adversaries. How can these things soften the heart? In the days gone-by the people used to call upon those purer of heart and perfect in spirit in order to study their demeanour and manners not for gleaning knowledge from them but for the fact that the conduct and deportment of these elevated souls were the end results of their knowledge. This has to be clearly understood and the study of the lives of saints of old made a part of the study of *hadith* and *fiqh*, for this alone can stir one's heart.”

Ibn Jawzi writes at another place in the same book:

“I have written a treatise describing the life and character, morals and spiritual attainments of every heavenly-minded soul of the olden times. One of these is about Hasan Basri and the others are about Sufyan Thauri, Ibrahim b. Adham, Bishr Haft, Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal and M'aruf Karkhi. One can achieve one's objective only by the grace of God, but ignorance is always an- impediment in taking to the right course. These two the like the drover (driving the herd) and the forerunner (leading the herd) while the heart of man in-between the two does not want to make any move by itself. One can reach one's destination if both the drover and the forerunner are in action God! keep us away from indolence and lethargy.”

We should not be the least cynical about these men of God, the missionaries of Islam, who were successful in bringing the whole nations and countries to the fold of Islam; we should rather acknowledge their service to us; we should pray for them and pass over if we happen to come across any fault or human weakness in anyone of them, for no man is free of human failing. God has praised such pure-hearted souls in these words:

“And those who came (into the faith) after them, say: Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who were before us in the faith, and place not in our hearts any rancour toward those who believe. Our Lord! Thou art Full of Pity, Merciful,” (59: 10)

The verse quoted here teaches us to be very careful about those who preceded us in faith. This is also demanded by the etiquette taught by the Qur’an and the practice of the holy Prophet. We have to be too careful in passing a verdict about another Muslim; we should neither be hasty nor emotional, nor yet express any definite opinion about our brothers unless we are sure of it and have formed a view on the basis of reliable and positive evidence. God had advised us that:

“Believers, if an evil-doer brings you a piece of news inquire first into its truth, lest you should wrong others

unwittingly and then repent of what you have done.”(49:6).

11. Whatever be our engagements, we ought to devote a bit of our time to preaching and calling the people to the way of God. This was the primary objective of prophethood and it was for this purpose that the Divine scriptures were revealed and the *sunnah* of the last Prophet was brought forth. God has said:

“You are the noblest nation that has ever been raised up for mankind. You enjoin justice and forbid evil. You believe in Allah.” (3: 110)

The Divine writ also says :

Let there become of you a nation that shall speak or righteousness, enjoin justice and forbid evil. Such men shall surely triumph.” (3 : 104)

But the preaching and giving a call for reformation and righteousness does not require any rigid or inflexible procedure to be followed by all. It is a duty incumbent upon all of us, but there is no fixed method or system to be followed by everybody.

The Prophet Noah says:

“My Lord! I have called my people by night and by day.”(71 : 5)

And again:

“Then indeed I called them openly; then indeed I spoke publicly unto them,

and I spoke unto them secretly.”(71 : 9)

The prophet of Islam was advised thus:

“Call thou to the way of the Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way.” (16 : 125).

It is a duty incumbent upon us, an obligation imposed by our religion, that we should not be indifferent to the moral and social condition of the Muslim peoples; we should share their sorrows and delights like the members of one family spread all over the face of this earth. The Prophet is reported to have said.

“Muslims are like a (human) body in respect of their mutual love and affection and kindly feelings; if any limb is afflicted with pain all the remaining parts of the body share the affliction through fever and restlessness.”

The sea of troubles in which Muslims happen to be placed everywhere should make our hearts bleed and the persecution of some others simply for their attachment to Islam should deepen our anxiety for them. Let these hardships revive our sense of Islamic brotherhood and strengthen the solidarity of Islam for assisting those who are working for the victory of faith, enforcement of *shari'ah* as the law of the land in Muslim countries and for regaining our lost power and prestige. This is the only

way open to the Muslims for being feared and respected by their adversaries, for rooting out corruption from the face of earth and for bringing man back to the obedience of his Lord and Master.

“And fight them until persecution is no more, and Allah’s religion reigns supreme.” (8: 39)

12. Lastly, contemplation upon finite nature of the world and all it contains, the short span of man’s life and the inevitability of death is the most effective means for softening the heart, leading a life of moderation and contentment and getting rid of airy hopes and aspirations. The Prophet is on record that:

“Keep the remembrance of death, the shatterer of pleasures.”

Meditation upon death, which should take some of our time, should cause us to worry about a happy ending since our ultimate success depends on virtuousness at the point of death. All those gnostics, saints and men perfect of spirit whose abiding popularity is a witness to their nearness to God and whose miracles are commonly spoken of had been so very anxious of entering the portals of death with their faith intact that they never *lost* sight of it even for a moment. They never took pride in their virtuous actions nor placed reliance on their own efforts. They had always this

pronouncement of Prophet fixed in their minds.

“Abu Huraira relates that the Prophet said; ‘None of you’ shall earn salvation through his deeds ‘! The companions asked, ‘And you too, O Prophet of Allah?’ ‘Yes, myself also,’ replied the Prophet, ‘save that the grace of Allah envelops me. Take the right path and

create cohesion; strive in the morning and in the evening and in a part of night also; take to moderation and you will reach your destination.”

It would be appropriate that this *hadith* calling attention to the need of Divine grace for ultimate success should become the starting point of our self-education to live as true believers.,

*(continued from page 38)*

prescribe fasting but prescribed it for a specific period of time. One whole month to be exact, dawn to sunset is a Muslim required to fast abstaining from food, drink and sex. Token or symbolic fasting for a certain day cannot provide the results that Ramazan seeks to create. It is only when people abstain from these day after day for a good one month can they attain control of their selves and a sense of concern for the less privileged begin to develop. Moreover, fasting that is accompanied by massive eating before and after the prescribed period of the day cannot yield those results.

