

Better light a candle than curse the darkness

شکوہ ظلمت شب سے تو کہیں بہتر تھا اپنے حصے کی کوئی شمع جلاتے جاتے

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BE AWARE, ALWAYS, EVERYWHERE

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IN FOCUS

A

Journey

to

Islam

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You too can Guess the Number

I By Hajira Khan & Sameen Ahmed Khan I

One is frequently curious to know what the other person may be thinking. There is of course no way of knowing what the other person is thinking. But one can tell with complete precision the number the other person has thought. This can be done by asking a series of simple questions to the persons who has thought of a number. We first describe one such game of guessing the number.

The respondent is asked to think of any number from 1 to 31 (say a date in some month). Then he is asked if the number is present/absent in the five Tables. He responds by saying yes or no in each case. These five answers are sufficient to determine the number the respondent had thought.

If the respondent had thought thirteen then on asking he indicates that it is present in Table-1, Table-3 and Table-4 and not there in the remaining two tables.

Table-1			
1	3	5	7
9	11	13	15
17	19	21	23
25	27	29	31

Table-2			
2	3	6	7
10	11	14	15
18	19	22	23
26	27	30	31

Table-3			
4	5	6	7
12	13	14	15
20	21	22	23
26	28	29	30
31			

Table-4			
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15
24	25	27	28
29	30	31	

Table-5			
16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31

The correct answer is obtained by adding the smallest numbers (1, 4 and 8) present in Table-1, Table-3 and Table-4 respectively.

The Tables have a clear pattern; the smallest numbers are 1, 2, 4, 8 and 16. These are the powers of 2 (for instance the third power of 2 is 8 and is obtained by multiplying 2 with 2 three times). Powers of two provide the binary representation (called as base-2) of the numbers which, we are accustomed to seeing in base-10. So every number in base-10 is represented as 0's and 1's in the binary. The 13 of base-10 is represented by 1101 in base-2. By indicating that the number is present or absent the respondent is unknowingly telling the 0's and 1's corresponding to the binary representation. And this binary representation of 13 is 1101. The respondent indicates the 1 by yes and 0 by no. The answer is actually told by the respondent and the gamer only re-expresses the binary in the usual base-10. In fact the gamer need not even know the underlying binary used in the design of the five tables. If there were bigger numbers, the next tables will start with the higher powers of 2 which are 32, 64, 128 and so on.

Muslims earn peanut;

Govt, Hindus benefit most from animal slaughter in India

40% of meat consumed locally, rest all are exported to other countries, a study by ummid.com reveals

Mumbai: In India, well on track to become world's largest bovine meat exporter, Muslims are earning just a peanut as against the general perception about the trade, and it is actually the government and non-Muslims who are benefiting the most from about 4.5 billion US dollar animal slaughter business, it was found in a study conducted by ummid.com.

The study also found that except for Allana Sons, a 1969 company which has a major share in frozen meat export from India, and few other smaller players who are Muslims, majority of meat exporters and owners of modern abattoirs, and those associated with other related industries like bone, leather, horn, farmers, transporters, animal blood and other raw materials are mainly non-Muslims, a fact acknowledged by Hindutva groups and also pointed at by none other than Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the run up to the 2014 Lok Sabha polls.

The study has thus put a big question mark over the statement of Union Minister Maneka Gandhi, who had alleged that revenue earned from the animal slaughter business is used for terrorism. The study also puts a question mark on the exact motives of the protest against the trade by the VHP, Bajrang Dal and other right wing Hindu extremist groups affiliated to the BJP, and the consequent ban by the Maharashtra government on bulls, bullocks and calves slaughter – ninth state in India to do so.

Ummid.com, after talking to beef traders in various parts of the state, organisations working for them and going through the available records and data, found that animals are purchased in over 95% cases from farmers, majority of them being non-Muslims. Most of the transporters who ferry animals and meat from one place to another before and after slaughter are also not Muslims. Except for direct consumption, where also Muslims and non-Muslims both are at par in terms of taking benefits, in rest all associated business including meat export, bone crushing and



powder industry, leather industry, horn processing industry, blood processing, animal fat and soap industry, except for few exceptions, each one is dominated entirely by non-Muslims.

Some prominent names are Arabian Export of Deepak Tijori, Al Kabeer Exports now run by Atul Subberwal, Al-Noor Export of Ajay Sud, Mahesh Jagadale and Co, Sujata Bones of MK Deore, Dode Industries, Fine Exports, SK Leather, Ramesh Juneja & Sons, Bharat Leather, Woodland, Raymonds, Datta Soap, BS International, Sixth Sense, Natural Craft, Bounty Fashion Export, Kochhar Brothers, Ravi Exports, Kalia International, and Hindustan Unilever Ltd. - all engaged in beef and the business of associated raw materials and products.

It is also found that some of those associated with the trade have different names and identities for different countries and regions. Like, Al Kabeer is 'Samurai' in Japan, 'Falcon Foods' in the UK, and 'Tayebat Al Emarat' in the UAE. It also owns other brands like Tabarruk, Cascade and Coral Reef.

It is also found that when comes to taking benefits from the trade the government too is not far behind. The findings showed that the state as an average charge Rs.120 for every animal purchased and Rs.150 per animal as slaughtering fees. It is found that in RSS bastion Nagpur alone, roughly around 1500-2000 animals were slaughtered every day be-

fore the government ban. In other parts of Maharashtra including Mumbai, Malegaon, Dhule, Aurangabad, Jalgaon, Nandurbar, Sholapur over 20,000 thousand animals were slaughtered every day.

The All-India Meat and Livestock Exporters Association lists 42 abattoir-cum-meat processing plants in the country and 32 meat processing plants are registered with the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA). These are over and above the municipal slaughterhouses which according to a rough estimates stand at 3,600.

India became the world's biggest buffalo meat exporter in 2012, ahead of Brazil. A report by the US Department of Agriculture says buffaloes are inexpensive to keep. This makes their meat a dollar a kg cheaper than beef. The Indian government has invested heavily in abattoirs. Recently released Ministry of Food Processing data showed that India exported 1.89 million tonnes of beef in 2012-2013, which is a 50 per cent increase over five years ago.

The total value of India's buffalo meat exports for the year 2010-11 was USD 1.9 billion which touched USD 2.3 billion during 2012-13. Exports have nearly tripled since 2009, rising to 1.65 million tonnes in 2012, according to USDA figures.

According to data released by Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under the Ministry of Commerce, Indian buffalo meat exports touched an all time high of Rs.13,917 crore in value terms in April-October 2013, representing an increase of nearly 58% over same period last year. In terms of quantity too, there has been 23% rise in buffalo meat exports from India.

Among Indian states, Uttar Pradesh (UP) has emerged as the biggest exporter of buffalo meat, followed by Punjab and Maharashtra. Besides having

the country's largest buffalo population, UP also has the highest number of abattoirs- cum-meat processing export units. The state has 317 registered slaughterhouses and, in addition, 24 export-oriented units for buffalo meat. Of the total Indian carabeef exports, 67% originates from this state.

Mumbai in Maharashtra has a distinction of having Deonar abattoir – Asia's largest. It has a capacity of about 4000 animals and recruit over 1200 people besides 30 medical professionals.

It is also found that Gujarat, which is projected as a model Hindu state, the trade has flourished under the kind protection of the state. Data compiled by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry from Gujarat's Pollution Control Board reveals that meat production in the State, when Prime Minister Modi was its chief minister, more than dou-

bled in 10 years. It was the time when Modi was taunting the Congress-led UPA of promoting 'Pink Revolution'.

Gujarat produced 22,000 tonnes of meat in 2010-11 against 10,600 tonnes of meat in 2001-02. During the same period, India's meat production grew from 18,59,430 tonnes to 48,69,000 tonnes, or by 163%. With 39 abattoirs, which slaughters over 1,000 animals a day, Gujarat is amongst the top 10 States in India in terms of the number of slaughterhouses.

Among the important buyers of Indian bovine and other meat are Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Australia, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. India exports both frozen and fresh chilled meat. China is a big market for Indian meat. Currently, one third of the total buffalo meat is exported to Vietnam.

Records show that buffalo meat export to Vietnam has seen a surprising growth in the recent period. Between April-October 2013, buffalo meat exports to Vietnam rose by 229% in value terms, and more than 100% in quantity terms over the same period last year. Vietnam accounts for close to 40% buffalo meat exports from India.



It is also found that, barring some 2% that can be called illegal, most of the slaughtering at these places were done at government approved, state owned or private, abattoirs, and in the presence of the government appointed qualified medical professionals. Interestingly, it was found that a doctor was appointed by the government but the payment is borne by the owners of the respective slaughter houses.

Ummid.com also found that in state like Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat where slaughter of bulls, bullocks and calves are banned, animals are purchased on cheap prices, and are 'smuggled' to neighbouring states especially Maharashtra and sold on ten times the purchase cost. Situation in the border areas in the states like Gujarat and Rajasthan is even stranger where a good number of animals are pushed towards other side of the country.

To encourage and support the industry which earns the state handsome revenue, the centre provides a transport subsidy of Rs.70 a kg for buffalo meat exports. It also gives grants of 50 per cent for general areas and 75 per cent for hill areas up to Rs.15 crore for setting up and modernising abattoirs. Between 2006-07 and 2011-12, the Centre's total subsidy for setting up abattoirs was Rs.240 crore, another Rs.300 crore went into buffalo rearing.

In India, cow is considered as sacred and its slaughter is banned since 1976. However bulls, bullocks and calves slaughter was allowed in most of the Indian states including Maharashtra. But, Maharashtra passed an amended legislation banning cow slaughter this month banning also bulls, bullocks and calves slaughter. Buffalo meat is treated in India as beef, and its export is flourishing under the government patronage.

Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), one of the outfits having affiliation with RSS and BJP, is of the view that the campaign to halt all cow slaughter and limit buffalo-meat exports is for the good of the country and isn't targeting Muslims or Christians. It also acknowledges the fact that many of the main beef export businesses are owned by Hindus.

Despite this reality, Muslim beef traders are targeted and harassed in most part of the country – with worsening situation at the time of Eid-al-Adha – the Muslim festival when the community members sac-

rifice animals.

Attacks on the country's beef industry, seizing trucks with cattle bound for abattoirs and blockading meat processing plants in a bid to halt the trade in the world's second-biggest exporter by Hindu extremist groups stepped up after BJP came to power in New Delhi and Maharashtra.

An official at a beef transport group in Maharashtra state said around 10 vehicles travelling to Mumbai had been stopped, the animals taken forcefully and drivers beaten by members of Hindu nationalist groups despite carrying valid documents February last week.

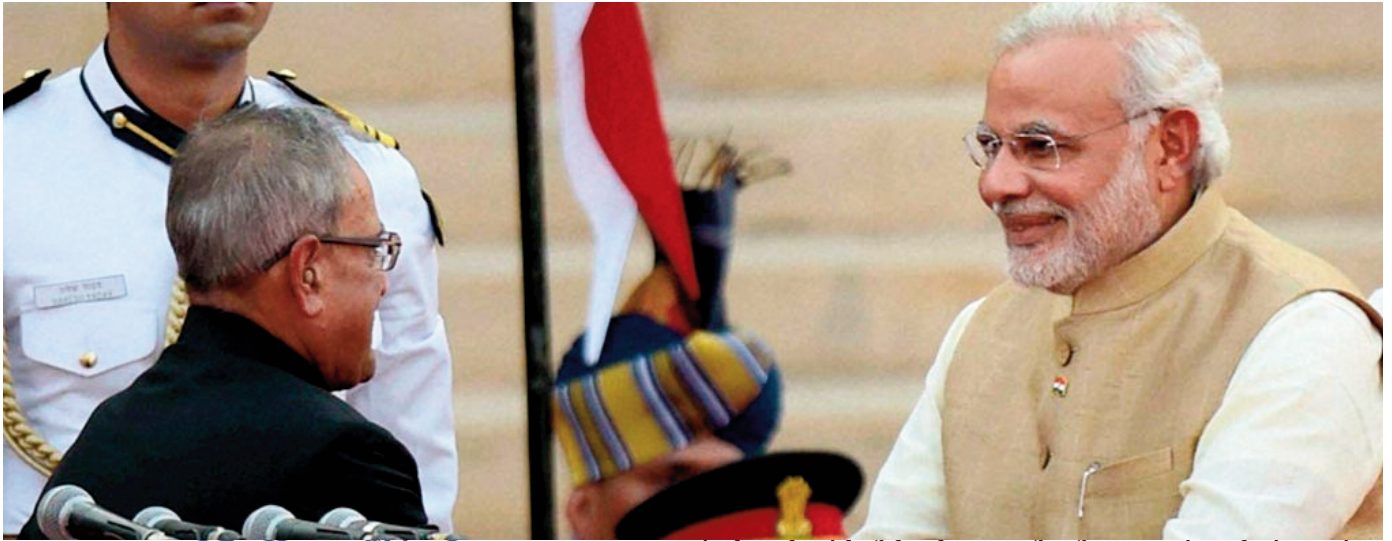
Tired of harassment and violent protests against the trade by Hindutva organisations, beef traders in Maharashtra went on an indefinite strike in February this year. They called off their strike after Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis assured them of government protection. About a week after the assurance by none other than the chief minister of the state, the BJP-led state came out with an amended law banning along with cow, slaughter of bulls, bullocks and calves as well.

