

Better light a candle than curse the darkness

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

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باخبر

# BAKHABAR

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BE AWARE, ALWAYS, EVERYWHERE

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COVER STORY

## Males and Females: "Just Friends"?

# BAKHABAR

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Khalid came and he was upset while saying:

"All of what we are in today (ie; the state we are today) of lowness and humiliation is because of these oppressive, corrupted rulers who have destroyed Islam."

Muhammad said to him:

"I did not see you today for the fajr prayer. So why weren't you present for it? Did the rulers prevent you from performing it?"

He said: 'No'

Muhammad said: "and why do I see you shaving your beard while you know that it is a sunnah of your Prophet ﷺ? Did the rulers force you to shave it?"

He said: 'No'

Muhammad said: "And the western clothing I see you wearing, did the rulers order you to wear it?"

He said: 'No'

Muhammad said: "And this sign of the cross in which I see hanging across your chest and on your shirt, are the rulers the one who made you wear it?"

He said: 'No'

Muhammad said: "Your garment exceeding past your ankles which is disobedience to your Lord, did the rulers order you with this?"

He said: 'No'

Muhammad said: "And that box of cigarettes which you are holding in your hands and trying to hide from me, did the rulers buy them for you?"

He said: 'No'

And then suddenly, Khalid's phone began to ring with the tone of music, so Muhammad then said to him: "This music tone on your phone, did the rulers put it (on your phone) for you?"

He said: 'No'

Muhammad said: "And before all of this, do you know the categories of tawheed which you worship your Lord with?"

He said: 'No'

Muhammad said: "Did the ruler prevent you from learning your belief?"

He said: 'No'

Muhammad said: "This is what is apparent, and what is hidden is greater, but I hope by this you have come to know that you ARE THE REASON for the debasement/lowness of your ummah.

Khalid said: "yes, you have spoken the truth." Then he stayed silent for a little, then he said: "But the rulers?!!"

Muhammad said: "Contemplate the statement of Allah the Most High: "Thus We make some wrong doers companions of others for what they earned (what they used to do)" (6:129)

So, Khalid said: "Yes! But what is the solution?!"

Muhammad (SallallahuAlaiheWasallam) said: "Allaah ﷻ informed us in His statement:

"Indeed Allah does not change the condition of people until they change what is within themselves" (13:11)

And Allah did not say "until they change their rulers"

End of conservation

Posted by shaykh Fawaz al-Madkhali رحمه الله

Translator: Abu AnasAtif Hasan

<http://salaf-us-saalih.com/2014/08/25/a-wonderful-conversation-worthy-of-being-spread/>



# Willing to Marry but to Whom?



**I By Nissar Nadiadwala I**

On one hand we have young Muslims born and brought up in un-Islamic manner, choosing the way of other cultures and ideologies, and on the other hand we have New Muslims born and brought up in Un-Islamic manner as well yet they choose to be an asset for the Muslim community when they join us. They are reviving many precious Islamic traditions which have been dead for us for centuries, and one of them is young unmarried men marrying widows.

One of the best obligations of Islam upon the society was widow and divorcee remarriages. Many Muslim women, who had lost their husbands, did not have to wait for long except for their iddah period, and marriage proposals of men flooded their guardians. There were young men who used to marry widows, divorcees and deserted women as a religious ritual. There were no fashion shows or vulgar display of beauties that gave a parameter to grade the looks of women. Young men in those days were awed by women whose stories of taqwa and sacrifice reached them, irrespective to their looks and age.

How many young men would be willing to take the hand of a widow today? When much of the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh) is being revived, no one draws attention towards this noble tradition except a few scholars. In fact our young men are totally governed by the view point of the society "what will people say?" Here is a list of excuses in many of today's young men for not finding a right girl, which I term it as 'The Cinderella Syndrome'.

My mother is looking for a girl for me  
My sister did not like her hair  
Her dress and her views are too religious and orthodox  
My parents are asking me to wait.

I wish that someone should pose a question to the fatwa websites, Dr. Bilal Philips, Sheikh Salman Oudha and other scholars of Fiqh- "Do young Muslim men also require the consent of their wali for their marriage?"

Due to this matrimonial chaos, the marriage market looks saturated with only a few boys available for an increased number of women. When the early generations of Muslims chose taqwa as the criterion for choosing a spouse, there was not a surplus of women waiting for marriage as there was a variety of "religious men" available and they were in abundance.

Today many young people, girls and boys, want hours of meetings and have scores of questions to discover whether they are compatible or not. Yet, many complain of unhappiness and wrong choices within a few years after marriage. The reasons are simple: Boys go for looks and just looks, and girls prefer wealth if they possess those looks.

Remember: Happiness cannot be judged by how much money your man spends on you but by how much quality time you spend with each other.

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# The 2015 King Faisal International Prizes

## Medals of the King Faisal International Prize



### By Sameen Ahmed Khan I

The King Faisal Foundation in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia has announced the King Faisal International Prize for the year 2015. The recipients in the categories are as follows. Service to Islam: Dr. Zakir Abdul Karim Naik of India; Islamic Studies (Topic: Cultural Heritage of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah): Dr. Abdulaziz Bin Abdulrahman Kaki of Saudi Arabia; Medicine (Topic: Intestinal Microflora and Human Health): Professor Jeffrey Ivan Gordon of USA; and Science (Topic: Chemistry) was awarded to Professor Omar Mwannes Yaghi of USA and Professor Michael Grätzel of Switzerland. The prize for Arabic Language and Literature (Topic: Venture towards Arabisation of Scientific and Medical Matters) has been withheld due

to insufficient fulfillment of the Prize requirements. The prize consists of a certificate, hand-written in Diwani calligraphy, summarizing the laureate's work; a commemorative 24 carat, 200 gram gold medal, uniquely cast for each Prize; and a cash endowment of Saudi Riyal 750,000 (about US\$200,000) to be shared equally. The winners will receive their awards in March in a ceremony in Riyadh under the auspices of the King of Saudi Arabia.

The prizes are named after the third king of Saudi Arabia. In the year 1976, the sons of late King Faisal (1906-1975) established a large-scale philanthropic organization based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and named it as King Faisal Foundation (KFF). One of the activities of the KFF is the King Faisal Inter-



national Prize (KFIP), to honour scholars and scientists, who have made the most significant advances to benefit humanity and enrich human knowledge. The annual prizes are in five broad categories. Prizes for Arabic Literature; Islamic Studies; and Services to Islam; were first given in 1979. Medicine and Science were introduced in 1982 and 1983 respectively. Each year the selection committee designates subjects or subcategories to each of the above five. The science subcategories cover a broad scope: physics; mathematics; chemistry; and biology by rotation cycle of four years. Over the thirty-seven years (1979-2015), there have been 239 laureates from 43 nationalities. The distribution is Service to Islam (43 scholars from 21 countries); Islamic Studies (35 scholars from 14 countries); Arabic Language and Literature (46 scholars from 13 countries); Medicine (63 scholars from 12 countries); and Science (52 scholars from 12 countries). Within Science, the individual subject recipients are Physics (17 from 7 countries); Mathematics (10 from 6 countries); Chemistry (14 from 6 countries); and Biology (11 from 4 countries). Within three decades the KFIP are ranked among the most prestigious awards. To date there are 17 KFIP laureates who also received Nobel Prizes (mostly after the KFIP). There are two KFIP laureates (in Mathematics) who are also recipients of the Fields Medal.

The prize for Service to Islam has been awarded to Dr. Zakir Abdul Karim Naik of India. Dr. Zakir Naik is the President of the Islamic Research Foundation in India (IRF: <http://www.irf.net/>). He was awarded the King Faisal International Prize in recognition of his outstanding services to Islam. He is one of the most renowned non-Arabic speaking promulgators of Islam. Dr. Zakir Naik has presented hundreds of public lectures and debates which explain the Islamic creed, defend its teachings and propagate its principles on the basis of the Holy Quran and authentic Sunna (sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad, PBUH). He has also paid considerable

attention to comparative religion, and became a renowned authority on this subject throughout the Islamic nation. His vast religious knowledge is not limited to one faith but to several other religions including Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism and Sikhism. He has even established a specialized organization for comparative religious studies and organized several training courses for scholars of this field worldwide. He has founded a television channel, Assalam (Peace Channel, <http://www.peacetv.tv/>), which remains the only television channel in the world specializing in comparative religion. Its programs are broadcast in English, Urdu and Bangali languages and viewers of the English Channel are estimated to exceed hundred million.

#### Main Features of the King Faisal International Prize



He has also established a series of schools, initially in India and subsequently in a number of Arabic and Islamic countries. These schools train non-Arab students from an early age on Arabic language and Quranic studies, in addition to regular classes of other curricula in English. A total of 43 scholars from 21 countries have been awarded the King Faisal International Prize for Service to Islam. The previous three winners from the Indian subcontinent are Sayyid Abul Ala'a Al-Mowdoodi (1979); Sayyid Abul-Hasan Ali Al-Hasani Al-Nadawi (1980); and Khurshid Ahmed (1990).

The prize for Islamic Studies (Topic: Cultural Heritage of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah) has been awarded to Dr. Abdulaziz Bin Abdulrahman Kaki of Saudi Arabia. He is a Consultant at Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah Development Commission. He is recognized for his distinguished research on the cultural heritage of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah. This is best demonstrated by his multi-volume Arabic text on architectural and historic landmarks of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah, particularly volume 7 which deals with the foundations and characteristics of the ancient architectural fabric of the city. In this research, the author combines cultural dimensions with field work and supports his study with various illustra-

tions including old and modern images, maps and other illustrations, making it a major reference in the field. A total of 35 scholars from 14 countries have been awarded the King Faisal International Prize for Islamic Studies. The two recipients from India are Muhammad N. Siddiqui (1982); and Ali Ahmad Ghulam Muhammad Nadvi (2004).

The prize for Medicine (Topic: Intestinal Microflora and Human Health) is awarded to Professor Jeffrey Ivan Gordon of USA. The intestines of humans contain 100 trillion viable bacteria. These live bacteria, which make up 30% of the faecal mass, are known as the intestinal microflora. There are two kinds of bacteria in the intestinal flora, beneficial and harmful. In healthy subjects, they are well balanced and beneficial bacteria dominate. These bacteria in the gut (alimentary canal or gastrointestinal tract) fulfill a host of useful functions for humans, including digestion of unutilized energy substrates, stimulating cell growth, repressing the growth of harmful mi-

sity. His research has opened opportunities for novel gut microbiome directed treatments to improve human health. A total of 63 scholars from 12 countries have been awarded the King Faisal International Prize for Medicine.

