

Better light a candle than curse the darkness

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

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BE AWARE, ALWAYS, EVERYWHERE

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The Merits of Islam

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RCC student Sifat Noorain ‘helps’ Zakir House of Jamia Millia Islamia lift trophy

Sifat Noorain, Bihar Anjuman sponsored student, is studying in Diploma in Elementary Education at Jamia Millia Islamia. She has earlier studied in Rahbar Coaching Centre of Muzaffarpur, under the sponsorship of Bihar Anjuman.

Besides studying, she loves taking part in extra-curricular activities. When the Faculty of Education organised house-wise tournament on the campus, Sifat with other girl students took part in it and came out with flying colours helping their team Zakir House lift the tournament.

The final was played in first week of March.

She told OT.COM that the unique thing about the tennis ball cricket tournament is that the matches are mixed with girls and boys taking part. However, during the match when girls are batting then it is only girls who will bowl.

About eight houses took part in the tournament. And at the end it was Zakir House and Ajmal that reached the final. Representing Zakir House, the team batted first and scored 106 runs in 12 over.

Ajmal House had to score 107 runs to lift the trophy. Though they played well, the team floundered on way to reach the total and was all out for 96 runs, said Sifat.

The match was interesting with some ups and downs. However, the team, Zakir House that kept its nerves won the tournament. Sifat couldn't shine on that final day but like her other friends they gave full support to the batters and bowlers who managed the show well.

She scored 15 runs and took one wicket out of the four women wickets, which was not bad.

<http://www.okhlatimes.com/jamia-student-sifat-trophy/10478/>



Rise Above Half Truths

Be Introspective and Patriotic

I By Dr. V.K. Tripathi I

The Ramjas College incident has polarized student community into two camps, nationalist camp and progressive camp. However, this division is superficial. Sloganeering is no measure of revolutionary zeal for freedom, nor countering slogans by abuse and violence a measure of patriotism. A patriot would care for freedom from humiliation, exploitation, and discrimination of every individual, every village, and every state. He/ she would strive to resist bad deeds, rather than running after slogans.

Some students complain that slogans like Kashmir ki Azadi, Bastar ki Azadi were raised. Others say the slogan on Kashmir was not raised. Do little introspection my friend. Look at the people of Kashmir as your own. Feel the pain of 3 lakh people forced to flee, the plight of masses under heavy deployment of forces for 27 years, and tens of thousands of civilians killed. Your anger would subside. Then you would be able to say, in the present day world, dominated by big powers and corporate sector, fragmentation of nations can serve no purpose except inviting massive internal strife and slavery.

Another important ingredient of nationalism is rising above narrow self interests and arrogance of social identities. Such a person would never discriminate on the basis of caste, religion, gender or class, nor indulge in exploitation. Laborers, farmers and artisans best qualify as patriots on this scale. They are true nationalists through their deeds, behavior and purity of heart. They give half of their earnings to the nation. They don't need to shout slogans on nationalism. In fact they constitute the soul of the nation.

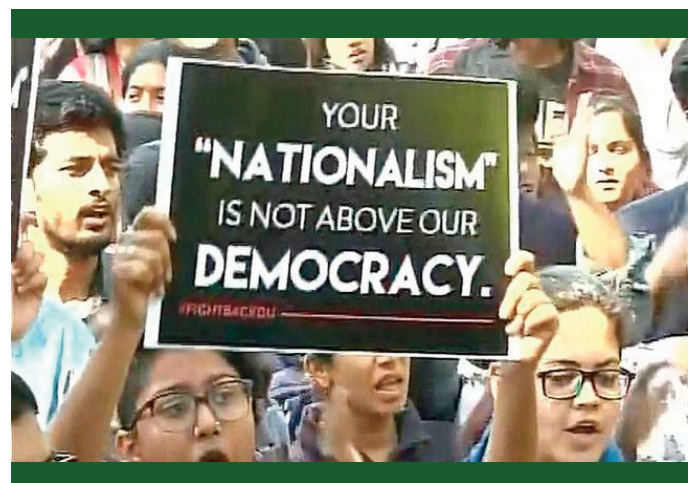
Nationalism in the Age of Imperialism

In last three hundred years border patriotism, i.e. staking ones life defending borders of the kingdom has been rendered irrelevant. With the growth of modern science and big machines, came the age of colonialism and imperialism. The focus of foreign interference shifted from borders to farms, mines, markets, towns and villages. All major wars in the world have been imposed by imperialist powers. A few wars that poor nations fought with each other often had imperialist designs behind them.

After independence, India fought four wars with Pakistan and China in 1947, 1962, 1965 and 1971 in which respectively 1,104, 3,250, 3,264 and 3,843 soldiers died. If one adds 522 soldiers killed in Kargil war, the total death toll from 1947 to 2016, goes to 11.5 thousand. Compare this with the killing of 84 thousand Indian soldiers in brief span of 7 years, from 1914-1921, fighting for the British in different countries. One more thing that imperialism did was to arouse racial/ sectarian passions in enslaved nations. To hide exploitation and oppression visited upon by them, they showed events of history vastly magnified and distorted so that the people hate each other. As a consequence, sectarian violence acquired grave proportions and several countries got fragmented. The deadly example of racial and sectarian devastation was World War II that killed 45 million people – 4 million from Axis Powers (Italy, Germany and Japan) and rest from the other nations.

In the current phase, neo-imperialistic tendencies are not limited to big powers. The elite classes and corporate sectors of most nations are into that mind frame, serving each other to an extent and getting richer much faster than the masses of their own lands. Allowing free access to big business and nurturing hatred towards poor neighbors is not fair. Patriotism demands that we don't support imperialist wars and exploitation. One may find Gandhian strategy of nonviolent resistance truly patriotic and an effective doctrine.

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Stop blaming Muslim leadership for UP debacle: Akhilesh, Mayawati are the real culprits

I By Murshid Kamal I

Victory has many fathers but defeat is an orphan. In the triumphant camp, Prime Minister Modi is being credited for BJP's splendid performance in Uttar Pradesh Assembly election and all his actions and statement are being glorified not only by his supporters but also by his harsh detractors, some of his very similar statements which failed him during Bihar election. On the other side, as expected, the blame game is in full swing.

The readers may recall 2015 Bihar Assembly election where the BJP did all that it could do to polarise the voters on religious line by highlighting the cow slaughter and other sensitive issues. BJP leaders like Giriraj Kishore took up the job of spewing venom against Muslims. BJP President kept saying in all the election rallies that the crackers will be burst in Pakistan if they lose the election. Despite their entire outburst to unite Hindu voters, they failed miserably. So what went wrong in UP which went right in Bihar? The answer does not lie in rocket science or arithmetic.

The answer is very simple and anybody's guess. The arrogant and imprudent leadership of SP & BSP did not learn a lesson from 2014 and Bihar Assembly election. It's not that they could not read writings on the wall. RJD Supremo Lalu Prasad Yadav advised the key players of UP politics soon after the Bihar election and urged them to forge an alliance to challenge the growing popularity of the BJP. But the romanticism and the fascination of ruling the state as an absolute leader kept them at a distance from each other. The result was very much on an expected line. More than 60% of non-BJP votes got divided and BJP rode on less than 40% popular vote share to win a thumping majority in the state.

A close look at constituency-wise vote share indicates, had there been a Bihar-like grand alliance in the state, the result would have been reversed and BJP would have been rooted out in the state. The so-called champions of secularism did not even bother to seriously think about a Bihar-like alliance to stop the march of Fascism. Those who are blaming Muslim leadership-political or religious-do not have much substantial evidence of division of Muslim votes, instead it was the



general secular vote which got divided between Samajwadi and BSP. Not more than 10 seats were lost to the BJP because of two Muslim candidates of major parties were contesting against each other. And yes, a couple of them was lost due to the presence of AIMIM on some of the seats. So what? BJP also lost some seats by a narrow margin to Muslim candidates due to the consumption of Hindu votes by rebel Hindu candidate. This happens in an electoral democracy.

As for the Muslim voters in general, they did their best to do tactical voting like 2012 assembly election, but the voters' calculation and wisdom cannot always be accurate and their integrity cannot be questioned. Asaduddin Owaisi restricted himself to the limited number of seats where his party was contesting. Ulema Council & Peace Party had influence in small pockets and were far from making any state-wise political impacts to be blamed for the counter polarisation. So why to be swayed away by the media narrative of Muslim vote division & blame the Muslim leadership for the devastation?

Now, what next? Not to be disheartened, of course. All's not lost. We can still put up a strong fight against the BJP and its allies in 2019 General election. Two completely differing example of UP & Bihar election result provides an opportunity for the non-BJP political parties to decide between sinking or swimming option. BJP will be banking on its 30% vote share which despite all the mobilisation, propaganda, media management and so-called wave will not cross 35- 40%. If non-BJP votes are consolidated especially in these two Indian states by forging a grand alliance, which seems very likely and pragmatic in the current circumstances, it will do the magic and the non-BJP government at the centre can easily be formed. But until then, stop blaming the Muslims for what happened in UP.

Shaikh Roshan Jahan

Poverty, double amputation couldn't stop her from completing

Mumbai: Women's Day was celebrated across the world with great enthusiasm to make women aware about their rights and also to give women their due position in the society. Women who have stood out and inspire others due to their efforts in social, educational and cultural fields are felicitated on this occasion.

Islam promises equal rights to women but it is often forgotten by the society and opportunity should be taken to remember this fact and act upon it.

Shaikh Roshan Jahan Jawad Ahmed comes from a conservative Muslim family. Fighting extreme poverty, she passed class tenth from Jogeshwar High School, Mumbai. She lost both her feet during an unfortunate train accident.

But the girl showed exemplary courage and determination and competed in the medical admission test. She cracked it successfully despite huge odds staked against her. She has now completed her MBBS and earned her degree. She has just become an inspiring doctor worth her salt.

During an interview, Roshan Jahan revealed details about her life that are as inspiring as her achievements.

Her dreams

Roshan Jahan dreamt of becoming a doctor while she was still in junior school. She came from a family where poverty made many dreams to collapse, without being fulfilled. Her secondary education was a miracle of sorts as she struggled to pay her fee in absolute

poverty.

Looking at the weak financial condition of her family, she wanted to support and improve the financial situation of her family by completing some kind of para-medical course as soon as possible.

Having scored a whopping 92% in her tenth exam, she enrolled in the science faculty of Anjuman Islam Girls

High School, Bandra, Mumbai. This was the beginning of a dream journey.

The accident that destroyed her dream, almost

During her semester exams in 2008, she was travelling to her school in train. It was very crowded and Roshan Jahan got up to get down quickly at her stop, but a jostle from the very dense crowd threw her off the train. This accident happened between Jogeshwari and Bandra. The train ran over both her legs. Roshan Jahan was conscious and saw the train running over her legs.

