



THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST

Vol. XXVI No. 1

January 2024

Annual Subscription:

Rs. 250 (per copy Rs. 25) in India \$ 75 (USA, UK, Asian, African and European Countries)

Cheques and Drafts may please be sent to:

The Fragrance of East

Nadwatul Ulama, P.O. Box 93, Tagore Marg. Lucknow-226007, U.P. (India)

Out-station cheques will not be accepted.

A/C 10 863 759 664

IFSC Code No. SBIN 0000 125 State Bank of India, Main Branch, Lucknow

Phone. No.: 0522 - 2740406

E-mail: fragranceofeast1998@gmail.com

Rs. 25/-





The Fragrance of East

Founder:

Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (RAH)

Patron:

S. Bilal Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi

Advisory Board:

Jafar Masood Hasani Nadwi Mohammad Aslam Siddiqui Shamsul Haque Nadwi Editor:

Shariq Alavi

Asstt. Editor:

Obaidur Rahman Nadwi



Divine Judgement About Mankind

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

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

(al-Shüra 42:28)

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

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

CONTENTS

1- The Qur'an - The Hadith	-	4
Editorial:		
2- Purpose of Our Existence	- Shariq Alavi	5
Society:		
3- Pillars of A Healthy Social Life	- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi	7
4- The Family: Its Objectives And Functions	- Khurshid Ahmad	9
5- What is It Like To Be A Muslim in India?	- Karan Thapar	17
6- Islam Shows The Way	- Anis Uddin Ahmed	19
7- A Colonial Discourse on The Veil	- Shaikh Mujibur Rehman	22
Seerah:		
8- Migration To Madinah	- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi	23
Education:		
9- The Relationship Between the	- Mahar Abdul Haq	27
Creator And The Creation And		
Its Educational Implications		
10- Universities And The Pursuit of	- Mahesh Verma	31
Excellence		
<u>Personalities:</u>		
11- My Teacher, My Guiding Light	- Mirwaiz Umar Farooq	33
12- Ernest Hemingway-A	- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi	36
Distinguished American Novelist		
Report:		
13- Innovative Approaches to Arabic	- Mubeenul Haq Nadwi	38
Learning: Zameel Academy's		
World Arabic Day Endeavors		
14- Around The World	-	39

Wisdom of Qur'an

"They are the ones who will be rewarded for their patience: lofty palaces will be granted to them, and they will be received with greeting and salutation. Therein they shall abide for ever: how good an abode, and how good a resting place!"

(Al-Qur'ân – 25:75-76)

These ayaahs deal with the rewards of patience. The word cabr (patience, fortitude) in the Arabic text is used in its most comprehensive sense. Variously, it means to endure persecution at the hands of the enemies of Truth with courage and to bear whatever hardships come one's way while striving for the establishment of the true Faith of God.

It also means to remain steadfast against all fears and to refuse to succumb to enticements; to resolutely fulfil one's obligations in spite of Satan's temptations and one's own carnal self; to shun the unlawful and to remain within the bounds of the lawful set by God; to spurn all pleasures and benefits that might accrue from acts of sins, and to cheerfully put up with difficulties and losses in order to follow the Path of righteousness and virtue and to accept every trial and adversity that one might encounter.

In sum, this one word embraces a whole universe of meanings regarding true Faith, a truly religious approach to life, and good moral conduct inspired by religious Faith.

Ghufrah means a lofty building. It is generally translated as the 'upper chamber' which brings to mind a two-storey building. The loftiest buildings constructed here are mere caricatures of the palaces of Paradise. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Tamim al-Dari relates that Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) observed: "Al-Dîn is the name of sincerity and well-wishing." Upon this we said: "For whom?" He replied: "For Allah, His Book, His Messenger and for the leader and the general Muslims."

(Sahih Muslim)

Nasiha means sincerity and well-wishing. Nasiha for Allah implies that man's heart is cleansed from all impurities with regard to belief in Allah, i.e. one should believe in Him as the Creator and Master with all His Attributes and with an earnest desire to obey all His commands.

Nasiha for Allah's Book means that it should be sincerely believed as a revelation from the Lord and be read and understood with utmost zeal and enthusiasm.

Nasiha for the Messenger signifies that his Apostlehood must be affirmed with perfect sincerity of heart, and whatever he has vouchsafed to humanity should be respected as the Will of God, and he should be respectfully followed in all his precepts and examples.

Nasiha for leaders implies that they should be respected, obeyed and given support in all those affairs which they conduct according to the Shari'ah. And if they deviate from the path of righteousness, they should be advised and admonished, and sincere efforts be made to bring them back to the right path.

Nasiha for general Muslims is that they shouldbe advised in all matters concerning the good of this world as well as the hereafter.

Nasiha thus covers the whole gamut of religion as its scope is as wide as that of Islam. ■

Editor's Note 🗷

Purpose of Our Existence

Islam has clearly laid down instructions how to lead life. The Holy Quran and our esteemed Prophet directed us to observe a pious life. We believe that our salvation depends on following these rules-

Recently Vijay Hashia in his article published in Times of India has described the purpose of our existence. For general benefit we reproduce below what he says:

"The meaning and purpose of life is an introspective quest that many of us indulge in at some point in life.

Arthur Schopenhauer gives the purpose of life a subjective hue, rooted in compassion, kindness, and love. His philosophy asserts that acknowledging the pervasive nature of suffering in all living beings fosters a compassionate attitude. And that the cultivation of moral virtues is a means to transcend the inherent suffering in existence. So, the recognition of shared suffering and the pursuit of moral excellence contribute to a meaningful life.

In contrast, Soren Kierkegaard explores life's purpose by delineating three distinct stages – the aesthetic, ethical, and the religious. Each stage represents a facet of personal growth, with the religious stage, in particular, emphasising a connection to something greater for an understanding of existential themes. Kierkegaard's framework posits that genuine meaning is found in religious pursuits, underlining the significance of a transcendent connection in navigating life's complexities.

The 'Ubermensch' introduced by Nietzsche is an idealised human shaping his own meaning beyond societal norms, driven by the 'will to power' for selfassertion. He contends that individuals transcending conventional morality hold the power to infuse life with meaning. Tolstoy's spiritual view emphasises faith, unselfishness, and love for a purposeful life. Tagore explores life's essence spiritually, while Bertrand Russell suggests pursuing enduring interests practically for purpose. Shakespeare, through Macbeth, offers a nihilistic view, likening life to 'a tale told by an idiot',

THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST, January 2024

potentially overlooking individual capacity for finding meaning amid life's chaos.

The diverse philosophies from Schopenhauer's compassion to Nietzsche's individual empowerment to Kierkegaard's religious stage and Tolstoy's spiritual values serve not only as challenges to conventional notions but also as thought-provoking inquiries into the fundamental nature of existence and human experiences.

The quest for meaning influences psychological and physical well-being, serving as a motivational and self-regulatory force. It aids in coping with life's challenges, and promotes mental health by mitigating uncertainty, stress, and sense of loss.

Finding a balance between personal fulfilment and contributing to the well-being of others, the community or society, emerges as a holistic approach to a meaningful life. Personal fulfilment involves understanding one's values, passions, and goals, engaging in activities that bring joy and satisfaction, and pursuing continuous self-improvement. Simultaneously, contributing to society's well-being, fostering meaningful relationships, and performing acts of kindness and service to others, contribute to collective well-being.

This perspective recognises the interconnectedness of individual happiness and the greater good, emphasising that both personal and collective well-being are integral components of a fulfilling existence. Actions that benefit society create a more positive and supportive environment, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities alike. In weaving together these diverse philosophical threads, a comprehensive understanding of life's meaning and purpose begins to emerge – one that encompasses the individual, the collective, and the intricate interplay between the two."

S.A.

We solicit articles for publication in The Fragrance of East. Suitable remuneration will be paid to writers. We prefer receipt of articles on: e-mail: shariqalavi4@gmail.com along with a hard copy, duly signed, by post.

Pillars of A Healthy Social life

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

There is no good in most of their secret talks, except in him who commands charity, enjoins good and brings about conciliation among mankind.

(al-Nisa 4:114)

These are the three pillars to a healthy social life charity, goodness and peace. Unless people demonstrate sympathy for other in the form of giving charity and sacrificing their selfish interests, they cannot have good social relations. Another equally significant Qur'anic concept it that of enjoining good. This stands for promoting something which is instinctively acceptable for all decent human beings. It may vary, depending upon local conditions. For example, in one particular society there may be quarrels and in-fighting for men are vulnerable to such feuding.

Maulana Ilyas insightfully commented that a burglar strikes only where he expects to find something. Satan is always after the pious and the noble. It is therefore a common sight that people hailing from noble families are riven with hostility. Since the élite are hypersensitive about their honour and prestige, Satan makes them particularly vulnerable on this count. They feel offended where no insult is intended. Rather they nurse a grudge for no reason, for a crime against them has not been committed.

In other words, charity, goodness

and cordial relations are needed by everyone all the time. Without charity, mutual love is all dried up. Charity does not always mean giving money. Talking gently to someone and sharing their joys and sorrows also constitutes charity. Giving a helping hand to someone in mounting is another form. Clearing the road of obstacles represents its spirit as The Qur'an employs well. comprehensive term, charity, of which there are numerous forms. What is important is a feeling of sympathy, goodwill, sincerity and helpfulness. Without such noble feelings, no healthy social life is possible.

The other Qur'anic directive is of bringing about reconciliation among people. Cordial social relations are the key to happiness. Today, both these values — charity and peace — are neglected. Divisive forces are dominant everywhere.

Equally important is one's sincere intention. Whoever seeks Allah's pleasure will be rewarded. A good deed may be performed out of purely selfish or political motives. One may have after all a material interest in doing something good. Accordingly, Allah declares that he will reward lavishly only those who intend to win His pleasure. He will reject any selfish motives. All of our good deeds should spring from the noble objective of earning only His pleasure.

Chronicles Of Death

Suicide is a rising trend in India, including among the young.