How can one feel the pain of those not fortunate enough to have their daily meals if one gluttons himself and feels no pangs of hunger? The Sufis have always held in accordance with the tradition of Prophet Muhammad, may peace be upon him, that one ought to eat less even during that portion of the day when one is not fasting otherwise the spirit of the fast is weakened. However, pragmatism requires that people be not subjected to undue duress hence the tradition of *sahr*, the pre dawn meal and *iftar*, the ‘breakfast’ meal.

Fasting however is not merely about avoiding food and drink; it is also about building your character. The one fasting is required to control his talk so as not to say words of abuse or even dislike to other fellow human beings. The Prophet said, “Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, God is not in need of his abstinence from food and drink.” Anger, that form of temporary madness, is to be subdued, a lesson that Muslims around the world would do well to follow. Said the Prophet, “Strong is not the one who overcomes people by his strength, but he who controls himself while in anger.” This is the demand of *taqwa*.

And when the faithful fulfils this commandment of God, having fasted and abstained from all vices and actively sought virtue for nothing but the pleasure of God, then he breaks into thankful joy on the first day of the next month, *Shawwal*, the day of *Eid*. After the prayer of thanks in the morning, the day is spent meeting friends, neighbours and relatives. Grudges of the past are buried to make a new beginning in human relations.

However, those struggling with the necessities of life are not to be forgotten and they are as entitled to enjoy this day as the others. Besides the *zakat* which is not directly connected with this month, Islam has prescribed another mandatory charity called the *Sadqatul Fitr*. This is a small sum given by those capable to the poor to enable them to engage in the festivities of *Eid* for there can be no festivity for the well off unless they have taken care of the have-nots.

# **The Day of Judgement and the Real and External Life**

**- S. Sulaiman Nadwi**

Islam, as we have seen, lays the greatest stress on the individual accountability to God. The human being's life in this world constitutes a sort of examination for which he prepares himself either for good or for ill, for the life of infinite duration. For although man's body dies: his soul has an existence extending beyond the present life.

Then those who denied God and rejected His guidance, who devoted themselves to the worship of deities other than God and who did evil deeds will be consigned to a fearful and terrible abode. There they will be in a state of enduring torment and agony from which there will be no respite. They will long to have another chance to return to the world to live their lives differently. In the light of their present knowledge of reality, but it will be too late, they will have no choice, but to acknowledge the justice of their destiny which is due to what their own hands wrought, in spite of all clear warnings which were sent to guide them:

And on the Day those who disbelieve will be placed before the Fire (they will be asked): Is not this real? They will say: Yes, by our Lord.

He will say: Then taste the punishment because you disbelieved. (46 : 34)

Verily, the sinners will be in the punishment of Hell to remain therein. It will not be lightened for them and they will be overwhelmed in despair. And We shall not be unjust to them but it is they who have been unjust to themselves.

' (43: 74-76)

As for those who believed in Allah, who obeyed and submitted to Him and lived their lives for His pleasure and who left their lives in a state of surrender to Him, a state of contentment and satisfaction awaits.

Those who believe and do righteous deeds they are the best of creatures. Their reward is with their Lord: Gardens of Paradise beneath which rivers flow. They will dwell therein for ever, God well-pleased with them and they with Him. This is for those who fear their Lord.

(98:7-8)

These two states, Heaven and Hell, will be experienced in physical form by the new bodies with which God will raise men up: these are not merely spiritual psychic states. And while we

do not know their complete and exact nature, the Qur'an tells us that the inhabitants of Heaven will experience some things which will remind them of their life on earth, that the happiness and beauty of it will far exceed anything one can imagine, and that the ultimate triumph and bliss for those who have attained Paradise will be in nearness to their Lord. As for those who have deserved Hell, theirs will be a temporary or permanent state of torture depending on their inner condition and the nature and extent of their sins. The Qur'an describes Hell as a state of intense fearful burning and agony without respite, among the most horrifying loathsome surroundings and companions. But the most awful part of the sufferings of its inhabitants will be the terrible inescapable awareness that this is the destiny which they deserved and brought upon themselves by rejecting God and ignoring the guidance which He had conveyed to them through His messengers (peace be upon him).

This clear reality of the future life is before the mind and consciousness of the devout Muslim. It is this awareness which keeps the present life, in the midst of intense happiness and deepest pain alike, in perspective: the perspective of a passing, temporary abode in which one has been placed as a test in order to qualify and prepare himself for his

future Home. This perspective is essential for the maintenance of mental balance and stability amidst the difficulties of life. Yet no Muslim, even the best among them, imagines that he is guaranteed Paradise; on the contrary the more conscientious and God-fearing one is, the more he is aware of his shortcomings and weakness. Therefore, the Muslim, knowing that death may come to him at any time, tries to send on ahead for his future, so that he can look forward to it with hope for his mercy and grace.

Now think of the man who does not believe in the Day of Judgement. To him neither obedience to God is of any advantage, nor disobedience to Him is of any harm. How then would it be possible for him to scrupulously follow the injunctions of God, His Prophet, and His Book? What incentive would remain there for him to undergo trials and sacrifices and avoid worldly pleasures? And if he does not follow the code of God then of what use is his belief in the existence of God, if any such belief he has?

That is not all. If you reflect still deeper you will come to the conclusion that belief in life after death is the greatest deciding factor in the life of man its acceptance or rejection determines the course of his life and behaviour.

This is a man who has in view the success or failure in this world alone.

