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# The Fragrance of East

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## Life is Ever Changing

### S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Islam is the last message of God Almighty; it has been presented in a complete form before the world, which has been told that:

*"This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion AL-ISLAM"* (Al-Ma'ida:3)

On the one hand God has been well-pleased to favour mankind with a perfect and final religion; on the other, the fact is that life is on the move, ever-changing and evolving as someone has aptly said:

Life is ever youthful,  
Continuously on the move, zestful.

The religion bestowed by Omniscient God is grounded in a faith in eternal values and transcendental facts, yet, it is also zestful, perpetually -moving and sufficing for the transformations of life. God has endowed His religion with the capacity to turn over a new leaf with the changes ringing the world and thus provide human beings with an uninterrupted guidance in every phase of their life. It can help humanity to find its way at every turn and pass. It is not a culture of any particular age or the architecture of a particular place preserved in the shape of archaeological remains, but a living faith, a masterpiece of ingenuity and craftsmanship of the omniscient and Wise Creator :

*That is the measuring of the Mighty, the Wise.* (Ya Sin : 38)

*... the doing of Allah Who perfecteth all things. Lo! He is Informed of what ye do.*

(An Namal : 88)

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

#### **So shall It Be!**

“So shall it be because it is Allah Who causes the night to emerge out of the day and causes the day to emerge out of the night and Allah is All-Hearing, All Seeing. So shall it be because Allah, He is the truth, and all whom they invoke instead of Him are false. Allah is Most High, Great.”

*(Al-Qur'an -22:61-62)*

The purport of the ayah 22:61 is that those who follow the course of unbelief and injustice will be punished and those who believe and act righteously will be rewarded; that the standard-bearers of truth who have been wronged, will see their own wrongs redressed; and those who seek to forcefully confront injustice will be aided by God. So, what is the reason underlying all these assurances? The ayah suggests that this will happen because of certain of God's attributes, i.e. those mentioned here.

God rules over the whole universe, and it is because of His Will that day and night follow in succession. Besides, the ayah also subtly points to the fact that God is equally capable of bringing about the decline and fall of those who are presently at the zenith of their power and glory. Likewise, the darkness of ignorance and unbelief which is presently struggling to prevent the break of the morn of the truth will soon give way, by God's command, to the brightness of truth and knowledge that will illuminate the whole world. God is All-Hearing and All-Seeing. He wields all power and is Lord in every sense of the term. ■

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

#### **Serve the Humanity**

“If you are merciful to your fellow beings, Allah will be merciful to you in the Heaven.”

*(Muslim)*

“Whoever alleviates the sufferings of a Muslim, Allah will lighten his gloom.”

*(Bukhari and Muslim)*

Islam gives utmost importance to service to humanity. It teaches the believers to alleviate the sufferings of fellow beings. This act of caring for others is elevated on par with worship to Allah. If anyone of our fellow beings falls sick or suffers from some ailment, this eventuality throws dual responsibility on our shoulders. One is submission unto the Will of Allah, the Exalted. And the other responsibility is to have a deep sense of service to humanity at large. The sick belong to the strata of society which is depraved, emaciated and utterly helpless, and as such deserve our highest sympathies. They attract our deep sympathies for the prime reason that not only are they incapable of rendering any help to others but are also themselves dependent on and deserving of others' help. Therefore, it becomes the foremost duty of a Muslim to look after them, and care and nurse them with due compassion.

In another hadith, the Holy Messenger said: There are five rights of a Muslim towards his brother-in faith, out of which one is that if one were to fall sick, it is incumbent on others to enquire about his welfare and to alleviate his sufferings. This is an act of piety, by doing which one earns the pleasure of Allah ■

*Editor's Note* 

## Fear of God

It is our daily experience that whenever we take up any job we do it under the pressure of threat or do it in the hope of getting reward. Recently we have come across a book "Peace lies in the commands of God." The author Dr. M. Mohsin Ali has nicely described the situation with proper references to Tradition. We reproduce below some extract of this book:

These days one question is frequently arise; "Why earth quakes or other natural calamities occur?" The answer is that natural calamities will not occur if majority of people purify their souls.

Frequently natural calamities are attacking our country (India). Because of these our country suffer a huge loss. For instance, Gujrat earth quake made us a loss of 20,000 crores, Orrisa floods and cyclone made us to suffer a loss of rupees 10,000 crores, Andrapradesh floods cost us 700 crores loss. Will making earth quake proof houses will protect people from the natural disaster? We need to see the root cause of it. If majority of the people are good, honest and purified, then God cannot punish us, He never punishes the good people. It is clear from the Qura'n that He has only punished the bad people till now and ever. There may be some good people in that area who are cleaned and purified but that is not enough, majority of the people should be honest, cleaned and purified. When good people become a silent viewers of the bad deeds, and do not take any step to stop these sins, the punishments affect the good people too.

### **The Prophets apprehensions at the time of a storm:**

Hazrat Aishah (with whom Allah is pleased) relates that whenever a strong wind bringing dense clouds started blowing, the Prophet (peace be upon him) turned pale with the fear of Allah. He became restive and would go in and out with perturbation, and would recite the following; "O, my Allah! I ask of thee the good out of those wind, the good out of that which is in this wind and the good out of that which is the out come of this wind. I seek refuge in thee from the evil of this wind from the evil out of that which is in this wind and from the evil out of that which is the out come of that"

She says; And further when it began to rain, signs of delight appeared on his face. I said to him once, O Prophet of Allah when clouds appear everybody is happy as they foretell rain, but why is it that I see you so much perturbed at that time?" He replied, "O Aishah! How can I feel secure that this wind does not portend Allah's wrath? The people

of A'ad were punished with the wind. They were happy when they beheld the gathering dense clouds, believing that they brought rain; but actually those clouds brought no rain but utter destruction of A'ad"

### **The Prophet's weeping the whole night**

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) once kept weeping the whole night through, repeating again and again the following verse .

“ If Thou punish them, they art Thy slaves; and if Thou forgive them, Thou only art the Mighty, the Wise.”

It is said about Imam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alaih) that he also once wept the whole night, reciting the following verse of the Qur'an in Tahajjud:

“But a vaunt ye, O, ye guilty, this day.”

This verse means that on the Day of Judgment, the guilty will be asked to separate themselves from the good, and will not be allowed to mix with them as they were doing in the worldly life. Why should not the people with fear of Allah in their hearts weep in anxiety regarding which class they will belong to on that Day?

Man, born to live on the planet earth, has been endowed with free choice, but he is not the master of his destiny. The most crucial aspect of life is that he is accountable to God Almighty for all his deeds. There is no escape from this accountability. After a brief span on earth, he is destined to face his death and find himself before God for his fate to be decided in the form of eternal hell or eternal paradise. The greatest of man's concerns is that he should prepare himself for the world to come. The present world is like a great examination hall, where man's only task is to pass the divine test set by God, so that he may save himself from divine punishment in the next world, and be held deserving of God's rewards in the form of paradise. In paradise there will be no fear and no regret.

Everyone is heading towards a fateful leap into the next world. Only those who can pass the divine test are the successful ones in this life and the next. This is the goal towards which people ought to strive. (Qur'an 37:60)

**S.A.**

We solicit articles for publication in The Fragrance of East. Suitable remuneration will be paid to writers. We prefer receipt of articles on:  
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## U.S. Generosity Fails to Get Sincere Friends

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

### Brothers and Sisters,

It makes me very happy to be with you here in Washington, the capital city of the United States of America, which may be described as the hub of the world. Today its influence is felt everywhere, and in all spheres of life, social, political and economic. We may like it or not, but no one can deny it.

### What is lacking here ?

How did America acquire that position and what part has the skill, industry, unity of interests and capacity to organise and act jointly with one another of the American people, and their scientific, industrial and technological progress played in it, and how much of it is due to our own negligence and shortcomings is a very complex question, and, I am sure, you will agree that it will be out of place to try to discuss it here. Thinkers, political scientists and historians have analysed it from various angles and offered their explanations.

From the material point of view, this country is a paradise on earth, and, excuse me, this is what has brought you to it from your native lands, India, Pakistan, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia,

and, so on. There is no harm in it either, for don't the pieces of iron collect around the magnet or the thirsty people rush to the place where water is found? I have seen America from coast to coast, both as an ordinary tourist and a student of the Quran and history, and the thing I have found wanting here is exactly what has been alluded to in the Quranic Verses we have just heard.

May God bless the learned friend who recited the verses from Sura-i-Kahf and reward him bounteously in both the worlds. He has brought us face to face with a world of truths and realities, and, at least, rendered a great service to me. I was wondering what I was going to say at this meeting. There are, of course, so many things one can talk about, but the difficulty lies in the choice. I was thinking what message could I deliver to you in the States, what would you like to hear from me that, suddenly, the Quran came to my rescue as it always does, and I felt that a wonderful portrait of the Modern Age, which had reached the pinnacle of material development, had been drawn in these verses.

For one of them We provided two gardens of grapevines. Both the gardens gave their fruit and withheld naught thereof And We caused a river to gush forth therein. And he had fruit. And he said unto his comrade, when he

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\* This speech was delivered at the Islamic Centre of Washington on June 25, 1977.

spoke with him: I am more than thee in wealth and stronger in respect of men.

