

Better light a candle than curse the darkness

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

Monthly e-Magazine

ISSN 2319-4049

باخبر

BAKHABAR

<http://bakhabar.biharanjuman.org/>

BE AWARE, ALWAYS, EVERYWHERE

Volume 9, Issue 01, January 2016

IN FOCUS

Modi in Lahore

and the Road Less Traveled



Editorial Board

Publisher

Bihar Anjuman BaKhabar

Editorial Board

Asrarul Haque, Seraj Akram, Mohd. Allam,
Ms Farhat Shakeel and Jahanzeb Mashhadi

bakhabar@biharanjuman.org

"The editors and publishers are not responsible for the views of writers, and their views do not reflect our policy or ideology in any way. We however reserve the right to edit any material submitted for publication, on account of public policy, or for reasons of clarity and space. – From Publishers." Pictures have been taken from available public sources.



Together we can change our society.
Join Bihar Anjuman
www.biharanjuman.org

write to

bakhabar@biharanjuman.org

form a chapter in your city or country

Dubai	Abu Dhabi	Chennai
Bangalore	Delhi	Jeddah
Patna	Riyadh	Muscat
Aligarh	Jubail	Qatar
Kolkata	Hyderabad	Toronto
Muzaffarpur	Ranchi	Gaya
Dammam/Khobar	California	Chicago

We are never without the solutions to our problems. It's just that sometimes we may have to wait a little. Learn how to remain peaceful and patient.

Live in the Present

Life is a game of forgetting and remembering.

You are losing the game when you... forget who you are and what you are doing here, remember the false things of the past and what they did to you.

You are winning the game when you... remember your true identity of peace, remember God who is always peaceful and has unconditional love for you, forget troubles of the past and move forward with the lessons learned.

Observe what you remember during the day and what you forget during the day. Forget the past, it is gone. Don't worry about the future. You do not know it. Learn to live in the present and discover how full it is of peaceful moments.

A 'Roti Bank' comes up in Aurangabad for the poor



Aurangabad (Maharashtra): A unique 'roti bank' has been launched in this city, famous for its Ajanta-Ellora caves, for the poor. People can 'deposit' rotis and the poor, aged, sick or the unemployed people can 'withdraw' a basic fare of freshly-cooked rotis and a vegetarian or non-vegetarian dish.

The Roti Bank first of its kind in Maharashtra, and second in India after a similar venture in Bundelkhand, Uttar Pradesh – was launched on December 5 by Yusuf Mukati, the founder of Haroon Mukati Islamic Centre (HMIC), on the busy Jinsi-Baijipura Road in the heart of the city.

“Over the years, I saw many poor people, especially Muslims, who can't afford one square meal a day. The situation is pathetic in large families with just one bread-winner. But because they live a dignified life, they do not resort to begging,” Mukati told IANS.

Targetting many such poor and deprived families, the idea of a 'Roti Bank' crystallized — and the 38-year-old Mukati made it clear that beggars would not be entertained here. After discussing with his wife Kauser, and his four married sisters – Seema Shalimar, Mumtaz Memon, Shehnaz Sabani, Huma Pariyani the 'Roti Bank' finally went 'public' with a modest 250 'depositors' on December 5.

Initially, curious passers-by would stop to ask about it but feel delighted to see it was a noble initiative. People have to fill up a form for Roti Bank's membership. “We allot them a specific code number. The

request is simple- Simply deliver us minimum freshly cooked two rotis and a plate of vegetarian or non-vegetarian food that they prepare for family at home daily,” Mukati said.

The idea clicked and within a fortnight the membership shot up by nearly 25 percent, and Mukati who runs a garment shop along with his realty consultancy — is optimistic it will double soon.

“The bank timings are 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. People can voluntarily 'deposit' their food, once a day or even more. Similarly, the poor people can come any time to collect the food as per their convenience and availability,” Mukati said.

The unique bank provides special carry bags with a code number to each 'depositor' on receipt. It is checked for freshness and quality, and then disbursed to the lucky families daily.

“The membership is growing, and occasionally food deposits are also higher than expectations So, on an average, we feed around 500 poor people daily,” Mukati told IANS.

He emphasized that over one-third of the donors and beneficiaries are non-Muslims and want to increase their contribution gradually “since food is the right of all human beings, irrespective of religion or financial status”.

As word spread about the noble venture wedding organisers started dispatching the extra food left over due to guest absenteeism.

“Since launch, at least six Hindu wedding organizers sent us 50-60 plates of excellent vegetarian food and another dozen Muslim marriage organizers also sent a similar quantity of non-vegetarian fare,” he said. “We store it separately in huge freezers with a capacity for 700 packets. The beneficiaries can take the food of their choice (veg/non-veg),” said Mukati while appealing to big restaurants, deluxe hotels, corporate and industrial canteens, flight kitchens and mega-event organisers to contribute their unconsumed, extra food for the Roti Bank.

He feels it will ensure there is “absolutely no wastage” of food anywhere any time in the city of 1.17 million population of which around 31 percent are Muslims.

Dwelling on the deplorable plight of Muslim women in the city, Kauser, his wife, said the divorce rates are very high, especially among young women.

She said the problem is acute. thousands of very young illiterate or semi-literate girls are pushed into marriage with much older men, and then divorced very soon... Their families borrow large amounts for marriages.

“These unfortunate girls, at times with tiny children, have no social security, nobody to house, feed or employ them,” said Kauser, who helps her husband in the Roti Bank venture.

In its own way, the Haroon Mukati Islamic Centre is contributing to women’s uplift with an academic centre for 2,000 girls in which they impart regular spiritual and vocational education in 15 different vocations, including yoga, fashion designing and computers.

“This equips the young girls with a capacity to earn a living and in case of any future problems, at least they will not starve or be driven to the road,” Kauser pointed out.

Incidentally, around 100 girl students from middle or upper-middle-class families have become Roti Bank members and contribute daily. It is disbursed among their less fortunate classmates.

IANIS

<http://www.siasat.com/news/roti-bank-comes-aurangabad-poor-893025/>

Victory of progressive alliance welcomed in Bihari diaspora

Under the leadership of Moon Khan, founding President of Bihar Cultural Association of North America, Biharis living in the USA are celebrating the victory of the grand alliance in the recent assembly elections.

“Bihar and Biharis have always fought for the solemn composite soul of India,” said Khan, who is also running for a major elective position in his area on the Democratic Party ticket. “In the assembly elections, the people of Bihar have spoken for development with tolerance.”

In Chicago, New York, Houston, Los Angeles, Orlando, and other major cities of the United States, people who favor coexistence and respect for everyone’s faith and traditions, are congratulating their Bihari friends.

“Biharis are like a diamond in the rough,” Raghunath Patel, an Indian American of Gujarati heritage. “They don’t hesitate in standing up on the right side.”

Khan, former York Township Trustee, wants to set up an organization in the USA that will publicize the progressive policies of the grand alliance in order to create awareness about the alternative viewpoints that are emerging in the mainland India.

The new election has hit Khan’s home also. His maternal uncle’s son-in-law, Dr. Fayyaz Ahmad, has just got re-elected on the RJD ticket from Bisfi, Madhubani.

“My soul lives in Bihar,” stated Khan, who plans to bring several key investors in Bihar in the coming months. “Bihari’s diaspora cannot and should not watch Bihar as spectators; we need to contribute in the development of our native land. Jai Bihar.”

BUILDING CHARACTER THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

I By B V VAMAN I

While scrolling through a social media site - which has become a very crucial element of daily life -- I came across an article mentioning that two German universities joined forces to investigate social e-networking. The study concluded that one in three people surveyed felt worse ("lonely, frustrated or angry") after spending time on social networking sites, often due to perceived inadequacies when comparing themselves to friends. Another article stated that heavy social e-media use might be correlated to lower self-control, which marketing experts believe could lead to higher spending.

Although the increasing popularity of social media sites like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn have gained attention as the most viable communication choice for bloggers, article writers and content creators, the downside is that the user shares too much information which may pose threats to him. Even with the tight security settings, your personal information may leak out. On the other hand, social networking sites are great enablers in a variety of ways despite the fact that they are also a source of exasperation and irritation.

Many times it is observed that children engrossed in their e-devices tend to ignore the call of their parents and teachers. Adults, too, end up paying more attention to social networking sites and in so doing, tend to neglect their partners, siblings and other family members and friends, too. Instead of spending quality time with family, we are spending quantity time on social media.

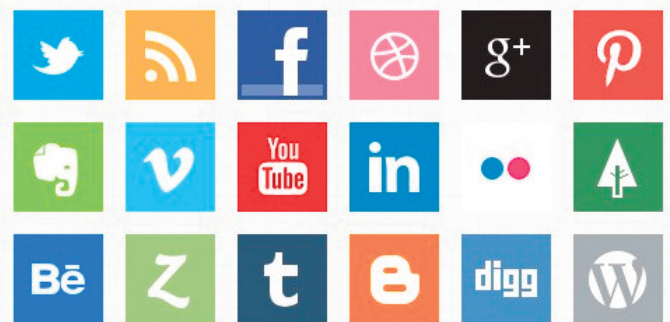
We are depriving ourselves of sharing real time love and affection. Although connected with friends and relatives who are far away, we are becoming distanced from near ones, sitting next to us.

Preoccupation with digital devices and e-social networking is a growing trend; and if this continues to the exclusion of people-to-people contact in the real world, it may cause more problems than generate solutions. The wonderful invention of science should help us to become a loving and caring society in-

stead of an affection-less society.

Life on earth as a human being could yield the highest benefit to not just humans but for all life forms. Therefore a sober and intelligent person should try to attain the highest benefit in life before it is too late. One should overcome or reduce the tendency for sense gratification.

We must utilize this wonderful opportunity by means of social media to find out the path to Self-realization, to gain knowledge of the Eternal Well-wisher



who is ever ready to shower grace on us.

One should use the human form to practice devotional and social service. And in this, social media could be a very important tool. The human body is most rarely achieved, and although temporary like other bodies, it is meaningful because in human life one can perform devotional service.

The Oxford English dictionary defines education as systematic instruction. 'Character' is defined as mental or moral qualities. The word 'secular' is very often used in education. According to the dictionary, secular means 'concerned with the affairs of the world, not spiritual, not sacred'. When secular word is not sacred, what is the reason to feel hesitation in introducing basic moral, social and spiritual education to children and the youth? How can we think about good governance of the country by citizens without a moral, social and spiritual backbone? As Columbia University Professor Keith Wilcox says, "It's not about 'don't spend time on social media', but it's about 'just be aware of what it might be doing to you.'"

Canada shows the way



I By AIJAZ ZAKA SYED I

Just when you think there's little hope for the world, something happens that restores your faith in humanity. Only those who have long suffered at the hands of their own, been driven from their homes and are desperately looking for refuge would truly value the gift Canada has offered to the Syrian refugees.