Interestingly, in its bid to quell the beef shortage in Goa following the ban in Maharashtra, the state, also ruled by the BJP, officially announced last week that it is considering to selling beef on its own. Lyndon Monteiro, chairman of the Goa Meat Complex, a government agency which runs the only legal service abattoir in Goa, said the government was in the process of "finalising modalities" for selling beef in Goa on its own, in order to come to the assistance of the beef-eating population.

Against this backdrop, it will be interesting to see how the state will go ahead with the actual implementation of the law as the government is not only being criticised by the Muslims but also by a good number of non-Muslim groups, industry giants, celebrities and individuals including farmers. Source:

<http://www.ummid.com/news/2015/March/11.03.2015/animal-slaughter-in-india-key-facts.html>

The third climacteric



By Hasan Ghias I

Three distinct turning points characterize the trajectory of Indian Muslim history since the nineteenth century, one occurring in each of the three centuries. While we can trawl through the pages of history, and its multiple narratives, to draw our own lessons and conclusions, it is the third and most recent event that poses complex challenges that we have to grapple with and find our way forward through numerous snares and confounding developments to discover opportunity in adversity.

The end of Mughal rule was accompanied by the catastrophic consequences of the sepoy mutiny of 1857. Pulverized by merciless reprisals, the Muslims of India were in a state of pitiable turmoil. Emotionally charged responses ranging from meek submission to defiant rage resulted in enormous confusion but little direction. It was against this backdrop that the great pragmatic visionary Sir Syed picked up the fragments of dashed hopes and a destroyed morale to piece together a cogent and reasoned response and a blueprint for revival. The Aligarh Movement was born and played a historic role in shaping the destiny of Muslims in the colonial state and thereafter.

The second cataclysmic event in the history of post-Mughal India, with consequences for Indian Muslims more abject and dire than those that followed the mutiny, was the tragic partition of India. Confused, directionless, suffering from loss of self-esteem, devastated by violence against their lives and property and relentless attacks on their identity, the Indian Muslim community yet again searched for direction. For decades, fed on deceptive promises and

imbued with false hopes, far from seeing their aspirations realized, they were silent witnesses to their relentless marginalization that pushed them down to the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. This time no Sir Syed appeared to provide a reasoned and cogent response. Even the wise sage, Maulana Azad, whose predictions proved prescient and prophetic as the nation and community hurtled down the route to disaster, found it beyond his tired capacity to weld together the hapless Muslims who chose to stay. In any event, he did not live long enough to see the pathetic picture fully emerge.

Just as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed major turning points in the lives and fortunes of the Muslims of India, the twenty first century saw its own watershed event in May 2014. I am not attempting to equate this with the two cataclysmic events of the past, but how far-reaching its consequences will be is too early to tell. In what manner will the future unfold will depend upon how we attempt to shape it. This puts a grave burden of responsibility upon the community. Will we simply drift as we have done since independence or will we fashion a reasoned, cogent and comprehensive response to the challenges that face us? Does our foresight reveal to us the vistas of opportunity that lie beyond the bleak landscape that we are staring at? We can surely cut out in the rough terrain our path to progress if we have the vision, grit and perseverance to do so. Some I know are attempting in laudable ways. Many others will, hopefully, follow.

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Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

[Article posted to NRI Indians group]

JOURNEY TO ISLAM:

I Finally Have a Place where I Belong

I By Franky I

Now I am a Muslim sister. My life to this day has been so much happier because I know that I have finally found the truth.

I want to tell you about my reversion back to Islam. I will start at the beginning.

I am an American woman who has tried all different kinds of faiths. I was a Catholic, a Methodist and more recently a Mormon.

I have searched for many years to find the truth. In my search I have come across some teachings of prophets, and some half mingled truths. I had joined the Mormon Church at the request of my husband, and I tried to go faithfully for awhile, until I learned that some of the people found it more important to treat me with disrespect due to my own spiritual issues.

I thought that if I tried hard enough that I could learn to believe in what they did, but I just couldn't grasp all that they were teaching. I went to church faithfully every Sunday, and I sat in the front row, and I led the choir, and helped teach some classes for children.

As hard as I tried, I could never quite understand why I didn't feel what they all felt. For awhile I stopped going to church and I avoided these people as much as I could.

The hard part was that my husband was a very faithful Mormon, and he didn't like that I had stopped going to church. I have read the Bible and found it to be a great source of understanding, but I still always felt like something was missing.

A few weeks ago, I was online on the Internet and I met someone called Ahmad. I was very interested in speaking with him because he seemed to be very centered and well balanced.

I must tell you that usually when I am online, I don't usually discuss 2 topics for fear of offending someone: 1) Politics, and 2) Religion.

At most times I have been successful, but as I listened to Ahmad speak, I could feel something warm and nice with his words. I couldn't help but wonder what his beliefs were and why he was so confident, yet centered.

When he told me he was from Gaza, I was so impressed. I had never before spoken to anyone that was so far away, and who was so fun to just sit and talk. When he told me that he was a Muslim, and proceeded to explain some of his beliefs to me, at first I must admit, I was scared to even consider reversion. There were so many things that I didn't understand, and yet I felt like I needed to know more. We continued to speak for quite some time. Everyday, in fact, (even now). Ahmad sent me a lot of articles to read to learn more about Islam. Which I must admit that I had only heard the term "Muslim" once as a child, and never really knew it actually existed. I was greeted by a man we call Uncle Fareed. In 2 days, I had read everything he had sent me. I couldn't sleep because I was so involved with all that I was reading. I always asked him to send me more and more to read because I needed to learn everything. I couldn't get enough of it. I suddenly found myself searching the internet for other Muslims so that I could learn even more.

At first it seemed like there was no other place I could go to get information, and after 2 days of trying to get into a chat room to speak with these people, I received a letter from a group that had accepted me into their room.

At first when I went in, I was shy and didn't want to say anything, I just wanted to sit back and watch. That however, proved to be impossible. As soon as I entered the room I was greeted by men and women whose lives were filled with so much love. They immediately called me their sister, and asked me a lot of questions. I was a little intimidated at first, but it wasn't long before I had relaxed enough to start asking questions.

I was greeted by a man we call Uncle Fareed. He asked me if there was anything special I wanted to know about, and at first I was mostly concerned

about the way the women are to dress. I could never understand why the women had to be so covered. He was very polite and explained at length that the reason was because it was improper for a woman to show her figure to anyone except the man with whom she is married.

We spoke for several minutes, and then some other members came in and they also greeted me as their sister. One woman and one man in particular were very interested in my feelings towards Islam. Stacey and Ehsan spoke to me online for several hours, and taught me what I wanted to know about. Soon Stacey and I were speaking alone. She explained to me that she had reverted herself only 3 years prior.

Before I took the Shahadah, my hands were shaking and my heart was racing.

We talked more about the different things that I was to learn, and as I spoke to her, I started feeling like this woman had so much love and respect and I wanted to be a part of that. I told her at that moment that I wanted to revert. She said she was proud of my decision, and to give her a few minutes to call someone to help me take the Shahadah.

A few moments later I was on the phone with Stacey and Ehsan. She was calling me from Massachusetts, and him from the United Kingdom. We spoke for almost 3 hours and I could feel how much these people believed in what they were saying and I knew then that I had to be a part of it. I told them that I wanted to take the Shahadah, and Ehsan guided me through it.

Before I took the Shahadah, my hands were shaking and my heart was racing because I was so nervous. When I had finished saying the words, (in Arabic even), my hands stopped shaking and I finally felt at peace. I began to cry for the joy that was in my heart. I had never before in my life had a feeling like this, and I was so happy.

Now I am a Muslim sister. My life to this day has been so much happier because I know that I have finally found the truth. I no longer speak to many of my old friends for they say that I was a fool to revert to this beautiful religion. The thing that I have learned the best, is that being a Muslim is not just words. It is an ACTION. I finally feel like I have a place where I belong, and I

wouldn't change that for anything. Allah be praised that I have finally found the true path....

Ameen

<http://www.onislam.net/english/reading-islam/my-journey-to-islam/contemporary-stories/416031-chatting-islam.html>

The Tea Boy

I By MdShadabAkram I

"I had just reached the railway station and was waiting for my train to arrive as I had to travel to Jaipur in a family function of my friend. When I asked the Train Enquiry Department, they told me that the train will arrive at 9.00 pm, which meant I had to wait for an extra hour. So I tried to pass my time by having a look at the station and the things happening there. Since it was a small station, there were very few passengers. I saw a group of boys playing with the pebbles. The boys were all dressed up quite pathetically as their clothes were very dirty and torn. But still they were quite happy with the pebbles and were enjoying to the fullest. Suddenly I developed an urge to drink tea as it was a cold evening, but to my misfortune, I couldn't find any tea vendors on the very station. The only tea vendor was sitting outside the station and I couldn't take the risk of leaving all my luggage on the station just to drink the tea. I called one of the boys from the guys and asked him to bring me a cup of tea by handing him a coin of 5 rupees. He agreed and went to bring me the tea. Time passed and after half an hour, I heard the announcement which said that my train would be arriving in a couple of minutes. Now I was sure that the children ran away with the money and cursed myself for trusting a ROADSIDE Boy. I stood up to pick my luggage as the train arrived. I was just about to enter the coach when I heard a voice which said 'Babuji, Apki chai' (translates to 'Sir, your tea') Surprised with the voice, I looked back and asked him, Why did he bring the tea so late? He told me, he lost the 5 rupees coin and so he had to clean the utensils of the tea vendor, to bring me a cup of tea!!

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Good Wives and Husbands

I By Nissar Nadiadwala I

Among the motivating verses from the Qur'an that charge up a weak faith are the verses of Surah Furqan from 63 to 74. It presents the qualities of the worshippers of Ar Rahman-The Most Gracious. Read them again and spot which qualities do you miss. Among them, the one which fascinated me: And those who pray "Our Lord! Grant unto us Wives and offspring who will the comfort of our eyes and make us the leaders of The Righteous."

Ibn Katheer quotes Ibn Abbas regarding this verse: This means, offspring who will work hard to obey Allah and bring the parents joy in this world and the Hereafter (at-Tabari 19:318).

Why is it essential to have wives who can give comfort to our eyes? Refer to 21 verse of Surah ar Room: And among His signs, He created mates for you from among yourselves, IN THEM YOU FIND SOLACE. One of the purposes of having wives is to find solace. Many a time a person returns home to find his wife ready with volumes of complains. Among the qualities of a good wife is that whenever her husband sees her he finds peace and happiness. What are the qualities that make a wife the comfort of a husband's eyes?

Refer to Surah anNisa'a, verse 34: fas-salihati, Qanitaati, HafizatililGhaibibima hafiz Allahu. Three most desired qualities of a good wife: Salihati, a Righteous woman; a Regular worshipper and a devoutly obedient woman as well as the one who guards in the husband's absence what Allah wants her to guard (her modesty and chastity).

The second testimony of a good couple is mentioned in SuraToubah Chapter 9, verse 71: Believing men and believing women are auliya (protectors, well-wishers and helpers) of each other, they command that which is good and forbid that which is evil. Husband and wives know of each other's weaknesses more than other people so they are called 'hunnalibasalkumwaantumlibaasahunna, you are their garments and they are your garments'. The duty of a garment is to cover your body and make you look appear able and so are the husbands and wives to each other. They should cover each other's faults and



make them appear able through good deeds.