There isn't enough official attention on this

National crime data for 2022 is grim reading. Among the grimmest statistics is that the national daily average of suicides was nearly 500. What does this say? Chronic levels of stress remain unaddressed. The three big gaps are poor mental health infrastructure, grey areas in relevant laws, and taboos that stop people from seeking help.

A public health crisis | In 2022, a third of all who died by suicide were farmers, daily wagers. Over 13,000 students form the other large group. Mental health experts say 'suicide clusters', such as in Kota, need niche tactics with continuous psychiatric evaluation and care. Yet as we saw in Kota, where 23 youngsters have died by suicide this year, authorities opted to put springs in ceiling fans, and nets below balconies. How is that a solution?

The law was righted | Attempt to suicide, IPC Section 309, was decriminalised with the mental health law in 2017. The new bill BNS, to be tabled in Parliament soon, has rightly dropped the legal provision altogether. The updated BNS retains abetment, notoriously difficult to prove.

Conviction's tough | On Monday, SC again said that to convict a person for abetment, his criminal intent and instigation must happen close to the time of the suicide. Quashing a case, SC said prosecution without such evidence would be "nothing but an abuse of the process of law". The problem often is shoddy police investigation.

Where's the support | Survivors need support, long-term help. Where do they go when home circumstances push them to the brink? After all, the data says cause for 32% suicide cases was "family problems". Residences can be unsafe places, for both men and women. Prior attempts are a predictor for more attempts. Who does the surveillance?

Governments must invest | Indians fall back on family-community support for most needs – financial to personal, yet a mental health issue is a no-go area. Addressing the taboo on mental distress is a task beyond the capacity of India's network of suicide helplines and support networks – still largely privately run, by psychiatrists and NGOs. Government networks, where they exist, are often inaccessible and understaffed.

One more data point. Nearly 35% of suicide deaths were in the 18-30 age group. That's part of the demographic dividend pushed to the edge.■

(Editorial, Times of India, 6-12-2023)

The Family: Its Objectives And Functions

- Khurshid Ahmad

What are the functions which Islam wants the institution of the family to perform in the lives of the individual and the society? The family is not just a factory for the procreation of the human species, although the preservation and communication of the race is one of its objectives. It is the basis of the entire socio—cultural structure and a self sustaining mechanism to ensure social, ideological and cultural stability over the entire span of society on the one hand and in the time past, present and future on the other. Let us briefly outline the objectives and functions of family as enunciated in the Qur'an and the Sunnah

1. Preservation and Continuation of the Human Race.

The survival of the human race and culture, and continuity in the functioning of man's Khilafah depends on the effective operation of the mechanism for procreation and reproduction. Nature has provided for this in that the phycological and physiological differences between the sexes are complementary to each other. All the facts of the procreation demand that the process needs a stable structure to come into operation. Man, woman and child all are in need of a permanent and lasting institution in order to fulfil this role.

The family is the institution which can take care of the entire process, from the initial phases to its fruition. The Qur'an says:

"O Mankind, be conscious of your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single soul, created of like nature, his mate and from the two created and spread many men and women."

"Your women are a tillage for you: so come into your tillage you wish and take care of what is for you, and be conscious of your duty to God and know that you shall meet Him.

2. Protection of Morals

Sex—urge is a natural and creative urge. Although common to all living beings, in the case of men and women there are some unique aspects. In other animals, it is primarily for procreation and is regulated through instinct and the process of nature. The mating urge is not effective 'at all times'; it is bound by its own seasons and cycles. With man, this is not so. The urge is always there and lacks any physiological control built—in mechanism. But control and regulation are essential for a healthy existence, even at biological level. They become more important at the social and cultural levels. Neither total abstinence or unceasing promiscuity can lead to stable and healthy existence.

Islam forbids non—marital sex in all its forms. But it enjoins marriage to enable men and women to fulfil their natural urges, to enjoy this aspect of life in such a way that pleasure and responsibility go hand in hand. Sex through marriage and marriage alone provides the control mechanism for the sex— urge. It also acts as a safety valve for sexual morality. Through it, fulfilment and sublimation are achieved in a balanced way and equilibrium is attained in inter-sex relations. The Qur'an calls marriage a hisn, a 'castle', i.e. (it is a protection) against a life of debauchery. It says:

"So marry them by permission of their folk, and give them their portion of kindness as women in wedlock, so that they be honest, not debauched, nor of loose conduct."- At another place the same point is stressed with reference to the man: '(It is lawful for you) to have the virtuous women of the believers and virtuous women of those who were given the Scriptures before you, when you give them their marriage portions and live with them in wedlock, with honour, not in debauchery, or free love.

3. Psycho—Emotional Stability, Love and Kindness

Another objective of marriage is to attain psychological, emotional and spiritual companionship. The relationship in the family, between all its

members, and most important of all, between the husband and wife, is not merely a utilitarian relationship. It is a spiritual relationship which sustains and generates love, kindness, mercy, compassion, mutual confidence, selfsacrifice, solace and succour. The best in the human nature expresses itself in the flowering of these relationships. It is only in the context of the family that what is spiritually potential in men and women becomes real and sets the pace for the blossoming of goodness and virtue within the family and outside it. In marriage companionship, each partner seeks ever-increasing fulfilment. With children in the family, the values of fellow- feeling, of love and compassion, of sacrifice for others, of tolerance and kindness are translated into reality and implanted in character. It is the family that provides the most congenial climate for the development and fulfilment of human personality. That is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) has said that home is the best place in the world. This function of marriage and family is emphasised in Qur'an in a number of ways. It says:

"And (one) of His signs is that He created for you, of yourselves, spouses that you may repose in them (and find rest and tranquillity in them) 'and he has set between you love and mercy."

At another place the relationship between the spouses has been described as that between 'the body and the garment'. "They are like a garment to you and you are (like) a garment to them".

This emphasises their sameness, their oneness, something much more sublime than legal equality. The husband and the wife both are described as each other's raiment, not one as the garment and the other the body. A garment is something nearest to the human body; it is that part of the external world which becomes a part of our being. Such is the closeness of the relationship between the spouses. Dress is something that covers the body and protects it. The spouses are protectors and guardians of each other. The dress beautifies the wearer. One feels oneself incomplete without it. Husband and wife complement each other; one completes and perfects and beautifies the other. This relationship also protects the morals —without this shield one is exposed to the dangers of illicit carnality. All these aspects have been captured in the single but succinct phrase: you are like garment for each other.

4. Socialisation and Value— Orientation

The function of child—bearing remains incomplete without its more crucial part of child—rearing and upbringing—their education, orientation, character—building and gradual initiation into religion and

culture. It is because of this aspect that family care becomes a full—time job. No other institution or even a number of institutions can take care of this function, "...and be conscious of your duty to Allah in whose name you appeal to each other (for your rights) and to (the ties of) the womb.

To be conscious of duty to the ties of the womb is an all—embracing demand which includes obligations towards the wife, the children and other relations. "And take care of what is for you" in Surah al—Baqarah also refers to the same function. One is enjoined to take care of one's self and the members of the family. "O you who believe", says the Qur'an, "strive to protect yourselves and your wives and children from Fire.' This objective is set forth in the form of a prayer at a number of places:

"Our Lord! Grant us the comfort of our eyes from our wives and our offspring and give us all (the grace) to be in the forefront of the righteous."

"My Lord!: Make me a performer of the prayer and make my offspring prayer—performing. Our Lord, accept my petition, Our Lord, forgive me and my parents.

The family's role as a basic organ of socialisation is referred to by the Prophet in a number *ahadith* where he has said that every child is born in the nature of Islam and it is his parents him into a Christian, Jew Or Magian.

The Prophet has said:

"Of all that a father can give to his children, the best is their good education and training."

"And whosoever has cared for his three daughters or three sisters and given them a good education and training, treating them with kindness till God makes them stand on their own feet. by God's grace he has earned for himself a place in the paradise." Although one's first responsibility is to one's children and younger brothers and sisters, this institution family care covers a number of relations, near and distant, according to the cirumstances. Care of one's parents and of the weaker or poorer members of the family has been enjoined again and again by the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

5. Social and Economic Security

The institution of the family is an important part of the Islamic system of socio—economic security. The rights do not relate merely to moral, cultural and ideological aspects; they include the economic and social rights of the family members. The Prophet has said: "When God endows you with prosperity, spend first on yourself and your family." Maintenance of the family is a legal duty of the husband, even if the wife is rid). Spending on the "relations of the womb" has been specifically enjoined. Poor relatives have a prior claim upon one's zakat and other social contributions.

The law of inheritance also reveals the nature of economic obligations within the family structure. This responsibility extends to a number of relations. One's parents and grandparents and paternal and maternal relations have a claim upon one's wealth and resources. Someone once said to the Prophet "I have property and my father is in need of it," The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied. "You and your property belong to your father. Your children are among the finest things you acquire. Eat of what your children acquire.

There are ahadith emphasising the rights of aunts, uncles and other relatives. Orphans in the family are to be absorbed and treated like one's own children. Older members are to be looked after and treated with honour, kindness and respect, and in the same way these responsibilities extend to one's grandchildren and great grandchildren. Even the needy relatives of any of the spouses have claims upon the well—to—do members. One of the functions of marriage and the family is to extend the ties with relatives and to weld them all into a system of socioeconomic cohesion and mutual support. This is not merely a system of economic security, although economic interdependence and support are its important elements. Islam established a system of psycho-social security.

The members of the family remain integrated within it; the aged do not go

to old people's homes. Orphans are not thrown into orphanages. The poor and unemployed are not made to survive on public assistance. Instead, all of these problems are, in the first instance, solved within the framework of the family in a way that is more humane and is in keeping with the honour and needs of everyone. It is not economic deprivation alone that is catered for; emotional needs are also taken care of.

The social role of the family becomes very clear in the context of the Qur'anic injunction about polygamy. Limited polygamy is permitted in Islam, as Islam is a practical religion and is meant for guidance of human beings made of flesh and bones. There may be situations whereon forced monogamy may lead to moral or social incongruities with disastrous consequences. Sexual urge is not uniform in all human beings, nor is their capacity to control themselves. For a number of reasons. a man may be exposed to a situation where the choice before him could be between second marriage or drift towards sin. In such situations, polygamy is permitted.