In comparison to its big neighbor, Canada has always known to be more generous and welcoming when it comes to immigrants and is decidedly more liberal in its policies in general. Yet nothing could have prepared anyone for the warm and generous welcome offered to the first planeload of Syrian refugees arriving in Canada last week.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who looks more like a young rock star than a politician, made it a point to be personally present at the airport in Toronto to receive the new arrivals. "Welcome, you are home!" he said to each one of them as he presented them with winter kits and toys for children. "This is a wonderful night where we get to show not just a planeload of new Canadians what Canada is all about, but we get to show the world how to open our hearts and welcome in people who are fleeing extraordinarily difficult situations," Trudeau said.

"Tonight, they step off the plane as refugees. But

they walk out of this terminal as permanent residents of Canada, with social insurance numbers, with health cards, and with an opportunity to become full Canadians."

Can anyone beat that? And there are some who are asked to prove their loyalty and patriotic credentials all their lives even if generations of their ancestors lay buried in the country. A group of Canadian children even reportedly put together a special performance on this occasion, reenacting the song that young Ansar girls would sing 14 centuries ago to welcome the Prophet when he arrived in Madinah from Makkah.

A group of Canadian children even put together a special performance on this occasion, reenacting the song that young Ansar girls would sing 14 centuries ago to welcome the Prophet when he arrived in Medina from Makkah, looking for refuge:

Oh, the white moon rose over us
From the Valley of Wada
And we owe it to show gratefulness
Where the call is to Allah
Oh you, who were raised among us
Coming with the Word to be obeyed
You have brought to this city nobleness,
Welcome the best caller to God's way

The performance of the classical Arabic song Tala' al-Badru Alaina by the students of Ottawa's École Secondaire Publique De La Salle touched a billion hearts around the world and rightly so considering the emotional, defining nature of the Prophet's migration and how it changed the course of history.

The song went viral on You Tube and social media amid the buzz over the arrival of Syrian refugees despite the fact that the language is classical Arabic. But then love knows no barriers of language or man-made borders.

Understandably, the Syrian refugees were incredibly moved by the welcome, with most of them teary eyed. After all that they have been through over the past few years and the death and dangers that they have braved to reach to safety in Europe, America and elsewhere with thousands of them perishing along the way, like Aylan Kurdi and his family, you could imagine their reaction on being welcomed the way they have been in Trudeau's Canada. Or in Angela Merkel's Germany which has agreed to accept

If these aren't the best of times to be Muslims, they are also perilous for those who stand up for them or even show them occasional sympathy.

The audacity of hope and generosity of spirit demonstrated by the Merkels and Trudeaus is therefore truly noble. May their tribe grow!

Clearly, leadership makes all the difference. Compare Canada's response today with the hate and cynical scaremongering that had been peddled when it was led by Stephen Harper. Or compare it with the petty, incomprehensibly small-minded response of politicians in the great, rich land of opportunity south of Canada.

Last night, I stumbled across the Republican presidential debate on CNN. And it was truly a sobering experience to see all those worthies competing with each other to project themselves as the most combative commander-in-chief to beat the hell out of "Islamist jihadist terrorists" which in their view more or less all Muslims are.



nearly a million refugees this year.

No wonder Time magazine has chosen Merkel as its Person of the Year. This is truly leadership at its finest, responding to the calls and challenges of humanity and a globalized world. This courage under fire is all the more remarkable considering the sharply rising paranoia and intolerance of all things Islamic in the West and around the world. Islamophobia is at its highest peak right now.

If you thought Donald Trump is one looney exception, wait till you hear Ted Cruz, the Tea Party favorite, New Jersey governor Chris Christie, former Florida governor Jeb Bush, former New York governor George Pataki, Florida senator Marco Rubio or even former neurosurgeon Ben Carson.

You couldn't have put together such mind-blowing combination of fire and brimstone and pure, unadulterated lunacy in one room even if you had sincerely

tried. The only sane and moderate voices were those of Rand Paul and Carly Fiorina, the former Hewlett-Packard CEO, but then they are nowhere in the reckoning when it comes to winning the Republican nomination.

If you heard any of these Republican hopefuls speak, you would think Islam, or “radical Islam” as they all insist, was the greatest threat and clear and present danger to America and the world right now and every Muslim out there is a Daesh extremist, only waiting to blow up the blessed land of the free.

Of course, none of them would dare to or care to show the other side of the reality. Like who or what created a monster like Daesh? Or how the catastrophic US and Western wars and their criminally reckless, lopsided policies have destroyed much of the Middle East and turned the Muslim world upside down, unleashing the chaos that is now beginning to touch their own lands. But of course we are not sup-

most vulnerable since 9/11. Many of them have convinced themselves things are down in the dumps and America is not winning, whatever that means, only because of the Middle East and Muslims!

No wonder politicians think the easiest way to win polls and power is by raising the bogey of “Islamist terrorism” or by bashing Muslims. In France, Marine Le Pen’s party has performed well in regional elections held after the Paris attacks. Other right-wing parties across Europe are also hoping to do well in polls ahead, playing on the fear of hordes from the Middle East invading the continent.

Unfortunately, all these years little has been done by Arab and Muslim countries to address these fears and concerns in the West.

Notwithstanding substantial financial resources at their disposal, few of these have been invested in creating world-class media, think tanks or reaching



posed to go there.

This vicious cycle of hatred feeding hatred, however, will only get worse in times ahead if there’s no sincere attempt to understand, by both sides, what is feeding it. Clearly, the US politicians and even those in Europe are tapping into the massive fear psychosis and ignorance that ordinary Americans and Europeans have developed after decades of hateful propaganda and blatant lies targeting Arabs and Muslims.

According to recent opinion polls, a significant majority of Americans thinks that their country is at its

out to Western public opinion and political establishment.

Given the fact this is a battle of ideas and perceptions, which by the way the West has mastered over the past few centuries, how could you face it with bare bodies and not even a stone in your hands?

Instead of earnestly praying for Hillary Clinton’s victory, couldn’t Arabs and Muslims be a little more proactive for a change? By the way, considering Hillary’s proximity to Israel and corporate sleaze-bags, she isn’t such an alluring option either.

—

Aijaz Zaka Syed is a Gulf based writer.

Communal violence bases on myths: Ram Puniyani

I By Naushad Ansari I

Patna: ‘Communal politics resorts to violence, and in turn the social issues related to the lives of people are sidetracked. Communal violence bases itself on the myths and stereotypes against the weaker group and minorities. This creates hatred and distance among the communities. Communal violence is a phenomenon where innocent people get killed’, said eminent Scholar and former professor of Biomedical Engineering of Indian Institute of Technology (I.I.T.), Mumbai, Dr. Ram Puniyani. He was delivering a lecture on “Need of communal Harmony for Development” organized by Peace Foundation here at Urdu Bhawan in Patna on 19 December.

Dr. Ram Puniyani delivering a lecture on “Need of communal Harmony for Development” organized by Peace Foundation at Urdu Bhawan in Patna .

Dr. Ram Puniyani said that at religious level Islam and local Hindu traditions interacted and strengthened Sufi Saints and Bhakti Cults. Kabir had a large following among the poor from amongst Muslims as well as Hindus. Mir Miyan, another sufi saint, laid down the foundation stone of Harmandir Golden Temple at Amritsar. The dohas of Abdur Raheem popularly known as Rahiman are still a source of inspiration for all of us.

On temple destruction he said that those were only to loot the wealth stored there. Muslim rulers also demolished some mosques. Ghazni’s army had one-third Hindus as soldiers and out of twelve generals, five were Hindus. Similarly, Aurangzeb too demolished temples as well as mosques. He also gave jagirs (property) for the maintenance and upkeep of Hindu temples. Hindus had a large presence in Mughal administration. During Shahjahan’s rule the number of Hindu kings was 24% and this number went up to 34% in the reign of Aurangzeb.

On the battle between Hindu and Muslim kings he emphasised that those were only political and for expansion of their kingdom. Those had never been a fight between Muslim and Hindu communities. Raja Mansingh, a Hindu, represented Akbar and on the other hand Rana Pratap’s main associate was his Muslim general Hakim Khan Sur. Similarly Shivaji was never anti-Muslim. He had many a Muslim sol-

diers and his main lieutenant was Siddi Sambhal, a Muslim. Also, Shivaji’s confidential secretary was Maulana Haider Ali.

On conversion he said that no religious belief can spread by sword. The first mosque in India was built in Kerala where no Muslim soldier ever entered. He quoted Swami Vivekananda who said that dalit Hindus embraced Islam to escape the atrocities of casteism and to get social equality.

On demolition of Babri Masjid he said that there was a time when Sant Goswami Tulsi Das, a true devotee (bhakt) of Lord Rama and the author of Ram Charit Manas wrote that he is ‘a slave of Ram, lives in a mosque’. But today’s so-called Ram bhakts want to demolish mosques, he surprised.

Naushad Ansari, President of the Foundation, delivered welcome address. Mohammad Quasim, Advocate, Patna High Court, Secretary of the foundation, informed that the foundation is focusing on education, employment and communal harmony. The foundation is providing free coaching to the needy students aspiring for SSC/Railways/Banking exams. It is also running a free computer centre in Bihar Sharif, free coaching centre for Navodaya Vidyalaya at Hajipur, etc. The foundation participated in mega Patna Book Fair with an object to combat terrorism, to weaken communalism and to promote communal harmony. To bring awareness on the government welfare schemes the foundation carried special drive using electronic, print media and public announcements.

Buddha Sharan Hans, I.A.S (ret’d), Vice President of the Foundation, explained the purpose of holding this meeting. He stated that upholding peace and maintaining law and order is the duty of state.

Dr. Razi Ahmed, Secretary of Gandhi Sangrahalaya, in his presidential address, stated that there cannot be development and peace until we assure inclusiveness and justice.

Yaqoob Ashrafi, an eminent motivator and Director of Oxfame, coordinated the program. M.T. Khan, Registrar (ret’d), Patna High Court, Madan Ji, social activist, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Jt. Secretary of the Foundation, Shakil Ahsan and others also spoke on the occasion. The program ended with vote of thanks by Shahzad Rasheed, Advocate, Mumbai High Court, coordinator of the foundation.

Forgotten Heroines: The Housewives Lament

I By Zainab bint Yunus I

Khuwaylid, Fatimah bint Muhammad, Maryam bint Imran and Aasiyah bint Muzahim (the wife of the Pharaoh).” (Ahmad)



Yet when we look at the biography of Fatimah bint Muhammad (Salallaahu Alaihi Wasalaam), one could say that in comparison to others amongst the early Muslim women, her life was relatively unremarkable. She grew up during a difficult time for her parents, when her father was being publicly mocked and derided for preaching his message; she lost her mother at a

relatively young age and she married her cousin Ali ibn Abi Talib when she was about fifteen years old. Some of the most well-known ahadeeth related by her mention how physically demanding her lifestyle was, such that her hands would crack and bleed from the wheat-grinding that she used to do.