This year's prize for Science is in the area of Chemistry. It has been awarded to Professor Omar Mwannes Yaghi of USA and Professor Michael Grätzel of Switzerland. Professor Yaghi was born in 1965 in Jordan and moved to USA at the age of fifteen. Now, he is a Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of California, Berkeley, USA. Professor Omar Yaghi has made seminal contributions in the field of metal organic frameworks (MOFs). MOFs possess a wide array of potential applications including materials for gas storage, gas/vapour separation, catalysis, luminescence, and drug delivery. In the last two decades, he developed MOFs through innovative approaches to construct novel materials and explored their applications in

### Postage Stamps

On 3 April 2006, Saudi Arabia issued the following two postage stamps with the theme, "*King Faisal International Prize - Supporting Research*"



croorganisms, training the immune system to respond only to pathogens, and defending against some diseases. Professor Gordon is a Dr. Robert Glaser Distinguished University Professor, and Director of the Centre of Genome Sciences and Systems Biology at Washington University, St Louis, USA. He is recognized for his seminal work on defining the microbiomes genomic and metabolic role in human health. Professor Gordon's pioneering work and interdisciplinary studies of the human microbiome (microorganisms in the gastrointestinal tracts) has provided fascinating insights into the metabolic processes and the genetic basis of mutually beneficial relationships between the host and microorganisms in the human gut. His innovative research has provided major breakthroughs into the influence of intestinal microbiota on postnatal development, physiology and illness susceptibility in humans and has thus enhanced our understanding of the pathogenesis of complex diseases such as obe-

various fields, including encapsulation of bio-molecules, and capturing of gases such as carbon dioxide and hydrogen. Professor Michael Grätzel was born in 1944 in Dorfchemnitz, Saxony, Germany. Now, Professor Grätzel is a Professor, Director of the Laboratory of Photonics and Interfaces (Institute of Physical Chemistry), Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Switzerland. He is recognized for his foundational and practical discoveries in the development of photo-electrochemical systems for solar energy conversion. His world-famous Grätzel solar cells are simple and relatively inexpensive to manufacture, and they possess unique practical properties including flexibility and transparency. Professor Grätzel's work has had and will continue to have a major impact on the practical realization of solar-energy conversion. Here, it is interesting to note that this piece of work is optics-related. This is an additional boost to the on-going activities of the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies



(IYL-2015). It is to be recalled that by another remarkable coincidence both the Physics and Chemistry Nobel Prizes of 2014 are related to optics! A total of 52 scholars from 12 countries have been awarded the King Faisal International Prize for Science. Prof. M S Narasimhan is the only Indian to have won the KFIP in the science category (for mathematics).

Here, it is relevant to recall the Egyptian born American chemist Ahmed Zewail who pioneered the Femtosecond chemistry in the 1980's by observing the chemical reactions (a femtosecond is a thousandth of a billionth of a second). He was the first person to observe the formation and breaking of chemical bonds in real time. Ahmed Zewail was recognized by the King Faisal International Prize for Science in 1989 in the subcategory physics with the co-winner Theodor W. Hansch from Germany. Ahmed Zewail received the 1999 Nobel Prize for Chemistry unshared. Egypt recognized him by issuing the postage stamps in 1998 and 1999; Order of Merit in 1995; and Order of the Grand Collar of Nile in 1999. It is to be further recalled that the Science Historian Roshdi Hifni Rashed received the Award in 2007 under the category of Islamic Studies for the Topic: Muslims' Contribution to Pure or Applied Sciences.

The prize for Arabic Language and Literature (Topic: Venture towards Arabisation of Scientific and Medical Matters) has been withheld as none of the nominees met the criteria laid down by the selection committee this year. To date, a total of 46 scholars from 13 countries have been awarded the King Faisal International Prize for Arabic Language and Literature.

The topics for the five prizes for the year 2016 (1437 Hijri) are Service to Islam; Islamic Studies (Topic: Muslim Geography Heritage); Arabic Language and Literature; Medicine (Topics: Clinical Application of Next Generation Genetics); and Science (Topic: Biology) respectively. Further details for all nominations at: the King Faisal Foundation Website: <http://www.kff.com/> and <http://www.kfip.org/>.

#### Further Reading

1. King Faisal Foundation Website: <http://www.kff.com/>
2. King Faisal International Prize Website: <http://www.kfip.org/>
3. Nobel Prizes Website: <http://www.nobelprize.org/>
4. Sameen Ahmed Khan, The King Faisal International Prize for 2014, BaKhabar, Vol 7, Issue 02, pp

21-22 (February 2014). Published by Bihar Anjuman, <http://bakhbar.biharanjuman.org/>.

5. Sameen Ahmed Khan, 2015 the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies (IYL), BaKhabar, Vol 7, Issue 01, pp 17-18 (January 2014). Published by Bihar Anjuman, <http://www.biharanjuman.org/bakhbar/BaKhabar-January2014.pdf>.

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## Marvelous achievement by Student of Rahbar Coaching Centre Patna

It is extremely pleasing to share with you the news relating to Khadeeja Mastoor, a former student of Rahbar Coaching Center, Patna, who is studying in 4th semester at MANUU Polytechnic Hyderabad (her Branch is Computer Science and Engineering).

In a competition organized by All India Women's Conference (Hyderabad-Secundrabad branch), She bagged

1st Position in - Word search, Crossword puzzle.

1st Position in - Essay Writing Competition.

1st Position in - Crossword Puzzle.

She received award in racing too.

She has secured 830 marks out of 900 in first year of her Diploma Engineering Course.

May Allah bless her with The Success in both the worlds.

The assistance and support of "Bihar Anjuman" for these poor children is a very noble work. May Allah accept our effort. In-shaa-Allah we will achieve "The Goal".

News shared by Shahid Amin, Al-Kabir Polytechnic, Jamshedpur

# PUCL: Why Teesta Setalvad can't be arrested legally



By IndiaTomorrow.net,

New Delhi, 18 Feb 2015: People's Union For Civil Liberties (PUCL) today issued a three-page statement detailing as to why the arrest of civil rights activist-turned journalist couple Teesta Setalvad and Javed Anand would be in violation of the present laws. Gujarat High Court has last week refused their anticipatory bail plea but the Supreme Court has stayed the arrest warrant till Friday (19th Feb).

Prof. Prabhakar Sinha, President, PUCL and Dr. V. Suresh, General Secretary, PUCL in a joint statement said: "This is not the first time that Teesta Setalvad is being targetted through false FIRs. Earlier too in the Best Bakery case of Vadodara and the Exhumation case of Panchmahals, there were efforts to malign the name and credibility of journalists Teesta and Javed Anand; however, both were stayed by the Supreme Court."

"PUCL had brought to the attention of the NHRC

the type of persecution and prosecution by Gujarat police of Teesta Setalvad and Javed Anand and the CJP for persistently seeking justice for the victims of the communal holocaust in Gujarat in 2002 following the Godhra incidents. We had pointed out that the, "allegations of financial impropriety are easy to make; but the damage such allegations cause to individual reputation and self-respect is irreparable."

"Seen in this backdrop the dogged and repeated demand of the Gujarat police seeking the arrest and "custodial interrogation" of Teesta and Javed is a matter of grave concern," they said and pointed out three reasons:

"Firstly, we would like to highlight that legally the direction of the Gujarat High Court seeking custodial interrogation is in violation of the fundamental right under Art. 20(3) of the Constitution that "No person accused of any offence shall be compelled to be a witness against himself".

"Secondly, we would like to point out that factually



during the pendency of the anticipatory bail before the Gujarat High Court, Teesta and Javed in obedience to the directions of the court had presented themselves regularly before the investigation officers. They were subjected to hours of questioning each time during which they fully cooperated. Reportedly all documents including audited accounts, bank statements of the individuals and the Trust, resolutions of trustees and so on were submitted. Voluminous documents were filed before the Gujarat High Court as well. Hence the insistence of the Gujarat police for 'custodial interrogation' appears to be more a veiled threat of third degree methods and torture than any genuine necessity for investigation."

"PUCL would like to point out that the SC has clearly spelt out the law relating to arrest and custodial interrogation in the landmark case of 'Joginder Kumar vs State of UP' (1994). The SC has pointed out that arrest and detention in police lock-up of a person can cause incalculable harm to the reputation and self-esteem of a person and therefore no arrest can be made in a routine manner on a mere allegation of commission of an offence made against a person. Pointing out that it would be

"prudent for a police officer in the interest of protection of the constitutional rights of a citizen and perhaps in his own interest that no arrest should be made without a reasonable satisfaction reached after some investigation as to the genuineness and bona fides of a complaint and a reasonable belief both as to the person's complicity and even so as to the need to effect arrest". Stressing that denying a person of her / his liberty is a serious matter the SC said, "A person is not liable to arrest merely on the suspicion of complicity in an offence. There must be some reasonable justification in the opinion of the officer effecting the arrest that such arrest is necessary and

justified. Except in heinous offences, an arrest must be avoided if a police officer issues notice to person to attend the Station House and not to leave the Station without permission would do." ((1994) 4 SCC 260 at page 267, emphasis ours).

"Very importantly, the apex court also pointed out that "No arrest can be made because it is lawful for the police officer to do so. The existence of the power to arrest is one thing. The justification for the exercise of it is quite another. The police officer must be able to justify the arrest apart from his power to do so". The court thereafter pointed out that arrest and custodial interrogation that follows

should be only in the following circumstances: (i) if the accused persons will flee justice or (ii) tamper with evidence or (iii) intimidate witnesses. The ruling of the Supreme Court is now a statutory safeguard incorporated in section 41 of the Criminal Procedure Code as amended in 2010."

"None of these three situations exists in the case of Teesta and Javed, who have been regularly appearing before the authorities. They

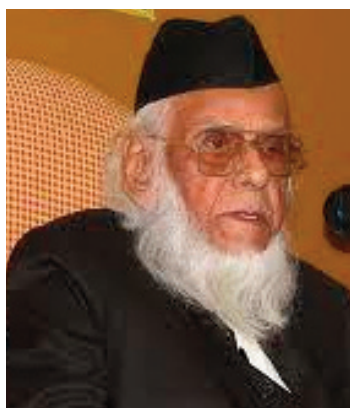
have always produced required documents even when it was clear that the police were on a fishing expedition desperately trying to find some evidence to pin against them. It is necessary also to point out that the accusation against Teesta and Javed are not of having committed heinous offences but financial ones, all of which can be established or disproved mainly on documentary evidences."

<http://www.indiatomorrow.net/eng/pucl-why-teesta-setalvad-cant-be-arrested-legally>



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# Eminent Urdu Poet Kalim Ajiz Passes away



**H**azaribagh, Jharkhand: Noted Urdu poet and Padmashree recipient Dr. Kalim Ajiz passed away at the age of 95 at his residence in Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, on Sunday.

Born in 1920 and a graduate of Patna University, Dr. Ajiz was the Chairperson of the Urdu Advisory Committee to the government of Bihar.

Author of several books, his poetries were highly regarded by his peers and public alike.

The following is an excerpt from an article published in PatnaDaily 12 years ago in 2003:

Dr. Ajiz, who is very proud to represent India, and Patna in particular, was born in a village in Patna district in the 1920s. He was a gold medalist in BA from Patna College and then earned his Masters degree in Urdu from Patna University. He also got his doctorate from Patna University for his thesis on "Evolution of Urdu Literature in Bihar." This thesis is now available in a book form. He served as a lecturer for decades in the Department of Urdu at Patna University.

In 1976, his first book of ghazals was released by the President of India in VigyanBhawan, Delhi. In the '60s and '70s he was the only Urdu poet who represented Bihar in the Red Fort Mushaira held every year in Delhi on the eve of Independence Day. One of the greatest Urdu poets of all time, Rahgupati Sahay Firaq Gorakpuri was a great admirer of Dr. Kaleem Ajiz. He sent his famous tape recorded words for Dr. Ajiz's first book while he was lying on his deathbed in which he respectfully said he felt jealous of Dr. Ajiz because of the ease in which he could express his thoughts through his verses. He said he loved Mr. Ajiz's poems so much that whenever he heard him reciting his ghazals, he always forgot his own works.

This humble and pious man is loved by everyone. Even with his frail health he travels a lot especially to Middle East and North America. He has some close relatives in the United States and Canada whom he visits whenever his health allows him to. Dr. Ajiz avoids any sort of publicity or fanfare despite the fact that he has hundreds of thousands of admirers all over the world. For the last 10-15 years, the winner of Padmashree award avoids mushairas as he believes their quality has gone down immensely and has become cheap and mediocre. Dr. Ajiz is very proud of being from Patna, the city that was also once known as Pataliputra and Azeemabad. He lives in a house on Ashok Rajpath opposite B. N. College. His elder son is a medical doctor in Patna Medical College Hospital, who is considering publishing his father's first book in Devnagri script.