Similarly, there may be more pronounced familial or situations. To take only one social instance, there are periods, particularly after wars, when the number of women in a society exceeds that of men. In such a situation, either some women must remain perpetual spinsters and / or live in sin or they may

be absorbed in the family system through polygamy. Islam prefers their absorption in the family. This points to the social function of marriage as a corrective of certain social imbalances.

Likewise, there may be orphans in the family or society and the family alone can provide them with the love, care and dignity they need. The verse in the Qur'an which gives permission of polygamy was revealed after the war of Uhad wherein about ten per cent of the Muslim army was killed, creating a problem of widows and orphans in the society. Although the permission is general, the historical context provides important clues to the function of the institution. The Qur'an says:

"And if you fear that you will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four and if you fear that you cannot do justice (to more than one) then (keep to) one (only) or that which your right hand possesses. Thus, it is more likely that you will not do injustice."

Marriage has also been encouraged to extend protection for the weak within the family. The Prophet commented on the behaviour of a bright young man who married an older widow because he had younger sisters, as their mother had died, and he wanted to marry a woman who could take care of them and bring them up properly.

The family, in the Islamic scheme

of life, provides for economic security as it provides for moral, social and emotional security and also leads to integration and cohesion among the relations. Thus, it establishes a very wide and much more humane system of socio—economic security.

6. Widening the Family Horizons and Producing Social Cohesion in Society

Marriage is also a means to widen the area of one's relations and develop affinities between different groups of the various societies—between families, tribes and nationalities. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has said: 'Matrimonial alliances (between two families or tribes) increase friendship more than anything else.' Marriage acts as bridge between different families, tribes and communities and has been instrumental in the absorption of diverse people into a wider affinity. In practice, marriage has played this role in the early Islamic period as well as throughout Islamic history and in all parts of the world.

7. Motivation for Effort and Sacrifice

It has also been indirectly suggested that marriage increases one's sense of responsibility and induces one to make greater efforts making a living and improving one's economic lot. This aspect is referred to by the Qur'an when it enjoins people to many, it says:

"Marry those among you who are single and (many) your slaves, male and female, that are righteous; if they are poor, God will enrich them out of His bounty; God is All—Embracing, All Knowing."

These are some of the major functions which are performed by the family in Islamic society. It provides for the reproduction and procreation of the human race. It acts as the protector of the morals of the individual and society. It creates a congenial context for the spiritual and emotional fulfilment of the spouses, as also of all other members of the family and promotes love, compassion and tranquillity in society. It initiates the new generations into the culture, tradition and further evolution of their civilisation. It is the sheet—anchor of a system of socio-economic security. It sharpens the motivation of man and strengthens incentives for effort and social progress. It is the cradle of civilisation and a bridge that enables the new generations to move into the society. It is the link that joins the past with the present and present with the future in such a way that social transition and change take place through a healthy and stable process. Thus it is, on the one hand, the means adopted for regulating relations between the sexes and providing the mechanism by which the relations of a child to the community is determined and on the other, it is the basic unit of

THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST, January 2024

society integrating its members within and enabling them to play their ideological and cultural role in the world (both now and in the future). This is the all—embracing significance of the institution of the family. If this institution is weakened or destroyed, the future of the entire culture and civilisation will be threatened.

The key role in the proper development of the family is played by the woman. In an Islamic society, she is freed from the rigours of running about in search of living and attending to the demands of employment and work. Instead, she more or less exclusively devotes herself to the family, not merely to her own children, but to all the dependant relations in the family. She is responsible for running it in the best possible manner. She looks after its physical, emotional, educational, administrative and other needs. It is a world itself and involves a network of activities, intellectual, physical and organisational. She runs and rules this world with responsibility and authority.

Enough Is Enough

That US naval forces confronted Yemen's Houthi rebels in the Red Sea, fending off an attack on a merchant ship, adds to the growing instability in West Asia. Houthis have been targeting Red Sea shipping ostensibly linked to Israel to get Tel Aviv to halt its bombardment of Gaza. But Netanyahu recently said Israel's military operation will continue for many months.

A difficult ally | So far, the US has provided Israel with immense military and diplomatic support. But Tel Aviv's actions have only made life difficult for Washington. The US is having to expend considerable military resources in tackling Iran-backed rebels in Syria and Iraq – and now Houthis – to support Israel.

Israel suffers too | Israel is also taking on considerable economic losses. The war is costing it at least \$260 million per day. Its much-vaunted high tech industry has seen an acute shortage of workers. Consumption has slumped and the Israeli economy is expected to contract by as much as 5% in Q4 2023. Therefore, resentment against Netanyahu's wartime administration is growing.

Who gains? | Certainly not the international community that is having to deal with disruptions to Red Sea shipping. The cost to ship a container from China to the Mediterranean was up by 44% in December. The only winners here are Iran – which has demonstrated its disruptive capabilities – and Russia, which has managed to draw attention away from the Ukraine war.

Decision time Biden | In a US election year Biden should calculate the political costs of the Israel-Hamas conflict. He should put greater pressure on Netanyahu to define a clear exit strategy. Trump, should he be the Republican presidential nominee, will certainly blast the Biden administration for its involvement in foreign wars. It's time to tell Netanyahu enough is enough.■

(Editorial, Times of India, 02-01-2024)

THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST, January 2024

(Cont. from page 38)

Academician), Dr. Abul Maathi Khairy Al-Ramadi (Professor, King Saud University, Riyadh & Egyptian Writer), Sameer Mahmud Attia (Palestinian poet), Dr. Makki Abdhullah Shami (Saudi Poet), Muhammad Halel Ruwali (Saudi Journalist), Dr. Khalifa Yasen ibnu Arabi (Assistant Professor, University of Bahrain), "Dr. Zainab Alyasi (Lecturer, UAE University), Sameer Al-Areemi (Omani Story writer & novelist), Bassam Algafoori Alyemani (Arabic Academician), Jaber Ateeq (Qatar Novelist), Adil Rashedi (Kuwaiti Islamic writer), Dr. Rizwanur Rahman (Professor, Dept. of Arabic, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New delhi), Dr. Nasim Akthar Nadwi (HOD, Dept. of Arabic language & literature, Jamia Millia Islamia, New delhi), Dr. Nadeer Ahmad Nadwi (Professor, Dept. of Arabic, Darul Uloom nadwathul ulama, Lucknow), Dr. Sayeed bin Makhashin (Assistant Professor, Maulana Azad National Urdu University Hyderabad), Dr. Sumama Faisal (Assistant professor, Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Lucknow campus), Dr. Jamaludheen Faroogi (Retired Professor and Arabic writer), Syed Huzaifah Ali Nadwi (Research Scholar, Cardiff University, Britain), who actively participated and enriched the event with their expertise.

A distinctive feature of the festival was the workshops on Reading Arabic Newspapers and following Arabic News Channels and Arabic calligraphy by Dr. Shuaib Nizami, Sayyid Abdulla Koya and Miss. Thooba. This workshop aimed to enhance linguistic and cultural understanding, emphasizing the significance of staying informed through Arabic media and delve into the art of Arabic calligraphy. The Islamic Chair at the University of Calicut hosted the workshop, providing a conducive environment for participants to delve into the intricacies of Arabic literature and media. The segment on Spoken Arabic by Mr. Bassam Al-Gafoori Alyamani provided a platform for participants to refine their spoken Arabic skills. The positive feedback received indicated a high level of satisfaction among the attendees.

Zameel Academy's International Arabic Festival was a resounding success, fostering a global appreciation for modern Arabic literature. The festival's emphasis on inclusivity, diverse perspectives, and thematic exploration contributed to a rich and enlightening experience for all participants. Building on the success of first two editions, Zameel Academy is committed to making the World Arabic day an annual tradition, further solidifying our dedication to linguistic and cultural diversity.

What is It Like To Be A Muslim in India?

- Karan Thapar*

It's, arguably, one of the saddest indictments of our country that today we increasingly ask the question "What is it like to be a Muslim in India?" The answer ought to be no different to being a Hindu, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or atheist. But it is. Ziya Us Salam's new book, Being Muslim in Hindu India: A Critical View, explains in distressing detail why that is so.

Let me start with the background but bear in mind the situation has got incalculably worse in the last decade. Muslims are 15% of the population but only 4.9% of state and central government employees, 4.6% of the paramilitary forces, 3.2% of IAS, IFS and IPS and, perhaps, as low as 1% of the Army. Since the Sachar Committee of 2006, we've known that in economic and social terms, they're far worse off than the Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

Even in politics, where once their voice was heard, it's diminishing and receding. In proportionate terms, they should have 74 seats in the Lok Sabha. They have 27. In not one of our 28 states do we have a Muslim chief minister; in 15, there's no Muslim minister, in 10, just one, usually in charge of minority affairs.

Actually, no party has turned its back on them as squarely as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Neither in 2014 nor 2019 did it have a Muslim Lok Sabha MP. Today, it doesn't even have a Muslim Rajya Sabha MP. In Karnataka and UP, with 14% and 19% Muslim populations respectively, it doesn't have a single Muslim MLA. In Gujarat, it hasn't fielded a Muslim candidate in any election, Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha, since 1998. In fact, this April, KS Eshwarappa, a former deputy chief minister of Karnataka, boasted that the BJP doesn't need Muslim votes.

What makes the situation worse is what's said of Muslims by ruling party leaders and their close supporters. They're called "Babar ki aulad", taunted with abba jaan and repeatedly told to go to Pakistan. When there are calls for their genocide, few, if any, BJP voices speak out in condemnation. When accused of rioting, their homes are demolished even before their guilt is established. They're also regularly accused of love *jihad* and murdered for alleged cattle smuggling.

Let me cite an example from Ziya's book of what happened to a Muslim man in Jharkhand in June 2019. It may be invidious to single out one incident but its illustrative of many others. 'The rampaging mob... tied him to a lamp post and beat him with anything that was on hand, from iron rods to batons, tyres and belts. The man bled from his head, hands and face. His legs were swollen, many of the bones were broken and his hands were bleeding. He could barely stand... His crime? He was a Muslim in new India."