What made Fatimah so special? So special, in fact, that she will forever be known as one of the greatest women of Paradise?

Fatimah bint Muhammad is not known for an act of dramatic courage such as that displayed by Nusaybah bint Ka'b during the battle of Uhud, but she too provides an example for a situation that many Muslim women around the world live and continue to face: the everyday drudgery of life as a wife and mother.

Fatimah may have been the most beloved daughter to the Messenger of Allah, who was also the head of the Islamic State and leader of the Muslim army, but that didn't mean that her life was one of luxury or ease.

Quite to the contrary, Fatimah was the mother of two young boys and ran her household single-handedly. Life was difficult back then, with none of the tech-

Money is tight. The kids are demanding. Skin is raw from all the cooking, cleaning and chores that have to be done every day. There's absolutely no time to spare for anything else, whether it's pursuing further education or volunteering for a special cause.

Does this sound familiar? There are Muslim women all over the world who find themselves at home, living life as domestic stay-at-home mums and housewives. It's a physically and emotionally demanding job and it's also a pretty thankless one. How can spending all day serving others, instead of being involved in some kind of noble, public cause, ever be truly fulfilling and worth recognition – not just by people, but by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'ala) Himself?

Fatimah bint Muhammad is known to be one of the four most perfect women in the entire world. “Prophet Muhammad (Salallaahu Alaihi Wasalaam) drew four lines and said to the Companions, “Do you know what these are?” They said, “Allah and His Messenger know best.” He said, “The best women of the women of Paradise are Khadeejah bint

nologies that smooth our way through tedious tasks today. She used to grind the wheat for her bread with her own hands, to the point that her hands would crack and bleed. Her husband, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, was an employee of one of the Ansaar, but the income was meagre and they struggled to survive on a daily basis.

One day, weary and despairing of the toll that their lifestyle was taking on her, Fatimah decided that she would approach her father, RasulAllah (Salallaahu Alaihi Wasalaam). At the time, the Muslims had won a battle and, as a result, had captured several prisoners and other spoils of war. With the reasoning that as a member of the Ummah, she was entitled to some relief, Fatimah went to visit one of RasulAllah’s homes. She did not find her father present, but seeing her stepmother A’ishah, Fatimah shared the story of her bleeding hands and her wish for a maid-servant to take on a share of the burdens.

After this, Fatimah never repeated her request for a maid ever again.

It may seem to be a small, insignificant thing, but subhanAllah this was one of the reasons for which Fatimah earned her position as one of the queens of Jannah. Her life was spent quietly serving her Lord, through her sincere intentions behind caring for her husband and children. Around her, there were many sahabiyaat whose lives seemed much more exciting, full of adventure and grandeur. Her stepmother, A’ishah, was a great scholar; her great-aunt Safiyyah bint Abdul-Muttalib was fierce in battle and the women of Madinah were renowned for their boldness in approaching any matter.

Nonetheless, for Fatimah bint RasulAllah, the path to Paradise was simple – though never easy. For every stay-at-home-mother and housewife who feels



Fatimah went back to her home, and when RasulAllah returned to his own house, A’ishah told him about his daughter’s visit.

That same night, RasulAllah slipped into his daughter’s home, where she and ‘Ali were already lying in bed.

‘Ali narrates, “I wanted to get up, but the Prophet said, ‘Remain in your place.’ Then he sat down between us until I felt the coolness of his face on my chest. The Prophet said, ‘Shall I teach you a thing which is better than what you have asked me? When you go to bed, say, ‘Allahu akbar’ thirty-four times, and ‘subhanAllah’ thirty-three times, and ‘Alhamdulillah’ thirty-three times for that is better for you both than a servant.’” (Bukhari, Book #57, Hadith #55)

that her life is too consumed by daily drudgery, who worries that her life is too dull to be of consequence, the quiet strength of Fatimah bint RasulAllah is an inspiration and a reminder that no deed, however small or seemingly insignificant, is overlooked by Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Just.

For indeed, Allah does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good. (Surah Hud, verse 115) Jannah is not only for the Prophets, the martyrs, the ascetics, or the scholars; Jannah is attainable by every Muslimah, no matter her occupation or station in life. In the eyes of Allah, every sincere Muslim woman who pledges her life to pleasing her Lord is a heroine of Islam.

Zainab bint Yunus
www.islaaminfo.com

JOURNEY TO ISLAM:

When God Reached Out to Me

How a Latino Woman Found Islam

I By Iman Reda Mohamed I

When I entered the mosque for the first time... I felt a lot of peace inside me. I don't know why.

Before getting married, I was pregnant with my baby but her father was mad at me.

When he knew about it he told me: "I am not ready to be a father, you have to abort the baby!!" (hard words for a young woman).

I told him: "I don't care if you don't want the baby, but I will never kill a little person only because you want to. So, I will be a single mother but you will have responsibilities towards the baby." And I left him...

I couldn't ignore the fact that my stomach would grow up... So after one month he came to me and told me: "I am so sorry for what I said, I was thinking that we have to get married, and I told him: "No thanks, I am sorry but I don't want you, you don't love me and you don't love your own baby."

But he talked with my parents and my parents decided that it was better for me to get married to him. With all my respect to the people, BAD IDEA.

More New Muslims' Stories

- I Finally Have a Purpose in Life
- A Trip to Egypt: My First Step to Islam
- One Step From Me, Two Steps From God
- God, If You Exist Then Guide Me!
- Adhan in India Led Jewish Sandra to Islam

Our wedding day was terrible, he was angry with me all the ceremony and party. I don't know why he wanted to marry me if he didn't want to. I did all that was possible to have a good relationship with him, but he never accepted me. He knocked me 3 times during my pregnancy and the last time I was really sick and my baby was born before time.

When the baby was born, he was a little nice to her but not to me. Sometimes it is impossible to believe it but really many women in the world are treated badly by their husbands and I was ONE OF THEM.

When my baby was 6 months, he never went with me to the doctor's appointment again. It was hard, the capital city is bad as you could find bad people. I took a bus in my city and travelled.

In the capital city I took another bus to go to the clinic, many times I had panic for my baby, but every time I repeated in my mind: God is with me, God is with me, God is with me.

I was Christian at that time of course, as are the majority of the people in Guatemala. Some months after that my husband was sick and went to hospital for 15 days. I made my best to care for him, but my life was like hell.

my baby surprised me when she put her little hand on my shoulder and gave me a kiss.

You don't have any idea how many times I received calls from women asking for him, that hurt me so much. But thanks to a friend that told me: "You are young, you only have one baby, you have to leave him, you have to stop him;" I decided to leave him.

Being alone in my depression I wanted to die. One day at night I was sitting down on the floor ready to kill myself, I was alone with my baby and was thinking WHY ME GOD, WHY ME...

In a moment, my baby surprised me when she put her little hand on my shoulder and gave me a kiss. I quickly opened my mind and cried so much because I was sure that God was talking to me at that moment.

All the time I asked myself WHY this happened to me? After I accepted Islam in my life and learned about the religion and life style of Islam, I understood: I lived bad moments to obtain happiness and mercy from Allah.

I am Muslima since June 10, 2007 and since that day I am trying to make everything in my life better than my past. I don't like to talk about my past because it's sad, empty and bad but sometimes I need to reveal my history to the persons who want to know about my religion and why I accepted Islam... I love to talk about my present because it's the time that I'm living and enjoying.

In the days before my conversion, I had been studying and learning so much about Islam and I had the opportunity to share this information with new friends that want to be Muslimas, alhamdulillah.

But this is not all, because I had been receiving many gifts from Allah. Could you imagine if I shared this information about our religion, I will be rich with the pleasure and love and mercy and grace from Allah, Al-lahu Akbar.

Never has somebody told me: "I am proud to be your friend." Never, and in those days many people from other countries said this to me. How could I not BE a PROUD MUSLIMA?

I never had friends before because I was never like them. I was always different in all ways from them and when I found Islam, I felt that during my entire life I was Muslima. And the most wonderful thing is that many persons think that I am Muslima since a long time, is this causality??? I don't think so.

How Did I Know About Islam?

with time, I knew more people from other countries that also told me: "I am Muslim"

Like many girls around the world, through a boy on the net. I knew him and he wanted to marry me, but he told me: "If you marry me you will have to accept my religion."

I asked: "What is your religion?" And he said: "Islam." (I didn't know about it). He told me: "I am Muslim and Islam is my religion."

I said: "WHAT!" Of course in those days the only information that I had about Muslims was: They are terrorists. So, I tried to leave him because I told myself, I will never be a terrorist (Allah forgive me for that).

But with time, I knew more people from other countries that also told me: "I am Muslim, my religion is Islam." And I was more interested about it and always when I had a chance I always ask about Islam and Muslim people.

One day a friend from Palestine sent me an invitation to enter in Muslimspace.com, but I was afraid of this site because I was still thinking 'maybe they are terrorists.' as I didn't understand Islam. One day I was sitting free with nothing to do so I decided to open this site and I made my blog in there.

Many weeks after entering the site, I knew a Muslim girl from my own country, I was excited to know her because who else would be more able to explain Islam

and what it entails than a girl coming from my own culture and speaking the same language?

But, I have to say that I had a bad idea about Islam so I kept telling myself 'maybe she too is a terrorist.' And so I refused the first invitation to know her and know the mosque in my country.

The next day I said my Shahadah, alhamdulillah.

At that time, some of my friends knew that I was interested in Islam but I thought that nobody believed that I was serious about it. So one Saturday I accepted the invitation of my new friend and I went to the capital city to know her and to visit the mosque...

Surprise... Surprise, when I entered the mosque for the first time... I felt a lot of peace inside me. I don't know why. At that night I was in the Muslimas' class and they were all really cool with me without knowing me. The next day I said my Shahadah, alhamdulillah.

When my family knew that I am Muslim, I had many problems, especially with my mom, because she thought that I will be a human bomb, a killer or a terrorist. My sweet mom doesn't understand the truth, because she closes her heart when I try to tell her the truth about Islam.

Some friends call my mom a disbeliever. It's a hard word to call the person who gave me life but I have to accept that only Allah will open her heart to the ONLY TRUE RELIGION.

You have to know me and you will know that I am a new miracle in this world ALHAMDULILLAH, because Allah gave me a second opportunity to have a better life in His Way and because now I am engaged with a man from Egypt who loves me so much and also loves my baby girl.

The most beautiful thing about his family is that his Sweet Mom is learning Spanish to be able to talk with me and my baby...