Currently, at least a dozen people are doing their PhD thesis on the works of Dr. Kaleem Ajiz in various universities of Bihar. Since India is celebrating its 54th Independence Day this year, it would not be out of place to say that through his verses, Dr. Ajiz has expressed his innermost feelings about the freedom from British rule and considers our Independence as the greatest event of this era and the partition of 1947 and its repercussions as the greatest tragedy in the Indian history.

A man with such a rich philosophical background, it's not possible for us at PatnaDaily.Com to do justice to Dr. Ajiz's life and literary works in such a limited column. However, Patna should be very proud of this man and there is no doubt that his popularity will keep increasing even after hundreds of years from now.

In the words of this great poet:

"Yeh pukar saare chaman mein thi, woh sehar hui-  
woh sehar hui  
Mere aashiyyan se dhooan utha, to mujhe bhiiski  
khabar hui."

(There was this outcry everywhere in the garden that lo the morning has come, morning has come !!  
When smoke started rising from my nest, I also became aware of this.)

The author of several books and classical ghazals, Dr. Ajiz is a retired professor of Patna University and a recipient of the much coveted Padmashree award for his contributions to Urdu literature.



# Avoiding the Satanic 'Intellect'

*In the Name of Allâh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful*

This was a piece of advice from Hamad bin 'Atiq an-Najdi to Muslims in general, written around two hundred years ago. It finds itself very relevant today.

"...And it should be known that intellect ('aql) is of three types:

- Natural intellect
- Faith-based intellect obtained from the Prophetic light
- Satanic, hypocritical 'intellect'

And the possessors of this last type think they are something special, and this type of intellect is found among many people - most of them, in fact. It is the essence of ruin and the fruit of hypocrisy, as its possessors think that intellect is to please everyone and to not go against their interests and desires, as well as to gain their friendship. They say that the best thing for you is to be part of the people and don't cause them to hate you.

This is the corruption and ruin of the soul, and this is due to four things:

The first is that the one who does this has gained the pleasure of people by angering Allah, and the people are more important in his eyes than Allah. Whoever gains the pleasure of people by angering Allah will end up with the anger of both the people and Allah. It was narrated that Allah Said: *"When I am angered, My Curse reaches the seventh generation of descendants."*

So, if the one who is able to enjoin the good and prevent the bad abandons doing so, he will bring about Allah's Curse that will reach the seventh generation of his progeny, and this is proven by the verse: *"The disbelievers from the Children of Isra'il were cursed by the tongue of Dawud and 'Isa bin Maryam. This is because they were rebellious and would transgress..."* [al-Ma'idah; 78]

So, it is clear that this compromising person has ruined himself through what he thought would help him.

Second, it is inevitable that Allah will open a door of humiliation and disgrace for the one who compromises from where he sought honor. And some of the Salaf said: *"Whoever leaves off enjoining good and preventing evil out of his fear of people, the respect and obedience people had for him will be removed." So, if he orders his son or servant to do something for him, they will belittle his status. Just like he belittled the rights of Allah, Allah will belittle and humiliate him: {"...they forgot Allah. So, He forgot them..."}* [at-Tawbah; 67]

Third, if some sort of punishment is sent down, the one who compromises will be one of its targets, as in the verse: *"And beware of a trial that won't only afflict the wrongdoers among you..."* [al-Anfal; 25]

...And Ibn Abi ad-Dunya reported from Wahb bin Munabbih that he said: "When Dawud made a mistake, he said: "My Lord, Forgive me!" So, Allah Said: *"I have Forgiven you and placed your sin on the Children of Isra'il."* Dawud asked: "Why, O Lord? How can this be when You are the Just who oppresses nobody? I fall into error and You place the sin on others?" He Said: *"When you did this error, they didn't criticize you for it."*

And Ibn Abi ad-Dunya reported that Allah revealed to Yusha' bin Nun (Joshua): *"I will destroy 40,000 of the best of your people and 60,000 of their worst."* He asked: "My Lord, I can understand the worst of them being destroyed. Why destroy the best of them?" He Said: *"They didn't become angry for My Anger, and they would give the worst ones food and drink."*

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr and others reported that Allah commanded one of the Angels to destroy a town. So, he asked: "My Lord, it has such and such a person who is a zahid who worships You constantly!" Allah Said: *"Begin with him, and let me hear his voice. His face never once became red for My sake."*

So, the only way out when punishments descend is to be from those who enjoin the good and prevent the wrong, as Allah Said: *"So, when they forgot what they were reminded of, We saved those who would forbid what was bad..."* [al-A'raf; 165]

Fourth, this compromising person who seeks the pleasure of people is worse than the adulterer, the thief, and the consumer of alcohol. Ibn al-Qayyim said:

"The Religion is not just leaving off outer prohibitions. Rather, it is to fulfill what Allah Loves along with this. Most religious people today don't do this except when it comes to things that the majority of people accept and agree with them in. As for Jihad, enjoining good and preventing evil, giving advice for the sake of Allah and His Messenger to His worshipers, giving aid and victory to Allah and His Messenger and Book and Religion - these obligations don't even occur to them, let alone evoke a desire on their part to carry them out, let alone be carried them out by them!

The lowest of people in the Religion and the worst of them with Allah are those who abandon these obligations, even if he practices the most zuhd from everything in this world. It is rare to find from them one whose face becomes red for

the sake of Allah, and who becomes angry due to His limits being violated, and who gives all he has to help his religion. Those who fall into major sins are better with Allah than these people."

So, imagine that someone fasts all day, prays all night, abstains from all worldly pleasures, and despite this never becomes angry or has his face reddened for Allah's sake and doesn't enjoin good and prevent evil - such a man is the most hated of people to Allah and the least of them in religiousness, and those who fall into major sins are better with Allah than such a person.

And a trustworthy person told me that Shaykh al-Islam, the leader of the da'wah in Najd (Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab), once said: "I saw some people sitting in the mosque with their Qur'ans, reciting and weeping. However, they didn't enjoin the good if they saw it and they didn't prevent evil if they saw it.

I saw people sitting near them saying: "These are the source of benefit," and I said: "These are the source of disgrace." Someone heard me and said: "I can't say they are a source of disgrace!" So, I replied to him: "They are blind and mute."

And this is supported by what some of the Salaf said: "The one who is silent about the truth is a silent devil, while the one who speaks falsehood is a speaking devil."

So, if the one who compromises by remaining silent comes to know that he is from the most hated of people to Allah even if he thinks he is good, he would speak openly. And if the one who seeks the approval and pleasure of people came to know that by not



speaking out against their evil that those who fall into major sins are better with Allah than him - even if he assumes himself to be religious - he would repent from his compromise and would retreat from it. And if the one who is stingy with his tongue from openly proclaiming the command of Allah came to know that he is a silent devil even if he fasts, prays, and is a zahid, he would do all that he could to avoid being similar to Satan.

O Allah, I seek refuge with You from every action that angers the Merciful, and from every trait that makes us resemble Satan or compromise on our religion with the people of doubts, hypocrisy, and kufr.

And may peace and blessings be on Muhammad, his Household, and Companions."

[*'ad-Durar as-Saniyyah'*; 8/75-79]



# Beyond Separatism

A review of MUSLIM POLITICS IN BIHAR: CHANGING CONTOURS By Mohammad Sajjad

**I By Usha Sanyal I**

In *Muslim Politics in Bihar*, Mohammad Sajjad, an assistant professor of history at Aligarh Muslim University, breaks new ground in a number of ways. First, addressing Bihar Muslim politics during the colonial period leading up to Partition, he shows that unlike U.P. and Bengal, its two neighbours (which, together with Punjab, have received most of the attention by historians of Partition), Bihar Muslims did not embrace the separatist message of the Muslim League until 1946, when in the wake of massive riots in Bihar the Muslim League made major electoral gains on the strength of the slogan 'Islam in danger'. While support for separate electorates was weak among leading Bihar Muslim politicians, that for Congress and for composite nationalism—conceptualized as political unity with non-Muslim Indians combined with non-interference by the State in Muslim religio-cultural affairs—aimed at ending British rule in India was stronger through much of the early twentieth century.

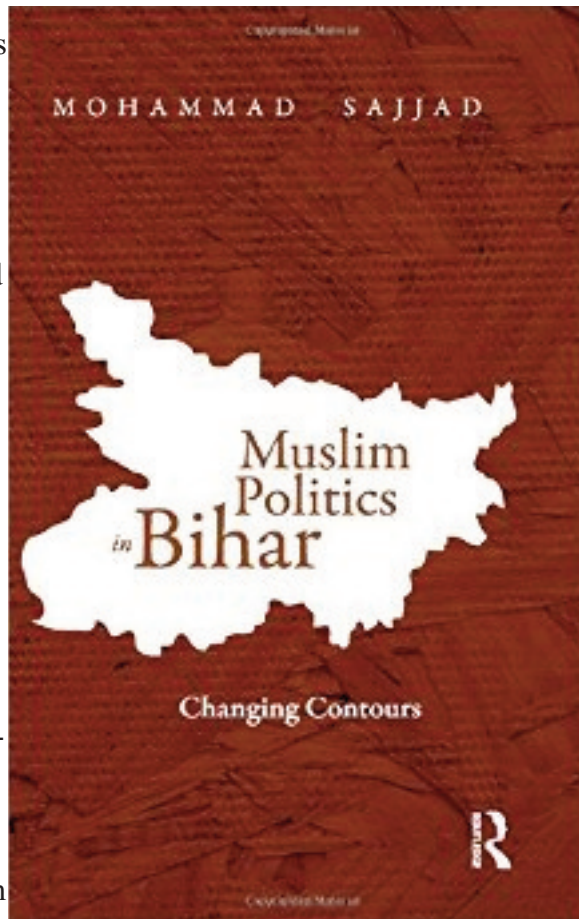
Second, Sajjad explores not only Bihar Muslim engagement with the Congress and the Muslim League, but also with the less well-known Muslim Independent Party (MIP), Imarat-e Shariah, and the All-India Momin Conference, whose politics were allied with the Congress.

This background in turn explains the post-Independence politics of Bihari Muslims. In both the campaigns which they have waged between 1947 and the present—that for the recognition of Urdu as a second State language until the late 1980s, and the struggle for social justice and political power since the 1990s through the creation of new reservation policies

which would benefit the most deprived among them—Bihar Muslims have participated fully in the democratic process in Independent India by mobilizing the masses for the attainment of their constitutionally guaranteed rights. The study thus seeks to challenge the idea that Indian Muslims bear 'responsibility for the partition of India' (p. xvi) by showing that in Bihar, Muslims had an antipathy to the Muslim League's Two-Nation Theory and a strong preference for a united, pluralist anti-colonial struggle. Furthermore it argues that contrary to the perception of Indian Muslims as 'isolationist', they have been fully engaged with the language of Indian 'constitutional, secular, pluralist democracy' (p. xvi) after Independence. The book uses a number of Urdu sources which have not been explored before, including biographies, histories, the Urdu press, and works of fiction.

The first four chapters of the book deal with the history of Bihar Muslim politics before 1947, and the last two with political mobilization around the issues of Urdu as a second language and Bihar's reservation policy. Taking these in chronological order, I will focus my comments on the Imarat-e Shariah and Momin Conference first, as they showcase inter-communal and class issues respectively, before turning to the post-Independence chapters. One can follow Sajjad's overall argument in the book by looking at these narrower issues.

The Imarat-e Shariah was established in 1921 by Maulana Mohammad Sajjad (1880–1940) on the advice of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in order to 'address . . . collective problems of the community in an institutional manner, so that the religio-cultural domain of the religious minority would remain a space wherein the state would not interfere' (p. 73). The



Jamiatul-Ulama-e Hind (JUH), associated with Deoband (whom the author wrongly conflates with 'Wahhabis'), had been established in 1919; at its 1921 annual session it approved the new institution.