Who are good offsprings? Children and grandchildren who would follow the guidance learnt from their parents and pass it on to the next generation while teaching and implementing it. That is what we say Sawab-e-Jaariyah, a continuous reward, even after the death of the parents.

Ibn Abbas, Al Hasan Basri and others said: Leaders who would be taken as examples in good (at Tabari 19:319).

Even Ibrahim (a.s.), when Allah offered to make him the Imamun Naas, the leader of mankind, he immediately invoked, "and my offsprings too". Refer to verse 214 of Surah Baqarah. The Arabic word for 'offspring' in the above verse and the verse of Surah Bakarah is "zurriyati". Zurriyati does not only cover our children, but also grandchildren and great grandchildren. Man should be constantly worried about his children's wellbeing from the perspective of Hereafter. Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.) also prayed: My Lord make me regular in salah and my offsprings too.

So we pray to Allah that not only He gives us good spouses but also makes us a good partner for our spouses as well and gives us Offsprings that are delight for our eyes.Ameen.

Economic and Educational condition of Muslims in Jharkhand.



I By Mohammad Ashraf Ali I

According to the Census Report 2001 Muslims in Jharkhand constitute 13.85% (i.e. 37,31,308) of the total population in the Jharkhand (Muslim males 19,24,723, Females 18,06,585), so far religion based population report of 2011 Census has not been published but based upon same growth rate it could be said that percentage remains almost same.

If we analyze economic condition of Muslim population in Jharkhand we can categorize them into rural and urban population as there are only few cities in the state.

Let's start with rural Muslim population. In a state such as Jharkhand, most of the population lives in rural areas where main source of income is farming or farming based unskilled jobs, generally daily wages. As per geographical condition, Jharkhand is a plateau where all land is not fertile for cultivation; even if land is fertile it yields only one batch of grains as irrigation other than seasonal rains is out of reach for most of the farmers. In this scenario most of the farmers end up with just enough grains which can be sufficient for their family consumption; surplus productions are rare in most of the cases.

Now let's talk about urban population (Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Bokaro, Dhanbad etc), most of the people live in densely populated Muslim areas known as Tola or Mohalla where some of them having small or medium size business related to cloth selling/tailor-

ing, auto related goods/repair shop, driving transport vehicles, grocery shop etc. Very few are part of skilled jobs such as IT/IT related, coaching center related, banking and even fewer in Govt jobs. So living in such cities with high expenditures and few earning members - most of the family has only one or two earning members - the income remains just enough for daily survival, they just find it difficult to cater to other essential necessities of life.

Based upon above analysis we can conclude that Muslim population is poor in general, or relatively poor in comparison with other communities of the region.

So, what are the reasons?

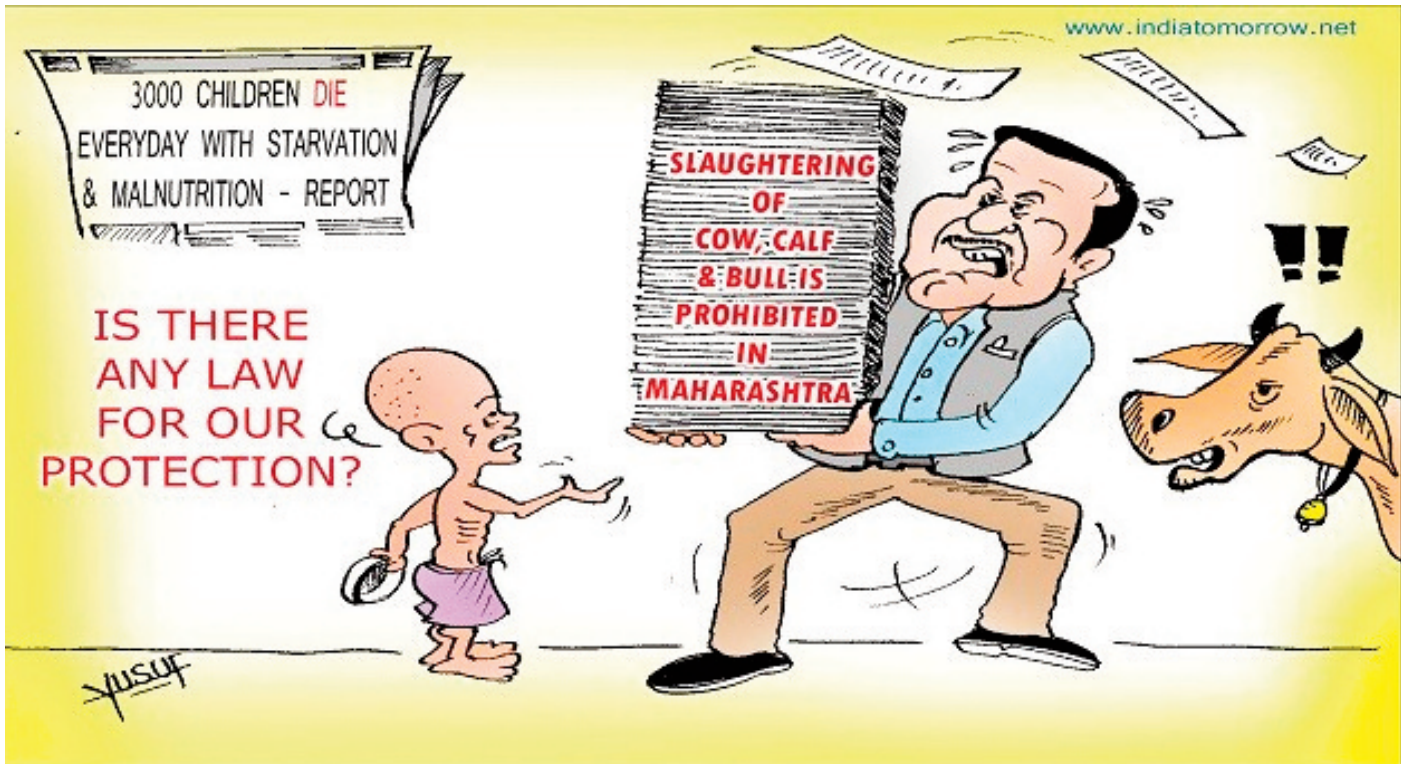
There are several odds, like less support from government or public bodies, but should we not take care of ourselves?

Poverty today may often mean illiteracy. Again, illiteracy in twenty first century means so many disadvantages which did not depend upon illiteracy a couple of centuries ago. But it will be very difficult for an illiterate to find his way through the new streets of the fast developing global village.

This topic is very vast and cannot be discussed in a small post like this but we have to agree that we have to work towards promotion of education with all available means currently at our disposal and we have to work on it together.

Wassalam

Holy Cow-Beef and Indian Political Games



I By Ram Punyani I

Can the dietary practices, the animal which is worshipped as a mother by section of population, be brought in on the political arena? While all this sounds surreal, its true as far as the role of cow is there in Indian political firmament. Recently Maharashtra Government got the Presidents assent to the bill “Maharashtra Animal Preservation (Amendment) Bill 1995 which will now ban the slaughter of bulls and bullocks as well. The defaulters will face a prison term of five years and a fine of Rs. 10000. When I first read ‘Animal Preservation’ part of the title of the bill, I thought this is some bill related to all the animals which are used for human consumption or deals with the use of animals for different purposes by the society. Contrary to that it turned out that this applies only to Cow and its progeny. A decade ago I was shocked to read that one of the outstanding scholars of ancient Indian History Professor DwijendraNathJha received regular threats on phone telling him not to publish his book, ‘Holy Cow Beef in Indian Dietary tradition’. This scholarly work traces the place of beef in Indian diet from centuries.

The idea is to target the minorities for beef eating, and cow slaughter. One recalls that one of the slogans which rent the air in the run up the 2014 General elections was "Modikomatdan, gaikojeevadan [Vote for Modi, give life to the cow], BJP kasandesh,

bachegigai, bachegadesh [BJP’s message, the cow will be saved, the country will be saved]". This slogan was propped up ‘Cow Development Cell’ of BJP.

As such emotive-identity issues are the hall mark of the politics in the name of religion. BJP built itself up on another identity issue, that of Ram Temple. The cow has always been accompanying and a parallel issue for political mobilization by RSS-BJP. It has also been the point of triggering violence in many cases all through. With the formation of VHP by RSS in 1964, cow issue has been systematically propped up time and over again. Many a misconceptions about cow, beef eating have been constructed. Building of misconceptions has also been extended to the dietary habits of the ‘Muslim’ community in particular. The profession of section of Muslims, Kasai (butcher), those in the trade of beef selling has been brought in to the ‘Hate other’, ‘social common sense’ in particular. The result being that it is perceived at broad layers of society as if beef eating is compulsory for Muslims. The notion which has been popularized is that Cow is Holy for Hindus: Muslims kill her! The perception is that the Muslim invaders brought beef eating into India. These misconceptions are by now the part of ‘social common sense’ of the large number of people in the society.

All the components of this are myths and stereotypes have been constructed over a period of time. Time

and over again one hears about some small communal violence, killing of dalits and traders of cows leading to communal polarization. Many a dalits dealing with cow hide have been killed in places like Gohana in Hariyana and the VHP leaders had justified such acts.

Contrary to this the beef eating and sacrifice of cows was prevalent here from Vedic period. The sacrifice of cows in the Yagnas (ritual around fire) is extensively mentioned in the scriptures. There is mention about beef eating in various books. There is a phrase in Taitreya Brahmin which states 'Atho Annam Via-Gau' (Cow is in veritably food) Different gods are mentioned to be having their choices for particular type of cow flesh. Prof D. N. Jha quotes innumerable examples of this in his masterpiece.

The preaching of non violence in India came with the rise of agricultural society. Jainism called for total non violence, while Buddhism talked non-violence; preventing of wasteful animal sacrifice in particular. It was much later that Brahmanism picked up cow as a symbol for Brahmanism in response and as a reaction to non-violence of these religions. Since Brahmanism has asserted itself to be the Hinduism it projects as if Cow is holy for Hindus overall. The matter of fact is that many sections of society, more particularly Dalits and Tribal have been eating beef all through. It is another matter that lately with the rising assertion of Hindutva, many a communities which are dependent on beef as a rich and cheap source of protein are gradually being forced to either give it up or do a rethink on that.

In contrast to what is being asserted by BJP and company, Swami Vivekanand had a different take on the issue. He points out speaking to a large gathering in USA said: "You will be astonished if I tell you that, according to old ceremonials, he is not a good Hindu who does not eat beef. On certain occasions

he must sacrifice a bull and eat it."

[Vivekananda speaking at the Shakespeare Club, Pasadena, California, USA (2 February 1900) on the theme of 'Buddhistic India', cited in Swami Vivekananda, The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol 3 (Calcutta: Advaita Ashram, 1997), p. 536.]

This is corroborated by other research works sponsored by the Ramakrishna Mission established by Swami Vivekananda himself. One of these reads: "The Vedic Aryans, including the Brahmanas, ate fish, meat and even beef. A distinguished guest was honoured with beef served at a meal. Although the Vedic Aryans ate beef, milch cows were not killed. One of the words that designated cow was aghnya

(what shall not be killed).

But a guest was a goghna (one for whom a cow is killed). It is only bulls, barren cows and calves that were killed." [C. Kunhan Raja, 'Vedic Culture', cited in the series, Suniti Kumar Chatterji and others (eds.), The Cultural Heritage of India, Vol 1 (Calcutta: The Ramakrishna Mission, 1993), 217.]

