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**Divine Judgement About
Mankind**

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Allah is the One Who sends down rain after men have given up all hope, and scatters His mercy far and wide. He is Protector, of all praise.

(al-Shūrā 42:28)

This Qur'anic verse embodies immeasurable guidance for everyone. The "rain" in the verse may also be taken to mean anything that rescues one and provides one with help in a crisis. It is Allah alone Who comes to man's rescue as he faces problems. Again, it is He Who lends man a supporting hand. As a dying person is revived when a drop of elixir is given him. Allah provides solace to the scorching earth by blessing it with rainfall. Allah responds to man's petition. At a time when everyone, including the high and the mighty, had despaired of rain. Allah sends down rain which revives the dead land. Thus He showers mercy. For He alone is man's protector deserves all praise.

The divine attributes mentioned in this context appear to be very carefully chosen. All of His names are excellent. His is the best example. Reference is made, nonetheless, to two of His attributes — Protector and Worthy of all praise, for these are directly linked with rescuing humanity and with truth. Allah is the Protector of humanity. No owner would like to see his field as barren. As mankind's Protector, Allah ensures its revival. In equal measure, Allah is deserving of all praise. It does not befit His mercy and majesty to abandon humanity. ■

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Wisdom of Qur'an

“Tell them: ‘Call upon those whom you fancy to be [your helpers] beside Him! They have no power to remove any affliction from you, nor can they shift it.’ Those whom they call upon are themselves seeking the means of access to their Lord, each trying to be nearer to Him. They crave for His mercy and dread His chastisement. Surely your Lord’s punishment is to be feared.”

(Al-Qur'an-17:56-57)

These verses throw a challenge to the unbelievers and polytheists to call upon their self-made deities whom they consider to be their helpers beside God to come to their rescue at times of affliction. They assert that these deities have no power to remove any affliction.

Not only prostrating oneself before someone other than God but also praying to and invoking anyone other than God amounts to associating others in His Divinity, i.e. to polytheism. Prayer and invocation are modes of worship and anyone who invokes someone other than God is as guilty of polytheism as an idol-worshipper.

Nor can anyone other than God avert a calamity or alter anyone’s plight. If someone entertains such beliefs about anyone other than God, then such beliefs are false and betray the fact that he associates others with God in His Divinity. How ironic that those whom the polytheists invoked and whom they sought to intercede with God on their behalf were themselves in need of God’s mercy, dreaded His punishment, and were constantly on the look-out for the means which would bring them close to Him. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

It is reported on the authority of Ibn Abbas that Muadh said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) sent me (as governor of Yemen) and (at the time of departure) instructed me thus: you will soon find yourself in a community one among the People of the Book; so first call them to testify that there is no god but Allah, that I (Muhammad) am the messenger of Allah, and if they accept this, then tell them that Allah has enjoined upon them five prayers during the day and the night, and if they accept it, then tell them that Allah has made Zakat obligatory for them that it should be collected from the rich and distributed among the poor, and if they agree to it, don’t pick up (as a share of Zakat) the best of their wealth. Beware of the supplication of the oppressed for there is no barrier between him and Allah.

(Sahih Muslim)

The People of the Book never denied the existence of God. Their belief however was not correct as it was alloyed with wrong conceptions and mistaken notions. This shows that mere faith in God is not enough. Therefore, the Holy Messenger asked Muadh to call the People of the Book to testify God, first and foremost. Calling to the prophethood of Muhammad is indicative of the fact that belief in his prophethood is an integral part of the faith. This hadith highlights the practical wisdom with which Dawah should be imparted to the fellow beings. ■

Editor's Note 

Congregational Service of Friday

There are four fundamental duties prescribed for Muslims. Salat (Regular worship), Zakat (Poor-due), Saum (Fasting) and Haj (Pilgrimage to Mecca). According to Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi the correct place in the Islamic Shariat, their proper legal position, their precise worth and importance in the religious structure and the individual and collective spheres of existence have been explained at length and such of their secrets and purposes set forth as are proved from the Holy Quran and the Traditions have been explained.

In this issue we will discuss the importance of the congregational service of Friday. It is distinguished by certain incentives and other features that have enhanced its solemnity and Splendour and are conducive to the generation of enthusiasm for the prayer and the promotion of the spirit of unity and co-operation among Muslims for piety and righteousness.

O ye who believe! When the call is heard for the prayer of the day of congregation (Friday), hasten unto remembrance of Allah and leave your trading. That is better for you if ye did but know. (—1xii : 9)

Some of the Traditions of the holy prophet regarding the congregation of Friday are as follows:

He who misses three Friday service (in succession) owing to heedlessness or indolence, God sets the seal on his heart.

Let people give up neglect of the Friday prayer otherwise God will set the seal on their hearts, and then they will become of those that are negligent.

Sometimes I feel like telling someone else to lead the prayers so that I could go and set fire to the dwellings of those who stay away from the congregation.

For the Friday service a Muslim is required to take a bath, brush his teeth

and use perfume and take the greatest care for cleanliness. A sermon is also delivered before the commencement of the service. The sermon the holy Prophet used to deliver was not of a routine nature but he dwelt on the current problems and realities of life and made it an effective medium of guidance and instruction. We learn from Hazrat Jabir that “when the holy Prophet delivered the sermon his voice got raised and his eyes became red. It appeared that he was warning against the enemy, an attack from whom was imminent (and could take place at any time of the morning or evening).”

Writes Allama Ibn-i-Qaiyim in ‘Zad-ul-Maad :

“In his sermon the holy Prophet used to instruct and inform the Companions about the laws, principles and practices of Islam and if there was a matter of sanctioning or prohibiting he would sanction or prohibit (as the case might be).”

Commenting on the conduct of the Imams and preachers of his day, the Allama remarks :

“Then a long time elapsed, the light of Apostleship faded from the eyes and rituals took the place of Commands and practices became common which were carried out mechanically and without regard to their purpose and significance. People became obsessed with outward forms and ceremonials and thought only of observing them in an impressive manner. The rituals were elevated to the status of the Sunnah and lofty ideals and objectives, in respect of which the least amount of negligence or variation was forbidden, fell into neglect. They embellished their sermons with glittering phrases and far-fetched ideas, but the thought-content declined till the very object of the sermon, was lost.” ■

S.A.

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along with a hard copy, duly signed, by post.

To The Arab Lands

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

In one of his selected poems Iqbal expresses the fondest sentiments of love and admiration for the Arab countries. He alludes to the distinction they enjoy of upholding the cause of Islam and coming to the rescue of mankind at a time when it was immersed in Ignorance and recalls the glorious daybreak that changed darkness into light.

At the very outset Iqbal remembers the unique personality through whose efforts the path of progress and deliverance was opened for humanity. He gives a free rein to his feelings and an atmosphere of intense sincerity and exaltation is at once created.

“O Arab,” he exclaims, “For whose deserts eternity has been ordained! O mighty race from which the world, for the first time, heard the thundering proclamation that the tyrannical order of Caesar and Chosroes had come to an end: To which community the Book of Books, the fadeless Quran, was first revealed? Whom did the Almighty trust with the secret of Monotheism? Who removed the fictitious deities from the pedestal of Divinity? In whose land was the torch of Guidance lighted that illumined the world? Can the name of anyone

besides you be taken in reply to these questions? Knowledge and wisdom, and virtue are your gifts to mankind. And all this is the living of the unlettered Prophet who transformed the arid desert into a blooming garden from which the breeze of freedom and equality blew and springs of culture and civilization flowed to the far-flung regions of the earth. The body of the Arab was without a soul, the heart and the indwelling ego were granted to him; the dust of obscurity and ignorance fell away from his face and he became known to the world. Arts were promoted, sciences were encouraged and the tree of civilisation sent forth new blossoms. From among the holy Apostle’s servants arose mighty conquerors, peerless leaders and whole-souled divines to play a decisive role in the struggle between truth and iniquity. The Prophet gave to the world God-fearing crusaders who were horsemen by day and ascetics in the night, who gave the Azan under the shadow of swords and offered Namaz in the thick of battle. The scimitar of the lofty minded soldier, Salahuddin, and the glance of the glorious ascetic, Bustami, held the guarantee of success in both the worlds.

“Heart and mind, soul and intellect come together under the comprehensiveness of his message.

The mystical insight of Rumi and intellectualism of Razi are merged into one another. Knowledge and wisdom, faith and law, government and administration are indebted to him. The Taj and the Al-Hamara are the resplendent gifts of the illustrious community of his followers to posterity. The splendid Islamic Civilisation is an external manifestation of the Prophet's keen aesthetic sense. Even men of exceptional virtue and holiness cannot form an idea of his inner beauty.

“Before the advent of the Prophet, the ‘Mercy to the Worlds’, man was a mere handful of dust. His Apostelship endowed him with faith and earnestness and knowledge and self-awareness.”

May thy lands, thy desert and wilderness, last till the crack of doom,

Who did the end of Caesar and Chosroes proclaim?

Who taught the secret of La Ilah?

Where was the lamp at first lighted?

Touched by the breath of the Unlettered One,

The sands of Arabia began to throw up tulips.

Freedom under his protection has been reared,

The ‘today’ of nations from his ‘yesterday’ is.

He put heart into the body of man,

And from his face the veil he lifted.