The immediate context was the Khilafat movement. Azad and the Deobandi ulama decided that until the Ottoman caliph was free to appoint his own Indian amir-e hind, the JUH ulama would elect him and a council of ulama, raising the necessary funds through zakat and ushr collections from local networks. The amir and deputy (na'ib) amir's jurisdiction was limited to Bihar and Orissa. Maulana Sajjad became the deputy amir.

They would create shariah courts; they had their own weekly, the Naqeeb (71–76). The operation of the shariah courts is not discussed in the book, however. Under Maulana Sajjad's leadership, the Imarat-e Shariah became actively involved in nationalist politics side by side with the Congress, including the noncooperation movement (1920–22), civil disobedience movement (1930–34), and (under new leadership) the Quit India movement (1942). The Imarat-e Shariah's rejection of the Muslim League's Two-Nation Theory and defence of 'composite nationalism' (muttahidah qaumiyyat) was based on the argument that Muslims in 'minority provinces' (aqalliyyat-subah) had nothing to gain from separation, their situation being completely different from that of Muslims who constituted the numerical majority (aksariyat) in their provinces. In 1940, Maulana Sajjad wrote to Jinnah saying that the latter had no constructive programme of action to offer Muslims in minority provinces, and that inter-community affairs should be decided on the basis of 'the judicious treatment of all sects' (p. 185).

In the 1920s the Arya Samaj's Shuddhi movement in Shahabad district, aimed at converting the Malkana Rajputs back to Hinduism (pp. 104–5), marred relations between the Congress and its Muslim allies, as did the rise of the Hindu Mahasabha and the active involvement of the lower ranks of Congress leaders in it in the 1920s and 1930s (pp. 106–10). Other issues included Muslim bitterness at the Bihar Congress ministry's lack of willingness to include Muslim leaders in positions of authority in 1937–39, and periodic riots over a range of communal issues (the Shahabad riots of 1917 and the 1946 riots book-ending them in the colonial period). Things got so bad that in April 1947 a proposal was made to divide Bihar into Hindu and Muslim provinces; though not,

Sajjad emphasizes, into separate 'States' (p. 328). Nor did Muslim leaders encourage migration out of Bihar.

The discussion of the Momin Conference (founded in 1924–25), another thread running through the book, raises economic issues rather than communal ones. The Momins were lower-caste weavers who also called themselves Ansari. As Sajjad notes, the Momins' anti-British politics were fuelled in large part by the fact that the weaving industry had been wiped out by the 'colonial onslaught' (p. 321). The Momin Conference was also anti-League and pro-Congress (remaining so until the Bhagalpur riots of 1989, when the Congress Government failed to protect the Muslims, many of them Momins). In 1939 its leader Abdul Qaiyum Ansari described the Muslim League as an upper-class institution which 'history and experience [had] taught the Momins not to trust' (p. 198). In 1940 the Momin Conference denounced as 'blasphemy' the League's demand for a separate Muslim homeland (pp. 196–97). With a claimed membership of 45 million people, the Momins presented a formidable oppositional force in the early 1940s. However, the dynamic changed in the League's favour as a result of a complex combination of forces, among them the riots of 1946. The last two chapters of the book raise issues about political participation in democratic processes in Independent India. Here Sajjad once again contrasts the Bihar Muslims' experience with that of Muslims in neighbouring states. Given that Muslims could not 'express their demands for political recognition on the basis of religion' in the secular Indian state, 'language . . . emerged as a convenient tool of minority politics' (p. 242). In Bihar, unlike U.P., from the 1960s to the 1980s Muslims waged a successful multifaceted campaign to secure Urdu's status as Bihar's second official language, leading to the acceptance of their seven-point demands in the 1980s (1980, 1981, and 1989). Although in practice, given the high rate of Muslim illiteracy in the state (64%; p. 284) and the paucity of jobs related to knowledge of Urdu (p. 273), this was a somewhat pyrrhic victory, it allowed the Bihar Muslim leadership to put the issue behind it and to focus on a far wider one, namely, 'the demand for a proportionate share in the power structure' (p. 280) through designation of different Muslim occupational/caste groups as either 'backward' (Annexure II) or 'most backward' (Annexure I) (p. 283).

The broader context for this struggle is that post-



Babri Masjid (1992), Muslims became disillusioned with their religious leaders, giving rise to a crop of new leaders of lower class/caste origins (p.338). Sajjad lays out the complex dynamics of this struggle with great skill, based on the Muslim groups' separation into three distinct categories, namely, high born/upper caste (ashraf), low caste, comparable to the Shudras among Hindus (ajlaf), and 'unclean' castes (arzal). The terms 'Dalit Muslims' or 'Pasmanda Muslims' have also become popular for the two lower groups. Sajjad sees this 'social justice' movement as a hopeful sign: 'The central emphasis of these movements of the backward caste Muslims is to seek reservations around the concepts of recognition and representation in the structures of power. . .

Notwithstanding its limitations, its leadership does not come from the clergy. . . . It mobilizes the common masses of the relevant social groups, underlines non-religious issues of concern, and contains the possibilities of forging unity with similarly located caste groups of other religious communities' (p. 315).

The question that kept returning to me as I read the book was, what makes Bihar so different from U.P.? Why did Muslims in Bihar resist the Two-Nation Theory when so many in U.P., its next-door neighbour, also a Muslim minority State, embraced it? While the author certainly does address the issue in passing in parts of the book, the explanations he offers, especially for the colonial period, seem inadequate. For example, he writes that anti-British feelings in Bihar were strong because of the 'Wahabi' movement in the early nineteenth century, so much so that 'this tendency never peter[ed] out' and kept manifesting itself up to the 1940s (p. 48). This explanation is not supplemented by any further discussion until much later in the book when Sajjad discusses differences between Bihar and U.P. in the post-Independence period. Here the explanations—notably that in Bihar the Congress was highly caste-ridden and the Muslims were therefore valuable to different groups as a voting bloc—are more convincing, though still barely touched upon in just a few pages (e.g., p. 239).

It is an excellent volume which makes a valuable contribution to the field of South Asian history

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Imam Ahmad  
ibn Hanbal رَحِمَهُ اللهُ:  
"Whoever rejects the  
hadith of the Prophet ﷺ  
is a person on the edge  
of doom."  
[Ibn al-Jawzi in Mana'iq al-Imam Ahmad, pg 182]

Imam al-Shafi' رَحِمَهُ اللهُ:  
"Muslims are in agreement  
that when a person knows of a  
Sunnah reported from the  
Prophet ﷺ, it is unlawful for  
him to leave it favouring  
someone else's view."  
[Al-Fulani, pg 68]

Imam Malik Ibn Anas رَحِمَهُ اللهُ:  
"I am human; I say things that  
are correct and I err.  
Thus, investigate my view; all  
that which conforms to the  
Qur'an and Sunnah, accept it  
and all that which does not  
conform to the Qur'an and  
Sunnah, reject it."  
[Ibn Hazm in Usul al-Ahkam, 6/149]

Imam Abu Hanifah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ:  
"If I ever say something that  
contradicts the book of Allah  
and the hadith of the  
Prophet ﷺ,  
then leave my statement."  
[Al-Fulani in al-Iyqaz, page 50]

Imaam Ibnul Qayyim  
(rahimahullaah) said:

"When there is money in your  
hand and not in your heart, it will  
not harm you even if it is a lot; and  
when it is in your heart, it will harm  
you even if there is none in your  
hands."

[Madaarij As Saalikeen: 1/463]

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# A Civilization We Do Not Belong To

I By Syed Iqbal Zaheer I

Consider a few facts concerning books and libraries alone, not to touch on the more important, the educational and knowledge aspects.

Libraries then were an integral part of the life of the majority of people. They crowded into them as their counterparts crowd into shopping malls today. The buildings – the houses of learning – they loved were built lavishly and maintained lavishly, while their own homes were decorated with thatched roofs. Those massive buildings were topped by domes supported on monumental columns. With rooms large and roofs tall, every class of books had its own housing area: history, economics, social sciences, geography, religion, science, etc. Every subject had its collections in thousands. Windows tall, that would allow in luxurious swash of fresh air, had to pass over trees and lakes that surrounded the building, describe the luxury.

Those libraries were not an uncommon sight. Baghdad at one point of time had some three dozen libraries. Their racks were filled by the supplies from hundreds of book dealers. In Morocco, not as great a city of learning – and the learned – as Baghdad, one particular street had one hundred libraries and bookshops. It looked as if books were the main business of the people of the town, as if they ate and drank them.

Zaytuna Mosque library in Tunisia stocked 100,000 books. But it was not an exceptional case. Every

mosque in the Islamic world, particularly in the northern Arab provinces from Marrakash to Bukhara to Ray to Andalus, had libraries attached to them. The books were donated to the mosques as waqf property. Khateeb al-Baghdadi had given away his personal library as waqf – for the delight of voracious readers. In addition, knowledge-hungry men borrowed books from personal libraries or read them on the spot. Scholars spent years searching material through libraries spread as far wide as a thousand miles. Late in the years, Zarkashi, the writer of 4-

volume “Al-Burhan fi ‘Ulum al-Qur’an,” whose book is still extant, cites hundreds of books from which he took his material.

Bookshops too were not to be left behind by the libraries for their luxurious atmosphere. People came in not merely looking for titles, but also to meet with other like-minded scholars, to discuss what was there within two hard covers of the books, over tea and refreshments in no short supply within the bookstores. The bookstore owners themselves were bookworms, knew the author’s level of learning, quality of material the author had presented, and could easily

advise the novices or the specialists, on the contents of a book.

Bookstores and libraries were, however, not the only place where you saw piles upon piles of books, new and old. Every second man’s home had its own library. Imam Muslim had to forage through a whole night amongst his books, to find a particular hadith he wished to double check. Jahez had such a tall library in his house, that when the books fell on him they buried him to bestow martyrdom on him. When

*The Abbasid Caliphate created a civilization to which we do not seem to belong. Except for morals and well-spread piety, its spirit was more in consonance with the Western civilization, at least so far as knowledge and learning are concerned, than with the Muslims of today’s world. Indeed, today’s Muslims seem to be at an irreconcilable hostile confrontation with the civilization of the Abbasids. To be sure, if it is said that today’s Muslims stand apart in complete contradiction with – not only the Abbasid – but their entire past, root and branch, then, it would be no overstatement.*



scholars moved, they carried their books on a dozen camels and when libraries were moved, they needed hundreds of camels. Khateeb wrote a history of Syria, never like its kind has been written since then in any language. The 30-volume books of the east or west, past or present, pale before it. Translated into English, its 80 Arabic volumes would need 150 fat volumes today. In the Bhatkal library, arranged on tables, they run into four meter length. It was in this tradition, that as late as the 19th Islamic century, Shah Abdul Aziz had some 15-20,000 books in his private library, of which, he had not missed to ready any.

Referring to the intellectual activities of the Abbasid period, Phillip K. Hitti wrote, “When, therefore, we speak of Arab medicine or philosophy or mathematics, what we mean is the learning that was enshrined in Arabic books written by men who were themselves Syrians, Persians, Iraqis, Egyptians or Arabians Christians, Jews or Moslems and who drew their material from Greek, Aramaic, Persian and other sources.” (Syria, a Short History, Macmillan, New York, 1959, p. 141, pdf)

Imagine the influence of the lingua franca of Islam – Arabic – that the all-time most influential Rabbi Maimonides, wrote his famous commentary on Mishna, apart from several others such as “Dalaat al-Haa’ireen” – books of Jewish interest – in Arabic. Compare that situation with that prevalent in any country of today’s Muslim world. It is, at best, only large cities that can be proud of a library. While in the USA every village has a library, many towns of the Islamic world, especially Asian, miss them altogether. An acquaintance who peeped into a village library in USA, found a few books on Islam too, including one on the life of Bilal. Not many Muslim libraries will boast of the life of this, their perennial hero, and a constant and un-drying theme of their preachers.