After the train had passed, a crowd gathered

around her. Shadab, an onlooker came to her aid about half an hour later. He gave her some water and informed her family about the accident.

Railway officers took a long time to come and offer some help after this and she was taken to a hospital. The operation theatre was closed so the hospital did some superficial dressing on her injuries. Her family members reached the hospital by then.

Looking at the lack of medical care given to Roshan



Jahan, her family members insisted on her discharge, which she was given by 6 or 7 pm. They rushed her to another hospital. Both her legs had to be amputated.

Recovery and self belief

Roshan Jahan then faced a life in bed since she had never ever seen any double amputee going on with his life like other normal people. She had not heard of prosthetic legs. She steeled herself for a very bleak future.

of other girls. She was disqualified for admission during the physical exam. Roshan Jahan called up Dr Kantharia who advised her to go to High Court with her appeal.

She did that. The court observed her walk and go about her daily works on her prosthetic legs. Her previous scholastic records were seen, which were impressive. During this time she started travelling on trains again. This was a big achievement in her life,



At this dark time she was encouraged and supported by Dr Guntharia, the doctor who operated upon her legs, and her family members. Dr Guntharia told her about prosthetic legs and brought a new ray of hope in her life.

Her family encouraged her to continue her studies. She was fitted with prosthetic legs and then she appeared for her exams. She scored 75% in her class twelfth exams. She also took CET.

Dr Sanjay Kantharia and his moral support

She was advised by many to take up some sedentary office job. But Dr Sanjay Kantharia urged her not to pay heed to all the discouraging suggestions from her acquaintances and look at her potential. He urged her to appear for the medical entrance test. She was very doubtful initially, but she scored third position in the CET.

She was counselled in JJ Hospital along with a score

the boarding of a train again on prosthetic legs.
Fulfilment of the dream

Roshan Jahan was eventually admitted in a medical college on the orders of High Court. She got full support from her family. And this is where her inspiring story stays for now.

She has plans of completing her MD in future and there is no doubt that her courage will make her fly through it with flying colours.

Meanwhile her college teachers are equally excited. Dr Walani, deputy dean of KEM Hospital said “Fantastic...Her achievement is like winning a Noble prize. We are very proud of her”. (Translated from Urdu-Times)

<http://viewshadlines.com/shaikh-roshan-jahan-poverty-double-amputation-couldnt-stop-her-from-completing-13080/>

BUTTERFLY EFFECT IN THE CREATION OF PAKISTAN

Is it possible that some fish, a casual remark and a grey film could have led to the partition of India? Let's find out.

Sometimes a very small and insignificant event can lead to a huge effect later on. It's called Butterfly Effect. It can also lead to the creation of a new country, the displacement of twelve million people, the loss of around two million lives and permanent animosity among people who used to share their bread and ancestry at one point of time.

If we study the life of Muhammed Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, we will find three incidents which led to the butterfly effect, resulting into one of the most significant and bloodiest midnights in the world history.

To know these three small events, we will have to start with Jinnah's grandfather, Premjibhai Meghji Thakkar, who was a prosperous Hindu merchant from Kathiawar, Gujarat. He had made his fortune in the fish business, but he was ostracized from his vegetarian Lohana caste because of their strong religious beliefs. When he discontinued his fish business and tried to come back to his caste, he was not allowed to do so because of the huge egos of the self-proclaimed protectors of Hindu religion. Resultantly, his son, Punjalal Thakkar (the father of Jinnah), was so angry with the humiliation that he changed his and his four sons' religion, and converted to Islam.

This was not the first incident when a Hindu had tried to come back to his religion and he was not allowed to do so by the priest class. When Islamic invasion began in India in 12th century, many Hindus had lost their religion because of petty rules like drinking the water poured by a Muslim in their ponds, being forcibly converted to Islam or going to places outside India. When they tried to reconvert to Hinduism, the stubborn priests blocked their path and branded them as permanent dharmabhrashta. This led to animosity in them for Hindus, and they converted to Islam and taught a lesson to those priests by killing them mercilessly. Today, a lot of Indian Muslims don't want to accept their Hindu ancestry, and the humiliation their ancestors felt centuries ago could be the reason behind it.

That's the first butterfly effect. If Jinnah's grandfather were allowed to come back to his caste and religion,

Jinnah would have remained a Hindu, and he won't have used his genius in creating a new country for Muslims.

In 1929, Jinnah's wife, Rattanbai Petit, died due to a digestive disorder. He was so devastated at her death that he moved to London. He led a very private life, lived in a large house, played billiards and attended theatre. But things took a drastic turn when he heard a comment made by his arch-rival, Jawahar Lal Nehru. In a private dinner party, Nehru had remarked that Jinnah was 'finished'. It made Jinnah so furious that he packed up and headed back to India with the intent to 'show Nehru'. He fired up the Muslim League, and transformed it from a scattered band of eccentrics to the second most powerful political party of India.

That's the second butterfly effect. If Nehu hadn't made that remark, Jinnah would have stayed in London, Muslim League won't have become so powerful and India might have stayed united.

Just one year before the partition and independence of India, Jinnah's doctor, Dr. J. A. L. Patel, discovered something in the X-ray report of Jinnah which could have destroyed the gigantic efforts to create Pakistan. Dr. Patel discovered two dark circles in the report which could have upset the Indian political equation and would have almost changed the course of history. Jinnah was suffering from Tuberculosis which left him only two or three years to live at most. He pushed Mountbatten for a speedy freedom and partition of India to make sure he made the mark in history before he died. The secret of Jinnah's disease and imminent death stayed between him and his doctor, ensuring the bloody historical event.

That's the third butterfly effect. That grey film had the secret to block the partition, and it was stopped from coming out by a Hindu doctor who thought his professional ethics was more important than the lives of millions. Had this report become public knowledge, Gandhi and Mountbatten might have delayed the independence of India to let the gentleman die and avoid the partition.

In the movie, Gladiator, the main character, Maximus says, "What we do in life echoes in eternity." We have no idea what eternal effect can come from something insignificant we are doing today. Jinnah's grandfather would have never thought that his decision to go into fish business would have impacted the lives of millions one century later.

SOURCE: Freedom at Midnight (Dominique Lapierre and Larry Collins); Indian Summer (Alex Von Tunzelmann); Sanskruti Ke Char Adhyay (Ramdhari Singh Dinkar)

Third National Urdu Science Congress, Moulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad

I By Azher Majid Siddiqui I

The Third National Urdu Science Congress was held at Moulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU), Hyderabad during February 16 - 17, 2017. The conference had successfully attracted scientists; renowned scholars of Arabic Urdu and Persian languages; educators; writers; poets; historians; heads of institutions; science reporters and Islamic scholars. The Inaugural Session of this congress was held at the auditorium of Distance Education Centre of MANUU and was presided over by the Vice-Chancellor, MANUU, Dr. Aslam Parvez. The Chief Guest of this event was Prof. S. Ramchandran, Vice-Chancellor, Osmania University, Hyderabad. The Guests of Honour for this event were Prof. Shamsul Islam Farooqui, Ex-Principal Scientist, Indian Agricultural Research Institute and Prof. Iqtidar Hussain Farooqui, Former Deputy Director, Department of Plant Chemistry, National Botanical Research Institute. He is well-known for his books including, "Plants of the Qur'an" and "Medicinal Plants In The Traditions Of Prophet Muhammad" (Sidrah Publishers, Lucknow, India). The conference had a very rich programme including keynote talks by renowned speakers and oral presentations.

Technology and science are interdependent as one leads to the other. Science impacts technology and technology is required for exploring nature leading to new science. Both science & technology are crucial for the social well being and sustainable economic development in the developing countries. It is essential that the public needs to be aware of scientific and technological advances. Hence, it is essential that the relevant information be provided to the general public in as many languages as possible. In order to be on par with the developed nations, it is essential that the public be made aware of the importance of science. A possible way to achieve this awareness is by delivering the relevant scientific content in a simplified manner in their native language. This commendable effort is due to Dr. Mohammad Aslam Parvaiz who is the Vice Chancellor Maulana Azad National Urdu University. Dr. Parvaiz was the former Principal Zakir Husain Delhi College.

For the past fifty years, Urdu has been categorically stated and considered as a language of Culture, Reli-

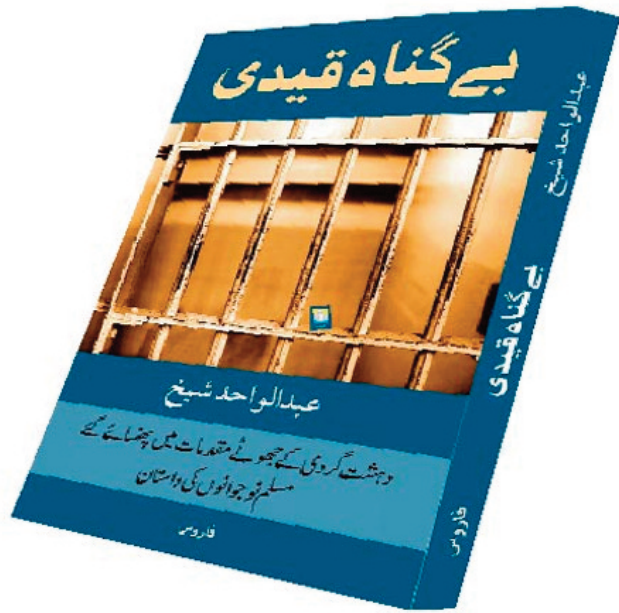
gion and Entertainment. But the number of students gaining education in Urdu has been declining ever since. A few years later, it is being considered that Urdu does not have that capability to enrich itself with Science and Technology as other languages have. Let us recall the example of Osmania University Hyderabad (established in 1918). It is the first university to have Urdu as a medium of instruction. For instance, its medical programme was in Urdu and its medical graduates went to UK for higher studies. They fared well in UK, pointing to the fact that they had expertise both in the sciences taught in Urdu along with English required for higher education in UK.

Approximately 75 years later, MANUU initiated its process of dispensing knowledge in Urdu. Through this effort, the University has a plan to dispense the Basic Scientific Knowledge with Urdu as the medium of instruction. This plan was put forward by first establishing a Centre by the name Centre for Promotion of Knowledge in Urdu whose Consultant is Dr. Khaja Syed Moizuddin. The Centre started its activities by organizing the III National Urdu Science Congress at its campus. This was a 2-day Congress which covered the following topics:

1. Development of Scientific Awareness and Knowledge
2. Status of Science Education in Madarsas
3. Sciences in School - Syllabi and Education
4. Dispensing of Knowledge - Challenges and Future
5. Latest Technology and Urdu
6. Quran & Science.