All my way to Islam began through knowing a man from Egypt and since then my life has completely changed with my marriage from an Egyptian man.

Isn't it strange, right?

Only Allah Knows Why.

<http://www.onislam.net/english/reading-islam/my-journey-to-islam/contemporary-stories/446955-when-god-reached-out-to-me.html>

JOURNEY TO ISLAM:

I Found Islam in Alhambra

Reversion Through Architecture

I By Karima Burns I

Ironically, I had stared right at the answers I was searching for, on the walls of the Alhambra. But, it took me two more years to realize that.

I sat in the Alhambra Mosque in Granada, Spain staring at the script that bordered the walls. It was the most beautiful language I had ever seen.

"What language is that?" I said to a Spanish tourist. "Arabic," they answered.

The next day, when the tour attendant asked which language I wanted my tour book in, I answered, "Arabic."

"Arabic?" she said, surprised. "Do you speak Arabic?"

"No," I replied. "Can you give me one in English too?"

By the end of my trip I had a bag full of Arabic tour guides to all the sites I had visited in Spain. In fact, my bag was so full that at one point I had to give away some of my clothes so I could make everything fit. But, I hung on to my Arabic tour books as if they were made of gold. I would open them every night and look at the letters of the language as they flowed across the page.

I imagined being able to write such beautiful script and I thought to myself that there must be something worth knowing about a culture that had such an artistic language. I vowed that I would study this language when I started college in the fall.

How the Journey Started

Only two months before, I had left my family in

Iowa to take a trip through Europe, alone. I was only 16 years old and due to enter Northwestern University in the fall and I had wanted to "see the world" first. At least, that is what I told my friends and family. In reality I was searching for answers. I had left the church only a few months before and did not know where to turn. I knew that I was not comfortable with what I was being taught, but I did not know of any alternatives.

Where I grew up, in the Midwest, there was no room for confusion - you were either part of the church or you were not. So, I had no idea there was something else. When I set off for Europe I hoped that there was.

In my church we were not allowed to pray to God, we could only pray to Jesus and hope that he would relay the message to God. I had intuitively felt that there was something wrong with that and so, without telling anyone, I secretly prayed to "God." I sincerely believed that there was only one entity to pray to. But, I felt guilty because this was not what I had been taught. Then, there was the confusing matter of what to do during one's "daily life."

"I dutifully went to church every Sunday and was very serious about what I learned regarding honesty, kindness and compassion. So, it confused me when I saw people from church acting so differently during the week. Were there no rules during the week? Did they only apply on Sundays? I looked for some guidance...but found none.

There were the Ten Commandments that covered the obvious things like killing, stealing and lying, but other than that, I had no guidelines for how to act when I wasn't in church. All I knew was: perhaps there was something wrong with wearing mini-skirts to church and only going to Sunday School because of cute guys that attended.

One day, I went to a teacher's house and saw a shelf lined with Bibles. I asked what they were. "Different versions of the Bible," my teacher replied. It did not seem to bother him at all that there were so many different versions. But, it bothered me. Some of them were really different and some chapters were even missing from the version I had. I was very confused.

At University

My favorite place to go became "Islamic Cairo," where the mosques always gave me a sense of comfort

I returned to college that fall disappointed that I had not found the answers I was hoping for in Europe, but with a passion for a language I had only just learned about - Arabic. Ironically, I had stared right at the answers I was searching for, on the walls of the Alhambra. But, it took me two more years to realize that.

The first thing I did when I reached the campus was... enroll in Arabic classes. I was one of only three people in the highly unpopular class. I immersed myself in my Arabic studies with such a passion that my teacher was confused. I did my homework with a calligraphy pen and I went into the Arab areas of Chicago just to track down a Coca Cola bottle written in the language.

I begged him to lend me books in Arabic just so I could look at the script. By the time my second year of college came around, I decided I should consider a major in Middle Eastern Studies. So, I enrolled in some classes focusing on the region. In one class we studied the Quran.

I opened the Quran one night to "do my homework" and could not stop reading it. It was like I had picked up a good novel. I thought to myself, "Wow. This is great. This is what I have always believed. This answers all my questions about how to act during the week and it even states very clearly that there is only one God."

It just all made so much sense. I was amazed that there was this book written about everything I believed in and had been searching for. I went to class the next day to ask about the author of the book so I could read more books by them. In the copy I had been given, there was a name. I thought it was the

author of the book, akin to the Gospels written by St. Luke or the other religions I had studied...that all attributed their writings to some person who was inspired enough to write it down.

My professor informed me that it was not the author but the translator because "according to the Muslims no one had written the book." The Quran was, according to THEM (referring to Muslims, he was Christian) the word of God and had not been changed since it was inspired, recited and then transcribed. Needless to say, I was fascinated. After that, I became passionate, not only about my studies of Arabic, but about studying Islam and about going to the Middle East.

Abroad Again

My senior year in college I finally went to Egypt to continue my studies. My favorite place to go became "Islamic Cairo," where the mosques always gave me a sense of comfort and awe. I felt that by being in them, one could really feel the beauty, power and awe of Allah. And, as always, I enjoyed staring at the elegant calligraphy on the walls.

One day a friend asked me why I didn't convert to Islam if I liked it so much. "But I am already Muslim." My answer surprised me. But then, I realized that it was a simple matter of logic and common sense. Islam made sense. It inspired me. I knew it was right. Why did I then have to convert?

My friend informed me that in order to "be official," I needed to actually go to the mosque and state my intention in front of two witnesses. So, I did. But, when they gave the certificate to me, I just filed it in my file cabinet with my "other" medical and personal records...because to me, I had always been Muslim.

I didn't need to hang a piece of paper on my wall to tell me that. I had known it the minute I picked up the Quran. The minute I opened it, I felt like I had found my long lost family.

I hung a picture of the Alhambra Mosque on my wall instead.

<http://www.onislam.net/english/reading-islam/my-journey-to-islam/contemporary-stories/436797-i-found-islam-in-alhambra-mosque.html>

Christmas Greetings to Milad People

I By Sameen Ahmed Khan I

Throughout Islamic history there have been attempts to introduce bidah (innovation) invented by ignorant and deviant persons. One of these bidah is repeated intensively every year in Rabi-al-Awwal, the third month of the Islamic lunar calendar. The last Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (PBUH, peace be upon him) was born in the month of Rabi-al-Awwal. Most scholars agree that he was born on the 12th of Rabi-al-Awwal in the year 53 before Hijrah corresponding to 570 in the Christian calendar (CE), in the blessed city of Makkah Mukarrah. He left on his final journey on the same day, 12th of Rabi-al-Awwal in the year 11 after Hijrah (632 CE) from the city of Madinah Munawwarah. Muslims in many parts of the world have started celebrating the birthday of the prophet, under the banner of Milad-un-Nabi (Mawlid). This practice is alien to Islam and an imitation of the Christians, who celebrate the birthday of Prophet Isa. In this article we shall first briefly look at the similarities between the bidah of Christmas and Milad respectively, and then importantly address what the Quran and Hadith say about bidah.

No one knows with certainty the date of birth of Jesus Christ (Prophet Isa, PBUH). Most countries celebrate Christmas on 25 December each year. Eastern Orthodox national churches, including those of Russia, Georgia, Egypt, Ukraine, the Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and the Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem celebrate on 7th January. The Armenian Apostolic Church celebrates on 6th January. Other Armenian churches celebrate on 19th January. Celebration of birthdays is itself a pagan idea, never promoted by any of the numerous Prophets or the Books of God, including the Torah and the Bible. The disciples (hawaris) of Jesus (PBUH) never celebrated Christmas. Early Church leaders opposed it strongly. As late as 245 CE, African Church father and philosopher Origen wrote that it was sinful even to contemplate observing Jesus's birthday, "as though he were a King Pharaoh". The church failed and the pagans prevailed. It was only in the 4th century after the ascension of Prophet Isa (PBUH) that Christmas was recognized as a regular Christian feast. With the advent of Capitalism, the old pagans got a new supporter in the form of the adman.

George Bernard Shaw observed: "Christmas is forced on a reluctant nation by shopkeepers and the press". This is how they can pretend to serve God, and make money at the same time.

Milad is a celebration, which closely resembles the Christians' celebration of Christ's birth (Christmas). To illustrate note: (a) decorating the mosques with lights etc; (b) inventing a new Eid: Milad-un-Nabi, a self-made Eid; (c) singing poetry in praise of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), such songs (naat) are mostly a bundle of shirk; (d) visiting relatives and friends; (e) wearing new clothes; (f) cooking nice foods. Some even go to the extent of doing pagan rituals (using lights and incense etc.) with the pictures of the green dome of the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah Munawwarah. Such pagan rituals are no different from the practices of the idolaters. Milad-un-Nabi is very much an adoption of Christmas by the deviant Muslims.

The earliest accounts for the observance of Milad can be found in 8th century (CE) Mecca. Public celebrations of the Milad did not occur until four centuries after the death of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). It was originally a festival of the Shia ruling class, not attended by the common people, with the first official Milad celebrations occurring in Egypt towards the end of the 11th century (CE). The early celebrations included elements of Sufic influence, with animal sacrifices and torchlight processions along with public sermons and a feast. In original Islamic resources (Quran and Hadith), we cannot find any instruction about the celebration of birthdays or death anniversaries. Many Companions of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), passed away during his life-time. His beloved wife Sayyidah Khadijah, Radi-Allahu anha, passed away in Makkah. His beloved uncle Sayyidna Hamzah, Radi-Allahu anhu was brutally slaughtered during the battle of Uhud. But the Holy Prophet, never observed their birthday or their death anniversaries, nor did he ever advise his followers to celebrate his own birthday.

Being fully aware of this human psychology, Islam has never prescribed, nor encouraged the observance of birthdays and anniversaries, and when such celebrations are observed as a part of the religion, they are totally forbidden. **The Religion is Complete.**

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ لِإِسْمِ اللَّهِ الْكَبِيرِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْفُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيخَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلامِ ذَلِكُمْ فِسْقٌ الْيَوْمَ بَيَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا يَدْرِي سَاعَةً يُنْفَخُ النَّفْخُ عَنْكُمْ وَالْيَوْمَ اكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرِ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Forbidden to you (for food) are: dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which hath been invoked the name of other than Allah. that which hath been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by being gored to death; that which hath been (partly) eaten by a wild animal; unless ye are able to slaughter it (in due form); that which is sacrificed on stone (altars); (forbidden) also is the division (of meat) by raffling with arrows: that is impiety. This day have those who reject faith given up all hope of your religion: yet fear them not but fear Me. This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. But if any is forced by hunger, with no inclination to transgression, Allah is indeed Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. [Al-Maidah 5:3].

It means that all the teachings of Islam were communicated to the Muslims through the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet. No one is allowed after it to add anything to them as a part of religion. What was not a part of religion during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, can never become part of it.

It is not permitted to celebrate the birthday of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), or the birthday of any other person, because this is a matter that has been innovated in the religion. The Prophet (PBUH) did not do this, neither did his successors, the Rightly-Guided Khaleefahs, or others among his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all), or those who followed them exactly (in faith) during the best centuries – these are the people who had the best knowledge of the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH), who loved him the most and followed the Shariah most perfectly, better than any who came after them. The Imams (Abu Haneefah, Maalik, al-Shaafi, Ahmad, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Ibn Seereen) did not do Milad or command others to do it or say that it was good. It was not even mentioned during the first and best three centuries.

- Narrated Aisha: Allah's Apostle said, "If

somebody innovates something which is not in harmony with the principles of our religion, that thing is rejected." [Sahih Bukhari, Book #49, Hadith #861].

- I warn you of the newly invented matters (in the religion), and every newly invented matter is Bidah, and every Bidah is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Hellfire.

[Nasai].

- Narrated Tariq: Abdullah said, "The best talk is Allah's Book (Quran), and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad." [Sahih Bukhari, Book #73, Hadith #120].

These ahadith contain a very stern warning against coming up with innovations and acting on them. Allah says in His clear Book (interpretation of the meaning):

مَا أَقَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَى فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

What Allah has bestowed on His Messenger (and taken away) from the people of the townships, - belongs to Allah, - to His Messenger and to kindred and orphans, the needy and the wayfarer; In order that it may not (merely) make a circuit between the wealthy among you. So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you. And fear Allah. for Allah is strict in Punishment. [Al-Hashr 59:7].

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah.

[Al-Ahzaab 33:21].

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ لِيَعْلَمَ الْأَمْرَ نَاقِلِينَ

O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if ye do believe in Allah and the Last Day: That is best, and most suitable for final determination.
[Al-Nisa 4:59].

•

But if they hearken not to thee, know that they only follow their own lusts: and who is more astray than one who follow his own lusts, devoid of guidance from Allah. for Allah guides not people given to wrong-doing. [Al-Qasas 28:50].

•

Say "If ye do love Allah, Follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful". Say: "Obey Allah and His Messenger": But if they turn back, Allah loveth not those who reject Faith. [Ale-Imran 3:31-32].

Christmas and Milad are not the Sunnah of both the ambiya.

• Narrated Umar: I heard the Prophet saying, "Do not exaggerate in praising me as the Christians praised the son of Mary, for I am only a Slave. So, call me the Slave of Allah and His Apostle." [Sahih Bukhari, Book #55, Hadith #654].

In most Milad gatherings, the naats (poems) in the memory of the Holy Prophet, are recited, just like the Christmas carols. When these persons indulging in the naat are told an Ayat from the Quran, they ask who the scholar is?; when told an Hadith they question if it is authentic? But when it comes to the naat they accept it completely and blindly, never even wondering who wrote the naat or what its wording imply. It is to be realized that naat is just a poetry written by Muslims and non-Muslims alike and its wording tend to have elements of shirk in it.

Some of them think that the Prophet (PBUH) actu-

ally attends the Milad gatherings, so they stand up to greet and welcome him. This is a serious falsehood and a form of gross ignorance. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) will not come out of his grave, or contact anybody, or attend any gatherings. He will remain in his grave until the Day of Resurrection, and his soul is in the highest Illiyoona (in Paradise), with his Lord in the Abode of Honour,

After that, surely, you will die. Then (again), surely, you will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection.
[Al-Muminoon 23:15-16].

I would advise my Muslim brothers and sisters to avoid and condemn this innovation called Milad-un-Nabi and do not take any risks, as innovations would deprive one from the pond Kauthar:

• Narrated Abdullah: The Prophet said, "I am your predecessor at the Lake-Fount (Kauthar) and some men amongst you will be brought to me, and when I will try to hand them some water, they will be pulled away from me by force whereupon I will say, 'O Lord, my companions!' Then the Almighty will say, 'You do not know what they did after you left, they introduced new things into the religion after you.'" [Sahih Bukhari, Book #88, Hadith #173].

We ask Allah to help us and all the Muslims to understand His religion and adhere to it, to bless us all by making us follow the Sunnah, and to protect us from bidah, for He is the Most Kind and Generous. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad, and his family and companions.

Bibliography:

1. A website for Quran Majeed with comprehensive search in Arabic and numerous languages, along with several English translations (meanings), <http://www.islamicity.com/mosque/quran/>
2. Websites for Hadith, <http://www.searchtruth.com/> and <http://ahadith.co.uk/>
3. Sameen Ahmed Khan, Beware of Naat in the Light of Shariah, BaKhabar, Vol. 8, Issue 7, pp 15-18 (July 2015). Published by Bihar Anjuman, <http://bakhbar.biharanjuman.org/>.

Sameen Ahmed Khan, Department of Mathematics and Sciences, College of Arts and Applied Sciences, Dhofar University, Salalah, Sultanate of Oman
rohelaakhan@yahoo.com, <http://SameenAhmedKhan.webs.com/>

Modi in Lahore — and the Road Less Traveled



Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif receives Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India at Lahore's Allama Iqbal International Airport on Friday, Dec 25, 2015. AFP

I By AIJAZ ZAKA SYED I

Intelligent men have no enemies, said Chanakya, the author of *Arthashastra*, the bible of statecraft. Advising leaders against conflicts, Chanakya warns that avoidable confrontations could be a distraction from the greater objective of empire building. I wonder how the ancient Hindu sage would have viewed Narendra Modi's breathtaking dash to Lahore from Kabul that has left the pundits and hawks on both sides scratching their heads. I suspect he would have approved of the surprise sprung by the Indian leader on his unsuspecting hosts as a gem of realpolitik.

Incidentally, Chanakya or Kautilya came from the ancient university of Takshashila or Taxila in modern-day Pakistan. It was on the basis of his Machiavellian astuteness that he went on to become the prime minister of Chandragupta Maurya, India's first emperor and Ashoka's grandfather. And, yes, Chanakya also cautions against excessive honesty in

one's dealings with the world. For, he warns, straight trees are cut first in the forest while crooked ones are left standing.

Whatever may be the motivation for Modi's short sojourn to Lahore, you have to admit, it was extraordinarily courageous and politically expeditious.

Perhaps only a Narendra Modi with his party's brute majority in parliament and his impeccable credentials as the Hindu Hridayasamarat (conqueror of Hindu hearts) could have pulled it off without worrying too much about his political stock. Something that the old-fashioned and excessively cautious Dr Manmohan Singh could never have imagined or dared to.

The poor Dr Singh! In his 10 years in the most powerful office in the land, he is said to have endlessly dreamed about visiting the land of his birth and ancestors one fine day but could never finally muster the courage to make the shortest possible journey.

Prime Ministers Modi and Sharif hug each other at Lahore's Allama Iqbal International Airport. While the good Dr Singh, repeatedly taunted by Modi for treating President Pervez Musharraf to chicken biriyani (or was it beef?), lacked the comforting security of a political base, his boss Sonia Gandhi, the Italian born president of the Congress party, lacked political courage. Accused of being "soft on the terrorists" by the BJP, the Congress forever remained on the defensive and shied away from taking any bold measures on normalizing ties with

national, "he (Modi) can walk into your house at the time of his choosing and say what he pleases – at times nice things. And he is unfettered and unshackled from convention. You don't know what he might do next. Those incremental, deliberate, structured, and coached types simply keep guessing."

It was what the Jews call chutzpah or Barack Obama would famously describe as the audacity of hope. Grant the man his due. He has got style. Like an accomplished performer, he has got impeccable timing



Pakistan.

This is why you cannot emphasize enough the historic nature of Modi's diplomatic coup although Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif deserves equal credit for inviting the neighbor to stop over for a 'chai pe charcha' (chat over chai) while he was in the neighborhood. (Alright, it was actually a lavish spread of traditional Punjabi hospitality – and apparently shudh shakhahari – all vegetarian to celebrate Sharif's 66th birthday and the wedding of his granddaughter Mehrunnisa, named after Jahangir's erudite queen known as Noor Jehan who ruled the vast Mughal Empire from Lahore and lays buried in the city she loved.)

As a mystified Shahzad Chaudhry, Pakistan's former air-vice marshal, grudgingly notes in theNews Inter-

and an acute sense of history. And to top it all, he loves the stage, the drama and the spotlight it generates. Anything for a billion plus eyeballs!

Whether Modi's groundbreaking visit to Pakistan acquires the historic nature of a Richard Nixon-like outreach to China in 1972 that not just revolutionized the relations between Washington and Beijing but paved the way for China's emergence as a global power largely depends on the Indian leader himself. Modi has got both the political heft and pluck and enjoys the support of the Hindutva Parivar and the hawkish military establishment. On the other hand, the fact that Sharif has been going out of his way to woo and engage the Indian leadership suggests that Pakistan's powerful military is also on board

Jawed Naqvi, the Pakistani newspaper Dawn's correspondent in New Delhi, offers an interesting expla-

nation. Drawing parallels between Modi's Pakistan visit and that of his more affable predecessor from the BJP, Atal Behari Vajpayee, in 1999, six months after the neighbors went nuclear, Naqvi points out that Vajpayee came up with the idea of the rush to Lahore in the wake of international furor over the burning alive of Australian Christian missionary Graham Steins and his young children by Hindutva zealots in Orissa.

The now infamous lynching of a Muslim farmer, Mohammed Akhlaq, in Dadri near Delhi over beef eating rumors in September earned for Modi equally bad international press. This even as his government has remained utterly clueless and helpless in the face of sustained protests by India's finest writers and artists over the past few months against the rising intolerance in the country. So Lahore offered relief to both Vajpayee and Modi, neutralizing in one stroke all the bad press and earning them laurels and applause all around.

Be that as it may, what now?

Whether Modi's groundbreaking visit to Pakistan acquires the historic nature of a Richard Nixon-like outreach to China in 1972 that not just revolutionized the relations between Washington and Beijing but paved the way for China's modernization and subsequent emergence as a global power largely depends on the Indian leader himself.

Modi has got both the political heft and pluck and enjoys the support of the hardline Hindutva Parivar and the hawkish military establishment.

On the other hand, the fact that Sharif has been going out of his way to woo and engage the Indian leadership by first attending Modi's crowning in Delhi and then inviting him over for his birthday bash suggests that Pakistan's powerful military is also on board. Without the nod from the other Sharif, it's unlikely that the Pakistani leadership would be so welcoming.

It would be a terrible shame and epic tragedy therefore if after the breakthrough of Lahore it is business as usual between the nuclear armed neighbors who have for the better part of their existence lived on the knife's edge.

God knows the people of India and Pakistan deserve a better deal than their opportunistic leaders have of-

fered them so far. While the South Asian twins take endless pride in being nuclear powers and spend a ludicrous proportion of their annual budgets on arming themselves to the teeth with fearsome weapons, the vast multitudes of their populations happen to be some of the poorest on the planet and still struggle for basics such as electricity, water, schools, hospitals and toilets.

Look at the fantastic story of China. It could never have achieved the dizzying heights of its economic growth, emerging as the fastest growing economy in the world today if it had remained stuck in a time warp, raising its vast, enterprising young population on a diet of hatred and mindless xenophobia. The US-China entente and subsequent disintegration of Soviet Union to some extent allowed China to focus on the nation building.

Imagine what an awesome difference India and Pakistan could make if they diverted the billions of dollars that they spend every year on acquiring fancy weapons and maintaining massive armies towards bettering the lives of their own people. Isn't it a shame that today Indians and Pakistanis can travel the world at the drop of a hat but cannot visit each other without a great deal of grief despite the fact that not long ago they belonged to one country?

Doubtless, the hawks and special interests, not to mention the self-anointed guardians of national interest in the media, on both sides are immensely powerful and have held the India-Pakistan relations a hostage of their hatred and absurd insecurities all these years. But if there is political will and the willingness to travel the road less traveled, nothing is impossible.

Prime Ministers Modi and Sharif owe it to their people to free them of the burden of history and allow them to dream of a shared, more promising future. The journey of a thousand miles, as the Chinese suggest, begins with one decisive step. The road from Delhi to Islamabad is paved with infinite possibilities. Peace is possible. Peace is doable.

Source: <http://caravandaily.com/portal/modi-in-lahore-and-the-road-less-traveled-aijaz-zaka-syed/>
Aijaz Zaka Syed is an award winning journalist and commentator on Middle East and South Asian affairs. He tweets @aijazzakasyed and can be reached at aijaz.syed@hotmail.com

Nehru in AMU



I By Dr Mohammad Sajjad I

During his tenure as the first Prime Minister of India, notwithstanding the immense charisma of Nehru, he was seen with great dissatisfaction by the Left. So much so that the most acclaimed of the Marxist historians of India, D. D. Kosambi (1907-66), while admitting to be a 'humble admirer of Nehru', subjected Nehru to criticism in his comprehensive review of Nehru's *Discovery of India*.

Though Kosambi also said, in the very same review, 'no person knows India better than Nehru', he also went on to caption his review: 'the bourgeoisie comes of age in India'. The 'Socialists' such as Jai Prakash Narayan (1902-79) and Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia (1910-67), the biggest defender of the backward castes, remained biggest of Nehru's critics, to the extent that Nehru's obsessive concern with the economic category of class made him almost oblivious of the deeper dynamics of the social category of

the caste as an institution of oppression. On the issue of Dalits therefore, his relations with B. R. Ambedkar (1891-1956) remained far from cordial. Simultaneously, for his 'socialistic' leanings, India's big capital always remained apprehensive of Nehru. The conservatives, bigots and religious reactionaries remained critical of him for his efforts towards secularization.

The interesting thing about Nehru therefore is: with all the reservations against Nehru among so many quarters, how could he create a 'fine balance' and wielded a charismatic influence upon the millions of Indian masses?

Precisely, this was something which provoked the AMU to host a talk on him in, November, the month in which Nehru was born in 1889! The Centre for Nehru Studies of the Dept of Political Science under the leadership of suave and articulate Prof. Asmer Beg, invited few scholars, historians, and speakers to deliver a talk on Nehru, by way of paying a tribute to this great nation-builder. The unflinching Congress-

man Mani Shankar Aiyar, an erudite diplomat turned politician, elaborated upon how Nehru's vision of India's civilisational journey is articulated in his vision of history—the Idea of India—in his *Discovery of India* (1946), which he wrote during his incarceration during 9 August 1942-23 March 1945. [Interestingly, at the same time, Wilfred C. Smith brought out his *Modern Islam in India: A Social Analysis*. Nehru's *Discovery* had benefitted from the pamphlet, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture* (1922) [of Tara Chand (1888-1973) who would later be commissioned to write three volumes of the *History of the Freedom Movement in India* (1961)], and M. N. Roy's *Historical Role of Islam* (1939), which shaped

Pro-Vice Chancellor, Brig. Ahmad Ali, gracing the event, and belonging to Allahabad, hence a “co-villager” of Nehru, must have been recalling certain nostalgic anecdotes from the Anand Bhawan. After all the Anand Bhawan once belonged to the AMU's founder Syed Ahmad (1817-98).

Prof. Irfan Habib (b. 1931) chose to remain anecdotal about Nehru. In his late 80s, he is much anecdotal these days. Would he bring out his autobiography? Just as another great historian of largely the same ideological persuasion, Eric Hobsbawm (1917-2012), wrote *Interesting Times*. Here is a disappointment for many. He remains reluctant



Nehru's imagination about polychromatic India].

Ironically, this was the period when Nehru's ideological adversaries, among his own countrymen, now asserting as the only biggest patriots, and also occupying the seats of power, were shamelessly indulging in fifth-columnist activities, collaborating with the alien rulers. Today, from certain quarters of the powers-that-be, there are worrisome instances of attempts by these very sinister forces to obliterate Nehru's unforgettable contributions. As Aiyar's articulation were laced with intermittent wit and sarcasm, in simplest and lucid Urdu, there were huge applause (and laughter too) among the riveted audience which was overflowing the auditorium. The

about writing his autobiography. This disappointment could be partly compensated by those around him if they would pen down their impressions about the intellect and persona of their teacher-mentor. But we are yet to see any such things. These associates surround him for their own personal academic benefits---taking suggestions about themes, titles, sources—to write on, get them checked, rather drafted, almost thoroughly, by him, mostly for publication in the ‘Proceedings of the Indian History Congress’. Will they take time out of these and will write about their mentor, who laboriously writes for them, to enhance their scores of Academic Performance Index (API) for their academic promotions?

By Irfan Habib's own admission, Nehru was somebody who sort of "re-founded" the AMU after India's Partition. This aspect of history, largely unknown to the people, according to him, was worth-sharing. What he didn't tell is that, in one of his essays, he has already evaluated Nehru as a writer of history and also because this theme was already taken up by Mani Shankar Aiyar.

Irfan Habib 'revealed' how, the migration of large number of AMU teachers to Pakistan at the time of Partition, had pushed AMU on the verge of closure. The worried Maulana Azad, the then Education Minister, rushed to Nehru, the Prime Minister, and who showed prompt seriousness of 'reviving' AMU to let it continue not only as a university but also as an institution symbolising India's civilisational characteristics of plurality and adequate concern for minorities.

The bustling campus of AMU then added what is now the Medical College, named after none but Nehru, the huge magnificent library named after Maulana Azad (1888-1958), and the Engineering College, named after another architect of modern India, Zakir Husain (1897-1969). Most importantly, all these generous steps were preceded by legislating an Act for AMU in the Parliament in 1950.

Irfan Habib shared his personal memories associated with Nehru and his warm relationships with many distinguished individuals of Aligarh including Irfan Habib's father, Prof. Mohammad Habib (1895-1971). His was more an indulgence in nostalgia, though he didn't share how Nehru had helped him out in removing some obstacles when he was to fly to the Oxford University for his doctorate on the agrarian system of Mughal India, a work which earned him tremendous laurels greatly envied by many of his worthy contemporaries.

Prof. Mridula Mukherjee, among the ablest of the students of Bipan Chandra (1928-2014), spoke at length on how Nehru dealt with communalism and communal riots, particularly in 1946, when the yokes of colonialism were yet to be thrown out completely. This was both a tribute to Jawaharlal Nehru as well as to Bipan Chandra. Because Bipan Chandra's take on communalism, as a product of colonial modernity, is basically an elaboration of what Nehru expounded in his *Discovery of India*. In the Mughal and Pre-Mughal India, communalism as an ideology was just unthinkable.

However, as it was no occasion of subjecting Nehru to criticism, the learned speakers quite aptly, didn't talk of something which Nehru missed---putting the criminal justice system in place towards punishing the rioters. Mridula didn't talk of why didn't the Congress ministry of Bihar appoint Justice Ruben Commission of enquiry into the communal riots of 1946? Despite her deep explorations on the theme, she did not even show an awareness of the fact that any such decision was taken and was pushed aside by Shri Krishna Sinha (1887-1961), the chief minister of Bihar, on the plea that its findings and indictments would embarrass and create misgivings among the Hindu Congressmen.

Prof. Aditya Mukherjee, spoke on the Nehruvian model of economic development with pro-poor social protective network, anti-imperialist independent internationalist outlook for the Third World, and pluralist democracy in domestic as well as foreign affairs, which enabled India to self-confidently go for a calibrated liberalization of economy in 1991. This was something the quintessential Marxist in Irfan Habib disagreed. As these talks were coming after the results of the Bihar elections, the audience expected him to talk on how much Nehru succeeded in achieving the goal of balanced regional development. Why does Bihar continue as India's "Internal Colony", as said way back in 1973 by a greatest living socialist thinker, Sachidanand Sinha (b. 1927)?

Did Nehru pay adequate attention to flood control, agricultural development, and hydro-electric power projects in eastern parts of India? These questions are being raised not by those bigots and reactionaries who want that the Nehruvian ideals should recede away from the historical memory. These are the concerns of those who identify with Nehru and his ideals, and are "today buffeted about in a sea of despair". In the words of the distinguished speakers, no leader, howsoever great, in this world has solved "all the problems once for all". The most enduring legacy of Nehru is to abhor and fight out the religious bigotry, majoritarian homogeneity, violent intolerance, and all such diseases. Long live the beautiful heterogeneity of India which endures because of the resilient institutions he created and the values he inculcated.

Mohammad Sajjad, Associate Prof.
Centre of Advanced Study (CAS) in History, AMU,
Aligarh (India)

On Arrogance, Humbleness, and Inferiority Complex

I By Khalid Baig I

It has been called ummul-amradh, or the root of all sicknesses of the heart. Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, warned that a person having even an iota of it in his heart will never enter paradise. This deadliest of all sins is kibr, or arrogance.

No one likes arrogance — in others. We never like a person who is haughty, too proud, or condescending. We detest a person who belittles us and has a huge ego. Similarly we love people who are humble, polite, and easy to talk to. We love people who give us respect and honor. Thus if we follow the principle of treating others the way we like to be treated, most of these problems might be cured. In reality, the treatment of ummul-amradh requires a deeper look.

For that we need to appreciate the difference between adab or manners, on the one hand and akhlaq or morals on the other. While adab deal with one's external disposition, akhlaq as defined by Islam deal with our inner thoughts, feeling, and attitudes. In a healthy personality, the manners and morals are in harmony. But it is also possible to have the former without having the latter. The first concerns itself with how a person deals with others. The second is concerned with what a person thinks of himself. Two persons showing humbleness in their dealings with others, may have exactly opposite ideas in their minds. One may do it out of his or her "generosity"; the other may do it because he genuinely thinks that he is not better than the other person. The first person only has a shell of humbleness, which will crumble when tested. It is the second person who is really free of arrogance.

Real greatness belongs only to Allah, our Lord, Creator, and Master. Human beings are just a creation of Allah — and a very small creation in comparison to the unimaginably vast universe. Anyone who understands this will realize that our proper status is only that of servants of Allah. In fact for a Muslim the real human model is none other than Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, who is the greatest of all human beings. His greatness lies in

being the humblest of all servants of Allah! It is impossible for any person who has this consciousness to entertain any notions of his own greatness.

This leads us to the definition of kibr, given in a famous hadith: "Kibr is to knowingly reject Truth and to belittle other people." This hadith exposes two strains of this deadly disease, both dealing with our exaggerated ideas of self-importance. The first suggests that I am more important than the Truth. The second suggests that I am more important than other people.

We know about the Quraish and Jews of Arabia who had come in contact with Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, and who knew in the heart of their hearts that he indeed was the Messenger of Allah. Their arrogance, though, kept them from accepting it. History has recorded statements from some of them who said we know he is the Promised Prophet but we will keep on opposing him to maintain our leadership.

While that was the most blatant form of arrogance, we can witness the same attitude on a smaller scale in our discussions and arguments. A person realizes that he was wrong, but then his pride keeps him from admitting it. No matter how polite or "humble" that person may appear to be ordinarily, this test shows the presence of arrogance in his heart. It is arrogance that keeps a person from saying "I am sorry."

The second strain involves our feeling of superiority with respect to other people. Islam's teaching is that one should never consider oneself greater than other people, because that Judgment will come from Allah, and Allah alone, on the Day of Judgment. None of us knows what our end will be, whether we will end up being a winner or loser over there. The person who appears to be nobody here may end up with eternal bliss because of his goodness that only Allah knew. The person who is a big shot here may end up among the sinners who will be punished there, because of his evil that only Allah knew. How foolish, it is then to congratulate ourselves over our fleeting "superiority".

What if a person does have edge over another person

in measurable worldly terms? How then can he not consider himself superior than the other person in that respect? The point is sometimes made in half jest: it is difficult to be humble when you are so great. Islam does not ask us to reject reality and imagine we don't have what we really do. Rather it asks us to take a deeper look at the reality and not be misled by a superficial perception of it. And the simple reality that escapes many is that our health, wealth, talents, and power are not of our own creation. God gave those to us as a test and He can take them back whenever He wills. Those who are conscious of this reality, their blessings will produce gratitude in them; those who are blind to it will develop pride and arrogance.

Some forms of kibr are subtle. If a person is embarrassed to bow to Allah in the presence of non-believers, that is a case of "kibr in the face of Allah," says Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi.

While throughout history humanity had agreed on the evil of arrogance and the virtue of humbleness (despite its failures in practice), this century has seen new dogmas that aim at changing the definitions of good and evil. Humbleness is no longer desirable. Rather, one has to avoid "Inferiority Complex." Alfred Adler (1870-1937) gave us that term. According to him, life is a continuous struggle to move from a position of inferiority to a position of significance. Those who fail to make the progress, develop inferiority complex, which can be treated by increasing self-esteem. Unfortunately today such pseudo-science is accepted as gospel truth.

The truth is that problems arise when we turn away from reality. A humble person is a happy, content, grateful person who thanks God for his blessings and has no notions of his own superiority. False notions of superiority or of one's entitlements in life, on the other hand, lead to frustrations and complexes.
<http://www.albalagh.net/general/kibr.shtml>

CHECK LIST

I want to begin with a quote from Paulo Coelho which says it all:

If you want to be successful you must respect one rule: Never lie to yourself.

Keeping that in mind always let's go forward:

1. What's the vision of your organization?
2. What's the strategy to achieve the vision?
3. What's the proof of concept that the strategy works?
4. What does your experience since inception show? Give data, not opinion.
5. What are the qualifications of your role holders?
6. How do they compare with role holders in benchmark organizations?
7. Who do you benchmark against and why?
8. What are your organizational values?
9. What are their operative definitions?
10. What are the metrics to show that your values are operating and at what efficiency?
11. What happens to those role holders who don't practice those values?
 Shortest way to extinction: Have values without metrics. You'll even feel noble as you expire.
12. How do you place yourself in terms of your influence nationally and globally? Give evidence, not opinion.
13. Which national and international bodies seek your opinion or consult with you about Muslim matters? Give names and dates.
14. Do you have a Think Tank? Who are its members and what are their qualifications?
15. Who is your media representative and what's his qualification?
16. What's the role of women in your organization?
17. How many women are members of your national and regional management?
18. What are their roles and qualifications?
19. Can a woman become the head of your organization? If not, why not?
20. What is your relationship on a daily basis (not token participation in public meetings) with other Muslim organizations?
21. What are your metrics to support your claim?
22. What differentiates your organization from the others?
23. What is your strategy with regards to collaboration with other Muslims Organizations?
24. Differentiate between actual grass root implementation and tokenism.
25. What percentage of your activities translate to your goal? What are the metrics? How do you know that the organization is not in an activity trap? What is the year wise data?

RAHBAR COACHING CENTRE, @ PATNA

Award Ceremony # 76

Date of Awards ceremony: 1st January 2016

Chief Guests:

1. Sunil Panday, Journalist from Sunmarg
2. Maulana Anisurrahman Qasmi, Nazim Imarat Sharia

Special Invitees:

1. Janab Shoaib Khan Sb, IPS
2. Syed Shabbir Barvi Sb, journalist from Al Watan newspaper
3. Janab Javed Ahmad Sb, Chief Editor, Inquilab (Urdu Daily)
4. Janab Md. Enam Khan Sb, convenor of Patna Chapter
5. Janab Sajjad sb, Teacher
6. Santosh ji, Teacher
7. Mahtab khan, BA Manager
8. Teacher Santosh Ji
9. Arun Ji, Teacher
10. Sajjad sb, Teacher

Nazim, Imarat Sharia was present, and distributed winter garments with his own hands, motivated the students to work harder, and gave precious advice and tips to them.

Mr. Sunil Panday, a journalist from Sunmarg, was impressed to see the program. He mentioned that he himself belongs to a very poor family and was forced to study in a government school. He said that he wanted to participate in this program regularly, because this coaching program caters to government school students only. He also offered his own services, absolutely free, to teach social studies to these students.

Javed sb, chief Editor of Inquilab daily gave away winter garments to students and expressed his view on importance of education.

Patna Chapter is thankful to following persons who donated for winter garments:

1. Imran wasif, B'Bay (10,000/-),
2. Monir Khan, Delhi (5000/-)



Winter garments were arranged by Patna Chapter and distributed among underserved students of RAHBAR Coaching Centre (RCC), Patna, during the 76th award ceremony which was held on 1st, January 2016 in the premises of Millat Urdu Girls High School at Phulwarisharif, Patna. Patna chapter distributes winter garments, every year. Thanks to brother Nurul Aziz Khan who came forward to raise fund for this purpose. He did this noble job all alone.



3. Nur khan, Delhi (5,000/),
4. Shakra Tashi, Delhi (15,00/),
5. Nikhat Yasmin Azmi, Patna (5000/)
6. Munawar Aziz Khan, Patna (10,000/),
7. Munir Azmi, Patna (2,000/),
8. Asmat Aziz Khan, Patna (1,000/),
9. Md. Tanvirul Aziz Khan, Patna (1,000/)

Total amount raised: Rs. 40,500/=

Total amount used: Rs. 40,515/

Bihar Anjuman thanks all the brothers and sisters who donated for this noble cause.

On this occasion Maulana Anisur Rahman Qasmi,

The First Step to Heaven

I By Zamiya Jay I

As Salaamu alaikum. I am Zamiya, eleven years old. I pour love from my heart and soul into everything I write.

I never thought I would actually cover my head until, what, eighth grade? To me, it seemed like a tiny, unnecessary part of my life, not an actual purpose. My mother wore the headscarf, and at school, hardly any girl was wearing the Hijab. I thought I would stand out, like neon yellow in a darkened background. I never thought it really was obligatory to wear it at all- until the day I found a special book.

Books are important to me. Writing is my heart and soul, and is not a passion, but a mechanism of survival. I needed it in my life- so of course, when I read that particular piece of art, I could not help, but become mesmerized. It told about a seemingly simple girl from the United States of America, who was struggling with keeping her headscarf – covered head high – she was strong, fiery, and fearless in the eyes of Allah Ta'ala. Along the way, she was faced with uncountable challenges – her scarf had been forcibly removed, Fitnah, discrimination, and a lot more. When I realized how indifferent she was, even with the Hijab – and that putting it on after reaching puberty was necessary.

I finally went up to my mother one fine day, my thoughts clashing with each other. You don't need to wear it. You look better with your hair all styled up. Don't do it for yourself or for others; you must look best in the Eyes of Allah (Subhaanahu WaTa'ala). I went up to her as she typed an article and told her my final decision.

“Mom, I have finally decided to wear the Hijab from the first day of school,” I anxiously announced. It turned out that she was overjoyed, gave me a hug, and took the whole family out for lunch the very next day. She styled my Hijab with pretty pins and a cool outfit, and we all went out. Even though my hair fell out quite a bit due to forgetting an under cap, all went well.

I did not wear it for the rest of the summer vacation, though. However, I did keep my promise for the first day of school!

When I went to school on the first day, my specially-bought blue Hijab wrapped around my head and my eyes sparkling with determination, I felt unbeatable – but also a bit nervous. However, it seemed to be totally okay. Loads of girls complimented me on the style and how well it suited me (even though some were plain snarky); the older girls and teachers congratulated me – and three other girls had worn the wonderful headscarf, too! By the end of the day, the three other Hijabis and I were discussing how we decided on wearing the Hijab. My mother took me out as some kind of celebration after school as well.

Now, it has been almost three months since I put on the scarf and strode with pride. I am now encouraging and doing Dawah, representing how a good Muslim girl should behave in public – but at the same time, being the same old silly girl I always was, striving for good grades, crying over anything and being all smiley the next moment, and being just the same person I was.

Nothing has changed during this time. I am sure that when I go to non-Muslim countries like the United Kingdom or the States, I will be faced with puzzled looks and fierce remarks. Still, I will never take off my scarf Insha'Allah. Instead, I will show all of them what a Muslim is, and hopefully change the minds of even the most ignorant ones with the help of Allah (Subhaanahu WaTa'ala).