Muslim libraries of today are housed in decrepit buildings, dimly lit, with plaster falling off from every wall. They are poorly furnished, stink from inside, and are surrounded by filth and squalor generously left to rot all over around the building. Furniture creaks. Books are old, torn, and some incomplete. Volumes are missing, good books have disappeared, and the unwanted works – worthy of waste baskets – are lined up in racks in disorderly manner. No catalogue will lead to a book of demand – if the book is still there in stock. Many entries of

the catalogues are missing, about which no one knows how they were lost. The librarian and attendants hardly know what they have, and are, invariably, clerks and officials who deal with books as vegetable merchants deal with potatoes and cucumber. They are, so to say, unlettered, and completely disinterested in their jobs.

The visitors to the libraries of today’s Muslim world come in to pass time, to browse through colorful magazines, where it is illustrations and photographs that catch their eye. If they read an article, it will be either on a sportsman, a celebrity or a film hero. Hardly ever will they borrow any book. The old religious manuscript-type of priceless volumes, which could be sold to the Western libraries at good price, are of no use to them.

In consequence, good authors and their knowledge-bearing books have disappeared from bookstores, from printing presses. Not a single readable title has appeared in India in any language since about 30 years. For the non-Arab world, Arabic has become a language of the Martians. After the standards of learning were lowered when books began being written in Urdu, Malay, and other vernaculars, which were a mere shadow of Arabic books, now it is the turn of books in English, which are shadows of shadows. The language of these English books seems to be in an English which has been invented anew. The language is poor, diction defective, expressions vague, sentences enigmatic, and the text most boring.

Such is also the quality of religious literature available on the fantastic, the beloved, authoritative, modern source of deep knowledge and profound learning: the Net. To sink anyone into an ocean of ignorance and stupidity, a man may be advised to obtain his knowledge of Islamic disciplines from the literature on the Net – a Sanctum Sanctorum of the disputants in support of their deviant opinions. At the international level, but, once again, specifically in the non-Arab world, the graph indicating the level of Muslim ignorance has been rising up, and up, steadily, and it seems it will soon become completely vertical.

No Jama’ah, group, or study-circle pays any attention to qualitative learning. At best they indulge in, as a Western writer aptly described, “ever more perfect re-statement of the stated.” The halaqas are a good place for a little nap. The speeches are what

you would have heard in your childhood. When they speak of knowledge, they mean acquaintance with what their founding fathers wrote. Their's is the final authority, and their books the Bible. To differ with them is to commit Kufr. To criticize a Jama'ah is to ask for an exit ticket. To talk of Arabic, is like talking of Sanskrit. Qur'an and Sunnah are slogans to help netfresh adherents. The latest victim of the carion call is handed over pamphlets, instead of the promised Qur'an and Sunnah. To differ with the statements, guidelines and fatwas of the minor contemporary scholars of those pamphlets, who are not known outside their countries, but because of the propagandists, is abid'ah. To criticize the renowned scholars of the past, of outstanding repute, is the Sunnah faithfully followed by members of the Jama'ah. The Lilliputian who most loudly criticizes the most learned of the past, is the winner of the hotly contested leadership in his group.

Hardly are the Muslims of today aware that scholars of the West having lost hope in their own life, culture and society, that they will ever recover from the on-going decline, are now reading more and more of those books whose titles are unknown to the modern-day Muslims. Most new biographies of the Prophet are being written by Western intellectuals. Thorough going, well researched articles on Islamic topics are being produced by Western writers. The best civil, economic, political and even religious aspects of Islam and Muslims of the past and present, are being explored by Westerners. As an example, a single academic Western site offers as its weekly contribution 10 books and articles concerned with Islam. Leave alone the contents, many titles are beyond the comprehension of today's argumentative protagonist of Islam:

1. The Identity of the Sabians: Some Insights, Dov Schwartz and Raphael Jospe (eds.),
2. [Toward] Abstract Models for Islamic History (working paper), by Maxim Romanov | Bookmarked by Fatma KIZIL
3. Tafsir and Islamic Intellectual History: Exploring the Boundaries of a Genre, by Andreas Goerke | Bookmarked by Fatma KIZIL
4. Violence in Islam, by Michael Schmidt
5. Trying Islam: Muslims before the European Court of Human Rights, by TuranKayaoglu
6. Three Takes on Islamophobia, by TuranKayaoglu. International Sociology. 27(5): 509-515,
7. Structural changes in the settlement geography of Medina, by Mehran Esmaeili

8. "What's there under your hijab?" What do International Muslim Graduate Students in the U.S. report about...? by Methal Marzouk

9. The Education of Islamic Boarding Schools; Religious Humanism Perspective Study by Mukodi Dr

10. Auto-Bio/Ethnography as a Curriculum in Cross-Culture Communication: A Voice from the Other Shore by Methal Marzouk

(<https://blu176.mail.live.com/?tid=cmj8n6aUOi5BGiVQAjfeM0hg2&fid=flinbox>)

Leslie Hazleton – a British Jewess – delivered a speech at TED, on the Qur'an, in the 20 allotted minutes, without referring to any note carried in the hand, that astonished many a Muslim. Describing the beauty and power of the Qur'an, in such exemplary rhetoric, she did what no Muslim scholar of Arab or non-Arab world is capable of delivering today. Rumi's mystical poetry rendered into English, are the best-selling titles in the West. Shah Waliyullah's difficult classic, "Hujjatullah al-Baligha," is now of such interest that it sees a translation – for the first time – into English by the learned society in Brill, Holland. Books of other similar renowned Muslim scholars of the past are in the pipeline. The texts of such books are, for today's Muslims, filled with such riddles as to tire them out by the third line – but they are of interest to those who are looking at how they could benefit from them.

There isn't any quick-fix solution to the problem of rising ignorance, not among the common people, but among those who think they are educated. Scholars, Da'wah workers, Jamaa'aats and anyone concerned, need to shove back their differences and courageously take up the task of educating the Ummah's educated class. A hundred thousand mosques conducting classes in basic Arabic language and delivering Dars on Hadith on weekly basis, for next ten years, will turn the tides; (yes, dars al-hadith and not the Qur'an, because once a man learns a bit of Arabic, his attachment to the Qur'an grows). It might sound a stupendous task, but Muslims of the past have demonstrated their penchant for stupendous tasks.

<http://www.youngmuslimdigest.com/editorial/02/2015/civilization-not-belong/>

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# Human Rights & Human wrongs

I By Israrul Haque I

How can we expect to bridge the ever deepening differences between the fiercely angry Islamic world and the West, whereby the Islamic world views America and the West as imperialist regimes trying to suppress Islamic propagation and values whereas the West undoubtedly considers every practicing Muslim and freedom fighter as extremist?

The issue is that at the moment the difference has become so large that the Islamic world thinks that the West is targeting Islam as a religion, while the West thinks that Islam as a religion is a religion of extremism and intolerance and confrontation.

My conviction is as I am a firm believer of a two pronged strategy currently required to be executed, one of the prongs of this strategy is to be executed by the Islamic world, in that we have to crystallize our thoughts, we have to decide whether the way forward is a way of confrontation, extremism, militancy. Or the way forward is one of human development, of emancipation of the Muslim world, which is the worst off at the moment in all-social indicators. So therefore having addressed political disputes, poverty and education we would be addressing the core issue which leads to extremism, fundamentalism and militancy. Thus, the goal of the moderate Muslim is to develop, establish and nurture a society driven by Faith, not by the fear of the Islamophobes. The point is that the structure of the government becomes secondary to this goal.

Unfortunately, there is no model in the world except what was established by Prophet Mohammed PBUH and his immediate companions. Each of the major governments in the so-called "Muslim world," regardless of their claims, has drifted from this foundation. A full range of political systems exist within the Muslim world - from out and out dictatorship in Egypt/Syria etc (for example) to relatively liberal democracy in Malaysia.

The simple fact is that all the governance systems in place in the Muslim world, including Malaysia, contradict Islam and seek to marginalize it in favour of secular western models of statehood and statecraft. This is demonstrated by the fact that none of the constitutions of the states (except K.S.A) represent-

ing the Muslim peoples is based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah, indeed, none of the states in question dare claim that they are the embodiment of Islam or, at least what is needed to constitute an Islamic nation or polity, facilitating Muslims to live by Islam. Because the so-called moderates' grasp of political aspects of Islam is so poor and because they carry the concept of statehood and statecraft inculcated into them in the form of non-Islamic western models, there is no hope that these intellectuals are a source of enlightenment. The heart of success lies in bringing a system where man is not sovereign, because the results of that are too clear for us to see. A sovereign man decides what is right and wrong according to his interests. Hence from genocides to open exploitation, colonialism is a constant feature of democratic states.

In India, thousands of Muslims were killed, are they asking anything about that? And by the way nothing has happened there. Missionaries have been killed in India also, Muslims have been killed - Sikhs have been killed. But they are the most democratic and the most secular state that the world recognizes.

Muslims never built gas chambers or systematic massacres of non-Muslims, they certainly would not have used nuclear weapons on a nation that was on its knees. Why? Because the Islam do not drive man's lustful desires to gain control of other nations by any means necessary: Certainly the way forward is one, as I call it, enlightened moderation. Now this is what we need to analyze in the Islamic world and adopt the course of enlightened moderation by establishing all over the Islamic world a real, just, progressive Islamic welfare states based on the principle of justice, equality, brotherhood, and freedom. On the other hand, the single strategy to be executed only by the Islamic world will not work. Therefore the west has to deliver the other prong of the strategy. And the second prong has to be delivered by the west is, that all political disputes all of them involve Muslims unfortunately and they seem to be on the receiving end, must be resolved with justice and this justice needs to be seen to be done to the Muslim world not just talked or deliberated.

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# Males and Females:

## "Just Friends"?

By Nabila Rizvi (edited)



**A**fter a long day of hard work with your peers on a project, a sister suggests that all of you hang out at the pizza place nearby for a late lunch. The problem is, your group of peers is made up of both guys and girls. "But we're all friends!" protests the sister when you, as a brother, bring up the issue.

**So you think about it and agree, because after all, you say – "She's like a sister to me."**

Key phrase here: "like a sister." She isn't really your sister, which means that there are limitations in how you relate to her. Nowadays, under the guise of Islamic brotherhood and sisterhood, many are unfortunately committing sins in the name of friendship. Islam, however, does not permit such close relationships between non-Mahrams.

Of course, living in the West, there are times when non-Mahrams do interact – but there is a difference between how we do so with our colleagues and with our friends. We interact on a regular basis with our colleagues regarding the work that has brought us together on a professional level. We also interact regularly with our friends, but our topics of conversation are not restricted to just business. Furthermore, we spend time with our colleagues at university or at the workplace – basically, any place that is relevant to business meetings. However, we can meet our friends in both formal and informal settings.

Our colleagues and friends are not one and the same. Keeping that in mind, we are supposed to interact with non-Mahrams as colleagues, not as friends. Unnecessarily spending time with non-Mahrams – doing things like hanging out or having long conversations just to kill time – is out of the question, because that is what we would do with a friend.

### Islam on Cross-Gender Friendships

As Muslims, everything we do is with the intention of gaining the pleasure of our Creator. We are supposed to be constantly aware of the presence of Allah, and to strive to get closer to our Beloved by following the teachings of the Prophet and his Ahlul

Bayt (peace be upon them). In line with those teachings, the concept of Hijab for men and women is one of the fundamental aspects of Islam. When it comes down to the core of the matter, all forms of Hijab are for the purpose of maintaining God-consciousness



and respect when we interact with non-Mahrams out of necessity.