It is to be recalled, that Dr. Parvaiz created the National Urdu Science Congress last year. The very First National Urdu Science Congress was organized by the Anjuman Farogh-e-Science, at Zakir Husain Delhi College, Delhi, India during 20-21 March 2015. One of the recommendations of this landmark event was to hold the Urdu Science Congress every year by rotation in different cities. Following the grand success and the recommendations of the first one, the Second Urdu Science Congress was held during 20-21 February 2016 at the ideal city of Aligarh, which is home to the renowned Aligarh Muslim University. Over 70 delegates had come from various parts of the country. Approximately 60 papers were presented.

Acquitted of terror charges, Mumbai man pens book on what to do if you are arrested in a false case



I By Aarefa Johari I

Abdul Wahid Shaikh spent nine years in jail on false charges of perpetrating the Mumbai train bomb blasts of July 2006.

During the nine years he spent in jail for a crime he did not commit, Abdul Wahid Shaikh completed a Master's degree in English, a course in journalism and the first year of a law degree. But his biggest accomplishment, he believes, is writing a 400-page book about his experiences, to serve as a guide for anyone who gets falsely implicated in a terrorist attack.

In 2006, Shaikh was one of the 13 men arrested by the Maharashtra police for allegedly carrying out the July 11 Mumbai train bomb blasts, which killed 188 people and injured more than 800. Shaikh was specifically accused of using his house to harbour Pakistani terrorists, who then went on to plant bombs in the city's local trains along with 13 Indian conspirators. Nine years later, in September 2015, 12 of the accused were convicted by a special court in Mumbai. Shaikh alone was acquitted, after the court found no merit in the accusations against him.

After his release, 38-year-old Shaikh slowly began to pick up the threads of his life once again – a life with

his wife, his now-teenaged son and daughter and his former job as a science teacher at an Anjuman-e-Islam school. But the trauma of the custodial torture he was put through has not yet left him.

Last week, Shaikh officially released *Begunaah Qaidi* – Innocent Prisoner – the book he spent ten months writing when he was in Mumbai's Arthur Road jail. The Urdu book, Shaikh makes clear, is less of an autobiography and more of a guidebook for other innocent prisoners fighting the "police state".

Nonetheless, the early chapters of the book contain Shaikh's gut-wrenching accounts of the kind of torture that he and his co-accused were put through for the first three months after their arrest.

Three degrees of torture

"I have been made to suffer all three degrees of torture that the police use to force false confessions out of people," said Shaikh, speaking to Scroll.in during recess hour at the school where he teaches.

First, he says, the police use verbal abuse, threats and the stripping of clothes as an interrogation technique. "Second degree is when they beat you with belts, force you into hunger or solitary confinement, tie you up and force you to stand for days," said Shaikh. Third degree involves extreme physical torture including waterboarding, using electric shocks or chemicals on private parts, or forcing the prisoner's legs into 180-degree splits.

"They also make rape threats towards the wives and sisters of the accused, or molest female relatives in front of you," said Shaikh, who claims that one of his co-accused was forced to watch police officers molest his sister-in-law. "Through these means, the police managed to get false confessional statements from everyone."

Shaikh was the only accused at the time who did not end up signing a confessional statement, which he claims was a deliberate "strategy" on the part of the police's anti-terrorism squad to prove in court that no torture had been involved in the interrogations. How-

ever, in the jail cells of various prisons in Maharashtra, Shaikh continued to face intermittent bouts of mental and physical torture till 2008. “At one point they fractured my arm and left me without medication for 15 days,” he said.

Characteristics of a terror accused

Now that he is acquitted and out as a free man, a number of Shaikh’s well-wishers have asked him to file criminal cases against the police for the torture he was put through. But Shaikh does not plan to do that any time soon. “My focus right now is to appeal against the conviction of the other 12 men in this case, because I know they are also innocent,” said Shaikh.

attack cases in Mumbai. “I was eventually acquitted in that case in 2012,” he said.

Innocence Network

Now, less than two years since his acquittal, Shaikh has already become an activist for the rights of all prisoners accused of false cases, and the 12 remaining men convicted in the train blasts case. Last year, he founded an organisation called Innocence Network, drawing together prominent lawyers, retired judges, activists and filmmakers to fight false arrests. The organisation holds seminars, rallies and people’s tribunals to spread awareness about the ways in which innocent Muslims often get implicated in false cases.



In his book, Shaikh writes about what he believes are the typical characteristics that the police in India look for while making arrests terror attack cases. “First, of course, he has to be a Muslim. They almost never bother to arrest Hindus,” he said. “He also has to be highly qualified, like an engineer, businessman, doctor, post-graduate. They don’t like Muslims becoming successful leaders.”

Also, as in the case of Shaikh himself, the police allegedly look to arrest men who already have some small previous criminal record in their name. In 2001, Shaikh claims he was framed and falsely accused of being a member of the banned extremist outfit, Students Islamic Movement of India. As a result, he was repeatedly questioned by the police in multiple terror

Shaikh is now looking for Hindi and English translators for his book, so that he can reach out to a larger number of readers. “I want to send out three messages through my book,” said Shaikh. “First, that the 7/11 train blasts case is bogus, and the convictions are bogus too. Second, that this nation has become a police state. And third, I want to tell people what exactly they can do if they are ever arrested in a false terror case – how you can resist torture, who you can seek help from within the justice system, and more.”

<https://scroll.in/article/831285/acquitted-of-terror-charges-mumbai-man-pens-book-on-what-to-do-if-you-are-arrested-in-a-false-case>

A new narrative emerges: Muslims in UP now like the BJP (and Yogi Adityanath likes them back)

There is little data to back up these assertions, however.

By Shoab Daniyal I

There has long existed a narrative in Indian politics that paints a picture of strategic Muslim voting. This is how it goes: Muslims pick a party or a leader and then back them to the hilt against supposedly communal forces such as the Bharatiya Janata Party.

This narrative has been struck down again and again, using both data and on-ground reporting – to little effect. Large sections continue to believe in the myth of the Muslim votebank.

Ironically, a counter to this narrative has now come from the BJP itself – which spent most of its history complaining about the Muslim votebank. After the BJP sweep in the Uttar Pradesh elections, a new theory has emerged which posits that Muslims did vote for the BJP after all.



Winning Muslim seats

In one case, the argument is driven by the scale of the BJP win in the state. The party got almost 40% of the votes polled and won 77% of the seats in the Assembly, bagging 312 out of 403 constituencies in the state. The scale of the victory indicates that the party has won many constituencies with large numbers of Muslim voters. For example, according to this report, the BJP won 62 of 82 constituencies where the community comprises a third of the population.

The most prominent example of this is the seat of Deoband, home to the famous Darul Uloom Deoband seminary, which went to the BJP's Brijesh Singh.

Of course, having a famous madrassah doesn't mean much in an election – voter numbers do. As this analy-

sis by India Today's Piyush Babaele shows, Deoband is a Hindu-majority constituency with only 27% Muslims (approximately 80,000). The BJP got a little more than one lakh votes here, while there are more than two lakh Hindu voters. Given the numbers, a purely Hindu vote bank was easily sufficient to make the BJP win, thus making Deoband a poor seat to try and prove that Muslims voted BJP.

Triple talaq struck a chord

Another argument put forward by the BJP was that Muslim women in Uttar Pradesh voted for the party because of its stance on ending triple talaq.

The BJP has been pushing this issue for a long time now, talking about the rights of Muslim women in the hope of attracting the female vote. It is not unusual in India for women to vote differently from their husbands, fathers and brothers, as was

seen in the case of the late Jayalalithaa, who was re-elected for a second consecutive term as Tamil Nadu chief minister in 2016, thanks in part to the large support of women voters.

However, even if Muslim women did break with their menfolk and vote for the BJP in the Uttar Pradesh elections, there is still no on-ground evidence for it. On the contrary, the party has very little to show for this claim. As Rukmini S points out in the Huffington Post, the BJP lost all Muslim-majority constituencies in Uttar Pradesh. All of the seven seats where Muslims account for more than 50% of the population went to the Samajwadi Party.

<https://scroll.in/article/832354/a-new-narrative-emerges-muslims-in-up-now-like-the-bjp-and-yogi-adityanath-likes-them-back>

Remembering Chaudhari Fariduddin

An Engineer Par Excellence, The Scholar, The Philanthropist, A Prolific
Writer And An Icon of The Indian Community

There can be no dearth of superlatives describing the public personality that was Mr. Fariduddin Chaudhari. He was a spiritual inspiration, a political commentator, a guide to those in despair and hope to those who needed him. Above all, he was a kind man, a generous man: he always gave before receiving and always gave more than he got. Perhaps that's why he was the center of community attention; he could just connect with people. The Indian community in Kuwait pays tribute to him and his works.

Mr. Chaudhari Fariduddin, originally from Vaith, a small but prominent village in Meerut District of Uttar Pradesh, grew up in Bombay and graduated with a Degree in Civil Engineering from Zakir Hussain College of Engineering & Technology, Aligarh Muslim University-Aligarh. He was a determined and hard-working student and much the same as a professional engineer.

He passed away in the early hours of March 17th, 2017 in his adopted town of Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh. He was laid to rest the same day, on Friday, after noon prayers in the Sir Syed Nagar Qabristan, Aligarh.

Relatives and family friends gathered at the residence of Mr Moin Chaudhari - younger brother of Mr. Fariduddin Chaudhari, to mourn his overwhelming loss and fondly remembered him as being a truly generous person. Those who knew him say there was an aura of goodness around him. They remembered him as a friend, a conscientious Muslim, a politically conscious commentator, a philanthropist and a true gentleman; immensely talented and all the while, an

incredibly humble soul.

Mr. Chaudhari Fariduddin was involved as he could be, right up until the end. The community has never had a more consistent voice on the power of education than his. He propounded that education was the best means for lifting up individuals and the community and thus, the nation. He was associated with several social and charitable organizations in Kuwait in different capacities of President, Patron and a well-wisher. He came to Kuwait in the year 1974 and began his career with M. A Kharafi before joining Gulf Consult in 1987 where he served as Head of Contracts for several years and finally retired in 2009 as an advisor to the CEO& MD and returned to India.



A condolence meeting was organized on 18th March, 2017 at Al-Mehri Mosque Salmiya, which was attended by many prominent personalities, friends, colleagues and well-wishers. Mr. Chaudhari

Fariduddin's entire family would like to thank everyone who attended.

Mr. Chaudhari Fariduddin is survived by his son Dr. Tariq Rasheed Chaudhari and daughter Engr. Mrs. Rahat Jahan Chaudhari. He lost his wife to cancer in 2005 in Kuwait. May The Compassionate grant his soul peace and the highest level of paradise. Ameen.

<http://www.indiansinkuwait.com/ShowArticle.aspx?ID=43561&SECTION=1>

Misunderstanding Power 10 Questions!

I By DR MANSOOR DURRANI I

Let's not misunderstand power; and mix it up with election results alone. There are unlimited opportunities all around us to earn power and gain respect.