—(XVIII : 33-35)

Can a better portrait be possible of modern America ? Gardens of grape-vines ! Take any part of this great land and does it not present a spectacle of luxuriance and plentitude ? What is lacking in it ? What fruit is not found here? All the gifts of the Lord are abundantly available in this country. Still there is something that is sadly wanting and to which attention has been drawn by the thoughtful and believing friend in these words:

When thou entered the garden,  
why did thou not say : That which  
Allah willeth (will come to pass) !  
There is no strength save in Allah !

—(XVIII : 40)

Only Masha Allah, laa quwata illa billaah (that which Allah willeth : there is no power but in God) is missing. This Masha Allah, laa quwata illa billaah can turn the dust into gold, elevate materialism into worship of the highest order, and tame the rebellious horse of the carnal self so that it became a blessed mode of transport for taking man to his destination. It is the master-key that can open any lock. If the Western World does not possess anything, it is this. On the face of it, these are just a few words which we utter frequently in everyday life. Masha Allah,

when did you come? Masha Allah, when you had this new suit made ? And, so on.

In fact, we have lost appreciation of the ocean of eloquence and profundity that is contained in this short, pithy expression and the marvellous power it possesses of subduing the materialistic aspirations and conceit of man that lead him into the deception that whatever is happening around him is of his own choice and making, That is why, we utter it mechanically, without the faintest idea of its intrinsic significance. What Masha Allah denotes, in sum is that whatever takes place in the world is at the command of God and by His power and authority; the credit for it does not go to man, nor does praise belong to him.

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

—(I : I)

And :

But His command, when He intendeth a thing, is only that He saith unto it : Be ! and. it is.

—(XXXVI : 81)

What has been set forth in the two aforementioned verses and the supremeness that has been affirmed in Allah is He who raised the heavens without any pillars, (XIII : 2) have got compressed into the single phrase of Masha Allah, laa quwata illa billaah. Only that which Allah willeth will happen. He

is the Author of all things, the Creator of all things. There is no power save in Allah.

Today, America is a living example of He hath loaded you with His favours both without and within, (XXXI : 20), and Abundantly supplied with sustenance from every place. (XVI : 112). Wealth is springing here from the earth and pouring down from the heavens. Then, why is it not giving the message of peace, good understanding and security to the world?

**America has no sincere friends**

The United States can claim to be the benefactor of the world, and, may God forbid, with many people it is the Great Provider of the daily bread. But how many countries feel sincerely grateful to it? America is giving food, money and arms to scores of nations and aiding them in the implementation of their development plans. But what is it getting in return?

A number of countries feel protected against external aggression because of their defence pacts and other arrangements with America. For them its friendship is the greatest guarantee of peace and the preservation of their sovereignty. Yet, no one is giving thanks to it. On the contrary, they never miss an opportunity to denounce it. An undercurrent of hatred is found everywhere against it. America has no

sincere friend, no true well-wisher in any part of the world.

Do the leaders of this great country not feel it ? Are its thinkers blissfully unaware of this reality? No, they must be knowing that for all its dollars what America is getting back is a kick here and a let-down there. But have they ever cared to go to the root of the matter? If they do a little self-introspection, they will find that at the base of it all lies America's own insincerity. Its entire concept and mechanism of aid and assistance is devoid of earnestness. Its generosity is a cloak for the exploitation of the weaker and the poorer nations. It gives, but not to enable them to stand on their feet. Its magnanimity is aimed at the perpetuation of their dependence upon it.

**The Apostles and their followers served mankind with sincerity and they came to be loved**

The Prophets devoted their time and energy to the service of mankind and gave it the priceless gifts of faith, truth, sincerity and universal brotherhood, and, as a consequence of it, nations and communities became their slaves. The Egyptians, Syrians and Iraqis renounced their languages, cultures and ancient civilisations, and willingly accepted the rule of the Arabs, or, rather, of the Muslim Arabs, and even their tongue. Nowadays, a campaign is being carried on in our Eastern tries

against the English language, so much so that it is being erased from the sign-boards, but so far not a voice has been raised against the Arabic language in the Arab World. In fact, no reaction or hostility against the Islamic Civilisation or the ArabIslamic culture is felt in the Arabic-speaking countries while, perhaps, a feeling of digest and intolerance is building up against the European Civilisation in various parts of the world and the day is not far off when they will throw it out and revive the Eastern or their own indigenous civilisations.

#### **America is unblest with true Faith**

There is everything in America save the effulgence of the Book of God and Divine Guidance. The belief that it is God who is directing the affairs of the world, He has power over all things and all that we have achieved is by His grace and we should spend what we possess according to his Will and Command and in His path is not to be found in this mighty land. If anything is wanting here, it is this.

It has Gardens of grape-vines, but not Masha Allah laa quwata illa billaah, and the owner of the earthly paradise can only be he who has been indicated in the Quran. In the parable of two men, the possessor of the gardens is a plain materialist, a rebel, an ungrateful soul, and an egotist while the other is a truthful Believer : he is weak, he does not

possess Gardens of grape-vines, but he is a Believer and God has blessed him with faith.

Both the Gardens withheld nothing. They poured out all that they had, like a spring gushing forth from the earth. Abundant was their produce.

Now, the turn of the other brother comes. He says, "Very well, but why did you not say : That which Allah Willeth will come to pass; there is no power save in Allah, when you went into the garden? You should have avowed that it all was by the grace and benevolence of the Lord, and a manifestation of His Might and Mercifulness."

#### **Had America been religious-minded**

America is not saying that all this is the gift of God. But why? It is a long and distressing story, and, also, shameful for you and me. It is long because it goes back to hundreds of years; distressing because had it been otherwise, had America been blessed with the wealth of faith and had it been religiousminded, the world would have been presenting another picture, the history of mankind would have been different, the danger of war would not have been hovering over our heads and the nuclear energy would not have been causing fear and suspicion in the minds of men; and shameful because we, the Muslims, failed in our duty to carry Islam to this part of the world. The Lord gave us many opportunities. Muslims came

to this land when it had begun to raise its head like an infant; all the portents were there of its enormous potentialities, but we were caught in deep slumber; and even before that when we ruled over Spain we should have striven to instill the message of Islam into the heart and soul of Europe instead of building Al - Hamara and Al-Zehra and erecting stately mansions and magnificent mosques, and the evangelists and preachers of Islam should have spread over the Continent. But it was not to be. Hence I say that the story is, also, shameful. However, what was to happen has happened. If this country needs anything now it is that a living bond is forged between it and Apostleship. But Christianity cannot do that.

### **Failure of Christianity**

Christianity had proved its powerlessness a long time ago. If you read the history of Christianity you will find that either it was not content with anything less than monasticism or there was so much of stagnation and prejudice in it that it felt compelled to push back the rising tide of knowledge and critical investigation. Christianity was not equipped to lend guidance to this great land. It did not possess the strength to show the path of moderation and comprehensiveness to the eager, ardent and enterprising peoples of Europe and America. It could not say, Show us the Straight path; or Our Lord

Give us good in this world, and good in the Hereafter. Christianity was not willing to say: Our Lord ! Give us good in this world... ..because it believed in the renunciation of the world.

### **Islam is the religion of balanced and comprehensive teachings**

It was left to our precursors to tell that they, alone, could do so. Now, it is our duty to present such a balanced and comprehensive image of Islam that the people of the West realised that it, alone, could lead them along the right path. If the bond is established between America and Islam, the doors of Divine Mercy and Benevolence will open for the whole world, the clouds of war will disperse, hatred will disappear from the hearts, and man will cease to be a hunter of man: he will become a man in the true sense of the word, and live only as an enemy of Satan. This only Islam can do, and whenever it is going to happen in America, it will be through Islam.

Christianity had lost its soul centuries ago when it had stepped out of Palestine and made its way into the Roman Empire. I feel proud to say it here in America which is the most powerful country in the world, today, that Christianity, as it is, is not the religion of the Apostle who had been raised up by God with the message of peace and love. It is the creation of St. Paul and the product of his ingenuity. It is the

Christianity of St. Paul, and of the Middle Ages, and it would be futile to expect it to guide the steps of a dynamic country like the United States or an impatient generation like the present one. It possesses neither a comprehensive programme of life nor the moral strength to uphold the values related to the inner existence of man.

### **A word to the Americans**

Oh, citizens of the United States ! My best wishes to you. I don't grudge you your attainments. I don't look at your progress with contempt. What I ask you most earnestly is only to add Masha Allah, wa laa quwata illa-billaah to what you have. Subordinate your worldly possessions and phenomenal achievements to the will of God. Place it all under the control and authority of the Divine law. Use it for the rebirth and redemption of mankind and the generation of an atmosphere of equality, fraternity, justice and freedom from fear in the world. Let there be no distinctions of race, colour or wealth between man and man. Use your enormous resources for reconstruction of the world. You will, thus, be helping yourselves as well for, without it, your civilisation cannot survive. Its days are numbered. As Iqbal has put it :

The arrant intellect that laid bare  
the treasures of nature,

In its own nest is threatened by  
the lightning it has released.

### **Deliver the message of Islam**

The Muslims, on the contrary, are fortunate to have been blessed with a unique comprehensiveness. They realise the worth and significance of this world, but, at the same time, regard it only a transitional stage in man's onward journey. With them the real and permanent abode is the Hereafter. Their attitude towards life is governed by the Quranic verse which says :

And for that Abode of the Hereafter We assign it unto those who seek not oppression in the earth, nor yet corruption. The (good) sequel is for those who ward off (evil).