However, mixing with non-Mahrams and going out of our way to spend time with them obviously defies those ideals of Hijab. It's as simple as this: brothers and sisters who are not Mahram to each other are not supposed to interact when there is no point in doing so, and any interaction that does take place is supposed to be done in a professional manner. Conclusively, the idea of non-Mahram boys and girls spending time together as "friends" is not endorsed by Islam.

Also, we need to realize that being Muslim doesn't make us immune to falling into sin. Just because a sister wears a headscarf and a brother sports a beard



does not mean it is okay for them to become friends. As Muslims, we are instructed to follow guidelines for our own benefit, and in this situation too there is wisdom. Just as we are to abstain from sitting at a table that has alcohol bottles on it and just as we are to abstain from listening to music, we are to abstain from developing non-Mahram friendships because of the greater sins that we could be led to commit.

### Studies on Cross-Gender Friendships

Allah is the One who created us, and He knows the details of the human system better than we can ever discover. It stands to reason that whatever He commands us to do and to stay away from is logical, because He

would not ask of us something that is impossible to do or that is harmful for us.

Whether or not we acknowledge it, there is a scientific aspect of attraction in cross-gender "friendships". Our brains release chemicals upon interaction with others, and the amount released increases as we spend more time with a

person of the opposite gender. We are fooling ourselves if we try to ignore these facts and be "just friends" with non-Mahrams, because then we will be treading thin ice over a sea of sin in which we will lose focus on our journey of getting closer to the Almighty.

More often than not, it seems that befriending someone of the opposite gender has become the first step to eventually turning the friendship into a more intimate relationship. So whether or not it is clearly stated aloud by the non-Mahram individuals them-

selves, studies show that non-Mahram friendships are, in reality, made for inappropriate reasons.

**But..**

"What's so wrong about it?" That question is usually followed by excuse after excuse, yet each reason that is always given has many flaws. Non-Mahram friendships are not permitted in Islam, no matter how much one may try to justify them by saying, "But..."

**"It's a normal thing these days."**

Everyone is best friends with a person of the opposite gender these days, so what's the big deal if we

go with the flow? The big deal is that it's wrong. Just because everyone else is doing something, that doesn't make it right.

In order to promote a lifestyle of selfishness and immorality, society pressures the public from all around. Be it through sit-coms, books, movies, or real-life examples, we are faced with a smorgasbord of practices that have become common. This idea

**“FRIENDSHIP IS NOT SOMETHING YOU learn IN SCHOOL. BUT IF YOU HAVEN'T learned THE meaning OF friendship, YOU REALLY HAVEN'T learned ANYTHING.”**

**Muhammad Ali**

of "friends with benefits" – the concept of having a friend of the opposite gender with whom one has physically intimate relations, while both still consider each other to be "just friends" – has permeated the fabric of our society, so much that it is no longer considered wrong. Yet the relation of "friends with benefits" does not truly provide anything but momentary pleasure; it destroys the moral compass by promoting easy indulgence in carnal desires, it shatters the honorable concept of being committed to one person, and it severely blackens the soul by

gaining the displeasure of Allah.

As mentioned in the above scientific studies, the question of "what if we were more than just friends?" is always in the air. So why go through all that doubt and put ourselves in a situation that has a great potential to become sinful?

### **"I know my intentions are pure."**

First of all, what does it even mean to "have a pure intention" when it comes to being friends with a non-Mahram? Second of all, even if you have no ill intentions, Shaitan has promised to mislead any person that he can, so what makes you think you're immune to his whispers? We have already been clearly warned in the Holy Qur'an, "Did I not charge you, O children of Adam, that you should not serve the Shaitan? Surely he is your open enemy." (36:60) We have to be on guard and be able to abstain from situations that are not only spiritually harmful but even potentially spiritually harmful.

Ayatollah Sayyid Ali al-Sistani's response to this can be found in his book, A Code of Practice for Muslims in the West:

### **328. Question: Is it permissible for a Muslim youth to accompany the girls who study with him in foreign universities for walking together, in vacation tours, etc.?**

Answer: It is not permissible, except with surety that he will not commit a forbidden act.

To have absolute surety of oneself is the condition here, and not everyone can claim this sense of surety. In order to qualify for such a claim, one would have to be the kind of person who – at the very least – has impeccable God-consciousness and Hijab in that (s)he keeps the gaze lowered, does not participate in idle chatter, and has control over his/her thoughts from wandering into inappropriate territory. Even then, the manner in which such a person would interact with non-Mahrams would end up falling under the "colleague" category and not that of "friend". Recalling the manner of our Infallibles (peace be upon them all), they fit this pious description perfectly and had the strongest of faith, yet we do not see evidence of them ever having befriended non-Mahrams or having spent time with them without official reasons.

And assuming that our intentions are pure, what about the intentions of our non-Mahram friend? We

**A PERSON WHO REMINDS  
YOU TO "FEAR ALLAH"  
IS YOUR TRUE COMPANION  
WORTH MORE THAN  
ANYTHING AND  
EVERYTHING THIS  
WORLD CAN  
POSSIBLY OFFER.**

**- ABU MARYAM**

cannot claim to be absolutely sure of his/her intentions, so it doesn't make sense to put ourselves in that situation. It's one thing to be confident in the strength of our faith in the face of temptations that may arise; however, it is entirely foolish (not to mention outright vain) to be so confident in the strength of our faith that we voluntarily dive right into a situation that is wrought with potential sin.

Ultimately, all our actions are supposed to be based on whether or not they will please Allah and take us closer to Him. Having a non-Mahram friend does neither.

### **"I'm engaged/married/older than him/younger than her, so it's okay."**

All those factors make no difference. Again, we are reminded by Allah, the Prophets, and the Ahlul Bayt that Shaitan is our open enemy who attacks from all sides. He targets everyone, so being engaged, married, older than the brother, or younger than the sister does not make a difference.

In fact, for an engaged/married person to befriend a non-Mahram would only cause misunderstandings and problems. In the study by Kaplan and Keys, participants who were already involved in a relationship reported that their attraction towards non-Mahram friends was less, relative to those who were single. A



point worth noting is that the word used in reference to the level of attraction was "less" not "none", so there is still the potential for falling into sin. Just as the engaged/married factor, the older/younger factor would cause a person to let down his/her guard, leaving an opening for Shaitan to easily enter through.

**"It's a good way to learn how boyss/girls think so I can relate with my future spouse better."**

A practice spouse? That's just plain wrong. Many of the official studies, such as April Bleske and David Buss' "Can Men and Women be Just Friends?" (2000) in the Journal of the International Association for Relationship Research, as well as informal interviews all reveal that men and women see this as one of the main beneficial reasons for having non-Mahram friends. By spending time with a non-Mahram friend, people claim that they can pick up tips on how to improve their relationship with their partner. So a person spends time both with a non-Mahram friend and with his/her spouse, talks over important issues with both, and is intimate with both – and according to the studies already mentioned, the level of intimacy with both is actually equal for a majority of cases. But then what's the difference between your close friend of the opposite gender and your spouse?



## Prevention, Not Cure

There is no truth to this fashion of non-Mahrams being just good friends. Getting into such a tainted "friendship" will only cause problems on multiple levels. A person may be able to control their thoughts and desires, but after repeatedly meeting a non-Mahram in an unstructured setting to spend time as friends, the battle against the self becomes increasingly difficult. With regard to one thing leading to another, the Leader of the Pious, Imam Ali (peace

be upon him) said: "Simply thinking about sinful carnal deeds encourages you to commit them eventually." (Ghurur al-Hikam, p. 518) Islam is about looking ahead and being wise to the on-goings around us. Some things are forbidden to us because they are harmful in essence, and other things are forbidden because they lead to harmful things. Here, we have a situation that is harmful in itself and that will also lead us to even greater

harm in this world and in the next.

We are taught to surround ourselves with friends who inspire us to strive even closer towards Allah, not with those because of whom we risk falling into sin. We must not let our desires direct our actions; rather, we must let our God-consciousness guide us towards what is pleasing to Him and thus beneficial for us. So let's not fool ourselves, because non-Mahram boys and girls can't be "just friends".

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# Core Principles of Zakat Management: Some Observations

The Bank Indonesia initiative to formulate Core Principles of Zakat Management is on. According to the Working Group entrusted with this responsibility, the policy document should serve “as a starting point for the frameworks and standards of zakat-based governance best practices...and to improve the quality of the zakat systems by identifying such weaknesses in the existing of supervision and regulation”. As a contribution to the on-going deliberations, the draft document is being subjected to a review. The entire document may be downloaded from this link at the Diwan Zakat Sudan portal. Relevant excerpts were also presented in an earlier blog. A quick review of the document raises certain important questions that should be addressed before setting out the principles.

## **The policy document under review states:**

“Core Principles on Governance for Zakat Management aim to adapt the existing internationally recognized frameworks of the Basel Core Principles (BCPs). The Basel Core Principles (BCPs) (Download the Basel core principles for effective banking supervision here) are the minimum standards for sound prudential regulation and supervision of banks and banking systems. The BCPs have already been conducted as a banking quality benchmark in more than 150 countries, so that the BCPs may represent the best role model for assessing the quality of the supervisory practices. By adapting the BCPs, the Zakat Core Principles represent an international standard of high-level principles to achieve and assess Zakat supervisory practices. This section adapts the 29 Basel Core Principles that were last revised in September 2012.”

Indeed, the above approach and methodology appears seriously flawed to me for the following reasons:

## **Uniqueness of a Zakat Institution (ZI)**

A zakat institution (ZI) is NOT a bank though it may be seen to engage in a unique type of financial intermediation. It does not buy money. Nor does it sell money. It does not owe money. Nor does it lend money (exception: zakat-funded credit pool in case of Akhuwat).

## **Overstating Interdependence between ZIs**

Unlike a bank that operates in an environment of interdependence, a ZI can stand on its own. For instance, according to some estimates, the Edhi Foundation in Pakistan collects over one-third of total zakat collected in the entire country in an environment of acute trust-deficit with the government zakat body and other zakat institutions. The issue of “contagion effect” is of minimal significance for a ZI, quite unlike a bank.

## **Unique Risk Factors with ZIs**

Unlike a bank, a ZI is exposed to unique risk factors. Even if some factors appear to be common between a ZI and a bank, their significance may vary greatly. For example, “country and transfer risk” and “disbursement risk” are of far less significance for a ZI as compared to a bank. Given that most ZIs operate on a local or at best national basis, and given that ZIs tend not to have long term commitments to pay, their exposure to the above risks may be somewhat exaggerated.

Thus, there is perhaps little merit in mimicking the Basel core principles – that are intended for the banking system – for developing the zakat core principles. Indeed, the framework for core principles for zakat simply cannot be derived from “common minimum” Basel norms for banks. A few other observations that merit serious consideration are as follows:

### Variations in Zakat Systems

The suggested framework is unduly biased towards a system where zakat management is characterized by absence of any element of coercion (zakat is voluntary) and private institutional participation. As rightly pointed out in the document there are major zakat systems (Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Pakistan etc.) where zakat payment is compulsory. The rules of the game dramatically change in such environments for obvious reasons.

Where zakat is compulsory, it is a kind of alternative tax on wealth and income. Compliance is a major issue. In such a scenario, the difference between a ZI and a bank is stark in terms of raising funds. The for-

mer “imposes” zakat while the latter “attracts” deposits and other forms of profit-seeking capital. However, when zakat is voluntary, a ZI will also “attracts” contributions.

Further, whether zakat is compulsory or voluntary is not just one of the many features of a zakat system. Rather, the features of a zakat system are dependent on this key principle. I therefore, recommend a hierarchy of principles (see my earlier blog Hierarchy of Core Principles for Zakat Regulation) rather than a mere description of them in the Basel style presentation.

In countries like India and South Africa, the zakat system is not only rooted in voluntarism, but also provides unbridled freedom to individual and institutional players to manage zakat unlike, say Indonesia. These systems need to provide for self-regulation in line with core principles, and not left to secular charity laws as suggested in the document.

### Absence of a Zero-Base

Unlike Islamic banking and insurance (for which AAOIFI and IFSB norms were developed assuming a zero base), zakat and awqaf system development cannot assume a zero base. Zakat laws already exist in various forms. Where laws are non-existent, zakat flows take place nevertheless, given that zakat is seen as a religious duty. One can assume that the system exists in diverse forms.

Any suggested framework therefore, must be mapped unto existing systems to assess the practicality of its implementation. For instance, one may examine “in how many countries out of 56 OIC countries, the suggested framework can be implemented?” In the face of wide diversity, the suggested framework must contain features that ensure tremendous flexibility and adaptability. This requires serious and systematic research into components of alternative zakat systems.

### Dealing with Diversity

Zakat systems may vary with respect to:

- compulsory or voluntary nature of zakat
- role of state agencies (Ministry of Finance/ Religious Affairs etc.)
- fiscal incentives
- cost recovery
- role of productive zakat

The core principles may refrain from making specific recommendations. For example, the Disbursement-Collection Ratio presented in the document appears to be a very useful tool for avoiding “zakat holding”. But this may make little sense in the context of the Nigerain zakat system where zakat is mostly collected as food grains and are distributed at the point of collection itself. Principles should not and need not specify the tools. Nor should they be expressed in terms of the tools, howsoever elegant they may appear to be. A broader statement of the “core principle” - avoid zakat holding – would be simple and clear.

Indeed if certain country-specific norms/principles/features are identified and suggested as the recommended ones, the policy document needs to clearly specify this (e.g. a vote for voluntary and against compulsory zakat).

The policy document may also specify clearly which norms/ principles/ features are present in a flexible format allowing multiple outcomes (e.g. both centralized and decentralized system of management) There are other specific observations regarding individual Zakat Core Principles to which I will revert later. However, these would be trivial as compared to the above issues that are more fundamental in nature. <http://sadaqa.in/2015/02/11/core-principles-of-zakat-management-some-observations/>

### **WHY AMBEDKARWAD ZINDABAD-ISLAM ZINDABAD?**

**It is true that we (shudras the aboriginal Indians) have since been kicked n killed for nothing of our fault; our womenfolk were not spared of their modesty by the Hindus (Eurasians). They have humiliated, oppressed, suppressed and exploited us like anything but the followers of Islam have not only embraced us but also offered & shared food on the same table (dastarkhan). They (the followers of Islam) have also made us the rulers of this land of ours (ref. Slave dynasty in the medieval period). The Hindus though micro minority in India are still unrepentant of their sins n cruelties and continued with their hatred devil designs against the majority community (the SC/ST/OBC) and even against the Muslims... Then we think it is our pious duty to say “Islam Zindabad” so as to liberate the millions of the persecuted humanities in India from the clutches of Hinduism so as to restore their human dignity which has been divested of by the Caste-Hindus...**

**Since the same Caste-Hindu or so-called upper caste lot though very meager in numbers has infiltrated/trespassed in Islam and bring bad name on it by their venomous devil designs of Caste base hatred.**

# Dr. Vipin Tripathi visits the proposed Godse statue location

I By Dr. Vipin Tripathi I

Friends,

I visited Meerut on January 22, 2015, distributed 1000 Gandhi fliers, visited Hindu Mahasabha office, talked to two of their members and saw the site where they plan to erect Godse's statue.

I reached Meerut at 10:30 AM by UP Roadways bus. It was drizzling yet I was able to give fliers shop to shop and person to person on the road from Ghantaghar to Faiz e Aam Inter College. At 12:15 I met college teachers and some students. The classes had ended an hour ago hence most students had gone. In half an hour Dr. Majeed, a prominent dentist and KhudaiKhidmatgar activist who had organized our program at Town Hall Gandhi Statue 10 days ago, arrived.

He took me to Hindu Mahasabha office. It is a small compound, with a deserted look. On the backside is Hindu Mahasabha office with takhat and chairs. On the left side of the compound (when viewed facing the office) is a small temple (that was closed at that time) and on the right is open space 20 feet by 10 feet where BhoomiPoojan for Godse's statue was performed few weeks ago. There were two people in the office, one old man and another in his thirties or forties dealing with old cars. I asked him why do they want to install Godse's statue.

He said, "Godse was our leader. And to show respect to our leader we are doing it.

I said, "Was not Godse in RSS?"

He said, "He was originally in Hindu Mahasabha. For some time he was in RSS then came back to Mahasabha."

I said, "Worshipping Godse is fine. Every body has likes and dislikes. But why do you condone Gandhi's assassination? Even if you do that it does not hurt him as he is no more. But the deadly fire, in quelling which Gandhi died, stares at people. And that is very serious"

He said, "Why did Gandhi sign the partition papers?"

I said, "Gandhi was not the office bearer of Congress. How could he sign? The seeds of partition were sown in the aftermath of 1857 when British returned to power. They pampered communalists. Savarkar, who earlier was a patriot, changed his plank. He became subservient to British. After the noncooperation movement, when freedom movement gained support of the masses, Hindu Mahasabha, Muslim League and RSS raised the sectar-

ian ideology."

He said, "Godse died for Akhand Bharat. Now when partition has taken place, why don't Muslims go to Pakistan?"

I said, "How can you talk of Akhand Bharat when you hate one fourth of your countrymen. Probably he was obsessed by geographical boundaries. Partition was merely the division of political power. How could you divide people? How could you transfer the land, the means of sustenance of people and people themselves from one territory to another? Masses had no say in partition. It was the massive violence that set in and division of political power was enforced. Never take masses for the political power. Now there is even a bigger power entity the market forces. They dictate terms to polity. They control resources, markets and lives of people, Godse or Gandhi are only a small part of your being. We will not be judged by our heroes, but by our own conduct and behavior. Let us keep masses into focus. They are already suffering from severe exploitation. None of our actions should aggravate their problems."

He did not feel offended and asked for my phone number. I gave him my flier, "Gandhi, mehnatkashaurrais".

From there Dr. Majid took me to Ismail Women Degree College. It is a very special college where 50% girls are Muslims, 40-45% Hindus and rest Christians and Sikhs. Faculty and management are mostly Hindus. It has a Gandhi study Center. I wanted to meet teachers and students but examination was going on hence I could meet only some people. Dr. Majid took me to his clinic where Dr. HashimAzim and one more friend joined. Later we went to meet Abdul QayyumAlvi sahib. We held heartening discussions. After that I left and continued with flier distribution. At 5 PM I took a bus to Delhi. At Modinagar bus stop, Dr. Vijay Garg came to see me. I gave him 150 fliers for dissemination at Modi College. In the bus 75 years old Mohammad Zaqir, was sitting by my side. His liberal views pleased me immensely. On reaching Kashmiri Gate I took metro to Hauz khas. It was 7:30 PM and there was not much rush in the metro. I distributed 150 fliers and most people read them with interest.

Tomorrow we will hold Republic Day PrabhatPheri at 6:30 AM in IIT Campus. At 9:30 we take out prabhatpheri in Trilokpuri, Delhi.

In the night I will leave for Vidisha to conduct 2-Day Heat Workshop for B.Sc. students at Women Degree College.



# The Perils of Being an Indian Muslim

I By Manzurul Haque I

**A**s a supporter of Aam Admi Party, I do not indulge in the job of predicting its victory in Delhi elections. I intensely desire it to win. Every move of mine is loaded, to give a push to the victory process, including this write-up. I am not neutral. I am not a journalist. I am in fact biased in favor of AAP. But I have my reasons.

I wouldn't have written this piece, had I not seen a glimmer of hope that AAP might perhaps win. This feeble hope has filled in me such a strong longing to let my emotions fly, that I cannot help myself from holding my pen tonight. Yes, I am not on my computer.

I will have to discount a number of things first. I am not a 'khas' admi, which in other words means, I am an aamadmi, but worse is, I am going to remain so, because I have already concluded my life with this terse verse, "Born. Why? Lived nigh.Died I!" I am also a pensioner which helps me in the manner, I have described somewhere, "How lucking I was, to have lived life, Behind the iron curtains of an Armed Force; and thus earned my pension, To ward me off – the fate of a poet!". Doubtless, I am writing all this preface, to protect myself from the 'Abuser-Brigade' of India, for my trying to 'defend the indefensible', which I have done in the past as well, if you will please recall.

When I see my life to have come to a full stop already, why do I extend my arm into the affairs of the world, is a natural question to ask. Well, I will answer. I see LIFE as a continuation, as something extending beyond life. It will not end with me. And I love LIFE.

I am pitted against great personal odds as well, because as a young boy, I was a Xavierian of Ranchi, and as an old boy, I was surrounded by comrade-in-arms of the CRPF. Most of them have known me as dear Manzurul (never actually uttered the prefix, but somehow I always felt I heard this). Now I know, what I am going to write may not sound music to quite a number of them (though I do not expect anyone to exclaim, 'you too Manzurul' simply because of absence of context), because in my attempt to brush my shoulders with Truth, I really have no choice. The questions relate to LIFE and are too important to allow the personal discomfiture to step in. Besides, as a Gandhian, I cannot just shy away from a struggle. I think my readers must be anxious to be looking for a subject-matter, a title of the topic, so let

me describe the title as 'The Perils of Being an Indian Muslim'.

## THE PERILS OF BEING AN INDIAN MUSLIM

A friend and a senior AAP leader of Jharkhand, was taken aback, in his sheer sincerity of course, to hear the 'Muslim' word from me, because in his very honest opinion, I should have been above this question. My credentials, according to him, were strong enough to let me play a full-blooded role in the national life of India

and AAP certainly was a platform that would welcome someone like me without any background check. Friends, the issue is not that flimsy for me either. I want to grapple the devil by the horn. I stand for "redefining of the personality of Indian nation" and to reach the core of 'this' topic, my topic of 'The Perils of Being an Indian Muslim' is just an opening, a gateway. My topic is just the name of the 'darwaza' of the citadel, through which to enter the question-land. May be this Aam Admi (me, here), is specially privileged to stand as a 'darban' of the 'darwaza' and is under duty to usher you,all of you,



very important persons in my life - into the citadel. Believe me; I have no problem in continuing to stand as a 'darban', after all of you have gone in, if there is shortage of space inside. I am quite happy to stand at the gate.

Let me explain the abstracts in greater detail. The question of 'Indian nationalism' is under question. A whole lot of us Indians have little respect left, for the current definition of nationalism. Secular nationalism as mentioned in the Constitution of India has been rubbished as pseudo-secularism. BJP, aided and abetted by other Hindutva outfits, are trying to redefine Indian nationalism by invoking Hindu pride and lots of folktales, but worse so, by alluding to Muslim's disregard for Hinduism – without however checking the facts with Muslims. I think there was a case for Muslims to be heard, not only for the sake of Muslims' well-being alone, but also to keep the debate of 'redefining Indian nationalism' on an even keel. Whenever Indian nationalism is on the discussion table, the Hindutva forces would push the Muslim question (appeasement, terrorism, disloyalty etc. etc.) on to the center-stage, obscuring the actual debate. That gives them an opportunity to define Indian nationalism in their own way, without a debate.

Through the medium of AAP, I want the Muslim question to be relegated to the margins of national life – to the very gates of the citadel. India is a Hindu country. Muslims cannot, will not and do not dislike Hindus. They find themselves not very different from Hindus except in a very narrow area of the 'methods of worship and certain observances', which have to do with their life-after-death, without in any way impinging on the resources of this life. Muslims are wise enough to understand their place in the material life of India. They just want to live as humans with their life, liberty and self-respect intact. If someone like Dr. ZakirNaik is dreaming of proletarianizing India – I have no hesitation in saying that such rogue elements are playing into the hands of the BJP and the RSS – for purpose. From day one, I have warned AAP not to espouse Muslim 'dalals' (Remember, my diatribe against AAP leaders for visiting the traditional power brokers of Muslims) with skull-cap and beard. If you, as a Hindu are looking for symbolic pious Muslim faces I can help. I am not saying I am one such Muslim because I am clean-shaven, without a skull-cap, but I am Muslim enough to help you identify a pious Muslim. For example, we Muslims, look for 'noor in the face' of a person, when we look for a pious person. A Muslim

can have his skull-cap and his beard, but he cannot bring in the 'noor' (without being truly pious) that we Muslims instinctively identify. When political parties bring in Muslim faces on to the dais, take it, that Muslims vomit at their sights. But above all, a pious Muslim will be the first to dismiss all political questions of life. The search for a Muslim face is thus futile, and a waste of energy and resources by the political parties, arising from the lack of understanding of Muslim psyche. Actually, it's flunky Muslims like us, who can articulate the real Muslim issues, but if you want me to wear a skull-cap and beard for this reason alone, I shall not. I am not that flunky. So ladies and gentlemen, from the ramparts of my computer table (yes, I am typing now), I hereby proclaim that the biggest Muslim issue is, that there is no Muslim issue, when it comes to debating and defining the true nature of Indian nationalism by the 85% of Indians. Muslims stand as bystanders because of historical reasons, while praying that the 85% of Indian population settle the question of Indian nationalism in favor of an inclusive nationalism, the kind of nationalism already defined by the old Congress Party in the Constitution of India, but rarely believed by the Party itself. I am almost sure that AAP will honor the Indian nationalism as defined in the Constitution of India and this much serves my full purpose as an Indian Muslim. The peril of my being an Indian Muslim is that I am face to face with the prospect of losing my nationalism as defined in the Constitution. I hope, friends who have loved me, and all such Hindus who have loved their Muslim friends and neighbors, understand that the push is actually against their Muslim friends. If Hindus as a majority community find some aberrations in Muslims, they do have the right to nudge them to correct their course in a truly brotherly manner. If you are in AAP, you must understand what it means to be in AAP, what it means to sing – 'Insaankainsaan se ho bhaichara, yehipaighamhamara'. I would like you to recall the words of Swami Vivekananda that for its renaissance 'India needs the body of a Muslim and soul of a Hindu'. I know so much of poison has already gone into the gut, that clear thinking is blurred in our national life. But please give your hope a chance, through AAP.

Manzurul Haque,

Date: 03.02.2015

Email: manhaq@yahoo.com

# What was Gandhi's Evaluation of RSS?

**I By Ram Puniyani I**

With the new ruling dispensation, Modi Sarkar, attempts are being made to present Gandhi in a light which is favorable to the RSS combine.

First, the SwachataAbhiyan (Cleanliness drive) was inaugurated on Gandhi Jayanti 2nd October, then it was claimed that RSS had nothing to do with Gandhi's assassin Nathuram Godse. Now; efforts are on to extract a certificate from Gandhi on the lines which should mean that Gandhi thought 'RSS very good'. In this direction a multimedia program is being shown in 'Dandi Kutir' which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister Mr. Modi recently, (January 2015). In this multimedia presentation in the exhibition it is claimed that Gandhi had come to RSS camp in Wardha in 1930, along with Ghanshyamdas Birla. Gandhi was very impressed by its functioning of RSS and wanted to meet Dr. Hedgewar, the founder of RSS. As per these claims Mahatma did meet the RSS founder the next day.

Irrespective of these claims the definitive knowledge is something else. On one side what is known is that RSS was very critical of

Gandhi's politics, his broadening of the national movement to include the average people of the country in the non-cooperation movement. This movement was the major event which awakened the people of India and linked them with anti British movement. This was the major landmark in the step towards 'India as a nation in the making'. This major phenomenon of Indian nationalism came under heavy criticism from RSS leadership. RSS founder

was critical of Gandhi for his efforts in the direction of 'Hindu Muslim unity' and this mass movement, non cooperation movement. Hedgewar went on to write, 'As a result of non cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi, the enthusiasm in the country was cooling down and the evils of social life, which that movement generated, were menacingly raising their

head. 'As per him 'it is due to this movement that Brahmin-non Brahmin conflict was nakedly on view'.

(C.P. Bhishikar in Keshav Sangh Nirmata, Pune 1979, p 7) What he is calling Brahmin-Non Brahmin conflict was actually the struggle of dalits for their lands rights and social dignity, for change in graded hierarchy of caste.

Hedgewar, true to the RSS ideology of upholding the values of declining-pre-industrial social system was against the movement. This non Brahman movement was actually challenging the status quo of caste relationships in the society.

Hedgewar's successor, Golwalkar, went further to criticize the Indian national movement as being just anti British. Golwalkar writes, 'The theories of territorial nationalism and common danger, which formed the basis of our concept of na-

tion, had deprived us of the positive and inspiring content of our real Hindu nationhood... Anti Britishism was equated with patriotism and nationalism, this reactionary view had disastrous effects upon the entire course of freedom movement, its leaders and its people.' (Bunch of thoughts Bangalore 1996, p. 138) This is so far as what Sangh thought of Gandhi and his struggles for uniting 'India as a Nation state' with the ideology of Indian





nationalism.

Now how did Gandhi look at RSS? As RSS for long was working 'quietly', there are not too many references about the role of RSS during this period. Also since it was not a part of National movement we can't comment about its role in that movement. However whatever one can glean from the available sources one can say that Gandhi's thoughts were not favorable to RSS. In Harijan on 9th August 1942, Gandhi writes, "I had heard of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and its activities; and also know that it was a communal organization", this was in response to the slogans and some speech against 'other' community, about which a complaint was made.

In this Gandhi is referring to the drill of RSS volunteers, who shouted that this Nation belongs to Hindus alone and once the British leave we will subjugate the non Hindus. In response to the rowdiness indulged by communal organizations he writes, "I hear many things about RSS. I have heard it said the Sangh is at the root of all this mischief." (Gandhi, xcvi, 320-322)

Amongst the recorded opinions about Gandhi's evaluation of RSS, the most authentic is the one of his secretary Pyarelal. Pyarelal narrates an event in the wake of 1946 riots. A member of Gandhi's entourage had praised the efficiency, discipline, courage and capacity for hard work shown by RSS cadres at Wagah, a major transit camp for Punjab refugees. Gandhi quipped back, 'but don't forget,

even so had Hitler's Nazis and Fascists under Mussolini' Gandhi characterized RSS as a communal body with a totalitarian outlook' (Pyarelal, Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase, Ahmadabad, page 440)

After independence, in the context of Delhi violence (Rajmohan Gandhi, Mohandas, page 642), Gandhi confronted the RSS chief Golwalkar, with reports of the RSS hand in Delhi violence, Denying the allegations Golwalkar also said that RSS did not stand for killing the Muslims. Gandhi asked him to say so publically. Golwalkar said Gandhi could quote him on this. Gandhi did this in his prayer talk that evening, but he told Golwalkar that statement

ought to come from him. Later he told Nehru that he did not find Golwalkar convincing.'

Today having occupied the seat of power, RSS is desperate to link itself to the legacy of freedom movement from which it had kept aloof. It had criticized the freedom movement as people from all the communities were part of it. RSS aims for Hindu na-

tion, the way Muslim League's goal was Muslim nation. Today treading a careful path it wants to appropriate Gandhi for which a 'certificate' is needed from Gandhi. So his sentence is being manipulated to highlight 'hard disciplined work' and to hide the rider that 'so had been the 'Nazis of Hitler and Fascists of Mussolini.' The basic contradiction in the two types of nationalisms should guide us as what was Gandhi's attitude was towards RSS, despite the well manicured claims from RSS combine.

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# A perverse interpretation of RELIGIOUS NEUTRALITY

**I Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam I**

Now that the AamAadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal is the Chief Minister of Delhi, the people, including Muslims, are naturally looking forward to action from him to redress their long-standing problems.

Muslims, whose vote percentage in AAP's favour was the highest among all segments, understandably expect that they would get a fair deal from the AAP government. Seventy percent of the total Muslim vote went in favour of AAP.

It is appropriate to note here that this election brought a welcome relief from the relentless communal mobilisation by BJP continuing since before the Parliamentary election till a few days before the Delhi Assembly polls.

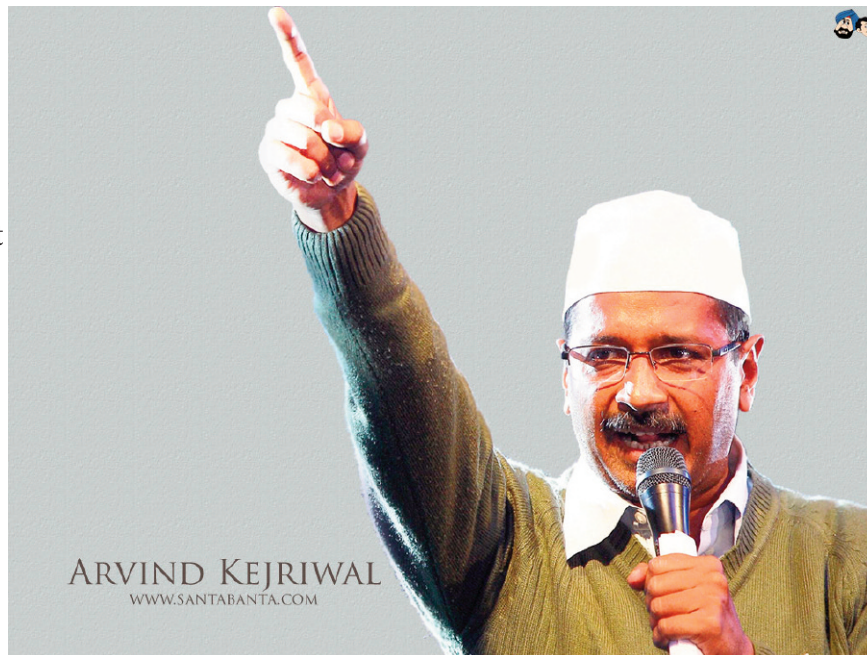
Happily, the Kejriwal campaign sidelined the RSS-driven hate campaign and replaced it with a neutral, non-communal discourse. This led to an improvement in the communal situation and provided a non-communal basis to politics.

However, within days of the AAP victory this apparent religious neutrality was seen at adverse play when the Okhla MLA said in an interview that he would pursue the Batla House fake encounter case to its logical conclusion.

Within hours AAP leaders disassociated themselves from this perfectly legitimate position of their Okhla MLA, who happens to be a Muslim. The MLA's insistence on the establishment of rule of law and

curbs on police lawlessness was summarily rejected as some kind of gesture of "appeasement of Muslims".

This is a dangerous trend as it tends to deligitimise with a perverse interpretation of religious neutrality the genuine concerns of a large section of the people.



This seems to suggest that AAP will not indulge in active persecution of Muslims, but it will not help them out of their troubles either. This is certainly a negative approach to Muslims.

Even earlier, soon after its first victory in 2013, AAP leaders took a similar stance in an interaction at Patna with a Muslim audience. They said that they did not think in Hindu-Muslim terms. Hence, they did not bother to address the deprivation and marginalisation of this community.

As things stand today, there is very little hope for any standardised, well-appreciated and well-understood political policy like affirmative action to pull Muslims out of their socio-economic difficulties under AAP in Delhi state. However, we will keep on reminding this government of its responsibilities towards the underprivileged and disadvantaged, to serve whom AAP claims to have come into power.

To begin with, AAP will have to shed its negative interpretation of religious neutrality and come to the aid of the section of people so far ignored or persecuted by the system.

[http://www.iosworld.org/short\\_takes/A\\_perverse\\_interpretation.htm](http://www.iosworld.org/short_takes/A_perverse_interpretation.htm)