CRYING, CRIBBING and finger-pointing has never helped anyone in the world. Nor will it ever help Indian Muslims!



After recent state elections, normal knee-jerk reaction is being noticed among Muslims. Need for unity and our own unified political outfit is the most common theme of discussions. Fair enough. In a democracy, local, state and national level political activism is an effective, direct channel to manage and influence government policies that affect our lives directly or indirectly. But for a variety of reasons such a scenario appears a distant dream for now.

Recent political developments present a great opportunity for us to go back to the drawing board. And ask some simple (not tough) questions:

1. Is political power the one-and-only platform for us

to gain influence and respect in the society and thereby protect our faith and secure our interests?

2. If not (and it is not), then who has stopped us from producing top-notch physicians like Abraham Verghese, Anil Aggarwal and surgeons like Devi Shetty, Ramakanta Panda – who besides being top medical professionals will also be firmly rooted in their faith and therefore focused on serving the humanity instead of inflating their bank balances?

3. Who has prevented us from developing legal luminaries of the caliber of Soli Sorabjee, Ram Jethmalani and KK Venugopalan; but whose entire focus will remain on swiftly and economically securing justice; not acquiring unlimited wealth?

4. Who has barred us from grooming highly respected journalists like Vinod Dua, Siddharth Vardarajan, Ravish Kumar and who's mission in life will not be to attain a celebrity status and political clout by distorting news and views; instead their mission would be speaking and writing nothing but truth – even if it is against us?

5. Who has banned us from mentoring entrepreneurs of the stature of Narayana Murthy and Kiran Mazum-

dar; but who at the same time will be dedicated to breeding more entrepreneurs, developing technologies and generating employment opportunities?

6. Who has forbidden us from preparing academics of the caliber of Raghuram Rajan, Amartya Sen and Nitin Nohria; who will then motivate young students to follow their footsteps – primarily for gaining and sharing knowledge and not just gaining wealth and social status?



7. Who has prohibited us from scaling new heights in corporate sector like Sundar Pichai, Satya Nadella and Indra Nooyi; and then strive to promote a corporate culture of sharing and caring and not a culture of greed and jumbo-sized egos – making rich richer and poor poorer?

8. Who has disqualified us from setting up world-class schools like Bishop Cotton and Doon School where our coming generations can combine the learning of modern sciences and humanities with learning and practicing our faith?

9. It has been 140 years since Aligarh Muslim University was built. Who has, since then, opposed us in building institutions of higher learning like Ashoka and Manipal where we can attain academic excellence together with preserving our religious values?

10. Who has stopped us from launching daily newspapers like DNA and DB and news channels like ndtv and Zee; which can allow us building bridges and

challenge those spreading hate and fake news?

Our population is north of 150 million. This is more than the combined population of two largest European countries i.e. Germany and France or more than the entire population of Russia! We have no dearth of financial resources either.

It is not the fascist forces that have stopped us from doing all this. Yes, it is true that we do not get smooth

rides. And it is only getting tougher as we face increased headwinds. But the truth is: we simply have no will power to do anything great – not even for our own sake – no question of serving others!

Over the last couple of centuries, we have mastered the art of blaming others for our blunders, for our lack of conviction and for our sorry state of affairs. And our priorities are completely misplaced.

Let's not misunderstand power; and mix it up with election results alone. There are unlimited opportunities all around us to earn power and gain respect.

Let's stop crying and cribbing. Let's act. Now!

Dr Mansoor Durrani is an international banker and writer and a PhD in Islamic banking from the UK. He serves as Senior Vice President with a leading bank in the Gulf. The views expressed are personal.
<http://caravandaily.com/portal/misunderstanding-power-10-questions/>

Syed Shahabuddin:

The Man Who Changed the Culture of Post Independence Indian Muslim Politics

I M Ghazali Khan I

It is said that hard times are the real test of someone's real mettle. What could be a tough time for him than the death in mysterious circumstances of his only son, a scientist, in US? But even after this tragedy Syed Shahabuddin continued his mission for the community as before

Like millions of other Indian Muslims who knew, admired and loved Shahabuddin Saheb, I am deeply saddened at his death. His death is a great loss for the community, especially at a time when Muslims in India are at a crossroads and yearning for a leader who could guide them and bring them into the cohesion that is the need of the time.

'Come out of your shell Mr. Malkani'. After this I became a great fan of his writings and never missed any article written by him and when he launched his Muslim India I became its regular reader.

In those days it was so rare to see a small letter by a Muslim in an English language daily or a periodical let alone an article portraying the true picture on the ground. News about Muslims in English publications was rare and few of the Muslims who wrote in English were extremely apologetic. No Muslim politician could dare raise his voice from the platform of a secular party against the injustices being meted out to the community and government's discriminatory policies against them.



Mourning this great loss my memories of and about Shahabuddin Saheb span more than three decades and are varied in many ways that I cherish greatly.

The first ever article penned by Shahabuddin Saheb that I had read was in New Delhi published as a rejoinder to K. R. Malkani, editor of RSS's mouthpiece Organiser. Malkani's piece was titled, 'Hindus and Muslims: A Question of Different Wave Lengths' and Shahabuddin Saheb's response was headlined as

This was the period when by playing film Barsat ki Raat's song, Mujhe to mil gaya bahana teri deed ka' at the end of Ramazan and by showing on Doordarshan the scene of Eid congregation at Delhi's Jama Masjid or one or two Muslim families from old Delhi eating Eid Siwaian all the demands and conditions of secularism were deemed complete. In such an environment Shahabuddin Saheb's leadership and his fearless speeches in parliament and public platform changed the culture and gave the community, specially the youths, a new hope.

My first meeting with him was very brief, in 1981, when we, the residents of Nasrullah Hostel of AMU's V.M. Hall, wanted to invite him as the chief guest in our annual hostel dinner. He had come to attend the meeting of AMU Court. I sent in a handwritten slip to him with the peon a few minutes before the meeting was due to start and within no time he came out to see us. I requested him to be our chief guest at the annual hostel function to which he readily agreed and said, 'Mujhe ek chitthi dal dena meN foran jawab doonga.' The next time I met him was a year later at his residence in Delhi. I had reached a bit earlier before the appointed time and he was not at home. Perhaps, it was his daughter who opened the door and asked me to wait in the drawing room. Only five minutes later Shahabuddin Saheb arrived himself driving his old Fiat. This was a brief meeting.

The third time I met him was in London when I interviewed him for Impact International, perhaps in 1989, at the residence of his brother-in-law, late Dr Majeed Saheb, a known orthopedist.

After the interview, I traveled with him from North London to Central London where a press conference had been arranged for him. During the journey, I noticed him close his eyes and reciting Kalima in whisper. I have a feeling that this was his habit and a routine to remember Almighty like this in his free moments but I doubt anyone except his family members would have ever seen him in this mood.

His writings and speeches speak for his courage and commitment to the community but the speech delivered by him in the Parliament in the wake of the infamous Moradabad Riots 1980 and the article in Sunday, then edited by M.J. Akbar, are in particular a glaring example of his fearlessness and love for his people. It is said that hard times are the real tests of someone's real mettle. What could be a tough time for him than the death in mysterious circumstances of his only son,

a scientist, in US? But even after this tragedy he continued his mission for the community as before.

Having served as a diplomat and ambassador and as a parliamentarian for three terms he had seen the real faces of all those wearing secular masks. An interview with Urdu Sahara tells it all how he felt and how he wanted the Indian Muslims to adapt and evolve a new election strategy.

After being nominated as a Janata Dal MP in the Rajya Sabha he articulated Muslims' grievances, asked questions and kept an open eye on all the ills pestering Indian Muslims. Undeterred by the hostility of the media as well as his own party he kept on speaking and writing on Muslim issues and paid the price by never being able to return to the parliament. In this respect (being in a secular party and still articulating Muslims' issues),

except Maulana Hifzur Rehman Saheb, he has no match in post-independent India. It was him who, in the 80s assembled Muslim MPs, from all the parties, and met the then Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi to highlight the problems being faced by Muslims in India. I still remember an editorial in the Times of India headed, 'Playing with fire' in which Shahabuddin Saheb was viciously vilified.

This is an irony that be it Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar or Syed Shahabuddin, the community has not spared any of its leaders from accusations and insinuations. I recall how, many in the community accused him of collecting crores of rupees for Muslim India. In the 80s some even spread the rumour that he was an RSS agent serving their agenda and that for this very purpose he was brought into politics by Atal Bihar Vajpayee. Some went as far as saying that out of their love for him some RSS activists had even hung his photographs in their houses.

This is an irony that be it Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar or Syed Shahabuddin, the community has not spared any of its leaders from accusations and insinu-



ations. (Sadly, Maulana and Syed Saheb both wrote extensively and published volumes of articles that would probably be equal to several books but none of them got the time to write even one single book). I recall how, many in the community accused him of collecting crores of rupees for Muslim India. In the 80s some even spread the rumour that he was an RSS agent serving their agenda and that for this very purpose he was brought into politics by Atal Bihar Vajpayee. Some went as far as saying that out of their love for him some RSS activists had even hung his photographs in their houses.

Incidentally, the story was written as a satire in a gossip column by a young Muslim journalist in the Telegraph. The column didn't have a byline. The journalist in question himself confided to me that he was the source of the story. But since it served the agenda of some who saw Shahabuddin Saheb as a threat to their interests circulated the nonsense as gospel truth. A friend who is no more told me even a far more bizarre and ridiculous story mentioning his source someone high in the Congress with dodgy record. May Allah bless him, he later refused to believe the absurdity that I do not want even to mention here.

Some intellectuals in the community accuse Shahabuddin Saheb of creating what they call Hindu backlash through his participation in the Babri Mosque movement and the infamous Shahbano case controversy etc. The fact is that this is an over simplification of the issues and is not different from the tendency of blaming squarely Muslim League and Muslim politicians for the partition while ignoring the game Hindutva elements had started playing much before 1947.

Some intellectuals in the community accuse Shahabuddin Saheb of creating what they call Hindu backlash through his participation in the Babri Mosque movement and the infamous Shahbano case controversy etc. The fact is that this is an over simplification of the issues and is not different from the tendency of blaming squarely Muslim League and Muslim politicians for the partition while ignoring the game Hindutva elements had started playing much before 1947. One wonders if these intellectuals had ever bothered to study the philosophy of RSS and its list that it wants 'liberated' including virtually every historical mosque in India like the Aurangzeb Mosque in Banaras, and the 'Idgah Mosque in Mathura (the birth land of Krishna!) etc. Do they realise the consequences if there was no protest?

It is worth narrating an interesting story that I have quoted in an article on Shahabuddin Saheb before and shared with me by Dr Hilal Ahmed, Assistant Professor, Center for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), when he was doing his PhD at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London.