—(XXVIII:83)

In the end, I thank you that you come here out of love for a Muslim brother and gave him a patient hearing. May Allah protect you and your faith, and your next generation, also, be a believer in Islam.

Die not die save as Muslims.

—(II :132)

My fervent prayer is that you remained true to this commandment.

May you be bowing your heads low before God. offering up Namaz regularly and adhering steadfastly to the Kalima as long as you live in this world, and when you depart from it, the radiance of Faith may be in your hearts and the Kalima of Laa ilaaha illallaah, Mohammadur rasulullaah on your lips!■

## A Few Words With Students

- S. Bilal Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi\*

The education system of religious institutions differ from other institutions. Madaris are not only to accord certificates and degrees. It has not ever been their main aim. It is unfortunate that today students have deemed Madaris as like those of government colleges and universities. They enroll in Madaris with a view that they may get certificates and earn worldly benefits. That is why today no fruitful results are visible from Madaris.

The road to Madrasa is not so easy. It demands struggle and sacrifice. Basically, the main plank of Madaris is to achieve the pleasure of Allah. A Madrasa student gives rather than he takes. Well-known Islamic scholar Maulana S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi described Madaris as the forts of Islam and the Power House of knowledge from where the entire nation learns the mode of living and the system of education. It is time students must inculcate in their minds that seeking knowledge in Madaris is not the task of left hand. They will have to gird up their loins to achieve it cutting of all unnecessary activities. If any student's intention is something else after taking admission in Madrasa, it would be better for him to change his decision

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\* *Rector Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow.*

forthwith.

It is very regretted that students passed a long period in Madrasas and are oblivious from their sole aims. They have no particular target of life and sometime their intention itself is bad. If asked even those students who have immense religious passion and spirit, they will also say that their main purpose is to serve the religion. While service to religion is not main objective but the sole aim is to achieve pleasure of Allah. For which all endeavors and sacrifices are laid. The service to religion is the source to attain the pleasure of Allah. But they regard the source as the main destination.

Generally speaking, students don't determine the destination of their life during schooling. So, they seem very confused and miserable after passing out from Madaris. When they go to impart education in a Madrasa and get meager salary and don't support themselves financially and leave the same saying that after earning more wealth they will serve the religion well but generally it doesn't happen.

It is a well-known saying that who goes to catch blanket, the blanket itself catches him. It is said that two friends were walking and observing natural scenes on a river bank. Meanwhile, they

saw a blanket floating on the river. One said, "Stop here I bring the blanket". Accordingly, he dived into the river and reached the blanket and stuck to it. When his friend called him. There was no answer. The blanket caught hold of him. Hence, which he thought as blanket, it was not the blanket but the same was bear which held him down.

Aimlessness, indecision, procrastination and lack of proper upbringing are big stumbling blocks in one's career. Students must take into account their resources as well as aptitude while taking the crucial decision about their career. Their ambitions and desires should also match their abilities and aptitudes.

It is generally said that those who

attach to the religious institutions, their lives are full of various difficulties and they cannot attain real peace of life. But the fact is that if they may strive with true religious spirit, honesty and integrity, after passing short difficulties, easiness and a host of opportunities will become their destiny and abundant bounties begin to shower on them. It is true that if anyone has true passion Allah helps him in many ways. Allah doesn't put His slaves in difficulties and afflictions beyond their strengths. And about whom it is heard that Allah put them in severe trials and troubles and they suffered a lot in their lives. Indeed they reached their highest position of faith (Iman). Obviously, we don't have the same. ■

*(English Rendering:*

*Obaidur Rahman Nadwi)*

### **The Essence of the Surat-ul-Kahf**

There is no strength save in Allah' carries the essence of the Surat-ul-Kahf... The Prophet of Islam and every believer reciting the Qur'an has been called upon to place implicit reliance in God in every affair instead of relying on his own resources. Every intention and hope for the morrow has thus to be made dependent on the will and pleasure of God.

"And say not of anything: Lo! I shall do that tomorrow, Except Allah will. And remember thy Lord when thou forget test, and say: It may be that my Lord guideth unto a nearer way of truth than this."

(A-Kahf: 24-25) One would verily not bow in submission before the outward material causes, nor rely on those who appear to possess the means nor even on his own whims, desires and caprices if he ascribes every favour to the beneficence of the Merciful Lord. Except if Allah wills or whatsoever Allah may will might appear to be two commonplace traditional phrases often repeated mechanically by force of habit, but these are really very significant, pithy and meaningful expressions which cut at the very root of blind faith in one's own capacity or material resources. ■

## When War Shakes The World

### The Global Fallout of The US-Israel Attack On Iran

- M. Iqbal Siddiqui

Energy shocks, humanitarian tragedy, and geopolitical upheaval in a conflict whose consequences now extend far beyond the Middle East.

In the early hours of 28 February 2026, the Middle East awoke to a coordinated military campaign launched by the United States and Israel against Iranian nuclear facilities, missile installations, and strategic infrastructure. The strikes, which eliminated several senior Iranian political and military figures, including the country's Supreme Leader, triggered swift retaliation through missile and drone attacks across the region.

Amid the escalating hostilities, one of the most shocking incidents was the attack on the Shajare Tayyibeh school, where 165 people – most of them schoolgirls between the age 7 to 12 – were killed and about 95 others injured, sending waves of grief and outrage across Iran and beyond.

Within days, what began as a calculated military operation evolved into a widening confrontation involving multiple actors, destabilising energy markets and exposing deep divisions within international alliances. In an interconnected world, the conflict has rapidly become not merely a regional

war but a global crisis with economic, geopolitical, humanitarian, and environmental consequences.

#### A World Economy Under Shock

One of the earliest signs of the conflict's global impact appeared in energy markets. Oil prices surged beyond \$100 per barrel amid fears that the war could disrupt supplies from the Persian Gulf. At the centre of these concerns lies the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow maritime corridor through which nearly one-fifth of the world's oil passes daily. Even the perception of instability in this chokepoint sends ripples across global markets. Tanker traffic slowed amid security threats and attacks in nearby waters, prompting the International Energy Agency to authorise the largest coordinated release of strategic oil reserves in its history to stabilise markets. The move reflected how profoundly the conflict had shaken global energy security.

Energy shocks inevitably translate into economic pressure. Rising fuel prices increase transportation costs, raise the price of food and essential goods, and intensify inflation in already fragile economies. For many developing countries, particularly in Africa and South Asia, the impact is

immediate. Governments dependent on imported fuel face fiscal strain while ordinary citizens confront rising living costs. The effects are already visible in India, where a sudden Rupees 60 rise in domestic gas prices has added pressure on millions of household budgets.

The war thus highlights a paradox of globalisation: while economic interdependence has connected markets, it has also created new vulnerabilities. A conflict in one region can quickly reverberate across the global system.

### **Global Trade and Supply Chains Under Strain**

Beyond the energy sector, the war has disrupted global trade. Shipping lanes in and around the Gulf have become zones of uncertainty as attacks on vessels and fears of escalation force companies to delay or reroute shipments.

The result is a chain reaction. Delays in maritime transport affect industries thousands of kilometres away. European markets reliant on Asian imports face longer delivery times, while manufacturing sectors in East Asia confront rising shipping costs and logistical hurdles.

Air travel has also been affected. Several international airlines have suspended flights over the region, forcing costly detours and longer travel

times. These disruptions highlight how fragile global commerce can be when geopolitical conflict unsettles key transport routes.

### **Geopolitical Realignments and Regional Turmoil**

The war has also intensified geopolitical tensions across the Middle East and beyond. Iran's retaliatory strikes have targeted Israeli territory, American military installations, and sites in Gulf states perceived as assisting the initial attacks. Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates have reinforced their defensive posture amid growing security concerns.

Inside Iran, the political landscape shifted dramatically after the assassination of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, following which the country's leadership quickly moved to elect Mojtaba Khamenei as the new Supreme Leader, seeking to project continuity and stability despite the shock of the attack.

Non-state actors aligned with Iran have opened additional fronts. Armed groups in Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen have escalated attacks on regional targets, raising the spectre of a wider confrontation capable of engulfing multiple countries simultaneously.

Major powers outside the region have responded cautiously. Russia and China have urged restraint while

emphasising the importance of sovereignty and diplomatic solutions. European governments have warned that the escalation could undermine international law and destabilise already fragile alliances. Divisions have become visible even within Western partnerships, with some European leaders criticising the campaign and Spain withdrawing its ambassador from Israel in protest. Across the Global South, governments have expressed apprehension about the broader economic and political consequences of the war. Many fear that prolonged confrontation could deepen inflation, disrupt trade routes, and intensify instability worldwide.

### **Voices of Dissent: War Fatigue in the US**

The conflict has also sparked debate within the United States itself. Demonstrations have appeared in several cities opposing the strikes and warning against another prolonged military entanglement in the Middle East.

Commentators reflecting a growing public sentiment argue that decades of interventions, from Iraq to Afghanistan, have left many Americans deeply sceptical of new wars. From this perspective, escalation with Iran reflects a broader pattern of “endless wars” whose human and economic costs are borne not only by distant societies but also by ordinary citizens at home.

Some critics have gone further, suggesting that the sudden escalation may also be linked to domestic political pressures in Washington, including controversies surrounding the disclosure of the Epstein Files. According to these voices, foreign crises have historically been used by political leaderships to shift public attention from internal scandals.

Others frame the conflict as primarily driven by Israeli strategic interests rather than American national priorities, arguing that the United States risks bearing the financial, military, and diplomatic costs of a war that many citizens feel does not serve their own country’s long-term interests. Such arguments, though sharply debated within American political discourse, reflect a growing unease among sections of the public about the direction of US foreign policy in the Middle East.

### **The Humanitarian Cost**

Behind the geopolitical calculations lies the stark reality of human suffering. Airstrikes across Iranian cities have damaged residential neighbourhoods, hospitals, schools, and public infrastructure, leaving many dead and thousands injured. Families have been displaced, while shortages of essential supplies have intensified humanitarian concerns.

Disturbingly, the targeting of civilian places no longer seems to

provoke the outrage it once did. Israel has already set the precedent in Gaza, where schools, hospitals, and residential neighbourhoods were repeatedly struck, effectively normalising the attack on civilian targets in modern warfare.

The conflict has also disrupted civilian life across the wider region. Thousands of foreign nationals and diplomatic personnel have been evacuated from several Middle Eastern countries, while airlines cancelled large numbers of flights to avoid the conflict zone.

Observers from within Iran describe a society living under the constant shadow of airstrikes and uncertainty. Palestinian commentators have drawn parallels between their own experiences and the unfolding tragedy in Iran, emphasising how civilians frequently bear the heaviest burden of geopolitical confrontation.

### **Environmental Consequences**

War also leaves scars on the environment. Fires at oil depots and industrial facilities have released toxic smoke into the atmosphere, while the risk of oil spills threatens fragile marine ecosystems in the Gulf.

Damage to desalination plants and water infrastructure presents another grave concern in a region already facing severe water scarcity.

Such destruction could deprive millions of people of reliable access to clean water and compound the humanitarian crisis.

Environmental analysts caution that modern warfare increasingly produces ecological damage that endures for decades, affecting populations far removed from the conflict itself.

### **The Crisis of International Norms**

The conflict has reignited debates about international law and the legitimacy of unilateral military action. Critics argue that largescale strikes undertaken without broad international consensus risk undermining the global framework established to prevent wars between states.

At diplomatic forums, countries have expressed sharply divided views. While Australia and Canada signalled support for the US-Israeli operation, others, including Russia, China, Pakistan, Malaysia, and several Global South states, condemned the strikes and urged immediate de-escalation.

These divisions illustrate the growing fragmentation of the international system at a time when collective responses to crises are urgently needed.

### **Islamic Ethical Reflections on War and Peace**

For Muslims, war is not merely a

matter of strategy but a profound moral question. Islamic teachings impose strict ethical limits on warfare and emphasise the sanctity of human life.

The Qur'an reminds humanity that "whoever kills a soul... it is as though he has killed all mankind; and whoever saves a life, it is as though he has saved all mankind." (The Qur'an 5:32)

Even when conflict becomes unavoidable, restraint remains essential. The Qur'an instructs: "Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress; indeed, Allah does not love transgressors." (The Qur'an 2:190).

Prophetic teachings reinforce this by prohibiting the killing of women, children, and other non combatants, as well as the destruction of crops, trees, and places of worship. From this ethical perspective, the suffering of civilians and the devastation of infrastructure in modern warfare starkly contradict the moral restraint emphasised in Islamic teachings.

### **Lessons from History**

History offers sobering reminders of how wars in the Middle East often unfold. Interventions in Iraq, Syria, and Libya demonstrate that military victories rarely translate into long-term stability. Instead, such conflicts frequently leave behind fractured societies, weakened institutions, and enduring grievances.

Many analysts fear that the current confrontation could follow a similar trajectory. Even if hostilities subside, the economic, environmental, and political damage inflicted by the war may shape the region's future for years.

### **A War Without Frontiers**

The US-Israel war on Iran reveals a defining reality of the modern age: war no longer remains confined to battlefields. Its consequences travel through energy markets, trade networks, humanitarian crises, and diplomatic alliances.

Ultimately, the greatest victims of war are rarely those who design it. They are ordinary people – families struggling with rising prices, communities displaced by violence, and children growing up amid fear and uncertainty.

The Qur'an reminds humanity that "reconciliation is best" (The Qur'an 4:128). In an age of global interdependence, this wisdom carries renewed urgency. Security founded on domination and perpetual confrontation cannot produce lasting peace.

The international community now faces a critical choice: whether to allow escalation to continue or to restore the principles of restraint, justice, and dialogue. For in a world bound together by shared humanity, no war remains distant for long; its consequences eventually reach every shore. ■

## The Crisis of Unemployment in J&K

- Bilal Gani\*

Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) is grappling with an unemployment crisis. In recent years, the unemployment rate in the region has soared to alarming levels. Such an increase has forced thousands of highly-qualified youth into low-paying jobs.

In the Kashmir valley, hundreds of jobless youth have been struggling to find stable employment despite completing their education and acquiring various skills.

### Myriad Reasons

The unemployment rate of J&K is higher than the national average. In December 2025, Parliament said that J&K's unemployment rate was 6.1% in July-September 2025, higher than the national average of 5.2%. Urban areas have shown sharper gaps with an unemployment rate of 10.6%, compared with the rural unemployment rate of 5.1%. As per estimates, the region has approximately 3.6 lakh registered unemployed youth, with roughly two lakh in Kashmir and 1.5 lakh in

Jammu. The unprecedented rise in the region's unemployment rate has been precipitated by its heavy reliance on the government sector in the absence of a robust private sector. Tourism and horticulture, traditional areas of the private sector, have been shrinking and are unable to absorb the growing educated workforce. The lack of a diversified industry has caused unemployment by limiting job creation in sectors beyond tourism and horticulture, leading to structural unemployment.

The delays in recruitment have further exacerbated this crisis. Almost 80% of all recruitment exams announced by the J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB) and the J&K Public Service Commission (JKPSC), two premier recruiting agencies, have been delayed or challenged in court. Thousands of posts now lie vacant across different departments like health, public works and education. The absence of a fair and transparent recruitment mechanism has worsened the situation. On December 15, the J&K government terminated 103 employees of the Fire and

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\* *Bilal Gani is with the faculty of Political Studies, Government Degree College Beerwah, J&K*

Emergency Services Department after large-scale irregularities were revealed in the recruitment process.

The region's economic unpredictability has turned entrepreneurship into survival ventures rather than growth engines.

Moreover, the absence of a well-defined public employment policy has replaced regular recruitment with contractual hiring. J&K has more than one lakh daily wagers across different departments who continue to work without job security or benefits. Their regularisation has been over looked for decades by successive governments. The job crisis in the region is particularly alarming among highly educated individuals who account for 23.9% of the total unemployment rate.

This situation reflects a serious mismatch between educational attainment and job opportunities.

### **A Swift Response**

J&K's job crisis demands urgent and effective government intervention. A strong start-up culture and a robust entrepreneurship ecosystem can effectively address unemployment in the region. Over the years, some local entrepreneurs have established successful start-ups and provided

employment to hundreds of youths. Therefore, the Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDID), the premier public institute supporting entrepreneurship development in the Union Territory (UT), should be fully funded to be an effective platform for encouraging entrepreneurs to build new start-ups.

However, the public sector remains the main employment generation the region. There should be massive recruitment drives to fill vacant positions and curb the unemployment graph, which continues to rise year after year. The government should appoint a monitoring agency which can oversee the selection process of recruiting agencies in the UT, so as to ensure transparent and time bound recruitment to various government positions. J&K's youth should be provided with equal employment opportunities in public and private sectors through fast-track recruitment, financial and logistics support, and market oriented education with special focus on skill-based courses. Private investors should be encouraged to invest in the region's talented human capital which will be a critical driver of productivity, innovation and economic growth. ■

## SC Defends Institution's Dignity. It Must Extend Its Vigilance to Communities

- S.Y. Quraishi

The Supreme Court's recent suo motu intervention over an NCERT textbook passage allegedly portraying judicial corruption is a welcome and timely assertion of institutional responsibility. By acting swiftly and decisively, it has reaffirmed a foundational principle: That public institutions, especially those entrusted with constitutional authority, must be protected from casual or deliberate disparagement — more so in educational material that shapes young minds. More importantly, the Court has signaled that reputational harm, when normalised, can erode public trust in ways not easily reversible. The authority of institutions rests not only on legal mandate but on public confidence; once this is systematically weakened, constitutional governance itself begins to fray.

This intervention, however, opens up a larger constitutional question. If the dignity of institutions must be protected against misrepresentation, does the same principle extend, by necessary implication, to the dignity of communities who form the fabric of the republic? The Constitution does not

recognise hierarchies of dignity. Its guarantees are structured on the premise that respect for persons, groups, and institutions is mutually reinforcing, not mutually exclusive.

India's textbooks have long been instruments of nation-building. They do more than convey information; they shape civic imagination. What is included, what is emphasised, and what is omitted influence how citizens come to understand their society and each other. Recent revisions have, therefore, drawn attention not merely to what is written, but to what is no longer there.

In 2022-23, references to the Gujarat riots were dropped from Class 12 Political Science textbooks. References to the Babri Masjid demolition were first diluted then removed, while the treatment of the Mughal period was significantly reduced. The treatment of cast struggles and Dalit assertion was pared down with much of its earlier texture and nuance diminished. Each of these changes maybe defensible in isolation. But taken together, they suggest a movement away from contested histories that democracies must learn to confront.

The concern is not partisan. Curricular revision is a constant feature of governance, and no political era is untouched by it. The deeper issue is structural: The relationship between education and honesty. A text book that sanitises history produces ignorance dressed as truth, as shaped by prevailing public discourse.

Representation in text books is not merely academic; it shapes civic imagination in ways both subtle and enduring. When a community with a long and well-documented history of oppression is presented primarily through narratives of suffering, an unintended distortion can arise: Its agency, intellectual traditions, reform movements, and leadership risk being overshadowed, leaving an incomplete picture. Acknowledging historical injustice is essential, but so is recognising the fullness of a community's experience.

These are not falsehoods in the conventional sense. They are partial truths, which, repeated often enough, harden into prejudice. The damage is deeper precisely because it is invisible, absorbed before the tools to question it are formed.

It is in this broader context that the Court's recent articulation assumes far wider significance. Justice Ujjal Bhuyan

has observed that it is constitutionally impermissible-whether by the state or non-state actors- to vilify or denigrate any community on grounds of religion, caste, language or region. Grounded in the constitutional value of fraternity, this observation elevates the discussion from institutional protection to a more expansive doctrine of social dignity.

Fraternity, often the least discussed of the Constitution's founding ideals, is in fact the glue that binds liberty and equality into a functioning democratic order. Without fraternity, equality becomes formal and liberty becomes fragmented. The Court's reminder is therefore not ornamental; it is structural. To vilify a community is not merely to injure sentiment- it is to weaken the constitutional promise of belonging.

The constitutional architecture supporting this principle is both explicit and expansive. The Preamble speaks of fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual. Article 14 guarantees equality before the law. Article 15 prohibits discrimination on specified grounds. Article 21, as expansively interpreted, protects dignity as an intrinsic component of life and liberty. Article 51 A (e) imposes a duty to promote harmony and common brotherhood. Read together, these provisions create

not merely a set of enforceable rights, but a normative framework within which public discourse must operate.

The statutory framework reinforces this position. Provisions such as Sections 153/A, IS3B, 295A and 505 of the Indian Penal Code criminalise the promotion of enmity and the vilification of communities. These are not obscure or rarely invoked provisions; they form the backbone of the legal response to hate speech and communal incitement. Yet, their enforcement has often appeared uneven, particularly when such narratives are normalised in everyday discourse. The law exists, the prohibitions are clear, but the threshold of intervention seems to shift depending on context, visibility, and perhaps even the identity of those affected.

This gap between constitutional promise, statutory clarity, and institutional response is where the challenge lies. A democracy cannot afford selective vigilance. If the law acts decisively when institutions are maligned but hesitates when communities are stereotyped or vilified, it risks creating an unintended hierarchy of concern. Such asymmetry does not strengthen institutions; it ultimately weakens them by eroding the moral coherence of the constitutional order.

Seen in this light, the Court's

intervention marks more than a defence of institutional reputation. It gestures toward a broader constitutional doctrine: That dignity-whether of institutions or communities- is indivisible. The same constitutional morality that protects courts from defamation must, by extension, protect citizens from vilification.

What this moment offers, therefore, is an opportunity for greater consistency in the application of constitutional values. If dignity is to be defended, it must be defended across the board, with the same clarity, urgency, and seriousness. For the real test of a democracy lies not only in how it protects its institutions, but in how it protects its people.

Let this landmark order mark a turning point - an end to a pattern of judicial hesitation in confronting the broader ecosystem of vilification, and a reaffirmation that the Constitution's promise of dignity must be defended with equal clarity, whether the subject is an institution or a community. ■

*Quraishi is former Chief  
Election Commissioner of India and  
the author of books including  
Democracy's Heartland: Inside the  
Battle for Power in South Asia  
(The Indian Express -28 -02-2026)*

## The Prince And The Police: A British Tale

- Karan Thapar

I don't think I'll ever forget my sense of shock when I heard Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor has been arrested. I belong to a generation that used to refer to him as Prince Andrew. He was said to be the late Queen's favourite child. More importantly, he's the younger brother of the reigning monarch. And at the time of the Falkland's War, he was a national hero. As Mark Antony said in a different context, "O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!"

Something similar would be unimaginable in India. We treat the privileged, the wealthy and the influential as special people. The laws and rules that apply to ordinary mortals often circumvent their lives. The police protect them – often from the rest of us – and rarely, if ever, arrest them.

Think of the rich kids in expensive cars, often driving without a licence and usually below the age limit, who have run over innocent people and how slow the police are to respond with effective action. It would be very different if the driver was just *aam aadmi*. Think of the communal slurs pronounced by senior politicians who are never held to account by their party leadership or the media. It would be very different if the offender was you and I.

No doubt this is why the news of Mountbatten-Windsor's arrest was such a shock.

What was equally surprising was the response of King Charles. In a statement issued by Buckingham Palace

not only did he say "the law must take its course" but, pointedly, that the process must be "full, fair and proper", the investigation must happen "in the appropriate manner", and, finally, it will have his "full and whole-hearted support and co-operation".

Do you need me to point out that's not how rich and powerful families would respond in India? We're more likely to pay the police to hush it up. Or contact someone important to protect our erring child. Or even suggest the family driver was behind the wheel, and not the faulty son.

Our courts frequently proclaim "be you ever so high, the law is above you", but is that really true in India? The powerful amongst us strive to ensure it's not. But on Thursday, February 19, it was true of Britain. That's why I admire the way they've handled this sad and sorry saga.

However, the truth is I don't think the British expected this. They're a country of privilege, with different standards for the high-born. People like Andrew don't get arrested and, certainly, don't end up in jail.

I dare say Andrew himself could never have believed this is what he would face. The photograph of him slumped at the back of a police car, shaken and shocked, reflects he can hardly believe what's happened.

The response of the British media suggests a similar stupefaction. "Andrew Arrested" was plastered across the front

page of *The Daily Telegraph*. “The Arrest of Andrew” was the headline in *The Times*. “The Prince and the Paedophile: A long, slow fall from grace” was the banner across pages two and three. Even the staid and stoic *Financial Times* carried the story on its front page.

Of course, we don’t know how this will end. Will he be charged? Could conviction follow? If he’s found guilty, what sort of sentence will he get? But the fact that these are credible questions is proof of how much changed that Friday morning, when the eighth in line to the British throne was summarily arrested, without warning and without any hint it was likely. Even the King had no foreknowledge.

The last time anything similar happened was in 1647 when Charles I was arrested. That was nearly four centuries ago.

Since then the British have placed their royal family on a pedestal and got used to looking up at them. Now to place the King’s brother on the floor of a prison cell is remarkable.

If the handling of the Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor case gives them a sense of pride, it’s well-deserved. ■

*Karan Thapar is the author of Devil’s Advocate: The Untold Story. (Hindustan Times – 01 – 03 - 2026)*

#### Attacks on Energy Infra Bring War Closer Home

With the targeting of key energy infrastructure, the conflict in West Asia is now spreading far beyond the region. Israel has struck Iran’s South Pars natural gas field, which is estimated to account for a significant share of the country’s gas production. In response, Iran has fired at the Ras Laffan Industrial City in Qatar-the world’s largest gas hub. With energy infrastructure now being specifically attacked-Saudi Arabia’s SAMREF refinery as well as a refinery in Kuwait are also reported to have been hit- it raises the risks of prolonged disruptions in supplies, further straining global energy markets. The ripple effects will be felt across the world.

Prompted, perhaps, by the damaging consequences for the global economy of this dramatic move up the escalation ladder, President Donald Trump has sought to distance the US from this attack. Placing the blame squarely on Israel, Trump posted on a social media platform that the US “knew nothing about this particular attack”. And that “NO MORE ATTACKS WILL BE MADE BY ISRAEL, pertaining to this extremely important and valuable South Pars Field unless Iran unwisely decides to attack”. Brent crude oil crossed \$110 per barrel during early trading. Stock markets the world over were in the red. Price pressures are already evident across economies. In the US, gasoline prices have surged to \$3.884 per gallon, up almost \$1 from a month ago, while in Europe, natural gas prices have soared following the recent attacks.

Disruptions in the supply of oil and gas and higher energy prices sustained over a long period will cause considerable pain. India will be no exception. The average price of India’s crude oil basket in March is currently \$114.08 per barrel, up from \$69 in February. India also has 22 vessels stuck in the Persian Gulf that hold 3.2 lakh tones of LPG, 2 lakh tons of LNG and 16 lakh tons of crude oil, as per are port in this paper. The chief economic advisor, V Anantha Nageswaran, reportedly told the Standing Committee on Finance that the impact of crude at \$90 is “almost insignificant or not relevant”. However, if crude rises to \$130 per barrel and sustains at that level for two to three quarters, then growth would fall to 64 per cent, inflation would rise to 5.5 per cent, the fiscal deficit would grow to 5.6 per cent of GDP and the current account deficit would widen to 3.2 per cent. Macro-economic management could then become far more challenging. ■

*(Editorial, The Indian Express - 20 - 03 - 2026)*

## Moral Virtues

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Today most of us have sunk into sins, vices, crimes, corruptions and anti-social activities. Humanity has touched its lowest ebb. The sanctity it carries has vanished. Existing laws have failed to infuse fear in nefarious elements. Law enforcing agencies have become ineffective. It is unfortunate that the whole world is in a state of turmoil. Materialism has over shadowed the finer aspects of life. Corruption of all kinds has now become a way of life.

