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Malice a Serious Evil

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The view of life arising from prophetic teachings has equity and moderation as its two immutable bases. Speaking of the right-guided persons, the Qur'an says:

"And those who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor grudging; and there is ever a firm station between the two."

(*Al-Furqan*: 67)

Again, the dominant characteristic of the followers of the Qur'an is stated to be their remarkable moderation:

"Thus we have appointed you a middle nation, that ye may be a witness against mankind, and that the messenger may be a witness against you." (*Al-Baqarah*: 143)

The Prophet himself afforded an illustrious example of complete and ennobling moderation. The distinguishing feature of Islam too, described as "the straight path" and "a right religion", is natural temperance and moderation and refraining from the aberrations of excess and extremism. Addressing the Prophet of Islam, says. God Almighty :

"Say: Lo! As for me, my Lord hath guided me unto a straight path, a right religion, the community of Abraham, the upright, who was no idolater."

(*Al-Anam*: 162) ■

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Wisdom of Qur'an

“(Adhere to the True Faith and) turn to Him, and establish Prayer, and do not be of those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity.”

(Al Qur'an – 30-31)

“To turn to God means anyone who opts to act independently of God's directives and thus deviates from the path prescribed for him by God, or whoever betrays God by accepting to serve aught apart from the One True God, should give up that attitude and revert to serving God Whose born servant he is.

Man should dread the punishment which he will incur by acting independently of, or worshipping others besides God, despite the fact that it is God Who brought him into being. Man should, therefore, shun all attitudes that lead to God's wrath.

Turning to God and holding His wrath in awe are acts of the heart. In order that this state of heart might become manifest and be reinforced, one needs to engage in physical acts which indicate that one has truly returned to the service and worship of the One True God, One Who has no associates in His Divinity. The regular performance of these acts helps develop in man the state of returning to and fearing God. This is why God asks him to engage in the establishment of Prayer.

The performance of the five daily Prayers at their stated times is the most effective means to develop God-consciousness and God-fearing. Thus man rehearses over and over again the Qur'an's teaching that man should believe in God and submit to Him in his day-to-day life. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

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

(Sahih Muslim)

This hadith gives good tidings to one who invites people to virtue, and warns a person against inviting his fellow beings to vice. Calling people towards doing good deeds is in itself a virtuous act. It wins the pleasure of God. Contrary to it, the act of inviting people to some evil is in itself a vicious act. It earns the Divine wrath.

God can give reward and likewise award punishment, here on earth and in the hereafter as well, to whom He wills. But this does not mean that His judgement is baseless. He knows perfectly well the deeds done by His servants as well as the intention working behind the commission of the deeds. Hence His judgement is based on human actions. He however can forgive whomsoever He wills.

This hadith encourages Muslims to call people towards doing good deeds because it will yield to him the same reward as those who in response to his call do good deeds. Similarly, it forbids them to invite people to do evil because it is a sin and earns the same punishment. ■

ORIGIN OF AZAN

A few years back Calcutta High Court had put a restriction on use of loud speaker for calling to prayer. Their argument was that it cause disturbance and also affect environment. Now U.P. Government through a recent order has restricted the use of loud speaker in religious places. Whatever the government's arguments may be it is true the excessive use of loud speaker certainly cause some inconvenience. With the availability of clocks and watches in abundance there should have been no difficulty for a Muslim to reach mosque in time to join the congregation. Any way one has to respect the law but also perform his religious obligations amicably and peacefully.

It will be interesting to our readers to know the origin of Azan. After migration to Medina holy Prophet gradually organized Muslims for their congregational prayer in mosque. At that time there was no public announcement system nor there were other means to call Muslims for prayer in the mosque.

In his usual meetings with companions he asked for the suggestions. Someone suggested that a flag should be shown from the top of mosque; some said that a bell be rung; a suggestion came that a messenger be sent to the believers and call them for prayer. Holy Prophet did not agree to any of these ideas. In the meantime a companion of the Prophet Abdullah bin Zaid saw a dream about the Azan. He revealed that to Holy Prophet who approved it and said that it is Allah's wish. Prophet called Hazrat Bilal and asked him to memorise what Abdullah bin Zaid has dreamt. He followed it and thus Azan came into practice. Caliph Umar when heard of it said that he too saw in the dream similar instructions given by a man. Holy Prophet thus put his seal on the way for calling to prayer.■

S.A.

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The Methodology of Da'wah

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Invite [mankind] to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His way, and He is the best to know those who are guided.

(al-Nahl 16:125)

The above directive is addressed by Allah to His final Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), and in turn, to the last community of believers - the Muslims. For they are not to be followed by another faith community. This passage occurs at the conclusion of *Surah al-Nahl*, spelling out the methodology of *Da'wah*. Allah proclaims: *"Invite [mankind] to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair preaching."*

It is one of the hallmarks of the Qur'an that it has not strictly identified the limits of carrying out *Da'wah*. Rather, its methodology and its details have been left to the discretion of those engaged in it. In keeping with the ground realities and acting on common sense preachers to the truth are free to work out its exact form and method. They are urged to decide the course of action in light of their own understanding and perception. The Qur'an provides only an outline, giving some broad principles which capture the essence of *Da'wah*.

The above Qur'anic passage makes two points in particular. Those

engaged in *Da'wah* have both their freedom and their constraints. They are free to pursue *Da'wah* up to a particular extent. At the same time, they are forbidden from going beyond certain limits. As for the scope and sphere of *Da'wah*, they are directed to invite the whole of mankind. The directive is to call mankind not to faith or sound beliefs but to their Lord. The addressees are not asked in the first place to offer prayers or practise excellent morals and manners or to respect their fellow human beings. All these exhortations are nonetheless implicit in calling them to their Lord. This directive opens up a wide field for both reflection and action. Reference should of course be made to other faiths, human needs and all that affects human life. Yet the most important concern is the call. The Qur'an does not specify whether the call should be oral or written. Nor is it narrowed down to sermonising alone. Rather, the invitation is an open-ended expression, encompassing all forms of persuasion. As and when situations arise, recourse may be made to the oral or written mode, or to sermonising or any other means of communication. All forms of making the call are valid, as long as these do not violate the norms of the *Shari'ah*. Attention should be paid to energetic and effective *Da'wah*. The overarching principle is that the call should be made, asking people to ensure their participation in *Da'wah*. This constitutes a golden opportunity for carrying out the call to truth.

The Qur'anic expression *hikmah* is pregnant with meaning. Owing to its numerous nuances it is not easy to translate it into a single expression. Likewise, the Qur'anic directive that *Da'wah* should constitute fair preaching is open to several interpretations. Once again, the Qur'an grants freedom in this exercise and at the same time prescribes some limits. In the above cited passage the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is directed to invite mankind to the way of their Lord with wisdom and fair preaching. Wisdom stands for common sense, tact, persuasive charm, preaching in a way which does not betray any opportunism or bowing down to someone or politicisation. Let it be realised that politics and preaching are poles apart.

Allah directed His beloved Messenger, the Prophet Moses (peace and blessings be upon him) to approach the accursed tyrant of the day, Pharaoh, inviting him to the divine faith. Yet Moses was instructed to speak to Pharaoh leniently. He was of course to state the truth firmly yet his mode of preaching was to be decent and gentle. For this might help Pharaoh take heed willingly or he may grow fearful of divine punishment. (*Ta Ha* 20:43-44) In either case it would bring an end to his disbelief and rebellion. If the truth is stated in a harsh way, it cannot bring about the desired results. Wisdom consists in articulating the truth properly. A dialogue or debate with an unbeliever should be characterised by decency and good manners. The Qur'an instructs that good practices be observed even in a polemical debate. Those present should

be impressed by the preacher's conduct. Even if the main addressees are not won over, the audience is likely to form a good impression of the call. This truth is put across in the following verse: "*Abraham was a community unto himself, obedient to Allah exclusively and he was not of the polytheists.*" (*al-Nahl* 16:120)

Notwithstanding his engagement in polemical debate, Abraham (peace and blessings be upon him) is praised in the Qur'an for his excellent mode of preaching, marked by cogent argument, tact, wisdom and fairness. Elsewhere too, he is spoken of as a devout Muslim who had nothing in common with polytheists. (*Al 'Imran* 3:67.) His *Da'wah* work stood out for its underlying wisdom and tactfulness. It was not tainted by any political motive or timidity. Every Muslim is thus obliged to emulate his role model. To assist others to profess sound beliefs, the same method of *Da'wah* is preferable. Those involved in *Da'wah* should adopt the attitude of a physician who treats his patients with tenderness, love and affection. A competent physician, notorious for his rudeness, is shunned. Muslims are, therefore, given this directive: *There has come to you a Messenger [Muhammad] from among yourselves. It grieves him that you receive any injury or difficulty. He is anxious over you. For the believers he is full of pity, kind and merciful.* (*al-Tawbah* 9:128)

It is incumbent on every Muslim to act on the above Qur'anic advice to carry out *Da'wah* with wisdom, a suitable strategy and with concern and love. This will help win over people to the true faith.■

Triumph of The Truth Gets Proclaimed

- S. M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi*

The flagpole of the Allah's Prophet was installed in the Hajoon district. The Muhajireen and Ansar got assembled in front of, and around, him. Then it was the time for the Prophet (SAW) to make his entry into the Mosque. He (SAW) kissed the black stone and then performed the circumambulation of the holy House of Allah. He (SAW) had a bow in his hand. There were 360 idols installed within and around Kaba. He (SAW) would keep hitting them, one after another, with the bow and say at the same time:

(the truth is come, and falsehood hath vanished; verily falsehood is ever vanishing)

(Al-Israa : 81)

and:

(the truth is come, and falsehood shall neither originate nor be restored)

(Saba: 49)

He (SAW) would keep reciting the above verses and the idols would, simultaneously, keep tumbling down face downward on earth.

Seated on his mount, he (SAW) had the circumambulation of the Kaba performed. He (SAW) had not donned then the Ihram. For, his entry into Makkah

had not been with the intention of performing Umrah. After having performed the circumambulation, he (SAW) had the keeper of the key of Kaba, Hazrat Uthman bin Talha, sent for and had the key of the Kaba retrieved from him. Then he (SAW) got the door of the Kaba opened; and entered it. There inside it, too, were the figurines painted. He (SAW) saw that there were even the likenesses of Hazrat Ibrahim and Hazrat Ismaeel, too, painted. They were depicted drawing lots with arrows. Seeing that, the Prophet (SAW) said: 'May Allah serve these people their due desserts! By God, these prophets had never drawn lots with arrows.' On his orders, these portraits were dislodged with arrows. He (SAW) had the doors, then, closed from inside and offered prayers therein. He betook himself to several places inside itself and had the Takbeer and expressions of Allah's Unity uttered. Then he (SAW) got the door opened. There were, in front of him, the people from the Quoraish gathered in throngs inside the mosque. They had themselves lined up in rows just waiting to see as to what treatment they were going to be meted out to by him (SAW). Resting his hands on both the two wings of the door, he (SAW) said:

(There is no God but He. He is All

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Alone; None-such. There is no parallel or partner to Him. He Had His Promise fulfilled. Helped His slave. Made His army victorious and had the troops of the enemies routed by Himself.)

And, then he (SAW) said:

‘Listen! Every wrong, every (unjustifiably acquired) property and unlawful homicide is all trampled today under my feet. That is all these wrongful acts are rendered null and void.’ Except the Offices of keeping the key of the House of Allah and supply of Water to the Hajis which were to stay with whom these were with, so far, all the rest of offices were taken away by him from those who held them and put them under the charge of the governor of the Muslims. He (SAW) made an announcement of some laws about homicide and taking revenge. Addressing the Quoraish, he (SAW) said:

‘O the people of the Quoraish! The vanity that you had during the pre-Islamic days and the pride that you took in the grandeur and glory of your fathers and forefathers and the resultant social disparity have, undoubtedly, been now rendered by Allah null and void. Listen! All the humans are the children of Adam. And Adam was created from clay.’ And, then, he (SAW) recited this verse from the holy Quran:

(... and We have made you nations and tribes that ye might know one another. Verily the noblest of you with Allah is the most God-fearing of you; verily Allah is Knowing, Aware,)

(Al-Hujarat: 13)

Then he (SAW) said:

‘O the people of the. Quoraish! What do you think what treatment today you are going to be meted out to by me?’ The Quoraish said: We only hope to be treated nicely. We hope to get the treatment that a noble brother extends to his other noble brother.’ As a retort to that, the Allah’s Prophet (SAW) could have said: ‘What was the one noble brother doing to his other noble brother up till the day before today?!’ But he (SAW) did not do so. On the contrary, he (SAW) simply said: ‘I would say to you today exactly what Hazrat Yusuf (AS) had said to his brothers. His reference was to what had happened to Hazrat Yusuf (AS). His brothers had thrown him into a well convinced that he would be perished there. But, Allah had him honoured. He had the monarchy conferred upon him. And, then, these brothers, under the financial straits, came to him seeking aid from him. Till then they were taking him to be someone Alien to them. But, when they came to know that he was the self-same brother whom they had, as per their conviction consigned to the jaws of the

death, they were ashamed and begged to be forgiven. Thereupon, he said: 'Worry not! O blame on you now! You are all let off!' The Prophet (SAW), too, on having overcome these cruel kin of his said the same thing: 'Worry not! No blame on you now! You are all let Off'!

Then, the Prophet (SAW) made himself seated in the Mosque. He, then, sent for the keeper of the key of Kaba, Hazrat Uthman bin Talha. He (SAW) gave him the key back saying: 'Today is the day of being magnanimous and condescending. This observation implied an allusion to a past incident. In the pre- Hijrat days, the Prophet (SAW) had once asked Hazrat U' thman bin Talha to open the door of the Ka' ba for him and the latter had, giving a demonstration of his aversion to the religion of Islam, refuse to oblige him. Thereupon, the Prophet (SAW) had said: 'A day would come when this key would be in my hands and I would give it to whoever would I like.' Taking it for some sort of balderdash, U' thman bin Talha had, then, said: 'Would such a day come to happen ever?! And would all the people of the Quoraish be dead by then?!'

The Prophet (SAW) had the key returned to him; whereas, Hazrat Ali and some others were desirous of having the office of key-keeping given under their charge. He (SAW) said to them that it

was the day of being magnanimous and condescending. To Hazrat U' thman bin Talha, he (SAW) said: The key would remain with you only. (That is, it was to stay within his family, generation after generation.) In case anyone would take it away from you, he would be the aggressor. And, hence, even today, after the passage of more than fourteen hundred years, the office of keeping the key of Ka'ba rests with them.

He (SAW), then, bade Hazrat Bilal Habashi (RAA) to say the Azaan standing on the roof of Ka' ba. There were at that time all the grandees of the Quoraish present there. One of them, pointing towards Hazrat Bilal said: If the one whose slave Hazrat Bilal had once been, that was Usaid, were to watch this spectacle that his slave was let stand at the glorified and elevated point of the most venerated place, how much disgraced he would have felt himself.

Thereafter, he (SAW) went to the house of one of his cousin sister, Hazrat Umm-e-Hani. There he (SAW) took a bath and thereafter offered eight Rakats of votive prayers in thanksgiving.

After having completed this operation of victory over Makkah, he (SAW) had a general amnesty declared for all excepting only a few who had deserved in the extreme to be punished and who could be put to death. But, the majority of them, too, having come to

him (SAW), begged for forgiveness and they too, were, granted forgiveness. And, it was just like him. It was his (SAW) usual noble wont that even if his sanguinary enemy came up with an excuse to, and sought forgiveness from him (SAW), he would but forgive him.

Then the Prophet (SAW) dispatched a few teams to wherever in the surroundings of Makkah were the dens of idols built to have them razed. Throughout Makkah, an announcement on his (SAW) behalf, was made, to the effect that whoever believed in Allah, His Prophet and the Day of Resurrection must not have idols in his/her house. In case there were any they should be destroyed forthwith.

And, thus, the central war-front of the infidels of the entire Arab Peninsula was exterminated. With that the animosity, the tyranny and the oppression that the Muslims had been made to suffer by the Makkans for last 20-21 years came to end. However, the Prophet (SAW) did not take any revengeful action against anyone and had them all forgiven.

Mass Mobilization Towards Islam:

In the wake of the victory over Makkah, Arabs' mobilization towards Islam took place on a mass scale. Delegations in large numbers and the masses, in hordes, would come to pay

homage to him (SAW) and get entered into the fold of Islam. It is this phenomenon which Allah Almighty has referred to in the following verses of the holy Quran:

(When there cometh the succour of Allah and the victory. And thou beholdest mankind entering the religion of Allah in crowds.)

(An-Nasr : 1-2)

The occasion of the victory over Makkah was in fact, an astonishing one. It was after twenty years of relentless, incessant animosity, persecution and oppression that their perpetrators were brought under control and there was nothing to prevent the Muslims from having themselves avenged. Yet, out of sheer cordial magnanimity, he (SAW) had even the staunchest of his enemies pardoned and despite being able to take the revenge from them, he (SAW) did not do so. Instead, he (SAW) had the scope of forgiveness further widened, rather. The bitterest of his enemies like I'kramah, the son of his bitterest enemy on earth, Abu Jahl, Wahshi: the slave of Jubail bin Muti'im and the killer of his (SAW) beloved uncle, Hazrat Hamza; Habbar bin Al-Aswad and Abdullah bin Sad 'bin Abi Sarh found refuge under the canopy of his (SAW) forgiveness and condonation.■

The Idea of Liberal Islam is Drastically Dangerous

- S.M. Wazeh Rasheed Nadwi*

Islamic world is under two huge powerful claws. At the one hand they have Western Europe, America is dictating them, at the other Eastern Europe which is being led by Russia. At the present time Liberal (or, moderate) Islam is the centre of the talk. Moderate Islam is the name of moving away from Islam, moderate Islam means (to them) staying away from Islam, without saving yourself from Halal-o-Haram, and do each and every thing for which Islam prohibits. This happened in Europe too, their life went away from church and they became liberal. Today, this is being used against Islam which is very dangerous, it is a way to desolate Muslims from its root and this is indeed a big plot of Europe. It is very important to understand this stratagem. Moderate Islam is being discussed with a lot of hue and cry and this thought is really threatening. People who are inviting towards liberal Islam they know nothing about nothing and they are not interpreting Islam at the right way. Nowadays European media and some Islamic scholars are

inviting for this propaganda which is an absolutely wrong ideology. Our Ulama must understand this. Today the plot of isolating Muslims from Islamic education has been propagated. Ulama should try to discover this plot.

Specialization is the need of time. Today Islamic scholars' are not specialized in their respective fields because they don't work hard and they get satisfied with a little knowledge. Despite the fact that at the present time there is no value without specialization. Our forefathers were not content on debates, they had great deal of knowledge but they used to have specialization at certain fields as well. This is why they were mentor at their respective fields. People used to go to them and learn from them. We have plenty of such examples in our history. As long as the passion of knowledge remains, knowledge would keep increasing and the moment people get content with knowledge it would start reducing.■

*(Translated by Mohd Raghbil Haque)
from Maulana S.M. Wazeh Rasheed Nadwi's
speech in Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi centre Takya
Kila, Rae Bareilly, U.P.*

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Quranic Commandments To Muslims

- A.K. Parekh*

The issues highlighted in this article, make certain obligations with Muslims. As a Hadith says: "The truth is bitter". According to another Hadith, "The wisdom is the lost asset of a Muslim. He acquires it wherever it is available." Perhaps the claim of a believer on wisdom is a little more than others.

We have highlighted a few facts about the cow slaughter which need contemplation by Muslims. They can seek aid of the four specific Quranic verses even while contemplating on these facts. Thus, it is hoped that they will prove themselves to be the 'Khaire Ummah' (best of the peoples) and a group that is only concerned about the welfare of the people and the one who bear a divine scripture with them.

The Muslims did not have a good image with the fellow countrymen for about 50 years prior to independence. Nor did it improve after the independence. It will not be accurate to say that Muslims alone were responsible for this. Nor will it be proper to say that it is the non-Muslim brethren who harbour some misunderstanding. The exact reason lies somewhere in between the two. There would be no harm in admitting this. Allah Says:

Those who fear God, when a thought of

* Nagpur based an erudite Scholar and Social reformer.

evil

Satan assaults them, bring God to remembrance

when lo. They see (aright).

(Araf:201)

This Quranic verse warns the believers against the Satan's temptations in the valley of this worldly life innocence on account of cow in India. Any court where justice is available, this could be proved.

The verse should cause alarm for all Muslims, for it warns them of the Satan's trappings set up in all the valleys of this life where we have to pass through an examination. Every turn in life poses new problems and issues. In certain issues the Muslims may be guilty. But the Satan would deploy all the guile at his disposal in such a way that the disbelievers hearts will only accept him as the culprit.

I therefore would like to tell my coreligionists that they should not get emotionally involved into the slaughter movement. They should rather study the situation and be firm and appeal the sympathetic quarters among the Hindu brethren that nothing will be gained by holding Muslims responsible for the cow slaughter. They should rather search for the real culprits and find new directions for the preparation of atmosphere.

Pointless discussions and purposeless repetition of the debate on this aspect should be avoided. The issue erupts in public once or twice a year. The serious sections and scholars among Muslims should keenly observe the situation and should not let the matter fall into the hands of non-serious and fiery natured youth. In order to restore normalcy of moods and situation, need to maintain a distance from the issue. If the cow-beef is being consumed by 300 million people of India why alone Muslims be accused or punished for the "crime". The Quran commands a Muslim to come out of the tense and nettlesome (difficult) situations by uttering the righteous words:

"Say to my servants that they should only say those things that are best: for Satan doth sow dissensions among them: for Satan is to man an avowed enemy."

(Beni Israel:53)

And if (at any time) an incitement to discord is made to thee by the evil one, seek refuge in God. He is the one who hears and knows all things.

(Ha Meem Sajada-36)

Every level of leadership of Muslims should now realise that a Muslim is basically a messenger and has to convey the message of Islam. The task of conveying the message presupposes a conductive and congenial atmosphere. When eyes of the people get befogged, the immorality assumes the proportions of epidemic and symptomises health and the governments employ all the weapons

- right and wrong - for rectifying their economic mistakes. On such occasions whipping of sentiments of sloga neering campaign or clamoring of rights will not be useful for a message-bearing Ummah. In such circumstances we should utilize the deep insight, seek Allah's refuge and should contribute to maintaining the atmosphere of tolerance. This will render all temptations and lures of Satan futile.

Just cast a glance on the scenario in the country being kicked up in the name of cow slaughter. India has over 40 crores of people who derive economic benefits from cow. The Government machinery helps them in cow slaughter and exports of its beef, while the number of Muslims who consume beef are not more than a few lakhs, that too only the beef of the slaughtered cows. Wisdom does not demand that these few lakh Muslims should involve themselves in the controversy and disputes with those who hold the cow in reverence and religious esteem.

Certainly the wisdom should dissuade us from any confrontation on this issue. Not alone confrontation, when the affairs get out of hand, they evoke bloodier reprisals in the form of massacres, rape, destruction of farms, shops and factories. And the brunt of all this will fall upon Muslims while those communities who consume beef make a long list. So, why take the blame on Muslims alone.

The Muslims of India should remind themselves of the following Quranic Verses :

“Nor can goodness and evil be equal. Repel (evil) with what is better. Then will he between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate and no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint; none but persons of the greatest good fortune.”

(Ha Meem Sajada 34-35)

The verse is full of meaning. The Muslim leadership has been accustomed to fiery statements and inflammatory speeches since 1930. This perhaps stems from the bewildering array of issues and problems the Ummah faces. But these bitter statements leave their imprint on the sands of times and cause even more problems. The Muslims disperse after hearing the sentimental speeches of their leaders. The euphoric mood vanishes by mid-night and the dawn engages them in daily chores. But they would have provoked the communal and chauvinist forces which plan out strategies and gradually implement their destructive programmes against them.

While Muslims and their leaders sleep after their provocative speeches, they awaken the communal wolves who have tasted the Muslim blood many a time.

APPEAL BY MAULANA ALI MIYAN :

In this connection Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi a philosopher of Islam had appealed to such Muslim leaders in his speech at Nadwatul Ulema Lucknow, in 1977. The speech needs attention of one and all among the Muslims:

“For Allah’s sake, please give us 10 years and allow us to work silently and patiently. We allowed you opportunity for so long. Now you keep quiet. Engage yourself in constructive work and restrain your tongue. Let us all adopt polite tones, sympathy, and arguments backed with logic and reason and deep contemplation on problems and issues. All these characteristics confirm to the style of the Prophet and the approach of Holy Quran.”

This appeal by the sage and wiseman of the age constitutes a mercy appeal for those 50 and odd Muslim leaders who stand before the microphones. The inflammatory speeches and fiery approach could be dispensed with. For Allah’s sake adopt cool-headed approach and argue in style that is laced with wisdom. Several of the riddles we face today could easily be passed over to other heads.

I had several occasions to hear such “Qaide Millat” who vowed to raise Qutb Minars of skulls, in his speeches. The speaker left for the city of Qutb Minar the next day as he belonged to that city. But the city where he spoke was scattered with skulls of men, women and children in such numbers that would be enough to erect several Qutb Minars. He had only pleased ‘Iblis’, the great Satan who was expressing gratitude to the Muslim leader for helping them immeasurably.

My heart fills with agony at this attitude of the community leaders. But I can only draw their attention towards what

the Quran commands us when it says that the evils should be removed by virtues. Muslims could avoid a lot of bad blood if they recognise the place and position assigned to them by Islam and discard policy of confrontation. Rather we should attempt at softening the opponents and critics by using the tools used by the Prophet in his dawah.

For example in an issue like cow slaughter, the Muslims adopted a very reasonable attitude of maintaining distance from it in the post partition era. Allah helped us by turning the issue against a commercial lobby which was promoting the trade and reaping huge profits. Unfortunately the control of the means of publicity and propaganda rests with such people who would like to put all the blame for cow slaughter on Muslims alone. But now the real culprits are appearing before the people with their nefarious crimes. Now those who blamed Muslims are sometimes even apologetic at the exposure of the anti-cow activities of their own coreligionists. Justice prevails and we see this happening around us. People are realising that the perpetrators of atrocities against cow are not the ones who were posed as such. It is therefore my fervent appeal that Muslims should keep themselves aloof from this issue. Demands and memoranda do not serve any useful purpose.

AN APPEAL TO HINDU BRETHREN:

Now that the real profile of beneficiaries of the cow-beef traders, leather and beef exporters, shoe makers from cow hides, foreign exchange earners,

beef eaters and caterers has become so evident, those Hindu brethren who are sentimentally attached to the cow should shed their anger against Muslims on this score. Muslim share, in the entire commercial stakes in cow is negligible. I know my Hindu brethren very intimately. The followers of religion who deem it a virtue to feed milk to snakes, cannot be instigated on slaying Muslims on the issue of cow. But the historical animosities, misunderstandings, provocations provided by leaders, has given rise to an atmosphere that often endangers the Muslim life, property and honour. It appears we are standing on a volcanic summit and the communal lava is boiling within, ready to overtake us any moment.

Indian Muslims are the sons of Indian soil. They return to the same soil on death. Their dignity is India's dignity. Their progress is India's progress. Their annihilation is annihilation of their own motherland. Who will deny all this? But when misunderstandings prevail, political charlatons occupy the stage, newspapers publicise rumours, any small incident can cause loss of thousands of lives.

A MACABRE INCIDENT:

This reminds me of a macabre incident. Once I was returning to Nagpur from Allahabad by train. We had to disembark at a big railway junction when the train engine failed. Though, it was an important railway station, it was located by a small town outside. Since the next train to our destination was not to come immediately. I came out of the station by using the footbridge and wanted to take a

light refreshment in nearby hotels. But soon my eyes were attracted towards the caracass of a cow lying in a pool of clotted blood. Its bones were badly smashed. The sight of dead cow shocked me and I began to apprehend trouble. Mischief makers by attributing the cow's killing to Muslims may goon rampage. My worries were proved right as within a shortwhile the town went agog with rumours of Muslims having killed the cow. A crowd of nearly 50 persons gathered outside the station and started sloganeering and abusing Muslims. Soon it turned into a riotous mob which was attacking carts, shops and people. I wanted to come back to the station's safety and leave the place as soon as possible by any train. But by then a lot of people who know me, had gathered around me and it was not possible to move away from them. I then made a close examination of the caracass. It was not a cow. It was an ox. We stood benumbed at the turn of the events around and were unable to plan the next move. But meanwhile, a few coolies surged through the crowd and loudly requested the people not to believe the rumours. They said the ox had been killed during shunting of a goods train that morning and they had merely pulled away the caracass from the track to the bridge side. This had a salutary effect over the crowd and things quietened by Allah's mercy. We too gathered courage and instantaneously arranged an address to the people. Yet the things did not seem fully settled in the town and there were undercurrents of tension. I left the town as soon as I got the next train. Later we learnt that riots spread out to other

villages the same night and mayhem continued for sometime.

THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT:

All this is unbecoming of India. The rioters, the rowdies, the attackers may go unpunished in this world. But they cannot escape culpability in the hereafter, from the divine court. There, nobody will be spared. All widows and children will get their compensation. The divine justice will take into account for everything.

I have deep faith in my Hindu brethren and expect that they too share my grief and believe that they too do not approve any kind of tyranny and excess. Yet an accident recurs in this country continually. No rhyme or reason can explain its recurrence. Such incidents or accidents do not bring any glory to this country nor enhance its stature.

I appeal to my peace loving Hindu brethren to provide protection to the innocent Muslims whenever their security is threatened. I appeal to them in the name of Ishwar, in the name of Dharma, mercy and humanity or whatever could satisfy them. They must stand up to prevent injustice. The leaves of holy Hindu scriptures bear testimony that sin is pardoned by Ishwar (God) but He does not grant pardon for the oppression. They also stand witness to the fact that the governments are spared of doom if they commit sins. Reprieve and opportunity to repent are granted to human beings. But the governments which suppress or allow or abet suppression cannot escape unpunished at the hands of God. ■

AIDS: Allah's Wrath on Earth

- Muhammad Abdus Samad*

AIDS stands for Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome, a dreaded disease killing a large number of people, irrespective of their caste, creed, sex and nationality, unabated since its first emergence in San Francisco, USA in 1981. AIDS destroys the immune system of body of a person failing to fight germs and infections present in his/her body. Consequently the person fails to protect against diseases. And it finally poses a threat to his/her life.

AIDS was first detected in human body in America in 1981. In the year 1981, a group of people in San Francisco was suffering from severe pneumonia caused by a germ called Pneumocystis Carinii Pneumonia (PCP) and also a kind of skin disease caused by a germ called Kaposi's sarcoma. Later these two diseases had also been found in the body of some persons in Europe and Africa. The group of men in San Francisco was shepherds by profession and practiced homosexual acts among themselves. At the same time this kind of disease was also detected in New York and named as GRID (Gay-related Immuno-deficiency Syndrome). Later the disease was renamed as AIDS. It needs mention here that the homosexuality that originates AIDS in

human body is a distorted and unnatural sexual intercourse executed between man and man through their anus. If a person contracts AIDS, he/she is sure to die of it, sooner or later.

Medically it is known that the vaginal lining is thicker and more lubricated than that of anal lining of both male and female. If the sexual intercourse is executed through anus, it is most likely to injure and damage anal lining of anus. If the anal lining is injured and damaged during sexual intercourse, the semen and its cells cling to the injured and damaged portion of anal lining breeding germs infecting the person with HIV/AIDS and also causing anal cancer. Subsequently the infection of HIV gets transmitted from the infected person to healthy one through sexual contact or other ways.

HIV TRANSMISSION

AIDS is also known as sexually transmitted disease. The infected person's body fluids such as semen, blood, vaginal secretion, saliva are transmitted and get entry into healthy person through sexual intercourse for which the latter also suffers from HIV/AIDS in future. Apart from this, the following means also contribute to the transmission of HIV infection to a healthy person: (a) Sharing of syringes and needles contaminated with infected blood and other body fluids (b) Use of

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intravenous drug injection and needle without sterilization (c) Use of instruments of dentist without sterilization (d) From infected mother to child during pregnancy, delivery and breast-feeding (e) Even the tear and saliva of infected person may carry the germs to healthy one.

Generally a society runs high-risk of HIV infection, which recognizes and legalizes free, distorted and unnatural sex and marriage between same sexes. However there are some misconceptions relating to transmission of HIV infection : (a) Casual contact like shaking hands of infected persons (b) Use of utensils and toilet of infected persons (c) Community eating (d) Sneezing and breathing (e) Use of cosmetic of infected persons. Recently it is discovered that a mosquito, if it sucks the blood of infected person and later bites the healthy one may infect the latter with HIV infection.

TREATMENT OF HIV/AIDS

The treatment of HIV/AIDS is still elusive and unsatisfactory. In fact there is still no efficacious medicine and vaccine invented that can cure a person suffering from HIV/AIDS. The medicines and vaccines which have so far been invented and developed, cannot cure the patients but merely assist his/her survive a few years more with this disease and its pangs.

SYMPTOMS AND PRECAUTIONS

Generally a person infected with HIV infection exhibits some signs and

symptoms: (a) Rapid loss of body weight (b) Diarrhoea (c) Intermittent fever, cough and cold (d) Muscle pain (e) pneumonia and (e) TB. Some precautionary measures may, however be suggested to combat HIV/AIDS: (1) Don't allow the infected person's body fluids to enter into the healthy one through homosexual and heterosexual acts and blood transfusion (2) Use of HIV proof condoms and sterilized syringes and needles (3) Get "Genetic Counselling" before marriage (4) Don't approach a partner whose HIV is unknown (5) Ban on the marriage between same sexes and (6) Ban on the pornography , porn industry and its advertisement. It is known that about 90 percent porn films viewed by young generation in Internet enthralls them towards distorted and unprotected sex. The precautionary measures and suggestions as stated above must be materialized in practical life before the treatment of HIV/AIDS begins.

Diagnosis of HIV infection is really a difficult and tedious job. It is not easy to tell with certainty whether a person contracts HIV/AIDS having based on his/her complexion and behavior. Because many infected persons do not exhibit signs and symptoms at least for two years. Under this circumstances, they cannot be called suffering from HIV/AIDS until and unless they are repeatedly tested and their disease detected.

The human immune system consists of two components (a) Cellular

Immune System and (b) Humoral Immune System. The first one eats, digests, kills and inactivates germs in body while the second one is some chemicals dissolved in blood plasma producing protein called antibodies which fight against germs in body. When the immune system becomes weak and inactivated due to HIV infection, the person suffers from AIDS.

HIV (Human Immuno-deficiency Virus) is diagnosed and detected by the tests known as ELISA Test and Western Blot Test. The ELISA Test is common screening test used to test the patient in initial stage while the Western Blot Test is used to confirm the result of the screening test. If the tests find the presence of HIV infection, it is called HIV positive. And the person with HIV positive suffers from AIDS. It is important to say here that the doctors should strictly maintain the secrecy of the test report; or else it may cause more harm to the patient.

The medicine which was once considered most effective for the treatment of HIV/AIDS is AZT (Azidothymidine). Actually it cannot cure the disease but suppresses the spread of HIV infection in body. It causes severe side-effects and subsequently develops Leukaemia. Hence it was not used for the treatment of HIV/AIDS. To re-immunise the patient, a sort of vaccine was invented, but it also fails to cure the disease. However the scientists are working against the time for invention of medicine and vaccine for the disease. In fact the treatment of HIV

infection is highly expensive, time-consuming and tedious. In USA, a single HIV positive patient needs an amount of 200,000 dollars for the treatment from the time of infection to death which is not affordable for all.

In order to combat HIV/AIDS, the Government of India is also spending massive amounts for study and research on the disease and its treatment every year. According to the Department of AIDS Control of India, the total number of people infected by HIV infection in India in 2011 was 20, 88,642. The highest number of them live in Andhra Pradesh (4.19lakh) followed by Manipur (25,639) and the rest live in other states (The Assam Tribune 29 August 2013). Most of these people live in slum areas with abject poverty and they are homosexuals, commercial sex-workers, intravenous drug-users and truck drivers.

Every year the world observes the World Health Day as the "World AIDS Day" on 1st December so as to generate awareness among people against HIV/AIDS and its danger and threat to life. Nevertheless the world witnesses the spread of HIV/AIDS like epidemic from one region to another because of free, distorted and unnatural sex prevalent in some so-called developed and civilized nations. Every year some nations including India organize seminars, conferences and mass-campaigns so as to sensitize people against danger of HIV/AIDS, but no one has wisdom and courage to demand

the total ban on commercial sex and brothels in vogue in their society which are the biggest contributors of this dreaded disease. What is the use of such seminar, conference and mass-campaign, if the commercial sex and brothels are permitted? Is it not double standard? Are we not inviting self-destruction?

NOT DEMOCRATIC RIGHT

While sex is a natural biological urge, sexual perversion is quite contrary to the natural disposition of man. Those who practice and favour the homosexual act say that it is their democratic right to practice it. They even do not hesitate to approach the courts of law demanding legalization of marriage between the same sex. In 2009 a group of people approached the Delhi High Court demanding the legalization of homosexual practice in India. The Court passed a verdict decriminalizing the homosexual practice in India. Later the Supreme Court quashed the verdict of the Delhi High Court criminalizing the homosexual practice again in India on 11 December 2013.

Homosexuality, being an unnatural process of sexual intercourse between same sex persons is contrary and detrimental to the natural disposition of human beings; hence it cannot be called democratic right. It would be apt to clarify that a male homosexualist is called sodomite and a female lesbian. Now the term "Sodomy" used to refer to homosexual act is derived from the name of a city "Sodom" wherein people first

practiced homosexual acts almost four thousand years ago.

MALE CIRCUMCISION

It is heartening to note that some modern scientists prove that the male circumcision is the best tool to check HIV/AIDS. Recently a group of scientists from the Harvard School of Public Health have advocated the male circumcision as most important tool to limit the spread of the deadly virus of AIDS. Daniel Halperin of the Harvard School of Public Health, one of the lead researchers said: "The time has come to look at male circumcision as the most important tool to limit the spread of HIV within the worst-affected regions of the world. Cutting off the foreskin has been shown in several studies to check the spread of HIV through heterosexual contact.....In men the risk is reduced by 60 percent but even in women, there is a knock-off effect with fewer infected men in the general population. Scientists warned that a quarter of century of research and billions of dollars spent on AIDS Prevention Programme based on HIV vaccine, wide-scale testing and promotion of condoms or sexual abstinence have turned to be less effective than a simple surgical operation to remove the foreskin"(The Assam Tribune 12 May 2008). Narrative of the people of Lut (PBUH)

There is a narrative in the Qur'an and the Bible relating to two tribes in Sodom and Gomorrah who practiced homosexuality and faced Allah's wrath on

earth for which they were punished with a gravious penalty. Allah considered the homosexuality a major offence and contrary to His law. Prophet Lut (PBUH) was sent by Allah to the tribes as a warner. The prophet tried his level best to rectify and keep them abstained away from homosexual practice. The tribes did not pay heed to his warning; but hatched a conspiracy to slay him. At last Allah's wrath fell upon them as stated in the Qur'an: "Prophet Lot said to his people: "Do you commit lewdness such as no people in creation ever committed before you? For you practice your lust on men in preference to women. Ye are indeed a people transgressing beyond bounds. Do you indeed approach men and practice wickedness even in your council? But the people said:" Bring for us the wrath of Allah if you tell the truth". Then Lot prayed: " O my Lord! Help me against the people who do mischief. Finally the Mighty Blast overtook them at sunrise. Allah said: " I turned the cities (Sodom and Gomorrah) upside down and rained down on them brimstones as hard as baked clay" (Qur'an 7:80-81, 27:54-58, 15:73-75). Punishment for Homosexual acts. Moreover the tradition of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) tells that if a man is convicted of homosexuality, he/she should be burnt to death (Tirmizi). Similarly the Bible also deals with the same story of those stubborn people and their destruction for the same crime in Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis19:1-29). Again the Bible prescribes the penalty of homosexual act:

"if a man has sexual relations with another man, they have done a disgusting thing and both shall be put to death .They are responsible for their own death" (Livictus20:13).

Thus it appears that Allah was highly displeased with the two tribes of Prophet Lot for the homosexuality as practiced by them as it was against His law resulting in His wrath on them and their destruction in Sodom and Gomorrah. Similarly we can reasonably conclude that HIV/AIDS, which originates as a result of homosexual act now practiced in various modern societies violating the law of Allah, is also Allah's wrath on earth. The narrative of Prophet Lot as narrated in the Qur'an and the Bible teaches us a lesson that the humanity is obligated to take up some strict measures prohibiting homosexuality, free sex, and other forms of lewdness so as to eliminate the fatal diseases like AIDS, and cancer, syphilis and gonorrhoea from the world and thereby save the humanity.

In fact the man is confronted with misfortune and danger only because of his misdeeds as stated in the Qur'an:" Whatever misfortune strikes you, it is what your hands have earned. And He (Allah) forgives many of them (42:30). Mischiefs have appeared on land and sea because of the evils which man's hands have done , that Allah may give them a taste of some of their misdeeds(in this world) "(30:41). May Allah save the humanity from His wrath! Ameen!! ■

Prophet's Behaviour With Non-Muslims

- M.S. Aftab*

With a view to saving the lives of those enemies who deserved death penalty, the Prophet had ruled that every Muslim, male or female, could grant shelter to the enemies and recommend clemency: all Muslims were obligated to honour such shelter-giving. There were cases of misuse of this ruling, but the Prophet did not revise or modify the ruling. Such shelters were given excessively to the POWs who all were non-believers.

The Prophet exchanged gifts with the non-believers. He strongly disfavoured the practice of inequality on the basis of tribe, clan, gender and economic status; he showed admirable empathy to the weaker sections of the society. He ate meal prepared by a Jew woman in the Khyber and permitted his companions to eat such meals, provided the stuff is not prohibited under the Shariah law. The prophet ruled that relatives, disbelievers included, must be dealt with maximum courtesy and gentleness.

As already stated in the chapter 08, in the Battle of Hunain. One of the old-age captive rebuked the captors saying "By God, I am the sister of your chief." The Muslims did not believe her but none the less brought her to the prophet. She was an old woman of seventy plus named Shayma daughter of Halima and Haris, she introduced herself to the Prophet and was recognized by a mark as the foster sister of the prophet. The prophet gave her full respect, enquired about her parents; she said both had died. The Prophet gave her a gift and offered her the choice of either staying with him or

returning to her tribe. She opted to turn to her clan. So, with all respect and honour, she was escorted to her home. She was also a non-Muslim. Later on she accepted Islam.

Compensation for the inadvertent killing of non-Muslims: in modern terminology, it is called "collateral damage." The day the Prophet's army got victory over Makka, two non-combatant non-Muslims namely Ibn Aasue Hazli and Juned Ibn Aku were killed. The prophet immediately ordered compensation and one hundred camels each were given to the heirs of the two. In following this sunnah (practice) of the Prophet, when a farmer from Syria complained to the Caliph Umar that the Muslim army marched over his farmland thus destroying his harvest, Hazrat Umar Caliph paid ten thousand dirhams to this farmer as compensation. Nowadays, whole village is destroyed in aerial bombardments and the army spokesperson issues a laconic statement that the matter is under investigation. And the inquiry goes on till another village is similarly destroyed; the first episode is forgotten, inquiry in the second episode starts. The supreme commander is too supreme to bother about such routine episodes.

There were situations where son/daughter was Muslim and his/parent (s) was/were non-Muslim and Prophet ruled that the relationship must be fully respected; for example the non-Muslim mother Umm Ruman sought financial help from her daughter Asma. Hazrat Asma was a very devoted Muslim; hostilities were at peak; so, Hazrat Asma sought guidance from the Prophet who ruled, If You must help your mother. "There are instances when some unbelievers got substantial help

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from the Prophet but in return, they cheated, conspired with enemies, damaged the Muslim properties which they were granted concession to enjoy and even joined the enemy army in combat operations. Muslims wanted to retaliate, but Prophet said, "once in control, forgiveness is better; have mercy on dwellers of the earth, The One in the Skies will have mercy on you."

"The recompense for an evil is an evil like thereof; but, whoever forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is with Allah. Verily, He likes not the oppressors, polytheists, and wrongdoers. And verily, whosoever shows patience and forgives, that would truly be from the things recommended Allah." (The Quran Surah 42 Ash-Shura: ayats 40 & 43)

The prophet deputed Mu'adh bin Jabal and Abu Musa to Yemen to invite the people to Islam. He instructed both "Make things easy and do not make them difficult; cheer up the people and do not scare them. The Prophet's description of the quality of the people of Yemen are noteworthy: "They have the tenderest hearts and the gentlest minds. Faith belongs to the Yemen and wisdom belongs to the Yemen."

The prophet treated Christians, jews and polytheists equally keeping in view the Quranic injunction "There is no compulsion in religion." (Surat no.2 Al-Baqara: ayah 256). He would explain Islam to everyone and then leave them free to make their own choice. Again, vide ayah no. 135 of the surah no.04 An-Nisa, God Almighty commands:

"Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for Allah alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether they are rich or poor, Allah is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and deviate from the truth."

The prophet remains the best example of these characteristics for the rules he enforced on Muslims. His just and tolerant attitude toward those of other religions, races, tribes and languages and his equal treatment of the rich and the poor are in full accordance with the Quran. He admirably complied with Allah's commands and never compromised on the implementation of justice, regardless of who was/were involved , for "My Lord has commanded Justice." (Surah Al-A'raf ayah 29). So much so that in a dispute between a jew and a Muslim, the jew insisted on the Prophet as an arbitrator and the Muslim was insistent on some other than the prophet, because his case was not based on justice and he knew that the Prophet would do justice. The Quran says:

Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you on account of religion and do not drive you out of your homes that you deal kindly and justly with them. Indeed Allah loves those who act justly. (Surah no. 60 Al-Mumtahinah : ayat no.08)

Allah loves those who deal with equity. The just, who are fair in their decisions, families and those under their authority, will be on podiums made of light, to the right of the Throne of Allah. (Authentic Hadith).

As stated earlier, the conquest of Makka together with the kindness and forgiveness with which the arch persecutors of the Prophet were treated generated decisive tides in favour of Islam and people started entering Islam in waves. The Muslim army comprised ten thousand soldiers; not even a year passed and the same army for the Tabuk Expedition increased to thirty thousand and in the farewell Haj the number of pilgrims was 1,24,000 or according to some reports 1,44,000 all chanting. "Here we are at Your command,

at Your service.”

Thus, the Islamic State bestrode the entire Arab peninsula with Medina as its capital. Although we cannot say that the Prophet's teachings had fully been embedded into the hearts of all those who entered Islam; because there were many churlish bedouins who had just entered Islam because their chiefs had entered Islam; otherwise they had not been purged of their deep-rooted instincts of loot, pillage and killings. The Prophet's teachings had not change fully. That is why Allah described in the Quran about them as under:

“The Bedouins are the worst in disbelief and hypocrisy and more likely to be in ignorance of the limits (Allah's commandments and His Laws) which Allah has revealed to His Messenger. And Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise. And of the Bedouins there are some who look upon what they spend (in Allah's Cause) as a fine and watch for calamities to befall you, on them be the calamity of evil. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) (Surah 9, At-Taubah: ayats 97 & 98)

And the Quran describes the others who were virtuous and whose hearts had imbibed the Prophet's teachings:

And of the Bedouins there are some who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and look upon what they spend in Allah's Cause as means of nearness to Allah and a cause of receiving the prophet's invocations. Indeed these (spending in Allah's Cause) are a means of nearness for them. Allah will admit them to His Mercy. Certainly Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surah 9, At-Taubah: ayat 99)

The foremost amongst the believers were the Emigrants (those who migrated from Makka to Medina) and the Ansars (natives of Medina who helped the emigrants in admirable manner) and those who exactly followed the Prophet in letter & spirits. Those who believed before the conquest of Makka went through the furnace; after the conquest, the people embraced Islam in crowds, the tide submerging the entire peninsula. However, God granted to all the believers a good promise. □

(Continued from page 38)

freelance writer has recently made comments about Trump and said that if William Shakespeare were alive today, he would instead of writing *The Merchant of Venice* write, *“The Merchant of New York”*.

One of the top Muslim journalists in the United States wrote on his blog the following: *“Moving US embassy to Jerusalem is a belligerent against the world and justice. US is not an honest broker. Evangelical Christians are so obsessed with theology that human rights matter little to them. In the name of God, white race has been turned by and large into a racist monster that cares only for its race in general. Of course the white masses have been forced to believe about their superiority on the basis of the Bible and other religious texts. But those white people who have risen above the racist theology are the real messengers of peace and justice. The best course of action in this situation is to wait for divine intervention. It would come and the U.S. and Israel would be its first two recipients. Don't resort to violence, verbal or physical. Keep quiet. Wait for the divine response. It will come and no one can stop it.”*■

Maulana Azad: India's First Education Minister

- Shariq Alavi

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad stands out as one of the foremost leaders of the Indian National Movement. He fought alongside Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi to 'win India freedom from British rule. Nehru always appreciated his erudite scholarship, literary flair and strong intellectual bent of mind. In 1947 he appointed him as his first education minister in the newly formed Indian cabinet. He remained minister for 11 years. This was a gracious recognition of the Maulana's expansive scholarship in Islamic theology, world history and politics.

As the first education minister of independent India Maulana Azad had a stupendous task. In 'the post partition communal violence ridden society he had to put in place a 'national' education that balanced tradition with modernity. He had to project education as a democratic and humane project that brought the Indian state closer to society. His education policy reached out to different sections of Indian society, cemented its fissures and brought the benevolent face of the new state to the forefront.

His education plan had four objectives. First, the removal of illiteracy. This was to be achieved through the

universalisation of elementary education upto the secondary level. The project reached out to women as well. Second, the provision for offering equal educational opportunities to all irrespective of caste and class. Third, the three language formula. This made Hindi and the state languages the medium of instruction. English was offered as an important second language. Fourth, the expansion of primary education throughout the country.

Azad gave the national planning of education more importance than the economic or industrial planning. In 1948 he put forward the idea of spending on education at least 10% of the central revenues. He framed the rules of instituting special stipends and scholarships for students coming from backward classes. Indeed the budget for these stipends went up from 3 lakhs in 1944 to 2.25 crores in 1960. He justified this increased expenditure on education by arguing that education was related to the security and welfare of the state.

According to Maulana Azad, the centrality of education in the new nations' planning would pay dividends only if it included women. He was of the view that

if women took to education more than half of the world's problems would be solved. This was because he felt that educated mothers meant literate children. Alongside, he was also very confident that the success of the education policy depended also on the spread of adult education. Adult education he felt would not only make the individual literate, it would also open up his mental faculties to the affairs of the country.

Indeed the awakening of the individual to the affairs of the new nation was the objective of Maulana Azad's education policy. Scholars like Rabindranath Bhattacharya have called this the 'social education policy' of Azad. They have argued that social education meant that every citizen came to know the meaning of citizenship and the functioning of democracy. This meant that people had knowledge of communal harmony in India. In a UNESCO seminar in 1949 he said, 'India has been at her best when the doors were wide open to all who came from abroad. She partook of whatever lessons the world had to teach and equally freely gave the world her best'. He went on to emphasise that living with compassion and tolerance for difference has historically been the hallmark of the Indian civilization. He was of the view that the new state should

make most of this embrative spirit of India. It should institutionalize it in its democratic humane and secular education policy. He made it clear that this encompassing educational policy did not mean that religion was being thrown out of the window. He did recognize the tremendous hold of religion on peoples' psyche. He only wanted that the state should supervise religious instruction so as to ensure that intolerance did not become the predominant strand of society. And the state could do this through its carefully balanced education policy. He thus setup a range of educational bodies that would tread this delicate rope: the University Grants Commission, the Mudaliar Commission, the ICCR, National Library, National Museum and National Laboratories.

Thus we can conclude that Maulana Azad was the epitome of secular values who envisioned a humane and democratic society for independent India. In the words of K.G. Saiyidain, 'he was a bridge between the cultures of the East and the West, a man who magnificently spanned in his person the gulf between the past and the future'. As the first education minister of independent India he steered the education policy to achieve his ideals for a humane and tolerant India. ■

Saiyid Ahmad Shahid – Ancestors and Early Life

- Mohiuddin Ahmad

MUHAMMAD Zun-Nafs az-Zakiya, who fell down fighting at Madina on the 7th December 762, in an action against the Abbasid Caliph Mansur (756-775), was the son of 'Abdullah al-Mahaz, whose father, Hasan Muthanna, was the son of Hasan bin 'Ali, and mother, Fatima Sughra, a daughter of Husain bin 'Ali. Twelfth in the line of his descendants, Saiyid Qutb-ud-din Muhammad al-Hasani, was one of those elects who are doubly blessed with the beauty of holiness and heroic intrepidity. From Baghdad, he migrated to Ghazni, and then moved onwards with a retinue of his dependents and followers to India in 1211. Sultan Shams-ud-din Iltutmish (1211-36) had, by the time, gained the remnants of Qutb-ud-din Aibak's wide dominion by his victory over Aram Shah. The Sultan received Saiyid Qutb-ud-din with great honour but the latter preferred to settle down somewhere in the eastern part of the country rather than be enlisted as one in the entourage of the King at the capital. He marched on to Kannauj where he gave battle to Raja Jai Chand and conquered Kannauj; the latter sought refuge in the fort of Kara, on the Ganges above Allahabad, and his brother Manikchand in that of Manikpur. Qutb-ud-din sent a detachment under Qawam-ud-din, his son, to subdue Manikpur while he remained besieging Jai Chand at Kara. After a two months siege the Rajas of both the places abandoned their forts and fled

to Kantith in the mountains of the Vindhya range.

It seems that Saiyid Qutb-ud-din was later recalled by the King to be appointed as Sheikh-ul-Islam" of the realm at Delhi for Barni writes about him: "Of the Saiyids, one who can be described as the prince among the pure-hearted souls of the time, was Qutb-ud-din, the progenitor of the Qazis of Budaun." Several other writers confirm the statement of Barni about the great respect enjoyed by Saiyid Qutb-ud-din on account of his piety as well as due to his being a direct descendant of the Prophet.' Saiyid Qutb-ud-din died in 1230, leaving three sons, Nizam-ud-din, Qawam-ud-din and Taj-ud-din, who were all noted for their spirituality and scholarship. Saiyid Taj-ud-din remained, for a long time, the Qazi of Oudh and then of the province of Budaun" while Saiyid Qawam-ud-din was betrothed to Qatiba, one of the daughters of Iltutmish. Not much is known about Saiyid Nizam-ud-din who does not appear to have accepted any office under government, but his son Saiyid Rukn-ud-din later adorned the office of Qazi of Kara. Zia-ud-din Barni, who happened to meet Rukn-ud-din speaks highly of his sanctity, selflessness and generosity. The progeny of Saiyid Nizam-ud-din continued to live as the elites of Kara for about a hundred years after which one of his descendants, Saiyid Qutb-ud-din II, migrated to Jai's in Rae Bareilly district.

Thereafter, in 1385, Qazi Saiyid Mahmud, the grandson of Saiyid Qutb-ud-din II, took residence at Nastrabad, another town in Rae Bareli at a distance of four miles from Jai's. Qazi Saiyid Ahmad, son of Qazi Saiyid Mahmud, was another zealous believer who left Nasirabad for Rae Bareli simply because in a law-suit presented before him one of the parties expressed resentment over the judgment given in accordance with the shari'ah. However, his sons and grandsons remained at Nasirabad.

Shah 'Alam Ullah, born on Monday the 27th December, 1623, was a grandson of Qazi Saiyid Ahmad. His father, Saiyid Muhammad Fuzail, had died two months and a half before his birth and his mother expired a year or two there-after. His maternal uncle, Saiyid Abu Muhammad, one of the nobles of Shah Jahan, brought him up with loving care. Saiyid Abu Muhammad wanted 'Alam Ullah to take up some employment in the imperial army, but he never agreed. Shah 'Alam Ullah stayed with his maternal uncle for two years, undergoing the hardships of the trainees, but he ultimately gave up all his belongings to join a reputed saint of the time, Saiyid Adam Binnauri, the spiritual successor of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi Mujaddid Alf Thani. It did not take him long under the guidance of his Sheikh to attain the heights of sanctity. Saiyid Adam Binnauri was so impressed with his talented disciple that he awarded him his own turban as well as the headgear of his spiritual mentor, Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi.

Then, bidding farewell to Shah 'Alam Ullah he said: "Saiyid, now you go back to your home town well contented. You would be like a sun among the stars."

Saiyid Adam Binnauri later migrated to Arabia. The devoted disciple also wanted to accompany his mentor, to which the latter agreed but instructed him that he would not reject the request, if made by anyone, to break his journey for good in the way. Shah 'Alam Ullah returned to his home and set out to leave the country along with his family. When he reached near Rae Bareli, another saint, 'Abdus Shakur by name, insisted that he should settle down at a place, about three miles west of the city, on the left bank of river Sa'i. Shah 'Alam Ullah had to accept the suggestion and this is the place where he enjoys a blissful sleep to this day. Twice he went for pilgrimage in 1664 and 1671. A year after the second pilgrimage he constructed a mosque by the side of the river on the model of Ka'aba.

A man of simple habits, Shah 'Alam Ullah always led austere life; to perform the household chores or to carry the fuel-wood on his own head, he never demurred. He was ever mindful of following the example of the holy Prophet to the minutest details and expected the same from his family members and dependents. Nobody, whatever his rank or authority or kinship with him could dare to flout, without incurring his displeasure, the rules of shari'ah or precepts of the Prophet. Once, Dalel Khan, a noble of

Shah Jahan, came to pay his respects to him. Shah 'Alam Ullah took a pledge from him to follow the righteous path of religion in future and to repent for his past sins. Thereafter the noble made a present which was graciously accepted by Shah 'Alam Ullah. Dalel Khan took leave of the Sheikh, but then the latter heard the drumbeat announcing departure of the noble. Shah 'Alam Ullah immediately returned the gifts presented by Dalel Khan.

Another time, after a flood in river Sa'i, when his house had been badly damaged, one of Shah 'Alam Ullah's disciples presented five hundred rupees for the repairs and raising the plinth of the house. Shah 'Alam Ullah, however, collected his sons and family members and told them that the amount received for repairs could better be earned by them by carrying on the repairs themselves instead of employing labourers. The repairs were carried out by all including the Shah, who took the same wages as other labourers.

Shah 'Alam Ullah never accepted a present from anyone if there was the least possibility of its having been earned through means not permitted by the shari'ah. Aurangzeb whose piety was proverbial, always avoided spending even a shell on himself from the state exchequer. He was even free from the more innocent pleasures of the rich. Once he ordered two hundred rupees to be presented to Shah 'Alam Ullah out of his own earnings, but the Sheikh flatly refused to accept anything from the Emperor.

Shah 'Alam Ullah solemnly entreated God, more than once, to grant sustenance to his progeny only enough to keep their body and soul together lest they should become heedless in recollection of the Lord.

In his private life, food and dress, habits and manners, Shah 'Alam Ullah closely resembled the companions of the Prophet of Islam. He had attained the stage of sanctity where gaining the good pleasure of God remains the only desire held dear by man. His son, Saiyid Abu Hanifah died at the age of thirty-two. Shah 'Alam Ullah performed the dawn prayers with the usual repose as if nothing had happened, and then informed others that arrangements for the burial of Abu Hanifah had to be made who had expired last night. After the burial he remarked: "Praise be to God. Abu Hanifah left this world with his faith intact."

Shah Ghulam 'Ali relates that the Emperor Aurangzeb once had a vision of the holy Prophet's demise in dream. Extremely perturbed, the Emperor made enquiries about its significance but he soon came to know that Shah 'Alam Ullah had breathed his last in the night he had had the vision. It was the early hours of Monday, the 26th of October, 1685 when Shah 'Alam Ullah passed to his heavenly abode at the age of sixty-two years and nine months.

Many among the sons and grandsons of Shah 'Alam Ullah, blessed with the internal illumination continued, in succession, to keep alight the lamp of spirituality. His second son, Saiyid

Muhammad Huda, who was destined to become the great-grandfather of Saiyid Ahmad Shahid was particularly noted for his chaste and pious life and generous disposition. He lived a life of extraordinary abstinence, heedless of everything save the worship of God. There were several occasions when he gave away all he had to the poor and the needy and himself endured the pangs of hunger. Once he received twelve thousand gold mohurs from one of his fiefs, but he distributed ail before returning to his house. Saiyid Muhammad Nur, the eldest son of Saiyid Muhammad Huda and a favourite of his grandfather, was not less careful in following the precepts of the Prophet than Shah 'Alam Ullah who had taken special pains for the moral and spiritual discipline of his grandson. Once his father sent him to seek the employment of Prince Muhammad 'Azam. His request was granted but he agreed to serve the prince provided he was not required to comply with the un-Islamic rules of Imperial court's etiquettes. Although the Prince paid due regard to Saiyid Muhammad Nur, he gave up the employment after a short while.

Saiyid Shah Abu Sa'eed, the grandson of Shah 'Alam Ullah's eldest son, Saiyid Ayat Ullah, was the maternal grandfather of Saiyid Ahmed Shahid. A man of God, known for his piety and righteousness, he had the honour of being the spiritual successor of Shah Wali Ullah. He was also too lavish in entertaining guests and helping the poor. Once he received one lakh of rupees. He distributed

the amount to the last rupee before he went back to his house.

Saiyid Muhammad Nur had two sons, Saiyid Muhammad No'aman and Saiyid Muhammad 'Irfan. Like his father, the latter was also a pious soul. While returning from Lucknow, in 1800, he fell seriously ill in the way and expired before reaching Rae Bareli. Bibi Najiya, the mother of Moulvi Saiyid Muhammad 'Ali, Saiyid Ahmad 'Ali Shahid, Saiyid Hamid-ud-din and Saiyid 'Abdur Rahman, was the only child born to the first wife of Saiyid Muhammad 'Irfan. After the death of his first wife he had married the daughter of Shah Abu Sa'eed, to whom were born three daughters and three sons, Saiyid Muhammad Ibrahim, Saiyid Muhammad Is'haq and Saiyid Ahmad Shahid. Saiyid Muhammad Is'haq was widely read and an erudite scholar who received education, first at Lucknow, and then studied hadith at the feet of Shah 'Abdul 'Aziz at Delhi. He was also initiated in the spiritual order of Shah 'Abdul 'Aziz. An eloquent speaker and a poet, Saiyid Muhammad Is'haq has left several poetical works in which he has explained the intricate problems relating to mathematics, rules of inheritance and grammar.

Saiyid Ahmad Shahid was born at Rae Bareli on 29th November, 1786. The young Saiyid Ahmad began his education, as was the custom among the Muslims in those days, at the age of four. But, unlike his brothers, he took little interest in his studies. It is related that during the first three years, he learnt only a few chapters

of the Qur'an and could write but a few words. His elder brothers, Saiyid Muhammad Ibrahim and Saiyid Muhammad Is'haq appeared to be much worried over his lack of interest in the studies, but his father asked them not to fret for him. Said he, "Leave him to God. He would do whatever is best for him. There is no use worrying about him."

It might be true that the Saiyid showed little inclination towards his studies in the initial stages, but he subsequently learnt enough Persian to speak fluently in that language. He often quoted verses of Bedil and Hafiz in his discourses. Mehr has also quoted Amir-ur-Rawayat to show that he studied a few text-books of Arabic under his brother Saiyid Muhammad Is'haq and took lessons in Traditions from Shah Muhammad Ismail later on at Delhi.

Saiyid Ahmad Shahid was, however, very fond of sports, particularly those which involved exertion and contest. He often used to divide his playmates into two parties, each of which tried to vanquish the enemy in mock- battles. The young Saiyid had attained proficiency in wrestling, swimming and archery and had developed a robust physique. He took such a keen interest in wrestling and other athletic exercises that, according to his nephew Saiyid 'Abdur Rahman, he could practice these exercises continuously for hours without showing any sign of fatigue. He had several dumb-bells weighing twenty, thirty and forty seers for gymnastic exercises. The result was that he had acquired such a physical strength that once

he lifted a heavy stone lamp-post and carried it about twenty paces. Then he threw it with such force that it got itself embedded one cubit deep in the ground. As other wrestlers had only been able to lift it with great difficulty, people found it difficult to believe that the pillar had been moved from its place by a single person. Similarly, in swimming, archery and other sports, he could easily beat his companions. Maulvi 'Alim Ullah was a noted swimmer of Delhi. Once he happened to see the Saiyid swimming upstream and acknowledged that it would have been difficult for him to swim against such a swift current.

The Saiyid was, from his childhood days, infatuated with a desire to wage war in the way of God. His enthusiasm was, however, taken by his elders as a childish fad except, of course, by his mother who had never had any misgivings about the capabilities of her son. Once he wanted to take part in a local skirmish which involved the defence of the Muslims' honour. He stood awaiting the permission of his mother while she was performing her prayers. In the meantime his foster-mother tried to dissuade him from joining the conflict, but as soon as his mother had said her prayers she said: "Ahmad, go ahead with the name of God on your lips. But, see, you do not turn your back in the fight. In that case I shall not see your face again. But if the other party sues for peace, do not reject the offer." Then, turning to the foster-mother of Ahmad, she said: "I know you love Ahmad, but not more than I

do. It was not the time to discourage him.”

As the Saiyid grew older, he developed a passion for two other callings. One of it was spending long hours in prayers and remembrance of God. He often spent the whole night in vigils recollecting God and contemplating over the injunctions of the Qur'an. Similarly, social service had also caught his imagination so ardently that he never hesitated in performing the toilsome jobs of his neighbours nor was there any work too low for him. He would regularly visit the widows, old and invalids to perform their household chores. As most of these neighbours held the Saiyid's family in reverence, they felt embarrassed in taking his assistance. Some of his relatives, too, like the blue-blooded gentry everywhere, felt the newly acquired craze of the Saiyid as below their dignity, but unmindful of what others thought or talked about him, the Saiyid fetched water, carried fuel-wood from the forest or attended to the household works of the poor and the crippled without a blush.

Belonging to a family with a long-standing tradition of zealously following the precepts of true faith, the Saiyid avoided, from the very beginning, doing anything which could be construed as an innovation in religion or superstitious accretion to the teachings of the Qur'an and sacred Traditions. The Saiyid thus led a chaste and unblemished life from his childhood days.

During 1803-4 when Saiyid Ahmad Shahid was about 17 or 18 years of age, he set out for Lucknow with his seven companions, mostly relatives, to seek some employment. They had to cover 79 kms. but with only one pack-horse being available, everyone in the party enjoyed the ride when his turn came, while others walked with their luggage on their heads. The Saiyid, however, never availed himself of his turn and always withdrew in favour of someone. When they had covered about half of the distance, almost everyone was too exhausted to carry on the journey with his heavy baggage. No porter was available either. At last, the Saiyid offered to suggest a solution provided everyone in the party agreed to accept his suggestion before-hand. This done, he packed the whole luggage in a blanket and carried it on his head; and, at the same time, thanked his companions for giving him an opportunity to be of some service to them.

Nawab Sa'adat 'Ali Khan then ruled at Lucknow. He was a competent administrator who attempted to reform the revenue administration and enforce financial discipline. He had, however, to carry on his government in difficult circumstances. In 1798, he was obliged to cede the fort of Allahabad and also to promise payment of 76 lakh rupees annually to the East India Company which, on its part, undertook the responsibility of the defence of the Nawab's dominions. Three years later, faced with the threatened attack by Sindhia, and anarchy prevailing

in Rohilkhand, he found himself unable to pay the accumulated arrears of the tribute payable to the Company. He had to execute a fresh treaty with the Company giving up Gorakhpur division, most of the Bareilly division, and the districts of Allahabad, Kanpur, Fatehpur, Etawah, Mainpuri, Etah and Farrukhabad, the south of Mirzapur district and the Tarai region of Kurnaun division. This left with him only the territory called Oudh, surrounded on all sides by the British dominions except the north.

When, Nawab Sa'adat 'Ali Khan ascended the throne on 21st February, 1798 his dominion had still not recovered from the ravages of the great famine of 1783-84 owing to the apathy of his predecessors and disorganised local administration in the districts. His efforts to reorganise revenue administration, specially resumption of grants by previous rulers, were met with resistance and, occasionally, with interference by the British Resident. The demobilisation of forces consequent on the shrinking of the Nawab's dominions and transfer of defence liabilities to the British, coupled with the stringent economy measures to achieve financial stability, caused widespread unemployment and discontent. Also, the absence of effective power in his hand exposed him to Wellesley's arbitrary and overbearing conduct towards him, but he had no option except to take a conciliatory attitude. A patrician of the city who held the Saiyid's forefathers and other elders of his family

in reverence took the Saiyid as his guest while his other companions had to earn their daily bread through calligraphy, tailoring or some other manual labour. It was not un often that one or the other of the Saiyid's friends was unable to earn a penny, but Saiyid Ahmad Shahid always shared the victuals sent by his host, and sometimes he even went without food to satisfy his friends' pangs of hunger. Saiyid Ahmad Shahid and his friends spent four 'months in this manner at Lucknow. The host of the Saiyid was by this time ordered by the Nawab to recruit a hundred cavalry for which about a thousand candidates with their arms and colts had turned up. The Saiyid's host asked him to select two persons from amongst his companions. He offered both the appointments to two persons not related to him and asked his relatives to have faith in God who would solve their difficulties' too. Very much impressed by the Saiyid's selflessness, his host promised to make some arrangements for his remaining companions in the near future.

After four months of the Saiyid's arrival in Lucknow, the Nawab asked the host of the Saiyid to arrange a hunting expedition. Saiyid Ahmad Shahid and his friends accompanied his host on safari in the hope of securing some employment during the expedition. Three more months, however, elapsed in the hilly tracts in the north, during winter season, without any opening in sight for anyone. The Saiyid had, however, given up all hopes of getting employed by now and was incessantly

pleading with his comrades to abandon their illusive quest of the worldly gains and go with him to Delhi. "Brothers", said he, "all this toil and trouble to make a living has been in vain. Why not abandon it and go to Delhi? Shah 'Abdul 'Aziz is there now a sign among the signs of God." None, however, took him seriously. At last he took Saiyid Muhammad Ali aside one night and said, "I shall leave for Delhi in a day or two. I want you to accompany me." Muhammad 'Ali replied. "We don't have anything except the clothes we are putting on. You might have the courage to undertake such a long journey empty-handed, but we can't dare." Then, after two or three days, the Saiyid disappeared without notifying his departure. His friends made a search for him since the forest where they happened to be at the time was very dense and dangerous. Wild beasts like lions, tigers, bears and hyenas sprawled in the thickets and not a day went by when a man or two was not mauled by them. The Saiyid's mysterious disappearance without a trace for several days convinced his friends that he had fallen a prey to some wild animal. After a few days, a man returning from Muhammadi forest told one of the Saiyid's friends that he had seen a young man accompanying an infantryman with a pitcher on his head. "As the young man did not appear to be a porter," continued the man further, "I enquired from the soldier why had he forced that poor man to undertake that undignified task. But the footman had a strange story to tell. He said that he had engaged an old and weak porter who found it difficult to carry the

load. Then, this man came and asked me to pay the wages to the porter and offered to carry the pitcher himself. I agreed to the proposal on his insistence for he would not allow the porter to carry the load any more." Listening to the story the Saiyid's companions heaved a sigh of relief for the young man could have been nobody else except the Saiyid.

Saiyid Ahmad Shahid had only a few paisas which he had decided to spend when absolutely necessary. When the pangs of hunger became unbearable, he purchased a little of gur and sattua, but he had hardly begun eating when a beggar came forward saying that he had not had anything to eat for two days. The Saiyid parted with his provender and spent the night in recollection of God. Way weary and exhausted, with blisters on his feet, he decided to spend a few days in a mosque in the way to regain strength before resuming the journey again. However, a man who had come to say his prayers enquired about his whereabouts. On coming to know that he was the son of Saiyid Muhammad 'Irfan, his spiritual guide, the man took the Saiyid to his home. He allowed the Saiyid, despite his insistence, to leave only after his blisters had been treated. He also provided the Saiyid with necessary transport for the rest of the journey. It was in this way that Saiyid Ahmad Shahid arrived at Delhi to become an eye-witness to the miserable condition of the once greatest metropolis of Islam in the world. ■

Jerusalem: Capital of Palestine

- Mohammad Yacoob*

On December 6, 2017, President Trump issued an Executive Order in which he stated that illegal occupation of Jerusalem, the Capital of Palestine, must continue, and he has declared that the U.S. embassy will be moved to Jerusalem, the Capital of Palestine. In other words, he encouraged the Zionist entity of Israel to continue occupation of Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine. The whole world reacted to his insanity.

The U.N. resolution passed in the United Nation General Assembly was 151-6. This awkward move by Trump came after he talked with Mahmoud Abbas, President of Palestine, and leaders of other countries in the Middle East. Each and every one said that it will ignite anti-American feeling and anti-Zionist feeling around the world, because he, Mr. Trump, is breaking the international law. President Trumps' mental capacity could not comprehend the magnitude of the problem. He was looking at it with his greed and maximise-the-profit perspective, and with his chosen colours; the colour of the dollar for his business and from the eyes of the extremist White supremacists, Ku Klux Klan and evangelists who supported him during the 2016 presidential election. So, he went ahead and made his illegal and reckless move about Jerusalem, the Capital of Palestine.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish

President, invited members of the 57-nation Organisation of the Islamic Conference and convened the meeting in Istanbul Wednesday, December 13, 2017 to address the worthless and reckless move by the unstable President of the only super power in the world. The Organisation of Islamic Conference condemned U.S. President Donald Trump's order on Jerusalem, the Capital of Palestine. "I am inviting the countries who value international law and fairness to recognise occupied Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine," Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told leaders at the start of the meeting. Mahmoud Abbas, President of Palestine said, "We are here today to say together and in clear language: Jerusalem was, still is and will always be the capital of the State of Palestine."

Jerusalem is not a religious issue. Trump has become subservient to the evangelical group of Christianity and White supremacists, and he is trying to turn Jerusalem into a religious issue. Jerusalem is a political issue. Israel has invaded Palestine, occupying Jerusalem and entire West Bank, continuing occupation of Palestine for the last 50 years, building illegal settlements in West Bank and East Jerusalem. Some political analysts, including Jewish ones, have said that this is not an occupation; this is colonisation.

Decent Jewish people have also condemned Trump's US order. The

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extremist Israelis, war monger and coloniser Zionists have attacked Jewish people for speaking the truth and are calling decent Jews 'Self Hating Jews'. The Israelis, Zionists and Trump cannot speak the truth and cannot stand truth. Many interfaith groups of Jews, Christians and Muslims have demanded that Israel end its occupation of Jerusalem.

Trump's executive order cannot stand the test of common sense. His son-in-law was involved in discussing the entire issue of occupation of Palestine with the Israelis, leaders of Palestine Authority and other Middle Eastern countries. Suddenly Trump's low level thinking based on greed and maximising-the-profit comes into the picture and he issues an executive order. One of the political analysts said in very simple terms by describing Trump's actions as saying, "I want to solve the Israeli and Palestinian problems to bring stability to the region by giving away Jerusalem to Israel. What kind of a logic is this?" No wonder the international leaders have called Trump an old lunatic. Even one of his cabinet members called Trump a Moron.

During the 2016 Presidential campaign it was revealed that Trump had made unwanted sexual advances on more than a dozen women. In November 2017 and December 2017, many movie producers and movie actors resigned after their sexual misconduct against women surfaced. Senator Kristen Gillibrand, during the first week of December, said that Trump should also resign over allegations that he made unwanted sexual advances on more than a dozen women. President Trump sent a tweet about

Senator Kristen Gillibrand. The words in the tweet implied that the Senator is a prostitute and a whore. This shocked the whole of United States but not the evangelical – holier than thou – supporters of Trump.

USA TODAY editorially said, "A president who'd all but call a senator a whore is unfit to clean toilets in Obama's presidential library or to shine George W. Bush's shoes. Donald Trump, the man, on the other hand, is uniquely awful. His sickening behaviour is corrosive to the enterprise of a shared governance based on common values and the consent of the governed. If recent history is any guide, the unique awfulness of the Trump era in U.S. politics is only going to get worse. Trump's utter lack of morality, ethics and simple humanity has been underscored during his 11 months in office." (Will Trump's lows ever hit rock bottom? The Editorial Board, USA TODAY Dec. 12, 2017).

This clearly shows that Trump has no decency, no etiquette and no character. Some of the FBI agents traded emails and in that they branded Trump as an idiot. He is a greedy lunatic who is occupying the seat of government of the only super power. Trump's actions and behaviour are forcing Americans to conclude that he is turning the USA from a super power to a sewer power.

At this very moment Trump is a super threat to humanity. Americans are tired of old lunatic and moron Trump. The international countries are also tired of unstable and greedy Trump. One

(Continued to page 26)

Valentine's Day: Reality or Mirage

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Valentine's Day is celebrated on 14 February each year with elan. This is originally a Roman festival. As far as we Indians are concerned, it has no sense for us. One has rightly said, "it is a tragedy of our time that our youths are bent on accepting every glitter of the 'Modern' era as fashion and symbol of progress".

It is unfortunate that we Indians are more susceptible in copying other without realizing the worth of the acts observed by others. It shows our imbecility, idiocy, impassivity, inanity, insanity and stupidity. Rabindranath Tagore describes of such mania in one of his poems with these words: "Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit".

In this context it may be said that Holi and Rakcha Bandhan both are sacred festivals of Hindus in India. Both have their radiant and redolent backgrounds and significant importance. But Christians, Jews and the like never celebrate it in their respective countries.

As regards Valentine's Day, various legends narrated about it. But the most famous is that during the third century Roman Claudius wanted to

have a big army. But most of the people did not like to leave their hearth and home. So the emperor banned the marriage of soldiers. Despite this mandate St. Valentine, the Bishop of the local church performed marriage secretly. When the emperor came to know about Valentine's breach of order. He ordered his soldiers to put him into Jail. One day the prison guard said to his daughter to visit Valentine in the cell. Accordingly St. Valentine fell in love with the jailer's daughter. It is said due to this reason he was executed on 14 February 270 EC. Since then 14 February is observed as the day of "Feast of lovers" in Rome.

Now let us see to what extent celebration of this festival is justified. Was the sacrifice of Valentine for prevailing the truth or any other noble cause? We shall dispassionately ponder over the ins and outs of this legend.

It is an open secret that Valentine's Day leads on youths to the path of obscenity, immodesty and indecency. It has no any good aspect through which one may take advantage of.

It is time we must keep away from such absurdities and take pride in our own culture and civilization. Good deeds lead to good and evil deeds to evil. ■

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