He had written a well-researched paper, based on Shahabuddin Saheb's editorials published in Muslim India. When he showed it to his supervisor, a leading expert on Indian politics, the gentleman remarked that so far his impression of Shahabuddin Saheb was based on media reports and that was the first time he had actually read his writings. 'From this he comes as a brilliant political thinker', the expert told my friend.

This paper 'An Introduction to the Political ideas of Syed Shahabuddin' has been included in a book 'Syed Shahabuddin, Outstanding Voice of Muslim India', compiled by Mushtaq Madni.

The fact is that had Shahabuddin Saheb compromised on his stand and principles he would have spent the last few years of his life in luxury and great comfort. But this is what Dr Javed Jamil Saheb quotes him as saying, 'Do you think Dr Jamil, I have lots of money. In my house, meat is cooked only twice a week, not because we don't relish it but because we can't afford it. And you see the (old) Fiat car outside my office. I am not even in a position to send it to the garage.'

I close this obituary with the quotes of Salman Khurshid made during the launch of the aforementioned book in 2003, 'Some narrow-minded people say he raised the issue of Babri Masjid and Personal Law for petty politics. This is wrong. The fact is that we could not take full benefit of him as much as we should have.' He said. Then he turned to Shahabuddin Saheb and continued, 'You speak strongly and clearly. If someone who did not know that you were a diplomat, would never sense it from your personality. You have ruled over the hearts of many men and women. We got in you a leader, an icon, a role model.'

May Allah forgive the shortcomings of this brave soldier of the community and shower His mercy on him. M Ghazali Khan is a senior Indian journalist and writer based in London and Editor of Urdu Media Monitor

<http://caravandaily.com/portal/syed-shahabuddin-the-man-who-changed-the-culture-of-post-independent-indian-muslim-politics/>

Remembering Syed Shahabuddin Muslim Heart, Indian Mind

I By Mohammad Sajjad I



Syed Shahabuddin (1935-2017): An Obituary

His arrival on the political scene as an articulate Muslim leader was no ordinary event in the journey of the Indian republic.

Writing an obituary of the writer, diplomat and politician Syed Shahabuddin is actually an exercise in writing of the journey of Muslims in the Indian republic. The much maligned gentleman was somebody who could never be ignored. As a very bright student of physics in the academically brighter phase of Patna University in the first decade of India's independence, he drew the attention of his teachers. The memoirs of his professors, Mohsin and Kalimuddin Ahmad (1904-82), describe Shahabuddin's promise in glowing terms. Soon thereafter, he became known for the leadership he provided to a student movement in 1955, including leading a 20,000-person march to wave black flags against Jawaharlal Nehru when he visited Patna – in protest against police firing on students.

He managed to get a job as a lecturer at the same time as qualifying for the civil services in 1957. He ranked second among all the aspirants, with a particularly high score in the interview section, and joined the Indian Foreign Service. Many delicious legends were

fabricated around the kind of questions he was asked and his witty responses. His success not only inspired many students, but also helped overcome the trepidation among Muslims about their place in India after Partition.

While a section of Hindus looked upon Muslims as potential fifth columnists, a section of Muslims was also not very confident of the inclusionary-pluralist democracy that was being built up under Nehru. Notably, even as a student, Shahabuddin too was contributing towards this task of nation-building. With some 'socialist' leanings, though not formally with any party, his activism allowed certain critiques of the Nehruvian consensus to be heard.

He paid a price for this activism, though a minor one. Owing to Shahabuddin's involvement in the student agitation of 1955, he had to wait for police/intelligence clearance and therefore could join the services a little later than his other batch-mates. Legend has it that Nehru himself finally cleared the file.

In the late 1970s, the hegemony of the ruling Congress came to be challenged by the socialists, Shahabuddin became restless within the confines of bureaucracy. He decided to quit government service and join politics. Until then, Indian politics lacked a pan-Indian Muslim leader with well informed and articulate views. Although Maulana Azad (1888-1958) had occupied an important position, he was part of the Nehruvian consensus and did not challenge it. Nor were academics looking at the worrying economic and educational locations of Muslim communities and their disproportionately inadequate share in the structures and processes of power. A few exceptions existed, such as the volume on castes among Muslims edited by Imtiaz Ahmad in the late 1960s, and the works of Uma Kaura and Mushirul Hasan looking at the marginalisation of Muslims by the Congress under majoritarian pressures in late 1970s, but these were rare.

None of the important dissenting voices in Indian democracy, whether Ram Manohar Lohia (1910-67), the defender of the lower castes, Jai Prakash Narayan (1902-79) nor the Left were paying attention to this issue.

Shahabuddin saw this vacuum in Indian politics and adventurously jumped in to fill it. His arrival on the scene as an articulate Muslim politician was no ordinary event in the journey of the Indian republic. As he stormed in, with his enviable articulation and abilities invoking constitutional values and spirit, he was almost matchless. He could not be dismissed, but he could be maligned as a sectarian, conservative and even communal reactionary. Often, he gave his critics grounds to do so. His stand on the gender issue, in the Shah Bano case, where he stood on the side of the clerics, and on free speech, by asking for Salman Rushdie's Satanic Verses to be banned, are particularly problematic as the repercussions continue to play out today. On the issue of caste among India's Muslims too, he was dismissive of Pasmanda activists, although unlike many 'reactionary' Ashraaf, he never denied the reality of caste-based oppression and discrimination in Indian Islam.

His critics had little time for complexities and he was frequently clubbed with people like Maulana Bukhari, the Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid in Delhi, despite there being little to compare the two in either democratic legitimacy or point of view.

Throughout the 1980s and '90s, Shahabuddin, through his English monthly, Muslim India, a journal of "Research, Reference and Documentation", kept articulating and disseminating the concrete (as well as emotive) issues of concern to Indian Muslims, besides contributing extremely powerful, informed and passionate editorials. Putting together news reports and views from across periodicals, the magazine also carried parliamentary speeches, interventions, government reports, book reviews, personality profiles and statistical data demonstrating the under-representation of Muslims in various sectors of the economy and employment, and many other crucial areas. This was done with candid, coherent, persuasive prose, laced with facts and figures, and at times beautified with apt Urdu couplets.

The title of the monthly he had chosen turned out to be provocative, as this expression is said to have been used in certain documents of the Muslim League in late colonial India. But the sharp (and cunning, if I may say) mind of Shahabuddin had a very strong defence in the English grammar. He explained that in the expression 'Muslim India', the former is an adjective and the latter a noun. Thus, 'Muslim India' would grammatically put emphasis on the Indian identity of

someone just happening to be Muslim. It was more patriotic than the expression 'Indian Muslims', wherein more emphasis was on Muslim (who happened to be Indian). Hence, he preferred 'Muslim Indian' to 'Indian Muslim'.

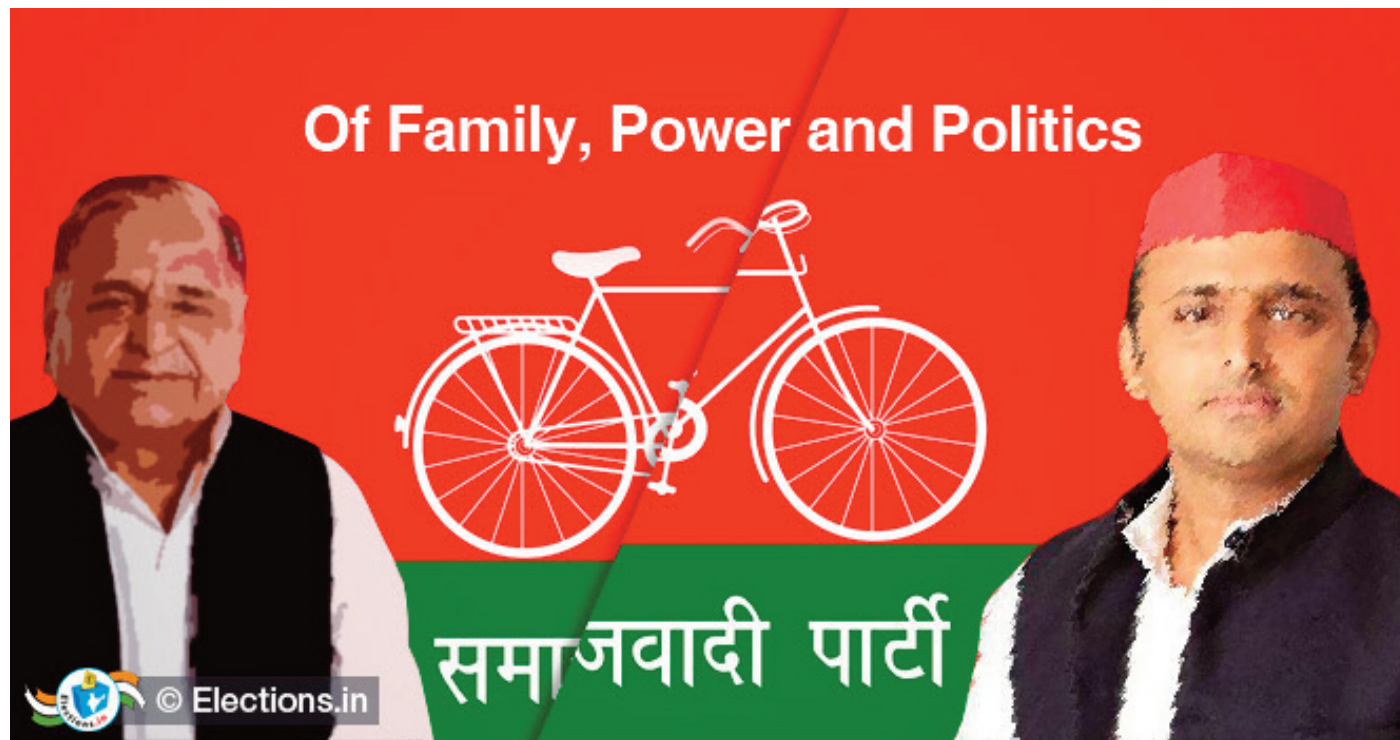
Besides making interventions in a range of journalistic and academic periodicals, including even the 'provocative' English monthly, Debonair, Shahabuddin's Muslim India carried very powerful editorials on almost every issue which touched the Muslim segment of Indian democracy. Nobody before and after him could muster that much of courage, conviction, energy and determination to do all these, that too all alone. Yet, he found enough time to reply to all the letters he received. He religiously wrote and dispatched letters.

The editorials that had particular impact are worth recalling. In July 1994, he wrote on Lalu Prasad Yadav's brazen Yadavisation in Bihar at the expense of his core and unflinching support base – Muslims. The argument was well made, even by the standards of Shahabuddin's characteristic articulation, with so much data damning the Lalu regime on almost every aspect of governance. Predictably, soon after, he left the Janata Dal. In July 2000, he published another editorial on the problems of governance at the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and their possible remedies. This was meant as advice from a senior IFS officer to a junior one, Hamid Ansari, who had joined as the vice chancellor of AMU. Yet another important editorial was on the 1988 Act making Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) a central university. He called the Act a "swansong" for JMI. He later expanded this editorial and wrote a long essay, 'How to revive the spirit of Jamia Millia', in the Milli Gazette in 2010. Focussing on the AMU Act 1981, the lawyer in him kept arguing that the legislated Act did not provide AMU with minority status, though it did have minority character.