Recent spate of rape cases seem that the moral fabric of the society has been torn to shreds. It has become hollow from within; its life- springs have dried up. In this context we may recall T.S. Eliot one of the greatest poets of twentieth century who composed a famous poem named "The Waste Land" after observing the then prevailing moral degradations, abjections, abasements, and beast-like behavior in Europe. He described Europe as waste land on account of the sins committed by its people. He further threw light on the disillusionment of a whole generation pointing out spiritual degeneration and prevalence of lust in contemporary Europe. The poem "The Waste Land" has been divided into five sections:

1. The Burial of the Dead
2. The Game of Chess

3. The Fire Sermon
4. Death by Water
5. What the Thunder Said.

In all five sections the poet refers to the loss of spiritualism from the world. He explains that the people of the modern world have become materialistic.

It is heartening to note that the Fire Sermon is the third section of the poem. Its idea came to Eliot from the sermon of Lord Buddha. In Lord Buddha's sermon the world is seen burning in lust and passion. There are hundred of sins that accompany it. Lust has been condemned in both East and West but the modern Waste Landers were lost badly in lust. There is no love. Hence they are suffering into immortal and everlasting pain. Eliot explains it through different scenes and images.

Today such is the condition in India. The nation is passing through stage degeneration. It has lost all the respect for spiritualism. Moral values of life are dead. Women have been the victim of masculine lust and exploitation.

Under these circumstances it is religion which instills into us fear of God and moral strength. It lays down for us the marg which we have to conduct ourselves. Besides it teaches us human

values and sublime norms. It also leads us towards the path of salvation, progress and prosperity. Human values are more characteristic of mankind. If we don't have them, we are not real human. It is, therefore, essential for every human being to develop the quality of considerateness, ethical values, kindness and compassion. Without these qualities we are only human animals, nara pasu, not more than that.

The sphere of human values is not only confined to human beings but it extends to all the things of the world created for the benefit of mankind. The rights of parents, the rights of children, the rights of husband and wife, the rights of relatives, the rights of neighbours, the rights of orphans, benevolent treatment with the widows, the rights of the poor, the rights of patients, the rights of slaves and servants, the rights of guests, the rights of a Muslim upon a Muslim, human relationship, the rights of animals and the like are under the human values.

In his book "True Knowledge" Dr.S. Radhakrishnan says: "It is a small dialogue in an Upanishad that a question is put: what constitutes the essence of the good life? The teacher replies: "Didn't you hear the answer"? There was a thunderclap: da da da. Immediately the teacher explained that these were the essence of good life. - dama, dana, daya. They constitute the essentials of the good life. You must

have dama or self control, restrain, which is the mark of human being".

Jawaharlal Nehru says: "Religions have helped greatly in the development of humanity. They have laid down values and standards and have pointed' out principles for the guidance of human life."(The Discovery of India, P.511)

He further says: "No man can live without religion," Gandhiji has written somewhere. "There are some who in the egotism of their reason declare that they have nothing to do with religion. But that is like a man saying that he breathes, but that he has no nose." Again he says: "My devotion to truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humanity, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means."(An Autobiography, p.379)

It should be noted that the essence of all religions is humanity which revolves around righteousness, action, creation, sustenance, happiness and ultimate self realization as to who am I and who is He. Human is called a social animal. But it forgets its purpose in life by its overcoming greed and other ills. Animals are more grateful than man. All of you know the story of "Alexandra' the slave and lion'. On being treated of his wound, lion though hungry of days has not eaten Alexandra. Religion everywhere serves the purpose of

supporting the moral & social principles which have made men civilized. (Enlightenment through Humanity and Spirituality, p.57)

A noted scholar has rightly said: "As an outcome of the materialistic concept of life mankind today faces crisis, which perhaps has no parallel in history. This crisis, pervading all the spheres of human life, has taken the form of universal revolt against religion. A psychological analysis of this situation reveals that it is the end-product of a basic feeling of insecurity. The world today stands at the edge of destruction. The threat of atomic war hangs over our heads. This humanity, if it wants to survive, has no option but to break way from the concept of materialism and humbly look up to the Diving guidance for peace and prosperity in the world. Choice between destruction and survival must be made some day sooner or later."

It is imperative that we must keep away from inhuman and terroristic acts.

No religion allows such sort of atrocities and offences. If anyone commits such kind of heinous crimes and wrong doings, he is not true follower of his faith. He is reprobate, malevolent and not loyal to his religion.

The need of the hour is that we should abide by the teachings of our respective religion in letter and spirit. Moreover, we must develop humanitarian attitude and come forward to render welfare and charitable services for the poor and down-trodden sections of the society irrespective of caste, creed, colour and region.

In a nutshell, it is time we mould our behavior and conduct and carry ourselves in the hue of ethical values and moral virtues. Besides we should avoid all sorts of anti-social activities which demoralize us and lead us to the path of devastation and ruin. No doubt only morality can prevent us from committing heinous crimes and unholy acts. It is such an asset which distinguishes between human beings and beasts. ■

**Kim Jong Un Sweeps Elections With 99.93% Votes, All Seats Taken**

IN NORTH Korea's 2026 parliamentary elections, Kim Jong Un achieved a landslide win as the Workers' Party of Korea and its coalition partners reportedly captured 99.93 per cent of the ballot and every available seat, according to Yonhap News Agency, which cited state media reports. With a reported turnout of 99.99 per cent, the polls were conducted on March 15 to select deputies for the 15th Supreme People's Assembly. Following the results, Pyongyang is scheduled to hold the inaugural session of the new assembly to decide on the election of state leadership and deliberate on a major revision to the constitution. This upcoming legislative gathering follows the Ninth Congress of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea conducted last month. ■

## The Battle of Trench

- Waqar Azeem Nadwi

### **GENERAL ASPECTS AND SPECIFIC LESSONS**

#### **General Aspects:**

Both the idea and term of Khandaq (i.e., Trench), were proposed to the Prophet (saws) by his companion Salman Al-Farasi (i.e., the Persian) (ra). "Khandaq" is a loan word from Persian "Kandak" derived from "Kandan", a verbal noun, i.e., to dig. It is also called Battle of Al-Ahzab (i.e., the Tribes) because a number of tribes i.e., Quraish, Ghatafan, Bani Sulaim, Fazarah, Murrah, Ashja'a, Asad, etc., were rallied by the Jews of Bani Nazir of Khaiber in a military alliance to attack Madina in order to totally wipe out the Muslim existence. So, this was basically a coalition war masterminded and financed by the Jews of Bani Nazir.

The Battle of Trench, in fact a siege, took place in the month of Shawwal 5 AH (February-March 627 AG) that continued for 27 to 30 days followed by siege of Bani Quraizah by the Muslims in the next month of Dhul Qa'dah, that continued for 25 days. February-March is last part of the winter in this area. The pagan army was stationed in the plain side of the Trench, duly exposed to the cold throughout the period ending with a chill wind storm while the Muslim army had privilege of

protective hills of Sala'a behind them, in addition to possibility of sometimes sneaking back to their homes. A month long continued exposure to stinging chill, then to a fierce cold wind storm brought severe havoc to the pagan army and shattered its morale.

The Trench was 5000 cubits long; 9+ c wide; and 7-10 c deep. It was based on an idea that a charging horse rider might not be able to jump over; and if tumbles in, then cannot be easily rescued. The Muslim garrison did camp only near the Sala'a hills where Al-Fatah mosque now stands (and not along the whole trench), due to the reason that the measurement criteria could not be accurately met at that very spot due to rocky ground of granite stone. Groups of ten persons were usually assigned task of digging 40 cubits. The Holy Prophet (saws) participated in person in the excavation task. It took 6 to 10 days to complete the trench.

Geographically, Madina is surrounded from three sides, by a wide belt of volcanic lava that prevents any raid by a cavalry. The southwest side, in fact a lower plain, lends itself only as a possible access for enemy intrusion. So, a trench running in shape of crescent from the Mountain of Ohud up to Sala'a hills was excavated in order to prevent an attack from that side. (It is

worth mentioning that Medina is situated at a seismic belt, and has been exposed to volcanic eruptions in prehistoric age as well as in the 2nd Hijra century, as already predicted by the Holy Prophet (saws)).

Strengths of the armies involved were as following: Quraish: ±4000; Ghatfan: ±6000; and the Muslims: ±3000. Bani Quraizah men of combating age, put to sword for treason and treachery were ±800. The hardware found in the fort of Bani Quraizah intended for war, included approximately 1500 swords, 2000 spikes and 500 armor coats.

**Specific Lessons:**

1. **Trenching, a Persian defense strategy:** Wisdom is Muslims' lost treasure regardless of its source.
2. **Trenching adopted as an outcome of consultation by the Prophet (saws):** It denotes democratic behavior of the Muslims in dealing with crucial national issues.
3. **Noticeable aspects of Trench digging:** Some aspects are: planning, task assignment; organized performance, and real involvement of the Prophet (saws) (i.e., the leadership's physical participation) contributing to morale boost-up.
4. **Timely preparedness by the Prophet (saws)** to respond to the Jewish-Makkan-Ghatfan troika conspiracy/movement to invade Madina, teaches us a need of smart intelligence gathering as a vital responsibility of a Muslim state. It should be noted that the Trench digging task took 6 to 10 days, yet was finished well ahead of arrival of the coalition forces. Such a ditch was a surprise to the attacking forces, yet their moving towards Madina was not a surprise for the Holy Prophet (saws) thanks to an effective intelligence receiving setup.
5. **Huzaifah in the enemy camp:** An example of espionage and counter-espionage in the enemy camp.
6. **Instruction by the Prophet (saws) to Huzaifah and Saad b. Muaz for lips' guarding:** It shows a safeguard measure taken against a rumor birth. Also, killing a rumor before its take-off for circulation is a further precautionary step since rumor mongering by hypocrites (or fifth column) is a tactic of war.
7. **Role of Abu Nuaim Al-Ashjai' in Bani Quraizah, Quraish and Ghatfan as instructed by the Prophet (saws):** It gives a ground for availing tactic (human or otherwise) resources in enemy's camp for insemminating dissent in their columns as a tool of undermining their unity, and moral

- sabotage.
8. **Hyperactivity of hypocrites** in siege-like situations is quite expected. So, a watching eye should be kept on them, and their malicious attempts should be timely pre-empted. (Ref.: Qad najama al Nifaqu fil Madina. "Hypocrisy flared up in Madina." – as quoted by the Chroniclers)
  9. **Alliance of Bani Nazir, Makkans and other tribes:** Dealing with coalition forces and siege is different from one-to-one battlefield encounter. Strategies might vary for each situation. However, the masterminding brain and financing source operating from Khaiber (i.e., Jews of Bani Nazir) had to be liquidated in year 7 AH. forever. In such alliances, the matter of driving force must be sorted out.
  10. **Bani Quraizah:** Their case implies following aspects: a) Treason as an unpardonable crime; b) In context of different treatment offered a year ago to Bani Nazir despite somewhat similar case of treachery (relating to breach of the previous pact known in the history as Madina Charter), the wisdom to be kept in mind is that "A Momen is not bitten twice from the same hole." Particularly when the Battle of Trench was a Jewish conspiracy; c) Bani Quraizah's fate was decided by a third party; d) The decision falls in consistence with the Mosaic law (Deuteronomy 20) and pertinent canonical interpretations; and e) Such a decision is well supported later by unbiased western writers. (Ref.: Life of the Prophet (saws) by Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi)
  11. **Thirty-day long duration of Siege:** Allah's help is sure to rush for rescue in distresses, yet it is tied with patience, endurance and unfailing belief in Him on the part of believers. God's mill grinds sure but fine!
  12. **Days of distress and poverty during the Battle of Trench:** Miracles in distresses should not be awaited. However, with sacrifice, patience and perseverance, some "out-of-normal-course-of-action" type of things might happen. The Muslims are asked to adhere to the rule of "cause-and-consequence" as their vision and attitude.
  13. **Period of scarcity and shortage:** Life survival resources are better to be co-shared generously.
  14. **Economic counter-measure:** Thinking over paying one half of the date produce of Madina to Ghatfan against their retreat, represents an economic counter-measure adopted in context that Ghatfan were only allured by Bani Nazir to participate in attacking Madina against a promise of being paid

half of the date produce of Khaiber. So, a situation might arise when economic allurements might work.

15. **Concept of War in Islam:** The battles fought by the Prophet (saws) should not be classified according to 'defense' or 'offense' criteria, as is being sold by some contemporary writers. Diverse scenarios are evident in different events, for instance;

*Ohud: defense; \_*

*Badr: assault;*

*Hamraul Asad: hot pursuit;*

*Hudaibiah: truce;*

*Hunain: encounter;*

*Tabuk: outreached defense, and*

*Ahzab or Khandaq: in-stronghold entrenching;*

*Victory of Makkah: overtaking capital, etc.*

Yet, the striking aspect common in all such instances was the "protection of the Prophet's divine mission i.e., Dawah interests". ■

### US Military Plans For Divided Gaza, Most of it Under Israel

The US is planning to divide Gaza into two zones: a "green zone" under Israeli occupation with the help of international military control where reconstruction would start and a red zone", which will be left in ruins. The Guardian reported. Most of the Palestinians have been displaced to the "red Zone", where no reconstruction is planned, the report said.

Gaza is already divided into two distinct zones by the so-called "yellow line", which is controlled by Israel. The area to the east, which is held by Israel, will become the "green zone". The area to the west, outside Israel's control, will be the "red zone" and is home to at least 2 million Palestinians. The "red zone" comprises less than half of Gaza's total area.

Foreign military forces under the international stabilization force will be initially deployed alongside Israeli soldiers in the "green zone", the report said.

The creation of an international stabilisation force (ISF) is part of US President Trump's 20-point "peace plan". The force will comprise military troops from several countries.

The UN Security Council will vote on a resolution endorsing Trump's Gaza peace plan, AFP reported.

The US and several Arab and Muslim-majority nations including Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Turkey called for the UN Security Council to quickly adopt the resolution. "The United States, Qatar, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Jordan, and Turkiye express our joint support for the Security Council Resolution currently under consideration," the countries said in a joint statement, adding they were seeking the measure's swift adoption.

The statement came as Russia is circulating an alternative resolution that includes fewer details about what would happen on the ground, but reiterates the importance of a two-state solution, Bloomberg reported. ■

## Riba In the Qur'an

- Waquar Anwar

The Arabic term for interest is riba which means 'to grow, to exceed, to increase.' Technically it means 'premium' paid or payable by the borrower to the lender along with the principal amount as a condition for the loan or for the extension in its maturity. In other words it is the extra amount, benefit or advantage received on any loan.

Riba has been discussed in the following verses of the Holy Qur'an in chapters, al-Baqarah, Aal-e-Imran, al-Nisa and al-Rum.

"Those who swallow usury cannot rise up save as he arises whom the devil has prostrated by (his) touch. That is because they say: Trade is just like usury; whereas Allah permits trading and forbids usury. He unto whom an admonition from his Lord comes and (he) refrains (in obedience thereto), he will keep (the profits of) that which is past, and his affair (hence forth) is with Allah. As for him who returns (to usury) –Such are rightful owners of the Fire. They will abide therein.

"Allah has blighted usury and made almsgiving fruitful. Allah loves not the impious and guilty. Lo! Those who believe and do good works and establish worship and pay the poor—due their reward is with their Lord and there

shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve. O you who believe! Observe your duty to Allah and give up what remains (due to you) from usury, if you are (in truth) believers. And if you do not then be warned of war (against you) from Allah and His messenger. And if you repent, then you have your principal (without interest). Wrong not and you shall not be wronged. And if the debtor is in straitened circumstances, then (let there be) postponement to (the time of) ease; and that you remit the debt as almsgiving would be better for you if you did not know. "(2 : 275-280)"

O you who believe! Devour not usury, doubling and quadrupling (the sum lent). Observe your duty to Allah, that you may be successful." (3:130)

"Because of the wrongdoings of the Jews We forbade them good things which were (before) made lawful unto them, and because of their much hindering from Allah's way. And of their taking usury when they were forbidden it, and of their devouring people's wealth by false pretences. We have prepared for those of them who disbelieve a painful doom."(4:160-161)

"That which you give in usury in order that it may increase on (other) people's property has no increase with Allah; but that which you give in charity, seeking Allah's countenance, has

increase manifold.” (30:39)

### **INFERENCES**

Dr. Mohammad Nejatullah Siddiqi has discussed at length the inferences drawn from the above verses of the Qur’an in his book “Riba, Bank Interest And The Rationale Of Its Prohibition” (published by Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, New Delhi), The following quotation from the book may be noted:

“These verses establish a number of important points. Firstly riba is categorically prohibited, secondly, it is stated that riba is what is over and above the principal and thirdly that it is unjust (zulm). It is also said that riba is destined to destruction (mahq). And last but not the least, the worst effect of riba mentioned in the above passage is that on human personality: riba demeans and diminishes individuals who indulge in taking it. Significantly, the claim of equating riba with trade is also rejected (trade being mutually beneficial whereas the benefits of riba may well be confined to one party only).”

Finally Dr. Nejatullah Siddiqi has summarised his masterly arguments under following heads:

Riba corrupts society.

Riba implies improper appropriation of other people’s property.

Riba’s ultimate effect is negative growth.

Riba demeans and diminishes human personality.

Riba is unjust.

### **THE DEBATE**

Some scholars initiated a debate whether the word Riba used in the Qur’an covers interest payment by banks or not. The whole argument by such scholars is to prove that interest is not the correct translation of Riba as it implies only usury, i.e. high rate of interest charged by money lenders for consumption loan. In other words, according to this line of argument, bank interest is not Riba, as such, as it is meant for production. Premium on production loan is not prohibited. Riba implies only premium on consumption loan. This distinction between consumption loan and production loan is done on the logic that persons taking loan for production purpose use that for earning profit and they should pay interest like the rent paid on land and other resources. The person who is giving loan is parting with his resource and liquidity, the cash, and so he should be rewarded positively, i.e. on fixed rate for predetermined period. Taking interest on consumption loan is not judicious so it should be discouraged, either prohibited or made soft loan where interest may be as low as possible.