In response to this bill thousands of workers of Devnar abattoir (Mumbai), who will be losing their jobs came on the streets to protest against this move of the government (March 11). Many traders, from different religion also came to Azad Maidan in Mumbai to protest this communal act of the Maharashtra

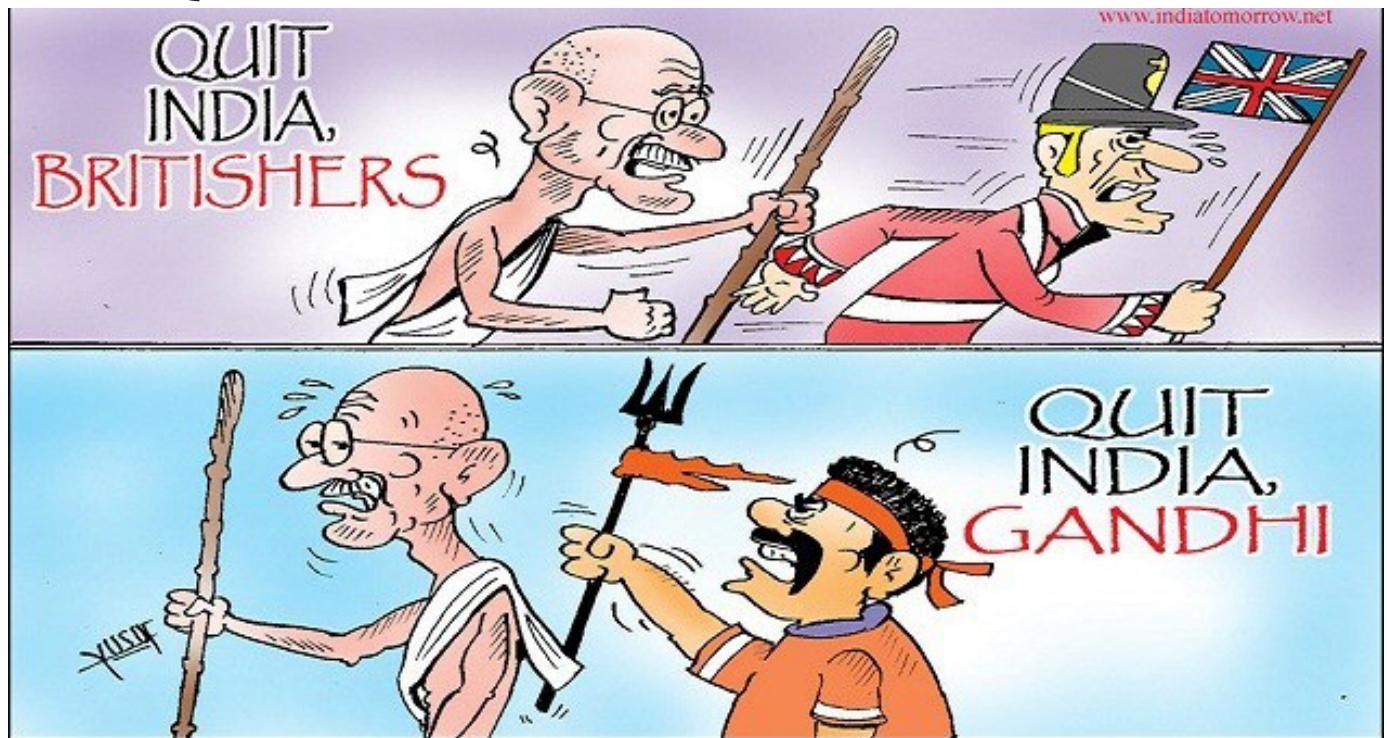
Government. In a PIL filed in the Bombay High Court the petitioner argues that this ban on beef infringes on the fundamental right of citizens to choose meat of their choice is fundamental. The hope is that the society overcomes such abuse of 'identity issues' for political goals and lets the people have their own choices in matters of food habits, and let those who are making their living from this trade do so peacefully.

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"You will be astonished if I tell you that, according to old ceremonials, he is not a good Hindu who does not eat beef. On certain occasions he must sacrifice a bull and eat it."

Quit India, Gandhi



Quit India, Gandhi

I By Mumtaz Alam I

parts of the country. However, both central and state governments discouraged the moves.

New Delhi, 19 March 2015: When Mahatma Gandhi launched Quit India Movement in 1942 – which culminated in The End of British Raj – he was 73 years old. Ironically, now when his historic movement is turning 73, Gandhi himself is being pushed out of India by branding him as an agent of the British Raj.

Gandhi was born in 1869 and he was assassinated by a Hindu extremist Nathuram Godse in 1948. Soon after his murder, Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), the parent organization of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party of Prime Minister Narendra Modi was banned by the government as the assassin Godse was said to be associated with the Hindu right organization. Godse was later hanged for the killing.

While officially RSS has dissociated itself from Godse and his act, its several outfits and leaders have always seen Godse with respect. In the recent times, particularly after BJP came to power at the centre and Narendra Modi became Prime Minister in May 2014, a surge has been observed in making Godse a hero. There were attempts to set up a temple in his name and install his bust in different

But yesterday, a leader of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, a sister organization of RSS, called Mahatma Gandhi “British agent”. Sadhvi Prachi said Gandhi was a “British agent” and his contribution towards independence of the country was “negligible”.

“It was only due to sole effort of Bhagat Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Ram Prashad Bismil and Subhash Chandra Bose that India was freed from the clutches of Britishers,” she was quoted as saying on the occasion of Hindu Dharam Sammelan in Ghaziabad near the National Capital of Delhi. She further said: “Gandhian ways of protests and hunger strikes were worthless in achieving freedom.”

Sadly, a week ago, former Supreme Court judge Markandey Katju had also written in his blog that Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Nation, was a British agent. Katju was strongly condemned by the people of the country and even Rajya Sabha, the Upper House of Indian Parliament passed a resolution against his statement.

Follow the writer on Twitter @MumtazAlam1978

JOURNEY TO ISLAM:

Young French Man Finds Islam in a Football Match

How Islam Changed Mathew's Life By Reading Islam Staff

Matthieu Cioccocini

Assalamu'Alaikum. My name is Mathew.

I'm from France, I'm 22 years old.

I was born in the North East of France, close to Belgium. From the age of 13, I moved to the South Western Coast. And now I'm studying at university, 4th year. I'm doing a masters of business administration. I'm currently involved in studies at the Victoria University of Wellington thanks to an agreement between my university and this university in New Zealand.

I'm going on my study here of the masters of business administration, and I would like in the future to be involved in international business.

My dad doesn't believe in God, and my mom is a Catholic but she doesn't go everyday to the church. So I didn't receive any teachings about religion at the beginning.

How I Knew About Islam

The first teachings about religion was about Islam thanks to my friends and my family and then all the Muslim guys I know from Morocco, Turkey, Algeria and Tunisia. Fortunately, I was living in a place where so many immigrants were living... They were all my friends and I was the only French in the group. We were doing some sport together.

This day when I started knowing more about Islam, we were playing football, and afisabil Allah (member of a Muslim dawah group) came in the field. And we stopped playing and they started speaking about Islam... It was like that...

At the beginning I was outside the group when they spoke about Islam. Then the fi sabil Allah guy told me to come. And then he invited me to come to the mosque to discover a little about religion, and I came and I started being interested like that. Then I decided to come back and to pray, to ask lot of people about Islam and I was more involved in this religion. I would say that I was very interested because I didn't know anything. It was surprising to see people for

example fasting and not to eat anything (during the day) for one month. I was wondering how they are able to do that. And for example in Ramadan and even different manifestations about Islam after Ramadan, such as Eid and everything like that, it was amazing. Finally I decided to learn about this religion.

Family & Friends

I was very young and they were surprised that my parents agreed to my conversion to Islam. They considered me as their child because they wanted to help me a lot and they didn't want to let me down. They considered me as part of their family. So it was very interesting.

Fortunately with my parents, if I compare to other guys who are trying to convert to Islam, they had a lot of problems with their family, but fortunately my parents were not very hard-going. They let me choose what I wanted to do. At the same time, they wanted me to stay in a safe place and the mosque for them was a safe place because I wasn't in the street insulting people, stealing or fighting with some guys. So they preferred me to stay in the mosque than being in the street.

What Islam Can Offer

I think that Islam was a very good thing for me. It taught me a lot about respecting people, my way of thinking and acting in life in general, because Islam as well encourages studying and gaining knowledge. Unfortunately for a few of my friends, they didn't try to be interested or to be involved in Islam, and they finally started to be drug addicted, or started drinking alcohol, ... relationships before getting married, ... And fortunately I managed to find Islam and it helps me a lot in my every day life.

I think that Islam is kind of a cure for needy people. For example, people in prison who try to discover Islam and they manage to be very good persons. Another example is people who were addicted to drugs or to alcohol, they don't manage to find anything to help them, and when they discover Islam they become very pure. That's a very good cure and Allah is the most wonderful doctor you can find to look after you. If you managed to find Him, He will help you a

lot.

I would say that given that I became Muslim a few years ago, I never had any problem about being French and a Muslim. But it's true that in Europe at the moment people start frightening about the fact that Islam arrives very quickly to Europe, and that a lot of Europeans try to convert to Islam. In France for example, business, religions and business of the state are separated, so it is very difficult for example for girls they can't wear their headscarf at school it's forbidden, except if you go to university then it is allowed, but before no, it's forbidden.

Islam & the Media

French people in general often believe what the media says about Islam, and that Muslims are terrorists and polygamists and women are secondary, and that is not the case at all. So the French just believe what they hear as they don't try to find the truth by themselves. They don't try to open the books and they just believe what they hear.

Fortunately, people around me started understanding that Islam is not as bad as they believe, because they know in my way of behaving with them and my way of being like the fact of being a good student, and that Islam is not as bad as they used to believe.

And for my parents, it was the same thing because I spoke with them a few months ago and we had a very interesting discussion together. They told me finally that to have found Islam was a good thing for me and that I was very lucky to find Islam, even if they were not Muslims at all. So I had the chance to find Islam and I'm very happy at the moment and I hope everything will be OK for me, for the education of my children, and my wife and everything.

I would like to say to people just try to know about Islam yourself. Just open the book. It's not very difficult to read and to learn. You go to the Internet or youtube or something and you find something about Islam and in-sha-'Allah (God willing) it will be helpful for you.

To conclude, I would like just to thank God...
<http://www.onislam.net/english/reading-islam/my-journey-to-islam/contemporary-stories/454344-i-found-islam-in-a-football-match-.html>

Far-right French Politician Reverts to Islam

OnIslam & Newspapers

"I'm ready to explain to them that Islam has a mission to unite all men and women," Buttey said.

CAIRO – In a shocking decision to Marine Le Pen's party, a French far-right councilor has reverted to Islam, sending a video message to officials of the anti-immigration party to praise the Muslims' holy book, the Qur'an, and asking them to join him.

"Both are demonized and very far from the image portrayed in the media," Maxence Buttey, a councilor in the eastern Paris suburb of Noisy-le-Grand, told Le Parisien newspaper, drawing up similarities between the Front National party and Islam, The Telegraph reported.

"Like Islam, the FN defends the weakest. The party denounces exorbitant interest rates charged on the debt of our country, and Islam is against the practice of usury."

Buttey, 22, reverted to Islam recently. Yet, his decision became known after he send officials of the anti-immigration FN party a video in which he praised the "visionary" virtues of the Qur'an and urged them to become Muslims. The video was a shock to many members of the party, which announced suspending Buttey from a regional FN committee.

"Religion is a private choice which I respect but it must not enter into the sphere of our political activities," Jordan Bardella, a local party secretary, said. "The proselytizing video which Maxence sent out is unacceptable."

France is home to a Muslim community of nearly 6.5 million, the largest in Europe. Le Pen's party has been adopting anti-Islam agenda for years. She took over the National Front from her father, party founder Jean-Marie Le Pen, who has several convictions for racism and anti-Semitism.

Le Pen has objected to schools serving Halal meat for Muslim pupils, a controversial issue in France, which has banned the wearing of the full-face veil in

public and headscarves in state schools. She also compared Muslim street prayers to Nazi occupation in a speech given during a rally in 2010.

Doubts

Buttey, who remains a party member and a councillor, said he found Islam after finding it difficult to believe the official version of 9/11 attacks. Moreover, he had doubts about the "Merah affair", referring to the al-Qaeda inspired French gunman, Mohammed Merah, who killed seven people in the south of France in 2012.

"Some of my voters will be disappointed by my choice," Buttey admitted. "But I'm ready to explain to them that Islam has a mission to unite all men and women." The new Muslim reverts defended Islam against false campaigns propagated about it.

"I am against the niqab [full-face veil]," he said, adding that Islam did not call for believers "to cut off heads as the Islamic State group does."

Buttey said he had decided to revert after lengthy discussions with the local imam, whom he met while campaigning for election earlier this year. "I was Catholic but when I reread the Bible I noticed all its inconsistencies," he said.

"When I read the Qur'an thoroughly, I understood that this religion is more open."

Buttey is not the first far-right politician who finds Islam after long study.