On the other hand, there is another man who believes in the next world and looks upon all worldly gains and losses as temporary and transitory and would not stake his eternal bliss for a transitory gain.

Now observe the radical difference between the belief, approach and life of the two persons. One's idea of a good act is limited to the benefit accruing to him in this brief temporary life in the shape of money, property; public applause etc. which give him position, power, reputation and worldly happiness. Such things become his objectives in life and he shuns not even from cruel and unjust means in their achievement. In

contrast to this man, the believer's concept of good and evil would be quite different. To him all that pleases God is good and all that invokes His displeasure and wrath is evil. A good act, according to him, will remain good even if it brings no benefit to him in this world, or even entails some worldly loss. He will be confident that God will reward him in the eternal life to come and that would be the real success. And he will not fall a prey to evils merely for some worldly gain, because he knows that even if he escapes punishment in this short life, in the end he would be a loser and would not be able to escape punishment in the court of God. He believes in the absolute moral standards revealed by God and lives according to them irrespective of gain or loss in this world. ■

### OBITUARY

The passing away of Mr. Wasi Ahmad Siddiqi, a member of our Editorial Board and Treasurer (Motamid -Mal) of Nadwatul Ulema on September 14, 2010 at the age of 80 years is a great loss to our institution. Mr. Wasi Ahmad a post graduate in Mathematics from Lucknow University joined Gandhi Faiz e Am Degree College Shahjahanpur as Lecturer in mid 1950's and after a distinguished service retired from there as Principal. Considering his administrative experience and long association with Nadwa the then Rector of the Nadwatul Ulema Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwai (RAH) entrusted him some responsibilities of Nadwa's administration. Till his death he worked with all sincerity and devotion and has left an everlasting memory of his association with this great centre of learning. May God give peace to his soul.

## Quol - e - Faisal\*

- Abul Kalam Azad

I had no intention of submitting any oral or written statement. This is a place where there is neither any hope nor expectation for us, nor any grievance. This is only a turnpike, without passing which we cannot reach our destination. For a short while, therefore, even against our own will, we have to break our journey here. Otherwise we would have gone straight to prison.

This is the only reason why for the last two years, I have always opposed the idea of non-cooperators taking any part in the proceedings of the court, although the All India Congress Committee, the Central Khilafat Committee and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Hind have given permission for written statements to be submitted for the information of the public. But, personally, I have always advised people to remain silent. I feel that a person who submits a statement because he is not guilty, even though he does it with a view to educating the public, is, nevertheless, not altogether

free from suspicion. Perhaps a feeble desire for acquittal or some unconscious weakness is working within him. The path of non-cooperation, however, is clear and straight and admits no compromise in that respect.

Non-cooperation is the result of utter disappointment with the existing conditions. And this despondency has led to a determination for affecting complete change. Non-cooperation on the part of any man reveals his disbelief in the sense of justice of the regime, and that is why he desires change. Now, if he is disappointed to such a degree that he sees no alternative except a change, how can he expect to receive any justice from that power?

To expect acquittal under the present circumstances is no more than a vain desire. With the exception of the Government itself, no sensible man can expect justice while the law courts are in their present state; not because they are run by individuals who do not like to administer justice, but because

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*\*On 21 December, 1921, Maulana Azad was arrested in Calcutta. He did not take part in the proceedings of the case, but on 24 January, 1922 he submitted a written statement called Quol-e-Faisal. On 9 February he was sentenced to one year with hard labour and sent to the Alipur Jail. Before leaving he told the Magistrate with a smile, "The sentence is too light and much below my expectations." The above is a selection from his statement to the Calcutta Court.*



they are based on a system under which no Magistrate can give justice to those persons with whom the Government itself does not wish to deal fairly! I want to make it clear that Non-cooperation is directed only against Government, the present set-up, and principles of Government, and never against individuals.

History bears witness that whenever the ruling powers took up arms against freedom and right, the court-rooms were used as the most convenient and plausible weapons. The authority of the courts is a force which can be used, both for justice and injustice. In the hands of a just government, it is the best means for the attainment of rights, but for a repressive and tyrannical government, there is no other weapon better fitted for vengeance and injustice. Next to battlefields, it is in the courts that some of the greatest acts of injustice in world history have taken place. From the holy founders of religions to the inventors and pioneers of science, there is no truthful or righteous deed which was not presented to the courts like a crime.

The list of the inequities of the courts of law is a long one, and history has not yet finished singing the elegy of such miscarriage of injustice. In that list we come across a man of God' like Jesus, who had to stand before a strange court with the worst of criminals. We see, also on the same

list, Socrates, who was sentenced to be poisoned for no crime other than that of being the most truthful person in the realm. We also find the name of the great Florentine martyr to truth, the inventor Galileo, who refused to believe his observations and researches merely because their avowal was a crime "In the eyes of the courts of the day. So, what a wonderful place is the convict's dock where the most righteous as well as the most criminal of men are made to stand! When I recall the great and meaningful history of the convict's dock and find that the honour of standing in that place belongs to me today, my soul bows in thankfulness to, and in praise of God. He alone knows the real joy and happiness of my mind. In this dock of the convicts I feel I am the envy of emperors.

It was never my intention to present a statement; but on the 6th of January when I was produced before the Court I found that the Government was frantically searching for a cause for my punishment; although if they were to accord to my wishes, I wanted to be given the maximum punishment. First, I was prosecuted under section 17 of the *Criminal Amendment Act*; but when such proof could not be produced as is considered absolutely necessary for proving the crime, the case under this section was withdrawn. Section 124A was then set up against me but, unfortunately, that too was not

enough. This judicial impasse made me change my mind. I felt that the very reason for my withholding any written statement demanded that I should not remain silent, and the crime that the government could not prove should be written down with my own pen.