In the thick of battle the majesty of Azan,
The recitation of As-Saffat at the point of sword.

The scimitar of Ayubi, the glance of Bayazid,

Key to the treasures of this world and the next.

Ecstasy of heart and mind from the same wine-cup,

Fusion of Rumi's devotion and Razi's thought.

Knowledge and wisdom, faith and law, government and politics,

Hearts in breasts devoid of peace.

Al-Hamara and Taj of breath-taking beauty,

To which even the angels pay tribute ;

These, too, a fragment of his priceless bequest,

Of his countless glimpses only a glimpse.

His exterior these enthralling sights,

Of his interior even the knowing unaware.

Before the raising up of the sacred Prophet the Arabs scarcely deserved to be called a civilised people. There was no order or discipline among them. They reveled in anarchy and lawlessness. With little to choose between them and the quadrupeds, their understanding of

life did not extend beyond eating and drinking. Though their sword shone brilliantly it lacked the edge. Before the dawn of Islam the Arabs grazed the camels but, on coming under its influence, over-ran the world and held a large part of it under their sway. The East and the West began to resound with Takbir.

Truth made thee sharper than sword,
Camel-drivers became the riders of
destiny.
Nations have stolen a march on thee,
Thou realised not the worth of thy desert.
From one community thou split into
several,
With thine own hands thou hast
destroyed unity.
Who'ver broke the bond of Ego
perished,
Who 'ever fell into line with others was
lost.

After eulogising the Islamic valour and the virility of the Arabs and their magnificent spirit of self-surrender it makes Iqbal sad to observe that they have lapsed into insipidity. Discord has taken the place of unity and imitateness of enterprise. With profound anguish he addresses these words to them: "The whole world is grieving over your apathy and listlessness. Other nations have forged ahead but you did not appreciate the

worth of your desert and neglected its message. You were a single community but have now got divided into numerous nations. You were the 'Party of Allah' but today there is no limit to factionalism in your ranks. Don't you know that he who disregards his individuality and depends on others for help is destroyed and he who abandons his fortress and takes refuge with the enemy suffers humiliation? The Arabs are their own foemen. They have been unjust to themselves and caused pain to the spirit of the Prophet."

What thou hast done to thyself none else
did,
Thou hast caused pain to the spirit of
the Prophet.
Ignorant of the witchery of the Frank,
Behold the hidden in his sleeve!
By his diplomacy all nations prostrate,
Unity of the Arabs crushed to pieces.
As long as they caught in his vicious
trap,
The Arabs shall not enjoy a moment's
peace.

The poet is cognizant of the treachery and deceitfulness of the West and its sinister designs are apparent to him because he has seen it from close quarters and thoroughly studied its psychology. His heart bleeds at the simplicity of the Arabs who still look to it for sympathy and help. "O dupers!" he

calls out to them, "Wake up! You are trusting the West and know nothing of its real intentions. You do not realise how many nations have fallen a prey of its artfulness. Don't you see that it has ruined your unity and divided you into a dozen states, perpetually falling out with each other Iqbal's optimism, then, reasserts itself and he ends his lamentation on a note of faith and hope. "Make use of the intellect God has given you," he exhorts them, 'and turn the dying spark into a blazing flame. Produce the spirit of Omar bin Khattab within you and know that the true fountain-head of strength is faith which is the real asset of a Muslim in life. O dwellers of the desert! So long as your hearts are the trustees of Divine secrets you are the custodians of faith and sentinels of the world. Your inner self is the criterion of good and evil and you are genuine inheritors of the earth. When your star will rise in the East all the other lights will fade."

O men of insight! Look at the contemporary world,

Recreate within thyself the spirit of Omar.

All strength is from faith,

And faith is conviction, resoluteness, sincerity.

So long as thy conscience is Nature's confidant,

Man of desert is world's sentinel.

Thy unspoilt nature, the criterion of good and evil,

With thy appearance a thousand stars fade.

Modern Age a creature of thy times,
Its ecstasy is from thy red wine.

Thou hast been the revealer of its mysteries,

And functioned as the first architect.

Since the West adopted it as child,

It became a courtesan without honour and shame.

Apparently sweet and lovable though,
It is crooked, faithless and impudent.

Bring the imperfect to perfection, O desert-dweller!

And cast Time into thine own mould.

Iqbal says, "The surroundings of the desert may be narrow and stifling but if you develop your individuality the horizons of your existence will widen beyond measure, you will become faster than wind and no one will be able to stand up to you in the arena of life."

With a heavy heart he asks the Arabs, "Who has pushed you behind in the race of life though the Modern Age is the fruit of your own endeavours? The day the reins of the world passed from your hands into those of the West humanity lost its distinction and hypocrisy and irreligion became its

creed.

“O desert-dweller! Realise your worth and significance, arrest the march of time, turn the tide of history and lead the caravan of mankind to its lofty goal and high destination.”

Go past wilderness and habitation, hill and dale,

Pitch thy tent within thy being;

Develop thy personality stronger than blast,

Thrust thy camel into the field of strife;

Intellect of the West sword in hand,

Bent like hell on slaughter of man!

The string of gain and loss is in thy control,

Glory of the day-star in the palm of thy hand;

Trustee of the wealth of faith and civilisation,

Bring the ‘luminous hand’ out of thy sleeve.

Iqbal addressed the spirit of the Prophet and grieves at the inertia and degradation of Muslims. “Islam has become a stranger in its own home,” says he. “Confusion has set in among your followers and their solidarity has gone to wrack and ruin. Where are they to go? What should they do? The Arabian Sea has lost its tumult and the Arabs, their passion. Who is there solace to me, to apply to the wounds of

my heart? In the long and tedious journey of life the Hadi Khwan of thy Ummat is disturbed and distressed. The destination is nowhere in sight. For the sake of God, take pity on the woeful state of thy followers and come to their rescue.”

The Millet is in shambles, into disorder it has been thrown,

Tell us yourself, O Prophet, which way should your faithful turn?

Now no more the Arabian Sea with love of tumult foams,

Which way should the tempest concealed within me turn.

Though there is no caravan left, no camel, no provision here?

From this rocky desert which way shall Hadi Khuwan turn?

Now at last, Oh spirit of Mohammad, unravel this knot,

Which way should the guardian of Divine verses turn?

It is most hurtful to Iqbal that in spite of repeated experiences the Muslims should still regard the Western Powers friendly and sympathetic and look up to them for the solution of their problems, specially that of Palestine, and forget that the West is dominated by the Jews and its political, economic and cultural life is virtually controlled by them. He remarks, “I know that the flame of life that once burnt so brightly among

the Arabs is even now alive and can burst forth at any time; I am also convinced that the solution of their difficulties does not lie with London or Geneva but in the development of their Ego." In the end, he ventures to address these forceful words to the leaders of the Arab World: "O People of Arabia! You were the first to appreciate the reality of Faith and you also know that loyalty to the sacred Prophet demands a complete break with Abu Lahab. Islam and Apostasy are utterly opposed to each other. In the same way, Islam is intolerant of nationalism, as of all other materialistic ideologies, and the Islamic World is not the name of certain

territories, but signifies whole-hearted devotion to the holy Prophet and unqualified dedication to the Islamic faith."

May this Indian Apostate also speak—

If it be not disrespectful to Arab leaders?

To which community was the truth first revealed:

Allegiance to Mohammad turning away from Bu Lahab is?

Frontiers and territories do not the Arab World make,

Its existence from Mohammad of Arabia is! ■

Govt Team Visits Nadwa As Part of Survey of Madrassas

LUCKNOW: A team of government officials visited the Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama in the city on Thursday as part of the ongoing survey of madrassas in the state.

The team comprised sub divisional magistrate (SDM), additional Basic Sikha Adhikari (ABSA) and district minority officer (DMO).

Led by SDM Sadar Navin Chandra, it conducted the survey on 12-point performance given by the state government. Speaking to TOI, DMO Sone Kumar said, "All the details were provided by members of Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama. It was revealed that there are 2,410 students in the madrassa who are taught Hindi, English, History, Urdu, Math, Science by a staff of 81 teachers. The madrassa runs on charity donations and files annual income tax as well." He said, "The survey of other unrecognized madrassas will continue till October after which the report will be handed over to the district magistrate."

Meanwhile, madrassa board chairperson Iftikhar Ahmed Javed said that the survey of unrecognized madrassas should not be treated as an investigation in any form.

"The purpose of the survey is to find out the exact number of madrassas so that they can be provided facilities, if needed," he said. He said that most of the madrassas in the state are running on donations and zakat money. ■

(The Times of India, 16-09-2022)

The Prophet of Mercy

- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi*

Here are two verses from the Holy Qur'an. The first is addressed to Arabs and tells them:-

“Now hath come unto you a messenger from amongst yourselves, It grieves him that you should suffer- Ardently anxious is he over you; to the believers he is most kind and merciful.”

The second is directed to the holy Prophet displaying His pleasures:

“We have not sent you but mercy for the world”.

Both these verses throw light on that aspect of the holy Prophet's characteristic features which distinguish him from others. This is not a simple laudation. This is pronounced by the Creator of Heaven and earth as an everlasting reality.

One can visualise by the study of history of that period the conditions of the world and also the direction towards which it was heading. The men were divided in different groups. Many of them had become great by manipulation, exploitation and the use of brute force. They over powered the helpless and treated them worst than slaves. They were not made to serve only but were also made objects of pleasure by treating them with extreme cruelty and

torture.

While celebrating and rejoicing any occasion they illuminated the venue by putting the slaves on fire. They made them fight with brute animals and it was a pleasant sight for them when they were torn to pieces and killed by these animals. Stadiums were crowded with spectators who enjoyed the game. These chosen few collected such luxuries and niceties around them that one finds it difficult to visualise it. The crown of the King and the turbans of the courtiers were studded with diamonds and precious stones. A big retinue of singers, dancers, attendants and chefs always formed a part of the court.

Woman was a source of pleasure only otherwise she was regarded as inferior to men folk and was unwanted. In her parental home she was considered inferior to her brothers and had to serve them along with her mother. The birth of a baby girl was taken as a bad omen. Her relations with the family were severed after marriage. She was not entitled to share in the inheritance. The death of her husband was a real calamity for her, already detached from her parental home. She was treated with contempt and reduced to the status of a domestic servant.

Our beloved Prophet bestowed all

* Rector, Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow.

human rights on slaves and women. He gave directions for their respectable position in society. He said that all are sons and daughters of Adam. All are equal irrespective of their complexion, Arab or non-Arab and none is inferior to other. The criteria for greatness was righteousness. He taught the world equality of all. Salman Farsi of Persia, Bilal of Ethiopia and Suhaib of Rome lived with him as members of the family. He freed his slave Zaid, son of Harisa, and treated him so affectionately that he was regarded as his foster son. Then he married him with his cousin sister Zainab which was so unusual in those days. He accorded proper rights to women, fixed their share in the patrimony and advised parents to take care of them even after their marriages. He instructed husbands to provide comforts to their spouse according to their status. He allowed separation under specific circumstances when they could not live together. He ordered for moderate expenditure of wealth but forbade to be miserly and closefisted. He made it obligatory for the wealthy people to help the poor and needy.

To extort money from anybody, to dishonour him and to kill him without justification was regarded a grave offence. He permitted revenge for killing innocent but restrained to exceed limits in exercising such rights.

His preaching was not simple, in fact created a society which had to

observe strictly this code of conduct. We find unique examples of adhering to these basic principles and values. When Hazrat Abu Bakr sent an army for the holy war, he issued orders that any worshipper at his religious place should not be ill-treated. No territory should be attacked unless the prospect of a treaty recedes. Nothing should be taken from occupied area without paying its cost. Nobody should be forced to change his religion.

When Hazrat Umar Farooq went to Jerusalem on the invitation of its ruler who wanted to hand over the city to Muslims, he entered the city on foot while his slave was on the camel's back. It was decided that both of them would ride the camel alternately and while entering the city it was the turn of the slave to be on the camel's back. The slave insisted to change positions but the Caliph did not agree.

When Persia was conquered a Muslim Soldier came in possession of the crown of the Emperor. The precious crown of the studded with jewels was brought by the soldier, covered by the front of his shirt, and delivered to the Caliph. On being asked his name he said that God knew his name and did not tell.

The Holy Prophet, by his practical guidance, created a society of which every member was indifferent for worldly pleasures and cared only for the reward in the life hereafter. He was prepared to

make any sacrifice, even his life, for implementation of truth and righteousness. He was just and honest in all walks of life, he cared for the weak and downtrodden, it was immaterial to what religion the oppressed man came from. Animals were also treated kindly. The spread of Islam was under the shade of kindness and mercy. Parents, relatives and neighbours got the rightful attention.

The world found a social order based on moral values and humanity. An order which had no precedence in history of the past. It was a period when humanity reached the brink of cruelty and injustice. No doubt, in that period, the world had tremendously progressed in the pursuit of knowledge and had achieved such glorious strength and power that its shine glared the vision. The world was wonder struck with the glamour of the Persian and Roman

Empires but humanity was crying under the weight of cruelty and injustice. The rulers, the intellectuals and the clergymen had no feelings for it. If somebody cared for it he found himself helpless to bring any change and abandoned his efforts. God Almighty took pity on this sorry state of affairs. He chose the holy Prophet and gave him perfect code of conduct and made him the last of the Prophets. This code of religious jurisprudence (Shariah) was in harmony with the changing conditions of the world and requirements of life. A code to be followed till the last day. It can stand to any new development.

The bounty, the blessing and the piety which have been brought by the holy Prophet are eternal. The ark of the well being is moving very smoothly. The proclamation of the Creator stands that He has sent the Prophet as the mercy for the worlds. ■

Durrani's Dad Nadir Ali Received the First Indian Police Independence medal in 1948

I express my deep condolences for the Queen's demise," said Durrani, who was commissioned as pilot officer in IAF in 1958.

Durrani had also been manager of the Indian cricket team for their first visit to Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji in 1980-81 for a four-and-a-half-month tour.

Durrani is Vishisht Sewa Medal awardee and has also received the Asiad Vishisht Jyoti from the President of India for exemplary duty in organizing the Ninth Asian Games in New Delhi.

He received the 25th Independence Day medal in 1972, while his father Nadir Ali Khan Durrani, the British-India police inspector received the first Indian police Independence medal in 1948.

His son Lieutenant Colonel Shahzad Salim Durrani received a medal on the 50th Independence Day in 1997, while his grand-son Lieutenant Shahnawaz Ali Khan Durrani, received the 75th Independence Day medal.

(Times of India 12-09-2022)

Strategic Autonomy

PM Modi reached Samarkand, Uzbekistan, to attend the 22nd summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The formal agenda includes stock-taking of SCO's two-decade journey and talks on ways to enhance cooperation in future. Of greater significance are the bilateral meetings on the summit's sidelines. Modi's departure statement said that he would meet some of the attendees including President S Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan. SCO, dominated by China, India and Russia, accounts for 40% of the global population and about 30% of its GDP, giving it heft among inter-government groupings.

A majority of SCO's membership has a pronounced anti-Western position. Yet, India's participation in SCO makes sense as it's in sync with its approach of strategic autonomy. Geopolitics today is in flux and India has done well to pursue a path of enlightened self-interest and seize opportunities. To illustrate, India didn't import crude oil from either Russia or the US in the April-June 2021 quarter. In April-June 2022, in the aftermath of the Ukraine war, crude imports from Russia and the US were \$6.2 billion and \$2.6 billion respectively, propelling both into India's top five sources of crude imports. Given this context, a bilateral meeting between Modi and Putin, if it happens, will be crucial.

Still, likely gains from SCO will be limited on account of China. Modi and Xi have not had a face-to-face meeting since the PLA's aggression in eastern Ladakh in 2020. Also present at the summit is Pakistan's new PM Sharif. Given the structural nature of disputes India has with both China and Pakistan, bilateral meetings on summit sidelines are inadequate to make meaningful progress.

SCO is a reminder of the need to be pragmatic in diplomacy as even adversaries cannot decouple economically. For instance, Japan and Australia, members of the Quad, have chosen tighter economic integration with China through the RCEP FTA. Given this backdrop, India's pursuit of strategic autonomy and investing in areas where there is an overlap of interests between countries is a wise course in a fluid geopolitical situation. The more groups you are part of, the wider your options. ■

(Editorial, The Times of India 16-09-2022)

The Responsibility of Ulama And Islamic Thinkers

- S. Bilal Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi*

Allah laid great responsibility of Dawah activities upon this Ummah saying "Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind. Enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah" (S.3.A.110) He further said, "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity" (S.3.A.104) and He dubbed it as its main distinction. But along with it He instructed the Ummah to adopt the comprehensive and sublime way of preaching stating that "Invite all to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious" (S.16.A.125) He further says, "Who is better in speech than one who calls men to Allah, works righteousness, and says, "I am of those who bow in Islam"? 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!" (S.41.A.34)

No doubt, it has ever been the practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as enshrined in the Qur'an regarding Dawah throughout his life and his companions also emulated it. Later on righteous persons treaded on their footprints. Wherever they went, they brought about unprecedented changes and outstanding reformation. It is said that the real conqueror was not Mahmoud Ghaznavi but Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddin

Chisti whose warm love and divine passion warmed up the hearts of the people. Thousands of people entered into the fold of Islam by observing his moral and ethical values and his devoted life. His matchless and inimitable imprints of life and selfless service for the sake of Islam are clearly felt even today.

The unhealthy scenario of the present time indeed is due to negligence of Ulama and their shirking from this noble job. Consequently, the Muslim Ummah is beset with a variety of issues and problems across the world. A cursory glance at history of reformation and preaching clearly shows that the method of Dawah activities have always been changed with the passage of time. If it is not considered, one may face a lot of formidable obstacles and difficulties in the way of Dawah. Accordingly, it is imperative for every Da'ee to judge psychology of people and also observe the situation, necessity and demands before communicating true message to others.

In short, at this juncture it is incumbent for us to come forward and transact the task of enjoining good and forbidding evil and also make it our main motto of life. There should be no dereliction, lethargy and negligence in discharging this religious task on our part. We should equip ourselves to carry out this noble cause effectively. Only then a healthy and sound society may come up. ■

(English Rendering: O.R. Nadwi)

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Allamah Shibli Library-A Treasure Trove of Books For All Faiths

For most Lucknowites, the Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama adjacent to Lucknow University is a closed-door seminary where no one except Islamic scholars are allowed to enter.

Contrary to this perception, the Allamah Shibli Nomani Library inside the Nadwa campus is open to people of all religions, where they can come and read books free of cost.

Librarian Mohammad Faizan Nagrami Nadwi said, "We don't discriminate on the basis of religion. This library is for all religions. Here, pundits come and make notes. At the same time, maulanas visit the library to use reference books. We have a special section for modern books."

"The library opens at 8 am and closes at midnight. We offer all help to scholars who want to come here and read books and take notes. The Nadwa administration has installed photocopiers. Because we don't give permission to anyone to carry the books home, we have provided the facility of photocopiers inside the library," he said.

"The three-storey library covering a combined area of 60,000 square feet has more than 2.60 lakh books on various subjects, including fiction, science,

languages and religion. The library has books in around 25 languages including 25,000 English books. The library also has more than 5000 books in Hindi explaining Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity etc. Besides, the library has more than 6000 rarest of rare manuscripts, some of them are 800 years' old."

Tafseer-e-Muntahal Uloom, an 800-year-old book written by Sheikh Nuruddin, is one of the prized possessions of the library along with 50 volumes of Al Muhaddithat: The Women Scholars in Islam by Oxford University professor Muhammad Akram Nadwi, who has written 50 volumes about 10,000 women scholars. It documents how the women enjoyed high public standing and travelled extensively for religious knowledge across Islamic countries.

Nadwi said, "The work of digitisation of the library is going on at a large scale. We have digitised almost all the manuscripts so that they can be preserved. Now the work of digitising almost all the books is going on. Our team is working day and night for that."

Most of the books in the library have been donated by scholars, said Nadwi. ■

Minding The Language of Justice

- Tahir Mahmood

The purpose of judicial writing is not to confuse or confound the reader behind the veneer of complex language," wrote Supreme Court Justice Dhananjay Chandrachud recently, adding that judicial decisions "must make sense to those whose lives and affairs are affected by the outcome of the case" (IE, August 25). He was disposing of an appeal against a Himachal Pradesh High Court judgment about which he remarked that even he "found it difficult to navigate through the maze of incomprehensible language" and that "a litigant for whom the judgment is primarily meant would be placed in an even more difficult position".

In *Ajit Mohan vs NCR Legislative Assembly*, decided in July last year, another brilliant judge of the court, Sanjay Kishan Kaul, had said more or less the same things about counsels' written submissions in appeals. Such submissions serve as feeders for extraneous material in court judgments which incorporate long abstracts from them. This practice makes the judges' work easier but leaves the litigants in the lurch, sometimes leading to frivolous litigation which, in the words of the new Chief Justice of India, U U Lalit, puts "additional burden on an already burdened judiciary".

Some learned judges have been known for their oratorical skills, expressed through the use of deeply philosophical or literary expressions in their judgments. Most well-known for this phenomenon was the late V R Krishna Iyer. The opening

paragraph of his judgment in the *Fuzlunbi* case (1980) begins with the words "Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee (characters in an old nursery rhyme)" and talks of "karuna and samata (compassion and equality) of the law." An Australian judge Michael Kirby said about him: "The power of his oratory is likened to the hypnotic capacity of music to capture the attention of the cobra, transfixing us by the majesty of language and the manifest sincerity of his ideas." An Indian judge Yatindra Singh wrote: "Many a time Justice Iyer's contribution to jurisprudence has been lost due to his language." Trying to imitate Iyer's inimitable style some judges of our times make their judgments almost incomprehensible.

Victorian English beyond law students' understanding is not the only phenomenon impairing court judgments. Shakespeare had said in *The Tragedy of Hamlet* that "brevity is the soul of wit" but the observation eminently applies also to court judgments. This *sine qua non* for the effective dispensation of justice is often overlooked by judges. There is an inexplicable tendency to stuff judgments with *obiter dicta*, unnecessary and sometimes irrelevant, which makes them unduly long and even unintelligible. Judgments are written as if the writer-judge has to prepare a doctoral or postdoctoral thesis on the legal issue involved in the case. Higher courts of the country which, under our constitutional and judicial system, have to provide precedents to be followed by the lower

judiciary often seek precedents for their decisions in foreign judgments by copying longish extracts from them. Further, cases that should be decided exclusively on the authority of the Indian Constitution and law are sometimes decided with reference to religious texts.

In the recent *Shayara Bano* case on triple talaq (2017) the learned CJI of the time wrote about 300 pages to reach the indefensible conclusion that the abominable practice was covered by the constitutionally protected fundamental rights of the citizens. Yet, contrary to this misbelief, he chose to stifle that “right” by issuing an impracticable order of “injecting Muslim husbands from pronouncing talaq-e-biddat as a means for severing their matrimonial relationship”. Two other learned judges on the *Shayara Bano* bench rightly dissented from his belief in the supposed constitutional cover for the anachronistic practice but the final order, based on their views – “the practice of talaq-e-biddat, triple talaq, is set aside” — also left much to be desired in respect of its meaning and implications.

Some learned judges of the country’s higher courts have innovated a new style of writing judgments with the lavish use of Urdu poetry which non-Urdu speaking lawyers and litigants hardly understand. In a PIL relating to the plight of an Indian prisoner in a Pakistan jail, former Supreme Court Justice Markandey Katju had concluded his judgment with Faiz Ahmad Faiz’s famous couplet beginning with the words “Qafas udaas hai yaro saba se kuchh tou kaho” (prison is sad, friends, say something to the breeze). In another appeal, relating to police excesses, Katju alluded to another

line of the great poet, “Baney hain ahl-e-hawas muddayi bhi munsif bhi; kise vakil karen kis se munsifi chahen” (gluttonous are both the petitioners and the arbiters, who to seek advice from, where to look for justice). An income tax appeal filed by a noted lawyer was dismissed by a Delhi High Court judge Rajiv Shakdhar citing a couplet of the great Ghalib: “Dil-e-nadaan tujhe hua kya hai; aakhir iss dard ki dawa kya hai” (what has happened to you, O foolish heart, what after all is the cure for this pain). I wonder whether the litigants in any of these cases understood what the judges wanted to convey through poetry and what purpose of justice this flair for Urdu poetry would have served.

The exhortation of Justice Chandrachud about the pressing need for simplicity and meaningfulness in court judgments has not come a moment too soon. I can only say three cheers for the learned judge who I have known since his student days in Delhi University where I taught law for three decades. Last year, when hearing an urgent bail appeal as a vacation judge, he had alerted the custodians of state authority: “If the State targets individuals they must realise that the apex court is there to protect them.” A great promise indeed, rejuvenating confidence in the court’s capacity to safeguard people’s human and constitutional rights. The nation will look forward to him for even more important and long-awaited redresses than his timely reprimand about linguistic idiosyncrasies in court judgments. ■

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(Courtesy: The Indian Express, 02-09-2022)

Madrasas Survey in UP And Its Alibi

- Syed Mansoor Agha

The community will co-operate, readying to face

In the backdrop of the four madrasas bulldozed in the state of Assam, Syed Mansoor Agha examines the survey of madrasas the Government of Uttar Pradesh has initiated, and notes the concerns of the community leaders in this regard.

In a hurried move, the Government of Uttar Pradesh on August 31 issued a government order (GO) instructing all DMs to constitute committees under ADMs by September 9, and to survey all unregistered Madrasas in the district. The committees will be required to submit their reports to respective ADMs by October 5. In turn, the ADMs will furnish consolidated reports to the DMs by October 10 and the same will be shared with the government by October 25.

THE SURVEY AND ITS ALIBI

The survey will cover details of each Madrasa, including name and address, whether being run by an individual or under some institution. The number of teachers employed and students enrolled; the curriculum being taught; status of the building,

whether owned by Madrasa or rented; type of furniture used there in. Availability of drinking water, toilets, electricity, etc. are also included in the questionnaire. Since most of the Madrasas are residential, information about boarding facilities and food served may also be collected.

Notably, the madrasas are not provided with state assistance of any type, not even the facility of mid-day meals, though most of the Madrasa students come from very poor families and the scheme is aimed to make nutrition available to the poor students.

Citing some reports of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), Iftikhar Ahmed Javed, Chairman of UP Madrasa Education Council, said, "We do not have the numbers of madrasas functioning without our recognition. When a violation of child rights takes place, fingers are pointed at the government. We want to know the availability of essential facilities for children as per the NCPCR rules."

THE REAL INTENT

He did not explain why other data is being collected. Secondly, the violation of Child rights is not a phenomenon of Madrasas but rampant

all around. Why indicate only Madrasas? Want to show them in a bad light?

However, he expressed the intention to “formulate new rules for granting recognition to such madrasas after going through the findings of the survey.” It shows the real intent behind the survey may also be to facilitate interference in Madrasas by way of ‘registration’.

The Chairman did not indicate if the Government be pleased to provide sufficient funds to update the status of Madrasas to the required level.

CAUSE OF CONCERN

The way in which the order has been issued, with urgency to complete the process within 55 days, creates doubts about the intentions, particularly because of the anti-Muslim rhetoric and attitude of the leaders in power and especially in the wake of bulldozing policy to demolish structures for non-verified reasons. Recent reports of bulldozing four madrasas in Assam have deepened the concerns.

ALLAYING THE FEARS

Allaying the community’s fears, the Minister of State for Minority Welfare Danish Azad Ansari said: “There is no deficit of trust in

government; the apprehensions are unfounded.” He said, “The survey is ordered under the directions of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights.”

Mr. Azad alleged, “Several instances have been reported where the children in the madrasas were chained and tortured.” He did not elaborate it any further. If there are complaints of ‘torturing’ the students, it is the duty of the police to act. Why the Survey?

Soon he added, “The data collected by the survey will be useful for making plans for the modernisation of the madrasas.” In an interview to India Today, Mr. Azad stressed, “Survey is necessary for the progress of Muslim youth and it is not right to question its intentions.”

He also assured, “There will be no interference in madrasas. The government is only trying to connect them with its schemes.” The question naturally arises, why the BJP government wants to connect unwilling Madrasas with its schemes? And why interested in the so-called “modernisation” of religious educational institutions of Muslims only while the condition of the schools as well as the Madrasas under its wings is quite awful? UP Madrasa Education Council Chairman Mr.

Javed acknowledged, "In all 16,513 madrasas are registered in UP. Out of them only 560 get grants (in the name of modernisation) from the state government."

He also revealed, "In 2018, data of registered Madrasas was collected through an online portal and it was found that around 2,500 to 3,000 registered madrasas exist only on the papers."

In this situation, will it not be fitting that the government should set first its house in order? Grant sufficient funds to willing registered madrasas to develop infrastructure per set standards and to pay salaries to the staff per official pay scales. Instead of improving the paraphernalia of schools under its control, expressing concern about private Muslim religious institutions is ridiculous and smells intrigues.

COMMUNITY REACTIONS

This is why the community is suspicious about the real intent behind this survey. To discuss the issue Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind held a consultative meeting of the Madrasa Managers in Delhi on September 6. The speakers expressed anguish and alarmed if the state government is intending to project the madrasas in a bad light to further its political agenda. However, they did not

oppose the survey as it is legally valid. They expressed their readiness to face and cooperate in the exercise. This sheds some light on the transparency in Madrasas' functioning.

The host of the meeting, Maulana Mahmood Madani blamed that the minority community is being looked at in suspicion. He stressed that the government should have taken Muslim organisations into confidence before ordering the survey. During the meeting, participants were briefed how to respond the questionnaire. They were also advised to maintain their accounts properly.

Obliquely mentioning probable shortcomings, the managers were assured of the help of the community and assistance of the newly set-up "Steering Committee" in streamlining any fallacy.

Contrary to the standard position of Madrasas not to accept Government funding, which comes with state intervention, many participants looked eager for the funding. They called for funds to modernise the system and improve infrastructure. A gentleman also warned if needed, will knock on the doors of the courts and will protest.

In Lucknow, Maulana Khalid Rasheed Farangi Mahali, Rector of

Darul Uloom, Farangi Mahal, pointed out, "Almost every mosque has a maktab or madrasa." It may be noted in Deoband alone there are more than 100 Madrasas. Maulana Sufiyan Nizami, spokesperson of Darul Uloom Farangi Mahal, said, "If there is apprehension about the survey, a discussion is necessary."

In Bareilly, Maulana Shahabuddin Razavi doubted the intention of the UP Govt. He is an eminent Islamic scholar and Gen. Secretary of Tanzeem Ulma e Islam, attached to the Aala Hazrat shrine. He expressed his suspicion, about whether the Govt. wants to disrupt the functioning of around 15,000 Madrasas, running independently with community donations or Zakat Funds. He rejected the oft-repeated allegation that Madrasas are teaching militancy. Instead, he said many Madrasas also include courses in English, Maths, Social and Computer Sciences along with Urdu, Arabic, Hindi, Persian, and Islamic Education. In some of them, other technical courses are also available depending upon their financial availability. Maulana Razavi expressed his dismay over bulldozing four buildings of Madrasas in Assam.

Another Bareilvi scholar Maulana Ishtiaq Ahmed Qadri was of the opinion, "Madrasas have nothing to gain and everything to lose. The

experience of the government regarding madrassas has not been good before, so it is difficult to believe. When the government is making schools private, why is it asking questions of madrassas," he added.

WHY MUSLIM MADRASAS?

Prof. Saleem Engineer, the Vice President of JIH, welcomed the state's willingness to improve Madrasas' conditions, but said, "Before furthering such a noble cause, the community should have been taken in confidence. Otherwise, the adventure is bound to be suspicious."

Talking to Hindi Daily Amar Ujala, he pointed out that there are thousands Govt. schools in UP devoid of essential facilities like safe classrooms, supply of drinking water, and facilities like toilets, etc. He said, if Government's intention is clear, it should step in to improve the conditions in its own schools which will benefit students of all communities.

He asked, "Despite such poor conditions of state schools, why the government is interested only in madrassas, where children from only the Muslim community are imparted mainly their religious knowledge? This is why this move of UP Government raises doubts." ■

(Courtesy: The Radiance)

The Advent of the Prophet – Effulgence of Islam

- S. Athar Husain

On the eve of the rise of Islam

In a dark period of history when nothing but ruin, squalor and desolation remained of what were once great civilizations, when oppression, exploitation of the weak and the right of might prevailed, when human rights had ceased to be recognised, when superstitions and hedonic cults flourished in many places, was born Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, (peace be on him) on Monday the 12th Rab'ul Awwal (corresponding to the 29th August, 570 A.D.) at Mecca in the desert country of Arabia.

From the earliest times, the people of Arabia have been divided into two classes—(1) the dwellers of the cities and the dwellers of the desert—the bedouins. The dwellers of the cities, particularly, the South Arabians had risen to prominence as a maritime people linking India with Africa. Along the trade routes to the north had sprung up cities two of which Petra and Palmyra had acquired renown. The life of the people in this area also could not escape the universal trend of decadence. Drinking, gambling, slavery and other social evils and weaknesses had dissipated the city life and lack of any central authority had produced anarchy. For the Bedouins, the dwellers of the desert, time stood still. Their livelihood depended upon sheep and

camel raising some extent, upon horse-breeding, hunting and raiding. In search of new pastures they roamed from place to place and lived a hard and adventurous life. Their survival against their foes depended upon their intrepidity, dash and daring and against forbidding and exacting environments, upon their resourcefulness, tenacity and endurance. The bedouin lived, as he does even now, in tents. Every tent represented a family and every encampment, a clan. A group of kindred clans constituted a tribe. While there was complete loyalty of the individual to the clan and close affinity of the clan with the tribe, every tribe was a unit by itself, self-sufficient and independent. Keen competition for water and pasturage was the focal point of conflict between the tribes and every tribe considered every other as a legitimate object of brigandage and plunder. The superiority of the tribe was determined by its fighting prowess. The only law they knew was the fierce tribal code of honour and kinship and the only authority they recognised was the authority of the tribal chief and that, too, sat lightly on its members. Living in a society which levelled down everything, the Arab in general and bedouin in particular was a libertine. Subordination to any central authority or coalition of the tribes into a nation had never been attempted before. Lawlessness and

cruelty prevailed and frequent outbursts of fratricidal wars left a long trail of hatred, vendetta and insecurity. It is not that the pre-Islamic Arabs were barbarians. Notwithstanding their cruel and predatory habits, they possessed, to a high degree, such virtues as generosity, hospitality and respect for the plighted word. As an enemy the Bedouin might be dreadful but as a friend he was loyal and generous. Be he a dweller of the city or a dweller of the desert, every Arab considered eloquence, archery and horsemanship as the basic attributes of a true Arab. Of these, eloquence was regarded the highest attainment. The bedouin's love of poetry was his one cultural asset.

The people of Arabia were largely idol worshippers. Here and there were settled a number of Jews and Christians. They followed their own religions which in the practice of their followers had ceased to have much of an appeal. Some professed to follow the religion of Abraham but, by and large, the Arabs were idolaters. Every city, like every tribe, had its own deities and its own forms of worship. In the Kaaba itself were installed hundreds of idols. But the Meccans also believed in a Supreme Deity, the biggest Provider and the God to be invoked in time of acute distress or peril. Vague monotheistic ideas had however already been spasmodically entertained here and there. The stage was set and the time had come for the

rise of a great religious and national leader.

Advent of Prophet

The child Muhammad grew up in such environments. He kept himself aloof from the evils and vices of the day. Not much is known of his early days except that he had no formal education, that he had often to go into the desert to tend the flocks of his uncle, was decorous and well-behaved and was loved and respected by all those who came into contact with him. He earned such a fame for uprightness, integrity and sincerity that the Meccans began to call him al-Ameen (the trusted). He entered into several business partnerships and always acted with great integrity in his dealings with his partners. Even as a youth, he felt greatly perturbed over the immorality of the people. Their ignorance and superstitions, their obscene rites and, with all their desert virtues, their lawlessness and cruelty and the frequent outbursts of fratricidal wars greatly saddened his heart. Often he used to repair to the loneliness of a cave on the Mount Hira for prayers and meditations to find answers to the questions surging in his mind. The period of probation had come to a close. The youth had entered the prime of life. At the age of forty he was blessed with the mantle of prophet-hood. He started preaching the new religion against stiff opposition which soon assumed the form of cruel persecution. He and his

band of followers had to leave their hearths and homes in Mecca and to migrate to Medina. From Hijrat to Khilafat, the history of Arabia is actually a record of brilliant achievements of the Prophet in which his companions played a very notable part. At Medina they had to face Meccan attacks; but the Prophet and his devoted followers went on advancing from strength to strength and in twenty three years almost the whole of Arabia professed the religion of Islam. During all these eventful years, the Prophet assiduously carried out his mission of proclaiming the oneness of God and of guiding mankind to the path of virtue and piety leading to salvation in the life to come. He announced that man was the highest creature of God and everything in the Universe was created for his use; that every man was born sinless and uninhibited by any past sins or blemish upon his conscience; that all men were equal in the sight of God and the only criterion of superiority of one over the other was righteousness, and that every man could approach his Maker without requiring any intercessor. He wiped away all distinctions and inequalities based on colour, caste, race, sex and creeds and bridged the gulf man had created between man and man. He gave equality of rights and status to women and struck a deadly blow at slavery. He not only affected a social revolution but changed the concept and way of life. He broadened the thought of his countrymen and widened their

sympathies. He taught them purity of life and straight forwardness of conduct. He impressed upon them the seriousness of life and struck at the very root of social corruption. He stimulated their moral qualities of prudence and restraint and breathed into them catholic charity and fear of God. The result was that all the social evils and vices fell like so many chains and powerfully influenced the course of human history thereafter. Indulgence and dissipation gave way to righteousness and austerity. Arrogance, greed and striving for power and wealth were replaced by humility and self denial; loot and plunder were replaced by honest living. Injustice, cruelty and oppression vanished and equality, justice and kindness took the field. The gulf between the extremes of wealth and poverty were narrowed down by abolition of usury and games chance, by promulgation of a law of inheritance that tended to equitable distribution of wealth among one's heirs, by enjoining obligatory payment of Zakat and encouraging charities and by fixing a moral responsibility upon the well-to-do to take care of the poor, the orphans, the widows and the destitute.

Prophet's illness

The final message of God having been delivered to mankind and the foundation of Islam having been laid firm and true, the mission of the Prophet was now complete. At midnight on the 18th Safar A. H. 11 he went to a public graveyard to invoke God's blessings for

those resting there in the slumber of death. While returning to his house he felt indisposed and this indisposition rapidly developed into the illness that proved fatal. During his illness, the Prophet went to the Great Mosque and addressed the congregation thus, "God offered to one from among His servants the choice of this earth or that which is nigh unto Him. And he has chosen that which is nigh unto God." Abu Bakr realised the significance of these words and with tears rolling down his cheeks he said, "We would rather sacrifice our lives and those of our parents."

When his condition deteriorated and he could not lead the congregational prayers, he directed that Abu Bakr be asked to lead them. Ibn Sa'ad records, on the authority of Hamza bin 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, that 'Ayesha implored the Prophet to absolve her father from this responsible duty, for, she pleaded, "He is an old man of tender heart who begins to shed tears profusely when he recites the Qur'an." The Prophet did not accede to her request. Ibn Sa'ad proceeds to mention, on the authority of Anas bin Malik, 'Ubaid bin 'Amr and Ibn 'Abbas, that Abu Bakr led the prayers seventeen times during the life time of the Prophet and the latter once prayed behind him when Abu Bakr was leading the prayers.

Election of Abu Bakr as his successor

The Prophet breathed his last

on Monday, the 12th Rab'iul Awwal (May God shower his blessings on him). When the tragic news reached Abu Bakr, he hurried to the Prophet's apartment and uncovering his face, kissed his forehead and uttered these words, "May the lives of my father and mother be sacrificed for you. Sacred was your life and sacred is your death. You have tasted of the death that had been decreed by God for you. And now you will never die." The Prophet had held such a hold upon his followers that they did not believe he could have died. 'Umar was so bewildered that he wildly proclaimed, "The hypocrites say that the Prophet has died. I swear by Allah that he has not died but has gone to Allah like Moses who had returned after an absence of 40 days in spite of the fact that the people said that he was dead."

Abu Bakr put him aside by these words "O people! verily, whoso worshippeth Muhammad, let him know that Muhammad is dead indeed ; but whoso worshippeth God, let him know that God liveth and dieth not." He then recited the verse of the Qur'an, "And Muhammad is no more than an apostle; many apostles have already passed away before him; if then he dies or is killed, will you turn back upon your heels? And whoever turns back upon his heels, he will by no means do harm to Allah in the least; and Allah will recompense the grateful;" 'Umar was speechless and the excited crowd quietened down. But just then a

messenger came bearing the news that the citizens of Medina—the Ansars had assembled to choose a chief for themselves. “The moment was critical. The unity of the faith was at stake. A divided power would fall to pieces, and all might be lost. The mantle of the Prophet as head of the Arab State must fall upon one successor and on one alone. Further Arabia would acknowledge no master but from amongst the Quraish, The dice was to be cast, and at once.”

Taking Abu ‘Obaida with them, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar hurried to the place. They were just in time for the Medinians were saying. “We are the legion of God and you Muhajirin are few in number. Still you are thinking of cutting our roots and turning us away and to let us have nothing to do with the Caliphate.” To this Abu Bakr replied “Every word which the citizen have uttered in their own praise is true, but in noble birth and influence the Quraish are paramount, and to none but them would Arabia yield obedience.” The Ansars said that whenever the Prophet sent a Muhajir on any mission, he had also sent an Ansar with him so there should be one chief from the Ansars and one from the Muhajirin. ‘Away with you!’ exclaimed ‘Umar, ‘two (chiefs) cannot stand together; and even Sa’ad agreed that to divide the power would be to weaken it.’ Abu Bakr stepped forward and pointing towards ‘Umar and Abu ‘Obaida said, ‘Ye see

these two; choose Ye now whoever of them Ye will, and salute him as your chief.’ ‘Nay’, cried both at once, ‘Thou hast already, at the Prophet’s bidding, led the prayers; thou art our chief. Stretch forth thy hand’. He did so and they struck their hands on his in token of allegiance. Their example was followed by others and groups after groups advanced to pledge their allegiance. Ibn Is’haq writes, on the authority of Anas bin Malik, that on the following day the general public pledged their fidelity to him and thus homage was done to him on all sides and he was acknowledged as the ‘Caliph’ or ‘Successor’ of the Prophet as head of the State.”

Before his death Abu Bakr had nominated ‘Umar as his successor in the vicegerency and the appointment was accepted by the universality of the people, including the House of Muhammad. ‘Umar died as a result of mortal injuries inflicted on him by a Christian fanatic. He had, however, before his death appointed an electoral committee consisting of six eminent companions to select his successor. Their choice fell on ‘Uthman, a descendant of Ommeyya and son-in-law of the Prophet who was installed as Caliph with the suffrage of the people. On ‘Uthman’s tragic death at the hands of assassins, ‘Ali, another son-in-law of the Prophet; was proclaimed the fourth Caliph. ■

Mahatma Gandhi And National Struggle For Freedom

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

1857 was the turning point for Indians. They revolted against the tyrannical British rule in India and their policy of political expansion and economic exploitation, but they failed. This transformed the simmering discontent among the Indians into a powerful flame. Consequently, nationalism gained Momentum and national movement came into existence. Later on the struggle for freedom was carried on under the Indian National Congress and India became free on August 15, 1947.

The foundation of the Indian National Congress was laid on December 28, 1885. The formation of the INC was the most remarkable event in the history of India. Allan Octavian Hume (A. O. Hume) was a retired member of the Indian Civil Service. He played leading role in the foundation of the Indian National Congress. That is why he is considered as the father of the Indian National Congress.

Generally, the history of the national movement of India divided into three phases. The first phase from 1885 to 1905 is known as the period of the Moderates. Moderate leaders like Dadbhai Naroji, Surendra Nath Banerjee, Pherozshah Mehta, Gopal

Krishna Gokhale, Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and others. They believe that the Englishman would grant 'Home rule' to the Indians when they would come to know of their will. They relied on the solemn pledges given by the British Government from time to time. Besides they had full faith in the British sense of Justice fair play honesty and integrity. They believed that British rule was a boon for India. The second phase 1905 to 1919 is known as the extremists or the nationalist Militants. Extremist leaders were like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and others. They are known as Bal, Lal and Pal.

Unlike the moderates who adopted constitutional means to achieve their aims the extremist exposed the true nature of the British rule which had been eating into the very structure of the Indian economy. Tilak presented the true picture of the British rule through his writings in his newspapers like Kesari and Maratha and exposed the so-called doctrine of the moderates that is the Indians' good progress under the benevolent guidance and control of the English. Ultimately Tilak declared "Swaraj is my birthright and I will have it."

By their speeches and writings the extremists filled the Indian people with fearlessness and infused in them such courage that they stood up as a rock to challenge the British imperialism. The sacrifices made by them did not go in vain. They shook the very foundation of the British authority who came to believe that their days on the Indian soil were now numbered.

Lord Curzon became the Viceroy of India from 1898 to 1905. Bengal was partitioned into two parts in 1905. The partition of Bengal and anti-partition movement accelerated the National Movement. In this connection a European writer Zacharias, remarked, "Out of Bengali emotionalism there sprang the new nationalism of India." The anti-partition Movement strengthened the National Movement by giving it the weapons of the Swadeshi and the Boycott. It also gave an opportunity to the Extremists to lead the National Movement. It came to be known as the Swadeshi and Boycott Movement and had an important place in the history of India's freedom movement. At last both the Movements bore fruit when the government gave in and revoked the partition of Bengal in 1911.

The third phase (1919 to 1947) is called the Gandhian Era. Gandhi was

one of those great persons who are called men of the age. Making an assessment of Gandhiji, Y.G. Krishnamurti said, "Mahatma Gandhi was not only a saint but also a great revolutionary. It would not be a misnomer to call him a revolutionary". Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869 in a trading family of Porbandar, Gujarat. Gandhi's other names: Mahatma (Saint)- by Rabindranath Tagore, 1917; Malang Baba/ Nanga Faqir (Naked Saint)- by Kabailis of North-West Frontier, 1930; Indian Faqir / Traitor Faqir – by Winston Churachill, 1931; Half naked- Saint (Ardha Nanga Faqir)- by Franq Mores, 1931; Rashtrapita (the Father of the Nation)-by Subhash Chandra Bose, 1944. His father was the Diwan of Rajkot state. He had schooling in Rajkot. After passing his matriculation examination he was sent to England to study law at the age of 19. He came back to India in 1890 as a barrister. He started his practice at Rajkot but later on he shifted to Bombay.

In 1893 when he was only 24 he went to South Africa as a legal advisor in a case on behalf of a Muslim firm. There the Indians were maltreated and many restrictions had been imposed on them. Gandhiji himself said: "My public life began in 1893 in South Africa in troubled weather. My first contact with

British authority in that country was not of a happy character. I discovered that as a man and an Indian, I had no rights. More correctly I discovered that I had no rights as a man because I was an Indian. But I was not baffled. I thought that this treatment of Indians was an excrescence upon a system that was intrinsically and mainly good. I gave the Government my voluntary and hearty co-operation, criticizing it freely where I felt it was faulty but never wishing its destruction. Consequently, when the existence of the Empire was threatened in 1899 by the Boer challenge, I offered my services to it, raised a volunteer ambulance corps and served at several actions that took place for the relief of Ladysmith. Similarly in 1906, at the time of the Zulu 'revolt', I raised a stretcher bearer party and served till the end of the 'rebellion'. On both the occasions I received medals and was even mentioned in dispatches. For my work in South Africa I was given by Lord Hardinge a Kaiser-i-Hind gold medal. When the war broke out in 1914 between England and Germany, I raised a volunteer ambulance cars in London, consisting of the then resident Indians in London, chiefly students. Its work was acknowledge by the authorities to be valuable. He fought the unjust laws boldly but non-violently."(The World's Greatest Speeches, p 359)

Gandhi's Literary Works:

Hind Swaraj (1909), My Experiments with Truth (Autobiography, 1927)-reveals events of Gandhi's life upto 1922. Gandhiji as an Editor: Indian Opinion: 1903-15 (in English & Gujarati, for a shorter period in Hindi & Tamil), Harijan: 1919-31 (in English, Gujarati & Hindi), Young India: 1933-42 (in English & Gujarati-named Navjeevan) (Lucent's General Knowledge, p, 115)

Having returned from South Africa to India in 1915, Gandhiji plunged himself into national straggle for freedom. He came restless observing the then deplorable conditions of Indians under the British rule. To drive the English out of India he made great strides in every possible way. To achieve he launched different movements from time to time. These movements no doubt played leading role in emancipation Indians from nefarious designs of the greedy aliens.

Civil Disobedience Movement:

At last the Government of South Africa had to accept several of his demands. It was a great political success of Gandhiji. He returned to India in 1915 after staying 22 years there. On his return to India, Rabindra Nath Tagore said, "In the garb of a beggar a great soul has come back." He established

Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat in 1916. He made a tour of the country and saw the conditions of the people. The poverty and ill treatment of the people under British rule, shocked and appalled him. He attended Lucknow session of INC held on 26 to 30 December, 1916 where Rajkumar Shukla, cultivator from Bihar requested him to come Champaran. Actually Gandhiji entered in active politics with Champaran campaign to redress grievances of cultivators oppressed by Indigo planters of Bihar (April, 1917) Champaran Satyagraha was his first civil disobedience movement in India. No doubt the Champaran episode was a turning point in Gandhiji's life. "What I did", he explain "was a very ordinary thing. I declared that the British could not order me about my own country."

Non-Cooperation Movement and Satyagraha Movement:

In March 1919 Gandhiji worked for peasants of Kheda in Gujarat for finding difficulties in paying the rents owing to failure of crops . Kheda Satyagraha was his first Non-Cooperation movement.

Edwin Montague, the secretary of State for India and Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy toured the whole country and assessed the public opinion and produced their scheme of reforms. It is called the Chelmsford- Montague

Reforms. On this basis of this report, the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act, 1919. The Reforms of 1919 failed to satisfy the Indians. This time the Moderates left the congress and the extremists came to dominate it. The atmosphere was surcharged with passion and excitement. The English were afraid lest they should launch an agitation. With this fear in mind the British Government passed the Rowlatt Act in March, 1919 to crush any popular or revolutionary movement. It gave powers to the government to arrest and detain suspected persons and to search them without a warrant and to imprison them without a trial. Any person under this Act had no right to Appeal, Vakil and Dalil. This Act came to be known as the Black Bill. It sent a wave of anger and unrest throughout the country. A hartal was observed all over India on April 6, 1919. Gandhiji appeared on the stage and launched a Satyagraha Movement against this Act. Soon he became an all-India leader. After that the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre occurred at Amritsar on April 13, 1919. In which about 1,000 persons died and several thousand were wounded. This tragedy has a great significance in this history of India. Gandhi returned Kaiser-i- Hind gold medal to protest against Jallianwala Bagh massacre April 13, 1919. Even the

great poet Rabindra Nath Tagore also renounced his Knighthood in protest against it.

Chauri Chaura Incident and Withdrawl of the Non-Cooperation Movement:

Chauri Chaura was a village in the Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh. On February 5, 1922 the police had beaten up a group of volunteers picketing a liquor shop and opened fire on the crowd which had come to protest before the police station. The angry mob attacked and burnt the police station killing 22 policeman. Gandhiji was shocked and disheartened. He realised that the Non-Cooperation Movement was becoming violent. Gandhiji decided to withdraw the movement. The Congress approved his decision on February 12, 1922 and the Non-Cooperation Movement came to an end. Gandhiji was arrested on March 10, 1922, and sentenced to six years of imprisonment on charges of sedition. He was released two years later due to ill health. The sudden withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement and the arrest of Gandhiji in March 1922, demoralised the Congress and they almost went into political unactivity. Many leaders searched for an alternative to Gandhian methods and end this impasse. (History and Civics, p. 158)

Congress leaders C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru advocated a new method of struggle against colonial rule. This proposal was put forward at the annual session of the congress at Gaya in 1922, by C. R. Das who presided over it. But the proposal for council-entry was rejected by congress leaders like Sardar Patel, Rajendra Prasad and C. Rajagopalachari. C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru resigned from their respective offices in the Congress and on January 1, 1923, announced the formation of the Swaraj Party within the Congress. Thus the Congress was split into two sections—**no changers led by Sardar Patel and the Pro-changers or the Swarajists.**

The Swaraj Party contested the elections to the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils in November 1923, and performed remarkably well. The Swaraj Party won 47 seats out of 105 seats in the Central Legislative Assembly. But after the death of C.R.Das on June 16, 1925 the Swaraj Party merged with the congress.

Khilafat Movement (1920-22):

The Caliph (or, Khalipah) Sultan of Turkey, was looked upon by the Muslims as their religious head. During the First World War, when the safety and welfare of Turkey were threatened by the British thereby weakening the Caliph's

position, Indian Muslims adopted an aggressive anti-British attitude. The Brothers-Mohammad Ali & Shaukat Ali launched an anti-British Movement in 1920-the Khilafat Movement for the restoration of the Khilafat. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad also led the movement. It was supported by Gandhiji and INC which paved the way for Hindu-Muslim Unity. However, the Khilafat Movement soon lost its vigour and relevance when Mustafa Kamal Pasha dethroned the Turkish Sultan and declared Turkey a secular republic. The Khilafat Movement came to an end and merged with the Non-Cooperation Movement launched by Gandhiji. It left a strong sentiment of Hindu- Muslim unity. It played an important part in strengthening the nationalist feeling and led to political awakening.

The Boycott of the Simon Commission:

On February 3, 1928, the day John Simon and other members landed in Bombay, all major cities and towns in India observed a complete hartal. People came out on the streets and participated in rallies and processions. Wherever Simon went he was greeted with black flags and slogans 'Simon go back' imprinted on balloons and kites.

In Lahore, protests took a serious turn. Lala Lajpat Rai, the most

respected Extremist leader of Punjab was hit on the chest during lathi-charge. He succumbed to his injuries on November 17, 1928. Lala Lajpat Rai's death spread a wave of indignation throughout the country. During Lahore session, presided over by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in December 1929, the Congress passed a resolution boycotting the Round Table conference and declaring 'Purna Swaraj' or complete independence as the only honourable goal of the Indians. It also decided to launch a programme of civil-disobedience, including non-payment of taxes. The tricolour flag was hoisted on December 31, 1929, and Independence Day was celebrated all over India on January 26, 1930.

The Dandi March and Violation of Salt Laws:

Gandhiji decided to start the Civil Disobedience Movement by a violation of Salt laws. On March 12, 1930 Gandhiji with 78 followers left Sabarmati Ashram and reached Dandi, a village on the sea coast of Gujarat on April 5, 1930, travelling a distance of 200 miles on foot. During the journey the village people showered leaves on them and three hundred village headmen gave up their jobs.

The Quit India Movement :

The Quit India Movement was

brutally crushed by the British Government in 1942, and all the leaders jailed. But the British realised that another mass movement under the leadership of Gandhi would shake the foundations of the British Empire in India. The Cripps Mission which came to India to negotiate with the Indians ended in failure. The Second World War came to an end in 1945, with the victory of the Allied Powers. The British in such moments of triumph and glory took the decision to quit India. This brightened the prospect of freedom in India. However the British took a little less than five years since its decision to quit India in 1942, to finally leave the country for good.

In short, Gandhiji dominated the scene of Indian politics and freedom movement from 1919 to 1947. He left no stone unturned in the fight for India's freedom. He also adopted novel means to fight this war of freedom, which got new vigour under his leadership. The most striking aspect of his life is that he laid great stress on the unity of all the communities, especially the Hindu-Muslim Unity. He understood the strategy of the English "Divide and Rule". He perceived that unless they united, they could not drive the English out of India. Whenever, the communal riots broke out in India he staked his own life to visit the riot-torn areas and this

restored peace there. His efforts began to bear fruit following the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre in 1919.

Mahatma Gandhi's greatness lies in the fact that he gave his heart and soul to the poor and downtrodden. He was engaged in a life long struggle against social evils like untouchability, communalism, dowry and oppression of the poor. He worked for the abolition of untouchability. He described the untouchables as 'Harijans' or children of God. He encouraged the use of Khadi to help the poor in the villages and set up the Village Industries Association. He led a campaign for the liberation of women from injustice.

In his magnum opus "The Discovery of India" Jawaharlal Nehru says: "Gandhi for the first time entered the Congress organization and immediately brought about a complete change in its constitution. He made it democratic and a mass organization. Democratic it had been previously also but it had so far been limited in franchise and restricted to the upper classes. Now the peasants rolled in and, in its new grab, it began to assume the look of a vast agrarian organization with a strong sprinkling of the middle classes. This agrarian character was to grow. Industrial workers also came in but as individuals and not in their separate

organized capacity. Action was to be the basis and objective of this organization, action based on peaceful methods. Thus far the alternatives had been just talking and passing resolutions, or terroristic activity. Both of these were set aside and terrorism was especially condemned as opposed to the basic policy of the Congress. A new technique of action was evolved which, though perfectly peaceful, yet implied non-submission to what was considered wrong and, as a consequence, a willing acceptance of the pain and suffering involved in this. Gandhi was an odd kind of pacifist, for he was an activist full of dynamic energy. There was no submission in him to fate or anything that he considered evil; he was full of resistance, though this was peaceful and courteous." (P. 360)

Before 1920 the national Movement was confined to a few educated youth belonging to the middle class. It had not touched the common masses. It was under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi that this Movement became the movement of Indian people who took part in his Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience Movement at an unprecedented large scale. His movement were supported by all the classes of people of India irrespective of their caste, creed or religion. It brought about an awakening among the

people who became ready to suffer and sacrifice anything for their motherland. The struggle for national freedom grew very fast. Women also vied with men in offering themselves at the altar of liberty. Gandhiji had to bear lathi blows, pass through gunfire and stake his life. However, he was too brave to care for such dangers. He went to jail several times but it did not break his courage. He stood firm like a rock and added to the courage of his people by his own sacrifices and sufferings. He was always ready to make any sacrifice for his country. Such condition forced the English to leave India in their own interest. At first they announced their resolve to leave India by June 1948. But subsequently, they left on August 15, 1947. The country attained freedom. Mahatma Gandhi's role in the achievement of freedom was unparalleled and supreme. That is why after India became free he was unanimously elected as father of the nation. Gandhi was shot dead on January 30, 1948 by Nathu Ram Godse, a member of RSS, while on his way to the evening prayer meeting at Birla House, New Delhi. Lord Mount Batten described Gandhiji's death with these words "The whole world was well-off and rich with living Gandhi and with his death it has become pauper." ■

S. Abul Hasan Ali Hasani Nadwi And The West

- Abu Mohd. Aamir Nadwi

From western point of view Islam is a religion of Arab Bedouins which is not compatible to modern era of science and technology and is limited within the boundary of rituals and worship and the mankind is indebted to western ideology in regard of modern sciences and civilization.

Because in Christianity the church and the crown were separated while Islam includes both of them and emphasizes on scientific approach about the universe and the human being itself actually this very idea changed the whole picture of human history that led to flourish the knowledge and research in Islamic world which is reflected in splendid Islamic state of Al-Andalus the modern day Spain and this idea was evaluated across the world.

As remarked by Wilfred Cantwell Smith about the writings of great scholar of his time Maulana S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi with great insight is a sense that something has gone wrong with Islamic history. The fundamental problem of modern Muslims is how to revive that history. This feeling, as reflected in his book "Islam and The World", dominated the religious and political thought of Ali Mian. His studies led him to conclude that Muslims did not merely attain political and intellectual supremacy and founded extensive and large empires, but they also surpassed at one time all other nations in the field of knowledge and intellectual endeavor.

But unfortunately western intelligentsia did not reconcile it due to second hand knowledge and approach to original sources of Islamic knowledge and

science and as a result there were a lot of misunderstandings and misinterpretations that caused confusion and perplexity between Islam and the west.

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi noticed this gulf between Islam and the west which should be bridged. Accordingly he supported the idea of foundation of Centre for Islamic Studies in Oxford. It was welcomed by Islamic and western intellectuals and prince of Wales offered his full support and in 2012 it was granted a Royal Charter by HM Queen Elizabeth.

As Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi mentioned in his first speech at Oxford centre for Islamic Studies:

"World events during the past decade emphasize the need for, and value of, an academic institution in the West dedicated to the dispassionate and objective study of the Islamic world, its religious beliefs, social and moral values, cultural traditions, and contemporary challenges and opportunities... I am confident that, having been welcomed by the University of Oxford and having engaged the interest and support of many throughout the world, insha' Allah the Centre will continue to make an intellectual and educational contribution to the benefit of all."

As a result Prince of Wales appointed the patron and Maulana S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was appointed the founding chairman of Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies and it paved a way for mutual understanding of East and West and bringing closer the nations of the world to each other. ■

Around the World

King Charles Addresses Parliament, Vows to Uphold British Constitution

London: Under the vaulted timbers of Westminster Hall, King Charles III addressed Britain's Parliament for the first time as sovereign, accepting condolences and pledging to uphold the principles of the country's constitutional monarchy. Speaking from the chamber where the body of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II, will lie in state later this week, Charles said, "Parliament is the living and breathing instrument of our democracy."

The ceremony showcased the harmonious and occasionally fraught intersection of royalty and government. There were expressions of fealty from parliament to the king and a reciprocal pledge by him to abide by the limits of his constitutional role, which stipulates that he remain above politics.

Charles paid tribute to the queen, whom he said was a "pattern to all princes living," quoting from Shakespeare. He referred to her constancy, symbolized by a stained-glass window that was installed to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee in 2012. "While very young, her late majesty pledged herself to serve her country and her people and to maintain the precious principles of constitutional government. This vow, she kept with unsurpassed devotion. She set an example of selfless duty which with God's help and your counsels I am resolved faithfully to follow."

Kazakhstan Limits Presidential Term, Renames Capital

ASTANA: Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed a law limiting the presidential term to seven years and

reinstated the capital's name to Astana. The name was changed to Nur-sultan in March 2019 in honour of outgoing president Nursultan Nairbayev.

Chinese Astronauts Go on Spacewalk From New Station

BEIJING: Two Chinese astronauts went on a spacewalk on Saturday from a new station that is due to be completed soon. Cai Xuzhe and Chen Dong's installed pumps, a handle to open the hatch door from outside in an emergency, and a foot-stop to fix an astronaut's feet to a robotic arm.

Armenia – Azerbaijan Clash Sparks Fears of Another War

The leader of Armenia said on Tuesday that at least 49 of the nation's servicemen had died overnight in clashes with the Azerbaijani Army. It was the worst escalation of hostilities between two countries since the 2020 war over Nagorno-Karabakh, a disputed mountain enclave, and a threat to both a loyal Russian ally and a ceasefire that Russia brokered.

The clashes — which erupted early, — resumed the decades-long armed conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, which is internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan but claims independence and is closely allied with Armenia. The escalation between the two former Soviet states in the South Caucasus has heightened fears that Russia could find itself entangled in a second war in addition to its invasion of Ukraine. Some military analysts suggested that Azerbaijan may have been emboldened by Russia's recent setbacks in northeastern Ukraine. ■

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