In 2013, Arnoud Van Doorn, a former member of the far-right Freedom Party (PVV), embraced Islam after an extensive study into the religion. He was among party leaders who helped produce an offensive film titled Fitna in 2008 that linked Islam and the Qur'an to violence.

But after Muslim outcry at the movie, Doorn began to read more about Islam and Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him), leading him to embrace Islam in 2013.

<http://www.onislam.net/english/news/europe/478959-far-right-french-politician-reverts-to-islam.html>

The Wonderful Presents

I By Hajira Khan I

One day the twins John and Jane were going to the toy shop to spend their pocket money. John wanted to buy a set of trains and some soldiers. Jane wanted a furnished doll house and some dolls that would fit in the doll house. Unfortunately, when they went to the toy shop it was closed! They saw the toys displayed in the window and they were very expensive! So, poor John and Jane went sadly to their home and told their mother what had happened.

Oh dear what a bad thing to happen. Well no problem, next week is your birthday and all your aunts, uncles, cousins and friends are coming to your birthday party. So cheer up. They will bring presents for you both. So, John and Jane cheered up.

So, they started preparing for their birthday party. At last the day came when it was their birthday party. They were thrilled and very excited while waiting for their guests. First Uncle Harry came with a birthday cake. Then came Aunt Mary with presents for John and Jane. Then came John and Jane's cousin Julian. He also had two presents. Then came Jane's best friend Darrell with a present for Jane. And then many other guests came with presents for John and Jane. Then it was time to cut the cake which Uncle Harry had brought. Then they all had fun and games. The dinner was very tasty. After some time the party was over. Everyone went away with a word of thanks for inviting them to the party.

When everyone had gone John and Jane opened their nicely wrapped presents. First they opened the Sam's present. They gave a scream of excitement because John had received a set of trains which he had seen in the toy shop, while Jane had got a dolls house. And then they opened Aunt Mary's present. John had got the soldiers he wanted, while Jane got a big white teddy bear in its neck was pink bow. Then Jane opened Darrell's present and in were some dolls that would be perfect to fit in the doll house!! John and Jane were very happy now and said that to their mother that there was no need to go to the toy shop, they can easily spend their money on sweets.

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The Pi Day and the Mathematics Day

I By Sameen Ahmed Khan I

The number pi is a mathematical constant: the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter. This ratio is fixed irrespective of the size of the circle. Its value to twelve decimal places is 3.141592653589 and may be approximated as a ratio of two natural numbers: 22/7 or 333/106 or 355/113, etc, in simple calculations. It is represented by π , the sixteenth letter of the Greek alphabet (Greek has 24 letters). The number π occurs in a variety of calculations involving perimeters or lengths of curves, areas and volumes. Pi is very special in many ways. It arises in very diverse situations. Moreover, it cannot be represented exactly as a ratio of two natural numbers (a property of the irrational numbers) or a solution of an algebraic equation (a property of the transcendental numbers). A dozen decimal places suffice for engineering calculation, but pi has been calculated to over thirteen trillion decimal places and the digits are found to be very random.

The number pi was known to the ancient mathematicians: Egypt (2500BC); India (600BC); Greece (250BC); and China (100CE). The Persian astronomer Jamshīd al-Kāshī computed the pi to 16 decimal places in the year 1424, using a polygon technique. In this technique one fits a polygon with many sides in the circle and computes the area or circumference, which gives the value of pi. Kāshī's calculation remained a record for a period of 180 years. A more efficient computation of pi is done using infinite series. A better value of pi is obtained by adding more and more terms. The Indian mathematician, Madhava (1350-1420) had obtained a series representation of pi which was obtained later by Gregory (1638-1675) using calculus! So, it can be concluded without doubt that calculus was known to Indians much before Europeans. The series method is hindered by slow convergence: many terms may be required to produce a single decimal. The Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan published a remarkable set of series in 1914. A single term of these series gives twelve additional digits of pi. These and related series are at the core of the current algorithms used for computing pi to trillions of decimal places.

A celebration is done every year on 14 March, under the title "Pi Day", highlighting the role of mathematics in our lives. This celebration originated in USA,

where the widely used convention for expressing a date is month/day/year and the 14 March corresponds to 3/14 or 3.14 the value of pi to two decimal places. The fifteenth year of the century becomes still more special as 3/14/15 or 3.1415 is pi to four decimal places. One can incorporate the time 9:26:53 (both AM and PM) to get additional five decimal places! Those of us who use the convention day/month/year are cautioned that 31/4/15 does not exist as April has thirty days! One can use the existing method or some other method to fix a Pi Day or a "Mathematics Day". We need one such day to highlight the importance of mathematics in our lives. Based on our current understanding of nature, "mathematics is the language of nature".

Learning and teaching of mathematics has been a major intellectual challenge across the globe. No system of education can boast that all its pupils are well trained in mathematics. The Math Day can be used to address these challenges being faced by both the students and the teachers. Such celebrations are also an occasion to recognize the mathematicians from the past to the present.

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De-Clutter Your Mind

From Productivemuslim.com

A key part of being productive, is about focusing your mind on what's beneficial and de-cluttering it from unproductive thoughts. If we can record our inner thoughts and replay them to ourselves each day, we'll be shocked at how much junk there is and how much brain power we waste on futile things that neither benefit or harm us. These thoughts can be in the form of replaying old "movies" in our heads of things that happened to us in our past or (going to some extreme) future dreams that are never attainable nor part of reality, or keeping thoughts which we're not happy to reveal to anyone, even having doubts back-biting about people which we needn't have... all these thoughts need to be purged if we want to relieve ourselves and de-clutter our minds.

How do you know if you have so much clutter? Notice your actions and speech. If you recognise them to be very focused, very productive, very thoughtful, and containing less gossip, then your mind is probably more de-cluttered than others! If not, and you see yourself all over the place and your tongue out of control, then your mind surely needs a cleanup exercise.

Unfortunately, we pay little attention to our thoughts and what goes on inside our mind, even though it's crucial to our well-being, productivity and ultimately how we behave as Muslims. Ibn Al-Qayyim has a profoundly powerful statement in his book *Al-Fawa'id*, referring to negative and sinful thoughts, he said: "You should repulse a thought. If you do not do so, it will develop into a desire. You should therefore wage war against it. If you do not do so, it will become a resolution and firm intention. If you do not repulse this, it will develop into a deed. If you do not make up for it by doing the opposite thereof [the opposite of that evil deed], it will become a habit. It will then be very difficult for you to give it up." "You should know that the initial stage of every knowledge that is within your choice is your thoughts and notions. These thoughts and notions lead you into fantasies. These fantasies lead towards the will and desire to carry out [those fantasies]. These wills and desires demand the act should be committed. Repeatedly committing these acts cause them to become a habit. So the goodness of these stages lies



in the goodness of thoughts and notions, and the wickedness of these thoughts lies in the wickedness of thoughts and notions." [Al Fawa'id, Ibn Qayyim]

May Allah be pleased with him! A deep insight into something so subtle. We should all memorize these words and use it whenever we feel unable to control the tsunami of negative thoughts that overtake our minds.

There's a verse in the Quran that should send shudders through any Muslim's spine, in which Allah (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) speaks of taking into account our inner thoughts, He says:

"To Allah belongeth all that is in the heavens and on earth. Whether ye show what is in your minds or conceal it, Allah Calleth you to account for it. He forgiveth whom He pleaseth, and punisheth whom He pleaseth, for Allah hath power over all things." (Surat Al-Baqarah, verse no. 284).

In an age, where people are fighting for privacy, some people might find the above verse "intrusive"! But who are we to judge what Allah does?! We're His slaves and He's our Master! He can do what He wills. The reason I'm saying this, is because believe it or not, the Companions of the Prophet, also found the above verse difficult to grasp (but in their case, they understood the implication, though we unfortunately, rebel due to arrogance). So they went to the Prophet with a heavy heart regarding this verse, but the Prophet told them "Say, we Listen and we Obey". As soon as they said that, Allah revealed 2 of the greatest verses in the Quran:

"The Messenger believeth in what hath been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith. Each one (of them) believeth in Allah, His angels,

His books, and His apostles. "We make no distinction (they say) between one and another of His apostles." And they say: "We hear, and we obey: (We seek) Thy forgiveness, our Lord, and to Thee is the end of all journeys."

On no soul doth Allah Place a burden greater than it can bear. It gets every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns. (Pray:) "Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or fall into error; our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which Thou didst lay on those before us; Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins, and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. Thou art our Protector; Help us against those who stand against faith." (Surah Al-Baqarah, verses no. 285-286) So, listen and obey and work out how to control your thoughts and Allah will not overburden you.

Here are some simple steps you can follow to de-clutter your mind and control thoughts, but they need to be constantly followed in order to develop a disciplined mind:

Dua - First and foremost, ask Allah for help and guidance on this issue. Remember "You Alone we Worship, and You alone we seek help from". Practice focusing your mind - especially during Salat - so that you at least de-clutter your mind, even temporarily.

Listen "into" your thoughts and don't let them just wave by unnoticed. A strong Muslim is the one who can control his inner self as well as his limbs. When a bad thought comes, fight it! And when a good thought comes, act upon it or at least write it down!

Be constantly watchful of your mind, like a predator, always ready to pounce on any unwanted thoughts and cutting evil from its roots.

May Allah (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) help us de-clutter our minds and make our thoughts, actions and words sincerely for Him. Ameen.

'Repeatedly committing these acts cause them to become a habit. So the goodness of these stages lies in the goodness of thoughts and notions, and the wickedness of these thoughts lies in the wickedness of thoughts and notions.' [Al Fawa'id, Ibn Qayyim]

Birthday Party with a Surprise

I By Hajira Khan I

I woke up one morning. I was very happy and excited. Cause it was the day I had to go to a birthday party at my best friend's. All my best friends were coming to the party. The party was from 5PM to 10PM. It was a surprise birthday party for my friend. We had planned that we will refuse to come to the party when she invited us, saying that we are busy. Only I had to agree to come to the party. Since, no one was coming we decided to go shopping. While the others went into the house, start decorating and get the cake ready. When it was 3 O'clock, I and my best friend Delia went out shopping. Delia told me that she was a bit hurt because everyone had refused to come to the party. I smiled a secret smile to myself. How happy Delia was going to feel. On the other hand everything was going fine at Delia's house. Ms. Lacy Delia's mother was very much astonished to hear that Delia was to have a surprise birthday party. She did allow them to decorate and order the cake at once. Then she started to make sandwiches and all other foods that are there in a birthday party. When it was 5 O'clock everything was ready. Everyone hid behind the couches and under the table. They also switched off lights. When it was 5:15 the bell rang. There was a pin drop silence in the house. Ms. Lacy opened the door while Delia and I entered the house. Delia was a bit surprised to see that the lights in the hall were switched off. She asked her mother it. Ms. Lacy said she was having an afternoon nap, which is why lights were switched off. When Delia switched on the lights, everyone came out of their hiding places and shouted SURPRISE!!, HAPPY BIRTHDAY DELIA!!!!!! What a sight there was. There were balloons hanging and banners on the walls. Delia was so happy that she could not help smiling. And what a time we had!! We played games and had the most delicious dinner. When it was ten O'clock, Delia thanked us for the gifts and the surprise birthday party. While we waved goodbye and went to our homes, "what a day we had had", I exclaimed to myself!!!

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Farm Rage:

Farmer is and should remain owner of his land



women farmers protesting against land acquisition bill at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi

I By Mumtaz Alam I

said another farmer.

New Delhi, 01 March 2015: The new Land Acquisition Bill, introduced in the form of ordinance by the BJP government in December last year, seems to have put farm on fire in the country, pushing thousands of farmers from across the country to the national capital last week to press the government to withdraw the bill.

Many of them had gathered at Jantar Mantar near Parliament House here under the banner of social activist Anna Hazare and many others were brought by the Congress. Many were angry at the new law and expressed apprehension the government wanted to acquire their land for corporate projects.

“If we don’t have land then how will we produce grains? How will we feed our children? Modi ji had said his government would implement Swaminathan report on farmers. Where is the report now?” asked Master Ramveer Singh, a farmer. But he also criticized Congress for taking the issue now.

“Where was the Congress for the last 67 years over land acquisition? When the government has planned to destroy farmland and agriculture labourers we along with Anna Hazare have come out on the street to protect ourselves,” said Singh.

“If farm land is gone then will cows, buffaloes and calves. Only if they are safe our country will be safe,”

One farmer sounded very angry at the bill and the BJP government not fulfilling the promises.