The bureaucracy in India is nothing more nor less than a conglomerate of domination which powerful individuals will always attain over a nation which is disintegrating because of its own neglect and internal weakness. In the natural course of events, such a dominant authority cannot countenance any national awakening or agitation for progress, reform, or justice, because it spells its inevitable downfall. It seeks to crush all agitation by declaring it a crime against constituted authority. No power would permit itself to submit to movements likely to cause its own decline, however much such decline might be in the ultimate interest of justice. This state of affairs is merely a struggle for existence in which both sides fight desperately for their principles. An awakened nation aspires to attain what it considers its birthright, and the dominant authority does not budge an inch from its position of unquestioned sway. It is contended that the latter party, even like its opponents, cannot be blamed because it is fighting for its own survival; and it is quite incidental that its existence happens to be inimical to the

perpetuation of justice. We cannot deny facts of human nature and its inseparable characteristics. Like good, evil also desires to live in this world and struggles for its existence.

In India, such a struggle for the survival of the fittest has already commenced. Most certainly, therefore, nothing can be a higher crime against the Government, than the agitation which seeks to terminate its unequivocal authority in the name of liberty and justice. I fully admit that I am not only guilty of such agitation, but that I belong to that band of prisoners who originally sowed the seed of such agitation in the heart of their nation and dedicated their whole lives to the cherishing and breeding of this holy discontent. I am the first Muslim in India who invited his nation for the first time, in 1912, to commit this crime, and, within three years, succeeded in bringing about a revolution in their slavish mentality. Hence, if the Government regards me a criminal and, consequently, desires to award punishment, I earnestly acknowledge that it would not be an unexpected thing and that I will hold absolutely no grudge against them.

After the 17th of November, the thing which was most desired and wished (by the Government) was that on 24th December, when the Prince of Wales was to arrive in Calcutta there should be no *Hartal*. The folly that had

been committed by introducing the *Criminal Amendment Act 1908*, would be accepted at least for one day. The Government felt that my presence and that of Mr. C.R. Das stood in its way. Both of us, therefore, were arrested after some bewilderment and consultations.

For the last two years I could not remain continuously in Calcutta. All my time was spent either in the activities of the Khilafat Committee or in political tours of the country. But suddenly the news about the fresh repression of the Bengal Government and of the communique of the 18th reached me in Bombay. Under these circumstances it became impossible for me to remain outside Calcutta. I consulted Gandhiji, and he, too, was of the opinion that I should cancel all programmes and return to Calcutta. We were apprehensive that the repression by the Government may make the people uncontrollable and indisciplined. Upon reaching Calcutta on the 1st of December, I saw repression as well as tolerance, both at their extreme.

I saw that the Government, unnerved by the memorable *Hartal* of the 17th November, had become like one who loses all sense of proportion in anger and rage. With one stroke of the pen, all the national organizations of volunteers were declared unlawful under the *Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908*. All public gatherings were

banned. Discretion of the police became synonymous with law, and, under the pretext of "unlawful organization", suspicion and investigation", it was permitted to do anything. On the obverse side, it was as if people had taken oaths for patience: and perseverance, and were determined neither to be violent under any provocation nor to be deterred from their path.

Under these circumstances the path of duty was clear. I saw two bitter realities naked before me. First, the entire machinery of the Government had been geared up at Calcutta. The final decision of victory or defeat would, therefore, be at this very place. Secondly, so far we have been struggling for full liberty; but present circumstances had revealed that this was not possible. Freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, these are the birthrights of man. The suppression of these, in the words of the famous philosopher Mill, is no way less than "the massacre of humanity". This suppression was being carried on without any misgivings. So I cancelled all other programmes and decided to remain in Calcutta so long as one of the two things did not happen, either the Government withdrew its communique or arrested me.

The past few days have provided for the pages of history, two realities. If on the one hand, all the false veils

have been lifted off the face of the government, on the other hand, national strength has also manifested itself after having passed through a hard ordeal. The world witnessed that if government was unbridled in its use of violence and repression, patience and tolerance also gained momentum simultaneously. Just as it has always been belied it can even be denied today, but it will be the most instructive story for future historians; how moral and passive resistance can defeat the repression and pride of material forces, and how is it possible to face bloody weapons with non-violence and sacrifice! In the two parties existing in that country, I do not know where to find the teachings of that great man who had brought the message of patience and Godliness against evil, I think the bureaucrats will not be unaware of his name; his name was Jesus Christ.

The philosophy of history tells us that lack of wisdom and far-sightedness was always a friend of the declining powers. The Government imagined that they would suppress the Khilafat and Swaraj with violence, and repression and the *Hartal* of the 24th could be warded off. But soon it realised that repression let loose against national awakening is likely to prove fatal. I confess that not only on these two occasions but in numerous speeches made in the last two years I have used these and even stronger

phrases. To say so is my imperative duty and I cannot hesitate from performing it simply because it would be regarded a crime under section 124A. I want to repeat this even now and will go on repeating it so long as I have the power of speech. If I do not do it I will be guilty of the worst crime before the Creator and His creation.

Certainly, I have said, "This government is a tyrant." But if I do not say so what else should I say? I do not understand why I am expected not to call a spade a spade? I refuse to call white, a thing which appears black. These are the mildest and the softest words that I can use. I cannot think of any other expression for such a crystal reality. I have been saying that there are only two paths open before us. The Government should refrain from doing injustice and jeopardising our rights; and if it can't do so, it must be wiped out of existence. A thing which apparently is an evil should either mend itself or end itself. When I am convinced of the evil deeds of this Government, I cannot be expected to pray for its long life.