In the final years of his life, many of his projects remained unfinished. The tragic and mysterious murder of his only son Parwez (an IIT alumnus and a promising scientist) in the US in 2005 had perhaps broken him from within, even though he did carry on with his life as bravely as ever. He never got around to finishing it but the title he chose for his autobiography was Muslim Heart, Indian Mind. Perhaps that is the best way to remember him by.

Mohammad Sajjad is an associate professor at the Centre of Advanced Study in History at Aligarh Muslim University and the author of Muslim Politics in Bihar: Changing Contours. Originally published at <https://thewire.in/115332/syed-shahabuddin-obituary/amp/>

Thanks to SP, this mandate comes as no surprise at all



I By Mohammad Sajjad I

The unprecedented victory of the BJP in UP has come as a big surprise for everyone, including for the victorious BJP. Well, it shouldn't. The last two governments headed by Mayawati (2007-12) and Akhilesh Yadav (2012-17) were tried and tested by the electorate with hope, aspirations and principles of social inclusivism. Did they deliver? No.

Akhilesh, in the latter half of his tenure, did pay some attention to building roads and flyovers. But this was largely perceived as being part of a 'Yadavisation' spree. The early Akhilesh years also witnessed a steep rise in lawlessness and the hooliganism. But, most importantly, the Samajwadi Party (SP) government's tenure was hardwired to wilful communalisation. More than 600 incidents of communal tension were reported during the last five years of which the 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots were only the most 'visible'.

Take the case of Durga Shakti Nagpal, sub-divisional magistrate of Sadar, Noida, who was suspended for taking on the sand mafia of Greater Noida in 2013. Senior SP leader Narendra Bhati had openly boasted of having her suspended in less than an hour of his 'intervention'.

The ruling party then 'intervened' to appease the sand

mafia, but paraded the episode as an exercise to protect the Muslims of Kadalpur who were building a mosque, the 'illegal' wall of which Nagpal had allegedly ordered to be demolished. Never mind that the land where the mosque was being constructed belonged to the Gram Sabha, not to a Muslim organisation.

It was only a few weeks later in August 2013 that the district of Muzaffarnagar in western UP and areas around it were engulfed in communal violence. The displacement caused by that horror persists to this day. A few other incidents of communal violence took place in areas with BSP presence, Bijnor being one of them.

Since the party in government itself was in the business of communalisation, it couldn't — and didn't — do enough to prevent such flare-ups. The tension suited both the SP and the BJP as it was through communalisation that the SP planned to alienate Muslims from the BSP and 'win them over' via victims' compensation.

It was also the SP attempt to wean away Dalits from the BSP — and Jats from the Rashtriya Lok Dal — that would see both communities gravitate towards the BJP. This had been the SP's grand plan in the run-up

to the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

Having seen his son to the CM's seat, Mulayam Singh Yadav wanted to accomplish his long-cherished aspiration of becoming PM. That this design eventually got subsumed by the 'Modi wave' is another story.

The 2014 Lok Sabha results were also inevitable. No other political formation derives the benefits of communal polarisation as much as the BJP. Its task of mobilising Hindus became easier by the fact that in the rural and urban local bodies elections in 2013-14, Muslim representation had risen to almost 33%. Of the total 403 assembly seats, 70 MLAs were Muslim in the 2012-17 Vidhan Sabha. Mayawati, too, hardly spoke out against this communalisation by the Akhilesh regime.

She suddenly started wooing Muslims by giving more than 90 Muslims tickets for the 2017 assembly polls. To retain Muslim support, the SP hurriedly aligned with the Congress, once again bringing in polarisation into the UP election narrative — all in the name of 'secularism', of course.

The BJP did resort to anti-Muslim rhetoric during its 2017 campaign — particularly after the third phase of polls — to consolidate Hindu votes. It denied tickets to Muslim candidates notwithstanding its 'sab ka saath, sab ka vikas' mantra. But what overtook all this was the widespread discontentment against the brazen 'Yadavisation' under the Akhilesh government.

Non-Yadav OBCs and non-Jatav Dalits were suffering from a deep sense of alienation and exclusion. The BJP saw through this and scripted its own kind of social engineering. It distributed 35% of its tickets to non-Yadav OBCs. Mayawati pushed out her OBC leaders, who were accommodated by the BJP.

The SP-Congress alliance in UP was very different from the mahagathbandhan of 2015 Bihar. In Bihar, if Lalu Prasad Yadav's Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) claimed to represent and accommodate Yadavs and Muslims, Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United) (JDU) represented not only Kurmis but also the most backward classes (MBCs) and women.

Nitish also appreciated the need for good governance and development.

Having the Congress join forces resulted in

a few upper castes also feeling included in the power structure. All this was woefully missing in Akhilesh's UP.

For long, family fiefdoms of regional satraps belonging to the dominant OBC castes (Lalu and Mulayam) and Dalits (Mayawati and Ram Vilas Paswan) have remained in power. Those outside these social groups were getting increasingly fed up. This perpetuation of Yadav-Paswan-Jatav power had become electorally convenient, with Muslims being tagged along.

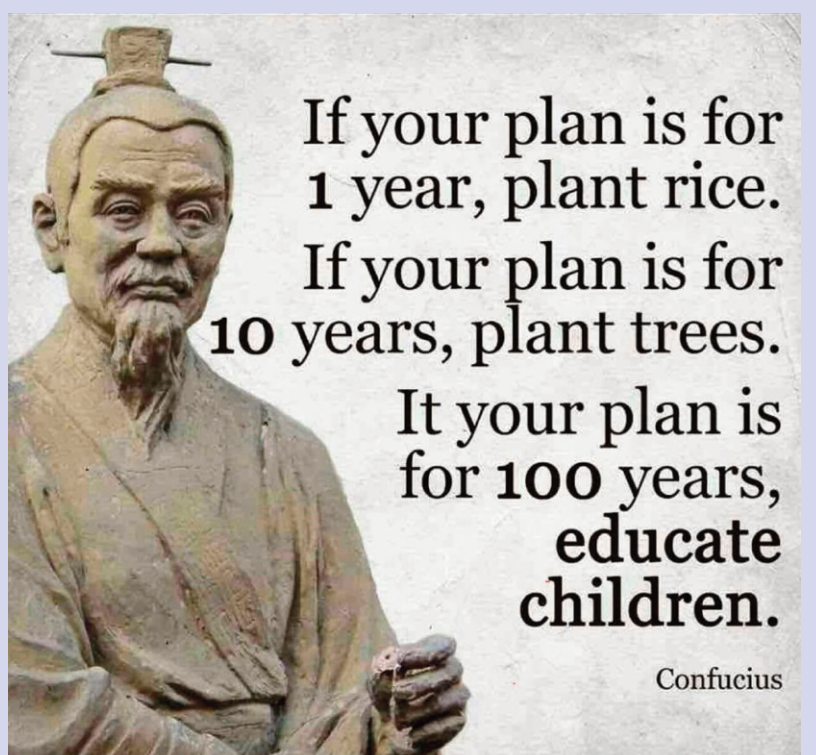
Such a cynical abuse of secularism earned disdain, making the BJP's task easier. Thus, the BJP rendered Muslim votes irrelevant in the face of Hindu consolidation.

It could also persuade a large electoral base. In an era of neo-liberal economics, when a 'charismatic leader' can promise to deliver — while others can't muster the courage of even making promises — Saturday's historic mandate in UP should come as no big surprise at all.

Non-BJP formations will now have to reinvent the grammar and syntax of their politics. Something India has been desperately waiting for.

The writer is Assistant Professor, History, Aligarh Muslim University

<http://blogs.economictimes.indiatimes.com/et-commentary/the-up-mandate-let-no-one-think-that-modisoomph-has-diminished-in-any-way/>



Confucius

The New Untouchables



I By Hasan Ghias I

The stunning victory of the BJP, which fielded not a single Muslim candidate in the UP elections, crowned by the nomination of Yogi Adityanath as Chief Minister, has confirmed the status of Indian Muslims as the 'New Untouchables'. Lies repeated often enough acquire the ring of truth. The BJP has distilled this Goebbelsian precept into a potent and poisonous canard of Muslim appeasement. Controversies raised during the election campaign regarding the allocation of funds to Muslim graveyards and uninterrupted electricity supply during their festivals conveniently glossed over the fact that while Muslims constitute 19% of the population of UP, their representation in the administration, judiciary, police, provincial constabulary, and the public sector falls woefully short. This propaganda of Muslim appeasement and 'minorityism' that flies in the face of facts has yielded the BJP rich political dividends and has converted a pluralistic democracy into sheer majoritarian rule. Disenfranchisement of Muslims has not been just a BJP preserve since other political parties have indulged in it as well, but the BJP has taken this exclusion to new heights.

Should then Muslims disengage from the political processes that are the lifeblood of democracy? This proposition may have some emotive appeal under the present circumstances, but rationally speaking that cannot be the answer. We must not surrender the one right that remains constitutionally ours just because we have been outvoted. What we need is a sensible political strategy, uninfluenced by self-seekers, community brokers, perpetrators of regressive ideas and divisive forces. If we wish India to remain a pluralistic

society, our own vision cannot be narrowly constrained. Above all, we need moral and intellectual integrity that has been sorely missing, with a very few notable exceptions of course. Those who profess to be Muslim leaders hardly have a following; those who apparently have a following lead in the wrong direction.

Elections are not the only time to engage with the political processes, nor is political engagement the only game in town. Most Muslim elected representatives have been insensitive to the needs of the community for educational development and social upliftment. While we have failed to produce visionary political leadership, we have failed even more in the exercise of educational, economic, social and moral leadership. We may or may not be able to influence the direction of political change in the country, but we certainly can improve our own pathetic condition through better education, improved skills and economic participation, shedding regressive social attitudes and more than anything else, repairing our frayed moral fiber.

Social cohesiveness can be the result of strong internal binding forces, or the outcome of externally applied pressure. In the absence of internal cohesion, external pressure may be a blessing in disguise. Despondency provides no escape from reality, nor does it illuminate the path to recovery. The pressing need is for a different kind of leadership, moral, visionary and wise, not one characterized by divisiveness, self-seeking opportunism, obscurantism, lack of honesty and intellectual bankruptcy. The darkest hour is before dawn. Are we to gloomily stare at a bottomless abyss of despair, or should we be looking for rays of hope, no matter how distant in the horizon?