“Modi had made false promises. He had promised to bring back black money but hasn’t yet. Instead, the government is looting farmers. It is usurping farmers’ land. We have come here to protest against the new law and to protect our rights,” said he.

Chaudhary Murari Lal, also a farmer said farmers should always remain owner of their land. “Farmer is and should be owner of his land. In Modi’s regime, farmers have sold rice to pay interest. The Land Acquisition Bill should be clean and in favour of farmers. Farmers should be owner of his land.”

However, Gopal Singh, another farmer, said farm land can be given only for people’s interests like hospital and roads, but not for hotels and business corridors.

“If through the Land Acquisition Bill, they want to acquire some land for public interest like road, hospital or rail tracks we can give it. But if they want to sell our land for industrialisation or to erect five star hotels and business corridors we will not accept it. They will have to change the law. We will oppose it to the last,” said Singh.

Following the massive protests in last one week, the BJP government has indicated flexibility to amend the law.

Muslims and their (Islamic) Banking (July 2012)

I By Shakeel Ashraf I

During a friendly discussion, a person working in an Islamic Bank was asked, “How much Islamic is your Bank”? The reply was, “as much as are we Muslim”. (Conversation was in Urdu: Jitne hum musalmanhainutnahamara bank Islami hai.)

A Muslim is the one who has surrendered to injunctions of Allah and one of His injunctions is to abstain from riba. Verse 279 of Sura Baqra declares war by Allah and His messenger against riba takers. After revelation of the verse money lending on riba became criminal offence in an Islamic society.

(<http://www.tafheem.net/tafheem.html>). Today one can argue that he is not living in a society where riba can be a criminal offence. Well, there is a hadith to warn him that the sin of riba is 70 times the sin of incest with one's mother (Ibnmaja, Baiaqi, http://tanzeem.org/books/books/BU_4_01_Islam_ka_Maashi_Nizam.pdf, page#22). Anyone having some moral sense can conclude, on the basis of this prophetic saying, that there is nothing more immoral than taking riba. Why such stern warnings against riba? Because Allah, the All-Knower knows that man has limitless lust to wealth. “And you love the wealth with all your hearts” (al-Fajr 89:20). Money is such a weak point for mankind that the general tendency is, to take the Divine restrictions in a light way? The warning on riba is not only to the lenders but includes all who are involved. The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) cursed the one who accepted usury, the one who paid it, the witness to it, and the one who recorded it. (SunanAbudawud Book #22, Hadith #3327). In a capitalistic economic system, one is free to enter race of money making without any ethical limitation but Islam cuts the root of such a system.

In olden time when riba was charged by individual lenders it was easy to perceive the sufferings. In modern time the financial institution's dual role of lending and borrowing appear quite innocent in spite of its destructive fallouts. Banks take deposits from their customers at a certain rate of interest and lend to other customers at a higher rate, the difference is their earning. Interest is the modern term for usury or riba. Lending on riba by financial institutions puts an extra liability on the economic system. To under-



stand this let us assume that a country starts its financial system from scratch, with issue of first lot of fiat currency of amount (x) by its central bank. The bank lends the first lot of currency to the entrepreneurs on interest after taking substantial collateral and expects return of (x+y) amount. The interest amount (y) is an extra liability created by bank, which doesn't exist in the economy. Entrepreneurs invest their borrowed money in the market and a trade battle starts as everyone tries to increase his money. The gain of one is the result of loss of another because sum total of currency has to be same as (x) issued by the bank. At the end of the term the gainers repay the principal and interest while the losers default and their collateral are forfeited by bank. The vicious cycle continues and the bank's asset grows at the cost of borrower's valuables. The destructive mechanism is further augmented by another devil's tool called fractional reserve banking, which allows banks to multiply the deposited amount and create virtual money, which causes inflation in the economy.

Banking takes working class to a deceitful world of enticements. The moment a professional joins his first job, bank offers all the comfort and lavishness of life to his doorstep – a new model car, a furnished new flat in an apartment and a credit card for shopping. Who can resist the temptations of this dajjalic civilization? Only those who possess firm belief in the life hereafter.

Islamic banks claim that their transactions are free of riba. How true is their claim? Islamic banks have their paid sharia board, which issues compliance certificates to their products. Is that enough for an educated Muslim who is bound to not cross the limits set by his Lord? If it is an affair of worldly benefit he will delegate all his knowledge and wisdom to find out the pros and cons. On the other hand in religious matters any favorable edict is adopted blindly

without bother to check its authenticity and applicability. Here is an example, which I have witnessed. One of my friends took a cash loan from an Islamic bank to spend in marriage and education of his children. I asked him, “under which contract did the bank give you cash loan”? He replied, “Bai-al-Salam”.

I said ‘Bai-al-Salam’ is an advance payment against future delivery of a sale, so what did you sell to the bank? I did not dare to point out the mistake on his part; I just told him that this is a gross violation by bank. He uttered an edict; “yes, the weakest point of Islamic banks is that they indulge in paper transactions (without any physical exchange of goods) to satisfy the sharia council”. What about his own weakness? I know he is well educated and there is no reason to think of his ignorance.

I borrow money from a bank and return a higher amount. What else could it be if not riba? If my dealing with an institution is in clear violation of Divine law, which I am aware of, will the ‘Islamic’ tag of the institution save me from the wrath of my Lord? Imran Ahsan Neyazi in his book “The Prohibition of Riba Elaborated” writes on page # 129 (<http://www.nyazee.org/islbanks/riba/riba-elaborated.pdf>):

“If Islamic banking has to become Islamic the idea of “cash loans” has to go. In other words, the concept of credit has to be altered radically and the creation of fake money by the banks has to come to an end. Till this is done, it will be difficult to call these banks “Islamic”. The obvious question that will be raised is: Will such banking be banking? Maybe not, and in our view this is not important as long as a system that is truly Islamic is put into place. We feel that even though the banking industry in Muslim countries is dominated and remotely controlled by Western banks, it is possible to have truly Islamic banks or institutions that perform similar services.”

Many Muslims, though aware of the prohibitions in financial dealings in Islam, argue that such dealings are unavoidable in this age. Well, prohibited is permitted sometime, but when? Only when one is forced by absolute necessity (muztar), there is no intention of willful disobedience (ghair-a-baghin) and does not take more than what is absolutely indispensable (wa la aadin). Do they really meet these conditions set by their Lord (al-Baqra, 2:173) or just indulge freely without any remorse in pretence of necessity?

13 Sholapur Muslims acquitted from terror charges after 12 years



By MM Special Correspondent.

Sholapur: There is an old adage, ‘Justice delayed, Justice denied’. It can be amply employed on those persons who have been implicated in terror cases and let off by courts but after spending their precious life in jail. Latest victims of this sordid saga are the 13 youths from the textile town of Maharashtra who have been now exonerated all terror charges by session court here on Tuesday. They were booked under the various sections of Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) in a 2003 terror case. However, it is an irony that they were absolved of all charges after undergoing 11 long year’s ordeal.

Sholapur Session Court Judge N N Dhend acquitted all the 13 accused for want of evidence as they were arrested by Maharashtra police on August 8, 2003 on the charges of plotting to make crude bombs for explosion. Police had allegedly recovered a small amount of explosive material from some of the accused. Soon after their arrest, police had invoked sections of POTA in the case. All the accused were released on bail after spending six months behind bars. Police produced 62 witnesses in the case but prosecution examined only 14 of them. However, all the witnesses were declared hostile by the court.

It is to mention here that the previous UPA government had scrapped dreaded law POTA in 2004 but not with retrospective effect. Because of this, many innocents have been languishing in jails.

Those, who got absolved of all charges, are Farooq Tabeeb, Imaan Nadaf, Hamid Mulla, Mahboob Daula, Anwar Shaikh, Mansoor Shaikh, Ghulam Shaikh, Mudassir Shaikh, Ibrahim Momin, Mubin Shaikh, Yaqub Saudagar, Jabbar Shaikh, and Rahman Shaikh.

<http://muslimmirror.com/eng/13-sholapur-muslims-acquitted-from-terror-charges-after-12-years/>

66th Award Ceremony of Rahbar Coaching Centre held in Patna

BIHAR ANJUMAN
(RAHBAR FREE COACHING CENTRE)
CENTRE MILLAT URDU GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL, KHANQAHA MOHALLAH, PHULWARI SHARIF, PATNA
LIST OF 66TH AWARD CEREMONY FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2015

CATEGORY I: BEST PERFORMANCE AWARD

CLASS	NAME	MARKS	PERCENTAGE	REMARKS
CLASS IX	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks
CLASS X	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks
CLASS XI	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks
CLASS XII	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks

CATEGORY II: BEST ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (COMPARISON TO LAST MONTH)

CLASS	NAME	MARKS	PERCENTAGE	REMARKS
CLASS IX	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks
CLASS X	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks
CLASS XI	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks
CLASS XII	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks

CATEGORY III: BEST ATTENDANCE AWARD

CLASS	NAME	MARKS	PERCENTAGE	REMARKS
CLASS IX	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks
CLASS X	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks
CLASS XI	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks
CLASS XII	2014-2015	88%	88%	100% Marks

List of awardees

I By M Naushad Ansari

Patna: The 66th award ceremony of Rahbar Coaching Centre, Patna was held on 28th February 2015 at Millat Urdu Girls High School, Khanqah Mohallah, Phulwari Sharif Patna.

Among the guests present were Mr. Abdul Wahid from Nehru Yuva Kendra, Mr. Shabbir Barvi, Senior journalist and social activist, Mr. Abdul Rafe, Educationist, Mufti Abdul Basith of Al-Ma'had, Phulwari Sahrif, Mr. Naushad Ansari, President, Peace Foundation and Mr. Mehtab Khan, Manager, Bihar Anjuman.

The Chief guest was Mr. Buddha Sharan Hans (I.A.S. Ret'd). Special invitees were Mr. Moosa Kazi (Joint Commissioner of Commercial Tax Ret'd) and Mr. Shoaib Khan (I.P.S. Ret'd).

The Award Ceremony started with recital of the Holy Qur'an by Nazish Sadaf of class IX. Mr. Naushad Ansari introduced the guests and, while addressing the students, said that only sincere and hard labour will assure success. As the final examinations are at hand, they need to focus totally on revision and solving old question papers. 'There is no short cut to success', he emphasized.

Mr. Mehtab Khan briefed on the activities of Bihar Anjuman (www.biharanjuman.org) and also informed the achievements of Rahbar Coaching Centres run by the anjuman. He informed that presently around one thousand three hundred students are studying in 19 Rahbar Coaching Centres in different districts of Bihar and Jharkhand. All the students are very poor and downtrodden coming from the government schools. Till now thirty-six students have cleared diploma engineering and many of them have joined good companies as engineers. Presently one hundred students are pursuing their diploma engineering. The object of the Centre is to convert non-meritorious poor students to meritorious, he stated. Poverty is not at all a hurdle in studying', said Mr. Moosa Quazi. What required is hard labour, will power and dedication, he advised. Mr. Shoaib Khan explained the question patterns of Board Examination and made periodic table easily understandable for the students.

Mr. Shabbir Barvi explained the examination tips and advised the students not to be panic while writing examinations. Mr. Abdul Rafe reiterated that positive thinking is the key to success. Mufti Abdul Basith elaborated the importance of sixth sense. One should always remember Allah S.W.T. for His bounties on the humankind and should never skip any namaz, he emphasised. Mr. Abdul Wahid praised the effort of Bihar Anjuman which has provided a ray of hope to the have-nots of the society.

Mr. Buddha Sharan Hans (IAS ret'd) informed the miseries he faced during his student life, which was much deplorable than what the students of the government schools are facing today. He advised the students to become master in English Language, for, English is the medium of higher and modern studies. One should also learn Computer. 'Never believe in superstitions and always apply logic in day to day life', he said.

The ceremony concluded with Dua. The contributor is President, Peace Foundation, Patna (peacefoundationbihar@gmail.com)

Ismail Yusuf College, Mumbai:

Facing Humiliation after 85 years of Service



Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister, Maharashtra

Mumbai: Accusing Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis of humiliation, a delegation of Mumbai Muslims Thursday walked out of his chamber in the state secretariat without attending a scheduled meeting called to discuss the ownership dispute over the Ismail Yusuf College land.

According to Yusuf Abrahani of SEWA, the delegation including members of SEWA, Ismail Yusuf College and Campus Bachao Sangharsh Samiti and others reached the Vidhan Bhavan well before the appointed time. But, in spite of the prior appointment, the delegation was kept waiting at the Vidhan Bhavan Gate for more than one hour.

This led to the delegation feeling that it was insulted and humiliated.

"This is not the way to treat a delegation that was called for the meeting on an issue of serious concern for the Muslim Community. The delegation therefore decided to return without meeting the chief minister", Abrahani said.

"We condemn the casual attitude of the government of Maharashtra on the serious issue. It shows that the chief minister and government of Maharashtra don't understand the seriousness of this issue", he added.

Abrahani said that after the announcement made by SEWA, an NGO working in the field of education, announced the protest march at Ismail Yusuf College, he was called by the police commissioner to call off his proposed march promising him a meeting with the chief minister to discuss the issue.

The police commissioner also said that he was working as per the message received from the chief minister's office, Abrahani said.

"We were promised that a 10 member delegation can meet the chief minister at 12 noon on 19th March and accordingly we postponed our protest march", Abrahani said.

The delegation included Sudhendra Kulkarni – Chairman Observers Research Foundation, Dr. Zaheer Kazi –

PreidentAnjuman-e-Islam, Shabbir Ansari, AamirE-dresy, Salim Alware, M A Khalid, FerozMithiborewala and others.

The Maharashtra government's decision to allot Ismail Yusuf College land to the NLU faced stiff opposition from all circles. Few Muslim NGOs and activists led by SEWA even announced to 'forcibly occupy' the Ismail Yusuf College and declare it a 'Muslim property' if the government went ahead with its controversial decision.

Ismail Yusuf College BachaoSamiti led by Dr. ZahirKazi of Anjuman-i-Islam and others warned to launch 'the biggest protest' in the history of Mumbai against the government's order.

Some of the leaders including Sudheendra Kulkarni - close aide of ex-prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, even warned the government that a stubborn approach to the problem may create a fertile ground for protests with unforeseen and undesirable consequences.

The idea of a college for Muslims was mooted by philanthropist Sir Mohammad Ismail Yusuf who in January 1910 donated Rs. 8 lakh to then State of Bombay with a condition to establish a college which should be primarily for Muslims though, he said, students belonging to other religious communities could also be given admissions. The idea began taking shape by March 1924 and the college, one among the four affiliated to University of Mumbai by then, finally started functioning in 1930.

Later on, a considerable size bisecting the land under the college control was used for the construction of Western Express Highway, and a hostel on the same campus was converted into an office for the education department of the state. In 1999, a few ex-students approached Bombay high court after the state government had started giving the college land to third parties.

Muslims are demanding possession of this land since independence. Their demands became stronger when the state government, after violent protests by Dalits, announced to use Indu Mill compound to build a memorial for Dr. Ambedkar.

Dr. MehmoodurRehman Committee, constituted in 2008 by the Congress-NCP alliance government to look into socio-economic and educational status of Muslims in Maharashtra, had also supported the demand in its report.

Source:

<http://www.ummid.com/news/2015/March/19.03.2015/mumbai-muslims-on-fadnavis.html>

Plums are very Sweet



*Plums are very sweet
And sour when we take
a bite of them they split
sweet and sour juice in
our mouth*

*They seem to be as round
As a ball they give us
vitamins as we know
and so we become strong*

*Oh!! What nice fruits
They are I hope there are
Thousands of them
in the market*

*Oh!! what nice fruits
They are!*

Hajira Khan
Indian School Salalah
Salalah, Sultanate of Oman

7 Psychological Equations to Empower Your Business Mind



You can either be at the effect (powerless) of your business or act as the cause (in power) of it. Your internal belief system about business is the most important predictor of success or failure. In order to train yourself toward success, undergo the emotional analysis necessary to build a sound business mind that's resilient to stress, change and uncertainty. Here are seven psychological equations that can help empower your business mind:

1. Introspection + Observation = Emotional Awareness

To be introspective means to look inside and examine your thoughts and emotions. To observe is the act of taking an existential view of yourself to better know how to function at your optimal levels of success. This type of self-analysis eliminates the interference of the more immature emotions which make you fall victim to being reactive, fearful, impulsive or indecisive in business.

The result of self-awareness is the brave and admirable quality of being able to think independently, which empowers you to rely exclusively on the observation of your own mental state to succeed. With self-awareness you become unafraid to be different, you embrace the uniqueness of your mind, the radicalness of your ideas and your ability to reason through change -- both positive and negative.

2. Focus + Commitment = Advancement

Focus is measured by the ability to shut out distractions and place emphasis on what needs to be done in your business to progress forward. Commitment is a measure of focus. Commitment puts meaningful action behind your chosen goals without wavering in your intention.

Work performed deliberately, consciously and intentionally with laser-like focus is summed up in the result of knowing how to advance in business. There is nothing lazy or unclear about a successful person's intention and subsequent action.

Advancement is the result of being attuned to every move and decision made in the achievement of your goals in a calculated fashion.

3. Honesty + Professionalism = Good Reputation

Honesty is a measure of integrity to do what you say you are going to do, when you say you are going to do it and to follow through on any delays or quicker advancements by informing all involved. False information is never given as it destroys the integrity of the business equation.

Professionalism is a measure of competency and skill in your business dealings with others, and how your know-how is executed through subsequent ac-

tion in a reliable way.

When honesty and professionalism are combined you naturally develop a stellar reputation. Because word of mouth is everything in business there is nothing which can supersede a great reputation. The successful understand that reputation has more value to others than their actual business. In this way, if people like and respect you they will like and respect your brand.

To be successful you must embrace the idea that you are your most important product.

4. Grace + Strategy = Solutions

Grace is a measure of staying calm under pressure. It is that fixed state of mind which seemingly carries you effortlessly through problems, obstacles and difficult negotiations in business. It is that quality when business is booming and things are flowing effortlessly, you show no ego.

Strategy is a measure of how you get to those higher aims in your business under the umbrella of uncertainty. Intelligent strategies must be attuned to patterns of business behavior and known ways to get to what you want.

Desperation kills strategy and eliminates solutions. When you have the business mind to approach uncertainty with grace and an awareness of what actions need to be applied to gain solid ground, solutions and success are your result.

5. Belief + Action = Fearlessness

A sound business mind comes from believing in yourself, your purpose and the direction of your business pursuits. Belief is similar to commitment in that belief slices away all meandering.

Firm belief is the great manager of the enemies of doubt and delay. The only time to delay in business is when delay is used as a strategy to obtain the desired goal, and in that case delay would be a measure of patience.

When delay is coming from doubt it is deadly to your success.

There is no result without action. Action can be summed up as the courage to create measurable movement towards a goal. It is the outward expres-

sion of your belief. For actions to be bold beliefs must be strong and determined. This is fearlessness. Fearlessness in business is your greatest asset.

6. Attention + This Moment = Mindfulness

To be highly successful, bring your full attention to all business situations and circumstances. To be the cause of your success, give attention to listening, observing and to the gathering of pertinent information before forming opinions and making decisions. All parts of a business require attention and to be great you must have the mind to never leave any part of your business neglected.

This moment is the moment you have to maximize. To be the cause of your destiny have the mind to understand that what happens now determines what happens tomorrow. With focused attention to the present moment you create the impermeable psychological state of being in touch with all aspects of your business.

When fully present and mindful in your business, you are nearly unstoppable.

7. People skills + Knowledge = Leadership

At its core, business is all about relationships. To be successful, master the art of charting your own path, while being open to listening and developing relationships which are mutually beneficial and based in integrity, at the same time. Further, to lead a team effectively you have to be someone others are inspired to follow.

To have a sound business mind, be abundantly knowledgeable in your field. Never hold the belief that you know enough. For you to be the cause of your success there is no such thing as enough knowledge. Knowledge is power. With knowledge you become smart to every new trend in your field, you consistently educate yourself, and choose to be ahead of the game.

Knowledge coupled with proficient people skills builds you into an unrelenting and inspiring leader. This allows you the opportunity to educate all those you lead, and the opportunity to lead all of those whom you partner with in business.

Source: <http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/243796>

Another boost to food fascism



I Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam I

It was Mahatma Gandhi's advocacy of ahimsa (non-violence) in general and his concern for cow protection in particular that is reflected in the Directive Principles of the Constitution making it incumbent on the state to work for cow protection.

Nobody knows how well it rhymes with the Constitution's commitment to secularism. What is intended in the Directive Principle is a gradual move towards full cow protection. However, from the beginning of the Republic there have been people who wanted a ban on cow slaughter (which includes a similar ban on oxen and calf slaughter as well) right away.

One such person was Rajendra Prasad, independent India's first president. Knowing Mahatma Gandhi's mind on the issue, President Prasad told him that he had got one lakh post cards demanding a ban on cow slaughter. Gandhiji, who also wanted the same in the long run, opposed any action in a hurry. He told Prasad that the only reason for such ban was Hindu opposition to beef eating on religious grounds.

Gandhiji argued that for Muslims idol worship was taboo. Going by the analogy of the proposed ban on beef eating because it was taboo to many Hindus, Pakistan could easily argue in favour of a ban on idol worship because it was a taboo in their religion.

The idea was dropped then, but the fact remains that what Prasad wanted in a hurry Gandhiji wanted slowly and in the long term. Once the ideal of an India without cow and bullock slaughter was enshrined in the Directive Principles of the Constitution it became difficult to oppose it.

Consequently, we have today a comprehensive ban in Maharashtra on not just cow slaughter but on bullock and calf as well. This is the result of an amendment to an already existing law in the state. With this Maharashtra becomes the 14th state to do so, which means half of India has already gone that way.

What could be the ramifications of this law? First, it will be a boost to food fascism in India. People who do not eat meat or beef have in effect ordered those who eat it to abstain from it for their own good. Those who have been eating it have been denied an affordable source of nutrition. Food being a cultural habit, they have been denied, undemocratically, without their consent, the food of their choice.

It is not just Muslims, Christians, most Dalits and tribals, but many mainstream Hindus also who have been deprived of a food of their choice. Such bans also destroy the trade, dramatically increase unemployment among already poor sections. The rate at which it is coming means we will soon have to go without an indigenous leather industry, which means we will have to import leather from the West for our leather goods – for shoes, bags and belts to coats and other goods. This will only increase our dependence on others.

Even the religious argument on which such action is based is deeply flawed as shown by Prof. D. N. Jha. Reviewing Prof. Jha's book for Times Literary Supplement, Wendy Doniger writes: "In ancient India, from the time of the oldest sacred text, the Rig Veda (c. 1000 BC), cows were eaten regularly both ritually and for many of the same reasons that people now a days eat Big Macs 'I eat beef as long as it is juicy', said a great Vedic sage, Yajnavalkya, in about 900 BC)".

Doniger continues: "But who will listen? Who cares?" Nobody, of course. Nobody who matters.

http://www.iosworld.org/short_takes/Another_boost_to_food_fascism.htm

Sadbhav Mission Convention calls for Cultural Renaissance

I By Dr. Vipin Tripathi I

Sadbhav Mission, in its annual convention held in Talimabad, Delhi on March 15, 2015 debated the issues causing sectarian divide in the country and worked out strategies to carry on cultural renaissance. Opening the discussion on Bangladeshi issue, Prof. V.K. Tripathi said that the vicious propaganda carried out by the sectarian forces in the last three and half decades, has worsened the plight of poor Bangali speaking Muslim countrymen. Quoting statistics on Assam, where one crore Muslims live, he said that Bangladeshis (mostly of working class dominion) are less than 1%, yet 99% others are targeted for hate. Nellie massacre of 1983, Bodoland riots of 2012 and Baxa massacre of May 2014 are but a few examples pointing to the ferocity of this design. Our task is two fold: to assess the living realities of targeted masses and to clear the perception of the rest of the countrymen towards these brethren.

Dr. Ashok Kumar put forth the issue of cooperation with Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and China. He said that the culture and living conditions of masses in these countries are similar to ours and a good understanding of each others' problems will help diffusing build up of euphoria on border skirmishes. Prof. P. P. Singh led the debate on media and polity. He said that corporate influence on media and their myopic vision have seriously compromised on cultural, political and social diversity of the country. Weaker sections hardly make any news. Certain political parties close to them ideologically get out of proportion coverage. We must reach out to journalists and anchors to reinforce social responsibility and objectivity. Dr. A. Majeed argued that we must simultaneously reach out to political parties to rise upto the challenge of sectarianism.