Even something as essential as their identity is denied to Muslims. Mohan

^{*} Karan Thapar is the author of Devil's Advocate: The Untold Story.

THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST, January 2024

Bhagwat, the RSS Sarsanghchalak, says "Every Indian is a Hindu". Not just Muslims even Sikhs would not accept that. But he's gone further. "All those who are in Bharat today are related to Hindu culture, Hindu ancestors and Hindu land, nothing other than these."

I think I've said enough to explain why the answer to the question "What is it like to be a Muslim in India?" could

threaten the integrity and future of our country. I'd say it's pretty obvious. But think for a moment what that answer means for our Muslim brothers and sisters. For the rest of us, it's an arms-length analytical concern. For them, it's their very existence. We speak of the problem, hopefully with deep concern. They live it and fear it can only get worse.

(Hindustan Times, 24-12-2023)

Urdu Poet Munawwar Rana Passes Away

- Anupam Srivastava

Noted Urdu poet Munawwar Rana passed away at the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences in Lucknow on January 14, 2024. He was on ventilator for the last six days, according to his daughter Somaiyya Rana. Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the death of noted poet Munawwar Rana and said he made rich contribution to Urdu Literature and poetry. Born on November 26, 1952, he left a mark on Indian literature and his work, "Shahdaba", earned him the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award in 2014 but he returned it due to political reasons. During the anti-CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act), his daughter and he supported the protesters. He was also in the news during the farmers' agitation for purportedly controversial remarks.

Expressing grief over Munawwar Rana's death, poet Sanjay Mishra Shauq said, "His contributions to Urdu poetry continue to resonate, leaving a lasting legacy in the realm of literature. Munawwar Rana was a luminary in the tapestry of Indian literature. His literary brilliance shone through his notable work, "Shahdaba," which not only captivated the hearts of readers but also earned him the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award in 2014."

"The profound impact of his verses, often delving into the complexities of life, love, and society, resonates beyond his mortal existence. Munawwar Rana's contributions to Urdu poetry endure as a timeless legacy, inspiring future generations to explore the richness of language and the depth of human experience through the written word," he added.

Noted poet Sarvesh Asthana said," Tragically, the final chapter of Munawwar Rana's life concluded at the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, where he breathed his last. His passing marked the end of an era, as Lucknowites mourn the loss of a poetic soul who had woven emotions and thoughts into the fabric of Urdu poetry. He was someone who used more of Hindi or Hindustani words in his poetry instead of tough Arabic or Persian words. That's why his poetry was an instant hit among the masses."

"Though he remained in controversies, when we reflect on the life and works of Munawwar Rana, we are reminded that though the poet may have left the physical realm, his words remain etched in the hearts of those who found solace and inspiration in the eloquence of his ghazal, especially Mohajirnama in which he has written 'Mohajir hain magar hum ek duniya chhor aye hain," Urdu critic Parvez Mallikzada said.

"In the realm of literature, his legacy persists, as a testament to the enduring power of poetry to transcend time and connect the human spirit across generations," he said.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, in a social media post said, "The demise of the country's renowned poet Munnavar Rana is extremely heartbreaking. Wishing peace to the departed soul. Heartfelt tribute."■

(Hindustan Times, 15-1-2023)

Islam Shows The Way

- Anis Uddin Ahmed

Islam declares in unequivocal terms that the real cause of our miseries is not economic. It holds that economic disorder is not the cause but a direct effect of moral degradation. Character building and development of moral health are the only remedies man is in need of. Without them social, political, economic or any other reform is simply unthinkable. Moral health is the master-key that all gates of progress and prosperity. It is the only power that can chase away all injustices, iealousies and the causes of conflicts and bad blood. To have a clear idea of the method we must know the real position of man.

What is Man?

The real man is not the human body or part thereof. Human body is as a matter of fact only a house in which the real man sits. We see only the body. We have no means to see the real man housed in it.

Fortunately or unfortunately man shrouded under heavy curtains. The body is never the index of the real man. Nobody can a man from his body whether he is good or bad, genius or a fool, virtuous or vicious.

Let us take help from a story of Mahabharat. It is said that the Mahabharat battles were in full swing. The dead bodies lay scattered in lacs. Thousands of people were squirming and wringing in pools of blood. In a remote corner a vulture was sitting silently. Narad Muni appeared there and addressed the vulture in a touching tone with a feeling to the unprecedented

blood bath presenting the most ghastly scene. The great Muni expressed great surprise and sorrow over the vulture's attitude. It appeared to be unmoved and taking pleasure in the unfortunate human sufferings- The vulture raised its hoary head and replied that he was not there for pleasure's sake. He added that his wife was very ill and that she would not be recovered unless she is served with a bit of human flesh. The great Muni pointed to the millions of corpses lying over the field and asked the vulture to notch out some flesh from any of them. To the great surprise of the Muni the vulture replied that none of them was a human being and handed over his spectacles to the Muni to see the corpses through them. The Muni saw the corpses through the spectacles and found that they were actually the dead bodies of so many animals like dogs, cats, foxes, asses, swines and jackals etc. The Muni was taken aback. The vulture took his spectacles back from the Muni and said there were only a few human beings in the battle field and that he was waiting for their death. If any of them was killed he would get a bit of his flesh for its ailing wife,

The story beautifully explains the real position of man. Human do not guarantee the presence of man in them. They often carry animals and beasts within them. Every biped is not necessarily a man. He may be an animal, a beast or a monster. Man has got certain attributes. If these attributes are taken away from him, he is reduced to an animal although he still possesses the body

of a man. Man has been divinely bestowed with love, compassion, sympathy and an urge to serve his fellow men. These are the basic human qualities. A biped devoid of these attributes is a mere animal.

- (a) It is common experience that a man of very grand personality with an air of holiness around him comes as a traveller, stays at the house of a stranger and to the utter surprise of the host leaves the place with some household articles at dead of night. The appearance so noble and lofty and the deed so black and dirty.
- (b) A naked ascetic apparently without the least worldly greed was found to cut off the head of a lovely girl simply to take hold of her golden earrings. What a contradiction in body and mind.
- (c) A man in a foppish suit and a charming personality, an embodiment of modesty and culture is caught red handed committing a daring burglary and shooting down many innocent lives during the action.

These are the hard facts of life.

Secondly, the construction, size, complexion, beauty and health of a man's body do not make any impact on his moral character. A man sound in body may be a debauch and a bad character while a man diseased in body may be a man of excellent character.

Thirdly, a man has absolute powers on his body. The body is helpless and powerless. It cannot go against the will of the man housed in it.

Let us explain this point by an

example. Take the best motor car available under the sun, well equipped with fuel and other necessaries. But it cannot move an inch. It is useless unless a driver comes in to drive it. If the driver is in his senses, a trained and responsible fellow, he will save it from all hurdles and pitfalls. But if the driver is untrained and in a drunken state he will come across accidents and collisions every now and then. The cars are therefore not responsible for the accidents. They are the sole responsibility of the drivers. If you think that accidents can be avoided by making the cars stronger by improving the polish it is your mistake. These improvements in the cars will spell even greater disasters, for if the cars are weak their collision may result in their own destruction, but if they are shining their collision will destroy not only the cars but the things around as well.

This is exactly the case with man. Our bodies are like motor cars and we ourselves are our drivers. If you think that a man living in plenty enjoying all the facilities of life will become virtuous and a boon to it is your mistake. The tantamount to making the motor car stronger and improving its polish. As the polishing of the motor car cannot reform the driver it is impossible for man to become an honest and righteous person if his body grows fat. As a matter of fact, the fat and strong body will be a greater terror for the society. A weak and diseased person will do little harm than the man who possesses nerve, energy and to do evils.

Keep this undeniable fact in your mind and closely examine the solution proposed by Islam.■

This is what Justice Feels Like, Smiling For The First Time in Over 18 Months, Says Bilkis

Bilkis Bano wept tears of relief, hugged her children and admittedly smiled for the first time in over 18 months on Monday, describing the Supreme Court's verdict quashing the early release of the 11 convicts who gang-raped her and killed 14 of her family members in 2002 as the dawn of a "true New Year for me". "I thank the honourable Supreme Court of India for giving me, my children and women everywhere vindication and hope in the promise of equal justice for all," Bilkis said in a statement released through her lawyer, Shobha Gupta.

VADODARA: Bilkis Bano wept tears of relief, hugged her children and admittedly smiled for the first time in over 18 months on Monday, describing the Supreme Court's verdict quashing the early release of the 11 convicts who gang-raped her and killed 14 of her family members in 2002 as the dawn of a "true New Year for me".

"I thank the honourable Supreme Court of India for giving me, my children and women everywhere vindication and hope in the promise of equal justice for all," Bilkis said in a statement released through her lawyer, Shobha Gupta.

"It feels like a stone the size of a mountain has been lifted from my chest, and I can breathe again. This is what justice feels like," she was quoted as saying.

In Randhikpur village of Gujarat's Dahod district, where Bilkis used to live, firecrackers lit up the evening sky in celebration of her legal victory that paved the way for the 11 people freed from jail in August 2022 to be incarcerated again. The Gujarat government had ordered the remission of their sentences based on a recommendation from the prison authority.

Bilkis harked back to the day they were released, recalling how she "simply collapsed" at the thought of those who had "destroyed" her family and "terrorised" her existence being given an early release. "I felt I had exhausted my reservoir of courage. Until a million solidarities came my way," she said.

Bilkis spoke of drawing strength from the PILs filed by various individuals and organisations in the SC, appeals, and open letters written by citizens.

"I have said before, and I say again today, journeys like mine can never be made alone. I have had my husband and my children by my side. I have had my friends, who have given me so much love at a time of such hate, and held my hand at each difficult turn."

She expressed gratitude to her counsel for constantly giving her "hope of justice".

Sources said Bilkis, her husband Yakub Patel and other family members had been maintaining a low profile in the days leading to the judgment, choosing to stay out of Gujarat. The family had relocated to Devgadh Baria after the March 3, 2002, mayhem of the post-Godhra riots.