My journey has just begun. I have a lot more to do – to influence the world with my talents, give them my earned knowledge, and much, much more. After all, I am still a little girl who has a lot more to learn about this world. I pray that our Ummah improves more and converts into something legendary- something so extraordinary that generations will praise us and we are in good books everywhere. Wearing the Hijab was only the first step of the stairway to Jannah – and I profusely hope, with all my heart, that I step upon each and every one of them, and that I eventually reach the glowing gates of the ineffably beautiful place all Muslims hope to reach one day: heaven. I will keep on climbing up to the next level of my Iman, Hijab on my head and eyes determined – being the same girl I always was.

Source: www.islaaminfo.com

The rule of “No risk No gain”

نہ تہاک چھتہ و خداتہاک چھنہ بوتاتہ و خداتہ بوتہ

ڈبو یا مجھ کو ہونے نہ بوتہ میں تو کہ یا بوتہ

Na tha kuch to Khuda tha kuch na hota to

Duboi a mujh ko hone ne na hota m

In the above quoted Urdu couplet, the poet regrets his very existence in this life. The concept of reward and punishment in the eternal life hereafter as a result of the test man has been put through raise a question: whether, taking up the test, was a compulsion or a matter of choice. The author, Abu Yahya, in his famous book, “Jab Zindagi Shuru Hogi – When life begins” talks on this subject.

“There was an occasion when Allah offered an opportunity to all of His living creations to enjoy His company eternally in the paradise. But to be able to do so, they first had to spend some time in the world without being able to see Him. All they were supposed to do was to obey His orders, worship Him, and submit to Him without seeing Him. Governance of the world was to be temporarily handed over in trust to the beings who accepted this challenge. The beings who accepted the challenge had to show that despite being the empowered rulers they were ready to obey Him without seeing Him. Those who used this authority and free will correctly were to be rewarded with the eternal company of Allah in the paradise whereas those who failed this test were to face punishment in the hell.

What happened then?

All living beings got scared and stepped back. The reason was that the Paradise was beautiful but the Hell was equally terrifying! Who in his right mind would present himself for such a trial? The emotional humans opted for this test. But, the decision to go through the test from Allah was taken by the collective soul of the entire humanity. Thus, it was a pre-requisite for Allah’s ultimate standard of justice to create every single human being and ask directly about the extent of the test he or she was willing to undergo. This happened because Allah is not unfair to anyone, not even in the smallest way. That is why he first created all human beings and then unveiled his complete scheme of the test to them. Obviously, majority of the human beings were already prepared

to take this test. Thus, they agreed to it being fully aware of its implications. However, for those humans who refused to take such a risk, the Almighty decided that they would take up the role of those children who die before reaching maturity. The same children will then become Ghilmán and Hoors.

Did the rest of the humanity agree to such a tough trial?

Allah showed his ultimate benevolence even in this matter. As we are aware, not everyone is tested in the same manner in the world. Each individual chose his or her trial that day. Those who had a lot of resolve chose the times of the prophets for their test. Their test was to believe in and support the prophets during those eras of widespread ignorance. The prime condition for their success was that they had to stand firm even in the face of worst opposition, to remain steadfast despite all kinds of challenges and to pass on the message of their prophets to other people. That is why there was a huge reward for them in the hereafter; however, in case they denied and rejected the prophets, they had to face a severe punishment as they had the benefit of direct guidance by the prophets. Examples of such people include Abu-Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, on one hand, and people like Abu-Lahab on the other hand, who was one of the worst enemies of the truth.

The second, and lower, level of the test is whereby people chose to become part of the nations of the prophets after the prophets had passed away. Their test was/is to protect themselves from going astray, sectarianism, deviations, and ignorance of later times while holding steadfast to the divine law. They were/are also expected to promote good deeds and to help stop people from bad deeds. Those responsibilities were/are assigned to them as they had/have the teachings of the prophets to turn to for guidance, and because they were/are born as Muslims. Therefore, they did/do not have to pass through difficult trials to recognize the right path. It also meant that they had/have more guidance available to them compared to other people; hence, they had/have greater opportunities to reap rewards. But in case of negligence, their accountability was/is to be very tough as well. Muslims belong to this group.

The third group comprises of people who selected an even easier test. They were/are born in circum-

stances where they did/do not have access to any direct guidance from the prophets. Their test was/is based on the innate divine guidance present in the nature of every human being, that is, a test based on belief in Oneness of God and universal moral values. Unlike other Muslims, they were/are not subject to the tough trials of following the divine law nor of the companionship of prophets through arduous times. Obviously, their accountability is also going to be quite lenient; accordingly their risk of facing dire punishments is also low and the opportunity to reap great rewards for them is also less.

What about the prophets?

They were the ones who decided to take the toughest test. That is why they received direct guidance from Allah and the criterion for their accountability was extremely strict too. We are well aware of what happened to Prophet Jonah. He had not committed a sin; he had only reached an incorrect conclusion and acted upon it without divine approval. As a consequence, the Almighty locked him up in the belly of a fish.

The real principle that works for all of the groups is the same. Those who received more guidance will face stricter accountability and consequently, will reap either greater reward or worse punishment. Those who received lesser guidance will face lighter accountability and therefore lesser rewards or punishment. However, the decision about which of the three groups each human being belonged to was taken by human beings themselves and was not decided by the Almighty. This implies that if one received more guidance in the world, it is at his/her own request. As a consequence he/she is a candidate for high level of success as well as equally severe punishment. It means he/she has taken a huge risk and the rule that ever works is – No risk No gain.”

In response to questions from readers the author replies:

“The basis of what I wrote is found in the Qur’an. The Qur’an has stated in chapter Al-‘A`rāf (7:172) that humans were born once, before the life in this present world began. The verse clearly mentions that at one point in time all human beings were present together. The occasion is commonly known as the Covenant of Alast.

Similarly, the idea that the human beings willingly agreed to be subjected to a worldly test is also explained in the Qur’an. The chapter titled Al-‘Ahzab

(33:72) clearly states that when this burden was offered to other creations, all of them declined to take it. It was only the human beings who came forward and accepted this test.

Both concepts as stated above, i.e. the presence of all human beings together in a previous life and their decision to undertake this test of their own free will are the basis of my extrapolation that each human being also chose the specific level of the test he or she wished to undergo. That is, each person chose one of the three tests: a test based on guidance found in one’s innate nature, a test based on being the direct addressee of a prophet or a test based on being amongst the followers and nation of a prophet after that prophet had passed away.

It is obvious that the tests of people in this world are not the same. We also know that Allah who repeatedly states that He does not inflict even the slightest injustice on his servants is conducting this test. How is it then possible that the absolutely just Allah would subject His servants to a test whose possible outcome includes the horrible fate of being sent to hell, without informing them beforehand of the details of the test and seeking their consent to it? It is based on these facts that I have presented this particular point of view in the book.”



Bihar Anjuman website Announcements:

1. We welcome 2016 with migration of biharanjuman's yahoogroup from Yahoo to IO Group [<https://groups.io/g/BiharAnjuman>]. You must have received a message already in your email, if you were subscribed to the yahoogroup. This migration will help the email group become much more professional with great new features. Kindly note that the email IDs which were bouncing have not been migrated.

If you were not a subscriber, subscribe now to benefit other group members with useful info, and to benefit from what they share in future, or what has already been shared since 14 July 2004 (all messages are retrievable from the message archives).

Group Email Addresses

- Post: BiharAnjuman@groups.io
- Subscribe: BiharAnjuman+subscribe@groups.io
- Unsubscribe: BiharAnjuman+unsubscribe@groups.io
- Group Owner: BiharAnjuman+owner@groups.io
- Help: BiharAnjuman+help@groups.io

2. At the onset of 2016, we are pleased to announce the new avtar of SABA [Shadi Assistance by Bihar Anjuamn] Online website (www.sabaonline.org), with brand new features.



User Name / Email ID	Password	Login now »
----------------------	----------	-------------

Not a registered User ? [Click here](#) | [Forgot Password](#)

Call Now: +1-647-367-3017

[Home](#) [About Us](#) [Contact Us](#) [Advanced Search](#) [Post Success Stories](#) [Membership Plans](#)

Find Your Perfect Match Today!

Gender : ☐ Male ☐ Female

Age in Years :

Religion :

Profile ID :

Photo Search :

Search



Announcement: y tuned for a new look of Bihar Anjuman - My RAHBAR website!

Eid-ul-Adha

Hajira Khan
Indian School Salalah
Salalah, Sultanate of Oman



Eid-ul-Adha is one of the two Eid (festivals) of Islam. Eid-ul-Adha marks the end of Hajj, the sacred pilgrimage to the Holy city of Makkah Mukarramah. Eid-ul-Adha also commemorates the Prophet Ibrahim's (peace be upon him) the unselfish act of offering to sacrifice his own son Ismail (PBUH) to one god Allah. To commemorate this outstanding act, people each year sacrifice a lamb/goat and other cattle animals on Eid-ul-Adha. Hence this Eid-ul-Adha is also known as the Eid of Qurbani (sacrifice). The meat is given to needy, relatives and friends. Eid-ul-Adha is from 10-12 of Zil-Hijaah the twelfth month of the Islamic Calendar. The skin of the sacrificed animals is given in charity. It is to be noted that ninth of Zilh-Hijjah is the main day of Hajj known as Arafah, on which day the pilgrims spend the day in the plains of the Arafat. On the tenth day the Muslims all around the world do the morning Salaat (prayers) in the Eidgah or designated big mosques. The sacrifice begins after this Salaat.

Bibliography:

1. Hajira Khan, Celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr, BaKhabar, Vol. 8, Issue 7, pp 12 (July 2015). Published by Bihar Anjuman, <http://bakhbar.biharanjuman.org/>.
2. Hajira Khan, Eidgah, BaKhabar, Vol. 8, Issue 7, pp 13 (July 2015). Published by Bihar Anjuman, <http://bakhbar.biharanjuman.org/>.

ONE CREATOR - ONE MESSAGE

[Kill not; Save Innocent lives]

The QURAN

“Because of this did We ordain unto the children of Israel that if anyone slays a human being-unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading corruption on earth-it shall be as though he had slain all mankind; whereas, if anyone saves a life, it shall be as though he had saved the lives of all mankind.”

[Quran – 5:32]

Babylonian TALMUD

“FOR THIS REASON WAS MAN CREATED ALONE, TO TEACH THEE THAT WHOSOEVER DESTROYS A SINGLE SOUL OF ISRAEL,³⁹ SCRIPTURE IMPUTES [GUILT] TO HIM AS THOUGH HE HAD DESTROYED A COMPLETE WORLD; AND WHOSOEVER PRESERVES A SINGLE SOUL OF ISRAEL, SCRIPTURE ASCRIBES [MERIT] TO HIM AS THOUGH HE HAD PRESERVED A COMPLETE WORLD”

[Tractate Sanhedrin Folio 37a, 39-40]