Mr. M. Adeeb, who just completed his term in Rajya Sabha, articulated the process of cultural renaissance. He said that we are inheritors of a great culture of assimilation and compassion. We fought colonialism with the unprecedented doctrine of truth and non-violence. The narrowness is now gripping our minds. It hurts not only the minorities but masses of all communities. When self righteousness, muscle power and greed prevail, working classes suffer. Prof. Imtiazuddin from Chicago said that hope must never be lost. There are plenty of positive things around. We pick up from there and build the culture of freedom. Dr. Gopa Joshi laid emphasis on truth and non-violent resistance and said that the study groups on these themes must be created as widely as possible to spread the culture of freedom. Mr. SAS Kirmani supported the move to have 10% students and faculty in minority community schools/ colleges from majority community and vice versa. Mr. Ovais Sultan said that we have to build courage to stand by the conviction that every one has equal right to live with full freedom and dignity. Mr. Mufti cited Gandhi's Champaran Satyagraha and other instances as a way to uplift soul. Dr. M.A. Haque raised the issue of linkage between education and employment and said that it hampers learning when chances of getting jobs are limited or suppressed by discrimination. Mr. Ajay Sahai, who has developed a core of volunteers who teach underprivileged children in slums, said that we may make these after school teaching sites as centres to propagate culture of freedom. Mr. Abdul Majeed Khaksar, made a passionate appeal to rise above self and develop affinity towards your neighbour that alone will sustain the society and strengthen the nation.

The presentations followed intensive discussions. V.K. Tripathi presented a summary of Mission activities in India and USA and outlined the activities for the next year. The day ended with the outstanding rendition of classic ghazals by Prof. Subhendu Ghosh that brought home the strength of our culture. So did the presentation of naats by Mr. Ameerul Haque earlier in the day.

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National Elocution Competition in English among Madrasa Graduates Concluded in Mumbai



By M. Burhanuddin Qasmi I

MMERC, Mumbai bagged winner trophy and grabbed all the top prizes.

By interpreting heartfelt feelings it is possible to conquer hearts: Maul. Badruddin Ajmal

Mumbai: MarkazulMa'arif Education and Research Centre (MMERC) held its first all-India competition for ulama. Selected ulama regaled the audience with their speeches. Including MarkazulMa'arif participants from six other organizations, namely MarkazIslami Education and Research Centre, Ankleshwar, Gujarat, JamiaIslamiaJalalia, Hojai, Assam, Institute for Higher Studies, Okhla, New Delhi, Al-Mahadul Ali Al-Islami, Hyderabad, Islamic Study Centre, Ibrahim Bawany ITI, Baroda, Gujarat, and Fazlani Centre for English Language and Literature, Lonavla, Pune took part.

It was the First Inter-DELL (Diploma in English Language & Literature) National Elocution Competition held in Mumbai. DELL is a two-year course to teach English and communication skills to the madrasa graduates under MarkazulMa'arif which was established by MaulanaBadruddinAjmal in 1994.

MMERC has 7 affiliated branches across India. The best three participants from each organization were

sent for the final round in Mumbai and in total there were 21 DELL students who took part in the competition. Surprisingly all the three winners were from MarkazulMa'arif Education and Research Centre, Mumbai; the first prize was secured by Inamul Hasan Qasmi who spoke on "The Concept of Jihad in Islam", the second winner was Abdur Rahim Qasmi who spoke on "The Principle of Freedom of Speech in Islam" and the third one was TahaQasmi who held forth on "Political System of Islam." In addition to attractive trophies and cash prizes to the winners all other participants were also given consolatory trophies and certificates. The award for the Winner of the 1st National Elocution Competition for the year 2015 also went to MMERC, Mumbai. The first session of the competition was presided over by Mufti Azizur Rahman Fatehpuri while the second session in the afternoon was presided over by MaulanaBadruddinAjmal Al-Qasmi. In the beginning of the programme, MaulanaMuddassir Ahmad Qasmi, Coordinator, Diploma in English Language and Literature (DELL) welcomed the audience and explained the aims and objectives of the elocution competition.

The Director of MarkazulMa'arif Education and Research Centre, Maulana Muhammad Burhanuddin-Qasmi, before his thanks-giving remarks with the cooperation of Branch In-charge, MaulanaAtiqur Rahman Qasmi and teachers, MaulanaAslam-

Javed Qasmi and Maulana Jaseemuddin Qasmi, presented bouquets and “Gamchas” (a kind of Assamese shawl) to all the dignitaries and distinguished guests. Maulana Burhanuddin Qasmi spoke to the audience about the salience of the Diploma in English Language and Literature (DELL) for ulama was first envisioned by Maulana Badruddin Ajmal in 1994 and was first started in Delhi and now the course is being taught in 12 cities by notable organizations. The course aims to provide ulama with proficiency in English speaking and writing and computer skills. He also announced that this national level competition will next year be hosted by Markaz Islami Education and Research Centre, Ankleshwar, Gujarat. President of the programme, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal, Member of Parliament and CEO Ajmal CSR Group lauded the participants of the final round. He said that the aim of the DELL course is to present the correct picture of Islam and the teachings of Qu’ran and Sunnah. This requires a proficiency in English, inner purity of the heart; and intention for heartfelt feelings can only be correctly interpreted by the tongue, enabling the speakers to conquer the hearts of people, Maulana Ajmal said.

Dr Zahir Qazi, President of Anjuman-e Islam, Mumbai, said in his speech those who needlessly blame madrasas should remember that after 1857, if there were no madrasas then it would have been impossible for Islam and Muslim culture to survive in Indian subcontinent in the purest form its today. He was all praise for the high level of English language and rational arguments displayed by the participants and said that the standard was not of a diploma but of the post-graduate level. He said that our ulama were not at all antediluvian and the evidence of this fact was presented by every participant in the competition today. He lauded the initiative taken by President of the Markazul Ma’arif, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal and he offered his heartfelt thanks to the Ajmal Group Companies for their philanthropic activities, which present a role model for other corporate houses. Hazrat Maulana Shumsuddin Saheb (Muhaddith) said that learning English to preach Islam is a very praiseworthy step and when these ulama equipped with moral character and purity of intention work in the practical field for the pleasure of Allah (swt) it is quite possible they may bring about a revolution. President of IDC, Mr. Umar Gautam, expressed his sincere appreciation for the efforts of Markazul Ma’arif and said that it has now spread like a shady tree. Its alumni are winning laurels far beyond the shores of India.

Maulana Muhammad Ali Manyar who came from Makkah said that it was a historic achievement for ulama to gain a command over the English language. He lauded the work undertaken by Maulana Badruddin Ajmal and said after listening to the speeches of the ulama it has become clear that this is a notable Islamic movement.

Among the dignitaries who were present were Mr. Ebrahim Ismail Doodwala from London, Mr. Shum-sulHaq Chaudhary, vice president of the Markazul Ma’arif (NGO) from Assam, CEO of Central Haj Committee of India, Mr. Attaur Rahman (IRS), Dr. Tayyib Patel from Aurangabad, Maulana Mahmood Daryabadi, Maulana Gulzar Azmi and Mr. Javed Anand from Mumbai.

Among the special guests on the occasion was noted human rights activist, Teesta Setalwad. She spoke and said that my experience shows that the students of madrasas and office bearers of Masjids are those with open hearts, and from whom all schools of thought can derive benefit. After listening to the speeches today I felt that ulama are the true messengers of peace.

The three judges of the competition were: Mr. Mohammad Wajihuddin, senior journalist with The Times of India, Mufti Dr. Obaidullah Qasmi, Assist Prof. Zakir Hussain College of Delhi University and Head of the English Department of Jamia Isha’atul Uloom, Akkalkuwan Maulana Shumul Huda Qasmi. The compare of the programme, Maulana Shahid-Moyeen Qasmi, Coordinator, Dept. of Dawah of Markazul Ma’arif, laid before the audience the steady progress of Markazul Ma’arif and the Ajmal Foundation. Among the institution representatives were Maulana Alauddin Qasmi from Assam,

Maulana Moosa Mankrod from Ankleshwar, Maulana Muhammad Inaam Qasmi Nadwi from Delhi, Maulana Muhammed Rafiq Qasmi from Hyderabad, Maulana Aamil Sarwar Qasmi from Varodara and Mufti Miftah Hussain Qasmi from Pune. Maulana Yunus Saheb who came from Madinah (KSA) made the valedictory Dua and ended the programme.

M. Burhanuddin Qasmi is Director, Markazul Ma’arif Education & Research Centre (MMERC)

Political history of Muslims of Muzaffarpur since 1857

I By Kashif-ul-Huda I

History should not be merely recounting of exploits of famous people or important conflicts. It should also be about changes happening at the grassroots level and how these local changes shape the course of communities and nations. Mohammad Sajjad's *Contesting Colonialism and Separatism: Muslims of Muzaffarpur Since 1857* falls into the latter category of History narration.

Muzaffarpur in Bihar "is neither a seat of power nor a place arguably having nationally known history-makers" admits Sajjad in his preface to the book. Mohammad Sajjad who Assistant Professor at the Centre of Advanced Study in History, Aligarh Muslim University, digs deep to find the "largely untold" stories of "lesser-known nation-makers of Muzaffarpur."

Beginning with a brief history of Muzaffarpur region, the book divided in 11 chapters, explores the socio-political history of Muzaffarpur and neighboring area since 1857. The failure of 1857 resulted in a new thinking among Muslims. Muzaffarpur Muslims were ahead of Syed Ahmed Khan in starting a movement for modern education. Syed Imdad Ali and Syed Mohammad Taqi were successful in getting non-Muslims to also join their cause. Muslims joined hands with Hindus to setup schools and colleges that benefitted all and not exclusively one community. The Hindu-Muslim cooperation extended to politics as well. The movement for separation of Bihar from the Bengal presidency was the first such movement where both Hindus and Muslims participated.

British administrators devised a rift between Hindus and Muslims by removing Urdu from school instructions and official business and restricted teaching of Urdu to just Muslims. As the movement for Hindi turned communal, Muslims responded by establishing Urdu Sahityik Sabha to bridge the gap between two languages. But the movement for Hindi was not for the development of Hindi as much as attempt to shrink public space for Urdu. The 1937 Madras session of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (HSS) was presided by Jamnalal Bajaj rather than Hindi poet Maithili Sharan Gupta, making it clear that HSS was a political group rather than a literary body.

By 1920s parts of India were reeling with communal violence. Muslims feared that the Congress was being converted into a Hindu organization and Muslim leaders

were pushed to the margins. In 1923, Hindu Sabha's Gaya session was presided over by Dr. Rajendra Prasad given credence to Muslim views that Hindu leaders of Congress are encouraging the communal elements.

Electoral defeat of Muslim leaders like Shafi Daudi and Mazharul Haque who considered themselves as Indian leaders and not just leaders for Muslims came as a shock. Muslims believed that communal elements in the Congress conspired to ensure their defeat.

In spite of the rising anti-Muslim feeling which had even engulfed the Congress, Muslims continued to actively participate in freedom struggle. They also vehemently opposed the Muslim League and its two-nation theory. Sajjad writes "Muslim political leadership (of Muzaffarpur) has displayed progressive outlook... Yet, it is quite in-

triguing that their share in political power has undergone a noticeable decline."

Muslims of Muzaffarpur didn't fare well in independent India either. Situation turned so bad that even such a big Congress leader like Maghfur Aijazi quit the party to contest the 1962 Parliamentary elections on Swantatra Party ticket.

Read this book carefully and you will see that Muslims of Muzaffarpur despite putting emphasis on modern education and not only being part of the political movements but leading it for most parts still end up being marginalized in the political processes and governance institutions. Even their history is on the verge of being wiped out if not for historians like Sajjad

who are ready to invest their time in writing about people who are largely forgotten.

Mohammad Sajjad shines through as modern historian in the last chapter which is 100-year long history of a village Turkauliya (population 6500). It's a wonderful reading of how outside political and economic forces affected the lives in this predominately Muslim village. It is a fascinating read and highlight of this brilliantly-researched book.

Book: *Contesting Colonialism and Separatism: Muslims of Muzaffarpur Since 1857*

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