Why is it that this has become an article of my faith as well as that of millions of my countrymen? Let me make it clear that this is my faith simply because I am an Indian; because I am a Muslim; because I am a man. It is my belief that liberty is the natural and God-given gift of man. No man and

no bureaucracy consisting of men have the right to make slaves of the servants of God. However attractive be the euphemism invented for *subjugation* and *slavery*, still slavery is slavery, and it is 'opposed to the will and canons of God. I, therefore, consider it my bounden duty to liberate my country from its yoke.

The notorious fallacies of *reform* and *gradual transference of power* can create no deviation in my unequivocal and definite faith. Liberty is the basic right of man, and Wis nobody's personal privilege to prescribe limits or apportion shares in its distribution. To say that a nation should get its liberty in graduated stages is the same as saying that an owner should receive his rightful property only in bits, and the creditor his dues by Installments. Evil cannot be classified into good and bad. All that in fairness is possible is to differentiate the varying degree. For instance, we can say "very heinous robbery" and "less heinous robbery", but who can speak of good robbery and bad robbery? I cannot, therefore, conceive of any justification for such imposition, because, by its very nature, it is an act of inequity.

I am a Muslim and by virtue of being one, this has become my religious duty. Islam never accepts as valid a sovereignty which is personal, or is constituted of a bureaucracy, or a handful of paid expectative. Islam

constitutes a perfected system of freedom and democracy. It has been revealed to recover for the human race the liberty which has been snatched away from it. Monarchs, foreign dominations, selfish religious pontiffs and power brokers, all had misappropriated this liberty of man. They had been fondly nursing the belief that power and possession spell the highest right. The moment Islam appeared it proclaimed the highest right is not might but right itself. No one, except God, has got the right to make serfs and slaves of God's creatures. All men are equal and their fundamental rights are on a par. Only he is greater than others whose deeds are the most righteous of all.

Sovereignty as defined by the Prophet of Islam and the Khalifas was a perfected concept of democratic equality, and it could only take shape with the whole nation's will; unity, suffrage and election. This is why the sovereign or a president of a republic is like a designated Khalifa. Khilafat literally means nothing more nor less than representation, so that the authority a Khalifa possesses consists in his representative role, and he possesses no power beyond this representative authority.

Islam defines it as a duty of Muslims to refuse to acknowledge the moral justification, even of an Islamic government, if full play is not granted

in it to the will and franchise of the nation. It is, then, obvious what ruling Islam would give to a foreign bureaucracy. If today there was to be established in India an Islamic government, but if the system of that government was based on personal monarchy or upon bureaucratic oligarchy, then to protest against the existence of such a government would still be my primary duty as a Muslim. I would still call the government oppressive and demand its replacement.

I confess that this original concept of Islamic sovereignty could not be maintained because of the selfishness and personal ambition of the later Muslim sovereigns. The magnificence of the emperors of Ancient Rome and of the Shahs of Persia had attracted the Muslim sovereigns to the dubious glory of great monarchical empires. They began to prefer the majestic figures of Kaiser or Khosroe to the simple dignity of the original Khalifas, clad often times in old tattered robes. No period of the dynasties and sovereignties of Islam have, however, failed to produce some true Muslim martyrs, who have made public declarations against the tyrannies and transgressions of such monarchies, and, joyfully and triumphantly, suffered all miseries and hardships which were inflicted upon them in the thorny path of duty.

To expect from a Muslim that he

should not pronounce what is right, is to ask him to renounce Islam. If you have no right to expect a person to give up his religion, then certainly you cannot require a Muslim to call tyranny, by any other name, because both expectations are synonymous. This vital organ of Islamic life, if cut off, terminates its best characteristics. In the Quran, the Holy Book of Islam, the Muslims have been told that they are witnesses of truth in the God's universe. In the case of a nation their witness has equal prowess.

But 'how would this national duty be performed? Islam has indicated three different standards under three different conditions: "If anyone of you sees an evil, it is necessary that you should correct it with your own hands. If you do not have the power to do it personally you should proclaim it, and if you feel that you have not the power to denounce it, you should consider it evil in your heart at least. But this last degree is the weakest stage of religion." In India we do not have the capacity to correct the evils of the government with our own hands. We have, therefore, adopted the second measure, i.e. we denounce its evils.

The Holy Prophet of Islam has preached the following doctrine to the Muslims: "That man is blessed with the best of deaths who proclaims truth in face of a tyrannical administration and is slaughtered as punishment of this deed." The Holy Quran defines the

greatest attribute of the true Muslim as "Not fearing any being except God, and whatever he considers to be truth, he reckes not any authority in the public proclamation of such truth." The Quran further defines the national characteristic of the Muslims as follows: "As long, therefore, as they continue to be Muslims they cannot desist from giving this public evidence." In fact it has designated Muslims as witnesses, i.e. givers of the 'evidence of truth. When the Prophet of Islam extracted a promise of righteousness from any person, one of the clauses of such a bond used to be, "I will always proclaim the truth in whatever condition and wherever I may happen to be."

To those Muslims who regard it as their religious duty that they should accept death rather than hesitate from proclaiming the truth, a conviction under section 124A can never be a very frightening thing; the maximum punishment for it is life imprisonment.

In the early Islamic days Muslims were truthful to such an extent that an old woman could in an open court, dare say to the Khalifa of the time, "If you fail to do justice, your hair would be pulled out." And instead of instituting a case against her he would thank God that such outspoken tongues were present in the nation. At the *Jumma* prayer gathering, when the Sultan would get up and say, "Hear and obey", a man would get up at once and say,

"Neither will we hear nor obey."

"Why?"

"Because the cloak that you have got on your person is much more than your own share of cloth and this is a breach of trust."

Thereupon, the Khalifa would produce his son for his witness who would declare that he had given his own share of cloth to his father and this cloak was prepared with that share.

This attitude of the nation was towards the Khalifa, whose bravery and enterprise overthrew the throne of Egypt and Iran. Nevertheless, there was no 124A in the Islamic government. When the attitude of Muslims towards Islamic governments has been such, what can the officers of an alien government expect from us? Is "the government established by law" in India dearer to us than the one established by Shariat?

Is the kingship of England and status of the Lord Reading more respectable for us than the Khilafat of Abdul Malik and the status of Hajaj-bin-Yusuf? If we leave aside the great difference between "alien and non Muslim" and "national and Muslim", even then, what we have been saying for the governments of Hajaj-bin Yousuf and Khalid Qasri, we will repeat about the Reading and Chelmsford governments. We had said to them,

“Fear God because the earth is loaded with your tyrannies”, we repeat the same today. As a matter of fact, what we are doing today in India, on account of our weakness and helplessness, was, in reality, meant to be done towards the tyranny and repression of Islamic administrators and not towards alien rulers. Had the agents of the British Government understood this reality, they would have realised that the patience and toleration of Muslims has passed all limits.

Islam has pointed at two ways of facing the tyranny of rulers, the choice being contingent upon different existing situations. One situation is where forcible possession is taken by alien rulers, the other is possession by Muslim tyrants. For the first, Islam orders the use of the sword. For the second, the commandment forbids the use of the sword, but, as far as possible, requires that every Muslim should go on proclaiming the truth. In the first case, there are executions at the hands of the enemies, while in the second place, there are untold sufferings and punishments at the hands of the tyrants. Muslims should make sacrifices in both cases and the result will be victory. Consequently, the Muslims made both kinds of sacrifices in the last thirteen centuries. They have suffered martyrdoms at the hands of alien rulers and have patiently proclaimed the tyranny of their own. In the first case their ‘war efforts’ were

without parallel, in the second’ their ‘spirit of martyrdom’ was unique.

Today, the Muslims of India have adopted the second course against their alien rulers, although their fight is in the first category.

The time had come for them to launch ‘the war effort’ but they opted for ‘martyrdom’. They decided not to fight with weapons, to remain nonviolent, i.e. they will do the same as they did in the case of Muslim rulers. Undoubtedly, the particular state of affairs prevailing in India is responsible for this attitude. The government should think about what all these suppressed Muslims can still accomplish. Unexpectedly, they are doing against the foreigners; what they should have done in the case of their coreligionists.

Truly, I have not the slightest grievance that a case has been set up against me with a view to awarding a sentence. But it is very painful for me to think that a Muslim is expected not to call tyranny by name, because he will be tried under section 124A. Islamic history has several instances on record where horrendous punishments are awarded for speaking the truth. An autocratic monarch ordered each organ of a rebellious victim’s body to be cut off. The charge against the victim was that he had condemned the injustice of the tyrant. Firm as a rock he stood and took the



punishment in all its heinous stages, but his tongue, right until the moment when it was severed, went on proclaiming that the autocrat was a tyrant. This incident occurred during the reign of Emperor Abdul Malik whose domain extended from Africa to Sind. Can anyone, then, attach any weight to a sentence under section 124A as compared to this penalty?

I confess that it is the moral decadence of Muslims and their renouncing the real Islamic life, which is responsible for this fallen state. While I am writing these lines I know that there are still many Muslims in India who pay homage to this very tyranny. But the failure of man to live upto the spirit of certain tenets cannot belie the intrinsic truth of those principles. The tenets of Islam are preserved in its scriptures. Under no circumstances is it permissible for Muslims to enjoy life at the expense of freedom. A true Muslim has to either immolate himself or to live as a free man; no third course is open for him in Islam.

During the last two years not a single day has passed when I have not proclaimed the tyranny of the government with regard to the Khilafat and the Punjab affairs. I admit to having always said that a government which is bent upon exterminating the Khilafat and is neither prepared to compensate nor is ashamed of the

tyrannies in the Punjab, cannot evoke any loyalty in the heart of any Indian.

On December 13, 1917, when I was interned in Ranchi, I wrote a detailed letter to Lord Chelmsford stating that if the British Government, against its declared promise, ever takes possession of Islamic countries or Islamic Khilafat, the Indian Muslims would find themselves faced with two alternatives, either to side with Islam or with the British Government.

This is exactly what happened. The Government glaringly broke its promise. Neither was the promise of January 2, 1914, kept nor could it keep the promise which Lloyd George, the Prime Minister of England, made in the course of a speech in the House of Commons on January 5, 1918. These events created a strange situation for the Indian Muslims. The minimum that they could do, under the Islamic law, was to withdraw their support and co-operation. Muslims have come to believe that to obtain what is right and just they must have Swaraj.

My own declaration in this respect, however, is quite unequivocal. The present government is an unjust bureaucracy. It is absolutely opposed to the will and wishes of millions of people. It has always preferred prestige over justice and truth. It regards the barbaric massacre of Jallianwala as the right action; it considers no injustice to have men

creep like animals; it allows young students to be whipped until they become unconscious, simply because they refuse to salute the Union Jack; it does not desist from trampling over the Islamic Khilafat even after receiving petitions from thirty crore people; it sees nothing wrong in breaking all its pledges and promises. Simply because tyranny is powerful and equipped with prison houses, should I buckle under and call this government "just" and say "do not mend and do not end!" Should I not call it "tyrant" and ask it to "either mend or end?" Is the oppressor, because he is possessed of power and jails at his disposal, entitled to some other epithet? In the words of the freedom fighter Joseph Mazzini of Italy, I should say, "We shall not deny your guilt just because you have some transient power in your hands."

Continuously in the last twelve years I have been training my community and my country to demand its rights and liberty. I was only eighteen years old when I first started speaking and writing on this theme. I have consigned my entire existence to it, and have sacrificed the best years of my life, i.e. the whole of my youth, to my love for this ideal. For four years I have suffered internment, but even during my internment I have never desisted from pursuing my goal and inviting people to adopt this national ideal. This is the mission of my life,

and, if I live at all I elect to live only for this single purpose. Even as the Quran says, "My prayers and my observances, my life and my death are all for my Lord, the God of the universe."

How could I deny this "crime" when I have pioneered this latest phase of the Islamic movement in India which has created a tremendous revolution in the political world of the Indian Muslims and has gradually elevated them to that pinnacle of national consciousness on which they are seen today. In 1912, I started an Urdu journal, *Al-Hilal*, which was the organ of this movement, the object of its publication being what I have stated above. It is a fact that, within three years, it had created a new spirit in the religious and the political life of the Muslims of India.

Previously, they were not only cut off from the political activities of their Hindu brothers but were instruments in the hands of the bureaucracy. The Government's policy of 'divide and rule' had created an apprehension in their mind that Hindus are large in numbers; and if the country attains Independence there will be Hindu Raj in India. But *Al-Hilal* persuaded them to have confidence in their faith instead of lamenting their numerical inferiority, and invited them to join hands fearlessly with the Hindus. Bureaucracy could not tolerate such a movement for long. First of all, the

security of *Al-Hilal* was forfeited, and, when the paper was restarted under the name of *Al-Balagh*, the Government of India interned me in 1916. I must add that *Al-Hilal* was out and out an invitation for 'liberty or death'.

On the 1st of January, 1920, after an internment of four years, I was set at liberty. Since then until the moment I was arrested again, all my time was spent in publicity and propaganda of these ideals. On February 28th and 29th, 1920, a Khilafat Conference was held in the Town Hall of Calcutta where the disillusioned Muslims made this announcement: "If the British Government even now fails to accede to the demands of the Khilafat, the Muslims, in accordance with their religious injunctions, will be compelled to cut off all loyal connection."

I was the President of that Conference.

I had clearly explained, in my long Presidential address, all the facts which are presented in these two speeches, on the basis of which I am being tried here. In this address I offered an explanation of the Islamic injunction under which the Muslims are required to non-cooperate, i.e. withdraw their help and co-operation from the Government.

It was here, in this Conference, where the resolution was adopted

under which it was declared un-Islamic for any faithful Muslim to serve in the army.' The Karachi case was launched on the basis of the same resolution. I have often pointed out in the press and in my numerous speeches that this resolution was, first of all, drafted by me and it has been thrice adopted under my President ship. So I am the proper person to be punished for this 'crime'. I have, with certain additions, published this statement in a book form with its English translation, as if it were a written proof of my 'offences'.

During the last two years, alone, and with Mahatma Gandhi, I have undertaken several tours of the country. There is hardly any city where I have not delivered speeches again and again on The Khilafat, The Punjab. The Swaraj and Non-cooperation, and where I have not repeated all these things which are stated in these two speeches.

In December 1920, a Conference of the All-India Khilafat Committee was held at the same time as the annual session of the Indian National Congress. In April 1921, a conference of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema was held in Bareilly; in October of last year, the U.P. Provincial Khilafat Conference took place in Agra; in November, the annual session of the All-India Jamiat-ul-Ulema was held in Lahore. I was the President of all these conferences and

whatever was said by all the speakers in all these conferences or by me in the Presidential speeches contained all the things that are being condemned in these two speeches. I must declare that they were more unambiguous and unequivocal than these.

If the implication of my two speeches comes under Section 124A, I must confess that I have committed this crime times without number. I will have to say that in the last two years I have done nothing except infringement of section 124A.

In this war of liberty and justice, we have adopted the path of non-violent non-Cooperation. Opposite us stands an authority armed with the complete equipment for oppression, excess, and bloodshed. But we place our reliance and trust, next to God, only upon our own limitless power of sacrifice and unshakeable fortitude. Unlike Mahatma Gandhi, my belief is not that armed force should never be opposed by armed force. It is my belief that opposing of violence with violence is in harmony with the natural laws of God, provided those circumstances exist under which Islam permits use of violence. But at the same time, for the purpose of liberating India, I entirely agree with all the arguments of Mahatma Gandhi, and I have complete confidence in his honesty. It is my

conviction that India cannot achieve success by the use of arms, nor is it advisable for her to adopt that course. India can only triumph through non-violent agitation, and her triumph will be a memorable example of the victory of moral force.

What I have already said at the beginning, I repeat the same in conclusion. All that the Government is doing today with us is contemptible. Violence and oppression are always the last resort of foreign governments especially at the time a nation awakens. We should not expect that human instinct will be changed for us. This is a natural weakness of all individuals and organisations. How many men are there in the world who would return the smallest thing that comes into their possession simply because they have no right over it? Then why should any honesty be expected when the question is of returning an entire continent? Power lust does not acknowledge a certain argument simply because it is reasonable and logical. It does not yield until a greater power comes along, and compels it to submit to a new set of unreasonable and illogical demands.

If our passion for freedom and for asserting our right is true, the very government which regards us as criminals today will be compelled to

greet us tomorrow as victorious patriots.

I have been charged with *sedition*, but let me understand the meaning of *sedition*. Can *sedition* be defined in terms of that struggle for freedom which has not been successful? If so, I plead guilty! But at the same time let me state that this very thing, when successful, is called patriotism. The insurgent leaders of Ireland were regarded rebels until yesterday, but what title would the Great Britain suggest for De Valera and Griffith today?

Consequently, what is happening today, would be judged tomorrow. We have faith in the judgement of the future. It is natural to expect showers when there are clouds in the sky. We see signs for the change of weather. But how pitiful are those eyes which refuse to see the signs.

I had said in these speeches that the seed of liberty can never yield fruit unless fertilised by the water of oppression. The government has begun its fertilisation process.

I had also said, "Don't be sad over the arrest of Khilafat volunteers. If you really want justice and freedom, get ready to go to prisons."

I want to say something to the Magistrate. Let him award the maximum punishment that he can,

without hesitation. I will never have any complaint or grudge. I know it that unless the entire administration is changed, its instruments will continue to grind away in the old rut.

I conclude my statement in the words of Gardino Bruno, the famous martyr of Italy who likes me, was also made to stand before the court: "Give me the maximum punishment that can be awarded without hesitation. I assure you that the pain that your heart will feel while writing the order, not a hundredth part of it will be felt by me while hearing the judgment."

Mr. Magistrate, I will not take any more time of the Court now. It is an interesting and instructive chapter of history which both of us are engaged in writing. The dock has fallen to our lot and to yours the magisterial chair. I admit that this chair is as necessary for this work as this dock. Come, let us finish our role in this memorable drama. The historian is eagerly awaiting, and the future is looking forward to us. Allow us to occupy this dock repeatedly and continuously, and, you may also go on writing the judgment again and again. For some more time this work will continue, until the gates of another Court are flung open. This will be the Court of the Law of God. Time will act as its judge and pass the judgment. And that verdict will be final in all respects. ■

## Self- Control With Ramadan

- Navaid Alam

The ninth month of the *Islamic Hijri* calendar, Ramazan (or Ramadan), holds as special significance for Muslims around the world. It is in this month that Muslims attempt to let go of the worldly pleasures and decide to reorient themselves towards being better humans - humans that are not so lost in the pursuit of their desires that they cannot sense the needs of others. The cruelties that man shows towards his own body round the year are redressed in this month. The body is allowed to rejuvenate and repair the damage caused during the rest of the year. Conscience, that guiding light, is strengthened and prepared to shine through the dark alleys of human greed. And the soul is provided with the spiritual nourishment that it needs to connect with its creator.

Although many obvious benefits for fasting have been observed both by spiritualists as well as scientists, the Muslim fasts because God has so commanded. This, while it may seem dogmatic, is inherently cogent. A command of an omniscient God cannot possibly be wrong because if it was then He wouldn't be omniscient. However, this holds good provided it can be established through

reason that it is indeed His command. This is one of the fundamental rationales of the Islamic thought and the foundation of its call to acceptance because faith built on unreasonable premises is unworthy of submission.

Fasting has always been prescribed by God for communities around the world, a fact attested by the the Holy Quran. And why shouldn't it be, after all if fasting has such fundamental benefits then those benefits must be for the entire human race. And one fundamental benefit mentioned by the Quran is *taqwa* in Arabic. *Taqwa* means, among other things, self-restraint, a quality fasting so strongly creates. When man is able to control his two most basic urges namely the digestive and the reproductive, it becomes easier to contain the others. And such control is the first step towards the greater realisation that these are the necessities of life not its purpose. However, the purpose of fasting is to control these urges and not to kill them for they are fundamentally essential to human existence and a system that destroys them cannot be natural or divine.

Islam did not, however, merely

(continued on page 20)

## ***AROUND THE WORLD***

### ***MWL's role in spreading Islam***

Muslim World League (MWL) Secretary General highlighted the important role played by MWL over the past 50 years, in terms of spreading the message of Islam all over the world and removing misconceptions about it. He said that the United Nations has given us the Messenger of Peace certificate in appreciation for our humanitarian activities all over the world. He said an international conference on The MWL: Its Present and Future, would be held in Makkah to mark the organization's 50th anniversary with the participation of leading Islamic scholars and heads of Islamic groups and centers in different parts of the world. The MWL has become an international organization with offices in different parts of the world. The MWL was honored to organize interfaith dialogue conferences in Makkah, Madrid and Geneva, he said. ■

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### ***Islamic Banking calls grows in India***

A major campaign to introduce Islamic banking and finance into India was kicked off in the Kerala city of Kochi with justice Krishna Iyer taking the lead. "Islamic finance has proven successful in poverty alleviation and promoting sustainable growth in many countries, including the United States and it is very relevant in our country where 20 million people are starving," Iyer said. The justice made this statement while proclaiming the plan to hold an international seminar in Kochi on October 4-6 on the prospects of introducing Islamic finance in India. He said Islamic finance, which is based on humane principles, was good for all humanity. Those who support humanism should welcome Islamic banking and finance in India, Iyer told the gathering, which was attended by a large number of prominent personalities. ■

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### ***Baghdad Returns to Map of Global Airlines***

Baghdad is getting back on the map of international airlines after 20 years of violence as the prospects of multibillion oil deals lures business travellers. Gone are the days of hair-raising cork-screw landings - dubbed death spiral - as the bloodshed has ebbed from a peak of sectarian warfare in 2006 and 2007, though bombings and suicide attacks still occur regularly across Iraq. Several foreign airlines started or announced plans to fly to Baghdad in recent months as firms slowly come back to Iraq seven years after a US-invasion, attracted by oil contracts and infrastructure projects. So far 12 mostly Arab carriers connect Baghdad with Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Bahrain, Jordan and other countries in the region, according to airport official. The latest destinations are Jeddah Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab Emirates. ■

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