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# The Fragrance of East

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## Religion as Guardian of Life

**S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi**

Time is a proportionate and balanced mixture of stability and change, stagnation and movement. If it loses either of these characteristics, it will lose its relevance. Islam as a religion accepts this fact and is ready to make necessary accommodations, but it holds the position that as religion it has to guide life, not simply follow it. Religion, as Islam pleads, does not have to passively approve all changes. It is not lifeless like the needle of a barometer which moves up or down mechanically to measure the pressure of the atmosphere, or a weather-cock fixed on the top of a building which moves to show the direction of the wind. The function of religion is not simply to acknowledge and show the changes which are occurring at a time. Its obligation is to check whether a change is healthy or unhealthy, constructive or destructive. It has to evaluate the effect of a change on mankind at large and on its promoters in particular. It judges all pros and cons of a change before it approves it. It, therefore, will discourage a change if it is destructive. It may even oppose the latter kind.

At this point we can see a clear difference between religion and morality. Religion feels obliged to oppose wrong inclinations, whereas morality simply identifies them. ■

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### ***Wisdom of Qur'an***

**“Pharaoh said: ‘O nobles, I do not know that you have any god besides myself. Hâmân, bake bricks out of clay and build a lofty palace for me so that I may mount up and be able to observe the god of Moses, even though I believe that Moses is a liar’.”**

(Al-Qur'ân – 28:38)

By saying so Pharaoh obviously did not mean that he was their creator and the creator of the heavens and the earth. For obviously only a lunatic would make such a claim. Nor did it mean that they worshipped no other God beside Pharaoh because it is well known that the Egyptians worshipped many gods and that Pharaoh, himself, had been raised to the status of godhead in his capacity as the incarnation of Ra, the sun-god. The Qur'ân, itself, mentions that Pharaoh worshipped many gods.

Hence the word “god” used by Pharaoh for himself was not so as to claim that he was their creator and their sole object of worship. He rather used this word in the sense that he was the lord and master of Egypt where his command was executed, where he was considered to have full authority, and where people considered themselves bound to obey him, where he was the absolute sovereign whose orders were carried out, and where he was in a position to decide what was good and what was evil, and where no one else had the authority to issue any command. In this context, Pharaoh wondered what the locus standi of Moses was. ■

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

Anas relates that the Apostle of God, one day asked: “Is there anyone who walks on water and his feet do not get wet?” “Our master, it cannot be,” he was told. “In the same way,” remarked the Prophet, “The worldly-minded cannot remain free from sin.”

—*Bukhari*

*Commentary* —The worldly-minded, in the above saying, signifies one who is intent on gain or worldly pleasure. Such a person cannot remain safe from sin. But if the ultimate aim of the bondsman be the seeking of the countenance of the Lord and the occupation in worldly interests is only a means to it, he will not be called worldly-minded. It will not be difficult for him to keep away from sinful acts in spite of apparent engagement in worldly pursuits.

It is related by Qatadah bin Noman that the Apostle of God said: “When God loves anyone, He makes him avoid the world, as you make a patient avoid water [when it is harmful for him].”

—*Tirmidhi and Musnad-i-Ahmad*

*Commentary*—‘This world,’ as we have seen, means the world that makes one forgetful of God and in getting absorbed in which there is the loss of the Hereafter. Hence, whom God loves, He protects them against this wretched world as a sick man is, sometimes, made to abstain from water. ■

*Editor's Note* 

## A Sane Advice

The September 2023 issue of the Fragrance is in your hand. By the grace of God this venture has been well received in the circles where it could make its way. Our basic aim is to counter the anti-Islam hysteria built by the western dominated media and also the Indian right wing influenced press that generates erroneous ideas about Islam. Indeed our mission is to combat the onslaught on Islam and project the correct picture of the religion. The dissemination of specious information and propagation of fallacious stories about Muslims and Islam are to be nip in the bud which is why we decided to start this magazine in English. However, the task is gigantic and very challenging and needs patience and persistence. The active cooperation of intellectuals, scholars, academicians, literati and writers is needed to run this magazine. Our efforts to motivate them to write for us have so far drawn blank but we have not lost hope and expect a good response from them.

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

feelings. But an intolerant group was so enraged by the Maulana's dictat that they staged demonstrations and made disperaging remarks against him.

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

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

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

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

**S.A.**

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

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

We do not find in the annals of history any civilization which can be called intellectual, in which nothing was ever accepted unless weighed in the scale of reason or commended by human intellect. If such a civilization were to come into existence it would make life an ordeal and would not perhaps last for more than a few days. As a western writer has well said:

“Man is by far more stupid in his actions than prudent”.

It would thus not be correct to claim that reason alone can become the base of culture and its ramifications. In fact, ideas and thoughts, beliefs and superstitions, habits, customs and usages come into existence first, before any thought is given to them ; thereafter intellect comes to discriminate, accept or reject them, and not unoften it so happens that the intellect assumes the role of an advocate and defender of the existing usages. What reasons were not conceived by the Grecian intellect to vindicate female lewdness and prostitution? No act of human brutality and savagery can rival gladiatorial sports, but, did Roman intellectuals' sophistry not try to prove it inoffensive? Was not Arabian custom of infanticide and suttee in India rationalised by the intellectual pundits of these countries? Nevertheless, these sophistries and rationalisations could neither alter the realities nor intellectualise

these customs or the civilizations which produced them.

Even philosophy cannot claim to be completely free from irrational traits much less to prefer such a claim on behalf of culture or social order.

Greek philosophy is commonly regarded as the essence of speculative thought but quite a large portion of it was drawn from Grecian mythology and superstitions. Even Aristotle and Plato, with all their claims to free-thought, could not deliver their precepts from the confines of their environment and accepted many an illogical notion of the day.

### **Materialism in intellectual civilization**

Civilizations commonly accepted as intellectual and scientific at the first glance, if subjected to a closer scrutiny, would none-the-less be found to be essentially sensist and materialistic. Among such social orders the present civilization of the West has been the most deceptive, thanks to its crafty propagandists; for, it is regarded as the most scientific and intellectual civilization man has ever known. It was, however, an offspring of the revolt of sensism and pragmatism against the intellectual movement, and its achievements comprise a decisive victory of matter over intellect, senses over spirit and experience over faith. European philosophers, scholars, social scientists

and ethicists began their crusade against intellectualism in the seventeenth century. They declared that anything which cannot be experimented, measured, weighed or counted is not acceptable, and, abiding by the same standard, believed that nothing is moral if it has no utility. They sought a rational elaboration of pure perception in 'order to propound a new theory of cosmology completely divorced of a transcendental, superhuman and metaphysical reality. They denied every power save matter and motion and dubbed the spiritual explanation of cosmic phenomena as essentially irrational and untenable. They propounded the theory of mechanical or natural causation which, in their view, was the only intelligible and scientific explanation of the cosmic order. Every other explanation, thought and discourse was rejected as irrational or unscientific with the result that gradually pragmatism, natural selection and utilitarianism came to have its sway over the entire field of human life. The new doctrine thus animated the entire human existence, leaving not untouched its remotest corner—the recesses of mind and heart—and accepted utility and pragmatic experience as the cornerstone of social, ethical, economic and political life.

It is undoubtedly correct that the terms "intellect" and "nature" have been used to a far greater extent in the European literature than in other literary compositions of the world. These works have had a magical effect and are still readily

acceptable to the western mind but if one were to explore their meanings and examine their application to human life, he would find that intellect stands for animal intellect (if it can be so named); an intellect bound by perceptions and experiences and rejecting everything imperceptible as irrational and unreal. A philosopher of the fifteenth century, Leonardo da Vinci, expounded this view in unambiguous terms. Leonardo's view has been thus expressed by Herold Hoffding in his History of Modern Philosophy.

"..... the results of our knowledge can only acquire perfect certainty by means of the employment of mathematics. Wisdom is the daughter of experience and it is therefore, also a product of time. Leonardo rejects all speculations which find no confirmation in experience, the common mother of all sciences".

Human nature thus construed is not different from the nature of the beast; for, it becomes devoid of sublime instincts, moral consciousness, nobleness of heart and intellectual virtue. It is weary of all restraints over its freedom and demands complete mastery over itself in order to satisfy the appetites of flesh; to eat, drink and amuse itself without any intervention from any quarter. The context in which the word "nature" is more often used in western literature leaves no doubt that it does not stand for aught but animal instinct.

Sensist thought and empirical sciences had evolved a hazy concept of



social animal for the human being. The European age of materialistic reasoning has unfolded this concept into a perfect and logical postulate of materialism which, since accepted as an article of faith, permeates the intellect and soul of the man, and renders it propitious for him to attain conformity with his true nature i.e. his ancestral instincts.

### **Epicurean ideals**

As a consequence, natural and inevitable, as it should be, pleasure and enjoyment became the ultimate object or ideal of human life. An Arab poet of the Age of Ignorance beautifully renders the same Sentiment in these words:

“He is a generous fellow, one that soaks himself in wine;

You will know tomorrow, when we're dead, where the world exists”.

Another poet expressed the same idea when he said: “Enjoy life for it is bestowed only once”, but, the oriental symbolism and idiomatic expression being unsuited to the Occidental frankness, the tatter spelt out this view unambiguously in the well-known maxim: ‘Eat, Drink and be Merry ere ye die tomorrow.”