Bilkis's uncle Abdul Razzak Mansuri, an eyewitness in the case, said it was "business as usual" for the convicts, who had been spending a lot of time out of prison even before the remission of their sentence.

All 11 convicts were incommunicado throughout Monday. Dahod district police beefed up security in Randhikpur following the judgment.■

(The Times of India 09-01-2024)

A Colonial Discourse on The Veil

- Shaikh Mujibur Rehman*

For years, proponents of Hindutva have accused the Congress of using Muslims for vote bank politics. In December, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announced that his government would withdraw the order imposed by the previous Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government restricting hijabs in classrooms. However, a day later, he clarified that the Congress government was still deliberating the matter. This decision, taken possibly in the fear of a BJP-led backlash prior to the general elections, is an example of vote bank politics and validates the BJP's longstanding allegation against the Congress. Meanwhile, the fact remains that the hijab/veil has been the subject of a global debate for some time now.

In recent years, many Western leaders have recommended a partial or full ban on the veil. In 2010, French President Nicolas Sarkozy ordered the French government to prepare legislation paving the way for a total ban on the full Islamic veil. In 2016, British Prime Minister David Cameron said that he would back institutions with "sensible rules" over Muslims wearing full-face veils. In 2019, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson came under fire for the use of Islamophobic language against Muslim women who wear burgas. On the other side, there have been massive protests by Muslim women against Iranian state policy, which enforces the hijab. There are four inter-related questions dominating the global discourse. Should Muslim women have the right to exercise their choice to wear the hijab/veil? Should the state have the prerogative to make a law for them? What is the provision in Islam

* Shaikh Mujibur Rehman teaches at Jamia Millia Central University, New Delhi on gender freedom? In the event of a clash between state policy and Islamic provisions, which should prevail?

The Western Colonial Project The dominant Western perception is that Islam has been unfair to Muslim women and does not offer the required equality or freedom. For some, this assessment is not objective as it is influenced by the legacy of a Western colonial mindset. In her book, Women and Gender in Islam (2021), Leila Ahmed argued that since the time of the Crusades, colonialism has had a "rich vein of bigotry and misinformation to draw on" against Islam. She wrote that feminism against cultures in the Islamic world or in sub-Saharan Africa or even in India was mainly intended for the service of colonialism. Edward Said articulated this relationship between colonialism and Islam evocatively; he wrote, "For Europe, Islam was a lasting trauma." Vestiges of this approach of the West towards Islam and Muslim societies can be found even in contemporary policies: wars in West Asia are often launched in the name of democracy or fighting terrorism.

Indeed, there is an overlap in the objectives of the Western colonial project and Hindutva's majoritarian agenda: both are driven by the ruthless desire for total domination. Both hold the idea of equal rights with contempt. Colonialism never respected the rights of its subjects and the Hindutva majoritarian ideology has no respect for the rights of minorities. Therefore, its concern about the hijab/veil is not related to concerns about gender equality or gender freedom. This becomes apparent when such claims are juxtaposed with the

(Cont. on page 35)

Migration To Madinah

- S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi

Here, on this end, the plot to have him (SAW) killed had been finalized and only the siege of his house was yet to be laid when the Command from Allah Almighty to get migrated was received by the Prophet (SAW). Hence, exactly when the siege was laid, the Prophet (SAW), after having made thorough arrangement for restoration of the belongings kept with him by their owners for safe custody, came out of the house, in accordance with the Divine Nod. under Allah's protection of Allah would protect thee from the people). That was the Assurance from Allah which he (SAW) exclusively relied upon. Throwing dust in their eyes and hoodwinking them, with Sura 'Yasin' on lips, he (SAW) steered clear of them. No one could have even an inkling of his exit. This event took place on Thursday. the 27th Safar of the year 13th Nabawi.

Prior to that in the morning, the Prophet (SAW) had, on getting the permission to migrate, come over to Hazrat Abu Bakr (RAA) and had it mentioned that Allah Almighty had granted him Permission to get out of here and migrate. Hazrat Abu Bakr had then said:

(Accompaniment, O Allah's Prophet!); O Allah's Prophet! I request to be allowed to have the favour of

keeping your company and have the honour of companionship with you. The Prophet (SAW) had said:

(Accompaniment, yes!) It is you only who would be my companion on this occasion. Thereafter, he (Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique, RAA) had made an offer of two mounts. He, then, had Abdullah bin Uraigat engaged on remuneration to serve as the guide. When he (SAW) came out of his house in the night intending migration and arrived at Hazrat Abu Bakr's house. Hazrat Asmaa, Hazrat Abu Bakr's daughter, had the Sattoo (barley beverage) which she had already got prepared to serve as the provision during the journey, packed in a pouch with its mouth tied up with a piece torn off her waist girdle. Having come out the house, he (SAW) looked at the Ka'ba and said: 'O Makkah! You are dearest to me of all the world. But your sons did not let me live here.' The Prophet (SAW) and Hazrat Abu Bakr (RAA), moving stealthily under the cover of darkness of the night set out of Makkah. The track was rocky. The sharp-edged stones were causing wounds to his (SAW) feet. By stumbling, too, he (SAW) was getting hurt. After having traversed a very untraceable distance of 4-5 kms from Makkah, they reached a cave atop a

mountain called 'Thaur'. Hazrat Abu Bakr (RAA) let the Prophet (SAW) stay outside and getting himself in, cleancd up the cave and having his clothes torn. now and again, had the holes in the cave plugged. Then he requested the Prophet (SAW) to get in, too. Here they stayed for three days. The fourth day, they set forth again on their way ahead. During the stop-over at the Thaur cave, Hazrat Asmaa, daughter or Abu Bakr, used to bring the meal to them from the house. Abdullah, son of Abu Bakr, would come over and give them the reports about the people of Makkah. A'amir bin Fuhaira would have his goats brought over and, having them supplied with the milk, would get back.

The Incident of Suraga bin Jashm:

There, at the other end, the Quoraish had an announcement made that whoever would get them Muhammad (SAW) or Abu Bakr (RAA), having made them captives, would be rewarded with the wealth worth one person's blood-money (100 camels). Having it heard and tempted by the award, Suraga bin Jasham set out looking for them. Exactly when the Prophet (SAW) had gotten on the track nearby, after having made his exit out of Makkah, Suraga caught sight of him. And having raced his horse forward got close to him. But the horse stumbled and fell on the ground. He took out the

portending arrows out of his sheath in order to get the augury as to whether he should make on assault or not. In response, 'No' was the answer. But, the exorbitant amount of reward of hundred camels that was at stake was too high to let the verdict of the arrows have the chance of being conceded to. He got mounted on the horse again and moved ahead. This time the horse's legs got thrust, knee-deep, in the (sandy) ground. He had to get down the horse and sought the augury again. Again, the answer was the same as before. Having the same experiment undergone repeatedly made him, anyway, disheartened. He got convinced that these were the indications of something quite different in nature. Hence, he called out the Prophet (SAW) saying that he just wanted to talk to him. Getting close, he apprised him of the incident of the announcement made by the Quoraish. And, (having expressed his retreat from his evil intention) requested him to furnish him with an amnesty in writing. Hazrat Abu Bakr's liege, 'Aamir bin Fuhairah, had the grant of amnesty orders written down on a piece of leather and handed it over to him.

The Anecdote of Umm-e-M'abad:

En route, after having come out the domain of the Quoraish and their ally, Banu Kinanah, when he (SAW) reached the domain of Banu Khuza'ah, he (SAW)

lifted the curtain of concealment from his journey in their domain as they were not on friendly terms with the Quoraish, considering that there was now little apprehension of harm in these quarters. On having entered that region when he (SAW) felt the need of some nutrition. he took a halt at a tent that was there and had himself presented, as per the traditional Arab practice, as a wayfarercum-guest. This tent belonged to a lady, Umm-e-M'abad, of Khuza'ah tribe. She wanted to entertain the Prophet (SAW). But her goat's udders appeared to be having no milk in them. He (SAW) made a supplication to Allah and had his hands passed over the udders. Allah Almighty granted His Favour; and, lo and behold! there was milk in the udders. He (SAW) and his companions had that taken and yet there was the remainder in surplus. Thereafter, he (SAW) resumed his journey onwards. This incident had been narrated by Umm-e-M'abad herself with jubilation.

After a while, Umm-e-M'abad's husband arrived. Seeing in the tent the milk-pot full of milk, he was astonished as to where did it come from?! Umm-e-M'abad said: 'An auspicious person had come here and this milk is the outcome of his presence.' He said: 'he seems to be the same fellow of the Quoraish whom I was in quest of. Well, would you please describe him to me. Umm-e-M' abad said:

"I saw a man outstanding in tidiness, radiant of face, proportionate in build, chaste in looks and pleasing in manners. He had neither the defect of obesity nor the flaw of lankiness. He was neither pot-bellied nor bald-headed. He had a handsome face, robust physique and appropriate height. He had a trace of antimony in his eyes which were broad and black. Pupils, too, were black and the eyeballs very white. The eyelashes were thick and long. He was dignified, full of quiet charm, sweet and lucid of talk, neither taciturn nor prolix. The words coming out of his mouth looked like the pearls strung on a string. He looked like a fresh twig flanked by two tender and delicate ones, a feast for the eyes. His companions would keep hovering around him. They would listen to whatever he would say. They would rush, headlong, to comply with orders he would give. He is the one waited upon and obeyed to. He is neither brusque nor blabber."

Having heard this description, he said: 'He is certainly the man whom the Quoraish are after. I must go and meet him.'

At all events, the prophet (SAW) and his companions, led by the guide, resumed their journey. Finally, they reached 'Quba', a place located at about three kms. south of the city of Madinah:

Republic Day

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

26th January 1950 is a rememberable day in the history of India. It assumes great significance and importance for all of us. This day the constitution of India was enforced. Indian constitution is considered the best one as compared to other constitutions of the world. It is a written and comprehensive document with 395 Articles (Now 404) and 12 Schedules. R.C. Majumdar says: "The constitution guarantees to all citizens freedom of speech and expression, the right to assemble peacefully and freedom of conscience and worship, subject to general considerations of public security and morality. All citizens, irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth, shall enjoy equality before the law and no disability shall be imposed on them in any respect. "Untouchability" is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. No person shall be deprived of his life, property or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law." (An Advanced History of India, p.992)

The Republic Day is celebrated with gaiety and enthusiasm all over the country and especially in the capital, New Delhi where the celebrations start with the presidential address to the nation.

On this occasion all government buildings and educational institutions are decorated attractively. Flag unfurling ceremony is held in every school. Children from several schools take part in the parade. They present various cultural programmes and showcase tableaux highlighting the rich cultural heritage of their state respectively.

India is the largest democracy in the world. India has been the cradle of a variety of civilizations, cultures and religions. It has a pluralistic society. It is known for values of peace, amity, brotherhood, fraternity, unity and integrity. It is the birth place of various icons like the Buddah, Mahavir, Guru Nanak, Mahatma Gandhi, Kabir, Jawaharlal Nehru, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar 'Chandra Vidya Sagar, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Rabindranath Tagore, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, Qazi Nazrul Islam, Swami Vivekananda, Netaji Subash Chandra Bose, Tipu Sultan, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Khan Abdul Gaffar khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali Jouhar, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Dr, Zakir Husain, Maulana S.Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and the like. All these beacons taught lesson of brotherhood and fraternity in their respective period and time. They are no more today. But their instructions and messages still inspire us to lead a peaceful life on this land.

Being Indians, it is imperative for us to maintain its unity and integrity by fostering national integration and propagating the message of humanity throughout India. The constitution of the country teaches us the same message and it is the message of the Republic Day.

The Relationship Between The Creator And The Creation And Its Educational Implications

- Mahar Abdul Haq

It is said that Reality has an absolute and necessary, not merely contingent, existence. We, human beings, are the highest form of life on earth. But when we study ourselves biologically, we find that our existence is true only under specific conditions. The continual katabolic processes of the body are hastening the deterioration of our physical existence and every minute we are rushing forth towards death. So, our individual existence cannot be real. Some people who see reality not in "thing" but in "ideas" hold that man is contingent but "humanity" is real. Individual men may die but humanity lives for ever.

According to Plato, "idea" is the eternally existing pattern of which individual things in any class are imperfect copies. To him the real objects of knowledge are not the everchanging things of the world of sense-perception but certain supra-sensible, immutable objects. Arid these objects he calls "ideas". Descartes and Locke hold that an idea is the immediate object of thought or mental perception.

If we see smoke rising from somewhere, we conclude that there is fire underneath it. Smoke is thus the "sign" of fire. The denial of "Sign" is, therefore, the denial of Reality. Similarly, if a law is perfect, unchangeable and universally true then the maker of that law is decidedly perfect, unchangeable and universally true. The creator can be known only through the knowledge of his creation. All the tangible objects of the Universe are the Signs of this Reality. So are the laws which govern these objects. The Holy Qur'an enjoins upon us to contemplate the beauty, goodness and truth of the "Signs" scattered so profusely everywhere in the universe to have some knowledge of the Absolute Reality.

Although we cannot define Reality, yet if we put ourselves into the very flow of his creative processes we can, to a great extent. understand and realize the nature of this great Reality. This understanding may vary in quality or quantity but happily it is common to all human beings whose mind's vision is clear enough to catch a glimpse of the Truth. Great men have greater vision but the less fortunate, too, are not without a share. Everything animate or inanimate in this universe proclaims the glory of this absolute Reality and he who cannot see it must blame his own vision.

We give names to things according to their qualitative attributes.

A thing that falls short of any of its attributes is not true or real, it must conform to all the implied meanings of its name. The Holy Qur'an uses a very comprehensive term Al Haqq or the Truth to encompass all the shades of meanings involved in reality, justice-faith, constancy, goodness, beauty, etc.

Man-made standards and principles cannot be the sure and final criterion for good and bad as they are subject to changes and are short-lived. By way of explanation, we may say that:

- Some statements are true selfevidently. When we say, "The whole is greater than the part", none of us, who knows what a whole is and what a part is, can think otherwise.
- Some statements can be verified by experiment, observation or experience. They remain true as along as contrary facts are not observed or experienced.
- 3) Some statements are neither selfevidently true nor can they be tested by experiment in the laboratory, nor observed, nor experienced. They are thinking of the majority of people of a particular nation or, a country and are called public opinion. These findings hold good, though controversially, for a certain period of time and under special circumstances. And for that reason, they cannot have any universal acceptance.

- 4) Some statements are of transcendental reference much above the reach of a scientist's experimentation or the logical hairsplitting of reason. Their truth transpires sometimes upon individuals and sometimes upon nations during one man's life-time or during many men's lifetime. Such information is usually called intuitive.
- 5) Finally, we come to the knowledge which is the surest and the most complete of all the above four categories. This truth is known as Revelation. The Holy Qur'an, the most complete guidance for the entire humanity, is the final Revelation from the Nourishersustainer of all the worlds.

In the world of today when human knowledge has made tremendous advances in all directions we require no argument to prove that everything in the universe is in a state of flux, activity or evolution. Everywhere we can witness with our own eyes the manifestations of Allah's volition or His will-in-action. Action means 'motion'. So, we can safely build our thesis on the premise that the first manifestation of the 'Real' is 'motion'. But this motion is not pure motion, because, in that case, there could be only one creation, i.e., pure motion and nothing else. We are indebted to science which has proved conclusively that all the creation of Allah is 'waves' or 'motion'. Heat, light, electricity etc., are all waves. In fact, every action of matter is capable of being transformed into waves. That means that matter must have been waves in the beginning. This has now been confirmed by the discovery of nebulas in the outer space. Something has been taken away from 'motion' to turn it into 'matter'.

Allah expresses His higher values in terms of the lower values of our understanding by using a language of symbols or what the Holy Qur'an terms 'Signs of Allah'. in addition to this truest knowledge, transmitted through Revelation. Allah has most graciously chosen some Master-Minds from Ourselves who make these 'Signs' clear to us through the God-given gift of our imagination, intellect, reasoning and understanding and thereby enable us to comprehend relationship between our minds and the Supreme Mind of the Real Ones. The Holy Qur'an is the last revealed Book giving us the experience of all the previous men of learning and wisdom and, at the same time, encompassing all the future thinking of the human mind

The whole of the Universe is manifestation of the Beauty, Goodness, and Truth inherent in Allah and this manifestation continues for ever without a beginning and without an end. The aim of Educational philosophy is no more and no less, than to search for, establish and identify this Beauty, world of matter

and motion and to provide all the means for the expansion of each individual fraction to the extent to which its potential has the capacity to evolve. "It is He who has created all things that are on the earth for you." (2:29). A highly cultured mind must be able to appreciate beauty even in the apparently ugliest of creatures. It must find out the purpose for which it has been created by the Supreme wisdom of Allah. Being valuable as a thing of beauty, goodness and truth it should be "a joy for ever" and for this very reason loved and respected.

Again, when we say that each higher fraction possesses all the qualities of each lower fraction', We mean, from the educational stand-point, that man in himself is the entire Universe possessing all the qualities of organic and inorganic matter. All around us we find things either standing erect (like mountains, trees etc.), or bent (like half quadrupeds) bowing-down prostrating (like reptiles). The Muslim prayer in its apparent form of Qa'ud, Raku and Sajud represents symbolically all these postures of the creation of Allah and thus reminds us of our stages of evolution. In fact, man is as much an animal as he is a vegetation or a mineral. He can know himself by studying all these lower creations, not animals alone. The best way is to study himself as man who is altogether a creature of different pattern.

Then again, we know that the lower

THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST, January 2024

fraction has very little consciousness of the higher but the higher one knows, or can' know, all about the lower ones. For example stones know nothing about the grass which sprouts even against their resistance; the grass knows nothing about the animals which eat it up, the animals know nothing or a little, about men who harness them. From this we must logically infer that, consciousness' is evolving to a greater degree in higher fractions and some 'fraction' higher-than-ourselves knows all about us- even better than what we know about

ourselves. Just as a blade of grass has a distaste for bad soil, an animal has a distaste for bad grass, a distaste for bad animals and bad vegetation, so a higher consciousness has a distaste for evil men. All educational programmes are, therefore, to be so framed as to ensure strict adherence to the laws of beauty, goodness and truth as enumerated in the Holy Qur'an, because this is the last and the final word of the Nourisher-Sustainer-Evolver of all the worlds sent to mankind as Light and Guidance. ■

Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Nawaf Dies, Sheikh Meshal to Succeed

Kuwait's ruling emir, the 86-year-old Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Sabah, died on Saturday after a three-year, lowkey reign focused on trying to resolve the tiny, oil-rich nation's internal political disputes.

Kuwait state television broke into programming with Quranic verses just before a sombre official made the announcement.

"With great sadness and sorrow, we - the Kuwaiti people, the Arab and Islamic nations, and the friendly peoples of the world mourn the late His Highness the emir, Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad Al Jaber al-Sabah, who passed away to his Lord today," said Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah al-Sabah, the minister of his emiri court, who read the brief statement.

Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah, 83, who has been Kuwait's de facto ruler since 2021, when the frail emir handed over most his duties, was named as Sheikh Nawaf's successor.

Sheikh Nawaf became emir in September 2020 following the death of his brother, Sheikh Sabah, who had ruled for more than a decade and shaped the state's foreign policy for more than 50 years

Sheikh Nawaf was seen by diplomats as a consensus builder even though his reign was marked by an intense standoff between the government and elected parliament, which had hindered key structural reforms in the oil rich Gulf state. In recent months, consensus returned between the government and the parliament.

Kuwait, holder of the world's seventh-largest oil reserves, borders Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and lies across the Gulf from Iran. It was invaded and occupied by Iraq in 1990, sparking the first Gulf war several months later in 1991 when the United States and other nations defeated Iraq and liberated Kuwait.

Since he took over in 2020, Sheikh Nawaf maintained a foreign policy that balanced ties with those neighbours, whilst domestically eight governments were formed under his rule. ■

(H.T. 17-12-2023)

Universities And the Pursuit of Excellence

- Mahesh Verma*

In the dynamic landscape of higher education, the imperative for Indian institutions to deliver quality education is fundamental not only for national development but also for capitalising on the demographic dividend which is unique to India. In this sense, the onus is on higher education institutions (HEIs) to deliver industry-oriented, human-centric, sustainability-focused education. Indian HEIs have encountered persistent challenges in attaining recognition among pre-eminent institutions worldwide, as evidenced by reputable rankings such as QS World Rankings and Times Higher Education Rankings. Over the past decade, Indian HEIs have undertaken a transformative journey towards global prominence. This ascent has not been without challenges. The innovative approaches outlined in the National Education Policy 2020 have undoubtedly played a crucial role in shaping this evolution.

Globally, the HEIs have two ways for delivering their mandated services.

One, they may themselves attempt to assess the needs of their stakeholders and address those. For instance, these institutions need to provide education such that their alumni get recognised for the laurels they bring, thereby gaining positive

feedback from academics and employers. To ensure this, institutions need to have enough (and competent) faculty and maintain a healthy teacher/taught ratio. The faculty gaining, creating and spreading knowledge by carrying out and publishing quality research is both an antecedent and outcome of such competencies. Nonetheless, the HEIs have to be mindful of the needs of the society/community, and contribute toward meeting those. All this is bound to make an impact and create a space for the institution at the global stage, thereby attracting international students, researchers and faculty.

Two, the HEIs may follow the rating methodologies of the bodies such as QS, and try to implement those criteria. To illustrate, the latest QS methodology focuses on academic reputation (30%), employer reputation (15%), faculty-student ratio (10%), citations per faculty (20%), international faculty ratio (5%), international student ratio (5%), international research network (5%), employment outcomes (5%), and sustainability (5%). Institutions following the first route as outlined here are naturally poised to score on these criteria.

Nevertheless, university rankings have become a critical tool for assessing the quality of HEIs, especially in the context of globalisation and the demand for accountability, efficiency, and transparency. Policymakers in Asian

^{*} Mahesh Verma is vice-chancellor, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi.

countries, including India, have begun to focus on improving the performance of their higher education systems as measured by international university rankings. The government of India introduced the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) to rank its HEIs, indicating a concerted effort to align with global ranking standards.

The dissemination of success stories and experiences from Indian HEIs can contribute to the enhancement of the higher education system as a whole. The case of Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University is illustrative. It got ranked A++ (for seven years) by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in 2023, made its maiden entry to the QS World rankings 2024, and got ranked 619 worldwide on the parameter of governance in the QS World Sustainability rankings 2024. Improving the reputation of the university in academic and corporate fields has remained at the core of our strategy. One of the key points we identified and delivered in our approach was to create state-of-theart infrastructure. Building modern classrooms, laboratories, conference rooms, auditoriums, and sports facilities, in addition to building capacity among the faculty contributed significantly to our plan. Besides, we paid attention to use the media and social media for showcasing our initiatives, achievements, and requirements from various stakeholders, providing a continuous push to our reputation among academia and the corporate world.

Moreover, recognising sustainability as a key concern for our generations, we continuously pay attention to the environmental and societal aspects. Furthering the National Service Scheme (NSS) and National Cadet Corps (NCC) played a key role toward this endeavour. In our ongoing effort to contribute to the betterment of society, village adoption remains our top focus.

Research is an essential element in the development of applied knowledge in contemporary times. Faculty and scholars play a pivotal role in ensuring that HEIs excel in research. Historically, scholars conduct a significant portion of their investigations independently, without the participation of bigger research teams. In light of the growing emphasis on interdisciplinary research and the advantages of collaboration in global methodologies ranking teams, increasingly include knowledge exchange as a critical element. In our pursuit of knowledge creation and exchange as a university, we have nudged our faculty and students to engage in bigger and versatile alobal teams.

In the QS Asia rankings 2024, Indian HEIs have achieved remarkable success, as 148 Indian HEIs were included in the list, compared to 133 Chinese HEIs. Also, 37 Indian entrants qualified for the QS Asia rankings 2024, which is equivalent to saying well begun is half done. However, the remaining half continues to pose a formidable challenge for HEIs in India.

(Hindustan Times, 01-01-2024)

My Teacher, My Guiding Light

"A person who is not thankful towards people can never be thankful towards the Almighty."

– Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Ghulam Mohiuddin Wani, also known as Mahad Sahab, passed away in Srinagar on December 17. He shaped my spiritual path at one of the most crucial and critical junctures of my life. I need to acknowledge him in the most generous way possible for, besides being my teacher, mentor and guide in religious matters, he epitomised the finest confluence of Islamic belief and spiritual practice, moderation and a deep sense of responsibility towards traditions and culture.

It was not easy for me to inherit the mantle of the Mirwaiz (chief cleric) when my father Mirwaiz Maulvi Mohammad Farooq attained martyrdom in 1990. I was a playful 17-year-old schoolboy. In a situation when we were bereft and grieving, I was suddenly enjoined to take over the responsibility of carrying forward the hallowed religious obligation of upholding the mission of the Mirwaizeen-e-Kashmir. The institution of the Mirwaiz is unique to Kashmir. In an unbroken tradition of over a century now, the revered pulpit has been guiding believers. It was a journey

- Mirwaiz Umar Farooq

that demanded of me an overnight transformation from being a teenager to ascending the esteemed pulpit of Jamia Masjid, the historic mosque located in the heart of Srinagar city.

That was when Mahad Sahab stepped in and contributed immensely towards making that transition smooth. Being a close associate of my father and a committed adherent of the Mirwaiz family's religious legacy, he volunteered his services to mentor me. He held me by the hand and hoisted me up the ladder to the Mirwaiz's pulpit. A self-taught man, Mahad Sahab was a devout businessman. When it came to matters of faith and practice, he was unique in many ways. Although he belonged to the more orthodox Salafi school of thought (Ahl-e-hadees), he was of a Sufi temperament, dedicated to understanding the teachings of Islam as a means to get close to Allah with humility and gratefulness.

He possessed great reverence for Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani, Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi and other Sufi peers. He would guide me in compiling a Wa'az (sermon) for the special occasion of the urs of the Sufi peers and would make it a point to participate in the congregation. I would observe him engrossed in the Wa'az, which he had helped to compile with great attention

and devotion. Later, he would tell me, "I experience a very different feeling when you are at the mimbar (pulpit) and recite from the bayaz (teachings)".

Immediately after my father's death, my first sermon at Jamia Masjid from the teachings of Mirwaiz Ahmadullah, was in Kashmiri. Although I could speak the language, I was not fluent in writing or reading it. Mahad Sahab ensured I was introduced to verses written by Kashmir's leading saint, Sheikh-ul-Alam also known as Sheikh Nooruddin Wali. This became an entry point for me into the Kashmiri language. It was followed by an introduction to Persian, especially the writings of Jami, Khusrau and Rumi.

Being a Mirwaiz requires special learning that no ordinary school or university can impart. The clerical tradition adopted the unique form of Wa'az-o-Tableegh (propagation through sermons) to educate people and bring the teachings of Islam to them. The distinctiveness was in the fact that it was completely based on the oral conventions of listening, repetition and absorption. This system continues without any distortion. A Wa'az puts special emphasis on the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and is suffused with reverence, devotion, love and praise for him. It also delves into the role and significance of the pious and learned saints and scholars of Islam. The

language traditionally has been Kashmiri and Persian, recited at specific moments during the Wa'az, giving a unique structure to the recitations.

embarked As I on this extraordinary journey of becoming a Mirwaiz, an intense period of initiation and education came from Mahad Sahab. He introduced me to this knowledge system with its etiquette and nuances. The qutab khana (library) at the Mirwaiz Manzil is home to a rich collection of manuscripts, some of which are over 400 years old. These manuscripts and bayaz are a treasure of Islamic learning and calligraphy. Mahad Sahab was well-versed in these and cherished and valued them. I would be deeply impressed by his knowledge and understanding as he traversed through the manuscripts of Mirwaiz Rasool Shah, Mirwaiz Ahmadullah or Mirwaiz Atiqullah and steered me through them. He would emphasise that moderation and balance were the key messages that came through the religious practice and teachings of the Mirwaizeen. He would guide me through these ancient manuscripts and prepare my sermons for the contemporary congregation. He was among the few people who knew the oral tradition of passing on the local knowledge, known as Seena ba Seena.

It was through a process of

THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST, January 2024

osmosis, through oral repetition and listening, that he had imbibed the institution, its methodology and structure. It was through the same process that he transferred the knowledge system to me. We would have a learning session every day before he would begin his day at his shop. His gift of the repertoire of Manajaat, Na'at and Manqabat in Kashmiri, Persian and Arabic opened

up a new world for me.

Now, with his death, the precious 33 years of association have come to an end. His life exemplified the virtues he imparted, leaving an enduring impression on those who had the privilege of knowing him.

And I have lost my guiding light. ■

(Indian Express, 05-01-2024)

(Cont. from page 22)

positions of the proponents of Hindutva on the Bilkis Bano case or the Sabarimala verdict.

The purdah system evolved slowly in different parts of the world, including India. Ibn Batutta (1377) was shocked to see unveiled Muslim women in southern Anatolia and western Sudan. Around 1595, Abul Fazl wrote referring to Bengal, "men and women for the most part go naked wearing only a cloth (lungi) about the loins". Historian Richard M. Eaton, who has written the most authoritative book on the rise of Islam in Bengal, offered a fascinating narrative of the gradual evolution of these practices. Around 1700, he wrote referring to a ballad, Dewana Madina, composed by Mansoor Baiyati, in which a peasant woman laments the death of her husband, that there is no evidence of the practice of purdah. He concluded that even in Bengal, the purdah system evolved gradually. This argument could be valid in the rest of India too.

Women in Islam What is the position of women in Islam? Scholars Fatima Mernissi and Amina Wudud have been deeply critical of Western feminism. Both have argued that Islamic provisions could be interpreted for gender equality and gender freedom. In her widely read book Qur'an and Woman (1999), Wudud examined various terms and argued that "there is no inherent value placed on man and woman" in Islam. "In fact," she wrote, "there is no arbitrary, pre- ordained and eternal system of hierarchy. The Qur'an does not strictly delineate the roles of woman and man to such an extent as to propose only one possibility for each gender."

Whether or not we agree with these formulations, the fact is that all Muslim women do not wear the hijab/veil, either in India or elsewhere. In India, many Muslim women have excelled in various walks of lives such as academia, media, politics, art, music, sport, and cinema without bothering about the hijab/veil. For instance, Parveen Babi and Zeenat Aman are acknowledged for having played "bold roles" in Hindi cinema. In part, this has been possible because India has let women exercise their choices and there is a hospitable secular political culture regardless of its flaws. Thus, Muslim women do not need to be emancipated by Hindutva activism, which does not respect minority rights in all its shapes and forms.

(The Hindu 11-1-2024)

Ernest Hemingway-A Distinguished American Novelist

(With Special Reference to His Novel "The Old Man And The Sea")

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Ernest Hemingway was a highly influential American author, novelist, short- story writer of the twentieth century. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1954.

He was born on July 21,1899 in Oak Park Illinois, U.S. and died on July 2,1961 in Idaho U.S.A.

During the First World War, he worked as an ambulance driver in Italy. He was badly injured and was in hospital for a long time.

He was an accomplished journalist. At the age of 17, he joined a newspaper office in Kansas City. After the First World War, he returned to America and joined a Canadian newspaper. He was also sent to Europe as a foreign correspondent and stayed in Paris where he moved in literary circles.

He was a prolific writer. He was also acclaimed as a short story writer. Men Without Women (1927), Winner Take Nothing (1932), The Fifth Column and the First Forty-Nine Stories (1938) are some of his collections of short stories which established him as a master of the genre.

Undoubtedly, Hemingway was a versatile genius. He was an expert in

the art of portrayal of characters. He wrote honestly on his own experience in life. He invented a new kind of hero known as the Code Hero. As a writer, he adopted the principle of absolute honesty and enthusiasm. He wrote what he actually experienced in life. His taste and talent rested on an active and meaningful life. He was a man of simple living and unostentatious behavior.

He authored a number of good novels. Some of his most important novels are as under:

- 1. The Sun Also Rises- This is the first novel written by Hemingway in which he says that the mass of men lives in desperate state, the virtue of man exists in the courageous acceptance of disaster. The novel appeared in 1926.
- A Farewell to Arms is his another novel. It was published in 1929. Its hero Frederick was a lieutenant with an Ambulance unit serving the Italian Army in the First World War. As G.B.Shaw deprecates war in Arms and the Man, Hemingway also bids farewell to war for ever.
- To Have and Have Not been his third novel. It was the story of Harry Moron, a native of key west Florida who

- wanted to keep himself, his wife and children happy. He failed to keep them happy. He took over the job of a snugger and suffered.
- 4. For Whom The Bell Tolls is Hemingway's finest as well as his popular novel. In its general meaning it is simply a story of courageous resistance to tyranny, and that resistance is felt as a concern of all humanity. The protagonist Robert Jordan is involved in mankind not as Marxist, but as a believer in Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.
- 5. The Old Man and the Sea was the last novel of Hemingway which brought him great eminence and the Pulitzer Prize in 1953 and the Nobel Prize in 1954. It is a parable of man's struggle with the natural world.

Santiago was a fisherman, who lived alone on the shore of the sea. His profession was hunting the fish. He had a peculiar nature.

He treated the sea as his mother. It was a natural mother for him. He considered the fish was his brother and he had much love for the animals of the sea. He knew that the killing the creatures of God is sin, yet he had regularly engaged in the act of fishing. He claimed that it was his profession so there was no harm in killing the fish.

Thus, he hunted for 40 days but did not get a single fish. He earned

nothing except the title of a Salao, which means an unfortunate fellow. Having come to know of his bad luck, the parents of the boy companion named Manolin was withdrawn from his service. He did not take ill of it. He had been continuously fishing for 84 days. He caught no fish but he did not become disappointed.

Santiago was an adventurist. He believed in the principle-"But man is not made for defeat". Santiago says, "A man can be destroyed but defeated." He was religious minded. He was a believer in the mercy and compassion of God.

He met disappointment and despair yet did not lose heart. He was superstitious by nature. He said that 85 was a good number for him. The sum of 8 and 5 is thirteen. Magicians consider 3,7,9, and 13 as good numbers so Santiago waits for 85 days of his adventure.

Truly Speaking, Santiago, an old man of the sea shows special courage, strength and endurance to win the fish Marlin and finally he got the fish but the latter itself is possessed by the Sharks. Santiago gets only the skeleton on the fish and its head which he gives to the owner of the restaurant who had been supplying him food from time to time.

To sum up, the summary of the novel "The Old Man and the Sea" is that a man can fail but not defeated and there is no age limit for a noble work. ■

Innovative Approaches to Arabic Learning: Zameel Academy's World Arabic Day Endeavors

- Mubeenul Haq Nadwi

On the occasion of World (UN) Arabic day celebration Zameel Academy successfully organized an International Literature Festival from December 1st to 31st 2023. seamlessly blending online and offline modes. It is the Academy 's second program in celebration of World Arabic day, building upon the success of the inaugural event held last year. The event witnessed active participation from both Gulf and non-Gulf countries such as Palestine, Jordan, Yemen, Egypt, Britain, America and India through thirteen engaging webinars. The festival provided a platform for in-depth discussions on contemporary Arabic literature, fostering cultural exchange and collaboration among participants. The virtual setting allowed attendees from diverse backgrounds to engage in meaningful conversations despite geographical constraints.

The festival showcased the rich tapestry of Modern Arabic literature, presenting perspectives from 13 different countries. This diversity highlighted the unique literary traditions and themes that shape

Arabic literature Today. Thirteen engaging zoom sessions were conducted, each addressing specific aspects of modern Arabic literature. These sessions facilitated dynamic discussions, enabling participants to share insights, ask questions, and deepen their understanding of the literary landscape.

The festival went beyond geographic boundaries, incorporating insights from non-gulf countries that have embraced Arabic literature. This inclusive approach broadened the cultural exchange and contributed to a more comprehensive exploration of the topic. Eminent scholars, authors, and literary figures were invited to share their expertise during the sessions. Their presence added depth to the discussions, providing valuable insights into the evolution and contemporary relevance of Arabic literature.

The webinars featured distinguished resource persons, including Dr. Saifudheen Thaha Alfuqara (Professor, Dept. Of Arabic, Sharjah University & Jordanian

(Cont. to page 16)

Around the World

Israeli Attacks in Gaza Continue as US Approves a Fresh Weapons Sale

Israeli warplanes struck two urban refugee camps in central Gaza, as the Biden administration approved a new emergency weapons sale to Israel despite persistent international ceasefire calls over mounting civilian deaths, hunger and mass displacement in the enclave.

Israel says it is determined to pursue its unprecedented air and ground offensive until it has dismantled Hamas. The United States has shielded Israel diplomatically and has continued to supply weapons.

Fighting was focused in al-Bureij, Nuseirat, Maghazi and Khan Younis, backed by intensive air strikes that filled hospitals with wounded Palestinians.

The bombardment has killed 165 people and wounded 250 others in Gaza over the past 24 hours, health authorities in the Hamas-run territory said.

Almost all Gaza's 2.3 million residents have been forced from their homes by Israel's 12-week assault, triggered after Hamas and allied groups killed 1,200 people and captured 240 hostages in a rampage in southern Israel on Oct. 7.

The offensive has killed at least 21,672 Palestinians, according to health authorities in Gaza, with more than 56,000 injured and thousands more feared dead under the rubble.

With Israeli forces pushing deeper into Khan Younis and the camps of central Gaza, tens of thousands of Palestinians streamed into the already crowded city of Rafah at the southernmost end of Gaza in recent days.

Drone footage showed a vast camp of thousands of tents and makeshift shacks set up on what had been empty land on Rafah's western outskirts next to U.N. warehouses. People arrived in Rafah in trucks, in carts and on foot. Those who did not find space in the already overwhelmed shelters put up tents on roadsides slick with mud from winter rains.

The State Department said Friday that Secretary of State Antony Blinken told Congress he approved a \$147.5 million sale for equipment, including fuses, charges and primers, that is needed for 155 mm shells Israel bought previously.

It marked the second time this month that the Biden administration is bypassing Congress to approve an emergency weapons sale to Israel.

The department cited the "urgency of Israel's defensive needs" as a reason for the approval, and argued that "it is vital to U.S. national interests to ensure Israel is able to defend itself against the threats it faces."

The emergency determination means the purchase will bypass the congressional review requirement for foreign military sales. Such determinations are rare, but not unprecedented, when administrations see an urgent need for weapons to be delivered without waiting for lawmakers' approval.

Blinken made a similar decision on December 9 to approve the sale to Israel of nearly 14,000 rounds of tank ammunition worth more than \$106 million.

The conflict risks spreading across the region, drawing in Iran-aligned groups in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, that have exchanged fire with Israel and its U.S. ally, or targeted merchant shipping.

Israel's stated aim is to destroy Hamas and while the U.S. has called for it to scale down the war and move to targeted operations against the group's leaders, so far it shows no sign of doing so.

(H.T. 31-12-2023)

OUR REPRESENTATIVES ABROAD

Britain : Mr. Akram Nadwi

O.C.I.S.St. Cross College Oxford Ox 1 3 TU (UK)

Dubai : Mohammad Khalid Kanpuri

P.O. Box No. 12772 Dubai U.A.E.

Pakistan : Mr. Ataullah

Sector A-50, Near SAU Qrs. Karachi 31 (Pakistan)

Qatar : Dr. Aftab Alam Nadwi

P.O. Box No. 1513 Doha, Qatar

Saudi Arabia : Mr. Zia Abdullah Nadwi

Director

Al Waha International School

P.B.No. 12491

Jeddah, Pin-21473 (K.S.A.)

South Africa : Mr. M. Yahaya Sallo Nadwi

P.O. Box No. 388

Vereninging, (South Africa)

U.S.A. : Dr. A. M. Siddiqui

98-Conklin Ave. Woodmere,

New York 11598