Tipu Sultan's 225 years old armoury being shifted to make way for Bengaluru-Mysuru Express Line



An armoury of Tipu Sultan, the 18th century warrior-king who forged his reputation fighting British colonialists, is being moved to build new railway tracks between the Karnataka capital and Mysuru.

About 225 years old, the armoury is part of 10 built by Tipu to store gunpowder and weapons. The monument is a 1000-tonne structure, and it is being moved by a New Delhi-based engineering firm and the US company, Wolfe.

The semi-buried structure was raised on beams, moved and is being lowered at the new site about 130 meters away.

“It will take us till Friday to complete the shifting,” said Jaman Buckingham of Wolfe. Work to move the armoury began a month ago.

Discussions on the project began about five years ago when rail traffic between Bengaluru and Mysuru began to grow. The new tracks are expected to help reduce the travel time on the route. Some 4,000 pas-

sengers travel on this route daily.

“The proposed (rail track) doubling work exactly passes over the armoury,” said Ravichandra, Deputy Chief Engineer of the railway’s Mysuru division.

“We could not alter the line as there were other monuments that belonged to the Archaeological Survey of India.”

Some local people are upset with the move.

“How can we even think of moving a historical monument? Monuments are intimately attached with the place where they were built,” said Mahadev Nayak, who runs a tea shop on the busy Bengaluru-Mysuru highway in Srirangapatna where the Tipu Sultan fort is located.

“When it is a question of public property, our governments can do as they please,” said Nayak, who said he was a descendant of the Nayaks who once ruled parts of eastern Karnataka.

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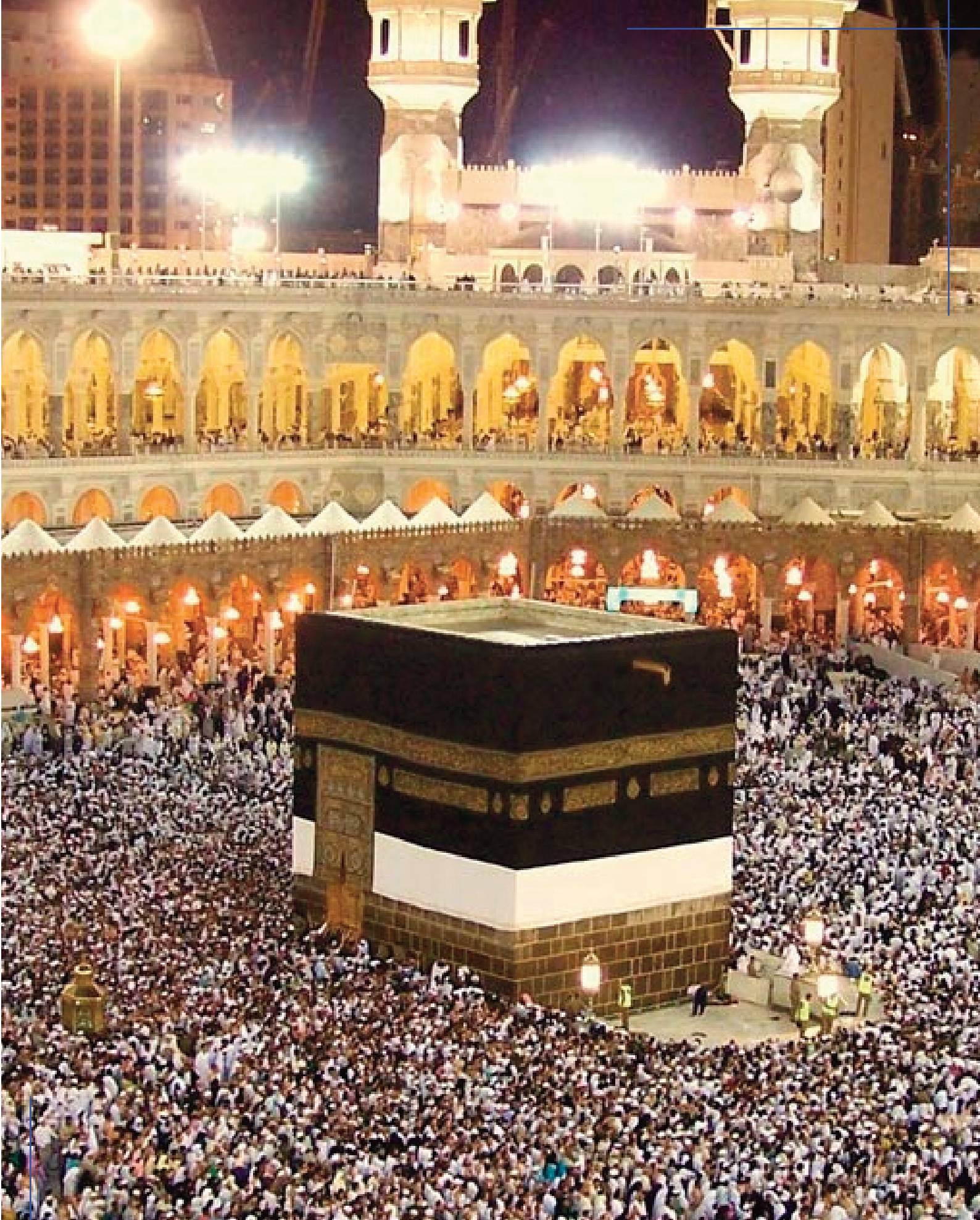
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The Merits of Islam

There are many religions. Why do Muslims think that Islam is true. Is there any factual basis?

Praise be to Allah.

This is a reasonable enough question for one who has not entered Islam, but one who believes in and practices this religion already knows the

blessings which are his because of this religion. There are many reasons for this, which include the following:

(1) The Muslim worships One God, Who has no partner, and Who has the most beautiful names and the highest attributes. Thus the Muslim's focus and aim is concentrated, focused on His Lord and Creator; he puts his trust in Him and asks

Him for help, patience and support; he believes that Allaah is able to do all things, and has no need of a wife or son. Allaah created the heavens and earth; He is the One Who gives life and death; He is the Creator and Sustainer from Whom the slave seeks provision. He is the All-Hearing Who responds to the supplication of His slave, and from Whom the slave hopes for a response. He is the All-Merciful and All-Forgiving, to Whom the slave turns in repentance when he has committed a sin or fallen short in his worship of Allaah. He is the Omniscient and All-Seeing, Who knows all intentions and what is hidden in people's hearts. The slave feels ashamed to commit a sin by doing wrong to himself or to others, because his Lord is watching over him and sees all that he does. He

knows that Allaah is All-Wise, the Seer of the Unseen, so he trusts that what Allaah decrees for him is good; he knows that Allaah will never be unjust to him, and that everything that Allaah decrees for him is good, even if he does not understand the wisdom behind it.

(2) The effects of Islaamic worship on the soul of the Muslim include the following:



Prayer keeps the slave in contact with his Lord; if he enters it in a spirit of humiliation and concentration, he will feel tranquil and secure, because he is seeking a "powerful support," which is Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted. For this reason, the Prophet of Islaam, Muhammad (peace

and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to say: "Let us find relaxation and joy in prayer." If something distressed him, he would hasten to pray. Everyone who finds himself faced with disaster and tries prayer finds strength, patience and consolation, because he is reciting the words of his Lord, which cannot be compared to the effect of the words of a created being. If the words of some psychologists can offer a little comfort, what do you think of the words of the One Who created the psychologist?

Now let us look at zakaat (the poor due), which is one of the pillars of Islaam. Zakaat purifies the soul from stinginess and miserliness, and accustoms people to being generous and helping the poor and needy. It will

bring a great reward on the Day of Resurrection, just like other forms of worship. It is not burdensome, like man-made taxes; it is only 25 in every thousand, which the sincere Muslim pays willingly and does not try to evade or wait until someone chases him for it.

Fasting involves refraining from food and sex for an appointed time. It is a form of worship, and a way in which one can feel the hunger of those who are deprived. It is also a reminder of the blessings of the Creator, and it brings rewards beyond measure.

guard the wealth of the orphan, to be gentle with the young and show respect to the old, to be kind to servants and animals, to remove harmful things from the road, to speak kind words, to forgive at the time when one has the opportunity to take revenge, to be sincere towards one's fellow-Muslims, to meet the needs of the Muslims, to give the debtor time to repay his debt, to prefer others over oneself, to console others, to greet people with a smiling face, to visit the sick, to support the one who is oppressed, to give gifts to friends, to honour his guest, to treat his wife kindly and spend on her and her children, to spread the greeting of peace



Hajj is the Pilgrimage to the sacred House of Allaah, which was built by Ibraaheem (Abraham, upon whom be peace). By performing Hajj one is obeying the command of Allaah and the call to come and meet Muslims from all over the world.

(3) Islaam commands all kinds of good and forbids all kinds of evil. It encourages good manners and proper treatment of others. It enjoins good characteristics such as truthfulness, patience, deliberation, kindness, humility, modesty, keeping promises, dignity, mercy, justice, courage, patience, friendliness, contentment, chastity, good treatment, tolerance, trustworthiness, gratitude for favours, and self-control in times of anger. Islaam commands the Muslim to fulfil his duty towards his parents and to uphold family ties, to help the needy, to treat neighbours well, to protect and safe-

(salaam) and to seek permission before entering another person's house, lest one see something private that the other person does not want one to see.

Some non-Muslims may do these things out of politeness or good manners, but they are not seeking reward from Allaah or salvation of the Day of Judgement.

If we look at what Islam has prohibited, we will find that it is in the interests of both the individual and society as a whole. All these prohibitions serve to safeguard the relationship between the slave and his Lord, and the relationship of the individual with himself and with his fellow-man. The following examples demonstrate this:

Islam forbids the association of anything in worship

with Allaah and the worship of anything other than Allaah, because this spells doom and misery. Islaam also forbids visiting or believing soothsayers and fortune-tellers; magic or witchcraft that may cause a rift between two people or bring them together; belief in the influence of the stars on events and people's lives; cursing time, because Allaah is directing its affairs; and superstition, because this is pessimism.

Islaam forbids cancelling out good deeds by showing off, boasting or reminding others of one's favours; bowing or prostrating to anything other than Allaah; sitting with hypocrites or immoral people for the purposes of enjoying their company or keeping them company; and invoking the curse or wrath of Allaah on one another or damning one another to Hell.

Islaam forbids urinating into stagnant water; defecating on the side of the road or in places where people seek shade or where they draw water; from facing the qiblah (direction of prayer) or turning one's back towards it when passing water or stool giving the greeting of salaam (peace) to one who is answering the call of nature; and putting one's hand into any vessel before washing it, when one has just woken up.

Islaam forbids the offering of any nafl (supererogatory) prayers when the sun is rising, when it is at its zenith, and when it is setting, because it rises and sets between the horns of Shaytaan (Satan); praying when there is food prepared that a person desires; praying when one urgently needs to pass water, stool or wind, because that will distract a person from concentrating

properly on his prayer.