This materialistic view-point and selfish disposition pervades all spheres of human life, as, for example, in economics it turns to capitalism, in politics to imperialism. In attitude and thought it chooses between two opposing systems, that which it finds easier, perceptible and

nearer to its sensist leanings, as, for instance, its choice fell to the limited geographical and racial nationalism which, being nearer to sensism, is more attractive even though a social order with an ideological or religious base is prone to be universal and more wide-based. Indeed, it could have never conceived of the whole world as the birth-place of human beings and, accordingly, it accepted the narrower concept of nationalism in preference to a broader view of humanism. With the gradual attenuation of religion in the West, nationalism established itself as if these were two sides of the same scale—one rose to the extent the other went down.

The contemporary literature of Europe, no doubt, exhibits a keen interest in spiritualism but it would be erroneous to suppose that this literature interprets any spiritual movement aiming at the purification of heart or moral refinement; since, the object of these compositions is simply development of certain latent human faculties for the display of wondrous and startling feats. It is treated as an art, or, rather as a science like mesmerism, having nothing to do with the betterment of human morals or the elevation-of soul.

### **Western materialism**

The whole of Europe has, indeed, not renounced religion. A greater part of it still professes Christianity; Church services are attended on Sundays, Christian rites and functions are held with

considerable pomp and show in the whole of Europe, many traces of Christian traditions are still visible, yet, the religion of Europe is nothing but materialism.

A right thinking European Muslim analyses the modern materialistic life of Europe in these words:

“The average Occidental—be he a Democrat or a Fascist, a Capitalist or a Bolshevik, a manual worker or an intellectual—knows only one positive “religion”, and that is the worship of material progress, the belief that there is no other goal in life than to make that very life continually easier or, as the current expression goes, “independent of Nature”. The temples of this “religion” are the gigantic factories, cinemas, chemical laboratories, dancing halls, hydro-electric works ; and its priests are bankers, engineers, film stars, captains of industry, record airmen. The unavoidable result of this craving after power and pleasure is the creation of hostile groups armed to the teeth and determined to destroy each other whenever and wherever their respective interests come to clash. And on the cultural side the result is the creation of a human type whose morality is confined to the questions of practical utility alone, and whose highest criterion of good and evil is material success.

In the profound transformation the social life of the West is undergoing at present, that new, utilitarian morality

becomes daily more and more apparent. All virtues having a direct bearing upon the material welfare of society—for example, technical efficiency, patriotism, nationalist group-sense—are being exalted and often absurdly exaggerated in their value; while virtues which, until recently, were valued from a purely ethical point of view, as, for example, filial love or sexual fidelity, rapidly lose their importance—because they do not confer a tangible, material benefit upon society. The age in which the insistence on strong family bonds was decisive for the well-being of the group or the clan is being superseded, in the modern West, by an age of collective organisation under far wider headings. And in a society which is essentially technological and is being organised, at a rapidly increasing pace, on purely mechanical lines the behaviour of a son towards his father is of no great social importance so long as those individuals behave within the limits of general decency imposed by the society on the intercourse between its members. Consequently, the Western father daily loses more and more authority over his son and quite logically the son loses his respect for the father. Their mutual relations are being slowly overruled and—for all practical purposes—made obsolete by the postulates of mechanised society which has a tendency to abolish all privileges of one individual over another, and—in the logical development of this idea—also the privileges due to family relationship.”■

## The Anatomy of A Riot

- Shaikh Mujibur Rehman\*

Though Hindu-Muslim violence is not new in India, the one that erupted in Nuh district and Gurgaon in Haryana recently has perhaps opened a new chapter in terms of its nature, character and consequences on Indian polity. Located in the Mewat region, Nuh is a poor district but its economic backwardness should not be seen as the main reason behind this violence. Based on reports, this violence — it could be argued — is a result of competitive assertion of identities in a highly polarised polity which offers varied forms of patronage to non-state actors. Given the state response, it looks like the Muslim minority may end up paying a disproportionately greater price, as has often been the case in riots even in the non-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) days of India's governance. Scholars might find it tempting to go back to Paul Brass's formulation of an institutionalised riot system (IRS), based on his study of riots in Aligarh and Meerut, to make sense of the spontaneity, and scale of this violence.

In my view, there is more to it than Brass's formulation. The political context of the sustained penetration of Hindu majoritarianism in various domains of state and society need to be factored in as well, particularly with regard to state indifference or complicity. The Haryana and Punjab Court's observation on Monday, describing bulldozer justice as "an

exercise of ethnic cleansing is being conducted by the State," reveals a lot about the ideological intent of state response.

### Everyday Communalism

In 1992, after the demolition of the Babri Masjid when Narasimha Rao's government dismissed the governments of four BJP ruled States, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh, some questioned the fairness by highlighting the riot free regimes the BJP had given in these States till then. The claim that the Hindu Right regimes have a better record of riot-free governance continues to be made even today. The Haryana violence proves it wrong. In April this year, U.P. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath made such a claim of no riots in the State since 2017. But National Crime Records Bureau data reports 5,302 cases of rioting in 2021.

During the Karnataka election campaign, also in April, Home Minister Amit Shah remarked at a rally in Belagavi that if the Congress came to power, there would be riots, implying that there were no riots under BJP rule.

There have been several incidents of riots in Maharashtra since April 2023 (Kolhapur, Mumbai, Sambhajinagar, Jalgaon, Akola and Ahmednagar), under the watch of the BJP coalition government. In most cases, there is a pattern which factors in a procession, a temple or

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\* Teaches at Jamia Millia Central University, New Delhi.

mosque, and a social media post establishing the circle of reason for the violence. The Nuh violence also presents a similar pattern. According to Paul Brass, there are at least three phases: preparation/rehearsal, activation/enactment and then explanation/interpretation. Given the ideological spin accorded to interpretation of riots, it seems the truth about the anatomy of riot will elude many.

### **Row Over Friday Prayers**

But how does one explain the speed with which the Nuh violence spread to Gurgaon leading to mob attacks on a mosque, killing its 26 year old Imam? A Muslim group had won the case in the Supreme Court to refurbish and expand this mosque only two months ago. Therefore, the Gurgaon namaz controversy that had rocked the city in 2018 may have constituted a background to this attack. Muslims used to have 116 designated public spaces to offer Friday prayers which has been reduced to six, owing to sustained protests by Hindu Right groups.

To connect the dots, what is the Friday namaz controversy? That Friday congregations at public spaces, even if it is for a couple of hours, may have caused public inconvenience has some truth. However, immersion processions (of Ganesh or Durga) or the Kanwar yatras also have a similar impact on regular lives.

Mutual accommodation and respect are the ways these inconveniences have been addressed in the past. The present

demand against Friday namaz is clearly driven by a Hindu supremacist ideology to show Muslims their place in this country — and public inconvenience is just a ruse.

But why do Muslims offer Friday prayers in public? According to Islamic practice, the Friday namaz is a unique mass prayer which requires a congregation, like during Eid or Bakra-Eid. For any newspaper reader in India, it is familiar to see photos of Muslims offering prayers on the roads during Eid. This is because a mosque does not have enough space to accommodate a large gathering. Given that there are not enough mosques to accommodate growing Muslim populations in Gurgaon, Muslims chose to offer prayers in an open space designated by the local administration.

In a way, it reflects the community's poor economic condition too. In this particular controversy, Muslim groups have conducted themselves with tremendous dignity, but their efforts to look for alternative arrangements for prayers have not borne fruit, owing to various bureaucratic bottlenecks, particularly with regard to available waqf lands and interest group politics connected with it.

To conclude, non-resolution of the namaz controversy, either by persuasive means or by state interventions, has created a supportive background to this retaliatory attack on a masjid in Gurgaon and the violence that followed. As long as there are no sincere secular interventions, the risk for violence will remain. ■

*(The Hindu, 10-8-2023)*

## Divorce Outside The Courts

- Faizan Mustafa\*

A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court in *Shilpa Sailesh v. Varun Sreenivasan* (2023) has ruled that the mandatory waiting period of six months prior to consensual divorce in cases under the Hindu Marriage Act can be waived by the apex court while invoking its extraordinary power to do complete justice. The court has also said that irretrievable breakdown of marriage, though not provided by Parliament, is a valid ground for divorce as the same is consistent with public policy. This author supports a uniform civil code (UCC) in a piecemeal manner but has argued before that we should no more in every case try to save the marriage. Our judges should come out of the cultural mindset that considers divorce as bad. If home has become hell, it is better to part in a dignified way and ideally by mutual consent in an out of court settlement. Muslim law has some good provisions on extra-judicial divorces that may be included as and when the UCC is drafted.

Indian courts have been quite sympathetic to Muslim women's causes. But the latest judgment by Justice G Saravanan of Madras High Court in *Mohammed Rafi v. State of Tamil Nadu* (2023) is not only against the Muslim wife in this case but would in the long run harm the interests of poor Muslim women who would now have to wait for the judicial dissolution of their marriage by the family courts. Most of them would have no means to fight the protracted

and costly legal battles against their husbands.

Let us first look at the facts of this case. One Rafi had married Sayeeda Begum in 2013 and the couple was blessed with a male child in 2015. The wife left the matrimonial home on September 3, 2016 and a shariat council on her initiative granted her khula (wife-initiated divorce) on June 17, 2017. This khula has now been nullified in 2023 as the court held, based on the Supreme Court's judgment in *Vishnu Lochan Madan* (2014), that sharia courts' decisions have no legal sanctity. The 20-page judgment was given ex-parte against the wife and therefore we do not know why Sayeeda Begum had left her matrimonial home and whether she had married someone else after the impugned declaration of khula by the shariat council.

Justice Saravanan did accept that Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act.1937 and the Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act.1939 give a Muslim wife the right to dissolve her marriage through khula and this is her absolute right with no questions being asked. He also relied on *XvY* (2021) Divisional Bench judgment of the Kerala High Court in which khula was held to be the women's absolute right, with her not being required to give any specific reason for invoking it. In this author's opinion, since the Quran terms dower as "free gift", the husband cannot make it a condition for khula. The Quran discourages husbands from taking back gifts given to the wife. Moreover, declaration by the wife

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\* *The writer is a constitutional law expert.*

is most important and it does not require anybody else's approval. It does not require any certificate to be issued by any court or Shariat council. Since our courts are already overburdened with 45 crore cases, we should not put an additional burden on them in cases of khula. Ideally, matrimonial disputes should be resolved outside the formal judicial system through arbitration and mediation.

Sylvia Vatuk of the University of Illinois in Chicago studied family courts in Chennai and Hyderabad and examined the cases before the kazis in two cities. She found that most Muslim women prefer to use kazis over formal family courts and generally they are the ones who seek divorces from their husbands. She found poor infra-structure and absence of basic facilities such as women's toilets and creches in the state's family courts. But the coercive use of khula after triple talaq became a criminal offence is a matter of grave concern. Recently, it was found that some Muslim husbands are compelling their wives to seek khula so that they escape the punishment under the triple talaq law.

It is wrong to conclude that Muslim women can get a divorce only through courts under the Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act, 1939. Though the Act uses the term "decree", it in no way takes away a Muslim woman's right to divorce outside the formal judicial system. What are the options available to a Muslim woman to dissolve her marriage?

First, Muslim women can seek divorce under the 1939 Act through a court under the law of fask (annulment of marriage) on certain grounds — the whereabouts of her

husband being for four years; non-payment of maintenance for two years; imprisonment of her husband for seven years; non-performance of marital obligations; impotency; insanity or suffering from diseases such as leprosy or venereal diseases; cruelty which includes the husband taking on a second wife. Hindu women had to wait till 1955 to get similar grounds to get divorce. Second, a Muslim woman is entitled to talaq-e-tafwid, that is, delegated divorce which gives her an identical right to divorce on par with men. The Madras and Kerala High Courts have rightly held that khula, the third type of divorce, is the unconditional and absolute right of the Muslim wife.

Fourth, a Muslim wife is also entitled to divorce with mutual consent (mubaraat) which too is mentioned as a distinct form of divorce in the Shariat Act of 1937. Ideally, the Muslim Personal Law Board and Muslim clergy should explicitly resolve that Indian Muslims would now use only this type of divorce through a written divorce deed. Fifth, when the husband indulges in slandering his wife's character by alleging adultery and has no proof of it, she is entitled to divorce. Sixth, if a Muslim wife was married by her guardian when she was a child, upon attaining maturity, she has a right to walk out of the marriage.

Section 89 of the Civil Procedure Code itself talks of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) through arbitration, mediation, conciliation etc. Arbitral decisions are given by specialist decision-makers chosen by the parties. ■

*(The Indian Express- 5-5-2023)*

## Disapproval of Begging

- S.Sulaiman Nadwi

Although the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was generous to the utmost, he condemned begging without need and with impudence. He used to say: It is better for one among you to bring a load of firewood on one's back and save one's honour than to beg.

Once an Ansar came to him and begged something. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) questioned: Have you not anything with you? He said: I have only a bedding, a part of which I spread under me and with the rest I cover myself and a bowl of water. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sent for both and said: Who will buy these things? A person set two dirhams as the price. He (the Holy Prophet) said: Is there anyone who desires to pay more? A person agreed to pay double. He handed over both these things to him and gave the dirhams to Ansari asking him to buy food with one dirham and send it to his house and a rope with the other asking him to cut woods from the jungle and sell them. After fifteen days he came to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and there were fifteen dirhams with him. He

bought some clothes and some corn with it. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Is it good or that one would come on the Day of Resurrection and there would be no flesh on one's face on account of begging.

Once, some people from the Ansar begged from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). They again begged him and he again gave them, till when what was in his possession was exhausted he said: Whatever goods (riches, goods) I have, I will not withhold from you. He who refrains from begging, Allah safeguards him against want and he who seeks sufficiency, Allah would keep him in a state of sufficiency, and he who shows endurance, Allah would grant him power to endure, and none is blessed with an endowment better and greater than endurance.

Hakim b Hizam who had embraced Islam at the conquest of Makkah reported: I begged the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and he gave me. I again begged, he again gave me, I again begged, he again gave me, and then said: This wealth is green and

sweet; he who receives it with a cheerful heart is blessed in it, and he who receives it with an avaricious mind would not be blessed in it; he being like one who eats without being satisfied and the upper hand is better than the lower hand. The result of the advice of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) on the mind of Hakim was that as long as he lived he never begged even the most ordinary thing from anyone.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was distributing Zakat when two persons came. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) looked at them. They were hale and hearty. He said: If you like I can give you out this charity, but thou who are rich and stout have no share in it.

Qabisa b. Mukhariq said: I was under debt and I came to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and begged him regarding it. He said: Wait till he receives Sadaqa. He again said: Qabisa, begging is not permissible but for one of the three persons. One who has incurred debt till he pays that off, after which he must stop it, a man whose property has been destroyed by a calamity which has smitten him, till he gets what will support life, or will provide

him reasonable subsistence and a person who has been smitten by poverty, the genuineness of which is confirmed by three intelligent members of his people, till he gets what will support him, or will give him reasonable subsistence. Qabisa, besides these three (every other reason) for begging is forbidden, and one who engages in such consumes that which is forbidden. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) considered Sadaqa as derogatory for him and his family and said that it was not permissible for them. He used to say: I go back to my family and I find a date lying on my bed. I then take it up to eat, but then I throw it fearing that it may be a Sadaqa. Once he found a date in the street and said: If it were not out of Sadaqa, I would have eaten it. Once Hadrat Hasan b. 'Ali took one dates of Sadaqa and put it in his mouth, whereupon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Leave it, leave it, throw it; do not you know that we do not eat the Sadaqa. Whenever the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was presented with food, he asked about it, if he was told that it was a gift he ate out of that and if he was told it was a Sadaqa he did not eat out of it and gave it to others. ■



## The Quality of Being 'The Mercy For The Worlds'

- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi

The level of passion of love and sympathy with each and everyone that the Prophet (SAW) had was extraordinarily high. The impact that this passion made on the Muslims and the orientation it gave to the minds of Muslims was uninterruptedly perceptible in the Prophet's (SAW) time and also in the lives of the later Muslims. As its fall-out, regions after regions of whatever lands the Muslim empires got extended to and wherever the Muslims got settled, got entered, on their own, on having seen those Muslims' kindheartedness and favours, into the fold of Islam. They were not forced by anyone to do so. It was because, as per the injunctions of Islam, it is forbidden to anyone to convert to Islam. This interdiction is extended further to the extent that the non-Muslim citizens living under the Muslim rule would not be burdened with obligations that the Muslims are burdened with. They have always been allowed to practice their respective religions in accordance with their religious teachings even in matters which are prohibited for the Muslims. As a result thereof, whichever non-Muslim communities had the opportunity to observe these virtues of Islam had embraced Islam.

Having embraced Islam meant

that Allah alone was to be believed to be one's lone and sole Providence and Master. His commands conveyed to him through His Apostle must be obeyed. The transgressions and moral and sexual waywardness that were being perpetrated in pre-Islamic life must be stopped. Hence, the people who embraced Islam kept their practices mended accordingly. The human comity got thus reformed a lot. A lot of such virtues as were vividly demonstrative of sublime human traits and characters were instilled. It may be assessed and appreciated by having a look at the pre-Islamic society which was marked by the ethnical inequities and the bloody carnages perpetrated by those in power, the powers that be, and which make the man shiver when he reads them in the annals of history. In the regimes governed by Islam even 1% of all that did not take place even in the event of war and battles. When the Romans captured Jerusalem after having fought for it, they shed so much blood of Muslim rulers and the Muslim people that their horses were knee-deep in blood. But, when the Muslims recaptured it later, they pardoned off the Christian rulers who were in occupation of it. It is what the English historian, Stanley Lane Pole, himself, has confessed.

In each and every society of pre-Islamic days, whether it were under the Roman Empire or the Persian one or the one of the Indian sub-continent or of the adjoining regions, the treatment meted out to womenfolk was so iniquitous as is hardly meted out to even the beasts. They had no right of inheritance. Nor were they equal in rights to their brothers. There was no safeguard for their honour and chastity. They were made to serve, in their own houses, like the servants and slaves are made to serve. And, if they became widow, they were deemed even ill-boding. On their birth, the family members got struck with grief. Many a people had them killed even before their coming of age. Those who were not killed were meted out the treatment mentioned above.

It is Islam which, on its advent, proclaimed the womenfolk entitled to be treated with honour and respect. It made them entitled to a share in inheritance, in the legacy left by their parents on their death. Ill-treatment of women simply because of their being the women was declared totally unlawful. In the days of Ignorance, women while menstruating would be rendered untouchable by the society. No one would come close by. Islam had this practice totally abolished. Barring the cohabitation, coming close to women in their state of menstruation in other matters was declared absolutely permissible. Prior to Islam, women were

kept reduced to the status of show-pieces. Their job was to seduce others with their body and dresses, be the source of feasting the eyes with their adornments and ornaments and be the tools of entertainment for the men-folk. It is Islam which, on its advent, strictly prohibited this malpractice. It ordered that, if the womenfolk, out of necessity, had to be amidst men not closely related, they must have themselves clad in loose apparels so that the lecherous glances are not directed towards them.

Likewise, women are mentioned, side by side the men, wherever instructions regarding matters of worship et cetera are enunciated. They, too, are provided opportunity to attain highest levels of spirituality and religious merits. However, as much differentiation as is warranted by the physical and congenital difference between the two sexes and is necessary and inevitable has, of course, been maintained. The holy Quran has the following statement made:

(And the believing men and believing women are friends one unto another: they command that which is reputable and restrain from that which is disreputable, and establish prayer and give the poor-rate and obey Allah and His apostle. Those! Allah will surely show mercy to them; verily Allah is Mighty, Wise.)

And

(Whosoever worketh righteously, male or female, and is a believer, We will surely quicken him to a clean life, and will surely recompense them their hire for the best of that which they have been working.)

And also that:

(I let not the work of a worker amongst you to waste, man or woman, one of you from the other.)

On occasion of the Hajjat-ul-Vida'a (the Valedictory Haj), the Prophet (SAW) exhorted as follows:

(Take this exhortation from me in respect of women: be nice to them. you have had them under Allah's security and have made them legitimate for you by the Word of Allah.)

Thus, the woman, in her constitution, is a little different from that of the man. It makes her weaker than the man. Keeping that in view, and, in order to have safeguards against the man making misuse of this disparity, some rules have also been formulated. For example: She should not travel all alone; she must be accompanied by her husband or some uterine kin. In return for obtaining right to use her by making her one's wife, it is made mandatory to give her, in cash or kind, a gift of alimony. He is not permitted to appropriate the wealth and property that she owns. Only she has the right over whatever she

owns. The husband has no right over it. Prior to her getting married, the onus of the expenditure on her is laid on her parents. In their absence, it is laid on her closest kin. After her getting married, this responsibility is to be borne by her husband. Thus, the wife herself has not been assigned the responsibility of meeting her own expenses. She would, however, in exchange, be the mistress of the house and assistant to her husband. She would bear the responsibility of the household affairs and looking after the children. The mandamus is:

(The woman is to bear the responsibility of looking after her husband's household.)

On separation from her husband, in case of divorce from him, she would revert back to the charge and responsibility of her parents.

The consequent effect of the values of mercy, compassion and humanitarianism enforced and promulgated by Islam was that wherever the Muslims adorned with these values went, they brought about a world of change in those places. All the iniquities and aggressions perpetrated owing to the class disparity between man and man or the sexual disparity between man and woman or the disparity between the ruler and the ruled or those committed on occasion of military conflicts or committed just for the sake

of fun and enjoyment were all exterminated. Even the people who did not embrace Islam, too, got influenced in some way or other by these reforms. The non-Muslim societies, too, took to emulate, to some extent at least, the reformed practices of these places. There were some practices in the past adopted just for the sake of entertainment or by way of sport, wherein creatures other than the man were subjected to brutality. Making the man and the beast confined within a well-like enclosure they were set against each other and made to fight to the death to the amusement of a vast assembly of

spectators. It was not felt at all necessary to be kind in any way to the animals. All these beastly acts underwent an exceptional change subsequent to the advent of the Prophet Mohammad (SAW) and as a result of his teachings and practical examples of morals set by him. And, thus, his coming into the world happened to be the mercy not for the Muslims only, but, in addition to the mankind, for all the creatures on the earth. That is what the holy Quran has referred to when it said:

(And We have not sent thee except as a mercy unto the Worlds.) ■

### **Acceptance of Gift by The Holy Prophet (PBUH)**

**- S. Sulaiman Nadwi**

Whenever the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was presented a gift, he accepted it, considering it as the best way of increasing love and affection. He said: Exchange gifts with one another. It will increase mutual love. Therefore, the companions often sent something to his house specially when he stayed in 'A'isha's (may Allah be pleased with her) apartment. We have already mentioned that whenever anything was presented to him, he asked about it. If he was told that it was a gift, he accepted it, otherwise, he refrained from it. Once a women presented a mantle. He took it. Just at that time a person made a demand for it. He gave it to him.

The kings and rulers of the neighbouring countries also sent gifts to him. A chief of Syria gave him a white mule. The Aziz of Egypt sent him a mule from Egypt. A ruler sent him socks. Once the emperor of Rome sent to him a fur garment with silver brocade. He wore it for a short time and then sent it to Hadrat Ja'far (brother of Hadrat 'Ali) who put it on and came to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He said: I did not send this garment that you should wear it. He replied: Then what should I do with it? He (the Holy Prophet) said: Send it to your brother Negus. Hadrat Ja'far stayed in Abyssinia for long till the conquest of Khaibar and taught Islam to Negus. ■

## Muhammad The Last Prophet

- Hammudah Abdalati

The Muslim's belief that Muhammad is the Last Prophet of God has been misunderstood by many people and, hence, needs an explanation. This belief does not, in any way, mean that God has closed His door of mercy or has retired. It does not impose any restriction on the rise of great religious personalities, or bar the emerging of great spiritual leaders, or obstruct the evolution of great pious men. Nor does it mean that God has done the Arabs, from whom Muhammad was chosen. His Last Favor to the exclusion of everybody else. God is not partial to any race or age or generation, and His door of mercy is ever open and always accessible to those who seek Him. He speaks to man in either of three ways:

- (1) by inspiration which occurs in the form of suggestions or ideas put by God into the hearts or minds of pious men;
- (2) from behind a veil which occurs in the form of sights or visions when the qualified recipient is asleep or in a state of trance; and
- (3) through the Heavenly Messenger Gabriel who is sent down with concrete Divine words to convey to the chosen human messenger (Qur'an, 42:51). This last form is

the highest and is the one in which the Qur'an came down to Muhammad: It is confined only to the prophets of whom Muhammad was the Last and the Seal.

But, again, this does not deny the existence or continuance of inspiration in the two other forms to whomever God wills. By choosing Muhammad to be the Seal of the Prophets, God has not lost contact with or interest in man, and man has not been barred from seeking God or obstructed in his aspiration to God. On the contrary, by choosing Muhammad to be the culmination of Prophet-hood and the Qur'an to be the completion of Revelation, God has established a permanent medium of communication between Himself and man, and has erected an ever-radiating beacon of guidance and light. Besides these general observations, there are other specific points which show why Muhammad is the Last Prophet of God, From among these, a few may be mentioned:

1. The Qur'an states in unequivocal words that Muhammad is sent to all men as the Apostle of God to Whom belong the dominion of the heavens and earth (7: 158). It also states that Muhammad was sent only as a Mercy from God to all creatures, human and non-human-

alike (21:107), and that he is the Messenger of God and the seal of the Prophets (33:40). The Qur'an is the word of God, and whatever it says is the truth of God by which every Muslim abides and on which every man should reflect. The Message of Muhammad was not simply a national revival or a racial monopoly or a temporary deliverance from bondage and oppression. Nor was it an abrupt change or reversion in the trends of history. The message of Muhammad was, and, of course, still is, a universal revival, a common blessing, a supranational heritage and an everlasting spiritual deliverance. It is an evolutionary continuance of the previous messages and a well-balanced incorporation of all the former revelations. It transcends all boundaries of race, age, color, and regional features. It is addressed to man of all times and it is precisely what man needs. Thus, a Muslim believes that Muhammad is the Last Prophet because the Qur'an bears true witness to that, and because Muhammad's message has the highest qualities of a truly universal and conclusive faith.

2. Muhammad himself stated that he was the Last Prophet of God. A Muslim, or anyone else for that matter, cannot question the truth of this statement. Throughout his life, Muhammad was known to be most

truthful, honest and modest. His integrity and truthfulness were beyond doubt not only in the sights of Muslims but also in the minds of his most staunch opponents. His character, his spiritual accomplishments, and his mundane reforms are unparalleled in the entire history of mankind. And it remains yet to be seen if history could produce any equal to Muhammad. He said that he was the Last Prophet because it was the truth of God, and not because he wanted any personal glory or sought any personal gains. Victory did not spoil him, triumph did not weaken his excellent virtues, and power did not corrupt his character. He was incorruptible, consistent, and inaccessible to any notion of personal gain or glory. His words display dazzling light of wisdom and truth.

3. Muhammad was the only Prophet who fulfilled his mission and completed his work in his lifetime. Before he died, the Qur'an stated that the religion of God has been perfected, the favor of God on the believers has been completed, and the truth of revelation has been guarded and will be safely preserved (Qur'an 5:3 and 10:9). When he died, the religion of Islam was completed, and the community of Muslim believers was well-established. The Qur'an was recorded in his lifetime and preserved in its total and original version. All this means that the religion

of God has been completed by Muhammad in concept as well as in application, and that the Kingdom of God has been established here on earth. Muhammad's mission, his example and his accomplishments have proved the point that the Kingdom of God is not an unattainable ideal or something of the Hereafter only, but it is something of this world too, something that did exist and flourish in the age of Muhammad and can exist and flourish in any age whenever there are sincere believers and men of faith. Thus, if any man was destined to be the culmination of Prophet-hood, who could it be other than Muhammad? And if any book was designed to be the completion of Revelation, what could it be other than the Qur'an? The actual fulfillment of Muhammad's mission on earth and the authentic recording of the entire Qur'an in his lifetime should leave no trace of doubt in any mind as to the belief that he was the Last Prophet.

4. The decree of God that Muhammad is the Last Prophet is based on the original and pure authenticity of the Qur'an, on the conclusive and unique accomplishments of Muhammad, on the universality of Islam, and on the applicability of the Qur'anic teachings to every situation, every age, and every man, This is the religion which transcends all borders and penetrates

far beyond all barriers of race, color, age and status of wealth or prestige. It is the religion which assures men, all men, of equality and brotherhood, freedom and dignity, peace and honor, guidance and salvation. This is the pure essence of God's religion and the kind of aid He has always extended to man from the beginning of history. With Muhammad and the Qur'an has come the culmination of religious evolution. This, however, does not mean the end of history or the termination of man's need for Divine guidance. It is only the beginning of a new approach, the inauguration of a new era, wherein man has been sufficiently provided with all the Divine guidance and the practical examples he needs. This Divine guidance is contained in the Qur'an, the most authentic and incorruptible Revelation of God, and these practical examples are found in the personality of Muhammad. If there were to come a new prophet or a new revealed book, what could this add to the quality of prophet-hood or to the truth of the Qur'an? If it is to preserve the word of God or guard the truth of Revelation, this has been done through the Qur'an. And if it is to show that the Law of God can be implemented in history or that the Kingdom of God can be established on earth, all this has been shown by Muhammad. And if it is to guide man to God and the Right Way of life, this has been well-established by the Qur'an and

Muhammad. Man does not need new revelations or new prophets. What he needs most is to wake up, to open his mind and to quicken his heart. What he needs now is to make use of the already available Revelations, to utilize his existing resources and to draw from the inexhaustible treasures of Islam which has incorporated, preserved and perfected the purity of the previous revelations.

5. God decreed that Muhammad would be the Last Prophet and so he was. No prophet before Muhammad had done or accomplished or bequeathed so much as he did. And no one after him, of those who have claimed prophet-hood, has done anything comparable to what he did. However, this Divine decree was in anticipation of the great historical events which have followed. It heralded good news for man that he would enter a new stage of intellectual maturity and spiritual heights, and that he would have, from then on, to do without new prophets or new revelations, to be on his own, aided by the rich legacies of prophet-hood and revelations as found in Muhammad and his predecessors. It was in anticipation of the fact that the cultures, races and regions of the world would become closer and closer to each other, and that mankind could do well with one universal religion in which God occupies His rightful position and man realizes

himself. It was a solemn witness to the great role which advanced knowledge and serious intellectual undertaking would play in terms of bringing man to God. And it is true that if man can combine his advanced knowledge and his sound intellectual potential with the spiritual and moral teachings of the Qur'an he cannot fail to recognize the existence of God and adapt himself to God's Law.

The historical stage of prophet-hood has ended with Muhammad to give man the evidence that he can mature on his own initiative, to give science an opportunity to function properly and explore the vast dominion of God, and to give the mind a chance to reflect and penetrate. The nature of Islam is such that it has a great deal of flexibility and practicability and can cope with any arising situation. The nature of the Qur'an is such that it is universal and ever-revealing, and in it guidance is sure, without doubt. The nature of Muhammad's message is such that it is addressed to all men and directed to all generations. Muhammad was not merely a racial leader or a national liberator. He was, and still is, a man of history and the best model of him who seeks God. In him every man can find something to learn, and excellent examples of goodness and piety to follow. And in him every generation can find its lost hope. ■



## Good Manners And Noble Qualities

- **Mohammad Manzoor Nomani**

Good manners and noble qualities of mind and character enjoy a place of crucial importance in the structure of Islamic teachings. Moral evolution and uplift was one of the main objects for which the sacred Prophet was raised up. The Prophet himself has said:

“I have been sent down by God to teach moral virtues and to evolve them to highest perfection.”

### **Importance**

An idea of the enormous importance Islam attaches to the cultivation of good manners and noble moral qualities can be obtained from the under-mentioned Traditions of the Prophet:

“The best of you are those who possess the best of manners.”

“On the Day of Recompense nearest to me will be one who displays in one’s daily life the best of manners.”

“On the Day of Reckoning the most weighty item in the ‘Balance of Deeds’ will be good manners.”

Once a Companion asked the Prophet, “What is there that takes a Muslim to Paradise?” The Prophet replied, “Fear of God and good manners.”

The Prophet, again, is reported to

have said, “A Muslim with good manners and good moral disposition gets the same reward as he who fasts (permanently) during the day and spends his nights in prayer.”

The last Tradition tells that a Believer who possesses good manners and carries out scrupulously the moral duties imposed on him by God but does not engage himself much in supererogatory fasts and prayers, attains the degree of excellence of the man who stands up in prayer all night and fasts all day long.

### **The Curse of Bad Manners**

We have been warned by the holy Prophet in an equally forceful manner against the curse of bad manners. He has said:

“A man with bad manners and a bad moral conduct shall not enter Paradise.”

“No sin is more detestable to God than bad manners.”

### **Some More Important Virtues**

Though in the Quran and the Traditions we are taught to cultivate all good and noble moral and social qualities and to avoid everything that is mean or wicked, here we will take up only such virtues as are more important and without which no one can hope to

be a good Muslim and a truthful Believer.

### **Truthfulness**

Truthfulness is a matter of such supreme consequence in Islam that, in addition to speaking the truth always, a Muslim is exhorted, also, to keep company only with those that are truthful. The Quran states:

“O ye who believe I fear God and be only with those who are true (in word and deed). (IX:119)

Says the Prophet:

“He who wishes to love God and His Apostle, or wishes God and His Apostle to love him, must take care to speak nothing but the truth whenever he speaks.”

“Speak the truth even if you see your ruin or death in it for, surely, salvation and life lie alone in truth, and avoid falsehood even if it may hold out to you the promise of success and salvation for the end of falsehood is nothing but failure and frustration.”

Once the Prophet was asked, “What is the hallmark of the dwellers of Paradise ? “ The Prophet replied, “Truthfulness.”

Conversely, a Tradition reads:

“To be a liar is one of the special signs of a Hypocrite.”

It was asked of the Prophet whether a Believer could be a coward.

He said, “It is possible.” It was asked whether a Believer could be a miser. He said, “It is possible.” Again, it was asked of him whether a Believer could be a liar. He said, “No.” (The idea of the Prophet was that a Believer in God could not develop the filthy habit of lying. Faith could never accommodate falsehood; they could not go together).

### **Fulfilling Promises**

It is also a part of truthfulness that when a promise is made it should be fulfilled. The Quran and the Traditions are very clear on the point. Our Faith demands of us never to go back on our pledged word. States the Quran:

And fulfil (every) engagement, for (every) engagement will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning).

(XVII:34)

To fulfil the contracts which ye have made (II:117)

And the Traditions say:

“He who does not fulfil promises made by him has no share in Faith”

“Not to fulfil one’s promises is a special sign of Hypocrite.”

### **Trustworthiness**

Closely allied to truthfulness is the quality of trustworthiness. It is an important branch of it. Islam has laid a special emphasis on it also. Here is what the Quran says:

God doth command you to render

back your Trusts to those to whom they are due. (IV : 58)

And, the Traditions:

“People! In whom there is no trustworthiness, in him there is, so to speak, no Faith.”

“Look not alone at anyone’s prayers and fasts to decide about his spiritual excellence (that is, do not be impressed by anyone’s spirituality simply because you find him devout in his prayers and fasts). You should also see that he is truthful when he speaks, restores honestly what he has received in trust to whom it is due, and remains righteous in times of adversity and suffering.”

### **Justice**

Justice is an integral part of Islamic ethics. We must practise it in all spheres of life. The Quran states:

God commands justice and doing of good (XVI: 90)

In Islam we are commanded to be just and fair not only towards our own people or co-religionists but also towards others even if they be the enemies of our life, property or Faith. It is candidly stated in the Quran that:

And let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety. (V: 8)

The above verse enjoins justice to

those also, individuals as well as communities, who may be harbouring ill will against us. Otherwise, we are sure to incur the displeasure of God and become grievous sinners and criminals in His sight.

To refer now to some of the Traditions:

“The most beloved of men in the sight of God, on the Day of Resurrection, and the nearest to Him, shall be the just leader; and the most hateful of men in the sight of God, on the Day of Resurrection, and the farthest removed from Him, shall be the tyrannical ruler.”

The Prophet is reported to have enquired one day from the Companions: “Do you know who will be the first to come under the shadow of “Divine Mercy on the Day of Requitat?” The Companions replied, “God and His Apostle know best.” The Prophet, then, said, “They will be those who accept a trust when it is offered to them and restore it willingly to the rightful claimant when they are asked to do so, and who Judge in respect of others exactly as they would in respect of themselves.”

The pity is that we ourselves have forgotten the glorious teachings of Islam. If we can produce these qualities within us today, and become truthful in word and deed, and honest in the matter of our trusts and promises, and just and fair in our dealings with others, the success of the world is bound to kiss

our feet and we will attain a high place in Paradise too.

### **Compassion and Forgiveness**

To feel pity on a fellow human being in distress, to be compassionately drawn towards him, to bring him succour, and to pardon the guilty and the defaulter are virtues that are valued very highly in Islam. Take these Traditions, for instance.

“Show kindness, and kindness shall be shown to you ; forgive, and you shall be forgiven.”

“They will not obtain the mercy of God in whose hearts there is no feeling of kindness for others.”

“His sins will not be forgiven by God who does not forgive the faults of others.”

“God will have mercy upon them that are merciful. Treat kindly the dwellers of the earth, He who dwells in the heavens will treat you kindly.”

It is apparent from the last Tradition that our kindness and gentility is not to be confined to our own people alone. We ought to be kind and compassionate towards friend and foe alike and to all the creatures that exist on the earth.

It is reported from the Prophet that once a person who was travelling by road saw a dog licking wet earth in the agony of thirst. The traveller was moved by the spectacle and gave water to the

dog to drink. This simple service of the man to the thirsting dog pleased God so much that He blessed him with salvation.

### **Tenderness**

Tenderness in monetary dealings and in all other fields of one’s activity, and the readiness to oblige and put others at ease are all virtues of the highest order in the Islamic pattern of morality. We will reproduce two Traditions of the holy Prophet in support of our contention. Said he:

“Hell’s fire is forbidden for those that are mild and gentle and make it easy for others to deal with them.”

“God is compassionate and likes compassion in His creature. He grants more to the kind and the tender-hearted than to those that are harsh and severe.”

### **Self-Restraint**

Tolerance, affability, self-restraint, and the ability to control one’s temper and overlook what is unpleasant and disagreeable are qualities that Islam wants everyone to cultivate. Believers who possess these fine moral attributes hold a very high place in the estimation of God.

In the Quran where a mention is made of the blessed ones for whom Paradise has been laid out such people are specifically referred to:

Who restrain anger and pardon (all men). (III : 134)

Said the Prophet:

“God will hold back His punishment from him who will hold back his anger.”

Blessed, indeed, are men who remember these verses and Traditions during moments of provocation and exercise restraint, and, in return, God Mays His chastisement from them!

### **Gentleness of Speech**

Gentleness of speech is a religious virtue in Islam and rudeness a sin. The Quran declares:

Speak fair to the people. (11: 83)

We have it from the Prophet that:

“To speak politely is piety and a kind of charity.”

“To indulge in intemperate language and in harsh behaviour is to perpetrate an injustice and the home of injustice is Hell.”

“Rudeness in speech is Hypocrisy (i.e., the quality of a Hypocrite).”

### **Humility**

Humility is a virtue. Islam wants its followers to practise it as a distinguishing feature of their moral and spiritual behaviour. It does not become a Muslim to be haughty and vainglorious.

Greatness with God is not for those who look down upon others. Instead, it belongs to those who desist from thinking too highly of themselves

and practise humility. In the words of the Quran:

And the servants of (God) Most gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility.

(XXV: 63)

That Home of the Hereafter We shall give to those who intend not highhandedness or mischief on earth.

(XXVIII: 83)

The holy Prophet has said:

“He who observes humility God will make him so exalted that, ultimately, he will attain the highest grade in Paradise.”

On the other hand, pride is so greatly repugnant to God that the sacred Prophet has warned us, again and again, against it in such strong words:

“Whoever hat pride in his heart even of the weight of atom, shall be cast head-long into Hell by God.”

“Whoever has pride in his heart, even of the weight of a mustard seed, shall not enter Paradise.”

“Beware of pride ! Pride was the sin which first of all ruined the Devil.”

May Almighty God save us all from the Satanic evil of pride and endow our hearts and minds with meekness and humility which He admires so much and is the symbol of His slaves.

It needs, however, be remembered that it is demanded of us

to practise meekness and humility in our personal matters and not in matters where truth or Faith is involved. When it comes to Faith or truth we must be bold and outspoken and give the fullest proof of courage and firmness for this is the Will of God for such occasions.

The way of a Muslim, in sum, is that while he is meek and humble in his own individual sphere of existence, he is firm like a rock and allows neither fear nor weakness to come near him where Faith or truth or justice is at stake.

### **Courage and Fortitude**

There occur periods of hardship and adversity in the lives of men. Sometimes there is want, sometimes there is disease and sometimes our enemies harass us. And, so forth. For such situations the teaching of Islam is that we should bear them with courage and fortitude, remain firm and stout of heart and do not waver from our principles in spite of a thousand trials and calamities that may assail us. For such men there is the assurance of the Quran that they are the Beloved of God:

For God loves those who are patient and persevering. (111: 146)

God, surely, is with those who patiently persevere. (II: 158)

And to be firm and patient in pain (or suffering) and adversity and through all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God fearing. (II: 177)

And the Prophet says:

“No boon conferred on man is more precious than that of patience.”

“Patience is one-half of Faith.”

Contrarily, impatience, chicken-heartedness and cowardice are the most lamentable of evils against which the Prophet used to beg God for refuge in his prayers.

### **Sincerity**

Sincerity is the life and soul of the entire moral edifice of Islam, nay, of Islam itself. By sincerity we mean that all our deeds and actions should solely be for the sake of God and prompted by no other urge than to earn His countenance. Apart from it, there must be no other desire, motive or intention behind whatever we do.

Monotheism which is the arch-stone of Islam attains fulfilment through sincerity. Faith in Divine Unity remains imperfect unless all our acts are performed wholly for the sake of God, and we have no other objective before us while carrying them out except the winning of Divine pleasure and reward. States the Prophet:

“He who ‘loves or hates, offers favours or withholds them, and whatever he does, does so for the sake of God, he perfects his Faith.”

It shows that a perfect Muslim in the sight of God is only he who succeeds in subordinating his entire

conduct, his social relations and all his other affairs to the Will of God and is not influenced in them by personal desire or likes or dislikes or by any other urges or impulses.

Another Tradition reads:

“God is not regardful of your fine visages or your wealth. He is regardful only of your hearts and intentions.” The idea of the above Tradition is that God will judge and requite solely on the basis of our motives and intentions.

Now, here is a Tradition with which we propose to round off the present discussion. About this Tradition it is reported that Abu Huraira often used to faint while he related it.

It says:

“The first of those who shall be called to account, on the Day of Resurrection, shall be one who had learned the Quran by heart, and one who had been killed in the way of God, and one who had an abundance of wealth. Then shall God say to him who had got the whole of the Quran by heart, ‘Did I not teach thee what I revealed to My Prophet?’ He will say, ‘Yes, my Lord!’ God will ask, ‘And what hast thou done with regard to what thou didst learn therein?’ He will say, ‘I was constantly at it in the hours of night and in the hours of day. I learnt it myself and taught it, also, to others, and I did it all for Thy sake alone. God will say, ‘Thou art a liar; thou didst only desire that men should say

that such a one was a reciter of the Quran and that has been said already.’

“And the master of wealth shall be brought before God, and God shall say, ‘Did I not give thee an abundance of wealth so that thou wast not in want of anything?’ He will say, ‘Yes, my Lord!’ God will say, ‘And what hast thou done with what I gave thee?’ He will answer, ‘I regarded the rights of kinship, and gave alms, and I did so for Thy sake.’ God will say, ‘Thou art a liar; thou didst desire that men should say that such a one was a generous man, and that has been said already.’

“Then shall he who had been killed in the way of God be brought before Him, and God will say to Him, ‘What was it that thou wast killed for? He will reply, ‘Thou didst bid us to do Jihad in Thy way, and I fought, and was killed,’ God will say, ‘Thou art a liar; thou didst desire that men should say that such a one was a valiant man, and that has been said already.

“These are the three men who, of all creatures, shall be first sent into Fire.”

Brother,—Now, let us examine our thoughts and deeds in the light of the above Tradition and see where do we stand in the sight of God!

O Allah! Endue our hearts with sincerity, and set right our motives and intentions, and make us Thy devoted, dedicated slaves. ■

## The Philosophy of Medical Treatment in Islam

- S. Habibul Haque Nadwi

Man has been created in the best of moulds (Ahsan -i-Taqwim). According to the Prophetic Tradition (Hadith) Allah has created man in His own image (Khalafa-Allah Adama 'Ala Suratih). Thus, being the climax and the crown of the creation, man is an all-embracing theatre of Divine Hierophany and a source of ultimate effusion of Truth. Being the vicegerent of Allah (Khalifat-Allah) on earth and being a celestial archetype on earth he has to bear and discharge the Divine Trust (Amana). An ideal creature like man cannot discharge his Amana without perfect and sound health—both physical and spiritual.

The concept of Original Sin and the treatment of man as a primary sinner, neither existed in Islam nor was disease ever regarded as the result of Original Sin, unworthy of any medical treatment. The rapid disintegration of his personality, according to Islam, is the result of his forgetfulness of the mission assigned to him as the representative of Allah on earth and because of his total identification with the world of passion and greed. He then loses the Divine Form and his theomorphic nature and he falls from the position of his vicegerency.

This was the philosophy which dominated the thinking of the Muslims through the centuries in every walk of life and in every field of knowledge, including Medicine. Eminent Muslim doctors and physicians, also being great scholars of the Qur'an and the Sunna, regarded medical service as a religious duty,

incumbent upon them to sustain the health of the vicegerent of Allah in dynamic shape and function.

### THE QUR'ANIC IMPERATIVES ON DIETETICS

(al-Ghadhaiyat)

The first Divine injunctions in respect to human diet are found in the Qur'an. Since the health of the soul is linked to the health of the body and since both are interdependent and interrelated, the Creator of man, Himself, cognisant of the biological needs of man, prescribed Halal and nourishing (Tayyab) food and prevented man from eating Haram and unhealthy food. Since diet is instrumental in preserving the health of man and since food controls the biological phenomena of the human body Muslim doctors and medical experts pondered over the Qur'anic verses and the jurists, exegetists, biographers and historians explained the verses in the light of the Prophetic Traditions (Ahadith dealing with Tibb-an-Nabawl - Prophetic Medicine), which gave rise to the primary Arabic medical literature. The doctors, physicians, surgeons and experts in other fields of medicine were inspired by the same religious injunctions and followed the dietary laws of the Qur'an in their medical treatment in order to save mankind from illness and physical infirmity. There is neither space nor occasion to deal with such verses in detail, yet a cursory glance over the verse dealing directly with dietetics will assist us in understanding the



philosophy of medical treatment in Islam. The Qur'an addresses both the believers and the non-believers in regard to their diet. Addressing humans in general the Qur'an commands:

O, ye people! eat of what is on earth, lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of the evil one, for he is to you an avowed enemy (11:168).

The believers have also been addressed in a similar tone:

O, ye who believe, eat of the good things that We have provided for you and be grateful to God, if it is Him ye worship (11:172)

From the Qur'a-nic verses it is evident that lawful (Halal) food is regarded as a prerequisite for the maintenance of sound health whilst the forbidden and unlawful (Haram) food has been described as injurious and impious to health, causing illness and physical ailments. The recurring theme of Halal food leads us to believe that prevention is better than cure. Haram food leads man to offensive and sinful deeds while Halal food leads him to licit deeds. The following verses merit our attention:

- (i) Eat of the good things what We have provided for you. (But they rebelled). To Us they did no harm, but they harmed their own souls (11:57).
- (ii) So eat and drink of the sustenance provided by God, and do not evil nor mischief on the (face of the) earth (11.60).
- (iii) O, ye who believe! Make not

unlawful, the good things which God hath made lawful for you. But commit no excess for God loveth not those given to excess. Eat of the things which God hath provided for you, lawful and good (Halal and Tayyab); but fear God in whom ye believe (V: 90-91).

- (iv) Eat what God hath provided for you, and follow not the footsteps of Satan, for he is to you an avowed enemy (VI:142).
- (v) Eat the good things We have provided for you, (But they rebelled). They did no harm, hut they harmed their own souls (VII:160).
- (vi) But (now) enjoy what ye took in war, lawful and good: But fear God for God is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful (VIII:69).
- (vii) So eat of the sustenance which God hath provided for you, lawful and good (Halal and Tayyab). .And be grateful for the favours of God, if it is He whom ye serve (X VI:14).
- (viii) Eat of the good things We have provided for your sustenance, but commit no excess therein, lest My Wrath should justly descend on you: and those on whom descends My Wrath do perish indeed! (XX:81)

In addition to its emphasis on Halal and Tayyab food, the Qur'an also lays stress on eating the meat of such animals which have been slaughtered in the name of Allah. Consuming of non-Halal meat has been described as sinful (Fisq) which leads to moral depravity and dissolute life:

- (i) So eat of (meats) on which God's name hath been pronounced, if ye have faith in His Signs. Why should ye not eat of (meats) on which God's name hath been pronounced, when He hath explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you except under compulsion of necessity? But many do mislead (men) by their appetites unchecked by knowledge. Thy Lord knoweth best those who transgress (VI: 118-119).
- (ii) Eat not of (meats) on which God's name hath not been pronounced: that would be impiety (Fisq). But the evil ones ever inspire their friends to contend with you. If ye were to obey them, ye would indeed be Pagans. (VI: 121).

The overindulgence and wastage of food have been condemned by Allah in the following words:

O Children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: But waste not by excess, for God loveth not the wasters. (VII: 31)

The Qur'anic verse clearly indicates that good and Halal (lawful) diet stimulates man for virtuous and pious deeds (A'mal-i-Saleh) and creates Godly character. Addressing His own Messengers, Allah guides them in the following words:

O ye Apostles! Enjoy and eat all things good and pure, and work righteousness: for I am well acquainted with (all) that ye do. (XXIII: 51).

Eat and drink ye, with profit and health,

because of your good deeds. (LII: 19).

Although the later verses are symbolical descriptions of life in heaven, they are down to earth. The bliss of righteousness is the result of the bliss of Halal and good sustenance which provides individual bliss as well as the social bliss together with individual satisfaction that one obtains through sound health and pious works. It is only those who do good works, which are products of good and pure diet, shall have the throne of dignity. The words 'eating' and 'drinking', if taken in the non-literal sense, generate enormous meanings. They also imply that one should neither eat up the money of the orphans, widows or the weak, nor should one earn his livelihood through Haram means, that is, injustice, theft, forgery, exploitation etc. There is no bliss (Baraka) in life today since seldom do we eat the earnings of Halal money or Halal sources.

The Arabic imperatives (Kulu: eat) have been used throughout the Qur'an. They are very significant since the jurists interpret the imperatives as a collective duty (Fard al-Kifaya). Excessive eating or wastage (Israf) has been forbidden by the Qur'an. Contemporary medical science has been very much concerned with regulating food intake (dieting) and using normal healthy food for the nourishment and preservation of health.

In Islam the sanctity of human life can be evaluated in many verses in the Qur'an, which allow man to eat non-Halal food in emergencies, namely, if his life is in danger or medical necessities demand administering such food to the patient in

order to save his life. The Qur'an first lists Haram foods and then relaxes the dietary laws only to save human life — a sacred trust (Amana) from God given to man.

He hath forbidden you dead meat, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that on which any other name hath been invoked besides that of God. But if one is forced by necessity, without wilful

disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, then he is guiltless. For God is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. (11: 173)

Thus the Holy Qur'an spells out the infallible Divine Wisdom and Infinite Mercies of the Creator to man who is but endowed with limited and fallible wisdom and finite vision. ■

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the guarantors of our children's future. Madrasa is like a candle which burns and spreads itself and conveys the light to others. The crux of the matter is that teachers also imbibe themselves with such sort of principles and norms. Today, the need of the hour is that the syllabus should be thoroughly reviewed. More importantly, besides education, the system of upbringing and the spirit for Dawah activities must be promoted to an unprecedented level. This is the real purpose of our two days event. We must hold deliberations over issues and challenges faced by Madrasas. Besides, "such steps should be taken in this direction which will be more lucrative and impressive and will cater to the needs of the time and situation to a great extent." The second session of the event was presided over by "Maulana Zakaria Sanbhali Nadwi, Dean Faculty of Shariah Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama. Maulana Alauddin Nadwi, HOD Department of Arabic Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama conducted the proceedings of the program. The topic of the second session was "Dawat-e-Deen" (Calling towards the Religion). Describing outstanding contributions of Madrasas, Maulana Zakaria said that today Madrasas are minarets of love, brotherhood and fraternity. He explained in detail the significance of Dawah and mentioned scores of challenges and upcoming issues of Dawah in the contemporary world. He urged the delegates to adopt moderate ways and comprehensive method of the Dawah keeping in view the prevailing situation and the challenges, and also bring due changes in their mode of Dawah mission. Every mode of persuasion for winning over the people should be included. Various participants also threw light on different dimensions of Dawah and gave valuable suggestions and proposals in this direction." The concluding session of the program was presided over by Maulana S. Bilal Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi. The Maulana said, "Your attending the program is laudable, listening it is also laudable, but only listening is not sufficient. It is imperative for you to take pledges to follow strictly the resolutions which were passed in the program in letter and spirit." Dr. Saeedur Rahman Azami Nadwi principal Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama laid tremendous stress on sincerity and selfless service to humanity and urged the participants to act on the message which the meet directed. The program was concluded with the prayer of Dr. Saeedur Rahman Azami Nadwi. ■

*(Obaidur Rahman Nadwi)*

## Teachers Are the Builders of the Nation

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Teachers' Day is observed on September 5, every year. In Hindi, a teacher is called "guru", "Gu" means darkness and "ru" means light. So, a teacher is one who leads to light from darkness.

Guru-Shishu' relationship is like that of parents and their children. Like a father who loves his sons and daughters, the same way a teacher should love his pupils. Accordingly, a great responsibility lies on the teachers. To a great extent future of students depends on their teachers, preceptors and instructors.

It is the teacher who creates inclination and avidity amongst students and provides them an incentive for performing good deeds and dissuades them from devilish acts. "In every religion teacher is put at a high pedestal. So it is in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "I have been sent as a teacher". He further said, "I have been sent to complete good manners."

In the words of Saint Kabir - "If the entire land surface of the world were turned into pens, they would not suffice to describe the greatness of a true Guru."

It is unfortunate that today this noble profession has lost its glory. Teachers have almost lost their honour and dignity by involving themselves in unholy and obnoxious activities. Due to some felonious and callous incidents of theirs, people have lost faith in "Guru-Shishu" relationship. "The recent incident of a school teacher named Tripta Tyagi in Muzaffarnager district who got her students to slap their Muslim classmate for not being able to recite a multiplication table of five. Even the teacher told his classmates to hit him. Mohammadan (Muslim) hai, zor se maaro (He is a Muslim, hit

harder). How cruel was she!

We may easily comprehend tendency and mindset of today's teachers through the following incidents.

According to newspaper reports, the 16 year old girl who was raped by the principal and his colleague of a Gov. school in Delhi. "Brijesh Prajapati, a class VI student in Kakaraiya Primary School, Farrukhabad, UP, was found chatting in the class. It incensed his teacher so much that he beat him to death. Arpit Kavadia, a class XII student in Udaipur died after his teacher hit him repeatedly as Arpit's legs were dangling out side his school desk. This had offended the teacher. Prasad Naskar, a class VII student of a higher secondary school in Baruipur was brutally beaten by his headmaster for not turning up in school uniform. The headmaster left the boy in an unconscious state.

Truly speaking, schools are manufacturing hubs of children in which they shape and shine their characters and behaviors in a sublime way. Besides, schools are like candles which burn and spread themselves and convey their lights to others. Hence, no communal feelings, prejudices and biasness are visible in schools. The crux of matter is that they are minarets of love, affection, brotherhood and fraternity.

No doubt, on account of moral debasements and lack of proper training of teachers, such heinous crimes and hair-raising incidents have become the order of the day.

It is time teachers must cultivate good qualities and sublime norms and set themselves as a true guru only then celebration of "Teachers' Day" will be meaningful and appropriate. ■

## Madrasas Are The Forts of Religion

A two days advisory program was held on August 16-17, 2023 at Darul "Uloom Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow." More than 200 delegates from various branches of Nadwatul Ulama attended the program. In his presidential address, Maulana S. Bilal Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi, Rector, Nadwatul Ulama said, "Madrasas may play a leading role in different branches of knowledge and learning. They also do yeoman services in the field of reformation and upbringing by doing away with social evils. And thus, they bring about a host of changes in every spheres of life, individually and collectively, and may also help in setting up an exemplary society. The basic aim of Madrasas is to produce such Ulamas who have full knowledge and gain proficiency in Islamic Shariah. In fact, Madrasas are the manufacturing hub of human beings in which they may shape and shine their characters and behaviors in quite a sublime way.

Keeping in view the present scenario of the world, responsibilities of Madrasas, especially Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama, increase. And at this juncture, if they do not pay attention to combat these contemporary challenges it becomes impossible for them to thwart the emerging spate of apostasy and transgression. And as such, they would be accountable for it before Allah on the Day of Judgement. He further said that we need not be disappointed, we should transact our duties with wisdom and sagacity.

The first session was presided over

by Maulana Jafar Masud Hasani Nadwi, Nazir-e-Aam, "Nadwatul Ulama. Maulana Kamal Akhter Nadwi conducted the proceedings of the first session and also shed light on the significance of the program and the main objectives of Nadwatul Ulama. The topic of the first session was "Education, Syllabus and System". It should be noted that a few scholars out of the participants delivered speeches on the selected subject of the event. They expressed their views to promote education and also desired to bring about necessary changes in the syllabus. "Addressing the gathering, Maulana Jafar Masud Hasani said, "The aim of education should be unprecedented. Every institution has its own aim and objective. Nadwa has also its fixed target. Another point worth noting is that students should also be informed about it. Without it no strength and potential factors develop in education, which Nadwa strives for since its inception. He further stated that parents and guardians of the students should also be apprised of the aim of education and its system which their children acquire in Madrasas. Moreover, there should be confidence, affection, intimacy and mutual love among teachers, students and the administration. The set up of Madrasa should be like that of the house so that holistic success may surely be achieved. Needless to add that Madrasas are the real forts of Deen (religion). They no doubt safeguard our faith and also are

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## Inside India

### Aug 23 Declared National Space Day

NEW DELHI: The day India's lunar Lander touched down on the Moon, August 23, will be celebrated as National Space Day from now on, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared as he showered effusive praise on Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientists and staff for their historic success — appreciation that he underscored by taking a detour to visit them while returning from his trips to South Africa and Greece.

Modi, who was visibly overcome with emotion while expressing his admiration for the scientists, said as is customary, the Chandrayaan-3's landing site will be named Shiv Shakti point — India became the first country to successfully land near the lunar south pole — and the place where its predecessor Chandrayaan-2 crash-landed as Tiranga point.

“Chandrayaan-3's success is not India's alone, but it is the achievement of the entire humanity. This mission will not only help us understand the secrets of the moon but also contribute to overcoming the challenges on earth,” Modi said, while interacting with scientists at the Isro Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC). “This is an India, which thinks new and thinks in novel ways, which goes to the dark zones and spreads the rays of light. India of 21st century has the capacity to solve major problems of the world”.

### Outcry Over Communal Beating in U.P. Classroom

Meerut: The Uttar Pradesh Police registered a case against a private school teacher accused of making communal comments and encouraging her students to slap their Muslim classmate for not being able to recite a multiplication table in Muzaffarnagar district, officers said.

A video of the incident — which police said

occurred at Neha Public School run from a private home in Khubbapur village — has been widely shared on social media since Friday. In the 34-second clip, the teacher, identified as Tripta Tyagi, can be seen sitting on her chair while asking her students to slap the Class 2 boy.

“A case has been registered against the teacher under sections 323 (punishment for voluntarily causing hurt) and 504 (intentional insult) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) based on the complaint of the boy's father,” said Satyanarayan Prajapat, Muzaffarnagar (city) superintendent of police (SP).

The victim recalled how the teacher told his classmates to hit him. “Mohammedan (Muslim) hai, zor se maaro (he is a Muslim, hit harder),” he quoted the teacher as saying. Asked why she did so, the boy said, “I don't know”.

The state's education department also served the notice to the school. Shubham Shukla, the Basic Shiksha Adhikari of the district, said a show cause notice has been served to the school management and asked its response by August 28 as to why the government recognition of the school not be cancelled.

The incident elicited widespread condemnation from across sections, with several opposition parties targeting the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for allegedly sowing “politics of hate”.

“Sowing the poison of discrimination in the minds of innocent children, turning a holy place like school into a marketplace of hatred — nothing worse a teacher can do for the country,” senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi posted on X, formerly twitter. “This is the same kerosene spread by the BJP which has set every corner of India on fire. Children are the future of India – we all have to teach them love not hatred.” ■

## Around the World

### **10 Killed in Anti-UN Peacekeeping Protest Rally in DR Congo's Goma**

At least 10 people were killed in DR Congo after soldiers attempted to stop a religious sect's planned anti-UN protest. The Christian-animist group known as the "Natural Judaic and Messianic Faith towards the Nations" had demanded departure of UN peacekeepers, a protest rally banned by local authorities.

### **China Warns U.S. Against 'Disastrous' Trade Curbs**

China's premier warned U.S. officials that moves to "politicise" trade issues would prove "disastrous" for the global economy, state media reported.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo is currently on a four-day bridge-building visit to China aimed at better managing tensions between the world's two largest economies.

But a meeting with Premier Li Qiang saw the top official lay into American trade curbs against Beijing, which Washington insists are necessary for its national security but China says are meant to clip its economic rise. "Politicizing economic and trade issues and overstressing the concept of security will... seriously affect bilateral relations and mutual trust," he told Ms. Raimondo.

### **Protest in Bangladesh Over 'Enforced Abductions'**

Thousands of Bangladeshi protesters marched demanding information on hundreds of people they say security forces have abducted during PM Sheikh Hasina's nearly 15 years in power.

Opposition supporters of the Bangladesh

Nationalist Party (BNP) and its allies joined families of those missing to mark the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, many with black gags over their mouths. The government denies the allegations of disappearances and extrajudicial killings, saying some of those reported missing drowned in the Mediterranean while trying to reach Europe.

### **Greece Blaze Declared Largest Wildfire Ever Recorded in EU'**

A forest blaze in Greece is "the largest wildfire ever recorded in the EU" and the bloc is mobilizing nearly half its firefighting air wing to tackle it, a European Commission spokesman said. The EU's civil protection service said the fire has burnt over 810 square kilometers (310 square miles)—an area bigger than New York City.

### **Taiwan Tells China to Stop 'Harassment' as it Detects Warplanes**

Taiwan urged China to stop "military harassment" that risked damaging regional security after it said 24 Chinese warplanes were detected near the island.

China has ratcheted up military and political pressure on self-ruled Taiwan since president Tsai Ing-wen came to power in 2016 because she rejects Beijing's stance that the island is part of Chinese territory.

"The People's Liberation Army's continuous military harassment in the region could lead to a sharp escalation of tensions and worsening of regional security," Taiwan's Defence Ministry said in a statement. "We urge Beijing to take responsibility and immediately cease all unilateral actions that undermine regional stability," it said. ■

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