### **TO SUM UP THE DEBATE**

Maulana Syed Abu Ala Maudoodi

has discussed related issues in the Foot Notes number 315-318 against verse 2:275 in Tafheemul Qur'an [Towards Understanding the Qur'an, published by Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, New Delhi). A summary of the discussions therein follows:

“The proponents of this view argue that if profit on money invested in a business enterprise is permissible, why should the profit accruing on loaned money be deemed unlawful? ...Their argument runs as follows: A person who could have profitably invested his money in a commercial enterprise loans it out to somebody who, in turn, makes a profit out of it. In such circumstances why should the borrower not pay the lender a part of the profit? Such people, however, disregard the fact that no enterprise in which a man participates, whether it is commercial, industrial or agricultural, and whether one participates in it with one's organising skill or capital, or by both, is immune from risk. No enterprise carries absolutely guaranteed profit at a fixed rate. What is the justification, then, for the fact that out of all the people in the business world, the financier alone should be considered entitled to a profit at a fixed rate in all circumstances, and should be protected against all possibility of loss?..

Let, us consider only the question of loans for profitable enterprises, and confine our consideration to loans made

at non-exorbitant rates of interest. The question, however, remains: Which rational principle, which logic, which canon of justice and which sound economic principle can justify that those who spend their time, energy, capacity and resources, and whose effort and skill make a business thrive, are not guaranteed profit at any fixed rate, whereas those who merely lend out their funds are fully secured against all risks of loss and are guaranteed profit at a fixed rate?”

Dr. Nejatullah Siddiqi in the above referred book has discussed this issue threadbare and proved that bank interest too is riba, the one prohibited by the Qur'an. Another authority on Islamic economics Dr. M. Umer Chapra has also discussed this issue and showed that riba implies both interest on consumption loan and production loan [Prohibition of Interest: Does It Make Sense? published by Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, New Delhi].

The distinction between interest and usury and between low and high rate of interest done by the supporters of bank interest on production loan is not tenable in economics. For an economist theory no such demarcation is possible. Interest and usury have same meaning for him. The issue is simply a distinction between interest and profit (on trading) which the Qur'an has highlighted by saying “Allah permits trading and forbids usury.” ■

## Reforming Choice-Based Education

- Abida Farooqui\*

‘Choice’ and ‘flexibility’ have become the new buzzwords in educational reforms and policy documents. Across the country, educators are focusing — more than ever before — on catering to the individual needs and aspirations of students. The traditional one-size-fits-all model is giving way to an approach that values the diversity of student aptitudes and interests.

The new paradigm encourages multiple pathways, allowing students to pursue combinations of courses and careers that align with their passions and potential. A science major can now minor in music, for instance — a shift symbolic of the move from teacher-centric to learner-centric education. The focus has expanded beyond disciplinary boundaries, embracing multi-disciplinary and even transdisciplinary approaches. The rationale is clear: learning confined to a single discipline risks isolating students from related fields, while cross-disciplinary study offers a larger and fuller perspective of the world.

However, when such ideals are imposed upon a rigid academic framework like ours, the choice offered is Hobson’s choice -choice in name only. Teacher workload, conventional

pedagogy, poor student to teacher ratios, and outdated evaluation systems conspire to reduce flexibility to a mere paper promise.

### The illusion of choice

The introduction of the Choice-Based Credit and Semester System (CBCSS) in Kerala in 2009 was heralded as a landmark reform meant to offer students more freedom. In theory, credits were to reflect weekly teaching hours. In practice, the system accommodated anomalies: a four-credit course could run for five hours a week, while a two-credit course might require just four hours. Such inconsistencies were quietly ignored to maintain the illusion of freedom. Moreover, the so-called buffet of choices were hardly choices in the real sense. Beyond a set of compulsory core courses, students were offered a limited selection of ‘electives’, often chosen by the departments themselves. The much-advertised “open course” a two-credit paper in the fifth semester offered to students of other departments was the only semblance of choice. Thus, despite the rhetoric, genuine academic freedom remained a distant dream.

The same rhetoric of flexibility once again took centre stage, with the launch of the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP) in Kerala in 2024, as mandated by the National Education Policy, 2020. The new structure allowed

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\* *Senate Member of the University of Calicut, and Professor and Head, P.G. and Research Department of English, Govt. Arts & Science College, Kondotty.*

students to switch majors and minors, theoretically enhancing autonomy. Yet, unlike earlier curriculum changes, this reform demanded deep structural changes, making it highly challenging. The traditional idea of teachers delivering lectures in fixed classrooms gave way to students moving across departments in search of suitable courses and teachers.

It goes without saying that structural changes pose insurmountable challenges. A case in point was a clause in the university regulations of Kerala prohibiting students from choosing minors from allied disciplines. While it was intended to promote interdisciplinary learning, it inadvertently hindered specialisation.

Disciplines like Commerce and Functional English, which had previously allowed aligned minors, found this rule counterproductive – a restriction masquerading as choice.

### **Need for systemic changes**

For any reform to succeed, systemic changes are essential. During the author's tenure as Chairperson of the Board of Studies in English at the University of Calicut in 2017, two key innovations were introduced.

The first was a skill-oriented question paper for the course on Communication Skills. The traditional format, filled with essay questions on theories and models, failed to test actual communication ability. It was replaced with a purely activity-based paper designed to assess real skills. Yet

even this change ran into bureaucratic hurdles: permission for an accompanying answer booklet was denied on "confidentiality" grounds, forcing evaluators to flip endlessly between question papers (which carried more than twice the number of questions of its earlier counterpart) and answer sheets.

The second innovation was a course titled 'Introducing Literature' -a hands-on, concept-driven paper designed to teach how to read literature rather than merely what to read. Instead of memorizing texts and answering questions on the basis of prescribed texts, students were taught literary concepts and were required to interpret unseen passages from linguistic, aesthetic and political angles. Ironically, this radical step met more resistance from teachers than students, as it demanded a shift from conventional methods to concept-based teaching, teaching us the valuable lesson that teacher preparedness and training should have been ensured prior to rolling out the reforms.

### **Facing ground realities**

Today, the FYUGP aspires to make undergraduate education more skill-based, research-oriented, and autonomous; with a modest 10% autonomy given to teachers for framing syllabi wherein each teacher can pitch in their innovative ideas. Yet, at the ground level, classrooms and methodology remain largely unchanged. One can only reap the results if adequate teacher training is provided, if class sizes are smaller, and if research were to be integrated into teaching workloads. ■

## Around the World

### **Israel Will Not Attack Iranian Gas Field Again, Says Trump**

Iran intensified its attacks on oil and natural gas facilities around the Gulf, raising the stakes in a war that is sending shock waves through the global economy.

The strikes, in retaliation for an Israeli attack on South Pars, a key Iranian gas field, sent fuel prices soaring and risked drawing Iran's Arab neighbours directly into the conflict.

Underscoring the danger to ships in the region, a vessel was set ablaze off the coast of the UAE and another damaged off Qatar. Efforts to bypass the Strait of Hormuz were also under pressure: An Iranian drone hit a Saudi refinery on the Red Sea, which the country had been hoping to use as an alternative exit route.

Brent crude oil, the international standard, briefly surged above \$119 a barrel, up more than 60% since Israel and the US started the war. The European benchmark for natural gas prices also rose sharply and has roughly doubled in the past month.

Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE denounced the Iranian attacks. Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit called them a "dangerous escalation" But Iran showed no signs of backing down. Saudi Arabia said its SAMREF refinery in the Red Sea port city of Yanbu was hit. Saudi Arabia had begun pumping large volumes of oil west toward the Red Sea to avoid Strait of Hormuz.

Qatar, a key source of natural gas for world markets, said extensive damage was caused by Iranian missiles hitting the Ras Laffan LNG gas facility, where production had already been halted after earlier attacks. Damage to the facility could delay Qatar's ability to get supplies to the market even after the war ends.

Two oil refineries in Kuwait and gas operations in Abu Dhabi also were targeted by Iran, local authorities said.

In Israel, more than a half-dozen waves of Iranian attacks targeting large parts of the country sent millions of people to shelters. The strikes caused damage to buildings but no significant

casualties were reported.

Israeli Energy Minister Eli Cohen said the electricity grid in northern Israel sustained some damage. He said crews had restored electricity to some areas and were working to restore it in others. Israeli media showed images of black smoke rising from an oil refinery in the northern city of Haifa; Cohen said the refinery damage was minor.

US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth implied that more leaders could be targeted, referring specifically to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Basij force.

Gen. Dan Caine, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said US forces continue to attack deeper into Iranian territory, with warplanes hunting Iranian boats in the Strait of Hormuz and helicopters striking Iranian drones. Caine said the US military has also dropped 5,000 pound bombs on underground weapon-storage facilities.

An F-35 fighter jet was forced to make an emergency landing after flying a combat mission Over Iran, US Central Command said. Capt. Tim Hawkins, a spokesman for the command, said the aircraft landed safely, the pilot was in "stable" condition and the incident was under investigation. In a sign of the Iran war's rising price tag, the Pentagon is seeking \$200 billion in additional funds, a senior administration official said.

Israel said it struck Iranian targets in the Caspian Sea for the first time. Israeli military spokesman Lt. Col. Nadav Sho-shani said the strikes hit dozens of targets, including ships, a shipyard and a command centre.

In Washington, President Donald Trump said that Israel would not attack South Pars again. But he warned on social media that if Iran continued striking Qatar's energy infrastructure, the US would retaliate and "massively blow up the entirety" of the field.

Asked later about the possibility of US ground troops being deployed to Iran, Trump responded, "No, I'm not putting troops anywhere."■

**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