Islaam forbids the Muslim to raise his voice in prayer, lest it disturb other believers; to continue offering supererogatory prayers at night when one feels drowsy - such a person should sleep then get up; to stay up all night in prayer, especially one night after another; and to stop praying when there is doubt as to the validity of one's wudoo' - unless one hears a sound or smells an odour.

Islaam forbids buying, selling and making "lost and found" announcements in the mosque - because it is the place of worship and remembrance of Allaah, where worldly affairs have no place.

Islaam forbids haste in walking when the iqamah (call immediately preceding congregational prayer) is given, and prescribes walking in a calm and dignified manner. It is also forbidden to boast about the cost of building a mosque; to decorate a mosque with red or yellow paint or adornments which will distract the worshippers; to fast day after day without a break .

Islaam forbids building over graves, making them high, sitting on them, walking between them wearing shoes, putting lights over them or writing on them. It is forbidden to disinter the dead or to take graves as places of worship. Islaam forbids wailing, tearing one's clothes or leaving one's hair unkempt when a person dies. Eulogizing the dead in the manner of the times of Ignorance (Jaahiliyyah) is also forbidden, although there is nothing wrong with informing others that a





person has died.

Islam forbids the consumption of riba (interest); all kinds of selling which involve ignorance (of the product), misleading and cheating; selling blood, wine, pork, idols and everything that Allaah has forbidden - their price, whether bought or sold - is haraam (unlawful); najash, which is offering a price for something one has no intention of buying, as happens in many auctions; concealing a product's faults at the time of selling; selling something which one does not own or before it comes into one's possession; undercutting, outbidding or out bargaining another; selling produce before it is clear that it is in good condition and free of blemish; cheating in weights and measures; and hoarding. A partner who has shares in a plot of land or a date palm tree is forbidden to sell his share without consulting his partners. It is forbidden to consume the wealth of orphans unjustly; to bet or gamble; to take anything by force; to accept or offer bribes; to steal people's wealth or to consume it unjustly; to take something for the purpose of destroying it; to undermine the value of people's possessions; to keep lost property which one has found, or to keep quiet about it and not announce it, for it belongs to the one who recognizes it; to cheat in any way; to ask for a loan with no intention of repaying it; to take anything of the wealth of a fellow-Muslim, unless it is given freely, because what is taken because of another person's shyness is haraam (impermissible); and to accept a gift because of intercession.

Celibacy and castration are forbidden, as is marrying two sisters, or a woman and her aunt (paternal or maternal), whether he marries the aunt after marrying her niece or vice versa, for fear of breaking the ties of kinship. It is forbidden to make deals in marriage, such as saying "Let me marry your daughter and I will give you my daughter or sister in marriage." Such reciprocal deals are a form of oppression and injustice, and haraam. Islam forbids mut'ah (temporary marriage), which is a marriage contract for a period of time agreed by the two parties, at the end of which the marriage expires. Islam forbids intercourse with a menstruating woman, until she has purified herself (by taking a bath after her period ends), and also forbids anal intercourse. A man is forbidden to propose marriage to a woman when another man has already proposed to her, unless the other man withdraws his proposal or gives him permission. It is forbidden to marry a previously-married woman without consulting her, or a virgin without seeking her permission. It is forbidden to wish (a newly married couple) "Bi'l-rafaa' wa'l-baneen (a joyful life and many sons)," because this is the greeting of the people of Jaahiliyyah (ignorance), who hated daughters. The divorced woman is forbidden to conceal what Allaah has created in her womb (if she is pregnant). A husband and wife are forbidden to speak (to others) about the intimacies of married life. It is forbidden to turn a woman against her husband or to take divorce lightly. It is forbidden for a woman to ask for another's di-

voice, such as asking a man to divorce a woman so that she can marry him. A wife is forbidden to spend her husband's money without his permission, or to keep away from his bed without good reason, because the angels will curse her if she does that. A man is forbidden to marry his father's wife, or to have intercourse with a woman who is pregnant from another man. It is forbidden for a man to practice 'azl (coitus interruptus) with his free wife without her permission. It is forbidden for a man to return home from a journey late at night and startle his family, unless he has previously notified them when he will arrive home. A man is forbidden to take anything of his wife's mahr (dowry) without her consent, or to keep annoying his

falling from a high place; eating blood, pork and anything slaughtered in a name other than that of Allaah or for idols; eating the flesh or drinking the milk of beasts that feed on filth and waste matter; eating the flesh of every carnivorous beast that has fangs and every bird that has talons; eating the meat of domesticated donkeys; killing animals by keeping them and throwing stones at them until they die, or detaining them without food until they die; slaughtering with teeth or nails; slaughtering one animal (for food) in front of another; or sharpening the knife in front of the animal to be slaughtered.

In the area of clothing and adornment, men are forbid-



wife so that she will give up her wealth.

Islaam forbids women to make a wanton display of themselves (tabarruj). It also forbids extreme forms of female circumcision. Women are forbidden to admit anyone into their husband's home without his permission; his general permission is acceptable so long as they stay within the limits of sharee'ah (Islamic law). It is forbidden to separate a mother and child (in case of divorce); to let one's womenfolk behave foolishly (in an immoral fashion) and not say anything; to let one's gaze wander everywhere; and to follow an accidental glance with an intentional glance.

Islaam forbids the eating of dead meat, regardless of whether it died by drowning, strangulation, shock or

den the extravagance of wearing gold. Muslim men are forbidden to be naked or to expose their thighs; to leave their clothes long (below the ankles) and trail them on the ground for the purpose of showing off; and to wear clothes that will attract attention.

It is forbidden to bear false witness; to make false accusations against a chaste believing woman; to accuse someone who is innocent; to utter lies; to slander and backbite; to call people by offensive nicknames; to spread gossip and malicious slander; to make fun of the Muslims; to boast about one's status; to shed doubts on a person's lineage; to utter slander, insults and obscenities; to speak in an indecent or rude manner; or to utter evil in public, except by one who has been wronged.

Islaam forbids telling lies; one of the worst kinds of lie is to lie about dreams, like fabricating dreams and visions in order to prove one's virtue, or make some material gains, or to frighten an enemy.

Muslims are forbidden to praise themselves, or to talk in a secret way: two may not converse secretly to the exclusion of a third, because this is offensive. It is for-

bidden to kill another person except in cases where it is right to do so; to kill one's children for fear of poverty; to commit suicide; to commit fornication, adultery or sodomy (homosexuality); to drink wine, or even to prepare it, carry it from one place to another, or sell it. Muslims are forbidden to please people by angering Allaah; to offend their parents or even to say "Uff" (the slightest word of contempt) to them; to



bidden to curse a believer or someone who does not deserve to be cursed.

Islaam forbids speaking ill of the dead; praying for death; wishing for death because of some suffering that one is passing through; praying against one's self, one's children, one's servants or one's wealth.

Muslims are told not to eat the food that is directly in front of others or to eat from the centre of the dish or platter; rather they should eat from what is directly in front of them or thereabouts, because the barakah (blessing) comes in the middle of the food. It is forbidden to drink from a broken edge of a vessel, because this could cause harm; or to drink from the mouth of a vessel; or to breathe into it. It is forbidden to eat while lying on one's stomach; to sit at a table where wine is being drunk; to leave a fire burning in one's house when one sleeps; to sleep with Ghamr in one's hand, like an offensive smell or the remainder of food (grease); to sleep on one's stomach; or to talk about or try to interpret bad dreams, because these are tricks of the Shaytaan.

claim that a child belongs to anyone but his real father; to torture by means of fire; to burn anyone, alive or dead, with fire; to mutilate the bodies of the slain; to help anyone commit falsehood; or to cooperate in wrongdoing and sin.

It is forbidden to obey any person by disobeying Allaah; to swear falsely; to swear a disastrous oath; to eavesdrop on people without their permission; to invade people's privacy or look at their private parts; to claim something that does not belong to one or that one did not do, for the purpose of showing off; to look into someone's else's house without permission; to be extravagant; to swear an oath to do something wrong; to spy on others or be suspicious about righteous men and women; to envy, hate or shun one another; to persist in falsehood; to be arrogant or feel superior; to be filled with self-admiration; to be pleased with one's arrogance. Islam forbids taking back one's charity, even if one pays to get it back; employing someone to do a job without paying him his wages; being unfair in giving gifts to one's children; bequeathing everything in one's will and leaving one's heirs poor - in

such a case the will should not be executed; writing a will that concerns more than one third of one's legacy; being a bad neighbour; or changing a will to the detriment of one or some of one's heirs. A Muslim is forbidden to forsake or shun his brother for more than three days, except for a reason sanctioned by sharee'ah; to hold small stones between two fingers and throw them because this could cause injury to eyes or teeth; to include his heirs in a will, because Allaah has already given heirs their rights of inheritance; to disturb his neighbour; to point a weapon at his Muslim brother; to hand someone an unsheathed sword, lest it harm him; to come (walk) between two people except with their permission; to return a gift, unless there is some shar'i objection to it; to be extravagant; to give money to foolish people; to wish to be like someone to whom Allaah has given more of something; to cancel out his charity by giving offensive reminders of his giving; to wilfully conceal testimony; or to oppress orphans or scold one who asks for help or money. It is forbidden to treat with evil medicines, because Allaah would not create a cure for this ummah which includes something that He has forbidden. It is forbidden to kill women and children in warfare; to boast to one another; or to break promises.

Islaam forbids betraying a trust; asking for charity that one does not need; alarming a Muslim brother or taking away his possessions, whether jokingly or seriously; changing one's mind after giving a gift, except in the case of a gift from a father to his child; practising medicine without experience; or killing ants, bees and hoopoe birds. A man is forbidden to look at the

'awrah (private parts) of another man, and a woman is forbidden to look at the 'awrah of another woman. It is forbidden to sit between two people without their permission; or to greet only those whom one knows, because the greeting is to be given to those whom you know and those whom you do not know. A Muslim is forbidden to let an oath come between him and good deeds; he should do what is good and make expiation for the oath. It is forbidden to judge between two disputing parties when one is angry, or to judge in favour of one party without hearing what the other has to say. It is forbidden for a man to walk through the marketplace carrying something - like a sharp weapon - that could harm the Muslims, unless it is properly covered. A Muslim is forbidden to make another person get up, so that he can take his place.

There are more commands and prohibitions which came for the benefit and happiness of individuals and mankind as a whole. Have you ever seen any other religion that can compare to this religion?

Read this response again, then ask yourself: is it not a great pity that I am not one of them? Allaah says in the Qur'aan (interpretation of the meaning): "And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers." [Aal 'Imraan 3:85]

Finally, I hope that everyone who reads this will be guided to the correct way and to follow the truth. May Allaah protect you and us from all evil. Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid

